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# The Lack of Female Directors and Artistic Leaders: Discrepancy in the Number of Women from Theatre Education to Career

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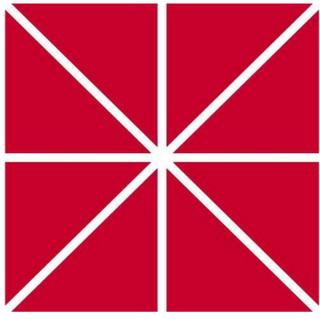
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# The Lack of Female Directors and Artistic Leaders: Discrepancy in the Number of Women from Theatre Education to Theatre Career

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As the theatre industry is built upon honest storytelling, it is disturbing to know the lack of inclusion amongst its creative and administrative decision-makers. When the stories produced are chosen by people not wholly representative of society's gender diversity, theatre is neither accurately nor truthfully reflective of life. Both studies and personal experiences repeatedly reflect that there are considerably more girls than boys participating in theatre during educational and formative years. Despite this, the number of female directors and artistic leaders in the theatre industry is significantly lower than males. At some point in life, the stigma surrounding young men in theatre subsides, and, instead, they are revered and promoted as industry commanders. As for the young women who were prominently active in their school years, their professional presence in theatre is met with little opportunity to become leaders. Why are there such large numbers of young women participating and thriving in educational theatre and a vastly smaller amount of women leading the professional theatre industry? What should we be doing to change it?

In 2014, 73% of LORT Artistic Directors were white men

In 2016, only 20% of new shows on Broadway had a female director

## Methodology

I first researched the abundant studies conducted on women's leadership effectiveness and competency in all career paths. Then I discussed the societal concepts of gender expression that discourage young boys from participating in the performing arts, and prevent gender equality in theatre education. Through interviews of two professional female directors, I gained intimate knowledge of the industry experience as a minority gender. Additionally, I referenced detailed scholarly studies, revealing the harsh statistics and realities of women in the theatre industry today.



## What Next?

As the amount of focus on reaching gender equality over the past few years has grown immensely, we are hopefully on the path towards reaching the final goal. So how long will it actually take? If the next year and a half can bring just a 10% increase in female representation, then we will be on the path to change. It is vital that all members of the theatre community, from the artistic to the technology to the administrative sides are aware of, on board with, and actively engaging in equal gender representation. Only then, I believe we can possibly reach equality within the next 10 years. Hopefully sooner.