



**WMC REPORT: GENDER AND RACE  
REPRESENTATION ON FIVE BIG SUNDAY  
SHOWS JANUARY 1, 2020 – DECEMBER 31, 2020**



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## THE WOMEN'S MEDIA CENTER WORKS TO MAKE WOMEN VISIBLE AND POWERFUL IN THE MEDIA

Founded in 2005 by Jane Fonda, Robin Morgan, and Gloria Steinem, the WMC is an inclusive and feminist organization that works to ensure women's realities are covered and women's voices are heard.

WMC works to make women visible and powerful in the media. We do so by promoting women as decision makers and as subjects in media; training women to be effective in media; researching and exposing sexism and racism in media; and creating original online and on-air journalism.

Our media programs that address the problems of unequal representation and misrepresentation of women in media include interconnected strategies that:

- Recruit and place diverse women experts in the media — print, broadcast, radio, internet, social media, and media leadership — through WMC SheSource.
- Train diverse women experts to be effective in media, and increase their thought leadership through WMC Progressive Women's Voices and other customized training and leadership programs.
- Investigate, report, create, and publish original media to expand diverse women's voices and representation through WMC Features, WMC IDAR/E, WMC Climate, WMC Women Under Siege, WMC FBomb, WMC Speech Project, and our syndicated radio program and podcast, WMC Live with Robin Morgan.
- Research, document, and produce reports that highlight the status of women in U.S. media, equip activists with evidence, and create benchmarks to hold media accountable for sexist and racist coverage.
- Advocate before government officials and agencies on policies affecting women's access to media and technology, ownership of media and technology, and safe and free speech in media and technology.



## FOREWORD

This “WMC Report: Gender and Race Representation on Five Big Sunday Shows” tells a story about guests on influential, agenda-setting television programs. The study finds that women and people of color are practically invisible — two-thirds of the guest appearances are by men and nearly three-quarters are White. White men comprise the overall majority of all guest appearances on these programs.

The major Sunday news shows set the tone for news coverage on all media platforms. The stories covered and the experts and opinion leaders featured tell us who has power — who and what the shapers of media think we should care about. These programs have a platform that can impact policy, politics, and action.

After years of massive protests, organizing, and news on issues of racial and gender justice, the Women’s Media Center conducted this yearlong review of the inclusion of women and people of color as guests on five major Sunday news shows to understand whether the media was accurately representing the voices and perspectives of the diverse population in our country.

The shows researched include: ABC’s *This Week*, CBS’s *Face the Nation*, CNN’s *State of the Union*, Fox News Channel’s *Fox News Sunday*, and NBC’s *Meet the Press*.

We found that at this pivotal moment, just as movements for racial and gender justice are pushing powerfully and visibly for change, inclusion of women and people of color came up short on these influential marquee shows. Why is it that women, who are nearly 51% of the population, were only 32% of the guest appearances? Why is it that people of color, who are nearly 40% of the population, were only 27% of the guest appearances? How can we possibly understand the perspectives, concerns, experiences, and lives of women and people of color if there is no equality in representation on these shows?

With White men dominating these major Sunday news shows, White male perspectives shape the culture by telling us who we are, what our roles in society are, and what we can be. This marginalizes women and people of color. It also results in the news media missing major stories and an expanded audience. Both the industry and the public are ill-served by the underrepresentation of women and people of color.

Over the past decade, we at the Women’s Media Center have released our “WMC Status of Women in the U.S. Media” reports and our signature “WMC Status of Women of Color in the U.S. News Media” in order to explore gender and race inequality in the media. This “WMC Report: Gender and Race Representation on Five Big Sunday Shows” adds to this important body of work by looking at evidence of the underrepresentation and lack of equality women and people of color face in the media.

In addition to reviewing the race and gender of all guests, the report also used these lenses to ascertain representation of guests on specific expert panels focused on the topics of COVID-19, racial justice, and the 2020 presidential election. It is important to note that when these shows addressed the topic of racial justice, all of them did a better job of inclusion of African Americans (but not for guests of other races and ethnicities), and the numbers drop sharply and substantially on other topics and on overall inclusion. These facts point toward the work that needs to be done.

This moment offers an opportunity for a new transparency and permanent changes aimed at greater equality and power for women and people of color in the media workforce and beyond.

We invite the hosts, producers, and bookers of these Sunday news and opinion programs to use our resources — including our **WMC SheSource** database of over 2,000 diverse female and gender-nonconforming experts and advocates — to expand and diversify the talent pool featured on their programs. We are glad to work with them in creating tracking systems and plans to build programs that more accurately and fairly represent the diverse population of our country.

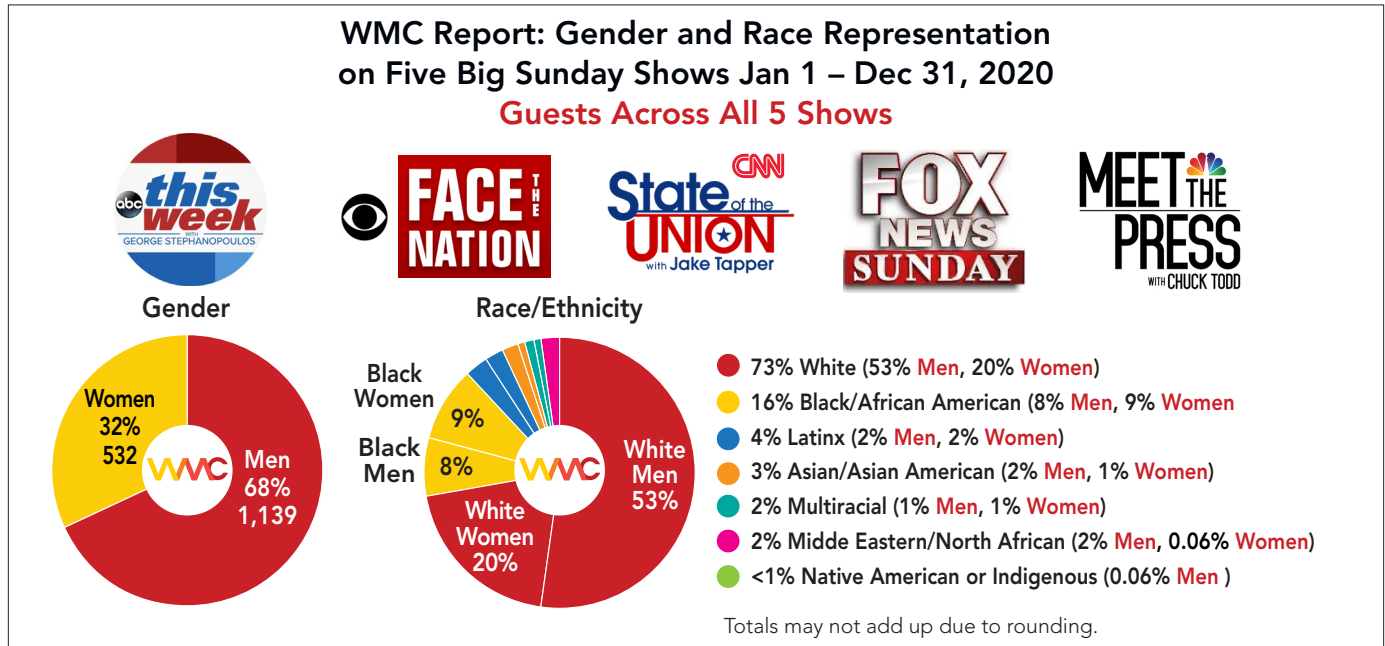
Advertisers have a role to play here too, and they should be part of the solution by spending their advertising dollars on shows that demonstrate their commitment to gender and racial justice in front of and behind the camera.

This report is a roadmap that shows us where we are and where we need to go. Let's choose the path to inclusion, representation, and equality — where all of us matter.

Julie Burton,  
President and CEO  
Women's Media Center

## WMC Report: Gender and Race Representation on Five Big Sunday Shows

The news in the United States is predominately White and male, and new findings from the Women's Media Center (WMC) confirm that the Sunday morning news shows are no exception. Data culled from five top Sunday shows in 2020 reveals that more than two-thirds of the guests on these influential programs were men, nearly three-quarters were White, and more than half were White men. In 2020, not one person of color hosted, or guest hosted, a Sunday morning show analyzed by WMC.



WMC data indicates there is disproportionate gender and racial representation on these shows. While women make up nearly 51% of the U.S. population, they were only 32% of the guest appearances. Women of color comprise 20% of the U.S. population but were fewer than 13% of the guest appearances.

These findings indicate the significant gender and racial disparities on Sunday shows and suggest how gaps in representation might affect which stories are told, how they are told, and, more broadly, given the power and prestige of these shows, how they may shape the following week's news cycle.

The five Sunday morning shows carry gravitas. These shows — NBC's *Meet the Press*, CBS's *Face the Nation*, ABC's *This Week*, Fox News Channel's *Fox News Sunday*, and CNN's *State of the Union* — influence the tone and content of the political and policy agenda for the coming week.

