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Measuring gender imbalances in the creative industries

Dr Cath Sleeman, Head of Data Visualisation

AI and Audiovisual Archives event

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Nesta is a global innovation foundation

We back new ideas to tackle big challenges of our time, from the pressures of an ageing population to stretched public services and a fast changing jobs market.



How can we
improve labour
market
information?

How can we improve
the measurement of
gender imbalances in
the creative
industries?

What's the data gap?

Quantitative analysis has tended to focus on surveys:

- Can be slow to deliver insights
- May not capture all aspects of gender balance

We're missing long-running & multi-dimensional measures of gender imbalances

#2/4

How can big data help?

Could we do more with our data?

EastEnders

was brought to you in 2017 by

GRACE
LOURDES MARIA ACERA
ZEB ACHONU
RON ADLINGTON
IAN ADRIAN
BILAL AHMAD
DARE AIYEBAYO
NEIL ALDERTON
IZZY ALLAN
JOANNA ALLEN
ROBERT ANDERSON
ELLE ANDREWS

KIN KELLY
SUE KENDALL
OLIVER KENT
CHRIS KERR
IAN KERSHAW
KEVIN KING
CATHY KIRBY
KAREN KIRBY
SUSIE KIRKHAM
LAUREN KLEE
LANCE KNEESHAW
ABBIE KNOWLES



Hello! Good evening,
welcome to the show.



THE DOCTOR
It very nearly ate you for dinner.

CLARA
Admit it. I totally saved your
life.

THE DOCTOR
It wasn't going to eat me.

CLARA
Then I totally saved you from
having to marry a giant sentient
plant thing. Oh come on! The bit
where I jumped over the side? That
was amazing!

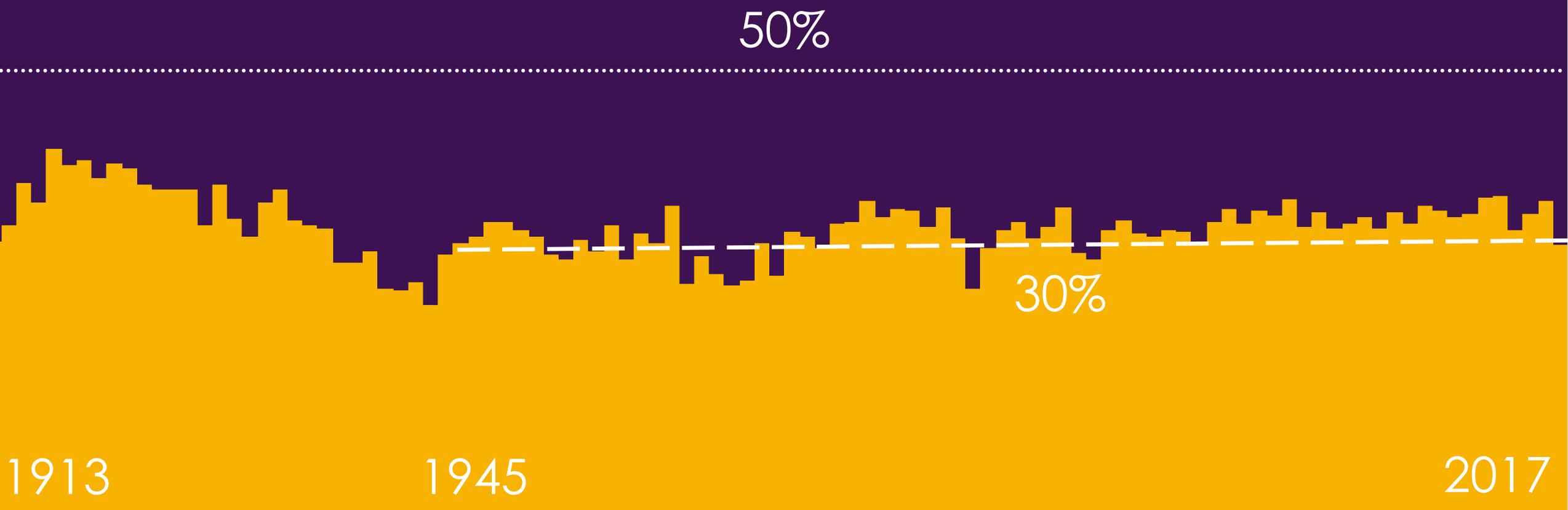
DOCTOR can't fight a small smile. It was

