

26<sup>th</sup> Annual Edition

***The Celluloid Ceiling:  
Employment of Behind-the-Scenes Women on Top Grossing  
U.S. Films in 2023***

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2023 was a year in which things were not as they seemed in Hollywood. While Greta Gerwig's *Barbie* reigned supreme as the number one box office film, women remained dramatically underrepresented as directors, accounting for just 16% of those working on the 250 top grossing films and 14% on the 100 top grossing films. It's the ultimate illusion, Greta Gerwig's well-deserved triumph belied the gender inequality that pervades the mainstream film industry.

In fact, 83% of the 250 top grossing films last year had no women directors and 94% had no women cinematographers. While 75% of the top grossing films employed 10 or more men as directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, and cinematographers, just 4% employed 10 or more women.

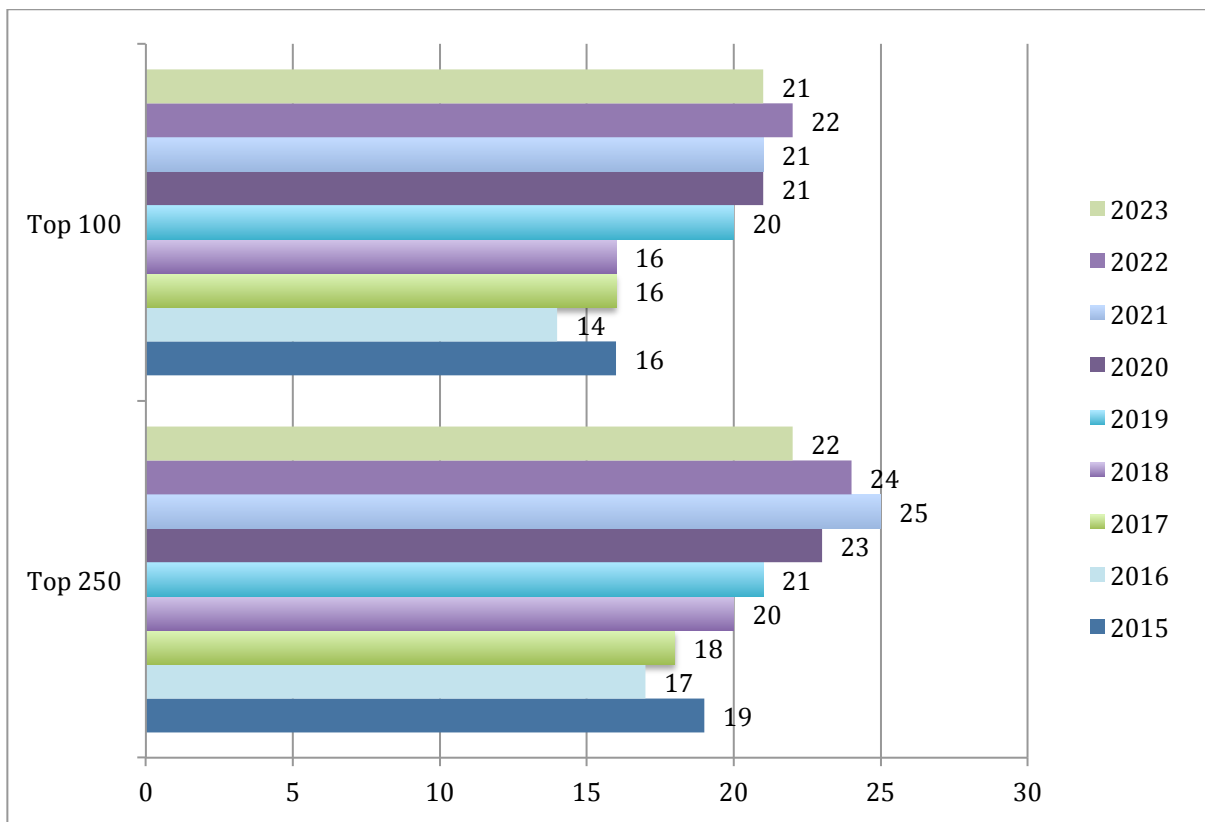
*The Celluloid Ceiling* has tracked women's employment on the 250 top grossing films for the last 26 years. Having monitored credits for a quarter of a century, the project provides the longest-running and most comprehensive account of women's behind-the-scenes representation available. This historical record reveals that women remain dramatically underrepresented in many key behind-the-scenes roles on the top 100 and 250 (domestic) grossing films of 2023.

