**Spellcheck For Bias: *THE VALET***

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 VALET* 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 *THE VALET*, 54 characters met this criterion:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER NAME** | **LINE COUNT** |
| ANTONIO | 500 |
| OLIVIA | 450 |
| GEORGE | 189 |
| BENNY | 87 |
| ISABEL | 84 |
| KATHRYN | 68 |
| DANIEL | 53 |
| STEGMAN | 52 |
| CECILIA | 47 |
| NATALIE | 43 |
| JAVIER | 43 |
| PEREZ | 39 |
| MARCO | 36 |
| RUDY | 36 |
| AMANDA | 27 |
| CLARA | 25 |
| BLANCA | 14 |
| JENNIFER | 11 |
| WAITER | 7 |
| MR. KIM | 6 |
| BOND TRADER’S GIRLFRIEND | 6 |
| NANCY O’DELL | 6 |
| SOFIA | 4 |
| UBER DRIVER (DAVE) | 4 |
| BOND TRADER | 4 |
| LIMO DRIVER | 4 |
| TEENAGED BOY | 4 |
| LU | 3 |
| POOL MAN | 3 |
| GRANDDAUGHTER | 3 |
| COUNCILMAN GARCIA | 3 |
| DANTE | 2 |
| PAPARAZZI #1 | 2 |
| PAPARAZZI #2 | 2 |
| IVY VALET | 2 |
| PAPARAZZI #3 | 2 |
| PAPARAZZI #4 | 2 |
| PAPARAZZI #5 | 2 |
| HOST | 2 |
| ANA PATRICIA | 2 |
| ITALIAN MODEL | 2 |
| FASHION DESIGNER | 2 |
| STYLISH WOMAN | 2 |
| CASHIER | 2 |
| PAPARAZZI #7 | 2 |
| DRIVER #1 | 1 |
| CUSTOMER | 1 |
| KOREAN KID | 1 |
| CHUCHO | 1 |
| DISHWASHER | 1 |
| COOK | 1 |
| DJ | 1 |
| RANDY | 1 |
| DRIVER #2 | 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.***

* 17 characters are specified as female.
* The leading character is male.
* The script contains 14 character opportunities to increase gender diversity.

Characters by Gender

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **FEMALE CHARACTER** | **MALE CHARACTER** | **GENDER UNSPECIFIED** |
|  | ANTONIO |  |
| OLIVIA |  |  |
|  | GEORGE |  |
|  | BENNY |  |
| ISABEL |  |  |
| KATHRYN |  |  |
|  | DANIEL |  |
|  | STEGMAN |  |
| CECILIA |  |  |
| NATALIE |  |  |
|  | JAVIER |  |
|  | PEREZ |  |
|  | MARCO |  |
|  | RUDY |  |
| AMANDA |  |  |
| CLARA |  |  |
| BLANCA |  |  |
| JENNIFER |  |  |
|  | WAITER |  |
|  | MR. KIM |  |
| BOND TRADER’S GIRLFRIEND |  |  |
| NANCY O’DELL |  |  |
| SOFIA |  |  |
|  | UBER DRIVER (DAVE) |  |
|  | BOND TRADER |  |
|  |  | LIMO DRIVER |
|  | TEENAGED BOY |  |
| LU |  |  |
|  | POOL MAN |  |
| GRANDDAUGHTER |  |  |
|  | COUNCILMAN GARCIA |  |
|  | DANTE |  |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #1 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #2 |
|  |  | IVY VALET |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #3 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #4 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #5 |
|  |  | HOST |
| ANA PATRICIA |  |  |
| ITALIAN MODEL |  |  |
|  |  | FASHION DESIGNER |
| STYLISH WOMAN |  |  |
|  |  | CASHIER |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #7 |
|  | DRIVER #1 |  |
|  | CUSTOMER |  |
|  |  | KOREAN KID |
|  | CHUCHO |  |
|  |  | DISHWASHER |
|  |  | COOK |
|  |  | DJ |
|  | RANDY |  |
|  | DRIVER #2 |  |

