

# BEING SEEN ON SCREEN: DIVERSE REPRESENTATION & INCLUSION ON TV

A NIELSEN DIVERSE INTELLIGENCE SERIES REPORT

December 2020



# **FOREWORD**

At Nielsen, we believe that audience is everything. Counting everyone and ensuring that all voices are seen and heard are at the heart of who we are as a company. Fostering diversity and inclusion is crucial to the success of our industry. Just as we are the measurement standard for the media industry, we are committed to bringing those same quality standards of measurement to representation and inclusion in programming. As part of our Diverse Intelligence Series, we are proud to offer our first report on the state of inclusion and representation in television programming in the U.S.

Every day, we watch, listen to and hear stories through TV, videos, music, podcasts and social media. The content we consume should reflect the growing diversity of our country, and we know that diverse audiences look for diverse content. As our nation's demographics become more diverse, the call for more authentic content, reflecting real people and real life is louder than ever. From #oscarssowhite, to the record number of diverse Emmy winners to the increase in corporate commitments to improving representation; the media industry is answering. Still, there is room for improvement.

With this report, we hope to answer questions such as: Where can I find programming that tells my story? What platforms lead in diverse representation? What genres are a haven for diverse casts? Where am I seen? Our data will show not just what's on-screen, but the degree to which different identity groups are represented and who's viewing such as audiences by race, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. These metrics are granular and intersectional, reaching beyond standard media measurement categories. Our intent is to both inform and empower the media industry, our partners and the community.

Identity and belonging, diversity, and inclusion – these will continue to evolve and take shape. We hope that our report will provide the foundation to advance and explore these ideas to reflect what's real for our audiences. Together, let's create a more inclusive media ecosystem and a society that embraces diversity.



**DAVID KENNY**CEO and Chief Diversity Officer
Nielsen

Visit nielsen.com/inclusionanalytics for more information and interactive data tools.

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### PROGRESS AND NEEDED CHANGE

America is in the midst of a demographic transition. Today, 41% of the U.S. population is racially and ethnically diverse, and people are increasingly exploring and defining their personal identities. As the U.S. diversifies, there is a unique opportunity to meet America's expanding entertainment tastes. The media industry has made some progress in creating a more inclusive ecosystem. In fact, across the TV landscape among the top 300 most viewed programs in 2019 (broadcast, cable, and streaming), 92% of all programs measured have some presence of diversity (women, people of color, or LGBTQ) in recurring cast. This increasing presence is applauded, but as we uncover in this report, presence is not the same as representation.

AMONG THE TOP 300 MOST VIEWED PROGRAMS IN 2019 (BROADCAST, CABLE, AND STREAMING), 92% HAVE SOME PRESENCE OF DIVERSITY

### **GUIDE TO OUR METRICS**

To measure representation, we have created new metrics.

- Share of Screen (SOS)¹: Identity group (e.g. women, LGBTQ, Hispanic) representation among the top 10 recurring cast members
- Inclusion Opportunity Index (IOI): compares the SOS of an identity group (e.g. women) to their representation in population estimates
- Inclusion Audience Index (IAI): compares the SOS of an identity group to their representation in a program's audience

These metrics<sup>2</sup> also take into consideration the viewing audience and viewing minute contribution. Having a diverse cast is an important first step, but getting a program in front of audiences is also critical. To measure this, we consider:

- Number of episodes a recurring cast member is present in
- Number of viewing minutes a program has
- Viewing audience by identity groups
   (e.g., men, women, ethnicity, LGBTQ, intersecting groups like Afro-Latinos)

### **Population estimates**

When we compare data of a specific identity group against "population estimates", this refers to Nielsen's Universe Estimates. This is based on Census information and other inputs used to build our representative TV panels.

### **Programs**

Programs in this report cover the most popular programs among select genres on broadcast, cable, and subscription video on demand (SVOD) in 2019 (approx. 300 programs, ~100 per platform). Programs are ranked by Average Audience % for P18+, Live+7. Linear programs are inclusive of first-run telecasts only.

<sup>2</sup> Inclusion Analytics incorporates celebrity data from Gracenote Studio System, program metadata from Gracenote Global Video data, and Audience data from Nielsen National Television Panel data.



<sup>1</sup> Share of Screen is weighted using episode occurrence at the program level. It is additionally weighted by minutes viewed at the genre and platform level.

# REPRESENTATION IN TELEVISION TODAY

### **Share of Screen Total TV**

Across the TV Landscape, share of screen varies by identity group and by platform. However there are some groups that are represented well across platforms. Broadly speaking, people of color are underrepresented across all of TV. White non-Hispanic people, men and women have the largest share of screen, and People of Color consistently have the lowest.

While there have been more roles for women on TV that break traditional stereotypes, overall, women are still underrepresented. Overall, LGBTQ talent are represented above parity.

# WOMEN MAKE UP 52% OF OUR POPULATION YET THEY ONLY HAVE A 38% SHARE OF SCREEN.



# **SHARE OF SCREEN: TOTAL TV 52.0**% 39.5% 37.9% 26.7% 6.7%

PEOPLE OF COLOR

WOMEN

Share of Screen

**LGBTQ** 

**Population Estimates** 

<sup>\*</sup> People of Color = Black, Native American/Native Alaskan, Asian & Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latinx, Middle Eastern/North African, Multiracial

### **Share of Screen by Platform**

While TV content today looks and feels more diverse than ever, there are still many opportunities for media to better reflect the society we live in. The chart below represents the share of screen by identity group. Across all platforms, the highest visibility groups are White non-Hispanics followed by Men. As you move down the chart, representation and frequency of visibility is low for many identity groups.

On these platforms, Asian and Black talent have good share of screen. On cable, we see a strong representation of LGBTQ talent; however, when we dive deeper and intersect race/ethnicity with gender, the cable industry has the greatest opportunity to increase parity in on-screen portrayals of many diverse populations.

Nearly one-third of the content on cable doesn't have parity representation of people of color, Women or LGBTQ talent. Subscription video on demand (SVOD) programming represents several identity groups well, helping us understand why more diverse audiences are subscribing to streaming services than the general population.



