

Women in the workplace

30

Women in film  
Gender bias is not just in front of the camera

31

Flexible working  
Is it possible to get the hours you really want?



32

Women in finance  
Will a new initiative finally close the gender gap?

# It's time to storm the barricades

Even though 50 per cent of those entering film school are female, only a few go on to direct. But is that about to change? By **Alice Barraclough**

From Oscar-winning actress Gwyneth Paltrow speaking out on being paid less than her male co-stars, to two major Hollywood studios announcing they are releasing no films directed by women between now and 2018, it appears gender inequality in the film industry has finally come to the forefront of debate.

According to the recent Directors UK study, *Cut Out of the Picture*, the number of female film directors hasn't improved in 10 years, with women making up just 13.6 per cent of film directors.

From struggling to get their first break to not being chosen for certain genres or given a chance to direct a second, third or fourth film, the statistics make for depressing reading.

Particularly so when you consider that the proportion of women who enter film school and wanting to be directors is 50pc.

Which begs the question: why do so few of them get the opportunity to go on and make films, especially ones with big budgets?

Susanna White, who directed TV adaptations of *Jane Eyre* and *Bleak House*, as well as the recent John le Carré film *Our Kind of Traitor*, says the study reveals how women in the film industry continually meet barriers, beginning at entry level jobs.

"I knew people who struggled to get their foot in the door," she says. "To me it wasn't a case where women were saying, 'I want to have a family and I don't want to be a film director', it was something much more insidious

**Deeds not words**  
Carey Mulligan and Anne-Marie Duff in *Suffragette*, main picture, above; inset right, the film's director Sarah Gavron

that was going on.

"If you get more women directing, you get more people interested in telling female-driven stories, and you get better parts for actresses. As a director you influence lots of things – you decide which extras are in the scene, and how you see the make-up of the crowd – you get to reflect something back on society."

The research discovered an innate reliance on the stereotype of the male director, and the freelance nature of film-making discourages any co-ordinated or long-term thinking that might encourage producers to employ women. "Everything is done on a project-by-project basis, so there's no HR compared to if you worked at a law firm," says Ms White.

"I understand you're going to want to hire someone with a track record, who's proved they can do it. But it's hard for female directors to get a track record in the first place. We're trying to break the vicious circle and create opportunities so women can prove themselves."

Speaking in Cannes earlier this year, the British Film Institute (BFI) voiced its support for gender equality in the industry and pledged a commitment that 50pc of its funding will go to women directors before 2020.

Sarah Gavron, who directed the hugely successful *Suffragette*, says that although we don't need to smash any windows, no one can ignore the facts.

"It's time to act and be radical. To use the *Suffragette*'s phrase, 'deeds not words'. The reason I'm so passionate about opening this

dialogue is not just because of gender equality in the workplace, but because film directly influences our culture," she points out.

"It's a bit like the chicken and the egg – if you don't have role models then women either don't go into it or are discouraged. Hence there are not many films made by women so people don't trust films made by women, and are less likely to employ women."

While the focus has been on women directors, there are other sectors of the industry where women are also woefully underrepresented. Another report, *Calling the Shots*, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and carried out by researchers at the University of Southampton, found that women accounted for only 30pc of all directors, writers, producers, executive producers, cinematographers and editors on the 203 UK films in production in 2015.

"By looking at those other roles we get a broader understanding of gender and equality," says Dr Shelley Cobb, who co-led the report.

"A director isn't the only kind of author of a film – though we often think of them that way. What's interesting is how collaboration between genders is happening across these key roles."

"Women producers are very good at hiring other women.

If there's one woman producer on a film, there's a much better chance of there being a woman in one of those other roles," she adds.

An observation that is backed up by the fact that 74pc of films with a woman director also had a woman producer.

