**Spellcheck For Bias: *Bad Dog***

Geena Davis Institute for Gender in Media

January, 2021

**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 *BAD DOG* for LIONSGATE:

* [Gender](#bookmark=id.gjdgxs)
* [Race/Ethnicity](#bookmark=id.30j0zll)
* [LGBTQ+](#bookmark=id.1fob9te)
* [Disability](#bookmark=id.3znysh7)
* [Age (50+)](#bookmark=id.2et92p0)
* [Body Size](#bookmark=id.tyjcwt)

**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 *BAD DOG*, 50 characters met this criterion:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER NAME** | **LINE COUNT** |
| BUB | 2116 |
| TOMÀS | 1040 |
| GRACE | 672 |
| SATAN | 649 |
| JENNI | 605 |
| KAREN | 460 |
| SEBASTIAN | 343 |
| MORPHOS | 330 |
| WILLY | 260 |
| PHOBOS | 207 |
| CARMEN | 185 |
| FRANCISCO | 155 |
| DR. CASEY | 155 |
| CODY | 111 |
| ROLAND | 218 |
| LINDSAY | 91 |
| BARF | 92 |
| HEIDI | 77 |
| DENNIS | 57 |
| OWEN | 82 |
| ENID | 38 |
| FINN | 110 |
| SNUGGLES | 54 |
| APRICOT | 43 |
| REGINA | 14 |
| NEWSSTAND GUY | 29 |
| LARRY | 25 |
| WAGNER | 17 |
| STEVE | 12 |
| BIJOU | 19 |
| BOY | 16 |
| MR. ANDERTON | 31 |
| PRINCIPAL | 30 |
| MOM | 18 |
| GLADYS | 17 |
| MORGAN FREEMAN | 29 |
| SHELTER WORKER | 10 |
| HANK | 7 |
| STUDENT #1 | 7 |
| STUDENT #2 | 16 |
| ROXY | 6 |
| JASPER | 10 |
| LOUISE | 21 |
| TAMBORINE | 4 |
| EMPLOYEE #1 | 7 |
| EMPLOYEE #2 | 17 |
| EMPLOYEE #3 | 3 |
| RICK | 8 |
| BARRY | 8 |
| STUDENT #3 | 5 |

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.***

* 13 characters are specified as female.
* The leading character is male.
* The script contains 10 character opportunities to increase gender diversity.

Characters by Gender

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FEMALE CHARACTER** | **MALE CHARACTER** | **GENDER UNSPECIFIED** |
|  | BUB |  |
|  | TOMÀS |  |
| GRACE |  |  |
|  | SATAN |  |
| JENNI |  |  |
| KAREN |  |  |
|  | SEBASTIAN |  |
|  |  | MORPHOS |
|  | WILLY |  |
|  |  | PHOBOS |
| CARMEN |  |  |
|  | FRANCISCO |  |
|  | DR. CASEY |  |
|  | CODY |  |
|  | ROLAND |  |
| LINDSAY |  |  |
|  | BARF |  |
| HEIDI |  |  |
|  | DENNIS |  |
|  | OWEN |  |
| ENID |  |  |
|  | FINN |  |
|  |  | SNUGGLES |
|  | APRICOT |  |
| REGINA |  |  |
|  | NEWSSTAND GUY |  |
|  | LARRY |  |
|  | WAGNER |  |
|  | STEVE |  |
|  |  | BIJOU |
|  | BOY |  |
|  | MR. ANDERTON |  |
|  |  | PRINCIPAL |
| MOM |  |  |
| GLADYS |  |  |
|  | MORGAN FREEMAN |  |
|  | SHELTER WORKER |  |
|  | HANK |  |
|  |  | STUDENT #1 |
|  |  | STUDENT #2 |
| ROXY |  |  |
|  | JASPER |  |
| LOUISE |  |  |
| TAMBORINE |  |  |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #1 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #2 |
|  | EMPLOYEE #3 |  |
|  | RICK |  |
|  | BARRY |  |
|  |  | STUDENT #3 |

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. |

****

**Race/Ethnicity Analysis**

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

* 6 characters are specified as characters of color.
* The leading character is a hellhound/dog and has an unspecified race/ethnicity.
* The script contains 42 character opportunities to increase racial/ethnic diversity.

