WOMEN’S MEDIA CENTER INVESTIGATION:
2016 REVIEW OF GENDER & EMMY
PRIMETIME NOMINATIONS

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WOMEN UNDERREPRESENTED IN BEHIND-THE-SCENES 
ROLES IN 2016 PRIMETIME NOMINATIONS

Women represent only 25 percent of the 2016 Primetime Emmy Awards nominations in writing, directing, editing, and producing — unchanged from last year, according to a Women's Media Center analysis.

Of the 43 writing, directing, editing, and producing categories, 328 of the nominees are women and 993 are men. Although the Emmys cover many different jobs related to television programs, these categories tend to have the most influence on what is depicted on the small screen.

When factoring in all 88 non-acting categories for the 68th Primetime Emmy Awards — to be broadcast on Sunday — women do only slightly better: 28 percent of the nominations, with men representing 72 percent. No women were nominated in 14 categories, mainly in cinematography, stunt coordination, music composition or direction, and sound mixing. Women are strongly represented in production design, casting, costume, hairstyling and documentary features.

“Our Women’s Media Center investigation shows there is a gender gap in Emmy nominations. Only 25 percent — one in four of all nominations — go to women in key, decision-making roles,” said Women’s Media Center President Julie Burton. “Most distressing is the lack of progress from year to year. There is a clear connection between the broadcast, network and cable programs that hire mostly male creators and the industry-wide gender divide. When there are few jobs for women, it is easy to see why so few women in non-acting categories are recognized for their excellence — if you cannot get through the door, you cannot be celebrated with Emmy nominations and honors. When will broadcast, network, and cable executives examine their hiring practices to ensure that women — especially in these influential roles — are at the table?”

Of the four major behind-the-scenes roles, the percentage of women is up in writing, at 23 percent versus 19 percent, and editing, at 21 percent versus 20 percent, over last year, but slightly down in the directing and producing categories.

Pat Mitchell, Chair, WMC Board of Directors, added: “Clearly, the number of nominees for Emmys is not representative of the impact or the accomplishments of women writers, directors, producers, editors whose overall representation in all those categories is still far from equal to their talents or the opportunities, facts that the Women’s Media Center’s research so clearly indicates.”
Here are the highlights in the directing (8), producing (21), writing (6), and editing (8) categories:

**DIRECTING**

Women were vastly underrepresented in directing, constituting only 9 percent or 18 nominees — down from 11 percent last year. In contrast, there were 174 men or 91 percent. Most of the directing nominations were in two categories: Outstanding Technical Direction, Camerawork, Video Control For A Series, and Outstanding Technical Direction, Camerawork, Video Control For A Limited Series, Movie or Special.

The one bright spot in the directing category was the increase of female nominees in Outstanding Directing For A Nonfiction Program. Women represented half of the nominees: Liz Garbus for “What Happened, Miss Simone?” the documentary about famed-singer Nina Simone, and Laura Ricciardi and Moira Demos for “Making A Murderer: Fighting For Their Lives.” Both programs — which were on Netflix — received nominations in six categories.

Two women were nominated for Outstanding Directing For a Variety Special: Beyoncé Knowles Carter for HBO’s “Lemonade” and NBC’s Beth McCarthy-Miller for “Adele: Live in New York City.” Both productions received nominations in four categories, including Outstanding Variety Special.

**PRODUCING**

More women were nominated in the producing categories than in writing, editing, or directing: a total of 263, although the percentage was slightly down from last year, 29 percent versus 30 percent. Men represented 71 percent, or 656.

Although the percentage of women in producing categories dropped, several categories showed marginal gains. In Exceptional Merit In Documentary Filmmaking, two films featured a nearly woman-only producer team: “The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution” (Independent Lens) on PBS and “The Hunting Ground” on CNN, which included Regina K. Scully as one of its executive producers. Also of note, Kathryn Bigelow was one of two female producers nominated for “Cartel Land,” a documentary about the Mexican drug war.

Three series accounted for an increase of women in the Outstanding Documentary Or Nonfiction Series: “American Masters” on PBS; “Woman With Gloria Steinem” on Viceland, and “Making A Murderer” on Netflix.

More gains were also seen in Outstanding Comedy Series, with nominations for “Black-ish” on ABC and existing programs like Amazon’s “Transparent,” HBO’s “Veep” and ABC’s “Modern Family.”

Kerry Washington picked up two nominations: This time for HBO’s “Confirmation” — the movie about the confirmation hearings for Justice Clarence Thomas. Washington played Anita Hill and was one of the film’s executive producers.

“Inside Look: The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story” on FX Networks received a number of nominations in multiple categories, including four female producers in the Outstanding Short Form Nonfiction Or Reality Series.

While women lost ground as producers in the Outstanding Drama Series category, they continued to contribute in the more popular and oft-nominated programs like HBO’s “Game of Thrones,” AMC’s “Better Call Saul,” PBS’ “Downton Abbey,” and “House of Cards” on Netflix.
WRITING

Women were 23 percent of the nominees for the writing categories, up from 19 percent last year.

Most of the gains were in Outstanding Writing For A Variety Series with big boosts from multiple female writers for “Full Frontal With Samantha Bee” on TBS, which included Samantha Bee, and “Inside Amy Schumer” on Comedy Central, which included Amy Schumer. “Inside Amy Schumer” received Emmy nominations in four categories. In addition, “Amy Schumer: Live At The Apollo” received nominations in three directing, producing, and writing categories, including Outstanding Writing For A Variety Special.

Michelle King was nominated for her fourth Emmy, this one for the final episode of CBS’ “The Good Wife” for Outstanding Writing For A Drama Series category — one of four nominations for the show that ended after its seventh season. Marti Noxon and Sarah Gertrude Shapiro also were nominated for the “UnREAL” episode “Return” on Lifetime.

EDITING

Women represented 21 percent for a total of 16 nominees in 2016, up 1 percentage point from last year.

No women were nominated in Outstanding Single-Camera Picture Editing For A Comedy Series, a loss of three in that category from last year. There was a gain of two women in the Outstanding Picture Editing For Variety Programming for “Conan in Korea” on TBS and “Drunk History — Inventors” on Comedy Central.

The info graphic can be found at http://www.womensmediacenter.com/pages/womens-media-center-investigation-2016-review-of-gender-emmy-primetime-nominees

This report was researched and written by Cristal Williams Chancellor with research assistance from Tiffany Nguyen and Neha Vasudeva. The Emmy analysis was drawn using information from Emmys.com. An individual was counted only once per category even if they were nominated multiple times in the same year for the same award.

The Primetime Emmy Awards do not include a producing category. The WMC report includes 21 categories in which producers are nominated.

The Women’s Media Center, co-founded by Jane Fonda, Robin Morgan, and Gloria Steinem, works to make women visible and powerful in media. The Women’s Media Center trains women leaders to be in the media; promotes women experts to the media through WMC SheSource; conducts groundbreaking research and reporting on media inclusion and accuracy; features women’s voices and stories on our radio program “Women’s Media Center Live with Robin Morgan” and through WMC Features, WMC FBomb, WMC Speech Project, and WMC Women Under Siege.

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