A female doctor on the female Doctor and reimagining the media industry

Dr Lorna Jowett
Thursday 4th November, 5pm – 6.30pm

Doctor Who is almost always headline news in the UK, and beyond, and it serves as a high profile example of the successes, and the shortcomings, of UK television.

RadioTimes.com

TV GUIDE ∨   TV ∨   STREAMING ∨   FILM ∨   SPORT   TECH ∨   BLACK

Doctor Who: Who will play the next Doctor?

With Russell T Davies returning as Doctor Who showrunner, we have a few more clues for who could replace Jodie Whittaker.

BBC Boss Promises 'Radical' Change for 'Doctor Who' After Jodie Whittaker Exits

Martin Holmes
AUGUST 26, 8:23 AM   16 COMMENTS

As Emma Nordin notes, the current social media culture means that 'critical voices [often fans] are expected to be heard and taken into consideration' by producers of popular media (2019).

⚡Rachel Reed⚡
@RachelLeeReed

Follow

uh @DoctorWho_BBCA originally posted this as "The Doctor and her wife" but then deleted it and changed it to "Jodie Whittaker meets

Madie Raybin🏳️‍🌈
@MadieRaybin

Follow

Jodie is the Doctor. Therefore this is her meeting HER wife. You guys are aware you can't suddenly be uncomfortable with this, right?

#DoctorWho

#DoctorWho @ SDCC✔ @DoctorWho_BBCA
Jodie Whittaker meets the Doctor's wife, Alex Kingston at #SDCC
#DoctorWho

12:54 AM - 21 Jul 2018

BBC Boss Promises 'Radical' Change for 'Doctor Who' After Jodie Whittaker Exits

the female *Doctor Who*

2017: BBC announces casting of Jodie Whittaker as 13th Doctor

Childhood ruined 😐 🔫
#DoctorWho

DOCTOR WHO 13th Doctor Announcement Bingo

I'm not a sexist but…	I'm not a misogynist	I'm never watching	This has ruined my	This has ruined my childhood!
What next… (See dalek/ cyberman in a dress, K9 with lipstick etc				This is part of the gay agenda!
Bring back David Tenant!				Wanting to now Donald Trumps reaction.
Anything about parking the Tardis.				I'm writing to the Daily Mail!
I'm writing to my MP!	I've burnt my multi coloured scarf!	I've put my boxsets on eBay!	I'm only watching Star Wars from now on!	I'm emigrating!
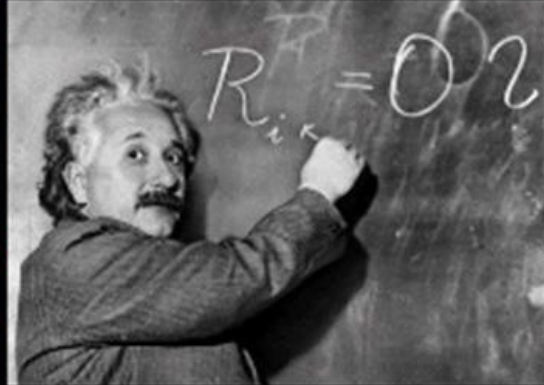
TheOwenSter 4 hours ago 0 subscribers
A woman really What's next a watermelon?
30

Matthew Gilligan 2 hours ago 110 subs
I'm not a sexist, but I don't like it.
Reply · 180

JustWHY? 6 minutes ago 0 subscribers
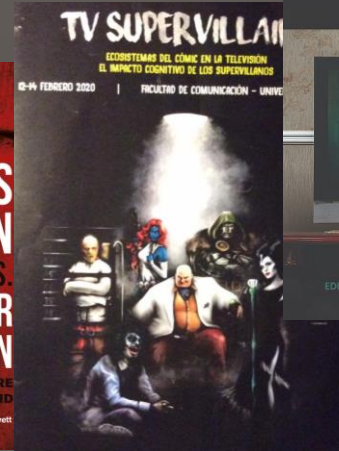I guess the Doctor degenerated this time.
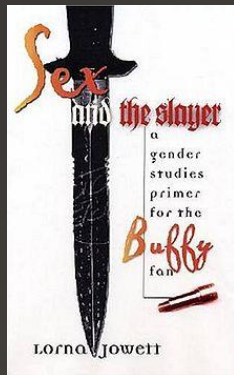
a female doctor

