

**Funding Female Features: Crowdfunding for Gender Equity in the Film Industry**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The U.S. feature film industry as a gendered organization, in which networks bound by race, gender, class and overt heterosexuality tend to exclude members of other groups. Hollywood filmmaking is a production process with high uncertainty about how to produce hits, resulting in discretion given to managers to use their personal networks to limit risk. This combination of organizational qualities limits diversity among filmmakers, such that previous research has shown women remain vastly underrepresented both on-screen and behind the camera. Crowdfunding has recently emerged as an alternative to corporate funding and traditional venture capitalism, where people donate small amounts of money online to fund business projects. Given underrepresentation of marginalized groups in the film industry and filmmakers' difficulty funding their projects, I show the use of crowdfunding to answer (1) whether it offers a more gender-equal opportunity than direct funding by major studios and (2) whether the films produced through crowdfunding are more female-centered when compared to non-crowdfunded films. Using a sample of 124 crowdfunded and traditionally funded feature films, released between 2012 and 2014; I found that crowdfunded films were more likely to employ female filmmakers and protagonist(s) than traditionally funded films. Additionally crowdfunded films had more filmmakers who are racial minorities, and filmmakers and protagonist(s) who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual. These results suggest that while women are far from achieving equity in the film industry as filmmakers or protagonists, crowdfunding may provide an alternative avenue for attaining financing for films, outside of the structure of Hollywood studios.

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## Statement of the Problem

This thesis will shed light on whether the exclusion of women from traditional Hollywood funding encourages women to turn to crowdfunding.

Because crowdfunding has only recently emerged as an option for financing creative endeavors, it is unclear whether it may open possibilities for women or maintain current gender organizational patterns. Nevertheless, due to the relative exclusion of women from direct funding by mainstream Hollywood studios, and the greater diversity of protagonists and storylines allowed by independent feature productions, I hypothesize that crowdfunding may provide an alternative to studio funding for groups least likely to obtain that. Although crowdfunding resulted from the long development of crowdsourcing and community fundraising, its newest incarnation provides greater possibilities due to its Internet based platform.

The questions I hope to answer are:

- Does crowdfunding offer more gender-equal opportunity than direct funding by major studio does?
- Are the films<sup>1</sup> produced through crowdfunding more female-centered or feminist<sup>2</sup> when compared to all non-crowdfunded films?

To examine the relation between movie financing on diversity of filmmakers and protagonists, I will collect data from several sources. The sampling frame for non-crowdfunded films includes the top 100 grossing films for 2012, 2013, and 2014, as listed on Box Office Mojo. From within this frame, I will select a random sample of movies to match the number of crowdfunded films

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<sup>1</sup> The term “film” refers to fictional, feature motion pictures, which average about two hours in length, which are now predominately digital in form.

<sup>2</sup> In that the characters in the film are interested gender inequality, either in pursuing gender equality or addressing existing forms of gender inequality.

released in each of these years. The total sample will consist of approximately 62 crowdfunded films and 62 non-crowdfunded films. Films will be coded for gender of filmmakers, writers, directors, and starring actors using data from IMDB.

## **Review of Relevant Literature**

### Gendered Organizations

The theory of gendered organizations explains how gender inequality is built into production companies in ways that do not all involve conscious or even direct discrimination (Acker 2012). Institutions organize participation around conceptualizations of gender in ways that reinforce a gendered division of labor and keep women in subordinate positions. Gendered organizations maintain cultures that reify gender identities and keep women from ascending to positions of power, even when staffed by people who might consciously oppose discrimination. As Acker (1992:567) puts it, “The term ‘gendered institutions’ means that gender is present in the processes, practices, images and ideologies, and distributions of power in the various sectors of social life.”

This framework distinguishes between the gendering and the gender makeup of an occupation. The sex composition of an occupation is the relative proportion of men or women who hold jobs within it (Britton 2000). Gender typing, on the other hand, “is the process through which occupations come to be seen as appropriate for workers with masculine or feminine characteristics, that is, occupations could be said to be feminized, masculinized, or, more generically, gendered” (Britton, 2000:424). This gendering, rather than the gender makeup of an occupation, contributes to the subordination of women within it. Davies (1996:669) also notes that the subordination of women denies, “qualities culturally assigned to femininity,” placing a

higher cultural value on masculinity. In describing the gendered role of managers, Kanter (1997:22-23) uses the ‘masculine ethic’:

This ‘masculine ethic’ elevates the traits assumed to belong to some men to necessities for effective management: a tough-minded approach to problems; analytic abilities to abstract and plan; a capacity to set aside personal, emotional considerations in the interests of task accomplishment; and a cognitive superiority in problem-solving and decision-making. These characteristics supposedly belonged to men; but then, practically all managers were men from the beginning. However, when women tried to enter management jobs, the ‘masculine ethic’ was invoked as an exclusionary principle.

Through the creation of a masculine ethic, managerial positions become gendered as masculine, reducing the tendency of employers to hire women to fill them.

This thesis will use this perspective on organizations that produce Hollywood films to argue that they are gendered, to extend the findings about hiring to practices of funding projects, and then to show how an alternative means of funding film projects offers women greater opportunity to enter the industry as filmmakers.

### *The Film Industry as a Gendered Organization*

Acker’s (1990) model of gendered organizations centers on gendered division of labor, such as in the division of film project personnel into above the line employees and below the line employees, distinguished in terms of their importance to the funding of a project. Above the line employees consist of directors, writers, principal actors, producers, whose roles in the development of a production are of sufficient importance that their compensations are determined in advance of principal photography. These roles are generally inhabited by men (Lauzen 2014; Smith et al. 2013a). Below-the-line employees include everyone else paid to contribute to production and post-production. While some of these jobs are arguably gender

neutral, such as editors or location scouters, others have underlying gendered ideals: cameraman, best boy, costume designer, hair stylist, and makeup artist.

Bielby and Bielby (1996:267) argued that “the women and men who finance, write, produce, market, and distribute feature films and television programming are ‘doing gender’ in a way that simultaneously shapes the work experiences and opportunities of those who participate in the industry and determines the images of gender consumed by a global audience.” Indeed, Hollywood talent agent, Bettye McCartt reported that,

When we get a call for a writer, they’ll say, “Who do you have who can write an action-adventure piece?” If I suggest a woman, well they laugh at me. There are certain genres where a woman won’t even be considered. By the same token, they’ll call and say, “What woman writers do you have for a piece on so-and-so.” (Writers Guild of America West 1990:12)

Her anecdote illustrates a larger pattern, in which, studios seek screenwriters based on gendered assumptions about abilities to write kinds of scripts (Bielby and Bielby 1996). McCartt is belittled for suggesting people who do not conform to gendered ideals. This reprimand illustrates how personnel reinforce gender norms like female submission or correct each other for non-conforming suggestions. The Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film found that women were most represented in documentary films and comedy, women were least represented in action and horror genres (Lauzen 2015). Research on spec scripts<sup>3</sup> has shown that there has been a continual decline in sold spec scripts written by women since at least 1991, with 22% of sold spec scripts having been written by women in 1992, 18% in 2002, and 9% in 2012 (Myers 2013).

Usage of such qualifiers as ‘women director’ or ‘female writer’ are common. As director Randa Haines remarked “Every women working maybe even still today feels that she’s carrying

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<sup>3</sup> Spec Scripts are scripts written without initial compensation with the intention of selling them once completed.



an added responsibility, that every time a woman succeeds at doing something, it opens the door a little bit further for everybody else, and if you fail, it closes the door just that little bit...you're carrying a race of people" (Hillier 1994:127). These women are not just directors; they are female directors responsible for the well-being and success of an entire population of women. In the script, the foundation of all films, there are gendered assumptions that men and women are differently qualified for certain genres of film. Women employed as screenwriters find themselves relegated to a smaller set of films.