**Key Findings**

•In 2023, women comprised 22% of directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, and cinematographers working on the top 250 grossing films. This represents a decline of 2 percentage points from 24% in 2022. The percentage of women working on the top 100 films decreased one percentage point from 22% in 2022, to 21% in 2023 (see Figure 1).

Figure 1.

Comparison of Percentages of Behind-the-Scenes Women on Top 100 and 250 Films\*

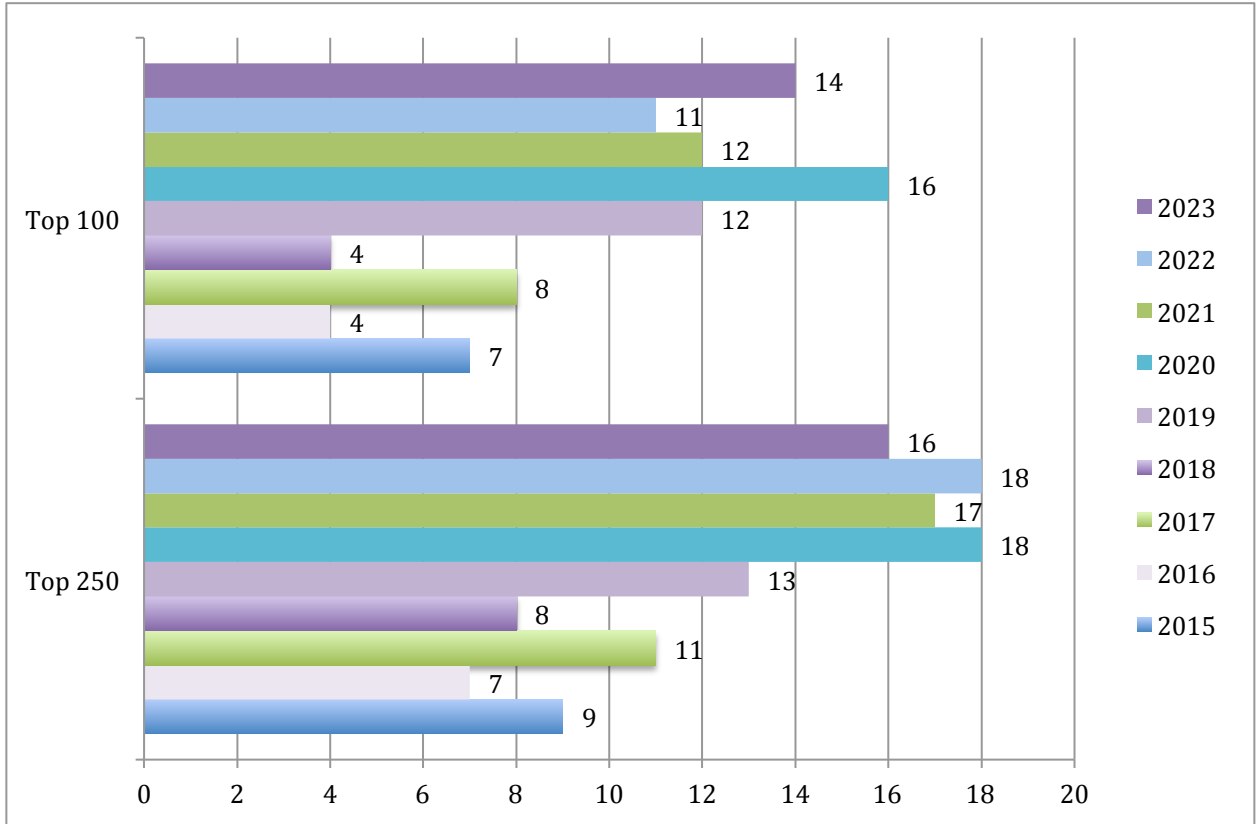


\*Includes directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, cinematographers

•Women accounted for 16% of directors working on the 250 top films in 2023, down 2 percentage points from 18% in 2022. Women comprised 14% of directors working on the 100 top films of 2022, up 3 percentage points from 11% in 2022 (see Figure 2).