In 2020, the Sunday morning political shows arguably exerted even greater influence on shaping news narratives, due to a confluence of the three largest issues of the year: the COVID-19 pandemic, which also kept people at home and glued to their screens; the dramatic 2020 presidential election, the results of which were not declared until the Saturday after the election, and which was contested into the new year by the then-incumbent president; and racial justice, an issue that seized U.S. media headlines after George Floyd's gruesome murder at the hands of Minneapolis police in May 2020.

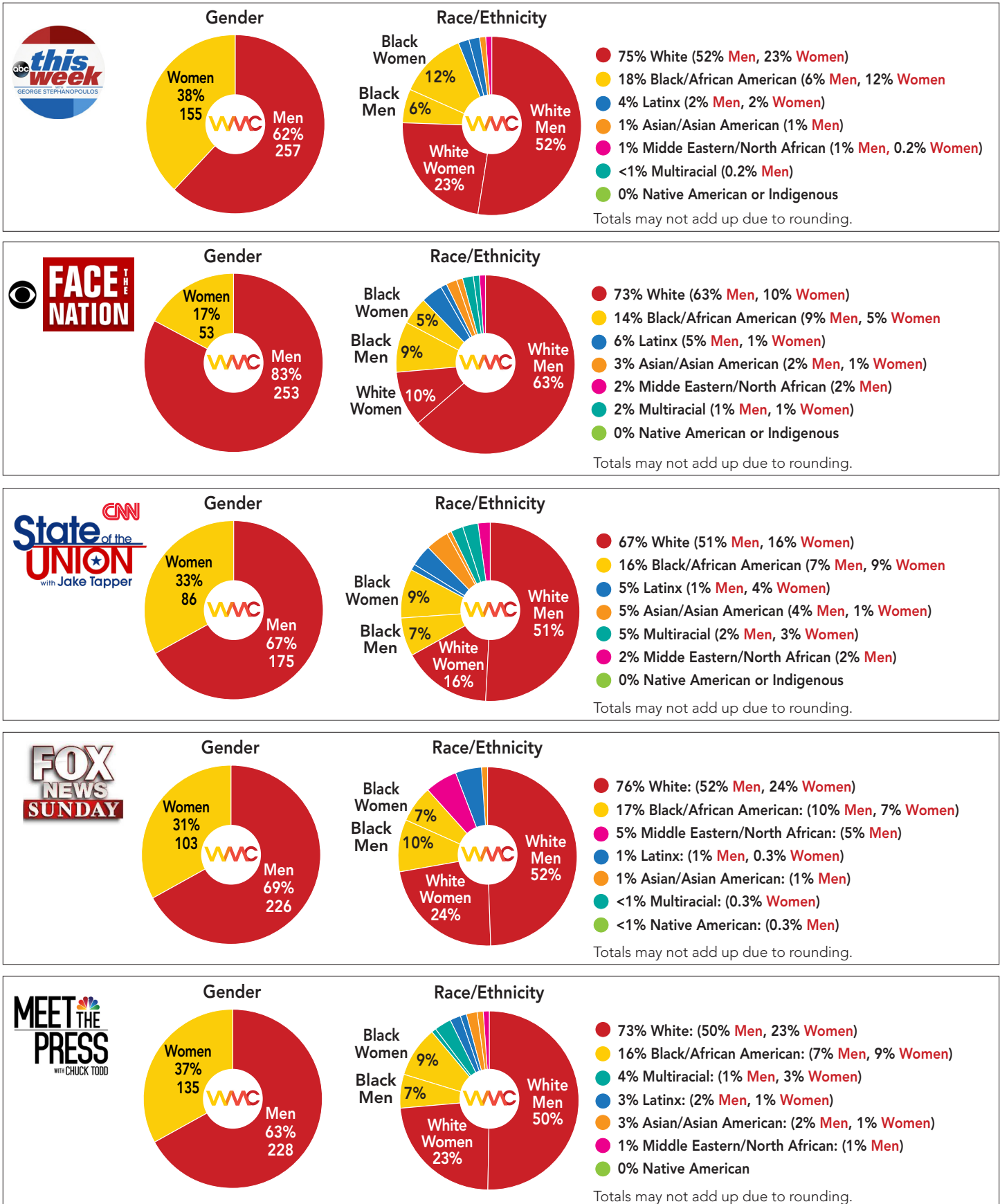
These three issues are inextricably connected to each other: COVID-19, for example, magnified the longstanding racial disparities in health care and medical access for communities of color.

These three issues resulted in the **highest ratings** for all five shows in 2020 since the 2015-2016 television season, when Hillary Clinton lost her historic campaign for the White House and Donald Trump monopolized the media's attention. These ratings are a notable reversal from the **slow but steady decline** in viewership in recent years, attributed in part to the rise of social media, which changed how people received their news.

This report, "WMC Report: Gender and Race Representation on Five Big Sunday Shows," documents WMC's findings on the gender and race of the hosts and guests on these five Sunday shows in 2020, highlighting how underrepresentation of women and people of color affects coverage of three of the biggest issues of the year.

# WMC Report: Gender and Race Representation on Five Big Sunday Shows Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2020

## Guests on Each Show

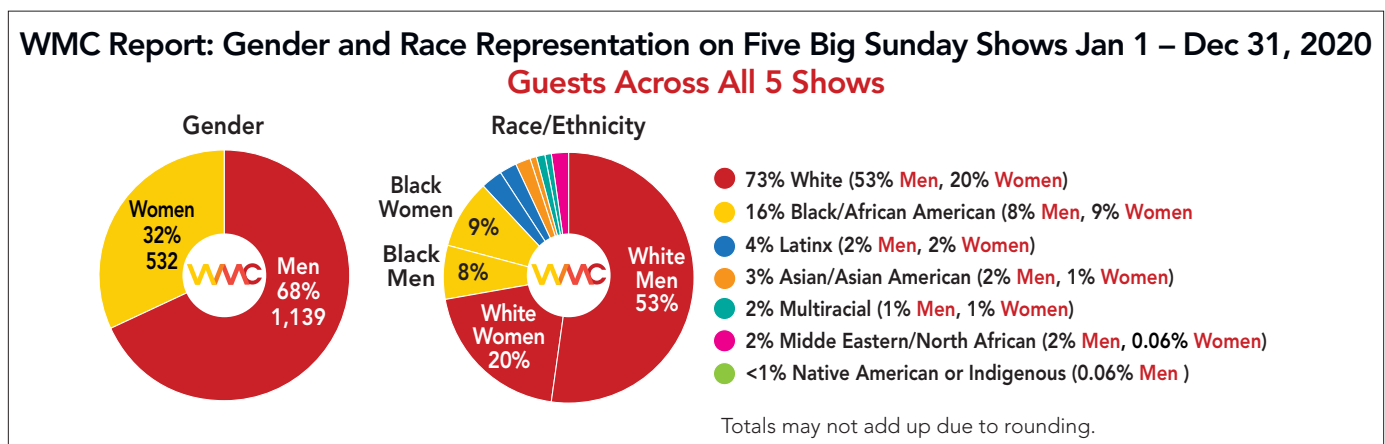


## Significant Failure to Represent Women and People of Color

White men dominated guest appearances on the five Sunday shows in 2020 at a proportion greater than their representation in the U.S. population. More than two-thirds (68%) of all 1,671 guest appearances were by men, despite their representing under 50% of the U.S. population. More than half (53%) were by White men, despite their making up only 30% of the U.S. population. On all but one show, White men comprised half or more of the guest appearances. NBC's *Meet the Press* had 180 guest appearances by White men out of a total of 363 guest appearances (49.6%). CBS's *Face the Nation* had the most glaringly disproportionate representation, with White males accounting for nearly two-thirds of all guest appearances (63%).

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of all guest appearances were by White people (mostly accounted for by an overrepresentation of White men at 53%, while White women were underrepresented with 20% of guest appearances). According to 2020 U.S. Census data, White people make up 60% of the total U.S. population. Only CNN's *State of the Union* (67%) had fewer than 70% White guests. The shows on ABC, CBS, NBC, and Fox each had more than 73% White guests; Fox had the highest percentage of White guests, at 76%.

Of the 258 episodes analyzed, not a single one was hosted by a person of color in 2020. All hosts on the five shows, both regular and substitute, were White. Counting both regular hosts and substitutes, there were 15 hosts in 2020: 10 were White men, five were White women.



### Black Women Overrepresented, With a Caveat

Of women guests, Black women were overrepresented relative to their population size. Black women comprise 7% of the U.S. population but totaled 9% of the guest appearances on these Sunday morning shows in 2020. However, this finding implies a greater representation than actually occurred, because of reappearances.

