

# *WOMEN IN AUSTRALIAN FILM PRODUCTION*

**Penny Ryan ■**

**■ Margaret Eliot ■**

**■ Gil Appleton**

**WOMEN'S FILM FUND**

**AUSTRALIAN FILM AND TELEVISION SCHOOL**

CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS DE LA MUJER  
FACULTAD DE PSICOLOGIA  
U. N. A. M. Adg 570

Published jointly by the Women's Film Fund of the  
Australian Film Commission, and the Research and Survey  
Unit, Australian Film and Television School, November 1983

Cover design by Jan MacKay

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Commission, 8 West Street, North Sydney, 2060; and  
the Australian Film and Television School,  
P.O. Box 126, North Ryde, 2113.

ISBN 0 642 92549 6

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permission of the Women's Film Fund of the Australian Film Commission;  
or the Australian Film and Television School.



The mammoth task of designing and supervising the survey upon which **Women in Australian Film Production** is based was undertaken by Penny Ryan. Margaret Eliot wrote-up Parts A, B and C. Part D was compiled by Gil Appleton who also edited the study.

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# PART A

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. RATIONALE FOR THE RESEARCH

This survey has its origins in demands made on the Women's Film Fund by women in the Australian film community for assistance in developing the range of skills necessary for making films. In response to these demands the Women's Film Fund began discussions with the Australian Film and Television School (AFTS) about providing the kind of training in filmmaking women seemed to want.

The main obstacle to devising suitable courses was the dearth of concrete information about the experience of, and opportunities for, women in the Australian film industry over the past decade.

So the Women's Film Fund, in conjunction with the AFTS, decided to carry out research into the position of women in the film industry in Australia. The research was in two complementary phases:

1. The circulation of a detailed questionnaire to as many women with current or past film experience as could be located.
2. The analysis of the production information on all feature films listed in **Cinema Papers** between 1974 and 1982 in terms of film type and the numbers of women listed in the film crews and in what capacity they worked.

The main focus of the questionnaire was on independent and feature film production rather than on television, sponsored or

advertising film production. This was a decision made when defining the scope of this survey, partly on practical grounds and partly on the knowledge that work in the film industry is largely on a freelance basis resulting in considerable interchange between independent, feature and commercial film production — as proved to be the case. (It should also be pointed out that the emphasis in the survey report is on filmmaking, not **film distribution** — as one respondent forcefully pointed out, the survey did not cater adequately for the experience of film distribution workers and so their experience is under-represented in the report.)

By contrast with the survey, the second phase of the study — the analysis of film crew lists — focuses entirely on feature film. This is because there is no comprehensive source of crew lists for independent films: **Cinema Papers** publishes some details of independent productions but it does not — and could not, given the volume of production — present the whole picture. Feature film production on the other hand is very fully covered in **Cinema Papers**.

The report is in four parts:

- A. Introduction:
  - Rationale for the Research
  - Broad Conclusions
  - Methodology
- B. Survey of Women in Film Production
- C. Data on Feature Film: Analysis of Crew Lists
- D. Appendices

## 2. BROAD CONCLUSIONS

Women's experience in the film industry needs to be seen, of course, in the context of the nature of work in that industry which affects all those aspiring to work in film, both women and men.

Work is largely on a freelance basis (staff jobs with security of pay and tenure are not the norm) with all the uncertainty of income and irregularity of work that represents. When work is secured on a project, there are still the daily realities of film industry working conditions to be dealt with: relatively short periods of intense work activity with long and irregular working hours, the pressure of maintaining a tight schedule, the problems of working on location.

Even so, there are many — and surely just as many women as men — who want to express their talents and use their skills (of whatever kind) in making a living from making films. Yet there is a distinct imbalance between the numbers of women and the numbers of men working in film, in all areas and at all levels: a clear indication that women are facing difficulties particular to them as women in securing work for themselves in film. Moreover, there is

a strong argument that the generation of such an important cultural product as film should be influenced by the participation of women at all levels and in a proportion which reflects their membership of the community generally.

Our analysis of the crew lists for Australian feature films over a nine-year period provided strong evidence of the smaller number of women overall compared to men working in the 'mainstream' industry, and of the serious under-representation of women in higher level jobs — particularly 'creative' jobs, and in key technical areas such as camera, sound and lighting: women were concentrated in traditional 'women's' jobs such as continuity and makeup, and in support-level jobs with low status and little or no responsibility.

The survey of individual women in film confirmed this general pattern, and as well provided interesting qualitative material about the special obstacles faced by women wanting to work in film. The findings of the survey can be grouped into two broad areas of experience in film work:

1. Getting in: beginning work in film, gaining a foothold, and
2. Staying in: securing that foothold and making a living.

### **Getting in**

A first job in film is not easy to obtain. There is no smooth, ticketed ride from film school to film crew.

It is clear that most women depend on contacts for their start in film — contacts that are either based on friendships or developed in a job which opened up possibilities of working in film. This may be par for the course in the film industry, but it is a process that is weighted against women. Networks of contact and influence are more widely established, more commonly accepted and more familiarly used by men than by women, although women in the film industry do seem to be creating some networks (however small and tenuous) which work to the advantage of women. The existence of such forms of organization as the Women's Film Fund and the recently established Women in Film and Television groups can only encourage and foster these networks.

There is the possibility of creating work by developing one's own projects, but this is not easy if one lacks the experience and credibility crucial to financing the project. A woman may find that while she gains experience and raises her aspirations, the necessarily modest scope of the project does nothing to establish her credibility or enhance her prospects of getting work in the mainstream industry in the future.

For a woman lacking contacts or openings through a job or a self-generated project, the only alternative in a largely freelance job market is to have the confidence and determination to 'sell' herself,

to 'hustle' her skills. In such situations it is often difficult for women to judge when self-assurance and determination may be rated as 'pushiness' or 'aggression', and for a woman lacking in confidence and needing experience to gain it, the difficulties of self-promotion may be insuperable.

Women also have to face restrictions in the range of work available (or regarded as available) to women. The pressures of conditioning will already have steered most of them towards acquiring skills that are considered 'more suitable' for women, and these skills are unlikely to be of a kind fitting women for work in technical areas. Only a small minority of women work in these areas, and it is a matter for concern that women express little interest in them. Unskilled jobs (such as runner and assistant gaffer) which involve lifting, carrying etc, are most often given to young men, yet these are the jobs which often lead to more responsible crew positions and promotion. Clearly, we need more female role models in technical areas along with encouragement for women to undertake technical training. Without some opening up of the opportunities for women, they will continue to cluster in certain jobs and thus have to deal with consequent problems of oversupply and stiff competition.

### **Staying in**

Many women do manage to overcome the difficulties of getting a start in film, and are able to gain a foothold. But having done so, they find that many of the difficulties outlined above will recur and that additional problems will have to be confronted as they try to secure that foothold.

There is the problem of moving beyond the confines of the role first assigned to them. The great majority of the women in our survey were in jobs of a 'support' nature: that is, lower status, lower paid jobs with a low level of responsibility. With lack of confidence and lack of encouragement, it is difficult to find the motivation for moving ahead, though many of the women aspired to jobs with more responsibility and control.

Some women feel that they have to work much harder and longer than men, be more highly skilled and maintain consistently higher quality output in order to gain the same degree of credibility, prestige and reputation as men in comparable situations. Others feel that skills developed in one area of filmmaking (eg independent film) are not as readily portable for women as for men and that reflects again the problem women frequently have in establishing credibility.

In a workforce in which they are a minority, women find themselves working in situations which are dominated by male values and practices, and involved in creating predominantly male representations of reality. Some women find it takes a great deal of

time, patience and persistence to develop what they consider are acceptable working relations with largely male film crews.

Significantly, 28% of the women surveyed were no longer working in the industry. The most commonly stated reason for dropping out amongst this group was 'lack of opportunity to develop'. Over 80% of these women wanted to return to the industry.

One of the most important findings of our survey relates to the problems faced by women attempting to combine film work with responsibility for children. A very high proportion of the women currently working in film (80%) did not have responsibility for children. Their comments indicated that many have made a conscious choice not to have children, or have deferred pregnancy, because of the difficulties of combining film work with child rearing. There are two aspects to this:

1. **Estimations of the work capacity of women with children:** women with children in care appear to be generally regarded as non-starters for film work, either because they could only be involved in 'spare time' filmmaking and therefore couldn't be taken seriously, or because care of the children automatically rules out availability for required work and location schedules.
2. **Difficulties related to working conditions:** many women with children in care did find that lack of provision for child care combined with irregular working hours and the demands of being on location made it extremely difficult or impossible to combine care for children with work in film.

