Women and people of color in local TV and radio news

Highlights

- The percentage of women and people of color in TV newsrooms and in TV news management are at the highest levels ever measured, but while the minority population in the U.S. has risen 12.4 points in the last 28 years, the minority workforce in TV news is up just 7.
- The disparity in representation of people of color in TV management is shrinking.
- The percentage of TV news employees overall and of TV news directors who are women is at an all-time high.
- There are fewer women and people of color in radio this year than last.
- The percentage of people of color in radio is up from its low in 2010, but down from the high 22 years ago and far from on par with the population overall.
- There are twice as many men as women in radio news, and just under half of radio news staffs include at least one woman, but the percentage of women news directors has increased in the past year.

of TV newsroom staff are people of color

24.8% +.4%

of radio newsroom staff are people of color

11.3% -.4%
People of Color in TV News

The percentage of women and people of color in TV newsrooms and in TV news management are at the highest levels ever measured by the RTDNA/Hofstra University Newsroom Survey.

The percentage of people of color in local TV news overall rose to 24.8% in 2017. That’s up just 0.4, but it’s enough to beat the previous record of 24.6% set in 2001.

Still, the bigger picture remains unchanged. In the last 28 years, the percentage of people of color in the U.S. has risen 12.4 points, but just 7 in the TV news industry. The U.S. is about 38.8% people of color, but the local TV news workforce only 24.8%.
Radio News Salaries 2018

Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA.org)

2018 RTDNA/Hofstra University Newsroom Survey

Newsroom Diversity

TV News:
- Per 100 TV news staff, there are about 25 people of color.

Radio News:
- Per 100 radio news staff, there are about 9 people of color.

Long-Term Trends in TV Diversity

- People of color in the U.S.: 38.3%*
  - 1990: 25.9%
  - Today: 24.8%
  - People of color as TV News Directors: 7.9%
  - 1990: 17.8%
  - Today: 17.4%

* Projected

RTDNA/Hofstra University Newsroom Survey 2018

Radio Television Digital News Association
RTDNA.org
In 2017, the percentage of African Americans in newsrooms rose the most, followed by Hispanics. Asian Americans and Native Americans were both less well represented than the previous year.

Overall, nearly 95% of TV newsrooms have at least one person of color on staff.
People of color are best represented in the top 25 markets, followed by markets 26 to 50, as the survey typically shows.

Every newsroom in the top 50 markets has at least one person of color and, on average they were nearly a third people of color.

Newsroom staff size made a little difference in representation, but surprisingly, a few newsrooms with staffs of 11 to 50 still reported no people of color.
While 90% or more of network affiliated newsrooms have at least one person of color on the news team, no network has staff of color in 100% of its local affiliate newsrooms. Network affiliate newsrooms are 21.4% people of color overall, down slightly, while independent commercial stations are much more diverse at 60% people of color. Fox affiliates were about 50% more diverse than any of the other network affiliates, which were all about the same.

Stations in the South and West were far more diverse than stations in the Northeast or, particularly, the Midwest, as has generally been the case in past years.

**Spanish-Language TV**

Overall, 93.6% of the TV news workforce at Spanish-language stations are Hispanic, up from 87.6% in 2016. The other 6.4% are white. The survey, for the first time, found no African Americans, Asian Americans or Native Americans at any Hispanic stations participating in this year’s survey.

The percentage of people of color at non-Spanish language TV stations edged up 0.1 to 22.7%, a slight increase over 2016 and a new record high. All of this year’s increase came from better representation of African Americans; Hispanics, Native Americans and Asian Americans were all slightly less well-represented at non-Spanish language stations.
Women of Color
Historically, in TV, men have outnumbered women for all groups except Asian Americans, where women have always outnumbered men, and Native Americans, which have commonly been about even, but there have been some slow, steady changes here.

Among people of color in newsrooms, women of color are now better represented in newsrooms overall than men of color, particularly among Asian Americans and Native Americans.

The greatest disparity between men and women has always been among Asian Americans, and this year the gap increased to 70% women and 30% men. Close behind in disparity are Native American at 66.7% women and 33.3% men. African Americans in local TV newsrooms are 53.8% women and 46.2% men. That’s a slight gain for African American women. Hispanic men and women are equally represented in newsrooms for the second year in a row.