Early film was widely understood not as art but as lucre instead, where women were a bare majority of screenwriters in silent-era Hollywood. A mid-century shift, from popular perspective of pure entertainment to that of art to be judged based on its aesthetic merits, led a large number of people with artistic backgrounds to Hollywood, where their participation transformed the industry (Mukerji 1978). As sound was introduced and movies became more lucrative, male writers invaded the industry, and the masculinity of the craft became institutionalized (Bielby and Bielby 1996). During this time film turned, in common conceptions of it, from mere leisure to high culture; and women found themselves largely pushed from the creation of increasingly high-status film, replaced by men, who today continue to take the vast majority of creative roles. So, as the economic power and cultural importance of film changed the industry became more male dominated (Bielby and Bielby 1996).

Bielby and Bielby (2002) have also shown that women in Hollywood filmmaking have been paid less than their male counterparts; and, as of the early 2000s, women film writers were outnumbered by men four to one. Recent emails released during the Sony Pictures 2014 hacking scandal have exposed the maintenance of such pay gaps between male and female actors and executives. Both Amy Adams and Jennifer Lawrence earned 7 points in back-end profits while

their male co-stars earned 9 points for the 2013 film *American Hustle*, despite Lawrence's starring role in 2012's massive hit *The Hunger Games*, which had arguably made her the biggest current box-office draw in the cast (Boot 2014).

Another revelation from the Sony emails is the salary disparity among the top earning executives. Of the top seventeen paid employees earning over \$1 million annually, Amy Pascal, the co-Chair of Sony, was the only woman; and there were only two men of color (Roose 2014b). Columbia Pictures, housed within Sony Pictures also has a male and female co-President, Michael De Luca and Hannah Minghella. The leaked emails revealed that although De Luca and Minghella have the same job title and responsibilities, De Luca has a base pay of \$1.5 million and earned \$2.4 million in 2014 while Minghella has a base pay of \$850 thousand and earned \$1.6 million in 2014; Minghella has also been employed with the studio for nine years longer than De Luca (Roose 2014a). In a recent blog post lamenting the state of female directors in Hollywood, director Lexi Alexander wrote

Gender discrimination in Hollywood goes far beyond women simply not getting the gig. It is reflected in movie budgets, P&A budgets, the size of distribution deals (if a female director's movie is lucky enough to score one), official and unofficial internship or mentorship opportunities, union eligibility, etc. ... I don't care if Hollywood dishes out the same impossible odds...as long as people are honest about the game we're playing...But don't tell me I'm not a wildcard when I so obviously am...Because then you're not only jerking me off, you are also dehumanizing me by not extending even an ounce of respect. (Alexander 2014)

In commenting on her experiences in Hollywood, Lexi Alexander notes many of the aspects that make the film industry a gendered organization, and individuals' inability to recognize that opportunities available to women are limited which allows it to reproduce these inequalities.

The Celluloid Ceiling Project from the Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film at San Diego State University found that, in the top 250 films of 2013, women occupied 16% of behind-the-camera roles including directing, writing, producing, editing, and

cinematography (Lauzen 2014). This was a decline from 18% in 2012 and 19% in 2001. They also found that women were also only 6% of writers and 10% of directors in the top 250 films of 2013 (Lauzen 2014). 2014 saw an increase to 7% of female writers and 11% of female directors (Lauzen 2015). A century of industrial change appears to have cemented male domination of the industry, leading us to expect that female filmmakers might innovate funding sources as they run up against such barriers.

### Networking in the Film Industry

According to Williams, Mullins, and Kilanski (2012) recent neoliberal shifts in workplaces have altered the organizational logic of occupations, placing greater emphasis on teamwork, personalized career maps, and formal and informal networks of contacts who pass along job opportunities, recommendations, and mentorship. This is especially relevant in the film industry where work is comprised of short-term contract based projects rather than long-term job assignments.

Employment in the entertainment industry is also largely at will, such that employers can hire without going through immense interview and vetting processes. Studio executives are also “most likely to imitate prior successful projects and to rely on rules of thumb that tend to typecast women writers” (Bielby and Bielby 1996: 249). Due to these tendencies toward nonrational exclusion by employers who need not account for their decisions, personal networks have become vital to those seeking jobs. Networking is “the process of developing and using your contacts for information, advice and moral support as you pursue your career” (DeWine and Casbolt 1983). Successful networking can be defined as contact with powerful people who can advance careers (Williams, Kilanski, and Muller 2014: 461). Network theory argues that,

“workers’ structural location affects their attractiveness as network members, their power over network members, their access to network members, and their time to interact with others, all of which affect the amount of help they receive from their network members” (McGuire 2002: 305). Due to the locations of many women in workplace hierarchies and the tendency for their careers to stall, women are less likely to be attractive network members. Physical location also has tremendous implications, as the film industry is highly concentrated in Hollywood (Scott 2002).

Perhaps as a result, several researchers have found that women’s occupational networks tend to have fewer men and fewer ties to people in power, whether the networks were formal or informal (Burke, Rothstein, and Bristor 1995; Wang 2009). Williams, Muller, and Kilanski (2012: 565) found that not only are occupational networks gendered and racialized but also “the most powerful networks are almost exclusively male” and they organize gatherings around traditionally male activities like hunting or golf. Burke, Rothstien, and Bristor (1995) found that women lack access to informal networks and relationships with their male colleagues; they also asserted that both men and women prefer to interact with those of the same gender.

Workplace changes in the new economy reflect patterns that have existed in the film industry since the 1940s. Jones (1996: 58) asserts that, “For over two decades, work in the film industry has been organized around project and informal personal networks, rather than around traditional hierarchies and in-house human resource departments.” Each project “is a separate and distinct commodity” that is released into an uncertain market, and cannot provide any form of job security or ensure benefit to reputation (Faulkner and Anderson 1987). Most filmmakers rely heavily on informal networks for learning about open positions. Often, jobs are not

advertised; and being outside of the densest networks leaves people unaware of opportunities (Grugulis and Stoyanova 2012). Physical location may also effect access to networks.

Candace Jones (1996) characterizes networks in the film industry as having a mutual responsibility and interdependence, while operating in an environment where opportunities are uncertain. Informal networks in this environment can function because members acknowledge that, when they hear of a job opportunity from someone within their network they are expected to reciprocate that behavior and look out for others; hence there is a mutual responsibility. In their study, Grugulis and Stoyanova (2012: 1317) had one respondent who stated that they regularly receive emails from people in their networks looking for jobs or wanting them to pass out their CV; and the same respondent said that when they hear of a job opening they email everyone in their network to pass it along.

Due to the tight turnaround in the film industry, many jobs listings are not released publicly; and so networking is the predominate method of learning about a job opening. Women's exclusion from these networks prevents them not only from learning about their crafts and how to navigate the industry but also from potential jobs, and because men are more likely to be in more powerful networks, this also prevents women from job opportunities in higher budget films. The cumulative nature of reputation, and its dependence on a track record of previous work, means that a little bit of exclusion early can have large consequences over the life of a career. Faulkner and Anderson (1987: 907) found that every film credit an individual has "increases a person's chances for future work, and each money-earning production increases a person's chances for future contracting with colleagues." So while having film credits helps a filmmaker gain more work, having credit for a film with a large profit margin helps people not only gain work opportunities but also makes them more marketable in networks with more

connections. Because age may be highly correlated with a filmmaker's experience, age and number of previous film credits may act as proxies for one another, marking status within the film industry.

