



Racialized Sexual Harassment: The Intersections of Race and Gender

**Prepared by: Emily-Jane Williams,
Development Director, Reelworld Screen Institute**

Reelworld Film Festival
Reelworld Foundation
50 Carroll St, Suite 106,
Toronto, ON
M4M 3G3
www.reelworld.ca

With support from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, Telefilm Canada, Canadian Media Producers Association, Writers Guild of Canada, DGC Ontario, ACTRA, Academy of Canadian Cinema & Television, Women in Film & Television - Toronto, and Harbourfront Centre

January 7th, 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	Page 2
Background and Objectives	Page 3
Methodology	Page 5
Results	Page 6
Conclusion and Recommendations	Page 13
Appendixes	Page 15

Executive Summary

The #MeToo movement has shone a necessary light on the sexual harassment and assault prevalent in the Screen-based Production Sector. Until now, these issues have only been analyzed as they relate to gender. This single-axis analysis is unable to adequately address the experiences of Women of Colour suffering from both sexual and racial discrimination. Reelworld and our partners saw the need to examine the multidimensional experiences of these women in the entertainment industry.

To that end, on Dec 10th, 2018. Reelworld invited over one hundred Women of Colour to take part in a symposium focused on Women of Colour in the entertainment industry, their experience of sexual harassment, and their role and duties as content creators. Surveys, created with the help of Zan Chandler, MA, OCAD Professor, Researcher and Facilitator at Kerr Smith Design, were at every table and were designed to encourage self reflection, stimulate discussion, and uncover important data on the intersection of race and gender in the entertainment industry. The results of these surveys and the event were compiled into this report to be distributed to our partners and other industry stakeholders.

Self reported ethnicities were 61% Black, 28% Asian and South Asian, 9% Indigenous, and 8% Latino. The women surveyed predominantly worked as Actresses (40.3%), Producers (44.4%), Directors (44.4%), and Screenwriters (44.4%).

Despite their high professional level in the industry, 82.9% of respondents believe their job to be more precarious than a white woman of similar experience, pointing to “countless” instances of pay discrepancy between Women of Colour and everyone else.

93.4% of respondents believe that the media perpetuates an oversexualized stereotype of Women of Colour. Images in the media inform and educate our society on social norms and how to act. 92% of respondents believe that Women of Colour in our industry experience sexual harassment differently than white women.

Common themes and narratives surfaced. Among the most salient themes uncovered at the event and in the survey are: Feelings of isolation as women and as of Women of Colour; the need for community; the need for true allyship with their white counterparts; and cultural pressures faced by many racialized groups.

The sample size of women is small but the results are statistically significant. We recommend that further research into the intersection of race and gender for women in the screen-based production sector is sorely needed across Canada.

Background and Objectives

Canada is one of the most diverse countries in the world, with almost a quarter of the total population (22.3%) identifying themselves as visible minorities and accounting for 21% of the Canadian labour force. The proportion of non-white Canadians is projected to increase to 29% to 32% of the population by 2031 (between 11.4 and 14.4 million people). In just over a decade from now, non-white Canadians are expected to form the majority of citizens in Toronto (63%) and Vancouver (59%) and almost a third (31%) of the population of Montreal.

In Canada, upholding cultural diversity is one of the key goals of Canada's Broadcasting Act. Canada's television policy states that the broadcasting system should be a mirror in which all Canadians can see themselves portrayed accurately, fairly and without stereotypes. In a speech to the Directors Guild of Canada Biennial Convention, the Executive Director of Telefilm Canada noted that "For our industry to truly be inclusive, all voices, from all corners of our country, must have the space to express themselves and to tell their stories in their way. It means an equal chance for all; that everyone is welcome at the table. We all want to see ourselves, our lives, our stories reflected on the screen."

To achieve real diversity in media, Women of Colour need to feel safe and welcome to participate. Racialized Sexual Harassment in our industry needs to be addressed by both Women of Colour and engaged stakeholders.

