

#OscarsSoWhite **Beyond the Hashtag**



An Analysis of the Academy Awards' Diversity Crisis
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Abstract

The 2016 Oscar nominations were received with severe backlash from the public and the mainstream media due to lack of diversity among the nominees in the top four acting categories. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences struggled to maintain its reputation, amidst key industry players and general public boycotting the event to show their disapproval. The controversy gained attention from the glob media as people weighed in over the Academy's and Hollywood's diversity issue.

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Overview

Oscar Nominations Spurs Conversation about Diversity

As the oldest award in the film industry, 2016 marked the 88th year of the Oscars which continues to remain one of the most significant award ceremony in the world of cinema (Essex, 1999).

However, when the 2016 Oscar nominations were announced late January last year, the Academy received severe backlash from the public and the mainstream media. People weighed in on the lack of racial diversity among the nominees in the top four categories as for the second consecutive year, all twenty acting nominees and four out of the five directors nominated were of Caucasian descent. The resulted public outcry on social media led to the resurgence of the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite (Smith, 2012). The controversy continued to grow, especially on digital platforms like Facebook and Twitter, as a host of industry heavyweights and prominent players of Hollywood planned on boycotting the Oscars. The nominations were announced in January and the debate stepped up especially as many marked the life of Martin Luther King on the same month. Digital platforms exploded with the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite as people expressed their disapproval, while news media outlets debated over the Academy and Hollywood's race problem (Buckley, 2016).

Eventually, two schools of thought were born. Some members of the Academy responded to the criticism and defended the Academy. They claimed that the award ceremony was based on merit and performance, and not race. Charlotte Rampling, who was recognized as the Best Actress nominee, said that efforts to stage a boycott of the Oscars were "racist to whites" (Child, 2016). While Oscar-winning producer Gerald R. Molen commented, "There is no racism except for those who create an issue. That is the worst kind. Using such an ugly way of complaining."

Others agreed that the lack of diversity among the Oscar nominees traces back to institutional racism in Hollywood. Actors such as Reese Witherspoon expressed her frustration saying, "As an Academy member, I would love to see a more diverse voting membership" (McDermott, 2016). President Obama weighed in on the controversy during a press conference saying, "I think when everybody's story is told, then that makes for better art. That makes for better entertainment. It makes everybody feel part of one American family. So I think, as a whole, the industry should do what every other industry should do, which is to look for talent, provide an opportunity to everybody" (Huddleston, 2016).

The #OscarsSoWhite debate raised an important question for Public Relations professionals - to what extent can effective communication save an organization's reputation when the subject of controversy

is as sensitive as race? This case study attempts to answer this question by analyzing the Academy's crisis management strategy and the reputation damage this controversy caused.

Organization Background

Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

Founded in 1927, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, sometimes referred as The Academy, is an honorary organization of distinguished contributors to the arts and sciences of motion pictures (Meares, 2016). Louis B. Mayer, the head of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) studio, wanted to create an organization that would mediate labor disputes and improve the film industry's image. Mayer along with 36 other film industry leaders coined the AMPAS, however, by the year 1937, the organization had shifted its focus to culture and education from its original objective of labor negotiations. Today the Academy has its headquarters in Beverly Hills with more than 6,000 members (Academy Story).

The Academy is divided into 17 branches which include actors, directors, producers, writers, public relation specialists and more. The Academy's corporate management and policies are overseen by a Board of Governors, which includes representatives from each of the aforementioned branches. As of 2016, the Board of Governors consists of 51 members (Finlay, 2006).

As a part of its research and film education initiative, in 1929, the Academy in a joint venture with the University of Southern California created America's first film school to further the art and science of motion pictures. The Academy also sponsors film-study programs, vocational scholarships to foster cooperation among the creative members of the industry (Zollinger, 2008).

