

Georgia State University

ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University

---

Sociology Theses

Department of Sociology

---

Fall 12-17-2019

## Creative Industries: Behind the Scenes Inequalities

Sierra C. Nicely

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/sociology\\_theses](https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/sociology_theses)

---

### Recommended Citation

Nicely, Sierra C., "Creative Industries: Behind the Scenes Inequalities." Thesis, Georgia State University, 2019.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.57709/15884571>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Department of Sociology at ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sociology Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ Georgia State University. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@gsu.edu](mailto:scholarworks@gsu.edu).

# CREATIVE INDUSTRIES: BEHIND THE SCENES INEQUALITIES

by

SIERRA NICELY

Under the Direction of Wendy Simonds, PhD

## ABSTRACT

Film has been a major influence since its creation in the early 20th century. Women have always been involved in the creation of film as a cultural product. However, they have rarely been given positions of power in major film productions. Using qualitative approaches, I examine the different ways in which men and women directors approach creating film. I examine 20 films, half were directed by men and half by women. I selected the twenty films out of two movie genres: Action and Romantic Comedy. These genres were chosen because of their very gendered marketing. My focus was on the different ways in which gender was shown on screen and the differences in approach by men and women directors. The research showed differences in approach of gender but also different approaches in race and sexuality. Future studies should include more analysis on differences by race and sexuality.

**INDEX WORDS:** Creative industries, Film, Gender, Gender segregation, Representation, Content analysis, Cultural production

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES: BEHIND THE SCENES INEQUALITIES

by

SIERRA NICELY

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2019

Copyright by  
Sierra Colleene Nicely  
2019

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES: BEHIND THE SCENES INEQUALITIES

by

SIERRA NICELY

Committee Chair: Wendy Simonds, PhD

Committee: Katie Acosta, PhD

Elisabeth Burgess, PhD

Electronic Version Approved:

Office of Graduate Studies

College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

December 2019

## **DEDICATION**

Thank you to the committee who stuck with me through this very long journey. Thank you to every friend, family member, and stranger who told me I could do this. Thank you to my family who told me that they would love me even if I never finished graduate school. Thank you to the friends who helped me recover after each round of self-esteem crushing revisions. Thank you to every director out there who gives the new generation the chance to be the hero of the story.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

A formal thank you to my committee members: Wendy Simonds, Katie Acosta, and Elizabeth Burgess. I know we are all pleased this is the final version of this document. A special thanks to Jennifer Craft Morgan who helped me see the light at the end of the tunnel and finally turn in the last draft. Finally, a thanks to every teacher out there who pushed me to do better.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>		<b>v</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>		<b>x</b>
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>2.1 Film History</b>		<b>2</b>
2.1.1 <i>History</i>		2
2.1.2 <i>Power Shift</i>		4
2.1.3 <i>Women Directors</i>		5
<b>2.2 Occupational Segregation</b>		<b>6</b>
2.2.1 <i>Contacts Culture/ Compulsory Sociality &amp; Homophilia</i>		6
2.2.2 <i>Motherhood and Domestic Life</i>		6
2.2.3 <i>Illusion of Diversity</i>		7
<b>2.3 Occupational Segregation</b>		<b>8</b>
2.3.1 <i>Cultural and Creative Industries as an Industry Perspective</i>		8
<b>2.4 Theory</b>		<b>9</b>
2.4.1 <i>Male Gaze as a Larger Visual Perspective</i>		9
2.4.2 <i>Social Learning Theory</i>		10
2.4.3 <i>Intersectionality</i>		11
2.4.4 <i>Work and Structural Sexism</i>		12



2.4.5	<i>Sexual Harassment</i> .....	13
2.5	<b>Opportunities in the Industry</b> .....	13
2.5.1	<i>Lack of Mentorship in the Industry</i> .....	13
3	<b>METHODS</b> .....	14
3.1	<b>Qualitative Analysis</b> .....	16
3.1.1	<i>Open Coding</i> .....	16
3.1.2	<i>What is a Main Character</i> .....	17
3.1.3	<i>Bechdel Test</i> .....	17
3.1.4	<i>Mako Mori Test</i> .....	17
3.1.5	<i>Ava Duvernay Test</i> .....	18
3.1.6	<i>Vito Russo Test</i> .....	18
3.1.7	<i>Socioeconomic Status</i> .....	18
4	<b>RESULTS</b> .....	19
4.1	<b>Gender Diversity of Protagonists</b> .....	19
4.2	<b>Bechdel Test</b> .....	22
4.3	<b>Mako Mori Test</b> .....	23
4.4	<b>Racial Diversity</b> .....	24
4.5	<b>Socioeconomic Test</b> .....	25
4.6	<b>Rape Culture</b> .....	26
4.7	<b>Homophobia by Gender</b> .....	27

<b>5</b>	<b>DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS .....</b>	<b>29</b>
5.1	Limitations .....	30
5.2	Recommendations and Future Work .....	31
5.3	Conclusion.....	32
	<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>33</b>
	<b>APPENDIX: FILM SUMMARIES .....</b>	<b>39</b>
	Appendix A.1: How to be Single .....	39
	Appendix A.2: Paper Towns .....	39
	Appendix A.3: Trainwreck.....	40
	Appendix A.4: About Last Night .....	41
	Appendix A.5: Silver Linings Playbook.....	42
	Appendix A.6: Me Before You .....	43
	Appendix A.7: Bridget Jones Baby .....	45
	Appendix A.8: Maggie's Plan.....	46
	Appendix A.9: The Obvious Child .....	47
	Appendix A.10: Beyond the Lights .....	48
	Appendix A.11: Captain America: Civil War .....	49
	Appendix A.12: Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens .....	50
	Appendix A.13: Skyfall.....	51
	Appendix A.14: Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2 .....	52

<b>Appendix A.15: The Dark Knight .....</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Appendix A.16: Underworld 5 .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Appendix A.17: Turbo Kid .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Appendix A.18: Zero Dark Thirty .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Appendix A.19: Red Riding Hood .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>Appendix A.20: The Hurt Locker .....</b>	<b>56</b>

**LIST OF TABLES**

<i>Table 3.1 Films Selected for Analysis</i> .....	16
<i>Table 4.1 Film Protagonist Breakdown by Gender</i> .....	19
<i>Table 4.2 Measures for Film Romantic Comedies</i> .....	20
<i>Table 4.3 Measures for Film Action</i> .....	21

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In my thesis, I examined major motion pictures and how the gender of the individuals in directorial roles shape films as cultural productions. I discovered the different ways in which men and women directors approached gender-targeted movies. Through examining twenty films, I drew conclusions about how the gender of directors shaped the film industry. According to Bourdieu and Johnson, "Cultural production is the site of struggles in which what is at stake is the power to impose the dominant definition of the writer and therefore to delimit the population of those entitled to take part in the struggle to define the writer" (Bourdieu and Johnson 1993 p. 42). People who created high-grossing major motion pictures had the power to create or shape worldviews on a massive scale (Slide 2012). The large-scale distribution of information through film is a powerful tool for creating and maintaining social norms. For example, the over-representation of wealthy, white, heterosexual men in film gave preference to these groups through oversaturation in media. Additionally, the under-representation of the poor, women, people of color, and LGBTQ individuals onscreen maintain our culture's dominant power structure by visually erasing historically marginalized groups. I explored the differences of character portrayals in film based on the gender of the director. Specifically, I looked at: Who are the main characters? What are they doing? Whose stories are being told? What demographics are being represented in the films? There is an abundance of literature on film production as a male-dominated field. However, there is limited sociological literature on the comparison of perspective based on the gender of the director.

As part of my thesis, I explored the ways that change in film across time structure the gender directorial inequality. Over time, the film industry targeted narrower audiences. I explored this in greater detail in the Literature Review. Gender-targeted films are films marketed to a specific

gender based on sociocultural understandings of what a particular group would like to watch. For example, the film industry markets action movies toward men and boys; and markets romantic comedies toward women and girls (White 2009; Sun, Bridges, Wosnitzer, and Liberman 2008). My thesis examined the different ways in which men and women directors approached gender-targeted movies. I evaluated this subject by analyzing a selection of twenty gender-targeted films from the past eight years. I used content analysis to examine the script as well as the films themselves to discover whether women-directors approached major motion pictures in the same way as men-directors (Singleton and Straits 2005). I explored how men and women directors approached film with different visual, auditory, and emotional cues within the films themselves. My main research questions were: 1) What are the differences in the films of men and women directors? 2) What are the differences in approach of men and women directors towards films in Action and Romantic Comedy Films?

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Film History**

I utilized historical framing because it situates film and the people who create it in a sociocultural context. I began this literature review with an overview of film history in order to familiarize readers with the context. Additionally, this section situates film as a medium in a socio-historical context.

#### **2.1.1 History**

Film historians divided American film into two major historical periods - "Classical" and "Post-Classical" (Bordwell et al. 1960, Corrigan 1998, Kramer 2000). The "Classical Period" encompassed the "Silent Era" and the "Studio Era"(Bordwell et al. 1960). "The Silent Era" ranges from the beginning of film through the late 1920s and, as the name indicated, was the era

before film utilized audio tracks and sound. (Bordwell et al. 1960). The introduction of sound brought about the "Studio Era" which encompassed all films made from the late 1920s through the late 1950s (Bordwell et al. 1960, Corrigan 1998, Kramer 2000).

The Studio Era of Hollywood brought to power individual studios that had control over the personal and professional lives of individual actors (Kramer 2000). The studios fell into decline for two reasons: with the advent and accessibility of home televisions, attendance at movie theaters decreased markedly; and second, the 1948 Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) ruling that Hollywood studios had to give up their financial shares in local movie theaters. The Federal Trade Commission maintained that the studios had too much concentrated financial power with studio interests in the theater chains. This concentrated financial power created a situation that did not allow for competition in the market. The advent of television and the FTC's ruling - in combination with the larger societal movements of the 1960s and 1970s - brought the once powerful studios into decline.

After this decline, those in power in Hollywood (heads of studios) started to look for new and innovative ways to make money off of films. During this transitional phase in the Hollywood film industry, the studio leaders (or heads) realized that films appealing to the changing nature of society with younger directors could be the solution (Corrigan 1998, Kramer 2000). The studios' decisions to take a calculated risk on a new generation of directors ushered in the "Post-Classical" period of film (Corrigan 1998, Kramer 2000).

The "Post-Classical" period encompassed the "New Hollywood Era" and the "Contemporary Film Era" (Corrigan 1998, Kramer 2000). "The New Hollywood Era" took place during the 1960s and 1970s with individual directors gaining success with less restrictive and more innovative movies. The "New Hollywood Era" was also a different occupational landscape from

the previous studio-centered world. Instead of actors being beholden to the studios, power shifted to actors, who now had a larger degree of freedom in film projects, and to the agencies which recruited them (Corrigan 1998, Kramer 2000). There was still a power dynamic between the studios. The studios funded the projects, and the actors, directors, and producers, who created the films, the power dynamic shifted positively for the creators (Corrigan 1998, Kramer 2000).

"The Contemporary Film Era" began in the 1980s and extended until the present day. Until this point, the film industry produced movies for broad audiences. As the power transitioned away from studios during the Post-Classical period, films focused on niche audiences. In particular, studios began marketing specific film genres to audiences based on gender (Lane 2000, Cooper 2010).

