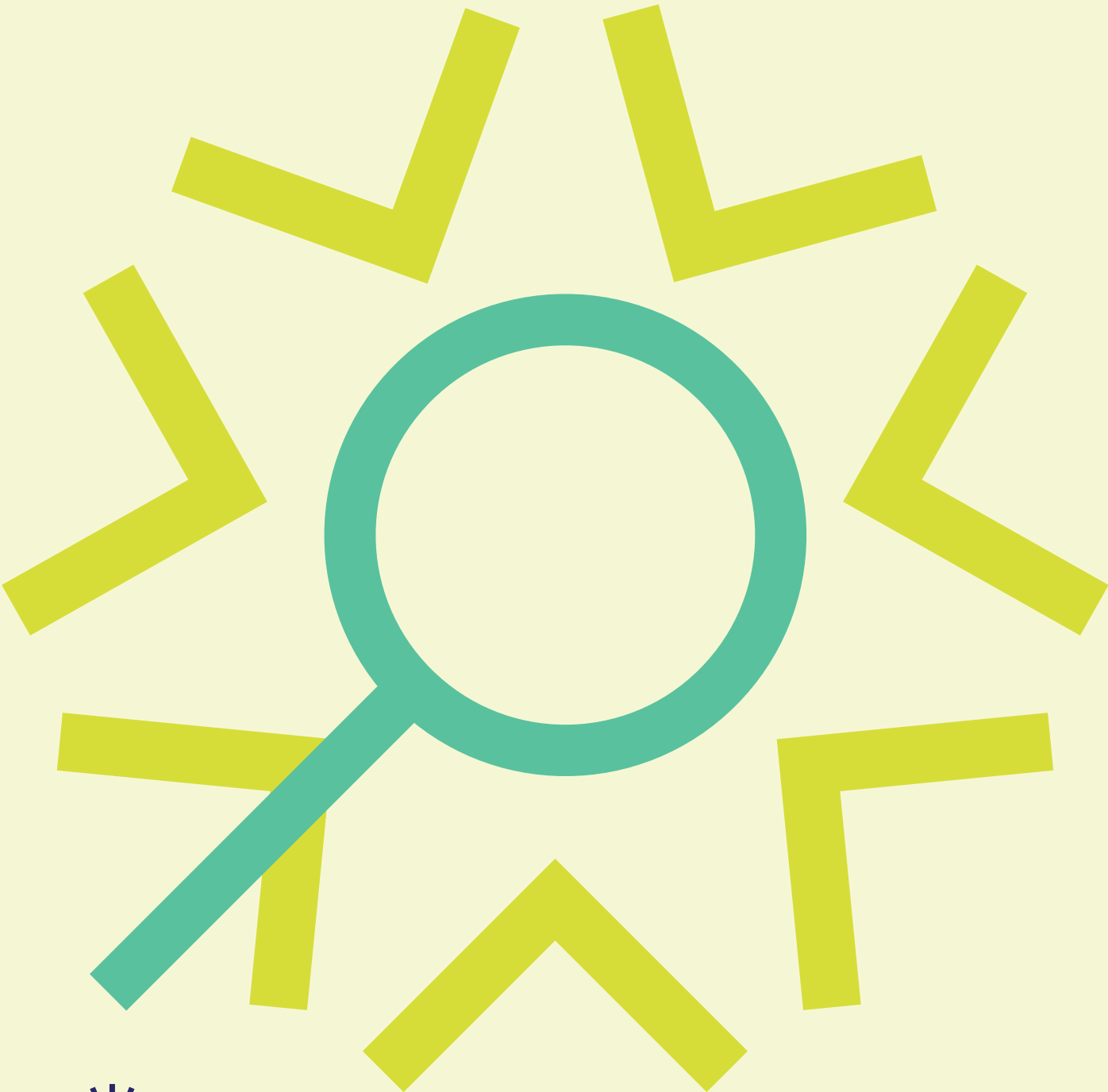


**THE  
STELLA  
COUNT**

*2019/2020*





**SUGGESTED CITATION:**

Harvey, M. and Lamond, J. (2022) *Stella Count 2019/2020*, The Stella Prize.

**REPORT AUTHORS:**

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**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

The 2019/2020 Stella Count is made possible by generous support from the Australia Council for the Arts, and the ANU Gender Institute. Our thanks also to all the literary editors who shared information about their publications' reviews with Stella.

**THANKS TO:**

Chloe Adams  
Ana Boado  
Alice Grundy  
Lana Guineay  
Peter Hannagan

Kate Greenwood  
Emily Hart  
Ennis Chen  
Judy Liu  
Gabrielle Luoni

Melody Lord  
Connor Tomas O'Brien  
Melanie Pryor  
Olivia Whenman  
Judy Young





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# Top-level findings

2019 was the first year in Stella Count history in which more books by women were reviewed in the Australian book pages we survey than books by men. This trend continued in 2020: **books authored by women are now the focus of 55% of the reviews published, up from 53% in 2019.**

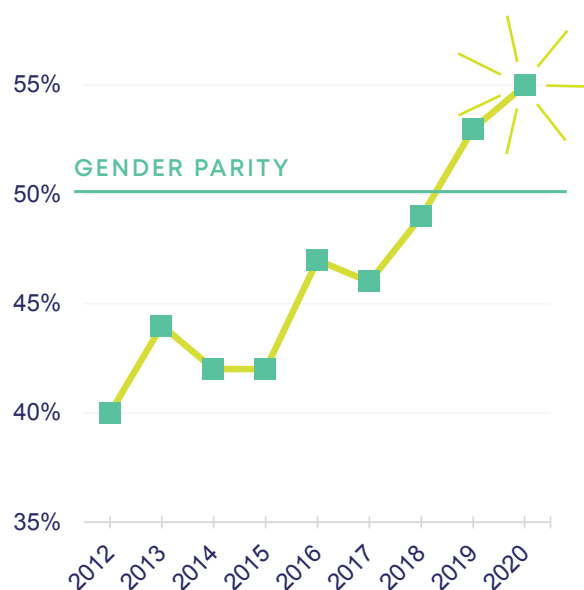
Notable statistics from the 2019/2020 Stella Count include:

- Women authors now receive equal attention in Australian book reviews for the first time in the Stella Count's history.
- 9 out of 12 of the publications we survey continue to review the same number, or more, of women authors as men authors.
- Large reviews continue to be a domain that women authors and reviewers struggle to access equally.
- 'Gender siloing' continues to be a feature of the Australian book reviewing landscape – i.e. men tend to review men and women tend to review women.
- Women authors feature strongly in reviews of fiction and children's and YA literature, but are making inroads when it comes to the reviewing of nonfiction books.
- Non-binary authors and reviewers are becoming more visible in our counting.

## ABOUT THE COUNT

The Stella Count is the leading annual statistical analysis of gender bias in the field of book reviewing in Australia. Begun in 2012, it collects and interprets data on the gender of authors and reviewers, length of review, and genre of books reviewed.

**Overall representation of women authors in Australian review pages over time**



# Introduction

The 2019 and 2020 Stella Counts are our eighth and ninth consecutive quantitative studies assessing women's representation in the field of book reviewing in Australia. We continue to survey twelve publications – including national, metropolitan and regional newspapers, journals and magazines – in print and online.<sup>1</sup> In order to measure the extent of gender bias in Australia's book review pages we record the authors, titles and genres of books reviewed, as well as the reviewers, and number and size of reviews published.

The 2019 and 2020 Stella Counts were undertaken in starkly different circumstances to those of previous years. The Count needs must take place retrospectively, given it looks back over a calendar year of book reviews. Our data collection work, therefore, begins in the early months of the ensuing year. But it became clear in early 2020 that the possibility of business-as-usual for this project, as in so many other things, was flying out the window. On 25 January 2020 the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in Australia and by the end of March a number of interstate borders were closed and, in Stella's hometown of Melbourne, the first of six lockdowns was in place.<sup>2</sup>

To say that the COVID-19 pandemic has put a spanner in the works in terms of the time, money and other resources required to undertake the 2019 and 2020 Counts is an understatement. We would say it is a small miracle that we can present our findings in the analysis that follows, except that we know this dataset is testament to the efforts of a group of generous and committed volunteers. They dropped everything to rush to libraries to consult physical resources when things were open, and were up to the challenge of wrangling partial online databases when they weren't.

This document discusses the 2019 and 2020 Stella Counts in turn, and then makes some general comments on discernible trends across the two counts.

---

1 These publications are *The Advertiser*, *The Australian (Weekend Review)*, *Australian Book Review*, *Australian Financial Review (Magazine)*, *Books+Publishing*, *Courier-Mail*, *The Mercury*, *The Monthly*, *The Saturday Age/SMH*, *The Saturday Paper*, *Sydney Review of Books* and *The West Australian*.

