

Hollywood Loves WoMEN... Right?

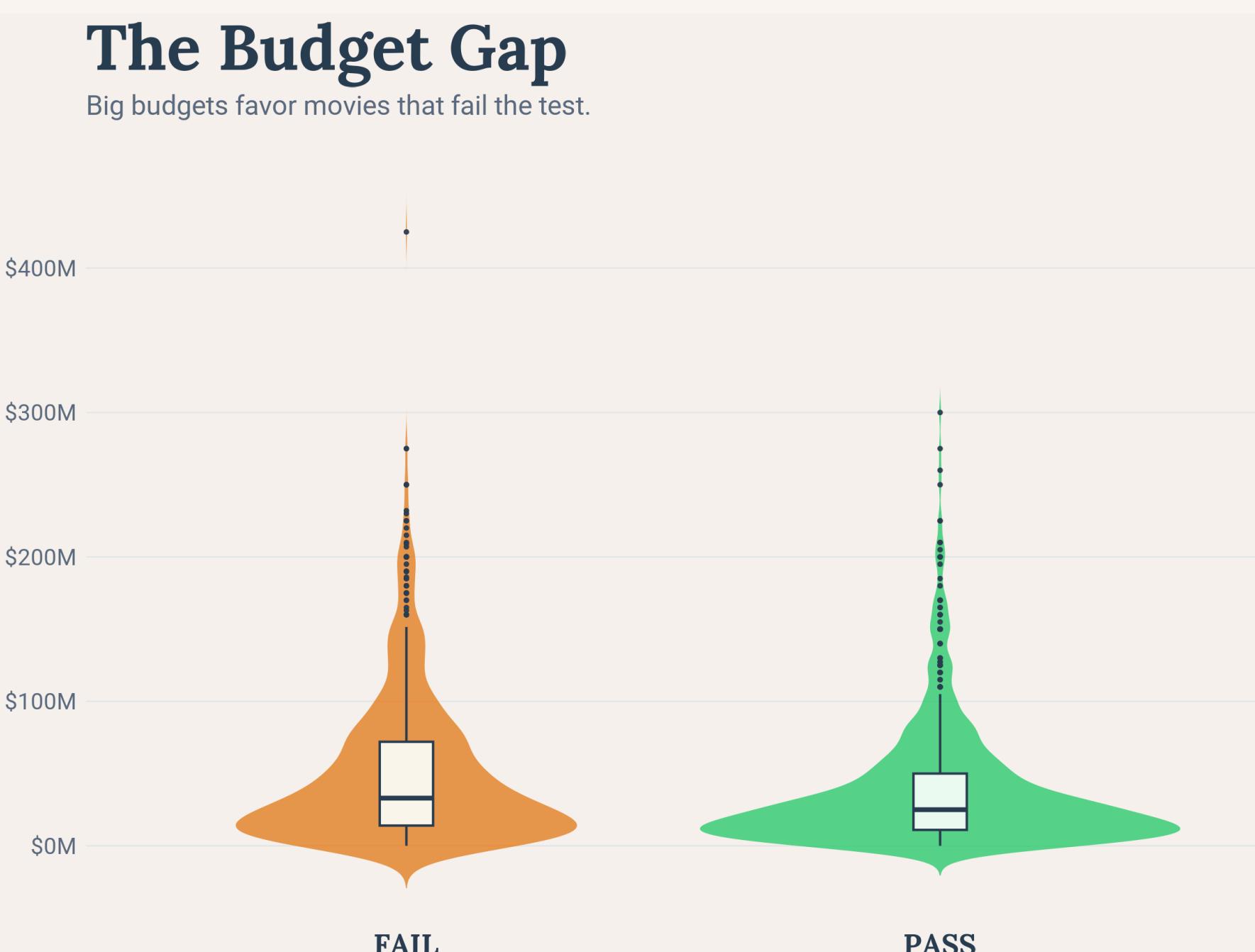
What the Bechdel Test Reveals About Budgets, Profitability, and Gender Bias

The Bechdel Test is a simple yet powerful measure of female representation in film. A movie passes the test if it features at least two named women who talk to each other about something other than men.