### **2.1.2 Power Shift**

The "Old Hollywood" model, regarding style and direction, extended from the beginning of film until the 1970s (Rich 2013, Cooper 2010). During this period, the film industry used a broad marketing strategy that separated the films into family targeted movies and adult-targeted movies (Lane 2000). Between the years of 1918 and 1970, the film industry produced significantly fewer genre films than from 1970 to the present day (Lane 2000). In the 1970s the studios were not making back what they were spending on production. In an attempt to take advantage of countercultural movements, and thus find a financially lucrative market, film studios sought to change the kinds of films they were making (Lane 2000). As a result, film studios introduced a new style of movie. In this "New Hollywood" a new kind of movie came to dominate the landscape: the "blockbuster" (Rich 2013). The opportunities to direct these new styles of movies went to young male directors such as Spielberg and Lucas (Rich 2013). A blockbuster is a colloquial term defining a highly commercially successful film (Rich 2013). Film franchises



such as *Star Wars* and *Back to the Future* are popular examples of blockbusters. Due to the release of “blockbuster” movies, Hollywood was forced to change its marketing approach from generally-targeted movies with a broad audience in mind to specifically-targeted movies with a narrow audience in mind (Lane 2000, Cooper 2010). The “New Hollywood” era extends to the present day.

### **2.1.3 *Women Directors***

Despite the shifts in power away from studios to directors, women are still not reaching parity with men in the film world. There is a clear pattern of involvement for women in film since the inception of this form of media. Early on, women who directed films often worked jointly with a male counterpart, usually a husband (Slide 2012). When the industry first evolved, female directors often went uncredited for their contributions. These factors obscured the fact that more women participated in early film production than current credits indicate (Slide 2012). While there is an abundance of literature on women working in silent film, there is little to no literature for the “Old Hollywood” period. The lack of credits and opportunities for women in the film industry created a “boy’s club” atmosphere which continued the cycle of exclusion of women in film. Parity for women in Hollywood financially and in the number of directing opportunities has still not been achieved. However, there has been positive movement toward parity in other venues such as independent film. (White 2009; Sun, Bridges, Wosnitzer, and Liberman 2008). Female-directed films use independent film and film festivals to showcase their work (White 2009; Sun, Bridges, Wosnitzer, and Liberman 2008). While gender parity in independent film and film festivals is not yet a reality, these venues have more equity than mainstream Hollywood (Sun, Bridges, Wosnitzer, and Liberman 2008; Lane 2000).

## 2.2 Occupational Segregation

### 2.2.1 *Contacts Culture/ Compulsory Sociality & Homophilia*

For many in the industry, steady employment requires direct referrals to a future job once a current job ends. It requires being able to come into contact with the "right" people. Thanki and Jefferys (2007) refer to this structure as "contacts culture." Often this "contacts culture," is nourished through meetings on golf courses or other male-dominated arenas, which denies women opportunities open to men (Eikhof, Doris, and Warhurst 2013). The unstructured, informal nature of the film industry allows for "old boys' networks" to flourish. The problem with this simple, informal networking strategy is that it shuts out those who do not belong to white upper and middle-class male groups (Eikhof, Doris, and Warhurst 2013). As evidenced by the #metoo movement this is especially true if women won't submit to these men's advances (Sauer, Birgit, and Clara Knäpper Bohman 2017).

Creative industries participate in what Gregg (2010) calls "compulsory sociality." In "compulsory sociality" the line between work and leisure activities begins to blur, and networking becomes critical to success (Deuze 2007). The occurrence of *homophily* further complicates this issue, which Clare (2012) describes as the tendency to prefer interacting with people who are similar to oneself. In short, the project-based model of production (a multitude of tasks culminating in a final project) combined with "contacts culture" and "homophily" reinforce an environment of inequality (Eikhof et al. 2013, Clare 2012, Deuze 2007).

### 2.2.2 *Motherhood and Domestic Life*

Working women often pay a price for motherhood that men do not have to pay for fatherhood. The research shows that while holding work experience, qualifications, and background constant mothers were tagged as having less competence and commitment (Wilde et

al. 2010). This is known as “the motherhood penalty.” Further examples of this are when mothers are pushed into “mommy track” jobs. “Mommy Track” jobs are jobs often have more flexible hours and career paths (i.e. teachers) (Wilde et al. 2010). Even in cases where women do not have children there is an assumption that she will and because of this should be pushed into “mommy track” jobs. In the case of film, this kind of social structuring of women in the workplace continues to create barriers for women in the field (Wilde et al. 2010).

### ***2.2.3 Illusion of Diversity***

Individuals in the film industry pride themselves on accepting and participating in a wide diversity of lifestyles (Gill 2014; Eikhof, Doris, and Warhurst 2013). For example, the work atmosphere might be more casual with games, such as foosball, available for employees to indulge in during free moments. The film industry has a less strict dress code as compared to other industries. Specifically, employees with openly displayed tattoos and unnaturally colored hair being acceptable and in some cases, commonplace (Eikhof, Doris, and Warhurst 2013). Gill (2014) addresses some of the issues with this particular "workplace culture." Gill (2014) maintains that preference for more traditionally masculine interests such as foosball tables and large TV's with rotating sports programming occurs in many film industry workplaces. Gill (2014) interviewed workers in cultural and creative industries about their work environments and whether or not they saw the environments as masculine biased. Gill (2014) found that giving preference to traditionally masculine interests was unrecognized as preferential by the majority of the white, middle-class, men whom it benefitted. The workers whom the environment did not benefit (women) saw the masculine environment as an expected bias. The workers also reported that they tried to overcome or ignore the masculinist environment. The behavior and comments made in the predominantly white, male, middle-class workspace are in line with Bonilla-Silva's

conceptualization of "colorblind" racist systems (Bonilla-Silva 2006). The white, middle and upper-class, male film industry workers with privilege did not realize that they had it (Bonilla-Silva 2006; Eikhof, Doris, and Warhurst 2013). The superficial appearance of diversity with the less stringent dress code, alternative rules regarding tattoos and hairstyles, and neoliberal tendencies create the illusion of diversity, even though the employee base lacks real diversity (Randle et al., 2007). This phenomenon of a homogenous work culture leads to a "white middle-class monoculture" (Randle et al., 2007, p. 91).

## **2.3 Occupational Segregation**

### ***2.3.1 Cultural and Creative Industries as an Industry Perspective***

Rosalind Gill calls the film industry a "Cultural and Creative Industry" (Gill 2014, p. 72). These industries involve a creative element that is not easy to fit into a rigid structural design often found in other fields. According to Gill (2014), while those working in creative and cultural industries often see themselves as progressive in structure and egalitarian in practice, in reality, these fields are among the most unequal overall (Randle et al. 2007). Often the comments from those in creative and cultural industries reflect a post-identity ideology, which claims that the race, class, and gender of the creator do not matter so long as the work is creative. Because the majority of those working in creative and cultural industries are white, upper to middle class, heterosexual men, they may not be aware of the barriers to other groups because of their privileged position. The few women and people of color working in these same industries cite institutional barriers that prevent them from having equal professional opportunities (Randle et al. 2007).

According to Gill, cultural and creative industries require a structureless atmosphere (Gill 2014). A structureless atmosphere allows for the freedom to work unconventional hours and to

have an unconventional appearance. Additionally, it allows for people to work in an environment with few rules other than to produce a creative product. For people in the film industry, the creative occupational atmosphere also provides periods of time with extreme hours of creative focus and production alternating with no visible productivity (Randle et al., 2007). This kind of atmosphere necessitates employees with flexible schedules and access to resources that can accommodate this sort of schedule. Often "employees with a flexible lifestyle" equates to a white, middle-class, male schedule (Eikhof, Doris, and Warhurst 2013, (p. 25). White, middle-class men are more likely to have social and financial capital to have a flexible schedule. Additionally, they are more likely to have a partner doing the lion's share of the domestic-related chores (Eikhof, Doris, and Warhurst 2013, (p. 25).

## **2.4 Theory**

### ***2.4.1 Male Gaze as a Larger Visual Perspective***

Because film is a largely male-dominated industry, the stories and perspectives are largely male-oriented (Mulvey 1975). Film is a creative industry that creates culture (Mulvey 1975). Laura Mulvey's theoretical construct, the "male gaze" explores this concept (Mulvey 1975). Mulvey's concept involves three "looks" present in film. The "creative force" (the camera(man) or director) behind the camera makes the first look. The second look(s) in the film are the looks that the actors give as a reflection of their surroundings. For example, all of the nonverbal communication that takes place between the actors on screen. The third look is the audience and assumed consumer of this information/visual perspective message. The "male gaze" frames the consumer of this information as a presumed male audience.

In an industry where every major project is a gamble (significant investment on the front end with no guarantee on return) studio executives, investors, and agents tend to invest in films

similar to those that have worked in the past (Randle et al., 2007). In this case, what has been successful in the past are teams led by men with stories about men in positions of power.

Ultimately industry forces encourage directors to maintain the status quo and not to risk changes to a business model that has historically produced economic success (Randle et al., 2007).

The male gaze impacts the hiring rate for women directors because the success of movies shaped by the male gaze leads to people with power within the industry assuming that men can direct movies with women protagonists. However, decision-makers in the film industry question whether women can successfully shoot a film with a male protagonist (Sun, Bridges, Wosnitzer, and Liberman 2008).

#### ***2.4.2 Social Learning Theory***

Social learning theory shows the real world effects of exposure to a limited viewpoint through film (Bandura 1969). Theorist Albert Bandura posits that people learn by observing others (Bandura 1969). People model behaviors that they see in others based on the outcome that a specific behavior elicits. Bandura maintains that we are more likely to model the behavior of people similar to us than to model the behavior of people who are different (Bandura 1969). Social learning theory alleges that learning occurs if the following conditions are met: the person observing pays attention, remembers the behavior, can replicate the behavior has a motivation to do the behavior (Bandura 1969). For example, if a child sees a peer say, "Please" and "Thank You" and receives praise for this action, they have a motivation to replicate this behavior in order to receive praise. However, there is not an equitable reward distribution by behavior. Individuals receive positive reinforcement for behaving in ways consistent with their social position. For example, women receive positive societal reinforcement from other society members for behaving in ways deemed "feminine," while receiving negative reinforcement for

behaving in ways deemed "masculine." Men and women receive social rewards for performing different actions by other society members (Bandura 1969).

Social learning theory is particularly relevant when examining film. One of the key elements to social learning theory is that people are more likely to model the behaviors of people similar to themselves (Bandura 1969). For example, if women grow up seeing film versions of women spending their lives in pursuit of a relationship with a man they learn that this is expected behavior.

### **2.4.3 *Intersectionality***

Kimberle Crenshaw's theory of intersectionality states that aspects of human categorization do not exist separately, but rather inform each other in their relationships with one another (Crenshaw 1991). Race, sex, gender, and social class do not exist separately and examining them separately misses the cumulative effect of complicated variables (Crenshaw 1991). Specifically, people who belong to several historically oppressed groups are often overlooked or asked to choose only one of their identities (Bandura 1969). My thesis examines the different ways in which these identity relationships play out on screen. Previous research indicates that films will be largely white, upper middle class, heterosexual, and male (Randle et al. 2007). These demographics match the directors of the films. Intersectionality assists in my thesis's articulation of how the different multifaceted identities behind the camera affect the construction of the identities in front of the camera. While my thesis focuses primarily on gender, my analysis is strongly informed by the theory of intersectionality and the different lens that gender can be seen through. For example, many films featuring women disproportionately feature financially secure, white women. This is only one type of woman and one type of story point to pull from.

#### 2.4.4 *Work and Structural Sexism*

There are several theories scholars have used to explain inequality in the workplace. Three of these are pink collar jobs, the glass elevator, and The glass ceiling. Pink collar jobs refer to jobs that are historically women dominated (Liben et al. 2001). The disadvantage of these positions is that they often offer fewer benefits, have a lower occupational prestige, and are often underpaid. In the film industry there are often jobs that are relegated to women (Liben et al. 2001). Specifically screen reviewers often referred to as “screen girls.” While an they do an essential job of script reviewing it is often a job relegated to women for little pay (Johnston 2010).