Of the women who had left the industry, one fifth gave 'responsibility for children' as their reason for doing so. Women without children discounted any idea of combining the two roles — they were prepared not to have children at all, or to give up working in films if they did have children.

That such a stark choice is seen as inescapable is an indication that prevailing work conditions in the film industry (in common with many other areas of work) have been and still are created by those who have not had to make such a choice.

## **Training**

A major objective of this study was to identify training needs. In summary, the key findings in this area were:

- A majority (61%) of the women surveyed had done some kind of training course in film, the most common being one of the AFTS Open Program courses.
- Younger women tended to be better qualified in terms of formal education/training. Nearly 80% of those under 25

had done film courses and two thirds of those who had been in the industry for a relatively short period (2-4 years) had tertiary qualifications.

- The most favoured kinds of training were attachments/traineeships, followed by specific skills workshops.
- Support for women-only workshops was not overwhelming.
- The area where training was most needed was the technical area.

### **To sum up**

Women will be beset by some combinations of the difficulties we have mentioned at some stage of their working lives in film. It is a tribute to the ingenuity, strength of purpose and persistence of women that the percentage of women currently working in the film industry is not smaller.

The Australian film industry has burgeoned over the last decade and its products have won international acclaim. It is therefore a matter for concern that it employs few women in key positions and that as a result, the viewpoint that it presents is most often a male one. Many more women would be working in the industry if they could, and certainly more will try to break into film in the future. The obstacles which now face them must be removed. The Australian industry and the culture it reflects and shapes can only be enriched by the contribution of women's talents and skills at all levels.

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

### **Phase 1: The Questionnaire**

The survey took the form of a detailed questionnaire called 'Women in Australian Film Production Survey'. The questionnaire sought a wide range of information (living situations, training, work experience, aspirations) from women who were currently working in film or had at one time done so.

The survey was put through three drafts and tested on a pilot sample of ten respondents before the final form was sent out. (See Appendix 1: Questionnaire)

The names of 1200 women involved with filmmaking were drawn from **Cinema Papers** crew lists and from the files of the Women's



Film Fund, the Sydney Filmmakers' Co-op and the Australian Film Commission (AFC) and an alphabetized list of names was sent to the AFC contact in each State, and names were sought from State film corporations, AFTS, Film Australia, the Sydney Filmmakers' Co-op, and Swinburne College. The main TV production houses such as Crawfords were also approached for names of women film workers. Addresses were found for 806 names in this way and all were sent:

1. A letter outlining the reasons for the survey;
2. The questionnaire;
3. A form inviting women to register their names with a proposed 'Women Film Workers Register'.

The distribution of the questionnaires by State (in August, 1981) was as follows:<sup>1</sup>

Northern Territory	3
Australian Capital Territory	5
Western Australia	46
South Australia	68
Queensland	24
Tasmania	32
Victoria	125
New South Wales	462

Of the 806 questionnaires sent, 100 were returned as being unknown at that address. Second letters and questionnaires were sent to all of the remaining 706 who had not replied and finally 406 replies were received — a very high response rate of 58%, providing a more than adequate basis for conclusions about the nature of women's experience in the film industry.

All information (except that given in open-ended questions) was computerized and exhaustively cross-tabulated to reveal significant correlations. All replies to open-ended questions have been summarized and grouped into main themes, with excerpts being used as illustrative quotes in the text of the report.

## **Phase 2: Analysis of feature film crews**

The names of all crew members, the features on which they worked and the position they filled were drawn from issues of **Cinema Papers** (1974-1982) and fed into the AFTS computer.

The task of analysing this data proved to be somewhat formidable as a result of the lack of any uniformity in nomenclature for crew positions. For example, the same function on three different

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1. The above list totals 765 — a further 41 addresses were located at a late stage and were not included in the State distribution.

feature films might be variously described as 'Photography', 'Director of Photography' and 'Camera'. It was therefore necessary to reduce the original list of job classifications (which totalled 432) to a more practical list which was, as far as possible, comparable with the classifications used in the survey phase.

This was done and the resulting more cogent data was organized into lengthy tables providing breakdowns by job classification and gender.

## PART B

# SURVEY OF WOMEN IN FILM PRODUCTION; RESULTS

## 1. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The sample profile is drawn from the whole sample, including women no longer working in film, and indicates age; place of residence; degree of responsibility for children; level of education.

### 1.1 Age

**Table 1 Age**

Age	%
Under 20 years	3.5
21-25 years	18.3
26-30 years	26.8
31-35 years	24.8
36-40 years	11.8
41-50 years	10.5
50+ years	4.3
Total no. = 399	

Of interest here is that women aged between 26 and 35 made up slightly more than half (51.5%) of the sample, and that more than a quarter were aged 36 or over.

### 1.2 Place of residence

Almost two thirds (62.8%) of the women lived in New South Wales, the next largest group in Victoria (14.5%) followed by

South Australia (9.5%). This concentration in New South Wales to some extent reflects the place of origin of the survey but is also clearly a reflection of the degree to which the Australian film industry is concentrated in New South Wales. (See Appendix 2, Table 1) —

### 1.3 Responsibility for children

Nearly three quarters (74%) of the women did **not** currently have any children in care — a very high proportion, considering that:

- 45% of all households in Australia include dependent children, while 53% of all married couple families currently have dependent children. (Australian Bureau of Statistics, December 1982), and
- 75.4% of Australian women over fifteen have borne children; though it should be noted that the question in the survey referred only to current situations, not whether women had responsibility for children in the past (1981 Census).

Of the 26% of women with children in care, 31% had sole responsibility for their children, 37% had partly shared responsibility and 31% had equally shared responsibility; 81% had children under ten years of age; 53% had one child in care and 36% had two children in care. (See Appendix 2, Tables 2 and 3)

### 1.4 Level of education

A very high proportion (48%) had tertiary qualifications (in the form of degrees or diplomas from universities or CAEs, compared with 4.8% of women in the workforce and 2.8% of women over fifteen who have a degree or its equivalent (1981 Census); a significant number (17%) had (also/only) secretarial qualifications; a small number (less than 4% had technical qualifications; and 9% had no formal educational qualifications.

**Table 2 Educational Qualifications\* (other than film)**

Qualification	%
None	8.7
School matriculation	32.7
Diploma/certificate in art/design	13.6
Secretarial	16.6
Technical	3.3
Hairdressing/dressmaking diploma/certificate	3.3
Degree/diploma university/CAE	47.6

Total no. = 391

\*Respondents were asked to give up to **two** qualifications

Age made some difference: 35% of those over 50 had no formal qualifications while among those aged between 26 and 35, 58% had

tertiary qualifications and of those aged between 31 and 40, 23% had (also/only) secretarial qualifications.

There was no significant difference in levels of education between women with children in care and those without.

## 2. INVOLVEMENT WITH FILM

This section outlines the experience of the whole sample in relation to film and covers initial contact and formal training in film, the length of time worked in films, and income made from films in the preceding financial year. It concludes with a summary of the 'more typical' experiences.

### 2.1 Initial contact

Women were asked 'How did you begin working on films?'. The ambiguity of the question was reflected in the replies. Two thirds understood the question to be referring to the **initial contact** which led to their involvement, one third the **first job** they had in film. So the replies were first grouped into these two responses, then into categories within each:

1. **Initial contact:** 15% became involved through other work (eg in community theatre, a film library); 12% through a friend; 10% as students; 9% through workshops; 6% through independent effort; 5% through a trade; and 4% through acting.
2. **First film job:** 17% began with related jobs in film and television (eg script assistant, make-up, wardrobe); 11% specified work as typist/production assistant and 7% began in a commercial production house. Among those working longest in the industry (eight years or more), 26% began working on films through another job in film or television, but among those working a short time (between three and six months), 29% became involved through a friend. This suggests that there may now be a network of social contact which did not previously exist on such a scale, offering women possibilities of involvement in film. Of those working eight years or more in the industry, 21% originally became involved through work as a typist or production assistant. As noted earlier, 23% of women between 31 and 40 years of age had secretarial qualifications.

