

Independent Women: Behind-the-Scenes Employment on Independent Films in 2014-15

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Independent Women is the most comprehensive study of women's behind-the-scenes employment on independent films available. This study is sponsored by the Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA, 92182, <http://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu>.

In 2014-15, women comprised 29% of directors working on documentaries and 18% of directors working on narrative features screening at more than 20 high-profile film festivals in the United States. These figures stand in stark contrast to the percentage of women directing top grossing films in 2014 (7%).

Overall, women accounted for 26% of directors, writers, executive producers, producers, editors, and cinematographers working on domestically and independently produced feature-length films (documentaries and narrative features). This represents no change from last year.

Women continue to fare better in documentary than in narrative films, accounting for 30% of all behind-the-scenes individuals working on documentaries and 24% of those working on narrative features.

Women comprised 9% of composers on all of the films considered (8% on narrative features and 9% on documentaries). These numbers are dramatically higher than the 1% of women working as composers on top grossing films.

The following summary provides employment figures for domestically and independently produced feature-length documentaries and narrative films screening from July 2014 through June 2015 at the following 23 festivals: AFI Fest; Atlanta Film Festival; Austin Film Festival; Chicago International Film Festival; Cinequest Film Festival; Cleveland International Film Festival; Florida Film Festival; Hamptons International Film Festival; Los Angeles Film Festival; Nashville Film Festival; New Directors, New Films; New York Film Festival; Palm Springs International Film Festival; Rhode Island International Film Festival; St. Louis International Film Festival; San Francisco International Film Festival; Santa Barbara International Film Festival; Seattle International Film Festival; Slamdance Film Festival; Sundance Film Festival; SXSW Film Festival; Telluride Film Festival; Tribeca Film Festival.

The findings of the study are divided into three major sections. The first section reports the overall figures for women working on narrative features and documentaries. The second section provides the numbers for women working on documentaries only, and the third section reports the figures for women working on narrative features only.

This report also provides comparisons of the data gathered for the present study (2014-15) with data collected from 2013-2014, 2011-2012 and 2008-2009.

Overall Findings for Documentaries and Narrative Features Screening at Festivals

- Women fared best as producers (33%), followed by executive producers (27%), directors (23%), writers (23%), editors (22%), and cinematographers (12%) (see Figure 1).

- The percentages of women writers, editors, and cinematographers increased slightly from 2013-14 to 2014-15, while the percentages of directors, producers, and executive producers remained the same.

- Women comprised 23% of directors in 2014-15. This figure is even with last year but up slightly from 22% in 2008-09.

- Women accounted for 23% of writers in 2014-15, up from 22% last year and 19% in 2008-09.

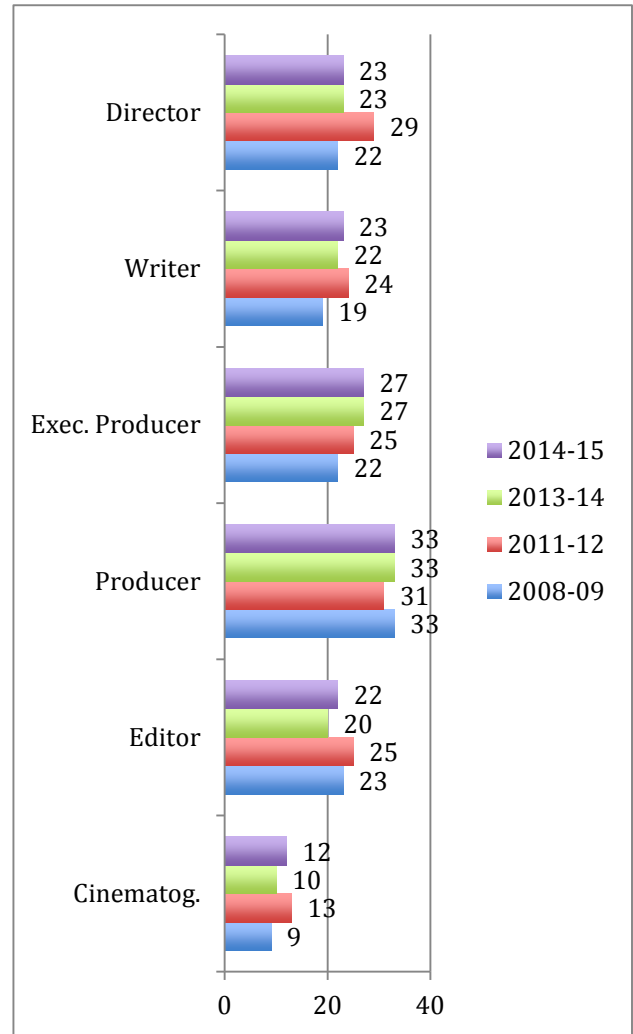
- Women comprised 27% of executive producers in 2014-15. This figure is even with last year and up from 22% in 2008-09.

- Women accounted for 33% of producers in 2014-15. This figure is even with last year and 2008-09.

- Women comprised 22% of editors in 2014-15, up from 20% last year but down from 23% in 2008-09.

- Women accounted for 12% of

Figure 1. Historical Comparison of Percentages of Women Working on Films (Documentaries and Narrative Features) Screening at High-Profile U.S. Festivals



cinematographers in 2014-15, up from 10% last year and 9% in 2008-09.

