

# Inclusion in Netflix Original U.S. Scripted Series & Films

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FULL REPORT

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# INCLUSION IN NETFLIX ORIGINAL U.S. SCRIPTED FILMS & SERIES

The purpose of this paper was to overview inclusion on screen (i.e., gender, race/ethnicity, LGBTQ, disability) and behind the camera (i.e., directors, writers, producers) across live action Netflix U.S. original fictional films and scripted series.<sup>1</sup> The sample included 126 movies and 180 scripted series released by the entertainment company during the 2018 and 2019 calendar years. Below, the results are presented by inclusion indicator (i.e., gender, race/ethnicity, LGBTQ, disability).<sup>2</sup> On certain measures, the inclusion profile of Netflix films and series was evaluated over time (2018 vs. 2019) and against industry metrics. Throughout the paper, only differences of 5 percentage points or greater were deemed significant. This approach was consistent with our previous work and used to avoid making noise about meaningless deviation (1-2%).<sup>3</sup> The letter “n” appears throughout the document, which illuminates sample size per row, column or cell analyzed.

## GENDER

Within this section, we assess the distribution of gender on screen and behind the camera across two years of Netflix films and series. For some indicators, we not only compare males to females but also look at gender differences yearly (2018 vs. 2019) and within medium (film vs. scripted series). Industry comparisons were provided on certain measures by utilizing our own top-grossing film reports as well as studies on scripted or episodic content by other scholars and groups.

### On Screen

On screen characters were assessed for gender in multiple ways. First, we looked at who drove the storyline. In film, this was the number of movies with a female-identified **lead/co lead** that centered the unfolding narrative. To create a comparable measure for scripted series, we looked at the number of shows where girls and women were 50% or more of series regulars.<sup>4</sup>

Overall, a total of 52% ( $n=157$ ) of all Netflix films and scripted series were driven by girls/women which was just over U.S. Census (50.8%).<sup>5</sup> Series (54.5%,  $n=96$ ) significantly outperformed film (48.4%,  $n=61$ ) in the number and percentage of shows with female-identified leads/co leads, however (see Table 1). Differences also emerged by year, as 2019 (55.2%,  $n=85$ ) featured a higher percentage of storylines with women and girls than did 2018 (48.6%,  $n=72$ ).

**TABLE 1**  
**PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE-IDENTIFIED LEADS/CO LEADS BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

INDICATOR	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of female-identified leads/co leads	<b>46.4%</b> <small>(<math>n=32</math>)</small>	<b>50.9%</b> <small>(<math>n=29</math>)</small>	<b>50.6%</b> <small>(<math>n=40</math>)</small>	<b>57.7%</b> <small>(<math>n=56</math>)</small>	<b>52%</b> <small>(<math>n=157</math>)</small>
TOTAL	<b>48.4%</b> <small>(<math>n=61</math>)</small>		<b>54.5%</b> <small>(<math>n=96</math>)</small>		

*Note: Leads represent the central figure(s) across a story’s plot. In film, two equal protagonists sharing the central journey of the story were counted as co leads. Scripted series with 50% or more female-identified series regulars were included as having female leads/co leads.*

Not surprisingly, a notable pattern was observed by crossing medium (film vs. series) and year (2018 vs. 2019). Just over half of all films in 2019 (50.9%,  $n=29$ ) depicted a female lead/co lead, which was up from 2018 (46.4%,  $n=32$ ). In series, the uptick was more pronounced and significant (7.1 percentage points). Fifty-eight percent of scripted shows starred female-identified protagonists in 2019 (57.7%,  $n=56$ ) and 50.6% ( $n=40$ ) in 2018.

Clearly, Netflix storytelling was strongly grounded in gender equality during the time frame evaluated. When we look to see how Netflix stacked up against the broader industry, the company outperformed top-grossing films. As shown in Table 2, the percentage of female leads/co leads in Netflix films (48.4%,  $n=61$ ) was significantly higher than two years of the most popular movies at the box office (41%,  $n=82$ ).<sup>6</sup> This advantage was demonstrated in both years evaluated (see Table 2). For series, a comparable industry statistic for leads was not available and thus that analysis was not conducted.

**TABLE 2**

**PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE-IDENTIFIED LEADS/CO LEADS IN NETFLIX AND TOP-GROSSING FILMS BY YEAR**

INDICATOR	2018	2019	TOTAL
% of Netflix films w/female-identified leads/co leads	<b>46.4%</b> (n=32)	<b>50.9%</b> (n=29)	<b>48.4%</b> (n=61)
% of top-grossing films w/female-identified leads/co leads	<b>39%</b> (n=39)	<b>43%</b> (n=43)	<b>41%</b> (n=82)

Note: A total of 126 Netflix films were included in the analysis and 100 top-grossing fictional films in 2018 and 2019. Both of these samples had movies driven by ensemble casts. While the ensemble films were counted in the sample total, they could not qualify as female led or not. This latter distinction was reserved for films driven by only one or two (equal) protagonists.

Second, we examined the **main cast** in films and scripted series. Main cast involved series regulars (i.e., recurring roles across a season as defined by Variety Insight) in scripted shows or primary and secondary roles that drive the plot in movies. For movies, the main cast was retrieved from the landing page of each film on the Netflix website. It is important to note that the main cast analysis was different from leads/co leads as we used the character as the unit of analysis in the former analysis and the entire story in the latter. By focusing on main cast characters, our sample size was much larger than the leads/co leads analysis.

**TABLE 3**

**PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE-IDENTIFIED MAIN CAST BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

MEASURE	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of female-identified main cast	<b>38.9%</b> (n=215)	<b>41.1%</b> (n=195)	<b>46.4%</b> (n=301)	<b>48%</b> (n=357)	<b>44.2%</b> (n=1,068)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39.9%</b> (n=410)		<b>47.3%</b> (n=658)		

Of the 2,420 main cast characters, 55.8% (n=1,351) were male and 44.1% (n=1,068) were female. Only 1 character within the main cast analysis was non binary and thus was excluded from the remaining statistics. A higher percentage of female main cast members were found in series (47.3%, n=658) than in film (39.9%, n=410). A non-meaningful difference was observed from 2018 (42.9%, n=516) to 2019 (45.4%, n=552). No significant patterns emerged when crossing medium by year (see Table 3). Given these findings, Netflix approached proportional representation with U.S. Census in scripted series in 2018 and 2019 but in neither year in film.

Lastly, we looked at the percentage of **speaking and named characters** by gender. A total of 12,168 speaking and named characters were evaluated across the 126 films (n=4,696) and 172 scripted series (n=7,472). A full 61.2% (n=7,441) were male characters, 38.8% (n=4,724) were female and <1% (n=3) were non binary. Due to the small sample size, the 3 non-binary characters (all in scripted content) were excluded in the subsequent analyses.

**TABLE 4**

**PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE-IDENTIFIED SPEAKING CHARACTERS BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

MEASURE	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of female-identified speaking characters	<b>35.8%</b> (n=898)	<b>36.5%</b> (n=799)	<b>39.9%</b> (n=1,364)	<b>41.1%</b> (n=1,663)	<b>38.8%</b> (n=4,724)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36.1%</b> (n=1,697)		<b>40.5%</b> (n=3,027)		

**TABLE 5**  
**PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE-IDENTIFIED SPEAKING CHARACTERS IN NETFLIX AND INDUSTRY**  
**BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

MEASURE	FILM		SERIES	
	2018	2019	2018	2019
% of female-identified speaking characters Netflix	35.8% (n=898)	36.5% (n=799)	39.9% (n=1,364)	41.1% (n=1,663)
% of female-identified speaking characters industry	33.1%	34%	40%	45%

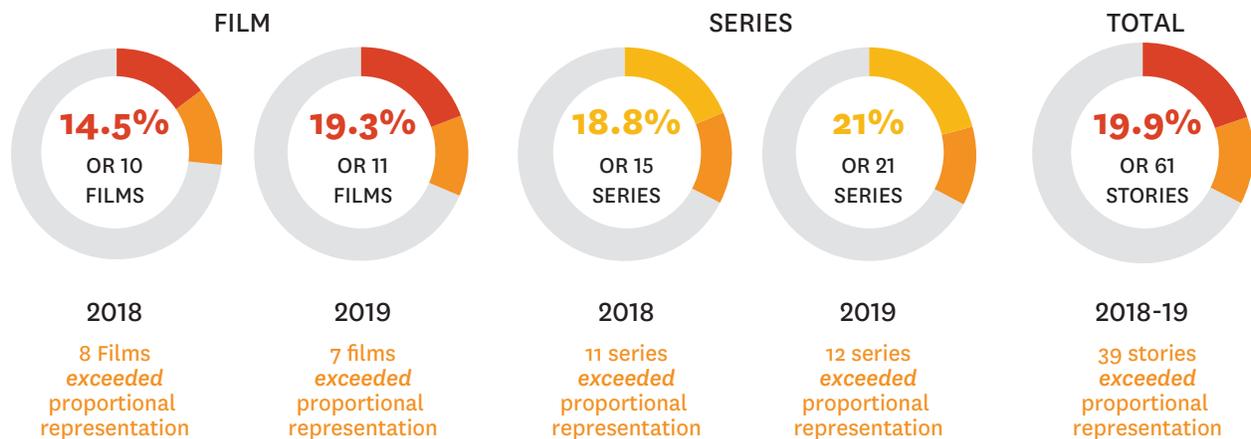
Note: The film industry comparisons are from the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative report.<sup>7</sup> For scripted series, the percentages were derived from San Diego State University (SDSU). Using the SDSU research, the 2019 cell is reflective of the 2018/19 season whereas the 2018 entry is reflective of the 2017/18 season.

Speaking characters' gender did not vary by medium (film vs. series) or year (2018 vs. 2019). As shown in Table 4, 36.1% (n=1,697) of all speaking characters were girls and women in movies and 40.5% (n=3,027) in series. How did Netflix compare with the broader entertainment ecosystem of female-identified speaking characters? As shown in Table 5, the percentage of girls and women on screen in Netflix films (2018=35.8%, 2019=36.5%) was slightly but non meaningfully higher than the percentage in top-grossing films in 2018 (33.1%) and 2019 (34%). Looking to series, Netflix was on par with the broader industry in 2018 (39.9% vs. 40%) but still slightly below industry performance in 2019 (41.1% vs. 45%; see Table 5).

While the aforementioned paragraph illuminates the overall percentage of female-identified speaking and named characters, it tells us little about how portrayals were distributed across the entire sample. To gauge the diffusion of girls and women on screen, we asked two additional questions at the film and scripted series level: 1) how many stories featured a gender-balanced cast? and 2) how many narratives erased girls and women on screen? The former tapped **proportional representation with U.S. Census (50.8%)** and the latter tapped **invisibility or erasure**.<sup>8</sup>

A **gender-balanced** story was defined as featuring girls and women in 45.7% to 55.9% of all speaking or named roles.<sup>9</sup> As shown in Table 6, 19.9% (n=61) of all stories depicted a gender-balanced narrative. Little deviation emerged by medium, as 16.7% (n=21) of films and 20% (n=36) of scripted series portrayed proportional representation. Though shy of the significance criterion (e.g., 5 percentage point difference), films in 2019 (19.3%, n=11) tended to show more gender balance on screen than films in 2018 (14.5%, n=10). There was no meaningful increase observed for gender-balanced casts in series. It is important to note that 15 movies and 23 scripted series across the entire sample exceeded proportional representation. No series or films **excluded** or rendered girls/women **invisible** on screen. Put differently, every story featured at least one girl or woman speaking or named character on screen across 2018 and 2019 content.

**TABLE 6**  
**GENDER-BALANCE BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**



ACROSS 2 YEARS, 32.7% OR 100 FILMS AND SCRIPTED SERIES MET OR EXCEEDED PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

Note: A gender balanced cast featured girls and/or women in 45.7% to 55.9% of all speaking or named roles. This is a confidence interval of 10% around the U.S. Census percentage of 50.8%.

Summing up, Netflix films and series depicted *female-identified leads/co leads* consistent with or above U.S. population norms. However, the percentage of females in the main cast and across all speaking or named characters decreased linearly from leads/co leads. These latter findings represent a missed opportunity, ensuring that main roles as well as those characters with a few lines or less reflect the broader representational ecosystem where girls and women take up half of the space of humanity.

**TABLE 7**  
**ABOVE-THE-LINE PERSONNEL IN FILM BY GENDER**

MEASURES	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
Directors	76.9% (n=100)	23.1% (n=30)	130
Writers	74.8% (n=151)	25.2% (n=51)	202
Producers	71% (n=306)	29% (n=125)	431
Total	73% (n=557)	27% (n=206)	763

### Behind the Camera

Given the findings above, we were curious about the frequency of women working behind the camera across Netflix films and scripted series. For this section, the analytics were handled differently for film and series. Above-the-line personnel were assessed at the episode level for scripted series but the story level for film. Using this approach, the sample sizes for specific roles behind the camera in series (i.e., director, writer) were quite large and thus would skew or mask overall and film-based findings. As such, we reported results for each medium separately.

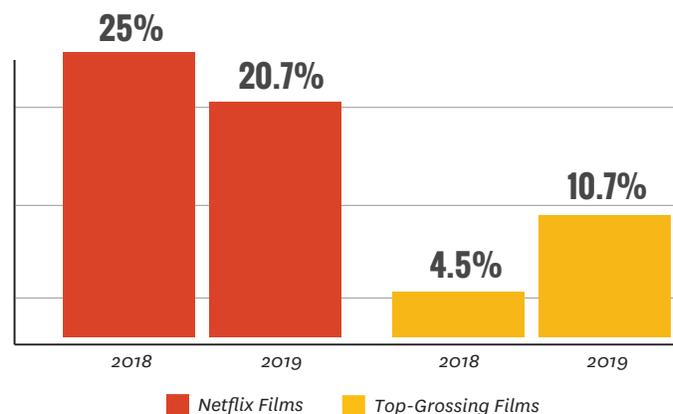
**Film.** A total of 763 above-the-line personnel (i.e., directors, writers, producers) were evaluated across the 126 movies.<sup>10</sup> Looking at specific positions, a total of 130 **directors** helmed the movie sample. A full 76.9% of directors were men (n=100) and 23.1% (n=30) were women (see Table 7), which translated to a gender ratio of 3.3 male helmers to every 1 female. The percentage of women directors non meaningfully decreased from 2018 (25%, n=18) to 2019 (20.7%, n=12). Interestingly, no women directors were hired to helm horror or sci-fi/fantasy films across the 2-year movie sample.

How did Netflix employment statistics of women helmers compare to those found across the 100 top-grossing films of 2018 and 2019? As shown in Figure 1, Netflix films (2018=25%, n=18, 2019=20.7%, n=12) featured a **substantially** higher percentage of women directors than did top-grossing fictional films (2018=4.5%, n=5, 2019=10.7%, n=12) across the sample time frame.

Pivoting to **screenwriters**, a total of 202 were credited across the 126 movies. Seventy-five percent of writers were men (74.8%, n=151) and 25% were women (25.2%, n=51). As shown in Table 8, the percentage and number of women writers was non-meaningfully lower in 2019 (23%, n=23) than in 2018 (27.5%, n=28). Netflix had a significantly higher percentage of women screenwriters (25.2%, n=51) than did top-grossing films overall (16.7%, n=73), however. Women writers of Netflix films were more prevalent in 2018 (27.5%, n=28) than were women writers of top-grossing movies (13.7%, n=31). The gap reduced to non significance in 2019, however (Netflix women writers=23%, n=23, top-grossing women writers=19.8%, n=42).

In addition to directors and writers, producing credits were assessed for gender. Only creatives credited as Producers (e.g., Produced by) without any modifiers (e.g., Executive, Co, Associate) were included in the analysis. This narrow approach was taken purposely, to focus on those individuals responsible for films coming in on time and within budget.

**FIGURE 1**  
**PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN DIRECTORS IN NETFLIX AND TOP-GROSSING FILMS**



**TABLE 8**  
**PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN ABOVE THE LINE IN FILM BY YEAR**

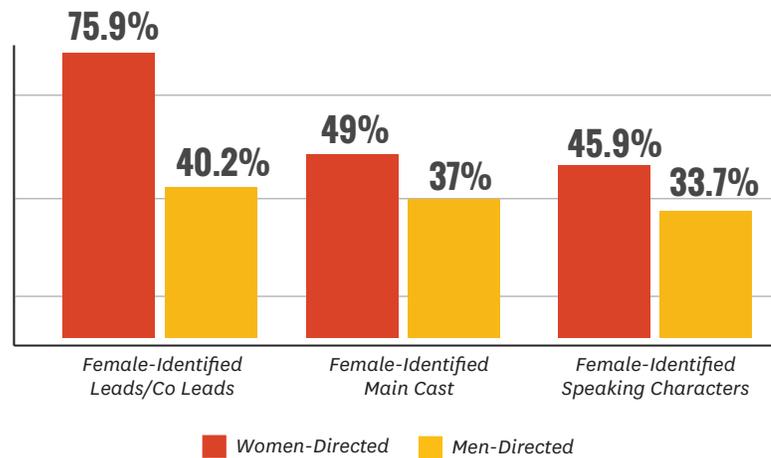
MEASURES	2018	2019	TOTAL
Directors	25% (n=18)	20.7% (n=12)	23.1% (n=30)
Writers	27.5% (n=28)	23% (n=23)	25.2% (n=51)
Producers	28.6% (n=72)	29.6% (n=53)	29% (n=125)

A total of 431 **producers** were credited across the 126 movies, with 71% men (n=306) and 29% women (n=125). No differences emerged by year (2018=28.6%, n=72, 2019=29.6%, n=53). See Table 8. Only 19% (n=130) of producers were women across 200 top-grossing films, with 21.5% (n=73) in 2019 and 16.6% (n=57) in 2018. As such, Netflix was **substantially** higher than the industry norm on hiring women producers to carry film projects to completion.

