

## ***Boxed In:***

# ***Women On Screen and Behind the Scenes on Broadcast and Streaming Television in 2020-21***

by Dr. Martha M. Lauzen

Copyright © 2021 – All rights reserved.

---

As the newer, shinier television viewing platform, streamers get credit for dominating the world of prestige television. Annual tallies of Emmy nods for series heavily favor streaming and premium cable series over those on the broadcast networks. A recent headline from *AdWeek* proclaims, “This Year’s Emmy Nominations Prove Streaming Has Officially Taken Over TV Awards Season.”<sup>1</sup> According to a *Los Angeles Times* article, streaming (and premium cable) have “overshadowed the broadcast networks at the Emmys for the last decade, a trend that continues in 2021.”<sup>2</sup>

Simultaneously, media reports bemoan what is frequently characterized as the more staid programming on the broadcast networks. Writing for *Vulture*, critic Josef Adalian offers the following lament of the upcoming season. “There seems to have been a collective decision that what network viewers want is more of the same – literally . . . there will be a whole lot less of networks even pretending to veer outside their established lanes.” The headline accompanying the article predicts that the 2021-22 network television season will offer “reboots, franchises, and very few laughs.”<sup>3</sup>

Currently in its 24<sup>th</sup> year, *Boxed In* considers how women are faring in original U.S. programming offered by these two platforms. Do streaming programs feature substantially higher percentages of female characters than those on the broadcast networks, and do they employ more women behind the scenes? This year’s report considers these questions, and the answers are more complex than one might expect.

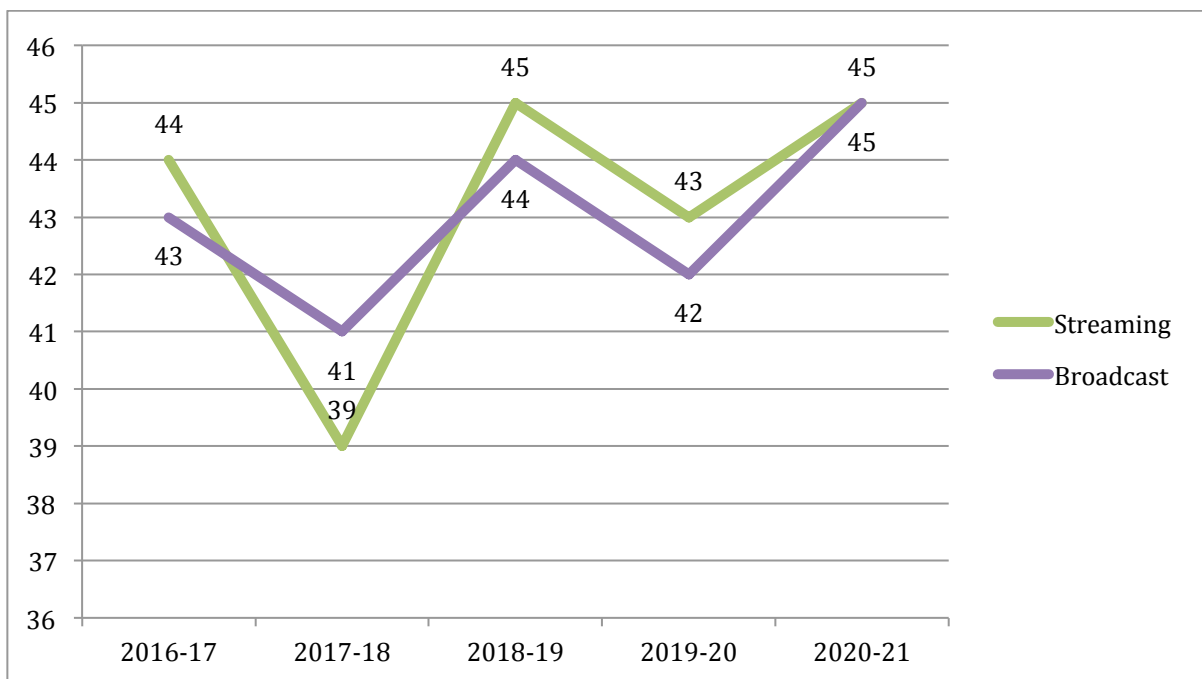
## Key Findings

• **In 2020-21, programs on streaming services and broadcast networks featured the same percentages of female characters in speaking roles.** Female characters comprised 45% of all speaking characters on streaming programs and 45% on broadcast network programs. This represents an increase of 2 percentage points for streaming programs, up from 43% in 2019-20, and an increase of 3 percentage points from 42% for broadcast programs.

• **The percentages of female characters in speaking roles (45%) represent recent historic highs for both broadcast networks and streaming services.** For broadcast networks, it tops the previous high of 44% achieved in 2018-19. For streaming services, it is even with the percentage achieved in 2018-19 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1.

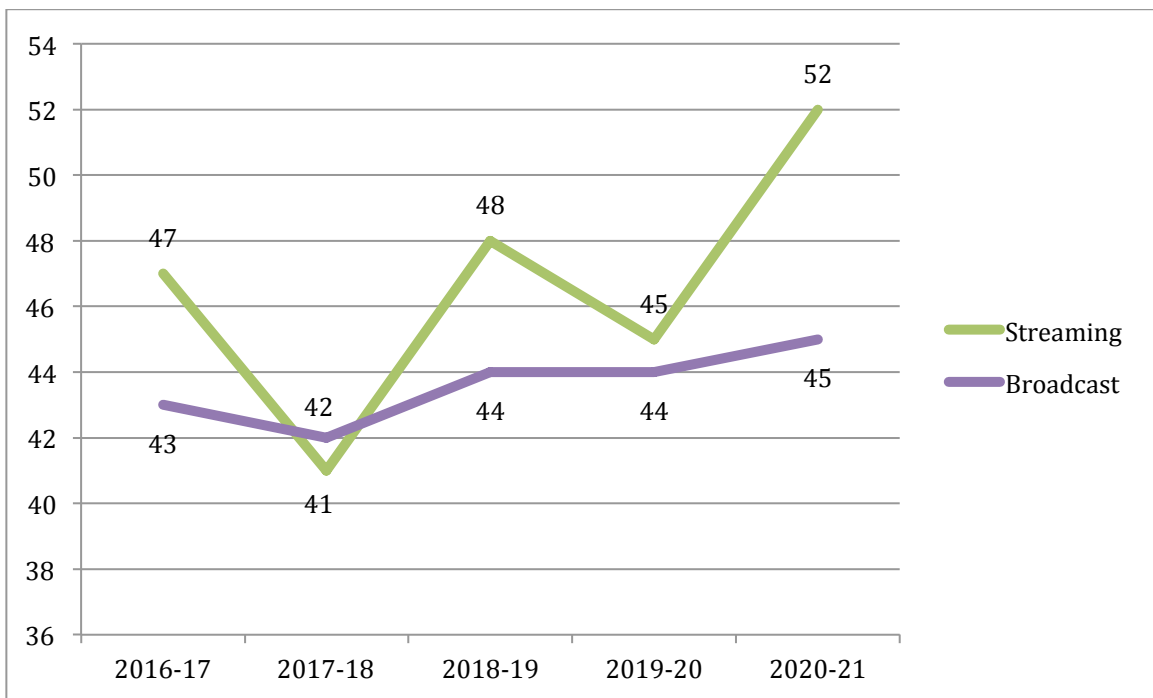
Comparison of All Female Characters in Speaking Roles  
on Broadcast and Streaming Programs



• **Programs on streaming services featured a higher percentage of *major female characters* than programs on broadcast networks.** Females represented 52% of major characters on streaming programs versus 45% on broadcast network programs (see Figure 2). This represents an increase of 7 percentage points for streaming programs, up from 45% in 2019-20, and an increase of 1 percentage point from 44% for broadcast programs, and recent historic highs.

Figure 2.

Comparison of Major Female Characters on Broadcast and Streaming Programs



• **Female characters continue to experience a steep decline in numbers from their 30s into their 40s.** On broadcast network programs, the percentage of females plummets from 39% in their 30s to 17% in their 40s. Similarly, on streaming programs the percentage of females drops from 31% in their 30s to 18% in their 40s.

• **Women 60 and over continue to be dramatically underrepresented.** Females comprised just 4% of female characters 60 and over on broadcast programs and 3% on streaming programs.

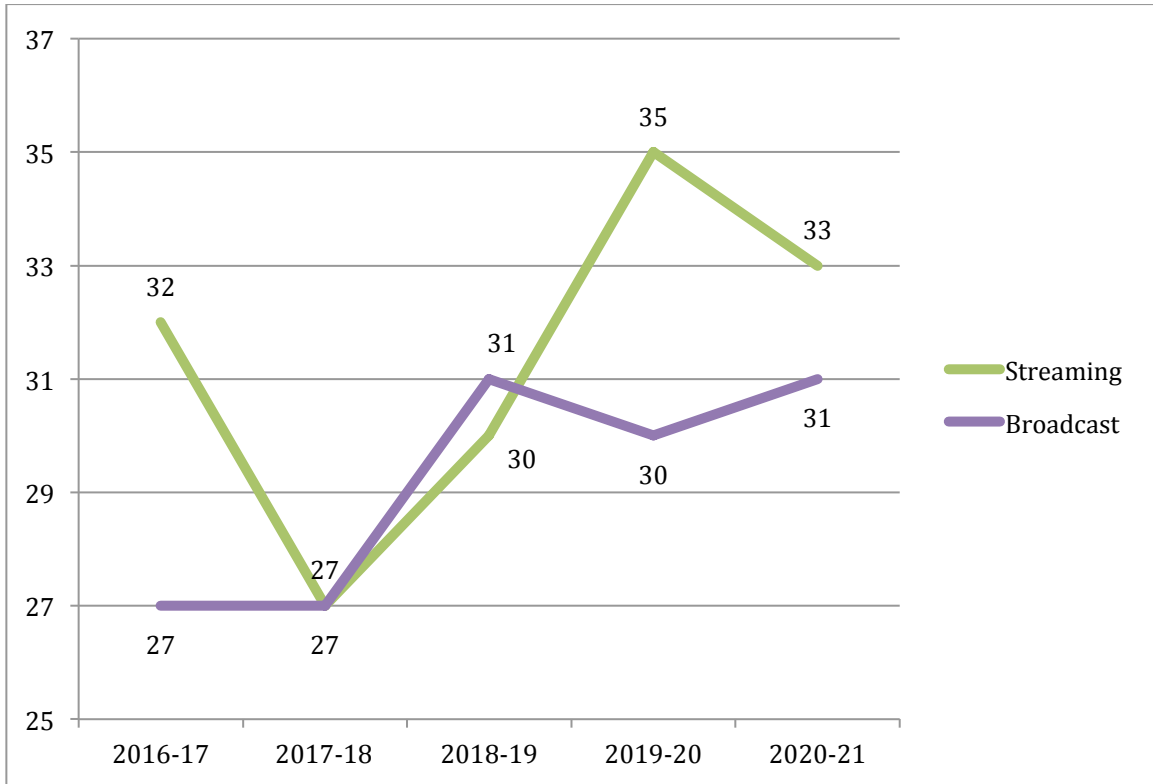
•**Broadcast network programs featured a slightly higher percentage of Black female characters in speaking roles than streaming programs.** On broadcast network programs, the percentage of Black female characters in speaking roles declined from 26% in 2019-20 to 23% in 2020-21. On streaming services, the percentage of Black females increased from 18% in 2019-20 to 20% in 2020-21. Even with the decrease, broadcast network programs featured slightly more Black female characters in speaking roles (23%) than streaming programs (20%).

