

LGBTQ representation in Netflix original romantic comedies

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INTRODUCTION

The question I set out to answer was, "How many LGBTQ+ individuals play lead roles in Netflix's original romantic comedies?". I love romantic comedies, but most of the time, the lead character who is search of love is heterosexual. So, I thought it would be interesting to find out if Netflix challenged this norm at all because I believe it's unfair that queer individuals never really get to see someone like them in a movie about love, but that's also funny and not something that's overly complicated/sad.

MOVIES

1. Good on Paper
2. Murder Mystery
3. Ready to Mingle
4. The Last Summer
5. Naked
6. A Perfect Pairing
7. When We First Met
8. Senior Year
9. Set it Up
10. Falling Inn Love
11. Lovehard
12. Afterlife of the Party
13. Dumplin'
14. Always be My Maybe
15. Holidate
16. Wine Country
17. love, guaranteed
18. The Royal Treatment
19. The Perfect Date
20. Resort to Love

METHODS

I decided to analyze 20 different Netflix original romantic comedies to see if the lead character was part of the LGBTQ+ community. When searching for these films, I simply typed in the search bar, "Netflix original romantic comedy", and randomly chose the first 20 that pop up on my screen. I then analyzed the films to see which of them starred a queer person, made note of if there was one at all and what part of the community they are in (gay, lesbian, transgender, etc.), and then came up with percentages of representation at the end.

RESULTS

It is unfortunately unsurprising that only 1 out of the 20 romantic comedies featured an LGBTQ+ lead role. That film happened to be "Wine Country", in which the main character is a lesbian.

This means that 5% of the movies I analyzed featured an LGBTQ+ lead. While I didn't analyze every single Netflix original romantic comedy, I find it a little sad that out of 20, there was only 1 with an LGBTQ+ lead. However, lesbians are usually less represented in film, with only 56 lesbian speaking roles in over 600 movies released between 2014 to 2019 (Annenburg Report 2020).

DISCUSSION

Unfortunately, my results are not good at all as they continue the underrepresentation of LGBTQ+ characters in film. However, in comparison to the Annenburg Inclusion Initiative's research, Netflix isn't far behind. With 56 lesbian speaking roles in 600 movies, that means that 9.33% of movies had a lesbian speaking role, while my research shows that 5% of Netflix originals have a lesbian speaking role.