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## Gender Inequality and the Scottish Press Awards

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### Introduction

A critical mass of women in decision-making positions in media bodies is central to improving gender equality both in terms of the content produced and the cultural context of the workplace.<sup>1</sup> This can in turn prompt better policy provision for a diverse workforce. One way to boost the number of high-profile women leaders is to highlight the visibility of role-models receiving public recognition.

The Scottish Press Awards (SPA), organised by the Scottish Newspaper Society (SNS), are bestowed annually. The SNS website describes the SPA as “the top awards for the newspaper industry, in both print and digital formats, in Scotland.”<sup>2</sup> Nominations are made across a range of categories and finalists are announced at a prestigious ceremony event.

It should be noted that SNS Director John McLellan introduced two new changes to the awards in 2016, recognizing that “it’s not before time that we addressed the issue of female representation”.<sup>3</sup> Firstly, serving editors would no longer sit on judging panels (potentially judging their own journalists’ work) and secondly the jury would consist of 25 external judges, the majority of whom would be women. These two changes are significant, as they begin to disrupt a system of value-judgements based on nepotism and sexist bias. Whether these changes have had an effect since being introduced at the start of the analysis period (2016-2020) will be discussed latterly.

The nomination process has two stages.<sup>4</sup> First journalists are invited to nominate themselves for an award, a process which involves:

- an entry fee (£21.60)
- providing a portfolio of best work
- the signature of an editor of at least one publication in which you have been published.

This entry process disproportionately excludes women both practically and culturally. The fee is nominal, and yet more significant for freelancers than contracted staff, for whom the cost can be covered by their institution. Women In Journalism Scotland

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL\\_STU\(2018\)596839\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/596839/IPOL_STU(2018)596839_EN.pdf) (p49)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.scotns.org.uk/awards/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.scotns.org.uk/2016/12/14/gender-balanced-in-scottish-press-awards-overhaul/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.scotns.org.uk/awards/to-enter/>

has attempted to redress this balance by covering the cost for women wishing to put themselves forward.<sup>5</sup> Having sufficient pieces of work and getting editorial sign-off is more difficult for freelance journalists – which women are more likely to be due to the need for flexible working. Moreover, editors are more likely to put their staff forward, or support them in the entry process, pointing to an institutional rather than individual sign of distinction.<sup>6</sup> Assembling work is time-consuming; given the degree of invisible work that women disproportionately do to bolster Scotland's economy,<sup>7</sup> entering an award may not be prioritised.

Culturally, women are more likely to suffer from imposter syndrome,<sup>8</sup> often socially constructed to perceive themselves as less capable or indeed worthy of an award. Moreover, given the 'competent or likeable' double-bind, women face a social backlash for displaying counter-stereotypical behaviour such as competitiveness or self-promotion.<sup>9</sup> In addition, the perception that the awards are not a level-playing field also dissuades women from entering in the first place. This in turn is linked to the entrance fee; women might feel more inclined to 'have a go' if there was no personal financial risk involved. Overall then, the conditions around self-nomination are not conducive to a gender-equal entry system for the awards, which in turn affects stage two.

The second stage of the nominations process involves a panel of judges shortlisting five, six or seven journalists for a series of categories. Table 1 shows the number of men and women who entered the awards in 2018 and were shortlisted – along with the judging panel breakdown. Obviously it is not possible to comment on the strength of the entries and subsequent selection process, but the figures are nonetheless revealing.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.wijscotland.com/news/wij-scotland-cover-scottish-press-awards-entry-fees>

<sup>6</sup> Harrison, B., & Jepsen, D. M. (2015). The career impact of winning an external work-related award. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 89, 21-31.

<sup>7</sup> <https://makingworkvisible.engender.org.uk/what-needs-to-change/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://hrnews.co.uk/over-6-in-10-women-suffer-imposter-syndrome-in-the-uk/>

<sup>9</sup> Rudman, L. A., & Fairchild, K. (2004). Reactions to counterstereotypic behavior: the role of backlash in cultural stereotype maintenance. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 87(2), 157.



Table 1. Entries, Shortlist and Judging panel from 2018.