2 [https://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Parliamentary\\_Departments/Parliamentary\\_Library/pubs/rp/rp2021/Chronologies/COVID-19StateTerritoryGovernmentAnnouncements](https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp2021/Chronologies/COVID-19StateTerritoryGovernmentAnnouncements)

# THE STELLA COUNT 2019

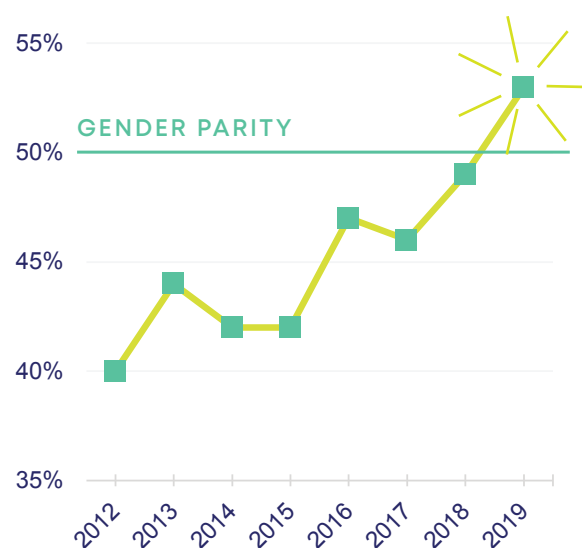
## Representation of Women Authors in 2019

The 2019 Count sees the representation of women authors in Australian book reviews **crash through the parity line for the first time in Stella Count history.**

53% of books reviewed in Australian publications were by women (up from 49% in 2018). This is the first time - certainly since the Count began in 2012 and possibly since the first book review appeared in Australia in 1824 - that the field as a whole has reviewed more books by women authors than by men. To say this is a watershed moment is an understatement.

As in the 2018 Count, nine of our twelve publications reviewed more women authors than men authors. These publications are *The Saturday Paper* (66% women authors reviewed), *The Monthly* (63%), *Books+Publishing* (65%), *The West Australian* (61%), *Sydney Review of Books* (57%), *The Advertiser* (56%), *The Mercury* (56%), *The Courier-Mail* (54%) and *Australian Financial Review* (53%). Even the three remaining publications that were yet to reach gender parity in 2018 have all increased the percentage of books by women authors reviewed in their pages in 2019: *The Australian* (from 40 to 43%), *Australian Book Review* (from 41 to 47%) and *The Age/Sydney Morning Herald* (from 48 to 49%). *Australian Book Review*'s increase of 6 percentage points for women authors is wonderful to see and its largest year-to-year increase since the 2013 Count.

Fig 1. Chart  
Overall representation of women authors  
in Australian review pages  
over time



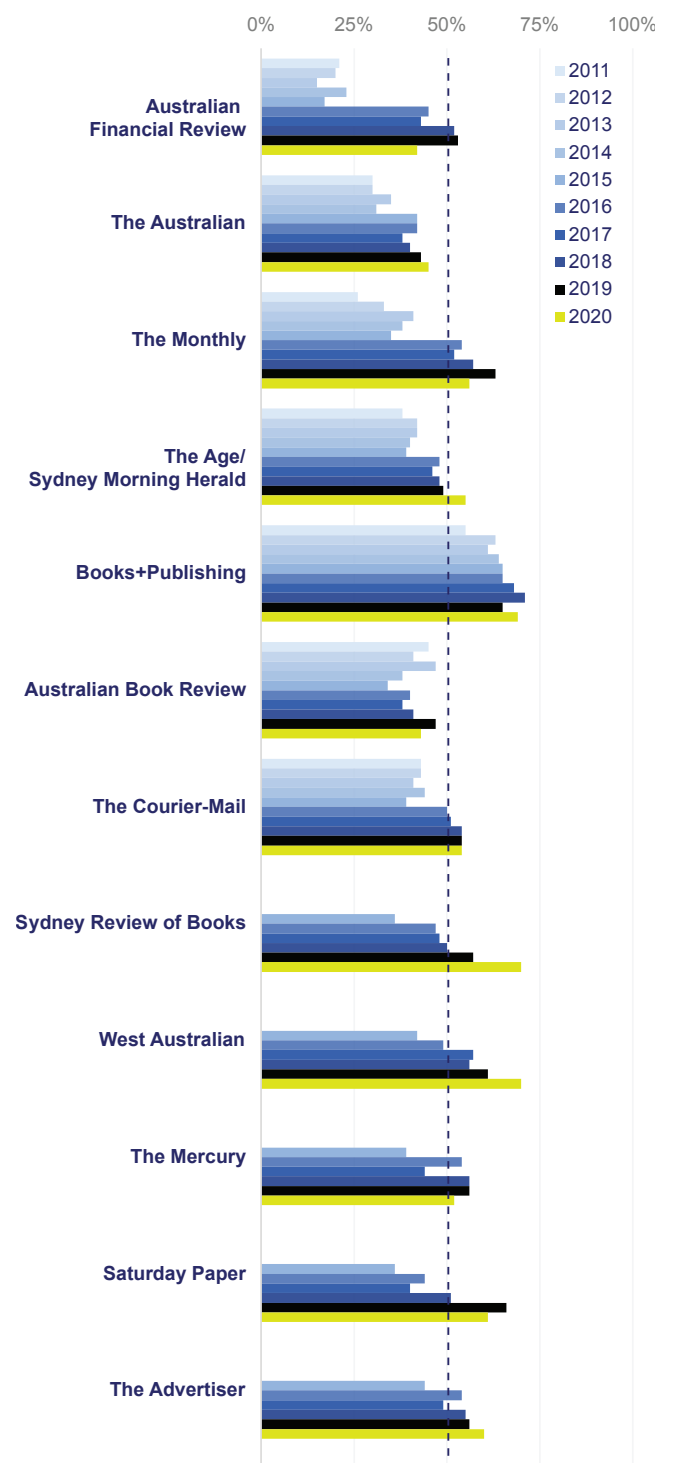
A comparison to the 2019 VIDA Count - in which only two of the fifteen U.S.- and U.K.-based publications included review more women authors than men authors - leads us to wonder: **does Australia now have the most gender-equal book reviewing landscape in the world?** It's hard to imagine this is a feat that has been equalled anywhere, at any time.

The Stella Count set out to quantify what had been understood anecdotally as bias against women in Australian book reviewing with a view to making gender inequality visible and shifting the assumptions and practices that underpinned it. The 2019 Count demonstrates the success of this project.

This year marks a different kind of milestone for the Stella Count: this is the first time we have counted non-binary authors in our data. This brings the Count into line with the Stella Prize, which in 2019 expanded its eligibility rules to include non-binary authors ahead of the 2020 Stella Prize.

Books by non-binary authors account for <1% of the total number of reviews published. We are aware, however, that the method we have adopted for identifying non-binary authors in 2019 - that is, self-identification and pronoun use in bylines and published bios - is not capturing all the non-binary authors in our data. Attempting to count non-binary authors is an important step towards undoing the patriarchal gender binarism that has characterised the Stella Count to date as well as recognising gender diversity that actually exists in the Australian literary field.

Fig 2. Chart  
Representation of female authors  
by publication over time



## Representation of Women Reviewers in 2019

In 2019, **women reviewers were responsible for half or more of the reviews printed in ten of the twelve publications we survey** (up from nine in 2018).

Women reviewers write the largest percentage of reviews at *Australian Financial Review* (100%), *The West Australian* (94%), *The Advertiser* (83%), *The Monthly* (also 83%), *Books+Publishing* (79%) and *The Mercury* (77%). For the first time in the history of the Count, *The Age/Sydney Morning Herald* has reached the 50% threshold for women reviewers (up from 48% in 2018).

The two publications in which men reviewers review more books than women remain *The Australian* (39% published reviews by women, up from 37% in 2018) and *Australian Book Review* (44%, unchanged from 2018).

What we have previously called ‘gender siloing’ continues to be a feature of the Australian book pages: men tend to review men and women tend to review women. Previously, we have reported that men were less likely to review women’s books than women were to review men’s books. In 2019, this appears to have evened up substantially: 32% of men’s reviews are of women’s books and 34% of women’s reviews are of men’s books.

For the first time, the 2019 Count has attempted to count non-binary reviewers. Relying on bylines and published biographical notes for this information, non-binary reviewers account for <1% of the total number of reviews published. Of note are *Books+Publishing* and *The Sydney Review of Books*: for each, 2% of published reviews are by non-binary reviewers. Interestingly, non-binary reviewers review men, women and non-binary authors almost equally (but the sample size is very small).

What we have previously called “gender siloing” continues to be a feature of the Australian book pages: men tend to review men and women tend to review women — though in 2019, this appears to have evened up substantially.

1 N.B. All 30 reviews are by a single female reviewer.



## Representation of Women by Review Size in 2019

Unfortunately, our prediction that positive change was afoot in terms of gender and review size was premature, based upon the 2019 data. After looking like parity was around the corner for women authors in the large reviews with good gains in the 2018 Count, the percentage has slipped slightly from 47% to 46% in 2019. **Large reviews — that is, reviews of 1,000 words or more — continue to be more the province of men authors.**

We continue to see large reviews as a crucial site for intervention because of the opportunity of serious and in-depth engagement they afford authors.

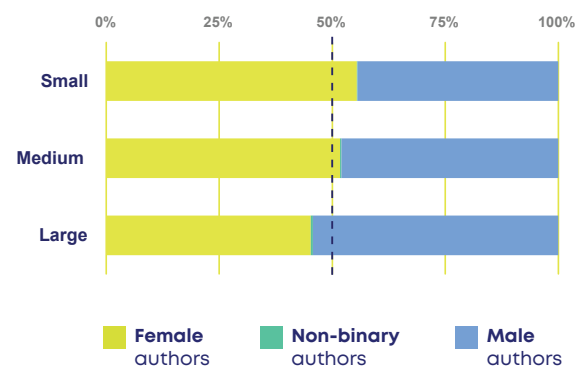
*The Australian* again has the worst gender distribution of large reviews, despite the fact that it publishes a high proportion of them: 54% of the reviews it publishes are large but 40% of these are devoted to women authored books (up from 39% in 2018). *Australian Book Review*, while still not yet achieving gender parity in its distribution of large reviews, has made a significant improvement this year: 44% of its large reviews are now devoted to women authored books in 2019, compared to 31% in 2018.