As explained in the section below on the impact of repeat guests, many guests made multiple reappearances. Of the top 10 guests who appeared the most, seven were White men. These seven White men totaled 170 guest appearances, which is 19% of all appearances made by White men. Here is the breakdown of guests to guest appearances:

- 305 White men made up 890 appearances by White men
- 100 White women made up 330 appearances by White women
- 49 Black men made up 130 appearances by Black men
- 46 Black women made up 143 appearances by Black women
- One Native American man made up the lone appearance by a Native American
- 17 Asian American men made up 32 appearances by Asian American men
- Six Asian American women made up 10 appearances by Asian American women
- 14 Latinx men made up 33 appearances by Latinx men
- 12 Latinx women made up 26 appearances by Latinx women
- Seven Middle Eastern/North African men made up 37 appearances by Middle Eastern/North African men
- One Middle Eastern/North African woman made up the lone appearance by a Middle Eastern/North African woman
- Nine multiracial men made up 16 appearances by multiracial men
- Eight multiracial women made up 22 appearances by multiracial women

Forty-six Black women comprised the 143 appearances by Black women on these five shows in 2020. This means that many Black women made multiple guest appearances — six of them, for example, accounted for nearly half of all appearances by Black women. Political strategist Donna Brazile and nonprofit CEO Yvette Simpson each made 14 guest appearances, accounting for nearly 20% of all appearances by Black women. White House correspondent for the *PBS NewsHour* Yamiche Alcindor and U.S. Congresswoman Val Demings made nine guest appearances each, combining for nearly 13% of all guest appearances by Black women. ABC correspondent Rachel Scott and U.S. Congresswoman Karen Bass' eight appearances each accounted for 11% of all guest appearances by Black women.

White women comprise 30% of the population but made 20% of the guest appearances. Latinx women total 9% of the U.S. population but accounted for only 2% of all guest appearances. Asian American women make up 3% of the U.S. population but totaled only 10 guest appearances — less than 1% (0.6%). Yet, it is critical to note that half of these 10 appearances were by one person: Indian American Nahid Bhadelia, an infectious-diseases physician and founding director of the Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases Policy and Research at Boston University.

Only one woman of Middle Eastern/North African descent appeared on the five Sunday shows in 2020: Lebanese American Donna Shalala, the former U.S. secretary of health and human services who lost her reelection campaign for Florida's 27th congressional district in 2020. The omission of Middle Eastern and North African communities from these shows correlates with their larger societal and categorical erasure in the United States: The U.S. Census categorizes Americans of Middle Eastern and North African descent as **White**.

### Indigenous Erasure

No Indigenous women made a guest appearance on any of the five Sunday news shows in 2020, and only one man who is a tribal member was a guest. Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt, who is a member of the **Cherokee Nation**, appeared on **Fox News Sunday** to defend opening state businesses in April of 2020.

### Consequences of a Female Host

CBS's *Face the Nation* is the only show solely hosted by a woman, Margaret Brennan. One other show has a female co-host: ABC's *This Week* is anchored by George Stephanopoulos with two co-anchors, Martha Raddatz and Jonathan Karl. There were three women substitute anchors: Dana Bash guest anchored seven episodes of CNN's *State of the Union* (in January 2021, Dana Bash was named as a co-host on the show, which in April 2021 was renamed *State of the Union with Jake Tapper and Dana Bash*), Andrea Mitchell hosted one episode of NBC's *Meet the Press*, and Brianna Keilar co-hosted two episodes of CNN's *State of the Union*.

Despite having the only solo female host, CBS's *Face the Nation* had the largest gender gap in guest appearances: Only 17% (53 of 306) of all guest appearances on this show in 2020 were by women. In other words, men appeared as guests on *Face the Nation* at nearly five times the rate of women. Men outnumbered women in every racial demographic in guest appearances on *Face the Nation* — even Black women, who had more guest appearances than Black men at every other network show.

When a woman co-hosted or substitute hosted, there was no distinctive inverse gender correlation: At ABC, men appeared as guests 1.5 times more than women (257 men to 155 women). On CNN, men appeared as guests two times more than women (175 men to 86 women). At NBC, men appeared as guests 1.5 times more than women (228 men to 135 women). And, at Fox News, men appeared as guests two times more than women (226 men to 103 women).

Professor Carolyn Byerly, professor emerita in the Department of Communications, Culture and Media Studies at Howard University, explains, "Seeing a woman or a person of color on a screen as a spokesperson, whether they are an anchor or guest, we might assume that they have some control over the content, including who is a guest on the show. Those are typically false assumptions. Producers and directors determine who the guests are. The anchor may have some input, but the script for the show is determined by other people, and they are typically men. There is a layered and consistent institutionalization of male superiority in the news business." Recent global-level research applying critical mass theory conducted by Professor Byerly and Katherine A. McGraw, an independent researcher, found that when women made up at least 45% of the reporting staff at a news organization, there was a significant statistical increase in the number of stories with women as the main subject. Theirs was the first major study to examine critical mass theory in a study of women and news.

## Repeat Guests' Impact

The demographics of guests who enjoy repeat appearances present a microcosm of who gets to tell the stories — and how they get to tell them. Guests are predominately politicians, government officials, policymakers, and, **increasingly** in recent years, journalists. Of the top 10 repeat guests, there was one person of color (Fox News political analyst Juan Williams) and two White women (Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi and Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer).

### The following 10 guests had the most appearances:

- 42 appearances: Scott Gottlieb, former commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration
- 32 appearances: Chris Christie, adviser to President Trump and former governor of New Jersey
- 31 appearances: Rahm Emanuel, former mayor of Chicago
- 19 appearances: Nancy Pelosi, speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
- 18 appearances: Anthony Fauci, chief medical adviser to the president and director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases
- 17 appearances: Juan Williams, Fox News political analyst
- 16 appearances: Bernie Sanders, candidate for the 2020 Democratic nomination and U.S. senator from Vermont
- 16 appearances: Gretchen Whitmer, governor of Michigan
- 16 appearances: Anthony Salvanto, election and surveys director at CBS
- 15 appearances: Pete Buttigieg, primary candidate for the 2020 Democratic nomination and mayor of South Bend, IN

Not only are the top 10 a microcosm of the gender and racial demographics of all guests, they also tell a larger story about the perceived qualifications and expertise of women. The only two women on the list are high-ranking elected officials; in 2020, Nancy Pelosi was the most powerful woman in American politics. And yet, she ranked fourth in guest appearances, below White men who in 2020 no longer held their elected or appointed positions. Note, too, that two male candidates for the Democratic nomination for president appeared in the top 10: Sanders and Buttigieg. The female Democratic candidate to come the closest in Sunday morning appearances? U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar, who dropped out of the race in May, ranked 19th with 13 guest appearances.

## Fox's Repeat Strategy Boosts Diversity Numbers

Repeat guest appearances significantly shaped the data, especially on *Fox News Sunday*. Of the 55 guest appearances by Black guests, 17 were by Fox News analyst Juan Williams, and six were by Jason Riley, also a Fox News contributor. All three Latinx guest appearances on *Fox News Sunday* were by Trump campaign senior adviser Steve Cortes. Likewise, of the 16 guest appearances by men of Middle Eastern/North African descent, 11 were by Fox News commentator Mo Elieith. *Fox News Sunday*, therefore, not only recycles guests but turns repeatedly to its own commentators and correspondents — notably, all men.

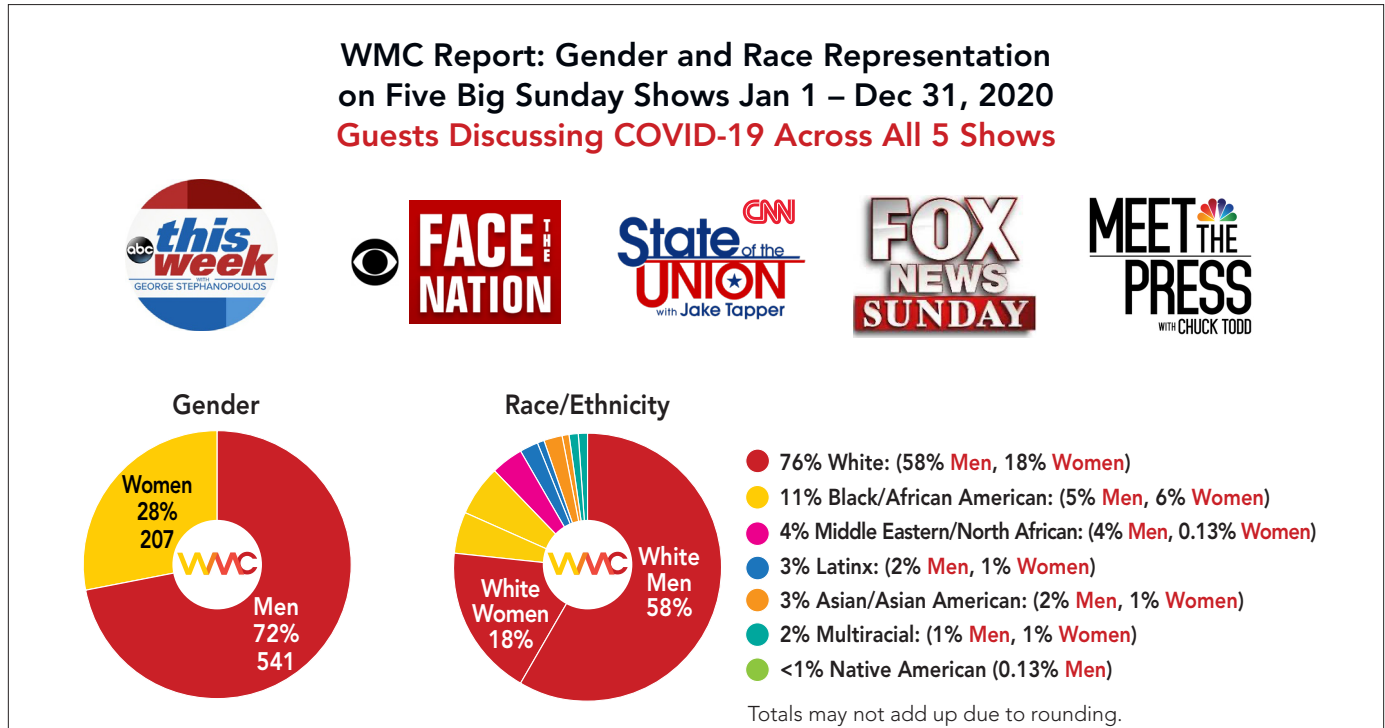
Consequently, *Fox News Sunday* had the highest Middle Eastern/North African (5%) and Native American (0.3%) representation, as well as the second highest percentage of Black guest appearances (17%), in 2020. ABC's *Meet the Press* had the highest percentage of Black guest appearances (18%), CBS's *Face the Nation* had the highest percentage of Latinx guest appearances (6%), and CNN's *State of the Union* had the highest percentage of Asian American (5%) and multiracial (5%) guest appearances.

