# DIVERSITY IN FILM

PROD.

Get ready for some more depressing statistics about the lack of diversity in Hollywood. A new USC study has found an "epidemic of invisibility" for women and people of color in the entertainment industry, both onscreen and behind the scenes. The statistics are staggering: In an analysis of the 11,000 speaking parts that appeared in 2014 studio films and live-action scripted TV shows from the 2014–15 season, only one-third were female, and only 28 percent were nonwhite. When female characters did appear, they were more than three times as likely as men to be sexualized. LGBT representation was even worse, with that community making up only 2 percent of all speaking parts. Of those, only seven characters were trans — a minuscule .06 percent, one-fifth as much as real-world estimates.
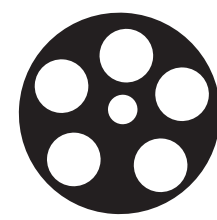
And these characters are largely being conceived, written, and directed by white men. As the study puts it, "The film industry still functions as a straight, white, boy's club." Women made up only 3 percent of film directors, and 10 percent of film writers. Film directors as a whole were 87 percent white. Despite the popular notion that things are better in TV, the numbers there are hardly reassuring. Women made up less than a third of all TV writers, and less than a quarter of all show creators. When it came to TV directors, the study only analyzed premieres and pilots, but the numbers are disheartening: On broadcast shows, a whopping 90 percent of such directors were white. (Cable and streaming came in at 83 and 89 percent, respectively.) Unsurprisingly, an analysis of Hollywood's corporate structures found that these white men were mostly hired by other men. On the executive level, roughly 80 percent of the boards of directors, executive management teams, and C-suite execs were male.

17 movies had **zero** black characters

40 movies had **zero** asian characters

For the first time, USC also handed out an "inclusivity index" report card for the corporate behemoths that make up the entertainment industry. Each film studio received a failing grade, but television did see some bright spots, as the CW, Viacom (and not just because of BET), Disney, Amazon, and Hulu each received a "fully inclusive" rating for their hiring practices or onscreen portrayals.

