#TAKETHELEAD: A Review and Comparison of STARZ Diversity Data to Industry Averages

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Developed in partnership with STARZ
The Center for Scholars & Storytellers (CSS), based in the Psychology Department at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), was commissioned to evaluate how STARZ, a global streaming media company, compares to the rest of the television industry in terms of diverse representation of gender, race, and their intersection on-screen, behind the camera, and among Senior Leadership (see page 4 for definitions of key terms). CSS’ findings indicate that STARZ’s diversity data for the reported categories is above the industry average in nearly all instances and in particular when comparing their diversity data for people of color (POC). For this report, CSS first tabulated STARZ’s diversity data for talent\(^1\) attached to STARZ’s original series (scripted) that aired or will air between January 2020 through December 2021, as well as series that are in production as of February 2021 and for their Senior Leadership as of February 2021. CSS then compared these findings to the most currently available data on diversity in the United States television industry\(^2\) for similar metrics, compiled from the UCLA Diversity Report and recent reports from the Writers Guild of America West (WGAW) and San Diego State University (SDSU) (for the full list of methods and data sources see pages 13-16). CSS recognizes that these studies report on seasons that aired prior to the release dates of the seasons of the STARZ shows reviewed for this report. The likelihood is that the metrics for the industry may have changed in either a positive or negative direction (please see limitations on page 15).

\(^1\) Talent includes Showrunners, Executive Producers (writing), Writers (all writing staff), Directors, Series Leads (first credited actor), and Series Regulars (top eight credited actors).

\(^2\) Across broadcast, cable, and digital scripted half-hour and hour series.
As a global streaming media company, STARZ offers audiences the opportunity to immerse themselves in something familiar or step into a place where they can discover a world and characters very different from themselves. While the world we live in is filled with unique and diverse stories and people, what we see on screen is not always reflective of that.

STARZ has had an ongoing programming mandate that focuses on narratives by, about and for women and underrepresented audiences and is expanding that commitment into #TAKETHELEAD, which defines our guiding principle across every facet of our business. #TAKETHELEAD is in the DNA of our company as indicative of our programming choices and hiring decisions, as illustrated through our complex storytelling and nuanced character portrayals and the incredible representation across our casts and crews.

We strive to seek out and cultivate authentic voices to share their untold stories in order to provide our viewers with more original storytelling and take them into new worlds, introducing them to characters that they may not have seen on television before.

As we evolve as a global network, it is important to reflect on our work, ensuring we hold ourselves accountable to the mandate we set and truly identify whether we have been fulfilling our mission. This study by UCLA’s Center for Scholars & Storytellers will help us evaluate how we are measuring up to our directive, identify opportunities for continued improvement towards more and better inclusion in the industry and stay in-tune with our viewers to invest in making sure we really understand and listen to them.

While we are proud of the achievements we have made, we know we can always grow. We pledge a commitment to our viewers and the industry to continue this annual study allowing us to continue identifying areas of growth. It is our hope that as we #TAKETHELEAD in diversity and inclusion, we set an example for our industry peers as we all look forward to a more diverse and inclusive world.

Jeffrey Hirsch
President & Chief Executive Officer

- On-Screen* (STARZ’s Series Leads): 57.9% Women and 63.2% People of Color
- Behind the Camera* (STARZ’s Showrunners): 54.6% Women and 45.5% People of Color
- Leadership³ (STARZ’s Executive Team): 75% Women and 50% People of Color, all who are women

CSS verified STARZ’s own data for its Senior Executives (defined by them as direct reports to the President & CEO) but was not able to make a direct comparison to industry averages due to a lack of industry data matching the scope of this specific category. We list this finding as well as a few highlights from our comparisons below to give visibility to their good work.

³ Leadership stats were not in comparison study but verified from STARZ’s diversity data on their Senior Executives (defined as direct reports to the President & CEO).
* On-Screen and Behind the Camera stats above are from comparison and listed in our findings.
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Below are definitions of major terms used for our findings.

**Directors:** All series directors.

**Executive Producers (EPs):** All writing EPs; does not include non-writing EPs or Showrunners.

**Industry Average:** Average of industry data for broadcast, cable, and streaming half-hour and hour series according to one of the data sources listed on page 16.

**POC:** People of Color includes Black, Indigenous, Asian, Native, Latinx, Black Latinx, Multi-ethnic/ Multi-racial, and Middle Eastern or North African (MENA).

