

WOMEN IN VIEW ON TV

JUNE 2013

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Women in View presents its first annual report on the employment and representation of women in key creative positions in Canadian live action television series. **WIV on TV 2013** follows up on **WIV on Screen 2012**, released last fall, which reported on the employment of women in key creative positions in Canadian theatrical feature films.

There have been several important studies examining the representation of women in Canadian media in different regions and sectors in recent years, most notably *L'avant et l'arrière de l'écran* by Quebec-based Réalisatrices Équitables; WIFT-Toronto's 2012 *Framework II; The 2012 Report on Canadian Screenwriters* by Ryerson University's School of Media; and the upcoming cross-union survey, *Focus on Women 2013*, from Canadian Unions for Equality on Screen (**CUES**).

However, Canadians have not had access to consistent year-after-year data that would allow us to track the patterns of employment of women in key content-creating positions over time. **Women in View** intends to address this gap with regular annual reports on the presence of women and racialized minorities in Canadian television, particularly in content-determining positions: directors, writers, cinematographers and, beginning in 2014, performers.

WOMEN IN VIEW is a national non-profit organization dedicated to revitalizing the Canadian media industry by strengthening gender and cultural diversity both on screen and behind the scenes. We do this through a range of initiatives that seek to generate awareness, promote talent and spark dialogue across the full spectrum of production, policy and artistic arenas.

Women in View is part of a working group, led by ACTRA National, with the goal of creating practical resources for media professionals committed to building a vibrant and innovative industry through the increased participation of women in guild and union memberships, and all aspects of film production.

Rina Fraticelli, Executive Director

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RATIONALE

Our television landscape continues to change rapidly as the digital revolution sweeps across every aspect of our society, including, with particularly dramatic speed, our cultural industries. Fixed household screens and “appointment watching” have given way to a proliferation of mobile screens that essentially accompany us, and conform to our schedules and movements, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, virtually anywhere on the planet.

In this television-saturated environment, we may hope that equally dramatic changes would be visible in the participation of women and racialized minorities both behind the camera and on screen. Yet, despite widely-held assumptions about women’s progress, there is a significant disconnect between assumptions and actualities.

Canadian women represent more than half the population, and close to half the labour pool, but a much smaller proportion of the work force in television, particularly in the areas of creative influence and financial control.

We know from an abundance of contemporary research that women employed in media industries are disproportionately represented in the stereotypically female occupations (hair, make-up), or what are known as “taking care” roles (production managers, production assistants, line producers, associate producers) in support of those calling the shots - the “taking charge” roles.

There is increasing evidence that even when women succeed in establishing themselves in positions of creative authority, they are rarely seen in the top-most echelons; and that, at almost every level, they earn less than their male counterparts.

It is important to understand these demographics as they describe not only who is being employed in various capacities in Canadian cultural industries, but also reveal the limited spectrum of talent, stories, perspectives and values available to all Canadians for their substantial television consumption.

HIGHLIGHTS

This report examines the employment patterns of women in key creative positions - screenwriter, director, and cinematographer – in the 21 live action television series that received the highest levels of investment (between \$1M and \$9.1M per series) from the Canada Media Fund in their 2010-2011 year. This is a snapshot of a specific slice of Canadian television. It does not include documentary, children's programming, lifestyle, sports or news.

- According to the Canadian Media Production Association (CMPA), the value of our media industries to our GDP was \$5.49 billion in 2011; and represents the equivalent of 128,000 full-time work positions.
- The 21 series examined represent a total public investment of just under \$100M by the Canada Media Fund (\$99,174,667).
- 11 of these 21 series employed not a single woman director on any of their 133 episodes.
- No racialized minority women directors were employed on any of the 21 series.
- Not a single episode of the 272 episodes of these 21 series employed a female cinematographer.
- 13 of the 21 series focused on a male protagonist while only six were centered on the experience of a female leading character. Two other series were centered on a male and female team.
- 13 of the 21 series employed no racialized minority or First Nations writers or directors of either sex on any of their 178 episodes.

