

1. Title ('A study of...' An investigation into...')
2. Introduction - present the problem and explain the different research methods you used to investigate it
3. Results - Present a summary of what you found
  - Each slide could have a heading of a different sub-question - this will encourage you have to cross reference results
  - include discussion and comment - both on your results and your research methods
  - try to reach some tentative conclusions
4. References - make sure you are clear about which source has provided you with which results
  - include a bibliography or webography

1. To what extent is the lack of women purely an issue of sexism?
2. To what extent have the conditions for women changed over the last few decades?
3. Is the independent industry more accessible for women than the mainstream industry?
4. Which roles within the film industry contain the least women? Why might this be?

5. Is it easier for British or American women to break into the industry?
  
6. Are the conditions for women within the film industry comparable to any other creative industries?
  
7. Is it easier for younger or more established women?
  
8. What are the effects of this lack on aspiring female filmmakers?
  
9. How does this lack affect the content of films?
  
10. Are there signs of improvement?

1. Intro - methods
2. the myth of the indie industry + contrast of indie festivals
3. Sexism
4. women perceived as creative risks
5. the traditional expectations of women and motherhood
6. long-term effects of male dominance - egos
7. 'self-identified' reasons for lack due to women's own 'faults'
8. Society/culture
9. Counters (signs of improvements)
10. effects of the lack - Women's stories vs men's stories
11. solutions
12. Evaluation
13. Conclusion

## Sexism:

### - SECONDARY:

Despite the progress in the indie sector, the very top of the industry is still very male-dominated as the Melissa Silverstein (Source 11, CNN, 2013) found that only 18% of directors, exec producers, producers, writers, cinematographers, and editors working on the top 250 domestic grossing films of 2012 were women. Some sources linked this directly to sexism. Skillset found that, "a number of older participants reported direct experience of overt sexism". Director Martha Coolidge (Source 2, The Guardian, 2010) argues that this is caused by the fact that most male Hollywood executives are led by money and sex with "gorgeous girls", and so don't want older women around. She believes that this applies to anyone outside of "a small circle of privilege" which excludes black, working-class, and gay filmmakers too.

### - FOCUS GROUP:

### - INTERVIEW:

**(2) there is an issue, if you look in general at pay, at women's pay, there's something serious, like 10 or something % less than men**

### Sports:

- (3) there was extreme sexism within the sport TV sector
- (3) Within sports - there was a lot of masculine, sexist banter
- (3) sports cameramen would often zoom on women's body parts and comment on them
- (3) the sexism within sports felt very permanent
- (3) there were no women sports presenters
- camera people also tended to be always male - women mostly did VT, editing or sound roles in the gallery
- women didn't get to go out into the field much
- in the news, the women presenters, unlike the male presenters, were always pretty - looks played a massive part for presenters
- (3) it just takes longer time for women to filter up the ladder into the senior management jobs (but why is this?)
- (3) sexism is rife in Sports TV because there is a massively masculine atmosphere

## the myth of the indie industry + contrast of indie festivals

### - SECONDARY:

The internet makes clear that Hollywood is easily the most troubled area in terms of lack of gender parity. Both the University of San Diego State (Source 2, The Guardian, 2010), Fandor (Source 14, 2013) and CNN's Melissa Silverstein (Source 11, CNN, 2013) have found that the current percentage of female directors in Hollywood stands

at 9%. This is an improvement on 2011's WFTV-figure ( Source 3, Sight & Sound, 2014) whereby only 5% of directors were women. Nevertheless, to evidence the significance of that tiny percentage, Fandor (Source 14, 2013) found that there are 15.24 male directors to every 1 female director. Anna Coatman in her article (Source 3, Sight & Sound 2014) links this percentage to the fact that many women are choosing to stay clear of the mainstream industry, and instead pursue a career in the independent industry. An example of this, pointed out by Jodie Foster, is Kathryn Bigelow, who is mentioned on many of the sources for being the first woman to win an Oscar for Best Director, who, despite her success with Hurt Locker, decided to make her next feature with an independent producer (Source 9, SuperPopINTERVIEWS, 2013).