**Senior Leadership:** Chairs/CEOs, Senior Management (Presidents, COOs, CTOs, and CFOs), along with EVPs and SVPs at TV Networks and TV Studios.

**Series Lead:** First credited actor.

**Series Regulars:** Top eight credited actors including the series lead.

**Showrunner:** The person who has overall creative authority and management responsibility for a television program.

**WOC:** Women of color includes women classified by the above definition for POC.

**Writers:** All writing staff, including showrunners.
FINDINGS
At the Showrunner level, STARZ hired a majority of women (54.6%), a difference of over 64% from the industry average. In terms of POC, the percentage difference between Starz and the industry average exceeds 123%. Twelve of 19 STARZ series considered in this report feature a woman as the single showrunner or co-showrunner.\(^4\)

In recent years, the television industry\(^5\) has emphasized a need to hire more women of color in writing and directing positions in order to create more authentically inclusive stories. STARZ appears to have heeded this call, greatly exceeding industry averages for hiring women writers of color and women directors of color.

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\(^4\) One series did not have a designated Showrunner at the time of this report’s publishing.

STARZ hired nearly 53% more women to serve as Executive Producers than the industry average and exceeded the hiring practices of racially diverse Executive Producers by 85%.

Note: Executive Producers here are defined as individuals who oversee production from the top, including script creation. This count does not include non-writing EPs or Showrunners. Industry data pulled from the WGAW Report.
STARZ had close to 22% more women and over 42% more people of color on their writing staff than the industry average.

STARZ hired nearly 79% more women of color to their writing staff than the industry average.

Note: Writers include all series writing staff, including Showrunners. Industry data pulled from the WGAW Report.

Note: Industry data pulled from the UCLA Diversity Report.
STARZ’s productions were directed by over 37% more women and above 77% more POC than the industry average.

STARZ created more directing opportunities for women of color, exceeding the industry average by over 88%.

Note: Directors include all series directors. Industry data pulled from the SDSU Report for gender and the UCLA Diversity Report for race.

Note: Industry data pulled from the UCLA Diversity Report.

Note: This includes transgender women. Due to a lack of industry data, transgender women were omitted from the above comparative count of women.
STARZ’s hiring practices for women in series lead roles exceeded the industry by nearly 25% and STARZ featured just over 78% more series leads of color than the industry average.

Note: Series lead is defined by the first credited actor. Industry average pulled from the UCLA Diversity Report.

The majority of STARZ’s series were led by POC.

Vida

P-Valley
STARZ’s productions exceeded 48% more POC series regulars than the industry average but fell behind the industry by nearly 5% for women in series regular roles.

One area in which STARZ lags behind industry averages is in on-screen series regulars. While it is clearly preferable to have on-screen numerical gender parity, CSS’s recent report on authentically inclusive representation notes that the nature of the portrayals must be considered. Many STARZ TV series (e.g., P-Valley⁶) are called out for their specificity and non-stereotypical portrayals, perhaps indicating that STARZ’s high number of women and POC Showrunners is contributing to more nuanced storytelling.

STARZ featured 58% more women of color in series regular roles than the industry average.

STARZ outperformed the industry with their Senior Leadership hiring practices with over 9% more women and over 81% more POC.

Note: Senior Leadership includes Chairs/CEOs, Senior Management (Presidents, COOs, CTOs, and CFOs), along with EVPs and SVPs at TV Networks and TV Studios. Industry data pulled from the UCLA Diversity Report. Please see page 4 for the complete definitions list and page 16 for more information about data from the industry.

CSS urges the television industry to strive to reflect the rich diversity of the overall U.S. population within Senior Leadership and when assembling talent in front of and behind the camera.
METHOD

Sample:
CSS conducted a numerical analysis examining race, gender, and their intersection (when comparable industry data was available) for a total of 501 hired roles for STARZ’s original programming and network management: Talent (n = 465) and Senior Management (n = 36).

Materials:
STARZ provided CSS with a list of talent attached to recent seasons of their original shows (for specific shows see page 16) and Senior Leadership. The materials defined each employee by their role on the show or within the Senior Leadership (see definitions on page 4).

