

Over the past few years, the world of mainstream news media has made many strides toward inclusivity and equality. However, despite modern-day perceptions of the news world, sexism is a serious issue that has not fully changed in mainstream news media. Whether it is in the form of broadcasting expectations, the use of female sources, or the overall presence of women in sports media, sexism is still a present issue. It is featured in various forms of mainstream news, but the outlet of broadcasting features very concerning expectations that contribute to this issue.

The world of broadcasting is often filled with inappropriate comments and double standards towards women. In an already male-dominated field, women are forced to live up to high expectations to be able to not only fulfill their roles but also try to avoid the harassment of society. How one wears their makeup or clothing or how one style their hair must fit the expectations set in place by news stations. One television station went as far as implementing an '11-page guide' for on-air female journalists to follow (Finneman and Jenkins, 482). This is just one element of the double standard that female broadcasters face in their industry. Another was demonstrated through a survey sent to 25 state broadcast associations that asked surveyors about their demographic, job, and viewer criticisms. It showed that broadcasters shared a range of criticisms from viewers based on their appearance (Finneman and Jenkins, 485). It was not just females who dealt with the viewers' criticisms; male broadcasters also received comments concerning their appearance. However, the female demographic has to deal with the rigid expectations of broadcasting that continue to evolve due to the downplaying of societal notions of gender (Finneman and Jenkins, 486). Broadcasting is not the only platform that evokes sexism, as the issue is also present in news and journalism.

The representation of women in news and journalism, specifically in the use of sources, is severely lacking. The *Global News Monitoring Project* evaluated the presence of women's voices in the news. The results concluded that women's voices were severely diminished in comparison to men. In 1995, the project found that women's voices in news media were only 17 percent and 20 years later, in 2015, that percentage only rose to 24 percent. This slight upward trend indicated that it would take more than 70 years for there to be only 50 percent of women in the media and how this was a 'true reflection of their representation in society' (Asr, Fatemeh Torabi, et al. 1). This study concluded that there is a bias in news media that needs to be changed.

Similarly, in a study done through the Gender Gap Tracker, it was shown that between October 2018 to September 2020, the percentage of women who were quoted in publications of different news outlets each week ranged from only 20 to 30 percent. This percentage represented that women in the news were consistently underrepresented and often overshadowed by men. The Gender Gap Tracker also found that while some news outlets were more gender-balanced in their quotations, others, including *The National Post* and *The Globe and Mail*, had a more male-dominated feature in their news. Whether this imbalance is from reporters' unconscious bias or societal bias, it is clear that women are underrepresented in news media (Asr, Fatemeh Torabi, et al. 14).

Although some may say that over the years, there has been an increase in female representation in the news, it does not account for the sexism that still appears in mainstream news media. The Gender Gap Tracker study showcased how there was still a clear underrepresentation of women's voices in news media; however, that was not all that was found. The study indicated that the author played a key role in determining who would be represented.

If the authors of the news outlet were of multiple genders, females were quoted more often than males. However, this is just a small victory for women because, in an overall sense, “female voices...are drowned out by the overwhelming number of times that [people] hear from men...” (Asr, Fatemeh Torabi, et al., 21).

Despite some efforts towards a more inclusive environment, sports broadcasting and journalism feature a concerning amount of sexism in its industry. In April 2016, the sports podcast Just Not Sports posted a YouTube video titled ‘#MoreThanMean.’ The video featured Sarah Spain, a radio and television host, and Julia Dicaro, a sports broadcaster, who sat across from regular men who read out a series of inappropriate social media comments. The purpose of the video was to call attention to the double standards of women in broadcasting (Finneman and Jenkins, 1). The campaign worked well to generate media coverage and was able to highlight how online harassment, which is a form of sexism, is present for women in sports journalism. However, this is not women's only issue in this industry. Sports journalism is a very male-dominated industry, and although some may say that the number of females has increased in this field over the years, women are still underrepresented in almost every sphere. Whether it be in the form of sports broadcasting, radio or newspaper, there is a lack of female presence. However, the women who have made it in this industry often face various forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment, pay inequality, and lack of advancement opportunities (Antunovic 430). This was why the *#MoreThanMean* campaign was so important because it not only brought attention to sexism in sports media but also was “...indicative of the gender bias in the media industry where men are perceived as more credible than women” (Finneman and Jenkins 434).

The sports media industry does not just feature sexism with its broadcasters and journalists but also within media coverage itself. Historically, female sports coverage has severely lacked in comparison with male events. Even in today's society, female sports, although increasing in numbers, do not get close to as much media coverage as male sports do. There is also a double standard regarding the media's portrayal of female sports. This is known as "gender-bland sexism," where sports commentators and anchors make sense of women's athletic abilities as 'insignificant and inferior through lacklustre commentary' (Musto, Michela, et al. 18). This perspective allows male sports to be depicted in a more exciting and athletically superior manner than women. Sports media also portrays female athletes as sexual objects, focusing more on their appearance in uniform than skill (Musto, Michela, et al. 11). This ideal encompasses the sexism that is seriously impacting not only the media coverage of female sports but the world of mainstream news media as a whole.

The news media industry has made many innovations in the last few years, but sexism is still a serious issue that must not only be brought forward but curved out of mainstream news media. It is still evident today in the expectations of broadcasters, the use of female sources, and the presence of women in sports journalism and broadcasting, and it needs to be changed. The world of mainstream news media and society's views should work together to step into a new direction where equality of all genders is presented in any form of news media. The first step to a solution revolves around ensuring that this industry ensures that inclusivity and equality exist for all.

Works Cited

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