*Fox News Sunday* had no Middle Eastern/North African female guests or Asian American female guests. And the show had only one guest appearance by a Latinx woman: Trump campaign senior adviser Mercedes Schlapp.

## White People Dominate COVID-19 Discussions

Despite the statistical fact that COVID-19 has disproportionately affected Black, brown, and Indigenous communities, more than three-quarters (76%) of all guest appearances on the topic were by White people. A majority (58%) of these guest appearances were by White men.

Overall, 72% of guest appearances on the topic of COVID-19 were by men. Men outnumbered women as expert sources on the pandemic in all racial demographic groups, except for Black and multiracial.



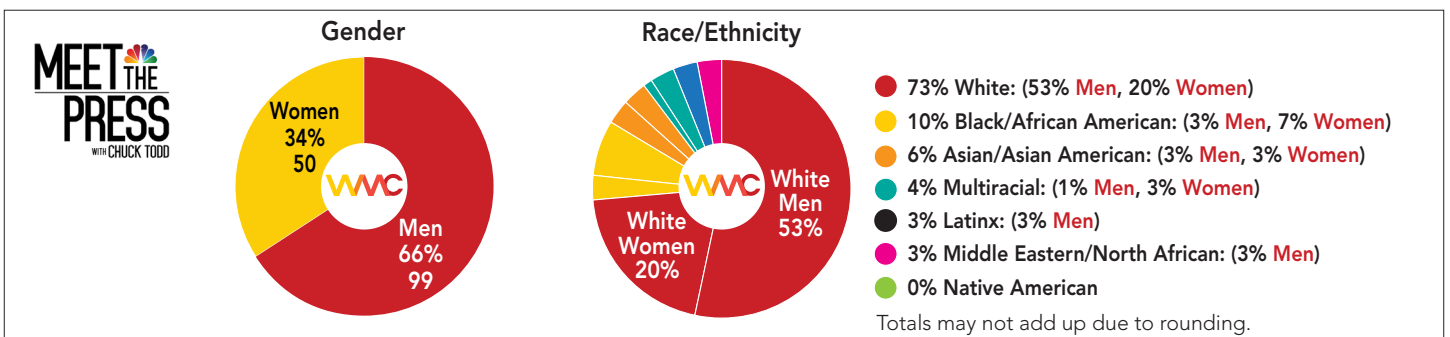
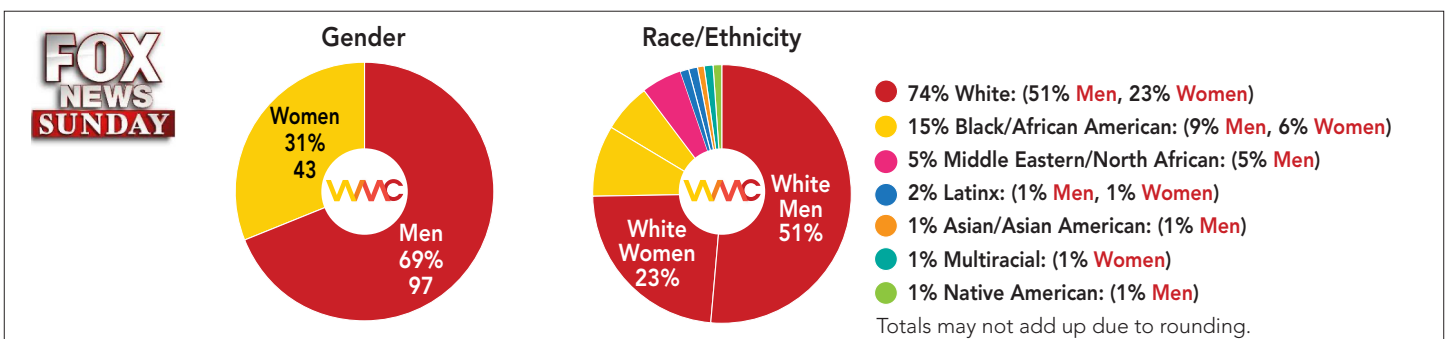
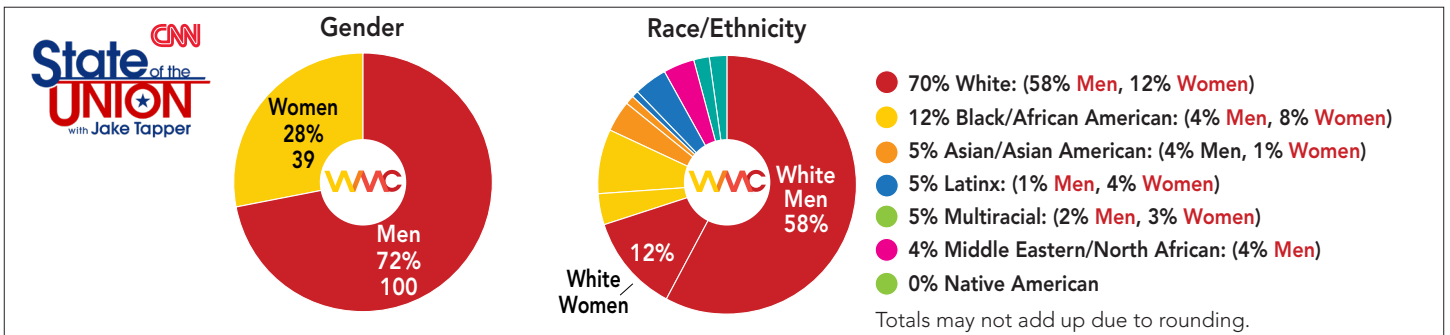
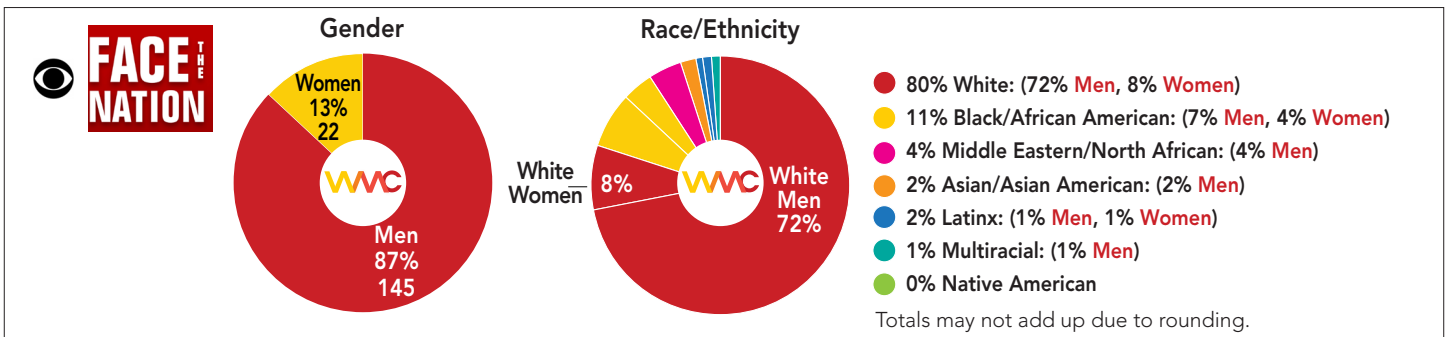
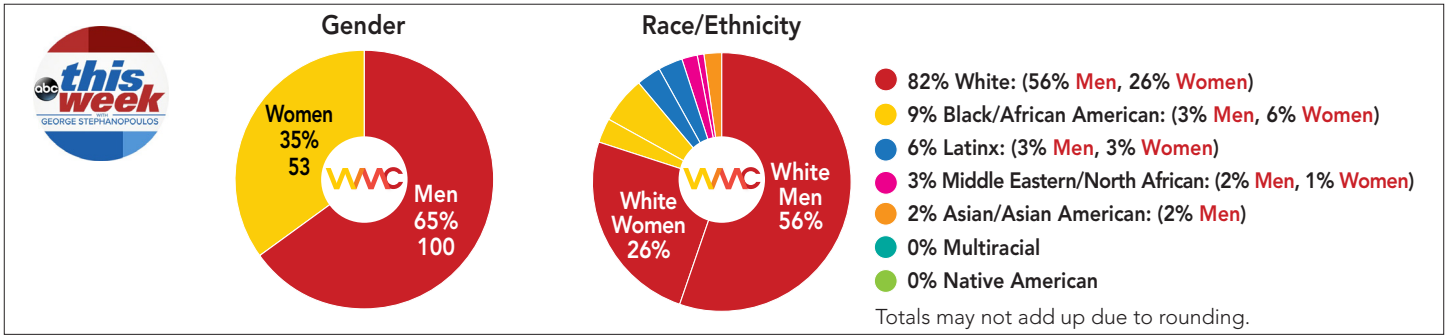
ABC's *This Week* had the largest racial disparity, with 82% of guest appearances concerning COVID-19 by White people. CNN had the smallest margin of difference, but its White guests still totaled 70% of all guest appearances on the topic of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Asian American community was represented in only 3% of the guest appearances. Only 1% of guest appearances concerning COVID-19 were by Asian American women, reflecting seven guest appearances, five of which were by Dr. Nahid Bhadelia on NBC's *Meet the Press*.