Example 1

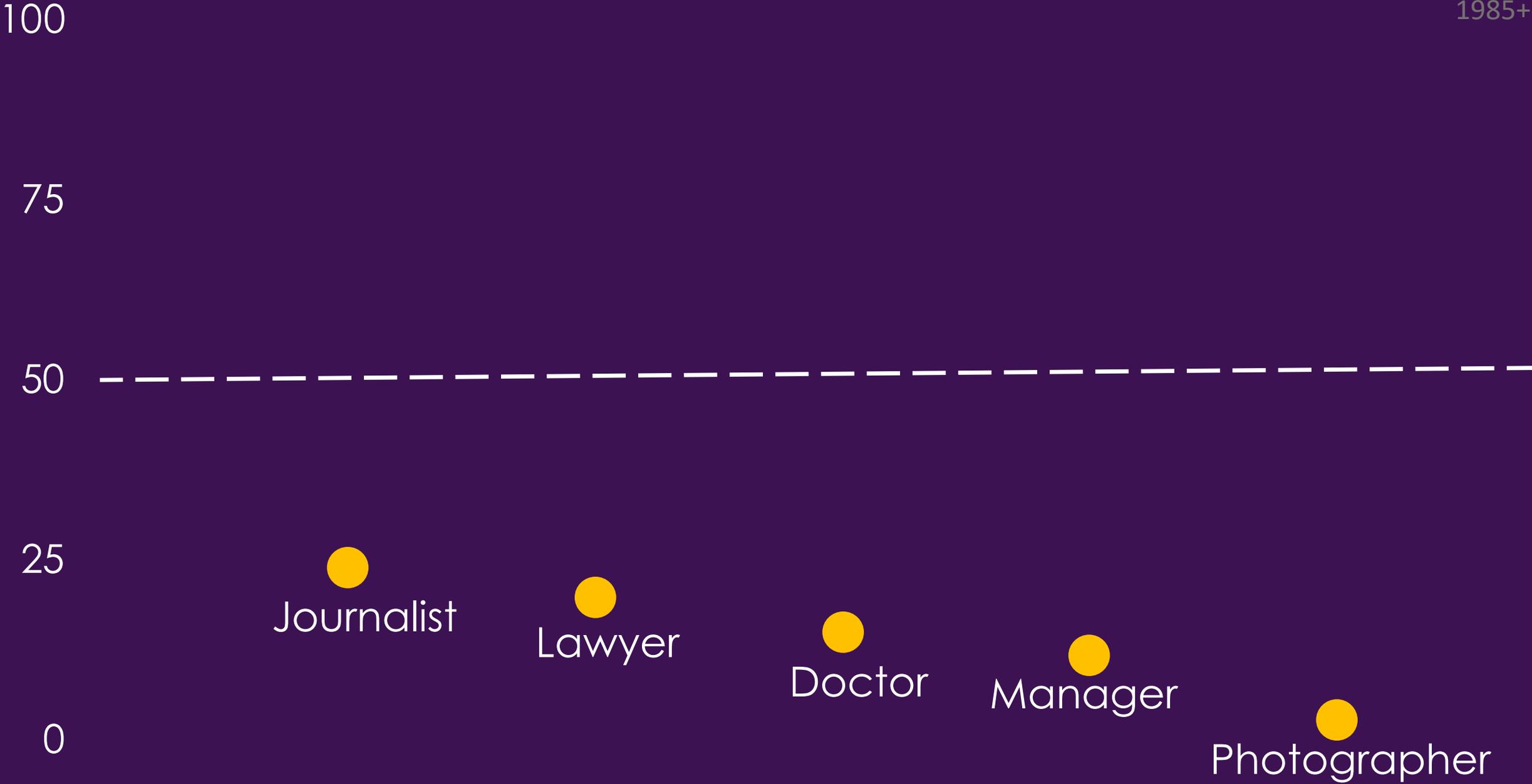
The gender imbalance in UK film casts

70% men 30% women
on-screen roles in 2017

Percent of cast members who are women in UK films



Percent of times character was played by a woman



Average number of films

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14

Actors who started in the 1940s



In the 1950s



'60s



'70s



'80s



'90s



2000s



Actors

● Women

● Men



KANTAR

information is beautiful awards 2019

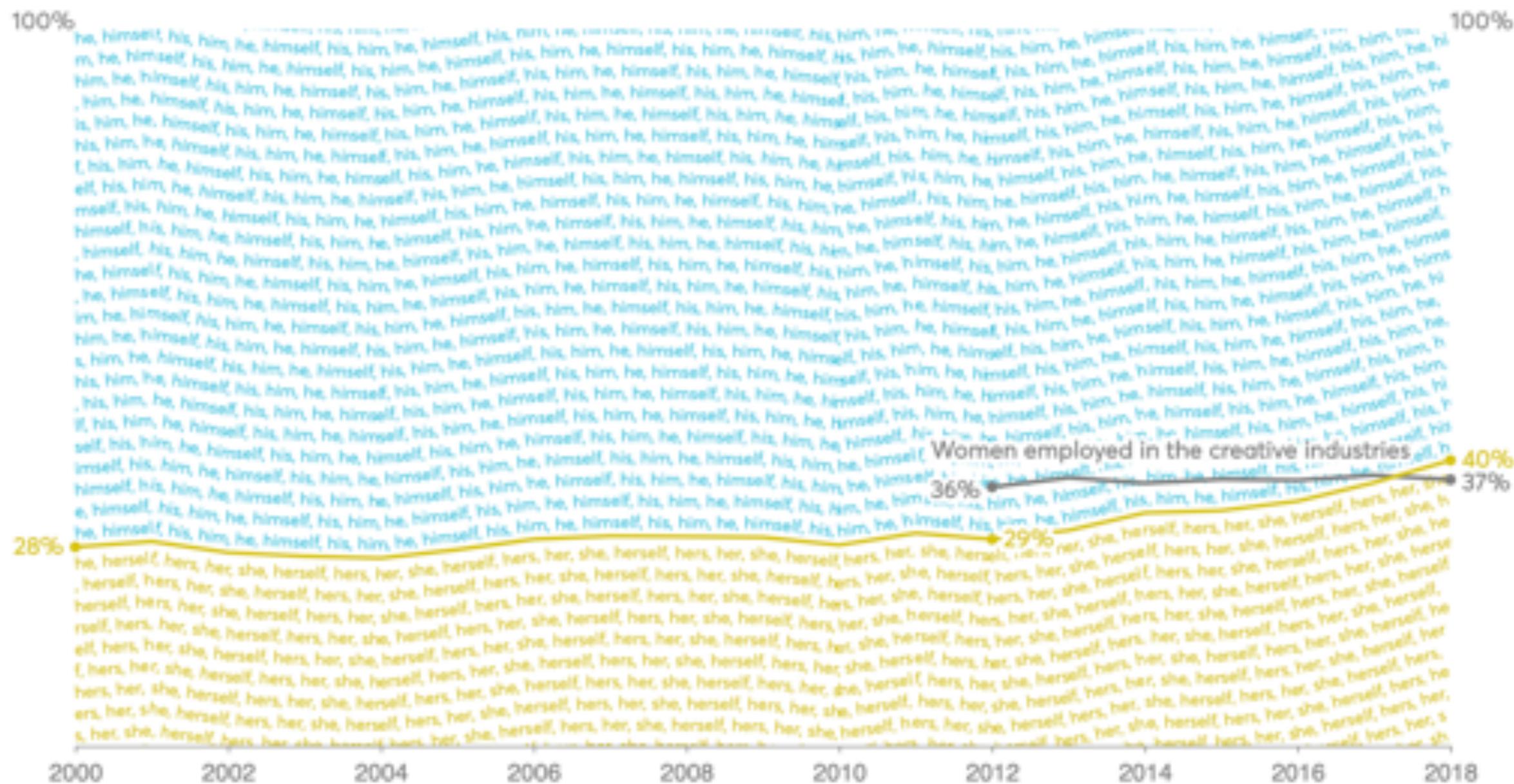
WINNER

Example 2

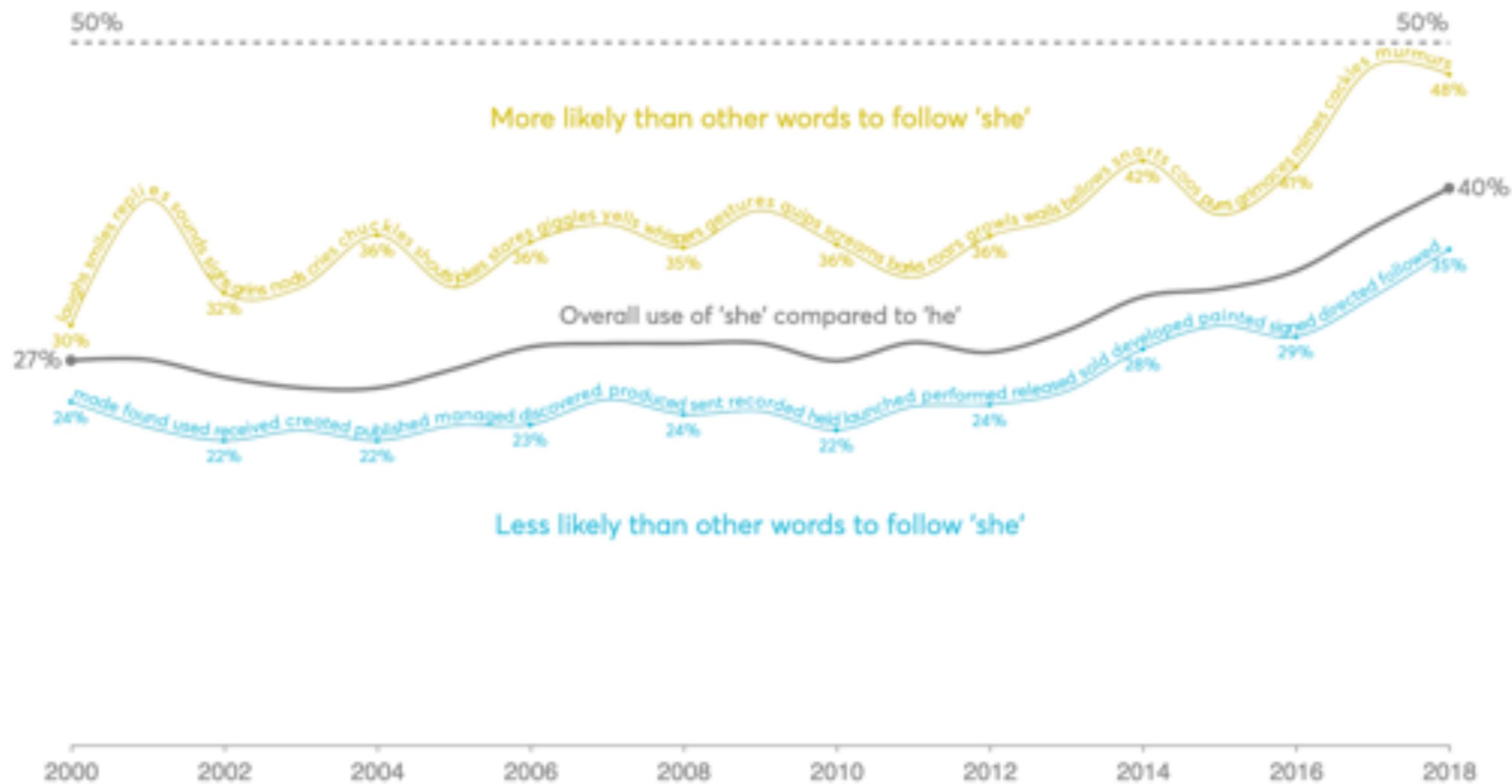
She said more

Measuring gender imbalances in reporting on the creative industries

Percentage of gendered pronouns that are male and female



Groups of words that are **more** and **less** likely to follow 'she'



Next project:

Could computer vision inform our understanding of gender imbalances in television?

Data: Programmes from the Learning on Screen archive

Measure: Compare on-screen time by male and female facial characteristics

Previous studies: Geena Davis with USC, INA

What are the limitations?

Limitations of big data studies for detecting gender imbalances

1. Typically can only infer a fixed and binary gender
2. Difficult to know who has been left out

To mitigate these, we can:

- Measure uncertainty where possible
- Openly discuss limitations in an accessible way
- View these studies as complements and not substitutes for existing research

Where do data gaps
remain?

Where do evidence gaps remain?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Which questions lack quantitative studies? | How did these gender imbalances emerge? | What does the gender mix look like <u>now</u> ? |
| What are we missing? | Panel data | Live and open tools |

Example of up to date analysis plus panel data: <https://filmography.bfi.org.uk/>



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