

Body Positivity Representation Matters

An intersectional study of the confluence of playwrighting, casting practices, and progressive productions as they relate to diversity and inclusion in theatre.

Created for the students of the McLennan College Theatre Department

Kathleen Laundry, Professor of Costume Design

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the friends and colleagues who served as my peer-review committee:

- Darlisha Blaylock, MCC alum, Waco, TX.
- Shahrzad Haghjoo, Professor of Costume Design at Del Mar College Corpus Christie TX.
- Dr. Malcom Morgan, Professor of Theatre at St. John's College—Santa Fe, NM.
- Dr. Ren Powell, Theatre Teacher at Vagen Drama Norway; Playwright and Poet.
- Christie Vela, Theatre Teacher at Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts; Associate Artistic Director of Theatre Three Dallas, TX.

Why do we need to know this?

American theatre, film, and television have a long and problematic history with systemic racism, misogyny, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, homophobia, and ableism:

Hollywood Beauty Standards are unrealistically narrow. There has always been a double standard in terms of the way beauty standards are applied to women compared to how they are applied to men. Men are allowed to be both fat and/or homely and can still get cast in good parts, but women must be thin and busty to be cast. Hollywood Beauty Standards cause low self-esteem and eating disorders IRL for actors as well as their fans.

In the 21st Century we should know better and do better. We hope through education and deliberate action toward inclusivity in our productions as well as our classes, to increase the representation of these under-represented groups in both our student population and the plays we produce.

<https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/research/#:~:text=Behind%20the%20scenes%2C%20women%20accounted,27%25%20in%202017%2D18.>

https://www.salon.com/2014/01/25/hollywoods_hidden_sexism_how_casting_notices_keep_beauty_standards_alive/

<https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2016/05/amy-schumer-last-fuckable-day#:~:text=It%20turns%20out%20the%20women,last%20fuckable%20day%E2%80%9D%20in%20Hollywood>

The way people cast a play!
As if all cooks were fat, all farmers tough, all statesmen stately!
—Bertolt Brecht

“Dance 10, looks 3, it’s like to die!
Left the theatre and called the doctor for my appointment to buy
Tits and ass, bought myself a fancy pair, Tightened up the derriere
Did the nose with it, all that goes with it.”
—Val in *Chorus Line*

Hollywood Beauty Standards

Although the concept of beauty is different in every culture and changes over time as well, **Hollywood Beauty Standards** are currently, and have always been, unrealistic. Starting with Silent Films in the 1920's, Clara Bow was the "It Girl" who generally played a flapper and was the Hollywood Ideal of that decade. She had a boyishly slim figure with small breasts and hips. In the Golden Age of Cinema (the 1930's-1950's), "The Blonde Bombshell" was the Hollywood Ideal. Marilyn Monroe was the epitome of The Blonde Bombshell with her hourglass figure. She had large breast and hips and a small waist. In the 1960's the first ever "Super Model" changed the Hollywood Ideal. Twiggy began her career at 16 as a fashion model, but then rapidly made the transition to Broadway musicals where she starred in *The Boyfriend*, a romantic comedy set in the 1920's. Twiggy was perfectly proportioned to replicate the 1920's silhouette with her extremely thin body, and even smaller breasts and hips than Clara Bow.

In the 1970's Farrah Fawcett became the Hollywood Ideal when she starred in *Charlie's Angels*. Farrah was athletically built and was also blonde. In one episode she went undercover as a Dallas Cowboys cheerleader, which cemented her place as the Poster Girl for American Beauty Queen, in Texas at least. In the 1980's Phoebe Cates took off her swimsuit top in *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*, and the Hollywood Ideal changed again. Phoebe was only 19 when she made that movie, while Farrah had been 29 in *Charlie's Angels*, so suddenly the Ideal became much younger. In the 1990's Pamela Anderson rocketed to fame running down the beach in *Baywatch*, and the Ideal changed again. It didn't hurt her career any when her sex tape with husband Tommy Lee, drummer for Motley Crue, was leaked to the media. In the 2000's another girl with a sex tape became the new "It Girl"—Kim Kardashian. She was much larger than any of the previous "It Girls" with an especially small waist and very large bottom. However, that didn't change things in Hollywood, as their standards just became even thinner than they had been before, resulting in the "Lollipop" figure that is popular now—large breasts, small waist and small bottom.

20th C. Ideal Beauty

<https://themarilynmonroecollection.com/marilyn-monroe-true-size/>

<http://www.glamamor.com/2013/08/sizing-up-old-hollywood-heights-weights.html>



Clara Bow
Age 22
Height—5'3"
Weight—112 lbs.
Bust—32"
Waist—24"
Hips—35"
Bra—A Cup

Clara Bow 1920's



Marilyn Monroe
Age 27
Height—5'5"
Weight—120 lbs.
Bust—37.5"
Waist—23"
Hips—36"
Bra—D Cup

Marilyn Monroe 1950's



Twiggy
Age 16
Height—5'6"
Weight—112 lbs.
Bust—31"
Waist—23"
Hips—32"
Bra—A Cup

Twiggy 1960's

20th C. Ideal Beauty

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/eugeneyang/womens-ideal-body-types-throughout-history#.avw4wZpn6o>



Farrah Fawcett
Age 29
Height—5'6"
Weight—135 lbs.
Bust—36"
Waist—24"
Hips—35"
Bra—B Cup

Farrah Fawcett 1970's



Phoebe Cates
Age 19
Height—5'7"
Weight—117 lbs.
Bust—35"
Waist—23.5"
Hips—35"
Bra—B Cup

Phoebe Cates 1980's



Pamela Anderson
Age 25
Height—5'7"
Weight—103 lbs.
Bust—36"
Waist—24"
Hips—36"
Bra—D Cup

Pamela Anderson 1990's

21st Century Ideal Beauty



Kim Kardashian

Age 29

Height—5'2"

Weight—128 lbs.

Bust—38"

Waist—27"

Hips—42"

Bra—D Cup

Hollywood Beauty Standards for Men

As with the female Ideal beauty, Rudolph Valentino started in silent films in the 1920's. In his pictures, he was a lover not a fighter. He was short with a slim but athletic build. In the Golden Age of Hollywood, Errol Flynn was the biggest "action" movie star, with his first role as a pirate in *Captain Blood*, followed by *Robin Hood*. He was quite tall and muscular, doing his own stunts like fencing, fighting, climbing ropes and swinging from them. Later in his career he played heavy weight boxer Gentleman Jim, and was actually a little more sculpted than the IRL boxer, Jim Corbett. In the 1950's James Dean was the teen idol of the time. He was also told he was too short to be an actor at 5'8" the same height as Rudolph Valentino. *Rebel Without a Cause* was released just a month after his death from a fatal car crash. These three men all died young and pretty which has retained their status as Hollywood Hunks even after their deaths.

Although Elvis Presley's music career made him famous in the 1950's he began his film career in the 1960's making 31 movies in eleven years. He was 6 feet tall and was of an average build. Unlike the previous men, his films often showed him without a shirt, mostly beach party/surfing films. Elvis remained famous until he died, because of his music, but his body got much fatter and he was no longer the Hollywood Hunk he had been. In the 1980's Tom Cruise slid onto the scene in *Risky Business* where he lip-synced to "That Old Time Rock N Roll" with no pants on. Tom Cruise is famously short, 5'8", but Hollywood makes him look taller by having him stand on a box in scenes with taller actors so he appears to be the same height. Also, Tom Cruise has retained his status as Hollywood Hunk even as he gets older, continuing to get starring roles in action films like the *Mission Impossible* series. In the 1990's Johnny Depp began his career in *Nightmare on Elm Street*. He had more of a slender frame with an average height of 5'10". Like Tom Cruise, his fame and career have only grown as he has aged. He was arguably more hot in the *Pirates of the Caribbean* franchise than he was earlier.

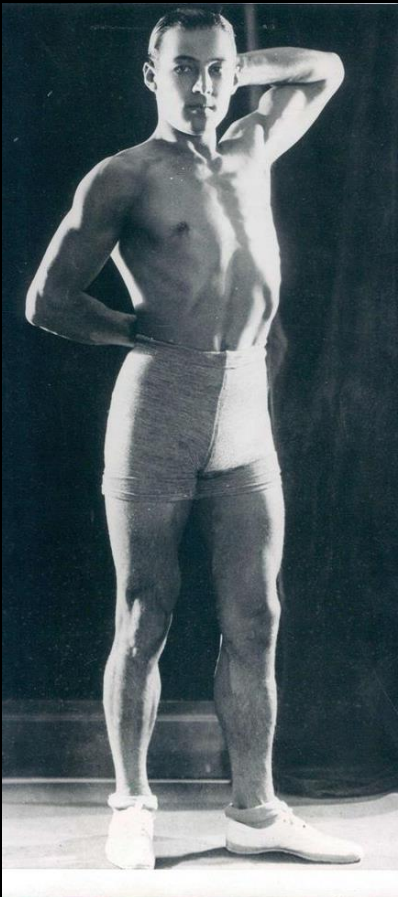
The 2000's have brought us the age of the bulky, ripped leading male, primarily with the new focus on superhero movies. Jason Momoa is IMO the current ideal of masculine beauty. He is much bigger than the previous actors at 6'4" and 215 lbs.

20th C. Ideal Beauty

<http://silenceisplatinum.blogspot.com/2010/04/mr-rudolph-valentino.html>

<http://imaginemdd.blogspot.com/2014/12/errol-flynn-custom-tights-record-seams.html#:~:text=Errol%20Flynn's%20Measurements&text=He%20has%20the%20best%20male,Thigh%2020%201%2F2>

<https://healthyceleb.com/james-dean/>



Rudolph Valentino

Age 26

Height—5'8"

Weight—156 lbs.

Chest—38"

Waist—32"

Rudolph Valentino 1920's



Errol Flynn

Age 33

Height—6'1"

Weight—180 lbs.

Chest—42"

Waist—32"

Hips—38"

Errol Flynn 1930's



James Dean

Age 22

Height—5'8"

Weight—138 lbs.

Bicep—16"

James Dean 1950's

20th C. Ideal Beauty

<https://www.wikibio.us/elvis-presley-wiki-height-weight-age-girlfriend-family-biography-more/#:~:text=40%20inches%20chest%2C%2032%20inches,as%20'Elvis%20the%20pelvis>
<https://starsunfolded.com/tom-cruise/>
<https://starsunfolded.com/johnny-depp/>



Elvis Presley

Age 31

Height—6'

Weight—170 lbs.

Chest—40"

Waist—32"

Hips—41"

Bicep—14"

Elvis Presley 1960's



Tom Cruise

Age 20

Height—5'7"

Weight—150 lbs.

Chest—44"

Waist—32"

Bicep—16"

Tom Cruise 1980's



Johnny Depp

Age 32

Height—5'10"

Weight—172 lbs.

Chest—40"

Waist—32"

Bicep—12"

Johnny Depp 1990's

21st C. Ideal Beauty

Age 39

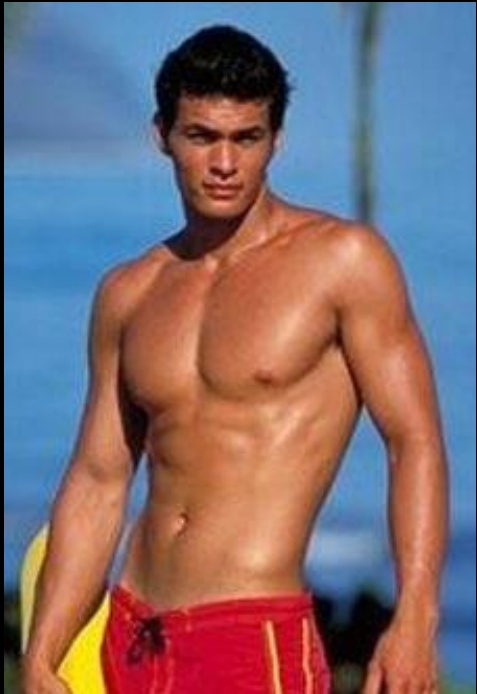
Height—6'4"

Weight—215 lbs.

Chest—50"

Waist—34"

Bicep—18"



Baywatch



Stargate Atlantis



Conan



Game of Thrones



Aquaman

Hollywood Beauty Standards

While there are occasionally "ugly" people cast, the vast majority of people in mainstream media are thin, toned, and perfectly groomed. Most actors spend a considerable amount of time and money maintaining their appearance with fitness coaches, nutritionists, cosmetic dentistry, liposuction, breast enlargement, tummy tucks, nose jobs, face lifts, etc...

For action films, the studio will pay for personal training for all their heroes and villains to bulk up and learn fight skills. This is in addition to the time and money the studio will spend on an actor's hair, makeup, wardrobe, and publicity photography to ensure that their images are ultra-glamorous and that those images appear in all mainstream media to promote the success of the film.

The standards for appearance are so high that they can cause actresses of a healthy weight to be cast as fat, which we will get into more in a later slide. Hollywood Beauty Standards often leak out into Real Life, so people feel terrible that they are not buff and muscular or thin and pretty (as applicable) since everything that comes out of Hollywood tells viewers they're only valuable if they're attractive/beautiful, which leads to many actors, as well as fans, having eating disorders.

<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/HollywoodBeautyStandards>

Body Shaming Tropes

- Anyone outside the very narrow height and weight parameters in Hollywood can only ever play supporting characters and will never play the romantic/heroic lead roles.
- Lead male roles are played by handsome/buff actors; Short or Skinny men are not manly.
- Lead female roles are played by thin but busty and beautiful actresses; Tall , fat, or flat-chested women are not feminine.
- Ugly characters who get makeovers are played by beautiful actors with glasses, ugly costumes, and bad lighting.
- Fat actors play comedic supporting roles; Hollywood is much more accepting of fat men than fat women.