Characters by Race/Ethnicity

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER OF COLOR** | **WHITE CHARACTER** | **RACE/ETHNICITY UNSPECIFIED** |
|  |  | BUB |
| TOMÀS |  |  |
| GRACE |  |  |
|  |  | SATAN |
| JENNI |  |  |
|  | KAREN |  |
|  |  | SEBASTIAN |
|  |  | MORPHOS |
|  |  | WILLY |
|  |  | PHOBOS |
| CARMEN |  |  |
| FRANCISCO |  |  |
|  |  | DR. CASEY |
|  |  | CODY |
|  |  | ROLAND |
|  |  | LINDSAY |
|  |  | BARF |
|  |  | HEIDI |
|  |  | DENNIS |
|  |  | OWEN |
|  |  | ENID |
|  |  | FINN |
|  |  | SNUGGLES |
|  |  | APRICOT |
|  |  | REGINA |
|  |  | NEWSSTAND GUY |
|  |  | LARRY |
|  | WAGNER |  |
|  |  | STEVE |
|  |  | BIJOU |
|  |  | BOY |
|  |  | MR. ANDERTON |
|  |  | PRINCIPAL |
|  |  | MOM |
|  |  | GLADYS |
| MORGAN FREEMAN |  |  |
|  |  | SHELTER WORKER |
|  |  | HANK |
|  |  | STUDENT #1 |
|  |  | STUDENT #2 |
|  |  | ROXY |
|  |  | JASPER |
|  |  | LOUISE |
|  |  | TAMBORINE |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #1 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #2 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #3 |
|  |  | RICK |
|  |  | BARRY |
|  |  | STUDENT #3 |

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.***

* No characters are represented as LGBTQ+.
* The leading character has an unspecified sexual orientation.
* The script contains 45 character opportunities to increase LGBTQ+ diversity.

Characters by LGBTQ+ Status

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **LGBTQ+ CHARACTER** | **HETEROSEXUAL CHARACTER** | **SEXUALITY UNSPECIFIED** |
|  |  | BUB |
|  | TOMÀS |  |
|  |  | GRACE |
|  |  | SATAN |
|  |  | JENNI |
|  |  | KAREN |
|  |  | SEBASTIAN |
|  |  | MORPHOS |
|  |  | WILLY |
|  |  | PHOBOS |
|  | CARMEN |  |
|  | FRANCISCO |  |
|  |  | DR. CASEY |
|  |  | CODY |
|  |  | ROLAND |
|  |  | LINDSAY |
|  |  | BARF |
|  |  | HEIDI |
|  |  | DENNIS |
|  |  | OWEN |
|  | ENID |  |
|  | FINN |  |
|  |  | SNUGGLES |
|  |  | APRICOT |
|  |  | REGINA |
|  |  | NEWSSTAND GUY |
|  |  | LARRY |
|  |  | WAGNER |
|  |  | STEVE |
|  |  | BIJOU |
|  |  | BOY |
|  |  | MR. ANDERTON |
|  |  | PRINCIPAL |
|  |  | MOM |
|  |  | GLADYS |
|  | MORGAN FREEMAN |  |
|  |  | SHELTER WORKER |
|  |  | HANK |
|  |  | STUDENT #1 |
|  |  | STUDENT #2 |
|  |  | ROXY |
|  |  | JASPER |
|  |  | LOUISE |
|  |  | TAMBORINE |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #1 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #2 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #3 |
|  |  | RICK |
|  |  | BARRY |
|  |  | STUDENT #3 |

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.***

* One character is specified as having a physical, cognitive, or communication disability.
* The leading character is not shown having a disability.
* The script contains 49 character opportunities to increase disability diversity.

Characters by Disability Status

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER WITH DISABILITY** | **CHARACTER WITHOUT DISABILITY** | **DISABILITY STATUS UNSPECIFIED** |
|  |  | BUB |
|  |  | TOMÀS |
|  |  | GRACE |
|  |  | SATAN |
|  |  | JENNI |
|  |  | KAREN |
|  |  | SEBASTIAN |
|  |  | MORPHOS |
|  |  | WILLY |
|  |  | PHOBOS |
|  |  | CARMEN |
|  |  | FRANCISCO |
|  |  | DR. CASEY |
|  |  | CODY |
|  |  | ROLAND |
|  |  | LINDSAY |
|  |  | BARF |
|  |  | HEIDI |
|  |  | DENNIS |
|  |  | OWEN |
|  |  | ENID |
|  |  | FINN |
| SNUGGLES (one-eyed dog) |  |  |
|  |  | APRICOT |
|  |  | REGINA |
|  |  | NEWSSTAND GUY |
|  |  | LARRY |
|  |  | WAGNER |
|  |  | STEVE |
|  |  | BIJOU |
|  |  | BOY |
|  |  | MR. ANDERTON |
|  |  | PRINCIPAL |
|  |  | MOM |
|  |  | GLADYS |
|  |  | MORGAN FREEMAN |
|  |  | SHELTER WORKER |
|  |  | HANK |
|  |  | STUDENT #1 |
|  |  | STUDENT #2 |
|  |  | ROXY |
|  |  | JASPER |
|  |  | LOUISE |
|  |  | TAMBORINE |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #1 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #2 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #3 |
|  |  | RICK |
|  |  | BARRY |
|  |  | STUDENT #3 |

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.***

* 9 characters are specified as ages 50+.
* The leading character is unspecified for age (an immortal hellhound who eventually turns into a dog on Earth)
* The script contains 28 character opportunities to increase age diversity.