So, how do we make things better? There isn't one solution. For a start, the industry can start by making concrete commitments to diversity, and recognizing and calling out narrow methods of representation. "On the whole," the study concludes, "inclusivity requires creating an ecosystem in which different perspectives hold value and stories represent the world in which we live."
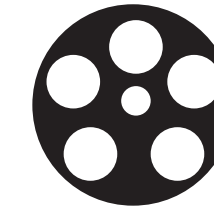
Hollywood's failure to present more diverse casts in movies and television is potentially costing the industry billions of dollars, according to a new report issued by the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at UCLA. The report, "2016 Hollywood Diversity Report: Business as Usual?," showed that films and television shows with casts that roughly reflect the nation's racial and ethnic diversity posted the highest box office and ratings numbers on average. "Yet the industry's homogenous corps of decision makers made relatively few of these types of diverse projects, potentially leaving billions in revenue on the table," said Dr. Darnell Hunt, chairman of the center. The report is the third in three years from Hunt. It reveals that the nation consisted nearly 40% of minorities in 2014 — the last year examined — and will only become increasingly so in the coming years, with a majority minority by 2043.
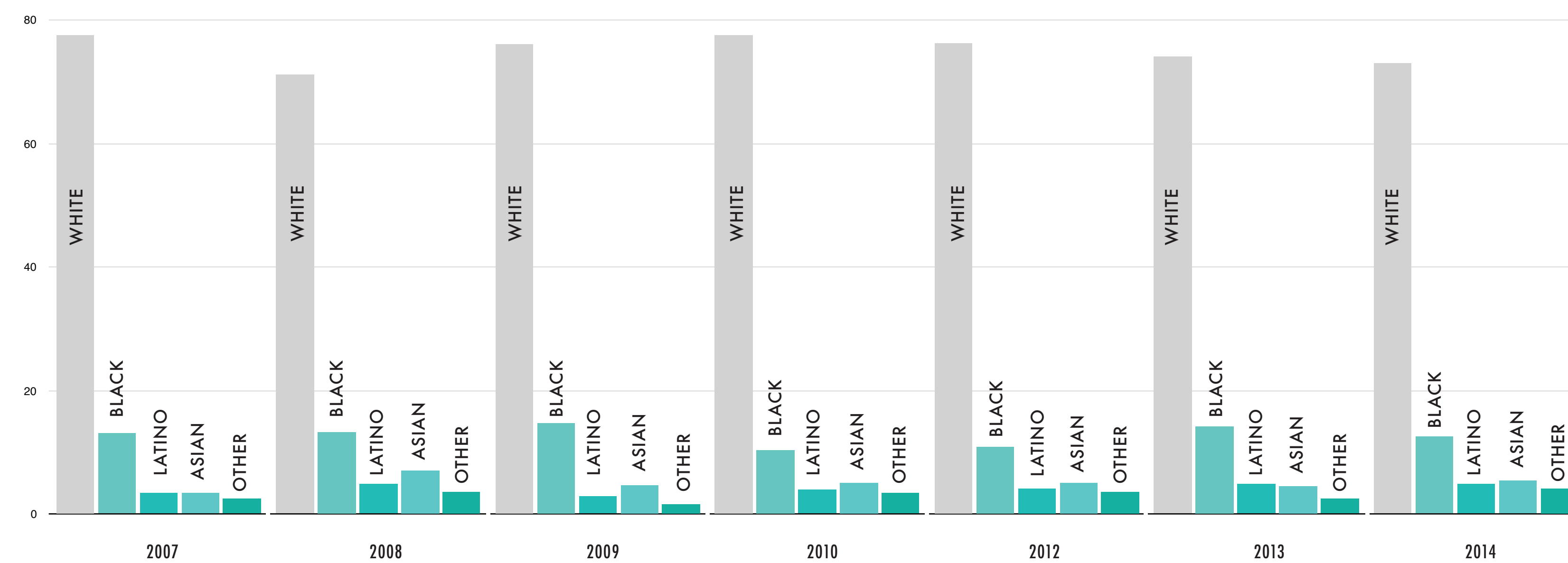