There seems to be a common belief that the independent industry is a far better place for female directors to flourish. During a video conference at Cannes, Director/Writer/ Actor Jodie Foster (Source 9, SuperPopINTERVIEWS, 2013) touches on this by saying that "there's always been a good chunk of female directors in Europe...we also have a really good chunk in the independent industry". The BFI's 2011-2012 report (Source 6, 2013) contradicts both of these points, to some degree, as only 11.4% of all UK independent films in 2011 were directed by women. To support this, DirectorsUK (Source 4, 2012), the union for UK directors, states that the current level of female directors in drama has remained consistent for the last 20 years. Nevertheless, the BFI (Source 6, 2013) has also found that 37% of the top 20 UK independent films were written by women, marking a massive leap forward for female writers. This improvement was reflected by British Writer/Director Andrea Arnold (Source 7, Indie Wire, 2013) who stated, "I don't feel discriminated against particularly as a woman writer". Promisingly, indie festivals are expressing similar progress as 40% of directors at the London Short Film Festival were women whilst female directors made up 50% of the documentary field at Sundance 2012. This latter fact corresponds with Fandor's (Source 14, 2013) calculation that 34.4% of all documentary directors are women anyway.

- FOCUS GROUP:

- in mainstream films, its **usually the woman who's the damsel in distress, or the bloke's sidekick, or trophy**

- Interview

## Women perceived as creative risks

SECONDARY:

Coolidge's argument links to a number of common factors, one being that women are often perceived as creative risks by Hollywood executives. Jodie Foster (Source 9, SuperPopINTERVIEWS, 2013) relates this to corporate concerns: "you have a group of people with an incredibly risky job, there's a lot of money on the line...they want to be the most risk averse...women represent some kind of creative risk where [Hollywood]

are scared they won't get their money back". As a result, Anna Coatman (Source 3, Sight & Sound, 2014) believes that there's "still a resistance towards new female talent at the top of the industry". Actress/writer Alice Lowe (Source 2, 2010) argues that the sheer lack of female filmmakers does carry some positives as it means women's work is often anticipated as new, exciting and "kind of taboo". However, Melissa Silverstein (Source 11, CNN, 2013) counters this by arguing that the consequence of there being so few female filmmakers is that movies about women are "held up to absurd scrutiny" because women's successes are still seen as flukes.

Kira Cochrane in her Guardian article (Source 2, 2010) links this to the perception that Hollywood executives seem "perplexed by films with female themes". As the majority of people in power are men, Cochrane believes that they will personally relate more to male characters and so feel that audiences will relate more to male characters too. This is rather odd considering that, according to the New York Film Academy (Source 10, 2013), half of all cinema tickets in the US are bought by women. This Hollywood perspective gives an impression that, as Anna Coatman has pointed out, the mainstream film industry doesn't seem to consider stories told by women as "interesting or commercial". However, Melissa Silverstein (Source 11, CNN, 2013) would argue that films like Bridesmaids and The Hunger Games are helping to diminish the total male domination of the mainstream industry. Nevertheless, Jodie Foster points to the fact that, although Kathryn Bigelow's Oscar win is a big step forward for women in the industry, it's significant that the first female director acknowledged by the Oscars won it for a male genre (Source 9, SuperPopINTERVIEWS, 2013). This may have been helped by the fact that, according to the New York Film Academy (Source 10, 2013), 77% of Oscar voters are male.

#### - FOCUS GROUP:

(5)- are mostly only made to make money so you have to make a film which normal, 'Fred and Frieda' at home, will like. - gotta go to norm.: Men are powerful in the film, good looking girl, good looking girl has problem, men fixes problem

= most films are *made for money* - so they are *aimed at the most general audience* - are *not especially challenging or revolutionary* in thinking

#### - INTERVIEW:

(4) the most powerful people at ITN were never women  
(4) it just takes longer time for women to filter up the ladder into the senior management jobs (but why is this?)