Celine Rattray, who co-founded Maven Pictures

ID:21439868  
size:6.631 by479.62  
House Ads-Appointments

ID:21439460  
size:6.631 by479.62  
University of Sussex

ID:21438959  
size:6.631 by479.62  
Met Film Limited

ID:21439821  
size:6.631 by479.62  
House Ads-Appointments

## WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE TECHNOLOGY

# Bending the rules of engagement

Don't be stuck in a rut – if flexible working works for you, there are opportunities out there with some switched-on employers, as **Catherine Hufton** discovers

A new study reveals that 79 per cent of people searching for part-time or flexible roles feel frustrated by the lack of opportunities in the jobs market. In fact, many female workers with family commitments often find themselves excluded or reach a halt in their careers because their availability doesn't fit what is required by advertised roles. The result? A highly skilled pool of talent is lost from the business sector. So what changes are being made to improve things?

In May the Hire Me My Way initiative was launched in the UK by Timewise – a scheme that aims to make the flexible working process fairer and more transparent. Calling for a more inclusive hiring market, the campaign is helping to give women the confidence to ask for more flexibility at work.

"We launched Timewise in 2012. The inspiration came from my own negative experience of looking for flexible work," explains Karen Mattison, joint CEO of the company.

"I wanted to have an open and honest conversation with businesses about their flexibility, but I couldn't find anyone willing to talk to me. When I went to recruiters, they told me what I wanted wasn't possible and that I had to make choices about what I wanted: my career aspirations or my flexibility. So we wanted to find a solution."

Ms Mattison's experience isn't uncommon – many women fear bringing the topic of flexibility up too early in an application process will make them look unambitious and uncommitted. Leaving it too late, however, risks making the employer feel misled. It's an issue that needs to be addressed, according to Ms Mattison.

"It's just not something that's talked about in the hiring stage. Businesses are still finding it very difficult to have that conversation," she says.

"Your career becomes stuck because you can't move if flexibility is really important to you, and you can't find something else to go into. This results in women staying where they are so they don't progress in their career – this is what I call the flexibility trap. In some ways things



have got better as an employee, but not as a candidate."

**Multi-talented and multi-tasking**  
Technology will play a key part in enabling more women to work remotely

**66**  
I'm loud and proud that I have a large job that I can do in a very flexible way

We're all about being healthy and happy here at Innocent so we're happy to have a chat about flexible working."

Lynn Rattigan is chief operating officer of Ernst & Young. The company is one of Britain's most inspiring flexible-working success stories. While raising twin daughters, Ms Rattigan has not only maintained her career but been promoted to one of the most senior management positions. So how has she made it work?

"I've been working flexibly ever since I had my children seven years ago. I'm very loud and proud that I have a very large job that I can do in a very flexible way. I think the key to making flexible working successful is down to four main things: clear priorities, boundaries, transparency and making it a business arrangement," she says.

Setting clear boundaries from the start was something that Ms Rattigan found was intrinsic to making her role work flexibly. To begin with, she admits she was trying to squeeze in phone calls and meetings when at home with her children, which wasn't beneficial to

### 'BE BRAVE AND BOLD'

"Always be fully transparent about your circumstances at interview stage," advises Lynn Rattigan. "Be brave and bold and ask if there is an opportunity for a role to be done flexibly."

Remember, it has to be a commercial arrangement – as soon as you distance yourself from feeling bad about it, and see it as a business arrangement, you will feel differently."

"Demonstrate how you make it work in your current role," recommends Karen Mattison. "But don't sound as if you've only applied because it's a role with flexible working options," she adds.

"First and foremost, you've applied because you have the right skills, it's a great role, and you want to work for this firm. No one wants to hire someone who is only applying because the job's part time."

herself or the business. She wanted to give her full attention to both roles as a business woman and a mother.

"When I came back from maternity leave, I almost felt so grateful at the ability to work flexibly, I was willing to please on almost any level," she adds.

"I found very quickly that it was much more useful to be very clear about the boundaries and what I could do on working days, and what I couldn't do when I was at home with my children. Have your boundaries and be proud about them and follow them through with conviction."

So is the future looking positive for flexible working? Ms Rattigan thinks so, pointing out that technology will play a key part. "I can attend a meeting by Skype rather than trudging into London and add the same thing to the meeting. In my eyes, technology is the number one factor that a business can utilise to help an employee work more flexibly."

For more information on Hire Me My Way, or for advice on finding a flexible role, visit [timewise.co.uk](http://timewise.co.uk)