Mission and Purpose

The Academy has seven well-defined purposes:

- Advance the arts and sciences of motion pictures
- Foster cooperation among creative leaders for cultural, educational and technological progress
- Recognize outstanding achievements
- Cooperate on technical research and improvement of methods and equipment
- Provide a common forum and meeting ground for various branches and crafts
- Represent the viewpoint of actual creators of the motion picture and
- Foster education activities between the professional community and the public at large

To live up to its purpose of fostering film education and recognizing talent in the industry, the Academy annually presents the following awards:

- The Academy Award of Merit
- The Irving G. Thalberg Memorial Award
- The Jean Hersholt Humanitarian Award
- The Gordon E. Sawyer Award
- The Academy Scientific and Technical Award
- The Academy Award for Technical Achievement
- The John A. Bonner Medal of Commendation
- The Student Academy Award

Awards which are not presented annually include:

- The Special Achievement Award, and
- The Honorary Award (Academy About).

Organization Background

The Oscars

One of the early committees formed within the Academy was responsible for considering award presentations. Thus, the annual presentation of the Academy Award of Merit, commonly known as the Oscars or the Academy Awards, was coined to symbolize recognition for excellence in acting, directing, and other areas of motion-picture production (Wikipedia).

The Academy Awards ceremony was held for the first time on May 16, 1929. Today, the Academy Awards is Hollywood's exclusive star-studded event that is annually broadcasted to over 200 countries around the world, but the very first Academy Awards was a private affair held at the Roosevelt Hotel in Los Angeles with tickets that cost just \$5 (History of the Academy Awards). Known to be the oldest entertainment awards ceremony, its equivalents such as the Tony Awards for the theater, Emmy Awards for television and the Grammy Awards for music and recording are modeled after the Academy Awards (Wikipedia).

The members of The Academy play an integral role in this award ceremony. With seventeen different branches, each representing a different discipline in film production, every member needs to be approved by the executive committee of the respective branch (Voting). Nominees for each category are selected by votes from members of the corresponding branches. For example, only actors vote to nominate actors in acting categories. However, all members vote to nominate films for the Best Picture category. After the nominations are announced, the full body of the academy votes for the winners of every category via paper and online ballots (Messer, 2016).

Though the Academy does not disclose its membership, the results of a recent study conducted by the *Los Angeles Times* indicated the demographic breakdown of approximately 88% of AMPAS' voting membership. Of the 6,000+ active voters confirmed, 91% were Caucasian, 76% were male, and 54% were found to be over the age of 60. 33% of voting members are former nominees (14%) and winners (19%). Furthermore, the executive branch, which finances the movies and determines what films warrant an awards campaign, is 98% white. The public relations branch, which strategizes those awards campaigns, is 95% white (Keegan, 2016).

Hollywood and the Conversation about Race

Actors and activists weighed in on the subject of equal representation as the Oscar nominations, for a second consecutive year, failed to recognize people of color. The lack of equal representation, compounded by the Academy's history of overlooking the work of minority professionals resulted in a backlash as people addressed a bigger issue, diversity in Hollywood.

A week before the Oscars night, University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism published a new study about Hollywood. The study surveyed a sample of 109 motion pictures and 305 broadcast, cable, and digital series over the course of 2014 - 2015. The researchers examined several criteria including how different ethnicities are portrayed on screen, the sexualization of women based on race and the composition of race and gender among writers, directors, and executives (USC, 2016). According to Dr. Stacy L. Smith, Marc Choueiti, and Dr. Katherine Pieper, the chief researchers of this study, the survey indicated that:

- Most stories fail to reflect or match the demographic composition of the United States: The study examined racial/ethnic balance in TV and found that only 22 stories depicted racial/ethnic balance on the broadcast networks (19%), 18 on cable (13%), 1 on streaming (2%), and 8 in film (7%)
- There is a severe lack of Asian stories being told
- Out of over 11,000 speaking characters in media, only 229 were found to be LGBT, but an overwhelming number of those characters were white men
- 96% of writers, directors, and executives are white men (USC, 2016)