Ugly Duckling Trope

This trope applies to mostly female characters, as discussed previously in the Female Representation Matters presentation on the [Cinderella Trope](#). In all the “makeover” movies, that role is always cast with a conventionally pretty actress who is made to look like an ugly duckling with bad costumes, bad lighting, and glasses or braces or both. It is also very likely that she’ll be padded out to begin with and then “lose weight” during a workout montage.

There are very few male versions of this trope, although an excellent one is Steve Guttenberg’s character in *The Boyfriend School*. His character Gus was a shy nerd who couldn’t meet women even before he had cancer and chemotherapy and lost all his hair. Fortunately, his sister writes romance novels and knows what women want in a man. She gives him a complete makeover, starting with the losing weight montage--running and lifting weights, then the fake spray tan, then as his hair is growing back, new clothes, a pierced ear, a “totem” piece of jewelry, add one Australian accent and his old motorcycle and he’s magically turned into a Fabio who wins the love of Jamie Gertz. Other examples are Steve Rogers in *Captain America* (made handsome, tall, and buff by a wonder drug) and Superman who is made ugly in disguise as Clark Kent with glasses, a bad hair style, and nerdy clothes, plus when he’s Clark he’s clumsy and awkward.

<https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20200716-how-clueless-transformed-the-movie-makeover>



My Fair Lady

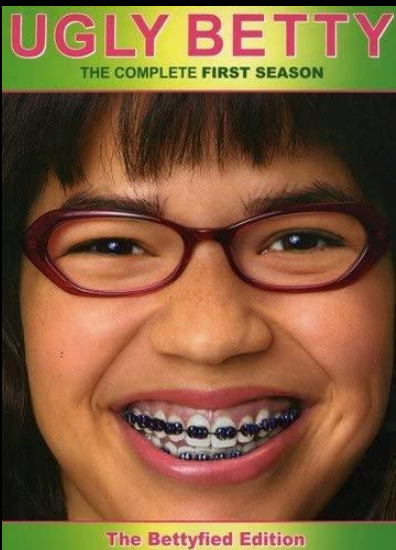


Breakfast Club



Clueless

Ugly Duckling Trope



Miss Congeniality



The Princess Diaries

Ugly Duckling Trope



Boyfriend School



Superman



Captain America



More Beauty Tropes

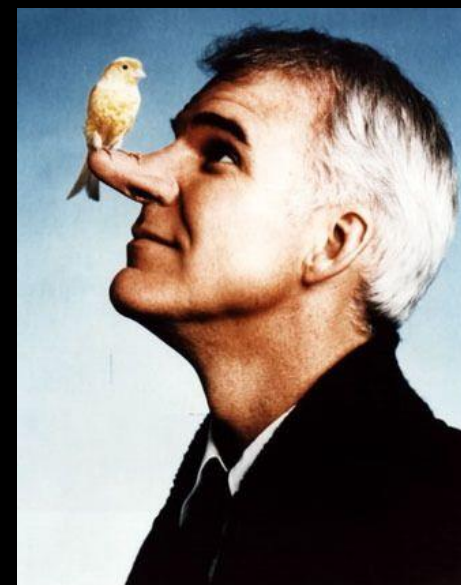
Hollywood Homely Male: Their appearance falls outside the Hollywood Beauty Standard and can be anywhere from plain to funny looking to frightening. Actors who aren't Hollywood Beautiful are considered "character actors" and can play a variety of roles, just not the romantic lead, usually. Male character actors actually get more work in Theatre/Film/TV over the course of a career, than the beautiful people, simply because once the beautiful actors get older they are no longer beautiful. Many times roles for "Hollywood Homely" male actors are really good parts such as supervillains, psycho-killers, mad scientists, monsters, or types of characters who exist on the fringes of society. Basically if you're a man and frighteningly ugly, you can still be cast in a lead role as the bad guy. And if you're just plain, you'll still get cast because there are simply more roles for men than there are for women on any given day in any given play. The trope codifier for men is Cyrano de Bergerac. He is so ugly that he refuses to court the woman he loves, but instead uses his command of language to help a Hollywood Beautiful Actor playing Christian, to court her, win her, and bed her. Christian dies and Cyrano never reveals it was him all along.

Hollywood Homely Female: However, if you're a woman and you're not "Hollywood Beautiful" you rarely get the chance to play juicy villain roles, because double standard. Hollywood wants its female baddies to be "femme fatales", vamps, sirens, etc... Female character actors play the nosy next door neighbors, cruel step mothers, mean teachers, sassy maids, prostitutes, lunch ladies, bank tellers, drug addicts, homeless people, etc... You should know that despite this double standard, many actresses who were told that they were not beautiful enough to succeed in Hollywood, became very famous anyway. Meryl Streep is the best example, but there are many, many more. Viola Davis, Tilda Swinton, and Glenn Close. Not surprisingly, many of these actresses found their way into Hollywood through comedy. The best example of that is Whoopi Goldberg, and the all the other plain or fat women from *Saturday Night Live*.

<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/HollywoodHomely>

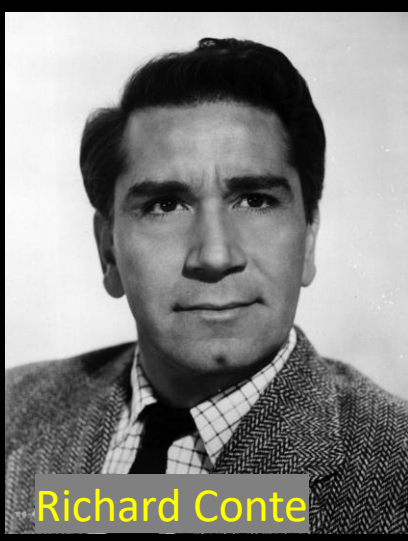


Hollywood Homely Male: Cyrano

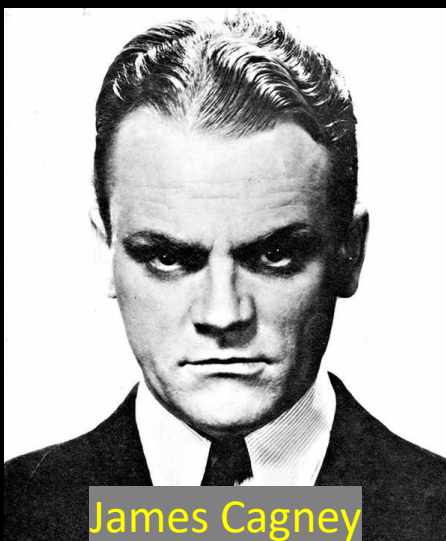




Boris Karloff



Richard Conte



James Cagney



Humphrey Bogart



Edward G. Robinson

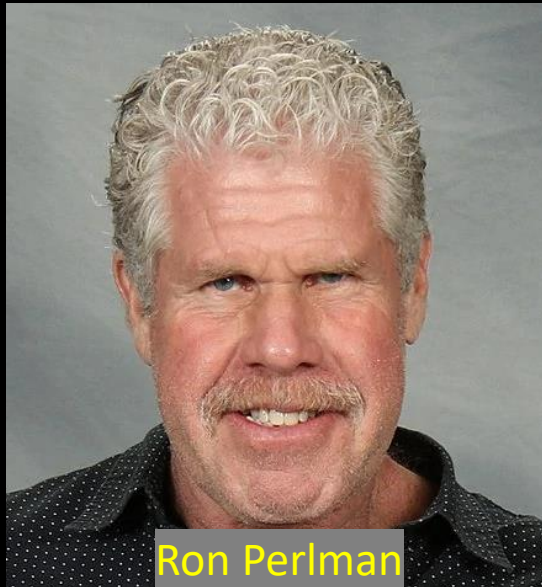
Hollywood Homely Actors: Bad/Tough Guy Roles