Markets 1 to 25 have historically had the greatest discrepancy of men over women, but this year there’s little distinction by market size or size of newsroom. Fox affiliates are slightly more balanced than the other network affiliates. Non-network affiliated commercial stations and non-commercial stations are the most male-dominated of all the groups.
Women in Local TV News

The percentage of women in the local TV news workforce rose to 44.4% in 2017, up .4 from 2016 and setting a new record high by .2 over the previous record year, 2015.

There is a discrepancy in the percentage of women in the TV news workforce based on market size: Women make up 43.1% of TV newsroom staffers in the top 50 markets and 44% of the workforce in markets 51 to 100, but women make up 46.5% in markets 101+.

Affiliation made little difference in the numbers, although Fox affiliates are closer to equal numbers of men and women than other affiliates. Stations in the South and West again have more representation of women than stations in the Northeast and Midwest.

Overall, 98.8% of TV stations have at least one woman on staff, but surprisingly, a few stations with newsrooms staffs of up to 20 or in markets 151+ still report no women on the news team.

Women make up about 47% of the full time U.S. workforce overall and 53.5% of the workforce ages 25 to 65 who have college degrees, the pool for most TV news jobs. Based on these numbers, the 44.4% of the local TV news workforce who are women is still behind what we could consider parity.
Women and people of color in TV news leadership

TV News Directors

The percentage of news directors of color rose to the highest level ever in TV. Up 2.5 percentage points from a year ago, the percentage of news directors who are people of color rose to 17.4%, breaking the old record of 17.1% set two years ago. Representation among all groups increased except for Native Americans, which remained the same.

The percentage of news directors of color when excluding Spanish language stations, where 100% of the news directors are Hispanic, likewise set a new record at 14.3%, also up about two and a half points from last year and 0.4 ahead of the previous record set two years ago. The percentage of news directors who are African American rose to a new all-time high of 6.7%, while 5% are Hispanic vs last year’s 3.9%.

However, the number of news directors of color in the smallest markets actually dropped from 10.2% to a 7.8%.

The percentage of women TV news directors recovered from last year’s drop to set a new, all-time record at 34.3%. Note that this figure is a precise census number based on every TV station that runs local news. Women news directors were most likely to be found in the biggest markets and, in both the largest and smallest newsrooms. Public TV stations followed Fox and
then NBC affiliates were most likely to have women news directors; ABC and CBS lagged a bit behind. Women news directors were less likely to be found in the Northeast than any other region.

**TV General Managers**

The percentage of TV general managers who are people of color rose 1.1 overall, but the percentage at network affiliates actually dropped by 0.2. Again this year, no Fox affiliates reported general managers of color. GMs of color were most likely to be found at NBC and then CBS affiliates and least found in the Midwest.
A surprisingly low 63.6% of general managers at Spanish language stations are Hispanic, up a point from a year ago. The rest are white. Excluding Spanish language stations, the percentage of GMs of color again edged up slightly, from 5.9% to 6.4%. Two-thirds of GMs of color are Hispanic, at 4.2% of GMs overall, up half a point from last year. 1.1%, the same as last year, are African American. At 0.8%, slightly fewer are Asian American, but slightly more are Native American.

Continuing its alternating up and down years, the percentages of women general managers rose 3.1 after last year’s drop of 2.4 and the previous year’s increase of 1.6. While women GM numbers are comparatively good this year, they’re still behind 2014’s numbers. Women GMs are most likely found in the smallest markets and at stations with the smallest newsrooms. As in the past, they were most often found at Fox affiliates and stations in the West. CBS stations and stations in the Northeast lagged behind.

All the TV general manager figures are for stations that run local news, not the general universe of TV stations.
People of Color in Radio News

The latest RTDNA/Hofstra University Annual Survey finds the percentage of people of color in local radio news slipping back to 11.3%, down 0.4 from a year ago.

The big picture for people of color in local radio news shows an industry going nowhere, even as the U.S. grows more diverse.

The workforce of people in color in radio fell by just under half a percent, despite big gains for African Americans, who are nearly twice as well represented as a year ago. However, Hispanics and Native Americans lost representation, and the percentage of local news staffers who are Asian American plunged in half.

The percentage of radio news staffs who have at least one person of color fell about 2 points to just under 15%.
Radio News Salaries - 2018

Radio Television Digital News Association
RTDNA.org

2018 RTDNA/Hofstra University Newsroom Survey

Newsroom Diversity

Only major market radio stations became slightly more diverse in the past year.