2013

2005
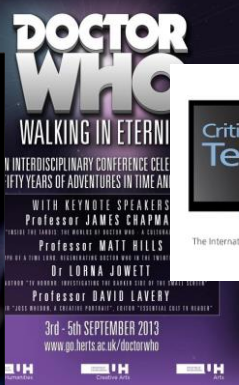
2017
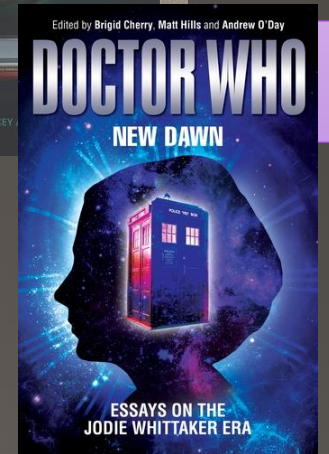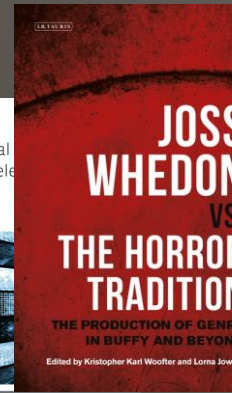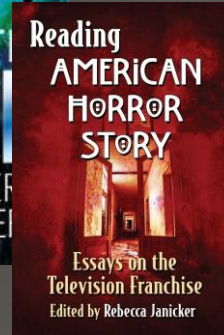
2021

a female doctor: publication timeline

A female doctor: planning the book
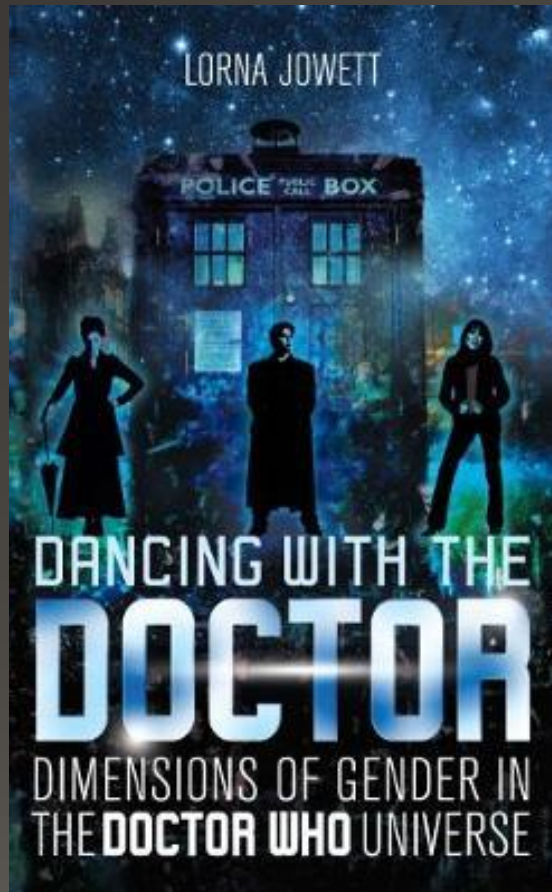
David Owens
@asoundreaction
Follow