The second is the glass elevator or glass escalator theory (Williams 1992). This theory asserts that while women may struggle in men dominated fields, men will often be disproportionately promoted in women dominated fields (Williams 1992). This theory is really not applicable to the film industry which is a man dominated field. A possible inclusion could be when women directors do well on a project and the sequel project is given to a man director with a bigger budget (Williams 1992). For example, the *Twilight* franchise started off with a small budget and a woman director. After the success of the first movie all subsequent directorial positions were given to men directors.

The third is the glass ceiling (Cotter 2001). The glass ceiling refers to the point in which women and other minorities from moving into higher level job positions (Cotter 2001). Examining the film industry with a glass ceiling lens it is we can see evidence of barriers set up for women and other minority groups. As mentioned earlier the film industry often relies on a contacts and networking culture. People are power are more likely to connect with people like themselves (Clare 2012). Which in this case is other straight white men (Clare 2012).



### **2.4.5 Sexual Harassment**

There have been many accusations, evidence, and prosecutions of sexual harassment/assault in the entertainment industry in recent years. The #MeToo movement has helped fuel a social movement holding people in the entertainment industry accountable (Rosette 2019). There are two general types of sexual harassment. The first is a quid pro quo type, where an employer may demand sexual favors in exchange for money, benefits, or promotions (Rosette 2019). The second type is a general hostile environment. A hostile environment will be defined as an environment that creates interference with job performance (Rosette 2019).

## **2.5 Opportunities in the Industry**

### **2.5.1 Lack of Mentorship in the Industry**

Hankin (2007) asserts that the film industry does not foster the talent of men and women directors equally. Men directors receive higher levels of mentorship support and opportunities than their women colleagues. Many organizations form in order to change inequity in the industry and achieve parity for women directors with men directors. Hankin (2007) maintains that through women-directors taking an activist role they reach larger audiences. Specifically, activist roles in the form of documentaries starring the female directors themselves, for example *Sisters in Cinema* (2004) *In the Company of Women* (2004). Documentaries starring female directors shed light on women directors who lack the same networking opportunities as their men counterparts.

Additionally, when women receive directing opportunities that are financially lucrative, women typically do not get second opportunities, as often occurs for men directors. A lack of a second opportunity is the case with the popular *Twilight* franchise. The first film, directed by Catherine Hardwicke, had a relatively small budget (White 2009). The film was very successful

at the box office and had a female protagonist. However, Hardwicke did not receive the opportunity to repeat her success. A male director received the directing opportunity for the sequel, who also had the benefit of a much larger budget (White 2009). Replication of unequal access to social capital continues to put up barriers to women in the film industry.

### 3 METHODS

In order to examine how the gender of the director affects films as cultural productions, I utilized content analysis. Content analysis is "The systematic reading of a body of texts, images, and symbolic matter, not necessarily from an author's or user's perspective" (Krippendorff, 2004). All of the films were either available publically through *Netflix* or were purchased previously. The content analysis is of a selection of Blockbuster films from 2008 to 2016 (Singleton and Straits 2005; Krippendorff 2004). Specifically, I examined films from two genres: action and romantic comedies. I selected these genres because of their traditionally gender-segregated marketing. In this case, studios target marketing romantic comedies at women and action at men. I chose films released in these eight years to gain a sense of the current state of the film industry. One limitation of this selection was that different films have become available for study during the completion of this thesis. Because of the disproportionate number of men to women directors for action films, it was necessary to go back eight years to find enough women directed action films. I compared the number of male-directed movies with the number of women directed movies in order to showcase the disparity between the two. Men directed action films are a much larger selection pool. For the men-directed action movies, I noted the years that women-directed action movies and will choose an action film directed by a man from that same year. There are larger selections of man directed films every year. I picked the highest grossing man directed action or romantic comedy from each year. The years were determined by how

often I could find a woman directed film. This was particularly challenging for action films where women are not given many opportunities.

This sample consists of ten action films (five directed by men and five directed by women) and ten romantic comedies (five directed by men and five directed by women). I chose these genres because of their niche audience targeting. Studios target action films in which action toward men, and romantic comedies towards women. By examining gender-targeted genre films in combination with the gender of the director I will analyze the ways that men and women create and recreate gender onscreen (Singleton and Straits 2005).

I limited the films to live-action films (as opposed to animation) to avoid including films that cross over with children's and family films. Studios market children's and family films to broader audiences and are therefore outside the scope of the study. Additionally, I excluded horror and thriller films because marketing is not disproportionate by gender. To further refine the selection of films for consideration, the films selected have been year-matched by genre. The films have been year-matched because the sample size for women-directed action films is substantially smaller than that of men-directed action films (Lofland et al. 2006; Singleton and Straits 2005). By "year-matched" I mean that I selected women-directed films and then selected the men-directed films from the same years.

Table 3.1 Films Selected for Analysis

Type of Genre	Title of Film	Year Released	Director by Name
Men Directed Romantic Comedies	How to be Single	2016	Christian Ritter
	Paper Towns	2015	Jake Schreier
	Trainwreck	2015	Judd Apatow
	About Last Night	2014	Steve Pink
	Silver Linings Playbook	2012	David O. Russell
Women Directed Romantic Comedies	Me Before You	2016	Thea Sharrock
	Bridget Jones Baby	2016	Sharon Maguire
	Maggie's Plan	2016	Rebecca Miller Gillian
	The Obvious Child	2014	Robespierre
	Beyond the Lights	2014	Gina Prince-Bythewood
Men Directed Action Films	Captain America: Civil War	2016	Anthony Russo and Joe Russo
	Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens	2015	J.J. Abrams
	Skyfall	2012	Sam Mendes
	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	2011	David Yates
	The Dark Knight	2008	Christopher Nolan
	Underworld 5	2016	Anna Foerster Francois Simard and Anouk
Women Directed Action Films	Turbo Kid	2015	Whissell
	Zero Dark Thirty	2012	Kathryn Bigelow Catherine
	Red Riding Hood	2011	Hardwicke
	The Hurt Locker	2008	Kathryn Bigelow

### 3.1 Qualitative Analysis

#### 3.1.1 Open Coding

After choosing the films I would use for my analysis, I examined them in detail to see what common specific themes emerged in the films. In my analysis, I used grounded theory methods (LaRossa 2005). Specifically, I focused on LaRossa's three phases of coding (open coding, axial coding, and selective coding). During my initial evaluation of the films, I wanted to look at as many themes as possible, making open coding the best approach. To gather the themes I watched each film several times taking notes on the themes during each viewing. I then utilized axial

coding. I grouped the notes by themes that emerged throughout each viewing using a more focused approach. I then put all of the information into concept tables to organize the emerging themes (Lofland et al. 2006).

### **3.1.2 *What is a Main Character***

In my analysis, it was necessary to define the main character(s) or protagonist(s) as a distinct category from other characters. I define the protagonist as the character that the story happens around. It would not be possible to take out this character, and the story still occurs. The audience sees the series of events through the protagonist's perspective.

### **3.1.3 *Bechdel Test***

The Bechdel test, created by artist Alison Bechdel, is a widely used measure in determining the representation of women in media (Bechdel 1985). A film passes the Bechdel test when two women with names have a conversation about a topic other than a man (Bechdel 1985). This test examines the way women characters play an active role in stories, and treatment by directors. The Bechdel test is not a measure of film quality, but a simple standard used to illustrate the low bar set for representation of women in film (Garcia, Weber, and Garimella 2014). In my analysis, I watched each film several times noting each time women talked to each other, what they talked about, and the number of times they talked.

### **3.1.4 *Mako Mori Test***

The Mako Mori Test originates from public response to the movie *Pacific Rim* (2013) directed by Guillermo Del Toro. In the movie, an actress plays a main character, Mako Mori, who has her own story arc. However, the film does not pass the Bechdel test. In response, the users on the social media site Tumblr © (Romano 2013) came up with the Mako Mori Test as an alternative gauge for film. In order to pass the Mako Mori Test, a film must have a named

woman character who gets her own story arc that is not about supporting a man character.

Mateas and Stern (2003) define a story or narrative arc as an extended storyline in some form of media (Mateas and Stern 2003). I examined the films in the sample looking at the main women characters to see if any of their story arcs fit the criteria. One limitation is that this test is more subjective and open to interpretation.

### ***3.1.5 Ava Duvernay Test***

The Ava Duvernay Test was first suggested in 2016 by New York Times film critic Manohla Dargis after the 2016 Sundance Film Festival. This test was designed to help test racial diversity in film. In order to pass the Duvernay Test, a film must have two named characters of color; the characters must have dialogue, not be romantically involved with one another, the dialogue cannot be about comforting or supporting a white character, one of them cannot be magical. I examined the films in the sample looking for characters of color who fit the criteria.

### ***3.1.6 Vito Russo Test***

Inspired by the Bechdel Test, GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation) developed its own film testing measure. The Russo Test is named after a GLAAD co-founder and film historian Vito Russo. The Russo Test seeks to examine LGBT representation in film. In order to pass the Russo Test, the film must have an identifiable lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender character. Secondly, that character cannot be only defined by their sexuality. Lastly, the character must be integral to the plot that their removal would significantly affect the overall story. I examined each film to look for LGBT characters and to see if they met the above criteria.

### ***3.1.7 Socioeconomic Status***

Socioeconomic status of the main character is an important factor because it informs the kinds of stories being told in popular media. Most of the movies take place in major cities (New

York, Los Angeles) where the cost of living is very high. Socioeconomic status has been coded by three factors for the main characters. Where do they work? Where do they live? How often do they worry about money? For employment, many of the characters do not have traditional jobs (i.e. superheroes) which does not have a clear pay scale or occupational prestige score. These questions tell us how much someone is making, what they have turned it into, and if they are worried about it. There are other outer displays of wealth with designer clothes or expensive restaurants, but they do not indicate wealth in the same way as a place of employment, where they live, and how often they discuss money.

## 4 RESULTS

### 4.1 Gender Diversity of Protagonists

The twenty films examined showed an almost even split of men and women protagonists.

*Table 4.1 Film Protagonist Breakdown by Gender*

Type of Genre	Title of Film	Year Released	Director by Name	Protagonist's Gender	Number of Protagonists
Men Directed Romantic Comedies	How to be Single	2016	Christian Ritter	Woman	1
	Paper Towns	2015	Jake Schreier	Man	1
	Trainwreck	2015	Judd Apatow	Woman	1
	About Last Night	2014	Steve Pink	Both	4
	Silver Linings Playbook	2012	David O. Russell	Man	1
Women Directed Romantic Comedies	Me Before You	2016	Thea Sharrock	Woman	1
	Bridget Jones Baby	2016	Sharon Maguire	Woman	1
	Maggie's Plan	2016	Rebecca Miller	Woman	1
	The Obvious Child	2014	Gillian Robespierre	Woman	1
	Beyond the Lights	2014	Gina Prince-Bythewood	Woman	1
Men Directed Action Films	Captain America: Civil War	2016	Anthony Russo and Joe Russo	Man	1

	Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens	2015	J.J. Abrams	Both	2
	Skyfall	2012	Sam Mendes	Man	1
	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	2011	David Yates	Man	1
	The Dark Knight	2008	Christopher Nolan	Man	1
Women Directed Action Films	Underworld 5	2016	Anna Foerster	Woman	1
	Turbo Kid	2015	Francois Simard and Anouk Whissell	Man	1
	Zero Dark Thirty	2012	Kathryn Bigelow	Woman	1
	Red Riding Hood	2011	Catherine Hardwicke	Woman	1
	The Hurt Locker	2008	Kathryn Bigelow	Man	1

Ten of the films featured a woman main character. Eight featured a man main character. Two of the films examined have both men and women as the main characters. It is important to note that despite the success of having an almost equal representation of women characters in the examined films, most women characters are white. Every instance in these films when a woman is the only main character she is without exception, white. Only two of the twenty films feature a main female character of color (*About Last Night*, and *Beyond the Lights*).