Category	Entries Received		Shortlist		Judging Panel	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Sports Photography	15	1	4	1	3	2
News Photography	24	3	4	1	2	3
Arts & Entertainment Journalist	14	5	4	1	2	3
Young Journalist	7	9	3	2	3	2
Interviewer	17	10	1	4	3	2
Political Journalist	13	5	6	1	2	3
Columnist	23	13	4	1	5	0
Sports Columnist	14	1	5	0	3	2
Financial/Business Journalist	10	4	5	0	3	2
Feature Writer	10	14	3	3	2	3
Sports Feature Writer	20	0	5	0	5	0
Sports News Writer	9	0	5	0	5	0
Outstanding Digital Journalist	10	9	7	0	2	3
Scoop	19	6	3	2	3	2
Reporter	26	13	2	3	2	3

- In 12 of the categories, more men are shortlisted than women; typically 4:1. In one category (*Feature Writer*) an equal number were selected; this is the only award for which more women entered than men. In two categories more women than men were shortlisted: *Interviewer* and *Reporter*. These two awards also attracted amongst the highest number of entries overall, suggesting that women need to enter in greater numbers than men to be in with a chance of shortlisting.
- At least one man is shortlisted for every award, whereas in five categories no women make the shortlist at all. Of these, two awards had no women entries to begin with, however in the category *Outstanding Digital Journalist*, although an almost equal number of men and women entered, seven men were shortlisted – and zero women.
- In total, 45 men and 30 women took part in judging the shortlists, although some may have taken part multiple times. If the jury is supposed to have a majority of women, as detailed by the SNS in their 2016 changes<sup>10</sup> then this effect is diminished by having men judge more frequently across the panels.
- Of the judging panels, nine consisted of more men than women, and six had more women. However, three of the awards were judged by all-male panels.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.scotns.org.uk/2016/12/14/gender-balanced-in-scottish-press-awards-overhaul/>



Two of these awards had no women entries to begin with, yet the third (*Columnist of the Year*) had one of the highest numbers of women entries (13) and yet only one woman was shortlisted, alongside four men. Having at least two women on each judging panels would prevent unfair aspersions being cast about gender bias in the shortlisting process.

Examining the shortlists themselves in greater detail provides insight into the gender balance of those journalists considered by the industry to be potentially award-winning. The report does not extend to the winners of each award each year but instead focuses on the shortlists as these provide more data, and therefore a greater overview of the sector's most lauded and visible journalists. The findings reveal problematic, exclusive practices in both category selection and the judging process.

## 2. Methodology

The following shortlists were examined:

- The 36<sup>th</sup> Awards in 2015<sup>11</sup>
- The 37<sup>th</sup> Awards in 2016<sup>12</sup>
- The 38<sup>th</sup> Awards in 2017<sup>13</sup>
- The 39<sup>th</sup> Awards in 2018<sup>14</sup>
- The 40<sup>th</sup> Awards in 2019<sup>15</sup>
- The 41<sup>st</sup> Awards in 2020<sup>16</sup>

Women In Journalism Scotland introduced the Nicola Barry Award for women in 2018, which “is open to all women journalists of any age working in print and online media in Scotland deserving of recognition for their work in issue-led reportage or commentary”.<sup>17</sup> Journalists nominated for the Nicola Barry Award were not included in the analysis as these were selected based on gender.

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<sup>11</sup> [https://www.scotns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/113/2015/12/winners\\_runners\\_up2015.pdf](https://www.scotns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/113/2015/12/winners_runners_up2015.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.scotns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/113/2016/04/winners\\_runners\\_up2016.pdf](https://www.scotns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/113/2016/04/winners_runners_up2016.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.holdthefrontpage.co.uk/2017/news/shortlist-unveiled-for-scottish-newspaper-awards/>

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.scotns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/113/2018/04/winners\\_runners\\_up\\_2018.pdf](https://www.scotns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/113/2018/04/winners_runners_up_2018.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.scotns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/113/2019/04/Scottish-Press-Awards-2019-Shortlist.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.scotns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/113/2020/03/shortlist-Scottish-Press-Awards-2020.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.wijscotland.com/news/about-the-nicola-barry-award#:~:text=The%20Nicola%20Barry%20Award%20is,issue%2Dled%20reportage%20or%20commentary.>



### 3. Findings

I first examined the total number of men and women nominated in each award shortlist from 2015 to 2020. There has been an 11% increase of women nominees since 2015, up from 15% to 26% (see Table 2). Women journalists' perception that the awards are not a level-playing field appear valid.