Characters by Age

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER 50+** | **CHARACTER UNDER 50** | **AGE UNSPECIFIED** |
| BUB |  |  |
|  | TOMÀS |  |
|  | GRACE |  |
|  |  | SATAN (immortal) |
|  | JENNI |  |
|  |  | KAREN |
|  |  | SEBASTIAN |
|  |  | MORPHOS (immortal) |
|  |  | WILLY |
|  |  | PHOBOS (immortal) |
| CARMEN |  |  |
| FRANCISCO |  |  |
| DR. CASEY |  |  |
|  | CODY |  |
|  | ROLAND |  |
|  | LINDSAY |  |
|  |  | BARF |
|  |  | HEIDI |
| DENNIS |  |  |
|  | OWEN |  |
|  | ENID |  |
|  | FINN |  |
|  |  | SNUGGLES |
|  |  | APRICOT |
| REGINA |  |  |
|  |  | NEWSSTAND GUY |
|  |  | LARRY |
| WAGNER |  |  |
|  |  | STEVE |
|  |  | BIJOU |
|  | BOY |  |
|  |  | MR. ANDERTON |
|  |  | PRINCIPAL |
|  |  | MOM |
|  |  | GLADYS |
| MORGAN FREEMAN |  |  |
|  |  | SHELTER WORKER |
|  | HANK |  |
|  | STUDENT #1 |  |
|  | STUDENT #2 |  |
|  |  | ROXY |
|  |  | JASPER |
| LOUISE |  |  |
|  |  | TAMBOURINE |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #1 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #2 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #3 |
|  |  | RICK |
|  |  | BARRY |
|  |  | STUDENT #3 |

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.***

* 2 characters are specified as having a large body type.
* The leading character is not specified as having a large body type.
* The script contains 48 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** |
|  |  | BUB |
|  |  | TOMÀS |
|  |  | GRACE |
|  |  | SATAN |
|  |  | JENNI |
|  |  | KAREN |
|  |  | SEBASTIAN |
|  |  | MORPHOS |
|  |  | WILLY |
|  |  | PHOBOS |
|  |  | CARMEN |
|  |  | FRANCISCO |
|  |  | DR. CASEY |
|  |  | CODY |
|  |  | ROLAND |
|  |  | LINDSAY |
| BARF |  |  |
|  |  | HEIDI |
| DENNIS |  |  |
|  |  | OWEN |
|  |  | ENID |
|  |  | FINN |
|  |  | SNUGGLES |
|  |  | APRICOT |
|  |  | REGINA |
|  |  | NEWSSTAND GUY |
|  |  | LARRY |
|  |  | WAGNER |
|  |  | STEVE |
|  |  | BIJOU |
|  |  | BOY |
|  |  | MR. ANDERTON |
|  |  | PRINCIPAL |
|  |  | MOM |
|  |  | GLADYS |
|  |  | MORGAN FREEMAN |
|  |  | SHELTER WORKER |
|  |  | HANK |
|  |  | STUDENT #1 |
|  |  | STUDENT #2 |
|  |  | ROXY |
|  |  | JASPER |
|  |  | LOUISE |
|  |  | TAMBORINE |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #1 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #2 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE #3 |
|  |  | RICK |
|  |  | BARRY |
|  |  | STUDENT #3 |

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**

* This story centers around the lives of a Latinx family as they navigate a majority-white town. It is a humanizing, interesting story.
* The storyline of the racist, profiling Karen is a great take-down of the recent Karen phenomenon.
* Bub’s arc as a hyper-masculine bully into a dog who accepts and seeks love and friendship is a wonderful storyline.
* Tomas’ thoughtful parenting is refreshing. The script could easily lapse into sexist stereotypes that men aren’t good parents, but Tomas is never depicted as the inept dad.

**Potential Pitfalls**

* Potential Racism: Bub uses the term “cuck alert,” which used to just be a sexist term for a man who is so weak that his wife cheats on him. In recent years, it’s been [appropriated](https://www.newstatesman.com/science-tech/2017/08/evolution-cuck-shows-different-far-right-groups-are-learning-same-language) by white supremacist and now has both sexist and racist connotations. Perhaps use “pushover” or “gutless”?
* Potential Sexism: “I’ll definitely be seeing this broad when after she dies” uses gendered term (broad) that can easily be replaced with a gender-inclusive insult (e.g., jerk, idiot, fool, etc.) As a side note, it might feel like using sexist terms to put down racist Karen’s is justified, but it ultimately just ends up reinforcing another “ism.”
* Potential Sexism: Tomas referring to Karen, Jr., “she’s crazy,” is gendered and ableist and undercuts her villainy as being due to mental health issues. Perhaps have Tomas refer to her as “an ass” or “a jerk.”
* Potential Sexism: Morphos says of Karen, Jr., “What’s that chick’s problem?” Chick is a gendered term that [infantalizes](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/sep/30/bird-infantilising-hold-women-back) women. It can easily be replaced with “jerk,” “person,” “woman,” “nosey neighbor,” etc.
* Potential Ageism: The “very old” Dr. Casey being confused about which animal the family was there for plays into the Feeble stereotype.