Using data from 1,794 films released between 1970 and 2013, this analysis explores how representation relates to production budgets, box office performance, and systemic gender bias in Hollywood.

The Budget Gap

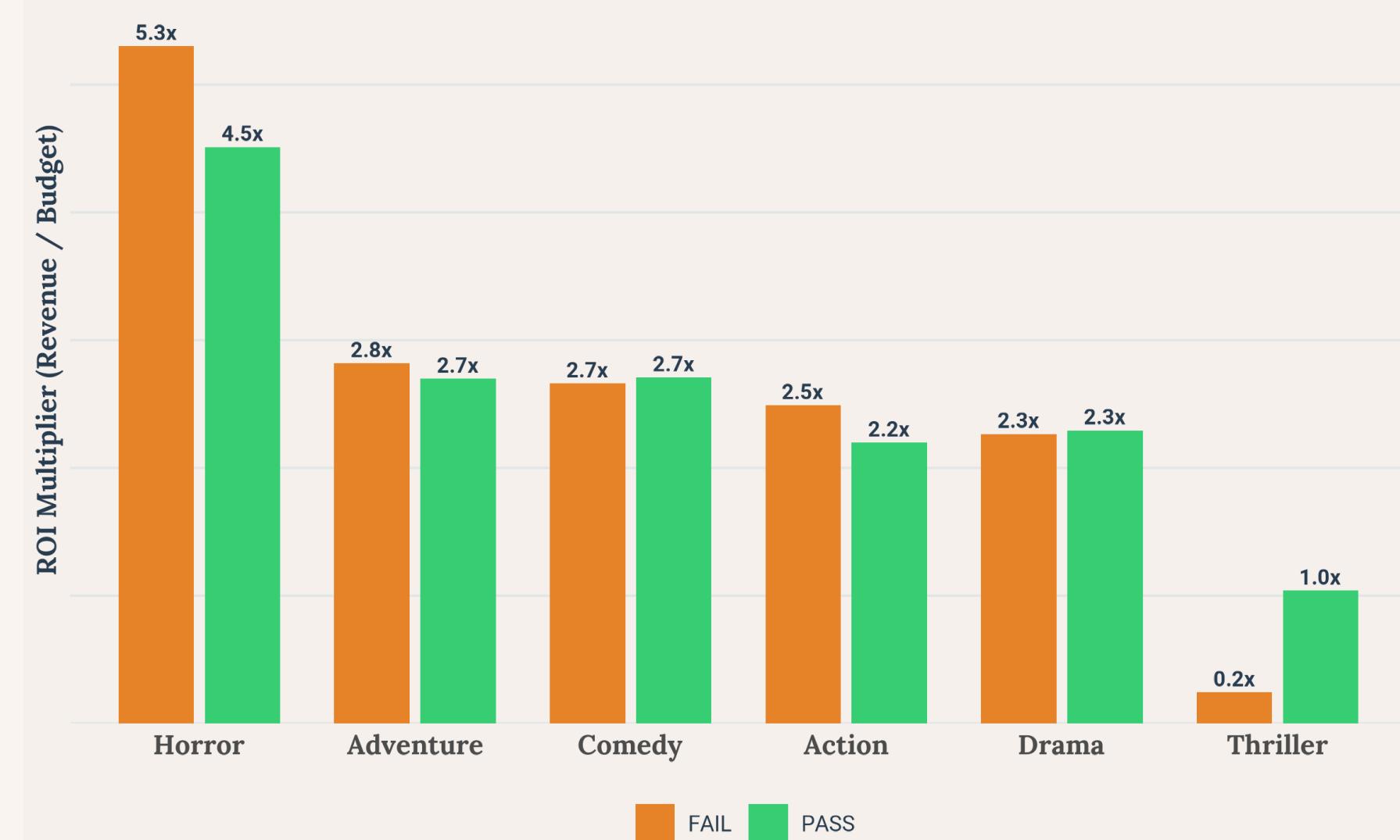
Big budgets favor movies that fail the test.



Films that fail the Bechdel Test receive consistently higher budgets, despite no clear financial advantage.