# STREAMING AND BROADCAST ARE AMONG THE MOST INCLUSIVE SOURCES FOR REPRESENTATION OF PEOPLE OF COLOR.

### **SHARE OF SCREEN BY PLATFORM**

((•)) Broadcast	□ Cable	SVOD	Total
66.9%	88.7%	64.7%	81.2%
64.2%	62.2%	51.1%	62.1%
33.1%	37.8%	48.9%	38.0%
24.7%	7.5%	18.9%	18.1%
9.1%	7.0%	10.1%	6.7%
5.1%	3.0%	8.3%	5.5%
5.0%	1.6%	3.3%	4.9%
2.5%	1.0%	2.1%	2.2%
1.7%	0.3%	1.9%	1.7%
0.3%	0.1%	0.8%	0.4%

<sup>\*</sup> White = White non-Hispanic or White non-multiracial

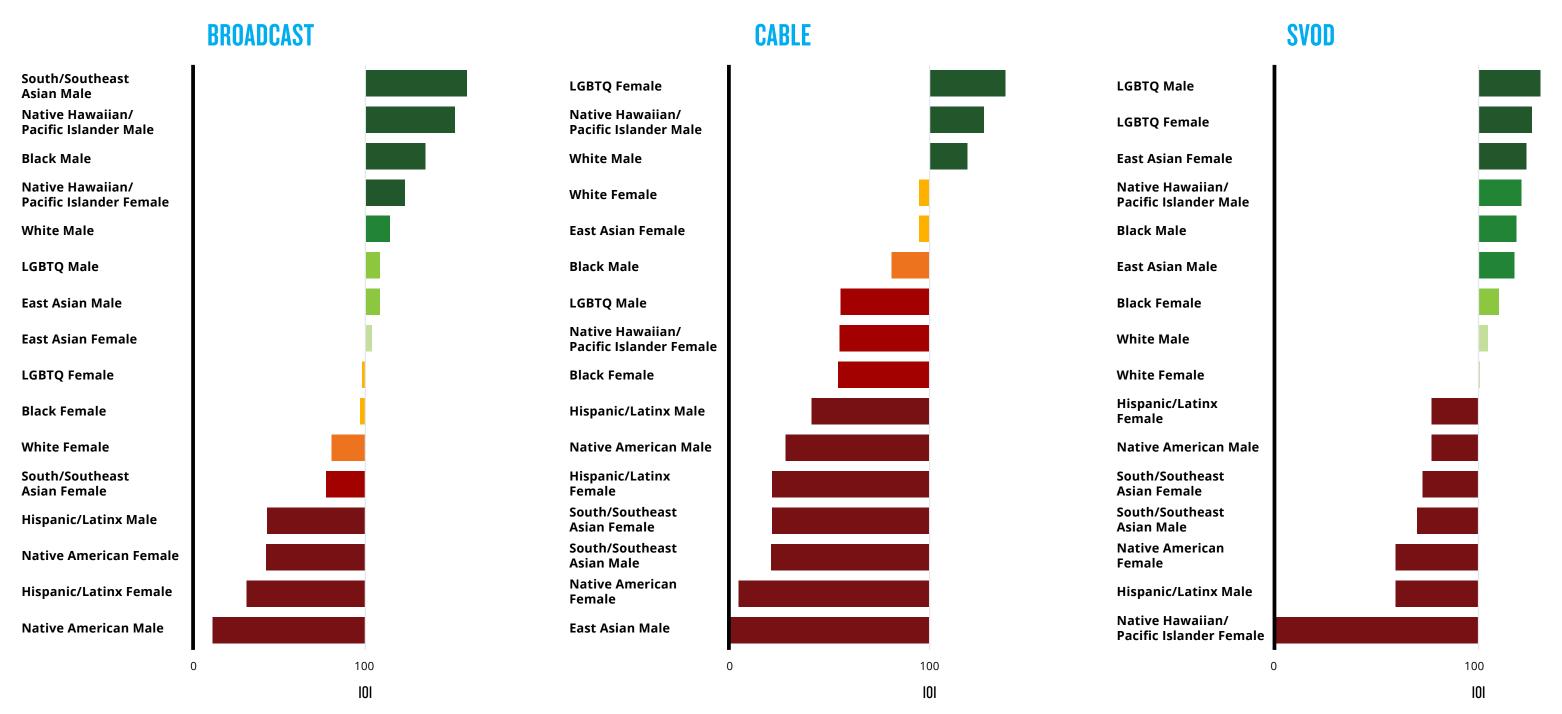
REPRESENTATION

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### **Representation by Platform**

Visibility of intersectional on-screen talent varies by platform, uncovering opportunities to diversify content. With the exception of Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander females, the top seven identity groups with representation at or above parity on broadcast were male. For both broadcast and SVOD, about half of the 16 intersectional identity groups had representation at parity or above. Cable showed strong representation for only three groups; the remaining identity groups were underrepresented.





<sup>\*</sup> IOI: compares the Share of Screen of an identity group (e.g. women) to their representation in population estimates

### **Representation by Genre**

At the genre level, we see where women, people of color and LGBTQ talent lag behind. While women are not well represented in any single genre, we see the most representation in Science Fiction, Drama, Comedies and Horror, and the lowest representation in News. However, News does prominently feature LGBTQ talent on-screen along with Reality and Horror programming.

Representation of people of color is fair in Music and Drama, followed by Science Fiction and Action and Adventure. The category with the least representation is also News.

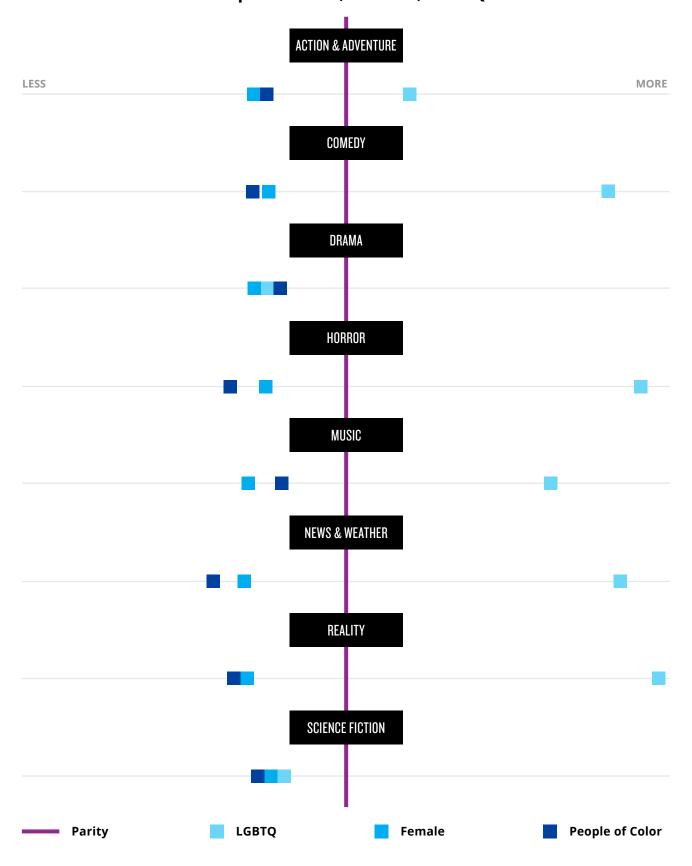
Notably, women and people of color are more likely to be present on screen in scripted content and entertainment roles and far less likely to be on screen in News. When we evaluate video descriptors associated with content where women have a high on-screen presence, we find that "news reporters" and "news correspondents" are not present in the top 300 descriptors. How talent is depicted on screen plays a role in identity formation, and illustrates the importance of portrayals on screen.