Women authors' loss of ground in large reviews has its mirror in the 2019 data for small reviews, of which books by women authors constitute 55%. In the 2018 Count small reviews were evenly distributed.

This backsliding is also evident in the trends for women reviewers. After achieving 49% of the share of large reviews in the 2018 Count, women reviewers reviewed only 42% of them in 2019. Women reviewers still write the bulk of medium and small book reviews (i.e. reviews between 300–1000 words, and reviews of under 300 words) at 63% and 68% respectively.

**Longer reviews stubbornly persist to be of men's books and written by male reviewers.**

Fig 3. Chart  
**Gender distribution of reviews in 2019, by length**



## Representation of Women by Genre in 2019

### Nonfiction

As we have noted in previous Counts, nonfiction reviews have tended to skew significantly to men authors. But women authors have gained ground in 2019, continuing the upward trend first identified in 2017. 45% of the total number of nonfiction books reviewed were by women in 2019, up from 42% in 2018. Of the twelve publications surveyed, seven publish the same number of reviews, or more, of nonfiction books by women authors as men authors (up from six publications in 2018).

Disparities in the reviewing of nonfiction authors continue at *Australian Book Review* (61% men, 39% women), *The Australian* (58% men, 42% women), *The Advertiser* (58% men, 42% women), *The Age/SMH* (57% men, 43% women) and *Courier-Mail* (56% men, 44% women). However, there have been some welcome improvements: *Australian Book Review*, for example, has upped its reviewing of women-authored nonfiction by 8 percentage points in 2019. In line with the trend across the past three years of the Count, nonfiction is reviewed equally by male and female reviewers.

### Fiction

The association between fiction reviews and women authors would seem to have strengthened since previous counts: 59% of all fiction reviewed in our publications was authored by women, up from 54% and 52% in 2018 and 2017. Fiction reviews are still more likely to be written by women than men: 67% of fiction is reviewed by women reviewers (compared to 66% in 2018).

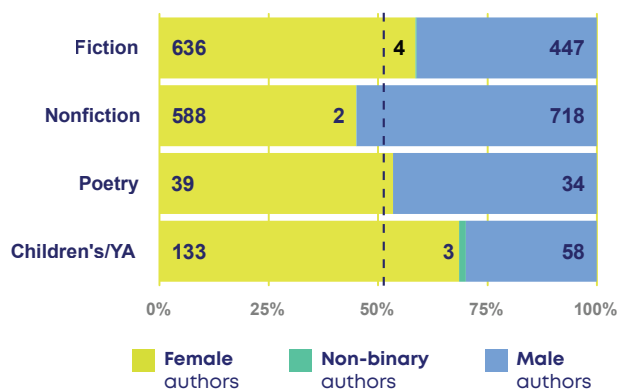
### Children's and YA literature

Our 2019 data shows that there appears to be some increase in the reviewing of works by male authors of children's and YA literature. In 2018, 72% of all reviewed books in this category were by women; in 2019, this was down to 68%. However, the reviewing of children's and YA literature in 2019 skews even more towards women reviewers than in the past: in 2019, 87% of all reviews of this category were written by women (up from 76% last year).

### Poetry

Poetry is the only genre included in the Stella Count that doesn't tend to favour men authors over women authors or vice versa in terms of the works reviewed: 53% of poetry books reviewed in 2019 were authored by women, compared to 48% in 2018 and 50% in 2017. However, men tend to review more poetry than women: in 2019, men reviewed 62% of poetry books in our data, compared with 68% in 2018.

Fig 4. Chart  
**Gender distribution of reviews in 2019, by genre**



# THE STELLA COUNT 2020

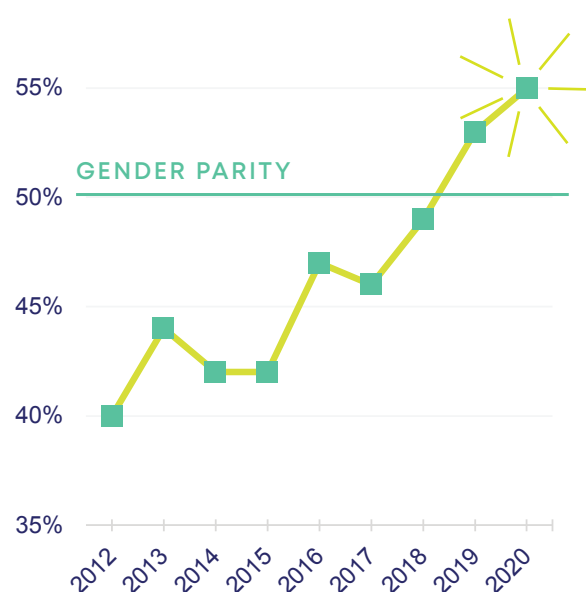
## Representation of Women Authors in 2020

2019 was the first year in Stella Count history in which more books by women were reviewed in the Australian book pages we survey than books by men. **This trend continues in 2020: books authored by women are now the focus of 55% of the reviews published, up from 53% in 2019.**

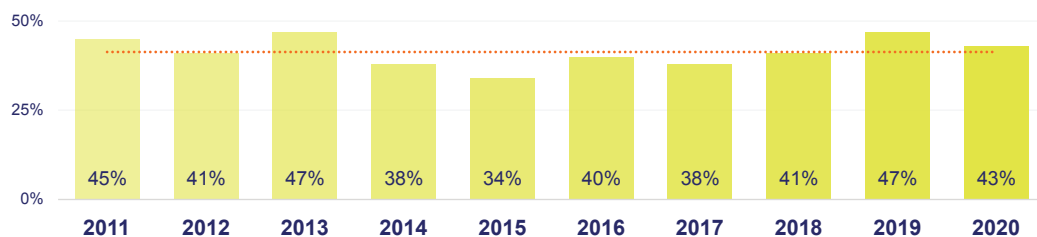
As we saw in the 2019 Count, nine out of twelve publications review more books by women than by men. These publications are: *The West Australian* (70% books reviewed authored by women), *Sydney Review of Books* (70% women, a significant increase from 57% last year), *Advertiser* (60%), *Books + Publishing* (69%), *The Saturday Paper* (61%), *The Monthly* (56%), *The Age/Sydney Morning Herald* (55%), *Courier-Mail* (54%) and *The Mercury* (52%). Of particular note is *The Age/Sydney Morning Herald*, which, after hovering at just below parity for the last two years, has for the first time in Stella Count history reviewed more women authors than men.

**2020 cements the parity achieved by women authors in book reviews in 2019.**

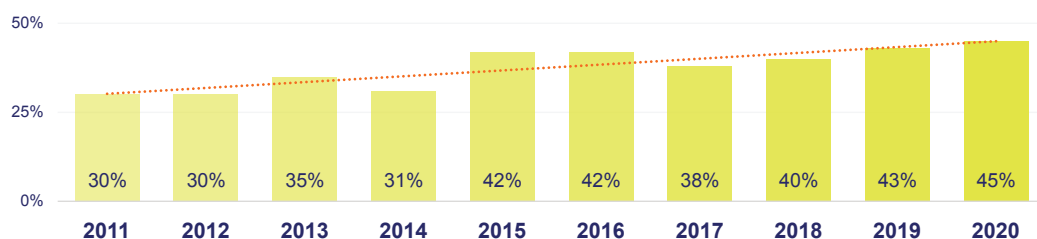
Fig 5. Chart Overall representation of women authors in Australian review pages over time



**Fig 6. Chart**  
Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors  
in *Australian Book Review*



**Fig 7. Chart**  
Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors  
in *The Australian*



By contrast, the *Australian Book Review's* percentage of reviews of books by women authors has dropped from 47% in 2019 to 43% in 2020 and *The Australian* increased slightly from 43% to 45% women authors reviewed. These two publications continue to find gender parity a difficult bridge to cross. This is significant because these publications have a national – even international, in the case of *Australian Book Review* – audience and, combined, publish 29% of the total number of the reviews we count. While *The Australian* is forecast to achieve parity by 2023, *Australian Book Review* remains the only publication we survey whose representation of women authors trends downwards over the nine years of the Stella Count.

We have also seen the *Australian Financial Review* slip out of the 'group of nine': it saw a drop in terms of women authors reviewed from 53% in 2019 to 43% in 2020. This is the first time that this statistic has not met or exceeded parity since 2017.