Danny Trejo



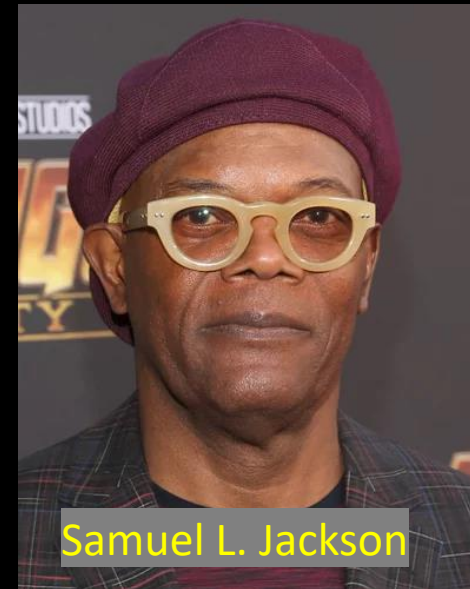
Luis Guzman



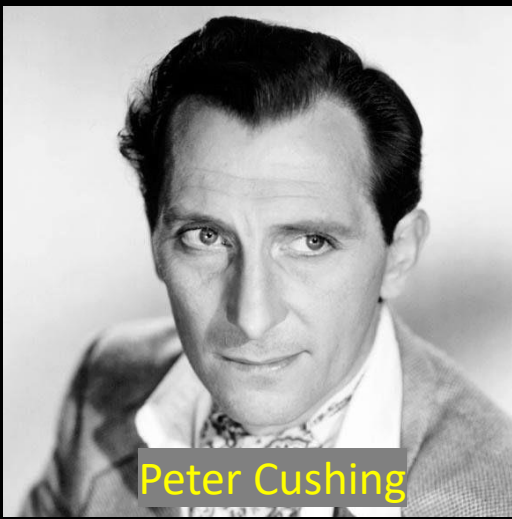
Ron Perlman



Forrest Whitaker



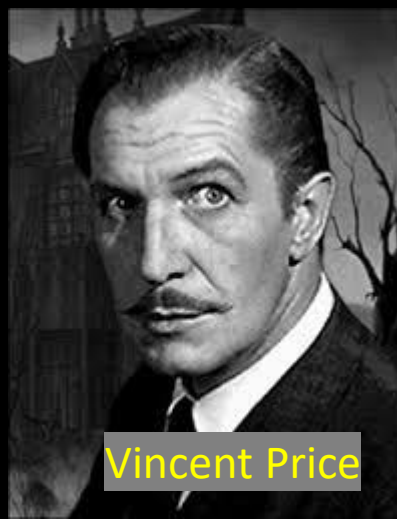
Samuel L. Jackson



Peter Cushing



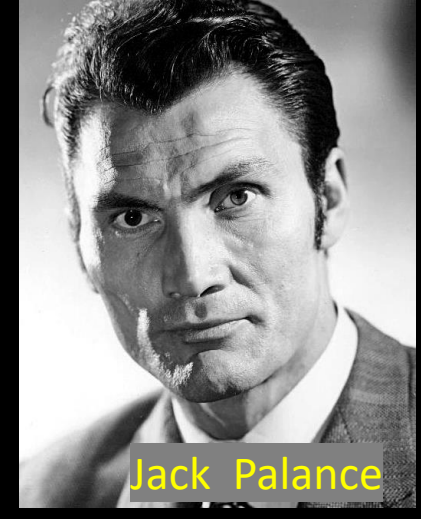
Christopher Lee



Vincent Price

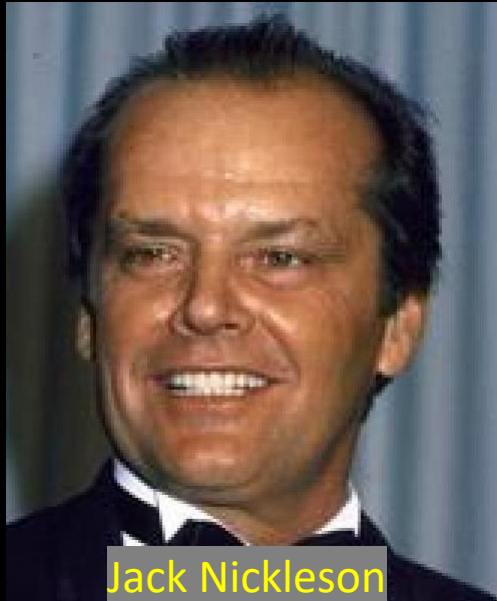


Peter Lorre



Jack Palance

Hollywood Homely Actors: Creepy/Crazy Roles



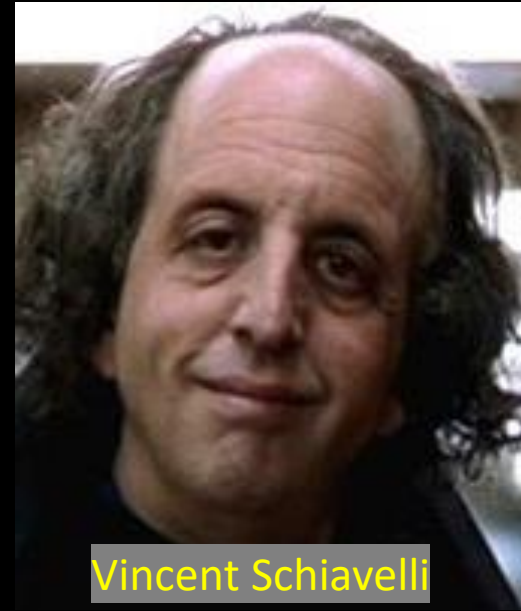
Jack Nickleson



Christopher Walken



Willam DaFoe



Vincent Schiavelli



Kevin Spacey



Marty Feldman



Don Knotts



Richard Pryor

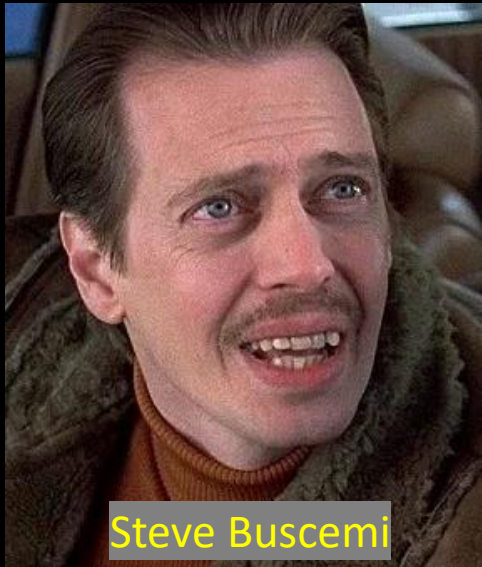


Robin Williams



Gene Wilder

Hollywood Homely Actors: Comedic Roles



Steve Buscemi



Chevy Chase



Bill Murray



John C. Riley



Rick Moranis



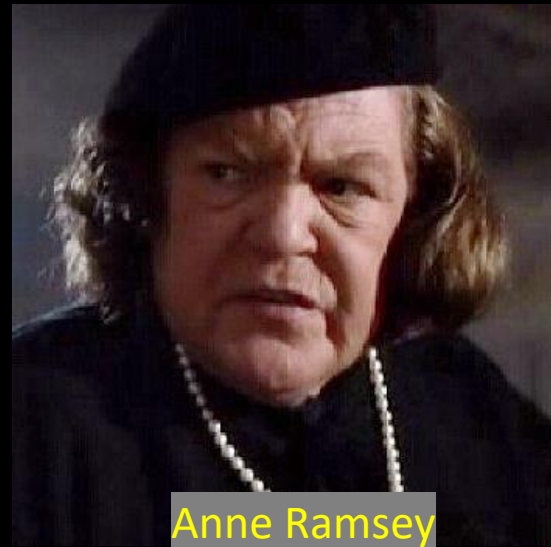
Margaret Hamilton



Agnes Moorehead



Sandra Gould

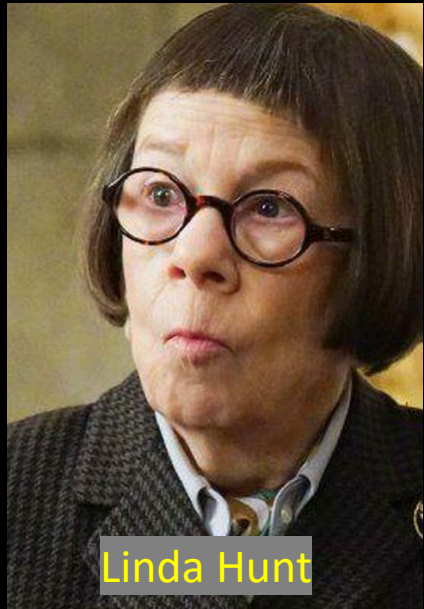


Anne Ramsey



Zelda Rubenstein

Hollywood Homely Actresses



Linda Hunt



Frances McDormand



Kathy Bates



Meryl Streep



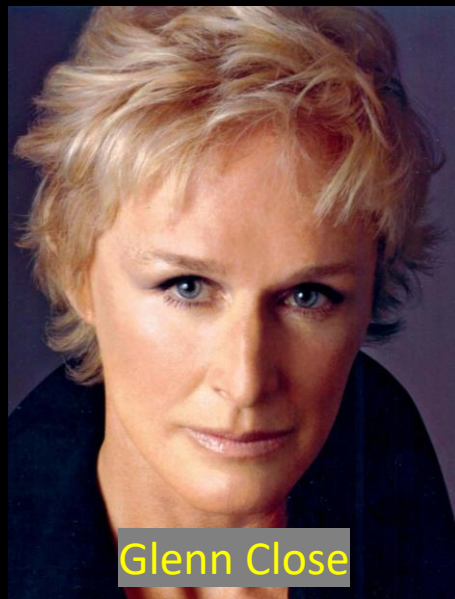
Tilda Swinton



Ellen Burstyn



Amy Madigan



Glenn Close



Diane Weiss



Ellen Barkin

Hollywood Homely Actresses



Cicely Tyson



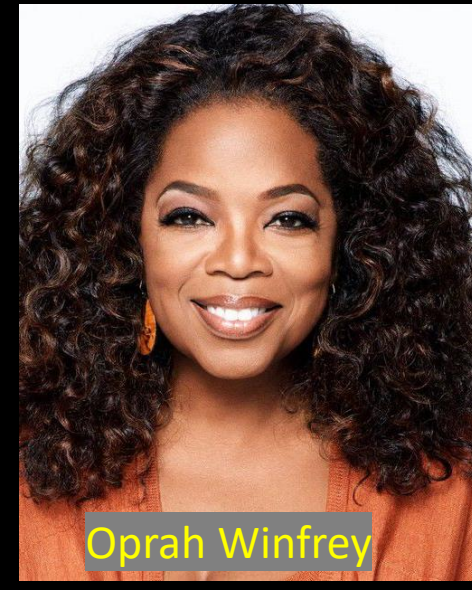
S. Epatha Merkerson



Viola Davis



Octavia Spencer



Oprah Winfrey



Lucille Ball



Betty Garrett



Billie Hayes



Una O'Conner



Gilda Radner

Hollywood Homely Actresses: Comedic Roles



Jane Curtin



Marsha Wallace



Carol Burnett



Julie Andrews



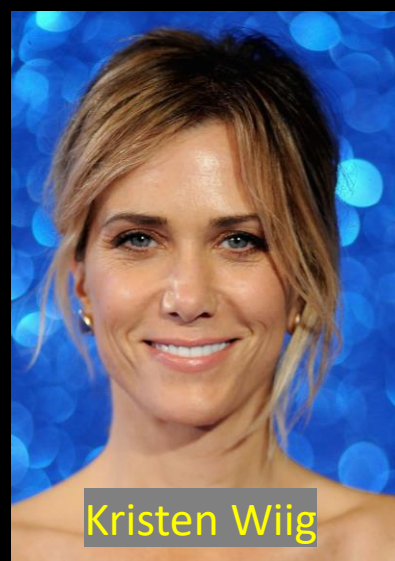
Whoopi Goldberg



Maya Rudolph



Rachel Dratch



Kristen Wiig



Jan Hooks



Leslie Jones

Hollywood Homely Actresses: Comedic Roles



Shelly Duval



Carol Kane



Joan Cusack



Jane Lynch

Beauty Tropes

Fat/Homely Husband and Thin/Hot/Young Wife: This trope is usually seen on sitcoms that are a vehicle for a successful male comedian who's given his own TV show. The husband is either funny looking or fat or both, but his wife is always much better looking than he is, at the very least she's thinner and younger. Starting with *The Honeymooners* where husbands Ralph and Ed make up a fat/thin duo (more about this later) and their wives Alice and Trixie are both "hot". This continued with *The Flintstones*, which was based on *The Honeymooners*, as well as *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, *The Bob Newhart Show*, *Family Ties*, *The Jeffersons*, *The Cosby Show*, *King of Queens*, *Everybody Loves Raymond*, *Big Bang Theory*, *The Simpsons*, *Family Guy*, *American Dad*, *According to Jim*, *The Sopranos*, *Still Standing*, *Modern Family*, *Fresh Prince of Bel-Aire*, *Grounded for Life*, *Just the Ten of Us*, *Lucky Louie*, *Family Matters*, *Game of Thrones*, *Parks and Rec*, *The Drew Carey Show*, *Married with Children*, *Home Improvement*, *Mad about You*, and *That 70's Show*. The husband is usually played as a doofus with the wife being much smarter, especially true of more recent shows starting with *The Simpsons* where the husband has become a man-child who is "incapable of mastering even the simplest of daily tasks".

<https://www.alternet.org/2014/01/why-tv-wives-are-always-way-hotter-their-husbands/>

<https://crasstalk.com/2013/01/full-list-of-tv-shows-with-fat-husbands-and-skinny-wives/>

<https://slate.com/culture/2005/01/fat-sitcom-husbands.html>

<https://www.tvguide.com/galleries/fat-guys-hot-1005918/8/>

Homely Husband/ Hot Wife Trope





Married with Children



Family Matters

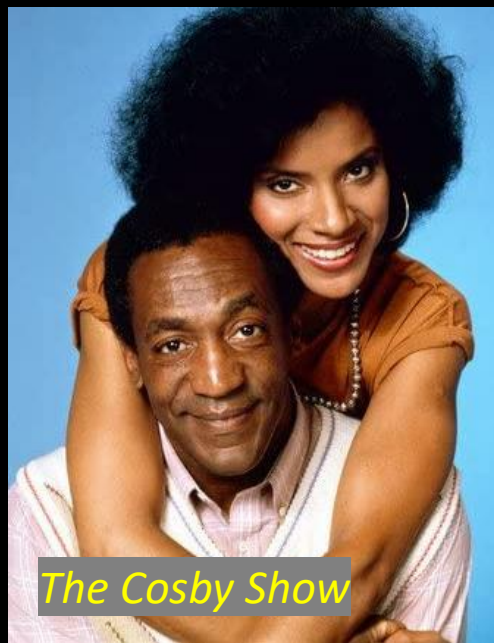


Mad About You



Home Improvement

Homely Husband/ Hot Wife Trope



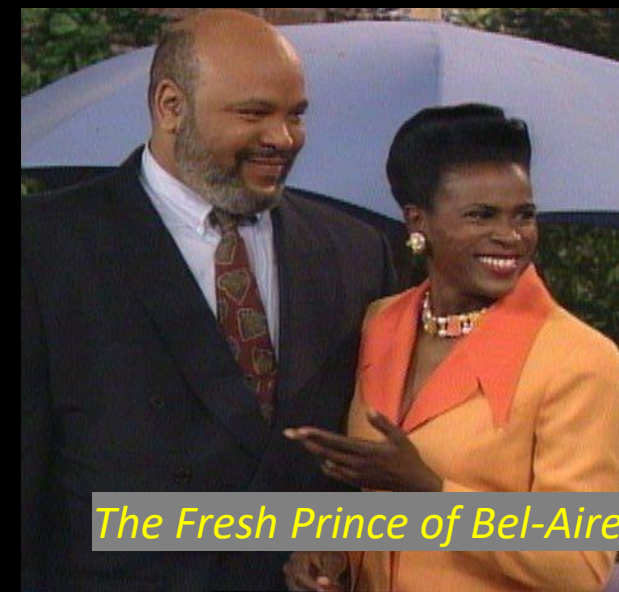
The Cosby Show



The Drew Carey Show



Everybody Loves Raymond



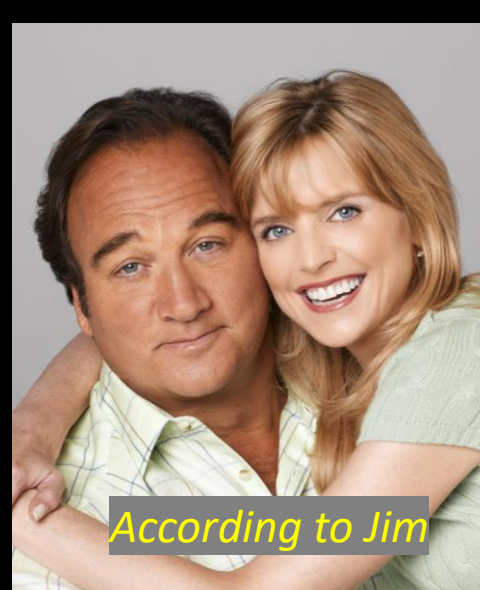
The Fresh Prince of Bel-Aire



That 70's Show



King of Queens



According to Jim



The Sopranos

Homely Husband/ Hot Wife Trope



Grounded for Life



Parks and Rec



Lucky Louie



Still Standing



Game of Thrones



King of the Hill



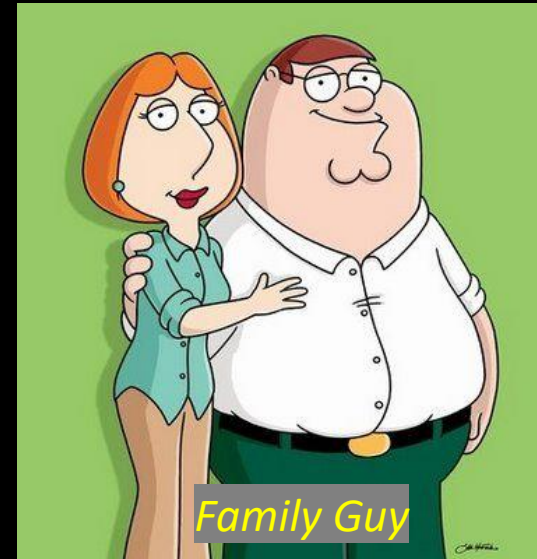
Big Bang Theory



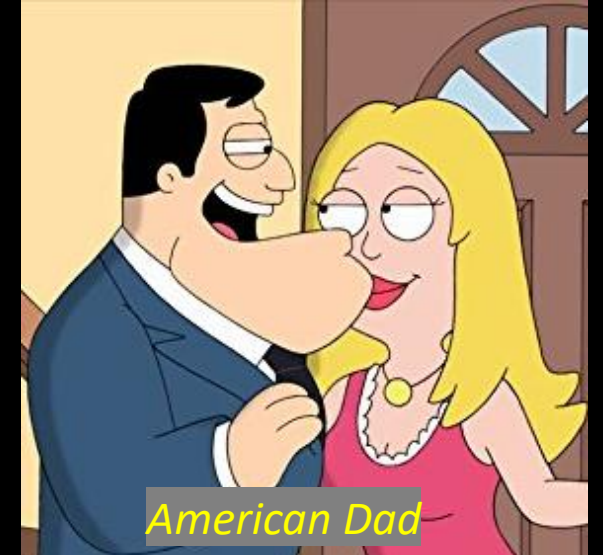
Homely Husband/ Hot Wife Trope



The Simpsons



Family Guy



American Dad

Fat Tropes

Hollywood Fat: A fat female character in Hollywood these days is IRL an average-sized woman. The Hollywood Fat character is or appears to be overweight only by comparison to the other actresses around her. She is not nearly obese. She'd have no trouble fitting through bus turnstiles or into a cute bathing suit, and wouldn't have her doctor telling her she must lose twenty pounds for the sake of her heart and pancreas. If you took the Hollywood Fat character out of her movie and plunked her down among a representative sample of real women, she'd fit in because she looks normal, even good in comparison. The two best examples of this trope are Jewel Staite from *Firefly* and Renee Zelweger from *Bridget Jones' Diary*. Both actresses were told to gain weight to play a character which was written as “pudgy”. However, if you hadn't read the character description, you wouldn't realize that they were supposed to be seen as “fat” because they appear average and healthy. Many average sized actresses are told by media and fans that they have gotten “fat” and need to lose weight.

