**Spellcheck For Bias: *The Dream Forge***

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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 Dream Forge* 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 Dream Forge*, 14 characters met this criterion:

| **CHARACTER NAME** | **LINE COUNT** |
| --- | --- |
| IZZIE | 67 |
| ZOEY | 56 |
| MATEO | 33 |
| MR OZ | 33 |
| LOGAN | 26 |
| COOPER | 21 |
| ALBERT | 12 |
| FORGEMASTER | 12 |
| NIGHTMARE KING | 11 |
| MRS CASTILLO | 8 |
| COOPERS MOM | 8 |
| NIGHT HUNTER | 7 |
| SINISTER TROPHY | 5 |
| SNEAK | 3 |

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.***

* 29% characters are specified as female.
* The leading character is female (“Izzie”).
* The script contains 0 character opportunities to increase gender diversity.

Characters by Gender

| **FEMALE CHARACTER** | **MALE CHARACTER** | **GENDER UNSPECIFIED** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| IZZIE | IZZIE |  |
| ZOEY | ZOEY |  |
|  | MATEO |  |
|  | MR OZ |  |
|  | LOGAN |  |
|  | COOPER |  |
|  | ALBERT |  |
|  | FORGEMASTER |  |
|  | NIGHTMARE KING |  |
| MRS CASTILLO | MRS CASTILLO |  |
| COOPERS MOM | COOPERS MOM |  |
|  | NIGHT HUNTER |  |
|  | SINISTER TROPHY |  |
|  | SNEAK |  |

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.***

* 7% characters are specified as characters of color.
* The leading character has an unspecified race/ethnicity (“Izzie”).
* The script contains 12 character opportunities to increase racial/ethnic diversity.

Characters by Race/Ethnicity

| **CHARACTER OF COLOR** | **WHITE CHARACTER** | **RACE/ETHNICITY UNSPECIFIED** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | IZZIE |
|  |  | ZOEY |
|  |  | MATEO |
|  |  | MR OZ |
|  |  | LOGAN |
|  |  | COOPER |
|  |  | FORGEMASTER |
|  |  | NIGHTMARE KING |
| MRS CASTILLO |  | MRS CASTILLO |
|  |  | COOPERS MOM |
|  |  | NIGHT HUNTER |
|  |  | SINISTER TROPHY |
|  |  | SNEAK |

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; |
| **YES** | 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 (“Izzie”).
* The script contains 14 character opportunities to increase LGBTQ+ diversity.

Characters by LGBTQ+ Status

| **LGBTQ+ CHARACTER** | **HETEROSEXUAL CHARACTER** | **SEXUALITY UNSPECIFIED** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | IZZIE |
|  |  | ZOEY |
|  |  | MATEO |
|  |  | MR OZ |
|  |  | LOGAN |
|  |  | COOPER |
|  |  | ALBERT |
|  |  | FORGEMASTER |
|  |  | NIGHTMARE KING |
|  |  | MRS CASTILLO |
|  |  | COOPERS MOM |
|  |  | NIGHT HUNTER |
|  |  | SINISTER TROPHY |
|  |  | SNEAK |

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 (“Izzie”).
* The script contains 14 character opportunities to increase disability diversity.

Characters by Disability Status

| **CHARACTER WITH DISABILITY** | **CHARACTER WITHOUT DISABILITY** | **DISABILITY STATUS UNSPECIFIED** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | IZZIE |
|  |  | ZOEY |
|  |  | MATEO |
|  |  | MR OZ |
|  |  | LOGAN |
|  |  | COOPER |
|  |  | ALBERT |
|  |  | FORGEMASTER |
|  |  | NIGHTMARE KING |
|  |  | MRS CASTILLO |
|  |  | COOPERS MOM |
|  |  | NIGHT HUNTER |
|  |  | SINISTER TROPHY |
|  |  | SNEAK |

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.***

* 7% characters are specified as ages 50+.
* The leading character is under 50 (“Izzie”).
* The script contains 8 character opportunities to increase age diversity.

Characters by Age

| **CHARACTER 50+** | **CHARACTER UNDER 50** | **AGE UNSPECIFIED** |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | IZZIE |  |
|  | ZOEY |  |
|  | MATEO |  |
|  | MR OZ | MR OZ |
|  | LOGAN |  |
|  | COOPER |  |
|  | ALBERT | ALBERT |
|  | FORGEMASTER | FORGEMASTER |
|  | NIGHTMARE KING | NIGHTMARE KING |
| MRS CASTILLO | MRS CASTILLO |  |
|  | COOPERS MOM | COOPERS MOM |
|  | NIGHT HUNTER | NIGHT HUNTER |
|  | SINISTER TROPHY | SINISTER TROPHY |
|  | SNEAK | SNEAK |

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; |
| **YES** | 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 (“Izzie”).
* The script contains 14 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 |
|  |  | ZOEY |
|  |  | MATEO |
|  |  | MR OZ |
|  |  | LOGAN |
|  |  | COOPER |
|  |  | ALBERT |
|  |  | FORGEMASTER |
|  |  | NIGHTMARE KING |
|  |  | MRS CASTILLO |
|  |  | COOPERS MOM |
|  |  | NIGHT HUNTER |
|  |  | SINISTER TROPHY |
|  |  | SNEAK |

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**

* Female characters central to action and have storylines independently of male characters.
* Izzie and Zoey are unique dreamers, tough, courageous, and solve their own problems. They are also central to advancing the quest. Zoey refers to herself as a “bandit” and is powerful and mysterious.
* Zoey defies gender-based stereotypes (she tells the boys “move it or lose it sweethearts”; tells Izzie to be more independent and that she doesn’t need the approval of male characters--that she is “tough enough” [10]).
* Male character (Cooper) is shown wanting the approval of his mother (rather than father).
* Zoey rescues two male characters (Albert and Mr. Oz).
* Valorizes creativity and imagination (particularly for male characters).

**Potential Pitfalls**

* Potential Sexism: Female characters resolve disputes using words (Zoey and Izzie), whereas male characters physically threaten each other (Logan and Mateo).
* Potential Sexism: Logan is written as an “alpha male” (to quote a previous script), espousing and giving a platform to unhealthy male behavior, including aggression, violence (“I can rearrange your face Matty” [14]), bullying, domination, and verbally sexualizing women (gestures to Zoey with a “call me” sign).
* Potential Sexism: All ‘evil villains’ in the script are male, and written with the gender-based ‘violent-male’ trope.
* 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 Ableism: consider replacing ableist language (“Numbskull”; “crazy”) with neutral language (e.g., “silly”, “chaotic”, “obstreperous”). 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”).