My 8-year-old daughter pumped her fist and shouted "yes!" when the new @bbcdoctorwho was revealed. Think that tells you all you need to know.
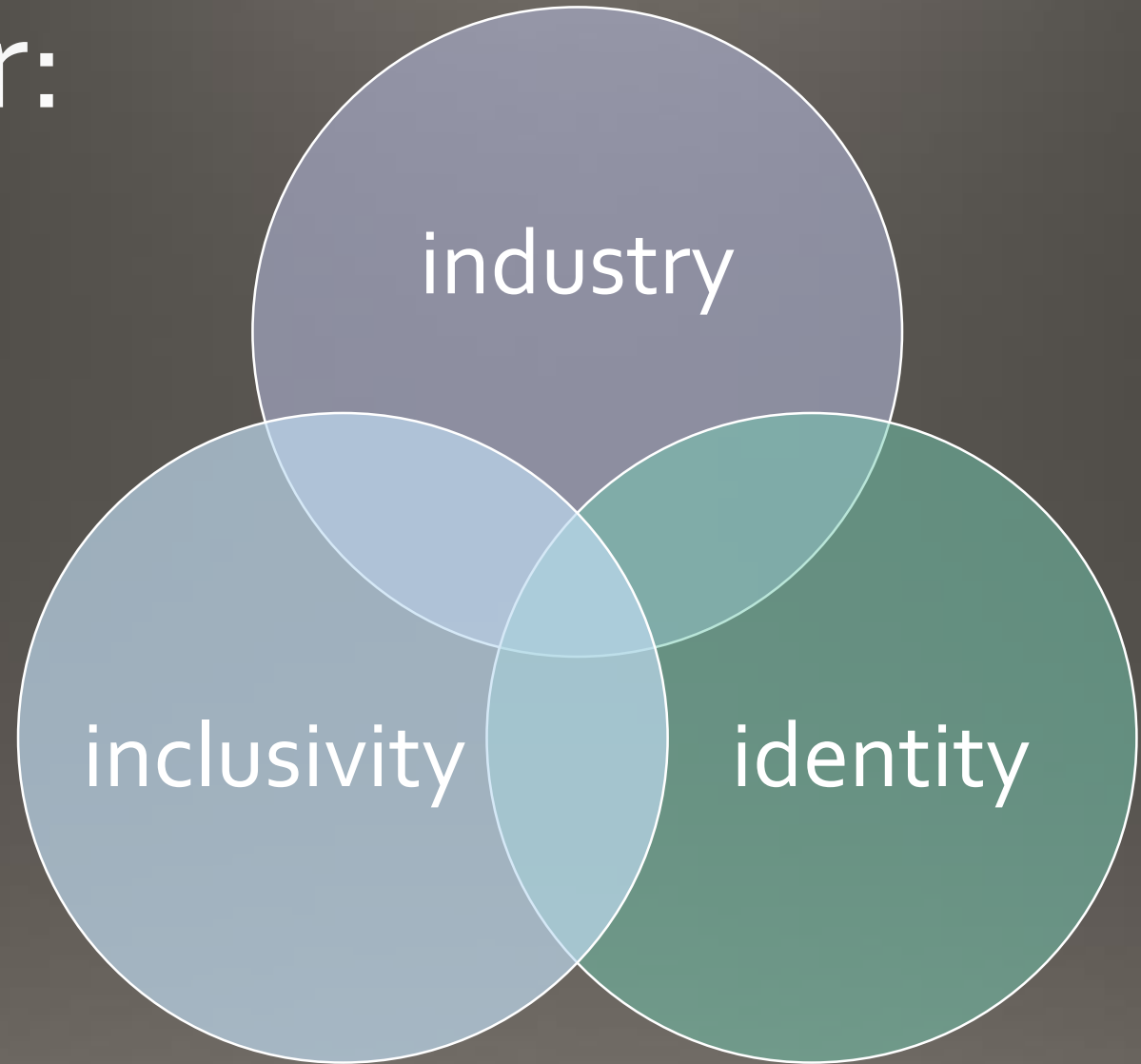
4:47 PM - 16 Jul 2017 from Cardiff, Wales

39 Retweets 99 Likes

2   39   99

a female doctor: research and teaching

industry

inclusivity

identity

representation on screen

Past decades have seen female characters become more prominent in supposedly male-targeted genres such as action, horror and science fiction, with scholars analysing how characters such as the female action hero or slasher horror's final girl challenge and uphold conventions of genre and gender.

However...

IRON MAN 1hr 2mins

ANT MAN 38mins

THOR 45mins

BLACK WIDOW 33mins

WAR MACHINE 35mins

VALKARIE 8mins

HULK 40mins

HAWKEYE 37mins

CAPTAIN AMERICA 1hr 6mins

NEBULA 41mins

OKOYE 6mins

CAPTAIN MARVEL 15mins

WONG 6mins

ROCKET 36mins

representation on screen

Women on *Doctor Who*

THE REAL GREATEST WOMAN OF DOCTOR WHO. EVER.