2020 sees a small increase in the number of non-binary authors reviewed in these publications: works by non-binary writers are the subject of 1% of the reviews in *Books+Publishing*, 2% of the reviews in *The Sydney Review of Books*, 3% of reviews in *The Saturday Paper* and 4% of reviews in *The Monthly*.<sup>1</sup>

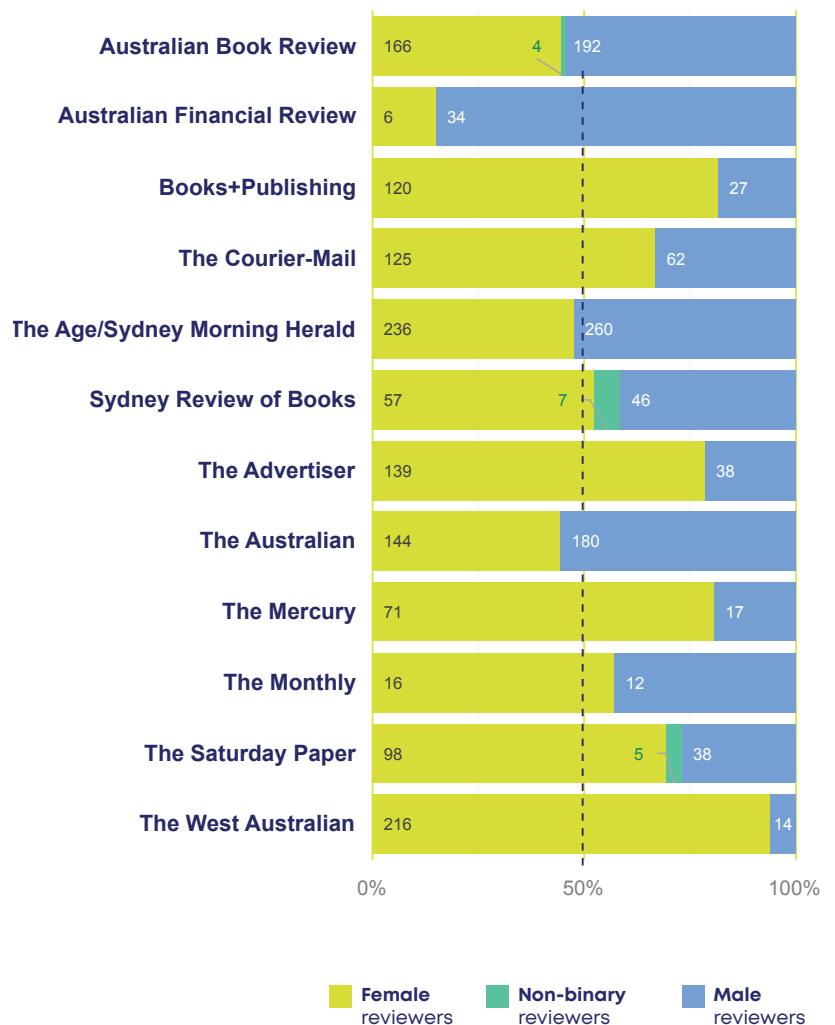
<sup>1</sup> We should note that these publications' inclusion of bylines and biographical notes render the identification of non-binary gender more straightforward than other publications included in the Count.

## Representation of Women Reviewers in 2020

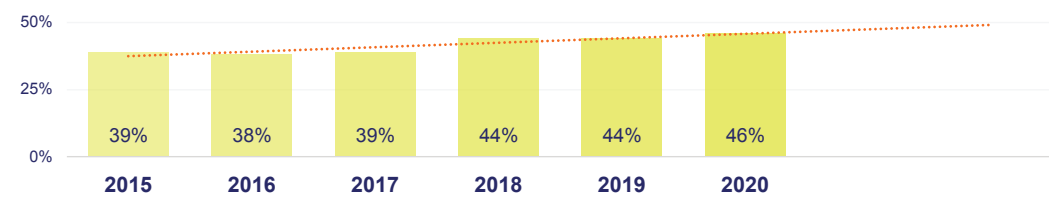
Women reviewers continue to be responsible for the majority of book reviews in our surveyed publications: more than half of the reviews that appear in eight of our twelve publications are written by women, which is down by one since 2018.

The publications in which women reviewers dominate the book pages are the *West Australian* (94% women), *Books + Publishing* (82%), *Mercury* (81%), *Advertiser* (79%), *The Saturday Paper* (70%), *Courier-Mail* (67%), *The Monthly* (57%) and the *Sydney Review of Books* (52%). Women reviewers publish fewer reviews than men in the *Australian Financial Review* (15% of reviews are written by women), *The Age/Sydney Morning Herald* (48%), *Australian Book Review* (46%) and *The Australian* (44%). The last two publications have never had gender parity in terms of reviewers over the period of the Count but are on trend to achieve this in the next 2-3 years.

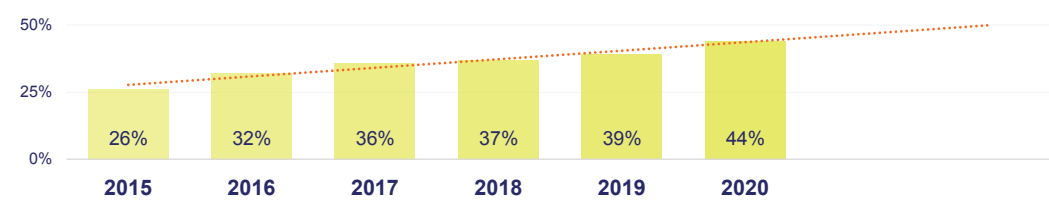
**Fig 8. Chart**  
**Gender distribution of reviewers, by publication**



**Fig 9. Chart**  
Proportion of reviews written by women  
in *Australian Book Review*



**Fig 10. Chart**  
Proportion of reviews written by women  
in *The Australian*



We note that the size of the pool of reviewers varies widely across our publications, and paying attention to it sometimes reveals another layer of gender disparity. Some publications, like *Australian Book Review*, draw on a large number of individual reviewers: that is, 217 reviewers across 362 reviews. Of these 217 reviewers, 42% are women. Others, like *The Age/Sydney Morning Herald*, include a stable of regular reviewers as well as occasional and one-off reviewers: 93 reviewers across 496 reviews. Of these 93 reviewers, 42% are women. Others rely on a very small pool of regular reviewers: *Australian Financial Review* commissioned a total of 40 reviews from only three reviewers, one of whom is a woman. Over at the *West Australian*, all 216 reviews in 2020 were written by three reviewers: two of the three are women. Gemma Nisbet published an impressive 204 reviews in the *West Australian* in 2020. This is, perhaps, a record for the Stella Count.

While non-binary reviewers continue to write under 1% of the total number of book reviews in our survey, they are, at last, becoming visible in our publication-specific data: 6% of reviewers at the *Sydney Review of Books* in 2020 identified as non-binary, 4% at *The Saturday Paper* and 1% at *Australian Book Review*.

Gender 'silos' remain a feature of some parts of the Australian reviewing field. For example, 39% of all reviews in *Australian Book Review* were by men reviewers of books by men; 62% of all reviews in *Books + Publishing* and 49% of those in *The Saturday Paper* were by women reviewing women. Across the field as a whole, however, men are reviewing women at the same rates as women are reviewing men: that is, at a ratio of one out of three reviews in both cases, returning us to the finding of the 2018 Count.

## Gender and Review Size in 2020

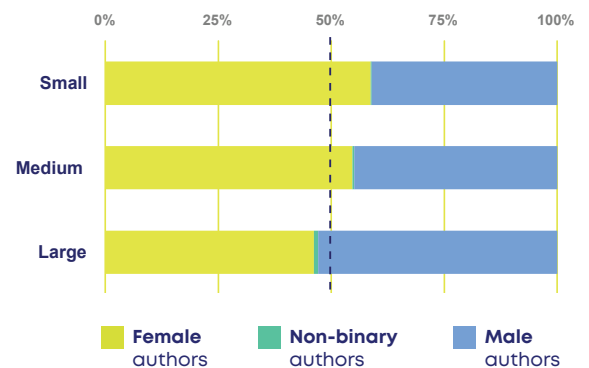
While books by women are now more likely to be reviewed in our twelve publications than books by men, they still do not receive equal access to large reviews (i.e. 1000 words or more). This is important because large reviews are the most conspicuous, prestigious and attentive of review types, not just because of their size and prominence but because they often are accompanied by images such as book covers and author photos, which lead to market recognition.

The total number of reviews of women's books has grown by two percentage points between 2019 and 2020 but women authors' share of the large reviews has only increased by one percentage point to 46%. This growth has come in the form of an increased proportion of small reviews (i.e. reviews of less than 300 words), from 54% in 2019 to 59% in 2020.

As always, these overall statistics do not necessarily reflect the individual situation of each publication we survey. For example, 70% of large reviews in the *Sydney Review of Books* and 60% of large reviews at *The Saturday Paper* are of books by women. By contrast, only 43% of large reviews published in *The Australian* in 2020 are of books by women. However, this is the best share of the large reviews at this newspaper that women authors have had in the history of the Stella Count.

Long reviews indicate, and generate, cultural authority (and, along the way, higher rates of pay). Arguably the most damning statistics in the 2020 Stella Count, then, have to do with review size and women reviewers. Given that women reviewers are responsible for 60% of reviews in our twelve publications, it is, frankly, unacceptable that women reviewers are responsible for only 44% of the long reviews published in 2020.

Fig 11. Chart  
**Gender distribution of reviews in 2020, by length**



**Women reviewers write 60% of reviews but only 44% of the most prestigious (long) reviews.**

## Representation of Women by Genre in 2020

Across the seven years that the Stella Count has considered genre, we have seen a continual association between male authors and nonfiction, and female authors and fiction, especially children’s and YA fiction. 2020 is no exception to this.