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.***

* 24 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** |
| ANTONIO |  |  |
|  | OLIVIA |  |
|  |  | GEORGE |
| BENNY |  |  |
| ISABEL |  |  |
|  |  | KATHRYN |
|  |  | DANIEL |
|  |  | STEGMAN |
| CECILIA |  |  |
| NATALIE |  |  |
| JAVIER |  |  |
| PEREZ |  |  |
| MARCO |  |  |
| RUDY |  |  |
|  |  | AMANDA |
| CLARA |  |  |
| BLANCA |  |  |
|  |  | JENNIFER |
|  |  | WAITER |
| MR. KIM |  |  |
|  |  | BOND TRADER’S GIRLFRIEND |
|  | NANCY O’DELL |  |
| SOFIA |  |  |
|  |  | UBER DRIVER (DAVE) |
|  |  | BOND TRADER |
|  |  | LIMO DRIVER |
|  |  | TEENAGED BOY |
| LU |  |  |
| POOL MAN |  |  |
| GRANDDAUGHTER |  |  |
| COUNCILMAN GARCIA |  |  |
| DANTE |  |  |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #1 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #2 |
| IVY VALET |  |  |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #3 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #4 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #5 |
|  |  | HOST |
| ANA PATRICIA |  |  |
|  |  | ITALIAN MODEL |
|  |  | FASHION DESIGNER |
|  |  | STYLISH WOMAN |
|  |  | CASHIER |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #7 |
|  |  | DRIVER #1 |
|  |  | CUSTOMER |
| KOREAN KID |  |  |
| CHUCHO |  |  |
| DISHWASHER |  |  |
| COOK |  |  |
|  |  | DJ |
|  |  | RANDY |
|  |  | DRIVER #2 |

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.***

* 1 speaking character is specified as LGBTQ+.
* The leading character is specified as heterosexual.
* The script contains 33 character opportunities to increase LGBTQ+ diversity.

Characters by LGBTQ+ Status

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **LGBTQ+ CHARACTER** | **HETEROSEXUAL CHARACTER** | **SEXUALITY UNSPECIFIED** |
|  | ANTONIO |  |
|  | OLIVIA |  |
|  | GEORGE |  |
|  | BENNY |  |
|  | ISABEL |  |
|  | KATHRYN |  |
|  |  | DANIEL |
|  |  | STEGMAN |
|  | CECILIA |  |
|  | NATALIE |  |
|  |  | JAVIER |
|  |  | PEREZ |
|  | MARCO |  |
|  | RUDY |  |
|  |  | AMANDA |
|  | CLARA |  |
|  |  | BLANCA |
|  |  | JENNIFER |
|  |  | WAITER |
|  | MR. KIM |  |
|  | BOND TRADER’S GIRLFRIEND |  |
|  | NANCY O’DELL |  |
|  | SOFIA |  |
|  |  | UBER DRIVER (DAVE) |
|  | BOND TRADER |  |
|  |  | LIMO DRIVER |
|  | TEENAGED BOY |  |
|  |  | LU |
|  |  | POOL MAN |
|  |  | GRANDDAUGHTER |
|  |  | COUNCILMAN GARCIA |
|  |  | DANTE |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #1 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #2 |
|  |  | IVY VALET |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #3 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #4 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #5 |
|  |  | HOST |
|  | ANA PATRICIA |  |
|  | ITALIAN MODEL |  |
|  |  | FASHION DESIGNER |
|  |  | STYLISH WOMAN |
|  |  | CASHIER |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #7 |
|  |  | DRIVER #1 |
|  |  | CUSTOMER |
|  |  | KOREAN KID |
|  |  | CHUCHO |
|  |  | DISHWASHER |
|  |  | COOK |
|  |  | DJ |
|  | RANDY |  |
| DRIVER #2 |  |  |

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. |
| **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.***

* 0 characters are specified as having a physical, cognitive, or communication disability.
* The leading character is not shown having a disability.
* The script contains 54 character opportunities to increase disability diversity.

Characters by Disability Status

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER WITH DISABILITY** | **CHARACTER WITHOUT DISABILITY** | **DISABILITY STATUS UNSPECIFIED** |
|  |  | ANTONIO |
|  |  | OLIVIA |
|  |  | GEORGE |
|  |  | BENNY |
|  |  | ISABEL |
|  |  | KATHRYN |
|  |  | DANIEL |
|  |  | STEGMAN |
|  |  | CECILIA |
|  |  | NATALIE |
|  |  | JAVIER |
|  |  | PEREZ |
|  |  | MARCO |
|  |  | RUDY |
|  |  | AMANDA |
|  |  | CLARA |
|  |  | BLANCA |
|  |  | JENNIFER |
|  |  | WAITER |
|  |  | MR. KIM |
|  |  | BOND TRADER’S GIRLFRIEND |
|  |  | NANCY O’DELL |
|  |  | SOFIA |
|  |  | UBER DRIVER (DAVE) |
|  |  | BOND TRADER |
|  |  | LIMO DRIVER |
|  |  | TEENAGED BOY |
|  |  | LU |
|  |  | POOL MAN |
|  |  | GRANDDAUGHTER |
|  |  | COUNCILMAN GARCIA |
|  |  | DANTE |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #1 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #2 |
|  |  | IVY VALET |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #3 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #4 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #5 |
|  |  | HOST |
|  |  | ANA PATRICIA |
|  |  | ITALIAN MODEL |
|  |  | FASHION DESIGNER |
|  |  | STYLISH WOMAN |
|  |  | CASHIER |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #7 |
|  |  | DRIVER #1 |
|  |  | CUSTOMER |
|  |  | KOREAN KID |
|  |  | CHUCHO |
|  |  | DISHWASHER |
|  |  | COOK |
|  |  | DJ |
|  |  | RANDY |
|  |  | DRIVER #2 |

