

## THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE U.S. MEDIA 2017

By Julie Burton  
President Women's Media Center



Media tell us our roles in society. They tell us who we are and what we can be. They frame, interpret and amplify our policies and our politics. They tell us who has power and who matters. The research we conduct is more than statistics. It is evidence, a tool for social change, and creates benchmarks to highlight the status and progress of women in media.

This fifth edition of the Women's Media Center's annual assessment of how a diversity of females fare across all media platforms -and in arenas including education, engineering and technology that pump workers into the media pipeline- finds areas of progress, regress and, sadly, outright pushback.

**"When men or women turn to or on the media, yet fail to see women in our true diversity, there is a sense that all or some women literally don't count. It's crucial that the media report and reflect, not conceal and distort."**

**GLORIA STEINEM  
WMC CO-FOUNDER**

Men still dominate media across all platforms -television, newspapers, online and wires- with change coming only incrementally. Our research projects on coverage of campus rape and coverage of reproductive rights show that the gender of the journalist affects how they cover topics and whom they choose as sources. Women are not equal partners in telling the story, nor are they equal partners in sourcing and interpreting what and who is important in the story.

Most certainly, we salute media advances toward gender and race parity that are noted in this report. Yet, we are deeply concerned about areas where the media lurched backward. Our own WMC "Divided" analysis finds that, at 20 of the nation's most widely read and heard news outlets, women still report far less of the news than men report. That gender

**gap is especially big at the major TV news Networks -where our study shows men report three times more news than women correspondents.**

**There are other signs that we can't relent in this battle to ensure that women and minorities stand on every rung of the media ladder, including at the very top. Women are more likely to hire other women, according to scholars whose research and commentary are highlighted in this annual compilation of studies about where media diversity exists and where it is relatively, woefully absent.**

**News that does not include equal roles and perspectives for women threatens democracy  
FOREWORD WOMEN'S MEDIA CENTER The Status of Women in the U.S. Media 2017 TOC  
womensmediacenter.com 3 Too many male CEOs, producers and editors remain in their comfort zones and default to hiring and promoting those who are like them. Male executives must be willing to intentionally chart a different course, expand the talent pool without trepidation and develop a more concerted and, perhaps, radical strategy for equally sharing power with women. The problem is bigger than any one outlet—it affects the whole culture. Fake news threatens democracy, as does news that does not include the equal voices, perspectives and experiences of over half the population.**

**Julie Burton  
President Women's Media Center**