The Canadian Creative Industries Code of Conduct was created to shift the entertainment industry's culture, to prevent and respond to harassment including sexual harassment, discrimination, bullying and violence and to ensure every workplace is one where safety, respect and professionalism are the norm. Industry stakeholders committed to zero tolerance for these harmful behaviours and established working groups to develop a Code of Conduct, safer reporting measures and industry-wide education and training. Since that time, many organizations have met with survivors, engaged in anti-harassment training exercises for staff and members, held policy reviews and hosted focus groups to learn more and to move these initiatives forward.

These initiatives are necessary. However, Reelworld and our partners believe that the oppressive institutions of racism and sexism, are interconnected and cannot be examined separately from one another. For example, a black woman will have some disadvantages because of her gender and some disadvantages because of her race. In addition, she may have some disadvantages specifically because she is a black woman. This is a separate, unique issue which neither black men nor white women have to endure.

The singular focus on one identity - gender - can take away from solving the broader systemic problem in our industry. To be serious about combating sexual harassment in our industry we must also focus on paying attention to the experiences of historically marginalized groups, to correct collective biases and obstacles to ensure an equal playing field.

Methodology

Reelworld gathered over 100 Women of Colour from the Canadian Entertainment Industry to complete the survey and have an honest discussion about Racialized Sexual Harassment in our industry and about the creation of content that furthers damaging negative stereotypes such as WoC being over-sexualized, combative, unintelligent, etc. The women in the room represented a diverse array of influential roles in our industry, from Broadcast Executives, Producers, Directors, and Screenwriters to Actresses. Most of them are at top of their fields, recognized with prestigious awards from the Order of Canada, Screen Awards, DGC, WGC and ACTRA. The women ranged in age from 20-75 years old and they all remarked on the fact that they had never had the opportunity to be in a room with so many WoC together, to share their experiences and discuss what they could all do to change racialized sexual harassment in our industry and revolutionize media content that continues to demean WoC.

Reelworld also invited key organizations who wished to receive further insight and garner data on the issues with which WoC in the industry deal and how WoC feel about and navigate these issues. Those organizations included Canadian Media Producers Association, Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television, Telefilm, ACTRA, Writers Guild of Canada, Directors Guild of Canada and Women In Film and Television Toronto. Representatives from these organizations reported that their experience at the symposium had been eye opening and that they had never before understood the specific issues which exist for Women of Colour.

Notable guests included Patricia Bebia Mawa, founder and Executive VP of AfroGlobal Television -Canada, Producers Jennifer Holness, Jennifer Podemski, Joan Jenkinson, Marva Daisley, Victoria Shen of Second Jen; Directors Sharon Lewis, Cazhmere Downey, Frances-Anne Solomon, Lana Lovell, Raj Dhillon; Actresses/Hosts Fennella Bruce, Nam Kiwanuka - Host of The Agenda, Nicole Hamilton, Tabby Johnson; Maxine Bailey from TIFF, CBC Executive Clara Lee, Talent Agent - Edna Khubyar, Erica Shaw, Natalia Escobar of WGC, Nicole Mendes, Rita Deverell - co-founder of Vision TV, Samora Smallwood Co-Chair of ACTRA Diversity, Winnie Jong of the DGC, and many others.

The surveys were created with the help of Reelworld staff and Zan Chandler, MA, OCAD Professor, Researcher and Facilitator at Kerr Smith Design. These surveys were emailed to invitees and paper copies were at every table at the December 10th Symposium. The survey was divided into four parts: Personal and Professional Background Information, Race Discrimination in our Industry, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault in the Workplace, and Knowledge gained at the Symposium. The questions were designed to encourage self reflection, stimulate discussion, and uncover important data on the intersection of race and gender in the entertainment industry.

RESULTS

Please see Appendix A for the full Questionnaire

SECTION 1: Personal and Professional Background Information

Respondents were asked to choose which best described their ethnicity and could chose more than one ethnicity. Self reported ethnicities were 61% Black, 15.2% Asian, 12.7% South Asian, 9% Indigenous, 8% Latino

Respondent age range:

7%	18 to 25
35%	26 to 35
39%	36-50
19%	50+

Respondents reported having worked as:

59.5%	Producers
43.2%	Directors
44.4%	Screenwriters
41.9%	Actress
12.2%	Executive

12.2%	Executive
9.5%	Crew
6.8%	Post Production
4.1%	Cinematographer
2.7%	Casting Director

44.3% of respondents had worked in the industry for over 15 years, 27.8% for 7-14 years, and 27.8% for 1-6 years.