Table 4.2 Measures for Film Romantic Comedies

Films		Measures			
		Bechdel Test	Mako Mori Test	Duvernay Test	The Russo Test
Men Directed Romantic Comedies	How to be Single	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
	Paper Towns	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
	Trainwreck	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail



	<b>About Last Night</b>	Fail	Fail	Pass	Fail
	<b>Silver Linings Playbook</b>	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail
<b>Women Directed Romantic Comedies</b>	<b>Me Before You</b>	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
	<b>Bridget Jones Baby</b>	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
	<b>Maggie's Plan</b>	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
	<b>The Obvious Child</b>	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
	<b>Beyond the Lights</b>	Pass	Pass	Pass	Fail

Table 4.3 Measures for Film Action

		<b>Measures</b>			
<b>Films</b>		<b>Bechde I Test</b>	<b>Mako Mori Test</b>	<b>Duvernay Test</b>	<b>The Russo Test</b>
<b>Men Directed Action Films</b>	<b>Captain America: Civil War</b>	Fail	Fail	Pass	Fail
	<b>Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens</b>	Pass	Pass	Pass	Fail
	<b>Skyfall</b>	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail
	<b>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2</b>	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail
	<b>The Dark Knight</b>	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
<b>Women Directed Action Films</b>	<b>Underworld 5</b>	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
	<b>Turbo Kid</b>	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
	<b>Zero Dark Thirty</b>	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
	<b>Red Riding Hood</b>	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail
	<b>The Hurt Locker</b>	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail

## 4.2 Bechdel Test

An examination of the twenty films showed that seven failed to pass the Bechdel test. In this sample, films directed by men are less likely to pass the Bechdel test. By category, romantic comedies are more likely to pass the Bechdel test than action films. Three of the seven Bechdel failing films examined are romantic comedies, and four are action films.

Out of the twenty films examined, thirteen films fulfill the requirements of the Bechdel test. There are two major patterns in the passing films. The first pattern is that films directed by women and men had different numbers of interactions that passed the Bechdel test. The second pattern is the subject matter of the Bechdel passing conversations.

Men-directed films almost exclusively passed the Bechdel test by having only one qualifying conversation. For example, the only Bechdel passing conversation in *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Pt II* is at the end of the movie when Hermione asks her daughter if she remembered her jumper. This short exchange allows this movie inclusion on a list of films that pass the Bechdel test. Men directed six of the Bechdel passing films. Five of these films pass by only one short exchange between two women characters. The only exception qualifying scene from ten men-directed films was *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* where there are two qualifying scenes. All woman-directed films passed the Bechdel test with a minimum of three conversations. The film with the highest number of Bechdel passing conversations is *Red Riding Hood*, with a total of nine conversations. *Red Riding Hood* is a woman-directed action film.

The second major pattern in the thirteen films is the subject matter of the Bechdel passing conversations. The content of the discussions in the movies varies by the director's gender. In films directed by men, that pass the Bechdel test, women talk about their career, their relationships with female relatives, magic/religion, and pregnancy. For example, in the movies

*Trainwreck*, *Silver Linings Playbook*, and *How to be Single*, all of the main women characters have a conversation with their more conventionally successful sisters who pursue marriage, children, and/ or well-paying careers. All of the conversations are in essence about the main characters not living a more conventionally successful life either in terms of their careers, relationships, or motherhood.

In films directed by women, topics of conversation were more diverse. Women talked about appearance, abortion, pregnancy, race, mental health, joy, relationships, sex, patriarchy, marriage, motherhood, careers, and magic/religion. Women talked about their own sexual joy unrelated to men. Women talked about not just pregnancy as a concept, but about abortion and motherhood as well. Women talked about race, mental health, and patriarchy as concepts that affected their lives. Women appear behind the camera create a more diverse landscape of human experience for women on screen.

### **4.3 Mako Mori Test**

Only nine of the twenty films reviewed pass the Mako Mori Test. Out of the nine passing films, seven directors are women, and two are men. Out of the sample, romantic comedies are only slightly more likely to pass the Mako Mori Test than action movies. Five of the passing films are romantic comedies; four are action movies. Two observations from the Mako Mori qualifying films, the first observation from these qualifying films is the directors' likelihood to create qualifying story arcs. In other words, women directors are more likely to help craft stories where women characters have stories independent from men.

The second important observation are the themes present in romantic comedies and action films that pass the Mako Mori test. Romantic comedies are more likely to pass the Mako Mori test with story arcs as journeys of self-discovery. The women characters achieve success

and contentment outside of having a relationship with a man. For example, in the romantic comedy *How to be Single*, the movie follows the protagonist during the points in her life where she is single. The ending of the movie is her fulfilling her goal of watching the New Year's sunrise over the Grand Canyon. While the movie does have elements of romantic relationships the focus is about the woman protagonist's personal growth. Romantic comedies, marketed towards women, focus on individual level problems (White 2009). This indicates an assumption that women are more interested in individual-level relationship stories than broader accomplishment stories.

Action movies that pass the Mako Mori test show women's story arcs as accomplishing a goal for or with others. Often the goal is saving the world from imminent disaster. For example in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, *Underworld 5*, and *Zero Dark Thirty* the women protagonists work with military and paramilitary organizations to defeat an enemy army. *Red Riding Hood* focused on a woman protagonist working with a small group of people to deal with an outside threat to their village. Action films, marketed towards men, focus on broader accomplishment and less on individual level relationships. In conclusion, thematically men and women have different film worlds marketed to them.

#### **4.4 Racial Diversity**

Nine out of twenty films have characters of color with names. Three movies feature people of color as the main characters (*About Last Night*, *Star Wars: Episode VII: The Force Awakens*, *Beyond the Lights*) and six movies feature a person of color as a secondary character who supports a white protagonist's storyline (*How to be Single*, *Paper Towns*, *Silver Linings Playbook*, *Maggie's Plan*, *Captain America: Civil War*, *The Hurt Locker*). Two of the three movies with a leading character of color are romantic comedies (*About Last Night*, *Beyond the*

*Lights*), with one directed by a man and one by a woman. The third film is an action movie directed by a man (*Star Wars: The Force Awakens*). The action movie is distinctive because it features several main characters, some of whom are white, and some are characters of color.

Four out of twenty films passed the Ava Duvernay Test *About Last Night*, *Beyond the Lights*, *Captain America: Civil War*, and *Star Wars: Episode VII -The Force Awakens*. Three out of four of the films were directed by men. There was an even split between action and romantic comedies. There is still so much work to be done if only 20% of the films examined can pass.

Romantic comedies, targeted by gender toward women, were more likely to feature characters of color as primary and secondary characters, for example, as protagonists and supporting characters who had several speaking roles. Men directors, overall, were more likely to include characters of color but as tertiary and non-named characters, for example, as nonspeaking or one appearance characters. As a note, only one film (*Beyond the Lights*) had a person of color as a director. *Beyond the Lights* is one of the three films in the sample with a person of color as a primary character. This lack of diversity once again illustrates that the demographics of the person directing the film can affect the content of the characters on screen.

#### **4.5 Socioeconomic Test**

For socioeconomic status I coded the instances for: Where do they work? Where do they live? How often do they worry about money? Most of the films depict people who do not have money as a primary concern. The films show clear patterns of separation of socioeconomic status by genre. Romantic comedies depict exclusively middle and largely upper-middle-class people living in New York apartments without constant financial stress. Everyone working had jobs working in medicine, entertainment, publishing, or high level sales. All of their jobs allowed them to freely engage in frequent activities. Men directors universally depict characters with

little to no financial problems. Four out of the five movies with women directors portray the main character as working to middle-class person who is close to an upper-middle-class or wealthy person with whom they spend most of their time. So in almost every movie, the setting is one of wealth. The exception is the *Obvious Child*. However, even in this movie the main character had a very secure family financial support system.

Action films have fewer standard socioeconomic status markers and appear to worry less about socioeconomic status. Often the “jobs” in the action films are revolutionary or superhero. In these stories the people either do not have homes or they are not revealed in the story. They, instead, focus more on the depiction of the powerful and the powerless. In this case power is often associated with access to lots of government level military weapons, futuristic facilities, and superpowers. This relates to Socioeconomic status because of the resources necessary to attain military level weapons and facilities. Often the characters in these settings gave no indication of their own socioeconomic status. This was measured through an open coding method. Seven out of ten of the action films focus on large-scale warfare as a main storyline where access to physical power and weaponry rather than financial security denote status. This is the case in four out of the five men directed movies, and three of the five-woman directed movies. The three exceptions (*The Dark Knight*, *Turbo Kid*, *Red Riding Hood*) focus on similar warfare themes but on a smaller scale.

#### **4.6 Rape Culture**

Rape culture refers to the normalization of rape through socialized attitudes of sexuality, gender, and respectability politics (Olfman 2009). Throughout my analysis, this theme of rape culture emerged. I define rape culture in my findings as explicit conversations about non-consensual sex. There are themes of rape culture present clearly in 4 out of the 20 movies in the

analysis. The majority of these instances were present in Romantic comedies directed by men. For example, in the movie *Trainwreck*, the protagonist's father hears he will be receiving a gift. He asks if it will be a "slightly awake cocktail waitress." In *About Last Night*, a man and a woman are having sex when she asks him to stop; he doesn't until she screams at him, "Are you deaf?" The purpose of each of the scenes is a comedic attempt. Additionally, in both of these cases, these scenes serve to further marginalize victims of sexual assault by trivializing the experience with humor.

There were two instances where women directed films had references to rape. In each case, the films show the perpetrators reprimanded. For example in *Red Riding Hood*, the protagonist's father is unconscious in the village after drinking, and a group of village men are pretending to have sex with him. The protagonist Valerie hits the men with a stick and escorts her father back home. The second example is in *Beyond the Lights*. In this instance, there is an attack on the protagonist on stage after rejecting her costar. After the physical removal of the costar from the performance by guards the costar leaves the stage with boo's from the audience. The conclusion here is that women directors appear to use themes of rape as a more serious or tragic subject matter than men directors who are more likely to use it as an opportunity for comedy.

#### **4.7 Homophobia by Gender**

None of the films examined had an LGBTQ protagonist. Only two films out of twenty have any LGBTQ characters with any speaking parts. Neither of these films passed the Russo Test. In those two films, both of the characters are white gay men who fulfill the "gay best friend" trope to a leading white woman character. While both men and women directors largely fail to present LGBTQ characters at all, they have no problem including references in the scripts.

Both of the films featuring LGBTQ characters with speaking parts are women directed romantic comedies (*The Obvious Child* and *Bridget Jones Baby*).