•**Broadcast network programs featured a slightly higher percentage of Latina characters in speaking roles than streaming programs.** On broadcast network programs, the percentage of Latina characters in speaking roles increased from 5% in 2019-20 to 8% in 2020-21. On streaming programs, the percentage of Latina characters declined from 9% in 2019-20 to 6% in 2020-21. Broadcast programs featured slightly more Latina characters in speaking roles (8%) than streaming programs (6%).

•**Streaming programs featured a slightly higher percentage of Asian female characters in speaking roles than broadcast programs.** On broadcast network programs, the percentage of Asian female characters in speaking roles increased slightly from 8% in 2019-20 to 9% in 2020-21. On streaming programs the percentage of Asian females increased from 8% in 2019-20 to 11% in 2020-21. Streaming programs featured slightly more Asian females in speaking roles (11%) than broadcast network programs (9%).

•**The percentage of women working in key behind-the-scenes positions increased slightly on broadcast networks (30% in 2019-20 to 31% in 2020-21) and declined slightly on streaming programs (35% in 2019-20 to 33% in 2020-21).** Even though the percentage of women working behind the scenes on streaming programs declined slightly in 2020-21, these programs employ a slightly higher percentage of women (33%) than broadcast programs (31%) (see Figure 3).

*Figure 3.*  
*Comparison of Women in Behind-the-Scenes Roles*  
*on Broadcast and Streaming Programs*

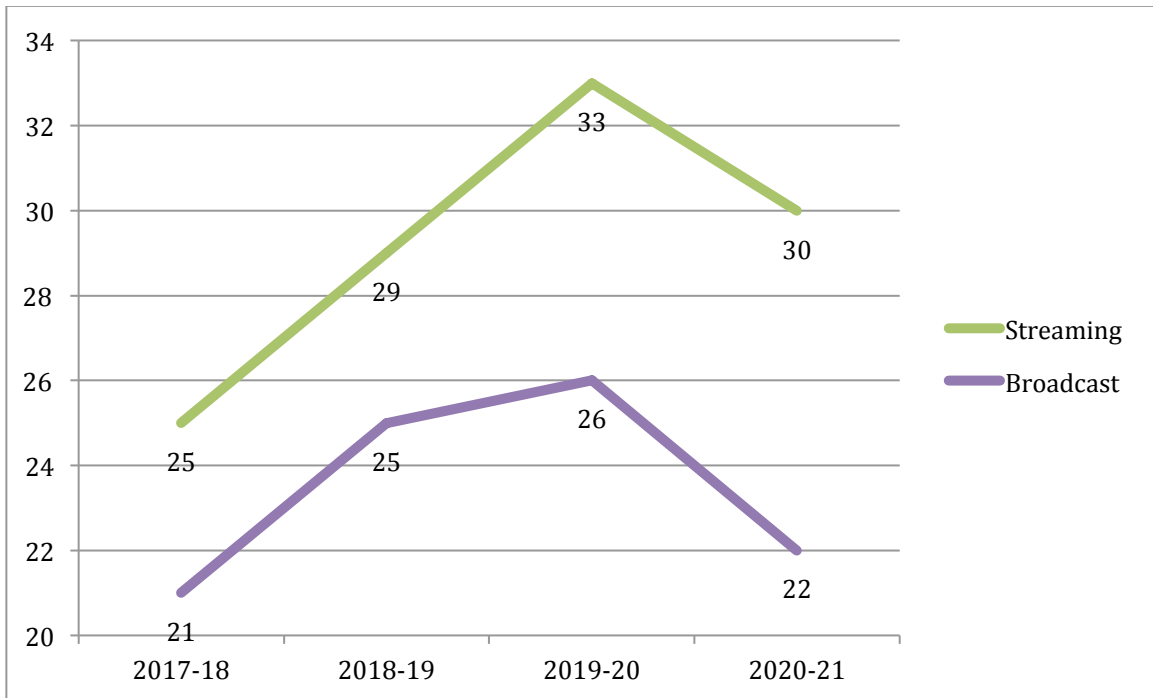


•**Broadcast and streaming programs employed relatively low numbers of women in key behind-the-scenes roles.** Only 12% of broadcast programs employed 11 or more women in the roles considered. 78% employed 11 or more men. 15% of streaming programs employed 11 or more women in the roles considered. 65% employed 11 or more men.

•**While streaming programs have a higher percentage of women creators than broadcast programs (30% vs. 22%), the percentages of women in this role declined on both broadcast and streaming programs in 2020-21.** The percentage of women creators on streaming programs declined from 33% in 2019-20 to 30% in 2020-21. The percentage of women creators on broadcast network programs declined from 26% in 2019-20 to 22% in 2020-21 (see Figure 4).

Figure 4.

Comparison of Creators on Broadcast and Streaming Programs



•Streaming programs employed substantially higher percentages of women as directors (31% streaming, 19% broadcast) and editors (24% streaming, 15% broadcast).

•On broadcast and streaming platforms, programs with at least 1 woman creator employed substantially higher percentages of women in other key behind-the-scenes roles and featured more female characters than programs with exclusively male creators. For example, when a program had at least 1 woman creator, women comprised 35% of directors. On programs with no women creators, women accounted for 19% of directors.

This year's edition of *Boxed In* focuses on the employment of women working in key behind-the-scenes positions, as well as the representation of girls and women on screen in original U.S. dramas, comedies and reality programs featured on broadcast networks and streaming services from September 2020 through May 2021.

The study considers one randomly selected episode of series appearing on the broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, CW) and streaming services (Amazon Prime, Apple TV+, Disney+, Hulu, Netflix, Paramount+, Peacock). Note that the streaming services included in the study expanded in 2020-21 to include Peacock and Paramount+. In 2020-21, the study tracked 3,429 characters and 4,434 credits. Over the last 24 years -- from 1997-98 to 2020-21 -- *Boxed In* has monitored over 50,000 characters and more than 63,000 credits.

Information on behind-the-scenes credits and on-screen portrayals was collected by viewing every episode in the sample one or more times in its entirety. The study considers the following behind-the-scenes credits: creators, directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, and directors of photography. Every character who was seen speaking at least one line was included in the study. The attributes of each character that were coded include: sex, race/ethnicity, age, prominence of character (major vs. minor), marital status, and occupational status. For the purposes of this study, major characters appear in more than one scene and are instrumental to the narrative of the story. The study also notes whether the characters were seen at work and actually working, and whether their roles are personal or professional in nature.

## Findings for Broadcast Networks

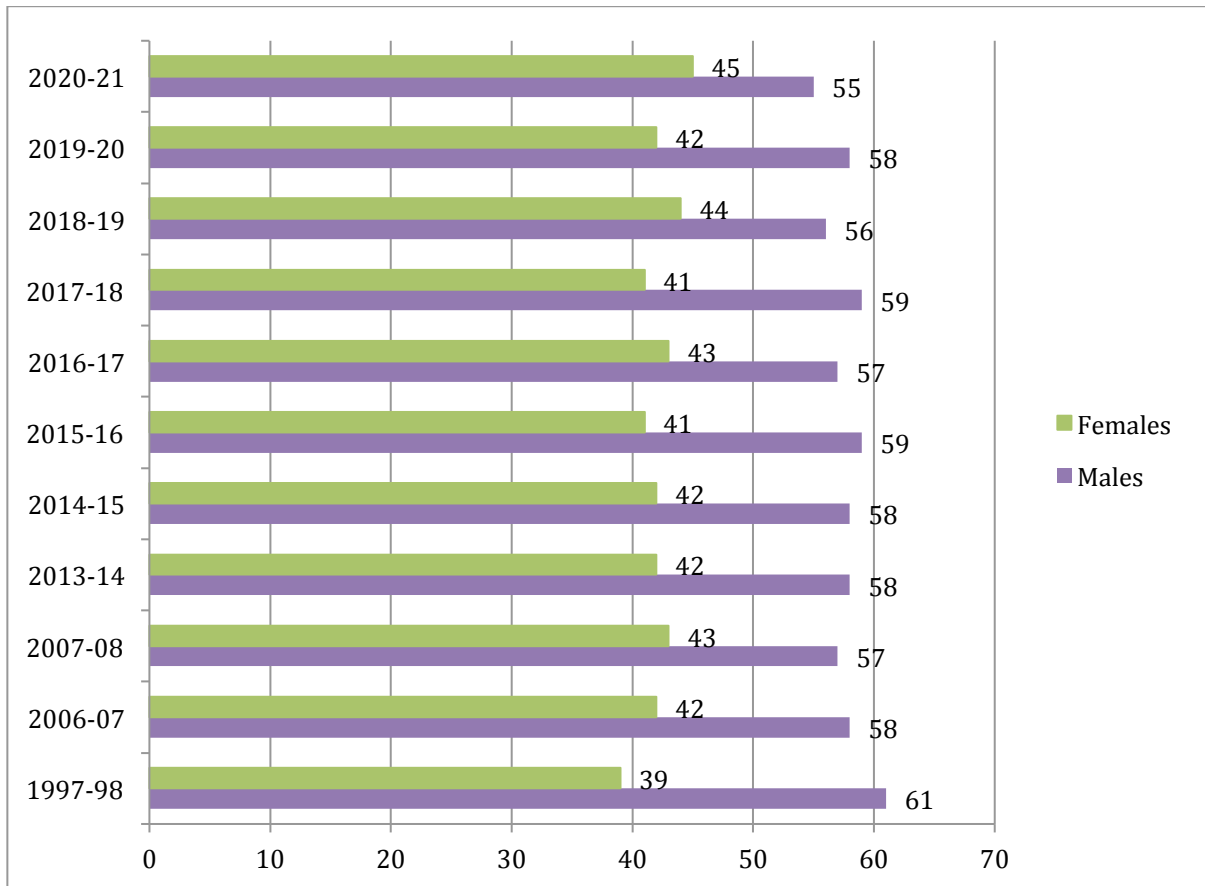
### Females On Screen

#### Representation

In 2020-21, females comprised 45% (44.6%) of *all speaking characters* appearing on broadcast network programs. This represents an increase of 3 percentage points from 42% in 2019-20, and a recent historic high (see Figure 5). Males accounted for 55% (55.0%) and non-binary and transgender characters 0.4% of all speaking characters.

Figure 5.

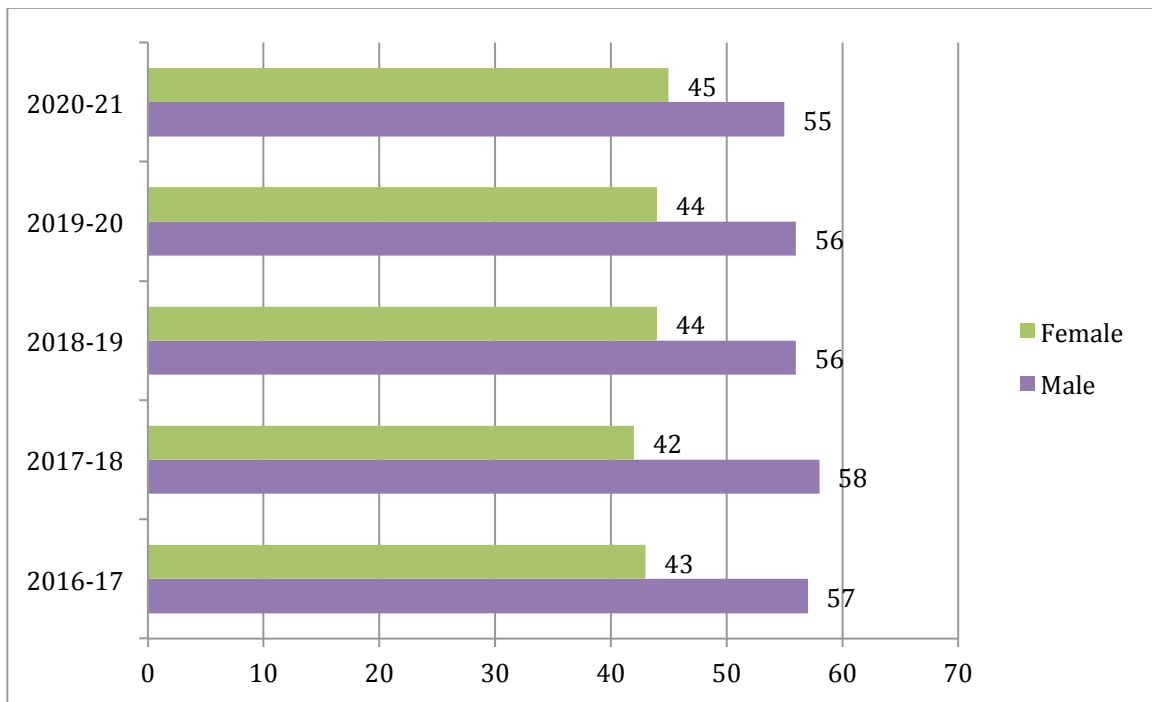
Historical Comparison of Percentages of All Speaking Female Characters on Broadcast Network Programs





45% (44.8%) of *major characters* were female in 2020-21. This represents an increase of 1 percentage point from 44% in 2019-20 (see Figure 6). For the purposes of this study, *major characters* appear in more than one scene and are instrumental to the narrative of the story. Males comprised 55% (54.9%) and non-binary and transgender characters 0.3% of major characters.

