

Record numbers for women and minorities  
by Bob Papper

By most measures, 2007-2008 was a good year for women and minorities in both TV and radio news, according to the latest RTNDA/Hofstra University Annual Survey. Better than good.

At 28.3 percent, there are more women news directors in television than ever before – eclipsing the old record set in 2003 by almost 2 percent. The percentage of minority news directors in TV also reached an all-time high of 15.5 percent. That's a percent and a half above the previous high in 2000. Overall, minorities in TV news – at 23.6 percent – reached the second highest level ever, not far behind the peak reached in 2001. The percentage of minorities at non-Hispanic stations also rose, but more modestly, coming in third behind 2001 and 2006. And at 9.1, the percentage of minority TV news directors at non-Hispanic stations reached the highest level in the eight years we've tracked that statistic.

Minority numbers in radio rose as well. After years of steady shrinkage, the percentage of minorities rose to 11.8 percent. That's no where near a record, but it's far better than the last several years.

Not all the numbers were on the plus side. Minority radio news directors, which had spiked last year, fell back to down to where it had been.

The bigger picture appears more mixed. In the last 18 years, the minority population in the U.S. has risen 8.1 percent; but the minority workforce in TV news is up 5.8 percent,

and the minority workforce in radio is up by just 1 percent. Still, TV news diversity is far ahead of newspaper (see sidebar).

#### Minority Population v. Minority Broadcast Workforce

	2008	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995	1990
Minority Population in U.S.	34.0%	33.6%	33.2%	32.8%	28.6%	27.9%	25.9%
Minority TV Workforce	23.6	21.5	22.2	21.2	21.0	17.1	17.8
Minority Radio Workforce	11.8	6.2	6.4	7.9	10.0	14.7	10.8

#### Broadcast News Work Force ... Television

	2008	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995
Caucasian	76.3%	78.5%	77.8%	78.8%	79.0%	82.9%
African American	10.1	10.1	9.5	10.3	11.0	10.1
Hispanic	10.3	8.7	9.6	8.7	7.0	4.2
Asian American	2.7	2.3	2.7	1.9	3.0	2.2
Native American	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.3	<1.0	0.6

#### Broadcast News Work Force ... Radio

	2008	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995
Caucasian	88.2%	93.8%	93.6%	92.1%	90%	85.3%
African American	7.8	3.3	2.5	0.7	5	5.7
Hispanic	3.6	0.7	1.9	6.0	3	7.5
Asian American	0.4	1.1	1.8	0.7	1	0.6
Native American	0	1.1	0.2	0.5	1	1.0

In TV, African Americans held steady; Hispanics rose 1.6 percent; Asian Americans were up 0.4 percent; and Native Americans went up by 0.1 percent.

Among non-Hispanic stations, the minority workforce rose to 20.1 percent. That's up from 19.4 percent last year, but it's still below the figure from two years ago of 20.4 percent. At non-Hispanic stations, the minority break down is:

- 10.5 percent African American
- 6.2 percent Hispanic
- 2.9 percent Asian American

- 0.5 percent Native American.

At non-Hispanic stations, Asian Americans rose 0.6 percent; African Americans went up 0.1 percent; while Hispanics and Native Americans were unchanged.

Overall, 82.1 percent of the TV news workforce at Hispanic stations are Hispanic.

Another 15.4 percent are white, 1.8 percent are African American, 0.3 percent Asian American and 0.4 percent Native American.

Men outnumber women for all ethnic groups except Asian Americans and Native Americans. There are 10 percent more African American men than women; 21.4 percent more Hispanic men than women; and 65.1 percent more white men than women. In contrast, there are 50 percent more Asian American women as men, and 50 percent more Native American women as men.

In radio, the picture was mixed. The percentage of African Americans and Hispanics shot up while the percentage of Asian Americans and Native Americans dropped.