While 33.8% landed their first paid job within 6 months, 28% took up to a year and 37.7% took much longer with 16.9% taking over 3 years.

20% of women had gaps of over 6-12 months between jobs and 40% of women had gaps of over one year.

SECTION 2: Racial Discrimination in and Promoted by the Entertainment Industry

Despite the extremely high professional level of the participants, only 6.5% of respondents believed their job to be equally secure to that of a white woman of equal experience. With less job security, these women are less willing to challenge the status quo. Many of those who did report trying to effect change also reported going to extreme lengths to massage the egos and feelings of those around them so as to achieve their goals without being labelled as pushy or difficult.

The symposium uncovered a deep feeling of isolation amongst participants. Women of Colour in the entertainment industry, especially those who had achieved a position of influence were often the only woman of colour on set, or in the boardroom. These women were alone and felt that their coworkers were often “tone deaf” and/or unable to understand their perspective. Participants expressed a real need for community and a space to speak openly.

Roles for women of colour can be stereotypical and demeaning. 95% of all women surveyed believed that the industry prioritised specific races and/or genders.

Women of colour feel deeply affected by the stereotypes promoted by the very industry in which they work and to which they contribute. 93.5% of respondents believe that media content perpetuates an oversexualized stereotype of Women of Colour. At the same time, 97.5% of respondents believe the media perpetuates stereotypes that are hostile towards Women of Colour.¹

The following are examples of negative stereotypes respondents encountered in the industry:

Over-sexualized--hooker etc. Rarely, if ever, audition as a member of a family. Not Asian enough--can't do martial arts, speak another language, don't have an Asian name. Breakdowns--overly objectifying.

¹ Sexism and prejudice as divided into hostile stereotypes (e.g., women are irrational) and seemingly benevolent ones (e.g., that women are fragile).

That we're lazy, bitchy and unable to handle stress, with no accounting for the workplace harassment CAUSING the stress

That having [dread] locs means you can't play a character in a position of professional power (judge, lawyer, etc)

Drunken Indian, mystical Indian, stupid Indian etc.

Black women won't count unless they are talking about being black.

80% of women report that the stereotypes affect their life outside of work. 75% believe that racial stereotyping has affected their ability to work in the industry. 46.7% of women were certain they had been denied work because of their race, 48% were unsure and only 5% disagreed saying that they did not think they had ever been denied work based on their race.

As content creators and storytellers, Women of Colour in the entertainment industry struggle to create material which is both authentic to their lived experience and palatable to a market saturated with and primed to expect racial stereotypes.

The symposium had a profound effect on the women present. Women felt empowered to themselves collectively make a difference in the industry. As one woman stated, "We

recognize our part in creating and upholding stereotypes.” When confronted with the reality of their part in perpetuating negative stereotypes, Producers of colour stated that, going forward, they were committed to thinking deeply about the impact their own stories had on society and the industry. Similarly, surrounded by other women of colour, actresses felt empowered to turn down stereotypical roles in favour of nuanced and fresh characters.

SECTION 2.1 : Racial Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Entertainment Industry

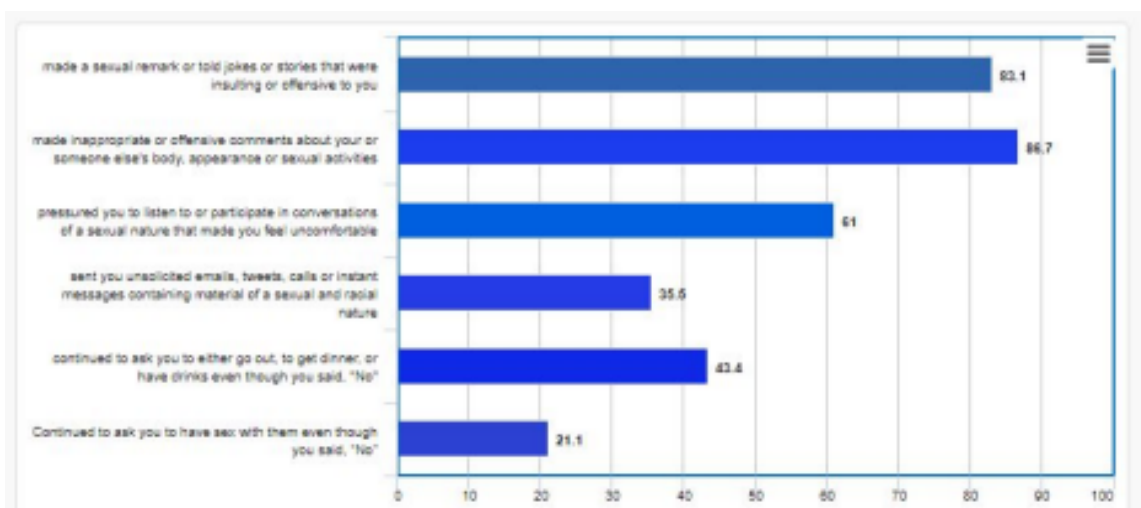
92% believed that Women of Colour experienced sexual harassment differently than white women. 66% believed that their experiences of sexual harassment were both race and gender motivated, 10.3% believed it was motivated by race alone.

Only 18.9% of women believed their race was not a factor when they were targeted for sexual harassment. 47.4% of women believe that they had missed out on professional opportunities due to discomfort with sexual advances and “banter”, 27.6% were unsure, with only 25% of respondents reporting that they had not lost work.

62% of respondents have felt more vulnerable than white women when speaking out against sexual harassment while only 6% have not.

SECTION 3: Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault in the Workplace

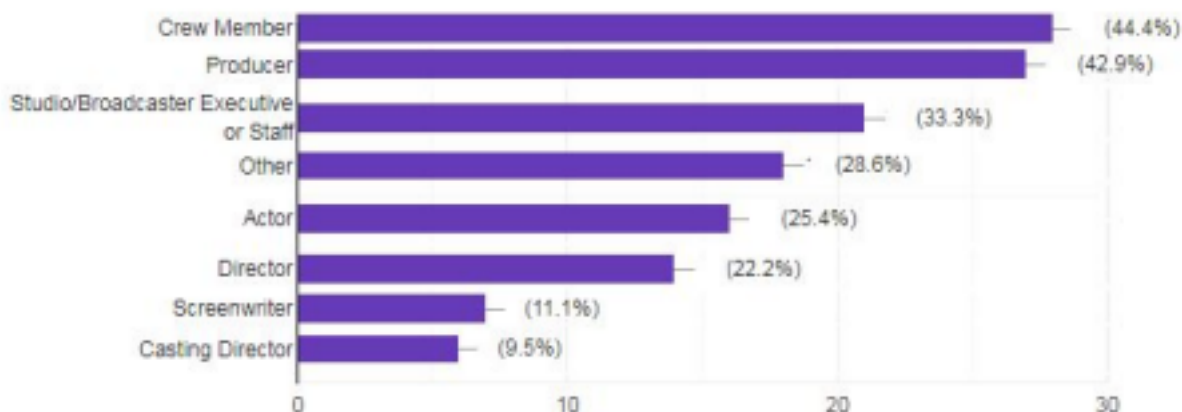
We asked Women of Colour if someone they work(ed) with on set or on a production sexually harassed them in the following ways. The bar indicates a “yes” reply.



Women also reported multiple instances of other kinds of harassment not listed. For example: camera operators zooming in on their breasts and buttocks; crew members pretending to perform sex acts on set pieces; co-actors creating fake erections during scenes; and so on.

The three jobs most likely to sexually harass Women of Colour are those traditionally held predominately by men: Producers, Studio/Broadcaster executives, and Crew members.

Were they a(n)?



When asked if women reported the incident, 73.8% of respondents did not report the incident even though 56% knew who to tell. Of the women who did report the incident, only 26.7% believed that it was handled appropriately.

Women refrained from reporting sexual harassment for varying reasons, mostly tied to their reputation. 61% thought it was not “serious enough” to report. 58.5% felt they would not have been believed or understood. 39% did not think anyone would understand the racial/sexual implications. 36.6% feared their report would not be kept confidential. 31.7% reported that it was too emotionally difficult. 29.3% did not want to get the perpetrator in trouble. 26.8% thought their race would make them a target for negative judgement, 46.3% feared other negative social consequences.