Was having a woman behind the camera associated with gender prevalence on screen? To answer this query, we bifurcated the sample into two groups. Starting with directors, every film was coded as having at least one woman director attached or not. Then, we looked at the percentage of female-identified film leads/co leads, main cast and speaking characters across these two groups. The same process was repeated for screenwriters and producers.

Not surprisingly, the results revealed that having a woman behind the scenes in a leadership position matters. Figure 2 reveals that films with at least one woman director attached had significantly more girls and women on screen as leads/co leads (75.9%, n=22, vs. 40.2%, n=39), main cast (49%, n=122, vs. 37%, n=289) and speaking characters (45.9%, n=436, vs. 33.7%, n=1,261) than films without a woman director attached. The same pattern held with stories penned by women screenwriters in comparison to stories without any women screenwriters on board: female-identified leads/co leads (70.7%, n=29, vs. 37.6%, n=32), main cast members (47%, n=163 vs. 36.3%, n=248), and speaking characters (42%, n=577, vs. 33.7%, n=1,120).

**FIGURE 2**  
**PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE-IDENTIFIED LEADS, MAIN CAST AND SPEAKING CHARACTERS BY DIRECTOR GENDER**



**TABLE 9**  
**PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE-IDENTIFIED LEADS, MAIN CAST AND SPEAKING CHARACTERS BY CONTENT CREATOR GENDER**

FEMALE-IDENTIFIED ROLE	WRITERS		PRODUCERS	
	Woman Writer Attached	No Woman Writer Attached	Woman Producer Attached	No Woman Producer Attached
Leads/Co Leads	70.7% (n=29)	37.6% (n=32)	56.4% (n=44)	35.4% (n=17)
Main Cast	47% (n=163)	36.3% (n=248)	43% (n=278)	34.7% (n=133)
Speaking Characters	42% (n=577)	33.7% (n=1,120)	37.7% (n=1,115)	33.4% (n=582)

With film producers, two of the three comparisons were significant: female-identified leads/co leads (Women Produced=56.4%,  $n=44$  vs. Men Produced=35.4%,  $n=17$ ) and main cast (Women Produced=43%,  $n=248$ , Men Produced=34.7%,  $n=133$ ). A difference that approached significance but fell short of the 5-percentage point criterion was observed on all speaking characters (37.7%,  $n=1,115$ , vs. 33.4%,  $n=582$ ), however. Taken together, across 8 out of 9 analyses, having a woman in a leadership position behind the camera was associated with greater inclusion across three different types of film roles.

In total, the findings from this section illuminated that Netflix hired or green lit stories with women behind the camera above film industry norms. This is particularly the case with women directors and writers, challenging much of the mythologizing around who can carry a movie or the availability of the pipeline. These hiring practices matter, as content with women behind the camera was associated with more girls and women on screen in leading roles as well as across the entire ecosystem of the story. The results also revealed that men’s casting decisions were less likely to be gender inclusive than women’s casting decisions.

**TABLE 10**  
**ABOVE-THE-LINE PERSONNEL IN SCRIPTED SERIES BY GENDER**

MEASURES	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
Creators	70.2% ( $n=186$ )	29.8% ( $n=79$ )	265
Producers	63.3% ( $n=1,025$ )	36.7% ( $n=594$ )	1,619
Writers	63.6% ( $n=1,682$ )	36.4% ( $n=963$ )	2,645
Directors	72.3% ( $n=1,205$ )	27.7% ( $n=461$ )	1,666
<b>Total</b>	<b>66.2% (<math>n=4,098</math>)</b>	<b>33.8% (<math>n=2,097</math>)</b>	<b>6,195</b>

**Scripted Series.** Creators, producers, writers and directors were assessed across every episode of each Netflix series included in the sample.<sup>11</sup> A total of 6,195 above-the-line personnel were evaluated. Overall, 66.2% of these jobs were held by men ( $n=4,098$ ) and 33.8% by women ( $n=2,097$ ). Table 10 reveals the breakdown of gender by position and Table 11 illuminates the percentage of women holding these posts by year.<sup>12</sup>

In terms of leadership, the top position in scripted series was **show creators**. Just under a third of these prestigious roles were held by women (29.8%,  $n=79$ ). A significant uptick was observed in the percentage of women show creators from 2018 (26.9%,  $n=32$ ) to 2019 (32.2%,  $n=47$ ). According to the SDSU report, women accounted for 22% of show creators across broadcast, cable, and digital series in 2017/18 and 25% in 2018/19 season.<sup>13</sup> Hence, Netflix hired and showcased the work of women creators significantly more than their industry counterparts during the years evaluated.

**TABLE 11**  
**PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN ABOVE THE LINE IN SCRIPTED SERIES BY YEAR**

MEASURES	2018	2019	TOTAL
Creators	26.9% ( $n=32$ )	32.2% ( $n=47$ )	29.8% ( $n=79$ )
Producers	33.3% ( $n=246$ )	39.5% ( $n=348$ )	36.7% ( $n=594$ )
Writers	30.6% ( $n=373$ )	41.3% ( $n=590$ )	36.4% ( $n=963$ )
Directors	25.1% ( $n=191$ )	29.9% ( $n=270$ )	27.7% ( $n=461$ )

Turning to **producers**, we examined credited individuals with the ‘Producer’ moniker in their title working across the majority of the season. A full 63.3% of credited producers were men ( $n=1,025$ ) and 36.7% were women ( $n=594$ ). A higher percentage and number of women were credited as producers in Netflix series in 2019 (39.5%,  $n=348$ ) than in 2018 (33.3%,  $n=246$ ). In comparison to statistics on producers from SDSU for the 2017/18 season, Netflix employed fewer women in producing roles (33%) in 2018 than the wider industry (40%) but kept pace with the industry norm in 2019 (40%).

To further understand women’s participation as producers across the sample, we evaluated specific credits within this moniker by gender. As shown in Table 12, women’s participation as producers **increased** as the prestige of their credits **decreased**. Almost one-third (31.6%,  $n=237$ ) of executive producers and 39.3% ( $n=77$ ) of co-executive producers were women, while women held 55.1% ( $n=27$ ) of supervising producer credits. Forty-three percent (43.3%,  $n=103$ ) of all producers and co-producers ( $n=58$ ) were women and 46.6% ( $n=27$ ) of line producers were women.

**TABLE 12  
PRODUCING CREDITS IN SCRIPTED SERIES BY GENDER**

MEASURES	MEN	WOMEN
Executive Producer	68.4% ( $n=514$ )	31.6% ( $n=237$ )
Co-Executive Producer	60.7% ( $n=119$ )	39.3% ( $n=77$ )
Supervising Producer	44.9% ( $n=22$ )	55.1% ( $n=27$ )
Producer	56.7% ( $n=135$ )	43.3% ( $n=103$ )
Co-Producer	57% ( $n=77$ )	43% ( $n=58$ )
Line Producer	53.4% ( $n=31$ )	46.6% ( $n=27$ )

Two positions were examined to understand if and how women’s employment as Producers on Netflix series changed over time. These roles have been tracked by SDSU and reflect roles with decision-making ability in series. The percentage of Executive Producers in Netflix series in 2018 (28.9%,  $n=101$ ) was not meaningfully different than Executive Producers in the wider industry (26%). This trend continued in 2019, when 33.9% ( $n=136$ ) of Executive Producers on Netflix series were women compared to 30% in the broader industry ecosystem. Among Producers, Netflix hired slightly more women in 2018 (44.8%,  $n=47$ ) than its industry peers (40%). This was also the case in 2019, though both differences were not significant. Forty-two percent of producers on Netflix series (42.1%,  $n=56$ ) were women compared to 40% of producers industry wide.

Looking to **writers**, the credited writer for each episode of a series was examined ( $n=2,645$ ). In total, 63.6% ( $n=1,682$ ) of writers were men and 36.4% were women ( $n=963$ ). As shown in Table 11, the percentage of women writers increased substantially from 2018 (30.6%,  $n=373$ ) to 2019 (41.3%,  $n=590$ ). Netflix (36.4%,  $n=963$ ) significantly outpaced the industry (30%) in terms of hiring women writers overall, as well as in 2018 (30.6% vs. 25%) and in 2019 (41.3% vs. 35%). Even as the industry increased hiring of women writers, Netflix exceeded that rate.

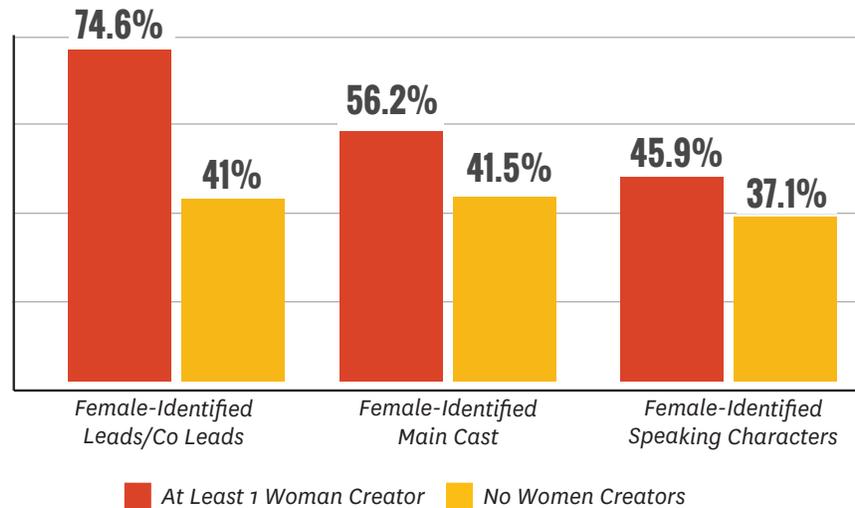
The last behind-the-camera position evaluated was **directors**. Each series episode was examined, with a total of 1,666 directors included in the analysis. Men (72.3%,  $n=1,205$ ) were more likely to direct Netflix series than women (27.7%,  $n=461$ ), which calculated to a gender ratio of 2.6 to 1 (see Table 10). The participation of women directors of Netflix series non meaningfully increased over time, as 25.1% ( $n=191$ ) of directors in 2018 were women compared to 29.9% ( $n=270$ ) in 2019 (see Table 11). Overall, Netflix (27.7%) was on par with the wider industry (28%) in its hiring patterns for women directors.<sup>14</sup> There was no difference between the percentage of women directors working on Netflix series in 2018 (25.1%) and what the DGA reported for the industry in the 2017-18 season (25%). Netflix (29.9%) was slightly lower than the DGA figures for the 2018-19 season (31%).

The final analysis conducted in this section examined the relationship between gender of show creators and gender of on-screen portrayals. Each series was placed into one of two categories: those with at least one-woman creator attached or those without any attached. Then, we analyzed the percentage of female-identifying characters and series regulars in each of these categories. We also conducted the same analysis with writers.

As shown in Figure 3, scripted series with at least one-woman creator attached featured more female-identified leads, series regulars and speaking characters. Two-thirds (74.6%,  $n=53$ ) of series with a woman creator featured girls and women in at least half of the series regular roles, versus only 41% ( $n=43$ ) of series with only men creators. In terms of series regulars, over half of recurring cast (56.2%,  $n=304$ ) were female-identified in shows that were created by women. Shows without a woman creator attached only

staffed 41.5% ( $n=354$ ) of the recurring cast with female-identified series regulars. Finally, women creators filled 45.9% ( $n=1,332$ ) of speaking roles with girls/women. Male show creators, on the other hand, depicted girls/women on screen in 37.1% ( $n=1,697$ ) of all speaking roles. These results point to the clear influence that women in creative roles can have on achieving gender equality on screen.

**FIGURE 3**  
**PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE-IDENTIFIED LEADS/CO LEADS,**  
**SERIES REGULARS AND SPEAKING CHARACTERS BY SERIES CREATOR GENDER**



The same analysis was conducted for writers.<sup>15</sup> Here, series with at least one credited woman writer ( $n=113$ ) across the first three episodes were compared to those without any women writing on the first three episodes ( $n=63$ ). In terms of the leads/co leads, 61.1% ( $n=69$ ) of series with a woman writer featured female-identified characters in at least half of the cast, compared to 42.9% ( $n=27$ ) of series without women writers. This trend continued with series regulars. Half (50.8%,  $n=458$ ) of series regulars were girls or women when one or more women writers worked on the episodes evaluated. In comparison, 40.7% ( $n=200$ ) of series regulars were women when there were no women writers. Finally, for all speaking characters, 42.3% ( $n=2,011$ ) of characters were girls/women when a woman writer was present versus 37.4% ( $n=1,018$ ) of characters when no woman writer was employed. As with creators, women in this critical behind the scenes role impact the inclusion profile on screen in Netflix series.

Behind the camera in Netflix series, women represented roughly a third of the individuals hired to bring these shows to life. Importantly, Netflix saw gains over time in its hiring practices for women across all four positions evaluated (i.e., creator, writer, producer, director). The company also outpaced the industry in its hiring practices for three of these four positions—only on directors was Netflix on par with or slightly below DGA findings. The presence of women as series creators and episode writers was related to seeing more girls and women on screen. As with film, the burden of responsibility to improve casting percentages for women rests primarily with men in series creator and writer roles.

Overall, this section reveals the extent to which Netflix values storytelling by and about girls and women. Fictional films and episodic series present girls and women in key roles on screen. Netflix can improve inclusion of female-identified main cast and speaking characters, but as the behind-the-camera analysis shows, men in positions of influence must do more to include girls and women on screen. Netflix outflanked the film industry in its inclusion of women in above-the-line roles, and often outpaced the industry in its employment of women behind-the-scenes in series. While these findings demonstrate Netflix’s ongoing commitment to stories centered on and by women, there were still pieces of the picture missing. Intersecting gender and race/ethnicity can illuminate where there continues to be bias and hiring gaps in the industry. As a result, the next section addresses another historically marginalized community with a particular emphasis on how women from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups fare on screen and behind the camera.

## RACE/ETHNICITY

This section illuminates the prevalence of race/ethnicity on screen and behind the camera in Netflix films and scripted series. Below, we map out how underrepresented status (i.e., white vs. underrepresented racial/ethnic group) was associated with specific measures as well as medium (films vs. scripted series), year (2018 vs. 2019), and gender (males, females) differences. At the end of the section, we provide a deeper dive into specific racial/ethnic groups.

**TABLE 13**  
**PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED LEADS/CO LEADS BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

INDICATOR	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of underrepresented leads/co leads	31.9% (n=22)	40.4% (n=23)	21.5% (n=17)	35.4% (n=34)	31.9% (n=96)
TOTAL	35.7% (n=45)		29.1% (n=51)		

### On Screen

Leads/co leads, main cast and speaking characters were assessed for race/ethnicity. A modified version of the U.S. Census categorizations (i.e., White, Black, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern/North African, American Indian/Alaskan Native, multiracial/multiethnic) was used to evaluate characters' racial/ethnic grouping.<sup>16</sup> Then, this measure was collapsed into two categories: white vs. underrepresented (UR).

**TABLE 14**  
**PERCENTAGE OF LEADS/CO LEADS BY RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP AND STORYTELLING MEDIUM**

MEASURE	FILM	SERIES	TOTAL	U.S. CENSUS
White	64.3% (n=81)	77.1% (n=135)	71.8% (n=216)	60.1%
Black/African American	18.3% (n=23)	9.1% (n=16)	13% (n=39)	13.4%
Hispanic/Latino	6.3% (n=8)	3.4% (n=6)	4.7% (n=14)	18.5%
Asian	4% (n=5)	1.1% (n=2)	2.3% (n=7)	5.9%
Middle Eastern/North African	1.6% (n=2)	1.1% (n=2)	1.3% (n=4)	1.1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0	0	1.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	<1% (n=1)	<1% (n=1)	<1%
Multiracial/Multiethnic	5.6% (n=7)	1.7% (n=3)	3.3% (n=10)	2.8%

In total, a full 31.9% of stories across Netflix films and scripted series featured underrepresented **leads/co leads**. Medium differences emerged, however. As shown in Table 13, film (35.7%, n=45) featured significantly more underrepresented leads/co leads than did scripted series (29.1%, n=51). 2019 (37.3%, n=57) depicted more underrepresented leads/co leads than did 2018 (26.4%, n=39). The uptick by year was observed for both film (8.5 percentage points) and scripted series (13.9 percentage points). 2019 was not meaningfully different from U.S. Census, which indicates that 39.9% of the population identifies as belonging to an underrepresented racial/ethnic group.<sup>17</sup> Table 14 depicts a breakdown of specific racial/ethnic leads/co leads by storytelling medium.

**TABLE 15**

**PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED LEADS/CO LEADS IN NETFLIX AND TOP-GROSSING FILMS BY YEAR**

INDICATOR	2018	2019	TOTAL
% of Netflix films w/an underrepresented leads/co lead	<b>31.9%</b> <i>(n=22)</i>	<b>40.4%</b> <i>(n=23)</i>	<b>35.7%</b> <i>(n=45)</i>
% of top-grossing films w/an underrepresented leads/co lead	<b>27%</b> <i>(n=27)</i>	<b>29%</b> <i>(n=29)</i>	<b>28%</b> <i>(n=56)</i>

Note: A total of 126 Netflix films were included in the analysis and 200 top-grossing fictional films in 2018 (n=100) and 2019 (n=100). Both of these samples had movies driven by ensemble casts. While the ensemble films were counted in the sample total, they could not qualify as underrepresented-led or not. This latter distinction was reserved for films driven by only one or two (equal) protagonists.

As noted earlier, only comparable industry data was available for leads/co leads in film. Netflix featured significantly more underrepresented leads/co leads than did top-grossing films across the same time frame (see Table 15). The gap was particularly large for 2019, where Netflix outpaced top-grossing fare by 11.4 percentage points (40.4% vs. 29%).