ROLL

WHITE 73.1%
OTHER **4.2%**
LATINO **4.9%**
ASIAN **5.3%**
BLACK **12.5%**
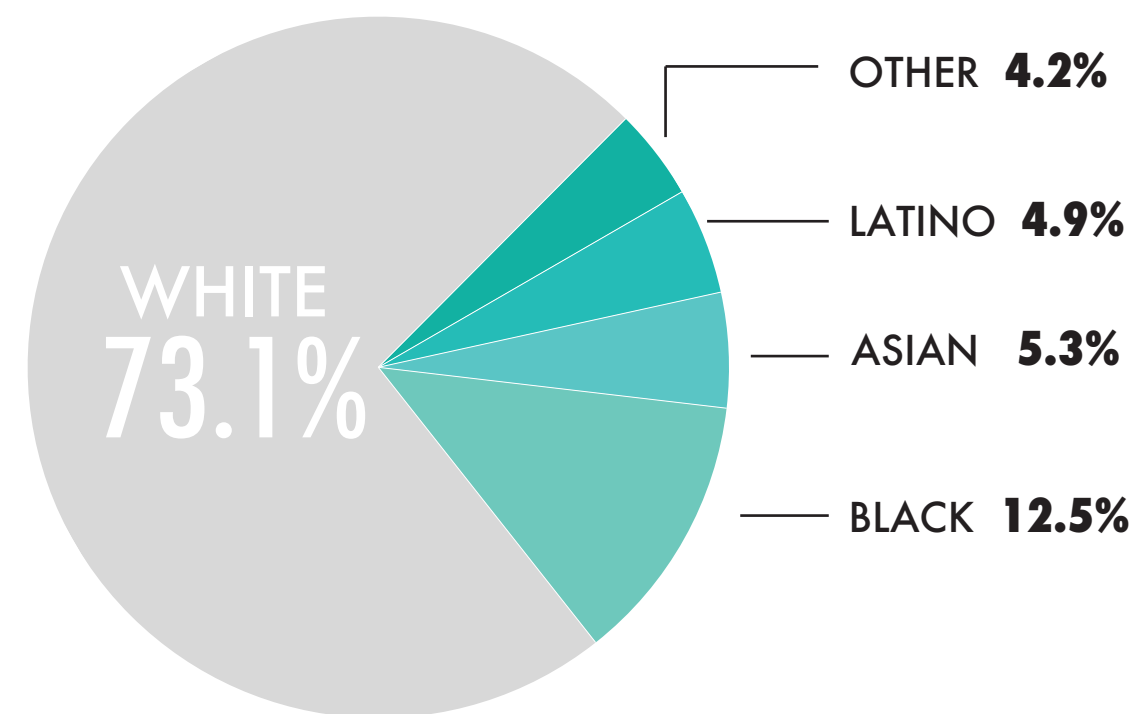
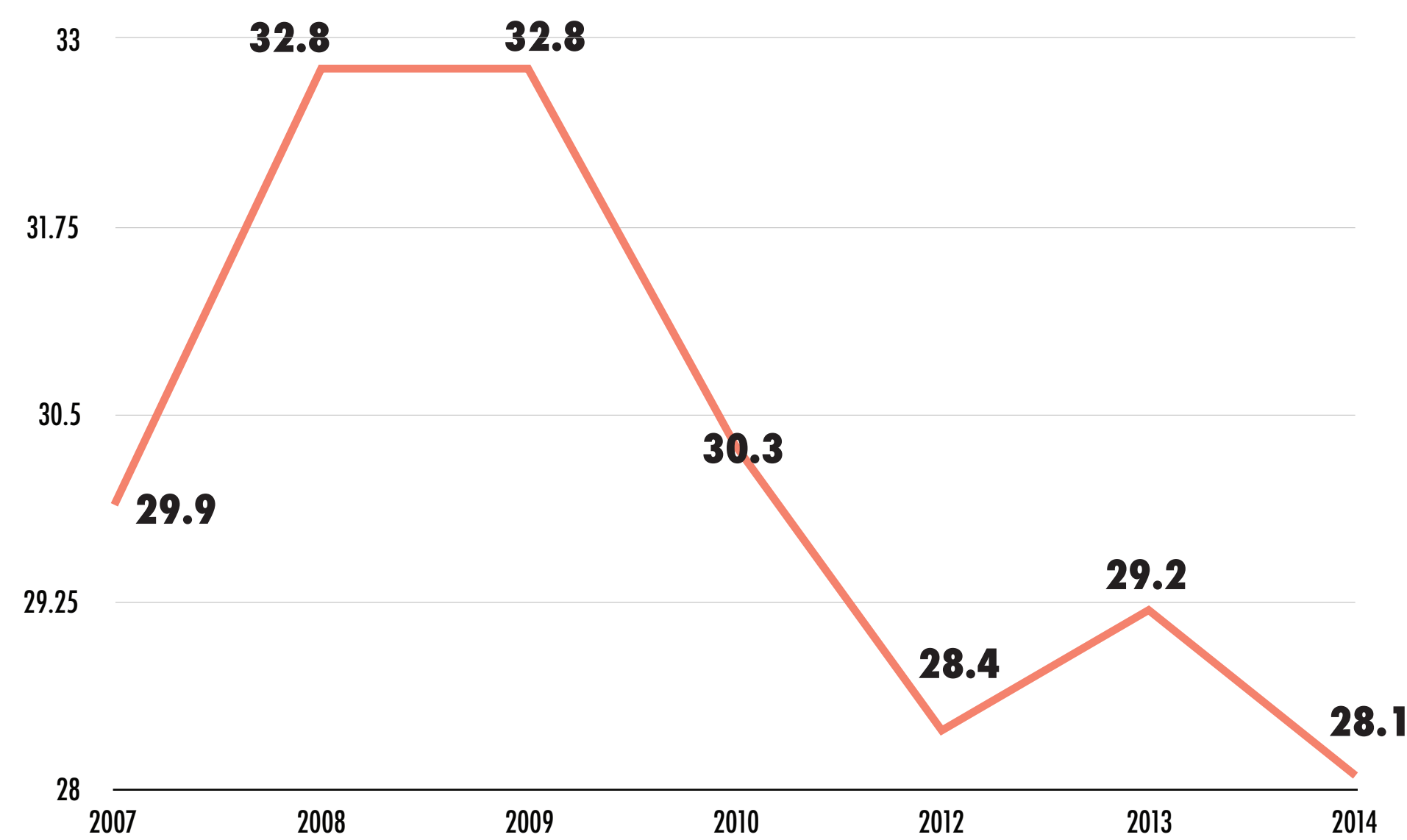Race/ethnicity In The 100 Top Films Of 2014