### 2.2 Training in film

61% of the women had done some kind of course in film ranging from short workshops to full-time courses of several years' duration. A higher percentage of **younger** women had done courses (79% of those under 25). It would seem that women working in film in the future will be increasingly better qualified, at least in terms of formal qualifications or having taken specific skills training

courses. Training may be less readily available in Tasmania: only 33% of women there had done courses, whereas in all other states the figure was over 50%.

Although 61% of women had done courses, only 19% said that they originally began working on film either through being a student or being involved in a workshop or course. Of those with film qualifications 51% had done an AFTS course of some kind: 26% had done an AFTS Open Program general course, 13% the Fulltime Program course, and 12% the AFTS Open Program women's workshops.<sup>1</sup> Of those who had done courses, 17% had had some kind of on-the-job training, either a traineeship or in-service training. (See Appendix 2, Table 4)

Women who had not done training courses were asked why not. More than half (52%) gave as one reason: 'On-the-job training more useful'. This percentage was not significantly affected by place of residence, income from film or having children in care.

Over one third (36%) of all women surveyed wanted further formal training: of these, 31% wanted it in the form of attachments/traineeships and a further 25% in specific skills workshops, indicating a general preference for courses giving specific skills-related training. Interest was expressed by 31% of the women in attending a course or workshop for women only.

### **2.3 Length of time worked in film**

The older the woman, the more likely it was that she had worked longer in the industry, with 51% of those between the ages of 31 and 35 working for more than six years in film, compared with only 19% of those between 26 and 30. A quarter of the sample had worked in film for more than eight years and 18% for between two and four years. These were the two largest groups. This suggests that the year of entry into filmmaking could be significant: ie if one began in 1973 or earlier, or between 1977 and 1979, circumstances existed then or since which were more favourable to women continuing to work in film. The concentration of women film workers in New South Wales fell away significantly amongst those who had been in film a relatively short time compared with the 75% of those who had worked in film for more than eight years who lived in New South Wales (and only 3% in South Australia). 53% of those who had worked for between two and four years lived in New South Wales (12% in South Australia). This suggests that there

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1. Open Program: shorter courses and workshops, sometimes held interstate, for industry workers and others wishing to gain film/television skills. Women's workshops were specially mounted for women.

Fulltime Program: three year fulltime course for selected students from all over Australia. Limited entry.

could be a growing involvement, most probably in independent filmmaking in states other than New South Wales.

Among the women who had worked for eight years or more, 68% had no children in care, 84% of those who had worked for between two and four years had no children in care. Two thirds (66%) of those working between two and four years had tertiary qualifications, compared with 30% of those involved for more than eight years; and 13% of the former had secretarial skills compared to 22% of the latter. (See Appendix 2, Table 5)

## 2.4 Income from films

**Table 3: Income from Film in Preceding Financial Year**

Income	No. of women	%
Nil	96	24.2
\$1,000 - \$5,000	101	25.5
\$5,000 - \$10,000	60	15.2
\$10,000 - \$15,000	59	14.9
\$15,000 - \$20,000	35	8.8
\$20,000 +	45	11.4
Total	396	100.0
Total no. = 396		

It is important to note that the total of 396 includes over 100 women no longer working in film,<sup>1</sup> and the 24% who claimed nil income from film probably coincides closely with this group. (28% of the sample as a whole)

On these figures, the women surveyed were divided almost equally between those earning \$5,000 or less and those earning over \$5,000. If the nil-earning group is excluded (on the assumption that they are no longer employed in film), we find that approximately 54% earned \$10,000 or less and 46% earned more than \$10,000.

Not surprisingly, the women who had worked longest in the industry earned most. A third of those who had been in the industry eight years or more earned more than \$20,000. The lowest earnings (under \$5,000) were concentrated amongst those who had been in the industry a year or less. The lowest earning group was nevertheless well qualified: 67% of those earning \$10,000 or less had done courses, compared with half of those earning more than \$10,000.

1. See Section 4

## **2.5 'More typical' experiences**

What is likely to be the situation and experience of the women surveyed based on the information already drawn out? If a simple 50%+ in any category is taken as the basis of 'more likely', then the women in the sample are 'more likely':

- to be aged between 26 and 35;
- to be resident in New South Wales;
- to be without children in care;
- to have tertiary qualifications;
- to have begun working in films through another job, either in the film or television industries or in a related area;
- to have completed a film course;
- to have worked in the film industry for more than two years; and
- to have earned upwards of \$5,000 from film in the preceding year.

Three especially significant points in the experience of women in film emerge from this:

1. Where you live is important;
2. Whether or not you have children matters; and
3. Entry into filmmaking is largely a matter of contingency.

## **3. EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN CURRENTLY WORKING IN FILM**

This section deals with nearly three quarters of the sample — the 72% of women surveyed who were currently working in film. The high proportion was expected because collation of the sample was based on the film industry and not on other sources connected with film, eg educational institutions where a survey of those who had completed film courses might reveal a high proportion not currently working in film.

The areas of work experience in film covered here are: current jobs; the type of film worked in; how work is obtained; proportion of work on films funded by the Creative Development Branch or the Women's Film Fund; the effects of having responsibility for children; ways in which being a woman has affected employment opportunities; aspirations in terms of future work in filmmaking; and finally, further 'more typical' experiences specifically related to women currently working in film.

Points of contrast, where significant, will be made between the experiences of this group and that of: i) the whole sample (as in Section 2) and ii) women not now working in film (as in Section 4). Where this is not done it can be assumed there is no significant difference.



### 3.1 Current Jobs

To simplify discussion of different job areas in film, it was necessary to divide the whole array of jobs into groups. This has been done in two ways:

- a) The jobs were grouped as follows:
- i) Production — all jobs having an administrative function.
  - ii) Creative — all jobs related to creation, design, art in film.
  - iii) Technical — all jobs dealing with technical aspects of filmmaking.

All three categories were further divided into two levels, according to the degree of control or accepted crew seniority inherent in each job. Thus, those with more control (eg producer, art director, camera operator) were allocated to Level I and those with less control (eg assistant producer, assistant art director, camera assistant) were allocated to Level II. (See Appendix 3 for a full list of all jobs in each category and level)

- b) The same allocation of jobs into categories was used but the categories and levels were grouped and named differently — this was done to avoid giving a particular significance to findings resulting solely from terminology. So jobs were again divided into three types:
1. Control — all jobs considered to have a considerable degree of control inherent in their performance, those belonging to Level I Creative and Level I Technical as defined above.
  2. Administrative — primarily co-ordinating jobs with an administrative function, the equivalent of Level I Production jobs as defined above
  3. Support — 'assistant' jobs, the equivalent of Level II in each of the Production, Creative and Technical categories as defined in (a).

Any such categorization must of necessity be somewhat arbitrary, but groupings of this kind are essential to allow useful generalizations about work in film.

**Table 4 Current Film Occupations Grouping (a)**

Production		Creative		Technical	
Level I	Level II	Level I	Level II	Level I	Level II
22.5%	15.7%	23.1%	27%	3.5%	8.2%
Total no. = 283					

Among women with Production jobs, 26% had secretarial qualifications, a significantly higher proportion than in the sample as a whole. Of women with Production jobs, 19% began work on films as a typist or production assistant, compared with only 7% of those with Creative jobs and 14% of those with Technical jobs.

**Table 5 Current Film Occupations Grouping (b)**

Control	Administrative	Support
26.6%	22.5%	50.9%
Total no. = 283		

When the jobs are grouped in these three levels, it is clear that half the women in the sample (51%) were in support jobs ('assistant' was the most commonly used word in their job descriptions).

A correlation of the levels of work with different areas of film shows that of those with **Control** jobs, 49% worked in independent film, 11% in features and 40% in commercial/television/ Government film. Of those with **Administrative** jobs, 35% worked in independent film, 37% in features and 27% in commercial/television/ Government film. And of those with **Support** jobs, 23% worked in independent film, 43% in features and 34% in commercial/television/ Government film.

Three quarters of women currently working in film worked outside what could be called externally-structured regular employment — 51% working freelance, 25% on their own projects or in their own business. The remaining quarter had staff positions, about equally divided between television, commercial production houses and government film organizations (though it should be kept in mind that the survey may have under-represented organizations which often employ regular staff — see Introduction). This distribution remained constant throughout all categories of jobs.

Of the small number of women currently working outside New South Wales and Victoria, a higher percentage worked in staff jobs. There are fewer opportunities for working freelance in those States — in Tasmania, Queensland and Western Australia only 24% of the women working in film are working freelance.

Women working outside structured job situations earned less: 62% of those working in staff jobs made upwards of \$10,000 compared with 41% of those working independently.

### 3.2 Area of film

Women were asked how they would define the area of film they mainly worked in: 31% said they worked mainly in independent film, 31% in features, 16.8% on film for television, 11.8% in government film organizations, and 9.4% on films for commercial production houses. Those working in independent film earned less: 85% made less than \$10,000 in the previous financial year,

compared with 41% of those in feature film, 50% of those in commercial production houses and 30% of those working in television. (See Appendix 2, Table 6)

### **3.3 Methods of obtaining work**

Asked how they obtained work, nearly half of those working outside structured job situations (for whom this question is pertinent) said that they relied on previous contacts. A further 29% obtained work through developing their own projects. Of this group, 77% were not listed with an agency. Asked why, a third said they found work more easily without one, a third said they had neither the experience nor the financial means to be listed with an agent and another third made such comments as: 'Never thought about it', or 'What is an agency?' or 'Don't know of any agencies'.

(See Appendix 2, Table 7)

### **3.4 Proportion of work funded**

When asked what proportion of their work had been on films funded by the Creative Development Branch or the Women's Film Fund, 58% said none. Of the remainder, 30% said under half, 2% just half, 8% over half and 2% said all.

The area of film in which they worked made some difference: 67% of women working in independent film said some of their work had been on films funded by Creative Development Branch or the Women's Film Fund, compared to 29% of those working in features; 19% in independent films said over half, compared with 3% in features.

Proportion of work on films funded by either body was not significantly altered by age, income or length of time in the industry.

(See Appendix 2, Table 8)

### **3.5 Responsibility for children**

Of women currently working in film, 78% did not have children in care, a slighter higher proportion than in the whole sample (74%). Among those working in independent film and features, 83% did not have responsibility for children.

All the women were asked what effect they thought caring for children had on working in films. Most of those who replied were those who did have care of children, but some women who did not have children in care also replied, saying in the main that they could not imagine how working in film could possibly be combined with the care of children and that essentially a choice had to be made between the two roles. Two comments from those without children: 'An impossible combination!' and 'Having a child would have a detrimental effect on my credibility'.

For the women with children, the main effects that responsibility for children had on their work in films were:

- dictating the area of film they worked in;

- restricting the ease with which they could respond to different work possibilities and learn new skills; and
- \* making it virtually impossible to work irregular hours or go on location, especially given the difficulty of organizing child care.

Some comments:

'I had a period of about two and a half years when I didn't work, it was too harrowing to organize babysitting for such crazy hours.'

'My own project becomes part-time because I find it impossible to find child care.'

'I have to compromise, it takes longer to achieve my ambition.'

'I sought work in another field, design, where I could balance work and child care less painfully.'

And for those determined to combine the two roles, there was still the problem of being viewed with a jaundiced eye:

'Producers are reluctant to employ me for location work or long hours when they know I have two small children — there is the perpetual question "What will you do with the children?" as though you haven't thought of it before applying for the job — it's a question never asked of men.'

'My dual role often seems self-defeating — I am not devoted to one or the other — and am seen by some men to be a "macrame" filmmaker.'

### **3.6 Effects of being a woman**

Women currently working were asked in what ways being a woman had affected their employment opportunities in film.

The largest group of comments centred on limitations imposed on them because they were women: for example, discrimination in promotion and pay and being confined by sexist attitudes to what were considered 'women's jobs' with a consequent lack of opportunity and choice. Some comments:

'Narrower job opportunities — only certain service jobs for women and I can't type.'

'Harder to get work involving lifting and carrying.'

'Easy to get stuck in supportive role through original typing/secretarial training.'

'Problems involved in establishing a good working relationship with all-male crews: basically different attitude to my work from male career-oriented

productions; being forced to dress female stars as male directors would like them to look, according to their idea of female beauty.'

Some said they had to be twice as good as men, constantly proving their skill and competence:

'Women have to fight harder and do better to advance.'

'You are expected to prove yourself more as an assistant.'

'You have to push harder to be taken seriously.'

Other effects of being a woman were more subjective: women lacked self-confidence, felt an absence of encouragement and appreciation, found it hard to take their own aspirations seriously:

'It has caused me to think of myself not as a director — there were always more dominant male people who took this position — ie it has affected my level of ambition rather than having had a direct effect on my employment opportunities.'

'I had to spend years as a production assistant whereas I could have been learning through jobs producing and directing if it wasn't for conditioned attitudes and lack of confidence in myself that I do have all the abilities in myself.'

A few women did say that being a woman had no effect on their employment at all; they believed that real talent created its own opportunities and overcame all obstacles.

### **3.7 Aspirations**

Half (51%) of the women would work in a different area of film if they had the opportunity. A significant number wished to move between feature film and independent film — 57% of those currently working in independent film would like to work on feature films, 59% of those working in feature films would like to work in independent film. In view of the high proportion of women in Control jobs in independent film (see 3.1), this may represent a wish for a different kind of work situation, (one with more control, scope or different work relations) as much as for work in a different area of film. Virtually no-one working in feature or independent film wanted to move into television, commercial film production or government film organizations. Those already working in these areas however did want to move into different areas: 56% of those working in television wanted to move into features and 48% of those in government film organizations wanted to move into independent filmmaking. Some of these women may have taken regular employment for reasons of financial security and greater ease with organizing

child care, and found that their creative aspirations are not being met in that employment.

When asked what sort of jobs they would like, given unlimited opportunity and no obstacles, 55% said they would like to do something different, with a significant number wanting to be in a job with more control. 58% of those working in Level I Production jobs wanted to move into Level I Creative jobs, and 62% of those working in Level II Creative jobs wanted to move into Level I. Of those working in Technical jobs, 64% wanted to move into Creative jobs, whereas only 15% of those in Production and 11% of those in Creative jobs wanted to move into Technical jobs. Only 17% of the younger women (21-25) were interested in Technical jobs. This may be the result of a process of self-imposed streaming away from these areas, which are currently male-dominated and present few role models for women. (See Appendix 2, Table 9)

When asked what they thought would be most likely to make it possible to move to another type of job, 35% of those wanting other jobs said more experience, 34% more training, 29% a traineeship, 17% more confidence, 11% expansion of the film industry and 8% not having responsibility for children.

Of the would-be movers, 22% had children in care and it is significant that among those who did, 29% thought not having children would make it possible to move to another job. Those over 35 thought expansion of the film industry more important than those under 35 — the younger the woman, the more importance she attached to experience, traineeships and gaining self-confidence. Only 7% attached importance to financial assistance.

(See Appendix 2, Table 10)

More than a third of women currently working wanted further formal training and this was minimally affected by age, income or care of children. However, the desire for formal training varied in the different job categories: 49% of those in Production jobs, 32% in Creative jobs and 60% in Technical jobs wanted further formal training.

(See Appendix 2, Table 11)

The type of training most wanted was attachment/traineeship (28%); followed by specific skills workshops (24%); a part-time course (13%) and a full-time course (10%). More than a third (36%) were interested in attending a course or workshop for women only.

### **3.8 'More typical' experiences**

The 'more typical' experiences of the whole sample (as in Section 2.5) are also true of the women currently working in film, as might be expected. The only significant difference is that the

latter group are likely to have worked in the film industry for four years or more rather than two.

Women in the survey who are currently working in film are more likely:

- to have a job in the Support category than in Control or Administration;
- to work outside a structured work situation;
- to work in independent film or features rather than in commercial production, television or government film organizations;
- to obtain work through previous contacts or own projects not through being listed with an agency;
- not to have any proportion of their work provided by films funded by either the Creative Development Branch or the Women's Film Fund; and
- to prefer working in a different area of filmmaking from the one they are currently working in; to prefer a Level I Creative job in either independent film or feature films; and to regard more experience and training as the ways of making these jobs possible.