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; |
| **NO** | Is not depicted with disability stereotypes or tropes. |



**Age (50+) Analysis**

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

* 4 characters are specified as ages 50+.
* The leading character is under 50.
* The script contains 26 character opportunities to increase age diversity.

Characters by Age

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CHARACTER 50+** | **CHARACTER UNDER 50** | **AGE UNSPECIFIED** |
|  | ANTONIO |  |
|  | OLIVIA |  |
|  | GEORGE |  |
|  | BENNY |  |
|  | ISABEL |  |
|  | KATHRYN |  |
|  | DANIEL |  |
|  | STEGMAN |  |
| CECILIA |  |  |
|  | NATALIE |  |
|  |  | JAVIER |
|  | PEREZ |  |
|  | MARCO |  |
|  |  | RUDY |
|  | AMANDA |  |
|  | CLARA |  |
|  | BLANCA |  |
|  | JENNIFER |  |
|  |  | WAITER |
| MR. KIM |  |  |
|  |  | BOND TRADER’S GIRLFRIEND |
| NANCY O’DELL |  |  |
|  | SOFIA |  |
|  | UBER DRIVER (DAVE) |  |
|  |  | BOND TRADER |
|  |  | LIMO DRIVER |
|  | TEENAGED BOY |  |
|  | LU |  |
|  |  | POOL MAN |
|  | GRANDDAUGHTER |  |
|  |  | COUNCILMAN GARCIA |
|  | DANTE |  |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #1 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #2 |
|  |  | IVY VALET |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #3 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #4 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #5 |
|  |  | HOST |
|  | ANA PATRICIA |  |
|  |  | ITALIAN MODEL |
|  |  | FASHION DESIGNER |
| STYLISH WOMAN |  |  |
|  |  | CASHIER |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #7 |
|  |  | DRIVER #1 |
|  |  | CUSTOMER |
|  | KOREAN KID |  |
|  |  | CHUCHO |
|  |  | DISHWASHER |
|  |  | COOK |
|  |  | DJ |
|  | RANDY |  |
|  |  | DRIVER #2 |

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 51 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** |
|  |  | ANTONIO |
|  |  | OLIVIA |
|  |  | GEORGE |
|  |  | BENNY |
|  |  | ISABEL |
|  |  | KATHRYN |
|  |  | DANIEL |
|  |  | STEGMAN |
|  |  | CECILIA |
|  |  | NATALIE |
|  |  | JAVIER |
| PEREZ |  |  |
|  | MARCO |  |
|  |  | RUDY |
|  |  | AMANDA |
|  |  | CLARA |
|  |  | BLANCA |
|  |  | JENNIFER |
|  |  | WAITER |
|  |  | MR. KIM |
|  |  | BOND TRADER’S GIRLFRIEND |
|  | NANCY O’DELL |  |
|  |  | SOFIA |
|  |  | UBER DRIVER (DAVE) |
|  |  | BOND TRADER |
|  |  | LIMO DRIVER |
|  |  | TEENAGED BOY |
|  |  | LU |
|  |  | POOL MAN |
|  |  | GRANDDAUGHTER |
|  |  | COUNCILMAN GARCIA |
|  |  | DANTE |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #1 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #2 |
|  |  | IVY VALET |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #3 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #4 |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #5 |
|  |  | HOST |
|  | ANA PATRICIA |  |
|  |  | ITALIAN MODEL |
|  |  | FASHION DESIGNER |
|  |  | STYLISH WOMAN |
|  |  | CASHIER |
|  |  | PAPARAZZI #7 |
|  |  | DRIVER #1 |
|  |  | CUSTOMER |
|  |  | KOREAN KID |
|  |  | CHUCHO |
|  |  | DISHWASHER |
|  |  | COOK |
|  |  | DJ |
|  |  | RANDY |
|  |  | DRIVER #2 |

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; |
| **NO** | 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** | **YES** |
| **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** | **YES** | **NO** | **NO** | **NO** |  |