In the U.S., individuals from underrepresented racial and/or ethnic groups amount to 37% of the population and, in 2014, bought 46% of movie tickets at the box office.24 Across the 100 top films of 2014, underrepresented characters accounted for 26.9% of all speaking or named characters. Further, only 17 of the 100 top films of 2014 featured a lead or co lead actor from an underrepresented racial and/or ethnic group. Of the 17 leads, 47% were Black, 29.4% were from mixed racial/ethnic heritages, 11.8% were Asian, and 11.8% were Hispanic/Latino. An additional 3 films depicted an ensemble cast with 50% or more of the group comprised of actors from underrepresented racial/ethnic backgrounds.

SCENE

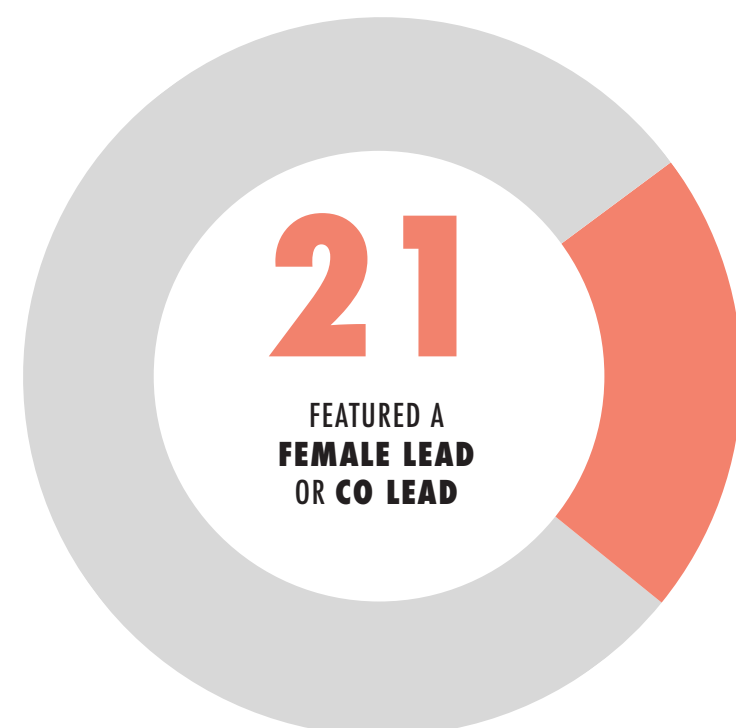Percentage of Characters by Race/Ethnicity in Top-Grossing Films: 2007-2014

(Bar chart showing WHITE, BLACK, LATINO, ASIAN, OTHER for years 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014)

TAKE

Percentage of Female Speaking Characters Across 700 Films: 2007-2014

2007	2008	2009	2010	2012	2013	2014
29.9	32.8	32.8	30.3	28.4	29.2	28.1

DIRECTOR

Out of the 100 top films in 2014...

21 FEATURED A FEMALE LEAD OR CO LEAD

Overall, the findings for prevalence reveal that female characters were vastly underrepresented on screen in the 100 most popular movies of 2014. Despite comprising roughly 50% of the U.S. population, girls/women make up less than a third of all speaking characters on screen and less than a quarter of the leads/co leads driving the storylines. Less than one out of four characters in animated or action adventure movies were female. Clearly, the norm in Hollywood is to exclude girls and women from the screen. It is also to misrepresent them.