The contrast between the complexity and diversity of Canada's population and the homogeneity of these cultural productions is striking, to put it mildly.

NOTE:

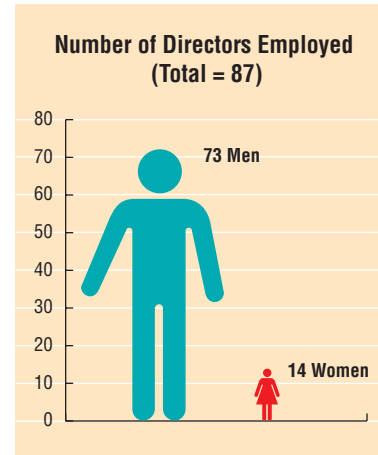
The 21 series examined were:

18 to Life; Being Erica; Blackstone; The Borgias; Call Me Fitz; Cashing In; Dan for Mayor; Endgame; Flashpoint; Heartland; Hiccups; Insecurity; The Listener; Less Than Kind; Little Mosque on the Prairie; Living in your Car; Lost Girl; Men with Brooms; Murdoch Mysteries; Republic of Doyle; Rookie Blue.

I. DIRECTORS: (**NOT**) CALLING THE SHOTS

The total number and percentage of individual women and men employed as directors

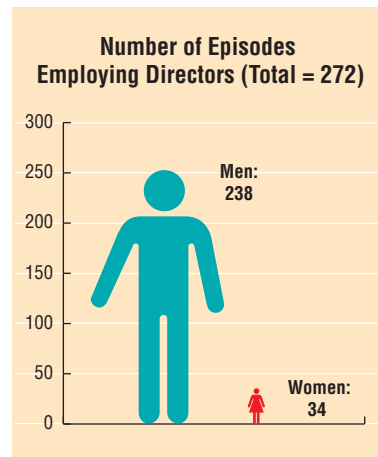
The 21 television series examined represent a total of 272 individual episodes, employing 87 directors: 73 men and 14 women or 84% male and 16% female. That is a ratio of five men to every woman.



The number of Canadian TV episodes employing women directors

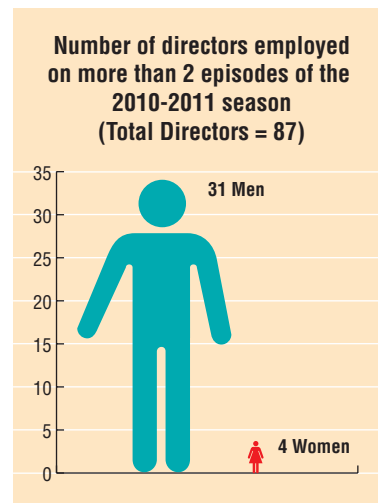
Women were employed as directors on a total of 34 of 272 (12.5%) individual episodes. The balance of 238 (87.5%) were directed by men.

Eleven of the 21 of live action television series (52%) receiving over \$1 million in CMF funding employed no women directors on any of their 133 episodes. The total public investment in these eleven series was \$44,893,289.



The number of directors employed on more than 2 episodes of the 2010-2011 season

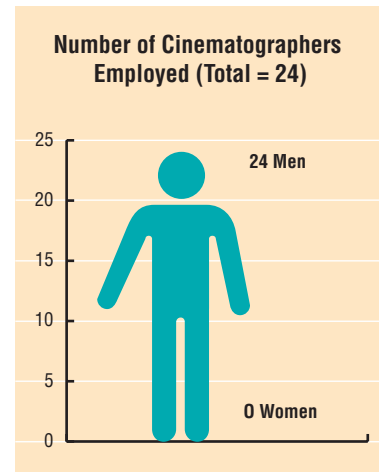
Of the 14 individual women employed as directors, only four of them (28.5% of female directors) were employed to direct more than two episodes in the 2010-11 season. And only three of these women (21%) were employed to direct four or more episodes. By contrast, 31 of the 73 men (42% of male directors) were employed directing more than two episodes; and 27 (37%) worked on four or more episodes.