Women's exclusion from more powerful networks may not only negatively effects job opportunities and career earnings but also filmmakers' opportunities to focus stories on protagonists who are not as white and male as most above the line personnel in Hollywood are. Inequalities in Hollywood networking affect the stories told.

As a culture producing industry, Hollywood has no formula predict the success of its releases. In *Adventures in the Screen Trade*, screenwriter William Goldman (1983) wrote, "Nobody knows anything," asserting that the success of films were flukes and not predictable. Therefore, the film industry relies on the track record and reputation of creators as a predictor of success (Faulkner and Anderson 1987; Ryan and Wentworth 1999: 184). Given the lack of female directors, writers, and producers, women may find it more difficult to develop a track record as capable filmmakers. While some higher profile female filmmakers, like Kathryn Bigelow, may consistently find work, the overall lack of female filmmakers inhibits women's ability to secure behind-the-camera positions, amounting to a form of institutional discrimination. Bielby and Bielby (1990: 249) characterize the employment process in the film industry as having "high levels of ambiguity, risk, and uncertainty." As Charles Perrow (1967) notes high variability causes systems to become unanalyzable; as such those in control of a film's production have a great amount of discretion in hiring decisions.

## Diversity in Film

Studies of Hollywood production have shown that, when film directors are members of marginalized populations, their films are more likely to include characters that are also members of those marginalized populations. Smith, Choueiti, Scofield, and Pieper (2013b) found that, among the top grossing films in 2012, 76.3% of characters were white, while African Americans were the second largest ethnic group making up 10.8% of all characters, Hispanics were 4.2% of movie characters, Asians were 5% of all movie characters, and 3.6% of movie characters were other ethnic groups. In 2012, 28.4% of characters in the 100 top grossing films were female (Smith, Choueiti, Scofield, and Pieper 2013a).

In a study by Smith et al. (2013a), researchers also coded the top 100 grossing films of 2012 for the sex of individuals working behind-the-screen; 4.1% of directors were female, 12.2% of writers were female, 20% were female, and 16.7% of films had a female director, writer, and producer. In another study Smith (2010) found that when the director of a film was female the film was more likely to have on-screen representation of female characters. Smith (2010:6-7) suggests that, "It may be the case that female directors are more likely to diversify their casts with regard to character sex than male directors. Or, it may be the case that female auteurs are drawn to scripts and stories featuring more girls and women." Like with gender, Smith et al. (2013b) found that the race of a film's director was significantly related to the depiction of racial minorities on the screen. Specifically when a film has a black director there is a 42.7% increase in black characters with speaking roles (Smith et al. 2013b).

Lauzen and Dozier (2005) found that female characters are limited in their range of employment on screen, often occupying lower-status jobs with less power than male characters (438). Previous research has also found that women are more likely to be portrayed in a sexual

manner compared to men (Smith et al., 2015). However, Bazzini, McIntosh, Smith, Cook, and Harris (1997) found that old female characters were less likely to be shown as sexual compared to older male characters. Relationship status may suggest sexual desirability of characters distinguished by gender.

Major media conglomerates market products to the widest ranges of the general population (Gomery 2003). Diversity in race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation is understood to reduce the interest of white and male audiences in the U.S., and anti-black audiences on other continents, limiting success. For that reason, diversity in casting is often not as high of a priority as favoring returns on investments by appealing to whites and men with stars who look like them. The recently leaked Sony emails also revealed producers' concerns over the possibility that black star Denzel Washington could fail to draw foreign audiences, as black actors "don't play well overseas," where a sizeable portion of profits come from (Georgantopoulos 2014). However, recent research has shown that increased diversity in casting leads to increased revenues (Bunche 2015). Suggesting that pure economic efficiency cannot explain patterns of discrimination, the relative exclusion of filmmakers and protagonists who are not white, male, and heterosexual owes to more than market forces.

### Independent Production and Crowdfunding

In the face of these difficulties in taking roles as filmmakers in the mainstream Hollywood system, many filmmakers have worked within the much less well capitalized realm of independent production, often making films that focus on protagonists rarely featured in studio productions. For this purpose, they innovate diverse means of funding, hoping to patch together sufficient funds for small productions, often from several sources each.



Budgets for independent projects can vary greatly and can be raised in several different manners, including from private investors or high-interest bank loans. Such funding constraints keep the average budget for an independent film at about \$250,000. For example, Spike Lee's *She's Gotta Have It* cost \$80,000, while Robert Rodriguez's *El Mariachi* had a budget of \$7,000 (Pierson 1995).

Mainstream studio and independent projects also differ in the roles that producers play. Some producers act as auteurs, who have influence over the content of the films themselves, acting in part as writers and directors (Meir 2009). Such auteur producers are less common in studio-funded films and more common in independent films, where producers secure financing and distribution to theaters.

Research on the music industry has found that major labels often use boutique agencies to cater to niche markets, such as smaller urban music labels nested within major labels. Negus (1999) showed how these smaller labels provide close connection to the target audiences while also having the backing, stability, and reputation of major labels. He notes "changes in popular music are driven by the activities of independent companies...it is often easier to identify a new sound and to participate in its circulation from outside the bureaucratic gatekeeper-riddled systems" (496). As in the music business, innovations and experimental films often develop outside of the heavily bureaucratic, oligopolistic system. However, to achieve widespread theatrical distribution a major studio must distribute the film. Distribution by a studio may require content editing for marketability or to receive a particular MPAA rating.

The advent of the Internet created alternatives to traditional business venture capitalism, which focused on raising money from highly capitalized patrons such as banks, wealthy

individuals, and corporations looking to expand. Crowdfunding is an innovative method of donation where people can donate small amounts of money online, to fund business projects in an unusually collective manner. Crowdfunding campaigns have occurred on behalf of projects ranging from charities, social-service providers, cafés, books, designers of apps or gaming systems, music albums, to feature and documentary films.

There are several different crowdfunding models including basic, reward, and investment. Crowdfunding allows creators to maintain complete control over their projects without being accountable to donors or investors. An example of *basic* crowdfunding is the website GoFundMe. In basic crowdfunding models, there is no potential financial gain, so donors give to projects based purely on which projects align with their interests.

Two of the most popular websites to employ the *reward* model of crowdfunding are Kickstarter and Indiegogo, where donors often receive small gifts in exchange for their donations, like a signed copy of the album they supported or a walk-on role in a film they helped fund.

*Investment-based* crowdfunding is a newer model, where funders are given equity in a company in exchange for their financial assistance. With investment-based crowdfunding, donors not only help a business or project that they have interest in but there is also the potential of a reward with the possibility to earn money in the future from their investment. An example of an investment crowdfunding website is Crowdfunder.

With all three models of crowdfunding campaigns, creators must also choose between all-or-nothing and keep-it-all platforms. On all-or-nothing sites creators must raise the entirety of their goal whereas in keep-it-all platforms creators take whatever they raise. In addition, crowdfunding site fees are a percentage of a creator's goal; keep-it-all sites tend to take a higher

percentage of funds raised while all-or-nothing sites tend to take a lower percentage, or nothing if the goal is not met.

Crowdfunding is often noted for its democratic nature. Potential donors choose projects to support based on the project's appeal and limited information that is included on each webpage. As noted by Ryan and Hughes (2006), self-production of media conveys a sense of democracy, where audiences come to feel as though the production of a specific piece of media is removed from conventional industry and has an element of authenticity and is democratic in nature, and is representative of the people. Because of technological advancements, programs and equipment necessary for self-production is readily available and increasingly affordable, which allows a greater number of people access to the creation of media and involvement in independent film production (Ryan and Hughes 2006). Ordinary people donate to crowdfunding campaigns from their limited disposable incomes, so when analyzing the failure or success of a campaign, the connection that a project has to the preferences of potential donors is particularly important. Unlike with traditional investment, crowdfunding is the proof of concept and the acquiring of capital in one step, given that those donating are future consumers of the product. A product that would not perform on the market because of lack of consumer interest will be less likely to succeed in a crowdfunding campaign.