### Nonfiction

Women authors have been gaining ground in nonfiction reviews since 2017, and the percentage of nonfiction books by women authors remains at 45% from 2019 to 2020. Nonfiction has been reviewed almost equally by men and women in recent years: in 2020, men reviewed more nonfiction (52%) than women.

### Fiction

Fiction by women authors continues to be strongly represented in our publications, continuing the upward trend: in 2020, 61% of all fiction reviewed was authored by women, up from 59% in 2019. Likewise, women continue to be more likely to review fiction than men: 70% of all fiction reviews in 2020 are written by women, compared to 67% last year.

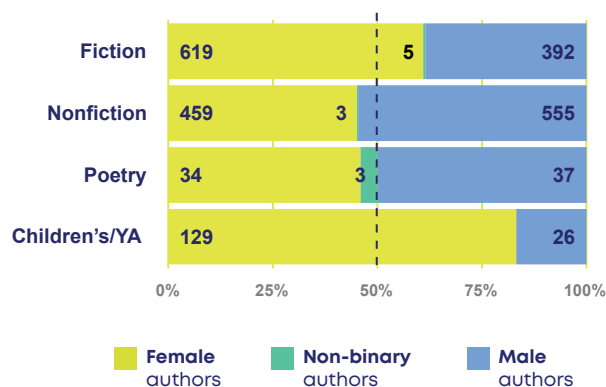
### Children’s and YA literature

The reviewing of children’s and YA literature remains overwhelmingly a women’s domain: in 2020, 83% of all reviews of children’s and YA works are of books by women (up from 68% last year, reversing the trend towards greater inclusion of works by men in reviews of this genre). When it comes to the reviewing of children’s and YA literature in 2020, a whopping 95% of all books in this category were reviewed by women, up from 87% in 2019 and 76% in 2018.

### Poetry

Poetry remains relatively equitable among our genres. In 2017 poetry by men and women was reviewed equally, with only slight movements above and below the gender parity line in 2018 (52% men authors) and 2019 (53% women authors). In 2020, men authors were responsible for 50% and women authors 46% of the reviewed books, with non-binary authors representing 4% of all poetry books reviewed this year. Men, however, continue to review more poetry: 68% of all poetry reviews in 2020 were written by men, up from 62% in 2019.

Fig 12. Chart  
Gender distribution of reviews  
in 2020,  
by genre





## Conclusion

The 2019 and 2020 Stella Counts prove that **a remarkable transformation of the Australian book reviewing landscape has taken place in front of our eyes**. For the first time in the history of the Stella Count, the 2019 and 2020 data tells us that more books by women than by men are reviewed in Australia's book pages. This is a milestone to celebrate uproariously.

Equal access to this crucial mechanism through which books are valued and promoted will make a genuine difference to the lives and reputations of Australian women authors. We would like to think that this achievement is, at least in part, due to the Stella Count's accountability and advocacy work on gender equality in book reviewing since 2012.

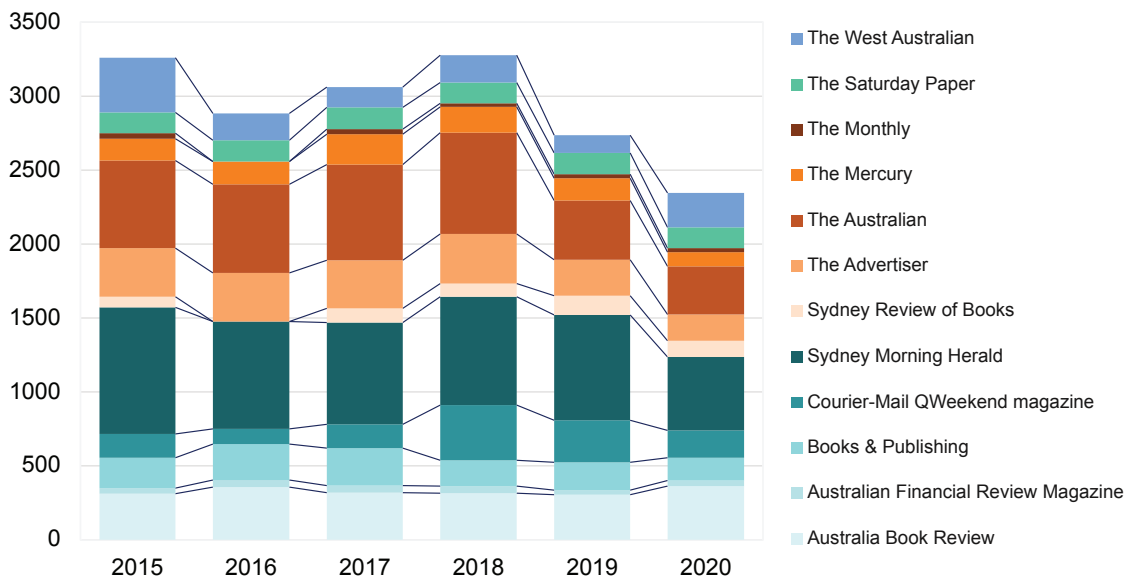
But gender bias is insidious: peel back the layers and you find it is still in residence elsewhere. Our data also shows that books authored by men remain more likely to receive the sustained attention of long book reviews than books authored by women, and that men reviewers are more likely to write them. For this reason it is fair to say that while the Stella Count has achieved its primary aim of ensuring that books by women receive an equal chance of being reviewed in the key Australian publications, men authors and reviewers continue to dominate the most prestigious review space in this country.

**While the Stella Count has achieved its primary aim of ensuring that books by women receive an equal chance of being reviewed in the key Australian publications, men authors and reviewers continue to dominate the most prestigious review space in this country.**

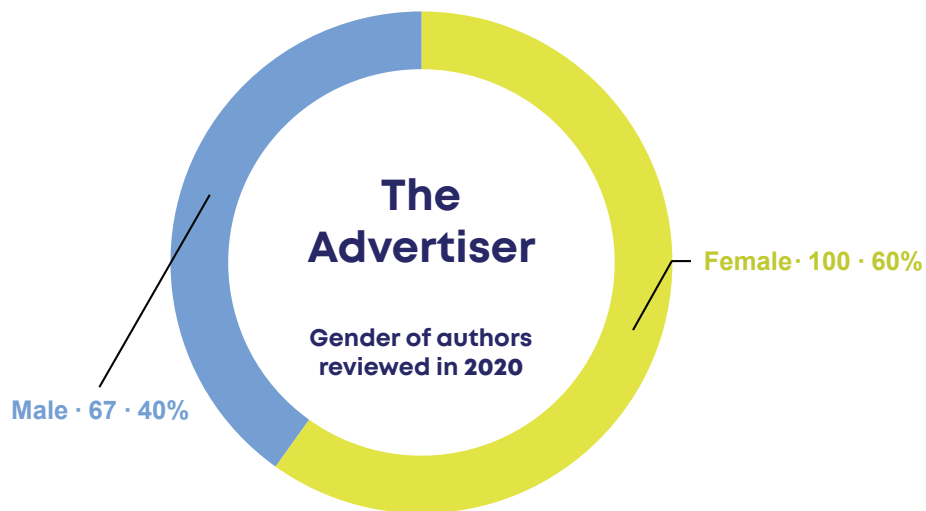
While it was never intended for this purpose, the data we have collected for the 2019 and 2020 Counts inevitably tracks the beginnings of COVID-19's impact on book reviewing in Australia. For example, the 2020 Count evidences a downturn in the total number of reviews published across our twelve publications. In 2020 we saw the total number of books reviewed in our publications drop by 15%. It is tempting to understand this as yet another 'crunch' effect of COVID-19, but our 2018 data tells us that there was also a decline in the total number of reviews published in 2019 of 16%.

That said, we know already that the negative impacts of COVID-19 - social and economic - are being disproportionately felt by women. Future iterations of the Stella Count will be crucial in taking the measure of the repercussions for women authors and reviewers. Yet again we are reminded of the importance of having continuous data to help draw proper conclusions and we thank all the donors and supporters of the Stella Count over the years for making this possible.