II. CINEMATOGRAPHERS

Male and Female Cinematographers

The situation of cinematographers is stark and simple. A total of 24 cinematographers were employed in the production of these 272 episodes. There was not a single woman among them.

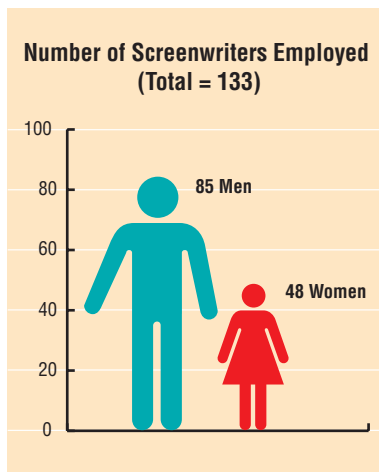


III. SCREENWRITERS

The Number of Women and Men Employed as Screenwriters

The opportunities for women screenwriters were somewhat better than those for women directors. A total of 133 screenwriters were employed: 48 or 36% of them women; 85 or 64% of them men.

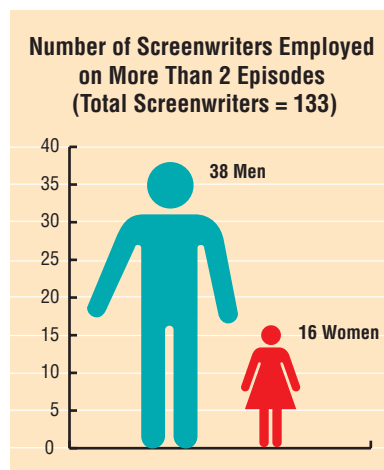
These 48 women were employed on 115 episodes (2.4 episodes each), while 85 men were employed on 265 episodes (3.1 episodes each).



The Number of Screenwriters Employed on More Than Two Episodes

16 women wrote more than two episodes, while 38 men wrote more than two episodes.

Seven women wrote four or more episodes compared with 26 men writing four or more episodes.



IV. RACIALIZED MINORITY DIRECTORS AND SCREENWRITERS

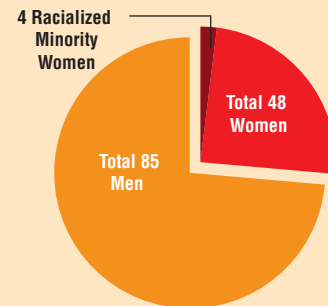
Employment of Racialized Minority Female Directors

Not a single racialized minority woman was employed as a director on any of these 272 episodes

Employment of Racialized Minority Female Writers

Four racialized minority women were employed as screenwriters. That is, 3% of the total of 133 writers and 8% of 48 female writers were racialized minority women.

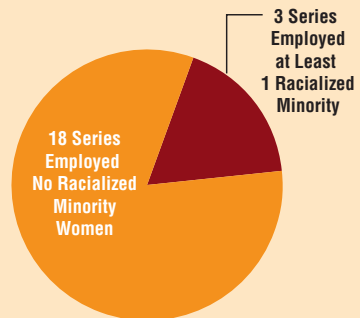
Employment of Racialized Minority Women
(Total Screenwriters = 133)



The Number and Percentage of Series Employing Racialized Minority Female Screenwriters

18 of the 21 series (85%) employed no racialized minority women screenwriters.

