**Spellcheck For Bias: *The Forgemaster***

Geena Davis Institute for Gender in Media

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**Overview**

The purpose of this report is to identify opportunities for content creators to diversify character representations. This report measures representations of six identities in the script *The Forgemaster* for LEGO Titan:

* [Gender](#7rdsrmby8a10)
* [Race/Ethnicity](#km0uzj1c47vm)
* [LGBTQ+](#l5fofjr5yyu7)
* [Disability](#phoxthamc9m4)
* [Age (50+)](#w6ssfbo3nmng)
* [Body Size](#ua15q4ot3gj6)

**Methodology**

Spellcheck for Bias is based on inventions and software developed at the USC Viterbi School of Engineering. For this report, we analyze characters who spoke 1 line of text or more. In *The Forgemaster*, 18 characters met this criterion:

| **CHARACTER NAME** | **LINE COUNT** |
| --- | --- |
| IZZIE | 60 |
| MR OZ | 48 |
| LOGAN | 42 |
| ALBERT | 39 |
| MATEO | 31 |
| COOPER | 24 |
| NOVA | 8 |
| MRS CASTILLO | 6 |
| NIGHTMARE KING | 5 |
| NIGHT HUNTER | 5 |
| FORGEMASTER | 5 |
| COACH JEFFREYS | 5 |
| MR HOPPER | 4 |
| JAY | 4 |
| NEWS STAND GUY | 2 |
| DALLAS | 2 |
| ZOEY | 1 |
| JADYN | 1 |

Automated coding is combined with expert human coding to generate the quantitative and qualitative analysis below.

**Gender Analysis**

***For comparison, women constitute 51% of the U.S. population.***

* 22% of characters are specified as female.
* The leading character is male (Mateo).
* The script contains 0 character opportunities to increase gender diversity.

Characters by Gender

| **FEMALE CHARACTER** | **MALE CHARACTER** | **GENDER UNSPECIFIED** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| IZZIE |  |  |
|  | MR OZ |  |
|  | LOGAN |  |
|  | ALBERT |  |
|  | MATEO |  |
|  | COOPER |  |
| NOVA |  |  |
| MRS CASTILLO |  |  |
|  | NIGHTMARE KING |  |
|  | NIGHT HUNTER |  |
|  | FORGEMASTER |  |
|  | COACH JEFFREYS |  |
|  | MR HOPPER |  |
|  | JAY |  |
|  | NEWS STAND GUY |  |
|  | DALLAS |  |
| ZOEY |  |  |
|  | JADYN |  |

The See Jane Test

| **In order to pass the See Jane test, a script/manuscript must have:** | |
| --- | --- |
| **YES** | At least one prominent character (leading, co-leading, supporting character) who is a woman who; |
| **YES** | Is not depicted with gender stereotypes or tropes. |

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**Race/Ethnicity Analysis**

***For comparison, people of color constitute 38% of the U.S. population.***

* 6% of characters are specified as characters of color.
* The leading character has an unspecified race/ethnicity (“Mateo”).
* The script contains 15 character opportunities to increase racial/ethnic diversity.

Characters by Race/Ethnicity

| **CHARACTER OF COLOR** | **WHITE CHARACTER** | **RACE/ETHNICITY UNSPECIFIED** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | IZZIE |
|  |  | MR OZ |
|  |  | LOGAN |
|  |  | MATEO |
|  |  | COOPER |
|  |  | NOVA |
| MRS CASTILLO |  |  |
|  |  | NIGHTMARE KING |
|  |  | NIGHT HUNTER |
|  |  | FORGEMASTER |
|  |  | COACH JEFFREYS |
|  |  | JAY |
|  |  | NEWS STAND GUY |
|  |  | DALLAS |
|  |  | ZOEY |
|  |  | JADYN |

The Sidney Poitier Test

| **In order to pass the Sidney Poitier test, a script/manuscript must have:** | |
| --- | --- |
| **YES** | At least one prominent character (leading, co-leading, supporting character) who is a character of color who; |
| **NO** | Is not depicted with race/ethnicity stereotypes or tropes. |



**LGBTQ+ Analysis**

***For comparison, LGBTQ+ people comprise 4.5% of the U.S. population.***

* 0 characters are specified as LGBTQ+.
* The leading character has an unspecified sexual orientation (“Mateo”).
* The script contains 18 character opportunities to increase LGBTQ+ diversity.

