**Spellcheck For Bias: *Shadow Force***

Geena Davis Institute for Gender in Media

February, 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 *Shadow Force* 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 *Shadow Force*, 36 characters met this criterion:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER NAME** | **LINE COUNT** |
| DAVID | 357 |
| KYRAH | 282 |
| CINDER | 185 |
| KY | 125 |
| AUNTIE | 64 |
| UNC | 41 |
| FRITZ | 17 |
| PATRICK | 14 |
| PARKER | 13 |
| VARJO | 12 |
| MEATHEAD DAD | 11 |
| BANK ROBBER #1 | 11 |
| CYSGOD | 10 |
| POLICE OFFICER | 9 |
| LORRAINE CINDER | 8 |
| TROOPER | 8 |
| TELLER | 5 |
| ANINO | 5 |
| CHRIS CUOMO | 4 |
| SCATH | 4 |
| SHADY SLEAZEBALL #1 | 4 |
| SHADOWY FIGURE | 3 |
| SHADY SLEAZEBALL #2 | 3 |
| CONGRESSIONAL COG | 3 |
| ANALYST | 3 |
| NEWSCASTER | 3 |
| BANK ROBBER #2 | 2 |
| EMPLOYEE | 2 |
| TEAMMATE | 2 |
| TOAD | 2 |
| MORITI | 2 |
| BANK ROBBER #3 | 1 |
| YOUNG KID | 1 |
| PUNK | 1 |
| BUREAUCRAT #1 | 1 |
| SHERIFF | 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.***

* 6 characters are specified as female.
* The leading character is male.
* The script contains 11 character opportunities to increase gender diversity.

Characters by Gender

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FEMALE CHARACTER** | **MALE CHARACTER** | **GENDER UNSPECIFIED** |
|  | DAVID |  |
| KYRAH |  |  |
|  | CINDER |  |
|  | KY |  |
| AUNTIE |  |  |
|  | UNC |  |
|  | FRITZ |  |
|  | PATRICK |  |
|  | PARKER |  |
|  | VARJO |  |
|  | MEATHEAD DAD |  |
|  | BANK ROBBER #1 |  |
|  | CYSGOD |  |
|  |  | POLICE OFFICER |
| LORRAINE CINDER |  |  |
|  | TROOPER |  |
| TELLER |  |  |
| ANINO |  |  |
|  | CHRIS CUOMO |  |
|  | SCATH |  |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #1 |
|  |  | SHADOWY FIGURE |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #2 |
|  |  | CONGRESSIONAL COG |
|  |  | ANALYST |
|  |  | NEWSCASTER |
|  | BANK ROBBER #2 |  |
|  | EMPLOYEE |  |
|  |  | TEAMMATE |
|  | TOAD |  |
| MORITI |  |  |
|  | BANK ROBBER #3 |  |
|  | YOUNG KID |  |
|  |  | PUNK |
|  |  | BUREAUCRAT #1 |
|  |  | SHERIFF |

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.***

* 4 characters are specified as characters of color.
* The leading character is specified as a character of color.
* The script contains 28 character opportunities to increase racial/ethnic diversity.

Characters by Race/Ethnicity

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER OF COLOR** | **WHITE CHARACTER** | **RACE/ETHNICITY UNSPECIFIED** |
| DAVID (Sterling K. Brown) |  |  |
| KYRAH (Kerry Washington) |  |  |
|  |  | CINDER |
| KY |  |  |
|  |  | AUNTIE |
|  |  | UNC |
|  |  | FRITZ |
|  | PATRICK |  |
|  | PARKER |  |
|  |  | VARJO |
|  |  | MEATHEAD DAD |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #1 |
|  |  | CYSGOD |
|  |  | POLICE OFFICER |
|  |  | LORRAINE CINDER |
|  |  | TROOPER |
|  |  | TELLER |
|  |  | ANINO |
|  | CHRIS CUOMO |  |
| SCATH |  |  |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #1 |
|  |  | SHADOWY FIGURE |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #2 |
|  |  | CONGRESSIONAL COG |
|  |  | ANALYST |
|  |  | NEWSCASTER |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #2 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE |
|  |  | TEAMMATE |
|  |  | TOAD |
|  |  | MORITI |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #3 |
|  |  | YOUNG KID |
|  | PUNK |  |
|  |  | BUREAUCRAT #1 |
|  |  | SHERIFF |

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 is specified as heterosexual.
* The script contains 28 character opportunities to increase LGBTQ+ diversity.

