

Telling All of New York's Stories

***Expanding Diversity Behind
the TV Cameras***



August 2017

Introduction:

Over the past decade, thanks to the New York State Film Tax Credit Program, New York has once again become a center for the film and television industry. The industry generates tens of thousands of jobs in New York¹. Unfortunately, the growth in opportunities in the film and television industries has been, in many ways, inequitable. Significant disparities in access to certain professional jobs remain, particularly within some of the behind the scenes creative professions that are crucial to productions. According to analyses of the gender and racial make-up of the directors and writing staffs for new and existing productions, female and minority directors and writers face a shortage of opportunities.

New York has one of the more diverse populations in the entire United States², making it one of the most diverse places in the world. This is a state full of stories from different viewpoints but unfortunately the disparities found within the behind the scenes talent that makes film and television productions possible means that many of those stories won't be told. It is in the interest of New York to ensure that we create an environment in which all New Yorkers, regardless of gender, race, or ethnicity, have the opportunity to display their skills and to tell their stories. For this reason, Senator Marisol Alcántara, a member of the Independent Democratic Conference (IDC), introduced and passed legislation that creates a tax credit program aimed at increasing diversity behind the scenes of television productions filmed here in New York. This credit will increase the number of female and minority writers and directors getting a chance to display their skills and tell their stories here in New York.

This legislation, senate bill 4999-D (Assembly bill 7270-C sponsored by Assemblyman Marcos Crespo), passed both houses of the legislature on June 21 with the support of the IDC and its leader, Senator Jeffrey D. Klein. A maximum of \$5 million annually in credits would be made available for expenses related to the salaries of female or minority television writers and directors. The credit would go into effect for expenses incurred for the tax year beginning January 1, 2018. The legislation focuses on television productions that generate more jobs for writers and directors on a lower pay scale than major film productions. Credits could not be claimed for salaries for writers or directors who also happen to be profit-participants of a project. In this way, the credit aims to help individuals break into the industry. In order to go into effect this legislation needs the Executive's approval. Senator Alcántara, Senator Klein and the members of the IDC urge the Executive to sign this measure into law and ensure that the funds are available to ensure that New York takes the lead in creating a diverse television workforce behind the scenes.

¹ Camion Associates, Economic Impact of the Film Industry in New York State - 2015 & 2016, report prepared for Empire State Development, January 2017. Available at: https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/news-articles/2017_CamoinAssociates_FilmTaxCreditReport.pdf

²The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, "Population Distribution by Race/Ethnicity." Available at: <http://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/distribution-by-raceethnicity/?activeTab=map¤tTimeframe=0&selectedDistributions=white&sortModel=%7B%22colld%22:%22White%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>

The Film and Television Industry in New York:

The latest report on the effectiveness of the New York State Film Tax Credit, issued in January 2017³, found that in 2015 and 2016 the program created 34,204 jobs directly in the film and television industry with aggregate wages of \$2 billion. This credit generated an additional 36,603 jobs indirectly due to the increased spending in the state, with wages for these jobs coming out to \$2.2 billion, as seen in the table below⁴.

Table 1: Production & Post Production Credit - Total Economic Impact on New York State (2015 & 2016)			
	Direct	Indirect	Total
Jobs	34,209	36,603	70,812
Earnings	\$2,001,312,675	\$2,221,457,070	\$4,222,769,745
Spending	\$6,543,232,139	\$6,043,058,760	\$12,586,290,898

Source: Empire State Development, EMSI, Camoin Associates

The program has helped ensure that New York is the second largest hub for the film and television industry in the United States after California in terms of employment and wages. According to the latest figures by the MPAA⁵, New York had a total of 89,920 direct jobs in the industry, of which 53,630 were involved in production-related jobs. These jobs created a total of \$10.2 billion in wages in New York. Jobs in the film industry tend to be skilled, well-paying, and unionized. Most of the employment in this industry here in New York is centered in and around New York City.

Major studios in New York City such as Broadway Stages, Silvercup, Steiner, and Kaufman have been expanding their facilities in the outer boroughs, with brand new stages set for The Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens⁶ and new facilities contemplated for Staten Island. According to testimony given earlier this year by Julie Menin, the Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, the 2015-16 television season saw 52 prime time television series produced in New York City⁷, an increase of 13% over the previous television season. In addition, seven more shows moved to film in New York City for the television season filming in February.

The continuing strength of the film and television industry here gives New York the ability to make a significant impact in this industry through its practices. Implementing policies in New York aimed

³ Economic Impact of the Film Industry in New York State - 2015 & 2016, January 2017. Available at: https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/news-articles/2017_CamoinAssociates_FilmTaxCreditReport.pdf

⁴ Ibid, pg. 11.

⁵ Robb, David, "MPAA: U.S. Film & TV Industry Generates \$121 Billion in Wages", *Deadline.com* (Sept. 2, 2016), available at: <http://deadline.com/2016/09/mpaa-u-s-film-tv-industry-generates-121-billion-in-wages-1201812945/>

⁶ Economic Impact of the Film Industry in New York State - 2015 & 2016, pg. 17.