TELEVISION, ACROSS BROADCAST, CABLE AND SVOD, CAN CHANGE AND REINFORCE, WHO WE SEE AS AN EXPERT VERSUS AN ENTERTAINER.

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### **INCLUSION BY GENRE**

### People of Color, Women, LGBTQ





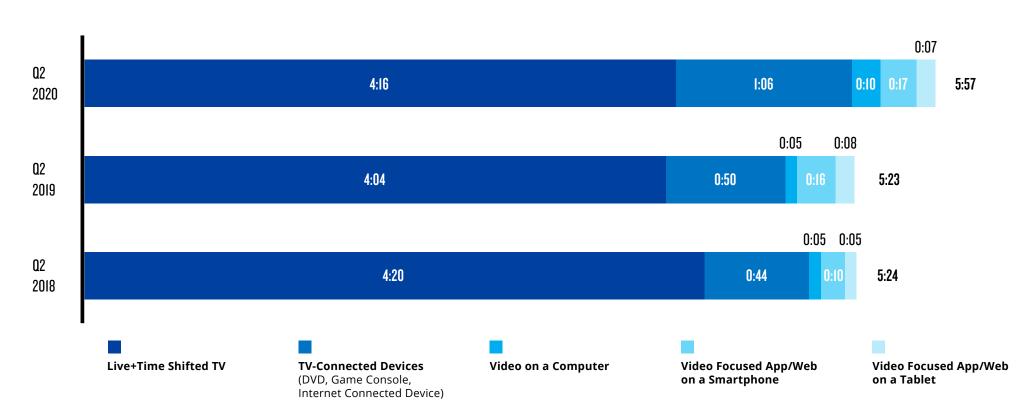
### THE STORIES WE SEE

### **Informing Identity: Why Context Matters**

On average, people spend nearly six hours per day engaging with TV programming from broadcasters, cable networks and streaming platforms. With a dedicated audience, television has the ability to improve the world, educate, spark the imagination and bring people together around common interests. Beyond entertaining us, what we see in programming becomes an external force for identity formation. The programming we consume plays a role in informing the way we think. Today's most-watched genres fuel our own identity formations and the realities we associate with others. Therefore, the presence of diverse people on screen and the context in which they are presented can be among the most influential factors in developing our personal attitudes and beliefs.

### AVERAGE TIME SPENT PER ADULT 18+ PER DAY ON VIDEO

### **Based on Total U.S. Population**

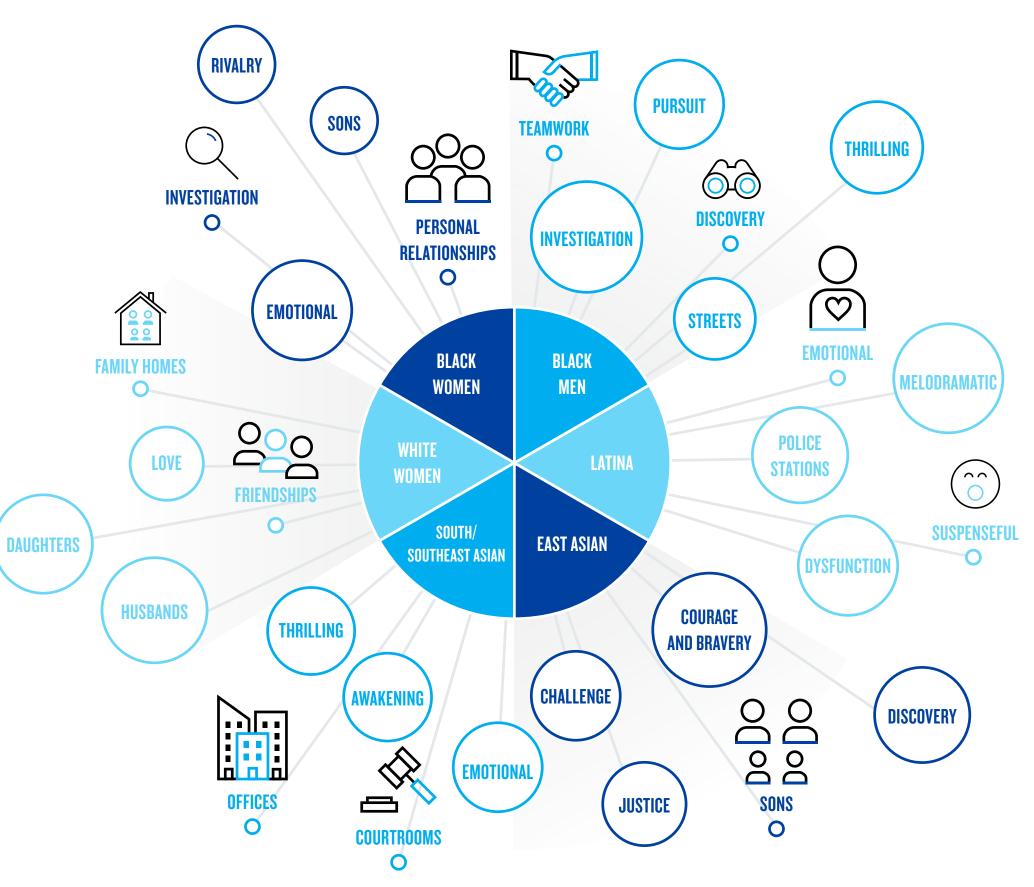


Source: Nielsen Total Audience Report, November 2020

# What People See When They See Themselves on TV

How does the context in which representation is present (themes and narratives) shape the way we think about ourselves, other races, ethnic and identity groups? When an identity group in the audience sees their identity group represented at parity or above in programming, what do they see? We evaluated top keyword descriptors\* associated with programming where both representation (IOI) and audience (IAI) viewing of the same identity group were high. When an identity group in the audience sees their identity group represented at parity or above in programming, these are the themes they see.