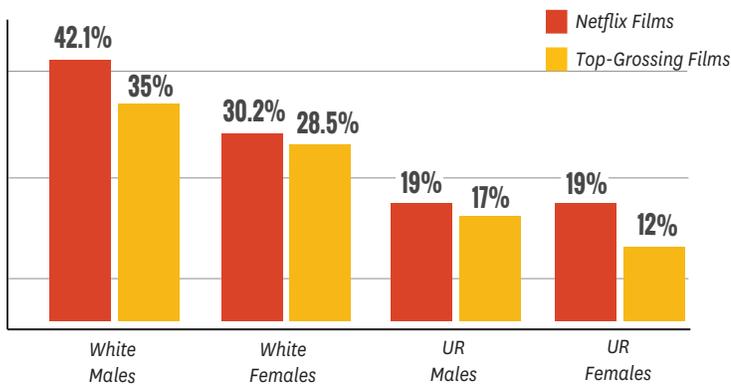
**TABLE 16**

**PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED LEADS/CO LEADS BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND GENDER**

INDICATOR	FILM	SERIES
% of underrepresented male-identified leads/co leads	<b>19%</b> <i>(n=24)</i>	<b>10%</b> <i>(n=18)</i>
% of underrepresented female-identified leads/co leads	<b>19%</b> <i>(n=24)</i>	<b>9%</b> <i>(n=16)</i>

**FIGURE 4**

**PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED LEADS/CO-LEADS IN NETFLIX AND TOP-GROSSING FILMS BY GENDER**



Note: Underrepresented status reflects the central character in the story. Only human or anthropomorphized characters with an ascertainable race/ethnicity were included. Percentages do not sum to 100% as films with ensemble leads are not included and heterogenous co leads were counted in each respective category.

The above findings focus on underrepresented status alone, not in combination with gender. Here, we cross these two measures to gain insight on the similarities and differences in access and opportunity for men and women of color on Netflix fare.

As shown in Table 16, there was no difference in the number and percentage of male and female leads/co leads from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups driving the storylines in film. The percentage of underrepresented leads/co leads was lower in scripted series where men of color (10.3%, n=18) had slightly more roles than women of color (9.1%, n=16) as protagonists. U.S. Census reveals that 20% of the population is composed of underrepresented males and 20% underrepresented females.<sup>18</sup> As such, film is just shy of proportional representation, but scripted series was substantially below this benchmark. The breakdown of underrepresented status by gender for Netflix and top-grossing film leads/co leads can be found in Figure 4.

**TABLE 17**  
**PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED MAIN CAST BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

INDICATOR	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of underrepresented main cast	32.3% (n=175)	38.9% (n=184)	27% (n=175)	38.4% (n=284)	34.1% (n=818)
TOTAL	35.4% (n=359)		33.1% (n=459)		

Turning to the **main cast** across film and scripted series, a full 65.9% (n=1,583) were White, 15.7% (n=376) Black, 4.8% (n=116) Hispanic/Latino, 4.7% (n=112) Asian, 1.7% (n=41) Middle Eastern/North African, <1% (n=11) American Indian/Alaskan Native, <1% (n=8) Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 6.4% (n=154) multiracial/multiethnic. In total, 34.1% (n=818) of all main cast across film and series were from an underrepresented racial/ethnic group.

Looking to content type, very little difference emerged in the percentage of main cast that were underrepresented by storytelling medium (i.e., film= 35.4%, scripted series=33.1%). See Table 18 for a complete breakdown of each racial/ethnic group by medium. Each showed a significant uptick in the percentage of underrepresented main cast from 2018 to 2019 (see Table 18), with scripted series (+11.4 percentage points) gain larger than films (+6.6 percentage points). Most of the increase was due to the casting of Black, Hispanic/Latino, and multiracial/multiethnic actors as main cast members.

We also crossed gender (males, females) and underrepresented status (white vs. underrepresented) for main cast members. Across two years of content (see Table 19), a full 37.3% of main cast members were white males, 28.6% were white females, 18.5% were underrepresented males and 15.6% were underrepresented females. Two other patterns were revealed in Table 19. In film and scripted series, the percentage of underrepresented girls and women as main cast members significantly **increased** from 2018 to 2019. In series, men and boys of color across the same time frame increased whereas the casting of white boys and men **decreased**.

**TABLE 18**  
**PERCENTAGE OF MAIN CAST AND SPEAKING CHARACTERS**  
**BY RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP AND STORYTELLING MEDIUM**

MEASURE	FILM		SERIES		U.S. CENSUS
	Main Cast	Speaking Characters	Main Cast	Speaking Characters	
White	64.6% (n=656)	62.1% (n=2,805)	66.9% (n=927)	64.8% (n=4,640)	60.1%
Black/African American	18.2% (n=185)	18.8% (n=849)	13.8% (n=191)	16% (n=1,144)	13.4%
Hispanic/Latino	3.3% (n=33)	5.9% (n=266)	6% (n=83)	5.9% (n=419)	18.5%
Asian	5.9% (n=60)	6.2% (n=282)	3.8% (n=52)	6.2% (n=441)	5.9%
Middle Eastern/North African	2.4% (n=24)	3.1% (n=138)	1.2% (n=17)	1.9% (n=137)	1.1%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	<1% (n=6)	<1% (n=15)	<1% (n=5)	<1% (n=22)	1.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	<1% (n=2)	<1% (n=18)	<1% (n=6)	<1% (n=20)	<1%
Multiracial/Multiethnic	4.8% (n=49)	3.2% (n=144)	7.6% (n=105)	4.7% (n=338)	2.8%

TABLE 19

PERCENTAGE OF MAIN CAST BY UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS, STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR

MEASURE	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL	U.S. CENSUS
	2018	2019	2018	2019		
% of white males	40.2% (n=218)	37.2% (n=176)	40.2% (n=260)	32.7% (n=242)	37.3% (n=896)	30%
% of white females	27.5% (n=149)	23.9% (n=113)	32.8% (n=212)	28.8% (n=213)	28.6% (n=687)	30%
% of underrepresented males	20.5% (n=111)	21.8% (n=103)	13.3% (n=86)	19.4% (n=143)	18.5% (n=443)	20%
% of underrepresented females	11.8% (n=64)	17.1% (n=81)	13.8% (n=89)	19.1% (n=141)	15.6% (n=375)	20%

Focusing on *speaking characters* (n=11,678), 63.8% (n=7,445) were White, 17.1% (n=1,993) Black, 5.9% (n=685) Hispanic/Latino, 6.2% (n=723) Asian, <1% (n=37) American Indian/Alaskan Native, <1% (n=38) Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, 2.4% (n=275) Middle Eastern/North African, and 4.1% (n=482) multiracial/multiethnic.<sup>19</sup> Across the two-year sample, film and scripted series did not meaningfully differ across any of these specific racial/ethnic groupings. Combined, a full 36.2% (n=4,233) of main cast members were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups which was not meaningfully different from U.S. Census.

Table 20 features the percentage of underrepresented speaking characters by storytelling medium and year. While no meaningful difference was observed over time for film, scripted series increased underrepresented speaking characters from 2018 (32%) to 2019 (38%). In terms of industry comparisons, Netflix films were no different than top-grossing films in the percentage of underrepresented speaking characters overall or in 2018 but 2019 was significantly higher (Netflix=40.2%, n=855, TG Films=34.3%, n=1,336).

TABLE 20

PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED SPEAKING CHARACTERS BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR

INDICATOR	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of underrepresented speaking characters	35.8% (n=857)	40.2% (n=855)	32% (n=1,053)	38% (n=1,468)	36.2% (n=4,233)
TOTAL	37.9% (n=1,712)		35.2% (n=2,521)		

The intersection of underrepresented status and gender for all speaking or named characters is found in Table 21. Here, the findings showed that over time no differences emerged by storytelling medium or year. Just under 40% of all speaking or named characters were white males, 24.1% were white females, 21.1% were underrepresented males and 15.1% were underrepresented females. White males over indexed relative to U.S. population estimates whereas white and underrepresented females under indexed. Underrepresented males were featured in line with their percentage in the U.S. (see Table 21).

Two additional measures, *proportional representation* and *invisibility*, were assessed using race/ethnicity of speaking or named characters. In terms of *proportional representation*, we captured whether stories came within 10% of U.S. Census (35.9%-43.9%). As shown in Table 22, only 11.4% (n=35) of all Netflix fictional stories were at or near proportional representation with film (10.3%, n=13) and series (12.2%, n=22) not meaningfully different. What is important, however, is that 27.1% (n=83) of all stories were *above* proportional representation with film (32.5%, n=41) showcasing more of those stories with underrepresented racial/ethnic casts than scripted series (23.3%, n=42). Further, the percentage of stories that featured above proportional representation increased from 2018 to 2019 across both film and series.

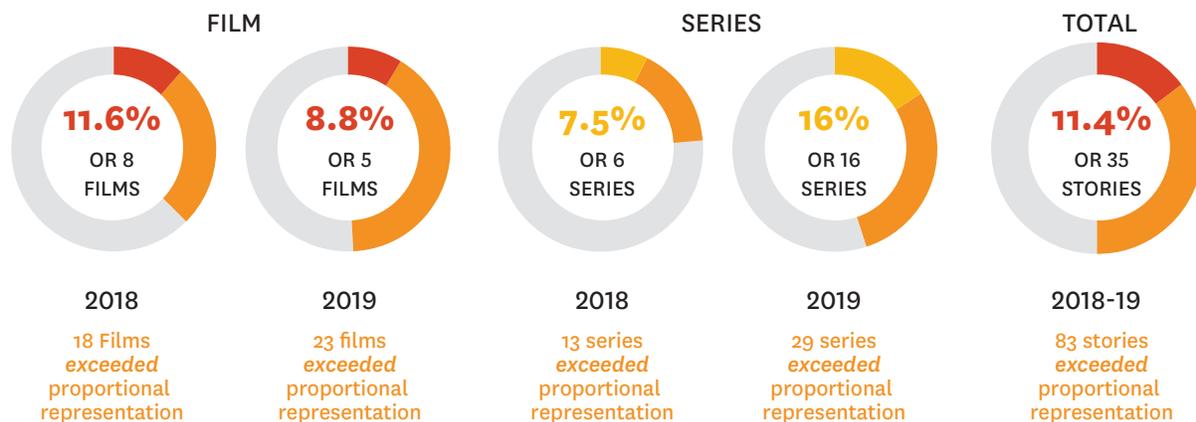
**TABLE 21**  
**PERCENTAGE OF SPEAKING CHARACTERS BY UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS, GENDER, STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

MEASURE	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL	U.S. CENSUS
	2018	2019	2018	2019		
% of white males	<b>41.8%</b> (n=999)	<b>38.8%</b> (n=824)	<b>41%</b> (n=1,351)	<b>37.8%</b> (n=1,461)	<b>39.7%</b> (n=4,635)	<b>30%</b>
% of white females	<b>22.4%</b> (n=536)	<b>21%</b> (n=446)	<b>27%</b> (n=890)	<b>24.3%</b> (n=938)	<b>24.1%</b> (n=2,810)	<b>30%</b>
% of underrepresented males	<b>21.7%</b> (n=518)	<b>24.7%</b> (n=524)	<b>18.8%</b> (n=619)	<b>20.8%</b> (n=805)	<b>21.1%</b> (n=2,446)	<b>20%</b>
% of underrepresented females	<b>14.2%</b> (n=339)	<b>15.6%</b> (n=331)	<b>13.2%</b> (n=434)	<b>17.1%</b> (n=663)	<b>15.1%</b> (n=1,767)	<b>20%</b>

In terms of **visibility**, the number and percentage of Netflix films and scripted series missing at least one or more speaking or named characters from specific racial/ethnic groups was depicted in Table 23. Almost all Netflix stories portrayed White speaking characters whereas almost no stories portrayed Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders and American Indian/Alaskan Natives. Roughly three-quarters of the films and series erased Middle Eastern/North African (MENA) characters and roughly half rendered Hispanic/Latinos invisible. In Table 24, we illuminated how many films and series erased female-identified characters by race/ethnicity. Fifteen out of 16 cells indicate that when we only focus on women and girls, the numbers become more dire reflecting greater erasure (see Table 24).

Taken together, this section revealed a few major trends. In terms of leads/co leads, Netflix was near or at proportional representation for race/ethnicity particularly in film. Similarly, main cast and all speaking characters in film and series were at or just below proportional representation in 2019. One problematic area pertained to invisibility, with a significant number and percentage of stories across film and scripted series erasing people of color – particularly women and girls from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups.

**TABLE 22**  
**RACIAL/ETHNIC PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**



ACROSS 2 YEARS, 38.6% OR 118 FILMS AND SCRIPTED SERIES MET OR EXCEEDED PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

**TABLE 23**  
**PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF NETFLIX FILMS AND SCRIPTED SERIES MISSING RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUPS**

Measure	White	H/L	Black	Asian	AI/AN	NHPI	MENA	Multi
% of films w/out speaking characters	1.6%	54%	18.3%	40.5%	96.8%	95.2%	75.4%	42.9%
# of films	2	68	23	51	122	120	95	54
% of series w/out speaking characters	1.1%	47.8%	10%	27.2%	93.9%	94.4%	71.7%	30.6%
# of series	2	86	18	49	169	170	129	55

Note: H/L refers to Hispanic/Latino; AI/AN refers to American Indian/Alaskan Native; NHPI refers to Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; MENA refers to Middle Eastern/North African; and Multi refers to Multiracial/Multiethnic.

**TABLE 24**  
**PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF NETFLIX FILMS AND SCRIPTED SERIES MISSING GIRLS AND WOMEN BY RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUPS**

Measure	White	Latina	Black	Asian	AI/AN	NHPI	MENA	Multi
% of films w/out speaking characters	4.8%	72.2%	31.7%	56.3%	96.8%	97.6%	88.9%	55.6%
# of films	6	91	40	71	122	123	112	70
% of series w/out speaking characters	4.4%	65.6%	27.2%	42.2%	96.7%	96.1%	88.9%	38.3%
# of series	8	118	49	76	174	173	160	69

Note: AI/AN refers to American Indian/Alaskan Native; NHPI refers to Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander; MENA refers to Middle Eastern/North African; and Multi refers to Multiracial/Multiethnic.

### Behind the Camera

As with gender, we scrutinized the distribution of race/ethnicity behind the camera on Netflix films and series. As noted earlier, film and series metrics are reported separately.

**Film.** There were 762 personnel in above-the-line roles across the 126 Netflix films evaluated.<sup>20</sup> Focusing on **directors**, more than 80% of helmers were white (83.1%,  $n=108$ ) and 16.9% ( $n=22$ ) were from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups (See Table 25). This is a ratio of 4.9 white directors for every 1 underrepresented director. There was no change from 2018 (16.7%,  $n=12$ ) to 2019 (17.2%,  $n=10$ ) in the percentage of underrepresented directors of Netflix films. The percentage of Netflix directors did not significantly differ from top-grossing films in the same time frame (see Figure 5).

**TABLE 25**  
**ABOVE-THE-LINE PERSONNEL IN FILM BY UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS**

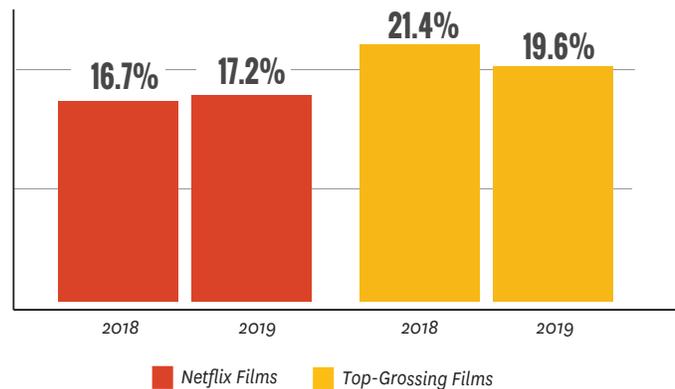
MEASURES	WHITE	UR	TOTAL
Directors	83.1% ( $n=108$ )	16.9% ( $n=22$ )	130
Writers	83.6% ( $n=168$ )	16.4% ( $n=33$ )	201
Producers	87% ( $n=375$ )	13% ( $n=56$ )	431
Total	85.4% ( $n=651$ )	14.6% ( $n=111$ )	762

The specific racial/ethnic breakdown for directors was: 83.1% ( $n=108$ ) white, 8.5% ( $n=11$ ) Black/African American, 3.1% ( $n=4$ ) Hispanic/Latino, <1% ( $n=1$ ) Asian, 1.5% ( $n=2$ ) Middle Eastern/North African, and 3.1% ( $n=4$ ) Multiracial/Multiethnic. There were no directors who were American Indian/Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander who directed a Netflix film in 2018 or 2019.

To further investigate opportunities for directors, we explored the intersection of underrepresented status and gender. White men were most likely to helm Netflix films, while women of color were least likely (see Table 26). Focusing on differences for underrepresented men and women directors over time reveals no significant changes. In both 2018 and 2019, Netflix (2018=11.1%,  $n=8$ , 2019=10.3%,  $n=6$ ) fell significantly below the percentage of underrepresented men working as directors of top-grossing movies (2018=20.5%, 2019=16.1%).

In the same time frame, Netflix (2018=5.6%,  $n=4$ , 2019=6.9%,  $n=4$ ) had a slightly higher percentage of underrepresented women working as directors than did top-grossing movies (2018=<1%, 2019=3.6%).