- COUNTER:

(4) all areas of the TV industry felt accessible to her generation

(4) quite a lot of producers were female

(4) there's certainly powerful women at ITN, but not the most powerful

## The traditional expectations of women and motherhood

- SECONDARY:

Producer/Writer/Director Naomi Foner (Source 7, Indie Wire, 2013) links this idea of rooted discrimination to the traditional expectation of society that women should take out time from their careers to raise their children: "Society has yet to catch up with laws about discrimination...the culture still undermines women, even when it comes to raising family". Filmmaker Beeban Kidron supports this by confessing that bringing up children "has a material effect on all women's careers". Atonia Bird believes this is due to film directing being a full-time job, and as a result, hasn't had children, concluding that "being a film director is virtually impossible unless you're rich" (Source 2, The Guardian, 2010). Anna Coatman (Source 3, Slight & Sound, 2014) suggests that Hollywood doesn't like using female directors because "the business culture of mainstream film doesn't allow for people taking time out to have a family".

On the other hand, Donna Langley (Source 12, CNN, 2012) managed to become Co-Chairman of Universal Pictures and still have a family, however, she had to put off having children until she was 40, so that her career had a solid footing first. She also admits that she had an "incredibly supportive husband". This suggests that a supportive husband is a necessity for women wanting to maintain a film career. In comparison, Naomi Foner (Source 7, IndieWire, 2013), who apparently didn't receive much help from her husband at the time, director Stephen Gyllenhaal, confessed that, "it may have taken me 30 years [to direct a film because] I also felt incredibly responsible for my kids". Donna Langley (Source 12, CNN, 2012) understands this feeling, "as women we carry a huge amount of guilt every second of every day we are not with our children".

- FOCUS GROUP:

(2) as well its about the stereotype of having a family, that women just can't dedicate themselves as directors and writers - men have more freedom

= the stereotype of *having a family* = makes women seem unable to dedicate enough time to become directors and writers because it's seen as their responsibility to raise the children

- INTERVIEW:

(5) there's a perception that women can't make good managers because they are bound to stop and have kids at some point

- COUNTER:

(2) I don't think that any girl in this room, or pretty much any girl that I know, thinks, like perhaps they would have done 30 years ago, that **we will leave here, maybe get a degree, and then get a husband. And I think that actually the family thing, I don't think has as much of an effect.**

'Self-identified' reasons for lack due to women's own 'faults'

- SECONDARY:

Whilst Langley has identified the attributes that make women perfect for the film industry, a number of women have blamed the lack on self-identified flaws carried by all women. Anna Coatman (Source 3, Sight & Sound, 2013) suggests that women generally have less confidence in themselves. Naomi Foner (Source 7, IndieWire, 2013) agrees with this, saying that when it comes to roles like directing, "women are more prone to being self-critical". Kate Kinninmont of Women in Film & Television UK, the "leading membership organisation for women working in the creative media" (WFTV, 2014), admits that whilst "women are brilliant at pitching somebody else, they're often not good at pitching themselves" (Source 2, The Guardian, 2010). It is quite significant for such prominent women within the industry, who both campaign for parity for women to be targeting the blame on women's inability to promote themselves. However, Kira Cochrane (Source 2, The Guardian, 2010) suggests that part of the problem is the cultural differences between men and women, including how "women are brought up to negotiate in very different ways from men", which is partly why fewer of them make it into the top roles.

Society/Culture - egos

- SECONDARY:

Whether the reasons for the lack of women are external or internal to female characteristics, the effects of this absence are inescapable. Statistics from the New York Film Academy (Source 10, 2013), collected from institutes such as IndieWire and Sundance Institute, show that, in between 2007-2012, 1/3 of speaking female characters wore sexually revealing clothes or were partially naked. On average, the ratio of male actors to female actors was 2.25:1 (Source 13, neontommy, 2013). These statistics can again be linked to the domination of male stories within our culture. Melissa Silverstein (Source 11, CNN, 2013) believes there's a "continual sense that male stories are universal, for everyone, and that women's stories are just for women" and that "men won't go see stories about women". As a result, the most popular films each year are male superhero films, giving the impression that only male

films are “the movies that matter”. She concludes that, when we don’t see enough women on screen and we don’t see enough women’s stories, “we get the message that women don’t matter as much, that our stories don’t count, that our experiences are less valid”. This chimes with filmmaker Carol Morely’s belief that it is ideologically and politically important for women to make films because “they offer a different perspective on the world” (Source 3, Sight & Sound, 2013).