There is a great deal of fat-shaming in Hollywood and in our national culture too. The deeper problem here is that Hollywood wants actresses to be skinny but also have big breasts. Those two things do not occur together naturally. Breasts are literally made of fat. The only way to have a skinny butt and thighs and keep D cup breasts is to either have liposuction on your bottom half or silicone implants on your top half, or both.

However, you're less likely to see this trope applied to men onscreen, since Hollywood is far more likely to cast a fat IRL actor to play an overweight male character thanks to age-old Double Standards. Men are “allowed” to be fat in Hollywood, women are not. <https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/HollywoodPudgy>

Hollywood Fat



Jennifer Lopez



Amber Benson



Beyonce



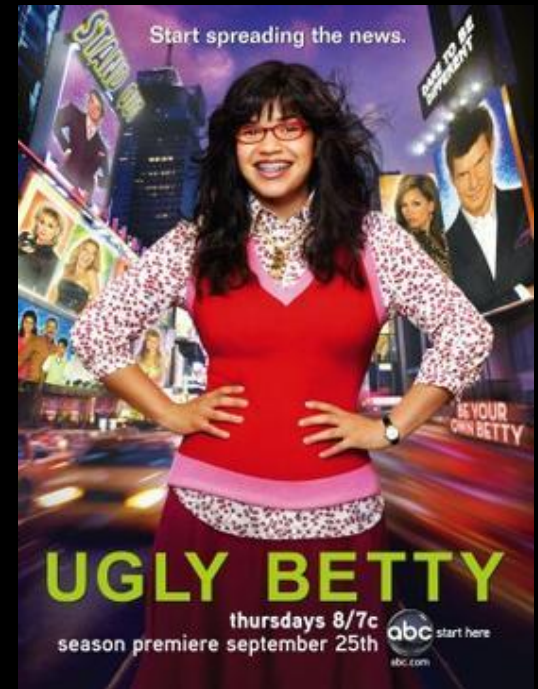
Drew Barrymore



Christina Hendricks



Tyra Banks



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mOQh3evqsl>

<https://www.shape.com/celebrities/celebrity-photos/20-celebs-criticized-their-curves?slide=0b71e7d0-1fd2-460e-a783-821e2f8222f0#0b71e7d0-1fd2-460e-a783-821e2f8222f0>

Alicia Silverstone as Batgirl, 1997

When Alicia Silverstone was cast as Cher Horowitz in *Clueless* she was 18 years old and was the hottest girl on film in 1995. Two years later, she's cast as Batgirl in *Batman and Robin*, and some jerk in the publicity dept saw photos of her in the suit and wrote on it, Fatgirl. The comment stuck in the studio and then leaked out IRL, as fans started commenting that Alicia had "gotten fat" since *Clueless*. And this was in the days before Twitter. Can you imagine the Twitter storm that would rage across the world if this would have happened recently, like what happened to Leslie Jones in *Ghostbusters*?



Fat Tropes

Fat Comic Relief: This character historically is male. He can be portrayed as always hungry, or clumsy, is usually loud and obnoxious. But his primary job is to make the hero laugh. A famous example, perhaps the Trope Codifier for western culture, is John Falstaff from Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 1, 2*, where he is the best friend of Prince Hal. At one point, Hal amicably refers to his friend as "this bed-presser, this horseback-breaker, this huge hill of flesh...". Falstaff is also in *Merry Wives of Windsor*, where he is trying to seduce two married women and fails hilariously. Another Shakespearean character that fits this trope is Sir Toby Belch from *Twelfth Night*, a drunken rabble-rouser who drinks all day, parties all night, and causes all kinds of mischief.

Modern day characters that fit this trope are: Chunk from *Goonies*, Norm from *Cheers*, Newman from *Seinfeld*, Fat Bastard from *Austin Powers*, Sgt. Schultz from *Hogan's Heroes*, Dennis on *Head of the Class*.

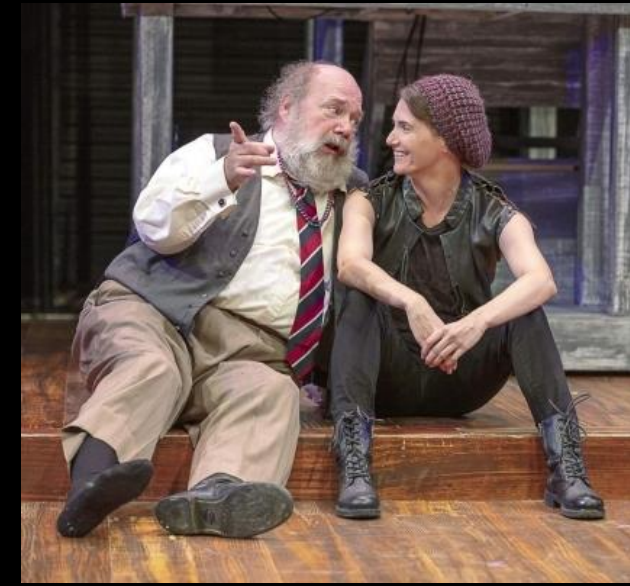
<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/FatComicRMelief>

<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/FatGirl>

Fat Best Friend: The male type is there to show how compassionate the hero is and how much loyalty he inspires. The fat best friend has no self esteem and will do anything for the hero. The hero inspires his friend to see his own worth. He is sweet and shy, and ashamed of how fat and unlovable he is. Sam from *LOTR*, Sam from *GOT*, Dave from *Full Monty*, Larry from *Leave it to Beaver*. The females type works the same way, she is sweet and underappreciated, doesn't get dates: Etta Candy in *Wonder Woman*, Amy from *Bosom Buddies*, Kim Parker from *Moesha*, Natalie from *Facts of Life*, Nurse Kelley from *MASH*. <https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/FatBestFriend>



Fat Comic Relief: Falstaff





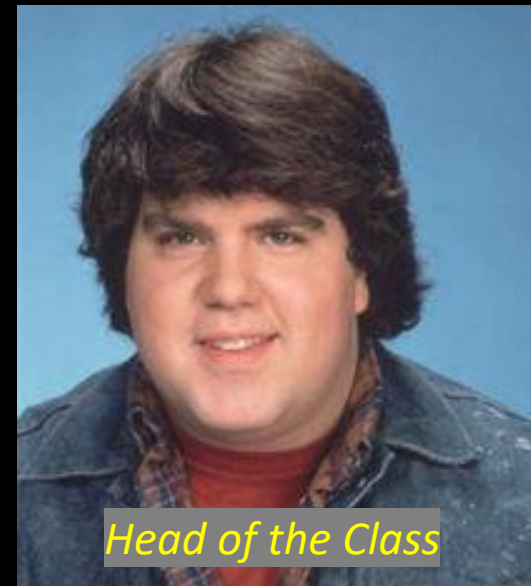
Twelfth Night



Hogan's Heroes



Cheers

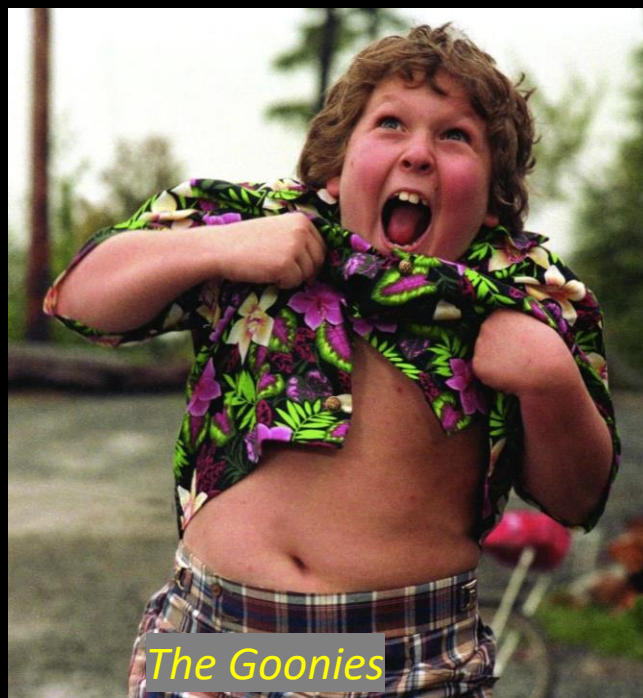


Head of the Class

Fat Comic Relief



Seinfeld



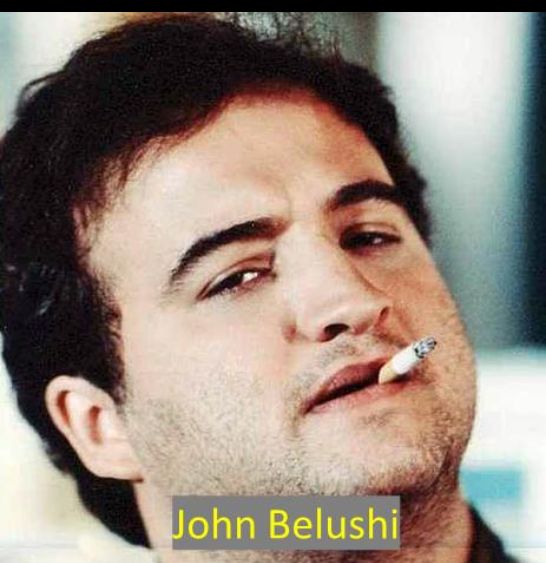
The Goonies



Austin Powers



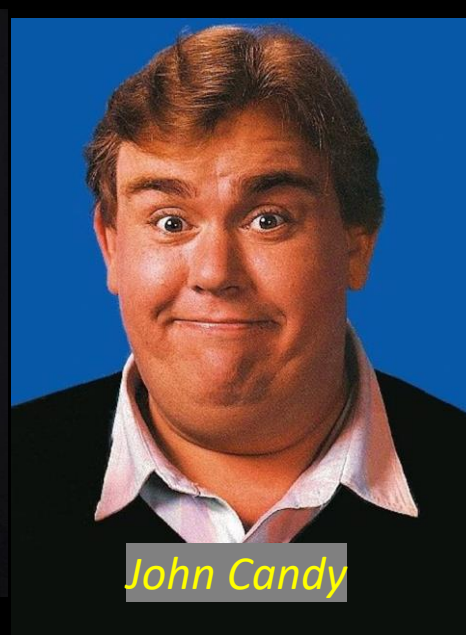
The Drew Carey Show



John Belushi



John Goodman



John Candy



Louie Anderson



Jim Belushi

Fat Comic Relief



Keenan Thompson



James Corden



Chris Farley



Jack Black



Nathan Lane



Rosanne Barr



Rosie O'Donnell



Wanda Sykes



Melissa McCarthy

Fat Comic Relief



Nicole Yvette Brown



Amy Shumer



Mindy Kaling



Rebel Wilson



Leave it to Beaver



Lord of the Rings



The Full Monty

Fat Best Friend



Game of Thrones



Wonder Woman



Wonder Woman



Wonder Woman

Fat Best Friend



M*A*S*H



Bosom Buddies



Facts of Life



Moesha



You call yourself Fat Amy?
Yes, so twig bitches like you don't do it
behind my back.

Skinny Tropes

Hollywood Thin: Basically, the media's tendency to present women far skinnier than the average person as attractive, healthy and average/normal. Audrey Hepburn (unintentionally) set a standard in the early 1960s for Hollywood Thin. She suffered starvation during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands when she was a teenager, which damaged her body's metabolism and led to a relatively early death at 63, after a lifetime of health problems. The irony of this is that she at first didn't fit the beauty standards of the day, so she was often cast as the Hollywood Homely girl who needed a makeover. She was also less uptight about her costumes being altered to hide her body flaws than other starlets of the day. Of course nowadays she's seen as one of the most beautiful women ever. The aptly named model Twiggy is widely regarded as having first popularized the idea of thin women as sexy, moving away from the "curvy is sexy" image of the early 20th century popularized by Marilyn Monroe. There were allegations that Twiggy was anorexic, despite the fact she was noted for being a Big Eater. Ironically, Twiggy herself observed in interviews at the time that "obviously" no other models would be so freakishly thin in the future. Any yet here we are.

For men the opposite holds true. Any male who isn't sporting a six-pack, ripped pecs, or biceps as thick as oak trunks is often portrayed as, or is implied to be, scrawny and weak, even if the character is supposed to be fourteen years old. On the bright side, no one is making the men diet down to be skinny. They just are and it becomes part of their trademark look. Doug Jones has made a whole career of his ability to fit inside monster suits.

<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/HollywoodThin>

Lean and Mean: This trope suggests that skinniness equates to villainy. Think Cruella DeVille, from *101 Dalmatians*, Ysma from *The Emperor's New Groove*, and many others.