**FIGURE 5**  
**PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED DIRECTORS IN NETFLIX AND TOP-GROSSING FILMS BY YEAR**



**TABLE 26**  
**NETFLIX FILM DIRECTORS BY UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS AND GENDER BY YEAR**

UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS	2018	2019	TOTAL
White Men	63.9% ( $n=46$ )	69% ( $n=40$ )	66.2% ( $n=86$ )
White Women	19.4% ( $n=14$ )	13.8% ( $n=8$ )	16.9% ( $n=22$ )
UR Men	11.1% ( $n=8$ )	10.3% ( $n=6$ )	10.8% ( $n=14$ )
UR Women	5.6% ( $n=4$ )	6.9% ( $n=4$ )	6.2% ( $n=8$ )

Turning to **screenwriters**, there were 201 credited on Netflix films; 83.6% were white ( $n=168$ ) and 16.4% were underrepresented ( $n=33$ ). Netflix increased the percentage of underrepresented writers hired between 2018 (13.9%,  $n=14$ ) and 2019 (19%,  $n=19$ ). How does this compare to top-grossing films? A slightly higher—but not significant—percentage of underrepresented writers penned Netflix movies in 2018 (13.9%,  $n=14$ ) than top-grossing films that year (11.2%,  $n=25$ ). The difference was significant in 2019, as 19% ( $n=19$ ) of Netflix writers were underrepresented compared to 13.2% ( $n=28$ ) of top-grossing film scribes.

Of the 201 writers of Netflix films, 83.6% ( $n=168$ ) were White, 7.5% ( $n=15$ ) were Black/African American, 1% ( $n=2$ ) were Hispanic/Latino, 3.5% ( $n=7$ ) were Asian, 1.5% ( $n=3$ ) were Middle Eastern/North African, and 3% ( $n=6$ ) were Multiracial/Multiethnic. There were no writers who were American Indian/Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

**TABLE 27**  
**PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED PERSONNEL ABOVE THE LINE IN FILM BY YEAR**

MEASURES	2018	2019	TOTAL
Directors	16.7% ( $n=12$ )	17.2% ( $n=10$ )	16.9% ( $n=22$ )
Writers	13.9% ( $n=14$ )	19% ( $n=19$ )	16.4% ( $n=33$ )
Producers	14.7% ( $n=37$ )	10.6% ( $n=19$ )	13% ( $n=56$ )

**TABLE 28**  
**NETFLIX FILM WRITERS BY UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS AND GENDER BY YEAR**

<b>UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
White Men	61.4% (n=62)	63% (n=63)	62.2% (n=125)
White Women	24.8% (n=25)	18% (n=18)	21.4% (n=43)
UR Men	10.9% (n=11)	14% (n=14)	12.4% (n=25)
UR Women	3% (n=3)	5% (n=5)	4% (n=8)

We also examined writers with an intersectional lens (See Table 28). Men and women of color were least likely to work as writers on Netflix films. There was no meaningful difference by year for underrepresented men (2018=10.9%, n=11, 2019=14%, n=14), nor for underrepresented women (2018=3%, n=3, 2019=5%, n=5). There were also no significant differences between Netflix writers and top-grossing films in terms of underrepresented men in 2018 (Netflix=10.9%, top-grossing=9.8%) or 2019 (Netflix=14%, top-grossing=9.9%), or for underrepresented women in either year (2018=3% vs. 1.3%, 2019=5% vs. 3.3%).

Producing credits (e.g., Produced by) were also evaluated. Of the 431 **producers** of Netflix films, 87% (n=375) were white and 13% (n=56) were underrepresented. From 2018 (14.7%, n=37) to 2019 (10.6%, n=19) the percentage of underrepresented producers of Netflix content declined non-significantly. In comparison to top-grossing films, in 2018 there was no significant difference in the percentage of underrepresented producers of Netflix content (14.7%) compared to top-grossing movies (11.3%). In 2019, however, significantly fewer underrepresented producers (10.6%) worked on Netflix films compared to top-grossing movies (19%).

**TABLE 29**  
**NETFLIX FILM PRODUCERS BY UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS, GENDER AND YEAR**

<b>UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
White Men	63.1% (n=159)	64.2% (n=115)	63.6% (n=274)
White Women	22.2% (n=56)	25.1% (n=45)	23.4% (n=101)
UR Men	8.3% (n=21)	6.1% (n=11)	7.4% (n=32)
UR Women	6.3% (n=16)	4.5% (n=8)	5.6% (n=24)

The specific racial/ethnic breakdown for producers was: 87% (n=375) white, 4.2% (n=18) Black/African American, 2.6% (n=11) Hispanic/Latino, 3.5% (n=15) Asian, <1% (n=4) Middle Eastern/North African, <1% (n=1) Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 1.6% (n=7) Multiracial/Multiethnic. There were no American Indian/Alaskan Native producers across both years.

Once again, we evaluated the producing ranks intersectionally (see Table 29). There was little difference over time in the percentage of underrepresented men and women credited as producers. Top-grossing (9.9%, n=34) and Netflix (8.3%, n=21) films were roughly equal in 2018 while in 2019, 14.2% (n=48) of producers of top films were underrepresented men versus 6.1% (n=11) of Netflix producers. In terms of underrepresented women, Netflix movies in 2018 featured more underrepresented women producers (6.3%, n=16) than top-grossing films (1.4%, n=5), though the difference was just shy of significance. In 2019, Netflix (4.5%, n=8) had roughly the same percentage of underrepresented women producers as top films (4.7%, n=16).

We were once again curious about the relationship between underrepresented creatives behind the scenes and the on-screen inclusion profile of Netflix stories. We split the sample into two groups. For directors, each film was determined to have an underrepresented director attached or not. Then, we examined the percentage of underrepresented leads/co leads, main cast, and speaking characters for films in each category. This process was repeated with writers and producers.

**FIGURE 6**  
**PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED LEADS, MAIN CAST**  
**AND SPEAKING CHARACTERS**  
**BY DIRECTOR UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS**

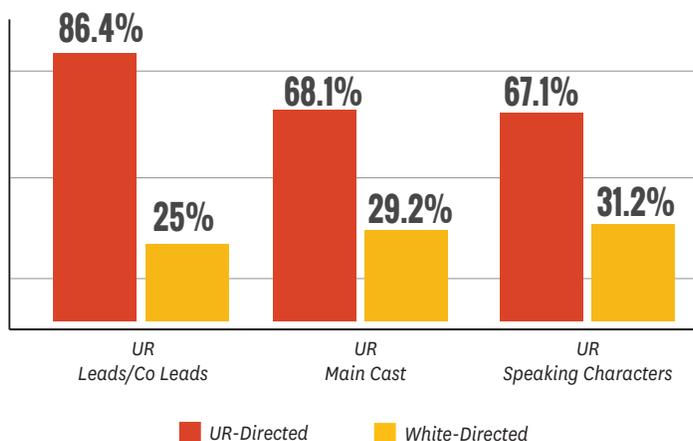


Figure 6 shows the results of this analysis. Films with one or more underrepresented directors attached were far more likely to feature underrepresented leads/co leads (86.4%,  $n=19$  vs. 25%,  $n=26$ ), underrepresented main cast (68.1%,  $n=109$  vs. 29.2%,  $n=250$ ), and underrepresented speaking characters (67.1%,  $n=566$  vs. 31.2%,  $n=1,146$ ) than those without an underrepresented director attached. The screenwriting analysis revealed the same pattern. Underrepresented writers were associated with more underrepresented film leads/co leads (76%,  $n=19$  vs. 25.7%,  $n=26$ ), main cast members (61.3%,  $n=119$  vs. 29.2%,  $n=240$ ), and all speaking characters (60.7%,  $n=541$  vs. 32.3%,  $n=1,171$ ) than white scribes. For producers, the same differences emerged for underrepresented vs. white producers across the three groups (leads/co leads, 70.6%,  $n=24$  vs. 22.8%,  $n=21$ , main cast, 51.8%,  $n=144$  vs. 29.2%,  $n=215$ , speaking characters 53.4%,  $n=770$  vs. 30.6%,  $n=942$ ).

Put differently, across 7 of 9 analyses, underrepresented creatives featured *more than double* the percentage of underrepresented leads, main cast and speaking characters than white directors did. Clearly, underrepresented content creators were more inclusive than their white counterparts when it comes to storytelling and casting. Although more white directors worked on Netflix films, they contributed less to the on-screen inclusion profile of Netflix content. Hiring practices behind the camera should take into account the need for inclusion on screen across all content.

The findings regarding film reveal that underrepresented content creators in above-the-line roles on Netflix films fell mostly below industry norms, though this varied from year-to-year. Most importantly, there was a clear relationship between an underrepresented creator behind the scenes and on screen casting choices. When underrepresented individuals worked behind the camera, there were more underrepresented characters as leads/co leads, main cast, and speaking characters—in most cases, more than twice as many. This suggests that underrepresented creatives were primarily responsible for the on-screen inclusion in Netflix films.

**TABLE 30**  
**PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED LEADS, MAIN CAST AND SPEAKING CHARACTERS IN FILM**  
**BY UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS**

UNDERREPRESENTED ROLE	WRITERS		PRODUCERS	
	UR Writer Attached	No UR Writer Attached	UR Producer Attached	No UR Producer Attached
Leads/Co Leads	76% ( $n=19$ )	25.7% ( $n=26$ )	70.6% ( $n=24$ )	22.8% ( $n=21$ )
Main Cast	61.3% ( $n=119$ )	29.2% ( $n=240$ )	51.8% ( $n=144$ )	29.2% ( $n=215$ )
Speaking Characters	60.7% ( $n=541$ )	32.3% ( $n=1,171$ )	53.4% ( $n=770$ )	30.6% ( $n=942$ )

**Scripted Series.** We assessed the creators, producers, writers, and directors of every episode of each Netflix series in the sample. Of the 6,155 personnel evaluated, 82.7% ( $n=5,092$ ) were white and 17.3% ( $n=1,063$ ) were from an underrepresented racial/ethnic group. This did not change over time; in 2018, 14.8% ( $n=415$ ) of positions went to underrepresented individuals and in 2019, 19.4% ( $n=648$ ) of positions did. Table 31 provides the breakdown of each position by underrepresented status.

Beginning with **creators**, 87.8% ( $n=231$ ) were white and 12.2% ( $n=32$ ) were underrepresented overall. This varied significantly by year, as 7.6% ( $n=9$ ) of creators in 2018 were underrepresented but 15.9% ( $n=23$ ) in 2019 were. Netflix series in 2018 were on par with underrepresented series creators overall (9%), based on the UCLA Hollywood Diversity Report (2017-18).<sup>21</sup> In 2019, Netflix (16%) was not meaningfully different from the industry (11.8%) in its work with underrepresented series creators.

**TABLE 31**  
**ABOVE-THE-LINE PERSONNEL IN SCRIPTED SERIES BY UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS**

MEASURES	WHITE	UR	TOTAL
Creators	87.8% ( $n=231$ )	12.2% ( $n=32$ )	263
Producers	85% ( $n=1,352$ )	15% ( $n=238$ )	1,590
Writers	82.6% ( $n=2,178$ )	17.4% ( $n=458$ )	2,636
Directors	79.9% ( $n=1,331$ )	20.1% ( $n=335$ )	1,666

**TABLE 32**  
**PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED ABOVE-THE-LINE PERSONNEL IN SCRIPTED SERIES BY YEAR**

MEASURES	2018	2019
Creators	7.6% ( $n=9$ )	15.9% ( $n=23$ )
Producers	12.9% ( $n=93$ )	16.7% ( $n=145$ )
Writers	13.9% ( $n=168$ )	20.3% ( $n=290$ )
Directors	19% ( $n=145$ )	21% ( $n=190$ )
<b>Total</b>	<b>14.8% (<math>n=415</math>)</b>	<b>19.4% (<math>n=648</math>)</b>

The specific racial/ethnic breakdown for creators was: 87.8% ( $n=231$ ) white, 6.1% ( $n=16$ ) were Black/African American, 2.3% ( $n=6$ ) were Hispanic/Latino, <1% ( $n=1$ ) were Asian, 1.1% ( $n=3$ ) were Middle Eastern/North African, and 2.3% ( $n=6$ ) were Multiracial/Multiethnic. None were American Indian/Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

As with film, we explored the creator position with an intersectional lens over time (see Table 33). A total of 8.4% ( $n=22$ ) of creators were underrepresented men, while 3.8% ( $n=10$ ) were underrepresented women. In 2018, 5.1% ( $n=6$ ) of creators were underrepresented men, which increased significantly to 11% ( $n=16$ ) in 2019. There was no corresponding increase for underrepresented women over time.

**TABLE 33**  
**NETFLIX SERIES CREATORS BY UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS, GENDER AND YEAR**

UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS	2018	2019	TOTAL
White Men	68.6% ( $n=81$ )	56.6% ( $n=82$ )	62% ( $n=163$ )
White Women	23.7% ( $n=28$ )	27.6% ( $n=40$ )	25.9% ( $n=68$ )
UR Men	5.1% ( $n=6$ )	11% ( $n=16$ )	8.4% ( $n=22$ )
UR Women	2.5% ( $n=3$ )	4.8% ( $n=7$ )	3.8% ( $n=10$ )

Among **producers**, 85% ( $n=1,352$ ) were white and 15% ( $n=238$ ) were underrepresented. This was consistent over time, as 12.9% ( $n=93$ ) of producers in 2018 were underrepresented compared to 16.7% ( $n=145$ ) in 2019. Netflix (12.9%) fell significantly below the industry average in 2018 (WGA=26.4%) and in 2019 (Netflix=16.7%, WGA=39.4%) for underrepresented producers.<sup>22</sup>

The specific racial/ethnic breakdown for producers was: 85% ( $n=1,352$ ) white, 5% ( $n=80$ ) were Black/African American, 3.1% ( $n=50$ ) were Hispanic/Latino, 2.8% ( $n=45$ ) were Asian, 1.3% ( $n=20$ ) were Middle Eastern/North African, and 2.7% ( $n=43$ ) were Multiracial/Multiethnic. None of the producers were American Indian/Alaskan Native or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.

Crossing the race/ethnicity and gender of producers revealed that 54.3% ( $n=864$ ) of producing credits went to white men, 30.7% ( $n=488$ ) to white women, 8.7% ( $n=139$ ) to underrepresented men, and 6.2% ( $n=99$ ) to underrepresented women. Over time, there was little difference in the prevalence of underrepresented men and women in producing roles. In 2018, 7.5% ( $n=54$ ) of producers were underrepresented men which was similar to 2019 (9.8%,  $n=85$ ). This was also true of underrepresented women in 2018 (5.4%,  $n=39$ ) and 2019 (6.9%,  $n=60$ ).

**TABLE 34**  
**PRODUCING CREDITS IN SCRIPTED SERIES BY**  
**UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS**

MEASURES	WHITE	UR
Executive Producer	87% ( $n=649$ )	13% ( $n=97$ )
Co-Executive Producer	80% ( $n=156$ )	20% ( $n=39$ )
Supervising Producer	57.1% ( $n=28$ )	42.9% ( $n=21$ )
Producer	91.1% ( $n=216$ )	8.9% ( $n=21$ )
Co-Producer	79.4% ( $n=104$ )	20.6% ( $n=27$ )
Line Producer	88% ( $n=44$ )	12% ( $n=6$ )

Table 34 reveals differences by race/ethnicity in the seniority of producing credits. Underrepresented producers were most likely to receive Supervising Producer credits (42.9%), followed by Co-Producer (20.6%) and Co-Executive Producer (20%) credits. As a counterpoint, underrepresented producers were least likely to receive Executive Producer (13%), Line Producer (12%), or Producer (8.9%) credits. In comparison to the industry as a whole, Netflix had significantly fewer underrepresented Co-Executive Producers (WGA=28%, Netflix=20%), Producers (WGA=39%, Netflix=8.9%) and Co-Producers (WGA=42.5%, Netflix=20.6%). There was no difference in the percentage of Executive Producers (WGA=15.5%, Netflix=13%) or Supervising Producers (WGA=39.5%, Netflix=42.9%).<sup>23</sup>

Episode **writers** were examined for race/ethnicity. Of the 2,636 writers credited, 82.6% ( $n=2,178$ ) of writers were white and 17.4% ( $n=458$ ) were underrepresented. This increased significantly over time in Netflix series. In 2018, 13.9% ( $n=168$ ) of writers were underrepresented while in 2019, that figure was 20.3% ( $n=290$ ). Compared to the wider industry (19.7%), in 2018 Netflix (13.9%,  $n=168$ ) had significantly fewer underrepresented writers. Netflix closed this gap (20.3%,  $n=290$ ) and did not differ from the industry at large (23.8%) in the percentage of underrepresented writers working in 2019.<sup>24</sup>

The specific racial/ethnic breakdown of writers was assessed, with the results presented here: 82.6% ( $n=2,178$ ) white, 7.4% ( $n=194$ ) were Black/African American, 2.2% ( $n=58$ ) were Hispanic/Latino, 3.5% ( $n=91$ ) were Asian, <1% ( $n=2$ ) were American Indian/Alaskan Native, 1.1% ( $n=30$ ) were Middle Eastern/North African, and 3.1% ( $n=83$ ) were Multiracial/Multiethnic. Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander writers were missing entirely from Netflix series in 2018 and 2019.

When gender was considered, 8.7% ( $n=228$ ) of writers were underrepresented men and 8.7% ( $n=230$ ) of writers were underrepresented women. There was a significant increase in the percentage of underrepresented men working as Netflix writers from 2018 (5.8%,  $n=70$ ) to 2019 (11.1%,  $n=158$ ). This was not the case for underrepresented women. In 2018, 8.1% ( $n=98$ ) of writers were women of color as were 9.3% ( $n=132$ ) of writers in 2019.