Prominent media outlets claimed that the outcome of the 2016 nominations can be traced back to diversity in Hollywood. For instance, according to an article published by *Variety*, there is a diversity gap in the executive ranks and the content produced by the six major studios in Hollywood. Five of

the six heads are of Caucasian decent (Lang, 2015). The Harvard Business Review published a paper addressing the aforementioned study and said that institutional racism is at the heart of Hollywood and award shows like the Academy Awards reflects the industry and the history of Hollywood is largely one of white men (DeCelles & Kang, 2016). In a similar article published by the *Time* magazine, the author discussed a study titled Flipping the Script, conducted by UCLA's Ralph Bunche Center for African American Studies. According to the article and the 2015 report, Hollywood remains behind the ethnographic makeup of the American society. For instance, minorities account for more than 40% of the US population, however, minorities remain underrepresented nearly six to one in broadcast scripted leads and nearly two to one among cable scripted leads (Ana-Christina, 2015).

‘Whitewashed’ – Were the Oscars racially skewed

Core Problem

In 2016, for the second year in a row, all 20 actors nominated in the lead and supporting acting categories were white (which, before 2015, hadn't happened since 1998). The announcement caused immediate public outcry on social media. It evolved from backlash to boycott as prominent celebrities refused to be a part of the ceremony. The Academy released an official statement promising changes for the future.

Timeline of Events: From Backlash to Boycott

#OscarsSoWhite, a hashtag coined by activist and advocate April Reign first surfaced on social media when the Oscar nominees were announced in 2015. After the 2016 announcement the hashtag resurfaced along with a “sequel” version of it, #OscarsStillSoWhite. Below is a brief timeline of events that are relevant to this case study (Dibdin, 2017):

January 14, 2016: The Academy Award nominees are announced. The #OscarsSoWhite and #OscarsStillSoWhite started trending on Facebook and Twitter as people expressed their disapproval at the lack of diversity. By the end of the day, it had logged over 17,000 impressions on Twitter alone.

January 18, 2016:

- Spike Lee, who directed 2015’s *Chi-Raq*, which did not receive any Oscar nominations, announced on Instagram that he will be boycotting the Academy Awards. The post gained over 10,000 “Likes” and over 2,000 comments
- Actor Jada Pinkett Smith shared a video on Facebook announcing that she would boycott the year’s festivities and addressed her disapproval further on Twitter. Her tweet was retweeted over 15,000 times
- Idris Elba, who received no nominations for *Beasts of No Nation*, spoke to British Parliament about the lack of opportunities for himself and fellow actors of color
- At the King Legacy Awards, where Academy President Cheryl Boone Isaacs was being honored, actor David Oyelowo (who played Martin Luther King, Jr. in *Selma* but did not receive an Oscar nomination for his performance) spoke about his *Selma* experience and why the Oscars matter for artists

January 19, 2016:

- George Clooney gave a statement to *Variety* decrying how Hollywood and the Academy are “moving in the wrong direction.” “I would also make the argument, I don’t think it’s a problem of who you’re picking as much as it is: How many options are available to minorities in film, particularly in quality films?”
- On *The View*, Whoopi Goldberg expressed her disapproval of the boycott

January 20, 2016:

- *The New York Times* reported that the Academy will announce “measures aimed at making its Oscar choices more diverse”
- In an interview with Robin Roberts on *Good Morning America*, Will Smith joined his wife’s boycott of the Academy Awards. “We’re part of this community. But at this current time, we’re uncomfortable to stand there and say this is okay... For my part, I think I have to protect and fight for the ideals that make our country and make our Hollywood community great. So when I look at the series of nominations of the Academy, it’s not reflecting that beauty.”
- Mark Ruffalo, nominated for Best Supporting Actor for his role in *Spotlight*, told *BBC* that he is “weighing” whether or not to attend the Academy Awards. “I woke up in the morning thinking, what is the right way to do this? Because if you look at Martin Luther King’s legacy, what he was saying was, the good people who don’t act are much worse than the people, the wrongdoers that are purposely not acting and don’t know the right way.”