⁷ Souccar, Miriam Kreinin, "Homeland, Quantico are among the seven TV shows that are new to New York", *Crain's New York Business* (Feb. 7, 2017), available at: <http://www.crainsnewyork.com/article/20170207/ENTERTAINMENT/170209900/city-reports-seven-more-tv-series-filming-in-nyc-this-season-including-quantico-and-homeland>

at increasing opportunities for minority and women writers and directors would reverberate throughout the whole industry.

Issues of Diversity in the Film and Television Industry:

As the population of the United States as a whole, and New York in particular, continues to become more ethnically and racially diverse, we should see this reflected in the workforce if opportunities for entering it are equal to all. Unfortunately, this is not the case – disparities in the number of individuals from different racial and ethnic groups employed in different industries, and the wage differences between these industries, point to a situation in which members of ethnic and racial minorities are under-represented in many high wage industries while being over-represented in lower wage industries. Since the 1960s the gender makeup of the workforce has also changed dramatically as women have entered all facets of the workforce, but we still see significant disparities in the gender breakdown in a number of industries, with women under-represented in many high wage industries and over-represented in low wage industries. There is also an intersectional issue, with women from minority groups being the most under-represented group in a number of high wage industries.

Several reports from both academic and trade organizations show that the film and television industries have a workforce that does not yet reflect the face of the United States or New York. Women and minority individuals remain under-represented in many creative positions. The Randolph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at the University of California Los Angeles has issued reports on diversity in the film and television industry for a number of years. Their latest report⁸ examined diversity in a number of different positions and includes detailed data on the 2014-15 television season filmed across the United States. This report found that New York was consistently the second most important filming location for a variety of television programs, not only for broadcast and for cable shows, but also for new digital series⁹. Digital series refers to programing broadcast by networks that are purely internet-based, with the best-known examples being Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Prime.

Diversity Issues for Television Writers

According to that report, the 2014-15 season saw increases in the percentage of television writers from minority groups. For broadcast network television shows, minority writers made up 13.4% of the credited writers, up from 9.7% for the previous television season¹⁰, but given that nearly 40% of the U.S. population is minority, this still represents significant underrepresentation. Female writers got 35.9% of the writing credits for broadcast shows during the same time, which was up from 32.5% in the previous season¹¹. Given that the population nearly split even in the U.S. between men and women, it is clear that women writers remain underrepresented in television. As it turns out, broadcast network shows had the most diverse writers' rooms in both the 2013-14 and 2014-15 seasons. Cable scripted shows did not perform as well. According to the report, only 10.6%, up from

⁸ The Randolph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at UCLA, [2017 Hollywood Diversity Report: Setting the Record Straight](http://www.bunchecenter.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/2017-Hollywood-Diversity-Report-2-21-17.pdf), February 2017, available at: <http://www.bunchecenter.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/2017-Hollywood-Diversity-Report-2-21-17.pdf>

⁹ Ibid, pg. 9.

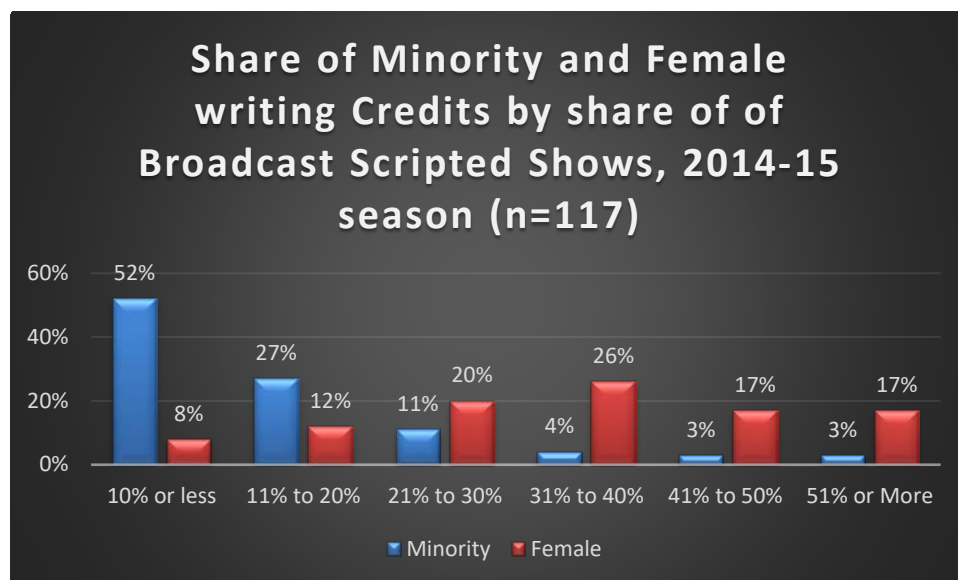
¹⁰ Ibid, pg. 31

¹¹ Ibid. pg. 33.

