**Spellcheck For Bias: *Miller’s Girl***

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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 *Miller’s Girl* 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 *Miller’s Girl*, 9 characters met this criterion:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER NAME** | **LINE COUNT** |
| JONATHAN | 460 |
| CAIRO | 398 |
| BORIS | 238 |
| WINNIE | 230 |
| BEATRICE | 179 |
| JOYCE | 33 |
| JOCK | 15 |
| SUZETTE | 1 |
| HIPSTER | 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.***

* 5 characters are specified as female.
* The script contains 1 character opportunity to increase gender diversity.

Characters by Gender

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FEMALE CHARACTER** | **MALE CHARACTER** | **GENDER UNSPECIFIED** |
|  | JONATHAN |  |
| CAIRO |  |  |
|  | BORIS |  |
| WINNIE |  |  |
| BEATRICE |  |  |
| JOYCE |  |  |
|  | JOCK |  |
| SUZETTE |  |  |
|  |  | HIPSTER |

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.***

* 2 characters are specified as characters of color.
* The script contains 5 character opportunities to increase racial/ethnic diversity.

Characters by Race/Ethnicity

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER OF COLOR** | **WHITE CHARACTER** | **RACE/ETHNICITY UNSPECIFIED** |
|  |  | JONATHAN |
|  | CAIRO (based on casting reports) |  |
|  |  | BORIS |
|  | WINNIE (based on casting reports) |  |
| BEATRICE (based on casting reports) |  |  |
| JOYCE (based on casting reports) |  |  |
|  |  | JOCK |
|  |  | SUZETTE |
|  |  | HIPSTER |

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. |

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**LGBTQ+ Analysis**

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

* 2 characters are specified as LGBTQ+.
* The leading characters are specified as heterosexual. (“Jonathan”, “Cairo”).
* The script contains 2 character opportunities to increase LGBTQ+ diversity.

Characters by LGBTQ+ Status

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **LGBTQ+ CHARACTER** | **HETEROSEXUAL CHARACTER** | **SEXUALITY UNSPECIFIED** |
|  | JONATHAN |  |
|  | CAIRO |  |
|  | BORIS |  |
| WINNIE |  |  |
|  | BEATRICE |  |
| JOYCE |  |  |
|  | JOCK |  |
|  |  | SUZETTE |
|  |  | HIPSTER |

The Vito-Russo Test

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **In order to pass the Vito-Russo test, a script/manuscript must:** | |
| **YES** | Contain a character that is identifiably lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or queer. |
| **YES** | 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). |
| **YES** | 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 characters’ disability status is unspecified (“Jonathan”, “Cairo”).
* The script contains 9 character opportunities to increase disability diversity.

Characters by Disability Status

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER WITH DISABILITY** | **CHARACTER WITHOUT DISABILITY** | **DISABILITY STATUS UNSPECIFIED** |
|  |  | JONATHAN |
|  |  | CAIRO |
|  |  | BORIS |
|  |  | WINNIE |
|  |  | BEATRICE |
|  |  | JOYCE |
|  |  | JOCK |
|  |  | SUZETTE |
|  |  | HIPSTER |

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.***

* 0 characters are specified as ages 50+.
* The leading characters are under 50 (“Jonathan”, “Cairo”).
* The script contains 2 character opportunities to increase age diversity.

Characters by Age

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER 50+** | **CHARACTER UNDER 50** | **AGE UNSPECIFIED** |
|  | JONATHAN |  |
|  | CAIRO |  |
|  | BORIS |  |
|  | WINNIE |  |
|  | JOYCE |  |
|  | JOCK |  |
|  |  | SUZETTE |
|  |  | HIPSTER |

The Betty White Test

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **In order to pass the Betty White test, a script/manuscript must have:** | |
| **NO** | At least one prominent character (leading, co-leading, supporting character) who is 50+ who; |
|  | 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 script contains 4 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** |
|  |  | JONATHAN |
|  | CAIRO |  |
|  |  | BORIS |
|  | WINNIE |  |
|  | BEATRICE |  |
|  | JOYCE |  |
|  |  | SUZETTE |
|  |  | HIPSTER |

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

**Positive Aspects**

* This film features many female characters, including two women of color.
* Features LGBTQ+ woman of color as a leader (Vice Principal at a high school).
* The story shows positive aspects of female friendship and male friendship.

**Potential Pitfalls**

* **Potential Sexism**: Winnie saying “Hit me up when you finish growing out your vagina” to a jock uses a woman’s body part as a put down. Later, she says “If I wanted to hold a tampon, I’d just pull it out of your pussy” to a jock. This line of banter could be replaced with something equally derogatory that isn’t a gender slur.
* **Potential Sexism**: Jonathan saying “You big-time, road-head owe me” in exchange for purchasing tampons for his wife suggests that wives are expected to perform sexual favors for husbands who enact the great feat of purchasing period products.
* **Potential Sexism**: Jonathan says to Boris, “It’s not that cold. Don’t be such a puss” which is short for pussy, another gender slur. It could easily be replaced with “baby.”
* **Potential Sexism:** Co-leading character “Cairo” and supporting character “Winnie” embody the Vamp Seductress trope (promiscuous teen girls seducing older male for selfish ends)**.**
* **Potential Sexism:** Beatrice is depicted with the “Busy Career Woman” trope, since her writing career gets in the way of a successful romance with her husband.
* **Potential Sexism**: The sexuality in the script almost exclusively revolves around male pleasure. Beatrice getting off with her husband on a student’s writing intended to seduce her husband puts his sexual pleasure at the center of both women’s attention. The next scene with Cairo telling Winnie, “We’re gonna make out. For them. Not for you.” fits the performative lesbianism for heterosexual male pleasure. There is no sexual activity in this script that centers on female pleasure and agency other than Winnie’s clumsy attempts to be a seductive teen.
* **Potential Racism**: Beatrice is a high-powered Asian-American woman who is depicted as heartless and called a “reptile” by Boris and “cold,” “cruel,” and a “monster” by Jonathan. This evokes the Dragon Lady trope of female Asian villains and allows the viewer to feel sorry for Jonathan. Beatrice calls Jonathan on this, pointing out that he is the real villain here, but the conversation quickly returns to Jonathan as the victim.
* **Potentially Sexist storyline:** The “teen girl seducing older men in positions of power” storyline reinforces the idea that children lie about sexual assault and ruin men’s reputations through false allegations. This storyline also reinforces the rape myth that that being a victim of assault brings benefits and status for the victim. Boris and Jonathan are engaging in actions that are illegal, but the script ultimately makes Beatrice and Cairo out to be the villains, thus absolving these men of their illegal actions.
* **LGBTQ+ stereotypes and Tropes:** Bisexual character (“Winnie”) depicted as the “depraved bisexual” and “sexually promiscuous”, while co-leading character (“Cairo”) embodies the “not really gay bisexual” LGBTQ stereotype.
* **Potential Ableism**:Boris and Beatrice invoke ableism when discussing a personal with a disability he dated.
  + BORIS “You’re a snob. Kristy was great.”
  + BEATRICE: She had one leg.
  + BORIS: Shoulda seen the way that nub could work a pole.

This funny banter uses people with disabilities as a punchline in a script that features no characters with disabilities.