People of Color in Radio News

- Native American: 0.6% (2017), 0.7% (2018)
- Asian American: 1.9% (2017), 4% (2018)
- Hispanic/Latino: 3.6% (2017), 4.2% (2018)
- African American: 2.8% (2017), 5.1% (2018)

RTDNA/Hofstra University Newsroom Survey 2018

People of Color in Radio By Market

- Major Market: 56%
- Large Market: 21.5%
- Medium Market: 18.8%
- Small Market: 10.1%

RTDNA/Hofstra University Newsroom Survey 2018

Major markets are those with 1 million or more listeners. Large markets are from 250,000 to 1 million. Medium markets are 50,000 to 250,000. Small markets are fewer than 50,000.
The percentage of staffs with any people of color dropped for both commercial and non-commercial stations. Commercial stations’ number of news directors of color and people of color as a percentage of the work force improved, but non-commercial stations grew less diverse across the board.

As usual, stations in the Midwest lagged all other regions in newsroom diversity.

Women of Color

Though in radio news overall there have historically been about twice as many men as women, women of color are actually better represented than men of color, particularly among Asian Americans, African Americans, and Hispanic radio news employees.

Only among Native American and white radio employees do men outnumber women, with white men outnumbering white women about 2.3 to 1.
Women in Local Radio News

The percentage of staffs with women dropped nearly 4 points in the past year. Fewer than half of radio news staffs overall have at least one woman. Women fell from 36.1% of the radio news workforce to 34.3%.

Women are much better represented at non-commercial stations are much higher than commercial stations, but overall their representation decreased at non-commercial stations, too, except at the news director level.
Women are also better represented in radio in the Northeast than other geographic region.

Women and people of color in TV news leadership

Radio News directors

Radio news directors of color slid slightly from last year’s 6.2% of radio news directors to this year’s 5.9%. Representation improved for African American and Hispanic radio news directors, but worsened for Asian Americans and Native Americans.

A year ago, non-commercial stations had almost three times the percent of news directors of color as commercial stations. This year, they’re just over a point apart.
News directors of color were much more likely to be found in the Northeast and West than in the Midwest or South.

After dropping a point a year ago, the percentage of radio news directors who are women shot up more than 5 points this time around. Women are twice as likely to be news directors at non-commercial stations as at commercial ones for another year.

**Radio General Managers**

The percentage of radio general managers of color rose 1.7 from a year ago. GMs were much more likely to be people of color at non-commercial stations than at commercial ones (by more than 4:1), in major markets and in the Northeast.

3.1 percent of GMs are African American, followed by 2.2 percent who are Hispanic and just under half a percent who are Native American. The survey found no Asian American general managers.
The percentage of general managers who are women rose by a point over last year, which was up 2 points from the year before. Women GM’s were slightly more common at non-commercial stations and in major markets, the Midwest and the West.

Since 1995 the proportion of people of color in the U.S. has risen 12.4%.

The percentage of TV news staff of color is up 7% overall & up 9.5% for News Directors.

Diversity is down 3.4% for radio news staff & 2.7% for radio News Directors.
2018 RTDNA/Hofstra University Newsroom Survey

Newsroom Diversity

About the Survey
The RTDNA/Hofstra University Survey was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2017 among all 1,683 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 3,542 radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,333 television stations (79.2%) and 415 radio news directors and general managers representing 1,110 radio stations. Some data sets (e.g. the number of TV stations originating local news, getting it from others and women TV news directors) are based on a complete census and are not projected from a smaller sample.

About Bob
Bob Papper is Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Journalism at Hofstra University and has worked extensively in radio and TV news. This research was supported by the Lawrence Herbert School of Communication at Hofstra University and the Radio Television Digital News Association.
Media Diversity Resources

Alliance for Women in Media (AWM)
202-750-3664
@AllWomeninMedia

Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA)
Phone: (415) 346-2051
@AAJA

Association for Women in Communication (AWC)
Phone: (417) 886-8606

Emma L. Bowen Foundation for Minority Interests in Media

International Women’s Media Foundation
(202) 496-1992
@IWMF

National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ)
Phone: (301) 405-0248
@NABJ

National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ)
Phone: 202-853-7760
@NAHJ

National Federation of Press Women (NFPW)
Phone: 804-746-1033
@NFPW

National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association (NLGJA)
Phone: (202) 588-9888
@NLGJA

Native American Journalists Association (NAJA)
Phone: (405) 325-1649
@najournalists

Journalism and Women Symposium (JAWS)
Phone: 510-764-1877
@womenjournos