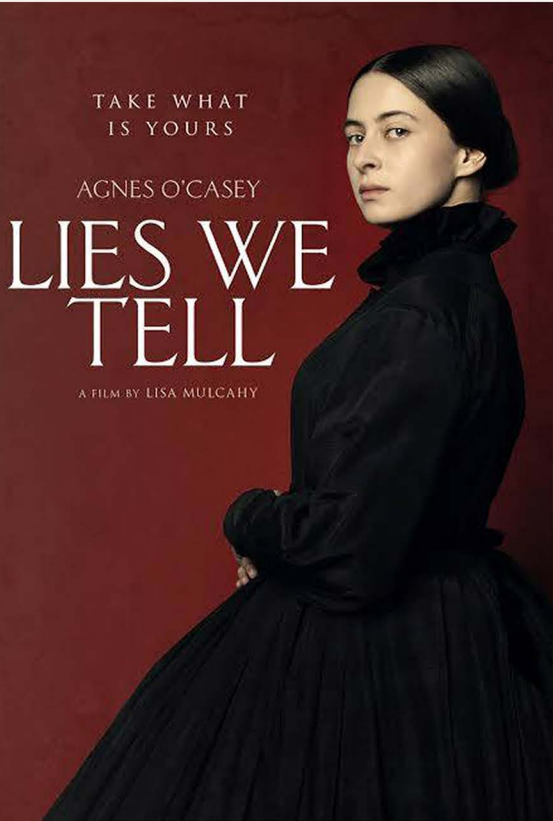


The Benefits & Limitations of Empowering Initiatives

A Feminist Analysis of Screen Ireland’s POV Scheme



INTRODUCTION

This project demonstrates the need for concrete action from Screen Ireland to accomplish faster transformative change for gender parity in the Irish Film Industry. By analysing the limited impact of Screen Ireland’s gender-focused initiatives and schemes, particularly the ‘Point Of View’ (POV) Production and Training Scheme, the written essay highlights the agency’s resistance to systemic change and its diminishing commitment to equality policies as external pressures lose momentum. The video essay illustrates the importance of women’s representation behind and in front of the camera. The women-led films produced through the POV scheme challenge the patriarchal ideology that has historically shaped mainstream cinema.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Since missing the 5050x2020 campaign target to achieve gender equality, has Screen Ireland effectively addressed the underrepresentation of women in the Irish Film Industry and implemented systemic change?



METHODS

The written essay uses Newsinger and Eikohf’s distinction between transformative and empowering measures as a theoretical framework to analyse Screen Ireland’s commitment to achieving gender equality. The essay builds on the work of Irish feminist film scholars. Screen Ireland’s progress toward equality is deconstructed through their policies, gender statistics data and production slates. First-hand interviews with directors of the POV scheme productions and panels with women in the industry on the *Women in Film and Television Ireland* podcast further contextualise and emphasise the limitations and benefits. The video essay uses theoretical frameworks and discourses from cine-feminist scholars Mulvey and Johnston to analyse the narrative and cinematic language of the Screen Ireland’s POV Scheme films *You Are Not My Mother* (2021) and *Lies We Tell* (2023).

FILM CASE STUDIES

- *Lies We Tell*, dir. by Lisa Mulcahy (Quiver Distribution, 2023)
- *You Are Not My Mother*, dir. Kate Dolan (Magnolia Pictures, 2021)

KEY RESEARCH

- Johnston, Claire, ‘Women’s Cinema as Counter-cinema’, in *Notes on Women’s Cinema*, ed. by Claire Johnston, (London: Society for Education in Film and Television, 1973), pp. 24–31
- Kerrigan, Páraic, Susan Liddy, and Anne O’Brien, “Tools and Measures for Diversity and Inclusion in Media Industries: International Best Practice and Informing Policy Change in the Irish Film and Television Sector”, *European Journal of Communication*, 38.3 (2023), 217–236, Doi: 10.1177/02673231221118192
- Mulvey, Laura, ‘Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema’, *Screen*, 16.3 (1975), 6–18, Doi: 10.1093/screen/16.3.6
- Newsinger, Jack, and Doris Eikhof, ‘Explicit and Implicit Diversity Policy in the UK Film and Television Industries’, *Journal of British Cinema and Television*, 17.1 (2020), 47–69, Doi: 10.3366/jbctv.2020.0507
- *Women in Film and TV Podcast*, Women in Film and Television Ireland, Spotify
- *Women in the Irish Film Industry: Stories and storytellers*, ed. by Susan Liddy, (Cork: Cork University Press, 2020)

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