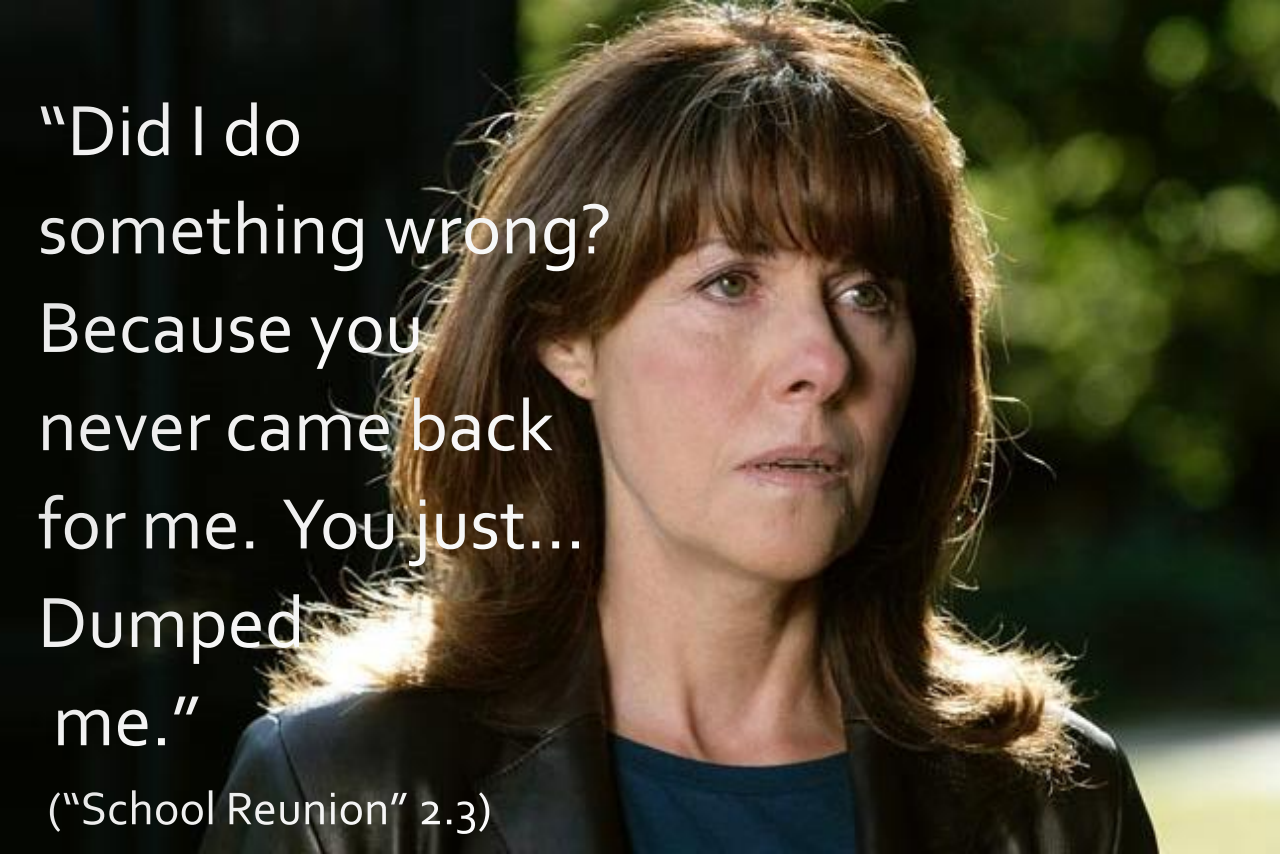"Did I do something wrong? Because you never came back for me. You just... Dumped me."

("School Reunion" 2.3)

women of *Doctor Who*

'I had a nasty feeling that it might get overlooked again. . . . But then I saw the TV schedules. . . . After more than thirty years, I finally felt appreciated by the BBC'

(Sladen and Hudson 2012, 319).