Figure 2.

Comparison of Percentages of Women Directors Working on the Top 100 and 250 Films



•In other roles, women comprised 17% of writers, 24% of executive producers, 26% of producers, 21% of editors, and 7% of cinematographers on the top 250 films.

•In 2023, 94% of the top 250 films had no women cinematographers, 86% had no women composers, 83% had no women directors, 74% had no women writers, and 72% had no women editors.

•Last year, the majority of the top 250 films (72%) employed 0 to 4 women in the roles considered, 24% of films employed 5 to 9 women, and 4% employed 10 or more women. In contrast, 5% of films employed 0 to 4 men in the roles considered, 21% employed 5 to 9 men, and the remaining majority (75%) employed 10 or more men.

- Films with at least one woman director employed substantially more women in other key behind-the-scenes roles than films with exclusively male directors. On films with at least one woman director, women comprised 61% of writers, 35% of editors, 10% of cinematographers, and 26% of composers. On films with male directors, women accounted for 9% of writers, 18% of editors, 7% of cinematographers, and 11% of composers (top 250 films).

### ***Background***

For the last 26 years, *The Celluloid Ceiling* has tracked women’s employment on the top 250 grossing films (international films and re-issues omitted). In later years, the study also considered the top 100 films, and until 2020 the top 500 films.

The results of the study are divided into two major sections. The first section reports the findings for the top 250 (domestic) grossing films, offering comparisons of percentages from 2023 with figures dating from 1998. This year’s report monitored over 3,200 credits on the top grossing films. Since 1998, the study has tracked more than 82,000 behind-the-scenes credits.

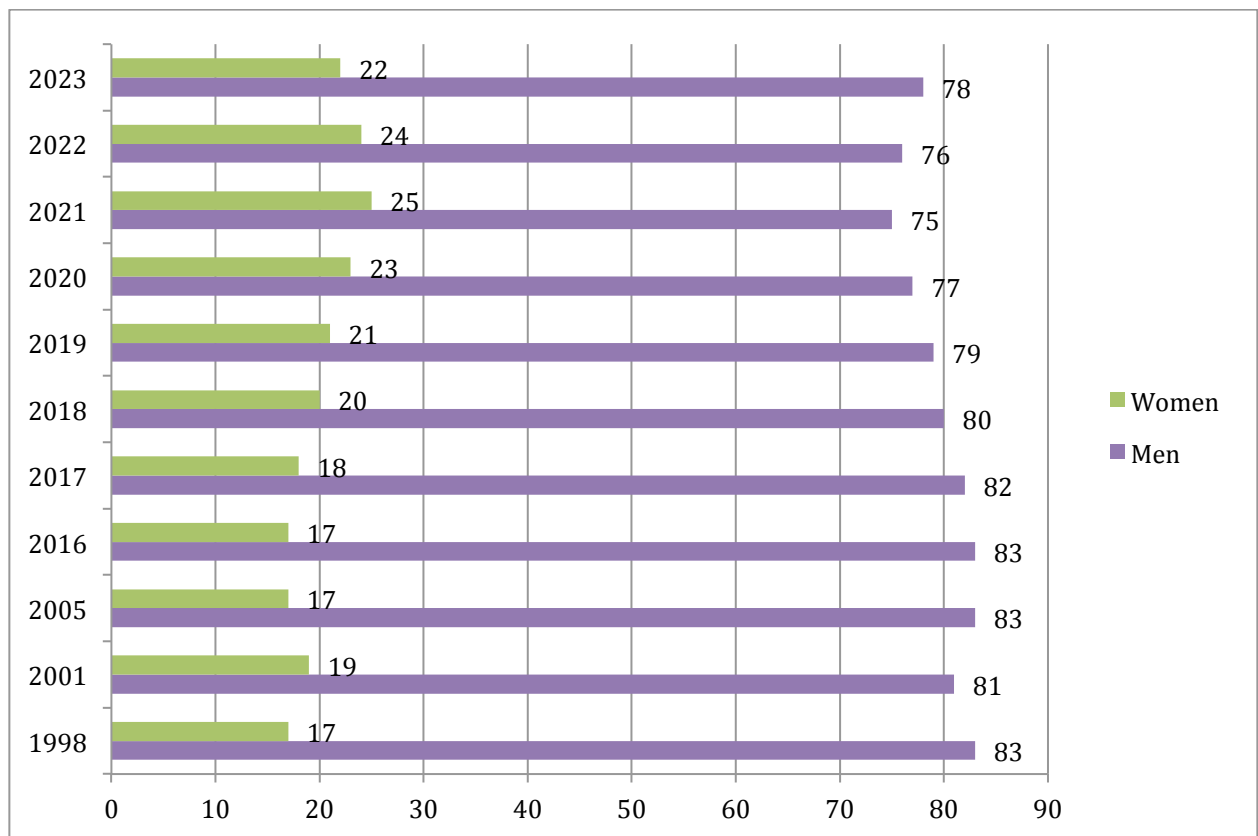
The second section provides the numbers for the top 100 (domestic) grossing films, comparing this year’s figures with those from 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, 2015, 2020, 2021, and 2022. Figures for the top grossing films are based on numbers obtained from The Numbers on January 1, 2024.