These abysmal numbers reflect the pervasiveness of the biased and racist narratives about Asians regarding COVID-19. They also illustrate how little space the broader Asian community has been given to counter, correct, and control the narrative, especially as the community has been egregiously demonized by both the former U.S. president and certain segments of the media as responsible for the COVID-19 virus.

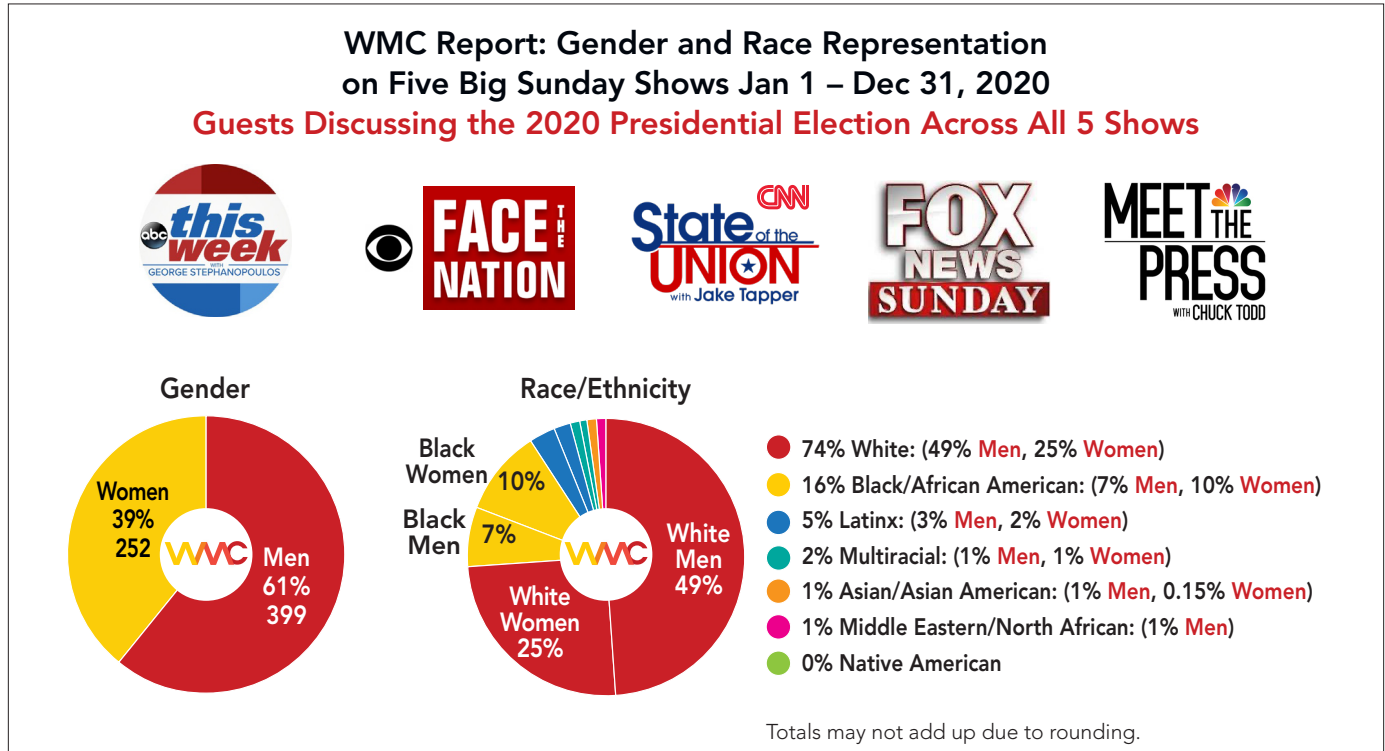
# WMC Report: Gender and Race Representation on Five Big Sunday Shows Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2020

## Guests Discussing COVID-19 on Each Show



## People of Color Suppressed in Election Discussions

Across all five Sunday shows, guests discussing the 2020 presidential election were predominately White and male. White people comprised 74% of all guest appearances on this topic. Men made up 61% of guest appearances to discuss the election, and White men were overrepresented at 1.6 times their share of the population at 49% of all guest appearances. (White women were underrepresented at 25%). More than half of the guests on election issues were White men on ABC's *This Week* (51%) and CBS's *Face the Nation* (57%).