THE Sarah Jane ADVENTURES

representation on screen

85% of women said "sometimes I feel media and culture are blind to how much they stereotype women."

66% said they have actively switched off films or TV shows if they felt they were negatively stereotyping them, while 1 in 4 women said that they had stopped watching a film/TV show because there weren't enough female characters, rising to nearly half (46%) of US Millennials.
(Geena Davis Institute, 2017)

Geena Davis Institute
on Gender in Media

representation behind the camera

'There are a large number of programme series showing zero employment rates of women directors. Many of the most popular series on British television, and many high profile programmes which represent the pinnacle of ambition for television directors, have never been directed by a woman'
(Directors UK report 2014, 5)

'I would say on *Doctor Who*, from the second of the reboot, that's what made me want to do it. That was eight seasons ago!'

(director Rachel Talalay in Brew 2014)

representation behind the camera

Follows & Kreager with Gomes, 2016.

50.1% of all film students in the UK and 49.4% of new entrants in the film industry are women.

27.2% of short films are directed by women.

21.7% of publicly funded films have a woman director.

16.1% of low-budget films (under £500,000) are directed by women.

12.8% of mid-budget films (£1-10 million) are directed by women.

3.3% of big-budget feature films (over £30 million) are directed by women.

Representation behind the camera

'Screenwriters are directly involved in representational processes, in producing views on and of the world, images and narratives for others to consume'

(Conor 2014, 104).

'Getting to play in the Doctor Who toy box is a dream come true. It's a total honour to contribute to a show that has brought me such joy as a fan'

(writer Sarah Dollard in Jusino 2015).

Representation behind the camera

Me is who I am now. No-one's mother, daughter, wife. My own companion. Singular. Unattached. Alone.

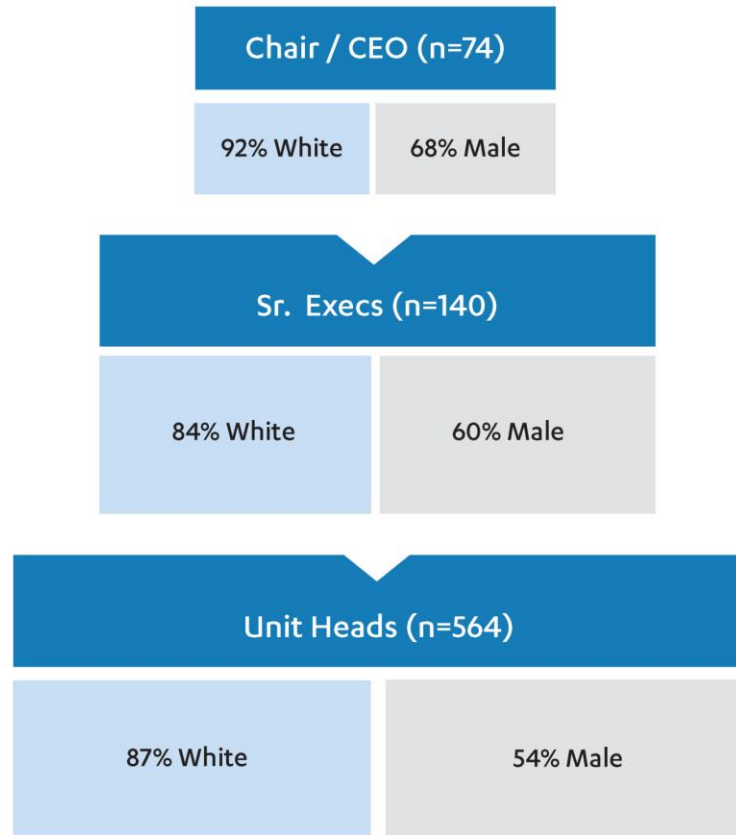'The Woman Who Lived' (9.6) writ. Catherine Tregenna