Finally, the race/ethnicity of series **directors** was evaluated. The majority (79.9%,  $n=1,331$ ) were white and 20.1% ( $n=335$ ) were underrepresented. This was consistent over time, as 19% ( $n=145$ ) of directors in 2018 were underrepresented as were 21% ( $n=190$ ) of directors in 2019. DGA industry-wide statistics for directors of color in the 2017-18 season (24%) outpaced those for Netflix episodes (19%). This was also the case in the 2018-19 season, when the DGA reported that 27% of episodic directors were underrepresented, versus 21% of Netflix directors.<sup>25</sup>

**TABLE 35**  
**NETFLIX SERIES DIRECTORS BY UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS, GENDER AND YEAR**

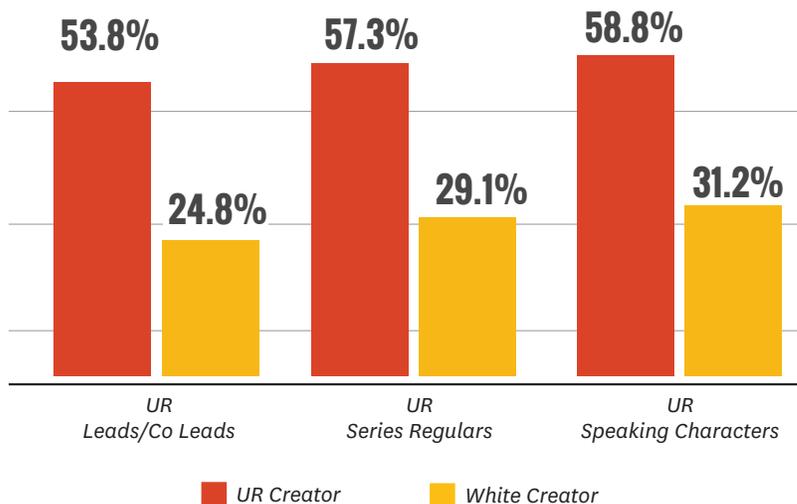
UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS	2018	2019	TOTAL
White Men	61.4% (n=468)	55.2% (n=499)	58% (n=967)
White Women	19.6% (n=149)	23.8% (n=215)	21.8% (n=364)
UR Men	13.4% (n=102)	14.8% (n=134)	14.2% (n=236)
UR Women	5.6% (n=43)	6.2% (n=56)	5.9% (n=99)

The specific racial/ethnic breakdown of directors was evaluated. Across the series evaluated, 79.9% (n=1,331) were white, 7.3% (n=121) were Black/African American, 2.8% (n=47) were Hispanic/Latino, 2.3% (n=39) were Asian, <1% (n=2) were American Indian/Alaskan Native, 1.9% (n=32) were Middle Eastern/North African, and 5.6% (n=94) were Multiracial/Multiethnic. There were no Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander directors who worked on episodes of a Netflix series released in 2018 or 2019.

The intersectional profile of Netflix series directors was evaluated (See Table 35). There was little change in the percentage of underrepresented men or women working as directors from year to year. There was little difference between DGA-reported average and Netflix in 2018 (DGA=17.8%, Netflix=13.4%) or 2019 (DGA=19%, Netflix=14.8%) in terms of underrepresented men. Netflix (5.6%) matched the DGA (6.2%) in its rate of hire for underrepresented women directors in 2018 and in 2019 (DGA=8%, Netflix=6.2%).<sup>26</sup>

How does the identity of individuals working behind the camera influence who appears on screen? We assessed each series to determine whether the creator was underrepresented or not. We used this information to create two groups: one for series with at least one underrepresented creator and the other for series without an underrepresented creator. Then, we evaluated the percentage of underrepresented main cast, series regulars and speaking characters for each group. The process was repeated for writers across the first three episodes investigated.

**FIGURE 7**  
**PERCENTAGE OF UNDERREPRESENTED LEAD/CO LEAD, SERIES REGULARS AND SPEAKING CHARACTERS BY UNDERREPRESENTED STATUS OF SERIES CREATORS**



The results for creators appear in Figure 7. Underrepresented series creators were responsible for more underrepresented leads/co leads (53.8%, n=14 vs. 24.8%, n=37), series regulars (57.3%, n=114 vs. 29.1%, n=345) and speaking characters (58.8%, n=612 vs. 31.2%, n=1,909) than white creators. These results suggest that underrepresented creators were responsible for the on-screen racial/ethnic inclusion seen in Netflix series. These shows over-indexed against U.S. population proportions, while series from white creators under-indexed. The same trends appeared for writers. When an underrepresented writer was credited across the first three episodes, a greater percentage of underrepresented characters were leads/co leads (51.7%, n=31 vs. 17.4%, n=20), series regulars (49.9%, n=243 vs. 24%, n=216) and speaking characters (47.6%, n=1,200 vs. 28.5%, n=1,321).

The results for underrepresented racial/ethnic groups behind the camera in scripted series demonstrate that Netflix shows outpaced the larger industry in some areas, such as for series creators, but fell behind in others (i.e., directors). Women of color were least represented across all positions. The presence of underrepresented creators and writers was associated with more underrepresented leads, series regulars and speaking characters on screen. Once again, underrepresented content creators are responsible for driving inclusion on screen in Netflix content.

## SPECIFIC RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUPS

The previous section examined race/ethnicity on screen and behind the camera across Netflix fictional storytelling. Here, we assess the three largest racial/ethnic groups (i.e., Black, Latinx, Asian, Middle Eastern/North African, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander). We focused on these three groups as they had large enough sample sizes to examine medium, year, and gender differences. Additionally, we approached the analyses differently than we did in the previous section.<sup>27</sup> Rather than using U.S. Census distinctions, we examined whether a character was identified as Black (yes, no), Latinx (yes, no), Asian (yes, no), Middle Eastern (yes, no), American Indian/Alaskan Native (yes, no), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (yes, no). Characters that were multiracial or multiethnic were recategorized and could count in more than one racial and/or ethnic groups.

Below, we summarize the prevalence of characters (i.e., leads/co leads, main cast) and content creators (i.e., above-the-line personnel) from these communities. Similar to the previous section, above the line roles were reported separately for film and scripted series. At the end of this part of the paper, we also summarize briefly the remaining racial/ethnic groups (Middle Eastern/North African, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander) by leads/co leads, main cast and personnel behind the camera.

**TABLE 36**  
**PERCENTAGE OF BLACK LEADS/CO LEADS BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

MEASURE	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of Black leads/co leads	<b>20.3%</b> <i>(n=14)</i>	<b>22.8%</b> <i>(n=13)</i>	<b>6.3%</b> <i>(n=5)</i>	<b>14.4%</b> <i>(n=14)</i>	<b>15.2%</b> <i>(n=46)</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21.4%</b> <i>(n=27)</i>		<b>10.8%</b> <i>(n=19)</i>		

### **Black Cast & Crew**

**On Screen.** A total of 15.2% (*n=46*) of all stories were *led/co led* with Black protagonists, with film (21.4%, *n=27*) significantly outperforming series (10.8%, *n=19*). The percentage of all stories centered on Black leads/co leads (15.2%) was in line with the proportion of the U.S. population that identifies as Black alone or in combination with another race (14.7%) with films notably higher (+6.7 percentage points).<sup>28</sup> There was no change over time for Black leads/co leads overall, or for film. Series, however, demonstrated a significant jump in Black leads/co leads from 2018 (6.3%, *n=5*) to 2019 (14.4%, *n=14*). Turning to individual characters, Black leads/co leads were equally likely to be male-identified (51.5%, *n=69*) and female-identified (48.5%, *n=65*) across both film and series.

Pivoting to **main cast**, 19.5% (*n=485*) were Black with film (20.8%, *n=214*) and series (18.5%, *n=271*) showing no meaningful difference. In comparison to U.S. Census (14.7%), the overall Black main cast (19.5%) was higher in proportion, but just shy of significant (4.8 percentage points) while film was significantly different (+6.1 percentage points).<sup>29</sup> Both film (17.9% to 24.2%) and series (14.8% to 21.8%) significantly increased the percentage of Black main cast members from 2018 to 2019 (see Table 37). Black main cast were more likely to be male-identified (61.2%, *n=131*) than female-identified (38.8%, *n=83*) in film, although there was no corresponding difference in series (male-identified: 49.1%, *n=133*, female-identified: 50.9%, *n=138*).

**TABLE 37**  
**PERCENTAGE OF BLACK MAIN CAST BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

MEASURE	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of Black main cast	<b>17.9%</b> <i>(n=99)</i>	<b>24.2%</b> <i>(n=115)</i>	<b>14.8%</b> <i>(n=100)</i>	<b>21.8%</b> <i>(n=171)</i>	<b>19.5%</b> <i>(n=485)</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20.8%</b> <i>(n=214)</i>		<b>18.5%</b> <i>(n=271)</i>		

**TABLE 38**  
**PERCENTAGE OF BLACK ABOVE-THE-LINE PERSONNEL BY INDUSTRY AND YEAR**

MEASURE	NETFLIX FILMS			TOP-GROSSING FILMS		
	2018	2019	OVERALL	2018	2019	OVERALL
Directors	<b>6.9%</b> (n=5)	<b>12.1%</b> (n=7)	<b>9.2%</b> (n=12)	<b>13.4%</b> (n=15)	<b>8%</b> (n=9)	<b>10.7%</b> (n=24)
Writers	<b>5%</b> (n=5)	<b>11%</b> (n=11)	<b>8%</b> (n=16)	<b>5.8%</b> (n=13)	<b>5.2%</b> (n=11)	<b>5.5%</b> (n=24)
Producers	<b>5.2%</b> (n=13)	<b>5%</b> (n=9)	<b>5.1%</b> (n=22)	<b>5.5%</b> (n=19)	<b>7.1%</b> (n=24)	<b>6.3%</b> (n=43)
Overall	<b>5.4%</b> (n=23)	<b>8%</b> (n=27)	<b>6.6%</b> (n=50)	<b>6.9%</b> (n=47)	<b>6.7%</b> (n=44)	<b>6.8%</b> (n=91)

**Behind-the-camera.** In film, 9.2% (n=12) of **directors** were Black with a significant increase observed from 2018 (6.9%, n=5) to 2019 (12.1%, n=7). This was in contrast to top-grossing films, where a significant decrease occurred from 2018 (13.4%, n=15) to 2019 (8%, n=9). For **writers**, 8% (n=16) were Black with 2019 significantly higher than 2018. Only 5.5% of top-grossing scribes were Black with no changes observed by year. There were no differences in Black **producers** across the industry (i.e., Netflix=5.1%, n=22, Top-Grossing=6.3%, n=43), year or the intersection of these two measures (see Table 38). Black women comprised 38% (n=19) of the behind the scenes roles in film and were most likely to work as producers (50%, n=11), followed by writers (31.3%, n=5), and directors (25%, n=3).

How inclusive were Black content creators when casting Netflix films? Black content creators were responsible for many of the Black film leads/co leads as well as main cast members across the sample. In movies with a Black director attached, 83.3% (n=10) of the leads/co leads were Black whereas only 14.9% (n=17) were in films with only non Black directors. A similar jump was observed for main cast members. Films with Black directors accounted for 62.4% (n=58) of Black main cast actors. Movies without a Black director attached only featured Black actors in 16.7% (n=156) of the main cast. For writers, the same trend emerged. Black screenwriters were far more inclusive than non Black screenwriters for Black leads/co leads (81.8%, n=9, vs. 15.7%, n=18, respectively) and main cast (65.8%, n=48, vs. 17.4%, n=166, respectively). The same pattern appeared with Black vs. non Black producers as well.<sup>30</sup>

Above-the-line personnel for scripted series can be found in Table 39. Only 6.5% (n=17) of series creators across the two-year time frame were Black but a significant increase emerged from 2018 (2.5%, n=3) to 2019 (9.7%, n=14). No differences were found over time for producers, writers, or directors where Black creatives held 5.6% (n=89), 8.6% (n=226) and 9.3% (n=155) of all jobs, respectively. Black women held 43.1% (n=210) of these behind-the-scenes roles, including 29.4% (n=5) of creators, 42.7% (n=38) of producers, 51.3% (n=116) of writers, and 32.9% (n=51) of directors. Black creators had a significant impact on the prevalence of Black series regulars. When a Black creator was behind a series, 72% (n=59) of series regulars were Black, while only 15.4% (n=212) of series regulars were Black when a non-Black creator developed a series.

**TABLE 39**  
**PERCENTAGE OF BLACK ABOVE-THE-LINE PERSONNEL IN NETFLIX SCRIPTED SERIES BY YEAR**

MEASURE	NETFLIX SCRIPTED SERIES		
	2018	2019	OVERALL
Creators	<b>2.5%</b> (n=3)	<b>9.7%</b> (n=14)	<b>6.5%</b> (n=17)
Producers	<b>3.9%</b> (n=28)	<b>7%</b> (n=61)	<b>5.6%</b> (n=89)
Writers	<b>5.7%</b> (n=69)	<b>11%</b> (n=157)	<b>8.6%</b> (n=226)
Directors	<b>7.1%</b> (n=54)	<b>11.2%</b> (n=101)	<b>9.3%</b> (n=155)
Overall	<b>5.5%</b> (n=154)	<b>9.9%</b> (n=333)	<b>7.9%</b> (n=487)

**TABLE 40**  
**PERCENTAGE OF LATINX LEADS/CO LEADS AND MAIN CAST BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM**

MEASURE	LEADS/CO LEADS			MAIN CAST		
	FILM	SERIES	OVERALL	FILM	SERIES	OVERALL
% of Latinx	<b>4%</b> (n=5)	<b>1.7%</b> (n=3)	<b>2.6%</b> (n=8)	<b>3.6%</b> (n=37)	<b>5.1%</b> (n=74)	<b>4.5%</b> (n=111)

### Latinx Cast & Crew

Earlier in the report, we examined all Hispanic/Latino characters independently of their descent or geographical heritage. Here, we took a more narrow approach. First, we examined Latinos across all racial groups (e.g., White, Black, Indigenous). Then, we identified creatives on screen and behind the camera who were born in the U.S. or its territories. All those of Spanish origin without other Latino identification were excluded prior to analysis. Given the small number of Latinx roles on screen and employment patterns behind the camera, we do not focus on over time trends.

As shown in Table 40, only 2.6% of all stories featured Latinx *leads/co leads* and 4.5% of *main cast* members were Latinx. According to Pew Research Center and U.S. Census data, 67% of U.S. Hispanic/Latinos are U.S. born.<sup>31</sup> Thus, roughly 12% of the U.S. population could be considered Latinx, a number substantially higher than the percentage of leads and main cast across film and series. No differences emerged in leads/co leads or main cast members by storytelling medium (see Table 40). Slightly less than half (42.9%, n=6) of Latinx leads/co leads were girls and women (film: 40%, n=2, series: 44.4%, n=4). Latinx main cast were also equally likely to be male-identified (50.9%, n=56) as female-identified (49.1%, n=54). Series (53.4%, n=39), however, were more likely than film (40.5%, n=15) to feature Latinx girls and women in main cast roles.

Focusing on content creators, less than 1% of above-the-line personnel were Latinx. Numerically, one *director* (<1%), one *writer* (<1%) and 5 *producers* (1.2%) comprised the entire pool of Latinx storytellers working behind the camera in film. Three of the producers were Latinx women. It is important to note that only 2 Afro-Latinos worked behind the camera across the Netflix sample. Both were women and served as producers on 2 movies. How do Netflix films compare to top-grossing movies? The numbers and percentages in Netflix films were lower than top-grossing films where 1.8% (n=4) of directors, <1% of writers (n=4) and 3.7% of producers (n=25) were Latinx.

For series, only 2.7% (n=7) of *creators*, 2.6% of *producers* (n=41), 2.5% of *writers* (n=65) and 2.5% (n=42) of *directors* were Latinx. Of the Latinx content creators in series, 40.6% (n=63) were women, including 28.6% (n=2) of creators, 34.1% (n=14) of producers, 38.5% (n=25) of writers, and 52.4% (n=22) of directors. No industry metrics were available to compare Netflix series to other episodic content. Because of the small sample sizes, the relationship between Latinx on screen roles and creative working behind the camera could not be evaluated.

**TABLE 41**  
**PERCENTAGE OF ASIAN LEADS/CO LEADS AND MAIN CAST BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM**

MEASURE	LEADS/CO LEADS			MAIN CAST		
	FILM	SERIES	OVERALL	FILM	SERIES	OVERALL
% of Asians	<b>7.1%</b> (n=9)	<b>1.7%</b> (n=3)	<b>4%</b> (n=12)	<b>7.7%</b> (n=79)	<b>6.6%</b> (n=96)	<b>7%</b> (n=175)

### Asian Cast & Crew

Four percent of all stories were *led/co led* by Asian actors (n=20, 9=males, 11=females), with films (7.1%, n=9) featuring significantly more than scripted series (1.7%, n=3). Of the *main cast*, 7% were Asian (n=175) with no differences between film (7.7%, n=79) and scripted series (6.6%, n=96). More Asian main cast roles were held by girls and women (57.5%, n=100) than boys and

men (42.5%, *n*=74). Series (63.2%, *n*=60) featured more female-identified Asian main cast than film (50.6%, *n*=40). The breakdown of series regulars' ethnic background or descent can be found in Table 42, with actors of Indian, Chinese and Korean descent or heritage (regardless of country of origin or nationality) working the most frequently across Netflix storylines.

Behind the camera, Asians comprised 3.1% of **directors** (*n*=4, 2=male, 2=female), 4% of **writers** (*n*=8, 7=male, 1=female) and 4.2% of **producers** (*n*=18, 10=male, 8=female). These percentages were not meaningfully different from the hiring patterns in top-grossing films during the same 2-year time frame: 4.5% of directors (*n*=10), 4.4% of writers (*n*=19), and 3.2% of producers (*n*=22). Only 4% (*n*=248) of all content creators across scripted series were Asian. The breakdown was as follows: 1.5% of **creators** (*n*=4, 1=male, 3=female), 3.5% of **producers** (*n*=55, 30=male, 25=female), 4.4% of **writers** (*n*=115, 40=male, 75=female), and 4.4% of **directors** (*n*=74, 51=male, 23=female).

