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Escaping the theories, viewpoints, and specifically calculated slants of the media is near impossible for the common American. Our perceptions of an entire demographic are capable of significant influence due to a particular broadcast. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender community, LBGT, has been a core group of scrutiny, fear, and confusion within the reports of varied mediums of exposure since the 1950s. The highly convincing nature

Constructing Crime: Perceptions on Making News and Social Problems, describe moral

stability and well-

Considering the all-consuming effect the entertainment industry has on society, it would be erroneous to discount entertainment media as having a largely important role in the perception of the LGBT community. In a study conducted on the level of influence the media has over the perception of homosexuals, it was found that socialization is the largest factor in the acceptance of the gay community (Calzo and Ward). Socialization includes exposure to peers, parents, and religion, but more importantly the media. The study was conducted with the presence of 1,761 undergraduate level students. The results of the study indicate that men and women view homosexuality differently based on specific media consumption that is geared towards their demographic. The same can be said for various socio-economic backgrounds. Various media outlets that display the more stereotypical representations of homosexuals are met with a high acceptance rate by males, while female directed programming, such as soap operas and situational comedies are also met with a high acceptance rate (Calzo and Ward). Based on the results, it was discovered that a mainstreaming effect on the media could result in an overall accepted perception of homosexuality. If multiple media outlets were displaying information with similar views on homosexuality, the majority would accept a larger, more similar view. For example, the more men that watched episodes of the television program *Will & Grace*, the more accepting they were of homosexuals (Calzo & Ward).

In the 1995 documentary film, *The Celluloid Closet*, film depictions of homosexuals are explored from the initial silent films through influence on American culture has only grown with the progression of its popularity. As narrated in the film, the media has made it difficult for people to think about gay people and gay people what to think about themselves. No one escaped

its influence (Epstein and Freidman). Spotted with various personal tales of film experiences and historical truths, several well-respected actors, directors, and writers, gay and straight, including Whoopi Goldberg, Tom Hanks, Shirley MacLaine, Tony Curtis, and Gore Vidal appear throughout. The appearance of gay stock characters in popular cinema dates back to the hay days of Charlie Chaplin. The public has been taught to perceive gay individuals through the representations they see in popular films. Gay behavior through this medium has taught American audiences to view these characters as individuals to either laugh at or fear (Epstein and Freidman).

fictional creations have appeared in several cult celebrated and award winning films. Marlene Dietrich in *Morocco*, Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon in *Some Like it Hot*, Peter Laurie in the *Maltese Falcon*, and Lauren Bacall in *Man with a Horn* are just a select few of several Hollywood Icons who have portrayed either homosexual characters or characters who embrace homosexual behavior. Though these Hollywood heavy weights appeared in these films, the sexuality of their characters rested below the surface; never were they out rightly mentioned as being homosexual. Audiences, both gay and straight, had to interpret from discreet mentions of close relationships with other characters or suggestive looks that they harbored any of these gay tendencies. This displayed to all audiences that even Hollywood was too nervous to represent the plight of these individuals to the masses. Although these cultural influences have opened the doors for gay representation in Hollywood, the messages they promote educate audiences to shy away from these stereotypes as they can either be ta1 3311(e)4(a)4(udie)-7(nc) sc caps

examples of the consequences of a homosexual lifestyle. Both characters meet tragic ends when the

within society for homosexual characters and their stories. The film adaptation of Annie

Brokeback Mountain stunned audiences for its portrayal of love, loss, and societal acceptance for its two homosexual male characters. During the 2006 Academy Awards, the winner of the Best Picture went to the racy, racially driven film *Crash* over the critically acclaimed tale of two gay cowboys in *Brokeback Mountain* (Ebert). Famed film critic Roger Ebert commented on the surprising results in a publication in the Chicago Sun-Times stating *Crash* was better than *Brokeback Mountain* although they were both among the best films of the year. That is a matter of opinion. But I was not "discomfited" by *Brokeback Mountain*. I chose *Crash* as the best film of the year not because it promoted one agenda and not another, but because it was a better film

Several *Brokeback Mountain* supporters felt as though the Academy purposefully shunned the film due to its controversial nature and deemed voters as holding homophobic tendencies. The voting pool of the Academy consists of actors, directors and writers alike, artists who typically support the plight of the LGBT community and in many cases may be belong to the community. Ebert quotes another critic, Ken Turan of the *Los Angeles Times*, as believing Academy voters to be too nervous to vote for such a

They could vote for it (*Crash*) in good conscience, vote for it and feel they had made a progressive move, vote for it and not feel that there was any stain on their liberal credentials for shunning what '*Brokeback*

was about two hard working, blue-collar individuals who engage in a turbulent romance over the course of several decades. Struggling to embrace their true nature and facing the violent consequences of the region in which they live, one of the men is eventually believed to be the victim of a hate crime while the other continues to deny his feelings of passion up until the films conclusion (Ebert). If the Academy of Motion Picture Sciences cannot embrace such a subject, an organization of the highest regard in cinema, how is the public capable of perceiving a film about homosexuals in a positive light?

The speed bump of the 2006 Oscars did not forever stain the public perception of homosexuals in the entertainment industry as seen in the most recent evaluations of popular television programming. In an article on ABC News.com, GLADD, The Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, announced their excitement for programs such as *Modern Family*, *Glee*, and *True Blood*

Marikar). Although the percentage of homosexual characters on primetime television is down from 3.9 percent to 2.9 percent for the 2011-2012 season, GLAAD remains pleased for the positive effects these characters have had on the public opinE4(se)3(ly)],bus90.02l(se

Another possible roadblock in the search for a media figure is said to come from the focus placed on the efforts to fight against AIDS in the 1980s and into the early 1990s (Peters). Placing the bulk of their efforts in shifting the media and public perception of AIDS as a homosexual disease, the search for a public face was overshadowed. The same occurred throughout the 2000s as the plight of gay activists honed in on discrimination laws and equality. The most probable explanation for the lack of a media or the public as interpreting the entirety of the gay community through one individual. Pulitzer Prize winning historian David J. Garrow believes the lack of a s better not to have a concentration or too much attention overinvested in one individual

exposure. It is the very slant of mass communication that determines our comprehensive awareness of LGBT community and how our society will react to social changes within our communities.

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