Characters by LGBTQ+ Status

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **LGBTQ+ CHARACTER** | **HETEROSEXUAL CHARACTER** | **SEXUALITY UNSPECIFIED** |
|  | DAVID |  |
|  | KYRAH |  |
|  | CINDER |  |
|  |  | KY |
|  | AUNTIE |  |
|  | UNC |  |
|  |  | FRITZ |
|  |  | PATRICK |
|  |  | PARKER |
|  |  | VARJO |
|  |  | MEATHEAD DAD |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #1 |
|  |  | CYSGOD |
|  |  | POLICE OFFICER |
|  | LORRAINE CINDER |  |
|  | TROOPER |  |
|  |  | TELLER |
|  |  | ANINO |
|  | CHRIS CUOMO |  |
|  |  | SCATH |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #1 |
|  |  | SHADOWY FIGURE |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #2 |
|  |  | CONGRESSIONAL COG |
|  |  | ANALYST |
|  |  | NEWSCASTER |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #2 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE |
|  |  | TEAMMATE |
|  |  | TOAD |
|  |  | MORITI |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #3 |
|  |  | YOUNG KID |
|  |  | PUNK |
|  |  | BUREAUCRAT #1 |
|  |  | SHERIFF |

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. |
| **NO** | 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). |
| **NO** | 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.***

* 1 character is specified as having a physical, cognitive, or communication disability.
* The leading character is shown having a disability.
* The script contains 34 character opportunities to increase disability diversity.

Characters by Disability Status

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER WITH DISABILITY** | **CHARACTER WITHOUT DISABILITY** | **DISABILITY STATUS UNSPECIFIED** |
| DAVID |  |  |
|  |  | KYRAH |
|  |  | CINDER |
|  |  | KY |
|  |  | AUNTIE |
|  |  | UNC |
|  |  | FRITZ |
|  |  | PATRICK |
|  |  | PARKER |
|  |  | VARJO |
|  |  | MEATHEAD DAD |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #1 |
|  |  | CYSGOD |
|  |  | POLICE OFFICER |
|  |  | LORRAINE CINDER |
|  |  | TROOPER |
|  |  | TELLER |
|  |  | ANINO |
|  | CHRIS CUOMO |  |
|  |  | SCATH |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #1 |
|  |  | SHADOWY FIGURE |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #2 |
|  |  | CONGRESSIONAL COG |
|  |  | ANALYST |
|  |  | NEWSCASTER |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #2 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE |
|  |  | TEAMMATE |
|  |  | TOAD |
|  |  | MORITI |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #3 |
|  |  | YOUNG KID |
|  |  | PUNK |
|  |  | BUREAUCRAT #1 |
|  |  | SHERIFF |

The Marlee Matlin Test

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **In order to pass the Marlee Matlin test, a script/manuscript must have:** | |
| **YES** | At least one prominent character (leading, co-leading, supporting character) with a physical, cognitive, or communication disability who; |
| **YES** | Is not depicted with disability stereotypes or tropes. |



**Age (50+) Analysis**

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

* 3 characters are specified as ages 50+.
* The leading character is under 50.
* The script contains 25 character opportunities to increase age diversity.