### **KEY THEMES IN REPRESENTATIVE CONTENT**



<sup>\*</sup> Gracenote Video Descriptors provide a granular classification of content on ultraprecise keywords capturing the story and context across mood, theme, scenario and more.

### **SPOTLIGHTS**

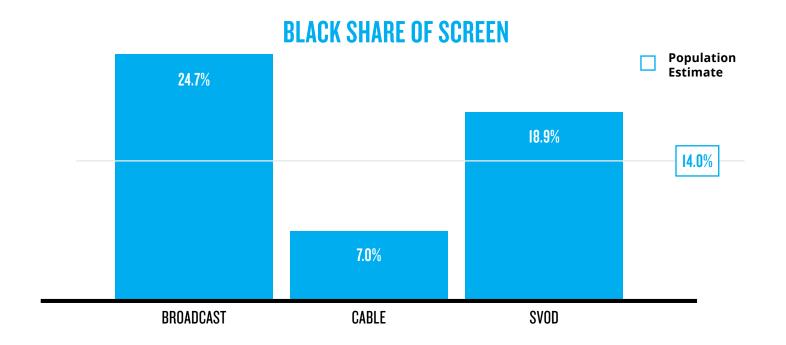
### **African Americans**

As 14% of the population and devout consumers of media, Black Americans are a driving force for television viewership. Television remains one of the most effective platforms to draw in Black audiences, with an average weekly reach of 88%.

### **Black Representation vs Black Viewership on Cable**

Not only do Black viewers lead TV audiences, they are also a major source of inclusion on screen. Black talent accounts for the highest total share of screen among any racial minority group at 18%. The on-screen percentage for Blacks in television exceeds their population estimate in both broadcast and streaming programs, but lags on cable.

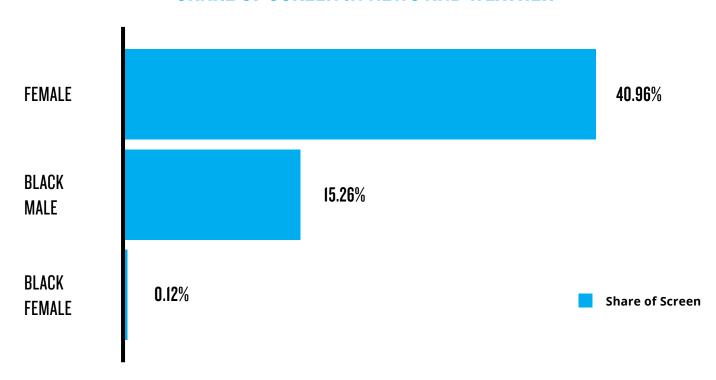
However, cable is consistently home to some of the most-watched programs for Black audiences. Even with viewing concentrated to just a fraction of networks in today's expansive cable lineup, Black people deliver viewing contributions across cable that outpace their inclusion on these networks overall.



### Taking the Lead on TV

While parity may not be the goal for every piece of content, the difference in on-screen inclusion for Black men and Black women is starkly illustrated in multiple programming genres.

### **SHARE OF SCREEN IN NEWS AND WEATHER**



For News and Weather content, Black women received less than 1% share of screen despite making up more than half of the Black population. This limited representation of Black women in command of national news underperforms significantly compared to time on screen for their Black male counterparts and women overall.

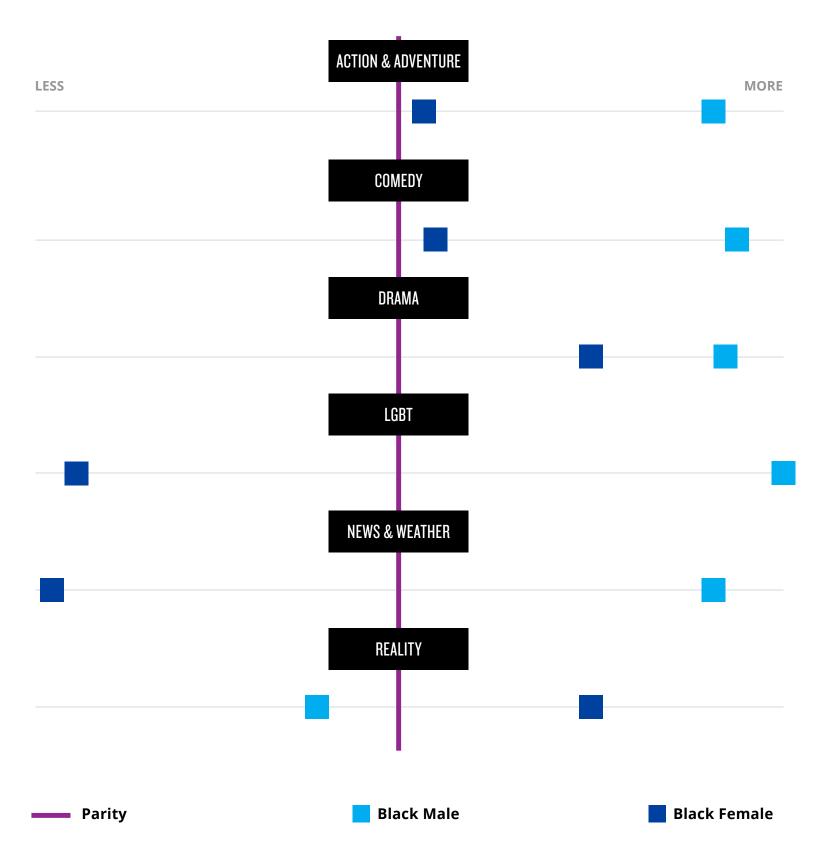
Within the most popular programs for the majority of genres, the Share of Screen (SOS) was high for representation of Black talent. Outliers like Entertainment and Romance programming offer smaller shares of time on-screen for Black talent at 9% and 5% SOS respectively. Some of the most inclusive genres for Black people on-screen, like Drama, are also attracting the largest Black audiences -- as well as all other identity groups.

An even more detailed look at the inclusion metrics for Blacks on-screen reveals that their representation is driven by the presence of Black men and an under-representation of Black women. Fantasy, Crime & Mystery, and Documentary programs were the only exceptions to the ratio where share of screen for Black women outpaced Black men. In LGBT themed stories and content, Black men have an SOS of more than 14x that of Black women in the genre.

