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## Mako mori test

People really enjoy boiling complex topics down to simple boxes that can be checked, regardless of how inane and ineffective that system will almost always be. A concept like gender representation in genre fiction does not easily map onto a yes or no question, but that won't stop people on the internet from trying. In 1985, cartoonist and author Allison Bechdel put out an entry in her long-running comic strip Dykes to Watch Out For entitled "The Rule." In it, a character explains that she has a unique rule she applies to films to determine whether she'll see them. Her standards require any film she'll sit through to feature at least two women having a conversation about something other than a man. This paradigm was christened the Bechdel test (more accurately known as the Bechdel-Wallace test) and has gone on to criminally overshadow the rest of Bechdel's work and remains controversial today. The Bechdel test has spawned a movement in various online forums, many of which have radically misunderstood its meaning. There are a few different sites that report upon new releases' passes and failures and endless discussion of exactly what passes the very low bar. Many proclaim it a simple and effective way of judging the representation of women in film while others think it wildly oversimplifies an extremely complex issue. Some are furious that the discussion is being had at all and others think that mandatory Bechdel tests reported on movie posters would fix the medium. A fairly common response to the Bechdel test is to try to devise a successor that will accomplish the same goal more successfully. One such attempt is the Mako Mori test. Guillermo del Toro's 2013 giant robot vs giant monster epic Pacific Rim was well-received but didn't get a ton of praise for its characters. Though a bit arch and trope-heavy, the primary cast of the film all perform admirably and establish themselves instantly as both identifiable and likable. Rinko Kikuchi stars as Mako Mori, a skilled technician and ambitious fighter who seeks to join the Kaiju-fighting Ranger unit. Mako's parents were tragically killed by a Kaiju attack when she was young, leaving her to be adopted by the Jaeger pilot that saved her life, Stacker Pentecost. Mako trained for decades to battle the giant beasts that took her family from her and eventually mastered the drift to co-pilot Gypsy Danger. Mako led the assault to bomb the Rift, avenged her bloodline upon the monsters, and became a hero through her own skill and determination. She's a solid character and fans loved her immediately, so some decided she's a great candidate to compare other characters to. The Mako Mori test was devised by Tumblr user Chalia in November 2014 as a deliberate replacement or addition to the Bechdel test. Evidently, some fans proclaimed Pacific Rim fell short of the Bechdel test and that anyone that lived by its rule should boycott the film. Chalia, incensed by the accusation, put forth Mako as an example of an ideal feminist character and the new standard by which the concept could be measured. With that in mind, the Mako Mori test requires that a work feature at least one woman with her own narrative arc that isn't devoted to supporting the arc of a man. Chalia doesn't proclaim this as the end-all and be-all, just as Bechdel never actually recommended anyone live by the Bechdel test. Both creators proclaim their work as incomplete, but in both cases, the internet took the idea and ran with it. The only significant problem with the Mako Mori test is that it's an extremely low bar. Granted, tons of works still eagerly military crawl beneath it, but it's still a small request. Demanding at least one woman have a self-supported narrative arc is also the basic standard for the existence of a meaningful character. Essentially, the test demands at least one woman who actually is a character in the narrative. Passing the Mako Mori test is an extremely low standard and says very little about a work of fiction. Conversely, failing the test would likely condemn a work's writing overall. There are almost certainly decent texts that fail the Mako Mori test, probably by solely centering on a small group of men. The Mako Mori test is a useful metric for cinema at large, but it also fails to really answer the question it's asking. The purpose of the Mako Mori test, like the Bechdel test before it, is to establish a minimum standard to judge the representation of women in media. It's more useful when applied to film as a medium than it is to apply to individual films. Representation matters and determining the quantity and quality of representation are much harder than a simple checklist. Mako Mori is more than just a bare minimum standard and creators have more to learn from them than basic character writing. MORE: Star Trek Discovery's Non-Binary Character Is Essential Representation The glamorous world of acting can sometimes seem like an enigma, an art form where talent Are you funny? Like a clown? Do you amuse me? Are you here for my entertainment? Let's Comedic Monologues for Women Finding great comedic monologues for women can be quite tough. The perfect After twenty years onscreen, Cameron Diaz left the film business in 2014, officially announcing her retirement Can the cast of "Sing" take on a Halloween thriller? They're about to find out in Pacific Rim inspired something called the "Mako Mori Test" among film theorists - here's why it's so important. Pacific Rim documents an invasion of extraterrestrial Kaiju from a trench portal called "The Breach" in the Pacific Ocean, with giant robot mechs called "Jaegers" fighting the Kaiju and eventually closing The Breach. Plotting the film's nuclear-powered Jaeger "Gypsy Danger" is Raleigh Becket (Charlie Hunnam) and Mako Mori (Rinko Kikuchi). The 2018 sequel Pacific Rim: Uprising focuses more on the Jaeger program and the aftermath of the Kaiju attacks. Mako Mori is introduced in Pacific Rim at the Hong Kong "Shatterdome," where Jaeger pilots from around the world convene to handle the exponentially increasing Kaiju attacks. She becomes a Jaeger pilot upon the insistence of both herself and Becket, much to her father figure Marshal Stacker Pentecost's (Idris Elba) reluctance. Pacific Rim, set between 2020 