Something that emerged during my analysis was the different ways that homophobia was presented on screen. I am defining homophobia as the blatant fear of same-sex closeness or mocking of gender nonconformity. The romantic comedies directed by men are the only films in the genre that verbally acknowledge/discuss LGBTQ existence. The acknowledgments come in the form of derogatory comments. The film references characterize gay men in a way that means to inspire fear. For example, in *About Last Night* one man is constantly saying homophobic things about the other character. Man one attempts to goad the other character into emotionally ignoring his girlfriend because he sees it as "unmanly." Lesbian references are in a dichotomy of either a fantasy or an overly masculine woman. For example, in *About Last Night* one of the women gets a new roommate and describes how much she dislikes masculine energy in the apartment. When asked if her new roommate is a man she replies with, "Basically." We then see a very masculine presenting woman exit the bathroom. The action movies directed by men do not make any allusions to anything other than a heteronormative pairing.

Unlike men-directed films, women-directed films in this sample do not portray LGBTQ characters as a group that other non-LGBTQ characters are afraid of. In fact, they barely discuss the characters at all. Two of the romantic comedies directed by women are the only films to portray openly LGBTQ characters with speaking parts. Both of these films have nearly identical depictions - minor characters that are white, gay men that play supporting roles to the main women characters. In both cases, the only reason we know the characters are gay is a singular reference to dating men or having a husband.



A woman directed the only action film that has any reference to LGBTQ characters, *Red Riding Hood*. The movie depicts the main character, Valerie, dancing seductively with another woman in order to get the attention of her male love interest. This does not appear in the film for the sexual interest of the two women involved but to create a sexual fantasy for a man character. The LGBTQ allusion in *Red Riding Hood* leans toward stimulating a man character's fantasy, but the overall depiction is not overtly derogatory. While action films target men, *Red Riding Hood* is an exception. A woman directed Red Riding Hood it appears to be a film for women.

## 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

My thesis examined major motion pictures and how the gender of the individuals in directorial roles shape films as cultural productions. My study is unique in its approach because it examined the difference between men and women directors by looking at gender targeted genre films. In this sample, women directors are more likely to create films with woman characters that can stand independently from male characters. In this sample, women directors are more likely to present women characters with storylines that more targeted, sometimes personal plots, outside of dramatic world-saving exploits. In this sample, women directors are more likely to represent minority groups, in terms of race, sexuality, and socioeconomic status.

In my thesis I have shown the ways in which different theories are at play. In examining the films through an intersectionality lens we can examine the ways in which these films succeed and fall short of progress. In the film sample, there were lots of examples of different kinds of white women dealing with different life issues. However, there were only two films prominently featuring women of color. In both cases the women were black. What we are seeing are the inequalities still present in film. These inequalities could be easily hidden underneath an attempt at gender parity. In examining the different interplay of identities there were ultimately very few

difference between characters. All of the characters are young, conventionally attractive, and financially secure. While there is some variation in character by gender and race there are largely no variations in approach to story.

In the evaluation of the films I there were lots of examples of the Male Gaze (Mulvey 1975). Firstly, all of the women were conventionally attractive. A distinction is between the men and women directed film are the level of presentation of the women in films. The women in the women directed films have less fitted, sexy clothing, more variety in conversation, and interact with one another. Men directed films reflect a more fantasy driven world of women interaction.

In examining the films with a social learning theory lens, men were indeed more likely to get higher budgets for films (Bandura 1969). This was particularly evident in the difficulty in searching for women directed action films. Action films require a higher budget because of the special effects. Men directors were given several opportunities every year whereas women directors were only given opportunities every few years. For example, it would have been possible to get all of the action movies directed by men in one year. In order to include five women directed films for analysis, I had to go back eight years. In this sample, I showed clear patterns of differences between men and women directors in film choices.

## **5.1 Limitations**

One of the limitations of this research was the small sample size. A sample size of twenty films is not enough to make generalizable conclusions. Conducting similar research on a larger scale would be beneficial. For example, examining every Action and Romantic Comedy grossing over a certain amount would allow for similar research on a larger sample. A larger sample might allow for more patterns to emerge. Additionally, the current research is also lacking in people of color and LGBTQ individuals. I see this as a flaw in my sampling method that did not

prioritize a generalizable sample in terms of race and sexuality. This is also due to the lack of representation of people of color and LGBTQ people in media. My current research shows that characters of color and LGBTQ characters are extremely underrepresented in primary, secondary and background roles. The exact degree should be measured in future research. The last limitation is the nature of the tests I used in my thesis. These tests are widely used, recognized, and accepted as pop culture measures but are not specifically based in the sociology discipline.

## **5.2 Recommendations and Future Work**

This film sample indicated that greater representation of women directors equates to a greater representation of people as a whole. For example, women were more likely to have diverse storylines for women characters, more likely to have characters of color with speaking roles, and more likely to have LGBTQ characters with speaking roles. This study matters because it examines the inequality in a major industry that creates cultural products. Furthermore, this study illustrates the need for further research in this area. It would also be beneficial to explore similar research in areas of race and sexuality. For example, a study featuring directors of color and examining the ways in which they compare to white directors. Another could be the top grossing films featuring characters of color and examining the different themes explored in the films. This same project could also be completed with a push for a larger sample size and a more diverse directorial selection. Furthermore, there could be a project focusing on the types of films featuring LGBTQ characters and the themes explored in the films. This could be examined in combination with the sexual orientation of the director, who makes films about the LGBTQ community? Who profits?

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This thesis has continued to add to the overall literature about how inequalities are present industry wide for film. Specifically, this thesis expanded and added to the literature on gender inequality present in the film industry. These inequalities affect the kinds of stories being told to the larger public both foreign and domestic. Women are less likely to be given access to larger budget projects, they are less likely to be given an opening into the industry itself, and when these opportunities are given they are disproportionately given to white women. However, when women are given a chance to direct they direct films that have women with more screen time, the women in the films talk about more varied subjects than the men in their lives, and are more likely to show women as real people and not caricatures. My thesis also showed the dramatic gap in equality in presentation for people of color and LGBTQ people in blockbuster films. I hope that this work continues and that further research will be done on these topics.

## REFERENCES

- Abrams, J.J. (Producer), & Abrams, J.J. (Director). (2015). *Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens* [Motion Picture]. United States: Lucasfilm.
- Allain, S. (Producer), & Prince-Bythewood, G. (Director). (2014). *Beyond the Lights* [Motion Picture]. United States: Black Entertainment Television.
- Apatow, J. (Producer), & Apatow, J. (Director). (2015). *Trainwreck* [Motion Picture]. United States: Universal Pictures.
- Bandura, Albert. "Social-learning theory of identificatory processes." *Handbook of socialization theory and research* 213 (1969): 262.
- Barron, D. (Producer), & Yates, D. (Director). (2011). *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Brothers.
- Barrymore, D. (Producer), & Ditter, C. (Director). (2016). *How to be Single* [Motion Picture]. United States: New Line Cinema.
- Bechdel, A. 1985. The Rule. In *Dykes to Watch Out For*.
- Beaulieu, B. (Producer), & Simard, F; Whissell, A. (Directors). (2015). *Turbo Kid* [Motion Picture]. United States: EMA Films.
- Bevan, T. (Producer), & Maguire, S. (Director). (2016). *Bridget Jones's Baby* [Motion Picture]. United States: Universal Pictures.
- Bigelow, K. (Producer), & Bigelow, K. (Director). (2008). *The Hurt Locker* [Motion Picture]. United States: Voltage Pictures.
- Bigelow, K. (Producer), & Bigelow, K. (Director). (2012). *Zero Dark Thirty* [Motion Picture]. United States: Columbia Pictures.

- Blair, Helen. "You're only as good as your last job': the labour process and labour market in the British film industry." *Work, Employment & Society* 15.1 (2001): 149-169.
- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in the United States*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2006.
- Bordwell, David, Janet Staiger and Kristin Thompson. *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1985. Print  
(Bordwell et al.1960)( Corrigan 1998, Kramer 2000)
- Bowen, M. (Producer), & Schreier, J. (Director). (2015). *Paper Towns* [Motion Picture]. United States: Fox 2000 Pictures.
- Broccoli, B. (Producer), & Mendes, S. (Director). (2012). *Skyfall* [Motion Picture]. United States: Eon Productions.
- Cardasis, D. (Producer), & Miller, R. (Director). (2015). *Maggie's Plan* [Motion Picture]. United States: Black Bear Pictures.
- Clare, K. 2012. *Gendered Spatial Divisions: Theorising Clients, Homophily and Inequality in the Labour Market*. Working paper produced for Oxford University .
- Cohen, B. (Producer), & Russell, D. (Director). (2012). *Silver Linings Playbook* [Motion Picture]. United States: The Weinstein Company.
- Cooper, Mark. 2010. *Universal Women: Filmmaking and Institutional Change in Early Hollywood*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010. 230 pp.
- Cotter, D. A., Hermsen, J. M., Ovadia, S., & Vanneman, R. (2001). The glass ceiling effect. *Social forces*, 80(2), 655-681.
- Corrigan, Timothy. "Auteurs and New Hollywood." *The New American Cinema*. Ed. Jon Lewis. Durham: Duke UP, 1998. 38-63. Print.

- Crenshaw, K. 1991. Mapping the margins: intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43: 1241–99.
- Davisson, J. (Producer), & Hardwicke, C. (Director). (2011). *Red Riding Hood* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Brothers.
- Deuze, M. 2007. *Media work*. Cambridge: Polity press
- Feige, K. (Producer), & Russo, A; Russo, J. (Directors). (2016). *Captain America: Civil War* [Motion Picture]. United States: Marvel Studios.
- Fu, W. W., & Govindaraju, A. (2010). Explaining global box-office tastes in Hollywood films: homogenization of national audiences' movie selections. *Communication research*.
- Garcia, David, Ingmar Weber, and Venkata Rama Kiran Garimella. "Gender Asymmetries in Reality and Fiction: The Bechdel Test of Social Media." *ICWSM*. 2014.
- Glaser, Barney G. *Theoretical sensitivity: Advances in the methodology of grounded theory*. Sociology Pr, 1978.
- Gluck, W. (Producer), & Pink, S. (Director). (2014). *About Last Night* [Motion Picture]. United States: Screen Gems.
- Graber, D. (2010). *Mass media and American politics* (8th ed.). Washington D.C.: CQ.
- Gregg, M. 2010. Friday night drinks: Workplace affect in the age of the cubicle. In *The affect theory reader*, ed. M. Gregg, and G. Seigwoth. Durham: Duke University press.
- Hankin, Kelly. 2007. And Introducing... The Female Director: Documentaries about Women Filmmakers as Feminist Activism. *NWSA Journal*. Vol. 19 Issue 1, p59-88.
- Hastings, A. Waller. "Bambi and the hunting ethos." *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 24.2 (1996): 53-59.

- Holm, E. (Producer), & Robespierre, G. (Director). (2014). *Obvious Child* [Motion Picture]. United States: Rooks Nest Entertainment.
- Kern, D. (Producer), & Foerster, A. (Director). (2016). *Underworld: Blood Wars* [Motion Picture]. United States: Screen Gems.
- Kramer, Peter. "Post-classical Hollywood." *American Cinema and Hollywood: Critical Approaches*. Eds. John Hill and Pamela Church Gibson. New York: Oxford UP, 2000. 63-83. Print.
- Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. Sage publications.
- Lane, Christina. 2000. *Feminist Hollywood: From Born in Flames to Point Break*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- LaRossa, Ralph. 2005. "Grounded Theory Methods and Qualitative Family Research." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67:837-57.
- Lauzen, Martha M. 2003-2013. *The Celluloid Ceiling: Behind-the-Scenes Employment of Women on the Top 250 Films of 2011*. San Diego University
- Lewis, Jon. *Hollywood V. Hard Core: How the struggle over censorship created the modern film industry*. NYU Press, 2002.
- Liben, L. S., Bigler, R. S., & Krogh, H. R. (2001). Pink and blue collar jobs: Children's judgments of job status and job aspirations in relation to sex of worker. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 79(4), 346-363.
- Lofland, John, David Snow, Leon Anderson and Lyn H. Lofland. 2006. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth CENGAGE Learning.
- Mateas, Michael, and Andrew Stern. "Integrating plot, character and natural language processing in the interactive drama Façade." *Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Technologies for Interactive Digital Storytelling and Entertainment (TIDSE-03)*. Vol. 2. 2003.