<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/LeanAndMean>

Hollywood Thin



Audrey Hepburn in
Sabrina



Twiggy



Portia de Rossi in
Ally McBeal



Sarah Michelle Gellar in
Buffy the Vampire Slayer



Mischa Barton in
The OC

Hollywood Thin Male Version



Art Carney



Don Knotts



Frank Sinatra



David Niven



Bob Denver

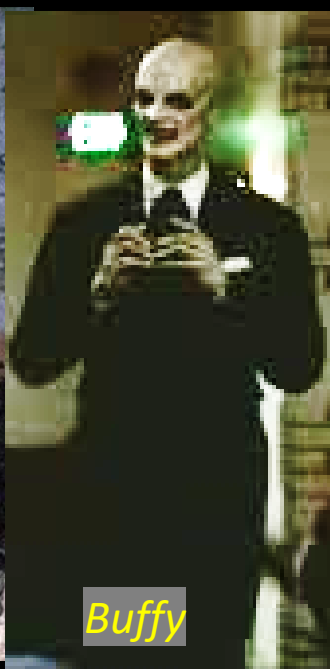


Anthony Daniels

Doug Jones



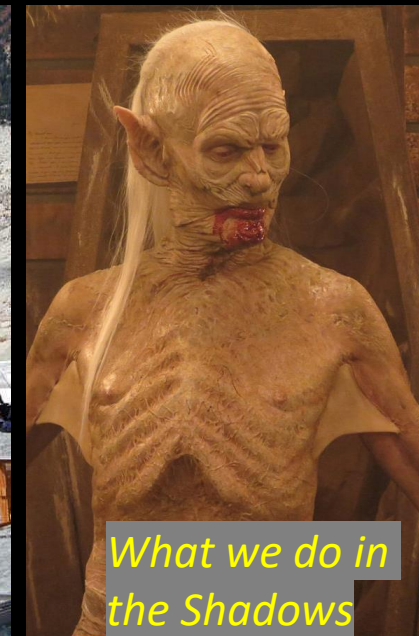
Hocus Pocus



Buffy



Silver Surfer



What we do in the Shadows



Hellboy



Pan's Labyrinth



Crimson Peak



The Shape of Water



The Hunchback of Notre Dame



Aladdin



The Fantastic Mr. Fox



Mulan



The Princess and the Frog

Lean and Mean Trope: Animation



The Jungle Book



Robin Hood

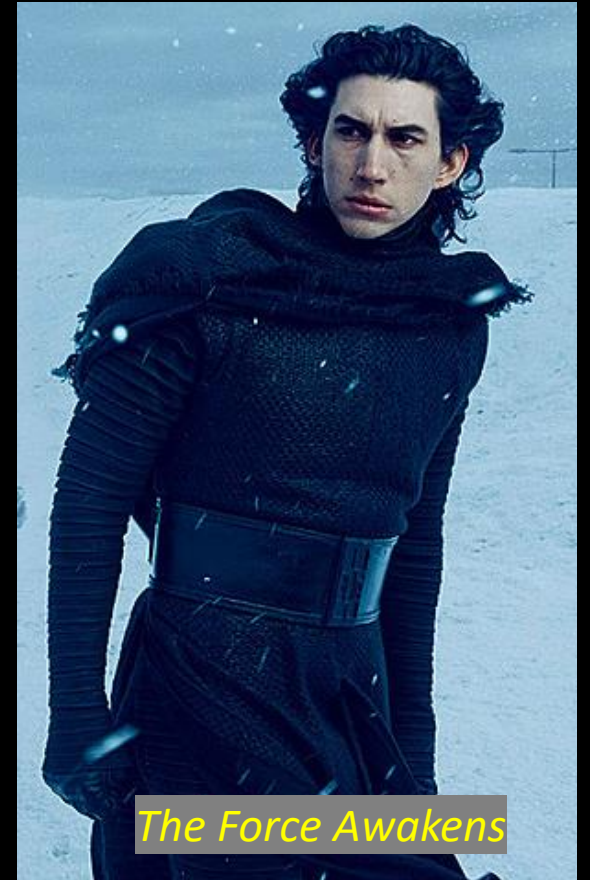


The Lion King



Kung Fu Panda 2

Lean and Mean Trope: *Star Wars*



Lean and Mean Trope





Nightmare on Elm Street



Se7en



X2



Hannibal

Lean and Mean Trope: Females



Weight Trope

Fat and Skinny: This is where a fat and a skinny character make up a two-character ensemble from the days of vaudeville. This is usually a comedy trope, usually with the skinny character being the Straight Man, although inversions of this are seen as well. These two guys usually (but not always) have some specific characteristics that tropify their relationship: The fat one is usually a dopey optimist, while the skinny one is cynical and refined. This pair, even in villain form, are devoted to each other. The skinny one has all of the ideas, and the fat one is also the strong man. On the rare occasion the fat guy has a brilliant idea, either the skinny guy will express extreme surprise at the fat guy's ability to rub two brain cells together, or the idea will be waved away as unworkable and then re-appropriated two seconds later as the skinny guy's idea. This is usually a male trope, although there are examples of female fat and skinny pairs

Examples are Laurel and Hardy, Abbot and Costello, Bing Crosby and Bob Hope, Ralph Kramden and Ed Norton from *The Honeymooners*, Jaq and Gus Gus from *Cinderella*, the Skipper and Gilligan from *Gilligan's Island*, R2D2 and C3PO from *Star Wars*, Tom Servo and Crow from *Mystery Science theatre 3000*. Timon and Pumbaa from *Lion King*, Jumba and Pleakley from *Lilo and Stitch*, Pacha and Kuzco from *Emperor's New Groove*, Chris Farley and David Spade from *Tommy Boy*, Bert and Ernie from *Sesame Street*, Drake and Josh, Keene and Kel, *Little Britain's* David Walliams and Matt Lucas, the two Royal Marines and the two Pirates from *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Simon Pegg and Nick Frost in every movie they've ever made together. Newt Scamander and Jacob Kowalski from *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*. Jay and Silent Bob, Banjo Kazooie, and *The Blues Brothers*.

Female examples are Roseanne and Jackie from *Roseanne*, French and Saunders in *Absolutely Fabulous*.

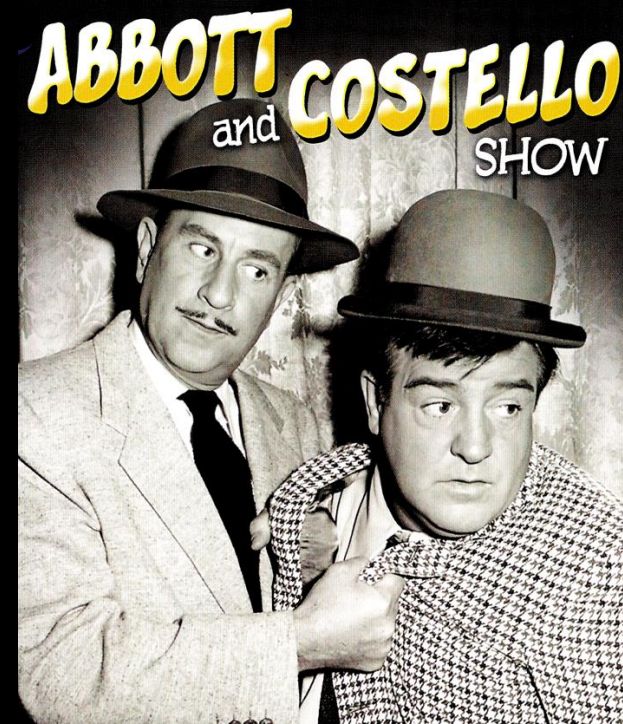
Fat and Skinny



Bob Hope and Bing Crosby



Laurel and Hardy



The Honeymooners



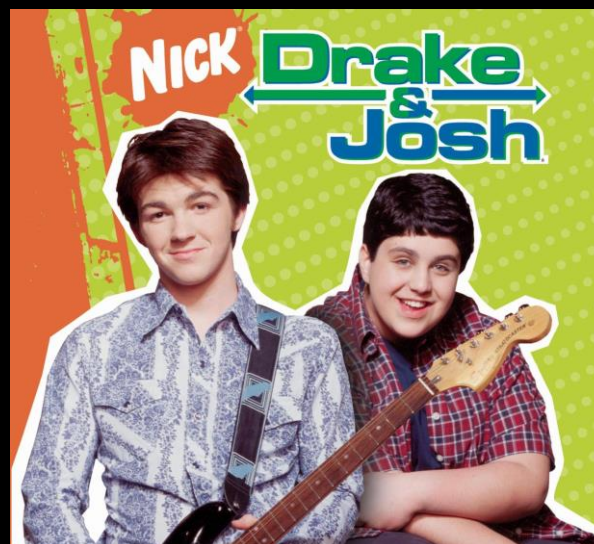
Gilligan's Island



Cinderella



Muppet Show



Lion King

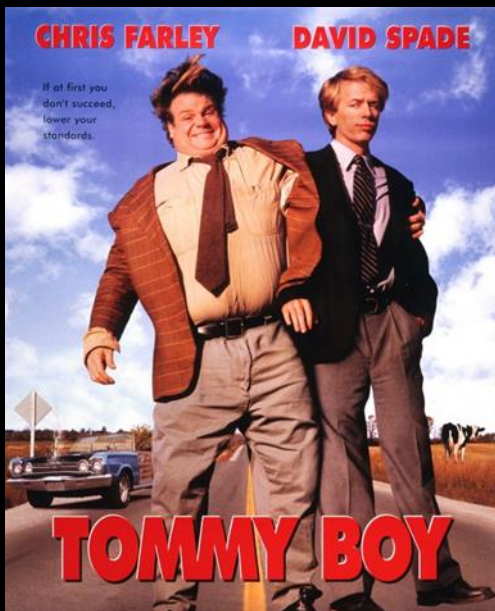


The Emperor's New Groove



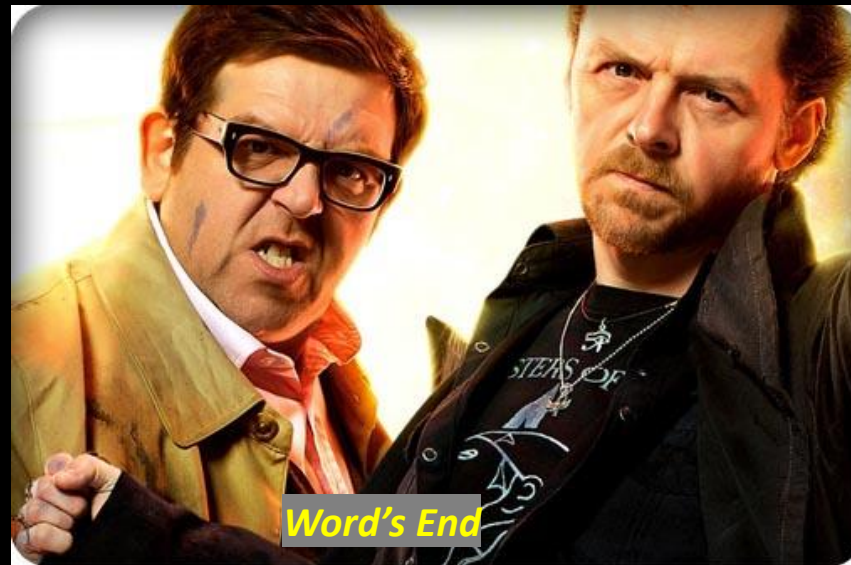
Lilo and Stitch



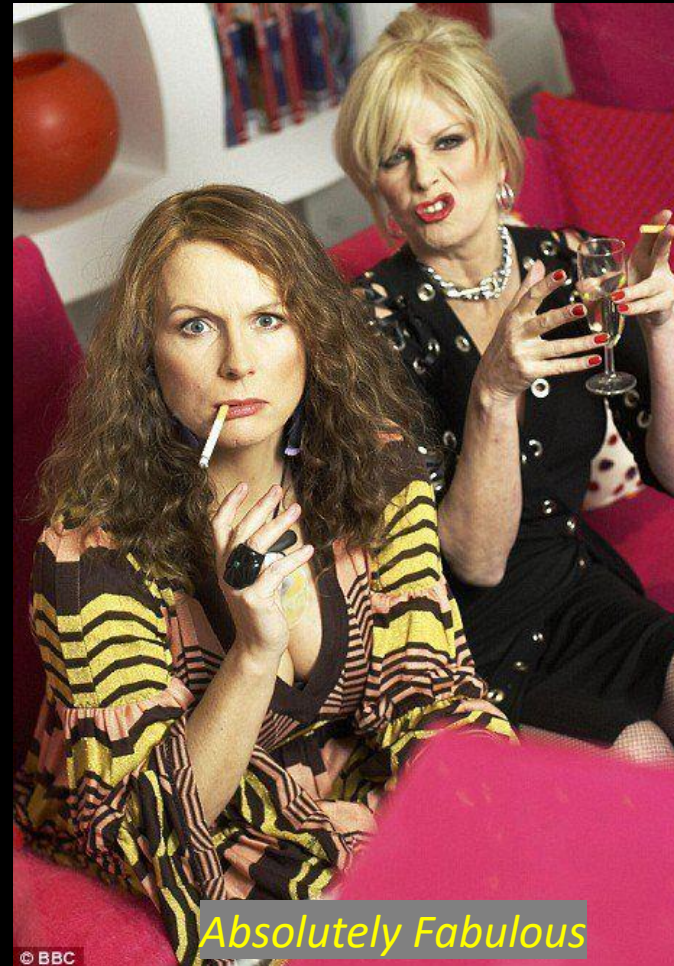




Simon Pegg and Nick Frost



Female Fat and Skinny



Gentle Giant Trope

Gentle Giant: He's big, muscular and angry looking. He might even be an actual monster. People are often fearful of him. But he's got a heart of gold. He loves children and puppies, and frequently abhors unnecessary violence. He is often rather intelligent, level-headed and analytical, a voice of reason in the group. He probably has a few unexpected hobbies. However, when push comes to shove, he's great to have on your side in battle. This is a reversal that has become an archetype in its own right. We are all used to thinking of big people and giant creatures as frightening and mean. Starting back as far as Frankenstein's Monster or earlier, the seven-foot shambling hulk of a man is almost always gentle inside, and misunderstood by society at large.