Table 2. SPA Nominees by Year, including numbers and percentages.

Year	Total Nominees	Women Nominees	Men Nominees	Women %	Men %
2015	78	12	66	15%	85%
2016	81	16	65	20%	80%
2017	82	18	64	22%	78%
2018	79	20	59	25%	75%
2019	95	21	74	22%	78%
t2020	100	26	74	26%	74%

However, since 2018 the upward trend has faltered; the 2019 figures replicate 2017 – women nominees making up only 22% of the total. By 2020 the figure jumps again up to the highest it has ever been – 26% (see Figure 1).

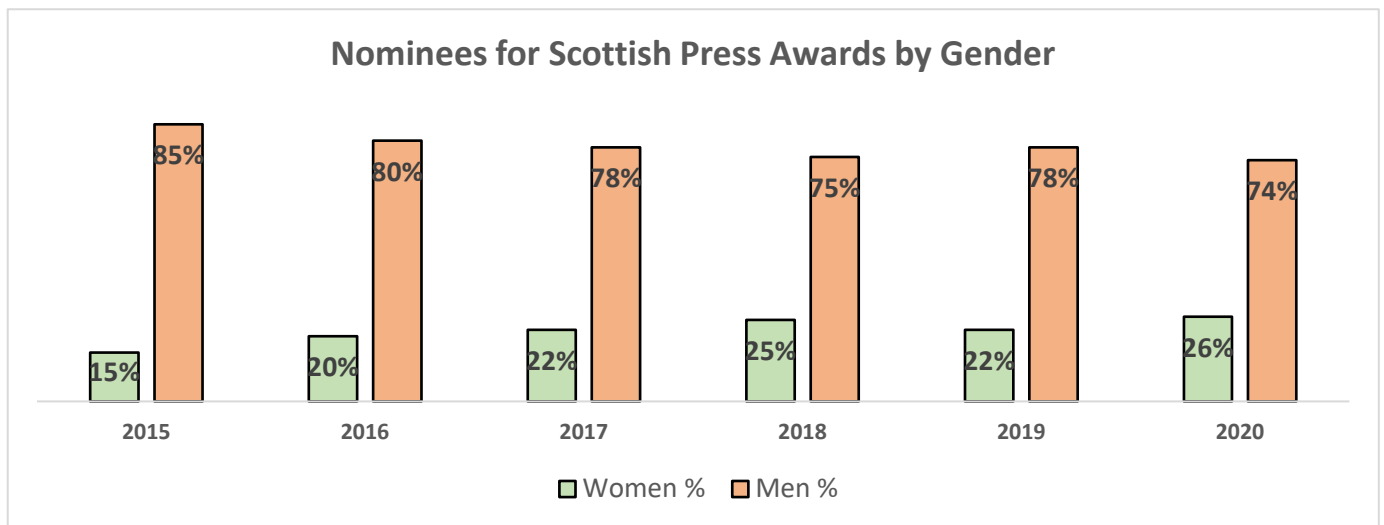


Figure 1. Percentage of Nominees by Gender 2015-2020.

While the overall trajectory is positive, these figures remain deeply problematic. On a shortlist for the most prestigious news awards in Scotland - only a quarter are women.

**Men are three times more likely to be nominated for an award than women.**



Before turning to look at each award category in greater detail, I noticed two patterns within the selection process which further complicated the gender breakdowns observed in Figure 1: the repeated nominations of journalists in the same categories year after year, and the same journalists being nominated in duplicate across several categories. Both these patterns applied to men *and* women, and speak to deeper, systemic issues with stages one and two of the shortlisting process – self-nomination and panel-selection.

### 3.1 Repetition across years

The same women were nominated repeatedly (often in the same categories) across the six years analysed, for example:

- Sarah Vesty is shortlisted for the *Young Journalist of the Year* in 2015, ‘16, ‘17 and ‘18.
- For *Interviewer of the Year*, Patricia Kane is shortlisted every year but one.
- Dani Garavelli is shortlisted for at least one category every year, Susan Swarbrick every year but one and Emma Cowing every year but two.

