

Statistics on Women and Media

Gathered by Media Report to Women 2005

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Advertising

- Women's voices make up only 25% of those heard in commercials (Screen Actors' Guild, 1997)
- 28% of female models in television commercials had comments made about their looks; only 7% of male models did (Children NOW and the Kaiser Family Foundation, 1997)

Television

- Male TV characters (41%) were more likely to be shown "on the job" than female characters (28%). Men were more likely to talk about work than women were (52% vs. 40%) and less likely to talk about romantic relationships (49% vs. 63%) (Children NOW and the Kaiser Family Foundation, 1997)
- Women are about 37% of prime-time TV characters (they are 51% of the U.S. population) (American Association of Retired Persons, 1996)
- Women 45 and older are only 15% of prime-time TV characters (American Association of Retired Persons, 1996)
- Viewers are more than twice as likely to encounter a scene in which a male character predominates over a female (American Association of Retired Persons, 1996)
- 96% of voiceovers in promotional announcements for television programs are male (Professor B. Carol Eaton, Syracuse University, 1997)
- Women are only 132 of the general managers of the 1,600 television stations in the U.S. (National Association of Broadcasters statistics)

Motion Pictures

- Of the top 250 domestic grossing films released in 2002, more than one in five films employed no women directors, executive producers, producers, writers, cinematographers or editors. The percentage of women working behind the scenes declined from 19% in 2001 to 17% in 2002. Male characters outnumbered female characters, 72% to 28%. (Professor Martha Lauzen, San Diego State University , 2003)

Motion Picture and Television Casting

- Although women make up the majority of Americans, men got 62% of the roles cast in 2002, numbers similar to data found in previous years.
- Women are affected by ageism to a greater degree than older men. Women over the age of 40 were cast in only 11% of the roles for women, while men aged 40 and over accounted for nearly 26% of roles cast.

- Of movies that grossed more than \$10 million domestically over the past year, the number of films that featured a female lead increased 45% from 20 films in 2001 to 29 films in 2002 (Screen Actors Guild, 2003)

Magazines

- 35% of articles in teen magazines focused on dating but only 9% addressed sexual issues, including sexual health. Only 12% discussed school or careers (Children NOW and the Kaiser Family Foundation, 1997)
- Of the 72 covers featuring people published by the three large newsmagazines -- Time, Newsweek and U.S. News & World Report -- in 1995, only 3 featured women (Forbes MediaCritic, 1996)

Internet

- By 2005, women will account for 60% of Internet consumers (Netsmart, 1997)

News

- An analysis of the evening news programs on CBS, ABC and NBC to determine the percentage of female protagonists in news stories in 2002 showed that they had an average percentage of 14% female protagonists, compared to 86% males. There were no significant differences among the networks in this regard. National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice led the top 10 with 45 appearances, followed by Senator Hillary Clinton (27) and the First Lady, Laura Bush (20). It took EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman a mere three appearances to make it into the top 10.
- The picture looks even worse considering the issues about which the top female protagonists were consulted or to which they were connected. In the context of the top issues, foreign affairs, out of 4,234 appearances of individuals, only 208 were women, an equally low 5% on all three networks.
- Similarly, out of 1845 individual appearances in the context of political issues, women appeared only 115 times. In fact, the only top five issues in which women consistently beat the network average of 14% were crime (often as victims) and, surprisingly, business -- though with a 21% share, women in this context are still far from achieving parity. (Media Tenor International, 2003)
- Women were only 15% of newspaper front-page references in 1996, the final year of this analysis (Women, Men and Media/Unabridged Communications, 1996)
- At the major TV networks (ABC, CBS, NBC), women made up 32% of the correspondent pool and reported just 26% of the stories in 1999 (Professor Joe Foote, Southern Illinois University, 2000)

- Women hold 26.5 percent of television news director jobs; women hold 39.3 percent of all television news jobs. (Radio and Television News Directors Association, 2003)
- In radio, women hold 14.4 percent of the news director slots and constitute 24 percent of the workforce. (Radio and Television News Directors Association, 2003)
- Women account for only one-third of journalists, a number little changed since 1982. Women make up the journalism workforce as follows: they represent 43.5% at newsmagazines; 37.4% in television; 36.9% in weekly newspapers; 33% at daily newspapers; 21.8% in radio; and 20.3% at major wire services. (Poynter Institute's American Journalist Survey, 2003)
- Women are 34% of newsroom supervisors at U.S. newspapers, men are 66%. Hispanic women are 1% of supervisors, black women 2%, Asian-American women one half of 1% and Native American women, less than one third of 1% (American Society of Newspaper Editors, 2000)
- Women have been the majority of college journalism majors since 1977 (Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication)