

The Celluloid Ceiling: Behind-the-Scenes Employment of Women on the Top 250 Films of 2007

by Martha M. Lauzen, Ph.D.

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In 2007, women comprised 15% of all directors, executive producers, producers, writers, cinematographers, and editors working on the top 250 domestic grossing films. This represents a decline of 4 percentage points from 2001 and represents no change from 2006 (see Figure 1).

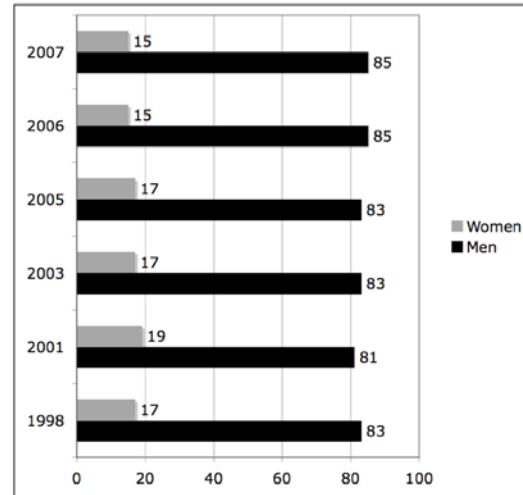
Women accounted for 6% of directors in 2007, a decline of one percentage point since 2006. This figure is approximately half the percentage of women directors working in 2000 when women comprised 11% of all directors.

The following summary provides employment figures for 2007 and compares the most recent statistics with those from the last 10 years.

Findings

- This study analyzed behind-the-scenes employment of 2,883 individuals working on the top 250 domestic grossing films (foreign films omitted) of 2007 with combined domestic box office grosses of approximately \$9.3 billion.
- Twenty one percent (21%) of the films released in 2007 employed no

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

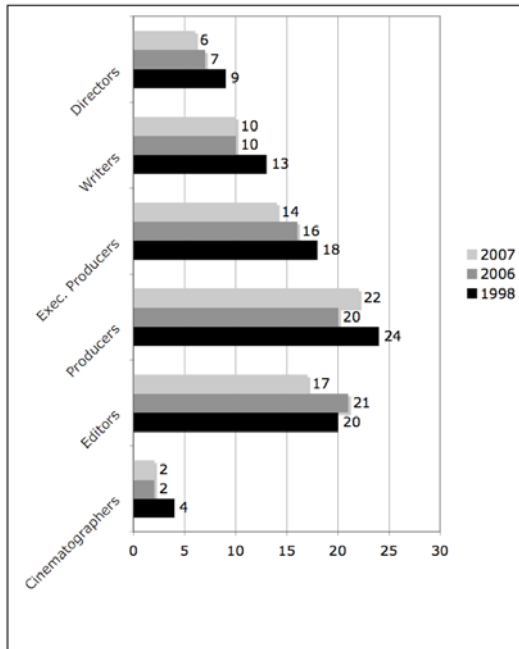


**includes directors, writers, executive producers, producers, editors, and cinematographers*

women directors, executive producers, producers, writers, cinematographers, or editors. No films failed to employ a man in at least one of these roles.

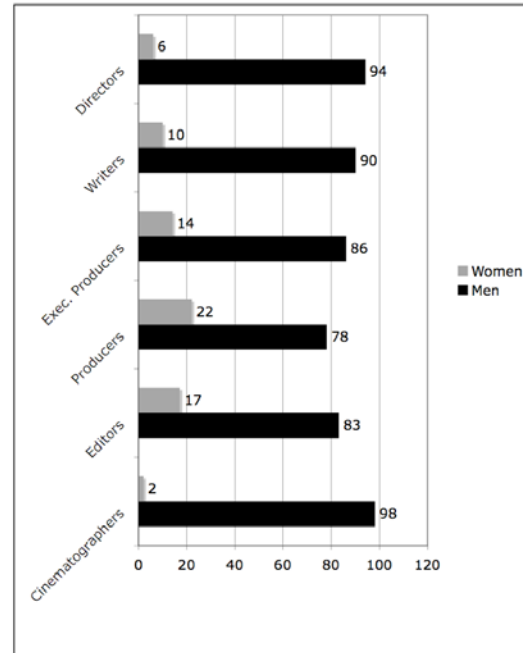
- A historical comparison of women's employment on the top 250 films in 2007 and 1998 reveals that the percentage of women in every role considered has declined (see Figure 2).
- Women comprised 6% of all directors working on the top 250 films of 2007. Ninety four percent (94%) of the films had no female directors (see Figure 3).

*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 2007. Eighty two percent (82%) of the films had no female writers.
- Women comprised 14% of all executive producers working on the top 250 films of 2007 (see Figure 3). Sixty seven percent (67%) of the films had no female executive producers.
- Women accounted for 22% of all producers working on the top 250 films of 2007. Thirty seven percent (37%) of the films had no female producers.
- Women accounted for 17% of all editors working on the top 250 films of 2007. Seventy nine

*Figure 3.
Comparison of Percentages of Women
and Men Employed on Top 250 Films of
2007*



- percent (79%) of the films had no female editors.
- Women comprised 2% of all cinematographers working on the top 250 films of 2007. Ninety eight percent (98%) of the films had no female cinematographers.
- By genre, women were most likely to work on romantic comedies, romantic dramas, and documentaries and least likely to work on science fiction, action-adventure, and horror features.

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