#### Broadcast News Directors ... Television - 2008

	2008	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995
Caucasian	84.5%	89.1%	86.8%	88.0%	86%	92.1%
African American	3.7	2.0	4.2	3.9	3	1.6
Hispanic	9.3	7.2	6.0	5.8	9	3.8
Asian American	1.7	1.0	1.2	1.3	2	1.5
Native American	0.8	0.7	1.8	1.0	<1	1.0

#### Broadcast News Directors ... Radio - 2008

	2008	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995
Caucasian	94.1%	88.0%	95.6%	89.0%	94%	91.4%
African American	1.7	4.4	1.9	0.0	3	5.4
Hispanic	3.4	3.8	1.3	8.8	2	2.4
Asian American	0.8	1.9	0.6	0	0	0

Native American	0	1.9	0.6	2.2	1	0.8
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At 15.5, the percentage of minority TV news directors set a new record, eclipsing the old one of 14 percent set back in 2000. In TV, all minority news director groups rose.

In TV, minority news directors were most commonly found in the biggest markets (25.8 percent) and least often in the smallest markets (at 10.3 percent). But minority news directors were also most likely to be in the smallest news departments (at 36.0 percent). Minority news directors were most commonly found in the West (25.4 percent) and the South (15.1 percent) as opposed to the Midwest (7.1 percent) or Northeast (6.7 percent).

At non-Hispanic stations, the percentage of minority TV news directors rose to an all-time high of 9.1 percent, up from last year's 6.5 percent and the previous all-time high of 8.6 percent the year before. Hispanic news directors at non-Hispanic stations rose from last year's 2.5 percent to this year's 3.0 percent. African American news directors rose from 2.2 percent last year to 3.3 percent. Asian Americans went from 1.1 percent to 1.8 percent, and Native Americans edged up from 0.7 percent to 0.9 percent.

In contrast, every minority group of radio news directors fell back from last year's increases. There were no consistent and meaningful patterns based on ownership, market size or geography.

#### Women in Local TV News – 2008

	News Staffs With Women	Women News Directors	Women as Percentage of Work Force	Average Number of Women on Staff
All Television	97.0%	28.3%	40.2%	14.5

Network Affiliates	97.2	27.7	40.2	15.3
Independents	94.4	38.9	41.7	10.0
DMA 1-25	91.2	43.3	40.9	20.6
DMA 26-50	98.0	20.8	37.8	19.5
DMA 51-100	97.9	26.0	39.3	16.2
DMA 101-150	100.0	26.7	41.4	10.9
DMA 151+	96.7	23.0	43.0	8.0
Staff 51+	100.0	28.1	39.3	28.8
Staff 31-50	100.0	18.1	38.8	15.4
Staff 21-30	100.0	28.4	42.7	10.9
Staff 11-20	100.0	31.8	44.0	7.2
Staff 1-10	100.0	24.0	36.4	2.6

At 28.3, the percentage of women TV news directors has set a new record – by almost 2 percent. And it’s worth emphasizing that the percentage of women TV news directors in the RTNDA/Hofstra University Annual Survey is based on a complete station census – not projected from a smaller sample. So 28.3 percent isn’t a rough figure, it’s an exact one. And unlike most past years, women TV news directors are just as likely to be found in the biggest newsrooms and in the biggest markets. That wasn’t the case even a year ago. There’s no meaningful difference geographically, but women are a little less likely to be news director at Fox affiliates (21.4 percent) than the other network affiliates (28.7 percent).

Otherwise, the percentages are little changed. Women have been around 40 percent of the TV news workforce for a decade. Those of you with a sharp eye for numbers may wonder about the first column above. How is it possible to have some market sizes and network affiliates under 100 percent women if all staff sizes are at 100 percent? That’s because the numbers come from different questions on the survey form. All surveys include market size, but not all surveys have staff size. That’s how they can report seemingly contradictory results – when, based on survey research, they’re both accurate.

### Women in Local Radio News - 2008

	News Staffs With Women	Women News Directors	Women as Percentage of Work Force	Average Number of Women on Staff
All Radio	27.5%	20.0%	22.7%	1.0
Major Market	45.5	10.0	36.0	0.8
Large Market	44.4	27.8	21.4	1.5
Medium Market	25.0	22.2	23.6	1.0
Small Market	20.4	15.2	14.8	0.8

The percentages for women in the radio news work force are down a bit from what they've been. The percentage of women radio news directors retrenched from last year's 23.5 percent to this year's 20.0 percent – close to the 20.4 percent of two years ago. Most market sizes fell except large markets. There were no consistent patterns as far as women news directors, although they were slightly more common in the Northeast.

Major markets are those with 1 million or more listeners. Large markets are from 250,000 to 1 million. Medium markets are 50,000 to 250,000. Small markets are fewer than 50,000.