Gentle Giant



Frankenstein



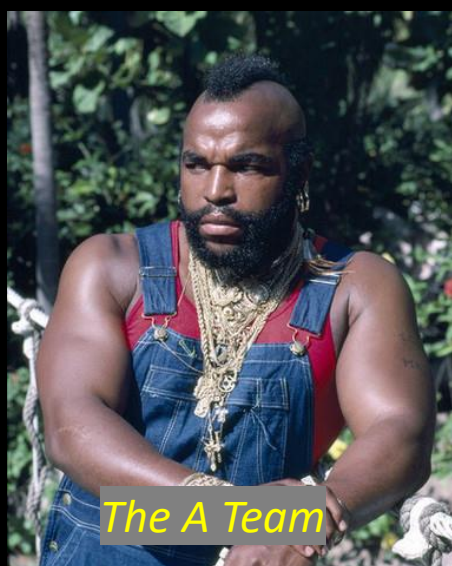
The Munsters



Young Frankenstein



Bonanza



The A Team



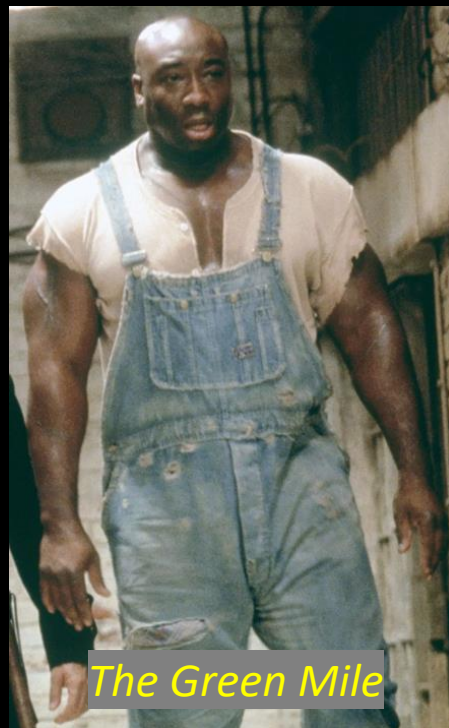
Police Academy



Goonies



Everybody Loves Raymond



The Green Mile



Hellboy



Lost



Game of Thrones



Arrow



Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.



Brooklyn 99



Deadpool



Nurse Jackie



Parker Lewis Can't Lose



How I Met Your Mother



Xena



Tall Women Tropes

Women, on average, are shorter than men. Most medical journals put the average American woman's height at 5'4". Because of this, in most human societies, tall girls and women often feel awkward and out of place, and some men will feel uncomfortable when it comes to having a relationship with a woman who towers over them. Oddly enough, "Hollywood Average" height for women is around 5'6" or 5'7". This heightened height may instill an enormous mental complex on the character. She may slump down to try to appear shorter or wear flats so she's not even taller than her date.

Amazon Warrior: As well as being tall, the Amazon Warrior character is also the most pectorally developed character. She may be an actual warrior, or just really good at sports, either way she is tough as nails and can kick your ass. Brienne of Tarth is a prime example. She refuses female roles and stereotypes, becoming a knight instead of a wife. A character who comes to terms with their tall stature can become beautiful with enough self-esteem. They may even become a statuesque stunner.

Statuesque Stunner: She must be either taller than most men in her setting or stand at *least* 5'8" (172 cm) tall AND she must be considered attractive in-universe. She may or may not kick ass.

Not all Amazon Warriors are Stunning (Brienne of Tarth, the Russian chick from Dodgeball, Leslie Jones from Ghostbusters) and not all Statuesque Stunners are Warriors like Jessica Rabbit who exists purely to be sexy. (Cat Woman and Poison Ivy don't fight their own battles, Cat Woman is a jewel thief and Poison Ivy kills with a kiss, Caprica is a Cylon and a spy, but doesn't actually fight.

<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/StatuesqueStunner>

Amazon Warrior Trope





Fifth Element



Guardians of the Galaxy



Star Wars



Game of Thrones



Kill Bill



Resident Evil



Dodgeball



GLOW



Ghostbusters

Statuesque Stunner



Batman



Beverly Hills Cop



Galaxy Quest



Battlestar Galactica



3rd Rock from the Sun



Who Framed Roger Rabbit?



Batman and Robin



Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2

Short Tropes

The Napoleon Complex popularly known as "short-man syndrome", an inferiority complex said to be suffered by short people. Aggressive or dangerous people who are short are often labeled as such to mock them. This was most famously done to the legendary French emperor, Napoléon Bonaparte. Although Napoleon was of average height for his nationality and time period, a number of different factors created the widely held urban legend that he was quite short — mostly stemming from a discrepancy between English and French measurement systems that got Lost in Translation and the fact he often surrounded himself with tall bodyguards. English propaganda of the time seized on the perception and portrayed him as comically short to deflate his image. Most characters, usually males, with this complex are known for having a Hair-Trigger Temper, or at least a big Berserk Button concerning their height. Many cartoons use this trope: Farquaar from *Shrek*, The Brain from *Pinky and the Brain*, George Jetson's boss from *The Jetsons*, Plankton from *Spongebob Squarepants*, Mr. Incredible's boss from *The Incredibles*, as well as Edna Mode, *Zootopia* has two: Mr. Big and Nick's partner, Yosemite Sam from *Looney Tunes*. Any role Danny Devito ever played, starting with Louie DePalma in *Taxi*. Principle Snyder in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Dark Helmet from *Spaceballs*, The Penguin from the *Batman* franchise, Tony Montana in *Scarface*, Rumplestiltskin in *Once Upon a Time*,

There are very few female characters that are sensitive about their height. The most famous one is Hermia from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Carla from *Cheers* is another example. Bernadette from *Big Bang Theory* was increasingly crabby the more the series went on.



Pinky and the Brain

Napoleon Complex



Bill and Ted's Exellent Adventure



Time Bandits



Napoleon
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM
BATTLE OF THE SMITHSONIAN
WWW.NIGHTATTHEMUSEUMMOVIE.COM
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Jack of all Trades



Shrek



The Incredibles



The Jetsons



Wreck it Ralph



Zootopia



Sponge Bob



Looney Tunes



DARK HELMET

Evil will always triumph, because good is dumb.

CLASH & SCARF



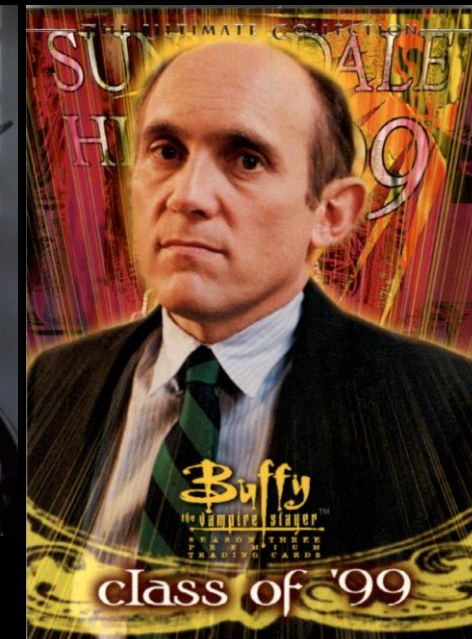
Scarface



Batman



Batman



class of '99

Napoleon Complex



Taxi



Night at the Museum



Pirates of the Caribbean 2, 3



Once Upon a Time



Trainspotting

Napoleon Complex Female Version



Shirley
Laverne and Shirley



Carla
Cheers



Principal
Kindergarten Cop



Bernadette
Big Bang Theory

Height Tropes

Big and Little: See weight trope. Usually a comedy pairing. Two guys who are often Heterosexual Life-Partners, and usually embody the Fat and Skinny trope as well. This trope describes a pair of guys who always fight together, are best friends forever, and quite often have a very obvious hierarchy: The little guy is often in charge, the big guy plays the Dumb Muscle role--a big dumb lug who often doesn't know his own strength.

The little guy is usually listed first, since he's the leader, and they are always listed together, as if they are one entity. In fact, some episodes may center on the fact that they can't live without each other. Although these guys are seen most often in kid's shows, they are also played seriously, as in George and Lenny in *Of Mice and Men*.

If this is a case of Brains and Brawn, the Big Guy is usually the Brawn, and the Little Guy the Brain. It's almost always a case of Smart Jerk and Nice Moron as well. Little Guy, Big Buddy is where the bigger of the two protects/looks after the smaller.

The female version is rare, but definitely codified by Helena and Hermia from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. "And are you grown so high in his esteem because I am so dwarfish and so low? How low am I, thou painted maypole?" Also, Maryanne and Ginger from *Gilligan's Island*, Jackie and Donna from *That 70's Show*, and Eleanor and Tahani from *The Good Place*.

<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/BigGuyLittleGuy>

Big and Little



Big and Little



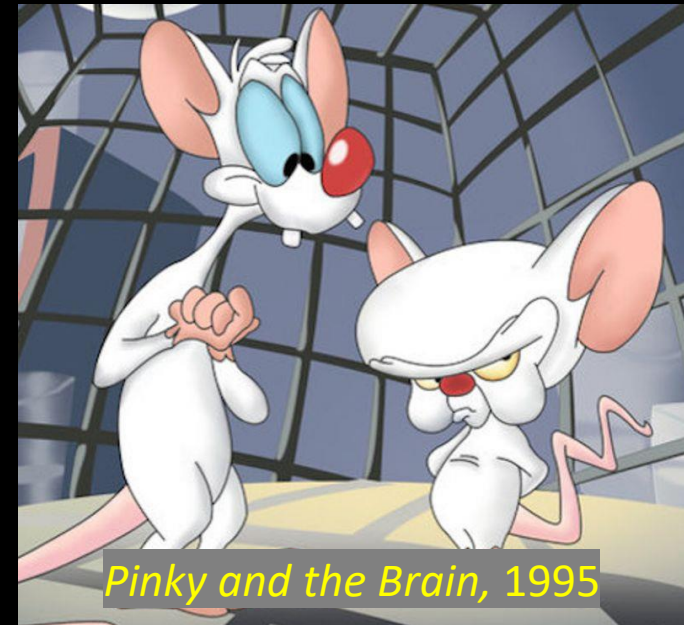
Sesame Street



Star Wars, 1977



Banjo Kazooie



Pinky and the Brain, 1995

Big and Little



Midnight Cowboy, 1969



Smokey and the Bandit, 1977



Children of the Corn, 1984

Big and Little



Laverne and Shirley, 1985



Home Alone, 1985

Big and Little



The Bride, 1985



The Princess Bride, 1987



Twins, 1988

Big and Little



Jumanji, 1995



Guardians of the Galaxy , 2014



Guardians of the Galaxy , 2017

Big and Little: Female Version



A Midsummer Night's Dream, 1935



A Midsummer Night's Dream, 1968



A Midsummer Night's Dream, 1999

Big and Little Female Version



Boob Tropes

Buxom is Better: Within various forms of media, there is a prevalent assumption among creators that large breasts automatically make a woman more attractive. This often leads to significant focus on said breasts, or in-universe social norms treating larger breasts as absolutely more attractive than smaller ones, sometimes going as far as making it the most important or even sole standard of female beauty — regardless of who the fans think is really the most attractive, or whether there is an in-universe distinction between sexual attractiveness and non-sexual beauty. In *The Aviator*, Howard Hughes is all about this, going so far as to design a special bra to display Jane Russell's assets in *The Outlaw* and arguing with Hollywood censors when they try to make him take all the cleavage out of the movie. **Glenn Odekirk:** Howard, you really think they're gonna let you put out a whole movie just about tits? **Howard Hughes:** Sure. Who doesn't like tits?

<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/BuxomIsBetter>

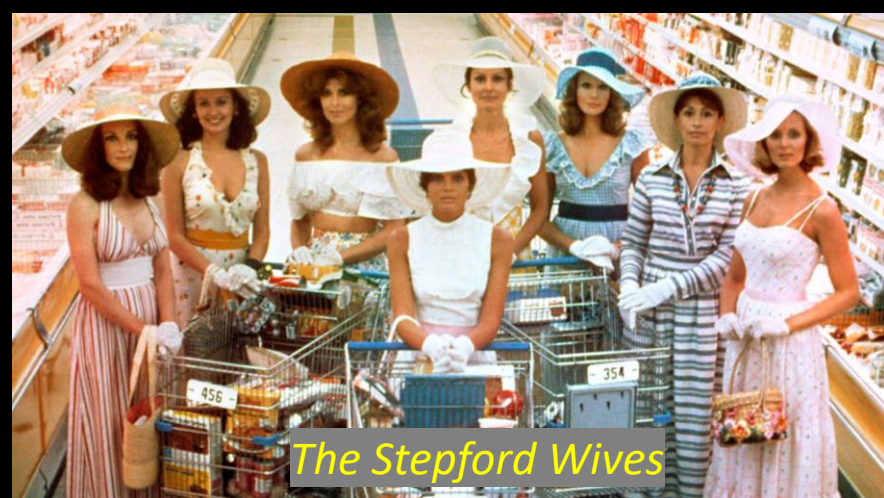
Most Common Superpower: Whether the superheroine/villainess is a mutant, an amazon princess or an Alien, if she's female, she is straining against the bonds of gravity... but not in a flying sort of way. This most common of metahuman attributes seems to range from a D-cup size upward for any character just past the onset of puberty (a time when many comic-book characters start to manifest superpowers). They are not only large, but remarkably self-supporting and perky for their size. Common because most artists are male. One theory behind this phenomenon in comics is that American superheroes are drawn in a "larger than life" artstyle. Heroes are supposed to look dynamic and impressive, villains look evil and shady, and thus women are sometimes drawn to accentuate any womanly features far more heavily than a realistic style would. Live Action Adaptations inevitably lead to a Big Bra to Fill.

<https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/MostCommonSuperpower>

A Cup Angst: Many works are set in a culture where the common assumption is that "Buxom Is Better". This standard of female beauty can be a challenge for women with smaller breasts, and while some wear the "ironing board" title with pride, others are plagued by problems of low self-esteem as a result of their... un-bustiness. This can be for a variety of reasons, but the most common anxieties are that she'll look less sexy to a Love Interest, be mistaken for a child, or be treated as underdeveloped and immature because of her small chest. In fiction you frequently see this with teenage and preteen girls, disappointed that they're not as "mature" as their older sisters or more-developed peers. <https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/ACupAngst>

Buxom is Better Trope





The Stepford Wives



Who Framed Roger Rabbit?