*Figure 6.*  
*Historical Comparison of Percentage of Major Female Characters on Broadcast Network Programs*

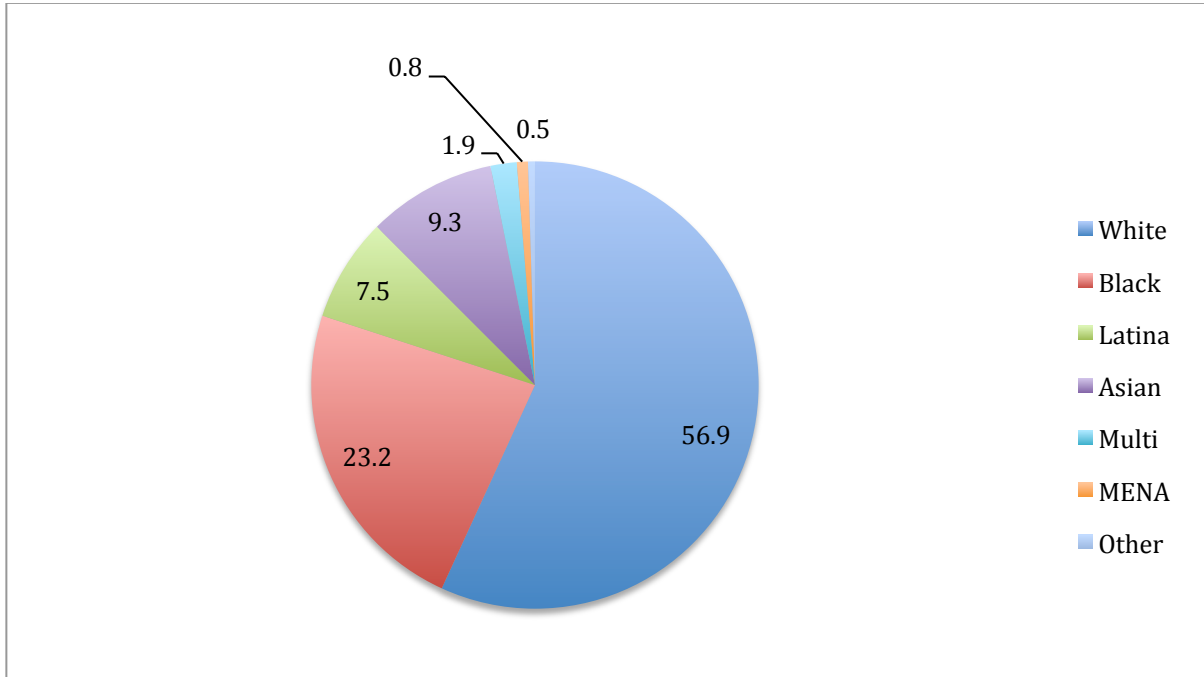


### Race/Ethnicity

In 2020-21, 57% (56.9%) of all *female characters in speaking roles* were White (down 3 percentage points from 60% in 2019-20), 23% (23.2%) were Black (down 3 percentage points from 26% in 2019-20), 8% (7.5%) were Latina (up 3 percentage points from 5% in 2019-20)<sup>4</sup>, 9% (9.3%) were Asian (up 1 percentage point from 8% in 2019-20), 2% (1.9%) were multiracial/multiethnic, less than 1%

(0.8%) were MENA<sup>5</sup>, and less than 1% (0.5%) were of some other race or ethnicity (see Figure 7).

Figure 7.  
Race/Ethnicity of Female Characters in Speaking Roles



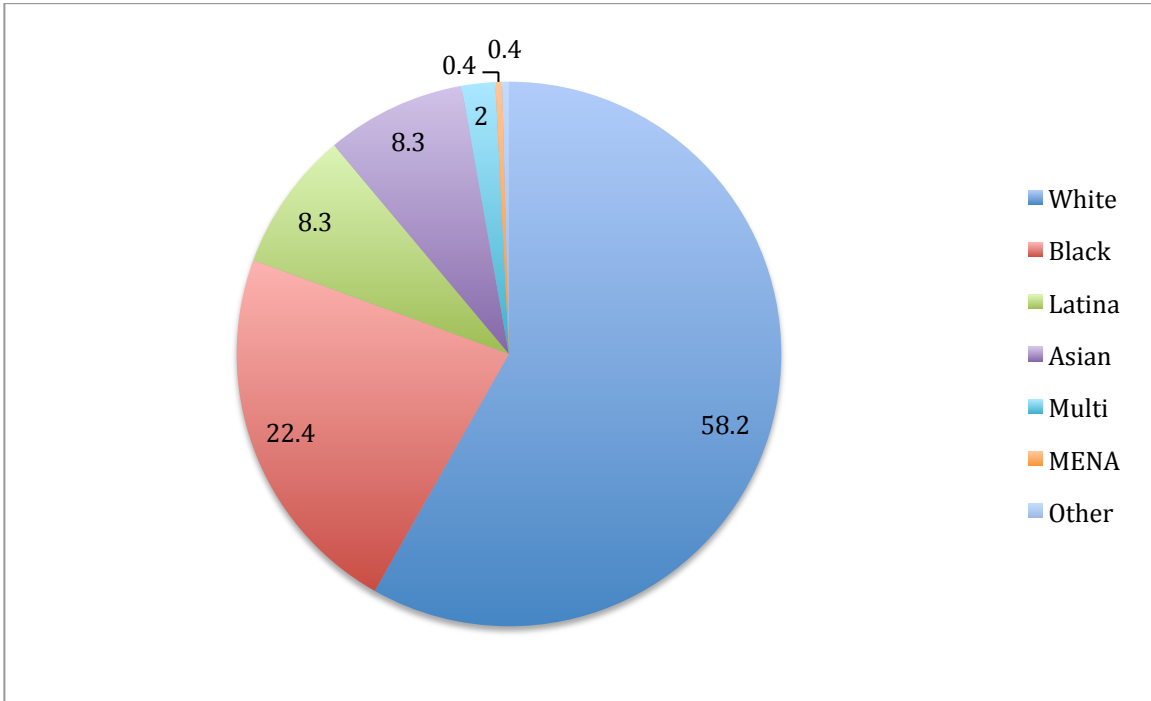
59% (59.0%) of *male characters in speaking roles* were White, 25% (25.3%) were Black, 6% (6.2%) were Latino, 6% (6.4%) were Asian, 1% (1.2%) were MENA, 1% (1.1%) were multiracial/multiethnic, and less than one percent (0.8%) were of some other race or ethnicity.

57% (57.1%) of *non-binary and transgender characters in speaking roles* were White, 14% (14.3%) were Black, 14% (14.3%) were Latinx, and 14% (14.3%) were Asian.

58% (58.2%) of *major female characters* were White (down 5 percentage points from 63% in 2019-20), 22% (22.4%) were Black (down 2 percentage points from 24% in 2019-20), 8% (8.3%) were Latina (up 2 percentage points from 6% in

2019-20), 8% (8.3%) were Asian (up 1 percentage point from 7% in 2019-20), 2% (2.0%) were multiracial/multiethnic, less than 1% (0.4%) were MENA, and less than 1% (0.4%) were some other race/ethnicity (see Figure 8).

Figure 8.  
Race/Ethnicity of Major Female Characters



61% (61.1%) of major male characters were White, 25% (25.0%) were Black, 6% (5.7%) were Latino, 6% (5.9%) were Asian, less than 1% (0.6%) were MENA, less than 1% (0.9%) were multiracial/multiethnic, and less than 1% (0.9%) were of some other race or ethnicity.

33% (33.3%) of major non-binary and transgender characters were White, 33% (33.3%) were Black, and 33% (33.3%) were Asian.

## Age

By age cohort, 12% (11.5%) of *females in speaking roles* were children or teens, 19% (19.2%) were in their 20s, 39% (39.4%) were in their 30s, 17% (17.0%) were in their 40s, 9% (9.0%) were in their 50s, and 4% (4.0%) were in their 60s or older.

For *male characters in speaking roles*, 8% (8.1%) were children or teens, 12% (12.3%) were in their 20s, 34% (34.2%) were in their 30s, 27% (26.6%) were in their 40s, 12% (12.0%) were in their 50s, and 7% (6.8%) were in their 60s or older.

For *non-binary and transgender characters in speaking roles*, 14% (14.3%) were in their teens, 43% (42.9%) were in their 30s, and 43% (42.9%) were in their 40s.

Overall, female characters continue to be younger than their male counterparts. The majority of female characters were in their 20s and 30s (58%), whereas the majority of males were in their 30s and 40s (61%).

Female characters experienced a precipitous decline in numbers from their 30s (39%) to their 40s (17%). The percentage of male characters also declined, but it was not as dramatic (from 34% to 27%).

46% of male characters were 40 and older but only 30% of female characters were 40 and older. More male characters than female characters were 60 or older (7% vs. 4%).

The findings for *major characters* were similar. By age cohort, 9% (9.1%) of *major female characters* were children or teens, 21% (21.0%) were in their 20s, 40% (40.3%) were in their 30s, 16% (15.6%) were in their 40s, 11% (10.6%) were in their 50s, and 3% (3.4%) were 60 and older.

5% (5.4%) of *major male characters* were children or teens, 11% (11.2%) were in their 20s, 37% (36.6%) were in their 30s, 27% (27.2%) were in their 40s, 13% (12.6%) were in their 50s, and 7% (7.0%) were 60 or older.

33% (33.3%) of *major non-binary and transgender characters* were in their 30s and 67% (66.7%) were in their 40s.

Overall, the majority of major female characters were in their 20s and 30s (61%), and the majority of males were in their 30s and 40s (64%).