January 22, 2016: The Academy released an official statement and announced major changes to increase the diversity of its membership. The amendments, approved by a special board of governors meeting were unanimously endorsed

January 23, 2016: *Saturday Night Live* chimed in on the controversy with the sketch “Screen Guild Awards,” in which white actors were nominated for increasingly small, pointless supporting roles in predominately black films. The sketch received more than 2 million views on YouTube and was a trending topic on Facebook and Twitter for the following two days

January 24, 2016 - January 28, 2016:

- Steve McQueen, the only black director to have ever won an Oscar for Best Picture (for *12 Years a Slave*), told *The Guardian* he hopes that “in 12 months or so we can look back and say this was a watershed moment, and thank God we put that right”
- President Obama weighed in on the situation during a press conference, “I think the Oscar debate is really just an expression of this broader issue of are we making sure that everybody is getting a fair shot”
- Isaacs, along with AMPAS CEO Dawn Hudson, gave an hour-long interview to *The Hollywood Reporter* for the magazine’s cover story. Isaacs said that at first, she was “heartbroken” and that she didn’t expect a global public outcry. They further explained the reasoning behind the changes to the Academy rules and talked about the role they believe the Academy plays in the film industry

Public Response

When the nominations were announced in January of 2016, the announcement was met with harsh criticism from the public and the mainstream media alike. People soon took to social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to express their disapproval. The Academy did not anticipate this response even though this was the second consecutive year that it faced backlash for lack of diversity among its nominees. Below are some of the statistics and figures that highlight the magnitude of the controversy on social media:

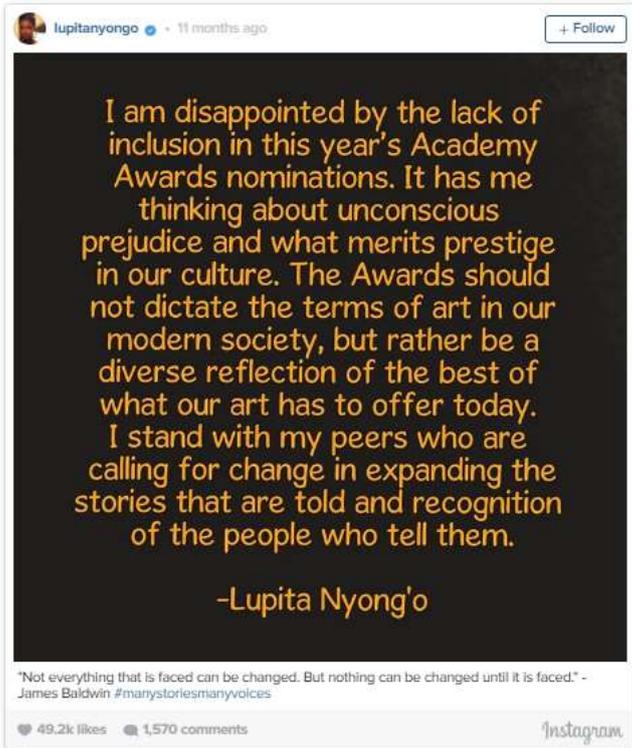
- According to Google trends between January 14 and February 20, there were 1,755 blogs posts about the #OscarsSoWhite campaign (Google Analytics)

- According to HashtagTracking, there were 144,481 original tweets using the hashtag #OscarsSoWhite from January 14 to February 14 (Meyer, 2016)
- According to Facebook search, as of February 20, more than 135,000 people were talking about this issue (Facebook)

A sampling of negative response on social media about #OscarsSoWhite follows:



Sample Tweets from users. Source: Twitter.