Who can be trusted with breaking news or expected to find love on screen? As we explore both quantity and context of representation across television for each identity group, there are limitations within the narratives that remain prevalent. Black women are integral to displaying the full range of experiences, joys and distinct challenges of the Black community. We need more nuanced and representative content of the African American experience, with greater inclusion of Black women and a broader range of themes for Black people on screen.

# BLACK MEN HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY MORE SHARE OF SCREEN THAN BLACK WOMEN

### **BLACK INCLUSION BY GENRE**



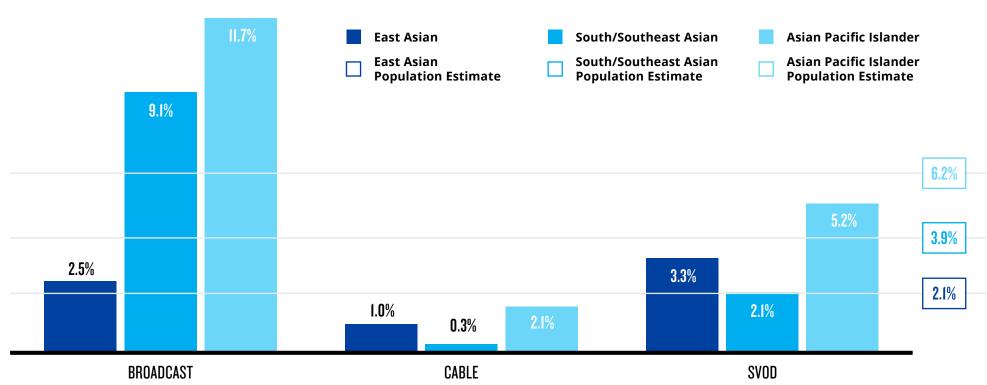
<sup>\*</sup> SOS - composition of the top 10 recurring cast members in a program

### **Asian Americans**

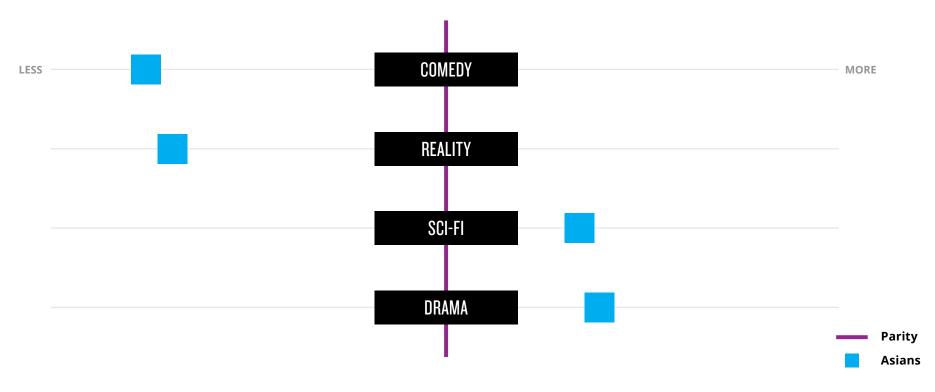
As the fastest-growing group of Americans, Asians are increasingly influential. They are trendsetters (think K-pop culture), content creators (think Parasite, Padma Lakshmi, Hasan Minhaj) and powerful consumers with a buying power that has tripled over the last decade—and continuing to grow. There is tremendous opportunity to create authentic connections through content that reflects the myriad of stories and experiences of Asian Americans who come from more than two dozen countries.

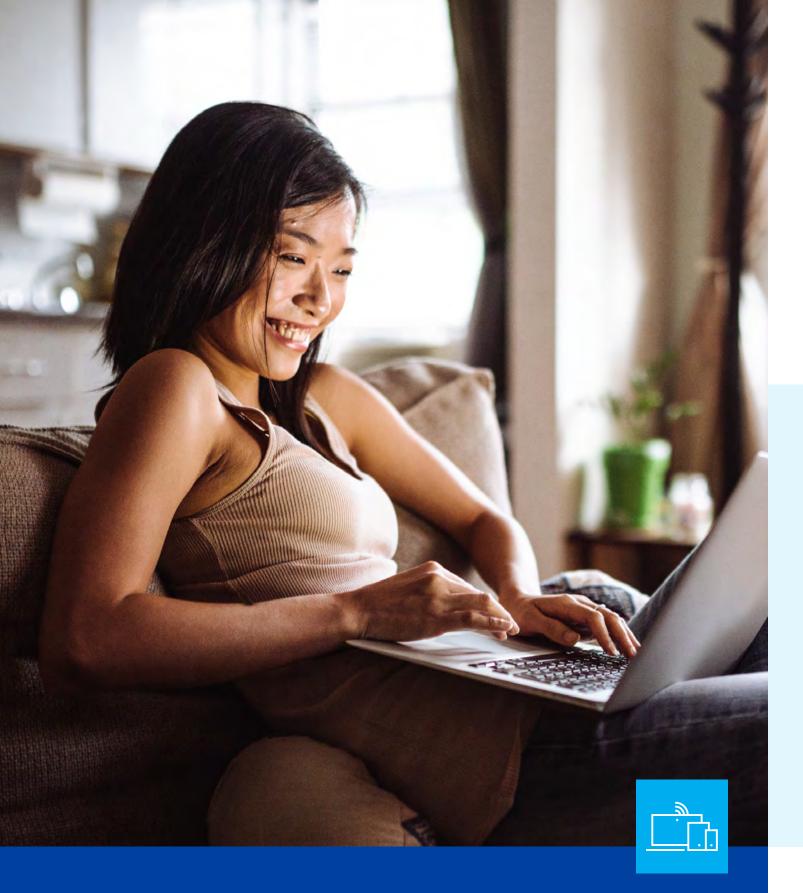
While Asians are well-represented on broadcast, we see low visibility on other platforms. Share of screen for South/Southeast Asians is 5% and for East Asians just 2% relative to their representation in the U.S. population. While there is good representation in Sci-fi and Drama, there is a bigger gap when it comes to Comedy and Reality TV. Building a bench of Asian talent is one possible path to closing this gap.

### **ASIAN SHARE OF SCREEN**



### **INCLUSION BY GENRE FOR ASIANS**





82% OF ASIANS SUBSCRIBE TO A STREAMING SERVICE 28% MORE LIKELY TO WATCH ALTERNATIVE CONTENT

We've also seen that Asians want to watch Asian stories and characters, particularly via streamed programming: 82% of Asian Americans subscribe to a streaming service (compared with 72% of the total U.S. population) and are also 28% more likely to watch alternative content\* (from other media publishers such as Asian language shows), via internet-connected devices. Brands and content publishers who want to make more authentic connections to Asian audiences should look to these Asian focused platforms and programs.