The Profitability Paradox

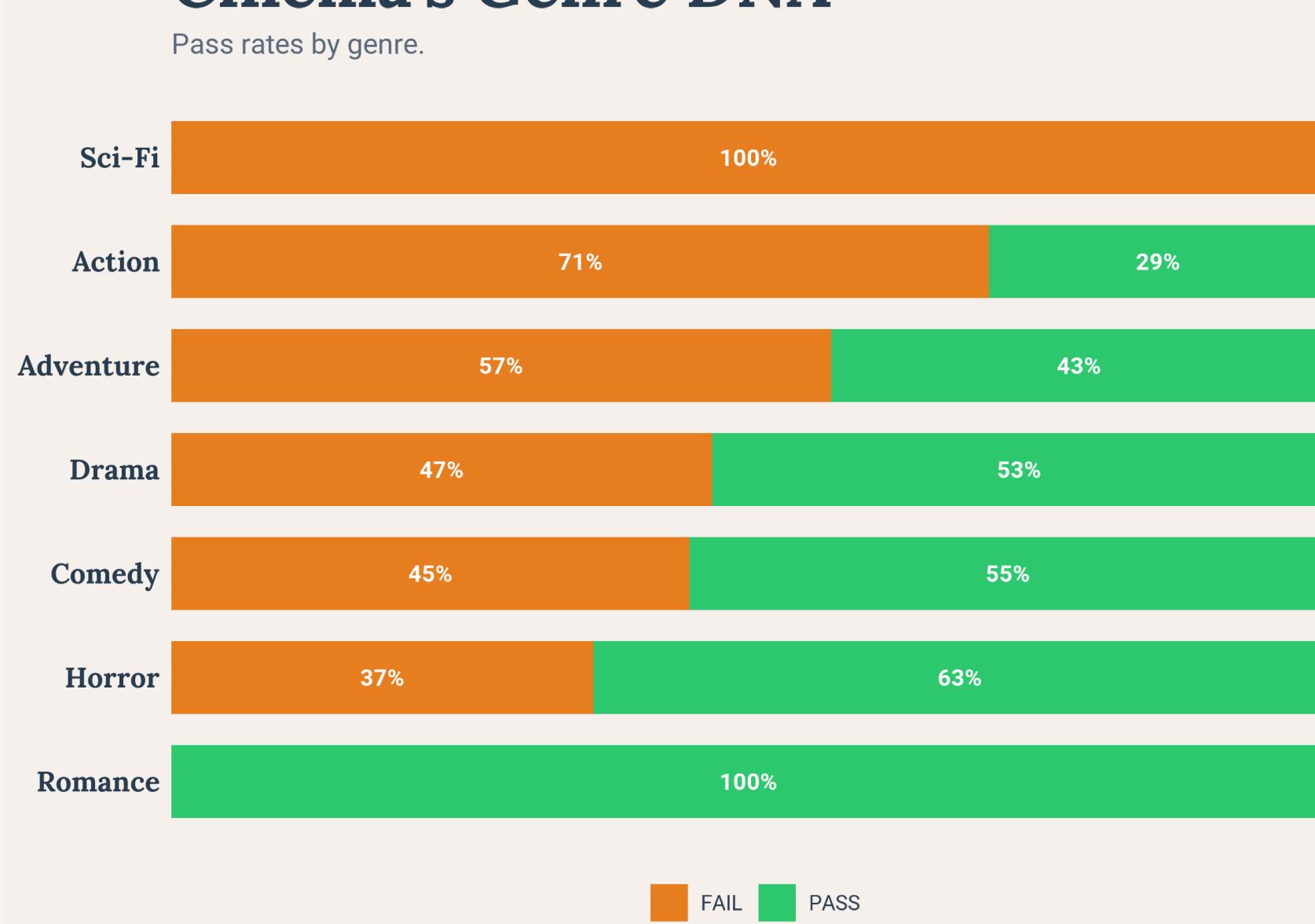
Median return on investment (ROI) by genre and Bechdel Test outcome.



Across nearly all genres, films passing the Bechdel Test achieve equal or higher ROI despite smaller budgets.