Liar Liar

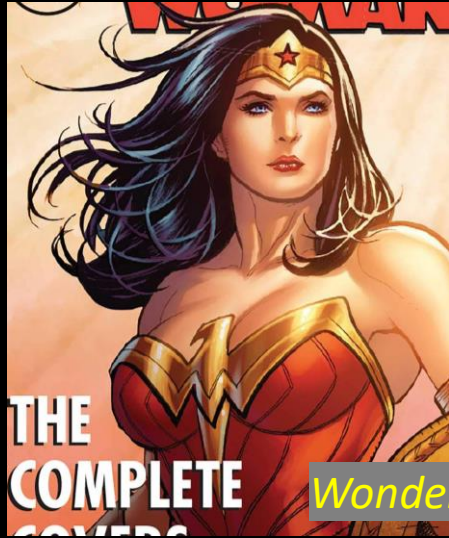


Summer Rental



Elvira Mistress of the Dark

Most Common Superpower



Wonder Woman



Hawkgirl



Batgirl



Supergirl



Most Common Superpower



Black Canary



Huntress



Harley Quinn



Poison Ivy



Most Common Superpower





Storm



Invisible Girl



Black Widow



Scarlet Witch





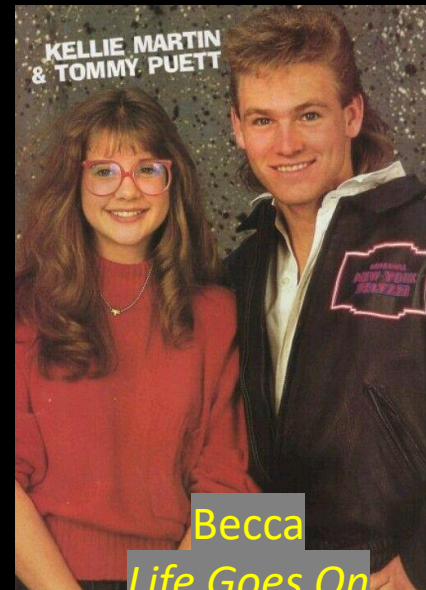
Julie
One Day at a Time



Janet
Three's Company



Bailey
WKRP in Cincinnati



Becca
Life Goes On



Rudy
The Cosby Show



Sam
Sixteen Candles



Mary Jo
Designing Women



Angie
George Lopez

A Cup Angst



Married with Children



Grace
Will & Grace



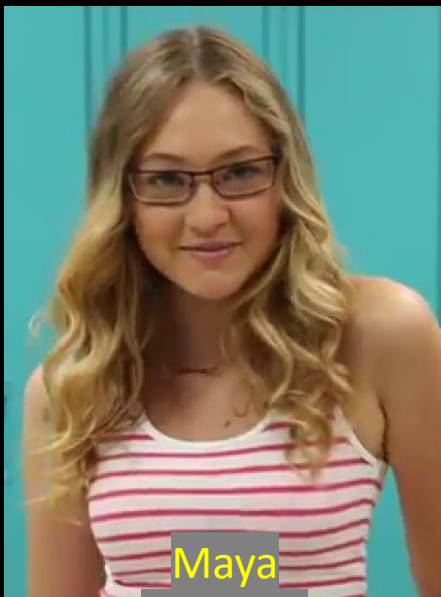
Lizzie McGuire



Alex
Modern Family



Fred
Angel



Maya
Degrassi



iCarly



Sam
Popular



Sophie
In Treatment

A Cup Angst

What now?

Without bringing attention to the mistreatment of Fat/Thin/Tall/Short/Homely characters, it makes it difficult for writers to change how they write these characters. By learning about stereotypes, we grow to appreciate quality storytelling. We always have to ask ourselves certain questions: Are these stereotypes damaging? How should show-runners and writers improve their storytelling when it comes to Fat/Thin/Tall/Short/Homely characters? Can we like certain pieces of media while simultaneously recognizing their mistreatment of Fat/Thin/Tall/Short/Homely characters?

Carrie Fisher's *Star Wars* Saga

Carrie Fisher was 19 when she was cast in *Star Wars*, and was so nervous about her first big movie role that she remembered keeping her head down and agreeing to everything. "I kept thinking they were going to realize their big mistake soon about hiring me," she told J.W. Rinzler in an interview for 2007's *The Making of Star Wars*. In 1977, Carrie was 5-foot-1, and 105 pounds, yet she was asked to lose weight to play Princess Leia in *Star Wars*. If not forgivable, this was, perhaps, to be expected. It was Hollywood — and it was a long time ago." She was sent to a fat farm to lose 25 lbs.. She didn't actually lose the whole 25 lbs.. and was terrified that Lucas would put her on a scale, figure out her deception, and fire her on the spot. But he didn't. Instead, he made her film the movie bra-less.

"So they put the dress on me the first day and brought me to George," Fisher said on HBO's *Wishful Drinking*. "He took one look at me and he said, 'you can't wear a bra underneath that dress', so I said, 'why?', and he said, 'because there's no underwear in space'. And the man said it with such conviction too. Like he had been to space and looked around and he didn't see any bras or panties or briefs anywhere."

But because she is in white the entire movie, they didn't want to see her nipples through her dress either, so every day her breasts were taped over so her nipples didn't show. Welcome to Hollywood, Carrie.



Return of the Jedi: Slave Leia

Carrie Fisher had to lose even more weight before they filmed this scene. “Nearly naked, which is not a style choice for me. ... It wasn't my choice. When [director George Lucas] showed me the outfit, I thought he was kidding and it made me very nervous. I had to sit very straight because I couldn't have lines on my sides, like little creases. No creases were allowed, so I had to sit very, very rigid straight.

When a controversy erupted in 2015 over the continued merchandising of “Slave Leia” toys, Fisher said she found peoples’ objections “stupid.”

“The father who flipped out about it, ‘What am I going to tell my kid about why she’s in that outfit?’ Tell them that a giant slug captured me and forced me to wear that stupid outfit, and then I killed him because I didn’t like it,” she told the *Wall Street Journal*.

<https://www.npr.org/2016/11/28/503580112/carrie-fisher-opens-up-about-star-wars-the-gold-bikini-and-her-on-set-affair>
<https://www.yahoo.com/entertainment/how-carrie-fisher-helped-create-the-star-wars-legend-151339546.html>



Jenny Craig Spokesperson

Carrie Fisher started Jenny Craig in November 2010, weighing 180 lbs. and achieved her original 30 pound weight loss goal in May 2011. Feeling inspired by her personal success, Fisher then decided to continue on the program, and is now excited to share her 50 pound weight loss with the world. "I feel really good about losing 50 pounds, I do," said Fisher with a smile. "I feel proud of myself."

But it seems just plain awful that part of anyone's motivation to make a lifestyle change would be the opinions of trolls on the Internet, the kind who gleefully suggest a woman has now morphed into Jabba the Hut. Why the sense of contrition, the walk of shame? This week, while Fisher was admitting that "I'm pretty fearless, but my scale is frightening," Seth Rogen was complaining of his training for *The Green Hornet* and boasting, "Now that the movie's over I hope to get fat again. Because I enjoy it." Try to get your brain around imagining a high-profile woman saying that. Ever.



https://www.reuters.com/article/us-carriefisher/carrie-fishers-weight-loss-is-no-joke-idUSTRE77N5P720110824https://www.salon.com/2011/01/13/carrie_fisher_jenny_craig_fat_shame/

The Force Awakens

When Fisher was asked to reprise her role in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* — a job she took in 2013, in her mid-50s — she might have expected a different outcome. Decades had gone by. A conversation about body image in entertainment was flowering. And, in any case, she was an icon — and not just for her turn in the gold bikini. Who else was going to play Luke Skywalker’s sister and Han Solo’s lady — not to mention a possessor of Jedi powers in her own right? Yet, she was asked to lose 35 pounds.

“They don’t want to hire all of me — only about three-quarters!” Fisher told *Good Housekeeping*, which reported the number in its January 2016 cover story, writing Fisher “was pressured” to lose the weight. “Nothing changes, it’s an appearance-driven thing. I’m in a business where the only thing that matters is weight and appearance. That is so messed up. They might as well say get younger, because that’s how easy it is.”



Beyonce as Deena in *Dreamgirls*

Beyonce already had a successful music career in the girl group Destiny's Child when she won the part of Deena in the film version of *Dreamgirls* in 2006. She had to lose 20lbs in two weeks before filming began.

The first photo is from her video for *Bootylicious*, before the drastic weight loss. About her *Bootylicious* track, "I wrote that because, at the time, I'd gained some weight and the pressure that people put you under, the pressure to be thin, is unbelievable. I was just 18 and you shouldn't be thinking about that. You should be thinking about building up your character and having fun, and the song was just telling everyone to just forget what people are saying, you're bootylicious. That's all. It's a celebration of curves and a celebration of women's bodies."

The second photo is of her in costume as Deena, twenty pounds lighter.



Anne Hathaway as Fantine in *Les Misérables*

She had to lose 25 lbs to play Fantine.

“I’d lost an unhealthy amount of weight in two weeks,” Anne, 36, told *PEOPLE* in their latest issue. “I didn’t know anything about nutrition. I taxed my body, and my brain bore the brunt of it for a while. I just felt very anxious and very lost at that time.” The 36-year-old revealed to *Vogue* after filming that she lost 10 pounds via a strict cleanse before cameras rolled then another 15 by eating two thin squares of dried oatmeal paste a day for two weeks as her character grew closer to death. “That weight loss was not a long-term good thing for my health, and it took a really long time to come back from it,” she says. “And I was still really sick because of it.”



Renee Zellweger as *Bridget Jones*

During casting, Zellweger was told she was too thin to play the chubby, chain-smoking Bridget, so she quickly embarked on gaining the required weight (30 pounds) and learning to speak in an English accent while she smoked herbal cigarettes. After the film wrapped she lost the weight, then gained it back for the sequel in 2004. Zellweger would always be asked about her weight fluctuations on press tours, and she disliked it. She found the obsession with the subject sad.



Bridget Jones's Diary, 2001



Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason, 2004

Jewel Staite: *Firefly/Serenity*

While many actresses try to keep their weight down as they believe that this will help them to get roles, Jewel Staite actually put on weight for a role. When she played Kaylee in *Firefly* in 2002, she deliberately put on 20 pounds. This series was later adapted into the 2005 motion picture *Serenity* and she had already lost the weight that she had gained. However, she was told that she did not have to regain the weight as they had no plans to offer anyone else the part anyway.

When was this element of the character presented to you?

Well, basically, when I read the breakdown of the characters before I auditioned, and I read Kaylee's synopsis, she was described as chubby. And I thought, "Well, I'm not chubby. I wonder if I'm going to get this?" And when I did get the role, immediately they said, "Listen, before we move forward, this is something that Joss requires. This is something that he wants to see in the role. Would you be willing to gain a few pounds?"

Is it true that you intentionally gained weight for your *Firefly* role?

"I did. I was asked to put on weight. [*Firefly* creator Joss Whedon] felt that Kaylee would be a more voluptuous type of girl. He wanted her to look like she really enjoyed life. She really indulged in all that life had to offer, which I appreciated. I'm naturally thin. I'm 23. My metabolism is incredibly fast right now. I'm sure things will change. And so he asked me to put on 15 to 20 pounds. So I did. I put on about 15 pounds. And I ate and I ate and I ate and I ate for about three weeks. They only gave me three weeks, and then I was on set. And I struggled to keep it on for the whole duration of the series. And then I lost the weight naturally after we were canceled. And when we got greenlit to do *Serenity*, Joss said, "By the way, don't worry about it, I'm not going to ask you to do it again." Because it was tough for me! It was hard. It made me feel sluggish. It just wasn't natural for my body type. And you know, when you're doing something like that, when you're force feeding yourself, when you're eating when you're full, you're eating before you go to sleep, it's not entirely healthy. And I can't imagine what my cholesterol level was like, because all I was eating was cake and ice cream and bacon and burgers and fries dipped in mayonnaise. I'm telling you, I was gorging myself!"



Jewel Staite as Kaylee Fry



Firefly series, 2002

When I watched the series originally I didn't know that she was supposed to be chubby. I thought she looked great. When the film came out three years later, I thought they'd recast the role. She was so thin I didn't recognize her. I literally looked it up on IMDB, saw that it was actually Jewel and still didn't really believe it.



Serenity, 2005

Jennifer Hudson as Effie in *Dreamgirls*, 2006

Before Jennifer Hudson rose to stardom as Effie in *Dreamgirls*, she lost 60 lbs. to audition for the third season of American Idol, where she was eliminated after making it as far as the top 7 contestants. Hudson had to gain 20 lbs. back to play Effie. Hudson says she never thought she was "fat" until an interviewer on the red carpet asked her, "How does it feel to be plus-sized in Hollywood?" At first, the actress defended her weight replying, "I looked around, like, 'Who is she talking to? Oh, me? I'm plus-sized?' In the neighborhood I'm from in Chicago, a size 16 is normal. But in Hollywood, everyone looks exactly the same, so I stood out." Hudson won 29 awards for her performance as Effie including an Oscar for Best Supporting Actress and Breakthrough Performer of 2006.

In 2010 she became the spokeswoman for Weight Watchers and lost 80 lbs. Her 2012 autobiography, *I Got This: How I Changed My Ways and Lost What Weighed Me Down*, detailed her weight loss. "[Weight] is definitely a part of the industry, but it keeps you separated, and helps you stand out from other people," Hudson said. "Everybody is little, why do I have to be little, too? They need some normal-sized people around here, so that doesn't bother me at all."

She was offered the lead role in *Precious*, but turned it down. While Hudson admitted that the thought of playing an abused and overweight single teen mom was compelling, the 100 or so pounds she would have to add to her frame to take on the part was a deal breaker. "I had [gained weight] with Effie [in *Dreamgirls*]," she writes in her memoir. "And as much as I was moved by this film, I wanted to try a role that had nothing whatsoever to do with my weight."



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<https://abcnews.go.com/GMA/Entertainment/story?id=2770327&page=1>

<https://www.inquisitr.com/172772/jennifer-hudson-precious-role-weight-gain-requirement/#ixzz6XNcXoKps>

Christian Bale *The Machinist*, 2004

Before being cast in this role, he weighed 190 lbs. from doing *American Psycho*.