#### 4. EXPERIENCE OF WOMEN NOT CURRENTLY WORKING IN FILM

This section deals with the experiences of the 112 women (28% of the sample) who were not currently working in film. Of these, 56% had tertiary qualifications (a higher percentage than in the sample as a whole — 48%) and 11% had secretarial qualifications (a lower percentage than in the whole sample — 17%). Over two thirds (67%) had worked less than two years in the industry (a higher percentage than in the whole sample — 36%), suggesting that contacts/opportunities crucial for continuing in the industry may have to be made early, before financial pressures and/or responsibility for children make it necessary to decide whether or not to continue.

This section looks at four areas of experience: reasons for no longer working in film; current occupations; responsibility for children; aspirations.

## 4.1 Reasons for no longer working in film

**Table 6 Reasons for no Longer Working in Film\***

Reason	%
Never wanted to work primarily in film	7.6
Lack of opportunity to develop	33.0
Not enough work	13.0
Financial insecurity	20.0
Lack of training	14.0
Responsibility for children	20.0
No opportunity to contribute creatively	11.0
Other	37.0
Total no. = 111	

\*Note: Many women gave multiple reasons

The 37% who indicated 'other' reasons for no longer working in film gave four main reasons:

- i) getting sidetracked into other areas such as theatre, design, writing, photography;
- ii) acquiring new skills such as shorthand, audio-visual techniques;
- iii) lack of confidence; and
- iv) difficulties in getting funding.

'Lack of opportunity' remained a constant reason regardless of age. Of the small number who had worked in the industry for more than four years before leaving it, half gave 'responsibility for children' as a reason for stopping.

## 4.2 Current jobs

Nearly all the women who had ceased to work in film were currently employed, in a wide range of jobs. The most widely-held jobs (in order from most to least mentioned) were: teaching, mostly related to media; working in television; art/design jobs; theatre jobs. One tenth of this group listed their current main occupation as mother. The remainder were: writing, studying, running cafes, working in community welfare, organizing in a union, doing a hairdressing apprenticeship, being a carpenter, working with computers, working in an office.

Since 84% of the women said that they would like to work on films in the future, it seems reasonable to assume that they were biding their time in their current jobs, waiting for circumstances that would enable them to return to working in film.



### 4.3 Responsibility for children

Over a third (36%) of this group had children in care, a significantly higher percentage than among women currently working in film (22%). As only 10% listed their occupation as 'mother' presumably the remainder combine responsibility for children with work.

This group made similar comments about the effects of caring for children on their working in film, to those made by women currently working in films, but with a sharper edge. This could perhaps be attributed to their having made the decision that it was impossible to continue working in film. Some comments:

'Care of my child eliminates any possibility of working in any capacity in film without sacrificing her development and happiness.'

'Have come to the conclusion that film work, ie on set, does not fit in with family life, male or female. Thus I now confine myself to designing and supplying costume.'

'Children mean that your time for work is severely limited—even when at school, as the film industry does not run to a school schedule.'

'One is regarded as not capable/available enough to work on films — children are regarded as a burden to creativity and productivity.'

### 4.4 Aspirations

The great majority (84%) of the women not currently working in film wanted to do so in the future. Of these 75% wanted work in the Creative category, 15% were interested in Production and 10% in Technical.

The desired area of filmmaking was less clearly defined than among women currently working in film (see Section 3.7): 26% did not specify any one area; 38% wanted to work in independent film, 20% in features, 8% in television, 5% in commercial production and 3% in a government film organization. As far as their preferred mode of work was concerned, 53% wanted to work freelance and 20% wanted to work on their own projects or in their own business.

When asked what factors would influence their return to working in film, the responses fell into five main categories:

- i) a greater availability of work;
- ii) gaining more skills and experience either through a job or a skills workshop;
- iii) having a greater degree of financial security;

- iv) being able to combine responsibility for children with film work because child care was available, children being older and work hours being better suited to family life; and
- v) for those living in states other than Victoria and New South Wales, place of residence was a key factor —most felt that availability of jobs and funding outside New South Wales was so limited that it was virtually mandatory to move to New South Wales in order to return to working in film.

When asked what type of training was felt to be most relevant to their needs, 35% wanted attachment/traineeship and 29% wanted specific skills workshops, both of which are clearly related to the needs expressed above to develop skills and gain on-the-job experience. Only 14% expressed interest in either full-time or part-time courses.

A majority of this group — 62% — were not interested in attending a women-only course or workshop; 24% would be interested (compared with 36% of those currently working in film).

## 5. KNOWLEDGE OF AND IDEAS ABOUT THE WOMEN'S FILM FUND

All women in the sample were asked what they knew about the Women's Film Fund, what their ideas were about its functions and how they thought the proportion of women working in the film industry could be increased.

### 5.1 Knowledge of the Women's Film Fund

9% had never heard of the Fund, 34% were unsure of its functions, 39% knew of its functions and 18% had applied for funding. More women in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia knew of the Fund than those living elsewhere — of those living in Tasmania, Western Australia, Queensland, Australian Capital Territory or the Northern Territory, 22% had never heard of the Fund, 39% were unsure of its functions, 28% knew of its functions and 11% had applied for funding.

The older women were, the longer they had worked in the film industry and the more they earned, the more likely it was that they knew of the Fund and its functions.

### 5.2 Ideas about the Fund's functions

Comments made were overwhelmingly in favour of the existence of the Fund. The small number who did not support it nevertheless saw it as a regrettable necessity which they thought should be phased out in the near future when there was no longer any need for it.

There were clear ideas about its possible functions. One set of ideas revolved around the Fund playing a role in facilitating women's involvement in the film industry by:

- securing increased opportunities for women in training and on-the-job experience;
- funding projects by women new to the industry; and
- lobbying for child care.

The Fund was also seen to be vitally important in: ensuring that films about women were made with women having creative control; creating opportunities for feminist ideas, issues and ways of working to be developed in film; and lobbying for the distribution and exhibition of films made by women.

The women felt that it was important for the Fund to get more funds, allowing it to expand its activities and develop more support and contact between women working in film, for example through a newsletter.

### **5.3 How to increase the proportion of women working in film**

Ideas for increasing women's participation in film included changes based on positive discrimination: more qualifying training and specific workshops for women; more women teachers in education institutions which offer film courses; job quotas in the production of films.

The women saw these measures as eventually increasing the number of women in key areas, creating role models for younger women and also gradually bringing about working conditions in the industry more suited to women's desired ways of working and their responsibilities for children. The Women's Film Fund was frequently mentioned here as being important in lobbying for such changes.

# ANALYSIS OF FEATURE FILM CREW LISTS 1974-1982

## 1. OVERVIEW<sup>1</sup>

The data obtained from nine years of feature film crew lists in **Cinema Papers** was organized into the same job categories as were used in the survey phase, to allow for comparisons. (Appendix 3 provides a list of crew positions and classifications.) During analysis of the crew list data, the same names tended to recur in particular crew positions on different films over the period covered. For that reason, we have where possible indicated the actual numbers of **individuals** in these positions, as distinct from the number of **credits** going to women and men on all films.

As expected, men predominated in the key Production, Technical and Creative positions (see Table 7). Only 25% of Level I Production positions and 14% of Level I Creative positions were occupied by women. In terms of actual individuals, 79 out of 350 people working at Level I Production were women, and 97 out of 635 at Level I Creative.

At the highest Technical level, women were hardly represented at all: only five women in total had worked at this level, compared to 143 men.

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1. A detailed description of the methodology of this phase of the study is in Part A, Section 3.

**Table 7: Gender Breakdown of Level I and II Feature Film Crew Positions in Production, Creative and Technical Categories**

Category	Number of positions occupied by women	% of positions occupied by women	Number of individual women working at this level	Number of positions occupied by men	% of positions occupied by men	Number of individual men working at this level	Total positions	Total individuals
<b>Production</b>								
Level I	140	25.5	79	408	74.5	271	548	350
Level II	345	57.0	227	261	43.0	210	606	437
<b>Creative</b>								
Level I	147	14.7	97	855	85.3	538	1002	635
Level II	316	46.1	188	369	53.9	220	685	408
<b>Technical</b>								
Level I	15	3.8	5	376	96.2	143	391	151
Level II	94	11.7	74	703	88.3	372	797	449

As the findings of the survey phase also showed, women were still concentrated in their 'traditional' production jobs (eg continuity, production secretary, publicist). Production Level II was in fact the only job grouping where women outnumbered men: over half (57%) of the positions at this level were occupied by women, while in the Level II Creative area, women filled 46% of crew positions. In the Level II Technical area, women occupied only 11% of positions. Only 74 women were working at this level, compared to 372 men.

## **2. REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN EACH WORK CATEGORY**

What follows is more detailed analysis of the employment of women in Australia feature film to establish whether women are significantly underrepresented in a particular work area, as well as in the film workforce as a whole.

### **2.1 Production**

At the higher level of responsibility and control in Production jobs (Level I) women were adequately represented in only two out of seven categories: production accountant (51% women) and production manager (48%). (See Table 8)

Although there are several successful and respected women producers working in Australian feature film, the overall statistics show that women have not made great inroads into this profession: only 13% of all producer positions were filled by women, and only 15 individual women were listed as producers compared with 87 men. Women were also in the minority at the executive producer level, with only 8% of EP jobs being performed by women, and at associate producer level (26% women to 74% men).

The crew list analysis supported the finding of the survey phase that women in the film industry are concentrated in the Level II jobs — those with less control — and in crew positions which have traditionally been seen as 'womens' jobs'. For example, over the period covered there were no male production secretaries or continuity people, these positions being wholly filled by women. Women were well represented in all such supportive or 'co-ordinating' positions: thus, 86% of production co-ordinators and 83% of wardrobe co-ordinators were women.

Even at this lower level of Production, men tended to predominate in the more 'active' / on-location jobs such as second assistant (92% of positions occupied by men), third assistant (80%), location manager (66%) and unit manager (80%).

### **2.3 Creative**

With the exception of wardrobe designer and casting director — both traditionally 'female' areas — Level I Creative positions were

**Table 8: Classification and Gender Breakdown of Production Positions**

	Classification	Women Number of	%	Number of different	Men Number of	%	Number of different	Total Number of	Number of different
Level I	Production Accountant	40	51.9	18	37	48.1	26	77	44
	(1)Assistant Director	6	8.7	4	63	91.3	38	69	43
	Producer	22	13.1	15	146	86.9	87	168	102
	Executive Producer	4	6.8	3	55	93.2	44	59	47
	Associate Producer	17	26.1	11	48	73.9	41	65	52
	Production Manager	50	48.5	27	53	51.5	29	103	56
	Co-Producer	1	14.2	1	6	85.8	6	7	7
Level II	Assistant Prod. Accountant	1	33.3	1	2	66.7	2	3	3
	Casting Co-ordinator	1	100.0	1	-	-	-	1	1
	Continuity	114	100.0	48	-	-	-	114	48
	(2)Assistant Director	5	8.4	5	54	91.6	36	59	41
	Location Manager	7	33.3	5	14	66.7	13	21	18
	Location Research	1	50.0	1	1	50.0	1	2	2
	Production Co-ordinator	26	86.6	23	4	13.3	3	30	26
	Production Secretary	88	100.0	58	-	-	-	88	58
	Props Buyer	20	39.2	13	31	60.8	21	51	34
	Publicity (Unit Publicist)	22	57.9	17	16	42.1	12	38	29
	Script Assistant	3	50.0	3	3	50.0	3	6	6
	Unit Manager	8	20.0	7	32	80.0	28	40	35
	Wardrobe Co-ordinator	5	83.3	5	1	16.7	1	6	6
	Wardrobe Buyer	2	100.0	2	-	-	-	2	2
	(3)Assistant Director	8	19.5	7	33	80.5	27	41	34
	Production Assistant	13	48.1	13	14	51.9	13	27	26
	Runner	21	27.2	18	56	72.8	50	77	68

**Table 9: Classification and Gender Breakdown of Creative Positions**

	Classification	Women Number of	%	Number of different	Men Number of	%	Number of different	Total Number of	Number of different
Level I	Animator	11	30.6	6	25	69.4	20	36	26
	Art Director	12	12.5	12	84	87.5	47	96	59
	Photography/ Director of Photography	3	2.1	3	137	97.8	71	140	74
	Casting	20	76.9	10	6	23.1	4	26	14
	Choreography	4	36.3	3	7	63.7	6	11	9
	Director	2	1.4	1	139	98.6	81	141	82
	Production Designer	12	29.3	8	29	70.7	19	41	27
	Editor	6	4.5	4	125	95.4	60	131	64
	Musical Director	-	-	-	16	100.0	15	16	15
	Composer	1	1.9	1	52	98.1	35	53	36
	Script/Screenwriter	19	10.9	16	156	89.1	132	175	148
	Wardrobe Designer	49	75.4	25	16	24.6	9	65	34
	Dubbing Editor	8	11.3	8	63	88.7	39	71	47
Level II	Assistant Animator	4	50.0	4	4	50.0	4	8	8
	Assistant Art Director	14	40.0	12	21	60.0	21	35	33
	2nd Unit Camera	-	-	-	3	100.0	3	3	3
	Additional Photography	-	-	-	4	100.0	3	4	3
	Design Consultant	1	33.3	1	2	66.6	2	3	3
	Hairdresser	51	81.0	31	12	19.0	7	63	39
	Make-Up	93	78.1	27	26	21.9	7	119	34
	Mixer	-	-	-	49	100.0	13	49	13
	Props	5	23.0	5	16	76.2	15	21	20
	Research	3	100.0	3	-	-	-	3	3
	Script Consultant	1	100.0	1	-	-	-	1	1
	Set Decorator	4	20.0	4	16	80.0	14	20	18
	Still Photography	24	21.2	15	89	78.8	50	113	65
	Scenic Artist	1	5.9	1	16	94.1	9	17	10
	Sound Editor	8	11.3	8	63	88.7	39	71	47
	Titles	3	21.4	2	11	78.6	10	14	12
	Wardrobe Assistant	89	76.7	62	27	23.3	14	116	78
	Art Department Assistant	2	33.3	2	4	66.7	4	6	6
	Background Layouts	2	40.0	1	2	60.0	2	5	3
	Make-Up Assistant	11	73.3	9	4	26.7	3	15	12



dominated by men. Only one woman (Gillian Armstrong) has emerged as a feature film director, compared with 81 men who were listed as directing feature films. Armstrong directed two of a total of around 250 features listed in **Cinema Papers** over the period under review.

On Australian features, 132 men have worked as screenwriters compared with sixteen women. Only 12% of art director jobs and 29% of production designer jobs have been performed by women. There have been no female musical directors and only one woman has composed a movie score, compared to 35 men. The only Level I Creative position in which women have predominated (filling 75% of the jobs) has been wardrobe designer.

Only three women in all have had the major photography credit on Australian features (all three were on animated films and only one of the films was completed and released) compared to 71 men.

Women were also poorly represented as editors (four women occupying 5% of editor positions, compared with 60 men occupying 95%). This is particularly significant given that men frequently use editing as a jumping-off point for directing. A similar pattern applied in sound editing, where six women occupied 11% of the jobs, compared to 28 men occupying 89%.

In the lower, Level II, Creative group women were once again clustered in the traditional 'female jobs': hairdresser (81% women); make-up (78%); research (100%); wardrobe assistant (76%). Men predominated in thirteen out of eighteen positions, particularly those which combined technical and creative skills such as second unit camera, additional photography and mixer. No women were listed as having worked in any of these positions over the period surveyed.

Only five women have ever worked at the highest Technical level (one as a camera operator and four as neg matchers) compared to a total of 151 men. The positions of gaffer, sound recordist, special effects and underwater photography have been filled entirely by men.

As indicated earlier, there were few women at either level in the Technical category, and at Level II women were predominant only in jobs such as standby wardrobe (82% women) and in some 'assisting' jobs: over 60% of all editing assistants and two thirds of assistant sound editors were women. This pattern was not reflected among assistant editors (only one third were women) or among camera assistants: these comprised three women and 34 men, with only 7% of jobs occupied by women; yet camera assisting is an important step towards higher level creative camera work.