## Findings / Top 250 Films

Women comprised 22% of all directors, writers, executive producers, producers, editors, and cinematographers working on the 250 top films of 2023. This represents a decline of 2 percentage points from 2022, and an increase of only 5 percentage points since 1998 (see Figure 3).

Figure 3.

*Historical Comparison of Percentages of Behind-the-Scenes Women on Top 250 Films*



Women fared best as producers (26%), followed by executive producers (24%), editors (21%), writers (17%), directors (16%), and cinematographers (7%).

In 2023, the majority of films (72%) employed 0 to 4 women in the roles considered, 24% of films employed 5 to 9 women, and 4% employed 10 or more women. In contrast, 5% of films employed 0 to 4 men in the roles considered, 21% employed 5 to 9 men, and the remaining majority (75%) employed 10 or more men.

Women comprised 16% of all directors working on the 250 top films of 2023, down 2 percentage points from 18% in 2022. Taking the long view, this represents an increase of 7 percentage points from 9% in 1998 (see Figure 4).

Films with at least one woman director employed substantially more women in other key behind-the-scenes roles than films with exclusively male directors. On films with at least one woman director, women comprised 61% of writers, 35% of editors, 10% of cinematographers, and 26% of composers. On films with male directors, women accounted for 9% of writers, 18% of editors, 7% of cinematographers, and 11% of composers.

Women accounted for 17% of all writers working on the top 250 films of 2023, down 2 percentage points from 19% in 2022. Taking the long view, this represents an increase of 4 percentage points from 13% in 1998.