- FOCUS GROUP:

- (1)Milly: female characters are mostly portrayed as a certain number of archetypes. - it’s a part of what our society is. It’s not necessarily about the amount of women, it’s about how men and women are.

= not necessarily the lack of women - more so the relationship between men and women in our society

- (1) Cameron: you gotta take it away from the film and arts industry and bring it back to just normal jobs...women and men....men are paid more, so that will obviously be affected in Hollywood and that, so it’s just taking it, in a way, from the norm of society. It’s not a good thing, it’s a bad thing but yeah, it’s nothing to do with Hollywood  
= the film industry reflects the level of pay and employment rights of normal jobs in society

- (1) the whole film industry, in terms of acting and stuff, it kinda reflects the whole atmosphere of today’s social context. You got predominantly men in the police forces, predominantly men in the army, in these kind of glorified roles within society which are reflected in the show business industry, or the film industry.

= reflects today’s social context - men are predominantly in the police + army - glorified roles in movies - predominantly men in these roles which are reflected by the film industry

- (1) Film is like a mirror on society and audiences, it reflects what people think.

= Film is a mirror on society and audiences - it reflects what people think

- (1) there’s industries that are dominated by males anyway generally in life, and film is obviously a representation of life in most cases - film shouldn’t be directly blamed for doing it, it should come back to more of the wider picture

= most industries are dominated by males generally - as most movies try to reflect society, films themselves shouldn’t be blamed for lack of female influence - its the fault of the wide society

- INTERVIEW:

• (2) **there is an issue, if you look in general at pay, at women’s pay, there’s something serious, like 10 or something % less than men**

• (2) it’s the culture - men’s stories dominate in our culture and its hard to change a culture

• (2) pay inequality shows that our society is still patriarchal

## Counter arguments (Signs of improvement)

### SECONDARY

- Despite the difficulties that women face in breaking into the industry, including the effect of raising children, women like Donna Langley prove that it is possible for women to reach the most important roles within Hollywood. Along side Langley sits Amy Pascal as Co-Chairman of Sony Pictures Entertainment, as well as Sue Kroll, who serves as the President of Worldwide Marketing and International Distribution for Warner Bros. Pictures (Source 11, CNN, 2013). Donna Langley (Source 12, CNN, 2013) counters the idea of male domination, saying that it doesn't feel like a man's world to her as she is surrounded by "great and fabulous women". She also suggests that women are very useful for the industry as they "have a unique way of multi-tasking" and can serve as "the ultimate diplomats".
- Nevertheless, the BFI (Source 6, 2013) has also found that 37% of the top 20 UK independent films were written by women, marking a massive leap forward for female writers. This improvement was reflected by British Writer/Director Andrea Arnold (Source 7, Indie Wire, 2013) who stated, "I don't feel discriminated against particularly as a woman writer". Promisingly, indie festivals are expressing similar progress as 40% of directors at the London Short Film Festival were women whilst female directors made up 50% of the documentary field at Sundance 2012. This latter fact corresponds with Fandor's (Source 14, 2013) calculation that 34.4% of all documentary directors are women anyway.

### FOCUS GROUPS

- (1) I'm going to use **The Hunger Games** as a perfect example here because you've got Jennifer Lawrence as this **strong, almost soldier-like character**
- (7) **it's slowly getting there**, and **it's got better than the black and white films**, so **give it another 50 years...**
- (7) But **we shouldn't have to wait another 50 years.**
- (7) **you can't get production companies to proportionally make films that are good with women and good with men.**
- (7) it's a slow progress of change but that's how life goes, that's how you evolve. It's not going to be tomorrow, [clicks] all of the films are gonna be very very balanced and it's all gonna be happy-dandy  
= the process of change is just very slow like evolution - the entire film industry, in terms of balance and equality, can't just change overnight.