- Morie, Jacquelyn Ford. "CGI training for the entertainment film industry." *Computer Graphics and Applications, IEEE* 18.1 (1998): 30-37.
- Mulvey, Laura . 1975 "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." *Screen* 16(3):6-18. Retrieved on Oct 10, 2014
- Nolan, C. (Producer), & Nolan, C. (Director). (2008). *The Dark Knight* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Brothers.
- Olfman, Sharna (2009). *The Sexualization of Childhood*. ABC-CLIO. p. 9.
- Owen, A. (Producer), & Sharrock, T. (Director). (2016). *Me Before You* [Motion Picture]. United States: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.
- Randle, K., J. Kurian, and W. F. Leung. 2007. *Creating difference: overcoming barriers to diversity in UK film and television employment*. Hertfordshire: Creative Industries Research & Consultancy Unit, Business School, University of Hertfordshire
- Rich, B. Ruby. 2013. The Confidence Game. *Camera Obscura*. Vol. 28 Issue 82, p156-165.
- Romano, Aja. "The Mako Mori Test:'Pacific Rim' inspires a Bechdel Test alternative." *DailyDot.com*. Aug 18 (2013).
- Rosalind Gill. "Unspeakable Inequalities: Post Feminism, Entrepreneurial Subjectivity, and the Repudiation of Sexism among Cultural Workers." *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State and Society* 21.4 (2014): 509-528.
- Rosette, A. S., de Leon, R. P., Koval, C. Z., & Harrison, D. A. (2019). Intersectionality: Connecting experiences of gender with race at work. *Research in Organizational Behavior*.
- Ruth Eikhof, Doris, and Chris Warhurst. "The promised land? Why social inequalities are systemic in the creative industries." *Employee Relations* 35.5 (2013): 495-508.
- Sauer, Birgit, and Clara Knäpper Bohman. "A frame analysis of the# Metoo movement and perception of sexual harassment within Austrian media."

- Singleton, Royce A.; Straits, Bruce C. 2005. *Approaches to Social Research*. New York, Oxford University Press.
- Slide, Anthony .2012. Early Women Filmmakers: The Real Numbers. *Film History*. Vol. 24 Issue 1, p114-121.
- Stacey, Jackie. 1994. *Star Gazing: Hollywood Cinema and Female Spectatorship*  
London: Routledge.
- Stamp, Shelley. 2006. Presenting The Smalleys, 'collaborators in authorship and direction'. *Film History* Vol. 18 Issue 2, p119-128.
- Sun, Bridges, Wosnitzer, Scharrar, Liberman. 2008. A Comparison of Male and Female Directors in Popular Pornography: What Happens When Women are at the Helm? *Psychology of Women Quarterly*. Vol. 32 Issue 3, p312-325.
- Williams, C. L. (1992). The glass escalator: Hidden advantages for men in the “female” professions. *Social problems*, 39(3), 253-267.
- Whissel, K. (2014). *Spectacular Digital Effects: CGI and Contemporary Cinema*(p. 213). Duke University Press.
- White, Patricia. 2009. Watching Women's Films. *Authors: Camera Obscura*. Vol. 24 Issue 72, preceding p153-162.
- White, Patricia.2013. Age Appropriate? Sundance's Women Filmmakers Come Next.  
*Film Quarterly*; Vol. 67 Issue 2, p80-84.

## APPENDIX: FILM SUMMARIES

### Appendix A.1: How to be Single

Protagonist Alice decides to see what the world has to offer and breaks up with her college boyfriend Josh. She moves in with her sister in New York City to be a paralegal. Her sister is an OB/GYN who avoids relationships and babies like the plague. Alice makes a friend Robin who offers her a taste of the wild life. The partying out of her system, Alice seeks to recommit to Josh, who has moved on with someone else. During this time Alice's sister decides to have a child. Meg also hooks up with a younger man she meets at a Christmas party. During the course of the movie Alice has a series of several relationships. As the audience we only see the beginnings and ends of the relationships with the film focusing on the single parts of Alice's life. Toward the end of the movie Alice is at the Grand Canyon to see the sunrise on New Year's Day (a goal she had from the beginning). We see her alone but confident. As she turns we see her catch someone's eye with the assumption that she is about to start a new relationship.

### Appendix A.2: Paper Towns

In an adaptation of John Green's novel *Paper Towns*, Quentin "Q" Jacobsen lives across the street from Margo Roth Spiegelman. As childhood friends Q harbors a crush on the mysterious Margo. As children they come across the corpse of a man in a park. Their reactions to this inform the next nine years. Q grows up to be cautious and "normal" while Margo runs away from home indulging in wild adventures. It is impossible to know how many of her adventures are real and how many are the result of rumor. One night Margo enters through the bedroom window of Q and gets him to go on an adventure with her to get revenge on her former friend and boyfriend. They go on this final adventure and the next morning she disappears. This coincides with Q's rediscovered love of Margo. Whenever Margo disappeared she would leave

clues for her sister. Q uses this information to discover her location. He goes on a road trip with his friends to find Margo and tell her he loves her. After much searching and self discovery amongst the group they find Margo. She has run away, but she never left any clues for Q and didn't care to be found. She doesn't love Q in return and refuses to be his manic pixie dream girl. Q is heartbroken but eventually realizes how he was just as guilty as everyone else in making up fantasies about Margo. He returns home, sans Margo, to rejoin his friends in their last moments of highschool bliss. The movie ends with him driving off to college realizing how much he learned on the trip to find Margo and telling the audience that while he has heard rumors about Margo he now believes her story belongs to her. That she should be the one to tell it.

### **Appendix A.3: Trainwreck**

The movie opens with Gordon Townsend telling his two daughters Amy and Kim. He is getting divorced from their mother and sloppily tells them that monogamy is realistic over and over. Twenty-three years later, Amy is an alcoholic, party girl who is sleeping her way through the New York area. Amy works for a men's magazine with clueless guys and for a heartless boss. Amy is given the assignment of interviewing sports doctor Aaron Connors. After receiving a text from her sister about moving their father to a nursing home she has a panic attack. Aaron helps Amy through it and takes her for lunch. this devolves into a one night stand with Amy sneaking out the next morning. Aaron tries to pursue Amy and she is completely terrified. She must finish the story but does not believe in relationships. At their next meeting Amy watches Aaron perform surgery and then receives a text that her father has fallen. Amy and Aaron drive to her father. There they meet Kim, the hyper organized, married, mother and antithesis of Amy. Amy is falling for Aaron and is terrified. Kim says she is finally just being normal. Gordon falls again and having hoarded his medication, overdoses and dies. Amy and Kim fight at the funeral,

after which Aaron tells Amy he loves her. Aaron receives an award and invites Amy. She gets a call from her boss who threatens her job and walks out of the ceremony. Aaron is very hurt by this and they argue. It affects Aaron's job and he asks Amy for a break. A distraught Amy goes out drinking with her coworkers including the intern. The intern invites her back to his house. After a very strange start to a sexual encounter the intern's mother enters. We then discover that he is 16. A horrified Amy is fired the next day. We cut to Aaron who is sadly sitting in his apartment his friends try to cheer him up to no avail. We cut to Amy with Kim. Amy finally opens up to Kim and apologises. Kim comforts Amy and they reconcile. Amy sends her story about Aaron to Vanity Fair and it is published. She sends a copy to Aaron. Amy then surprises Aaron with a dramatic dance number at his job and they confess their feelings for each other.

#### **Appendix A.4: About Last Night**

Two groups of best friends Bernie/ Danny and Joan/ Debbie meet at a bar after Bernie and Joan hooked up. They are each telling their quieter friends about their escapades. After the four meetup Joan and Bernie take off to have sex in the bathroom. Debbie and Danny are now left alone they end up on an impromptu date. They end up sleeping together and starting a relationship. They both have baggage coming into the relationship. Danny is recovering from a bad breakup but starts letting Debbie in, including taking her to his stand in father's (Casey) bar. As Debbie and Danny grow closer Bernie and Joan fall apart. This creates tension. Further tension is caused when Danny's boss at a loan office tells him that they will foreclose on Casey's bar. Danny quits his job to help Casey. At a disaster thanksgiving all four friends end up in a fight. Danny apologizes with a puppy. Danny feels inadequate working at Casey's and is hostile toward Debbie's support. After a run in with Alison Debbie and Danny separate further. After a last fight on New Year's Eve Debbie leaves Danny. As Debbie and Danny mourn their lost love

Bernie and Joan reconnect. After Bernie and Joan invite both Danny and Debbie to dinner it becomes clear they will reconnect with both couples finally at peace.

### **Appendix A.5: Silver Linings Playbook**

The protagonist Pat is returning home after an 8 month stay in a psychiatric facility after an explosive bipolar episode. He is released into the custody of his parents living in his childhood bedroom in a working class section of Pennsylvania. He is extremely focused on exercising and reading in an attempt to win back his wife Nikki. However she appears to want nothing to do with him after the bipolar episode brought on by catching her cheating in their home. Pat is required to see a therapist, Dr. Patel. Pat explains that he is clear of mind with his new life motto “Excelsior.” Pat is invited to dinner by his friend Ronnie and wife Veronica. At dinner Pat is introduced to Veronica’s sister Tiffany. Tiffany is a young widow with a history of mental issues. They share a clear connection but Pat is stuck on trying to work out his issues with Nikki who seems to want to have nothing to do with him. Tiffany eventually offers to get a letter to Nikki if Pat works on a dance with her for a dance competition. Pat agrees to work with Tiffany believing it will be a great way to show Nikki how much he’s changed. Pat’s father in an attempt to earn money for a restaurant has started illegal bookmaking. As an extremely superstitious person he wants Pat at a specific Eagles game as a good luck charm. However this means he will miss an appointment with Tiffany. At the game pat sees his therapist Dr. Patel. Pat and Patel’s groups suddenly join together in sports bliss. When some racist fans begin harassing Dr. Patel, Pat defends him but ultimately ends up in a fight. Pat and his brother are arrested and the eagles lose. Pat’s father is angry and blames Pat’s time with Tiffany on bringing bad luck to the Eagles. By chance this is when Tiffany shows up to berate Pat for breaking their deal. When Pat’s father and Tiffany get into an argument she points out that when Pat has been with her

there has been no trouble and the Eagles were winning. Therefore the best course of action if she's "reading the signs" is for Pat to practice with her. Won over Pat's father makes a deal with his gambling friend to recoup his money. If the Eagles win by at least ten points and Pat and Tiffany get at least a 5 out of ten in their dancing competition he can win back his money. After being told Nikki may be there Pat reluctantly agrees. After Tiffany gives Pat the letter from Nikki he notices that some of the writing is Tiffany's. The night of the game and the Dance competition arrives. Tiffany arrives at the hall to discover that Nikki is actually in the audience in the company of Ronnie and Veronica. Tiffany is devastated and begins drinking at the bar. Pat finds her and insist they see the dance through. Right before they begins we find out the Eagles have won. Tiffany and Pat perform their set and score a remarkable average of 5. As friends and family scream with joy (to the confusion of everyone else) Pat walks over to Nikki. Tiffany sees this and flees the hall. Pat leaves Nikki to chase Tiffany. He gives her a letter. In the letter, he tells her he knows that she lied about Nikki's letter. How he fell in love with her and how he appreciates her waiting for him to catch up. They kiss. Afterwards we cut back to Pat's parents house. All is well. Pat's father opened a restaurant and Pat and Tiffany are in a relationship.