Highlighting this in no way diminishes their achievement, yet it does suggest either a limited pool of women journalists in general, or that the shortlist process sees the same women entering (or being entered) - and then selected each year. To understand which factor is at play, I examined a male-dominated category, to determine whether the repetition of names is present for men as well. If so, the ‘limited pool’ theory is unlikely, and the shortlist process itself requires re-evaluation.

Table 3 details the shortlisted names for Financial/Business Journalist of the Year from 2015-2020. One woman is shortlisted, Erikka Askeland in 2015 and 2016; all the other journalists are men. Those nominated three or more times over the six years have been highlighted.

2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Erikka Askeland	Erikka Askeland	Michael Glackin	Greig Cameron	Alastair Dalton	Greig Cameron
Greig Cameron	Greig Cameron	Graham Huband	Kevin Scott	Brian Donnelly	Alastair Dalton
Alastair Dalton	Michael Glackin	Mark Lammey	Peter Ranscombe	John Ferguson	Michael Glackin
Colin Donald	Graham Huband	Ian McConnell	Graham Huband	Graham Huband	Martyn McLaughlin
Ian McConnell	Ian McConnell	Peter Ranscombe	Scott McCulloch	Scott Wright	Martin Williams

Table 3. Nominated journalists for Financial/Business Journalist of the Year.



This reveals that the repetition is also observed for men, indicating that the same journalists – regardless of gender – are being selected each year.

This practice has a disproportionately negative effect on women journalists, as

- a) fewer women enter the awards in stage one (see Table 1); and thus
- b) fewer women are selected in stage two for the shortlist.

The replication effect diminishes women’s opportunity to be shortlisted. The dominance of a core group of names being shortlisted each year prevents diverse, emerging talent being recognised.

### 3.2 Duplication across categories

The same women were named multiple times a year across numerous categories. For example, in 2019 Dani Garavelli was shortlisted for three awards, while Emma Cowing and Ruth Warrander were shortlisted twice each. Again, this in no way speaks to their talent or work being deservedly recognized for different awards. Yet such duplication is significant as it distorts the accuracy of the figures in Table 2, since fewer women are shortlisted overall.

Again, this might suggest a smaller pool of women to draw from except that the duplication is also present for male journalists. For example, in 2016 Jeff Holmes, Teddy Jamieson, and Brain Beacom were all nominated for two awards. In 2019 Paul English, Peter Ross, Fraser Wilson, and Stephen McGowan were all nominated twice.

In 2017, Iain MacWhirter was even nominated twice for the same award (*Columnist of the Year*), a practice allowed in the regulations: “The number of entries per category is unlimited; however, the number of shortlisted entries per category will be limited to two per title”.<sup>18</sup>

Indeed, the effect appears to extend to winning; in 2018 Gordon Blackstock won *Reporter of the Year* and *Scoop of the Year*, while Peter Ross won both *Feature Writer* and *Arts/Entertainment Journalist of the Year*.

The duplication of one name across several categories – rather than being an unusual event – has become the norm, reducing opportunities for new names and faces to be recognised. The impact is less consequential for men, as proportionally more of them are shortlisted in the first place. In an already minoritized group, shortlisting one woman for several awards means fewer women overall. Moreover

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.scotns.org.uk/awards/to-enter/>



the number of shortlisted names by gender does not in fact reflect the actual number of individual men and women nominated each year. This is an important observation when one examines the nominations list for each award in greater detail.

## 4. Categories

### 4.1 Overview

The individual awards categories have changed over the 6-year period studied, yet in many respects reflect an outdated, masculinist version of journalism. From the outset this excludes both women and more diverse content-creators, reinforcing a version of journalistic value based on stereotypically male-coded categories. Alongside a number of awards for publications, rather than individuals (e.g. *Headline Of The Year* (OTY)), a typical set of award categories are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Typical Award Categories for the SPA

Columnist OTY	Feature Writer OTY	Political Journalist	Sports Photographer
Reporter OTY	Interviewer OTY	Financial/Business Journalist	Sports Feature Writer
Scoop OTY	Local/Weekly Feature Writer	Arts/Entertainment	Sports News Writer
News Photographer	Young Journalist	Digital Journalist	Sports Columnist

Just as occupational segregation by gender signals inequalities in the distribution of men and women across employment categories,<sup>19</sup> so too does journalistic segregation continue in the news media sphere.<sup>20</sup> The ‘hard’ news/ ‘soft’ news gendered reporting divide unfortunately still remains,<sup>21</sup> where political, financial and sports related news are still largely considered masculinist spaces.<sup>22</sup> That there are four sports awards in the SPA and only one arts/entertainment (combined) category reveals a journalistic focus heavily weighted towards masculine-coded interests.