**Fig 13. Chart**  
**Total reviews in Australian publications, 2015-2020**



**Read on for the findings relating to individual publications.**

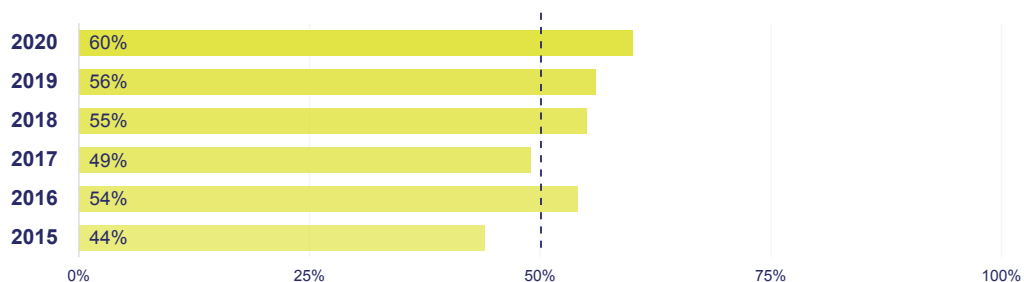


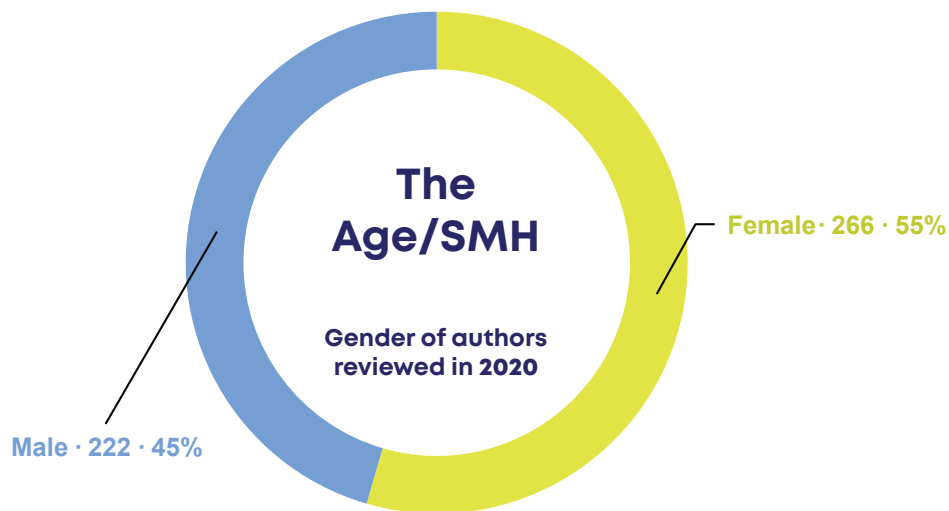
### Through the years

*The Advertiser* has been steadily increasing its percentage of reviews of books by women over the nine years of the Stella Count.

It has a relatively small stable of reviewers including veteran reviewer Katherine England, who wrote more than a quarter of all reviews published in *The Advertiser* in both 2019 and 2020.

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors

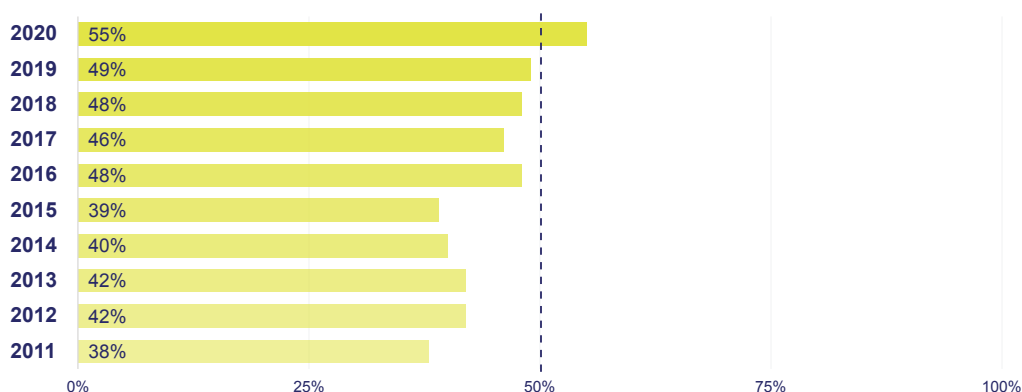




### Through the years

*The Age/Sydney Morning Herald* has achieved real change in the gender balance of its reviews since 2011. For the first time in 2020 it has published reviews of more works by women than by men. This is noteworthy because of both the scale of its review coverage (*The Age/Sydney Morning Herald* publishes more reviews than any other outlet in our study) and its reach (these newspapers emerge from Australia's two largest cities in terms of population, Melbourne and Sydney).

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors

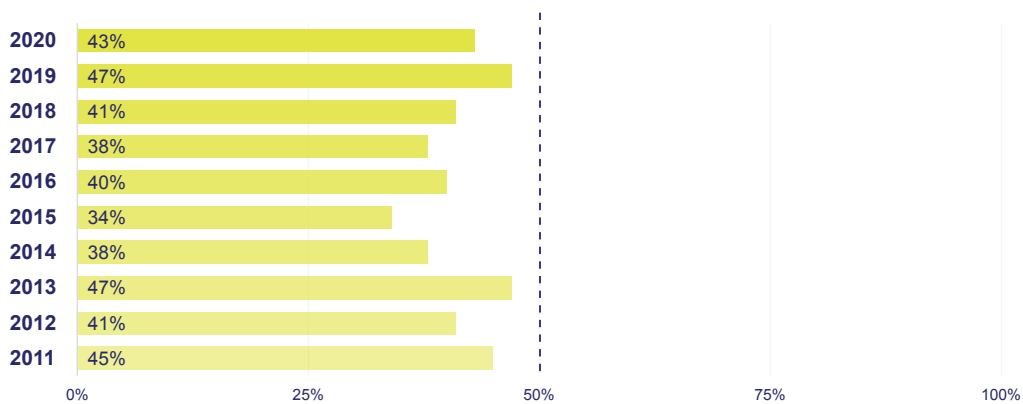


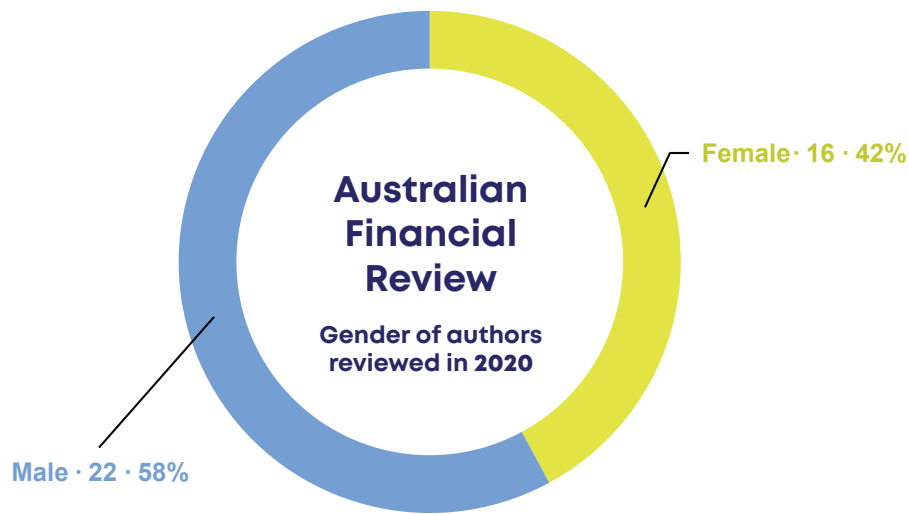


### Through the years

*Australian Book Review* is the only publication in our study that, despite better years in 2013 and 2019, has not steadily improved its representation of women authors in its book reviews across the period of the Stella Count. This remains a concern because *Australian Book Review* is a longstanding and respected national literary review.

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors

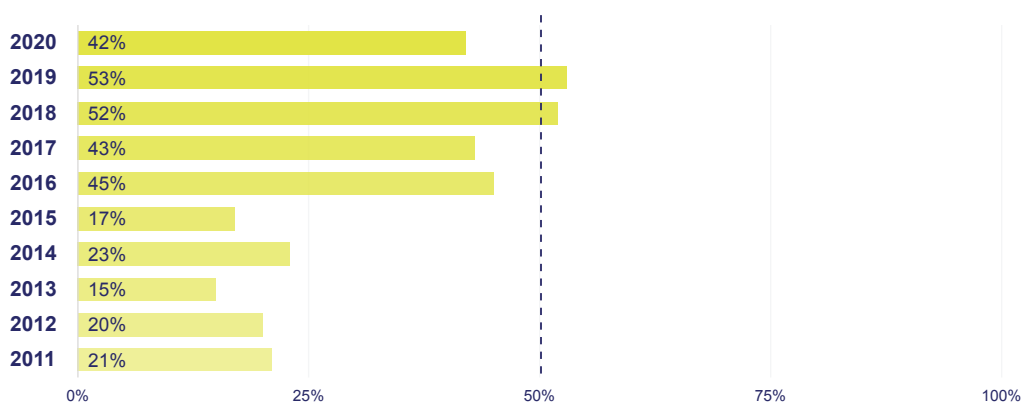




### Through the years

*Australian Financial Review* has improved its gender balance over the nine years of the Stella Count, but its sample size of total reviews and pool of reviewers has tended to be very small, meaning it is prone to larger shifts from year to year.