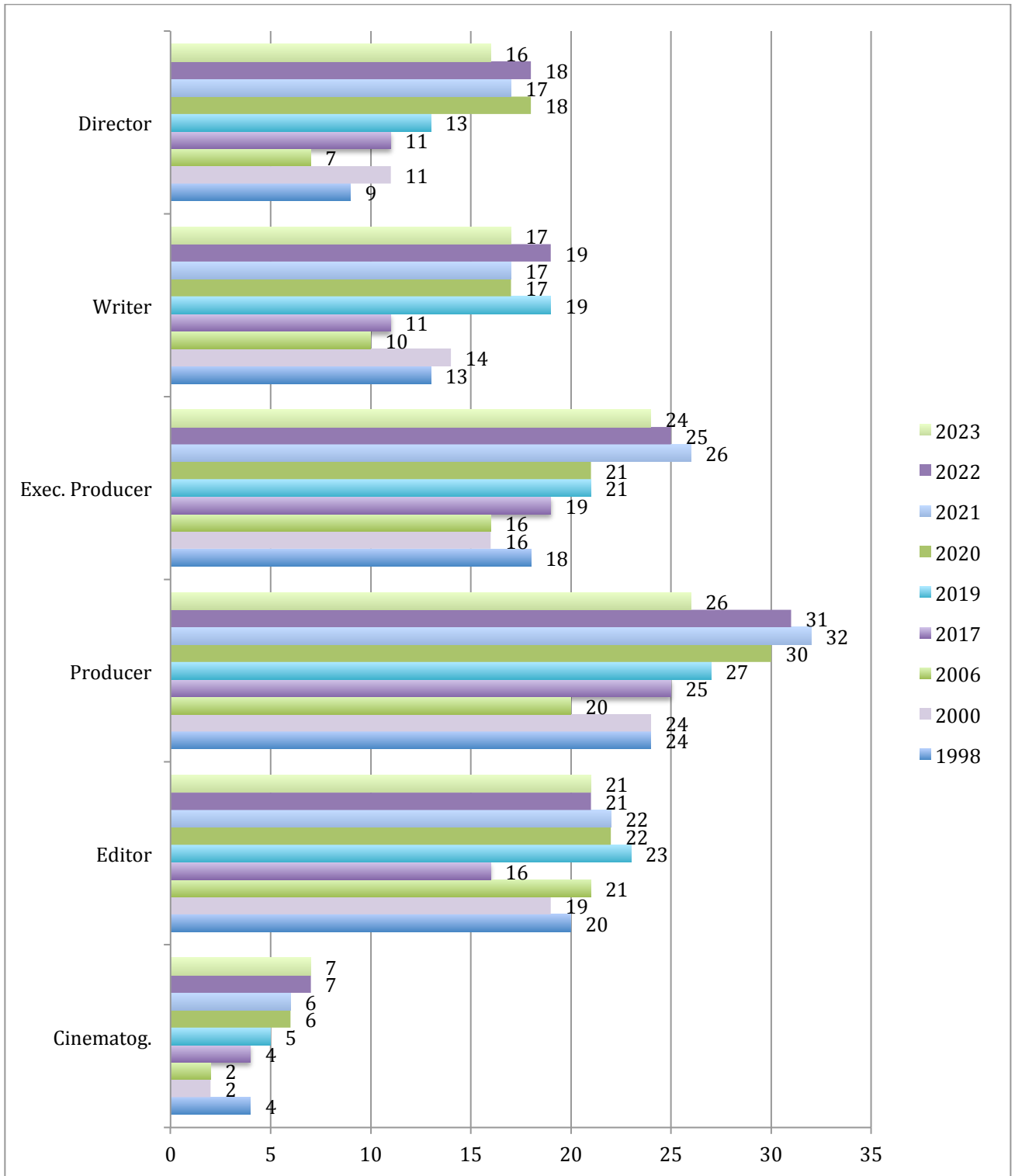
Women made up 24% of all executive producers working on the top 250 films of 2023, down 1 percentage point from 25% in 2022. Taking the long view, this represents an increase of 6 percentage points from 18% in 1998.

Women comprised 26% of all producers working on the top 250 films of 2023, a decrease of 5 percentage points from 31% in 2022. Taking the long view, this represents an increase of 2 percentage points from 24% in 1998.

Women accounted for 21% of all editors working on the top 250 films of 2023, even with the percentage achieved in 2022. Taking the long view, this represents an increase of just 1 percentage point from 20% in 1998.

Figure 4.

Historical Comparison of Percentages of Women Employed Behind the Scenes on Top 250 Films by Role



Women made up 7% of all cinematographers working on the top 250 films of 2023, even with the percentage achieved in 2022. Taking the long view, this represents an increase of 3 percentage points from 4% in 1998.