Post from Lupita Nyong'o. Source: Instagram



Social media posts from celebrities. Source: Twitter and Facebook.



Post from Spike Lee. Source: Instagram



Tweet from Joy Reid and trending topic on Twitter as of January 2016. Source: Twitter.

Media Response

Traditional and hybrid news media outlets, from across the globe, expressed their disapproval. *The Daily Beast* published a story titled, “The Lack of Diversity Historically Dooms Oscars” (Fallon, 2016), while the *Washington Post* published a similar story titled, “Who picked those #OscarsSoWhite nominees? Other white people” (Izadi, 2016). *Huffington Post* criticized the Academy’s decision with a story titled, “The Academy Proves That Oscars Are Only For White People, Again.” The story included a handy chart which indicated that the last time not a single person of color was nominated was in 1998. It was followed by further statistics and figures that showed in 1999, 2000, 2006 and 2009 only one person of color was nominated out of 20 (Workneh, 2016). *The New York Times* published several articles and opinion pieces including, “Another Oscar Year, Another All-White Ballot” (Buckley, 2016) while *CNN*’s story was titled “#OscarsSoWhite, it starts with the Academy” (France, 2016).



The underlying theme of all these stories remained the same – the makeup of the Academy’s voting membership. Furthermore, news outlets criticized the Academy’s decision to keep the membership demographic a secret. When the *Washington Post* reached out the Academy for comment, they received a response via email, “We do not provide demographic information on our members” (Izadi, 2016).



Popular British news outlet *The Guardian* took an aim at the Academy and said, “The race is now on for the Academy to PR its way out of this one. We’re predicting a diverse set of presenters, the overuse of clips from *Creed* and *Compton* in any marketing montages and 12 further months of black/gay/trans industry friends being pushed to the forefront. #OscarsSoTired” (Lee, 2016). Some media outlets like the *BBC* shed light on the “bigger problem” claiming that Hollywood’s diversity problem goes beyond the Oscars (BBC, 2016).

The Academy’s Response

Overall PR Strategy: Digital and Traditional Media

The Academy issued its first response on January 18, 2016, four days after the nominations were announced and amidst the ongoing backlash. The statement released on Twitter and Facebook came from Cheryl Boone Isaacs, Academy President, who promised to do more to diversify the makeup of the voting Academy members. In her note, she said, “In the coming days and weeks we will conduct a review of our membership recruitment in order to bring about much-needed diversity in our 2016 class and beyond” (Harris, 2016). The statement was released on Facebook and Twitter

simultaneously. On Facebook, it was liked over 5,000 times and shared more than 2,000 times (Facebook). Twitter users retweeted the post over 6,000 times (Twitter). Recognizing the digital engagement is important because on an average the Academy’s social networking handles do not see much engagement, for instance on Twitter, the Academy’s regular posts are liked not more than 7-10 times (Twitter).



Isaacs was at the center of the backlash as the public and the media questioned her stance on this issue as the first black President of the Academy. Other than the official statement published on social

media, Isaacs addressed the issue in-person during an interview with the *Hollywood Reporter* and the African-American Film Critics Association (Min, 2016). In her interview, she acknowledged the lack of diversity as an issue and said that “was heartbroken” when the nominations were released. She further outlined the Academy’s plans to diversify its membership, “By the year 2020 we want diversification of women, people of color, national origin and sexual preference, disability all across the board to be recognized because of their value to the business of motion pictures” (Min, 2016).

In a similar interview with *Variety*, Isaacs announced that The Academy has extended its membership to 683 new members, with members of the new class being 46% female and 41% people of color. This new class of members is the largest ever, by far, to be announced by the Academy (Stedman, 2016). In an official statement, she said that the Academy has reframed its “lifetime membership policies” and will “open its doors wider, and create opportunities for anyone interested in working in this incredible and storied industry” (Academy News). Additionally, membership was extended to

283 new international professionals from 59 countries. In support of Isaacs' previous comment regarding the Academy's five-year plan, AMPAS announced in a press release that by 2020 it will have added 500 non-white members and 1,500 female members (Stedman, 2016).