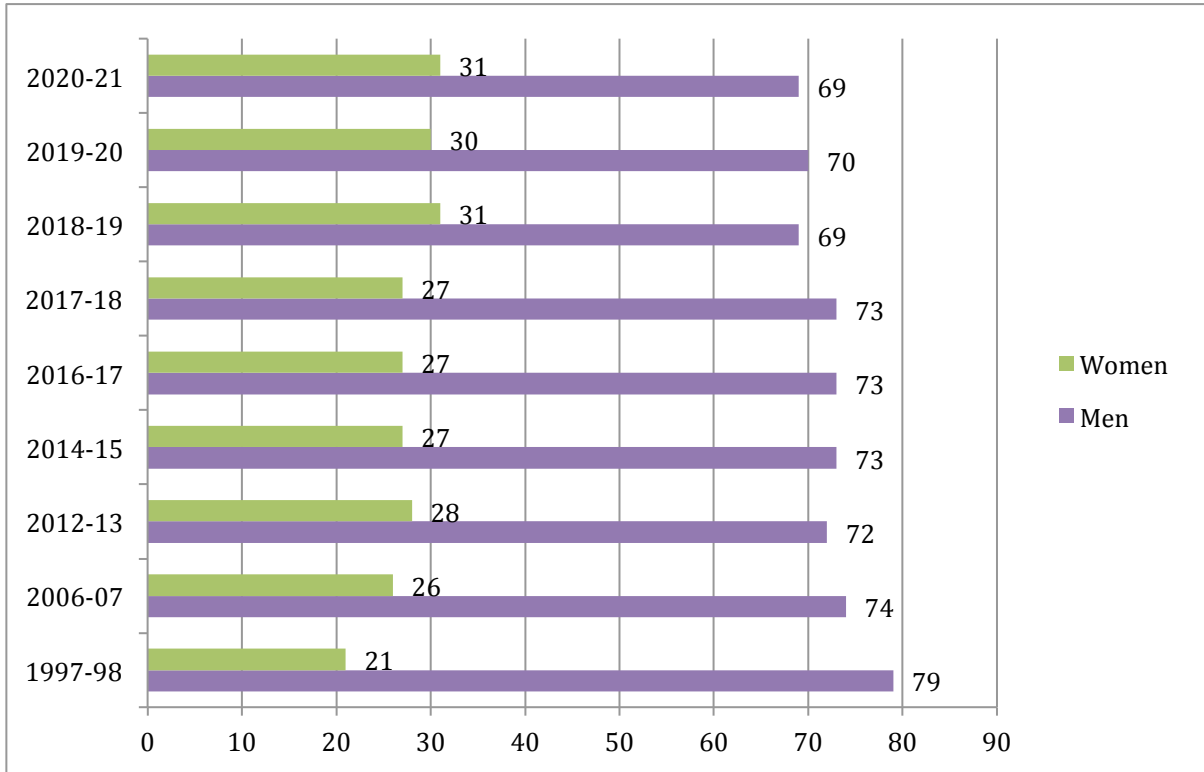
The percentage of major female characters dropped precipitously from their 30s to their 40s (40% to 16%). The percentage of male characters also dropped, but not as dramatically (37% to 27%).

There were over twice as many *major male characters as female characters* 60 and older (7% vs. 3%).

### *Women Behind the Scenes*

In 2020-21, women accounted for 31% (30.9%) of all creators, directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, and directors of photography working on broadcast network programs. This represents an increase of 1 percentage point from 30% in 2019-20 (see Figure 9). Men comprised 69% (69.1%) of individuals in behind-the-scenes roles.

*Figure 9.*  
*Historical Comparison of Percentages of Women Working Behind the Scenes on*  
*Broadcast Network Programs*



43% (42.7%) of the programs employed 5 or fewer women in the roles considered. 2% (2.4%) of programs employed 5 or fewer men.

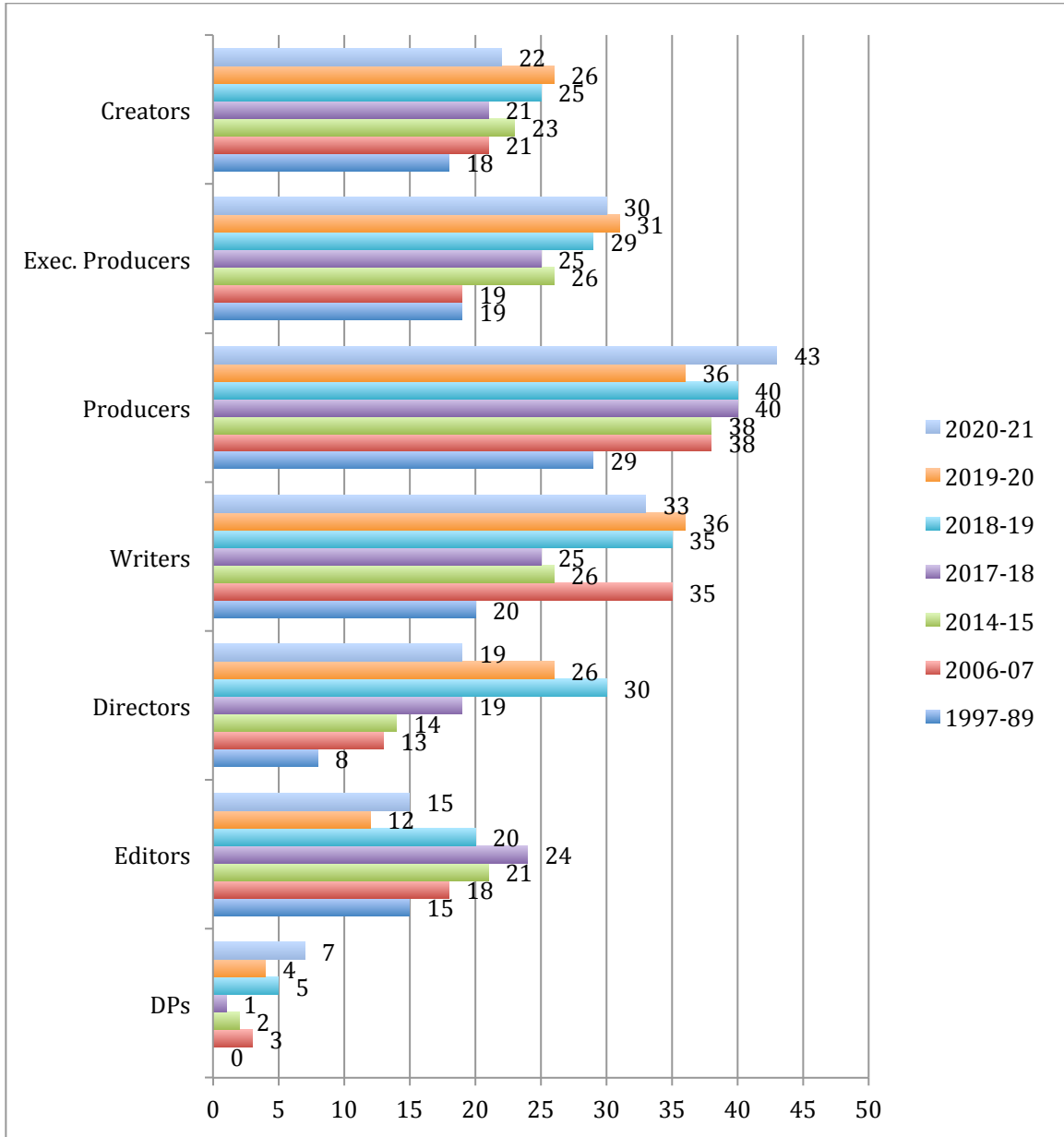
Only 12% (12.0%) of the programs employed 11 or more women in the roles considered. 78% (78.1%) employed 11 or more men.

Overall, women fared best as producers (43%), followed by writers (33%), executive producers (30%), creators (22%), directors (19%), editors (15%), and directors of photography (7%) (see Figure 10).

In 2020-21, women comprised 22% (21.9%) of creators on broadcast network programs. This represents a decline of 4 percentage points from 26% in 2019-20.

Figure 10.

*Historical Comparison of Percentages of Behind-the-Scenes Women by Role on Broadcast Network Programs*



Women accounted for 30% (29.8%) of executive producers working on broadcast network programs. This represents a decline of 1 percentage point from 31% in 2019-20.

In 2020-21, women comprised 43% (43.0%) of producers working on broadcast network programs. This represents an increase of 7 percentage points from 36% in 2019-20, and a recent historic high.

Women accounted for 33% (32.8%) of writers working on broadcast network programs. This represents a decline of 3 percentage points from 36% in 2019-20.

Women comprised 19% (19.3%) of directors working on broadcast network programs last year. This represents a decrease of 7 percentage points from 26% in 2019-20.

In 2020-21, women accounted for 15% (15.3%) of editors working on broadcast network programs. This represents an increase of 3 percentage points from 12% in 2019-20.

Women accounted for 7% (6.8%) of directors of photography working on broadcast programs last year. This represents an increase of 3 percentage points from 4% in 2019-20, and a recent historic high.

In 2020-21, 94% (94.4%) of broadcast programs had no women DPs, 81% (80.6%) had no women directors, 80% (79.8%) had no women editors, and 73% (73.4%) had no women creators.



## Findings for Streaming Services

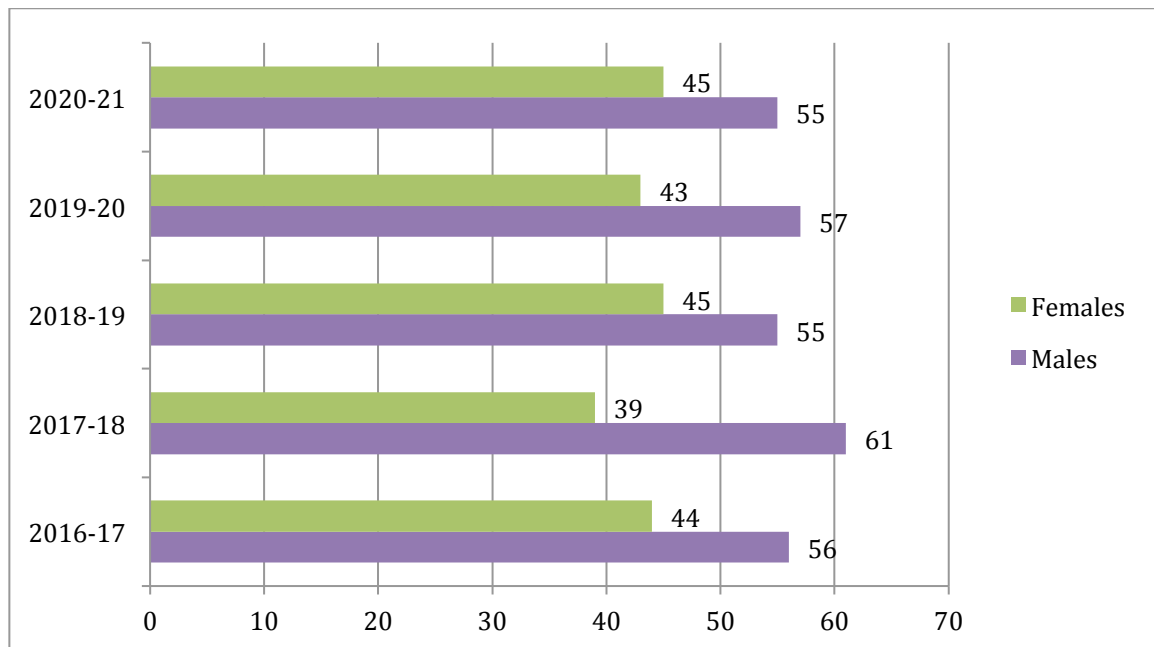
### Females On Screen

#### Representation

In 2020-21, females accounted for 45% (44.7%) of *all speaking characters* on streaming programs. This represents an increase of 2 percentage points from 43% in 2019-20 (see Figure 11). Males comprised 55% (54.8%) and non-binary and transgender characters 0.5% of all speaking characters.

Figure 11.