**TABLE 42**  
**ASIAN MAIN CAST ACTORS BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM**

COMMUNITY	FILM	SERIES	COMMUNITY	FILM	SERIES
Indian	25.3% ( <i>n</i> =20)	28.4% ( <i>n</i> =27)	Singaporean	1.3% ( <i>n</i> =1)	2.1% ( <i>n</i> =2)
Japanese	20.3% ( <i>n</i> =16)	5.3% ( <i>n</i> =5)	Thai	1.3% ( <i>n</i> =1)	1.1% ( <i>n</i> =1)
Chinese	16.5% ( <i>n</i> =13)	27.4% ( <i>n</i> =26)	Malaysian	0	2.1% ( <i>n</i> =2)
Filipino	13.9% ( <i>n</i> =11)	9.5% ( <i>n</i> =9)	Laotian	0	1.1% ( <i>n</i> =1)
Korean	13.9% ( <i>n</i> =11)	15.8% ( <i>n</i> =15)	Nepalese	0	1.1% ( <i>n</i> =1)
Indonesian	11.4% ( <i>n</i> =9)	2.1% ( <i>n</i> =2)	Tibetan	0	1.1% ( <i>n</i> =1)
Vietnamese	2.5% ( <i>n</i> =2)	5.3% ( <i>n</i> =5)	<b>Total</b>	<b>7.7% (<i>n</i>=79)</b>	<b>6.6% (<i>n</i>=96)</b>
Pakistani	1.3% ( <i>n</i> =1)	4.2% ( <i>n</i> =4)			

Note: For film and series, the column totals do not add to 100%. Six film and six series actors identified as coming from multiple Asian communities. Actors were classified by descent and could be of any nationality (e.g., American, etc.).

### Middle Eastern/North African, American Indian/Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Cast & Crew

Three remaining racial/ethnic groups were explored. As shown in Table 43, very few **leads/co leads** were Middle Eastern/North African (MENA), American Indian/Alaskan Native (AIAN) or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (NHPI). This was also true for main cast. Fewer than 1% of **main cast** roles were held by AIAN or NHPI actors, and just 1.4% by MENA talent. For MENA (*n*=25) and NHPI (*n*=12) roles, the majority were filled by male-identified actors, while AIAN leads/co leads (*n*=2) and main cast (*n*=14) were more likely to be female-identified.

**TABLE 43**  
**PERCENTAGE OF LEADS/CO LEADS AND MAIN CAST BY RACIAL/ETHNIC GROUP AND STORYTELLING MEDIUM**

MEASURE	LEADS/CO LEADS			MAIN CAST		
	FILM	SERIES	OVERALL	FILM	SERIES	OVERALL
% of Middle Eastern/ North African	<b>1.6%</b> ( <i>n</i> =2)	<b>&lt;1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =1)	<b>1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =3)	<b>2.2%</b> ( <i>n</i> =23)	<b>&lt;1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =11)	<b>1.4%</b> ( <i>n</i> =34)
% of American Indian/ Alaskan Native	<b>1.6%</b> ( <i>n</i> =2)	<b>0</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =2)	<b>&lt;1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =9)	<b>1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =14)	<b>&lt;1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =23)
% of Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	<b>&lt;1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =1)	<b>&lt;1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =1)	<b>&lt;1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =2)	<b>&lt;1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =6)	<b>&lt;1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =12)	<b>&lt;1%</b> ( <i>n</i> =18)

Behind the scenes, content creators from these communities were rare. In film, 1.5% of **directors** ( $n=2$ , both women), 1.5% ( $n=3$ , all men) of **writers**, and <1% ( $n=4$ , 3 men, 1 woman) of **producers** were MENA. Only 2 male-identified film **writers** were AIAN, and 1 woman film **producer** was NHPI. Netflix films were not significantly different from the percentage of MENA, AIAN or NHPI content creators working on top-grossing movies.

Turning to series, 1.9% ( $n=5$ ) of **creators**, 1.5% ( $n=40$ ) of **writers**, 1.5% ( $n=24$ ) of **producers**, and 2.6% ( $n=43$ ) of **directors** were MENA. Of the MENA directors, writers, and producers in series, 13.4% ( $n=15$ ) were women. Fewer than 1% of all series above-the-line personnel were AIAN; of the 14 AIAN content creators, 9 were **directors**, 3 were **writers** and 2 were **producers**. Nine of the 14 personnel positions were held by AIAN women. Only 4 creative positions were held by people from the NHPI community: 1 **director** and 2 **producers** were NHPI women and 1 male-identified NHPI producer worked on a Netflix series. No series creators were MENA, AIAN or NHPI women.

The results in this section indicate that the percentage of Black leads/co leads and main cast in Netflix films exceeded proportional representation with the U.S. population, while series were on par with this figure (14.7%).<sup>32</sup> However, for other groups, notably the Latinx community, Netflix content fell short of reaching this level of representation. On screen, MENA, AIAN, and NHPI leads and main cast were rare—there were no series that depicted a majority AIAN main cast in 2018 or 2019. And, while Asian cast were at proportional representation, the full diversity of this community was not seen. Behind the camera, the presence of Black content creators improved significantly over time. Yet, these same gains were not achieved for other groups, whose presence in key creative positions were minimized or even erased.

## LGBTQ

In this section, we review the on-screen distribution of LGBTQ characters (i.e., leads/co leads, main cast, speaking characters) in Netflix films and scripted series. We also provide comparisons to the wider industry statistics in two ways. First, we compare Netflix movies to top-grossing films. Second, we compare Netflix series to statistics from GLAAD on primetime broadcast series. Although GLAAD examines cable and streaming series, LGBTQ characters as a percentage of all characters are not reported for film and series overall in their report. Thus only information on broadcast series regulars is included as a comparison.

**TABLE 44**  
**PERCENTAGE OF LGBTQ LEADS/CO LEADS BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

INDICATOR	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of LGBTQ leads/co leads	2.9% ( $n=2$ )	5.3% ( $n=3$ )	0	2.1% ( $n=1$ )	2.3% ( $n=7$ )
TOTAL	4% ( $n=5$ )		1.1% ( $n=2$ )		

Overall, 2.3% ( $n=7$ ) of **leads/co leads** across film and series were LGBTQ. In comparison to the U.S. population (12%)<sup>33</sup>, Netflix films and series under performed by 9.7 percentage points. Film (4%,  $n=5$ ) and series (1.1%,  $n=2$ ) did not differ significantly in the presentation of LGBTQ leads/co leads (see Table 44). There was also no difference by year, as 2018 (1.4%,  $n=2$ ) and 2019 (3.2%,  $n=5$ ) featured roughly equal percentages of LGBTQ leads/co leads. There was also no difference when year and medium were crossed.

Of the leads/co leads across film content in 2018 and 2019, 1 was lesbian, 1 was gay, and 3 were bisexual. The two series in 2019 with majority LGBTQ casts featured 2 lesbian, 2 gay, 6 bisexual, and 3 transgender characters. Moving from the number of stories featuring LGBTQ leads to the 17 LGBTQ lead characters, audiences were equally likely to see female-identified (52.9%,  $n=9$ ) and male-identified (47.1%,  $n=8$ ) leads/co leads in Netflix films and series. However, few underrepresented LGBTQ leads/co leads (29.4%,  $n=5$ ) appeared on either medium. Only 3 of the leads/co leads who were LGBTQ were women of color. Two other factors

captured the nature of LGBT portrayals: age and parental status. The majority of LGBTQ leads/co leads were young adults (41.2%,  $n=7$ ) and only two were depicted as a parent or caregiver across film and series content.

Netflix (4%,  $n=5$ ) did not differ from top-grossing movies (2%,  $n=4$ ) in the percentage of LGBTQ led films overall, in 2018 (Netflix=2.9%,  $n=2$ , Top-Grossing=2%,  $n=2$ ) or 2019 (Netflix=5.3%,  $n=3$ , Top-Grossing=2%,  $n=2$ ). Although Netflix was comparable to industry, the lack of LGBTQ leads across the wider film ecosystem demonstrates that there is room for greater inclusion among protagonists across both the Netflix medium and theatrical releases. There was not a comparable metric available for series, thus the analysis is not reported.

Next, we examined the **main cast** of films and series. Of the 2,419 main cast in Netflix films and series, 5.3% ( $n=129$ ) were LGBTQ. Series (6.1%,  $n=85$ ) and film (4.3%,  $n=44$ ) had similar percentages of LGBTQ main cast. There was no significant difference over time, as 4.2% ( $n=51$ ) of main cast in 2018 and 6.4% ( $n=78$ ) in 2019 were LGBTQ. Crossing year by medium did not result in any significant deviations (see Table 45). Netflix and primetime broadcast series featured comparable percentages of LGBTQ main cast/series regulars in 2018 (Netflix: 4.6%,  $n=30$ , primetime: 6.4%) and 2019 (Netflix, 7.4%,  $n=55$ , primetime: 8.8%).<sup>34</sup>

**TABLE 45**  
**PERCENTAGE OF LGBTQ MAIN CAST BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

INDICATOR	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of LGBTQ main cast	<b>3.8%</b> <small>(<math>n=21</math>)</small>	<b>4.9%</b> <small>(<math>n=23</math>)</small>	<b>4.6%</b> <small>(<math>n=30</math>)</small>	<b>7.4%</b> <small>(<math>n=55</math>)</small>	<b>5.3%</b> <small>(<math>n=129</math>)</small>
TOTAL	<b>4.3%</b> <small>(<math>n=44</math>)</small>		<b>6.1%</b> <small>(<math>n=85</math>)</small>		

Overall, main cast were most likely to be gay (2.7%,  $n=66$ ) in Netflix films and series, followed by lesbian (1.5%,  $n=37$ ), bisexual (1%,  $n=23$ ), and transgender cast (<1%,  $n=4$ ). The percentage of transgender main cast was comparable to U.S. population figures (0.6%) and all of the transgender main cast appeared in series released in 2019.<sup>35</sup> There were no significant differences per year or by medium in the distribution of LGBTQ main cast.<sup>36</sup>

LGBTQ main cast were more likely to be male-identified (61.2%,  $n=79$ ) than female-identified (38.8%,  $n=50$ ). Female-identified LGBTQ main cast were more prevalent in series (41.2%,  $n=35$ ) than film (34.1%,  $n=15$ ). LGBTQ main cast achieved proportional representation for underrepresented racial/ethnic groups (38.8%,  $n=50$ )—though few of the LGBTQ main cast were women of color (14%,  $n=18$ ). Film (43.2%,  $n=19$ ) had more underrepresented LGBTQ main cast than series (36.5%,  $n=31$ ). In terms of age, half of LGBTQ main cast (46.5%,  $n=60$ ) were young adults, while 26.4% ( $n=34$ ) were teens, 22.5% ( $n=29$ ) were middle aged, and 4.7% ( $n=6$ ) were elderly. Parental or caregiving responsibilities were shown on screen by a total of 93 main cast roles depicted parents, but few (11.8%,  $n=11$ ) of these roles were held by LGBTQ main cast.

Finally, we examined the percentage of LGBTQ **speaking or named characters**. Of the 12,018 speaking characters across film and series, 2.8% ( $n=338$ ) were LGBTQ. The percentage of LGBTQ speaking characters did not vary significantly by medium or by year. In comparison to top-grossing films (1.4%,  $n=119$ ), Netflix was not significantly different (2%,  $n=93$ ) overall, in 2018 (Netflix: 1.9%,  $n=47$ , Top-Grossing: 1.3%,  $n=58$ ), or in 2019 (Netflix: 2.1%,  $n=46$ , Top-Grossing: 1.4%,  $n=61$ ).

Gay characters (1.6%,  $n=192$ ) were most likely to appear on screen in films and series, while fewer than 1% of all speaking characters were lesbian ( $n=101$ ), bisexual ( $n=33$ ), or transgender ( $n=15$ ). Again, there was no change over time or variability by medium.<sup>37</sup>

Of the LGBTQ speaking characters, 62.4% ( $n=211$ ) were male-identified and 37.6% ( $n=127$ ) were female-identified, which did not differ by medium (film: 38.7%,  $n=36$ , series: 37.1%,  $n=91$ ). In terms of race/ethnicity, 59.8% ( $n=201$ ) of the LGBTQ speaking charac-

**TABLE 46**  
**PERCENTAGE OF LGBTQ SPEAKING CHARACTERS BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

INDICATOR	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of LGBTQ speaking characters	<b>1.9%</b> (n=47)	<b>2.1%</b> (n=46)	<b>2.5%</b> (n=83)	<b>4.1%</b> (n=162)	<b>2.8%</b> (n=338)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2%</b> (n=93)		<b>3.3%</b> (n=245)		

ters were white and 40.2% (n=135) were underrepresented. Series (41.6%, n=101) were more inclusive of underrepresented LGBTQ characters than films (36.6%, n=34). Women of color comprised 17% (n=57) of LGBTQ speaking characters across series and film. Consistent with findings on leads/co leads and main cast, the majority of LGBTQ speaking characters were young adults (61.5%, n=208) and few were parents (17.3%, n=28).

Overall, the findings in this section revealed that Netflix features few LGBTQ leads/co leads, main cast, or speaking characters in film or series content. While not significantly different from the wider industry in terms of leads/co leads or main cast, Netflix falls below population figures for this community. In the next section, we examine another historically underrepresented community —characters with disabilities.

## CHARACTERS WITH DISABILITIES

The prevalence of characters with disabilities in Netflix content was assessed. The definition of disability was based on the text of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and included physical, communicative, and cognitive disabilities, as reported by the U.S. Census.<sup>38</sup> In this section, we provide information on lead/co leads, main cast, and speaking characters across Netflix films and series.

Beginning with **leads/co leads**, a total of 5.3% (n=16) stories were led by characters with a disability (see Table 47). Compared to the 27.2% of the U.S. population that identifies as living with a disability, Netflix films and series show substantially fewer leads/co leads.<sup>39</sup> Films (11.9%, n=15) were significantly more likely than series (<1%, n=1) to feature leads/co leads with a disability. There was no difference over time for films and series combined, as 4.1% (n=6) of stories in 2018 and 6.5% (n=10) in 2019 were led by characters with disabilities. When medium and year were crossed, however, a significant increase was observed for film. In 2018, 8.7% (n=6) of leads/co leads were shown with a disability, which rose to 15.8% (n=9) in 2019, though this was an increase of only 3 leading/co leading roles. No corresponding increase was observed for series.

**TABLE 47**  
**PERCENTAGE OF LEADS/CO LEADS WITH A DISABILITY BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

INDICATOR	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of leads/co leads with a disability	<b>8.7%</b> (n=6)	<b>15.8%</b> (n=9)	<b>0</b>	<b>1%</b> (n=1)	<b>5.3%</b> (n=16)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11.9%</b> (n=15)		<b>&lt;1%</b> (n=1)		

Of the leads/co leads with a disability, 66.7% ( $n=10$ ) were male-identified and 33.3% ( $n=5$ ) were female-identified in film. In series, the single program with leading characters experiencing a disability had one male-identified and one female-identified co lead. There were few leads/co leads with a disability from underrepresented racial/ethnic groups in film (20%,  $n=3$ ), though both of the leads/co leads in series were underrepresented. Three of the underrepresented leads/co leads with a disability were men of color and 2 were women of color. There was a single film with a lead/co lead with a disability from the LGBTQ community.

Overall, Netflix (11.9%,  $n=15$ ) featured slightly fewer leads/co leads with a disability than top-grossing films (14%,  $n=28$ ). When this was examined by year, Netflix (8.7%,  $n=6$ ) and top-grossing films (9%,  $n=9$ ) did not differ in the percentage of leads/co leads with a disability in 2018, nor in 2019 (Netflix=15.8%,  $n=9$ , Top-Grossing=19%,  $n=19$ ). There was no available industry comparison for series, thus it is not reported.

The nature of the disabilities depicted in Netflix films and scripted series were also evaluated. Because leads/co leads could be depicted with more than one disability, these categories do not total to 100%. Cognitive disabilities (56.3%,  $n=9$ ) were most prevalent. Cognitive disabilities included dyscalculia, post-traumatic stress disorders, and depression.<sup>40</sup> Half of leads/co leads were shown with physical (50%,  $n=8$ ) disabilities, such as paralysis, missing limbs, mobility restrictions and severe heart conditions. Slightly less than one-third of leads/co leads were depicted with a communicative (31.3%,  $n=5$ ) disability, including leads/co leads who were deaf, blind or mute.

**TABLE 48**  
**PERCENTAGE OF MAIN CAST WITH A DISABILITY BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

INDICATOR	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of main cast with a disability	3.4% ( $n=19$ )	4.9% ( $n=23$ )	5.2% ( $n=34$ )	5% ( $n=37$ )	4.7% ( $n=113$ )
TOTAL	4.1% ( $n=42$ )		5.1% ( $n=71$ )		

Turning to **main cast**, 4.7% ( $n=113$ ) of the main cast across film and series were depicted with a disability. There was no difference in the percentage of main cast with a disability in Netflix films (4.1%,  $n=42$ ) or series (5.1%,  $n=71$ ), nor was there a difference over time (2018=4.4%,  $n=53$ , 2019=4.9%,  $n=60$ ). Table 48 reflects the results when medium and year were evaluated. No significant differences emerged in the percentage of main cast with disabilities each year for either film or series content.

Slightly more than one-third of the main cast with a disability were female-identified (36.3%,  $n=41$ ), with series (40.8%,  $n=29$ ) more likely to feature girls and women with a disability in the main cast than film (28.6%,  $n=12$ ). Roughly one-quarter of main cast with a disability were underrepresented (26.9%,  $n=29$ ), no differences emerged by medium (film: 28.2%,  $n=11$ , series: 26.1%,  $n=18$ ). Crossing gender and race, 13.9% ( $n=15$ ) of the main cast roles shown with a disability were held by women of color. These women were more likely to appear in series (17.4%,  $n=12$ ) than film (7.7%,  $n=3$ ). Fewer than 10% (8.8%,  $n=10$ ) of main cast with a disability were LGBTQ, which was consistent across film (7.1%,  $n=3$ ) and series (9.9%,  $n=10$ ).