Motivations for creators to use crowdfunding include control over their product and built-in marketing and promotion. A major deterrent for creators using crowdfunding is lack of control over intellectual property, with the chance of intellectual theft a higher risk in online settings (Valanciene and Jegeleviciute 2013). Motivations for donors include rewards (including returns from investments), altruism, supporting a cause, or to feel closer to a community. Deterrents for

donors include distrust of project creators who may not use funds in the manner that they advertised or lack of faith that projects will be successful (Gerber and Hui 2013).

Some filmmakers are rejecting the premise that self-production leads to inferior projects and that if a film can't get made the 'proper way', maybe it shouldn't be made at all. They turn to crowdfunding to raise funds to insure that lack of studio interest does not prevent stories from being told (Bartlett 2013:39). Often when filmmakers use crowdfunding they already have funds from other sources; and the crowdfunding campaign is needed to supplement that capital (Chrystie, Finifter, Scott, and Stokes 2013).

Crowdfunding also allows filmmakers to maintain creative control over their product, whereas with studios typically maintain final say over films that they fund more exclusively. In fact, more filmmakers may be flocking to independent film and crowdfunding;

If we assume that highly creative artists are among those least likely to want to conform to the vision of others, it is reasonable to expect that the most creative of young artists would avoid the fetters of the traditional producer-centered production process and gravitate instead toward a decentralized artist-centered system of self-production. (Ryan and Hughes 2006:251)

If this assumption is valid, then younger and newer filmmakers may seek to retain control over their creative processes, perhaps by, crowdfunding, which will also allow them to directly interact with fans and potential consumers (Frost 2013). In addition to retaining creative control, crowdfunding also requires filmmakers create a fan base as they raise funds. Many crowdfunding websites have elements of social media, with comment boards where creators can interact with donors and links to existing social media sites. This allows crowdfunded projects to build communities of supporters, which can aid in grassroots promotion.

Specific subject matter may also incline individuals to donate to a project. In certain cases:

Supporters are not only financially supporting a film, but also its cause. Thus crowdfunding and crowd investment schemes usually attract campaigning and issue-led film. The financial aspect is not the only benefit of crowd investment and crowdfunding schemes, and building a community plays a huge part both in promotion and the production and distribution processes. (Sørensen 2012:739)

Given the lack of representation of marginalized populations in studio films, projects that feature the narratives of marginalized groups may garner more attention and attract more donations.

Filmmakers tend to use crowdfunding at one of two points during film production, either in the pre-production phase or during post-production. The use of crowdfunding during post-production to raise funds for editing or festivals, which help gain distribution deals can be more attractive for donors who are able to see part of the finished project that they are donating to rather than just a treatment (Frost 2013).

In sum, women's status in the film industry is marginal, with few women occupying positions as studio executives (Siegemund-Broka 2015). In addition, exclusion from powerful Hollywood networks prevents women from accessing the same opportunities as their male counterparts. In recent years, independent filmmakers have turned to crowdfunding in hopes that crowdfunding's more democratic nature will allow financing without studio oversight. Crowdfunding's autonomy from studio financing networks may grant women a more equitable position in the film industry, compared to traditional forms of financing film production and release.

Based on previous literature, outlined above I examine the following two research questions:

- Is a more gender-equal opportunity offered with the use of crowdfunding compared to direct funding by major studios?

- Are more female-centered or feminist films produced with the use of crowdfunding compared to all non-crowdfunded films?

My first research question tests the hypothesis that crowdfunding offers a more gender-equal opportunity than direct funding by major studios by looking at if the funding source of a film is dependent on the gender of the filmmaker. My second research question tests the hypothesis that films produced through crowdfunding tell stories more likely to center on female protagonists, examining whether the funding source depends upon the gender of the protagonist(s). While examining each research question I controlled for the race of the filmmaker to assure that any effect was due to gender and not race as both variables are identity markers and may influence the likelihood of a filmmaker getting their film financed, and the region the film was produced to ensure that the model was assessing gender and not the location of the production as that is likely to have significant effect on the type of financing that is available to a filmmaker.

## **Description of Methods**

### **Sample**

The sample includes feature films that debuted in 2012, 2013, and 2014.<sup>4</sup> All feature films listed as having been crowdfunded on IMDB are included in the sample. A sample of non-crowdfunded films were randomly selected from the top grossing 100 films of 2012, 2013, and 2014 to match the number of crowdfunded films that came out in each of those years. The list of the top 100 films were procured from the Box Office Mojo website. The total sample consists of 62 crowdfunded films and 62 non-crowdfunded films.

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<sup>4</sup> The earliest crowdfunding films began to see theatrical releases around 2010 and 2011, with larger numbers of crowdfunded films being released in 2012, hence the start date of the sample.

## Description of variables

For the purpose of this study, filmmakers are those parties who initiate searches for funding for particular projects. Filmmakers of the crowdfunded films are easier to identify as they appear in direct appeals to the public, whereas non-crowdfunded films can be initiated by studios or taken over by them after initial producers depart projects. Studios may even be party to conflicts that result in the departures of filmmakers from projects. For example, I identified Gillian Robespierre as the filmmaker of *Obvious Child* and Justin Simien as the filmmaker of *Dear White People*, both crowdfunded films. However, the filmmaker of *Iron Man 3* is less obviously a single party; Stan Lee wrote the original comic and assisted with the film but was not responsible for initiating production of the film. In the case that studio personnel initiated the initial production of a film, I treated the studio as the filmmaker and coded them as male. However, a project can be driven by multiple filmmakers, in which case I used trade journal announcements of producer activity to determine who initiated a film project and sought funding and coded that individual as the filmmaker. In cases where studios took over film production in progress, I coded the initial producer who sought financing, as it was their effort that initiated the project. I coded the gender of filmmakers as male, mostly male, evenly male and female, mostly female, or female. Race of filmmakers was coded as white and non-white, the specific race of a filmmaker was noted when easily discernable. In addition to the filmmaker, I also coded the gender, race, age, sexuality and professional training for the writer and director of each film to determine if film school education had an effect on funding source. Coding was based on articles and filmmaker interviews gathered from trade journals, as well as information listed on IMDB. Gender and race were coded either through appearance or as stated in interviews. Age was discerned through date of birth as listed on IMDB, in the few cases when unavailable age was

coded as missing. Consequently, only filmmakers who were openly gay at the time of data collection, speaking publically about their sexuality or having a same sex partner listed on IMDB were coded as such.

Coding for protagonist(s) was based on the top billed actor(s), with the most screen time, whose character's decisions drove the action of the film. The gender of the protagonist for both single protagonist and ensemble casts was coded as male, equally male and female, or female. Films with a majority male ensemble casts were coded as male and films with a majority female ensemble casts were coded as female. Race of the protagonist was coded as white and non-white, the specific race of the protagonist was noted when easily discernable. The age, relationship status, and employment status of protagonists were also coded.