Digital Strategy

As a part of the organization's response strategy, the Academy updated the FAQ section of their website to highlight, in depth, how the new changes will be implemented and the selection criteria for nomination (Academy FAQ). During the next few days, the Academy directed users from their social media platforms to their FAQ page to learn more. Though the posts and tweets received a mixed response from the public, according to Google trends, there was a considerable drop in the #OscarsSoWhite topic across digital platforms (Google Analytics).

As a part of the social media content strategy, the Academy started sharing content that visually showcased people of color being nominated for different categories besides acting. They also used this opportunity to share statements and quotes from previous winners and leverage their response to advocate for the Oscars.

PR Strategy for the Day of the Event

Actor Chris Rock was scheduled to take the stage as the host for the evening. Rock was selected for this role in late 2015, prior to the #OscarsSoWhite uproar. This turned out to be both a blessing and



Sample posts shared/published by The Academy post #OscarsSoWhite crisis.



curse for the Academy. In a year of all-white acting nominees, Rock was a person of color who did not hesitate to address the Oscars diversity furor and in his monologue made his personal stance on diversity. However, at one point during the evening, Rock introduced three Asian children on stage dressed as PricewaterhouseCoopers

accountants. The joke was based on the stereotype of Asians being good at math. He followed his statement with “phones made by the children” in reference to the use of child labor in developing Asian countries. The response was swift, two-time Oscar winner Ang Lee joined a group of 25 Academy members of Asian descent in writing a letter protesting the joke. Host Chris Rock was criticized for the mistake of conflating #OscarsSoWhite with a black and white binary. The Academy published a press release addressing the issue and apologized for any aspect of the Oscar telecast that was offensive (Rich, 2016).

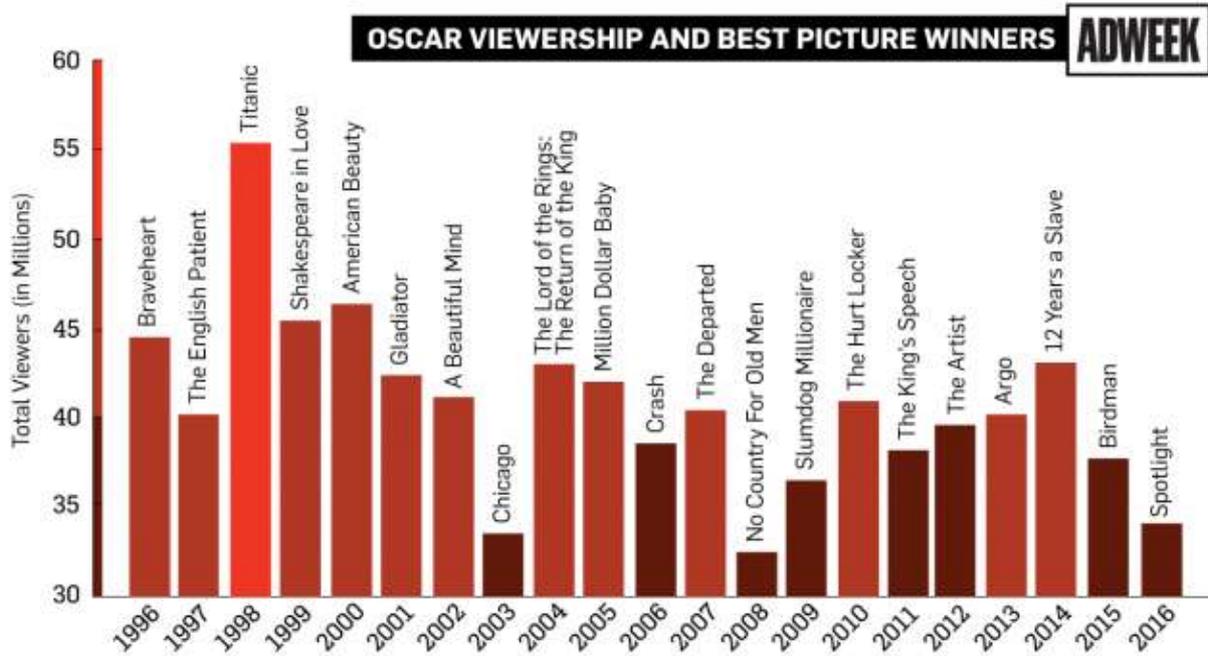
The producers also reached out to a slate of presenters from diverse backgrounds such as Whoopi Goldberg, Dev Patel, and Kerry Washington. Though an understandable gesture and a well-meaning one, the public and the media interpreted it as a short-term image cleansing strategy, similar to the Academy’s 2015 lineup.