9.1% in the previous season¹², and the share of female writers for cable shows was 30.6%, up from 27.6% in the previous season¹³. Shows created for digital platforms, which is the newest sector of the industry and the fastest growing, were very similar to cable programming in terms of diversity. The share of minority writers for digital series was 10.8%, up from 8.8% in the previous television season¹⁴, and the share of female writers was 27.3%, down from the previous television season, in which women had gotten 28.1% of the credited writing positions¹⁵.

The following graphs, utilizing the data from the Bunche Center report, breaks down the diversity of writers' rooms for the various types of network shows. Of all the television shows examined by this report during the 2014-15 season, minority writers made up only 10% or less of the writing staff for a majority of shows, regardless of who broadcast them. Again, broadcast networks had the most diverse writing casts in terms of minority breakdown, while digital shows trailed, with only one-quarter of their staff represented by minorities. At the same time, cable broadcasts had the largest number of writing staffs in which minority writers made up 51% or more percent of the members, with 5% of shows having such staffs, as the following graphs show.

The general gender breakup of writing crews was more evenly spread. For broadcast network shows, a larger percentage has a majority female writing staff (17%) than had a writing staff with 10% or less of it being female (8%). For digital platform shows on the other hand, the percentage with a writing staff that was 10% or less female (35%) was much larger than the number of shows with a majority female writing staff (13%).

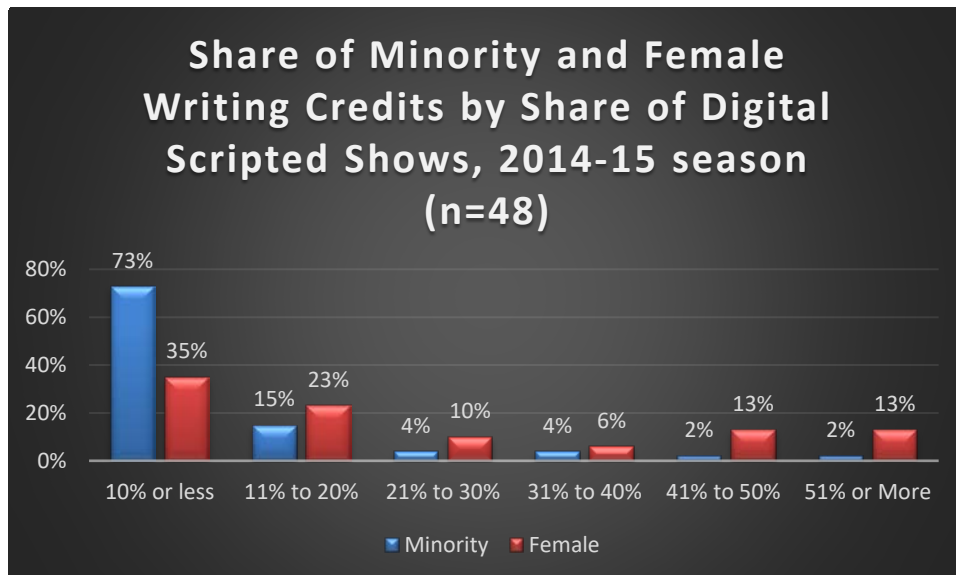
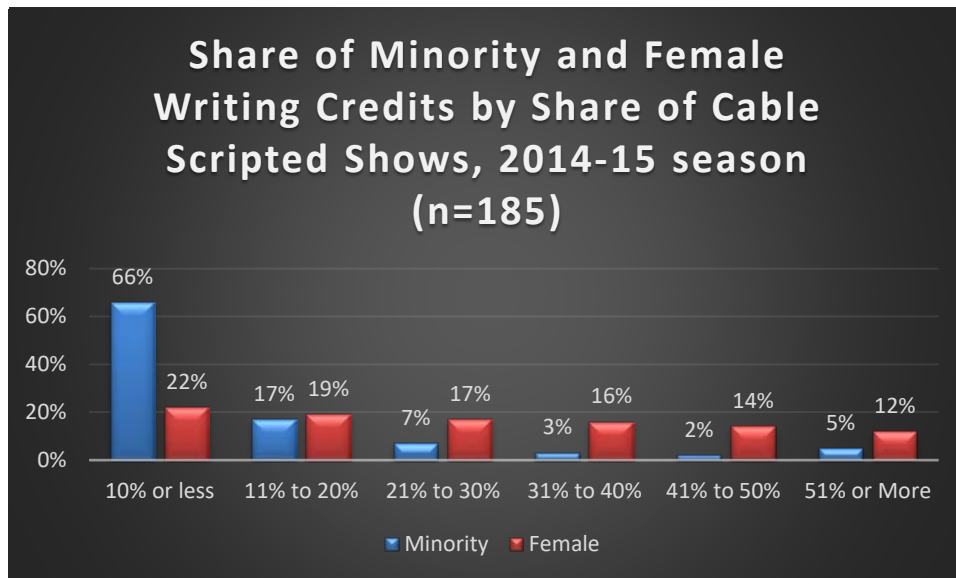


¹² Ibid, pg.32

¹³ Ibid, pg. 33.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid, pg.34.