I coded crowdfunded films for the percentage of their goal that was raised, as stated on their crowdfunding campaign page.<sup>5</sup> Crowdfunded films were also coded for the progress of the production at the time that the crowdfunding campaign was launched; pre-production, post-production, or seeking distribution (i.e., festival circuit). The location in which crowdfunded films were produced was also coded, as filmmakers may be more likely to turn to crowdfunding when they are physically outside of Hollywood production. Films were coded for inclusion of political storytelling, where the protagonist(s) was engaged in action that addressed some form of structural inequality, pertaining to but not limited to gender, race, class, or sexuality. This action must have also been imperative to the overall plot of the film. It was also noted if the political storytelling was specifically feminist in nature or pertaining to gender based structural inequality.

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<sup>5</sup> Films using IndieGogo may earn less than their stated goal. Kickstarter films, due to the website's all-or-nothing policy, may only earn 100% or more of their stated goal. Therefore films that attempted to use Kickstarter but failed to reach 100% of their goal are not included in the sample because they do not use money gained through crowdfunding in their production.



Coding for all variables was based on IMDB profiles, filmmakers' personal websites, or published interviews. Sexuality of filmmakers was based on their public disclosure of their sexual orientation. As such, it is likely that several filmmakers in this sample may be LGBT yet in the closet and therefore coded as heterosexual.

### Analytic Strategy

The data in this study was analyzed using chi-square and binary logistic regressions to assess the relationship between funding source and gender of the filmmaker and protagonist(s). Cross tabulations were used to examine the relationship between funding source gender of filmmaker and protagonist(s), age of filmmaker and protagonist(s), race of filmmaker and protagonist(s), and the sexuality of the filmmaker and protagonist(s), due to the dichotomous nature of each variable. A three-way cross tabulation was also run to study the relationship between funding source, filmmaker gender, and protagonist(s) gender. Chi-Square was used to analyze the significance of each model (Sweet and Grace-Martin 2012: 110).

A binary logistic regression was used to measure the relationship between funding models and the prevalence of exclusion of women as fundees and women as protagonists. Results were interpreted as odds ratios and variability was measured with a Nagelkerke R-square (Sweet and Grace-Martin 2012).

### Results

The majority of filmmakers were male regardless of the source of the film's financing. Nineteen percent of filmmakers who utilized crowdfunding were female compared to six percent of films that did not use crowdfunding, as shown in Table 1. Likewise, 27% of crowdfunded

films had female protagonists, compared to 13% female protagonist in studio films, as seen in Table 2. Table 3 shows that the majority of male protagonists appear in movies made by men, and the majority of female protagonists occur when the filmmaker is both female and uses crowdfunding. While female filmmakers still do not find parity with the use of crowdfunding, these results affirm my two hypotheses that crowdfunding offers women more opportunities as filmmakers and protagonists than other sources of financing.

The average age of filmmakers of crowdfunded and studio films was between 30 and 49 (Table 4). The average age range of crowdfunded protagonists was 18-29, while the average age range of studio protagonists was 30-49, as seen in Table 5. Overall crowdfunded filmmakers and protagonists tended to be younger than their non-crowdfunded counterparts, as was expected since crowdfunders may be more likely to use crowdfunding given their lack of previous credits.

For both crowdfunded and studio films the majority of filmmakers and protagonists were white (Table 6 and 7). However, crowdfunded films had double the amount of non-white filmmakers, with ten filmmakers of color. This however did not impact the race of protagonists, as studio films had slightly more protagonists of color at eleven, compared to the ten crowdfunded non-white protagonists. White non-crowdfunded filmmakers were more likely to make films featuring non-white protagonists than white crowdfunders. The correlation between the filmmaker's race and the protagonist's race was significant, however the magnitude of this relationship is likely due to the number of white filmmakers with white protagonists.

Furthermore, while crowdfunded projects are more likely to begin with the filmmaker who then creates a script, studio films are more likely to start with a script and then find a filmmaker who seeks funding for the project. Therefore, the lower number of non-white filmmakers of non-crowdfunded films does not necessarily dictate a low number of non-white protagonists. The

probability of the race of the filmmaker being related to the race of the protagonist is more likely in crowdfunded films. This finding also shows that while crowdfunding may offer slightly increased opportunities for women, those advantages may not extend to race.

As shown on Tables 9 and 10, the one variable on which crowdfunded films most differed from studio films, in their proportionate representation, was sexuality. The numbers are small; but crowdfunded projects involve more openly LGB filmmakers and protagonists: eleven LGB filmmakers, compared to one among the studio films; and nine LGB protagonists compared to none in studio films. Neither sample had filmmakers or protagonists who were transgender. This finding is similar to that of Smith et al. (2015), which found that in the top 100 grossing films of 2014, of all the speaking characters only 19 were lesbian, gay, or bisexual characters, and none were transgender. However, in the past year increased public recognition of transgender identity has aided in the release of several television shows, films, and documentaries featuring transgender protagonists.

Sixty-one percent of crowdfunded protagonists and eighty-six percent of studio protagonists were employed. Fifty-three percent of female crowdfunded protagonists compared to sixty-seven percent of crowdfunded male protagonists, and seventy-five percent of female studio protagonists employed compared to eighty-nine percent of studio male protagonists. In both samples women were less likely to be employed than their male counterparts, confirming previous research (Lauzen and Dozier 2005).

Thirty-seven percent of crowdfunded protagonists were in romantic relationships, while forty-seven percent of studio protagonists were in romantic relationships. Twenty-four percent of female crowdfunded protagonists were in relationships compared to fifty percent of female studio protagonists. While previous research suggested that younger female protagonists were

more likely to be sexual (Smith et al., 2015), female crowdfunded protagonists were less likely to be in a relationship than either female studio protagonists or male protagonists.

Only one crowdfunded film made an overt feminist statement, however six other films made political statements about issues concerning race, LGBT status, and disability. There were four studio films that made a political statement on issues concerning class and the environment. In films where there was a political statement, characters were either directly engaged in some form of activism, or the plot revolved around protagonists who were engaged in these issues in an unconventional way, depicting perspectives that are often invisible. For example, the film *I Do* provides a commentary on both immigration and gay rights, as the protagonist, an immigrant in America, is unable to marry his partner and remain in the country. Several of these filmmakers also stated explicitly in interviews that their goal was to create a film that was a commentary of a social issue and to make their audiences expand their understanding of these topics.

Fifty percent of filmmakers who turned to crowdfunding had no previous credits. Of the other 50% of filmmakers who used crowdfunding, they had an average of 3 previous credits. Filmmakers who did not use crowdfunded had an average of 16 previous credits, not including films that originated within the studio. As expected, crowdfunders are new filmmakers, lacking in experience and therefore less likely to have close networks ties that would allow them to seek financing from studios. For crowdfunded films, 31% were produced in Hollywood, 29% were produced in New York, and 40% were produced in another region. Confirming expectations, the majority of crowdfunded films originated outside of Hollywood. Due to their physical distance from Hollywood studios these filmmakers lacked industry networks that would allow them to have access to individuals who could aid in securing financing, forcing them to seek alternative methods of fundraising for which crowdfunding was their option.

For crowdfunded films, the median of the intended goal raised was 108%. Male filmmakers raised a median of 111% of their goals, and female filmmakers raised a median of 107% of their goals. Films featuring predominately male casts made a median of 108% of their goal, films with an equal number of male and female protagonists made a median of 119% of their goals, and films featuring predominately female casts made a median of 106% of their goals. It was expected that men would raise substantially more than women, however these results suggests that donors are less concerned with the gender of the filmmaker and protagonist.