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors

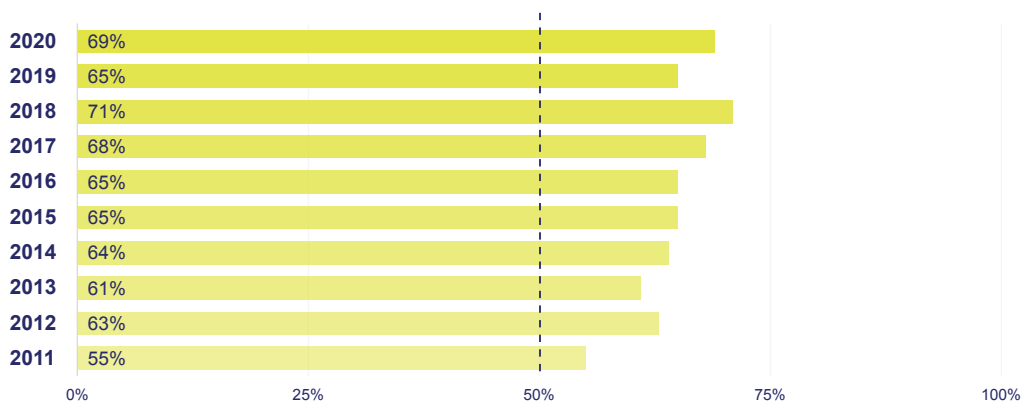


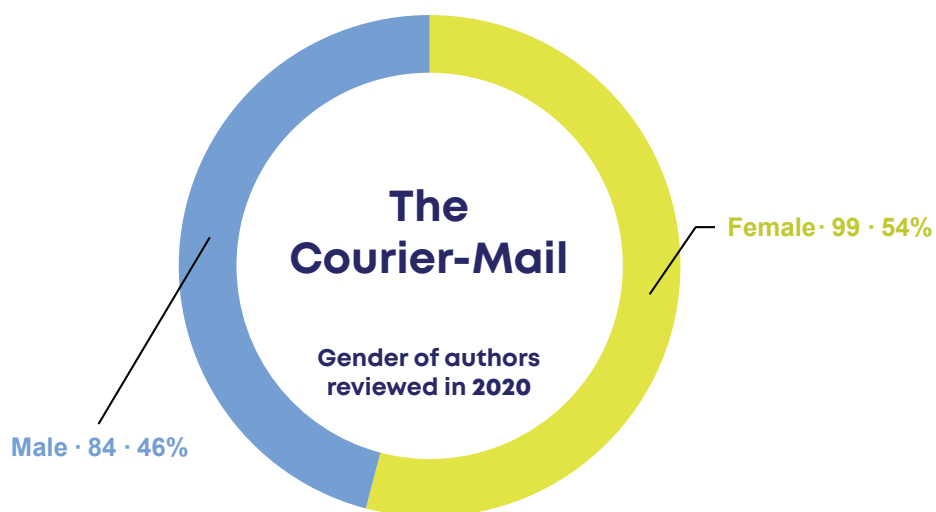


### Through the years

Trade publication *Books+Publishing* is the only outlet that has reviewed more works by women than by men in every year of the Stella Count since its inception in 2012. *Books+Publishing* reviews a high proportion of children's and YA literature.

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors

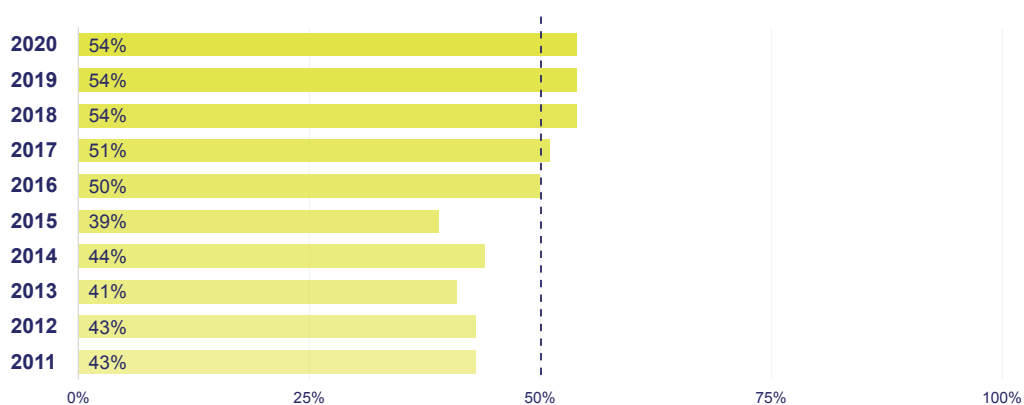




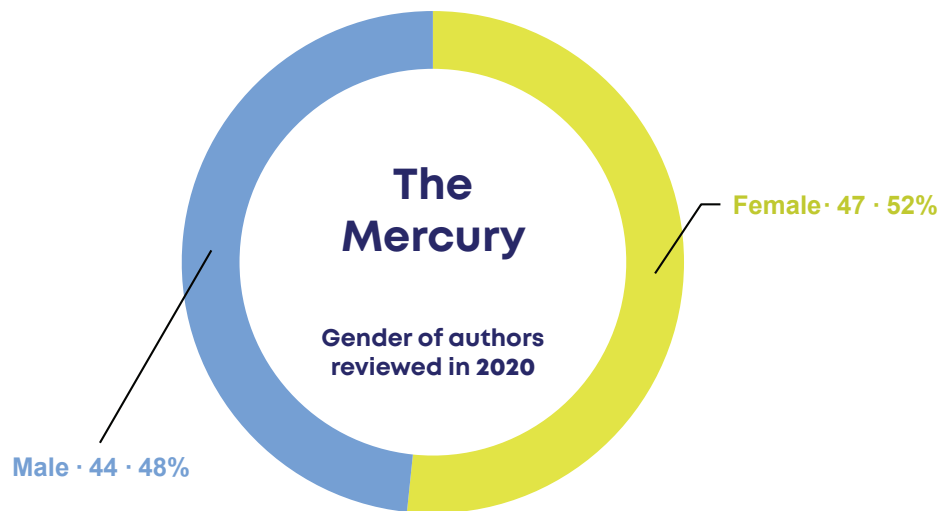
### Through the years

The *Courier-Mail* has improved its gender balance significantly over the nine years of the Stella Count, and has held steady at 54% of reviews by women for the past three years.

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors



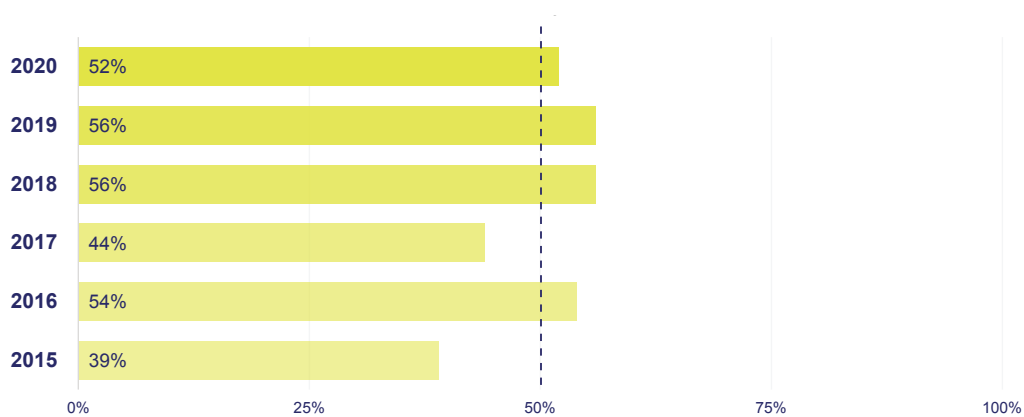


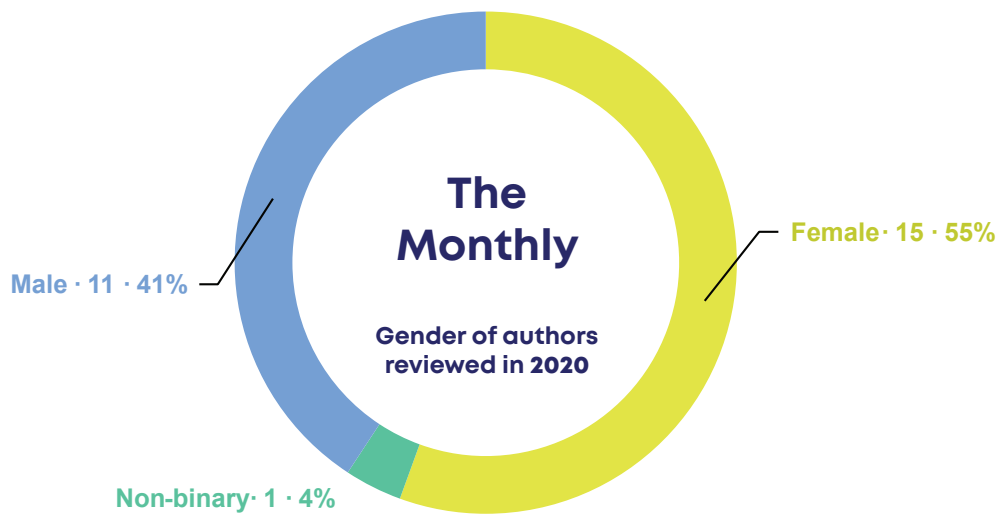


### Through the years

*The Mercury* improved the gender balance of its reviews significantly in 2018 and has retained it ever since.

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors





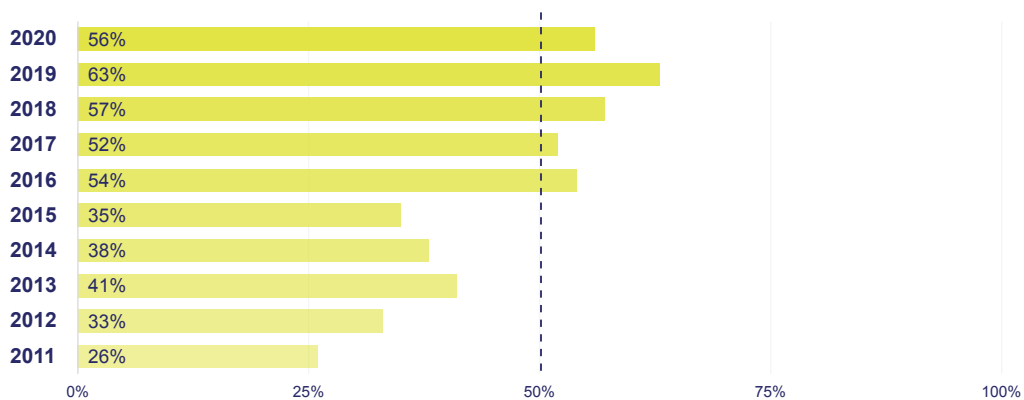
### Through the years

*The Monthly* has made a dramatic improvement in the gender equality of its review pages since the Stella Count began.