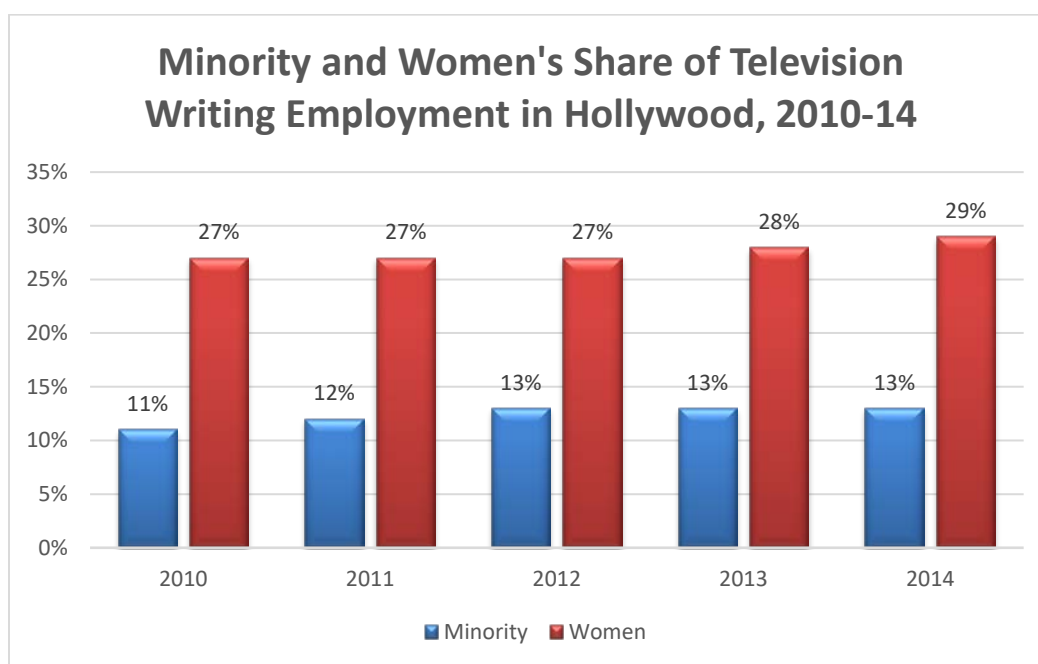


A report commissioned by the Writers Guild of America, West¹⁶ shows that the disparity in employment opportunities decreased, but very slowly. According to this report, between 2010 and 2014, the share of minority Writers Guild, West members employed by the television industry climbed from 11% in 2010 to 13% in 2014. This minor improvement still leaves minority writers grossly underrepresented. The report also shows that there is a persistent wage gap between minority television writers and their colleagues. Minority television writers earned 80 cents for every dollar that a Caucasian male television writer earned in 2014, virtually unchanged from 2012, when a minority writer earned 79 cents on the dollar¹⁷. The same report showed that the female share of television writers had increased very slightly as well, with female writers making up 27% of television writers in 2010 and 29% by 2014. Women television writers also suffer from a wage gap,

¹⁶ Hunt, Darnell M., Ph.D. The 2016 Hollywood Writers Report: Renaissance in Reverse?, March 2016. Executive summary available at: http://www.wga.org/uploadedFiles/who_we_are/hwr16execsum.pdf

¹⁷ Ibid., pg. 5.

though this gap is narrower than that faced by minority writers. Between 2012 and 2014, women television writers went from earning 91 cents on the dollar that their white male counterparts earned to 93 cents on the dollar¹⁸. The Writers Guild of America, East (WGAE), which represents individuals who write for television in the New York area, provided us with their own internal figures regarding the diversity of television writing staffs. WGAE explained that the only way an individual can become a member of the Guild is to be hired by a participating signatory company, so that membership in the Writers Guild is representative of the general hiring practices of the industry. In the past five years, 27% of the members hired to write scripts for television were female, and 14% were minority members. These numbers are in line with the figures from the Writers Guild, West report and the Bunche Center report.