A commendable change was the 2019 inclusion of four awards for local/weekly journalism, providing opportunities for journalists across Scotland to have their

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/HANDOUT2.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Steiner, L. (2017). Gender and journalism. In *Oxford Research Encyclopaedia of Communication*.

<sup>21</sup> Schoch, L. (2020). The gender of sports news: Horizontal segregation and Marginalization of female journalists in the Swiss Press. *Communication & Sport*, 2167479520951162.

<sup>22</sup> <https://rm.coe.int/bis-factsheet-gender-equality-sport-media-en/1680714b8f>





work acknowledged.<sup>23</sup> It should also be noted that as of 2021, a series of new categories have been introduced,<sup>24</sup> as follows: Specialist Reporter, Student Journalist, Food and Drink Writer, Travel Writer, Best Coverage of a Live Event, News Website, Daily Newspaper of the Year, Sunday Newspaper of the Year and Chairman’s Award. The inclusion of the first few individual awards signals a change from the traditional categories, and it is hoped that the subsequent shortlists may be more diverse and gender balanced than previous years as a result. However, the collation of Arts and Entertainment into one category remains problematic, especially given the plethora of arts for which Scotland is famous.

## 4.2 Breakdown

The categories reveal patterns within specific shortlists and more nuanced gender imbalances. Analysing every category was beyond the scope of this report, so I chose a selection. I examined content-based categories (Sport, Arts/Entertainment and Political Journalist) then five genre-based categories (Columnist, Interviewer, Feature, Reporter and Photographer of the Year). Finally, I turned to Digital Journalism and Young Journalists. Due to journalists being repeatedly nominated for the same category each year, I examine both the gender breakdown of shortlisted names as well as the number of journalists ever nominated for the award.