In Technical jobs, men predominated in five out of six Level I positions (the exception was neg matcher) and in twelve out of

**Table 10: Classification and Gender Breakdown of Technical Positions**

	Classification	Women Number of	%	Number of different	Men Number of	%	Number of different	Total Number of	Number of different
Level I	Camera Operator	2	2.2	1	90	97.8	40	92	41
	Gaffer	-	-	-	95	100.0	34	95	34
	Sound Recordist	-	-	-	140	100.0	43	140	43
	Special Effects	-	-	-	46	100.0	22	46	22
	Underwater Photography	-	-	-	1	100.0	1	1	1
	Negative Matcher	13	76.5	4	4	23.5	3	17	17
Level II	Boom Operator	2	1.8	1	110	98.2	36	112	37
	Best Boy	-	-	-	73	100.0	40	73	40
	Camera Assistant	3	7.3	3	38	92.7	34	41	37
	Clapper/Loader	16	17.8	12	74	82.2	44	90	56
	Assistant Dubbing Editor	4	40.0	4	6	60.0	6	10	10
	Assistant Editor	33	33.7	25	65	66.3	40	98	65
	Electrix	1	1.8	1	53	98.2	38	54	39
	Focus Puller	5	5.7	1	83	94.3	32	88	33
	Grip	-	-	-	104	100.0	42	104	42
	Assistant Sound Editor	2	66.7	2	1	33.3	1	3	3
	Editing Assistant	11	61.1	10	7	38.9	7	18	18
	Assistant Grip	1	25.0	1	3	75.0	3	4	4
	Standby Props	6	10.2	5	53	89.9	25	59	30
	Set Construction	-	-	-	31	100.0	22	31	22
	Transfers	1	100.0	1	-	-	-	1	-
	Standby Wardrobe	9	81.8	8	2	18.2	2	11	10

### 3. A CHRONOLOGICAL VIEW

The figures given so far indicated the **overall** picture for the nine-year period of the survey. It is important to look also at the data on a year-by-year basis to see whether the situation of women has improved, in terms both of the total number of crew positions they fill and of their representation in certain key positions.

In order to take a chronological view, we selected three years, 1974 (the first year of the **Cinema Papers** crew lists), 1978 (as a median year) and 1982 (the latest year included in the survey). The resulting figures suggested that the number of people working in the feature film production had increased dramatically over the period. In 1974, only 66 crew positions were listed, nine of which were filled by women and 57 by men. For 1982, the equivalent numbers were 235 and 604, totalling 839.

Table 11 shows the number of Level I and Level II jobs filled by women and men in each of the three years.

**Table 11**  
**Feature Film Crew Positions Occupied by Women and Men, 1974, 1978 and 1982**

Year	1974			1978			1982		
	Women	Men	%	Women	Men	%	Women	Men	%
Level I positions	1*	36	2.7	26	147	15	47	241	16.3
Level II positions	8	21	27.5	93	255	26.7	188	363	34.1
Total both levels	9	57	13.6	119	402	22.8	235	604	28.0

\*This position was 'Associate Producer'

As the table indicates, the overall percentage of women filling crew positions in the industry more than doubled over the period. However, the percentage of women working in Level I jobs, while it increased sharply between 1974 and 1978 (from 2.7% to 15%) had not risen appreciably in 1982 (16.3%).

Some key crew positions were studied to see if any pattern had emerged over the nine-year period.

Analysis of the figures on a year-by-year basis showed that in the two Level II jobs where women have tended to be well represented (production accountant and production manager) there had been an increase in the years 1979 and 1980, coinciding with a steady flow of feature film production, but that this had levelled off somewhat in 1981 and 1982.

This pattern was also reflected in jobs where women might be expected to have improved their representation. For example, the peak year for women as scriptwriters was 1979, with six credits going to women. This dropped away to one in 1980 and two in 1982. The same situation applied for clapper/loader, with a peak of six positions filled by women in 1980, falling back to two in 1981 and three in 1982.

The figures showed that when the total number of positions available had increased substantially with the increase in the volume of production in the late 1970s, the increase in some key cases favoured men rather than women. For example, six out of thirteen clapper/loader positions in 1980 were filled by women; in 1982 it was three out of sixteen. While it is clearly not appropriate to draw any conclusions about long-term trends from these figures, they suggest that the situation should continue to be monitored.

We tested a hypothesis that men might be moving into jobs which had traditionally been 'women's jobs' such as production accountant, hairdresser and wardrobe designer, as the industry became better established and more attractive to work in. There was no discernible trend in any of these positions, though it is worth noting that in 1979/80, women exceeded men two to one as production accountants; in 1982 there were equal numbers of women and men.

Assistant editor was one position where women gained and maintained a foothold over the period surveyed, though they were still outnumbered two to one by men. The only position in which women improved their representation **at the expense of men** was production manager. In 1975, the ratio of men to women in this job was 5:1; in 1982, it had become 3:1 in favour of women.

# PART D

## APPENDICES

### 1. QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for answering this questionnaire. Please read the questions carefully, and **CIRCLE** the number of the answer you want to give. Where possible, spaces are provided to write any comments you may have.

If you do not currently work in film, do not fill in Box 2. If you are working at present in film, please do not fill in Box 3.

Thank you once again. Please return the questionnaire in the envelope provided.

		1	2	3	4
<b>Box 1: Work Experience (All to answer)</b>		<b>OFFICE USE ONLY</b>			
Q1. What is the total length of time that you have ever worked in films?					
1. Under 3 months		5			
2. 3-6 months					
3. 6-12 months					
4. 1-2 years					
5. 2-4 years					
6. 4-6 years					
7. 6-8 years					
8. 8 years and over					
Q2. Is your current <b>main occupation</b> connected to film?		6			
1. Yes					
2. No. If No, what is your current main occupation? .....		7 8			
Q3. How did you begin working on films? .....		9 10			
Q4. Please list up to 6 job titles you have performed on films, and the period of time over which you spent doing them. Please start with your first job title.		11 12 23 24			
<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Period of Time</b>				
1. ....	..... mths/yrs	13	14	25	26
2. ....	..... mths/yrs				
3. ....	..... mths/yrs	15	16	27	28
4. ....	..... mths/yrs				
5. ....	..... mths/yrs				
6. ....	..... mths/yrs	17	18	29	30
		19	20	31	32

**Box 2: For Women Currently Working Mainly on Films. (All Others Go to Box 3)**

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ONLY**

Q1. What is the job you mainly do on films now? .....	35	36
Q2. Do you mainly work at present.		
1. Staff — Television		
2. Staff — Commercial Production House		
3. Staff — Government Film Organisation		
4. Freelance		
5. In your own business		
6. On your own projects only		
7. Other, please specify, .....	37	
Q3. How would you define the area of film that you <b>mainly</b> work in?		
1. Independent film		38
2. Features		
3. Commercial Production House		
4. Television (Commercial/ABC)		
5. Government Film Organisation		
Q4. If you had the opportunity, would you want to work in a different area of film?		
1. No ( <b>Go to Q5</b> )		39
2. Yes		
If Yes, which area would you want to work in?		
1. Independent films		40
2. Features		
3. Commercial Production House		
4. Television		
5. Government Film Organisation		
Q5. What proportion of your work has been on films funded by Creative Development or the Women's Film Fund?		41
1. All		
2. Over Half		
3. Half		
4. Under Half		
5. None		
Q6. Are you listed with an agency?		42
1. Yes		
2. No ( <b>Up to two reasons</b> )		
If No, why not?		
1. Not applicable — I have a fulltime job		43
2. Find work easily without an agent		44
3. Don't have enough experience to be listed		
4. Too expensive		
5. Other, please specify, .....		
Q7. How do you get <b>most</b> of your work? ( <b>Up to two ways</b> )		45
1. Not applicable — have a full time job		46
2. Through my agent		
3. Through my own projects		
4. Approaching possible employers		
5. Rely on my previous contacts		
6. Place paid advertisements		
7. Other, please specify .....		
Q8. Given unlimited opportunities and no obstacles (eg lack of experience etc), what sort of job in films would you choose?		
1. What I'm doing at present ( <b>Go to Q10</b> )		47
2. Something else (Please specify, up to two jobs) .....		
.....	48	49
Q9. What would you need to make these jobs possible? ( <b>Up to two</b> )		
1. More training		
2. More experience doing what I am doing now		
3. Traineeship/Attachment to someone in the industry		
4. Financial assistance to purchase equipment		
5. Not having children in my care any longer		
6. More self confidence		
7. Expansion of the film industry		
8. Other, please specify .....	50	51
Q10. In what ways do you think being a woman has affected your employment opportunities in film?		
.....		

