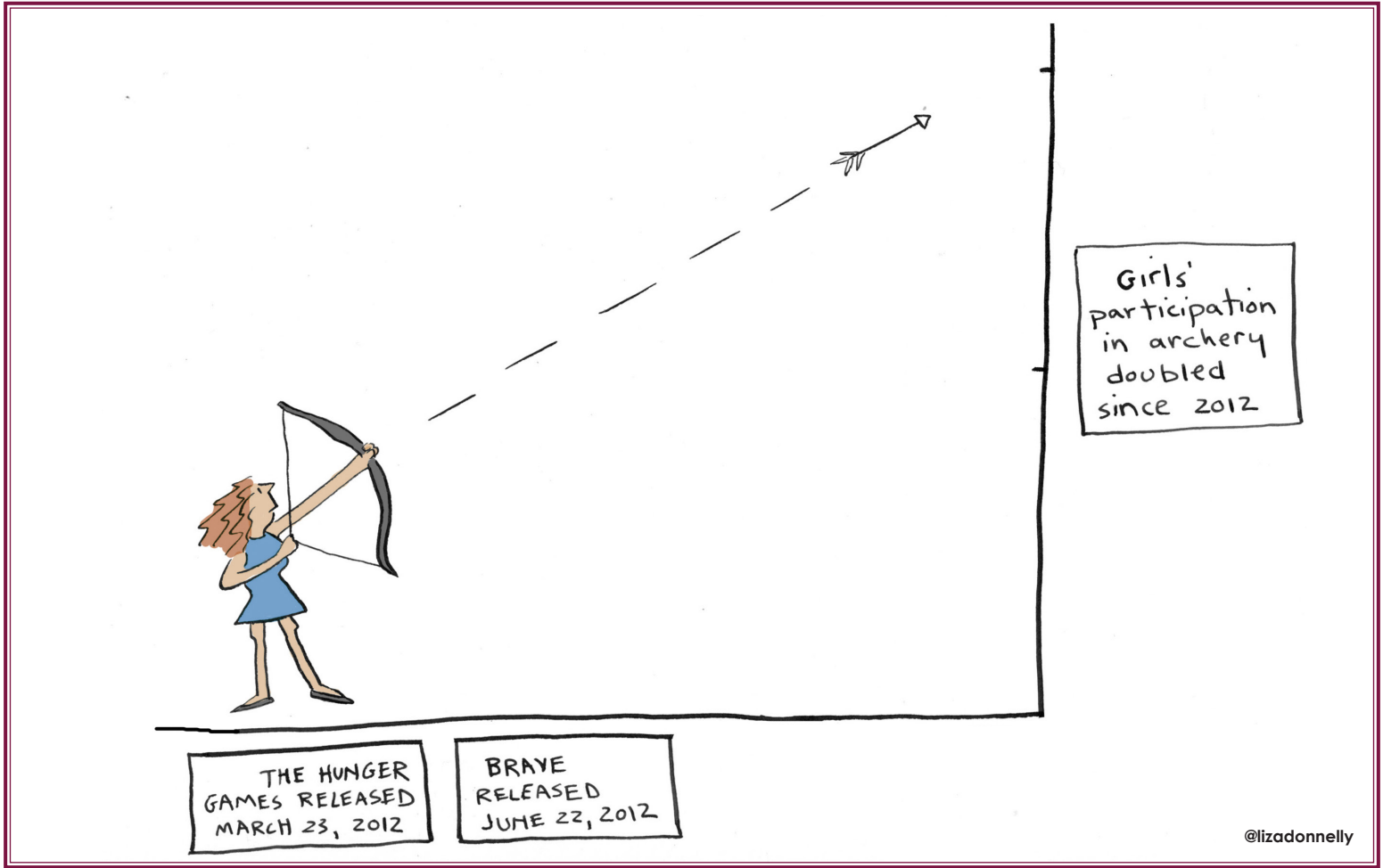


If she can see it, she can be it.™



## Hitting the Bullseye: Reel Girl Archers Inspire Real Girl Archers

In the year 2012, girls' participation in national archery competitions doubled.<sup>1</sup> Our study focuses on the role of entertainment media in the recent, rapid growth of archery.<sup>2</sup> Journalists and archery experts speculate that more young people and women are taking up archery because of Hollywood representations of female archers.<sup>3</sup> *The Hunger Games* movies and Disney's animated film *Brave*, both released in 2012, featured prominent female archers. Our study is the first to examine whether archers in popular film and television programs inspire people to take up the sport.