Diversity Issues for Television Directors

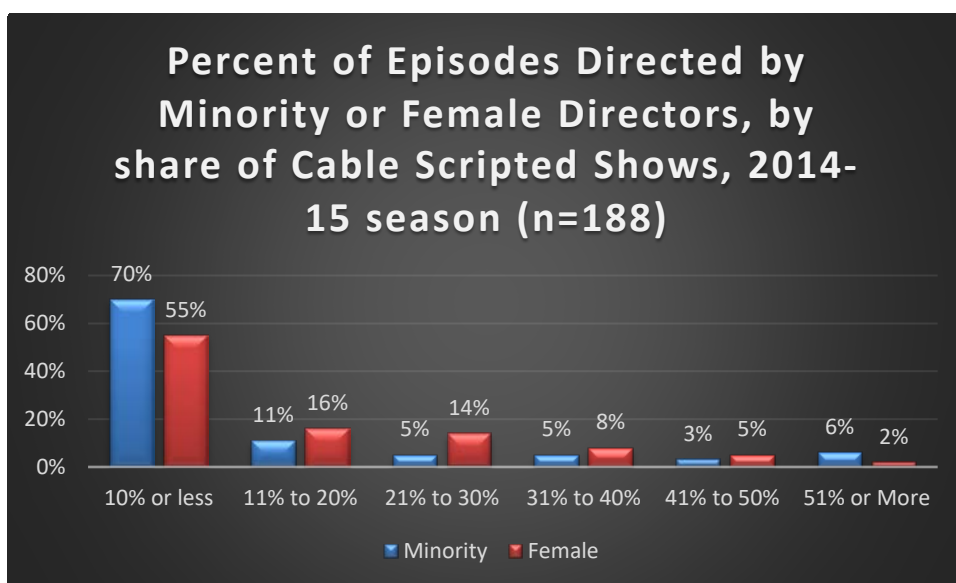
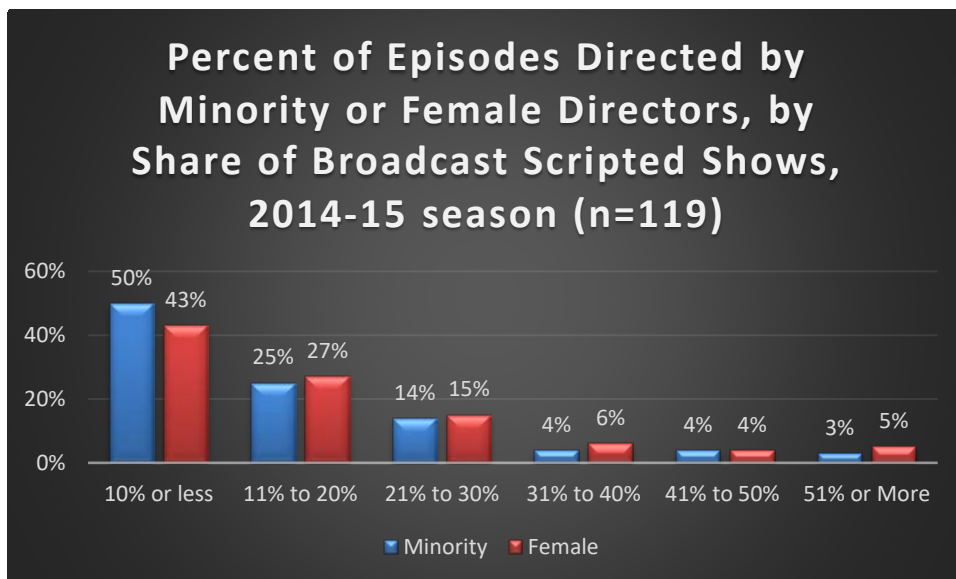
Women and minority television directors also face issues of poor representation in their field. In terms of the percentage of television episodes directed by minority directors, the differences in percentages between broadcast, cable, and digital shows was lower than differences seen in the share of writing credits. Unfortunately, all three sectors displayed a significant disparity when it came to the share of episodes directed by minority directors. In the 2014-15 television season minority directors oversaw 13.9% of broadcast episodes, 13.4% of cable episodes, and 12% of digital episodes.¹⁹ The differences between the different sectors were more pronounced when looking at how many episodes were directed by female directors. Broadcast television was again the most diverse, while digital broadcasts were the least diverse when it came to the share of episodes directed by women. In the 2014-15 season female directors managed 17.1% of broadcast episodes, 12.4% of cable episodes, and 9.1% of digital episodes.²⁰

¹⁸ Ibid., pg. 2

¹⁹ Bunche report, pgs. 34-35

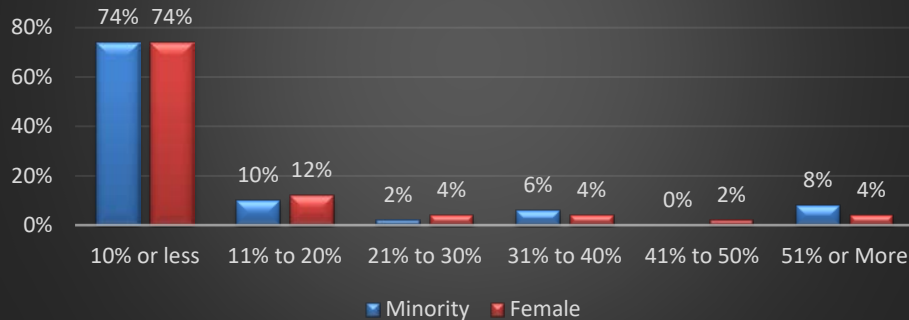
²⁰ Ibid., pg. 37.

The bulk of television series had 20% or less of their episodes directed by minority directors, with broadcast network shows again proving more diverse than cable or digital network shows, similar to the narrow set of opportunities seen for minority TV writers. Whereas female writing credits were significantly more evenly spread out than minority writing credits, the share of episodes directed by women by the share of shows reveal that opportunities for female directors were clustered in a smaller share of shows, much like opportunities for minority directors. Broadcast television again provided the most opportunities²¹.