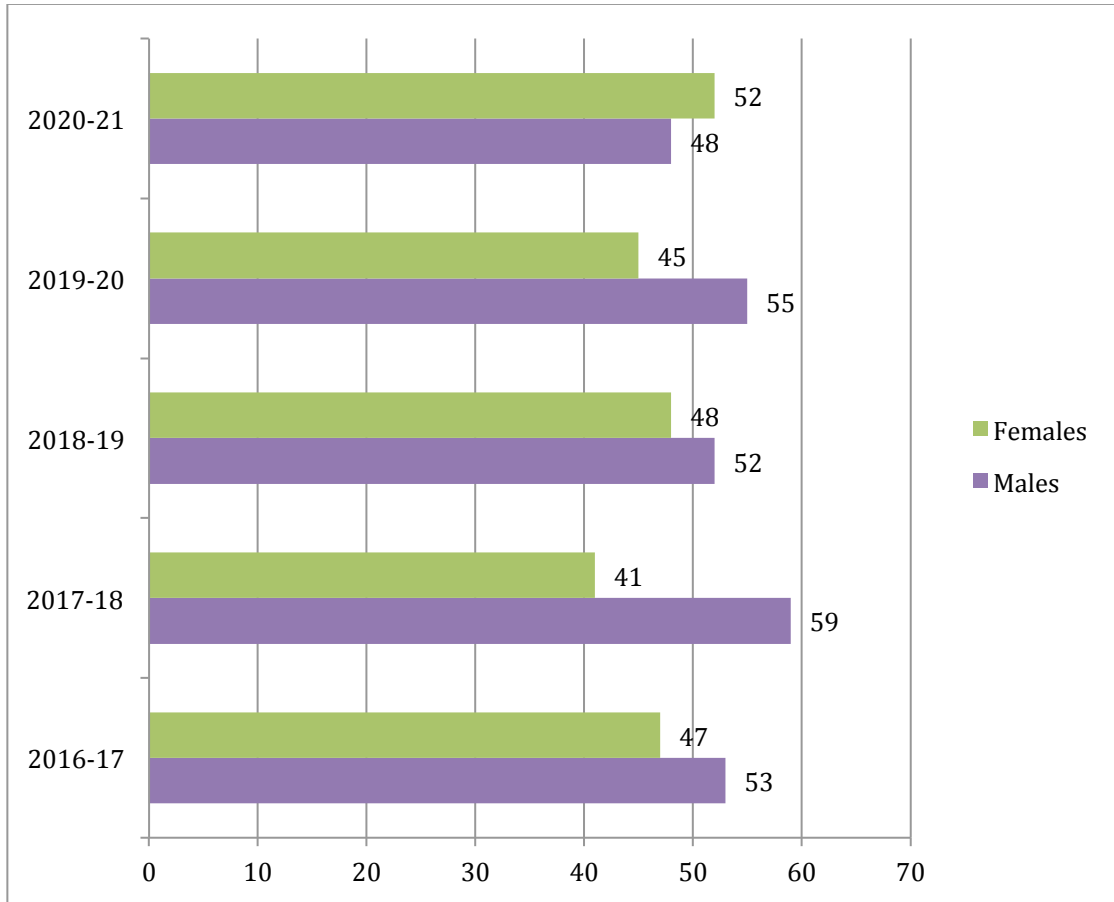
*Historical Comparison of Percentages of All Speaking Female Characters on Streaming Programs*



Females comprised 52% (52.2%) of *major characters* on streaming programs. This represents an increase of 7 percentage points from 45% in 2019-2020, and a recent historic high (see Figure 12). For the purposes of this study, *major characters* appear in more than 1 scene and are instrumental to the narrative of the story.

Males accounted for 48% (47.8%) and non-binary and transgender characters 0.0% of all major characters.

*Figure 12.  
Historical Comparison of Percentages of All Major Female Characters on Streaming Programs*

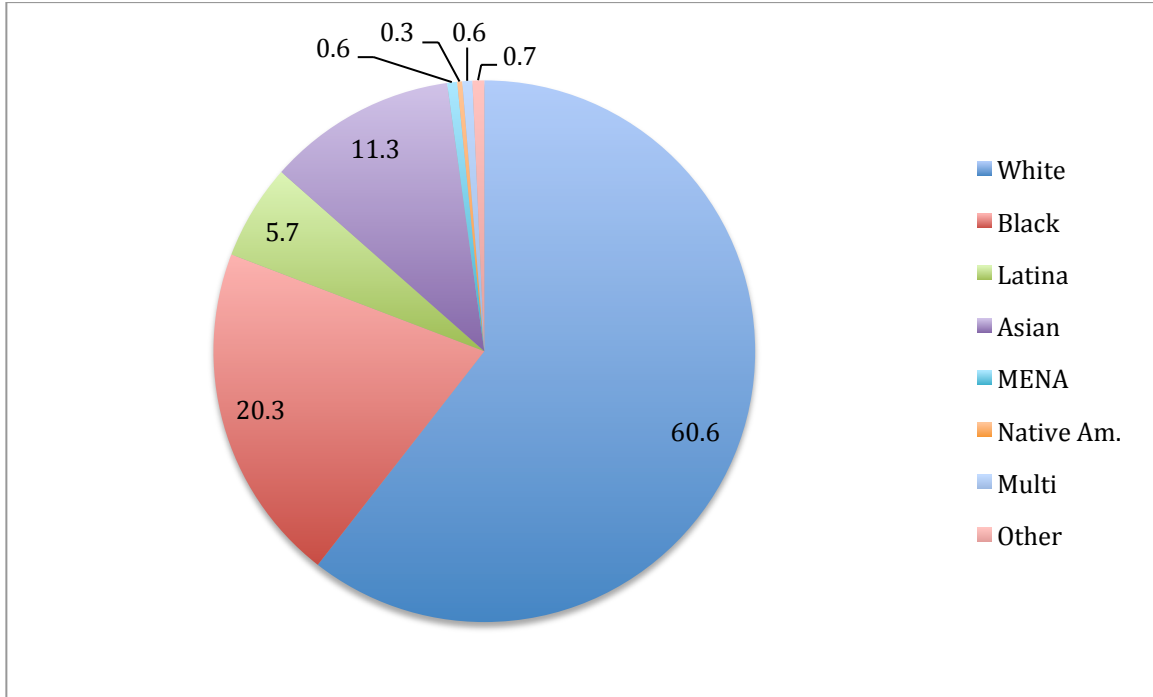


Race/Ethnicity

Regarding race and ethnicity on streaming programs, 61% (60.6%) of *females in speaking roles* were White (a decline of 4 percentage points from 65% in 2019-20), 20% (20.3%) were Black (an increase of 2 percentage points from 18% in 2019-20), 6% (5.7%) were Latina (a decline of 3 percentage points from 9% in 2019-20), 11% (11.3%) were Asian (an increase of 3 percentage points from 8% in 2019-20), less than 1% (0.6%) were MENA, less than 1% (0.3%) were Native

American, less than 1% (0.6%) were multiracial/multiethnic, and less than 1% (0.7%) were of some other race or ethnicity (see Figure 13).

*Figure 13.  
Comparison of Race/Ethnicity of Female Characters  
in Speaking Roles on Streaming Programs*

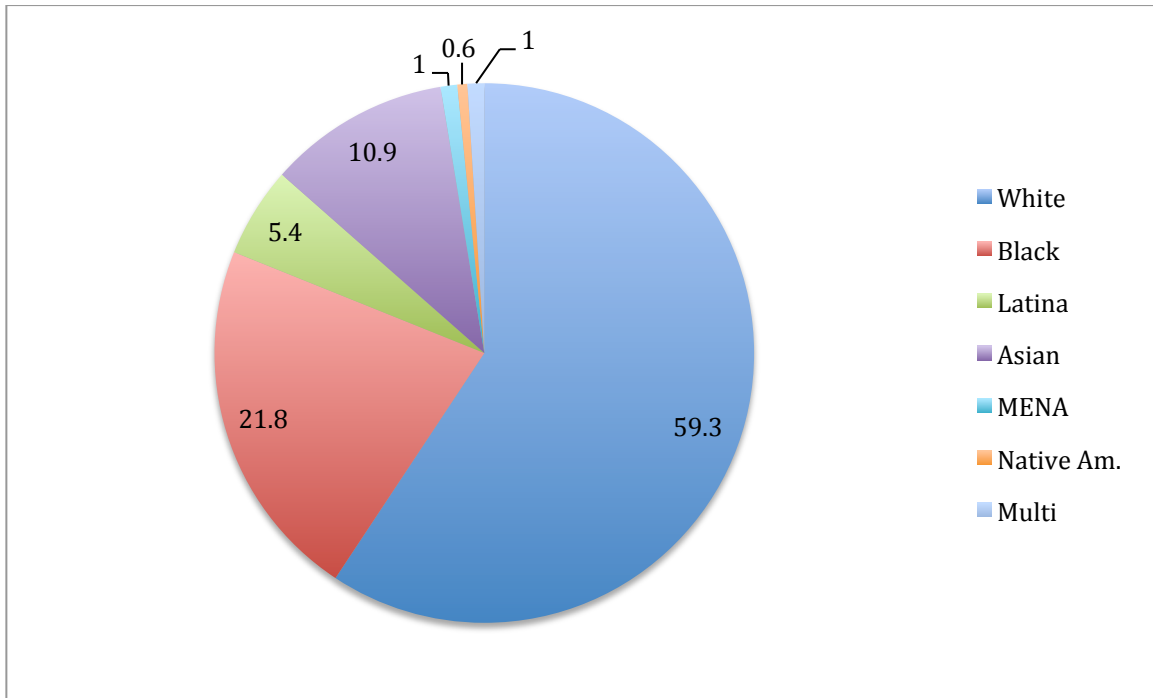


63% (63.4%) of *males in speaking roles* were White, 20% (19.5%) were Black, 8% (8.3%) were Latino, 5% (4.8%) were Asian, less than 1% (0.9%) were MENA, less than 1% (0.6%) were Native American, less than 1% (0.5%) were multiracial/multiethnic, and 2% (2.0%) were of some other race or ethnicity.

For *major characters only*, 59% (59.3%) of females were White, 22% (21.8%) were Black, 5% (5.4%) were Latina, 11% (10.9%) were Asian, 1% (1.0%) were MENA, less than 1% (0.6%) were Native American, and 1% (1.0%) were multiracial/multiethnic (see Figure 14).

Figure 14.

Comparison of Race/Ethnicity of Major Female Characters on Streaming Programs



For *major characters only*, 64% (63.8%) of male characters were White, 20% (19.5%) were Black, 9% (8.7%) were Latino, 4% (3.5%) were Asian, 1% (1.4%) were MENA, 1% (1.0%) were Native American, less than 1% (0.3%) were multiracial/multiethnic, and 2% (1.8%) were of some other race or ethnicity.

Age

By age cohort, 24% (24.0%) of *female characters in speaking roles* were children or teens, 16% (15.9%) were in their 20s, 31% (30.8%) were in their 30s, 18% (17.7%) were in their 40s, 9% (9.1%) were in their 50s, and 3% (2.5%) were in their 60s.

For *males in speaking roles*, 19% (18.8%) were children or teens, 11% (11.4%) were in their 20s, 30% (29.8%) were in their 30s, 23% (23.0%) were in their 40s, 10% (10.1%) were in their 50s, and 7% (6.9%) were in their 60s.

29% (28.6%) of non-binary and transgender characters were in their 20s, 29% (28.6%) were in their 30s, and 43% (42.8%) were in their 40s.

Overall, 30% of female characters but 40% of male characters in speaking roles were 40 or older. Streaming programs featured more than twice as many male characters as female characters 60 or older (7% vs. 3%).

For *major characters* only, 28% (28.4%) of females were children or teens, 18% (17.6%) were in their 20s, 27% (26.5%) were in their 30s, 15% (14.7%) were in their 40s, 10% (9.9%) were in their 50s, and 3% (2.9%) were 60 and older.

For *major characters* only, 23% (22.6%) of males were children or teens, 11% (10.6%) were in their 20s, 26% (26.1%) were in their 30s, 23% (22.6%) were in their 40s, 11% (11.0%) were in their 50s, and 7% (7.1%) were in their 60s.