Characters by LGBTQ+ Status

| **LGBTQ+ CHARACTER** | **HETEROSEXUAL CHARACTER** | **SEXUALITY UNSPECIFIED** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | IZZIE |
|  |  | MR OZ |
|  |  | LOGAN |
|  |  | ALBERT |
|  |  | MATEO |
|  |  | COOPER |
|  |  | NOVA |
|  |  | MRS CASTILLO |
|  |  | NIGHTMARE KING |
|  |  | NIGHT HUNTER |
|  |  | FORGEMASTER |
|  |  | COACH JEFFREYS |
|  |  | MR HOPPER |
|  |  | JAY |
|  |  | NEWS STAND GUY |
|  |  | DALLAS |
|  |  | ZOEY |
|  |  | JADYN |

The Vito-Russo Test

| **In order to pass the Vito-Russo test, a script/manuscript must:** | |
| --- | --- |
| **NO** | Contain a character that is identifiably lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer. |
|  | That character must not be solely or predominantly defined by their sexual orientation or gender identity (i.e. they are comprised of the same sort of unique character traits commonly used to differentiate straight/non-transgender characters from one another). |
|  | The LGBTQ character must be tied into the plot in such a way that their removal would have a significant effect, meaning they are not there to simply provide colorful commentary, paint urban authenticity, or (perhaps most commonly) set up a punchline. |



**Disability Analysis**

***For comparison, people with disabilities constitute 19% of the U.S. population.***

* 0 characters are specified as having a physical, cognitive, or communication disability.
* The leading character is not specified as having a disability (“Mateo”).
* The script contains 18 character opportunities to increase disability diversity.

Characters by Disability Status

| **CHARACTER WITH DISABILITY** | **CHARACTER WITHOUT DISABILITY** | **DISABILITY STATUS UNSPECIFIED** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | IZZIE |
|  |  | MR OZ |
|  |  | LOGAN |
|  |  | ALBERT |
|  |  | MATEO |
|  |  | COOPER |
|  |  | NOVA |
|  |  | MRS CASTILLO |
|  |  | NIGHTMARE KING |
|  |  | NIGHT HUNTER |
|  |  | FORGEMASTER |
|  |  | COACH JEFFREYS |
|  |  | MR HOPPER |
|  |  | JAY |
|  |  | NEWS STAND GUY |
|  |  | DALLAS |
|  |  | ZOEY |
|  |  | JADYN |

The Marlee Matlin Test

| **In order to pass the Marlee Matlin test, a script/manuscript must have:** | |
| --- | --- |
| **NO** | At least one prominent character (leading, co-leading, supporting character) with a physical, cognitive, or communication disability who; |
|  | Is not depicted with disability stereotypes or tropes. |



**Age (50+) Analysis**

***For comparison, people ages 50+ constitute 34% of the U.S. population.***

* 5% characters are specified as ages 50+.
* The leading character is under 50 (“Mateo”).
* The script contains 7 character opportunities to increase age diversity.

Characters by Age

| **CHARACTER 50+** | **CHARACTER UNDER 50** | **AGE UNSPECIFIED** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | IZZIE |  |
|  | MR OZ | MR OZ |
|  | LOGAN |  |
|  | ALBERT | ALBERT |
|  | MATEO |  |
|  | COOPER |  |
|  | NOVA |  |
| MRS CASTILLO | MRS CASTILLO |  |
|  | NIGHTMARE KING | NIGHTMARE KING |
|  | NIGHT HUNTER | NIGHT HUNTER |
|  | FORGEMASTER |  |
|  | COACH JEFFREYS | COACH JEFFREYS |
|  | MR HOPPER | MR HOPPER |
|  | JAY |  |
|  | NEWS STAND GUY | NEWS STAND GUY |
|  | DALLAS |  |
|  | ZOEY |  |
|  | JADYN |  |

The Betty White Test

| **In order to pass the Betty White test, a script/manuscript must have:** | |
| --- | --- |
| **YES** | At least one prominent character (leading, co-leading, supporting character) who is 50+ who; |
| **NO** | Is not depicted with age stereotypes or tropes. |



**Body Size Analysis**

***For comparison, people with large body types constitute 39% of the U.S. population.***

* 0 characters are specified as having a large body type.
* The leading character is not specified as having a large body type (“Mateo”).
* The script contains 18 character opportunities to increase body type diversity.

Characters by Body Size

| **CHARACTER WITH LARGE BODY TYPE** | **CHARACTER WITH SMALL/MEDIUM BODY TYPE** | **BODY SIZE UNSPECIFIED** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | IZZIE |
|  |  | MR OZ |
|  |  | LOGAN |
|  |  | ALBERT |
|  |  | MATEO |
|  |  | COOPER |
|  |  | NOVA |
|  |  | MRS CASTILLO |
|  |  | NIGHTMARE KING |
|  |  | NIGHT HUNTER |
|  |  | FORGEMASTER |
|  |  | COACH JEFFREYS |
|  |  | MR HOPPER |
|  |  | JAY |
|  |  | NEWS STAND GUY |
|  |  | DALLAS |
|  |  | ZOEY |
|  |  | JADYN |

The Cooper Test

| **In order to pass the Cooper test, a script/manuscript must have:** | |
| --- | --- |
| **NO** | At least one prominent character (leading, co-leading, supporting character) with a large body type who; |
|  | Is not depicted with size stereotypes or tropes. |