'Face the Raven' (9.10) writ. Sarah Dollard

BBC international women's day photo 2015

diversity behind the camera

FIGURE 1: TV Executives, September 2020

Chair / CEO (n=74)
92% White — 68% Male

Sr. Execs (n=140)
84% White — 60% Male

Unit Heads (n=564)
87% White — 54% Male

UCLA College Social Sciences
ENGAGING LA, CHANGING THE WORLD

Overview: Degrees of Underrepresentation, Gains and Losses, 2018-19 Season*

Arena	Minorities	Women
Broadcast Scripted Leads	< 2 to 1	< 2 to 1
Cable Scripted Leads	< proportionate	< proportionate
Digital Scripted Leads	< 2 to 1	proportionate
Broadcast Scripted Creators	< 4 to 1	< 2 to 1
Cable Scripted Creators	< 3 to 1	> 2 to 1
Digital Scripted Creators	4 to 1	< 2 to 1
Broadcast Episodes Directed	< 2 to 1	< 2 to 1
Cable Episodes Directed	< 2 to 1	< 2 to 1
Digital Episodes Directed	> 2 to 1	< 2 to 1
Credited Broadcast Writers	< 2 to 1	< 2 to 1
Credited Cable Writers	< 2 to 1	< 2 to 1
Credited Digital Writers	< 2 to 1	< 2 to 1
Network Heads**	5 to 1	< 2 to 1

*Gains since the 2016-17 season highlighted in blue, losses in gold.
**Compared to 2015

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Behind the cameras of *Doctor Who*

'without any doubt, one of the most influential creative figures in television today' (Richardson 2006)
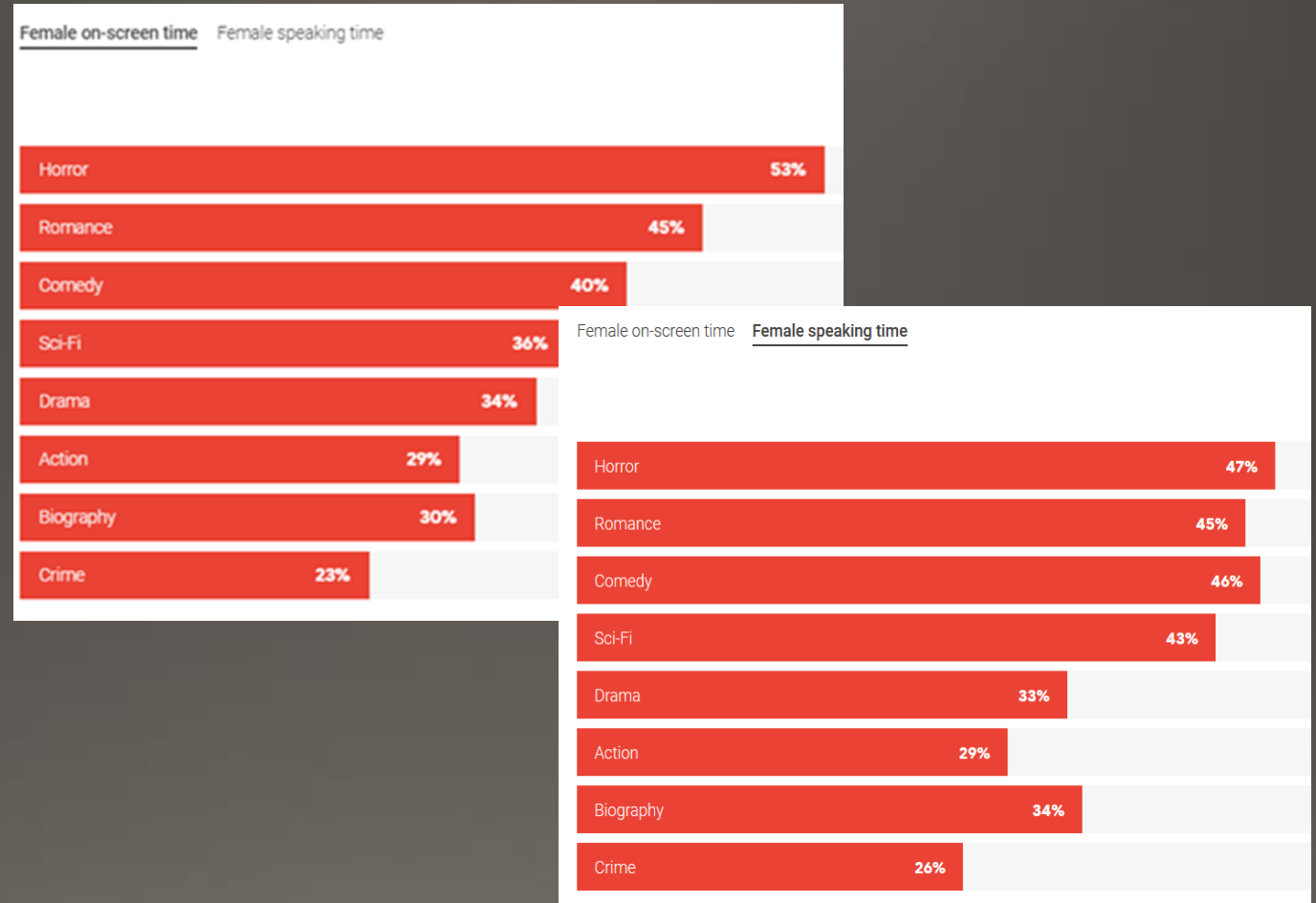