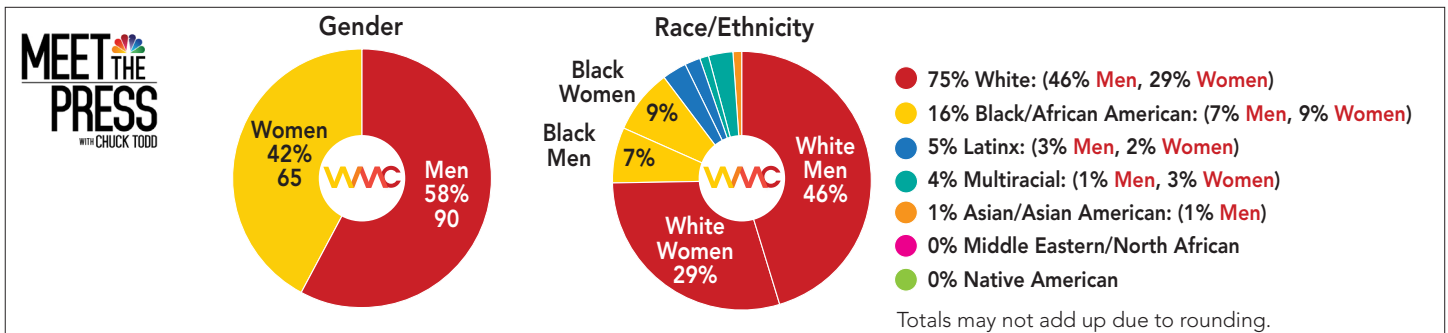
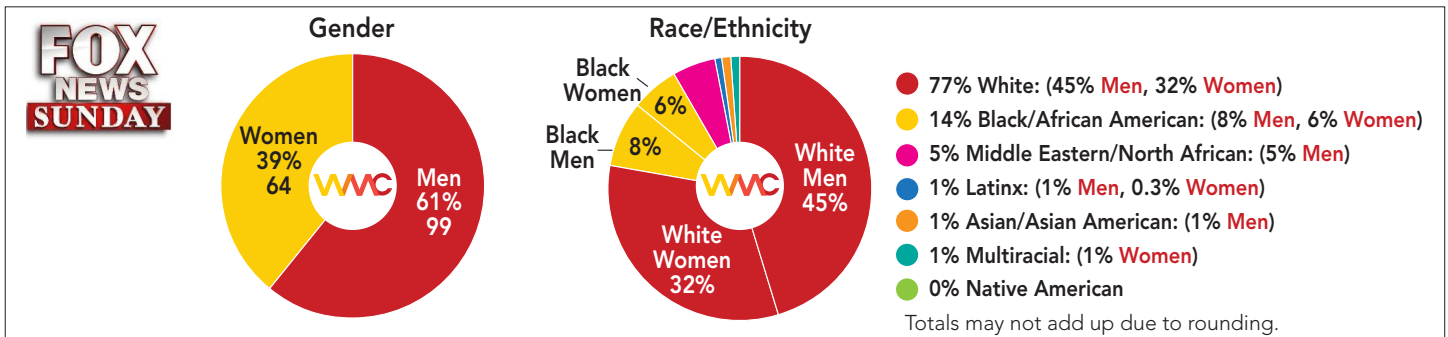
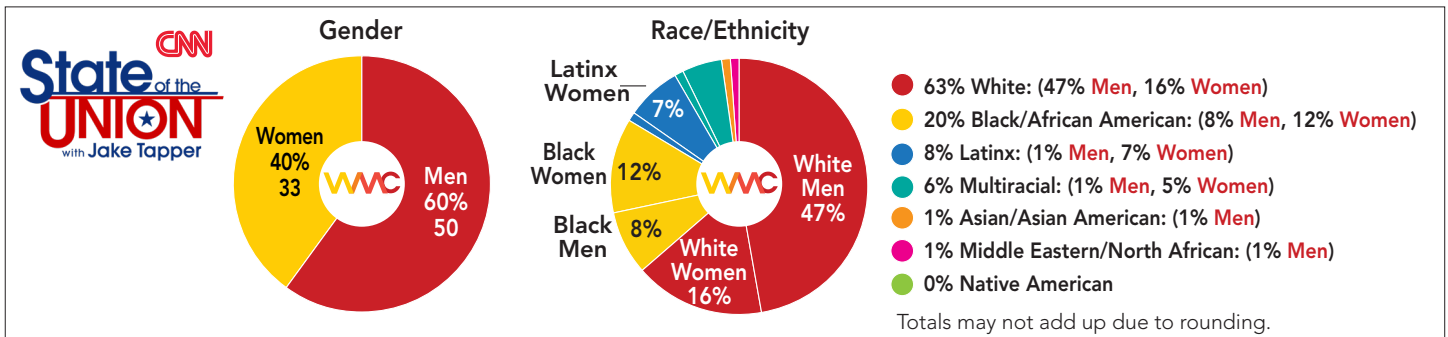
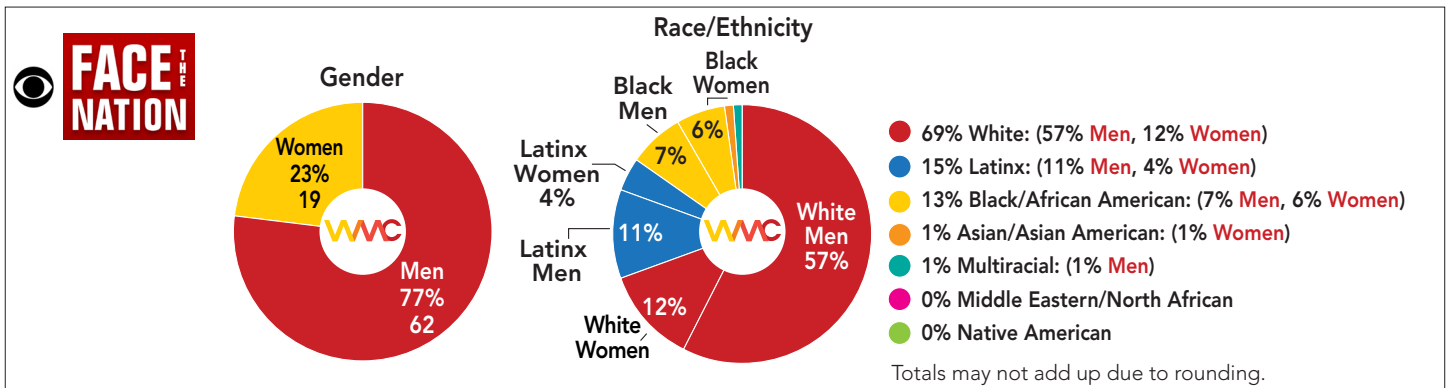
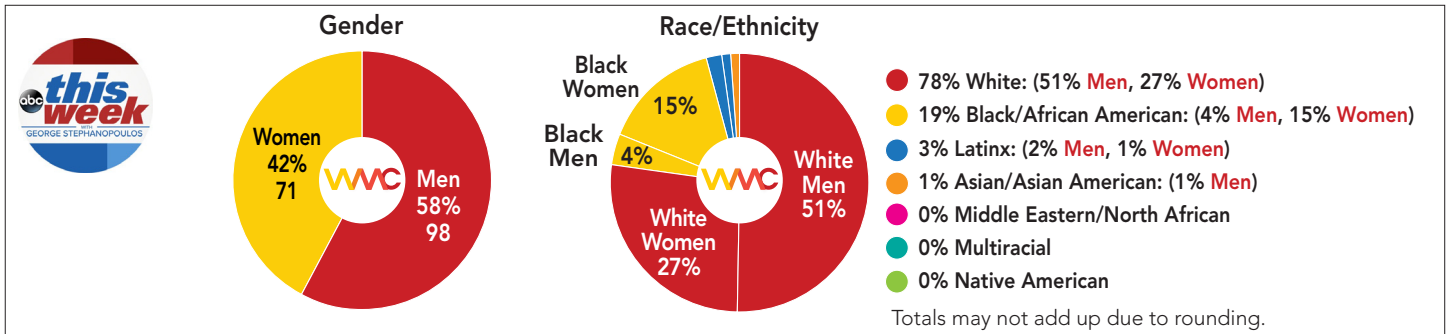


Men outnumbered women on the topic of the presidential election in all racial demographic categories, except two: Black women made 10% of appearances compared to Black men, at 7%, and multiracial women made 9 appearances compared to 4 appearances by multiracial men. On ABC's *This Week*, Black women comprised 15% of all guest appearances concerning the election, compared to 4% of appearances by Black men. A majority of these appearances (12) were by one Black woman: Yvette Simpson, who ranks 16th overall in repeat appearances across all five shows. Ranking 17th in repeat appearances is another Black woman who spoke primarily about presidential election issues: political campaign strategist and former Democratic National Committee chair Donna Brazile.

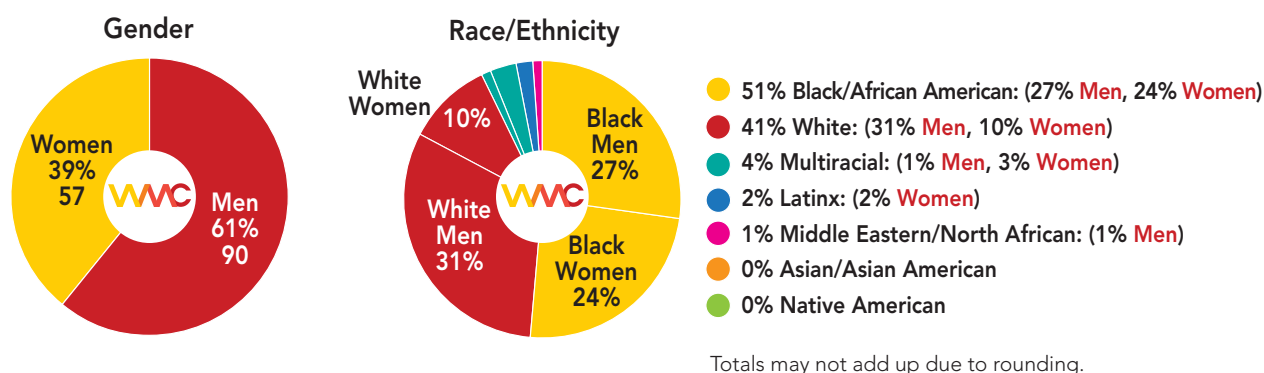
Only one Asian American woman — Vanita Gupta, then president and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and former head of the Civil Rights Division at the U.S. Department of Justice — made a guest appearance on CBS's *Face the Nation* to discuss the presidential election. And that was a single appearance.

# WMC Report: Gender and Race Representation on Five Big Sunday Shows Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2020

## Guests Discussing the 2020 Presidential Election on Each Show



**WMC Report: Gender and Race Representation  
on Five Big Sunday Shows Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2020**  
**Guests Discussing Racial Justice Across All 5 Shows**



## White Men Considered Racial Justice Experts

George Floyd's homicide by police in May 2020 elevated racial justice issues to a major focus on the Sunday shows. However, only a slim majority (51%) of guest appearances on this topic were by Black people.

Strikingly, it was White men (31%) who appeared as the most frequent guests on issues of racial justice. Black men followed, with 27%, and Black women, with 24% of all guest appearances. This is the only issue topic in which Black men outnumbered Black women. Overall, men comprised 61% of guest appearances on issues of racial justice. White women comprised 10% of guests. Multiracial women made up 3% and Latinx women made up 2%, and multiracial men and men of Middle Eastern/North African descent each represented 1%.

Black and White guests totaled 92% of all guest appearances on issues of racial justice. No Asian Americans and no Indigenous people appeared as experts on this leading topic on any the five shows in 2020.