#### **Appendix A.6: Me Before You**

Louisa Clark is a cheerful and flamboyant working class woman supporting her family. After being laid off from her cafe job she is hired by a wealthy family as a companion. She finds out that she will be a companion for Will Traynor a former active young banker who was paralyzed in a motorcycle accident. While Louisa has no experience as a companion Will's mother is hopeful that her sunny disposition will help him come out of his shell. Will has become isolated only speaking to his nurse Nathan. Will knows he will never be able to regain the use of his body due to his injury. A depressed and cynical Will treats Louisa coldly. After a visit from

his previous best friend and former fiance Will learns they are to be married. Overcome with emotion after they leave Will smashes all of their photos on the dresser. When Louisa comes in to fix the photos Will and Louisa end up arguing. The next day Will invites Louisa to watch a movie with him and they begin a hesitant friendship. Louisa and Will continue to grow closer talking about his former travels. Louisa begins to look at her own life which has been very close to home with her boy friend Patrick. Patrick is often consumed with his triathlon training and blows Louisa off. Will sees this also and pushes Louisa to do more with her life. Working with Nathan during one of Will's illnesses Louisa sees scars from a previous suicide. She then discovers that Will gave his parents six months or they have agreed to fly him to Switzerland for an assisted suicide. Will has no desire to live a life in pain with no hope of regaining his mobility. Louisa makes it her personal mission to change his mind. She puts together trips and activities which have mixed success. After a few outings Will agrees to go to his former friend and fiance's wedding. Will and Louisa's presences makes everyone uncomfortable. They decide to increase this by dancing together in the middle of the floor. Will meets Louisa's family over dinner and learns that her father has been laid off after the company was bought out in a move by one of Will's former associates. Will organizes a job as the head of maintenance at Stortfold Castle. Louisa realizes what he's done in trying to help her have her own life free of supporting her family. As time goes on it becomes clearer that Will and Louisa love each other. this causes Patrick to be jealous resulting in their break up. During an island trip Will tells Louisa that while their time together has been special he still intends to go through with the trip to Switzerland. He tells her he doesn't want her to give up her life for him. He also tells her he wants her to be there in Switzerland at the end. Louisa is crushed. As they arrive back in London Louisa quits not speaking to Will for several days. Her father pushes her to talk to him. She finds



out he has already gone to Switzerland and she rushes to him. Louisa is able to be there for Will in the end promising to live her life. In the weeks following Will's death Louisa sits in his favorite cafe in Paris and reads his letter encouraging her to live her life with suggestions of places to try. Will leaves her money to secure her freedom.

### **Appendix A.7: Bridget Jones Baby**

The morning of her forty-third birthday Bridget Jones wakes up to her mother's phone call. Her mother uses this as a way to remind her that her biological clock is ticking. She spends the day at a funeral for a rich former fling, Daniel Cleaver. She sees her ex Mark Darcy and his new wife Camilla. Embarrassed at not having moved on to a new relationship she lies when she bumps into him post service and claims a boyfriend. Bridget, now working as a television producer with her anchor friend Miranda. After all of her friends cancel on her for her birthday she ends up alone on her birthday evening. Bridget takes this opportunity to embrace her life and decides to join Miranda at a music festival. Miranda challenges Bridget to sleep with the first man she sees and get over Mark. Not dressed for music festival mud Bridget falls full force into the mud. She is helped by a stranger named Jack. They end up having a one night stand. Returning home, Bridget goes to a friend's child's christening as the godmother. Awkwardly, Mark has been selected to be the godfather. Bridget and Mark awkwardly interact and he tells her that he and his wife are divorcing. Still having feelings for each other Bridget and Mark spend the night together. The next day Mark is travelling for work again just like in their relationship. She feels reconnecting with him would be too painful. Several weeks later Bridget discovers that she is pregnant. She goes to a Dr. Rawlings. She tells Bridget it is not possible to determine who fathered the child. Seeing Jack in an tv ad Bridget realizes that Jack is a billionaire inventor of a dating website. Conspiring with Miranda, Bridget gets him on their TV show. She

is able to tell him he may be the father of her child. Jack immediately commits to be there for her and the baby. Deciding it is only fair she also tells Mark. She doesn't tell the men about each other. Afraid of the neonatal DNA test and risk of miscarriage she convinces the Doctor to do every appointment twice. After inviting Jack to a work event they run into Mark. The two men initially like each other. After further conversation it is revealed that the paternity is unknown. Jack is still game but Mark is offended and walks out. During the parenting class both men show up and it is clear that Jack is the warmer of the two. Mark is often wounded and falls out of contact. Now with only Jack at her side they discuss how to proceed. Jack offers for her to live with him. When she asks how he would proceed if the child was Mark's, Jack says he would re-evaluate the relationship. He also reveals to her that he told Mark that he was unlikely to be the father. She rushes to Mark only to find his wife arriving. Nine months pregnant Bridget quits her job rather than be fired. Out shopping for food, Bridget's card is eaten by an ATM and accidentally locks her groceries and keys in a bank lobby. Stuck outside her apartment in the rain Bridget loses hope. It is then that Mark shows up having had a change of heart. He breaks into the flat and they reconcile just as her water breaks. Having thrown his phone in a romantic gesture they are without emergency help. Jack shows up in the nick of time and the two men carry her to the hospital. They both support her through the birth with Mark saying he would be there regardless. Both men bury the hatchet. A baby boy is born. Flashforward a year later to the wedding of Bridget and Mark. We learn Mark is the father. Everyone is friends and all is well. The film ends with a newspaper on a bench saying Daniel Cleaver has been found alive.

### **Appendix A.8: Maggie's Plan**

A young woman Maggie Hardin is the director of business development and outreach for arts students at New School. She is very intent on having a child and decides to ask an

acquaintance from college, Guy Childers, as a sperm donor. While at work Maggie meets John Harding, a married tenure professor who is in the midst of writing a novel. She takes an interest and they begin to meet regularly to discuss the book. After Maggie meets with Childers and attempts to inseminate herself she is interrupted by John claiming to be in love with her and begs to be the father of her child. Cut to three years later, Maggie and John are married with a daughter Lily. Maggie is finding herself always putting her own life on hold for John, his two step children, and his still uncompleted novel. While Maggie and Lily are out they run into Guy who thinks Lily is his child. Maggie tells him Lily is Johns. Maggie goes to see Georgette at her book signing. She talks to her and realizes she is still in love with her ex-husband. The two conspire to get them back together by sending John and Georgette to the same conference. At the conference John and Georgette reconcile and sleep together. John returns home a tearfully confesses to Maggie that he wants to return to Georgette. John soon learns of the plan between the two women is angry and disappears. When Maggie goes to Georgette to find out where he is she ends up bringing Georgette and the children to her home. They end up reading John's novel. Georgette meets him and gives him an honest critique. He realizes she knows him the best and he forgives her. The film ends with all of the blended family ice skating with Lily repeating numbers out loud. this is strange as neither Lily nor John are mathematically inclined. The film ends with Guy Childers the mathematician walking towards the rink. The implication is that Lily is his child and Maggie is interested in him

### **Appendix A.9: The Obvious Child**

Donna stern is a young comic just finishing her her set a a club. the night ends with her boyfriend dumping her for one of her friends. After performing a set at her regular comedy club, Donna Stern is dumped in the bathroom by her boyfriend, Ryan, who confesses he is leaving her

for one of her friends. She is crushed and at her next performance drunkenly bombs her set. The jokes are awful. Later that evening she meets Max. They have an instant spark and end up sleeping together. Donna sneaks out the next morning. Several weeks later Donna discovers that she is pregnant. She goes to Planned Parenthood to schedule an abortion. The only free day is Valentine's Day. Max turns up at the bookstore where Donna works and tries to awkwardly engage with her. She runs into him again when she tries to return a book to her mother, who is his professor. Donna and Max have lunch and Donna almost tells Max about the pregnancy until he talks about wanting to be a grandfather. He shows up to her comedy show but she leaves with someone else. After a horrendous evening, Donna visits her mother to talk about her abortion. Her Mother reveals that she had one before Donna was born and that it doesn't make her a bad person. After avoiding Max, Donna invites him to see her set at the comedy club. When he arrives she reveals that she is pregnant and going for an abortion. Max leaves but returns the morning of with flowers and asks if she needs company to the clinic. When they arrive max is supportive and assures her that being a grandfather is something he wants well into the future. After the abortion Max takes Donna home and cares for her with tea and watching *Gone with the Wind*.

### **Appendix A.10: Beyond the Lights**

Noni a multiracial British pop star struggles against the pressures of fame, sexualization, and racism. She is living in the USA with her famous rapper boyfriend. After a performance she feels overwhelmed, used, and empty. After an awards show she tries to jump from her apartment building. A police officer turned bodyguard (Kaz) saves her. Kaz avoids Noni at first after lying at the press conference about the incident. Soon they begin to grow close. Kaz pushes Noni to be more self assured in her art and her relationship. He pushes her to have her songs on her next

album. She breaks up with her boyfriend. She and Kaz are then free to connect as a couple. Unfortunately, at a shared performance her rapper ex-boyfriend embarrasses her and Kaz appears on stage to defend her. This results in Kaz punching him in the face. Kaz's father is worried about his reputation and how this will harm his chances for local office. Kaz ignores his father's warning and sneaks Noni away to Mexico. They have some time alone away from the spotlight and connect. It doesn't last with noni's stagemother finding them. She convinces her to come back despite Kaz's protests. Noni returns for a meeting at the record label. She insists her songs be put on it despite the label's disapproval. When they refuse Noni quits the label and fires her mother as manager. She goes back to the UK to perform where Kaz meets her and tells her he loves her backstage. She continues on stage singing her own song.

#### **Appendix A.11: Captain America: Civil War**

In a flashback to 1991 we see a brainwashed Bucky Barnes sent from Hydra to a car to steal a case of super soldier serum. Flashforward to present day one year after Ultron's defeat in Sokovia. The Avengers are trying to prevent an incident that goes wrong. There is an explosion that kills innocent people including several Wakandan humanitarian workers. The Avengers are informed that due to public outcry the United Nations is preparing to pass the Sokovia Accords. This would establish a panel to oversee and control the Avengers. The team is divided with Tony Stark being for the accords and Steve Rogers against. At the same time Helmut Zemo obtains a Hydra book of trigger words to control Bucky Barnes. In Vienna where the accords are being ratified a bomb is set off killing King T'Chaka of Wakanda in front of his son. The security footage reveals Barnes to be the guilty party and T'Chaka's son T'Challa vows to kill him. Steve Rogers wants to track down Barnes and try to keep everyone from killing him. Rogers and Wilson find Barnes in Bucharest and end up in a fight with T'Challa and authorities. All four are

arrested. Passing himself off as a psychiatrist Zemo gains access to Barnes and uses hydrazine codebook to make Barnes obey him. He uses the words to make Barnes break free and cause a scene. Rogers stops him and takes him away. When Barnes gains control he explains that Zemo is the terrorist involved in the Vienna bombing. His goal is to find the Siberian Hydra base where the other super soldiers are hidden and kept frozen. Rogers does not want to wait for authorization. He and Wilson go rogue. They get Maximoff, Clint Barton, and Scott Lang to join them. With permission, Stark forms his own team. This includes Romanoff, T'Challa, James Rhodes, Vision, and Peter Parker. There is a fight between the two teams at the airport. Rogers and Barnes escape with the rest of the team captured in a massive governmental ocean raft prison. Stark discovers that Barnes was framed by Zemo and gets Rogers's destination from Wilson. Without informing the government Stark goes to find them. He strikes a truce. None of them know T'Challa has followed them. They arrive to see that the other soldiers have been murdered by Zemo. Zemo then shows the footage from 1991. It reveals that Barnes murdered Stark's parents. Angry that Rogers didn't tell him Stark fights both of them. A massive fight begins. It ends with Barnes' arm and Stark's armor being destroyed. Rogers leaves with Barnes leaving his shield. Zemo sitting alone reveals he did all of this after his family died due to the Avengers' fighting in Sokovia. Zemo tries to kill himself but is stopped by T'Challa. Afterwards, Stark helps those injured in the Avengers airport fight and Rogers breaks his friends out of the raft prison. Barnes is allowed to stay in Wakanda while they work on a cure.