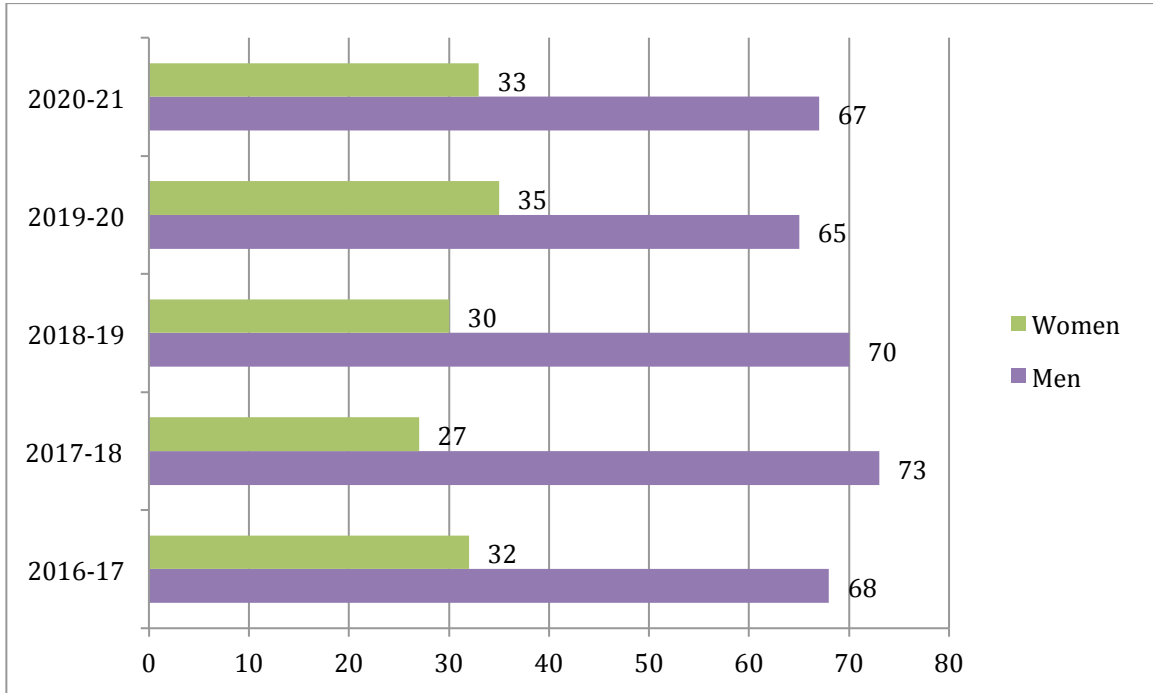
Overall, 28% of *major female characters* but 41% of *major male characters* were 40 and older. Streaming programs featured slightly more than twice as many major male characters as female characters 60 or older (7% vs. 3%).

### ***Women Behind the Scenes***

Women comprised 33% (32.9%) of creators, directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, and directors of photography working on streaming programs in 2020-21. This represents decrease of 2 percentage points from 35% in 2019-20 (see Figure 15). Men accounted for 67% (67.1%) of those working in the behind-the-scenes roles considered.

Figure 15.

*Historical Comparison of Percentages of Women Working Behind the Scenes on Streaming Programs*



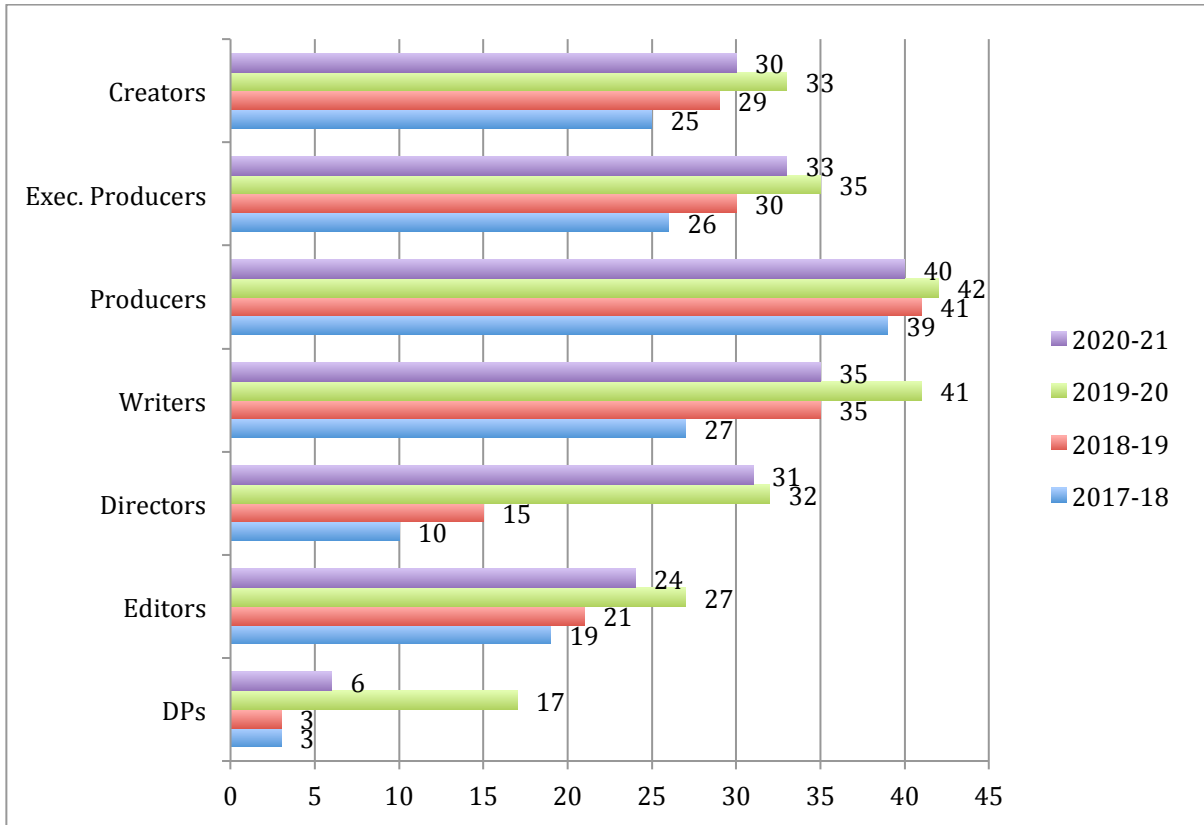
44% (43.6%) of programs employed 5 or fewer women in the behind-the-scenes roles considered, whereas just 5% (5.3%) employed 5 or fewer men.

15% (15.0%) of programs employed 11 or more women in the behind-the-scenes roles considered. 65% (65.1%) employed 11 or more men.

Women fared best as producers (40%), followed by writers (35%), executive producers (33%), directors (31%), creators (30%), editors (24%), and directors of photography (6%) (see Figure 16).

Figure 16.

*Historical Comparison of Percentages of Women Working in Key Behind-the-Scenes Roles on Streaming Programs*



Women comprised 30% (30.2%) of creators working on streaming programs in 2020-21. This represents a decline of 3 percentage points from 33% in 2019-20.

Women accounted for 33% (33.3%) of executive producers working on streaming programs in 2020-21. This represents a decline of 2 percentage points from 35% in 2019-20.

Women comprised 40% (40.3%) of producers working on streaming programs in 2020-21, a decline of 2 percentage points from 42% in 2019-20.

Women accounted for 35% (34.5%) of writers working on streaming programs in 2020-21, a decline of 6 percentage points from 41% in 2019-20.

Women comprised 31% (30.5%) of directors working on streaming programs in 2020-21, a decline of 1 percentage point from 32% in 2019-20.

Women accounted for 24% (24.3%) of editors working on streaming programs in 2020-21, a decline of 3 percentage points from 27% in 2019-20.

Women comprised 6% (6.2%) of directors of photography working on streaming programs in 2020-21, a decline of 11 percentage points from 17% in 2019-20.

94% of programs had no female directors of photography, 69% had no female editors, 69% had no female directors, and 65% had no female creators.

## *Findings for Broadcast Networks and Streaming Services*

### *Females On Screen*

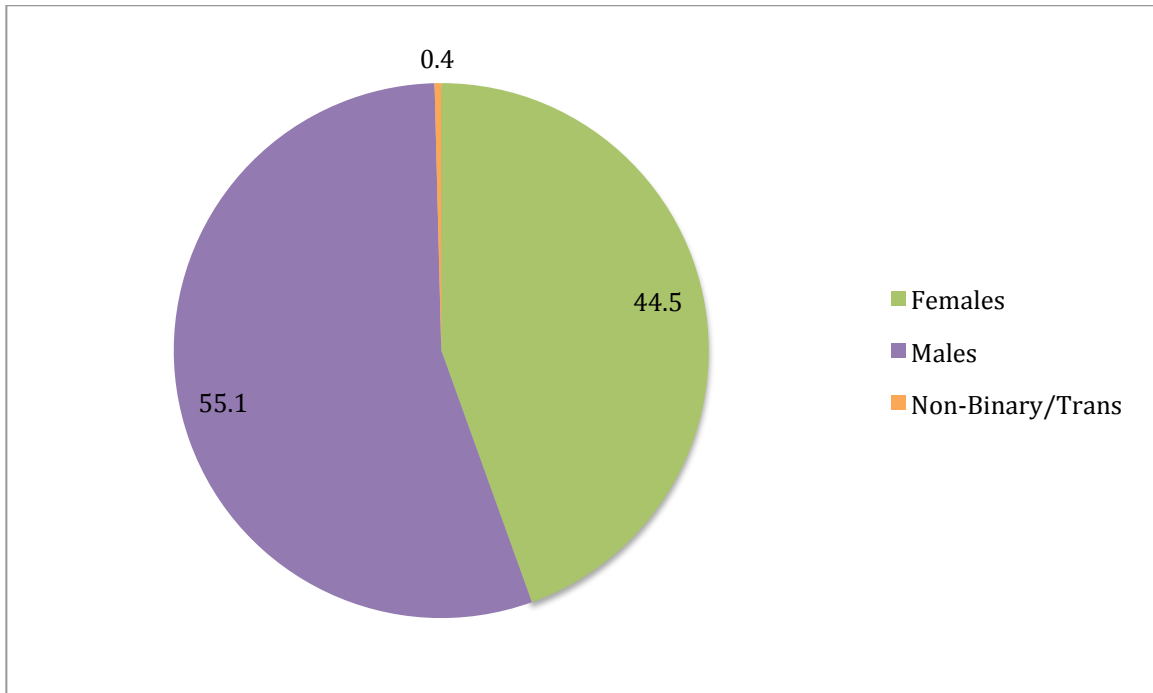
#### Representation

In 2020-21, females accounted for 45% (44.6%) of *all speaking characters* on broadcast network and streaming programs. Males comprised 55% (55.0%) and non-binary and transgender characters made up 0.4% of speaking characters (see Figure 17).



Figure 17.