Women felt that they had to weigh the costs of keeping silent about harassment against the benefits of coming forward. 74% of respondents have worked on set/on a production with persons who said or did something sexually inappropriate that created an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment and/or interfered with their work. However, 70% reported that they ignored sexual harassment at work so as not to “rock the boat”.

The symposium also brought these common themes into the light. Multiple participants stated that they were afraid of the repercussions of reporting sexual harassment. They observed that retaliation against women who spoke up against harassment often manifested subtly and quietly rather than overtly. Participants noted that women of colour who report their circumstances are labelled as “troublemakers”, “hard to work with” and relegated to the sidelines.

Furthermore, women reported cultural factors which kept them from speaking out against harassment. One participant described the Asian culture of normalizing “struggling”: if you are struggling, that means you are working hard and that hard work is good. This gives way to the idea that things should never be easy and that one should be grateful for any little opportunity “given” to them. Women also feel conflicted about reporting incidents where the perpetrator is also a person of colour. As one participant said, “Sometimes, that person is all we’ve got!”.

Further comments from survey respondents included:

I once resigned from a job because my executive producer said I had to sleep with him or else. I kept quiet because I knew no one would believe me and I didn’t want to spend the rest of my career labelled as the girl who lied (he was powerful and

9

vindictive). I was young and vulnerable. ... Nothing will change unless executive producers believe they could lose a show over it. Networks need to flex their muscle.

Two thoughts: 1) I'm still afraid to talk about an event that happened with an established actor because we were casually dating when it happened and he is beloved in the industry 2) Still, my knee-jerk reaction is to look for men to collaborate with. I am ashamed. I am committed to change

Even though I work in film and TV, being on set up until now has been a rare experience compared to time spent in classes, auditions, industry social events, conversations with agents--those are the places where I have experienced the most sexual harassment, abuse and discrimination

The culture of racialized sexual harassment comes from the top down - how executives handle the situation affects how crews behave on set - when nothing is

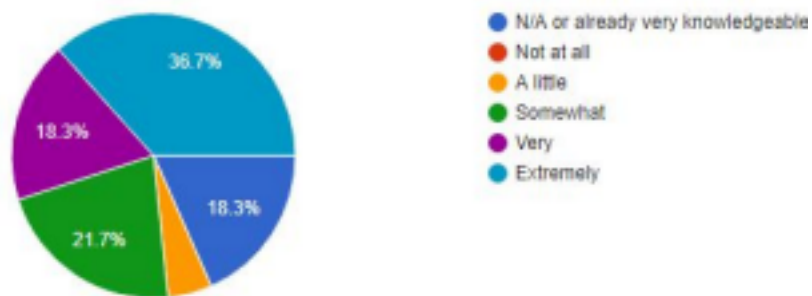
done, then the 'off colour jokes' are worse.

Many participants also reported being hyper aware in “white spaces” as to how to describe the hostilities they encountered. When describing racialized sexual misconduct, many participants were uncertain as to whether they were using the correct language to recount their mistreatment. The women often knew that something was wrong but felt that the situation was difficult to verbalize and navigate. Racism and sexism is pervasive but can often be subtle. Many women expressed the need to understand how to legally protect themselves in the moment.

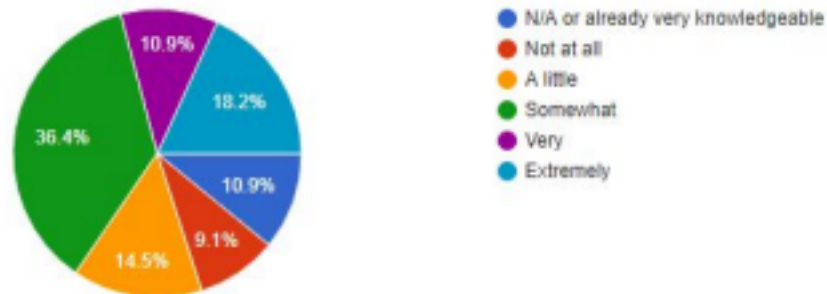
SECTION 4: Knowledge gained at the Symposium

Among respondents, there was a worrying lack of knowledge about sexual harassment and procedures for reporting and getting help. Only 18% of participants reported that they were “already very knowledgeable” of how to define sexual harassment and misconduct. Likewise, only 10.9% of participants were “already very knowledgeable” on standard industry procedures carried out after an individual reports sexual assault and/or misconduct.