An Adventure in Space and Time (2013)

representation: female characters (US media)

•*Across platforms, the percentage of female characters in __speaking roles__ declined from 45% in 2018-19 to 43% in 2019-20 (see Figure 3).* By platform, females comprised 42% of speaking characters on broadcast programs, 44% of characters on cable programs, and 43% of characters on streaming programs.

•*Females comprised 45% of __major characters__ on broadcast, cable and streaming programs.* This represents no change from 2018-19 (see Figure 4). By platform, females accounted for 44% of major characters on broadcast programs, 45% on cable programs, and 45% on streaming programs.

(Lauzen, 'Boxed In 2019-20: Women On Screen and Behind the Scenes in Television', 2020)

Female on-screen time   Female speaking time

Horror	53%
Romance	45%
Comedy	40%
Sci-Fi	36%
Drama	34%
Action	29%
Biography	30%
Crime	23%

Female on-screen time   **Female speaking time**

Horror	47%
Romance	45%
Comedy	46%
Sci-Fi	43%
Drama	33%
Action	29%
Biography	34%
Crime	26%

('The women missing from the silver screen and the technology used to find them.' nd. *Google).*

gender and genre

Horror scholarship: the abject, body horror, castration/ phallic symbolism, the male gaze, voyeurism, female passivity, female victimhood, women in jeopardy, female monstrosity

BUT

Horror has 'provided me with the best, most interesting characters—really cool, smart, interesting, darkly funny women, who I haven't found in a lot of other places' (actor Katharine Isabelle in Fordy 2015).

real horror

1. The everyday for many women is horrific. (Men are afraid that women will laugh at them. Women are afraid that men will kill them.)

2. Horror allows women to experience emotions that in the everyday might be repressed—fear, horror, disgust, violent rage, or violent glee. Sara Ahmed debates how feminism becomes "sensational," as feminists experience or feel the effects of it on personal and social/cultural levels.... Ahmed also identifies "the political labor necessary of having to insist that what we are describing is not just what we are feeling or thinking".

(Jowett 2018, 210)

next book: with Stacey Abbott

Women Creators of TV Horror

- interrogating inequalities of the television industry and the horror genre

- highlighting work of women creating horror

- a series of historical and contemporary case studies of and interviews with women creators of horror above and below the line

audiences respond to female characters

fans use online spaces and incorporate some concerns of second-wave feminism, specifically sexual victimisation and the male gaze, but reject other aspects of postmodern feminism