Books by women made up 26% of reviewed works in 2011.

That has surged to 63% in 2019 and 56% in 2020.

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors

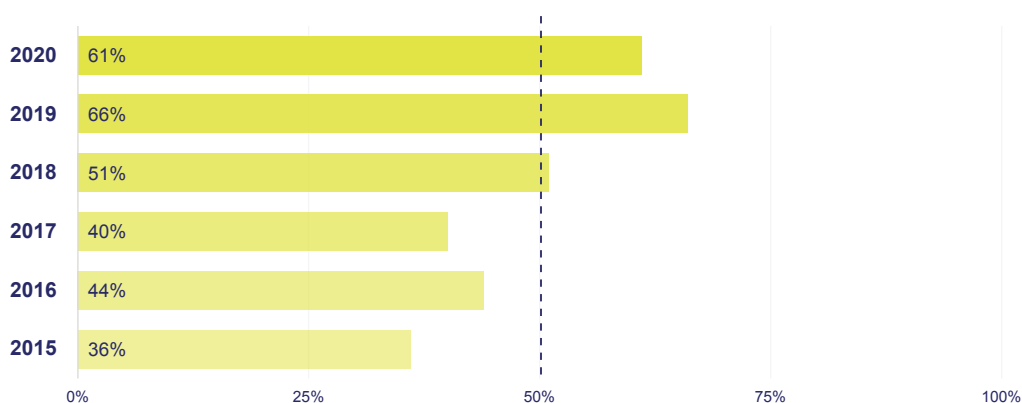




### Through the years

When it was first included in the Stella Count in 2015, *The Saturday Paper* had a gender problem: only 37% of its reviews were of books by women. Its readers didn't know this because its reviews were at that time published pseudonymously. Three years later – coincidentally in the same year it decided to end pseudonymous reviewing – it had reached parity and now publishes more books by women than by men.

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors

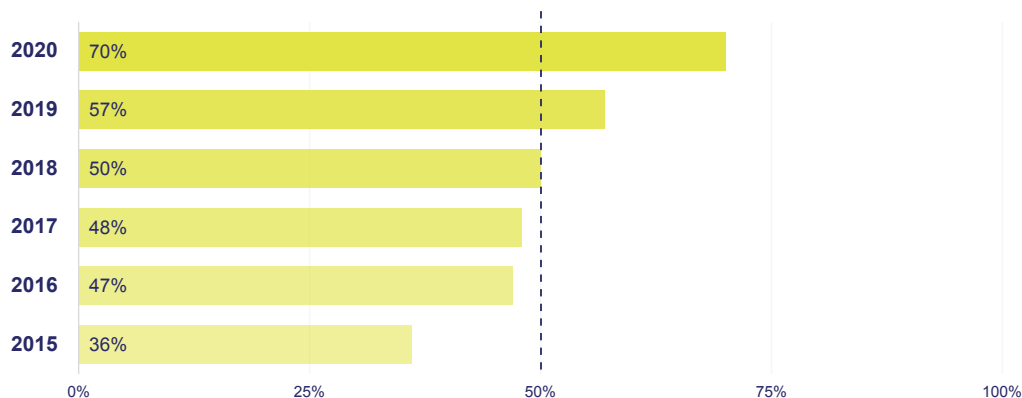


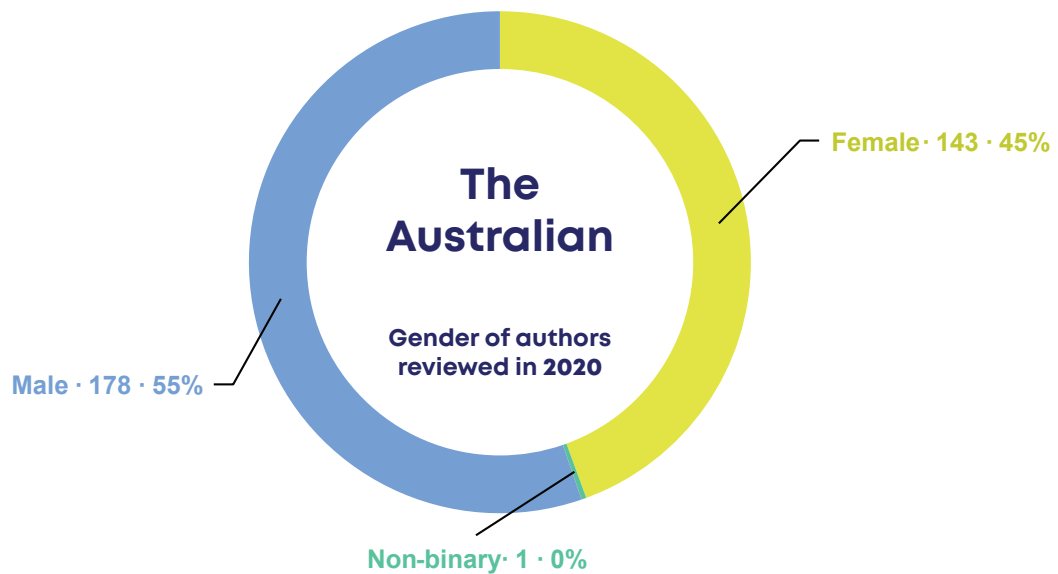


### Through the years

*Sydney Review of Books* has almost doubled its percentage of reviews of books by women across the seven years that it has been included in the Stella Count, from 36% in 2015 to 70% in 2020. *Sydney Review of Books* is unusual in that it publishes an equal number of works of fiction and nonfiction by women, as well as reviews a much higher percentage of works of poetry (13%) than any other outlet surveyed: the next highest percentage of poetry reviews is *The Australian* at 7%. Half of the surveyed publications published no poetry reviews at all in 2020.

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors

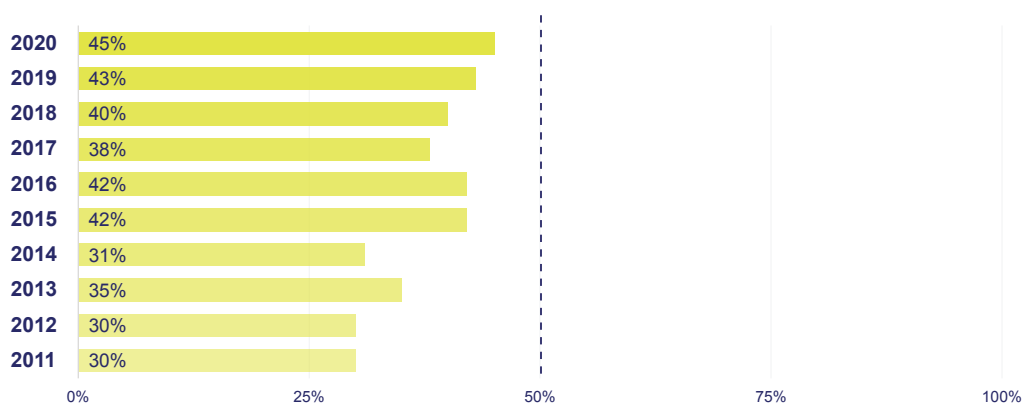




### Through the years

*The Australian* has been improving the representation of books by women in its review pages and is inching closer to gender parity in 2020.

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors

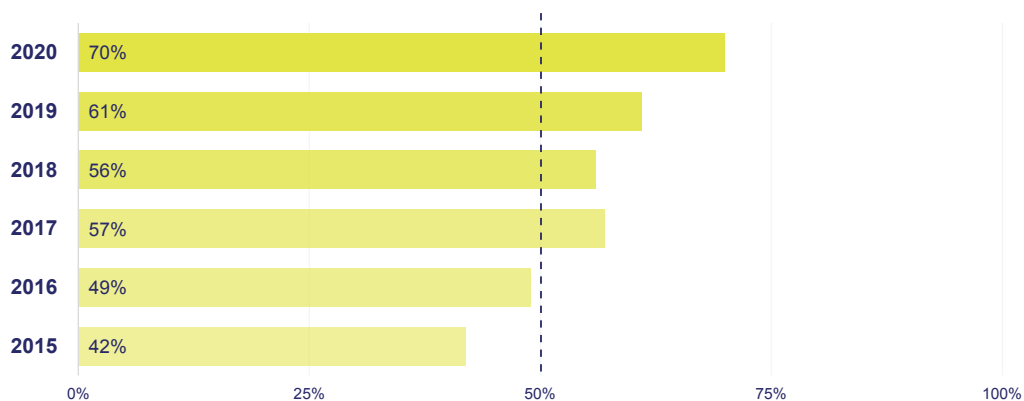




### Through the years

*The West Australian* has published a strong percentage of reviews of books by women since 2016. We note that this publication relies on a decreasing stable of reviewers: 11 in 2019 and 3 in 2020 (down from more than 30 in 2018).

### Proportion of reviews of books written by female authors





*Changing the story  
of Australian literature*

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