Please indicate the level to which this workshop has increased your knowledge of how sexual assault, sexual harassment, racialized sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct are defined:



Please indicate the level to which this workshop has increased your knowledge of what standard industry procedures are carried out when an individual reports and incident of sexual assault or sexual misconduct on set/in a production



Conclusion and Recommendations

Sexual misconduct is clearly prevalent in our industry. It is not limited to powerful producers or executives preying on young actresses. Crew and production members also act inappropriately and predatorily without consequence.

More effort is needed to educate all players on what constitutes sexual harassment, what repercussions perpetrators will face, and on what resources and protections are available to victims.

The vast majority of women who experience harassment do not make an official complaint. Victims are put into the position of having to protect their future reputations because speaking up can adversely affect their career trajectory. In an industry where reputation is so important, women are reluctant to risk becoming known as “complainers” and losing out on potential opportunities to form valuable professional connections. They feel that they have to weigh the costs of coming forward on sexual harassment against the costs of keeping silent.

Women of colour need to feel that their voice matters and that they have support from other women of colour and white allies in film and television. They need to know that they do not deserve to be harassed in any way and that if it does happen that their case will be taken seriously. We cannot minimize the fear of retaliation that Women of Colour have if they were to publicly voice their concerns on how they are treated.

One of the many positive things which arose from the Symposium discussion and survey questions was the feeling of increased empowerment in participants. Women discussed ideas to stop the perpetuation of stereotypes which they had either written, directed, acted in, or produced themselves. As vibrant members of the industry, participants committed to being

proactive in using their power to be more sensitive to the content they create and make changes in the projects they control.

Appendix

Questionnaire distributed to participants.

Racialized Sexual Harassment: The Intersections of Race and Gender

Thank you for taking the time to complete this anonymous survey. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The #MeToo movement has shone a necessary light on the sexual harassment and assault prevalent in our Industry. Until now, there has been only a single-axis analysis of the issues. Reelworld and our partners believe that we need to examine the multidimensional experiences of Women of Colour against that single-axis analysis which may distort our experiences. Your answers will inform a report to be shared with industry stakeholders. All answers are anonymous. Please fully complete your survey and place the completed survey into the envelope provided. Volunteers will be on hand to collect them at the end of the event.

SECTION 1: Personal and Professional Background Information

Which best describes how you identify?

- Indigenous Asian Black Latin Middle Eastern South-Asian

What is your age range?

- 18-25 26-35 36-50 50+

Are you?

- A Canadian citizen or A Permanent Resident

Please place an X over all the positions you work in

- Actress Casting Director Cinematographer Crew
 Director Executive Post Production Producer Screenwriter

How long have you worked in the industry?

- 1-6 years 7-14 years 15+ years

How long did it take to get your first professional, paying job in the industry?

- 6 months 6 months to 1 year 1 to 2 years 3 years

What is the longest period of time you have had between jobs?

- 6 months one year one year

Do you believe that the entertainment industry prioritizes specific genders or races when selecting people for certain positions?

- Yes, Gender Yes, Race Yes, Both No, Neither

Do you believe that Women of Colour in our industry experience sexual harassment differently than white women?

Yes No

SECTION 2: Racial Discrimination in the entertainment industry

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements:

The media perpetuates an oversexualized stereotype of Women of Colour.

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

The media perpetuates stereotypes that are hostile toward Women of Colour.

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

The industry's stereotyping of Women of Colour impacts my life outside of work.

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

Preconceived ideas about Women of Colour have affected my ability to work in this industry.

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

My agent puts my name forward primarily for work they feel is for Women of Colour.

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

I have been denied work because of my race and/or ethnicity.

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

As a Woman of Colour, my job is more precarious than a white woman of similar experience.

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

I will not be hired unless I conform to a certain profile expected of my race.

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

I believe Women of Colour in the entertainment industry experience more sexual harassment than they would in other industries.