The percentage of main cast with a disability in Netflix series was compared to the percentage of series regulars in primetime broadcast series with a disability, based on research by GLAAD.<sup>41</sup> In 2018, Netflix (5.2%,  $n=34$ ) was not significantly different from the 1.8% ( $n=16$ ) of series regulars with a disability reported by GLAAD. This was also the case in 2019, Netflix (5%,  $n=37$ ) and primetime broadcast shows (2.1%,  $n=18$ ) did not differ in their presentation of main cast with disabilities. Main cast were most likely to experience physical disabilities (50.4%,  $n=57$ ) across films and series, followed by cognitive (49.6%,  $n=56$ ) and communicative (13.3%,  $n=15$ ) disabilities.

Finally, the percentage of **all speaking characters** with a disability was evaluated. Overall, 2.1% ( $n=253$ ) of all speaking characters were shown with a disability. Netflix films and series fall far below U.S. Census (27.2%) statistics regarding disability in the general

population. Table 49 reveals that there was no difference in the percentage of characters with a disability across film (1.5%,  $n=70$ ) or series (2.4%,  $n=183$ ). There were also no differences per year (2018=1.9%,  $n=116$ , 2019=2.2%,  $n=137$ ) in the depiction of characters with disabilities. When year and medium were crossed, once again no significant differences emerged.

**TABLE 49**  
**PERCENTAGE OF SPEAKING CHARACTERS WITH A DISABILITY BY STORYTELLING MEDIUM AND YEAR**

INDICATOR	FILM		SERIES		TOTAL
	2018	2019	2018	2019	
% of speaking characters with a disability	1.3% ( $n=33$ )	1.7% ( $n=37$ )	2.4% ( $n=83$ )	2.5% ( $n=100$ )	2.1% ( $n=153$ )
TOTAL	1.5% ( $n=70$ )		2.4% ( $n=183$ )		

The demographic profile of speaking characters with a disability was evaluated. Characters with a disability were more likely to be male-identified (63.1%,  $n=159$ ) than female-identified (36.9%,  $n=93$ ). Series (40.7%,  $n=74$ ) featured more girls and women with disabilities on screen than film (27.1%,  $n=19$ ). Of the characters with disabilities, 71.3% ( $n=169$ ) were white and 28.7% ( $n=68$ ) were from an underrepresented racial/ethnic group, with no difference by medium (film: 27.3%,  $n=18$ , series: 29.2%,  $n=50$ ). There were few girls and women of color depicted with a disability (14.3%,  $n=34$ ), though series (17%,  $n=29$ ) featured more underrepresented girls and women with a disability than film (7.6%,  $n=5$ ). Finally, few characters with a disability were LGBTQ (5.3%,  $n=13$ ), which did not vary by medium (film: 4.3%,  $n=3$ , series: 5.6%,  $n=10$ ).

Compared to top-grossing movies (1.9%,  $n=171$ ), Netflix films (1.5%,  $n=70$ ) featured roughly the same percentage of characters with disabilities. There were also no differences between Netflix and the wider industry in 2018 (Netflix: 1.3%,  $n=33$ , Top-Grossing films: 1.6%,  $n=69$ ) or 2019 (Netflix: 1.7%,  $n=37$ , Top-Grossing films: 2.3%,  $n=102$ ). Speaking characters across films and series were most likely to be presented with a physical disability (51.8%,  $n=131$ ), followed by cognitive (43.1%,  $n=109$ ) and communicative (19.4%,  $n=49$ ) disabilities.

The results in this section demonstrate that few characters with disabilities were shown in Netflix films and series across 2018 and 2019. When they did appear, these characters were more likely to be male-identified and were primarily white. As 27.2% of the U.S. population reports living with a disability, there is room for Netflix to grow in order to depict the full range of how people experience disability.

## CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to examine inclusion across live action, U.S. original Netflix films (126) and series (180) from 2018 and 2019. On screen, gender, race/ethnicity, LGBTQ, and disability were evaluated for leads/co leads, main cast, and speaking characters. Behind the camera, directors, writers, producers, and creators were assessed for gender and race/ethnicity. Below, the major findings from the study are reviewed.

### Netflix Reflects Gender Equality in Key Roles

For more than a decade, advocates have pushed entertainment companies to include more girls and women on screen and to hire more women behind the camera in film and television. Netflix has clearly heeded this call. On screen, girls and women filled half of the leading and main cast roles in Netflix films and series from 2018 and 2019. One-third of the stories released over the two-year sample time frame achieved or exceeded gender balance. These findings reflect the extent to which Netflix has focused its storytelling on girls and women and ensured that its offerings represent half of the U.S. population—and the Netflix audience.

Behind the camera, key decision-making roles were also held by women. Netflix led its industry counterparts in the percentage of women film directors and producers as well as those who were series creators and writers. It is clear that the company values

the perspectives and leadership of women, an inference made not only from these results, but because half of Netflix's workforce and its senior leadership are women.<sup>42</sup>

From its position as a leader in this area, Netflix can continue to address areas in which the prevalence of girls and women lags. Girls and women represented slightly more than one-third of all speaking characters in Netflix content, leaving a gap between fiction and reality that can be closed. In particular, films with only male directors, writers, or producers were less likely to feature female-identified characters than those with women in these positions. Netflix can work with male content creators to ensure that their stories feature a more gender-balanced cast. Another path Netflix could take to remedy this is to increase the number of women working in senior creative roles. While the strong showing for the company is notable, women did not fill fully half of all positions behind the scenes. This was especially true for women of color, which will be discussed below. Netflix can support talented women who are new or seasoned professionals by commissioning their work or hiring them for its content. This will bolster the pipeline for women filmmakers and creatives and further increase the prevalence of girls/women on screen.

### ***Netflix Features Racial/Ethnic Inclusion in Specific Storytelling Roles***

Historically, underrepresented racial/ethnic groups have been marginalized and even erased in popular entertainment content—both on screen and in creative roles that shape storytelling. While calls for increasing representation have grown increasingly louder in the recent past, Netflix content demonstrates important lessons for the wider industry. First, the company demonstrated that significant growth is possible. On screen, the percentage of underrepresented leads and main cast across film and series, as well as underrepresented speaking characters in series grew notably between 2018 and 2019. For leads/co leads and for main cast in 2019, this growth ensured that Netflix films and series reached proportional representation. Behind the camera, increases were limited to film and series writers and series creators. These changes were driven by greater inclusion of Black talent in on screen roles as well as working in key creative positions. Not surprisingly, the percentage of Black employees at Netflix has also increased over the past three years.<sup>43</sup> These results speak to what is clearly a company-wide commitment to creating greater inclusion in storytelling and in leadership roles.

However, there is still room for improvement in key areas. Not all racial/ethnic groups saw their representation increase over time. In fact, invisibility is still a major concern in content for Hispanic/Latino, Middle Eastern/North African, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander communities. Half or more of the stories in the Netflix sample did not feature a single character from these groups in 2018 or 2019. This extended to behind the camera employment, few storytellers identified with these communities or who were Latinx, Asian, Middle Eastern or Indigenous worked on Netflix's film and series lineup. The lack of inclusion for specific groups, particularly the Latinx community, contributes to the gap between on screen percentages and proportional representation for underrepresented speaking characters. While it is important to celebrate the gains, Netflix must continue to strive for representation that reflects all communities and presents authentic stories about the groups that comprise its audience. That effort may begin behind the camera, with commissioning and hiring storytellers. It also requires working with casting directors and—in particular—white directors, writers, producers, and creators—to ensure that their stories are inclusive of underrepresented characters. By deepening its efforts to hire and cast inclusively, Netflix can continue to demonstrate how companies can change the historical patterns of inequity that still persist in entertainment.

### ***Women of Color are a Critical Component of Inclusion***

When women and people of color are excluded, women of color face the greatest erasure on screen and behind the camera. Netflix content in 2018 and 2019 both confirmed this and demonstrated areas of progress. One bright spot for women of color was in leading or co leading roles. Across films and series, girls and women of color were as likely as men of color to fill lead roles. Netflix movies also surpassed top-grossing films in their inclusion of leads/co leads who were women of color. While centering the stories of girls and women from underrepresented groups is a crucial part of expanding opportunities on screen, this inclusion must not stop at prominent roles only.

There are areas for improvement, however. Women of color were least likely to fill main cast roles and to be shown as speaking characters on screen across films and series. Moreover, the erasure that faced Hispanic/Latino, Middle Eastern/North African, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander characters was compounded when the presence of women from these groups was evaluated. Two-thirds or more of the fictional films and series in this 2018 and 2019 Netflix sample were missing women from these communities entirely.

Behind the camera, women of color were largely absent in creative roles on Netflix films and series—fewer than 10% of roles across each position evaluated (directors, writers, producers, creators) went to underrepresented women. There was no significant change over time for women of color behind the camera, either. The lack of women of color in decision-making positions is not unique to Netflix content, as these results mirror industry-wide trends. However, as Netflix continues to consider how it can create more inclusive content, increasing the number of women of color working behind-the-scenes is an important place to begin. By focusing on women of color, Netflix can take aim at where some of the biggest gaps between the population and its content exists. Narrowing these divides can impact not only the stories seen on Netflix, but can have a ripple effect throughout the wider industry ecosystem.

### ***LGBTQ and Disability Communities are Rarely Seen and Heard in Storytelling***

Representation of the LGBTQ community and people with disabilities in entertainment has received much attention in recent years, with little evidence of substantive change. Thus, it was imperative to evaluate how Netflix represented these two communities in its content. Beginning with the LGBTQ community, while 12% of the U.S. population identifies as a member of the LGBTQ community, Netflix content did not approach this benchmark in its representation of leads, main cast, and all speaking characters. Additionally, in the two series with majority LGBTQ main cast there were only 3 transgender leading/co leading characters, while few transgender main cast or speaking characters were shown in Netflix content. Beyond the lack of LGBTQ characters overall, Netflix content also lacked intersectional inclusion in this community. For example, although half of leads/co leads were women, LGBTQ characters were primarily male. Representation of this community was also predominantly white. The lack of women and people of color depicted as LGBTQ minimizes the authentic diversity of this community. Additionally, most LGBTQ-identified characters were young adults, and few were shown as parents. These indicators speak to the nature of storytelling and the narrow portrayal of LGBTQ characters in Netflix content.

A similar pattern unfolded for characters with disabilities. Netflix content did not approximate the 27.2% of the U.S. population who identify as having a disability by depicting this group as leads/co leads, main cast, or in all speaking roles. Film provided more opportunities than did series; 11.9% of leads/co leads in film across two years were shown with a disability versus fewer than 1% of all series had a majority main cast with disabilities. Still, the depiction of characters with disabilities trended toward white and male representation rather than showing women and girls or people of color in these roles. Very few characters with disabilities were part of the LGBTQ community. Given the prevalence of disability in the U.S. population and thus among the Netflix audience, this is an area where this entertainment company can seek to increase authentic representation—and can lead its industry peers toward greater inclusion of this community.

### ***Limitations***

As with all studies, two brief limitations must be noted. First, this study focused on U.S. live-action, fictional, English-language films and series released on Netflix in 2018 and 2019. Animated stories, non-fiction, or international offerings may differ in their inclusion profile. Moreover, the subject of this study was Netflix original content; licensed offerings may also feature a different portrait of inclusion. Subsequent investigations are necessary to examine how different forms of content present the groups assessed in this study. Second, there are key methodological differences across this report and studies used to provide comparison data on series. Given this, contrasts are presented to inform the reader but should be interpreted cautiously.

### ***Final Takeaways***

Overall, this report provides a deep look at the inclusion in Netflix films and series in 2018 and 2019. It is important to acknowledge two things about this investigation. One, it was instigated by Netflix and demonstrates a commitment to self-reflection and a desire for transparency. These are critical steps to take in a journey toward inclusion. Two, the size and scope of Netflix's content across these two years is an indication of its position in the industry. As such, each data point in this study is an echo of a decision that the company and its partners made. Looking across a total of 22 inclusion indicators that were assessed in this report, Netflix films and series showed small to significant improvement across 19 metrics between 2018 and 2019. The cumulative impact of these decisions reverberates through Netflix content and to its audiences. Committing to inclusion requires approaching each decision with intention. This report demonstrates that Netflix takes its decision-making role seriously, is moving toward inclusion, and will continue to use data-driven metrics to ensure that its choices reflect the diversity of its audience and the talent that exists throughout the entertainment industry.

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## Endnotes

1. U.S. fictional films and scripted series with release dates in 2018 and 2019 were included in the sample. Netflix provided a list of films and series, which was reviewed by research team members for consistency with inclusion criteria. The entirety of a film was analyzed in the study. For series content, the first three episodes of a season were analyzed, and a composite of those three episodes was created. This allowed for a character who appeared across all episodes to be counted only once, and a series-level judgment made for variables that might change across the episodes. For series ( $n=29$ ) that were released in both 2018 and 2019, both seasons were included in the final sample to ensure comparisons could be made over time. Additionally Netflix provided a list of four programs described as “TV movies” and four programs referred to as “TV specials” that were included in the investigation of series content.

2. Across both film and scripted content, there were two units of analysis. The first was the individual speaking or named character. When a living character spoke one or more discernible words or was named on screen, that entity was included in the subsequent analysis as a single line of data. Characters who spoke simultaneously in heterogeneous groups (e.g., crowd scenes) or those that spoke at different times but were identical were “grouped” as a line of data. Only one group appeared across the entire sample (in a scripted series) and thus was excluded prior to analyses.

In addition to unitizing the individual speaking character, a new line of data was created whenever a character experienced a demographic (e.g., type, age, sex, race/ethnicity) change. For example, a character might be presented as an adult for the majority of a story, but a flashback to childhood occurs during the story. In these cases, a new line of data was created when the character was presented at a different age. A total of 148 demographic changes appeared across the sample of films, and 157 across scripted series. The gender breakdown of these demographic changes was 59% male and 41% female in film and 52% male and 48% female in series. Removing these lines affected overall percentages of gender minimally (64% Male, 36% Female for film; 60% Male, 40% Female for series). Lines of data representing demographic changes were included in the final analysis. Data on leading characters was determined based on the character’s demographic details over the longest duration of the film or series.

Each film or scripted series was evaluated by three research assistants at the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. Research assistants were provided with rigorous training regarding the methods, procedures, and definitions of the study. Several training diagnostics were included to ensure proper identification of speaking or named characters and deployment of variables and definitions. Once sufficient reliability coefficients were achieved for each diagnostic, research assistants began to evaluate content included in the sample. After three research assistants had evaluated a film or scripted series, reliability was assessed per film or per episode. Disagreements between coders were adjudicated via discussion with one of the senior research team members and resolved.

Reliability related to unitizing was computed per film. This form of reliability measures the number of lines of data (i.e., characters) which at least 2 of 3 coders captured or agreed upon. Unitizing agreement across the sample for movies was high. The ranges of coefficients are presented in four groups after sorting all films by this measure from high to low and dividing the sample into quartiles: The first quartile (Q1) of the sample spans the following range of unitizing agreement: 100%-92.9% ( $n=31$  films); Q2: 92.6%-87.6% ( $n=32$  films); Q3: 87.5%-79.3% ( $n=32$  films); Q4: 79.2%-45.2% ( $n=31$  films). Fourteen films had unitizing agreement below 70%. For scripted series ( $n=516$  episodes, 4 “TV Movies”, and 4 “TV Specials”), a similar range of unitizing agreement was observed. In quartiles: Q1: 100% ( $n=131$ ); Q2: 100%-94.7% ( $n=131$ ); Q3: 94.4%-89.7% ( $n=131$ ); Q4: 89.7%-56.2% ( $n=131$ ). Seven episodes had unitizing agreement below 70%.

A series of measures were included in the study and assessed at the character and the film level. These measures were defined consistently with other Annenberg Inclusion Initiative projects. For all characters, research assistants utilized information presented in the story to render a judgment. That is, cues related to demographics, sexual orientation/gender identity, and disability were all pertinent indicators that allowed research assistants to decide whether a character met the definition of a variable or its levels.

The first group of variables related to demographic indicators. Those included, *biological sex* (i.e., male, female), *age* (i.e., 0-5; 6-12; 13-20; 21-39; 40-64; 65+), and *apparent race/ethnicity* (i.e., White, Hispanic/Latino, Black/African American, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Asian, Middle Eastern/North African, Other/Multiracial).

Within the text, some analyses focus on Latinx individuals who are part of the main cast (film) and series regulars (series). Here, research assistants obtained information about the actor’s background, including their ethnicity and birthplace. Latinx refers only to U.S.-born Latinos who are not of Spanish descent (unless they were Spanish in addition to other Latino origin). In contrast, actors of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity include characters of Spanish origin or descent, in line with the U.S. Census definition. Below, we break out the number of main cast members and series regular cast who were Latinx versus those who were born outside the U.S. or were of Spanish origin or descent. In films, 4 main cast members were of Spanish origin or descent. In series, 9 series regulars were of Spanish origin or descent.

TYPE	HISPANIC/LATINO CAST		
	LATINX	NOT LATINX	TOTAL
Film Main Cast	37	18	55
Series Regulars	74	49	123

The *sexual orientation* of characters was ascertained. Characters were categorized as one of four values: *gay* or *lesbian* as a result of their identification and enduring romantic proclivities to the same-sex, *bisexual* when attracted individuals of the same- and opposite-sex, or not lesbian, gay, or bisexual in the absence of any same-sex attraction. These decisions relied upon information presented in the plot of the story about a characters’ enduring attraction to others. *Transgender identity* (i.e., no, yes) was also evaluated. The presence of *disability* (i.e., no, yes) was evaluated using a definition based on the Americans With Disabilities Act (1990). Once a character with a disability was identified, they were categorized as having a disability in the *communicative*, *cognitive*, and/or *physical* domain, in line with U.S. Census distinctions.