As shown in tables 11 and 12, there was a positive relationship between the funding source and the gender of the filmmaker and the gender of the protagonist, so as more women are filmmakers or protagonists the more likely they are to use crowdfunding over studio funding. The odds ratio for the regression of funding source on filmmaker gender was 3.48, suggesting that women, compared to men, are 3.48 times as likely to be filmmakers for crowdfunded films than studio backed films. The odds ratio for the regression of funding source on protagonist gender was 1.77, so female protagonists, compared to male protagonists, are 1.77 times as likely to be the protagonists of crowdfunded films than studio films. However, shown in both binary regressions, the region where a film was produced did have a significant outcome on how a film was financed, as films based outside of the Los Angeles area, were significantly more likely to turn to crowdfunding. This may be because filmmakers outside of the LA production networks must use alternative means to finance films or filmmakers who were once a part of the Hollywood film industry left and needed alternative sources of financial support.

## Discussion

These results suggest that, regardless of how they finance their films, women are far from achieving equity in the film industry as filmmakers or protagonists. However, crowdfunded films, or independent films more generally, are growing as an outlet, where more women find space as filmmakers (Smith, Pieper, and Choueiti 2014). As seen in Table 3, regardless of the gender of the filmmaker, more movies about women are crowdfunded than paid for by studios, which affirms the relative lack of interest by studios in creating female-centered content documented by previous research. The findings of this study replicate those of the Center for Women in Television and Film, which found similar percentages of women employed by studios on screen (thirteen percent) and behind the camera (six percent) (Lauzen 2015). This study finds that women gain financing from crowdfunding at a higher percentage (nineteen percent) and appear as protagonists in twenty-seven percent of crowdfunded features.

Although the percentage of non-white filmmakers was low for both samples, crowdfunding had ten filmmakers of color compared to five for the studio films. Previous research (Smith et al. 2013b) has found that, with the presence of a filmmaker of color, the chance of having a protagonist of color rises. However, this was not the case in this sample, as both the crowdfunded and studio films had roughly the same number of non-white protagonists (ten and eleven respectively). Due to the similar number of protagonists of color compared to the larger differences among filmmakers, this study suggests that crowdfunding may offer greater chances for filmmakers of color, because the race of the filmmaker is not necessarily tied to the race of the protagonist.

While filmmakers in both samples tended to be between 30 and 49, more filmmakers who used crowdfunding were under 30 (nine) than studio filmmakers (zero), and only one

filmmaker who used crowdfunding was over 50 compared to twelve of the studio filmmakers. In this sample, age and previous credits act as proxies for one another, where the age of the filmmaker provides insight into the filmmakers previous experience in the film industry. A filmmaker's seniority may allow for more studio financing opportunities, with the majority of crowdfunded filmmakers have little or no previous credits. Financing for 33 non-crowdfunded films were initiated within the studio, due to organizational structures there is a lack of public information about the specific executives who greenlit film projects, making it difficult to interpret trends in the ages of studio filmmakers. Protagonists in crowdfunded films also tended to be younger, which may speak to the age of the filmmakers, compared to protagonists in studio films, which was spread across several age groups.

Many project creators who turn to crowdfunding have specific audiences in mind when they solicit money. It may be that filmmakers of color lack networks with large amounts of disposable income and therefore they do not see crowdfunding as a viable source of financing.

It is difficult to assess how many Hollywood filmmakers are LGB, as those filmmakers who work within the studio system may mostly be closeted. However, a much higher proportion of crowdfunded filmmakers are openly gay, lesbian, and bisexual (eighteen compared to two percent in studios), and were able to create films centered around protagonists who were LGB (sixteen percent as opposed to none among studio films). Studios may assume that stories focused on LGBT protagonists are less marketable and keep LGBT characters in supporting roles for that reason. Short films comprise the majority of film projects that use crowdfunding. Hence, newer filmmakers may turn to crowdfunding to finance early projects as a way to build

their demo reels<sup>6</sup>, whereas filmmakers who have more of a track record may find it easier to approach studios (or are approached by studios) to produce movies.

Neither the crowdfunded films nor the studio films included many films with overt political statements about race, sexual orientation, or other inequalities. However more crowdfunding films did have political messages (11%), such as *The Little Tin Man*, a film about job discrimination faced by an actor who is a little person. Others addressed abortion, race, sexual orientation, and discriminatory immigration policies based on sexuality. There were a smaller percentage of studio films that had political messages (6%) however; they tended to deal with issues including classism and the environment.

Based on these results, the average crowdfunder is male, white, between the ages of 30 and 49, and at least presumably heterosexual. The average crowdfunded protagonist is also male, white, and heterosexual, but is slightly younger between the ages of 18 and 29. The average non-crowdfunded film is most likely produced by a studio (and not a small independent firm) and has a protagonist that is male, white, slightly older than the crowdfunded protagonist being between 30 and 49, and always straight (compared to the crowdfunded protagonist that has a 16% chance of being LGB). Although both of these funding models produce films with these demographic outcomes, as expected with crowdfunding there is a higher chance that both the filmmaker and the protagonist will be female, a racial minority, younger, or LGB. Specifically crowdfunding delivered double the number of filmmakers who were racial minorities (10 compared to 5), double the amount of female protagonist (17 compared to 8), and three times the number of female filmmakers (12 compared to 4).

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<sup>6</sup> Individuals working in a variety of occupations within the film industry often create demo reels to demonstrate their skills, whether acting, directing, or cinematography. Demo reels consist of snippets of previous work. Newcomers generally find it easier to gain experience working on short films, and so their demo reels are comprised of segments from short films.



## **Conclusion**

Due to the lack of ability to predict of success in Hollywood, filmmaking remains unanalyzable (Perrow 1967), with single-project employment largely left to the discretion of studio managers. Without external oversight or an ideological shift, there is no mechanism to increase the number of female or minority filmmakers. Therefore, crowdfunding may be the only effective tool for increasing opportunities for filmmakers from marginalized populations to tell stories, and for filmmakers to tell stories about minorities, which is vital in a culture producing industry to represent the interests of the population it serves. Although even with the use of crowdfunding women and people of color still do not reach anything close to parity, crowdfunding allows a greater number of women to be featured in prominent roles behind the scenes as well as on screen.

Crowdfunding may circumvent some aspects of the gendered structure of organizations. Acker (2006:445) stated, “The steepness of hierarchy is one dimension of variation in the shape and degree of inequality.” Because crowdfunding employs a flatter hierarchy, the distribution of power in crowdfunding rests not in a formal institution in which members must attend to rules established by parent conglomerates, as with some aspects of Hollywood studio filmmaking. Instead, crowdfunding creators market projects as they wish; and unconnected individuals outside of the industry donate. Crowdfunding still has elements of a gendered organization, but this slight redistribution of power appears to have made space for women behind the cameras and in other decision-making roles in a proportion greater than Hollywood allows.

Networks in the film industry are restrictive; and Hollywood’s structure is based primarily on project-specific contracts (Jones 1996). This can obscure inequalities faced by those working in the industry. However, due to the tight-knit and exclusive networks in Hollywood

financing innovation is more likely to occur outside of these circles (Peterson and Anand 2004). While crowdfunding lacks the momentum to destabilize the control that these core communities maintain within the studios, it may be visible enough to act as the voice of the public and a strong motivation for change. This can be seen in studios use of crowdfunding as a gauge to measure fan interest of projects that they are wary of investing in (Hurst 2014).

While the representation of LBG filmmakers among crowdfunders is closer to the percentage in the general population, underrepresentation of female and non-white filmmakers persists, even among those financed in that manner. Although this underrepresentation remains in crowdfunding, it is less than that in non-crowdfunded films, both traditionally financed independent films and films financed directly by studios.