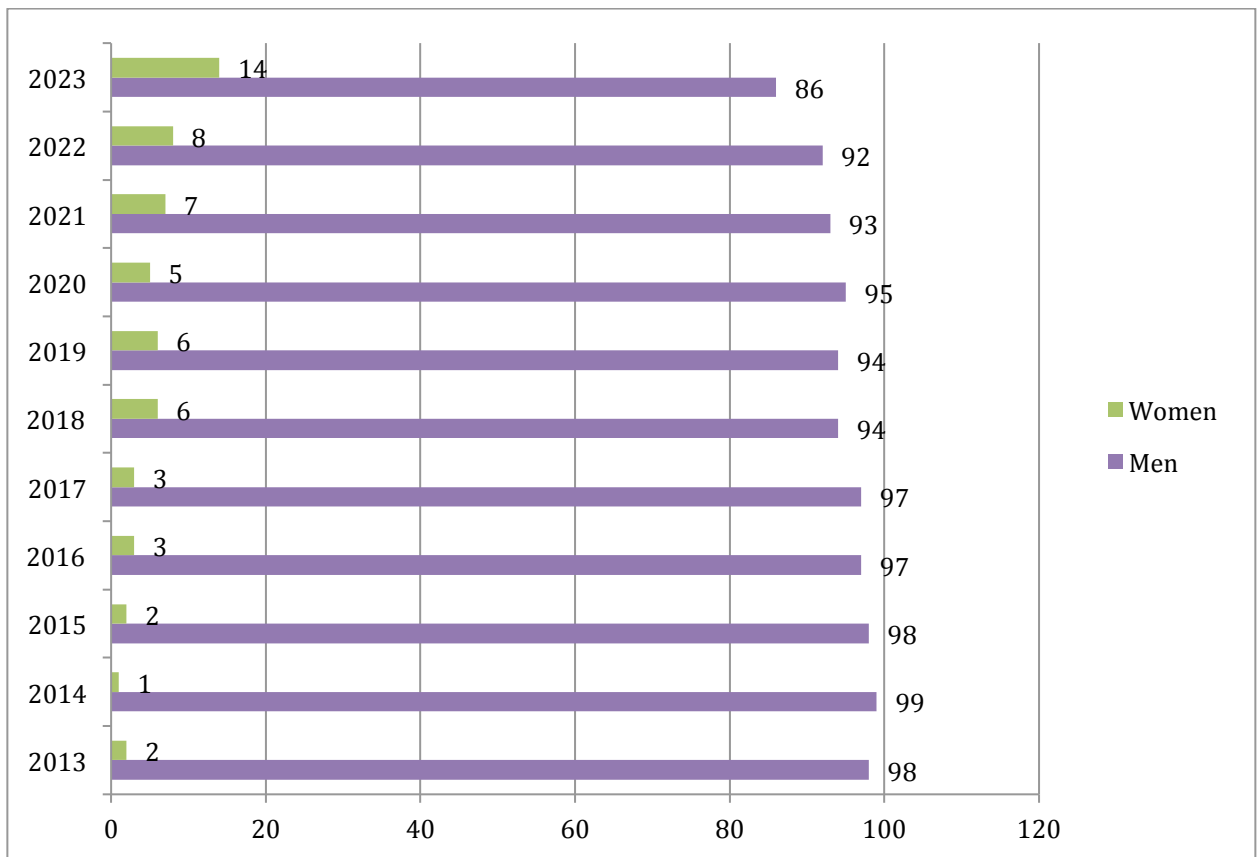
94% of the top 250 films had no women cinematographers, 83% had no women directors, 74% had no women writers, and 72% had no women editors.

*Additional Role / Composers*

Women comprised 14% of composers working on the top 250 grossing films of 2023 (see Figure 5). This represents an increase of 6 percentage points from 8% in 2022, and a recent historic high. 86% of films had no women composers in 2023.

*Figure 5.*

*Recent Historical Representation of Women and Men as Composers on the Top 250 Films*