### INTERVIEW:

- (1) there has clearly been a change over the last 20 years
- (1) in terms of employment, it's a lot better now
- (4) all areas of the TV industry felt accessible to her generation

- (1) for her generation there was a reasonably good mix of males and females, nearly 50/50
- (1)the news room in general was pretty 50/50

### Effects of the lack - Women's stories vs men's stories:

#### SECONDARY:

- Whether the reasons for the lack of women are external or internal to female characteristics, the effects of this absence are inescapable. Statistics from the New York Film academy (Source 10, 2013), collected from institutes such IndieWire and Sundance Institute, show that, in between 2007-2012, 1/3 of speaking female characters wore sexually revealing clothes or were partially naked. On average, the ratio of male actors to female actors were 2.25:1 (Source 13, neontommy, 2013). These statistics can again be linked to the domination of male stories within our culture. Melissa Silverstein (Source 11, CNN, 2013) believes there's a "continual sense that male stories are universal, for everyone, and that women's stories are just for women" and that "men won't go see stories about women". As a result, the most popular films each year are male superhero films, giving the impression that only male films are "the movies that matter". She concludes that, when we don't see enough women on screen and we don't see enough women's stories, "we get the message that women don't matter as much, that our stories don't count, that our experiences are less valid". This chimes with filmmaker Carol Morely's belief that it is ideologically and politically important for women to make films because "they offer a different perspective on the world" (Source 3, Sight & Sound, 2013).
- Evidence from the New York Academy (Source 10, 2012) shows that it's also very important for there to be more women behind the camera. There is an approximate 10.6% increase of female characters on screen when a female director is attached, along with a 8.7% increase when a female screenwriter is attached. Its hard for these percentages to go any higher as the top roles within the top 250 films of 2012 were also dominated by men, with women consisting only 25% of producers, 20% of editors, 17% of executive producers and a measly 2% of cinematographers. Kira Cochrane (Source 2, The Guardian, 2010) argues that, as a result of there always being fewer women at the top, there are fewer role models and fewer mentors to inspire young women to get into the industry. Filmmaker Alice Lowe (Source 3, Sight & Sound, 2013) agrees that it's much harder for young female filmmakers beginning their careers because they need a mentor who's similar to them, however, there's just not enough women directors to provide that. This concluding point suggests a doomed cycle, whereby the amount of women in the industry will only increase slowly as there are too few women already in the industry to inspire the next generation of female filmmakers. Short-filmmaker -aspiring feature filmmaker - Lauren Tracy supports this idea as she finds herself to be one of the few current female filmmakers, even in the short film industry (Source 8, X-Factor Filmmakers, 2013).
- Nevertheless, Jodie Foster points to the fact that, although Kathryn Bigelow's Oscar win is a big step forward for women in the industry, it's significant that the first female

director acknowledged by the Oscars won it for a male genre (Source 9, SuperPopINTERVIEWS, 2013). This may have been helped by the fact that, according to the New York Film Academy (Source 10, 2013), 77% of Oscar voters are male.

#### FOCUS GROUP

- ratio wise, you'll have **5 main guys and 1, maybe 2, women**
- **you don't have female characters without expecting that they're gonna hook up with male characters** at some point in the film
- **One man would probably have more power than all of those women in the film**
- **if they're seen as making their own decisions or something like that, there's something bad that's behind that, rather than it just being normal.**
- in mainstream films, its **usually the woman who's the damsel in distress, or the bloke's sidekick, or trophy**
- Katniss Everdeen is a strong character, **she is strong butt's like what Kitty said before is that, she ends up getting with...like the whole romance thing -**
- often its **LOOK THIS IS A STRONG WOMAN THEREFORE SHE DOES THIS, there's no intrinsically strong character that are just strong.**
- **there has to be something special about them, like critically it would be pointed out more that she is a strong woman, like its not just a normal thing**
- **Female characters aren't allowed to make mistakes**
- **you hardly ever have a film that has a woman in and there's no type of romance - it's disproportionate**
- (6) I'm more comfortable writing men but that's just cos of who I am and the gender I am as I am a man so I write about men.
- (5) thousands and thousands of films are written in America for Hollywood, I don't think anyone realises how few get made - they pick, however many they make a year, I mean it's nothing, if you think about how many films that are actually in the cinema within a year, it's very very few - out of all those thousands, there's got to be hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of them, that represent women equally, there must be but they don't get chosen  
= out of the thousands of films that are submitted to Hollywood each year, only very few are selected and the ones about women or written by women, which there are probably hundreds, are rejected - perhaps for a number of reasons - women seen as creative risk?