### **Spotlight: Asians in San Francisco**

As the Asian population across the U.S. continues to grow, so does the diversity within the group. To better understand the influence of Asian culture, we took a closer look at the San Francisco Designated Market Area (DMA), which has the largest share of Asians in a DMA in the country (27%). Here, K-pop is popular with all demographics, Asian food is increasingly becoming a regular part of everyone's diets\*\* and the large number of local tech companies are attracting even more South Asians.

In this market, Asians aren't a monolith, and neither is what they watch. In this DMA, Asians are twice as likely to watch alternative content as the total population, watch 39% of alternative content and 32% of connected device programming.

<sup>\*</sup> Alternative content = All Other Tuning (AOT) is how Nielsen classifies viewing to TV content not yet measured

<sup>\*\*</sup> Nielsen Omnibus survey - May 2020 "I like to cook ethnic foods" top 2-box 60% response for all demos

### Hispanics

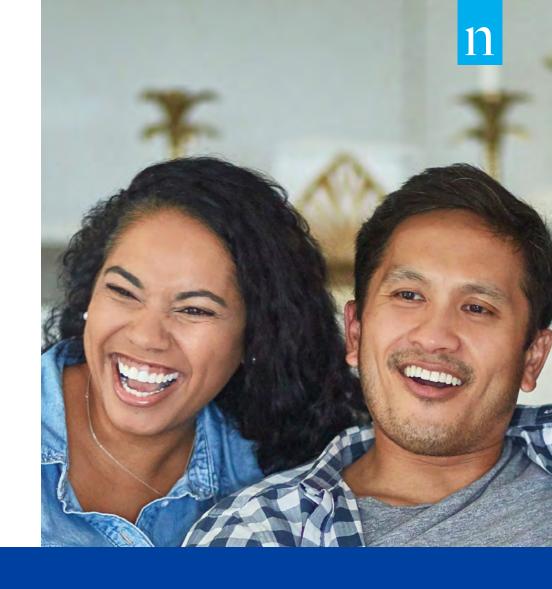
The Hispanic population is the largest minority group in the U.S., making up 18.8% of the population, contributing more growth to the total population than any other segment. With nearly 40% of Latinos living in multigenerational households, content consumption and cross viewing are the norm.

### **Hispanic Representation on TV**

With the strongest on-screen representation on streaming, Hispanics are still underrepresented across every platform. Across all TV, Hispanic's share of screen is only one-third of their presence in population estimates. Even though Hispanics make up 18.8% of the population, they only account for 5.5% of share of screen across all of TV. Visibility is double on SVOD at 10.1%, but that is still about half of reaching parity. For Latino audiences across the country, the TV landscape doesn't reflect your experience or your culture.

Given the highest representation, SVOD programming is a strong draw for Latinos, especially younger Latinos. Of the top 15 programs on SVOD among Latinos 18-34, 40% had fair or strong Latino representation, compared with only 13% of the top 15 programs among Hispanics 35+.

# HISPANIC SHARE OF SCREEN | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18.8% | 18



# SHARE OF SCREEN FOR HISPANICS IS ONLY 1/3 OF THEIR PRESENCE IN POPULATION ESTIMATES



The representation of Afro-Latinx on-screen is encouraging, with about 0.9% share of screen across all of TV. Afro-Latinx representation meets or exceeds population estimates for each platform except broadcast, with representation at about 70% under parity.

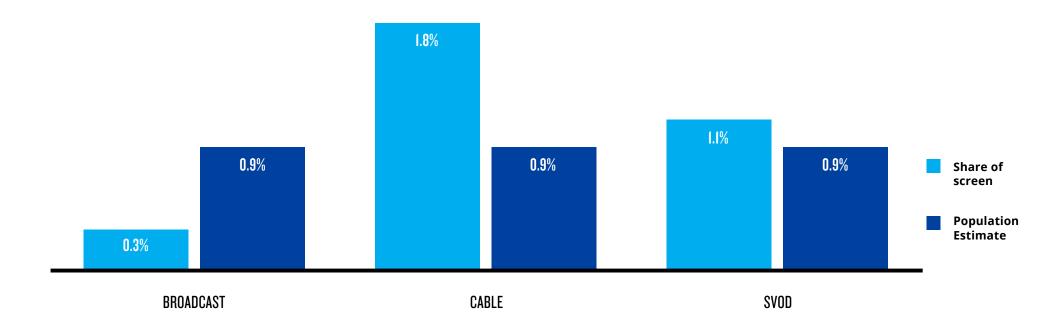
### **Hispanic Representation by Genre**

When it comes to genre leaders for Latinx visibility, no singular genre represents Latinos well. The highest visibility for share of screen is in Thrillers, Drama and Action-Adventure, where Latinos achieve about 50% of parity for on-screen representation. The lowest representation is in News and Weather. This begs the question, "When Latinos are underrepresented in news, are their stories being told?" Visibility is one layer of representation, yet quality and authenticity should be considered as well. With so few programming that includes Latinos at parity or above, there is inequitable pressure on a few programs to get storylines right for all Latinos.

# NO SINGULAR GENRE REPRESENTS LATINOS WELL



### **AFRO-LATINX SHARE OF SCREEN**



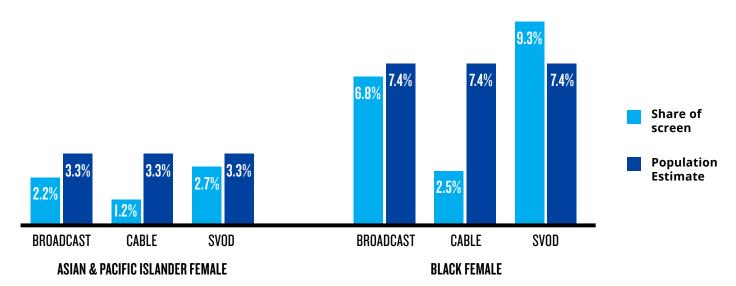
### **INCLUSION FOR HISPANICS BY GENRE**



### Women

Women comprise 52% of the U.S. population, but show up on screen only 38% of the time. Women have the highest share of screen on SVOD (49%) and the lowest on broadcast (33%), but the real need for on-screen representation improvement among women is among those over the age of 50. When compared to the population estimates, Asian women have less representation on SVOD, while Black women are better represented.