resulting in what [Alex] Naylor argues are 'forms of pop culture critique that are not grounded in outright rejection but in combinations of fascination and frustration which are not so dissimilar in tone to the invested and passionate discourses of fandom' (2016, 43).
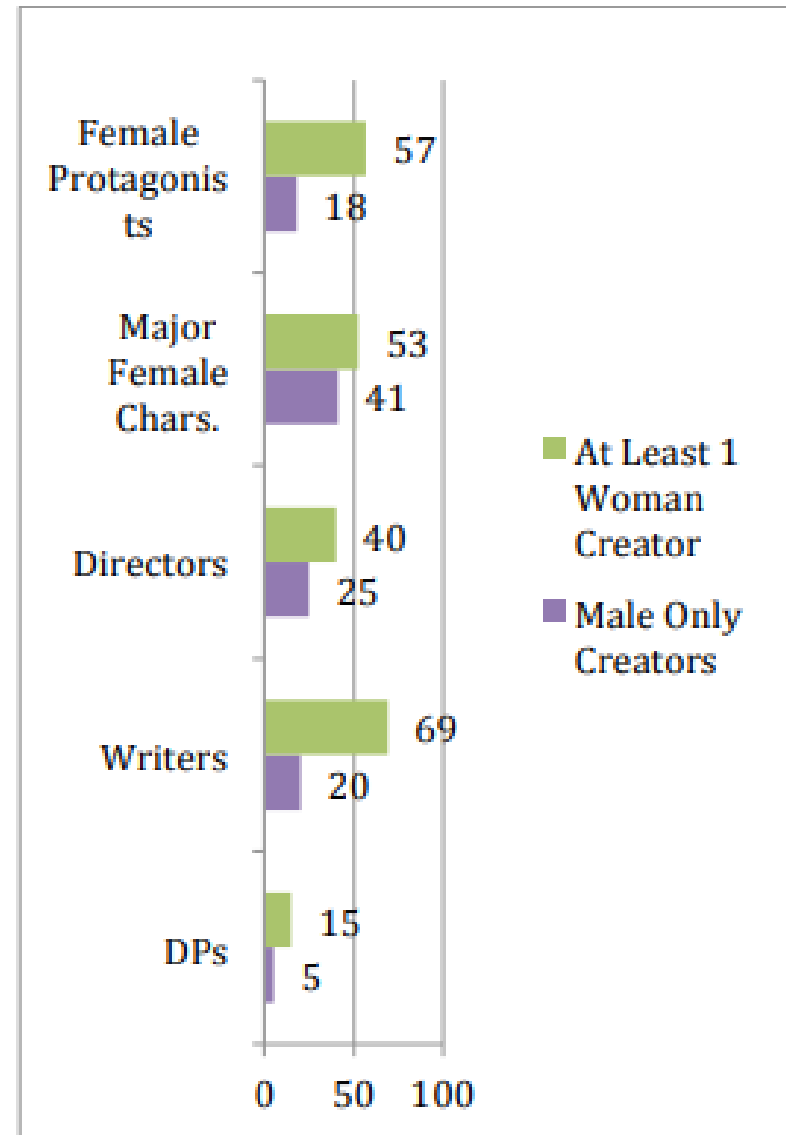

THE PERSONAL IS POLITICAL

benefits of diversity

(Lauzen, 'Boxed In 2019-20: Women On Screen and Behind the Scenes in Television', 2020)

Figure 15.
Comparison of Programs with at Least 1 Woman Creator vs. Programs with Exclusively Male Creators

benefits of diversity

Fewer Black-led stories get told, and when they are, these projects have been consistently underfunded and undervalued, despite often earning higher relative returns than other properties.

The value of achieving racial equity in Hollywood

Continue to next section

$10 billion

is largely shut out of those critical roles.

Emerging Black actors receive significantly fewer chances early in their careers to make their mark in leading roles, compared with white actors, and they have a lower margin for error.

(Dunn, Lyn, Onyeador, and Zegeye 2021)

Ryan Murphy's (*American Horror Story, Scream Queens*) 'Half' initiative aims to fill 50% of directing positions by women, people of colour and members of the LGBTQ+ community, and creates mentorship opportunities on all of these shows.

HALF Initiative

'purposeful research' 'disruptive innovation'

- 'Take responsibility for effecting positive social change
- Live in accordance with your own values
- Work empathetically with those around you to effect positive change '

'a personalised, emotional connection that transcends quality to transform individuals for the betterment of themselves and society'

Changemaking: "Spotting a social or environmental problem, and having the skills and grit to do something about it."