In addition to the values listed above for every measure, two additional options were available and used across the study: *can’t tell* and *not applicable*. The former was utilized in situations where not enough information was available to render a decision amongst the possible values and the latter was used when it was not possible to assign a value given the circumstances.

Variable reliability was also assessed across the sample, using the Potter & Levine-Donnerstein formula for multiple coders. For each variable, we report sample-wide medians, with mean and range included in the parentheses. For the film sample: *sex* 1.0 ( $M=1.0$ ,  $range=1.0$ ); *race/ethnicity* 1.0 ( $M=1.0$ ,  $range=1.0$ ); *age* 1.0 ( $M=.98$ ,  $range=.65-1.0$ ); *parental status* 1.0 ( $M=.96$ ,  $range=.64-1.0$ ); *sexual orientation* 1.0 ( $M=1.0$ ,  $range=1.0$ ); *transgender identity* 1.0 ( $M=1.0$ ,  $range=1.0$ ); *disability* 1.0 ( $M=1.0$ ,  $range=1.0$ ); *communicative disability* 1.0 ( $M=1.0$ ,  $range=.61-1.0$ ); *cognitive disability* 1.0 ( $M=1.0$ ,  $range=.61-1.0$ ); *physical disability* 1.0 ( $M=1.0$ ,  $range=.61-1.0$ ); *occupation* 1.0 ( $M=1.0$ ,  $range=.57-1.0$ ); and *occupation sector* 1.0 ( $M=.96$ ,  $range=0-1.0$ ).

For the TV sample: *sex* 1.0 ( $M=1.0$ ,  $range=1.0$ ); *race/ethnicity* 1.0 ( $M=1.0$ ,  $range=1.0$ ), *age* 1.0 ( $M=.98$ ,  $range=.65-1.0$ ); *parental status* 1.0 ( $M=.95$ ,

range=.64-1.0); sexual orientation 1.0 (M=1.0, range=.82-1.0); transgender identity 1.0 (M=1.0, range=.61-1.0); disability 1.0 (M=1.0, range=1.0); communicative disability 1.0 (M=.99, range=.61-1.0); cognitive disability 1.0 (M=.99, range=.61-1.0); physical disability 1.0 (M=.99, range=.61-1.0); occupation 1.0 (M=.97, range=.57-1.0); and occupation sector 1.0 (M=.96, range=.66-1.0).

In addition to evaluating characters on screen, information on main cast members and series regulars was obtained. Main cast information was listed on the Netflix details online for each film; when 3 or fewer individuals appeared, Netflix provided the main cast information directly to the research team. Series regular information was compiled from Variety Insight. When this information was not available, information on IMDbPro was used to determine the number of episodes in which a character appeared across the season. Actors meeting a threshold of 85% (i.e., appearing in the majority of episodes across a season) were included as series regulars.

Once main cast and series regular information was obtained, the gender and race/ethnicity of actors filling those roles was investigated by the researchers. This involved using online databases (e.g., Variety Insight, Studio System), where possible. Other online information (e.g., interviews with actors, social media posts) were also consulted for information on a cast members' identity. When no information could be found, a photograph of the individual was obtained, and two senior research team members rendered a judgment on the individuals' race/ethnicity and/or gender. This latter method was used in 31 cases in film casts, 2 cases in TV casts. Our high quality of assurance in inferring race/ethnicity is substantiated by a .90 correlation between our research team's independent judgments and the racial/ethnic identification of 2,175 series regulars across 305 broadcast, cable, and streaming series from the 2014-15 season.

For films, the lead/co lead character was identified based on the story. The lead character was the individual who drives the action in the plot. In the case of co leads, two individual characters must equally share the story. Ensemble films have three or more characters who drive the story arc.

3. Significance tests are not reported; in some cases due to small sample sizes these tests could not be computed. Rather, once differences of 5 percentage points or greater were observed, these were discussed in text as they represent meaningful deviations.

4. Series regulars were determined using Variety Insight and IMDbPro. Series regulars reflect recurring characters who appear throughout a season of content. In cases where information was not available from online databases, confirmation of series regulars was provided by Netflix.

5. U.S. Census Bureau (2020). Quick Facts. Retrieved August 17, 2020 from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/LFE046218>

6. Samples for top-grossing films were determined using cumulative domestic box office for fictional 2018 and 2019 releases reported by Box Office Mojo by IMDbPro. The range, high to low, of cumulative domestic box office for the 100 top-grossing films of 2018 was \$700 million to \$20.8 million and for 2019 the range was \$858.4 million to \$20.4 million.

7. Smith, S.L., Choueiti, M., Pieper, K., Yao, K., Case, A., & Choi, A. (2019). Inequality in 1,200 Popular Films: Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, LGBT & Disability from 2007 to 2018. Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. <http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inequality-report-2019-09-03.pdf>. Smith, S.L., Choueiti, M., & Pieper, K. (2020). Inequality in 1,300 Popular Films: Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, LGBT & Disability from 2007 to 2019. Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. [http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inequality\\_1300\\_popular\\_films\\_09-08-2020.pdf](http://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inequality_1300_popular_films_09-08-2020.pdf). Lauzen, M.M., (2019). *Boxed In 2018-19: Women On Screen and Behind the Scenes in Television*. Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film. San Diego State University, CA. [\[loads/2019/09/2018-19\\\_Boxed\\\_In\\\_Report.pdf\]\(https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/LFE046218\)](https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/up-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

8. U.S. Census Bureau (2020). Quick Facts. Retrieved August 17, 2020 from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/LFE046218>

9. The proportion of female-identifying characters within each program was calculated to determine gender balance. A program was counted as gender balanced if the percentage of female-identifying characters or main cast fell within a range of 10% above or below the U.S. Census Bureau (2020) statistic of females in the population.

10. Behind the scenes data for film was compiled based on the directors, writers, and producers listed on IMDbPro.com. The gender and race/ethnicity of each individual was ascertained using the same procedure outlined for main cast, described above, with a notable exception. Where possible, confirmation on race/ethnicity was sought from individuals connected to the person (e.g., agents, managers, etc.).

11. Every episode within a series was analyzed for behind the camera personnel. Using IMDbPro, each director, writer, and producer across every episode was identified. Then, gender and race/ethnicity were obtained using the procedures outlined above. For analysis purposes, the list of producers was reduced to individual members of the producing team who worked across the season. This avoids double-counting individuals credited for their role as a producer across every episode. The creator(s) of each series was obtained using IMDbPro, Variety Insight, or additional sources.

12. In each series analysis behind-the-camera, "writer" refers to the writer of the episode and not to writers credited in other roles.

13. Lauzen, M.M., (2019). *Boxed In 2018-19: Women On Screen and Behind the Scenes in Television*. Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film. San Diego State University, CA. [https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/2018-19\\_Boxed\\_In\\_Report.pdf](https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/2018-19_Boxed_In_Report.pdf)

14. Industry comparisons behind the camera come from the following sources: Directors Guild of America (2019, November 19). *DGA Reports New Inclusion Records in the 2018-19 TV Season*. Available: <https://www.dga.org/News/PressReleases/2019/191119-Episodic-Television-Director-Diversity-Report.aspx>. Writers Guild of America (2020). *WGAW Inclusion Report*. Available: [https://www.wga.org/uploadedfiles/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/wgaw\\_inclusion\\_report.pdf](https://www.wga.org/uploadedfiles/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/wgaw_inclusion_report.pdf). Writers Guild of America (2019). *WGAW Inclusion Report Card: 2017-2018 TV Staffing Season*. [https://www.wga.org/uploadedfiles/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/WGAW\\_Inclusion\\_Report\\_20.pdf](https://www.wga.org/uploadedfiles/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/WGAW_Inclusion_Report_20.pdf).

15. For series, only the relationship between the presence of women as series creators and writers was explored. These positions were chosen as those that could have the most direct influence on the on-screen demographic profile of a series. Directors and producers were not included in these analyses as it was not possible to determine how much influence an individual in either role would have on casting. For example, ambiguity in how producing credits were allocated did not allow researchers to disentangle those with writing responsibilities from those overseeing production.

16. U.S. Census Bureau (2020). Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019. Retrieved August 17th, 2020 from: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2020/population-estimates-detailed.html>

17. U.S. Census Bureau (2020). Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019. Retrieved August 17th, 2020 from: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2020/population-estimates-detailed.html>. Arab American Institute Foundation (2018). Arab American Demographics Fact-sheet. Retrieved January 20th, 2020 from: [Page 34](https://censuscounts.org/whats-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

18. U.S. Census Bureau (2020). Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019. Retrieved August 17th, 2020 from: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2020/population-estimates-detailed.html>

19. Some characters are not capable of possessing a race and/or ethnicity. That is, robots, supernatural creatures, or other non-human beings may be part of fictional storytelling. For those characters who were not capable of possessing a race and/or ethnicity, *not applicable* was used for this variable, and these individuals were excluded from analysis.

20. The directors, writers, and producers for each film in the sample were collected via IMDbPro.com. For writing, only screenplay and screen story credits were included and writers of source material were not included. Across producer titles only 'Produced by' credits were taken for Netflix films. Gender and racial/ethnic information was obtained in the same method described above, using data obtained for other research at the Initiative and confirming with representatives and individuals when possible.

21. Hunt, D., & Ramon, A-C. (2020). *Hollywood Diversity Report 2020: A Tale of Two Hollywoods; Part 2: Television*. UCLA College of Social Sciences. Available: <https://socialsciences.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UC-LA-Hollywood-Diversity-Report-2020-Television-10-22-2020.pdf>

22. Writers Guild of America (2020). *WGAW Inclusion Report*. Available: [https://www.wga.org/uploadedfiles/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/wgaw\\_inclusion\\_report.pdf](https://www.wga.org/uploadedfiles/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/wgaw_inclusion_report.pdf). Writers Guild of America (2019). *WGAW Inclusion Report Card: 2017-2018 TV Staffing Season*. [https://www.wga.org/uploaded-files/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/WGAW\\_Inclusion\\_Report\\_20.pdf](https://www.wga.org/uploaded-files/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/WGAW_Inclusion_Report_20.pdf).

23. Writers Guild of America (2020). *WGAW Inclusion Report*. Available: [https://www.wga.org/uploadedfiles/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/wgaw\\_inclusion\\_report.pdf](https://www.wga.org/uploadedfiles/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/wgaw_inclusion_report.pdf). Writers Guild of America (2019). *WGAW Inclusion Report Card: 2017-2018 TV Staffing Season*. [https://www.wga.org/uploaded-files/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/WGAW\\_Inclusion\\_Report\\_20.pdf](https://www.wga.org/uploaded-files/the-guild/inclusion-and-equity/WGAW_Inclusion_Report_20.pdf).

24. Hunt, D., & Ramon, A-C. (2020). *Hollywood Diversity Report 2020: A Tale of Two Hollywoods; Part 2: Television*. UCLA College of Social Sciences. Available: <https://socialsciences.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UC-LA-Hollywood-Diversity-Report-2020-Television-10-22-2020.pdf>

25. Directors Guild of America (2019, November 19). *DGA Reports New Inclusion Records in the 2018-19 TV Season*. Available: <https://www.dga.org/News/PressReleases/2019/191119-Episodic-Television-Director-Diversity-Report.aspx>.

26. Directors Guild of America (2019, November 19). *DGA Reports New Inclusion Records in the 2018-19 TV Season*. Available: <https://www.dga.org/News/PressReleases/2019/191119-Episodic-Television-Director-Diversity-Report.aspx>.

27. All individuals credited behind the scenes and main cast were researched to determine how they identify their racial/ethnic grouping. Online databases (Variety Insight, Studio System, IMDbPro) as well as press articles, interviews, familial information reported online, and direct communication were used to facilitate categorization. Measures were created counting the presence or absence of identification for each possible race and ethnicity category (e.g., *Black-Identifying*, present or absent).

28. U.S. Census Bureau (2020). Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019. Retrieved August 17th, 2020 from: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2020/population-estimates-detailed.html>

29. U.S. Census Bureau (2020). Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019. Retrieved August 17th, 2020 from: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2020/population-estimates-detailed.html>

30. Films with Black producers were more likely to feature Black Leads or Co Leads (86.7%,  $n=13$ ) than films without a Black producer (12.6%,  $n=14$ ). The same pattern held for main cast where films with one or more Black producers included a larger proportion of main cast members that identified as Black (69%,  $n=78$ , vs. 14.8%,  $n=136$ , respectively).

31. Noe-Bustamante, L. & Flores, A. (2019, September 16). Facts on Latinos in the U.S. Pew Research Center. Retrieved January 20th, 2021 from: <https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/fact-sheet/latinos-in-the-u-s-fact-sheet/>

32. U.S. Census Bureau (2020). Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin for the United States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019. Retrieved August 17th, 2020 from: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2020/population-estimates-detailed.html>

33. GLAAD (2017). *Accelerating Acceptance*. Retrieved January 20th, 2021 from: [https://www.glaad.org/files/aa/2017\\_GLAAD\\_Accelerating\\_Acceptance.pdf](https://www.glaad.org/files/aa/2017_GLAAD_Accelerating_Acceptance.pdf).

34. GLAAD (2018). *Where We Are on TV*. Retrieved January 20th, 2021 from: [https://glaad.org/files/WWAT/WWAT\\_GLAAD\\_2018-2019.pdf](https://glaad.org/files/WWAT/WWAT_GLAAD_2018-2019.pdf)

35. Flores, A.R., Herman, J.L., Gates, G.J., & Brown, T.N.T. (June 2016). How Many Adults Identify as Transgender in the United States? The Williams Institute. Retrieved January 20th, 2020 from: <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Trans-Adults-US-Aug-2016.pdf>

36. While differences by medium were not significant, a few patterns can be noted. In film, the number of lesbian cast rose (2018: <1%,  $n=2$ ; 2019: 2.1%,  $n=10$ ), while the number of gay cast decreased (2018: 3.1%,  $n=17$ ; 2019: 2.1%,  $n=10$ ). There was little change in the number of bisexual cast (2018: <1%,  $n=2$ ; 2019: <1%,  $n=3$ ), and no transgender cast appeared in film. Moving to series, there were numerical increases for gay (2018: 2.2%,  $n=14$ ; 2019: 3.4%,  $n=25$ ) and bisexual (2018: <1%,  $n=4$ ; 2019: 1.9%,  $n=14$ ) cast, but little change for lesbian cast (2018: 1.8%,  $n=12$ ; 2019: 1.7%,  $n=13$ ).

37. In film, a numeric increase occurred for lesbian characters (2018: <1%,  $n=12$ ; 2019: <1%,  $n=18$ ), while a decrease was witnessed for gay characters (2018: 1.2%,  $n=29$ ; 2019: 1%,  $n=22$ ). The number of bisexual (2018: <1%,  $n=5$ ; 2019: <1%,  $n=4$ ) and transgender characters (2018: <1%,  $n=1$ ; 2019: <1%,  $n=2$ ) varied little. In series, there were numeric increases across each group, as follows: lesbian (2018: <1%,  $n=25$ ; 2019: 1.2%,  $n=46$ ), gay (2018: 1.5%,  $n=50$ ; 2019: 2.3%,  $n=91$ ), bisexual (2018: <1%,  $n=7$ ; 2019: <1%,  $n=17$ ), and transgender (2018: <1%,  $n=2$ ; 2019: <1%,  $n=10$ ) characters.

38. U.S. Census Bureau (2018). Americans with Disabilities: 2014. Retrieved January 20th, 2021 from: <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2018/demo/p70-152.html>. Americans with Disabilities Act (1990). <https://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm>. Characters were counted as having a disability when the presence of a condition (rooted in the function, form, or structure of a character's mind and/or body) manifested a limitation, interference, and/or non-functioning related to any 'major life activities' or 'major bodily function' for a period longer than six months. A disability could be present in one or more of the following domains: *Communicative* (seeing, hearing, speaking), *Cognitive* (learning, memory, thinking, emotions), and/or *Physical* (mobility, breathing, internal and external corporeal components). See Smith, S.L., Choueiti, M., & Pieper, K. (2016). *Inequality in 800 Popular Films: Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, LGBT, and Disability from 2007-2015*. Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism. Retrieved from: [https://annenberg.usc.edu/sites/default/files/2017/04/10/MD-SCI\\_Inequality\\_in\\_800\\_Films\\_FINAL.pdf](https://annenberg.usc.edu/sites/default/files/2017/04/10/MD-SCI_Inequality_in_800_Films_FINAL.pdf)

39. U.S. Census Bureau (2018). Americans with Disabilities: 2014. Retrieved January 20th, 2021 from: <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2018/demo/p70-152.html>.

40. U.S. Census Bureau (2018) reports include “any mental or emotional condition that seriously interfered with everyday activities” (p. 3) in their definition of disability, noting that depression, anxiety, and other issues that result in “trouble coping with day-to-day stress” are included in this spectrum of conditions. Stories that featured characters coping with mental health issues that severely restricted their day to day activities were scrutinized to ensure that the restrictions experienced met the same threshold of restriction as other (e.g., physical, communicative) disabilities.

41. GLAAD (2018). *Where We Are on TV*. Retrieved January 20th, 2021 from: [https://glaad.org/files/WWAT/WWAT\\_GLAAD\\_2018-2019.pdf](https://glaad.org/files/WWAT/WWAT_GLAAD_2018-2019.pdf)

42. Myers, V. (2021, January 13). Inclusion Takes Root at Netflix: Our First Report. *Netflix*. Available: <https://about.netflix.com/en/news/netflix-inclusion-report-2021>

43. Myers, V. (2021, January 13). Inclusion Takes Root at Netflix: Our First Report. *Netflix*. Available: <https://about.netflix.com/en/news/netflix-inclusion-report-2021>