### **SHARE OF SCREEN FOR TOTAL TV**



ASIAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER WOMEN ARE
CONSISTENTLY AND SIGNIFICANTLY
UNDERREPRESENTED ACROSS ALL PLATFORMS



Women 50+ are watching, but are not being seen. They are 60% less likely to see themselves in programming than in the general population. Making up a full 20% of the population and 20% of all TV viewers, women over 50 only have an SOS of less than 8%.

In contrast, Men over 50, who make up a full 17% of the population, enjoy almost 2x the representation of women over 50 across all platforms, with a share of screen of 14%.

### **WOMEN OVER 50 VS MEN OVER 50**

**Share of Cast in the Top 15 Programs** 

	Women over 50	Men over 50
((¸)) Broadcast	4%	16%
<b>⊡</b> ∙ Cable	7%	19%
SVOD	5%	12%



### **LGBTQ Pride in Being Seen**

The LGBTQ storylines and characters have grown in on-screen presence, but only recently have we seen an increase in representation of this identity group at the talent level. Our current measures of inclusion look at the personal identity of cast members, not the characters they play, except in the case of programs where the celebrity is the main character or host, like in Reality and Entertainment programs. Our data shows that 26% of the top 300 programs in 2019 have representation of individual cast members who self-identify as LGBTQ. The highest level of representation is on SVOD (8% SOS), followed by cable (7%) then broadcast (5%). The total SOS for LGBTQ was 7%. LGBTQ people are 4.5% of the population\* so across all platforms we see fair representation.

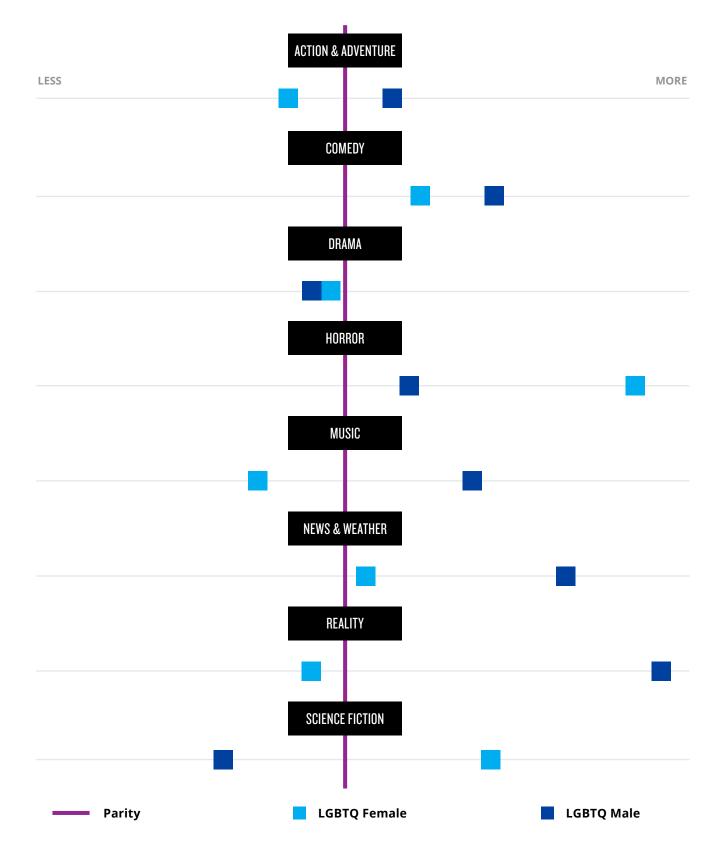
The genres in which LGBTQ cast are represented show differences between male and female and non-binary representation. For LGBTQ women, representation is strongest in Reality, News and Comedy. For LGBTQ men, representation is strongest in the Horror, Science Fiction and Comedy genres.

Of the top 300 programs across broadcast, cable and SVOD, only 2.3% have non-binary representation. Non-binary representation was highest for SVOD (0.64%), followed by broadcast (0.11%), then cable (0.02%). The total SOS for non-binary representation across all platforms was 0.20%.

# THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION IS ON SVOD (8% SOS), FOLLOWED BY CABLE (7%) THEN BROADCAST (5%). THE TOTAL SOS FOR LGBTQ WAS 7%



### INCLUSION OF LGBTQ MEN AND WOMEN BY GENRE



<sup>\*</sup> LGBT Demographic Data Interactive. (January 2019). Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. SOS - composition of the top 10 recurring cast members in a program



### **Native American**

In spite of a legacy that spans the continent, Native Americans struggle to see themselves represented on screen. They have some of the lowest on-screen presence, leaving the distinct tribes, cultures, and relevance of Native Americans without visibility in TV programming.

While still underrepresented, Native American males, have the strongest on screen visibility in SVOD, at about 60% of the population estimates. Across all TV, Native Americans' share of screen is less than one quarter of their presence in population estimates.

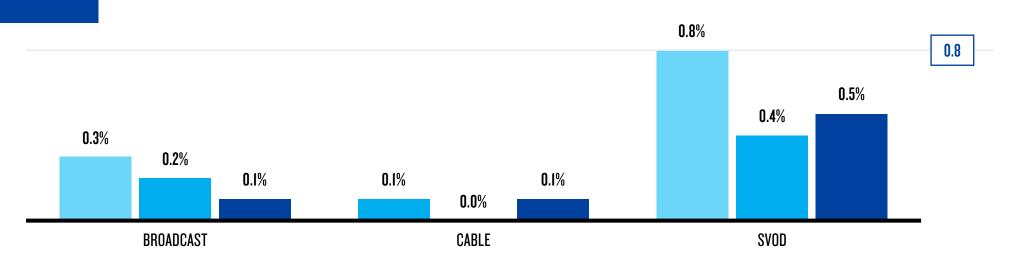
When we intersect race/ethnicity with gender, we see even larger gaps for representation of Native American women who have less than 0.6% of share of screen across any TV platform. Native American women make up about 0.8% of their population yet the highest share of screen is 0.4% on SVOD.

### **NATIVE AMERICAN SHARE OF SCREEN**



# NATIVE AMERICANS' SHARE OF SCREEN IS LESS THAN 1/4 OF THEIR PRESENCE IN POPULATION ESTIMATES





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### **ADVERTISERS AND INCLUSIVE TELEVISION CONTENT**

As advertisers look for new ways to express their values and engage an increasingly diverse consumer base, consideration of on-screen inclusion is an additional advertising strategy. Advertisers are also looking to avoid content that is not well received by the identity groups represented in the storylines. Understanding a program's inclusiveness along with the reception of the content by the people represented in it can inform brand safety plans.