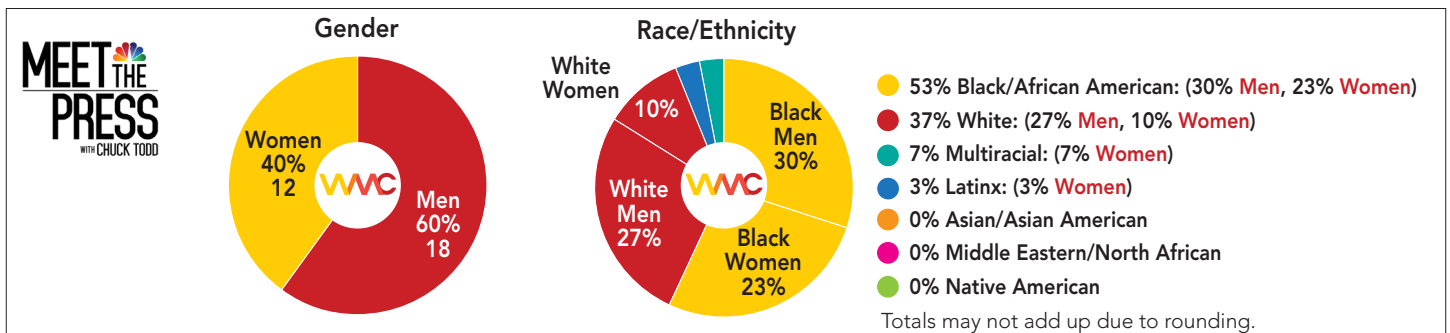
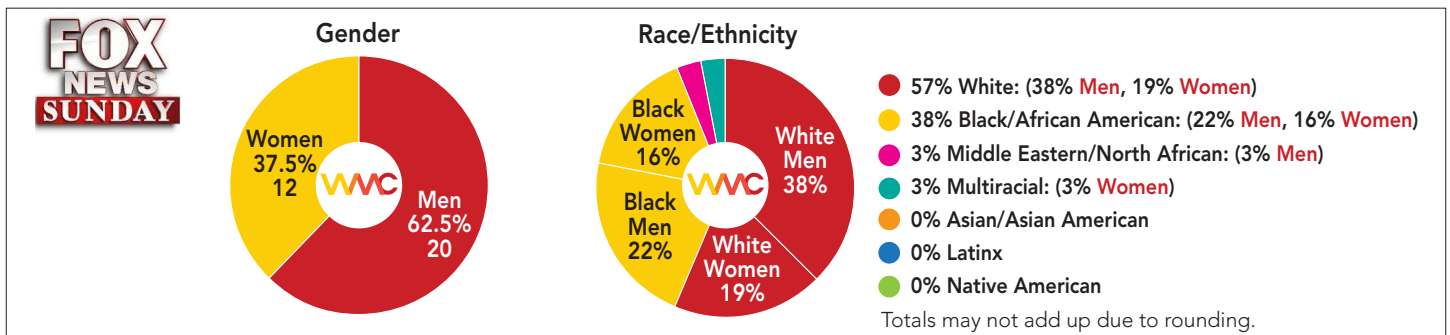
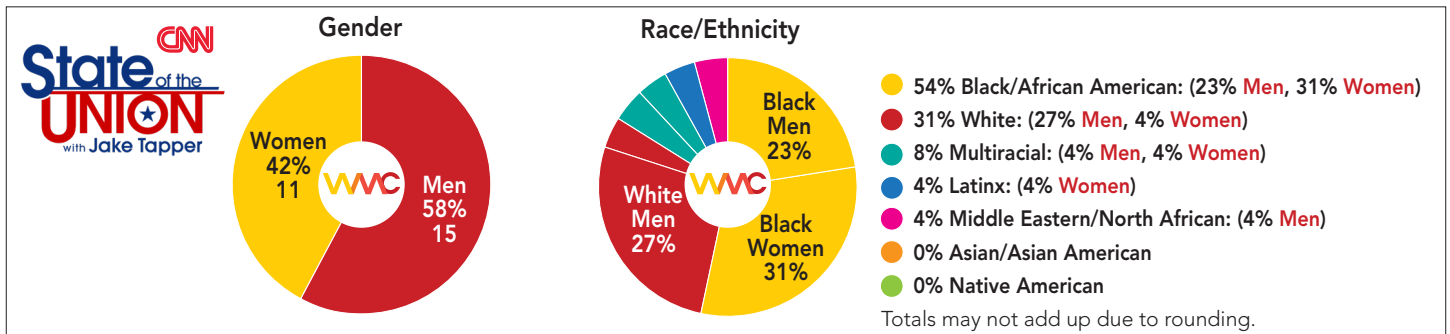
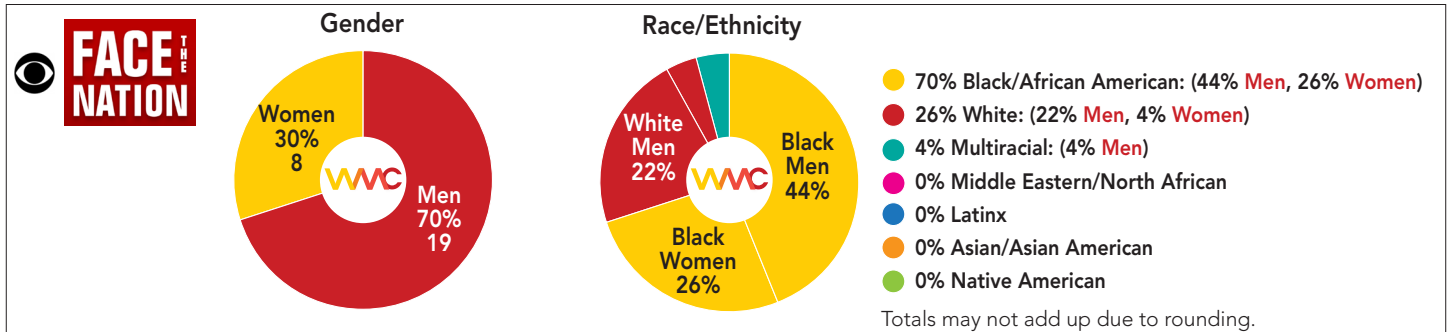
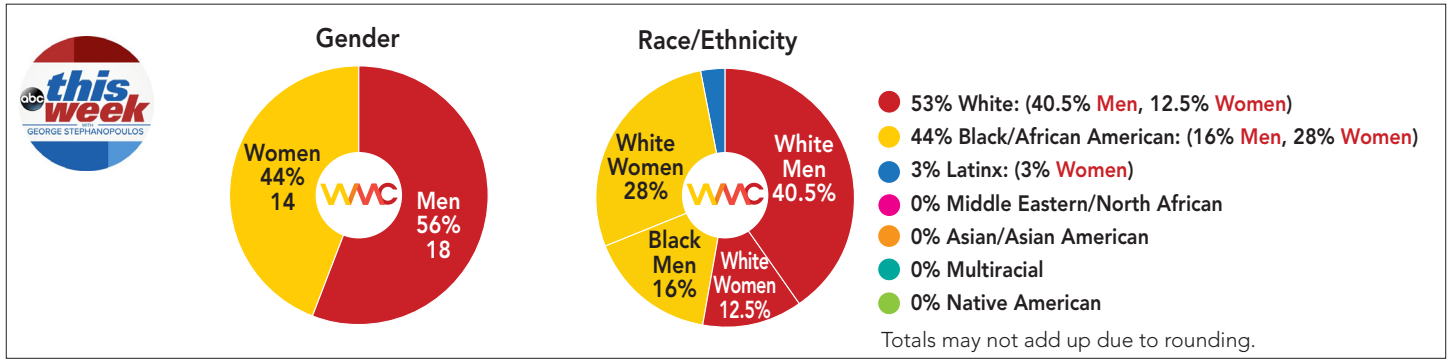
No women of Middle Eastern/North African descent spoke about racial justice either. Only two men of Middle Eastern/North African descent made guest appearances, and these were specifically in discussions about Black Lives Matter protests: then Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar, on CNN's *State of the Union*; and Fox News commentator Mo Elleithy, on *Fox News Sunday*.

No Latinx men discussed racial justice issues on any of the shows. Latinx women comprised 2% of guest appearances on the topic, but none appeared on *Fox News Sunday* or CBS's *Face the Nation*. Three Latinx women made guest appearances to discuss Black Lives Matter protests, and two of these three were network hires: Voto Latino President and MSNBC commentator Maria Teresa Kumar appeared once on NBC's *Meet the Press*, and ABC's senior White House correspondent Cecilia Vega appeared once on ABC's *This Week* to discuss racial justice. The third was New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, who appeared once on CNN's *State of the Union*.

While Black men and women appeared as guests on the topic of racial justice in greater proportion than their combined population size, these percentages reflect the extent to which Black experts and pundits are pigeonholed into speaking mostly on topics of race and racism. The Sunday shows, therefore, reflect the social perception of race as a Black/White issue. Yet, racism affects all people of color, and it is alarming that entire communities were completely omitted from the conversation.

# WMC Report: Gender and Race Representation on Five Big Sunday Shows Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2020

## Guests Discussing Racial Justice on Each Show



## Sexualized Violence, Harassment Largely Excluded

The significance of these gender and racial disparities is not simply that of visibility for the sake of representation alone. The underrepresentation of women and people of color affects both the visibility and viability of stories integral to these communities. As WMC President Julie Burton explained in *"The Status of Women of Color in the U.S. News Media 2018"*:

"The lack of women in decision-making and prominent positions in media is the breeding ground for defamatory and sexist coverage and comments, and it lowers the standard of excellence by cutting in half the pool from which talent is chosen. It also results in media missing major stories — and missing viewership and readership. Both the media and the public are ill-served by the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of women — including an even greater level of misrepresentation and underrepresentation for women of color — at all levels as content creators and as thought leaders. To challenge sexism, shape public discourse and policies, and provide gender-specific analysis and solutions, women need to be involved in all media sectors, and women of color especially need a greater role and voice than they have had."