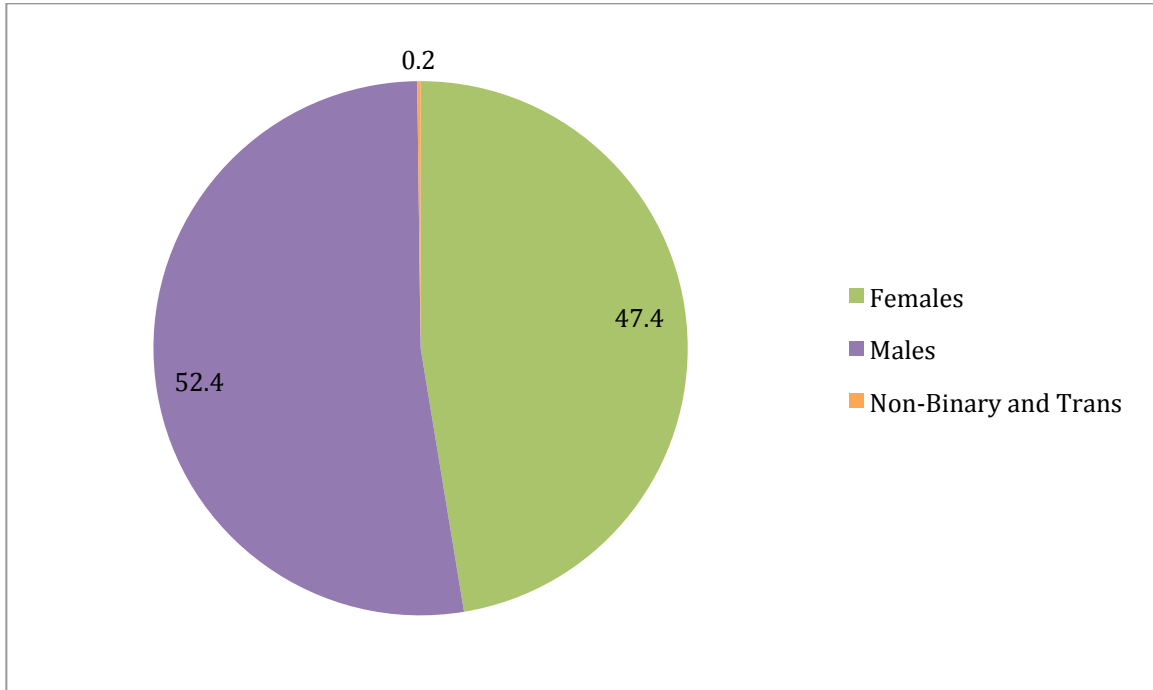
*Gender of All Speaking Characters on Broadcast and Streaming Programs*



Females accounted for 47% (47.4%) of *major characters* on broadcast network and streaming programs. For the purposes of this study, major characters appear in more than 1 scene and are instrumental to the narrative of the story. Males comprised 52% (52.4%) and non-binary and transgender characters made up 0.2% of major characters (see Figure 18).

Figure 18.

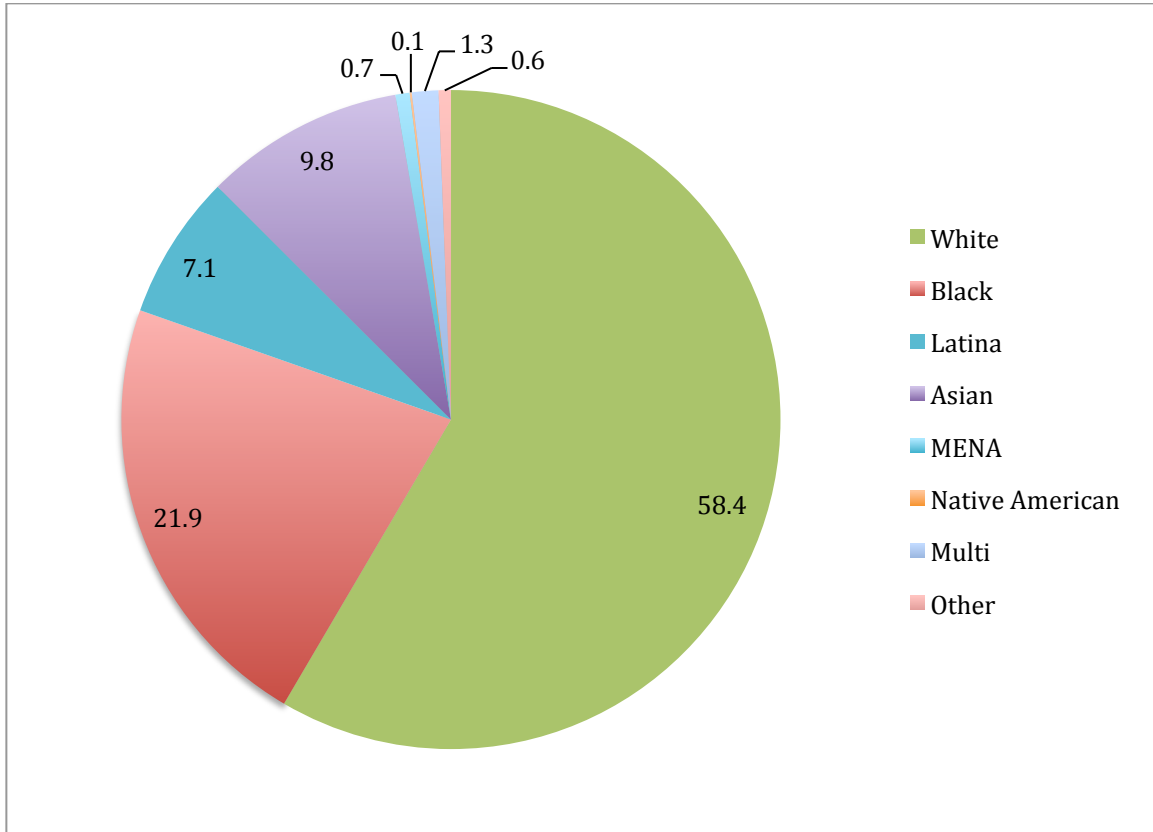
*Gender of Major Characters on Broadcast and Streaming Programs*



Race and Ethnicity

Regarding the race and ethnicity of female characters in *speaking roles*, 58% (58.4%) of females were White, 22% (21.9%) were Black, 7% (7.1%) were Latina, 10% (9.8%) were Asian, 1% (0.7%) were MENA, less than 1% (0.1%) were Native American, 1% (1.3%) were multiracial/multiethnic, and less than 1% (0.6%) were of some other race or ethnicity (see Figure 19).

Figure 19.  
Race/Ethnicity of Female Characters in Speaking Roles  
on Broadcast and Streaming Programs



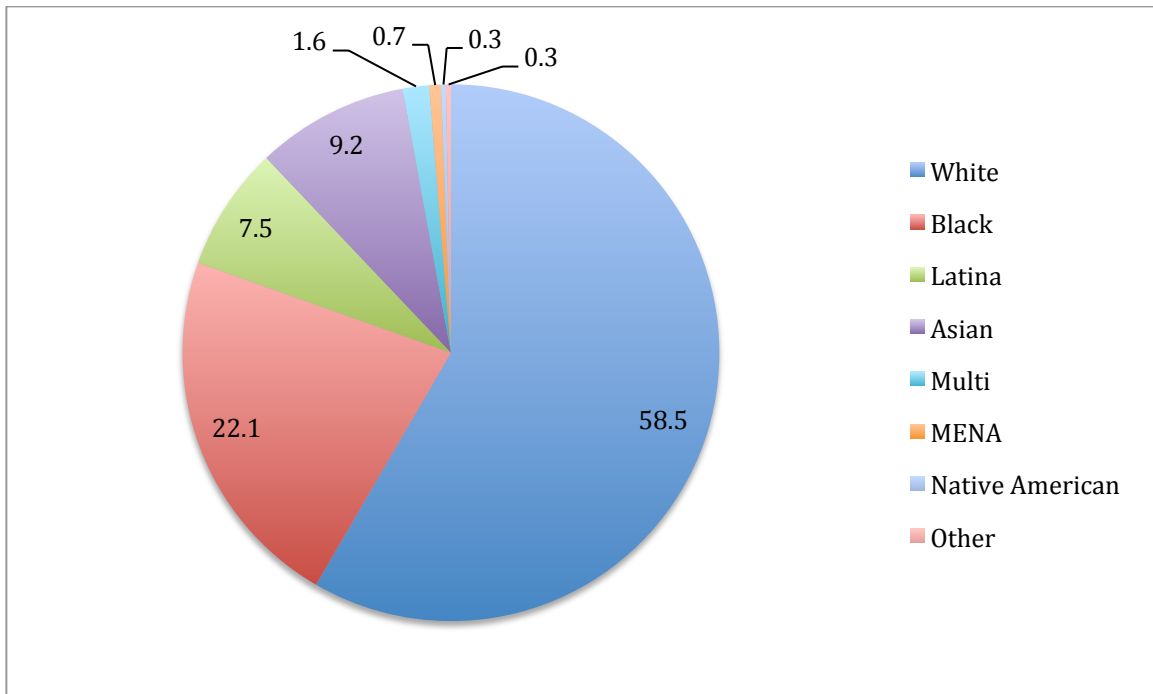
For male characters in speaking roles, 61% (61.0%) were White, 23% (22.7%) were Black, 7% (7.2%) were Latino, 6% (5.6%) were Asian, 1% (1.1%) were MENA, less than 1% (0.8%) were multiracial/multiethnic, and less than 1% (0.3%) were Native American, and 1% (1.3%) were of some other race or ethnicity.

For non-binary and transgender characters in speaking roles, 29% (28.6%) were White, 43% (42.9%) were Black, 21% (21.4%) were Latinx, and 7% (7.1%) were Asian.

In major roles only, 59% (58.5%) of females were White, 22% (22.1%) were Black, 8% (7.5%) were Latina, 9% (9.2%) were Asian, 2% (1.6%) were

multiracial/multiethnic, 1% (0.7%) were MENA, less than 1% (0.3%) were Native American, and less than 1% (0.2%) were of some other race or ethnicity (see Figure 20).

*Figure 20.*  
*Race/Ethnicity of Female Characters in Major Roles*  
*on Broadcast and Streaming Programs*



In *major roles* only, 62% (62.0%) of males were White, 23% (23.1%) were Black, 7% (6.9%) were Latina, 5% (4.9%) were Asian, less than 1% (0.8%) were MENA, less than 1% (0.7%) were multiracial/multiethnic, less than 1% (0.4%) were Native American, and 1% (1.2%) were of some other race or ethnicity.

In *major roles* only, 33% (33.3%) of non-binary and transgender characters were White, 33% (33.3%) were Black, and 33% (33.3%) were Asian.

## Age

By age cohort, 17% (17.2%) of *all females in speaking roles* were children or teens, 18% (17.7%) were in their 20s, 35% (35.4%) were in their 30s, 17% (17.4%) were in their 40s, 9% (9.0%) were in their 50s, and 3% (3.3%) were 60 or older.

13% (12.9%) of *all males in speaking roles* were children or teens, 12% (11.9%) were in their 20s, 32% (32.3%) were in their 30s, 25% (25.0%) were in their 40s, 11% (11.2%) were in their 50s, and 7% (6.8%) were in their 60s or older.

7% (7.1%) of all non-binary and transgender characters in speaking roles were children or teens, 14% (14.3%) were in their 20s, 36% (35.7%) were in their 30s, and 43% (42.9%) were in their 40s.

Overall, female characters in speaking roles were younger than males. The majority of female characters were in their 20s and 30s (53%), whereas the majority of male characters were in their 30s and 40s (57%).

Female characters experienced a precipitous decline from their 30s to their 40s. 35% of females were in their 30s but 17% were in their 40s.

Slightly more than twice as many male characters as females were 60 or older (7% vs. 3%).

For *major roles* only, 17% (17.3%) of females were children or teens, 19% (19.4%) were in their 20s, 34% (34.3%) were in their 30s, 15% (15.4%) were in their 40s, 10% (10.3%) were in their 50s, and 3% (3.2%) were 60 or older.

For *major roles* only, 11% (11.4%) of males were children or teens, 11% (10.9%) were in their 20s, 33% (33.3%) were in their 30s, 26% (25.5%) were in their 40s, 12% (11.9%) were in their 50s, and 7% (6.9%) were 60 or older.

For *major roles* only, 33% (33.3%) of all non-binary and transgender characters were in their 30s, and 67% (66.7%) were in their 40s.

Overall, the majority of *major female characters* were in their 20s and 30s (54%) while the majority of *major male characters* were in their 30s and 40s (59%).

29% of *major female characters* but 44% of *major male characters* were 40 and older. Slightly more than twice as many *major male characters* as *major female characters* were 60 and older (7% vs. 3%).