and 2025, requires that Jaeger pilots can mentally link together in a process called "drifting," which she can do naturally with Becket. In their first time drifting in Gypsy Danger, Becket relives his past of losing his brother in a Kaiju fight. This prompts Mori to remember the traumatic childhood experience of running away from a Tokyo Kaiju that killed her family, only to then later be saved by the Pentecost-piloted Jaeger. As she and Becket improve their drifting and fighting, they eventually work together to fight incoming Kaijus and blow up The Breach using Gypsy Danger as the bomb. Mako Mori's character arc influenced the Mako Mori test, which requires that a film include a female character with an arc that doesn't support a male character. Pacific Rim was made in the early 2010s, when director-driven tentpoles were more common. The test is a variant of the Bechdel Test, which requires that two female characters have a conversation that isn't about a man. While the Bechdel Test is more quantitative in nature and points at the lack of women in film, the Mako Mori Test is more qualitative, focusing instead on the depth given to a film's female characters. Pacific Rim notably doesn't pass the Bechdel Test, unlike Pacific Rim: Uprising. Therefore, film theorists and Pacific Rim fans created the Mako Mori Test to recognize the film's progressive female representation in spite of its male-heavy cast. Her representation was so well-received that some fans wished for a Guillermo del Toro Pacific Rim sequel remake to fix Mori's character arc that, ironically, fails the Mako Mori Test in Pacific: Uprising. While this will never happen, this response does prove how effective Mako Mori's representation was in Pacific Rim. The Mako Mori Test fuels much discussion about feminism in film. Some use the Mako Mori Test to point out the Bechdel Test's flaws, citing that Bechdel-passing films don't guarantee well-developed female characters or prevent female stereotyping. Discourse states that films should aim to use the Mako Mori Test in conjunction with the Bechdel Test. For example, many Disney movies are able to pass both the Bechdel and Mako Mori Tests, including Cinderella (1950), Alice In Wonderland (1951), Frozen and Moana. Even if Pacific Rim could have had better female representation, its portrayal of Mako Mori still raises the standard for how films should portray women. Next: How Netflix's The Black Fits Into The Pacific Rim Timeline This article is written by a student writer from the Her Campus at UVA chapter. Warner Bros The Bechdel-Wallace test is not the average No. 2 pencil-to-paper test but a guide that is applied to fictional productions such as movies, books, shows, etc. There are three requirements in order to pass this test: 1) two "named" women must be present, 2) these women must talk to each other, and 3) they must talk to each other about something other than a man. The term was coined by Alison Bechdel in 1985, as a way to measure the lack of female representation and experience on screen. Bechdel, however, credits the idea to a friend, Liz Wallace, and to Virginia Woolf as well, who commented on the inequalities between the majority of female relationships in literature and about their only connection seemed to revolve around a man. The test sounds easy right? Unfortunately, if you're not as familiar with it, you may be surprised by the amount of movies that do not meet all three criteria, including movies released today. In a recent study, researchers at the American Psychological Association found that only 49.58% of popular movies pass the Bechdel test, while 95.31%, or almost all movies, pass the reverse test where men talk to each other about something other than women.While most big pictures this year passed the test, (Barbie, Everything Everywhere All at Once, even Top Gun: Maverick), the test's criteria truly are the bare minimum, especially when those identifying as women represent half of the population. Similar to the Bechdel-Wallace test, the Mako Mori test, named after Mako Mori, a character in the Pacific Rim series, is another media test that follows three different criteria in which a female main character has her own storyline. The criteria include: 1) at least one female character is represented, 2) the female character has her own narrative arc, and 3) the narrative does not support a man's story. Ironically, the Pacific Rim movies did not pass the Bechdel-Wallace test, but they did incorporate a strong female lead and supporting character into the series. The difference between the two tests is the depth of the female narratives in fictional portrayals. The Bechdel-Wallace test focuses more on the representation of women in media, without the support of a man, while the Mako Mori test focuses more on the development and impact of a female character's individuality in the media. Of course, there are several other tests that follow similar ideas and guidelines in order to draw attention to the representation of women in the media. These tests do not only evaluate the many films and books that we are familiar with or adore, but also can teach us how to be more cognizant of the disparities between sexes in reality too. After learning about these two tests in a recent lecture, I began to ask myself, "would my own conversations between my female friends pass these tests?" I enjoy talking to my girlfriends about their latest love interests or dating adventures, but now I've become extra aware of the conversations we exchange and the connections that have formed our relationships, assuring that the subjects we converseate about have depth and are not centered around a man. The Bechdel-Wallace and Mako Mori tests may apply to the media, but we can learn something about our own female friendships through the analyses of female narrative arcs in the fictional context as well. The next time you watch a newly released film or rewatch your favorite movie or tv show, I implore you to ask yourself whether it passes either of these tests. For more information on the Bechdel-Wallace test and which movies have already passed, you can visit the Bechdel Movie Test List, and maybe even contribute a movie or show that you've identified as passing the criteria to the list too. 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