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Hollywood

Academy Award Winners Haven't Included Latino Actors, Nonwhite Actresses in 10 Years

By Dennis Romero Sun., Feb. 26 2012 at 7:05 AM

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Updated at the bottom: The Oscars broke the 10-year spell.

Only days after the voters behind [the Academy Awards](#) were revealed as [extremely white](#) (94 percent), male (77 percent) and old (median age, 62), the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center issued a report indicating that Oscar winners seem to reflect the body.

The brief, "Not Quite a Breakthrough: The Oscars And Actors of Color, 2002-2012," deflates any notion that 2002's big year for African Americans at the Academy Awards opened the doors of Hollywood to further gains by minorities:

If anything, 2002, when Halle Berry and Denzel Washington won the top acting awards and Sidney Poitier was honored for lifetime achievement, was a symbolic high point that Hollywood hasn't seen before or since.

According to the paper, written by Russell K. Robinson, Su Li, Angela Makabali, and Kaitlyn Murphy of the Chief Justice Earl Warren Institute on Law and Social Policy at the UC Berkeley School of Law:

-All Best Actress winners since 2002 have been white.

-No winner in any acting category during the last ten years has been Latino, Asian American, or Native American.



Halle Berry in 'X-Men: The Last Stand.'

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-Oscar winners and nominees of color make fewer movies per year after their nominations than their white peers do.

-Oscar winners and nominees of color are more likely than their white peers to work in television, which is considered lower-status work.

-Oscar winners and nominees of color are less likely than their white peers to receive subsequent nominations.

Things are getting better, though:

From 1990 through 2000, about 9 percent of the Oscar nominees in the top categories were people of color (Munoz 2002). Our analysis shows that from 2002 through 2012, almost 20 percent of nominees were people of color, which is a notable increase.

But the researchers note that minority nominees are much less likely to be nominated again and are much more likely to end up working in television (72 percent of minority nominees end up in TV versus 36 percent of white ones).

Chief among the authors' recommendations:

-Diversify the Academy. Along with its overwhelmingly white, geezerly voting population, the paper notes that just one of the Academy's 43 board of governors members is not white. The researchers want the Academy to start a diversity task force.

-Develop young talent of color. The paper states:

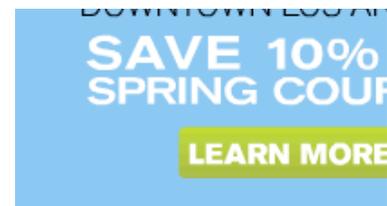
Each year Hollywood executives select unknown white male actors (such as Armie Hammer, Chris Hemsworth, and Andrew Garfield) and cast them in big-budget action films and prestige projects, grooming them to become the next Brad Pitt or Tom Cruise. Actors of color are routinely shut out of these game-changing roles.

-Diversify the ranks of Hollywood executives: The authors contend that there isn't one minority who's able to green-light major-studio projects.

Not even [Tyler Perry](#).

[Read the full brief here; check out additional research from USC at the bottom]:

[CSRC Latino Policy and Issues Brief March2012](#)



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[Added at 11:50 p.m. Sunday]: Another recent study (*Asymmetrical Academy Awards 2*), this one by researchers at USC Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism, including lead author and associate professor Stacy L. Smith, looked at the Oscars from 2007 to 2010 and unearthed some similarly startling facts:

-Looking at 30 Best Picture nominees, women made up only 32.6 of the films' characters, which had a ratio of 2.1 men to every woman on-screen.

-78 percent of the speaking characters were white. Latinos, who comprise one of every two people in Los Angeles, made up 1.9 percent of the speaking roles.

-Women made up less than one in four producers (23.9 percent), 14.3 percent of directors and 12.3 percent of writers on nominated films.

[Update at 9 p.m.]: The Awards broke the 10-year dry spell for minorities in major categories tonight when Octavia Spencer won best supporting actress for her role as an outspoken maid in *The Help*.

The UCLA study notes that ...

... the industry channels women of color into supporting roles ... The Best Supporting Actress category is the most diverse, with women of color constituting 32 percent of the nominees. Most of these nominees, however, have been black women playing roles that embodied some combination of longstanding stereotypes: women who are sassy, full-figured, maternal, or non-sexual.

[@dennisjromero / djromero@laweekly.com / @LAWeeklyNews]

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