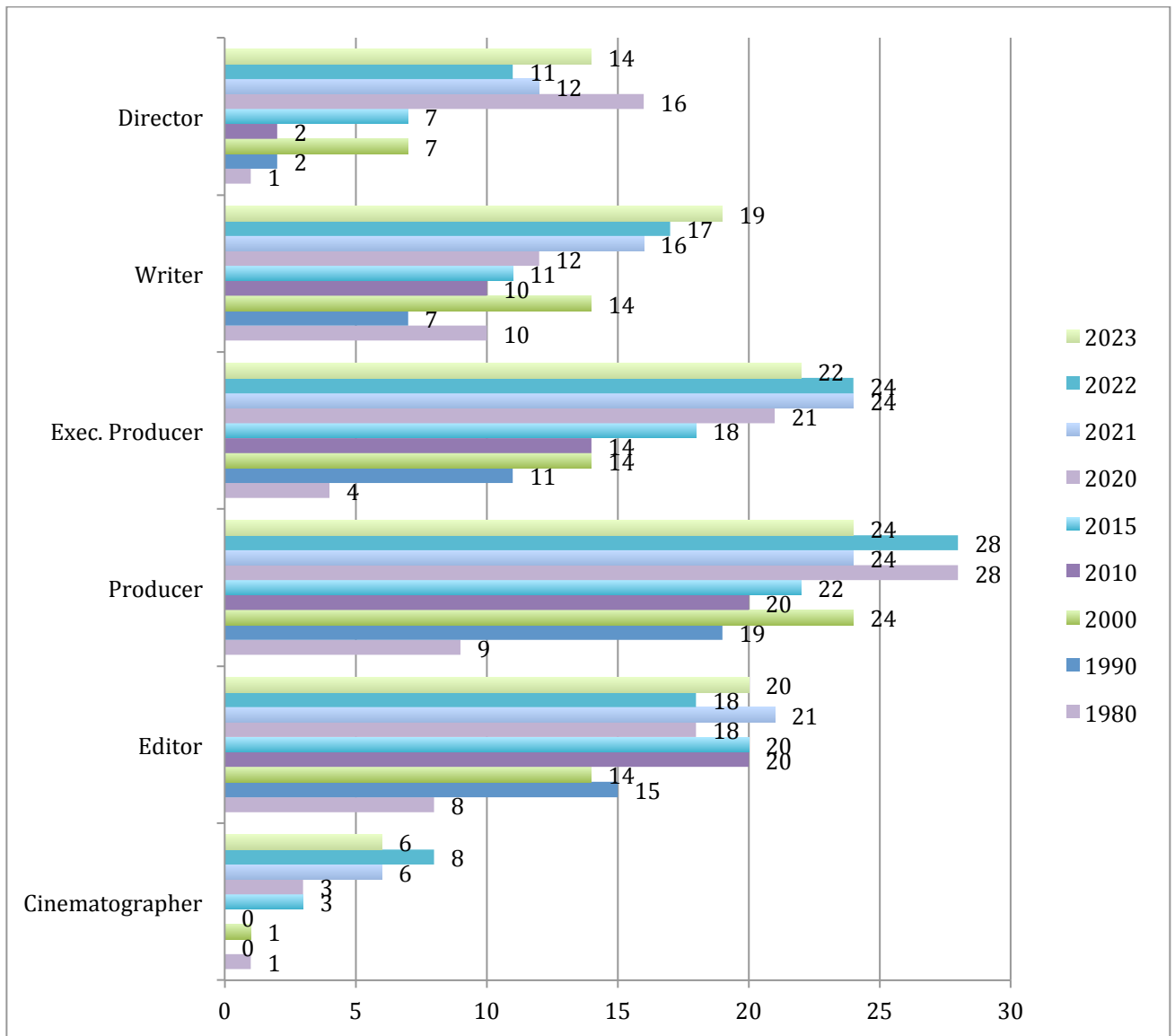


**Findings/ Top 100 Films**

Women comprised 21% of all directors, writers, producers, executive producers, editors, and cinematographers working on the top 100 films of 2023. This represents a decrease of 1 percentage point from 22% in 2022.

Figure 6.

Historical Comparison of Percentages of Women Employed Behind the Scenes on Top 100 Films by Role\*



\*Note that relatively minor fluctuations in the numbers affect this data set to a greater extent than the set of 250 films due to its smaller size.

Women fared best as producers (24%), followed by executive producers (22%), editors (20%), writers (19%), directors (14%), and cinematographers (6%) (see Figure 6).

Women comprised 14% of directors working on the top 100 films of 2023. This represents an increase of 3 percentage points from 11% in 2022.

Women accounted for 19% of writers working of the top 100 films of 2023. This represents an increase of 2 percentage points from 17% in 2022.

Women made up 22% of executive producers working on the top 100 films of 2023. This represents a decrease of 2 percentage points from 24% in 2022.

Women comprised 24% of producers working on the top 100 films of 2023. This represents a decrease of 4 percentage points from 28% in 2022.

Women accounted for 20% of editors working on the top 100 films of 2023. This represents an increase of 2 percentage points from 18% in 2022.

Women made up 6% of cinematographers working on the top 100 films of 2023. This represents a decrease of 2 percentage points from 8% in 2022.

#### *Additional Role / Composers*

Women comprised 12% of composers working on the top 100 films of 2023. This represents an increase of 3 percentage points from 9% in 2022, and a recent historic high. 86% of films had no women composers in 2023.