One limitation of this study was the small size of the set of films that were both crowdfunding and had theatrical debuts. A larger sample size would increase my ability to more definitively assess the trends in gender, sexuality, and race of crowdfunders and protagonists. As crowdfunding grows and more feature films become publically financed, future research can determine if these trends hold. Additionally, due to lack of insight on the inner workings of major film studios, I cannot accurately assess the rationale behind why certain films are financed over others. This past year's Sony hacking scandal gave a rare insight into the inner mechanisms of Hollywood studios. One leaked memo commented on the use of Denzel Washington as a box office draw domestically but stated that his celebrity did not translate abroad (Georgantopoulos 2014). This illustrates the desire amongst studio heads to use track records to predict success not only in the US but internationally, and that when those results seem unlikely certain personnel will not be used, even if that means greater diversity. Ultimately the claim that actors of color do

not have the same audience draw overseas has been shown to be false with the box office performance of 2015's diversely cast *Furious 7*, which is the fourth highest grossing film of all time, had a 75% minority audience domestically, and delivered international openings that ranked the highest grossing of all time, without adjusting for inflation (McClintock 2015). Because there are very few other markers aside from box office returns and production track records, studios replicate past performances and rely on those tropes to try and recreate successes (Bielby and Bielby 1994). New initiatives like the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media or Kickstart Diversity aim to challenge these assumptions by increasing diversity on-camera and behind-the-scenes, arguing that studios do not yet know the buying power of minority audiences because they have not produced enough films featuring minority casts (Harris 2015; Leonsis 2015).

Because women were funded more when using crowdfunding than when using traditional financing methods, crowdfunding and public input may allow women more space than other avenues do, particularly if these findings extend to crowdfunding campaigns for other creative endeavors such as music production or game design. Researchers have found that women are more likely to donate to crowdfunding projects created by women (Marom, Robb, and Orly 2015). Additionally female project creators on Kickstarter are outperforming male creators in the technology field and that women disproportionately donated to these campaigns (Greenberg and Mollick 2014). Because crowdfunding requires donors to use disposable income to support creative endeavors, it may be that donors are a self-selecting group who may have higher incomes or more education and are more likely to support art that they consider to be more progressive, either due to the creator or the topic, whether that be a female filmmaker or a LGB protagonist. Projects created by LGB filmmakers, or films with LBG characters, may be funded

by members of the LGB community, which would explain the higher percentage of LGB films financed through crowdfunding. In 1993 it was estimated that the LGB community had purchasing power in the range of \$394 billion; and in 2006 the LGB community was estimated to have buying power in the range of \$641 billion (The Hartford (Conn.) Courant 1993; Um 2012). If that is the case, then their buying power may have expanded the number of crowdfunded films with LGB protagonists, as well as the recent growth of media featuring transgender characters. Such results would not necessarily be generalizable to the general public or to the dynamics of gender or race. Further research must be done in order to assess the motivation of donors. Additional research should also assess whether these findings extend to other creative projects that use crowdfunding.

While the literature has shown that women are often left outside of networks in Hollywood that would allow them more opportunities to navigate funding sources (Jones 1996; Grugulis and Stoyanova 2012), this study has shown that crowdfunding, a system exterior to those networks, offers women more opportunities to gain funding for their feature films, which in turn increases the proportion of female protagonists on screen (Smith et al. 2015).

Studio filmmakers had more previous credits than crowdfunded filmmakers, highlighting the importance of track record in the film industry (Faulkner and Anderson 1987). Additionally, more female filmmakers, as well as minority and LGB filmmakers, used crowdfunding than traditional funding and had fewer previous credits than studio backed filmmakers; suggesting that these groups have more difficulty breaking into the industry as Smith et al. (2015) also found. These findings suggest that the film industry uses gendered, racialized, and heteronormative logic that puts these groups at a disadvantage as they may find more difficulty amassing the criteria necessary to find success as filmmakers.

Without mindful intervention, Hollywood executives will likely continue to choose the safe option, using managerial discretion in hiring, resulting from institutional logic that focuses on track record as the best indicator of success and high task uncertainty. This sexism is not only blatant but institutional, in that it makes it difficult for women to infiltrate male dominated networks with access to job opportunities, however far those networks may be from meeting rooms and elite offices in which producers make their track-record based decisions.

While the inner workings of studios may not be visible, crowdfunding is providing some space for minority expression in the film industry. It may provide an alternative avenue for financing films, outside the structure of Hollywood studios. Crowdfunding, as an emerging technology, has allowed the production of films with higher number of female filmmakers and protagonists.

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Table 1  
 Cross Tabulation of Funding Source and Filmmaker Gender

		Filmmaker Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Funding Source	Crowdfunded	50 81%	12 19%	62 100%
	Non-Crowdfunded	58 94%	4 6%	62 100%
Total		108 87%	16 13%	124 100%

Chi-Square = 4.593, p = .032

Cramer's V = .192, p = .032

Table 2  
 Cross Tabulation of Funding Source and Protagonist Gender

		Protagonist Gender			Total
		Male	Equal	Female	
Funding Source	Crowdfunded	36 58%	9 15%	17 27%	62 100%
	Non-Crowdfunded	44 71%	10 16%	8 13%	62 100%
Total		80 65%	19 15%	25 20%	124 100%

Chi-Square = 4.093, p = .129

Cramer's V= .182, p = .129

Table 3  
 Cross Tabulation of Funding Source, Filmmaker Gender, and Protagonist Gender

Protagonist Gender				Filmmaker Gender		Total
				Male	Female	
Male	Funding Source	Crowdfunded	33 92%	3 8%	36 100%	
		Non-Crowdfunded	41 93%	3 7%	44 100%	
	Total		74 94%	6 8%	80 100%	
Equal	Funding Source	Crowdfunded	9 100%		9 100%	
		Non-Crowdfunded	10 100%		10 100%	
	Total		19 100%		19 100%	
Female	Funding Source	Crowdfunded	8 47%	9 53%	17 100%	
		Non-Crowdfunded	7 88%	1 13%	8 100%	
	Total		15 60%	10 40%	25 100%	
Total	Funding Source	Crowdfunded	50 81%	12 19%	62 100%	
		Non-Crowdfunded	58 94%	4 7%	62 100%	
	Total		108 87%	16 13%	124 100%	



Table 4  
 Cross Tabulation of Funding Source and Age of Filmmaker

		Age of Filmmaker				Total
		18-29	30-49	50-65	65+	
Funding Source	Crowdfunded	9 15%	52 84%	1 2%	0	62 100%
	Non-Crowdfunded	0	17 59%	10 34%	2 7%	29 100%
Total		9 10%	69 76%	11 12%	2 2%	91 100%

Chi-Square = 27.807, p = .000

Cramer's V = .553, p = .000

Table 5  
 Cross Tabulation of Funding Source and Age of Protagonist

		Age of Protagonist						Total
		Under 18	18-29	30-49	50-65	65+	n/a	
Funding Source	Crowdfunded	9 15%	27 44%	25 40%	1 2%	0	0	62 100%
	Non-Crowdfunded	8 13%	12 19%	31 50%	7 11%	3 5%	1 2%	62 100%
Total		17 14%	39 32%	56 45%	8 7%	3 2%	1 1%	124 100%

Chi-Square = 13.964, p = .007

Cramer's V = .337, p = .007

Table 6  
 Cross Tabulation of Funding Source and Race of Filmmaker

		Race of Filmmaker		Total
		White	Other	
Funding Source	Crowdfunded	52 84%	10 16%	62 100%
	Non-Crowdfunded	57 92%	5 8%	62 100%
Total		109 88%	15 12%	124 100%

Chi-Square = 1.896, p = .169

Cramer's V = .124, p = .169

Table 7  
 Cross Tabulation of Funding Source and Race of Protagonist

		Race of Protagonist			Total
		White	Other	n/a	
Funding Source	Crowdfunded	51 82%	10 16%	1 2%	62 100%
	Non-Crowdfunded	49 79%	11 18%	2 3%	62 100%
Total		100 81%	21 17%	3 2%	124 100%