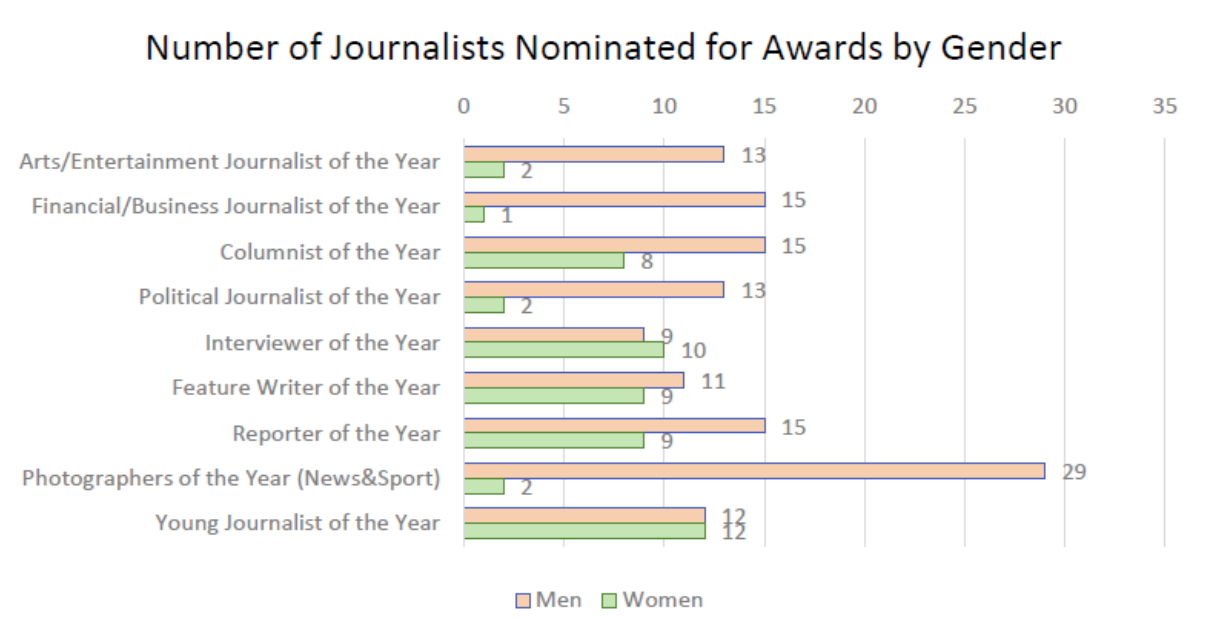


Figure 2. Gender breakdown of journalists ever nominated for each award.

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.scotns.org.uk/2018/12/19/local-journalists-be-heroes-at-40th-scottish-press-awards/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.scotns.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/113/2021/02/42nd-Scottish-Press-Awards-Categories-Final.pdf>



### 4.3 Sport

From 2015-2020, 113 names were shortlisted across four categories: *Sports Photographer*, *Sports News Writer*, *Sports Feature Writer* and *Sports Columnist*. Table 5 reveals that only two women have ever been nominated for any of these awards. No women were shortlisted at all in 2020.

**96% of all journalists shortlisted for a sport award since 2015 have been men.**

Table 5. Women nominated for any SPA Sport Award 2015-2020.

2015	Susan Swarbrick	Sports Feature Writer of the Year
2016	Jane Barlow	Sports Photographer of the Year
2017	Susan Swarbrick	Sports Feature Writer of the Year
2018	Jane Barlow	Sports Photographer of the Year
2019	Jane Barlow	Sports Photographer of the Year

### 4.4 Political Journalist of the Year

Awards for political journalism, too, remain dominated by men. Across the six years 32 names have been shortlisted. Dani Garavelli has been nominated once (2016) and Adele Merson three times (2018, 2019, 2020). Otherwise all other nominees have been men. Taking into account the repetition of all names across the six years, 13 men have ever been nominated, and two women (see Figure 2).

**Therefore 88% of those every shortlisted for the award have been men.**

### 4.5 Arts/Entertainment Journalist of the Year

I thought that perhaps a less 'masculine' coded award (like sport or politics) might reveal a more balanced shortlist. However, of the 27 names shortlisted for *Arts/Entertainment Journalist of the Year* (2015-2020, excluding 2017 which did not award this category) only two women have ever been nominated – once each. As seen in Figure 2, 13 men have been nominated – the same as for the Political Journalism award.

**Therefore, 93% of those ever shortlisted for the award have been men.**

I turned from content-based categories to the genre-based awards: *Columnist*, *Interviewer*, *Feature Writer*, *Reporter* and *Photographer of the Year*.



#### 4.6 Columnist of the Year

The category Columnist of the Year shows some improvement. From 2015 to 2018 the shortlists are dominated by men, with Dani Garavelli nominated each year, often the sole woman. Indeed 15 of the 23 journalists nominated across the years are men (see Fig. 2). But in 2019 there were equal number of men and women nominated, and in 2020 three (different) women and two men. This may reflect greater numbers of women becoming columnists, entering themselves, or being selected; either way the gender balance is welcome and will hopefully continue.

#### 4.7 Interviewer of the Year

This category continues the positive trend. Overall, 30 names have been shortlisted over the six years, of which 18 have been women and 12 men. Moreover, when one accounts for repetition (see Fig. 2), 19 journalists have ever been nominated, 10 women and nine men. This is the only category in which more women journalists are nominated than men.

#### 4.8 Feature Writer of the Year

Given that this award was the only one to have attracted more entries from women than men in 2018 (see Table 1) I was interested to see whether the category is more gender-balanced in general. Over the six years, 33 names have been shortlisted, 12 women and 21 men. Again, some journalists are repeatedly shortlisted over the years, and so in total nine women and 11 men have ever been nominated in this category.

This award has the potential to be amongst the most gender-balanced – and indeed in 2020 four of the five shortlisted journalists were women. Yet the effect of repetition of names is disproportionately affecting women journalists here, as 11 men have secured 64% of all nominations between them, limiting the space for others.