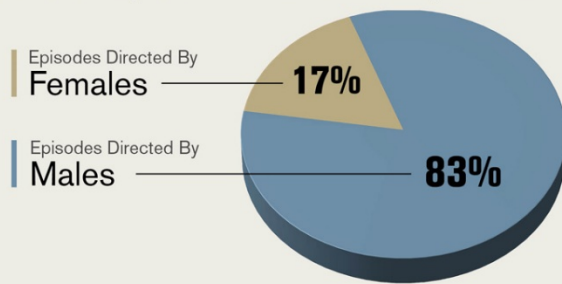
²¹ Ibid, pgs. 36 – 38.

Percentage of Episodes Directed by Minority or Female Directors, by share of Digital Scripted Shows, 2014-15 season (n=49)



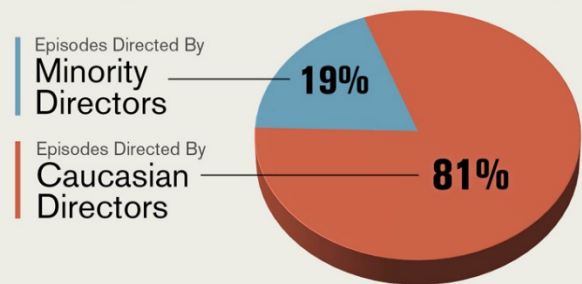
For years, the Directors Guild of America has been publishing an annual Episodic Television Director Diversity Report. The latest report, on the 2015-16 season, released in September 2016,²² showed that Caucasian males directed just over two-thirds of all television episodes shown that year. Minority males directed 16%, Caucasian females directed 14% and minority female directors supervised just 3% of television episodes that year. These numbers represented minor improvements or no changes over the findings of the 2014-15 season by the DGA, in which Caucasian males directed 69% of episodes, minority males directed 15%, Caucasian females directed 13%, and minority females directed 3%²³. The following graphs from the 2016 report illustrate the continuing lack of equal opportunities for minority and female directors:

2015-16 Episodic TV Directors by Gender



*figures rounded to the nearest percentage

2015-16 Episodic TV Directors by Ethnicity



*figures rounded to the nearest percentage

²²Director's Guild of America Press release: [DGA 2015-16 Episodic Television Diversity Report](https://www.dga.org/News/PressReleases/2016/160912-Episodic-Television-Director-Diversity-Report.aspx), September 12, 2016. Available at: <https://www.dga.org/News/PressReleases/2016/160912-Episodic-Television-Director-Diversity-Report.aspx>

²³ Director's Guild of America Press release: [DGA TV Diversity Report: Employer Hiring of Women Directors Shows Modest Improvement; Women and Minorities Continue to be Excluded In First-Time Hiring](https://www.dga.org/News/PressReleases/2015/150825-Episodic-Director-Diversity-Report.aspx), August 15, 2015. Available at: <https://www.dga.org/News/PressReleases/2015/150825-Episodic-Director-Diversity-Report.aspx>

The DGA reports include detailed lists of the percentage of episodes directed by minority and female directors by television series. To find out whether shows filmed in New York had a better or worse record of accomplishment, we examined a set of 22 television series whose entire production could be confirmed to have occurred in New York State. These 22 television shows includes a mix of broadcast network, cable network, and digital network shows. In the 2015-16 season, 328 episodes were filmed.

Directed by	Number of Episodes	Percentage of Total Episodes
Directed by a male Caucasian	229	70%
Directed by a male minority	35	11%
Directed by a female Caucasian	53	16%
Directed by a female minority	14	4%
Directed by a female or Minority	102	31%
Total Episodes Filmed	328	100%

As the preceding table shows, series produced in New York overall suffered from the same diversity issues seen in the television industry as a whole, with the numbers of this smaller New York specific subset being slightly worse than the industry whole numbers.

The DGA report also examined the differences in opportunities available for minority and female directors by distribution platform. The study found that broadcast networks hired the most female directors, with 20% of the directors they hired being female, and came in second in hiring minority directors, with 19% of the directors hired being minority directors. The report by the DGA broke up the cable category into basic cable and premium cable categories (premium cable encompassing those special subscription only channels), and found that basic cable hired the most minority directors, though this was driven by the work of a single minority director, Tyler Perry²⁴. Cable and digital platforms were less likely to hire female directors than broadcast networks and premium cable and digital platforms performed poorly in hiring minority directors. These findings by the DGA report are in line with those of the Bunche Center report. These findings also help explain the lower diversity level found in the New York specific subset analyzed by staff, as the majority of the shows filmed entirely in New York that were examined were produced for distribution on cable or digital platforms (14 of 22) as opposed to a broadcast network (8 of 22).