Chi-Square = 3.088, p = .378

Cramer's V = .158, p = .378

Table 8  
 Cross Tabulation of Funding Source, Filmmaker Race, and Protagonist Race

Protagonist Race				Filmmaker Race		Total
				White	Non-White	
White	Funding Source	Crowdfunded	49 96%	2 4%	51 100%	
		Non-Crowdfunded	48 98%	1 2%	49 100%	
	Total		97 97%	3 3%	100 100%	
Non-White	Funding Source	Crowdfunded	2 20%	8 80%	10 100%	
		Non-Crowdfunded	7 64%	4 36%	11 100%	
	Total		9 43%	12 57%	21 100%	
n/a <sup>7</sup>	Funding Source	Crowdfunded	1 100%		1 100%	
		Non-Crowdfunded	2 100%		2 100%	
	Total		3 100%		3 100%	
Total	Funding Source	Crowdfunded	52 84%	10 16%	62 100%	
		Non-Crowdfunded	57 92%	5 8%	62 100%	
	Total		109 88%	15 12%	124 100%	

<sup>7</sup> The racial coding of n/a applies to animated characters whose racial identity was undeterminable (i.e., *Planes*)

Table 9

Cross Tabulation of Funding Source and Whether Filmmaker Openly Identifies as LGB

		Filmmaker Sexuality		Total
		Not LGB	LGB	
Funding Source	Crowdfunded	51 82%	11 18%	62 100%
	Non-Crowdfunded	61 98%	1 2%	62 100%
Total		112 90%	12 10%	124 100%

Chi-Square = 9.226, p = .002

Cramer's V = .273, p = .002

Table 10  
 Cross Tabulation of Funding Source and Whether Protagonist is LGB

		Protagonist Sexuality		Total
		Not LGB	LGB	
Funding Source	Crowdfunded	53 84%	9 16%	62 100%
	Non-Crowdfunded	62 100%	0	62 100%
Total		115 93%	9 7%	124 100%

Chi-Square = 9.704, p = .002

Cramer's V = .280, p = .002

Table 11  
 Regression of Funding Source on Filmmaker Gender including standardized regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), S.E.,  $p$ , and  $R^2$

Model		$\beta$	S.E.	$p$	Exp( $\beta$ )	$R^2$
1	(Constant)	-.148	.193	.442	.862	.050
	Filmmaker Gender	1.247	.609	.041	3.480	
2	(Constant)	-1.440	.345	.000	.237	.534
	Filmmaker Gender	1.101	.775	.155	3.006	
	Protagonist Gender	.125	.524	.811	1.133	
	Filmmaker Race	1.146	.708	.106	3.146	
	Region Produced	3.520	.601	.000	33.781	

Dependent Variable: Funding Source, 1=Crowdfunded  
 Gender 1=female, Race 1=non-white, Region 1=outside Hollywood



Table 12

Regression of Funding Source on Protagonist Gender including standardized regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), S.E.,  $p$ , and  $R^2$

Model		$\beta$	S.E.	$p$	Exp( $\beta$ )	$R^2$
1	(Constant)	-.201	.225	.372	.818	.024
	Protagonist Gender	.568	.380	.135	1.765	
2	(Constant)	-1.440	.345	.000	.237	.534
	Protagonist Gender	.125	.524	.811	1.133	
	Filmmaker Gender	1.101	.775	.155	3.006	
	Filmmaker Race	1.146	.708	.106	3.146	
	Region Produced	3.520	.601	.000	33.781	

Dependent Variable: Funding Source, 1=Crowdfunded

Gender 1=female, Race 1=non-white, Region 1=outside Hollywood

Film Sample

Crowdfunded Film	Non-Crowdfunded Films
<p>Bad Fever (2012)            Blue Like Jazz (2012)            A Broken Code (2012)            Cinema Six (2012)            First Winter (2012)            Gayby (2012)            Keep the Lights On (2012)            The Last Fall (2012)            Mosquita y Mari (2012)            My Best Day (2012)            Nate &amp; Margaret (2012)            Now, Forager (2012)            Alpha Girls (2013)            Angel's Perch (2013)            Ass Backwards (2013)            Barmy (2013)            Between Us (2013)            Black Rock (2013)            The Canyons (2013)            Cement Suitcase (2013)            Dick Figures: The Movie (2013)            Drinking Games (2013)            Electick Children (2013)            Four (2013)            Future Weather (2013)            Gimme the Loot (2013)            Grow Up, Tony Phillips (2013)            I Am Not a Hipster (2013)            I Do (2013)            I Used to be Darker (2013)            Kid-Thing (2013)            Nancy, Please (2013)            Newlyweeds (2013)            Oconomowoc (2013)            An Oversimplification of Her Beauty (2013)            Pavilion (2013)            Saving Lincoln (2013)            The Taiwan Oyster (2013)            This is Martin Bonner (2013)            Welcome to Pine Hill (2013)            White Reindeer (2013)            Zero Charisma (2013)            The Babadook (2014)            Blue Ruin (2014)</p>	<p>The Hunger Games (2012)            Dr. Seuss' The Lorax (2012)            Hotel Transylvania (2012)            Life of Pi (2012)            The Campaign (2012)            This is 40 (2012)            Hope Springs (2012)            Project X (2012)            The Possession (2012)            The Three Stooges (2012)            The Guilt Trip (2012)            House at the End of the Street (2012)            Iron Man 3 (2013)            Man of Steel (2013)            The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug (2013)            Star Trek into Darkness (2013)            The Croods (2013)            American Hustle (2013)            Identity Thief (2013)            Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues (2013)            Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2 (2013)            Lee Daniels' The Butler (2013)            Captain Phillips (2013)            This is the End (2013)            Elysium (2013)            Oblivion (2013)            Turbo (2013)            Mama (2013)            The Best Man Holiday (2013)            Warm Bodies (2013)            Last Vegas (2013)            After Earth (2013)            12 Years a Slave (2013)            Evil Dead (2013)            Tyler Perry's Temptation: Confessions of a Marriage Counselor (2013)            Gangster Squad (2013)            Snitch (2013)            47 Ronin (2013)            The Family (2013)            R.I.P.D. (2013)            Side Effects (2013)            Delivery Man (2013)            Captain America: The Winter Soldier (2014)</p>

Chrysalis (2014)	X-Men: Days of Future Past (2014)
Dead Snow 2: Dead vs. Red (2014)	22 Jump Street (2014)
Dear White People (2014)	Divergent (2014)
Down and Dangerous (2014)	Lucy (2014)
The Foxy Merkins (2014)	300: Rise of an Empire (2014)
G.B.F. (2014)	Non-Stop (2014)
A Girl Walks Home Alone at Night (2014)	Fury (2014)
God Help the Girl (2014)	Let's Be Cops (2014)
Hide Your Smiling Faces (2014)	Think Like a Man Two (2014)
I Am I (2014)	Planes: Fire and Rescue (2014)
Left of Center (2014)	The Hundred-Foot Journey (2014)
The Little Tin Man (2014)	The Boxtrolls (2014)
Love & Air Sex (2014)	Into the Storm (2014)
Lust for Love (2014)	St. Vincent (2014)
Obvious Child (2014)	Dolphin Tale 2 (2014)
Test (2014)	Million Dollar Arm (2014)
Veronica Mars (2014)	Nightcrawler (2014)
Wish I Was Here (2014)	When the Game Stands Tall (2014)
	That Awkward Moment (2014)