#### 4.9 Reporter of the Year

In total 34 names have been shortlisted for Reporter of the Year, one of the most prestigious awards presented. 12 of these have been women, and 22 have been men. There have been several people repeatedly nominated however, thus as shown in Figures 2. and 3. **in total nine women have ever been nominated, compared with 15 men.**

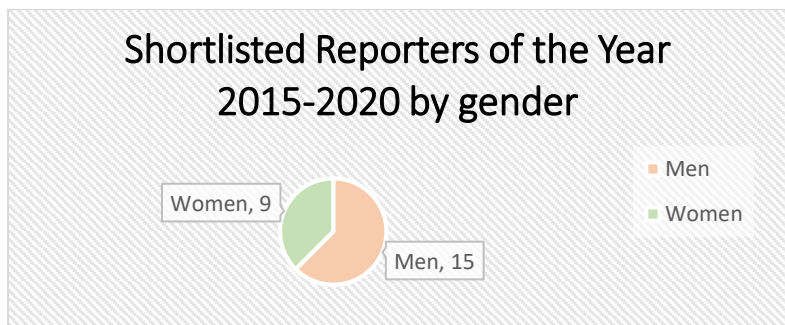


Figure 3. Journalists ever nominated for Reporter of the Year (2015-2020) by gender.

#### 4.10 Photography

There are two photography categories: Sports Photographer and News Photographer. Across the six years, 61 names are shortlisted for these awards. As shown in Figures 2 and 4, two women are shortlisted: Katie Lee Arrowsmith in 2015, and Jane Barlow seven times. Meanwhile 29 men have ever been shortlisted. Thus photography remains a male-dominated award: **94% of nominations are men.**

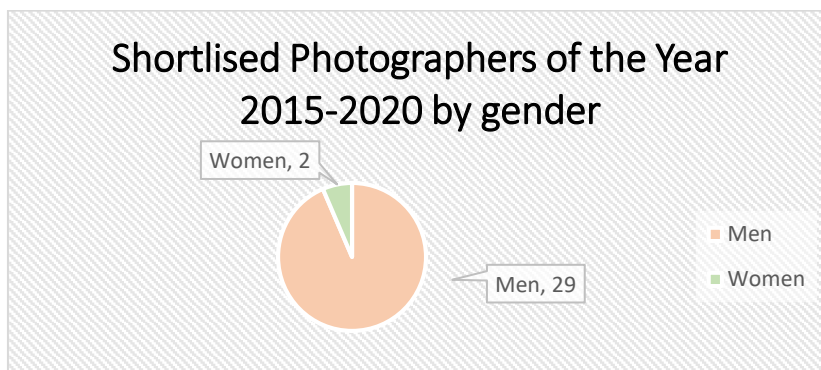


Figure 4. Shortlisted Photographers by Gender, 2015-2020.

Overall, the SNS shortlist more women for genre-based than content-based awards, however distinct gender inequalities remain consistent, though variable across the categories. Moreover the practice of repeatedly nominating the same people over the years serves to consolidate these categories as male-dominated. I turn now to Digital Journalism and Young Journalist of the Year.

#### 4.11 Outstanding Digital Journalist of the Year

Given the increasing centrality of digital journalism to news media, this category's inclusion in 2017 was a progressive step – and a welcome way to include more women, whose exclusion from other forms of media has prompted a diversification of content online. However, the category is not extended beyond 2019, and despite having had an equal number of men and women shortlisted in its 2017, by 2018 all six shortlisted names were men, and in 2019 only one woman to four men.

In 2020 the category was missing, but there were two new categories which offer a more nuanced deconstruction of 'digital journalism' and again, therefore, an opportunity for more women to be nominated. *Podcast of the Year,*