Analysis:
Two trained research assistants (RAs) used a detailed coding manual to individually categorize the race, gender, and their intersection\(^7\) of each Showrunner, Executive Producer, Writer, Director, Series Lead, Series Regular, and Senior Leadership Member included in the STARZ data set. The RAs utilized public platforms including IMDb, Studio System, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook to identify the race and gender of each individual. In a few instances, the information for the STARZ employee could not be found or explicitly verified, and as a result, CSS did not include their race or gender in the final analysis (i.e., missing data). After conducting the individual analyses, the RAs compared their categorizations to ensure agreement. In the rare instance of disagreement, they worked together to come to a consensus.

\(^7\) When comparative industry data was available.
Next, they went through the categorized data set to calculate the number of men, women, nonbinary individuals, White persons, POC, WOC, and White women represented at each level for STARZ talent and Senior Leadership. In a few cases, the STARZ team informed CSS that their records indicated a different race/ethnicity. In those instances, CSS reexamined publicly available records to determine whether the data from STARZ could be verified. If so, the classification was changed and if not, CSS’ classification was kept. No single industry report contained all of the necessary comparative data for each category, so the STARZ numbers were compared to industry averages pulled from the latest reports from UCLA, the WGAW, and SDSU (see page 15 for more information). CSS prioritized the UCLA Diversity Report for the majority of the industry data and pulled from the reports from the WGAW and SDSU to fill in any gaps. These comparisons were based on averages across broadcast scripted, cable scripted, and digital scripted, due to a lack of comparative data for only cable scripted shows for each category considered. In some cases, talent (e.g. actors, directors, etc.) worked on multiple shows or filled multiple roles on one show. As such, they were counted as an individual for each show and/or role. In all instances, as best possible, the RAs compared apples to apples (e.g., Sr. VP and above for Senior Leadership, etc.) for STARZ’s data with the data gathered from the other reports, in some cases combining findings such as leadership data from UCLA’s report that was broken into categories named Unit Heads (EVPs and SVPs), Senior Management (Presidents, COOs, CTOs, and CFOs), and Chairs/CEOs.
A limitation of this study is that the industry data came from several reports, each examining various seasons (e.g. 2018-2019, 2019-2020). By contrast, the STARZ data came from their current and future programming. CSS was also unable to directly compare some of the more specific diversity data collected by STARZ to the television industry due to a lack of comparative industry data. Additionally, CSS relied on publicly available information to identify the race and gender of STARZ talent and Senior Leadership. This meant that some race and gender identifications determined by CSS may not align with how individuals in this report self-identify.
1. STARZ’s Senior Leadership current as of February 2021.

2. STARZ’s talent data pulled from the following shows:
   - American Gods (Season 3, currently airing), Becoming Elizabeth (Season 1, in production in 2021), Blindspotting (Season 1, set to air 2021), Black Mafia Family (Season 1, set to air 2021), Dangerous Liaisons (Season 1, in production in 2021), The Girlfriend Experience (Season 3, set to air 2021), Heels (Season 1, set to air 2021), Hightown (Season 1, originally aired 2020), Outlander (Season 5, originally aired 2020), Power (Season 6, originally aired 2019-2020), Power Book II: Ghost (Season 1, originally aired 2020), Power Book III: Raising Kanan (Season 1, set to air 2021), Power Book IV: Force (Season 1, in production in 2021), P-Valley (Season 1, originally aired 2020), Run the World (Season 1, set to air 2021), Shining Vale (Season 1, in production 2021), The Spanish Princess (Season 2, originally aired 2020), Step Up (Season 3, in production in 2021), Vida (Season 3, originally aired 2020).

   - Data is from broadcast scripted, cable scripted, and digital scripted half-hour and hour shows that originally aired or began streaming between September 1, 2018 and August 31, 2019, the 2018-2019 season.
   - To represent Senior Leadership, we combined and averaged the data from this report for Chairs/CEOs, Senior Management, and Unit Heads (those in charge of different departments at TV Networks and TV Studios, with the titles EVP and SVP).

   - Data is from broadcast scripted, cable scripted, and digital scripted half-hour and hour shows that originally aired or began streaming between September 1, 2019 and August 30, 2020, the 2019-2020 season.

   - Data is from broadcast scripted, cable scripted, and digital scripted half-hour and hour shows that originally aired or began streaming between September 2019 and May 2020.
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Thank you!

To find out more about the work that The Center for Scholars & Storytellers is doing around diversity and inclusion, please visit www.scholarsandstorytellers.com/representation-diversity-inclusion

To download the AIR Report, visit www.scholarsandstorytellers.com/air
For more information about the methods or details about this study, please contact:
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