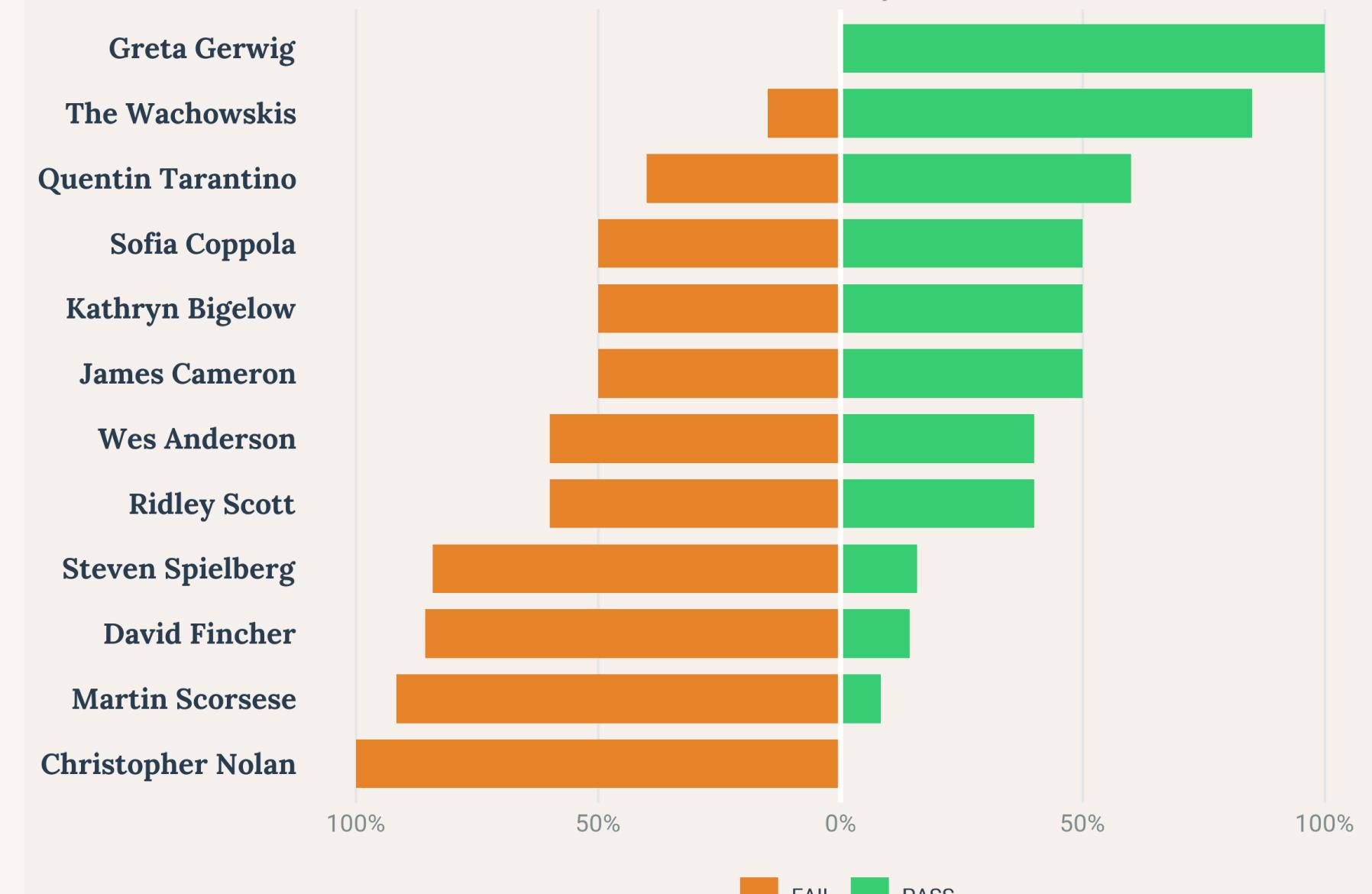
Cinema's Genre DNA

Pass rates by genre.