#### INTERVIEW:

- in fictional TV, there's generally a masculine perspective
- many more male protagonists compared to female protagonists

- women's TV shows generally tend to follow certain genres to do with looking nice, creating a home..etc.
- a lot of female characters still seem to be periphery - there is something they have to save or acquire

### long-term effects of male dominance

#### - FOCUS GROUP:

(3) in the forefront in my mind there would always be, that above me there's a huge majority of men and that it's very very hard to make your way up the ladder as a woman just because they think, when you're in that kind of directorial position, you've got to have a lot of respect and you gotta have people who are gonna listen to you - she's gotta have a certain amount of prestige, before men will start listening to her

= many women are probably discouraged by the fact that the industry is dominated by men and that its harder for a woman to make her way up the ladder and earn enough respect and authority to become a director or producer

(3) you have guys who are allowed to be like, 'im the shit', 'Im worth this amount of millions of quids' or whatever and 'if I'm in this film it'll be worth this amount of money' but if a female actress was like that, everyone would be like 'oh my god what an up herself bitch' and no one would like her and no one would sell anything.

= because of long-term dominance of the industry, male actors are allowed to promote themselves and treat themselves with the most importance in securing film roles - women are not able to do the same

(3) the less female writers and female directors employed, the less female roles there'll be

= the less women employed in the top roles of producers, directors and writers, the less female roles there will be

#### - INTERVIEW:

(1) senior members who had been within the TV industry for 20 years+ were all men  
 (1)/(3) camera people also tended to be always male - women mostly did VT, editing

or sound roles in the gallery

(1) the junior female staff felt they weren't old enough to challenge the sexism (haven't got enough authority or respect yet?)

(1) the lack is partly a historical issue - (long term discouragement) = 20 years ago it was very different

- COUNTER

(3) **it encourages you**, knowing things like [the stats] **encourages us to change it.- especially with theatre - all of the monologues I can find for my casting are about men and how I'm in love with a man.**

- (3) **it's made me want to prove something.**
- (3) **It encourages me to write things, like scripts or whatever**
- (3) I see it as **more opportunities for women because there's less of them in the industry**
- (1) for her generation there was a reasonably good mix of males and females, nearly 50/50
- (1) there has clearly been a change over the last 20 years
- (1) in terms of employment, it's a lot better now
- (1) the news room in general was pretty 50/50

Solutions - conclusion?

FOCUS GROUP

- (6) films should apply the Bechdel test - **"if you can try and install that then it does slowly make an industry better for women"**
- (3) **if you employ more female writers and more female directors, there'll be more female roles.**
- (7) **give it 50 years, and it'll be better - maybe it'll be quicker now with technology like the internet**
- (7) **you've got to give it time. And now we got people like us who're young like us and thinking like this, when we grow up and we start correcting that, we're the next generation with that new idea.**

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## CONCLUSION

1. Secondary
  - sources had extremely useful information which was easy to scavenge - easy to link - obviously had consulted the first initial sources
  - my methods of data collection were very successful
  
  - wanted better sources
  - some sources had too much of the same info
  - some sources proved less useful than first thought
2. Focus group
  - very pleased with the people I got - extremely thoughtful points put across
  
  - didn't tell them much other than the facts - didn't want to sway their opinions - keep it objective - but could have sparked more of a debate
  
  - didn't hear enough from boys
  - were too shy to properly counter or speak up
  - whole group were friends so didn't want to say things that may cause a backlash and make them appear sexist
  - wanted to have another focus group just for boys but didn't work out
3. Interview
  - wish I had asked different questions - could have explored ideas such as self-identified flaws in women
4. Overall
  - very successful
  - it's clear what I achieved
  - achieved a wealth of educational information
  - able to make my own judgement on the issue
  - developed my research technique