The Importance of Diversity Behind the Camera:

Television is now central to how our culture portrays itself. Successful television shows not only provide material for water-cooler discussions, but a window into aspects of our own country and culture. This ability to construct the mental picture that others are going to have about a place or time gives the creators of television series great influence in how the public will perceive and remember a culture, a place, or a time. For example, for many people television created their image

²⁴ [DGA 2015-16 Episodic Television Diversity Report](#).

of New York City Back in the 1990's shows like *Seinfeld*, *Law & Order*, or *Law and Order: SVU* that were set in New York City painted the image of the city for those who never visited it. Today shows like *Girls*, *Empire*, and *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* serve the same function.

The power of television to create the mental image of a group, culture or a place means that it is often very easy to distort people's perceptions with a biased, stilted, or incomplete telling of the real stories that come from that group, culture or place. While it is not impossible for an outsider to tell the stories in a respectful and honest manner, it is difficult because any outsider by definition is missing some of the commonly held assumptions formed within any group. This means that they might have never noticed that their take on a situation is actually different from that formed by the members of the group whose story they want to tell.

Writers and directors are empowered to frame the stories told on television. Writers create the overall narrative through the script for the episode and by choosing the backgrounds of the characters portrayed. Given that television is a visual medium, the way in which the actions of the characters are framed visually also plays a key role in the way the story is told, and this is the job of the directors. This means that having writers and directors who are cognizant of and conversant in the specific assumptions, norms, and expectations of the group depicted will make the story told more authentic and true to the group's experiences. As our country becomes more diverse, it becomes critical that the stories of all the various populations of this state and this country be told in an honest and authentic manner.

The Bunche Center report examined the relative success of shows based on how well they actually depict the more diverse nature of our country. The report examined the median ratings for 127 different scripted broadcast network shows broken down by demographic category based on how diverse the overall cast was²⁵, and in doing so found that overall, increases in diversity meant higher median ratings. The Bunche Center found that the highest median ratings for African American, Caucasian and Latino households were for shows where over 50% of the cast was comprised of minority cast members. For Asian-American households and for the prime demographic (18 to 49-year-olds), the highest median ratings were found for shows in which 41 to 50% of the cast was minority. The data shows that audiences respond positively to television shows that reflect the diverse picture of our society.

Studies show that there is a correlation between diversity behind the camera and diversity in front of it. Shows with more diverse casts, like *Empire*, *Being Mary Jane*, and *Fresh off the Boat* also have writing and directing staffs that are among the more diverse in the industry. A study by the Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film at San Diego State University²⁶ that examined the opportunities presented to women in the 2015-16 televisions series found that series with more women in key creative positions increased, so did the representation of women in front of the screen. According to the report²⁷, a show with a female in the creator role increased the percentage of speaking roles for women from 36% to 45%. Women comprised 29% of the writing staffs of shows with at least one female executive producer, while only making up 15% of the

²⁵ Bunche Center Report, pgs. 67-68

²⁶ Lauzen, Martha, M. Dr., Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film, San Diego State University. Boxed In 2015-16: Women On Screen and Behind the Scenes in Television, September 2016, available at: <http://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/files/2015-16-Boxed-In-Report.pdf>

²⁷ Boxed in 2015-16, pg. 16.

writing staffs of shows with no female executive producers. Getting roles as writers and directors give individuals the opportunity to advance in the television industry and eventually become creators of their own shows, or executive producers in future productions. Creating a pipeline of female and minority talent is critical to end the disparities in diversity we see in the television industry. The only way to begin creating this pipeline is by making entry into the television industry easier.

Members of the Writers Guild of America, East provided testimony on the difficulty of entering the television industry and the importance of diversifying television writing rooms:

I recently told my kids that I got a new job and my 9-year-old daughter burst out crying, saying, "You don't have to go back to LA, do you?" I was happy to tell her that I've been lucky enough to land a job at one of the few writers' rooms in New York. Last year, I spent much of my time in Los Angeles writing for Here, Now, a new HBO drama starring Tim Robbins and Holly Hunter. It was a dream job but it was 2,700 miles away from my family.

The New York area has some of the best dramatic writing programs in the country. Playwriting schools like Juilliard where I am an alum are producing in-demand TV-writers that would prefer to remain in New York. If more writing rooms opened here, they would attract exciting NYC based talent and increased production, as well.

Television shows begin shooting the first episodes of a season while the writers are still figuring out what happens at the end of the season. This means it's advantageous for the stages to be near the writers' room so that the showrunner can go back and forth between the actors and the writers. Thus, when you create an incentive for more writers' rooms in NYC, you create jobs for actors, directors and crew, as well.

Tanya Barfield

Of all the writers' rooms that I've been privy to, Law & Order, Nurse Jackie, Treme, Bosch, only the latter two shows had writers of color; Treme had Lolis Eric Elie and Bosch had myself. Other than those two examples the writers rooms were all lily white.

So for decades, monochromatic writers have been writing about people of color with many of them getting that experience wrong. We have qualified women and men of color in the film and television industry, professionals who can better write this experience, having lived it.

Having said that, writers of color are also capable enough to write outside of their particular ethnicities and genders as our predecessors have done since the first films and television shows screened and aired.