Many brands are actively seeking to invest an equitable share of their advertising spend in programs that are inclusive. We reviewed the top advertisers in programs inclusive of Black women and found 86% invested 7% or more of their total ad spend for 2019 in programs Inclusive of Black women—an investment that reflects the proportion of Black women in our population estimates. For LGBTQ ad spend, we found that 80% of the top advertisers invested equitably in programs that were inclusive of LGBTQ talent.

IN 2019, MORE THAN 80% OF TOP ADVERTISERS
INVESTED THEIR AD SPEND IN PROGRAMS INCLUSIVE OF BLACK WOMEN AND LGBTQ TALENT.



# THE VALUE OF BEING SEEN

In this first-ever report, we have shown progress and opportunities to improve representation and inclusion on TV. Highlights include:

- Overall, representation in on-screen programming is low for multiple identity groups across all media platforms. Streaming fares better for inclusion followed by broadcast and cable.
- Viewing audiences are increasingly seeking content that tells their stories. As a result, people are migrating to platforms that have broad and more diverse content offerings. In 2019, Black and Hispanic TV households had among the highest cord-cutting rates in the U.S. SVOD shows strong representation for Hispanic, East Asian and Black people, corresponding to their increase in adoption of streaming platforms at higher rates than the general market.
- All audiences, regardless of how they identify, like to see diversity in the content they view on TV. Programs with more diverse casts yield higher audience ratings for all viewers when compared to shows that have low diverse representation.
- Quality of representation matters too. The themes and narratives depicted onscreen can contribute to identity formation and social perceptions. As the industry seeks to improve diversity on-screen, content creators and publishers should consider the context in which women, people of color, and LGBTQ talent is presented. Equally important is investing in marketing those diverse programs so that they are watched.

The first step to creating an inclusive society is for people to feel seen and be seen. The stories told, the characters portrayed and the experiences shared on screen help people feel empowered and learn about those who are different. The insights in this report underscore the power of the media industry in supporting a more inclusive narrative for all. Together, let's use that power to break traditional stereotypes, give voice to underrepresented groups and help society move towards a more inclusive future.



# METHODOLOGY & SOURCING

### 1. Race/ethnicity explanation of identity groups.:

- Race/ethnicity was coded into the following categories: White, Black, South/Southeast Asian, Hispanic/Latinx\*, Native American/Native Alaskan, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Multiracial, and Middle Eastern/North African (MENA). The MENA category contains persons descended from the following nationalities: Algeria, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Palestine, and Yemen. Ethiopia and Sudan are sometimes included. Transnational ethnic groups from the MENA region as well as pan-ethnic groups such as Arab, Middle Eastern, and North African.
- \* Hispanic/Latinx includes people of Spanish and Brazilian descent

### 2. Gender explanation

• Gender was coded according to the following categories: male, female and non-binary.

### 3. LGBTQ explanation

The following identities were coded as "select all that apply" and were rolled-up into LGBTQ:
 Transgender, Gender fluid, Queer, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Pansexual, Asexual, Intersex, Other. Non-binary folks are also counted in LGBTQ. Only publicly, self-identified talent is coded. Children under 18 were not coded.

### 4. Top 10 credited actors

Actors are ranked by number of episode occurrences in the program for 2019. Talent associated
with each program and their episode occurrences were sampled from Gracenote Studio System and
Gracenote Global Video Data. The top 10 actors were coded for every program.

### 5. Share of Screen Definition

• Percentage of representation of the Top 10 recurring cast by identity group, weighted by episode occurrence and viewing minutes. Share of screen (SOS) tells us the percentage of an identity group that appears on-screen as a recurring cast member. For Example: (Black women cast / Total Cast) multiplied by the number of episodes Black women appeared throughout the year multiplied by P2+ viewing minutes of that program for the year.

### 6. IOI definition

• Inclusion Opportunity Index (IOI) is Share of Screen / Universe Estimate. The IOI illustrates representation and parity quantifying how appearance on screen for an identity group compares to their Nielsen Universe Estimate.

### 7. IAI definition

Inclusion Audience Index is Share of Screen / Audience Share. The IAI metric illustrates the viewing
contribution from a particular identity group compared to their representation on-screen. IAI allows
us to answer questions about the correlation of on-screen presence in programming and its ability
to draw diverse viewers.

### 8. Television Methodology

- a. Programs analyzed:
  - Linear: first-run episodes of the top 100 Broadcast and Top 100 Cable programs, as ranked by P18+ Live+7 ratings across 2019
  - SVOD: Top 100 SVOD programs, as ranked by P18+ ratings across 2019.
  - For both linear and SVOD, sports, movies, and animation were excluded, as were programs with fewer than 5 telecasts. Total TV, Platform, and Genre insights are based on this sample.
- b. Top 10 programs from Broadcast, Cable, and SVOD for Hispanic, Black, and Asian people were also analyzed.
- c. Television data are derived from Nielsen's National TV Panel that is based on a sample of over 45,000 homes that are selected based on area probability sampling. Live+Time-shifted TV (PUT) includes Live usage plus any playback viewing within the measurement period.

Time-shifted TV is playback primarily on a DVR but includes playback of encoded content from video on demand, DVD recorders, server based DVRs and services like Start Over. Total Use of Television (TUT) includes Live TV + Time-shifted TV as well as TV-connected devices (DVD, Game Console, Internet Connected Device). TV-connected devices include content being viewed on the TV screen through these devices. This includes when these devices are in use for any purpose, not just for accessing media content. For example, Game Console also includes when it is being used to play video games. Internet Connected Device usage includes Smart TV app usage. Data used in this report is inclusive of multicultural audiences.

### 9. Population/UEs

- Nielsen Universe Estimates for P2+ and all available identify groups.
- LGBT Demographic Data Interactive. (January 2019). Los Angeles, CA: The Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

### 10. Video Descriptors

- Video Descriptors are a comprehensive set of descriptors bound by a unified hierarchical Video Descriptors Taxonomy. The descriptors are used to comprehensively describe a program across the various Video Descriptors Types like Theme, Character etc. The data set is created by specially-trained Gracenote editors using a rigorous tagging process to ensure a high-quality and consistent metadata product. Each video descriptor assigned to a program has a Video Descriptor Weight associated with it. The weights give the degree of importance of the descriptor for the program.
- 11. Celebrity data is sourced from Gracenote Studio System and the Gracenote Inclusion Analytics research team.
- 12. Episode occurrence and genre data is sourced from Gracenote Global Video metadata.

# **CONTRIBUTORS**

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**Nielsen Business Resource Groups** 

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