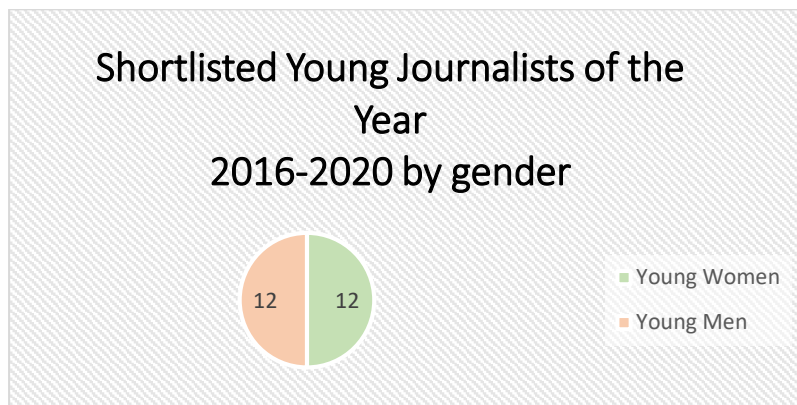


however, nominates seven people, one of whom is a woman, and *Video of the Year* nominates five people, two of whom are women. Of a total 12 names, a quarter are women – a figure which closely matches the 26% women across all the awards overall (Figure 1).

This trend, should it continue, risks the further exclusion of women from having their digital journalistic work recognised for its merit.

#### 4.12 Young Journalist of the Year

The shortlist for Young Journalist of the Year is the most gender balanced overall. 31 names are shortlisted across the six years, of which 17 are women and 14 are men. There is still repetition across the six years – such as Sarah Vesty nominated from 2015-2018 and Carla Jenkins and Colan Lamont each shortlisted twice. However of the 24 young journalists ever nominated, there are 12 women and 12 men overall (see Figure 5).



*Figure 5. Young Journalists shortlisted from 2016-2020 by Gender.*

There also features one of the only two women of colour shortlisted from 2016-2020 – Gurpeet Narwan. The other is Khaleda Rahman for Scoop of the Year in 2015.

Given the gender balance amongst shortlisted journalists at the first stages of their careers, the clear dominance of male journalists in more senior categories begs the question: why are the women disappearing? The answer, of course, is complex, and includes sets of practices across the news media landscape that systematically disadvantage women and prevent them reaching senior positions to the same extent as their male colleagues. The SNS should be aware of these causal factors, and be working constructively to counter the effect in the awards themselves.

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

This report constitutes a broad-stroke overview of the SPA awards over the last six years. It reveals clear gender imbalances persisting across almost all awards, demonstrating that the 'overhaul' announced in 2016 has



made some progress, but certainly not enough. **That men are three times as likely to be nominated for an award as women is unacceptable.**

An extended analysis reaching back prior to 2015 would give greater insight into stagnations and progressions in different categories over the years. It would be beneficial to the SNS to undertake a thorough assessment of equality and diversity amongst their nominations and make this a regular feature of their annual awards process. Regular self-monitoring would demonstrate the need for - and indeed prompt - more systematic reviews of the nominations process as a whole.

Working with equalities organisations expert in diversity bias, gender imbalances in journalism and equality initiatives to enact changes to the entry, nominations and judging processes would be a judicious step. Gender Equal Media Scotland and Women In Journalism Scotland are two such organisations that could provide valuable insight.

There is clearly an urgent need to review the judging process for the selection of shortlisted names, proactively seeking out new and emerging talent, and ensuring that the awards are inclusive of a diverse range of journalists. The lack of women of colour is deeply concerning. The continued gender chasms in many categories remains problematic, and that women nominees remain overall at 26% in 2020 is shocking. Increasing the transparency of the judging process would significantly increase the credibility of the awards. Ensuring each judging panel is at least 40% women could be an important step.

The replication of names across the years should be noted and reduced, as the effect diminishes women's opportunity to be shortlisted for an award. The duplication of certain journalists shortlisted multiple times across several categories should also be minimised, and it is recommended that the rules be amended to confirm that a journalist can only enter each award once.

The categories, now improved, are still weighted towards masculinist interests; one fewer sports category and the separation of Arts and Entertainment would be a useful step. The outcome of the shortlists for 2021 are anticipated with interest.

*This report was compiled using publicly available data, as part of the development work towards the creation of a Women in Media Body for Scotland. I am indebted to Women In Journalism Scotland for their insight and additional resources.*

## About Gender Equal Media Scotland (GEMS)



Gender Equal Media Scotland is a coalition of journalists, organisations and academics working to bring about women's equality in Scotland's media.



The post of Development Officer is hosted by Engender, Scotland's feminist policy and advocacy organisation, on behalf of GEMS