2 HAD A FEMALE DIRECTOR
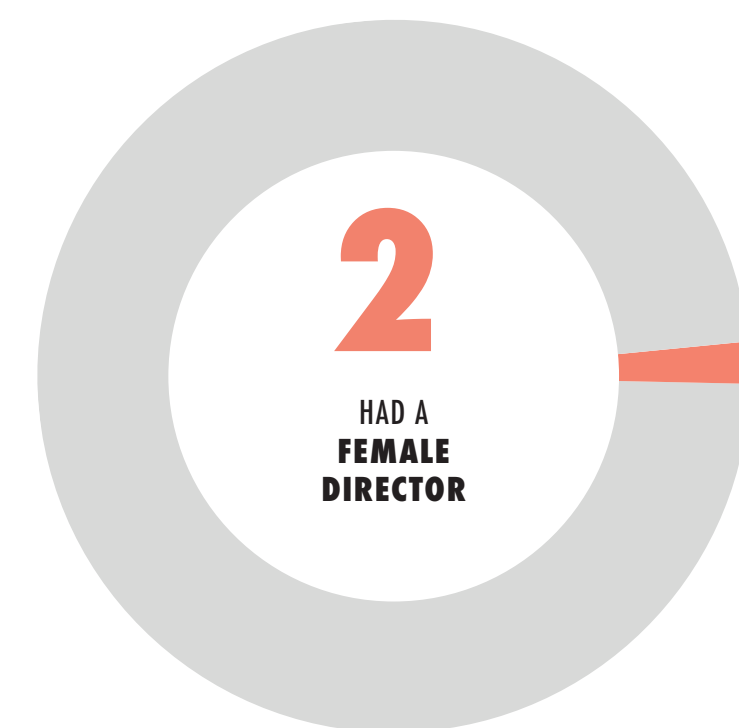
Across the 100 top films of 2014, a total of 4,610 speaking or named characters were evaluated. Of these characters, 28.1% (n=1,297) were female and 71.9% (n=3,313) were male. The gender ratio is 2.6 on screen male characters to every 1 on screen female character. The percentage of female characters from 2007 to 2014 has not meaningfully changed. Matter of fact, the 2014 percentage is 1.8% lower than that observed in 2007 and .6% lower than the percentage (28.7%) we observed in a set of popular films from 1990 to 1995.5 In a small sample of movies released from 1946 to 1955, other research has demonstrated that only 25% of on screen characters were women.6 Despite the activism and attention devoted to raising awareness on this topic in the popular press, the prevalence of girls and women on screen has not changed in over 50 years.