### **Appendix A.12: Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens**

Thirty years after the defeat of the Empire a new threat emerges in the form of The First Order. Fighting against it is the Resistance supported by the New Republic, led by General Leia Organa who is searching for her brother Luke. Meanwhile on the planet Jakku Resistance

pilot Poe Dameron gets a map of Luke's location. While he is there the village is attacked by stormtroopers commanded by Kylo Ren. They destroy the village and capture Poe. One stormtrooper refuses to fire on the villagers. Only Poe's droid BB-8 escapes with the map. He is found by a metal scavenger Rey. Kylo Ren forces information from Poe. Poe is rescued by the stormtrooper who refused to fire, Finn. They escape crashing onto Jakku in the process. Finn ends up coming into contact with Rey and BB-8. They meet just as the scrapping yard is attacked by stormtroopers. They run to a nearby ship in a scrapyard and escape on a dilapidated Millennium Falcon. The falcon is captured shortly after by a large ship which is piloted by Han Solo and Chewbacca. Meanwhile the First Order has completed their super weapon and use it to destroy the planets dominated by the resistance. We also find out that Kylo Ren is Han Solo and Leia Organa's son. The Falcon sees that BB-8's map is not finished. Han explains that it was Kylo's betrayal of Luke that caused Luke to disappear. Han takes them to a cantina owned by Maz. At the cantina Rey has strange visions and is drawn to the lightsaber Maz has in the basement. She then runs to the woods. Maz gives Finn the lightsaber. The first order soon starts attacking. They are saved by the resistance pilots. Including Poe who survived. Rey is captured by Kylo Ren. Han and Leia are reunited. At the resistance base BB-8 finds R2-D2 who has been off since Luke's disappearance. After learning of another First Order Attack the resistance uses the Falcon with Han, Chewbacca, and Finn to rescue Rey and stop the attack. They sneak aboard. They find Rey and plant the explosives. They are caught by Kylo Ren. Han tries to help him. Kylo Ren kills him. Distraught the rest of the crew leaves. Wounded Kylo chases Finn and Rey resulting in a duel. Ultimately Finn and Rey are victorious and escape before the explosion with Chewbacca. While Finn is recovering Rey sets out and finds Luke.

### **Appendix A.13: Skyfall**

James Bond and Eve Moneypenny are in Istanbul following a mercenary. Bond and the mercenary fight and Moneypenny is ordered to take the shot. She hits Bond. Bond falls and is

presumed dead with the mercenary, Patrice, escapes with a hard drive. Several months later M is under pressure from a cyber attack. She discovers Bond is not dead but in hidden retirement. After being convinced to return to work Bond is on the hunt for the cyber terrorist. This leads him to Shanghai, where he fights Patrice who falls to their death in the struggle. A series of clues lead to a woman Severine, Patrice's accomplice. They meet her employer. Severine warns Bond of the danger he is in and that he about to be killed and she will help him if he kills her employer. They escape together. It turns out her boss is the Cyber terrorist Severine is killed but Bond escapes. A series of subterfuge and action scenes leads us to Bond and M at his old childhood home pursued by the cyber terrorist. Bond returns to work finally seeing Moneypenny.

#### **Appendix A.14: Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2**

In the Final installment of the Harry Potter movie series the three heroes (Harry, Ron and Hermione) set out to complete their mission to defeat the evil Lord Voldemort and save the magical world from a corrupt government. Having experienced great loss of friends dying to protect them the group is recuperating in Ron's brother's home. In their last daring escape they escape with a goblin who assists them in planning to break into the Gringotts Wizarding Bank. After narrowly escaping the bank on the back of a blind dragon the trio realize that to complete their final task to defeat lord Voldemort they must return to their school Hogwarts. As they return to their former school and home they find the conditions have deteriorated. As their presence is made aware to both friend and foe forces begin to mount. The final battle of hogwarts takes place as the hero's search for their last obstacle in defeating Voldemort. In their search they discover that Professor Snape a long time antagonist is not what he seems. Harry gazes into Snape's memories to discover that the only way to defeat Voldemort and save his friends is to sacrifice himself willingly. He quietly steals away from the castle toward the enemy camp



feeling responsible for all of the dead now in the castle. As he walks to his death he is accompanied by the ghosts of his parents. He emerges in the enemy camp and is seemingly killed by Voldemort. Harry awakens while the ghost of his mentor Dumbledore explains what happened. Harry is given the choice to go on to the afterlife or return to life. Voldemort takes what he thinks is Harry's lifeless body to the front line to take the fight out of the opposing side. Unfortunately for him, Harry is not dead. The battle begins again and Harry defeats Voldemort. Cut to 19 years later, the heroes are preparing their children to leave for school as they did years before.

### **Appendix A.15: The Dark Knight**

Gotham has a new district attorney Harvey Dent. Who promises to clean up the city. Batman continues his work but not at Dent's approval. however both of their attentions are on the new villian. A man called the Joker. The Joker cause chaos in the city, robbing the mob, robbing a bank, and attacking people. meanwhile Batman lives his double life as Bruce Wayne who is in love with lawyer Rachel. However, these feelings are also shared by Dent. As Dent is the Cities White Knight Batman is the Dark. The joker attacks a Gala where Bruce, Dent, and Rachel are all present. After much fighting it appears everyone is safe. Commissioner Gordon is killed in an apparent later fight with the Joker. Dent and Rachel are both captured by the Joker. Batman must now chose who to save. Only Dent is saved but with half of his face burned off. Ultimately Bruce is destroyed about losing Rachel. The Joker finds Dent and continues to twist his mind. Dent finds that he wants to blame the "Never Dead" Commissioner Gordon and attacks his family. Ultimately Dent is killed. the decision is made to make him a Martyr for goodness. The Joker is also caught after failing in his scheme.

**Appendix A.16: Underworld 5**

Vampire Covens are at war with the Lycans (werewolves). Both groups are looking for Selene. the Vampires for vengeance and the Lycans for information. Through betrayal and intrigue we learn that the crimes Selene is accused of are falsified. Selene tries to find some peace with the vampires and is subsequently framed again for murdering trainee vampires. Selene and her companion David narrowly escape pursued by both groups. They hide in a peaceful vampire coven in the north. Here David returns as the rightful heir. here Selene finds out that her love was killed by the Lycan Marius. Selene rips out his spine. David defends the northern coven. After the battle Selene and David are named as new elders and Selene is reunited with her daughter Eve.

**Appendix A.17: Turbo Kid**

In an alternate universe in a post apocalyptic earth there is a teenager called The Kid. He finds a comic called Turbo Kid. He finds along his travel a friendly girl named Apple. The Kid teaches Apple how to survive and develops a crush on her. The gangleader Zeus tries to kidnap Apple she tells the Kid to run. As he runs he discovers the remains of the real Turbo Kid. The Kid takes up his armor and sets off to rescue Apple. He is able to succeed after being briefly captured. The Kid discovers Apple is a robot. Damaged after the fight he tries to save Apple by scrounging for parts. After being pursued by Zeus Apple is decapitated. The Kid is able to find her a new body. but succumbs to the fumes. He is saved but Apple is gone. The Kid reveals that Zeus killed his family. The Kid is about to be killed by Zeus when Apple appears and saves him. The Kid survives and discovers Zeus is also a robot. Apple dies protecting The Kid. The resulting explosion reveals a new source of water. The Kid mourns Apple and then takes off across the wastelands for new adventure.

**Appendix A.18: Zero Dark Thirty**

Maya is a CIA analyst. She has been given the task of finding Osama Bin Laden. In 2003 she goes to Pakistan where she meets an officer Dan. She witnesses him use approved torture techniques on a suspected terrorist. This makes her uncomfortable but she doesn't stop it. The years pass with no results. In 2009 Maya's friend is killed in the Camp Chapman attack. Maya finally has a lead based on the mistaken report of the death of a key informant. They are able to convince a Kuwaiti prince for information for a substantial financial reward. They use the info to track a phone to a compound. The CIA surveills it but with no intel. There is an assumption that Bin Laden is inside with Maya throwing her opinion at 100%. The attack on the compound occurs and Osama Bin Laden is killed. He is taken to a CIA base. Maya identifies his body. She boards transport home to the USA. She tells the driver her destination and cries.

**Appendix A.19: Red Riding Hood**

A young woman Valerie lives with her parents and sister in a village attacked by a werewolf. She is in love with the woodsman Peter but is betrothed to the blacksmith's son Henry. Peter and Valerie are going to elope. Shortly after Valerie's sister is killed by the wolf. Suspicions and rituals abound in the town. Valerie's mother sees her and tells her that her sister is only her half sister as well as Henry's. She begs her to marry Henry and save for the future. A witch hunter Father Solomon is called in to kill the wolf. The townsfolk kill a wolf and Solomon tells them it is only a common wolf not a werewolf. Henry's father was killed. The village celebrates anyway and is attacked by the werewolf. The wolf corners Valerie and a friend Roxanne and Valerie understands the wolf. An autistic boy, brother to Roxanne is accused of witchcraft and tortured for being in league with the wolf. In an attempt to save him Roxanne accuses Valerie of Witchcraft. Father Solomon chains her in the townsquare as bait. Henry and Peter help her

escape. Solomon is bitten by the wolf and killed by his own guards. Valerie dreams the wolf is her Gran who lives in the woods alone, Going to find the truth Valerie goes to the cabin to find her Gran dead and her father is the wolf. Peter appears and the two fight. Peter stabs the wolf and wins but not before being bitten. Valerie and Peter weigh the body with stones and throw it into the river. Peter runs away saying he will only return when he can know he is safe. Henry joins the knights protecting the village. The town is still gripped with fear even though the attacks have long stopped. Peter returns to Valerie who now lives in her Gran's cabin.

### **Appendix A.20: The Hurt Locker**

In 2004 Sgt. first class William James is a new team leader of an army explosive disposal squad in Iraq. His team consists of J.T Sanborn and Owen Eldridge. James befriends an Iraqi kid named Beckham. Sanborn and Eldridge think James takes too many chances and is unsafe to work with. One day after returning to the camp the team encounters British mercenaries. The combined group is soon under attack and the three in the team survive. In a warehouse raid James discovers Beckham has had a bomb surgically implanted and cannot save him. James is distraught. The three set out following an unstable James. There is a firefight and Eldridge is injured. The next day James sees Beckham alive and well. The boy who died was someone else. James and Sanborn are called away two days before rotating home. An Iraqi civilian is strapped to a bomb. James tries and fails to help the man and abandons him. The man explodes. Sanborn is crushed. He tells James he wants to go home and have a family. After returning home James cannot cope with the boredom of civilian life. He returns to the bomb squad for another rotation.