Characters by Age

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER 50+** | **CHARACTER UNDER 50** | **AGE UNSPECIFIED** |
|  | DAVID |  |
|  |  | KYRAH |
| CINDER |  |  |
|  | KY |  |
|  | AUNTIE |  |
|  | UNC |  |
|  |  | FRITZ |
|  | PATRICK |  |
|  | PARKER |  |
|  |  | VARJO |
|  |  | MEATHEAD DAD |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #1 |
|  |  | CYSGOD |
|  |  | POLICE OFFICER |
|  |  | LORRAINE CINDER |
| TROOPER |  |  |
|  |  | TELLER |
|  |  | ANINO |
| CHRIS CUOMO |  |  |
|  |  | SCATH |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #1 |
|  |  | SHADOWY FIGURE |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #2 |
|  |  | CONGRESSIONAL COG |
|  |  | ANALYST |
|  |  | NEWSCASTER |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #2 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE |
|  | TEAMMATE |  |
|  |  | TOAD |
|  |  | MORITI |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #3 |
|  | YOUNG KID |  |
|  |  | PUNK |
|  |  | BUREAUCRAT #1 |
|  |  | SHERIFF |

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.***

* 1 character is specified as having a large body type.
* The leading character is not specified as having a large body type.
* The script contains 29 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** |
|  | DAVID |  |
|  |  | KYRAH |
|  | CINDER |  |
|  |  | KY |
|  |  | AUNTIE |
|  |  | UNC |
|  | FRITZ |  |
|  | PATRICK |  |
|  | PARKER |  |
| VARJO |  |  |
|  |  | MEATHEAD DAD |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #1 |
|  |  | CYSGOD |
|  |  | POLICE OFFICER |
|  |  | LORRAINE CINDER |
|  |  | TROOPER |
|  |  | TELLER |
|  |  | ANINO |
|  | CHRIS CUOMO |  |
|  |  | SCATH |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #1 |
|  |  | SHADOWY FIGURE |
|  |  | SHADY SLEAZEBALL #2 |
|  |  | CONGRESSIONAL COG |
|  |  | ANALYST |
|  |  | NEWSCASTER |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #2 |
|  |  | EMPLOYEE |
|  |  | TEAMMATE |
|  |  | TOAD |
|  |  | MORITI |
|  |  | BANK ROBBER #3 |
|  |  | YOUNG KID |
|  |  | PUNK |
|  |  | BUREAUCRAT #1 |
|  |  | SHERIFF |

The Cooper Test

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **In order to pass the Cooper test, a script/manuscript must have:** | |
| **YES** | At least one prominent character (leading, co-leading, supporting character) with a large body type who; |
| **YES** | 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** | **NO** | **NO** |
| **Character of Color** | **YES** |  | **NO** | **YES** | **NO** | **NO** |
| **LGBTQ+ Character** | **NO** | **NO** |  | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** |
| **Character with a Disability** | **NO** | **YES** | **NO** |  | **NO** | **NO** |
| **Character 50+** | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** |  | **NO** |
| **Character with Large Body Type** | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** |  |

**Positive Aspects**

* This script is a great action film featuring prominent Black leads. It also features a Black man with a disability. These representations are rare and wonderful.
* The opening scene where Ky says his mother is “stronger than Black Panther” is a great gender role reversal.
* David, a Black man, is portrayed as an attentive, caring father. He and his partner Kyrah have non-traditional gender roles. Kyrah is a highly-proficient sharpshooter who protects the family from danger while David is a stay-at-home dad.
* Racial inequality within the criminal justice system is pointed out during David’s interaction with the officers who first arrive at the bank (who assume he is a criminal) and his interaction with the Trooper who pulls him over.

**Potential Pitfalls**

* Potential Sexism: Avoid depicting Kyrah, Anino, and Moriti as the Fighting Fuck Toy trope.
* Potential Sexism: Some gender slurs and derogatory terms/phrases are used that could easily be replaced with equally degrading terms that don’t play on gender:
  + “Talk shit now, bitch” could be “talk shit now, asshole”
  + “That’s what I thought, bitch” could be “that’s what I thought, coward”
  + “pussy-ass tourists” could be “pansy-assed tourists”
  + “Couple of pussies dressed up as dicks”
  + “Wade on in bitches” could be “Wade on in fuckers”
  + “something to say about how shit go down here and you gonna see it, up-close-personal-point-blank-style, bitch” could end with “asshole”
  + “--BITCH-ASS!-- could be “shit ass”
  + “I hope you getting right with God right about now, motherfucker...‘Cuz he about to call you home, bitch” could end with “asshole”
  + “Yup. With Unc spending the rest of his bitch-ass life in prison, I’m back on the market” could be “pathetic fucking life”