**Intersectional Analysis**

|  | **Female Character** | **Character of Color** | **LGBTQ+ Character** | **Character with a Disability** | **Character 50+** | **Character with Large Body Type** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Female Character** |  | **YES** | **NO** | **NO** | **YES** | **NO** |
| **Character of Color** | **YES** |  | **NO** | **NO** | **YES** | **NO** |
| **LGBTQ+ Character** | **NO** | **NO** |  | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** |
| **Character with a Disability** | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** |  | **NO** | **NO** |
| **Character 50+** | **YES** | **YES** | **NO** | **NO** |  | **NO** |
| **Character with Large Body Type** | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** |  |

**Positive Aspects**

* Episode valorizes “inspiration, creativity, and focus”--particularly in male characters.
* Female character, Izzie, comes up with ideas that are listened to, accepted, and acted upon.
* Cooper stands up for Mateo and confronts Logan’s bullying.
* Izzie saves her friend and uses her unique imagination to save her (instead of waiting for male characters to save her).
* Male lead (Mateo), Logan, and Cooper (male characters) are shown as creative and with considerable ‘soft skills’ (drawing, dreaming). If these characters are cast as a character of color, they will defy gender and racial stereotypes related to “creativity.”
* Depicts a single-parent household, showing viewers there are healthy family arrangements beyond the traditional 2-parent household.
* Jay, father of Mateo and Izzie, is a competent, loving, and involved working father (e.g., Jay refills his kids’ Metro cards every week, asks to spend Friday nights watching movies with Izzie and Mateo). This character de-stigmatizes traditional gender norms by having the father take on parental duties and do them well.
* Female character (Izzie) is a central part of the action scenes and fights back against villains instead of waiting to be rescued.
* Healthy Masculinity: Albert (male character) provides emotional support and encouragement for another male character (Mateo) (e.g., “my dear boy,” puts hand on Mateo’s).

**Potential Pitfalls**

* Potential Ableism: The script uses ableist slurs. Consider replacing ableist slurs (“crazy,” “dumb,” “lame,” “stupid”) with neutral language (e.g., “incredible,” “marvelous,” “silly”). Not only is utilizing alternative words more inclusive, it can serve to expand children’s vocabulary and encourage children to be more creative with their language choice when describing events (e.g., instead stating “X event was crazy,” one could write “X event was chaotic”).
* Potential Ageism: If “NewsStand Guy” is cast as 50+ he will embody the age-based stereotype “cranky/grumpy.”
* Potential Racism and Ageism: Mrs. Castillo, an older Latinx character, is written with the “service worker” stereotype and Izzie demands, “get that in my belly pronto,” which drives home Mrs. Castillo’s service worker status. Mrs. Castillo also falls asleep on the job, associating characters of color that are 50+ with “laziness.”
* Potential Sexism: Mr. Oz (a teacher) gives motivational comments only to the male characters (excludes Izzie) when the children are trying to cross the bridge.
* Potential Sexism: The tactics employed by the children when attempting to overcome the golem reinforce gender tropes and stereotypes (e.g. Logan “charges” the knight with brute force, Cooper pulls a “model tire kit,” Izzie attempts to use her “plushies,” and Mateo creates a “sword”) [10-11].
* Potential Sexism: “alpha” male characters are called “cool” (Logan and Dallas). The cool sports team is associated with hyper-masculinity (male characters high fiving, creating a “wolf” logo, calling people trying out for sports “sheep”). In addition, Logan emasculates Mateo to dominate him (calling him a “wuss”). When male characters excited they are braggadocious, stating “I’ll dreamcraft a super decked-out nitro-fueled muscle car! Show this dude the real meaning of kit bash”[12]. Whereas Izzie “squeals with delight” [8;18].
* Potential Sexism: Izzie “squeals with delight” [8;18] and often can’t contain her excitement. This conforms with the gender stereotype “can’t control emotions.”
* Potential Sexsim: All “evil villains” in the script are male, and written with the gender-based “violent-male” trope.
* Potential Sizeism: If Mrs. Castillo is cast as a larger-bodied character she will be written with the size-based stereotype of being strongly associated with food (she states, “I remember the breakfast burrito I dreamed about”).
* Harmful messages on bullying: Mr. Oz is often present when Logan is bullying Mateo, however he never confronts Logan, doesn’t attempt to teach Mateo healthy responses to bullying, or attempt to restore the relationship between the two boys.
* Potential Racism: villainous and “shadowy” characters are called “the darklings.” This name resembles the racial slur “darkies.”
  + Potential Racism: While the mythical creatures may not have races, they do have colors. Nearly every villainous character is described as dark (shadowy, darklings) and is unattractive, while the forces of “good” are light colored and attractive (bright unicorns). These palette choices may contribute to children associating “ugliness” and “darker colors” with “evil,” and pretty things that are “lighter” with “good.”
* Potential Sexism: Izzy states, “boys are so dumb” -- this is simliar to the language surrounding the idea that “boys will be boys,” suggesting men can act irresponsibly with relative impunity.