"I came up with the absolutely brilliant method of just smoking cigarettes and drinking whiskey to lose weight," Bale told *Star2.com*, reflecting on the role. Of course, this isn't the long and short of it, but it's pretty close. Bale has since expanded that his daily diet, dubbed the "Black Coffee Fast", consisted of black coffee, a solitary apple and a tin of tuna every day.

That equates to a daily intake of about 200 calories. And incredibly, the 120 lbs.. final weight Bale eventually reached reportedly wasn't enough for him. Bale wanted to cut down to a mere 100 lbs., however the film's producers stopped him for health reasons.



Bale at 120 lbs..

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0361862/?ref=tttr_tr_tt

<https://www.gq.com.au/entertainment/film-tv/the-story-of-christian-bales-the-machinist-transformation-is-insane/news-story/1892292672564838caf2106b38d9115d>

<https://www.indiewire.com/gallery/christian-bale-most-shocking-physical-transformations/t-bale-cheney-1/>

Batman Begins, 2005

"I stuffed myself after *The Machinist*. My first screen test for *Batman Begins* was a month and a half away after finishing *The Machinist*, so I had to get my weight back up. Then I had about five months to reach what you see in *Batman Begins*. At the start I was eating often and I was eating foods very high in calories because I lost 60lb. He amazingly managed to pack on a whopping 100 pounds.

It took me a while to even be able to work out properly after *The Machinist* as well, so at first it was slow progress exercise wise. I didn't start running until a few weeks after I got my weight back up. I love running and it's something I always do when I'm not working. I enjoy running more than weights. I think it clears the brain and obviously, it's good for the heart."

"Actually, I gained too much weight in the run up to *Batman Begins*. (220 lbs.) I wasn't the size that Christopher Nolan wanted, so I had to cut down 20lb or so just before shooting – I was a lot beefier at first. That cutting down was achieved by going on a calorie deficit and running more and for longer. I cut a lot of the carbs out of my diet for those few weeks as well."



Bale at 190 lbs..

https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0372784/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1

<https://www.trainmag.com/fitness/christian-bale-transformation/>

<https://www.ladbible.com/entertainment/celebrity-film-and-tv-christian-bale-opens-up-about-his-experience-filming-the-machinist-20180105>

Vice, 2018

“One of Bale’s best and most extreme transformations happened on his 2018 movie *Vice*, which he collaborated on with Oscar-winning writer-director Adam McKay. To play Cheney, Bale added a lot of weight to his frame, shaved his head, and dyed his eyebrows to get an accurate look of the former vice president.”

“I had never before gone to a doctor or a nutritionist about gaining or losing weight for my roles,” Bale told [Star2.com](https://www.star2.com). “But eventually that caught up with me. So, finally for [*Vice*], I decided that maybe somebody knows better than I do; so I went to somebody and they managed to get me up a good 40lbs. It’s never healthy to put on that amount of weight in a short amount of time, but I did it in the healthiest manner.”

“**Christian Bale** has been told many times that gaining a lot of weight – as he did for *American Hustle* and *Vice* – isn’t necessary as prosthetics can do the trick, but he chooses to do it anyway,”



https://www.imdb.com/title/tt6266538/?ref_=fn_al_tt_2

<https://www.indiewire.com/gallery/christian-bale-most-shocking-physical-transformations/t-bale-cheney-1/>

<https://www.mensjournal.com/health-fitness/christian-bales-most-extreme-body-transformations-for-movie-roles/american-psycho-2000/>

225 lbs..

Zachary Levi's Transformation

Zachary Levi was 27 when he starred on *Chuck* as a Nerd-Herder (a rip off of Best Buy's Geek Squad) and had an average body. He was 6'4" lbs and probably weighed 180, on the thinner side of average for his height. He was 38 and 200 lbs when he began filming *Shazam!* and put on 20 lbs of muscle for the role.

Becoming a badass superhero is rigorous work. Zachary Levi spent 18 months getting ridiculously ripped for *Shazam!* For Levi, exercising with a number of trainers and learning how to adjust to the physicality of the role was challenging, but ultimately fulfilling. "I probably weigh about 220 pounds now, and I was 200 pounds when I started, so I put on about 20 pounds. Somehow, in the back of my mind, I always believed that I was going to get a job one day and they were going to pay me to get into the best shape of my life." The actor said he has been "in the gym basically six days a week for certainly the last year, maybe even a little bit longer, 14 months or so, eating thousands and thousands of calories a day. That's actually the hardest part of it. The gym I'm addicted to and I love, and I can't wait to get to the gym every day. I just feel that even from a mental health perspective, it's so healthy for you," he added. Levi said he is "stronger and healthier" than he has ever been in his life.



Chuck



Shazam

Simon Pegg

He did *Run, Fat Boy, Run* in 2007. That paunch is real.

"Simon Pegg's 6 month body transformation for #InheritanceMovie," he tweeted.

"The brief for this role was lean, VERY lean. It required a specific body shape & look."

Pegg, who is 5'10" tall lost 20 pounds in just six months dropping from 170 pounds to 150 pounds. He added that the 49-year-old actor had dropped from 12% to just 8% body fat — in the lower range for an athlete, according to *Coach Magazine*."

His wife cried and said he was all skin and bones. She hated it.



Run, Fat Boy, Run, 2007 170 lbs. 12% body fat

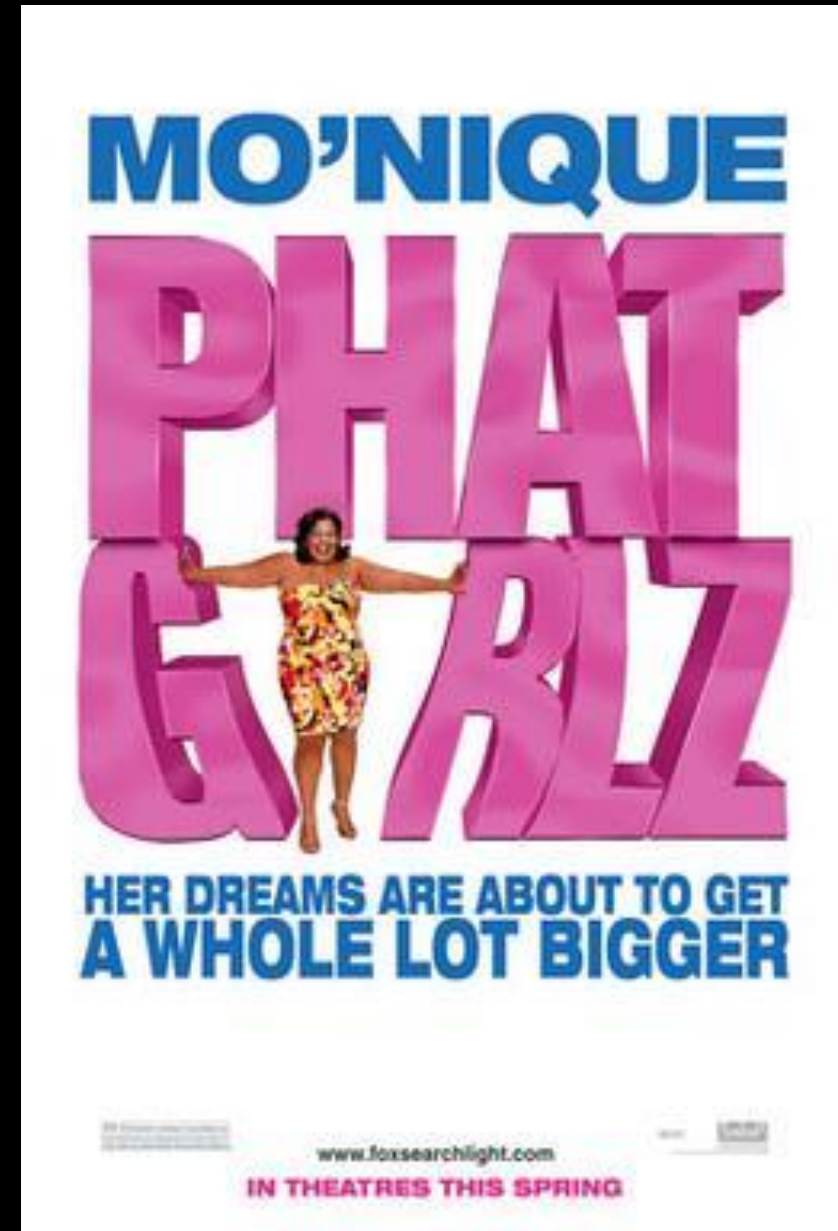


Inheritance 2019-150 lbs. 8% body fat

Mo'Nique *Phat Girlz*, 2006

Written and directed by Nnegest Likké, it starred Mo'Nique as Jazmin, an overweight aspiring fashion designer who wins a trip to a resort where she meets a Nigerian doctor who thinks she's hot as hell precisely because she's fat. However, she can't believe that his adoration is real so she rejects him.

Wesley Morris, writing for the *Boston Globe* said, "Her private collapse feels like brutally real psychodrama. She attacks her svelte dressing mannequin. She tosses the TV set out the window. She shouts, sweats, and wails in obvious agony in a struggle to love herself...And suddenly, the movie has turned from a comedy into one of those inspirational mass-market confessionals. Mo'Nique's raw self-exorcism in that sequence is not becoming of a movie star, but it's perfect for a spokeswoman. And *Phat Girlz* becomes a touching demand for the empowerment of a disenfranchised social class of women: the big-boned, or thick, as Jazmin puts it. Fine, the movie turns preachy, but if we're going to get a lecture, it might as well be an entertaining one about a prejudice that hides in plain sight and shows no signs of going away. In the eyes of her tormentors, Jazmin might be fat as hell, but she's not going to take it anymore."



Aidy Bryant *Shrill*, 2019

Shrill is an American comedy web television series, based on the book *Shrill: Notes from a Loud Woman* by Lindy West, that premiered on March 15, 2019, on Hulu. *Shrill* follows "Annie, described as an overweight young woman who wants to change her life — but not her body. Annie is trying to make it as a journalist while juggling bad boyfriends, sick parents and a perfectionist boss, while the world around her deems her not good enough because of her weight. She starts to realize that she's as good as anyone else, and acts on it."

Rotten Tomatoes rated it at 91% fresh, "Sharp social commentary and a star-making performance from Aidy Bryant help *Shrill* overcome its familiar comedic sensibilities to create a show that proves self-acceptance isn't one size fits all."

Kelly Lawler from *USA Today* gave the series a positive review, calling it an "unflinchingly authentic depiction of a fat woman in the modern world," and acknowledging that it "flies past positivity and shoots for fat acceptance".

Pop Culture Happy Hour's Linda Holmes, who is plus-sized, applauded the writers for giving the protagonist the best lines, instead of handing them off to secondary or supporting characters. Holmes wrote: "seeing her perform such strong material is a delight".

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8962130/>

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/tv/2019/03/18/shrill-honest-and-beautiful-portrait-fat-woman/3173131002/>

<https://www.npr.org/2019/03/18/703809393/aidy-bryant-is-brilliant-in-the-funny-smart-and-thoughtful-shrill>

<https://deadline.com/2018/08/aidy-bryant-star-shrill-hulu-comedy-series-elizabeth-banks-lorne-michaels-alexandra-rushfield-1202438250/>



Deadpool 2, 2018

Russell Collins aka Firefist, played by Maori actor Julian Dennison.

"I used to watch the films and see characters I've always wanted to be and who don't look like me. They were these chiselled actors – heroes, strong, really muscly; it's really important for me to play this character for other kids who look like me or are plus-size," Dennison revealed to Darren Beaven writing for *Stuff*. "You gotta feel good in your own body – and I do feel good, I could be healthier. I can be healthy, but you've got to make sure you feel good in your body, and also I can make other kids who are like me feel good about themselves too."

The X-Men are known for diversity and addressing social issues like racism, inequality, and homophobia, but this may be the first time that the series has addressed size-ism. Dennison went on to state, "*Deadpool* is its own thing and it's very quirky, breaks out the box and doesn't follow the rules of normal superhero movies, so it was really important for me to show that kids that look like me, who are chubbier than other kids, that they can be the hero they want – it was a dream of mine to be a superhero and it's come true."



https://www.imdb.com/title/tt5463162/?ref=nm_sr_srg_0

<https://www.polygon.com/2018/5/19/17361668/deadpool-2-kid-firefist-actor-julian-dennison>

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/entertainment/film/103779062/why-julian-dennisons-deadpool-2-mutant-is-a-step-forward-for-big-screen-diversity>

Actors with Anorexia/Bulimia

Lady Gaga

Jane Fonda

Jameela Jamil

Alyson Stoner

Camila Mendes

Troian Bellisario

Gabourey Sidibe

Lilly Collins

Demi Lovato

Tracey Gold

Nicole Scherzinger

Zoe Kravitz

Candace Cameron Bure

Zosia Mamet

Hillary Duff

Mary Kate Olsen

Lana Condor

Tracey Gold

Portia de Rossi

Mischa Barton

Kate Winslet

Zosia Mamet

Troian Bellisario

Katharine McPhee

Christina Ricci

Alexa Penavega

Russell Brand

Zyan Malik

<https://www.prevention.com/health/health-conditions/g30996694/celebrities-with-eating-disorders/>

<https://www.shape.com/celebrities/celebrity-photos/female-celebrities-with-eating-disorders>

<https://fairwindstreatment.com/celebrities-overcome-eating-disorder/>

Resources for People with Eating Disorders

- [The National Eating Disorders Association](#) The hotline number is 1-800-931-2237
- Or you can contact the [Crisis Text Line](#) by texting “NEDA” to 741741.
- <https://themighty.com/2020/04/body-positivity-fat-shaming-self-isolation-covid-19/>
- <https://danceswithfat.org/2012/09/28/are-health-at-every-size-and-size-acceptance-the-same/>