Business Impact

2016 Academy Awards Viewership and Performance

Despite the Academy’s actions to confront the immediate backlash and the promotion of Chris Rock as the host of the 2016 ceremony, it fell short of gaining viewership. According to Nielsen, only 34.3 million total viewers tuned into the 88th Academy Awards on ABC. The 2016 Awards ranked as the third lowest rated Academy Awards telecast since 1974. The measurement company said that “only the 2003 ceremony (33 million) and 2008 (32 million) had lower ratings.” The show pulled a 10.5 rating among adults ages 18 to 49, which translates to around 13.3 million viewers in the demographic. That is the smallest 18-49 Oscar’s audience in at least two decades (Battaglio, 2016).

However, the reputational crisis was only partly to be blamed for the 8% drop in total viewers from 2015’s Academy Awards. While the #OscarsSoWhite controversy did keep some viewers away from the event, there was also a relation between the movies that were nominated and the viewership. For instance, best picture winner *Spotlight* is a critically acclaimed movie but has grossed just \$39.1 million at the box office, which means that it was not very popular among the masses. The below graph showcases the relationship between Oscar viewership and the best picture winners:



Source: AdWeek.

The leaders of the #OscarSoWhite movement acknowledge that there were other contributing factors that resulted in the lack of viewership last year, however, they also believe that the social media uproar and the backlash played an integral role in the Awards unpopularity. American civil rights activist, Al Sharpton, who led the rally against the Oscars, said that there was a “significant decline” (in ratings) and should send a message to the Academy and to movie studio heads, “Though clearly we don't take full credit for the decline, certainly one would have to assume we were effective and part of it And to those that mocked the idea of a tune-out, it seems the joke was on them” (Lynch, 2016).