Joe Gonzalez

As the first African American female writer for Sesame Street in its nearly 50 year history, I can't stress to you enough how important this bill is. Yup, you read that right. I'm the first and only black female writer for Sesame Street, one of the most progressive and ground breaking shows in television history. Which just goes to show that even with the best of intentions and a socially progressive agenda, women and people of color have still been left out of the room. This is because television shows are generally staffed from pretty exclusive communities, that have historically been solely white and male. That's not an opinion, that's a fact backed by some pretty grim statistics. This tax credit would be the first of its kind, and doesn't necessarily get us in the room, it just helps give women and people of color access to the door. Also, it would incentivize creating writing rooms (and thus keeping more productions) in New York, which is good for everyone.

Let's make New York a leader in affecting actual positive change and creating more TV and film opportunities for all of us.

Geri Cole

I am the first and ONLY black female head writer in the history of late night comedy. Currently, there are only four black women writers in my entire genre, out of nearly 200 writers. The industry is closed to women and people of color in so many ways simply because people mostly hire who they know. And if you didn't go to Harvard like the majority of these writers did, you just don't have the connections to break in. It's honestly a secret society in many ways. This bill would open up opportunities for equally qualified and talented women and people of color to simply get interviews for jobs from which they are currently entirely shut out. We just want an equal chance to be considered. It's about access, not training or favors. Thanks so much for your support!

Robin Thede, creator and host of BET's upcoming *The Rundown With Robin Thede* and former head writer/correspondent for *The Nightly Show With Larry Wilmore*.

The Television Writers' and Directors' Fees and Salaries Credit

Senator Alcántara's bill, S.4999-D, amends New York's tax law to create the Television Writers' and Directors' Fees and Salaries Credit. The credit can be claimed by any television production that meets the requirements to qualify for the New York State Film Tax Credit. The credit will cover salary and fees paid for employing eligible writers or directors. For costs to be eligible the individual hired must be a woman or a member of a minority community as defined in New York's executive law and they cannot be a profit participant in the television production. This means that salaries or fees paid to anyone that is contractually owed a percentage of the profits (this does not include residual income negotiated by a bargaining unit) are not eligible for this credit. The purpose of this exclusion is to ensure that this credit is helping people trying to break into the industry.

To be an eligible writer, an individual must be responsible for writing or revising scripts, screenplays, teleplays, dialogue, etc., and they have to report to the writers' room. A maximum credit of \$50,000 can be claimed for the salary or fee expenses for hiring a writer who is given a writing credit for an episode. The maximum allowed credit for any one individual credited writer hired by a single production during the entire season is \$150,000. A maximum credit of \$75,000

per season can be claimed for salaries or fees paid to any individual who is hired as an uncredited writer on a series. A maximum credit of \$50,000 can be claimed for an eligible director per episode, and this is capped at a maximum of \$150,000 per individual for a season.

The entire value of the credits is capped at \$5 million per tax year, with eligibility for credits determined by date of filing if the demand exceeds this allowed amount. Any production that filed later and thus is denied the credit would have their application carried forward to the following tax year. Eligible productions would be able to start claiming the credit for eligible expenses incurred starting in tax year 2018.

In order to monitor the effectiveness of this program and to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being safeguarded, this legislation includes strong reporting requirements. Empire State Development (ESD), which is responsible for running the New York State Film Tax Credit, would have to submit an annual report to the Executive and legislative leaders that includes information on the utilization of the credit, as well as the impact the credit on the state labor force and its economy. ESD would also be able to make recommendations on the implementation of the credit program.

Conclusion:

Thanks to the New York State Film Tax Credit, New York is gaining strength as a major hub of the television production industry. The increased importance of New York as a center of television production gives the state the opportunity to enact policies that can make a difference in the practices of this industry. As the data highlighted in this report shows, there is a serious problem of diversity in key creative professions in television.

Writers and directors are central to which stories television series tell. In turn, these stories shape people's perceptions of the world around them. As New York and the United States become more diverse, it becomes more important than ever to ensure that all groups in this country can tell their stories in an authentic manner. Ensuring that the talent behind the television camera is as diverse as New York and the United States is critical to achieving this goal. Unfortunately, the television industry has a long way to go before achieving this.

Senator Marisol Alcántara, along with Senator Jeffrey D. Klein and all members of the IDC, want to help achieve this goal by creating an incentive for the hiring of women and minority television writers and directors. This new Television Writers' and Directors' Fees and Salaries Credit would make \$5 million a year in credits available for New York television productions that diversify their behind the camera talent by hiring more women and minority writers and directors. Increasing opportunities for women and minority writers and directors now will create an industry in which, in the long term, everyone will have an opportunity to tell their story based on their talent, and not their background.

The Legislature passed the Television Writers' and Directors' Fees and Salaries Credit in June of this year. The IDC calls on the Executive to sign S.4999-D (A. 7270-C) into law and to ensure the funds are available, so that we can ensure that all of New York's stories have a chance to be told.