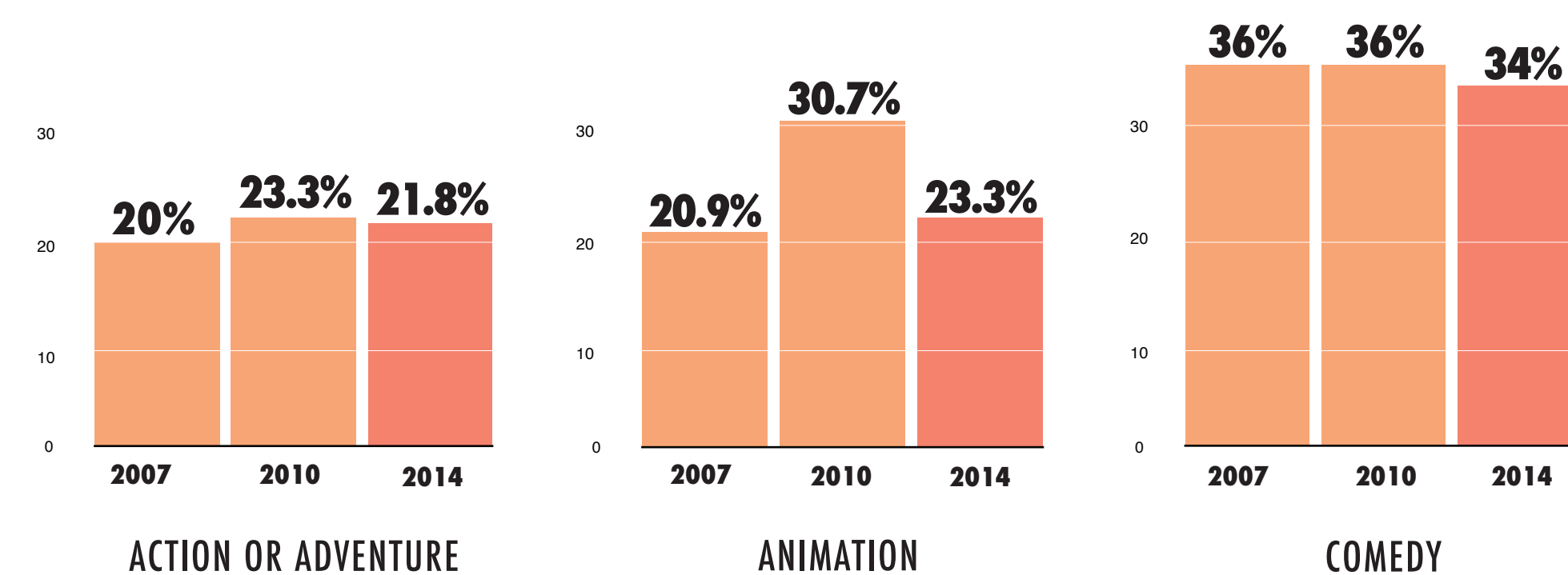**11** PERCENT OF WRITERS WERE FEMALE
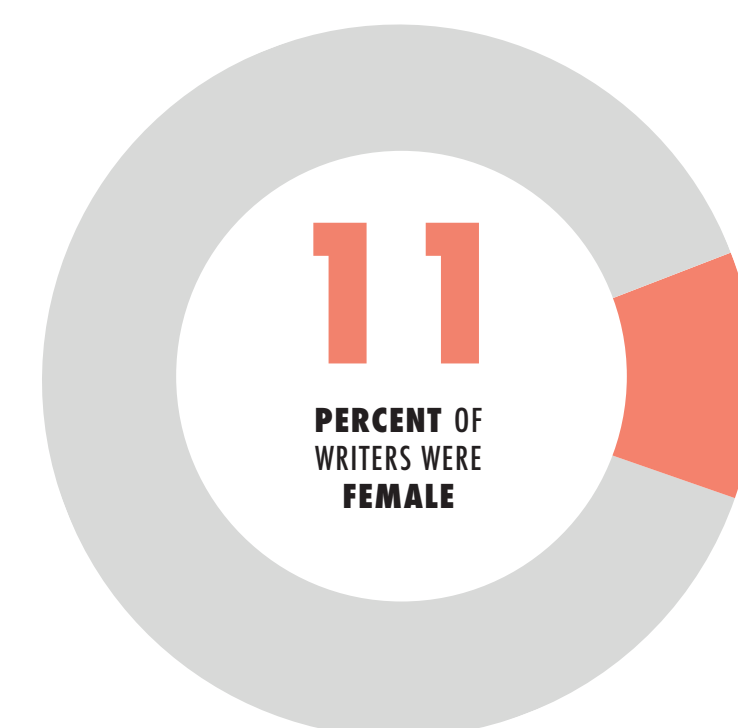
Focusing on leads, a total of 21 films featured a female lead or roughly equal co lead across the sample of 100 films in 2014. This is similar to the percentage in 2007 (20%), but a 7% decrease from the 2013 sample (28%). Three female actors that play leads/co leads are from underrepresented racial/ethnic backgrounds. No leads or co leads are played by female actors over 45 years of age. Across the 2014 movies, stories with a female lead/co lead featured significantly more female characters on screen (41.2%) than those stories without a female lead (25.5%). A full 47 narrators were identified across the 100 most popular movies of 2014. Only 21.3% were female and 78.7% were male. This is a ratio of 3.7 male narrators to every one female narrator.
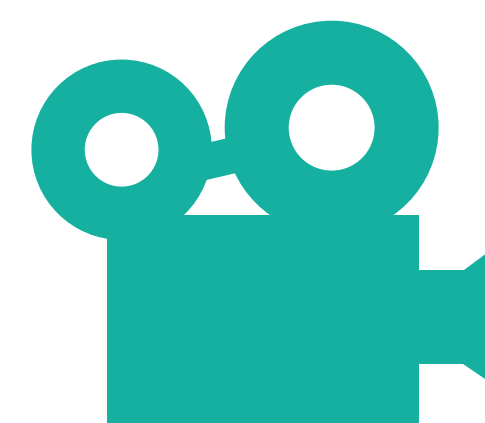
19 PERCENT OF PRODUCERS WERE FEMALE
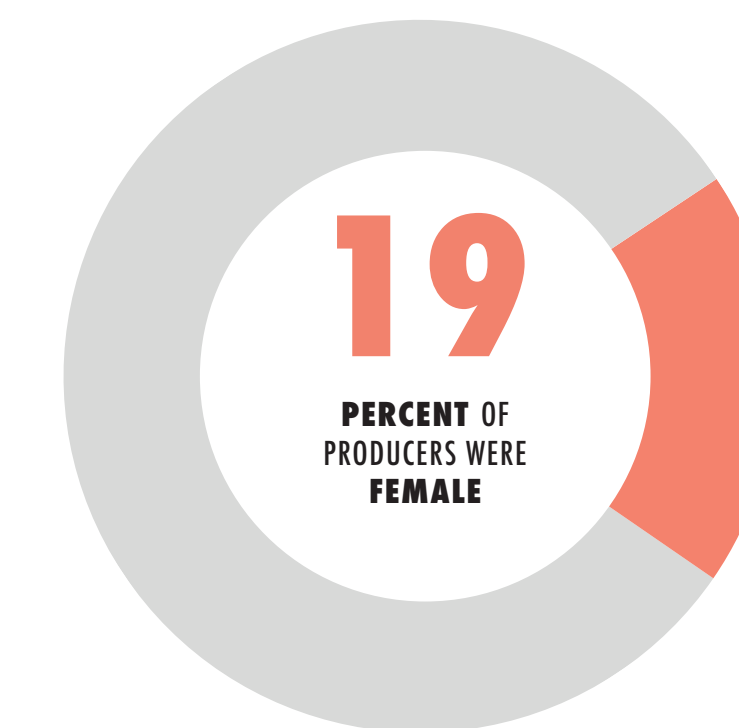