**Box 3: For Women Not Currently Working Mainly in Film (All others go to Box 4)**

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Q1. What are the main reasons that you stopped working on films?(Up to two main reasons)

1. I never wanted to work primarily in film
2. Lack of opportunity to develop skills or experience
3. Not enough work
4. Financial insecurity
5. Lack of Training
6. Boredom with the job I was doing
7. Responsibility for children
8. No opportunity to contribute creatively to films
9. Other, please specify, .....

52 53

Q2. Would you like to work on films in the future?

1. No (Go to Box 4)
2. Yes
3. Maybe

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Q3. What job would you want to do? .....

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Q4. What are of film would you want to work in?

1. Independent
2. Features
3. Commercial Production House
4. Television
5. Government Film Organisation

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Q5. Would you want to work,

1. Staff — Television
2. Staff — Commercial Production House
3. Staff — Government Film Organisation
4. Freelance
5. Have own business
6. On own projects only
7. Other, please specify, .....

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Q6. What factors would influence your return to working mainly in films?

.....  
.....

**Box 4: Training (All to answer)**

Q1. What formal qualifications (other than those related to film) do you have? (Up to two)

1. None
2. School Matriculation
3. Diploma/Certificate in Art/Design
4. Secretarial
5. Technical
6. Hairdressing/Dressmaking Diploma/Certificate
7. Degree/Diploma University or CAE

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Q2. Have you done any courses in film?

1. No Go to Q3
2. Yes

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If Yes, which of the following courses have you done?

(Up to two courses)

1. AFTS Fulltime Program
2. Swinburne 3 yr. course
3. Swinburne Grad. Diploma
4. Other CAE course (please specify, .....)
5. AFTS Open Program for Women
6. AFTS Open Program (please specify, .....)
7. Women's Workshops (please specify, .....)
8. Workshop/Summer schools (please specify, .....)
9. Traineeship (please specify, .....)
10. In-service training (please specify, .....)
11. Other, please specify, .....

62 63

Go to Q4. overpage

Q3. What are the reasons that you haven't taken any courses in film? (Up to two reasons)

1. Not interested in working in the film industry
2. Film courses are irrelevant to my working in the industry
3. Cost too much
4. No course available for training I need
5. No courses available in my area of residence
6. Satisfied with my present skills
7. On-the-job training more useful than courses
8. Applied, but not accepted for course (please specify, .....)
9. Applied, accepted and about to begin course (please specify, .....)

64 65

**Box 4 continued**

Q4. Do you want any further formal training?

1. No, (Go to Box 5)
2. Yes

Q5. What type of training do you think most relevant to your needs?

1. Attachment/Traineeship .....
2. Full time course (please specify .....
3. Part-time course, (please specify .....
4. Specific skills workshop (please specify .....
5. Production based workshop (please specify .....
6. Other, please specify, .....

Q6. Would you be interested in attending course or workshop for women only?

1. No
2. Yes

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**Box 5: The Women's Film Fund (All to answer)**

Q1. What do you know about the Women's Film Fund?

1. I have never heard of it before
2. Knew that it existed, but unsure of it's functions
3. Knew of its functions
4. Knew of it's functions and applied to it for funding

Q2. The Women's Film Fund provides financial assistance for the production of films of special interest or usefulness to women, and in which women have the opportunity to work in key roles.

Do you have any comments about the Fund and its functions? .....

Q3. Do you have any comments about how the proportion of women working in films could be increased?

**Box 6: Demographic Details (All to answer)**

Q1. What is your age?

1. Under 20 years
2. 21-25 years
3. 26-30 years
4. 31-35 years
5. 36-40 years
6. 41-50 years
7. 50 years and over

Q2. In what state do you normally reside?

1. N.S.W.
2. Vic.
3. W.A.
4. Tas
5. Qld
6. A.C.T.
7. N.T.
8. S.A.

Q3. What was your average gross income made from films in the last financial year?

1. Nil
2. \$1-\$5,000
3. \$5,001-\$10,000
4. \$10,001-\$15,000
5. \$15,001-\$20,000
6. \$20,000 and over

Q4. Have you any children in your care?

1. No
2. Yes  
If Yes, how many children and what are their ages?
  1. .... under 2 years
  2. .... 5-10 years
  3. .... 10-15 years
  4. .... 15-18 years

Q5. Do you have sole or shared responsibility of care for your children?

1. Sole
2. Shared partly
3. Shared equally

Q6. Do you have any comments on the effect that caring for children has on your working on films?

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## 1. TABLES

**Table 1: Place of Residence**

State	%
New South Wales	62.8
Victoria	14.5
South Australia	9.5
Western Australia	5.7
Tasmania	3.0
Queensland	2.7
Australian Capital Territory	1.2
Northern Territory	0.5
Total no. = 401	

**Table 2: Number of Children in Care**

No. of children	% (of women)
One	53
Two	37
Three	7
Four	2
Five	1
Total no. = 103 women	

**Table 3: Age of children**

Age of children	% (of women)
Under 2 years	28
5-10 years	53
10-15 years	23
15-18 years	20
Total no. = 103 women	

(Note: women having more than one child account for 100%+ total)

**Table 4: Film Qualifications**

Course Done	%
AFTS Fulltime Program	13
Swinburne 3 year course	2
Swinburne graduate course	6
Other CAE course	9
AFTS Open Program for women	12
AFTS Open Program	26
Women's workshops	9
Workshops — summer school	10
Traineeships	6
Inservice training	11
Other	39*

Total no. = 243 women

(\*Note that 39% 'Other' is made up of women who have done courses at places in Australia other than those listed, or courses outside Australia.)

**Table 5: Length of Time Worked in Film**

Time	%
Under 3 months	10.2
3-6 months	6.2
6-12 months	7.7
1-2 years	12.2
2-4 years	18.4
4-6 years	10.9
6-8 years	8.4
8+ years	25.4

Total no. = 401 women

**Table 6: Area of Film Currently Employed in**

Area	%
Independent film	30.6
Feature film	30.9
Commercial production house	9.4
Television	16.7
Government Film Organisation	11.8

Total no. = 288 women

**Table 7: Means of Obtaining Work**

Means	%
Fulltime job — N/A	24
Through agent	11
Through own projects	29
Approaching employers	22
Relying on previous contacts	48
Place paid advertisements	1
Other	8
Total no. = 285 women	

**Table 8: Proportion of Work on Films Funded by Creative Development Branch or Women's Film Fund**

Proportion	%
All	2
Over half	8
Half	2
Under half	30
None	58
Total no. = 284 women	

**Table 9: Preferred Film Occupations**

Preferred occupation category	%
Production	24
Creative	62
Technical	14
Total no. = 161 women	

**Table 10: Means of Making Jobs Possible**

Means	%
More training	34
More experience	35
Traineeship	29
Financial assistance	7
Not having children	8
More confidence	17
Expansion of film industry	11
Other	21
Total no. = 154 women	

**Table 11: Most Relevant Training**

Training	%
Attachment/traineeship	30.9
Fulltime course	8.7
Part-time course	11.7
Specific skills workshop	25.3
Production-based workshop	8.7
Other	12.5
Total no. = 265 women	

### **3. FILM OCCUPATIONS**

#### **Categories and Levels**

#### **PRODUCTION**

##### **Level I:**

production accountant, producer, executive producer, associate producer, production manager, co-producer, assistant director(1)

##### **Level II:**

assistant production accountant, location manager, assistant director(2), production co-ordinator, props buyer, publicity, script assistant, unit manager, unit publicist, wardrobe buyer, runner, production secretary, production assistant

#### **CREATIVE**

##### **Level I:**

animator, art director, director of photography, casting director, choreographer, director, associate director, dubbing editor, production designer, editor, music director, script/screenwriter, sound editor, underwater photographer, wardrobe designer

##### **Level II:**

assistant animator, assistant art director, 2 unit camera, additional camera, casting consultant, colour design, design consultant, hairdresser, location casting, makeup, mixer, props research, script consultant, set decorator, stills, scenic artist titles, wardrobe assistant, wardrobe consultant, research assistant, assistant makeup, design assistant, background layouts, art director's assistant, animation checking, animation painter

#### **TECHNICAL**

##### **Level I:**

camera operator, gaffer, negative matcher, sound recordist, special effects

##### **Level II:**

boom operator, best boy, camera assistant, clapper/loader, continuity, assistant dubbing editor, assistant editor, electrix, focus puller, grip, assistant sound editor, wrangler, editing assistant, prop standby, set construction, transfers, wardrobe standby, wrangler assistant