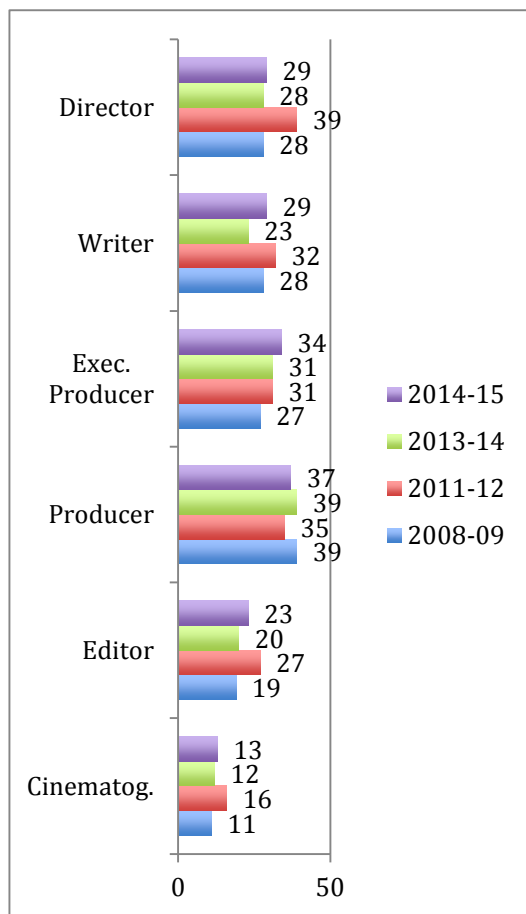
Findings for Documentaries Only

- Women fared best as producers (37%), followed by executive producers (34%), directors (29%), writers (29%), editors

(23%), and cinematographers (13%) (see Figure 2).

- The percentages of women working as directors, writers, executive producers, editors, and cinematographers on documentaries increased over the last year. The percentage of women working as producers declined slightly.

*Figure 2.
Historical Comparison of Percentages of
Women Working on Documentaries
by Role*



- Women comprised 29% of directors working on documentaries screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, up

slightly from 28% last year and from 2008-09.

- Women accounted for 29% of writers working on documentaries screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, up from 23% last year and from 28% in 2008-09.
- Women comprised 34% of executive producers working on documentaries screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, up from 31% last year and 27% in 2008-09.
- Women accounted for 37% of producers working on documentaries screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, down from 39% last year and 2008-09.
- Women comprised 23% of editors working on documentaries screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, up from 20% last year and 19% in 2008-09.
- Women accounted for 13% of cinematographers working on documentaries screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, up from 12% last year and 11% in 2008-09.

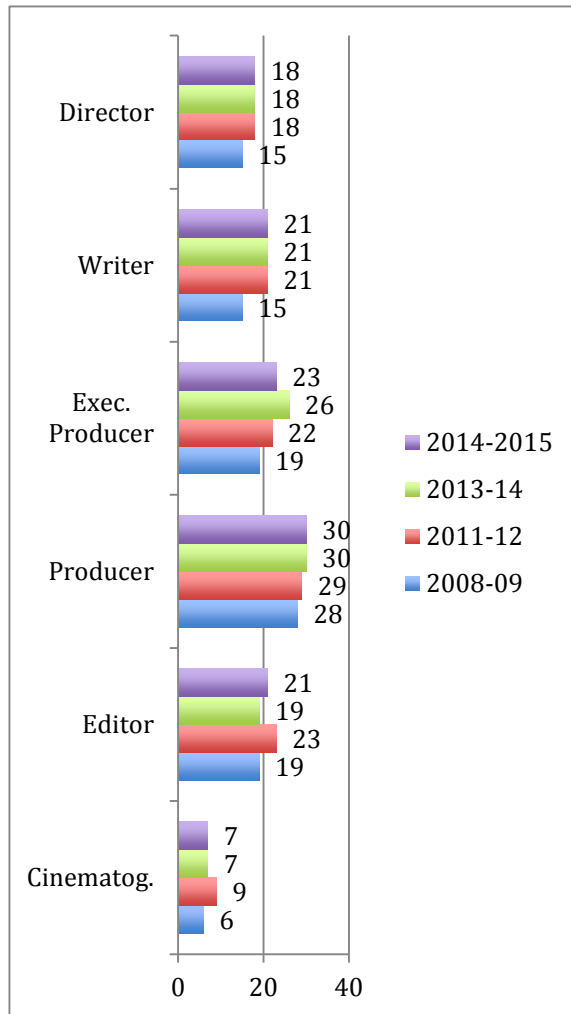
Findings for Narrative Features Only

- Overall, women fared best as producers (30%), followed by executive producers (23%), writers (21%), editors (21%), directors (18%), and cinematographers (7%) (see Figure 3).
- The percentages of women working as editors on narrative features increased over the last year. The percentages of women directors, writers, producers, and cinematographers remained the same,

and the percentage of women executive producers decreased.

- Women accounted for 18% of directors working on narrative features screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, even with last year and up from 15% in 2008-09.

*Figure 3.
Historical Comparison of Percentages of Women Working on Narrative Features by Role*



- Women comprised 21% of writers working on narrative features screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, even with last year and up from 15% in 2008-09.

- Women accounted for 23% of executive producers working on narrative features screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, down from 26% last year but up from 19% in 2008-09.

- Women comprised 30% of producers working on narrative features screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, even with last year but up slightly from 28% in 2008-09.

- Women accounted for 21% of editors working on narrative features screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, up from 19% last year and in 2008-09.

- Women comprised 7% of cinematographers working on narrative features screening at the festivals considered in 2014-15, even with last year and up from 6% in 2008-09.