### Minorities in Local TV News - 2008

	News Staffs With Minorities	Minority News Directors	Minorities as Percentage of Work Force	Average Number of Minorities on Staff
All Television	82.5%	15.5%	23.6%	7.3
Network Affiliates	83.9	11.4	21.5	7.1
Independents	80.6	54.3	58.4	11.3
DMA 1-25	75.8	25.8	34.4	13.0
DMA 26-50	76.6	17.0	22.6	8.9
DMA 51-100	90.4	10.6	20.8	7.7
DMA 101-150	81.3	15.6	20.8	4.7
DMA 151+	83.6	10.3	15.5	2.8

Staff 51+	93.2	7.8	24.8	15.6
Staff 31-50	96.3	6.2	19.5	7.2
Staff 21-30	90.9	18.4	23.3	5.8
Staff 11-20	81.8	9.5	17.9	2.7
Staff 1-10	68.0	36.0	39.7	2.6

There was little difference among network affiliates. Independents were the most diverse at 58.4 percent minority. Stations in the West (32.7 percent minority) and South (27.1 percent) were more diverse than stations in the Northeast (13.0 percent) or Midwest (11.5 percent). That's been the case for quite a few years.

Overall, the concentration of blacks was highest in the South (17.9 percent) and lowest in the West (6.4 percent). Hispanics were highest in the West (20.2 percent), with the South at 7.6 percent and the Northeast (3.1 percent) and Midwest (2.3 percent) well behind. Asian Americans were most heavily concentrated in the West (5.1 percent) – as were Native Americans (0.9 percent).

#### Minorities in Local Radio News - 2008

	News Staffs With Minorities	Minority News Directors	Minorities as Percentage of Work Force	Average Number of Minorities on Staff
All Radio	10.1%	5.9%	11.8%	0.3
Major Market	9.1	0	26.7	1.8
Large Market	22.2	13.3	10.0	0.3
Medium Market	10.7	3.9	8.1	0.2
Small Market	4.1	4.9	4.4	0.1

As with last year, there were more minorities at independent stations than group owned (15.0 percent versus 8.5 percent), and more in the West (19.1 percent) and least in the Northeast (2.1 percent).

## TV General Managers - 2008

	Percent Caucasian	Percent Minority	Percent Men	Percent Women
All Television	90.2%	9.8%	83.7%	16.3%
Network Affiliates	92.0	8.0	84.0	16.0
Independents	69.2	30.8	84.6	15.4
DMA 1-25	81.0	19.0	81.4	18.6
DMA 26-50	88.6	11.4	81.8	18.2
DMA 51-100	92.9	7.1	82.4	17.6
DMA 101-150	91.7	8.3	86.0	14.0
DMA 151+	94.4	5.6	86.0	14.0

The percentage of women GMs at stations that run local news edged up again from 15.8 to 16.3 percent. Women GMs were least likely to be found in the smallest (101+) markets, and there were about half as many women GMs in the Northeast as any other part of the country. The only difference by network affiliation was that CBS stations, at 9.6 percent, were half as likely to have women GMs as the other network affiliates (18.5 percent).

The percentage of minority general managers at TV stations that run local news rose from last year (6.4 percent to 9.8 percent). All told, 6.3 percent of non-Hispanic stations (that run news) had minority general managers. That's up from 3.6 percent a year ago. African Americans were 2.7 percent; Asian Americans were 1.6 percent; Hispanic/Latino 1.3 percent; and Native American 0.6 percent.

ABC affiliates were the most likely to have minority GMs. Minority GMs were also most often found in the largest markets but at the smallest stations – and most often in the West. Most of that is the prevalence of Hispanic GMs at Hispanic stations.



Radio General Managers – 2008

	Percent Caucasian	Percent Minority	Percent Men	Percent Women
All Radio	94.9%	5.1%	74.6%	25.4%

At radio stations that run local news, female general managers jumped from 20.3 percent to 25.4 percent, most often at group-owned and less often in markets of 1 million and more.

Minority general managers were little changed from last year’s 5.5 percent and least likely in markets of 1 million and more.