### ***Women Behind the Scenes***

Overall, women comprised 32% (31.7%) of creators, directors, writers, executive producers, producers, editors, and directors of photography working on broadcast network and streaming programs in 2020-21. Men accounted for 68% (68.3%) of those working in behind-the-scenes roles.

When comparing the employment of women on shows by platform, with the exception of producers and directors of photography, streaming programs employed higher percentages of women than broadcast network programs. The differences are especially pronounced for creators (22% broadcast, 30% streaming), directors (19% broadcast, 31% streaming), and editors (15% broadcast, 24% streaming).

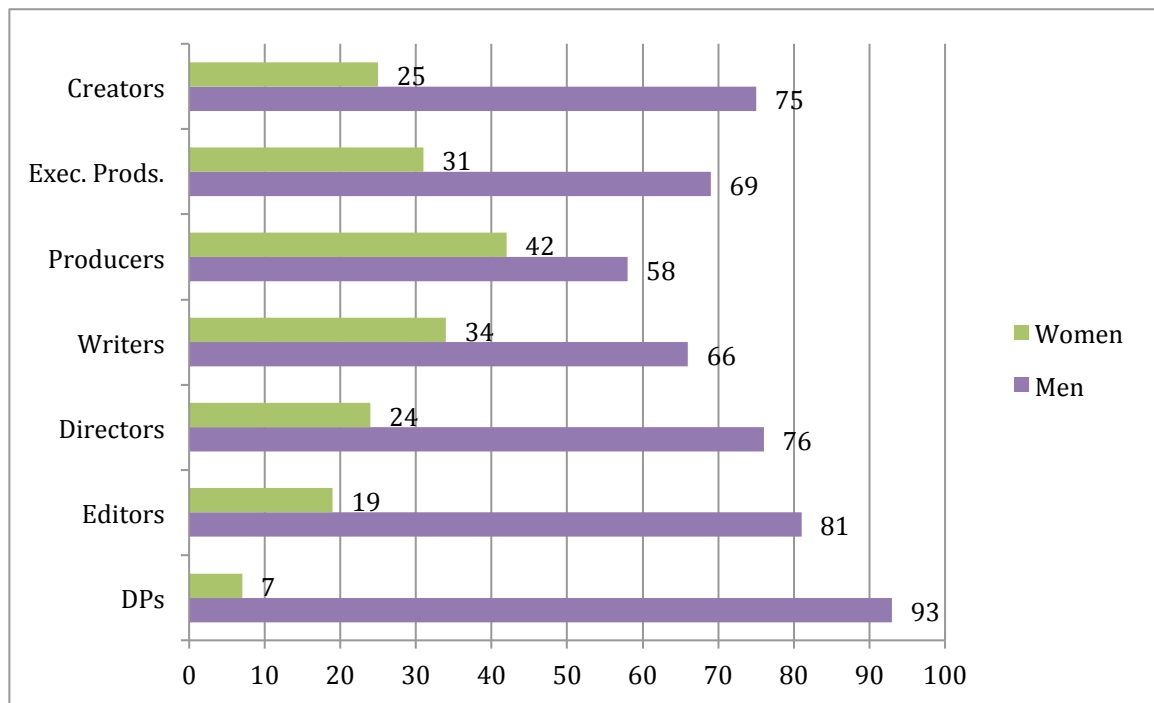
When considering broadcast and streaming programs, women fared best as producers (42%), followed by writers (34%), executive producers (31%), creators (25%), directors (24%), editors (19%), and directors of photography (7%) (see Figure 21).

Women comprised 25% (25.4%) of creators working on all of the programs considered in 2020-21. By platform, women accounted for 22% of creators on broadcast programs and 30% on streaming programs (see Figure 22).

Women accounted for 31% (31.2%) of executive producers working on all of the programs considered. By platform, women made up 30% of executive producers on broadcast programs and 33% on streaming programs.

Women comprised 42% (42.0%) of producers working on all of the programs considered in 2020-21. By platform, women accounted for 43% of producers on broadcast programs and 40% on streaming programs.

*Figure 21.  
Percentages of Women and Men by Behind-the-Scenes Role  
on Broadcast and Streaming Programs*



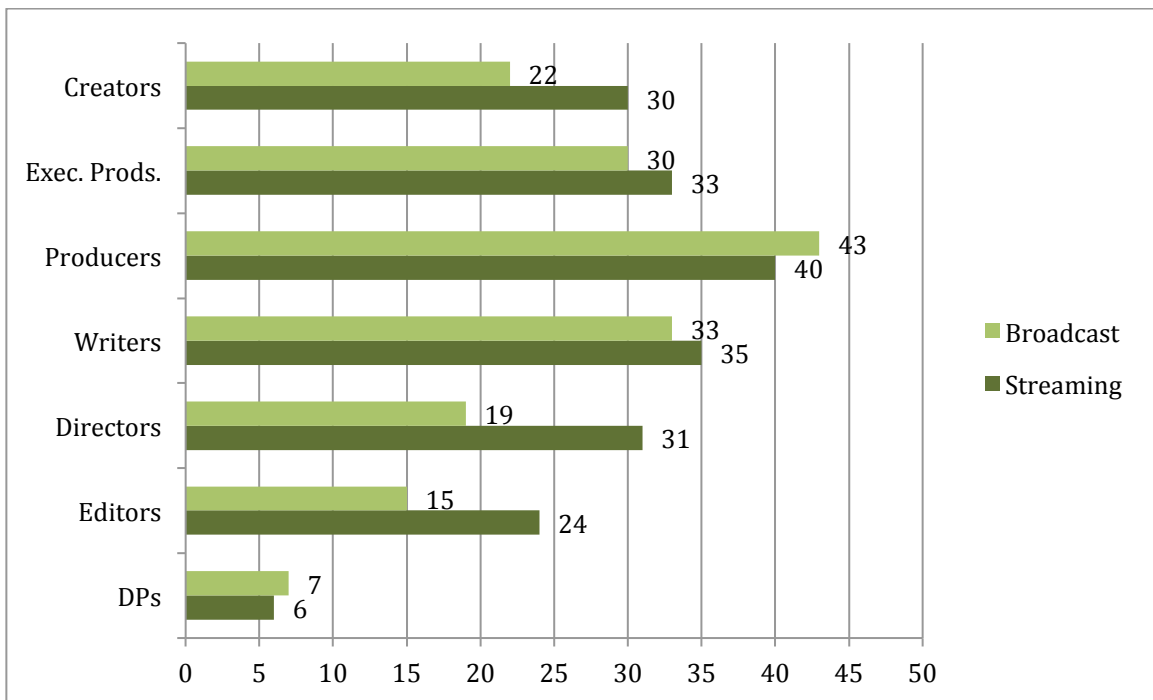
Women accounted for 34% (33.5%) of writers working on all of the programs considered. By platform, women comprised 33% of writers on broadcast programs and 35% on streaming programs.

Women comprised 24% (24.2%) of directors working on all of the programs considered in 2020-21. By platform, women made up 19% of directors on broadcast

programs and 31% of directors on streaming programs.

Women comprised 19% (18.8%) of editors working on all of the programs considered. By platform, women accounted for 15% of editors on broadcast programs and 24% of editors on streaming programs.

*Figure 22.*  
*Comparison of Percentages of Behind-the-Scenes Women by Role*  
*on Broadcast and Streaming Programs*



Women made up 7% (6.5%) of directors of photography working on all of the programs considered in 2020-21. By platform, women accounted for 7% of directors of photography on broadcast programs and 6% on streaming programs.



### *Important Relationships*

Broadcast and streaming programs with at least 1 woman *creator* featured more female characters in speaking and major roles than programs with exclusively male creators (see Figure 23). In addition, programs with women creators also employed higher percentages of women as directors, writers, and editors.

On programs with at least 1 woman creator, females comprised 49% (49.2%) of characters in speaking roles and 53% (53.4%) of characters in major roles. On programs with exclusively male creators, females accounted for 43% (43.3%) of all characters and 46% (45.5%) of major characters.

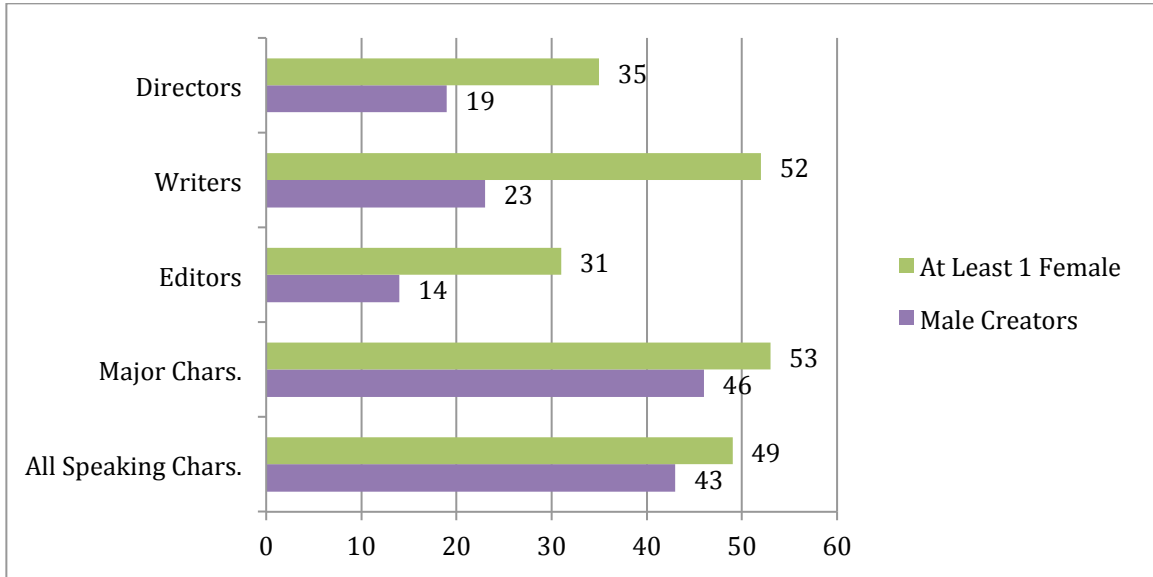
On programs with at least 1 woman creator, women comprised 35% (35.2%) of directors. On programs with exclusively male creators, women accounted for 19% (19.2%) of directors.

On programs with at least 1 woman creator, women made up 52% (51.7%) of writers. On programs with exclusively male creators, women accounted for 23% (23.4%) of writers.

On programs with at least 1 woman creator, women comprised 31% (30.6%) of editors. On programs with exclusively male creators, women accounted for 14% (14.0%) of editors.

Figure 23.

Comparison of Programs with at Least 1 Woman Creator vs.  
Programs with Exclusively Male Creators



## *Endnotes*

<sup>1</sup>Sutton, Kelsey. (July 13, 2021). This Year's Emmy Nominations Prove Streaming Has Officially Taken Over TV Awards Season *AdWeek*.

<https://www.adweek.com/convergent-tv/this-years-emmy-nominations-prove-streaming-has-officially-taken-over-tv-awards-season/>.

<sup>2</sup>Battaglio, Stephen. (July 13, 2021). Emmys 2021: HBO Narrowly Tops Netflix with 130 Nominations. *Los Angeles Times*, <https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/business-story/2021-07-13/2021-emmy-nominations/scorecard>.

<sup>3</sup>Adalian, Josef. (May 20, 2021). When Network TV Gives Up: Franchises, Reboots, and Very Few Laughs. *Vulture*. <https://www.vulture.com/2021/05/network-tv-fall-schedule-analysis.html>.

<sup>4</sup>Latina characters are of Latin American descent and do not include Spaniards.

<sup>5</sup>MENA or Middle Eastern/North African characters are from the following countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.