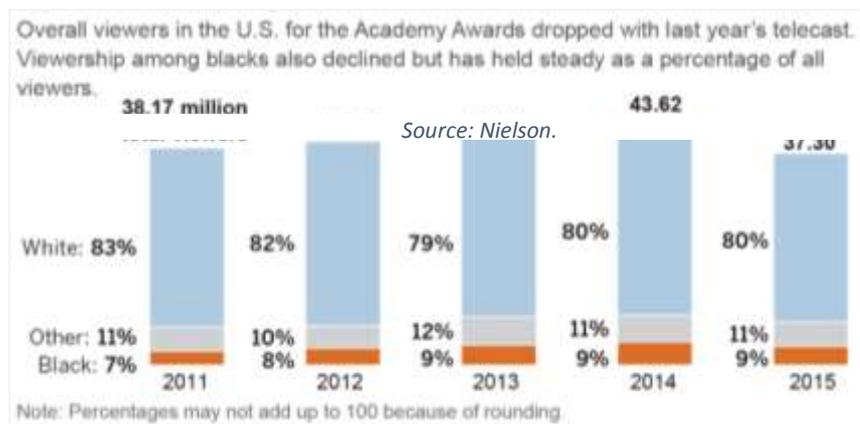
Revenue Impact

The #OscarSoWhite tarnished the Academy’s brand but the controversy did not cause much financial damage to last year’s telecast. ABC, the television network that broadcasts the event, had already sold out nearly all of its commercial time before the controversy erupted. And it was unlikely that any advertisers would have pulled out of this highly lucrative event. Some industry experts even suggest that the controversy boosted the TV ratings, “Anything that generates interest in a program is good for ratings. We've seen that happen during the last year with the Republican presidential debates," said Ashwin Navin, chief executive of the analytics firm Samba TV. Advertisers are important for the Academy as it collects the bulk of its annual revenue from the TV rights fees. According to the organization’s most recent tax filings, the telecast, and other Academy Awards-related events generated \$95.6 million in revenue for the Academy in 2013 (James, 2016).

However, the repercussion of this problem goes beyond the just immediate economic gains or loses. Though #OscarsSoWhite did not directly affect the finances of the Academy, the controversy caused serious reputation damage to the organization. In 2015, when the hashtag was first coined, the Academy did not take it seriously. It was considered as just another Twitter-outcry without any potential for actual damage. However, according to Nielsen: 2015 Oscars’ ratings were down by 16% and recorded the lowest records in six years. The firm said that “a dearth of diversity among nominees and unfamiliarity with some of the most honored films may have contributed to the lower tune-in for the 2015 Oscars” (James, 2016).

Advancing justice, inclusion and equality have the potential to drive better revenue for the Academy. According to Nielsen data, whites make up roughly 80% of the viewership for the award show while African Americans make up about 9% of the audience. That number has remained consistent over the last five years. The Oscars continue to miss out on attracting a diverse viewership because of the lack of diversity among award nominees. For instance, Nielsen data suggests that the African American viewership increases when the nominees are more diverse as they want to see themselves reflected on screen (James, 2016). The other aspect of the Academy’s image problem is the fact that though most

advertisers did not change their plans to purchase time during the Academy Awards in 2016, in the long run, it is more likely that advertisers and organizations will ask themselves the question – are we a part of the problem or a part of the solution?



In 2011, ABC signed a contract with the Academy to air the Oscars through 2020. The Academy Awards are the highest-rated non-sports televised event every year. As an exclusive pact, for this event, ABC does not guarantee ratings to advertisers (Lynch, 2016).

Beyond the Hashtag: A Hopeful Future

“According to the Arthur W. Page Society, corporate character is the unique identity that distinguishes an enterprise and the enterprise should embody that character in every interaction. This identity is defined by the enterprise’s purpose and values, and through this shared belief decision makers take action. Eventually, over time stakeholders gain confidence as their actions result in positive outcomes (Arthur W. Page Society, 2012). Defining a company’s beliefs and values are integral to its corporate character – was the Academy successful at defining its character?”

The #OscarsSoWhite controversy raised an important question for Public Relations professionals: “What defines a good communication ‘strategy’ when the theme of the crisis is as sensitive as race?” For the Academy, having an open conversation was the first step. Isaacs’ statement about being heartbroken as a woman of color was probably the most impactful strategy that resonated with the audience. The honesty of the statement and the fact that the leadership acknowledged that diversity was a real issue in the world of cinema was a step in the right direction to move the conversation forward. However, as we learned previously, the controversy did not impact the Academy’s overall revenue. The question then arises, how do you communicate the importance of brand reputation to members of the Academy when controversies don’t impact the baseline of their business?

It's probably safe to say that the 2017 nominations will look very different than it did last year. However, as public relations specialists is our job limited to strategically communicating the changes that the academy implements? Is diversity just a numbers game? As responsible citizens do we owe it to our profession to bring about actual change, from within, through transparent communications, better policies and grassroots changes to advance the organization and the society at large?

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