

The Celluloid Ceiling: Behind-the-Scenes Employment of Women on the Top 250 Films of 2010

by Martha M. Lauzen, Ph.D.

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In 2010, women comprised 16% of all directors, executive producers, producers, writers, cinematographers, and editors working on the top 250 domestic grossing films. This represents a decline of 1 percentage point from 1998 and is even with 2009 figures (see Figure 1).

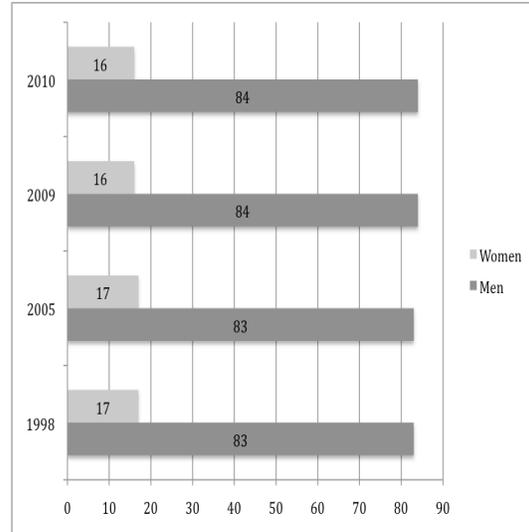
Women accounted for 7% of directors in 2010, the same percentage as in 2009. This figure represents a decline of two percentage points from 1998.

The following summary provides employment figures for 2010 and compares the most recent statistics with those from previous years.

Findings

- This study analyzed behind-the-scenes employment of 2,649 individuals working on the top 250 domestic grossing films (foreign films omitted) of 2010 with combined domestic box office grosses of approximately \$10.5 billion.

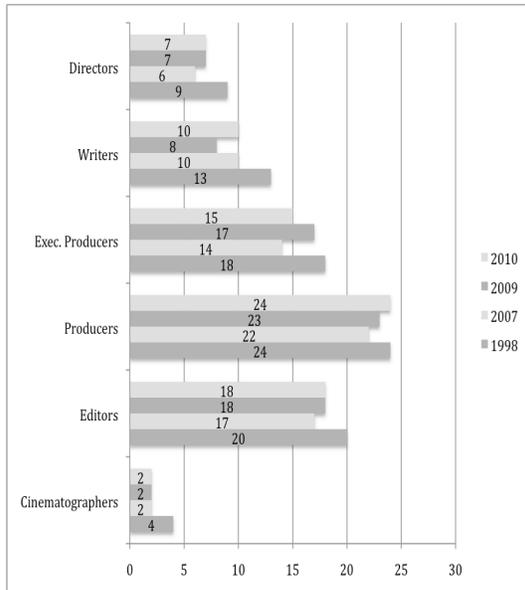
Figure 1.
Historical Comparison of Percentages of
Women Employed in Key Behind-the-
Scenes Roles*



*includes directors, writers, executive producers, producers, editors, and cinematographers

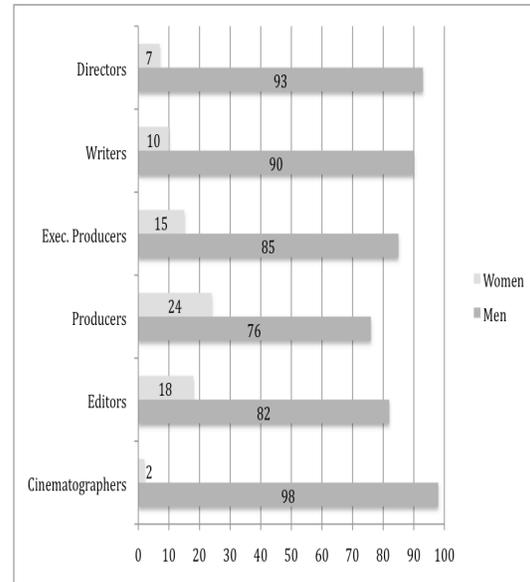
- A historical comparison of women's employment on the top 250 films in 2010 and 1998 reveals that the percentages of women directors, executive producers, writers, editors, and cinematographers have declined slightly. The percentage of women producers has remained the same (see Figure 2).
- Women comprised 7% of all directors working on the top 250 films of 2010. Ninety three percent (93%) of the films had no female directors.

*Figure 2.
Historical Comparison of Percentages of
Women Employed Behind the Scenes on
Top 250 Films by Role*



- Women accounted for 10% of writers working on the top 250 films of 2010. Eighty three percent (83%) of the films had no female writers.
- Women comprised 15% of all executive producers working on the top 250 films of 2010 (see Figure 3). Sixty five percent (65%) of the films had no female executive producers.
- Women accounted for 24% of all producers working on the top 250 films of 2010. Thirty three percent (33%) of the films had no female producers.

*Figure 3.
Comparison of Percentages of Women
and Men Employed on Top 250 Films of
2010*



- Women accounted for 18% of all editors working on the top 250 films of 2010. Seventy seven percent (77%) of the films had no female editors.
- Women comprised 2% of all cinematographers working on the top 250 films of 2010. Ninety eight percent (99%) of the films had no female cinematographers.
- Women were most likely to work in the romantic comedy, documentary, and romantic drama genres. They were least likely to work in the horror, action, and comedy genres.

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