# Josh O’Connor on casting straight actors in gay roles



Josh O’Connor has contributed to the ongoing debate regarding the casting of straight actors in gay roles. Known for his exceptional performances in productions such as The Crown, Challengers, and God’s Own Country [pictured; Picturehouse], the 34-year-old actor has become a prominent figure in the entertainment industry. O'Connor's insights came during an interview with Vanity Fair.

Addressing his involvement in depicting gay characters, particularly in God’s Own Country and the forthcoming drama The History of Sound, O’Connor acknowledged the complexity of the subject. He elaborated, stating, "The truth is that ultimately, I will read a script, and what affects me affects me. The History of Sound is a film about many things. For instance, it’s about grief. It’s about companionship. It’s about music. It’s about what happens in life when you fall in love with someone, and maybe that connection is broken, you know?"

He went on to discuss his role in God’s Own Country, highlighting the character’s struggle with the ability to love and be loved. O'Connor emphasised that factors such as a character's background and family dynamics are integral to his preparation as an actor, suggesting that these elements deserve attention, just as much as any other character attribute.

However, despite his thoughtful engagement with these roles, O’Connor admitted to having "mixed feelings" about the broader debate, indicating that he remains uncertain about where he stands.

The topic of authentic LGBTQ+ casting has sparked considerable discourse over recent years, with actors and creatives offering an array of perspectives. Paul Mescal, who co-stars with O’Connor in The History of Sound, also addressed this issue earlier this year. Speaking to The Sunday Times, Mescal noted that while some portrayals have been offensive due to a lack of careful consideration, he believes that his upcoming project does not fall into this category.

Luke Evans, another well-regarded actor, expressed his views in 2022 regarding the importance of LGBTQ+ representation in film and television. During an interview with The Telegraph, Evans highlighted the necessity for change, acknowledging that gay actors often miss out on opportunities to portray gay characters. However, he noted that if roles were strictly assigned based on sexual orientation, his own career would have been significantly limited.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://gayety.co/paul-mescal-and-josh-oconnor-are-starring-in-a-new-queer-drama-and-people-dont-know-how-to-feel> - Corroborates Josh O’Connor's involvement in 'The History of Sound' and the debate around straight actors playing gay roles.
* <https://www.edgemedianetwork.com/story/336477> - Supports Josh O’Connor's comments on the difficulty of playing gay roles and his past roles in 'God’s Own Country' and 'Challengers'.
* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBvm49Tng0s> - Provides Josh O’Connor's candid thoughts on playing gay characters, reflecting on his experiences.
* <https://www.attitude.co.uk/culture/josh-connor-on-gay-roles-mixed-feelings-476034/> - Details Josh O’Connor's 'mixed feelings' about playing gay roles and his comments on 'The History of Sound' and 'God’s Own Country'.
* <https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/11/14/josh-oconnor-gay-roles-gods-own-country/> - Corroborates Josh O’Connor's 'mixed feelings' about playing gay roles and his upcoming role in 'The History of Sound'.
* <https://gayety.co/paul-mescal-and-josh-oconnor-are-starring-in-a-new-queer-drama-and-people-dont-know-how-to-feel> - Supports the information about Paul Mescal co-starring with Josh O’Connor in 'The History of Sound' and the broader debate on LGBTQIA+ casting.
* <https://www.attitude.co.uk/culture/josh-connor-on-gay-roles-mixed-feelings-476034/> - Provides context on Josh O’Connor's role in 'God’s Own Country' and his character’s struggle with love and being loved.
* <https://www.thepinknews.com/2024/11/14/josh-oconnor-gay-roles-gods-own-country/> - Corroborates the importance of considering a character's background and family dynamics in Josh O’Connor's acting preparation.
* <https://www.edgemedianetwork.com/story/336477> - Supports the ongoing discourse around authentic LGBTQIA+ casting and the various perspectives from actors and creatives.