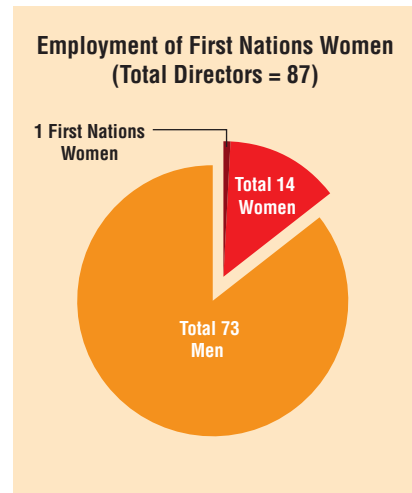
Number of Series Employing Racialized Minority Women Writers
(Total Series = 21)



V. FIRST NATIONS DIRECTORS AND SCREENWRITERS

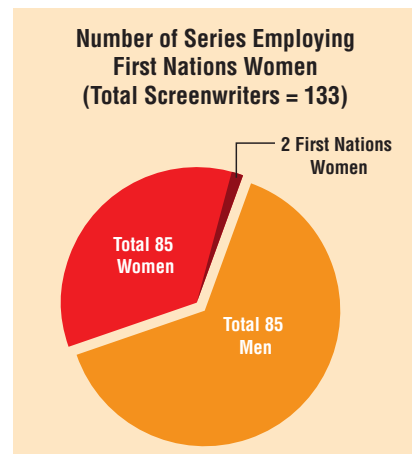
Employment of First Nations Female Directors

One of 87 directors and 14 women directors was a First Nations woman. She directed one of the 272 episodes



Employment of First Nations Female Writers

Two of 133 screenwriters were First Nations. These two women were employed on three episodes.



NOTE:

What is striking about the employment patterns of First Nations and racialized minority media professionals is the extent to which the employment of both men and women from these communities is confined to an extremely narrow range of series. 13 of the 21 series (62%) employed no racialized minority writers or directors of either sex; and the only series that featured a minority actor in a leading role was *Little Mosque on the Prairie*.

All First Nations writers and directors, of both sexes were employed exclusively on two series, both produced for APTN.

MY CANADA INCLUDES WOMEN

It's obvious that women have access to an unacceptably small fraction of public investment in the production of Canadian live action television series. And this fraction is much smaller for First Nations and racialized minority women.

This is more than an issue of employment equity, which is undoubtedly important. Once they have completed their professional training, undergone their apprenticeships and internships, demonstrated their ability and earned their accreditation, Canadian women have the right to expect fair access to employment and professional fulfillment. Labour inequities exist in many fields of employment, and matter in each one. However, for better and for worse, media industries are unique in their power to influence attitudes and behaviours. If they weren't, corporations wouldn't invest so much of their marketing budgets there. This makes it critically important to ensure that we are not investing in media products that reinforce narrow stereotypes and outdated mores.

This is more than an issue of industrial development, though this is no small matter. We know innovation and diversity are the lifeblood of creative industries. Diversifying our labour force not only allows us to draw from a deeper well of talent, but it also better reflects the global marketplace for our cultural products.

Media is more than an industry. It's also a critically important platform for cultural expression. Almost fifty years of collective investment in public instruments such as Telefilm Canada and the Canada Media Fund clearly indicate the value Canadians place on our national media culture.

Although this data is primarily concerned with employment of media professionals, rather than with analyzing the content of the media produced, the link between diversity behind the camera and diversity on screen is impossible to ignore. Employment of First Nations and racialized minority women in the creation of Canadian television will ensure a fuller expression of our culture on screen.

There is a great deal more we need to know to continue to fill in this picture. Including other genres of programming, for example, would expand our field of comparison; as would correlating the size of budget with the gender of the writers/directors. In the coming years, we will explore the field more widely, as we continue to document and analyze these employment patterns over time.

The questions these findings leave us with are simple: Why don't we emphasize our greatest assets in such an important, sustainable and exportable industry? Given the value of diversity in a global marketplace, why have we not seen significant change in the previous decades? And how can our public investment in this cultural industry better reflect and serve today's Canada?

This report was prepared by Rina Fraticelli, Executive Director of Women in View, with Katie McMillan and Kay Armatage