Three specific aspects of character portrayals were evaluated: domestic roles, apparent age, and sexualization. Focusing on domestic roles, speaking characters were assessed for whether they were shown as parents (no, yes) and/or in a romantic relationship (no, yes). Female characters (53.5%) were more likely than male characters (41.9%) to be shown as caregivers. A similar trend emerged for relational standing, with females (59.6%) more likely than males (46.1%) to be depicted in a committed romantic relationship. These patterns reveal that domesticated roles are still gendered in film, which is consistent with previous research.

DATE

Percentage of Speaking Female Characters by Genre

ACTION OR ADVENTURE
2007	2010	2014
20%	23.3%	21.8%

ANIMATION
2007	2010	2014
20.9%	30.7%	23.3%

COMEDY
2007	2010	2014
36%	36%	34%

Ratio of males to females
2.6 : 1

Total number of speaking characters
30,835

Percentage of Speaking Minority Characters by Genre

ACTION OR ADVENTURE
2007	2010	2014
21.5%	29.7%	26.1%

ANIMATION
2007	2010	2014
8.1%	1.5%	33.5%

COMEDY
2007	2010	2014
23.1%	23.8%	26.5%

SOURCE: USC Study: Inequality in 700 Popular Films: Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race, & LGBT Status from 2007 to 2014