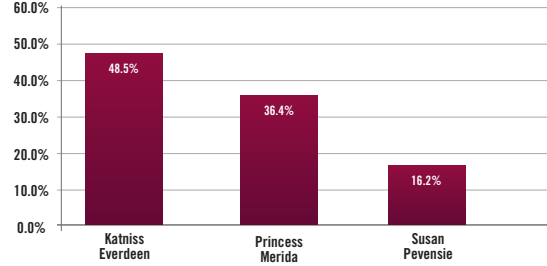
**Methodology**

We administered a national survey to members of USA Archery, the largest archery membership organization in the nation. We asked questions about when respondents got started in the sport, what inspired them to get involved in archery, and who they see as role models in the sport. We found that fictional archers in films and television programs have played a key role in inspiring young people to take up archery, especially girls. This finding has implications beyond the sport itself. Archery has positive benefits for boys and girls, including improved self-confidence, motivation, and focus.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, girls who participate in archery develop higher self-esteem and get better grades in school.<sup>5</sup> Archery role models in entertainment media thus have a positive effect on the lives of many young people.

**Key Findings** This study examined fictional archers in film and TV. We find that entertainment media is driving this trend:

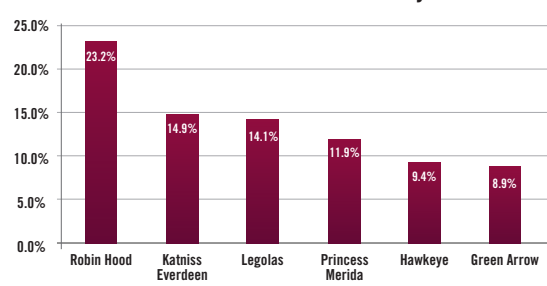
- **7-in-10 girls say that Katniss from the Hunger Games and Princess Merida from Brave influenced their decision to take up archery.** Nearly half (48.5%) of female respondents under 18 say Katniss Everdeen from *The Hunger Games* had “a lot” or “some” influence on their decision to take up archery, while one-third (36.4%) say they were influenced by Princess Merida from *Brave*. (Some girls report that both characters inspired them to start archery.)
- **Across age groups and genders, many say that fictional archers in film and television influenced them to take up the sport.** Robin Hood (23.2%) was the fictional archer most mentioned as having “a lot” or “some” influence, followed by Katniss Everdeen from *The Hunger Games* (14.9%), Legolas from *The Lord of the Rings* franchise (14.1%), Princess Merida from Disney’s animated film *Brave* (11.9%), Hawkeye from *The Avengers* franchise (9.4%), and Green Arrow from the *Arrow* television series (8.9%).
- **When asked about archery role models, respondents were just as likely to mention fictional archers as real life archers.** The top five real life role models mentioned were Brady Ellison (29.4%), Khatuna Lorig (22.9%), Fred Bear (19.1%), Howard Hill (15.2%) and Reo Wilde (14.1%). (Nearly one-in-ten archers (8.3%) mentioned Geena Davis as an archery role model!) The most admired fictional archers mentioned were Robin Hood (23.9%), Katniss Everdeen (19.7%), Green Arrow (15.1%), Princess Merida (10.4%), and Legolas (9.6%).

**Fictional Archers who Influenced Girls**



The media influence of fictional film and television archers is more pronounced for girls than other archers. Girls who joined archery after the 2012 release of the first *Hunger Games* film and *Brave* are far more likely than other respondents to say they were influenced by fictional female archers.

**Influenced Decision to Start Archery**



Boys were also influenced by fictional archers in film and television in recent years, although to a lesser extent than girls in the sample. Their most influential role models are male archers.

*Research conducted by Caroline Heldman, Ph.D. for the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media*

see full report online: [www.seejane.org/ArcheryReport](http://www.seejane.org/ArcheryReport)