The dearth of #MeToo discussions on Sunday shows is a case in point. In the 258 episodes analyzed, there were only 26 mentions of sexual assault, sexual harassment, #MeToo, or domestic violence (including child abuse).

WMC data indicates that only three shows — ABC's *This Week*, CBS's *Face the Nation*, and CNN's *State of the Union* — mentioned domestic violence in the context of COVID-19, despite the fact that **rates of reported instances of domestic violence** against women and children rose exponentially around the world due to stay-at-home orders. "While one in three White women report having experienced domestic violence [during the pandemic], **the rates of abuse increased dramatically to about 50%** and higher for those marginalized by race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, citizenship status, and cognitive physical ability," said Erika Sussman, executive director of the Center for Survivor Advocacy and Justice, in an **interview** with *Time*.

Trump adviser and former governor of New Jersey Chris Christie mentioned domestic violence twice on ABC, Dr. Brett Giroir commented on child abuse and child sexual abuse on ABC, then U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams mentioned sexual abuse and child abuse on CBS, and host Dana Bash asked Senator Joni Ernst about domestic violence on CNN.

In total, only five of the 258 episodes analyzed mentioned domestic violence linked to COVID-19, and only 26 of the episodes included any issue linked to domestic violence, sexual abuse, or sexual harassment.

## WMC Findings Show Marginal Change Over Time

The findings of this report show a strong correlation to previous studies of Sunday morning shows and news media in general. According to WMC's *"The Status of Women in the U.S. Media 2019,"* "men report and produce the majority of U.S. news" across all platforms, from news wires to print and online news. Prime-time news broadcasts have one of the largest gender gaps, according to this report: "63 percent of TV prime-time news broadcasts feature male anchors and correspondents; 37 percent feature women."

More than three decades of research have shown that Sunday morning shows have remained largely a White and male affair. For example, the Harvard Kennedy School's **Shorenstein Center** on Media, Politics and Public Policy conducted a multiyear, comparative analysis of Sunday morning talk shows, from the years 1983, 1999, and 2015. Their findings show "an overwhelming majority of White, male guests, though the percentage declined somewhat from 1999 to 2015, while the percentage of female guests roughly doubled from 1983 to 1999, with 2015 remaining about the same as 1999. There was a noteworthy uptick in the number of African American guests in 2015 relative to 1999 ... [but] there has been relatively little change in the percentages of Asians, Hispanics, or, more broadly, women of color."

The American University Women & Politics Institute's "Sunday Morning Monitor" 2017 report found that "overall, men accounted for 70 percent of guests on these five Sunday morning news shows. Women were 29.9 percent." This data, included in WMC's *"The Status of Women in the U.S. Media 2017"* report, shows there was a slight increase from the 2015 numbers, where women accounted for 27.8% of the shows' 1,973 guests.

The data in “Sunday Morning Monitor” is consistent with that of Media Matters’ “**Diversity on the Sunday Shows in 2015**” report: “The overall number of female guests on those shows — whether journalists or not — rose to 27 percent in 2015 from 25 percent in 2013 and 2014. While White people still made up four-fifths of guests on all five shows, the proportion of nonwhites increased to 22 percent in 2015 from 19 percent in 2013.”

This three-to-one gender gap translates into roughly the same percentage documented in these latest findings from WMC on Sunday shows — with women constituting 32% of all guest appearances in 2020.

## Summary

The marginal improvement in gender and racial representation on the Sunday morning news programs still does not reflect U.S. demographics, or the social or political realities of women and people of color. Women of color comprised fewer than 13% of all guest appearances on Sunday morning shows, yet make up 20% of the U.S. population. The representation of women on the five shows studied amounts to less than two-thirds of the total U.S. female population. Women in some racial groups, particularly Native American women, were excluded entirely from these influential programs.

White men continue to be significantly overrepresented as guests on the Sunday shows. As a result, White men were largely in control of Sunday morning media narratives concerning the biggest issues of the year — the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects, racism and racial justice efforts, and the 2020 presidential election, in which we witnessed the nomination and election of the first female, first Black and Asian American vice president of the United States.

WMC data demonstrates that the Sunday shows all have important diversity, equity, and inclusion work in front of them, and in recognizing women, especially women of color, as experts whose voices, experiences, and knowledge are essential to understanding how major events shape women’s lives.

## Methodology

The Sunday shows analysis was drawn from data extrapolated from the transcripts of all the episodes of the following shows that ran between January 1, 2020, and December 31, 2020: ABC’s *This Week*, CBS’s *Face the Nation*, CNN’s *State of the Union*, Fox News Channel’s *Fox News Sunday*, and NBC’s *Meet the Press*.

The five Sunday political shows selected for this research include a leading news program from each of the major broadcast and cable news channels that consistently receives high viewership numbers on its respective channel.

The race/ethnicity and gender of every guest and host on each of the shows was used to analyze the gender and race/ethnicity diversity of each show.

Each person’s race/ethnicity was determined by confirming with two reliable sources that state the person’s race/ethnicity — these could include a newspaper article, a list of elected officials of a particular race/ethnicity, the person’s own website, etc. For those guests whose race/ethnicity could not be determined through two reliable sources, we employed intercoder reliability methodology.

The race/ethnicity categories used reflect those used by the U.S. census, with the addition of a Middle Eastern/North African category. The White category excludes those who are Hispanic or Latino.

None of the guests or hosts on the Sunday shows analyzed publicly identified as being nonbinary or transgender. Totals may not add up due to rounding.



**WMC REPORT: GENDER AND RACE  
REPRESENTATION ON FIVE BIG SUNDAY  
SHOWS JANUARY 1, 2020 – DECEMBER 31, 2020**



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## Research, Reports, Publications, and Content Channels

Women's Media Center Status of Women in the U.S. Media (2019, 2017, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012)

WMC Divided: The Media Gender Gap (2017, 2015, 2014, 2012)

Women's Media Center Status of Women of Color in the U.S. News Media (2018)

Media and #MeToo: The WMC Report (2018)

SuperPowering Girls: Female Representation in the Sci-Fi/SuperHero Genre (2018 — WMC and BBC America Report)

Superpowering Women in Science Fiction and Superhero Film: A 10-Year Investigation (2019 — WMC in association with BBC America)

WMC Media Watch: Women & Elections — Where Voters Saw Most Sexist Treatment of Women Candidates in Media (2016)

WMC Media Watch: Women & Elections — #WhoTalks — U.S. Presidential Election Tracking of Cable/TV News Show Analyzed by Gender and Race (2016) (Partnership project with the Rutgers Center for American Women and Politics and GenderAvenger)

WMC Investigation: Analysis of Gender & Oscar Non-Acting Nominations (2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2010)

WMC Investigation: 10-Year Analysis of Gender & Oscar Nominations in Non-Acting Categories (2016)

WMC Investigation: Review of Gender & Non-Acting Primetime Emmy Nominations (2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2014, 2013, 2012)

WMC Investigation: 10-Year Review of Gender & Emmy Nominations in Non-Acting Categories (2015)

WMC Media Watch: The Gender Gap in Coverage of Reproductive Issues (2016)

WMC Media Watch: Writing Rape — How U.S. Media Cover Campus Rape and Sexual Assault (2015)

Women's Media Center Media Guide to Covering Reproductive Issues (2016)

Name It Change It: The Women's Media Center Media Guide to Gender Neutral Coverage of Women Candidates & Politicians

10 Do's and Don'ts on How to Interview Sexualized Violence Survivors (2017)

Name It. Change It: An Examination of the Impact of Media Coverage of Women Candidates' Appearance

Name It. Change It — WMC Infographic — Stick Figures Explain Negative Impact of Appearance Coverage on Women Candidates (2013)

Bias, Punditry, and the Press — Where Do We Go From Here? (2008) (Report from the Women's Media Center, the White House Project, and the Maynard Institute for Journalism Education)

Unspinning the Spin: The Women's Media Center Guide to Fair and Accurate Language (2014)

WMC Women Under Siege Syria Crowdmap

WMC Women Under Siege Reports: Sexualized Violence in Conflict Zones (Burma, Mexico, North Korea, Democratic Republic of Congo, Libya, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Darfur-Sudan, Rwanda, Bosnia, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Colombia, Bangladesh, Holocaust, Nanking)

WMC: What Online Harassment Tells Us About Our Newsrooms: From Individuals to Institutions (2020)

WMC Speech Project Wheel of Online Abuse and Harassment (2016)

WMC News and Features

WMC Climate

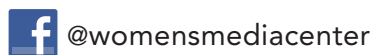
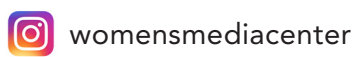
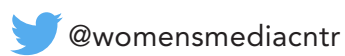
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