**Positive Aspects**

* The story of Cecilia as an immigrant mother and Antonio as a first-generation American is very relatable and tells a difficult story in a positive way.
* It is really great to see folks like Natalie being a shop owner and Mr. Kim being a landlord—both holding jobs outside the realm of service.
* Cecilia and Mr. Kim are positive representations of characters ages 50+ (i.e., finding new love, being active, working, caring for family, etc.).
* The story of gentrification underlying Antonio’s town and the victory they eventually receive is positive.
* Writing the bike mechanic as a woman (Natalie) is a great gender role reversal.
* The scene where Natalie is being teased for not speaking Spanish well is a good way to show diversity amongst Latinx people who are often stereotyped as being “Mexican” and Spanish speakers.
* The critical commentary on women in Hollywood starving themselves to fit into dresses is good. Olivia acknowledges that it’s not at all healthy.
* Antonio encouraging his son’s acting career is a great depiction of healthy masculinity.

**Potential Pitfalls**

* **Racial Stereotypes**: The script creates a stark contrast between the wealthy worlds of Olivia/Kathryn who are served by Latinx people and the urban life of Antonio. However, there is little complexity/diversity in the representations of people of color. The characters of color that we see live in a segregated *ghetto* of LA are almost all service workers (i.e., the valets, the poolman, gardeners, the housekeeper). We also see several specific Latinx (i.e. the Gardener, the Maid, the Non-English Speaker, poor/coming from poverty, undocumented) and Asian (i.e., the Non-English Speaker) tropes and stereotypes portrayed throughout the script. This reinforces a bevy of racial stereotypes about people of color being poor, in service professions, less educated, etc. More diversity in character of color is needed. Some easy way to do this:
  + Cast Latinx and other BIPOC characters as bosses, managers, etc. Perhaps Daniel, premiere attendees, etc. could be people of color.
  + Show Clara, who has moved up the socioeconomic ladder, being more helpful and supportive of her family instead of separating her, which implies it’s because of her success/new social class.
  + Cast white characters in service positions, perhaps as young actors trying to get their break (which is typical in the settings in this script).
* **Potential Racial Appropriation**: Kathryn uses the word “pow-wow” which can be considered Native American [appropriation](https://www.insider.com/native-american-offensive-racist-things-2020-1).
* **Potential Racial Stereotypes**: Mr. Kim speaking broken English reinforces the stereotype that immigrants mostly speak broken English.
* **Potential Racism**: The scene where Antonio picks up a pitcher of water in a restaurant after being confused as the busboy reinforces the idea that he thinks of himself as being in service to white people. Latinx people get stereotyped as servers all the time, so the idea that he would just jump into the busboy role robs him of an agency he would likely have. The same with the later scene at the premiere when he is mistaken for being a server. This theme, coupled with the theme that Antonio doesn’t want something better for himself (Isabel’s words) makes it seem like Antonio is to blame for not getting ahead, instead of systemic racism. Perhaps show him with more agency and pushing back against these stereotypes and mistreatment, but with little success because institutional and structural racism are hard to counteract on an individual level.
* **Potential Gender Stereotypes**: Many of the women in this script are reduced to sex objects and degraded in specifically gendered ways. Women’s worth being tied to their appearance and their “fuckability” is a primary theme in this script, especially for the women of color:
  + “I’d hit that”
  + “An attractive gear-head”
  + “I’m a horny rich bitch”
  + “Never have an affair with a woman who doesn’t need your money”
  + “A little pear shaped, but she has a nice smile, right?”
  + “A vision of hotness”
  + “The hottie with the fur boots”

Less sexually objectifying commentary from characters and camera angles, and more casting of women with diverse appearances would flip the cliche of women as sex objects.

* **Potential Sexism**: Dante, a 9-year-old, sexually objectifying a grown woman (“I’d hit that”) along with Benny, a grown man, is gratuitous to the plot and asks the audience to laugh off a boy and a man reducing a woman to a sex object.
* **Potential Sexism**: Clara, a school principal, described as “less nurturing than you would expect,” suggests that women are expected to be nurturing, or that women in power are expected to be nurturing.
* **Potential LGBTQ Stereotypes**: If Lu is casted as a queer woman, we should be careful not to portray her with the LGBTQ+ stereotypes of being a Manly Lesbian or very masculine, which can be counteracted by more in-depth development of her character.
* **Potential Sizeism**: Perez epitomizes stereotypes about people with large body types. He is constantly eating, which serves as comic relief and makes his weight a running punchline. His character could still be shown as a food connoisseur, but more backstory and fewer moments of physical comedy with food would be more humanizing.