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

I believe Women of Colour in the entertainment industry experience sexual harassment differently than white women.

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

SECTION 2.1 : Racial Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Entertainment Industry

As a Woman of Colour, I have:

a) Witnessed sexual harassment at work in our industry

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

b) Been denied work because of speaking out against sexual harassment.

Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

- c) Lost professional opportunities due to discomfort with flirting or sexualized banter.
 Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know
- d) Endured more sexual harassment at work in our industry than white co-workers.
 Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know
- e) Have felt more vulnerable than a white woman when speaking out against sexual harassment.
 Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know
- f) Been sexually targeted in my industry because of my race/ethnicity.
 Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know
- g) Have ignored sexual/racial harassment and overtures so as not to rock the boat at work.
 Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

SECTION 3: Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault in the workplace

For each question, please mark the most applicable choice:

Has someone you work(ed) with on set or on a production said or done something sexually inappropriate that:

- a) Interfered with your work or professional performance or limited your ability to participate in a project?
 Yes No
- b) Created an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment?
 Yes No
- c) How many different people behaved this way?
 None 1 person 2 people 3 or more people
- d) Were they a(n):
 Actor Casting Director Crew Member Producer Director Producer Screenwriter Studio/Broadcaster Executive
 or Staff Other

Has someone you work(ed) with on set or on a production:

- a) Made a sexual remark or told jokes or stories that were insulting or offensive to you?
 Yes No
- b) Made inappropriate or offensive comments about your or someone else's body, appearance or sexual activities?
 Yes No
- c) Pressured you to listen to or participate in conversations of a sexual nature that made you

feel uncomfortable?

Yes No

d) Sent you unsolicited emails, texts, tweets, calls or instant messages containing material of a sexual and racial nature?

Yes No

e) Continued to ask you to either go out, to get dinner, or have drinks even though you said, "No"?

Yes No

f) Continued to ask you to have sex with them even though you said, "No"?

Yes No

Did you know where to go and who to tell?

Yes No

Did you decide to report the incident?

Yes No

a) If you did report the incident, did you feel that it was handled appropriately?

Yes No

b) If you didn't report the incident, why didn't you report the incident? Please check all that apply:

- It was too emotionally difficult to tell someone
- You felt you wouldn't have been believed or understood
- You thought it was not serious enough to report
- You didn't want to get the person in trouble
- You thought your race would make you a target for negative judgement
- You feared other negative social consequences
- You didn't think anyone would understand the racial/sexual implications
- You feared it would not be kept confidential
- Other reasons _____

c) Did you ever tell anyone else about your incident? Check all that apply:

Friend

- Family member
- Someone in charge
- Union member
- Someone else _____

Others in my work environments have attempted to:

a) Manipulate me into believing that my feelings about my experience of sexual harassment are unjustified.

- Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

b) Use sexual harassment to belittle me or my position.

- Agree Disagree Not Sure/Don't Know

Over the span of your career, have you experienced sexually harassment:

- Never 1-5 times 6-15 times 16-30 times Too many to count

Did you feel these incidents were more race motivated, gender motivated, both:

- Race motivated Gender motivated Both

SECTION 4: This Symposium

Please indicate the level to which this workshop has increased your knowledge of the following:

How sexual assault, sexual harassment, racialized sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct are defined:

- N/A or Already very knowledgeable Not at all A little Somewhat Very Extremely

Where to get help and support if you or a co-worker/friend have experienced sexual assault or sexual misconduct in the industry:

- N/A or Already very knowledgeable Not at all A little Somewhat Very Extremely

Where to go to report sexual assault or sexual misconduct in the industry:

- N/A or Already very knowledgeable Not at all A little Somewhat Very Extremely

What standard industry procedures are carried out when an individual reports an incident of sexual assault or sexual misconduct on set/in a production:

- N/A or Already very knowledgeable Not at all A little Somewhat Very Extremely 17

Please describe any negative stereotypes about your race which you have encountered in our industry:

Final Thoughts: Please use this space to express any final thoughts you may have that were not covered by the survey. For example: you may choose to use this space to describe an experience where you felt uncomfortable and either chose to speak out, or were afraid to speak out; or to make suggestions as to what you would like to see in our industry. (Please feel free to use the blank side of this paper)