***Bob Papper is professor and chair of the Department of Journalism, Media Studies, and Public Relations at Hofstra University and has worked extensively in radio and TV news. This research was supported by the School of Communications at Hofstra University and the Radio Television News Directors Association.***

**About the Survey**

The RTNDA/Hofstra University Survey was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2007 among all 1,647 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 2,000 radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,241 television stations (75.3 percent) and 138 radio news directors and general managers representing 271 radio stations. Data for women TV news directors are from a complete census and are not projected from a smaller sample.

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**Women & Minorities Sidebars ... 2008**

TV Positions by Gender and Race

	Percent Male	Percent Female	Percent White	Percent Minority	Percent African American	Percent Hispanic/Latino	Percent Asian American	Percent Native American
News Director	71.7%	28.3%	84.5%	15.5%	3.7%	9.3%	1.7%	0.8%

Assistant News Director	51.3	48.7	81.2	18.8	11.1	6.0	0.9	0.9
Managing Editor	69.5	30.5	87.8	12.2	3.7	7.3	<0.1	1.2
Executive Producer	44.8	55.2	85.5	14.5	7.0	5.8	1.6	<0.1
News Anchor	43.2	56.8	75.3	24.7	11.9	9.1	3.5	0.2
Weathercaster	78.4	21.6	91.3	8.7	3.3	4.3	1.1	<0.1
Sports Anchor	92.2	7.8	86.0	14.0	7.6	5.8	0.6	<0.1
News Reporter	43.3	56.7	70.8	29.2	12.4	10.8	5.5	0.6
Sports Reporter	81.3	18.7	83.8	16.2	5.2	6.4	3.2	1.3
Assignment Editor	51.3	48.7	72.5	27.5	13.8	11.0	2.3	0.5
News Producer	35.8	64.2	80.8	19.2	10.0	6.9	2.1	0.2
News Writer	36.6	63.4	76.2	23.8	11.6	8.1	3.5	0.6
News Assistant	25.0	75.0	70.5	29.5	14.7	13.2	1.5	<0.1
Photographer	93.2	6.8	77.4	22.6	10.3	10.5	1.6	0.1
Tape Editor	68.3	31.7	70.1	29.9	13.1	13.9	2.4	0.4
Graphics Specialist	68.0	32.0	79.0	21.0	5.0	13.0	2.0	1.0
Internet Specialist	54.9	45.1	82.9	17.1	6.3	9.1	1.7	<0.1
Art Director	65.8	34.2	81.6	18.4	<0.1	15.8	<0.1	2.6

We ask about gender and ethnicity by position every three years. Having started in 1996, we can see trends going back a dozen years. If there's a surprise, it's how few consistent trends have emerged over that time. But there are some.

News directors are more likely to be female and people of color than a dozen years ago. African American assistant news directors have doubled in that time. Executive producers have moved from a majority male to a majority female.

Among news anchors, the percentage of minorities has been slowly but steadily rising, but the percentage of women has leveled off at about 57 percent. Weathercasters have remained mostly male and mostly white. So are sports anchors, but a little less so these days with both women and minorities making modest inroads.

Women news reporters have also leveled off around the 57 percent mark, and there are more minority reporters than there used to be. Women and minorities have both made gains as sports reporters in the last 12 years.

There are also more minorities on the assignment desk. Women remain almost two-thirds of all TV news producers, but they were there by the time we started asking in 1996, and it hasn't changed since. There are more African American producers than there used to be.

The percentage of women photographers has dropped over the years (although not in the last three). Women and minorities have both made gains among internet specialists.

## Newspapers v. Broadcast

The 2008 survey by the American Society of Newspaper Editors found that minority journalists make up 13.5 percent of newsroom employees at daily newspapers. African Americans were 5.3 percent of the total, Hispanics 4.5 percent, Asian Americans 3.2 percent, and Native Americans 0.5 percent. Women were 37.4 percent.

	Daily Newspapers	TV News
Minority population	13.5%	23.6%
African American	5.3	10.1
Hispanic/Latino	4.5	10.3
Asian American	3.2	2.7
Native American	0.5	0.5
Women	37.4	40.2

	Daily Newspapers	TV News (non-Hispanic only)
Minority population	13.5%	20.1%
African American	5.3	10.5
Hispanic/Latino	4.5	6.2
Asian American	3.2	2.9
Native American	0.5	0.5
Women	37.4	40.2

## For More Information

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