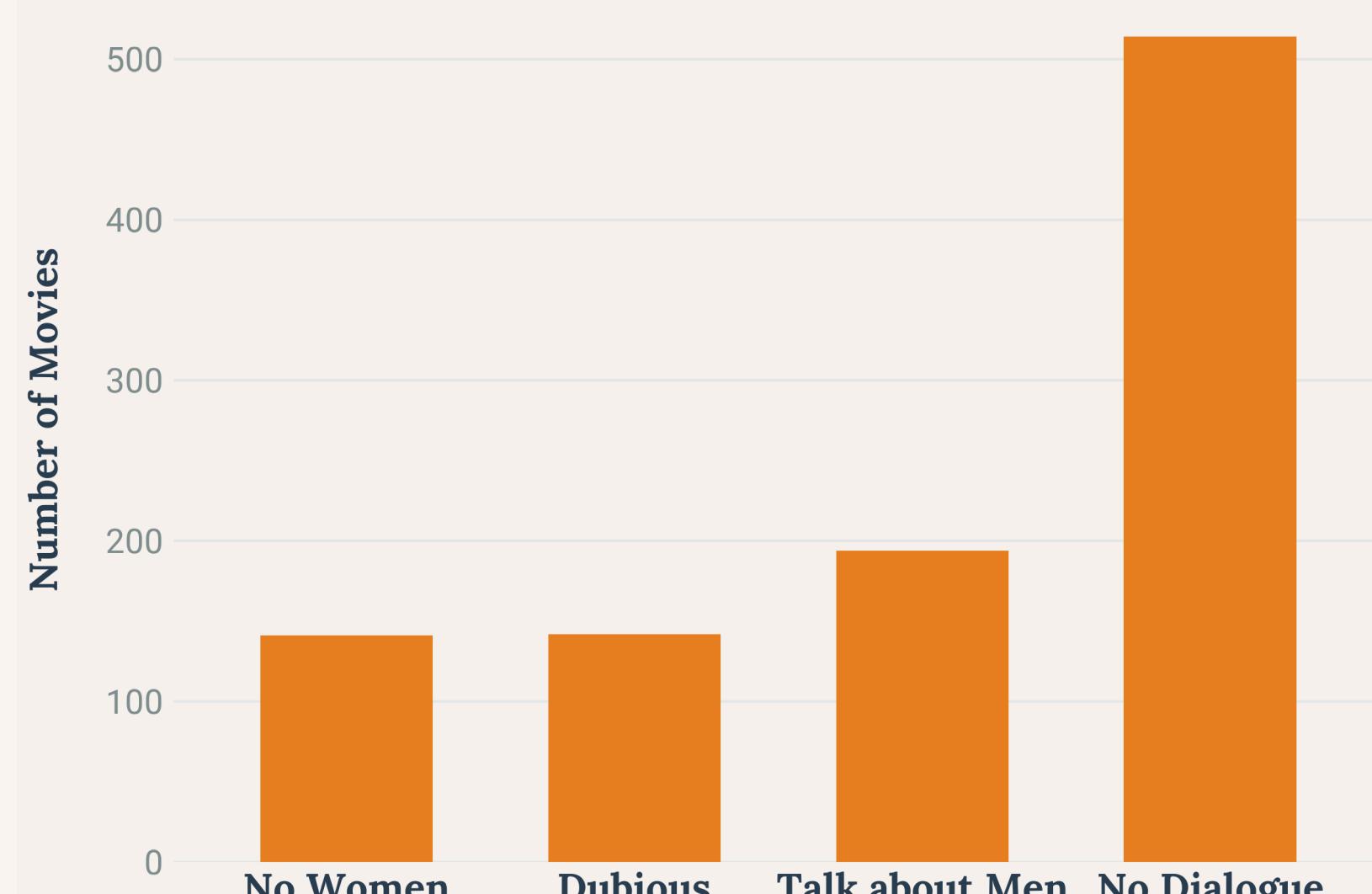
The proportion of films passing the Bechdel Test differs by genre, suggesting genre-specific representation dynamics.

Directors' Equality Scorecards



Bechdel outcomes vary, with prominent mainstream figures often scoring lower.

The Anatomy of Failure



Failure stems primarily from a lack of interaction (No Dialogue), rather than the absence of women on screen.

Data source:

FiveThirtyEight Bechdel Test Database (1970–2013)

Scan for the GitHub

