

by Weiden + Kennedy, was one of several similar events held across the country throughout the year. Lukasik was also a panelist at the event.

Gordon's work in the movement has earned her numerous accolades and speaking engagements in front of audiences across the country and abroad. She also writes a business blog, and in 2013, Advertising Age named Gordon one of the Top 10 Women to Watch.

"There's a business imperative for diversity. It's good for profitability," Gordon said. "And advertising shapes how (people) feel about their bodies, their health, who they want to vote for, what car they want to drive. This shapes culture. We have to make sure they get a healthier media diet."

It's especially true for what children see: According to studies cited by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the average child is exposed to more than 40,000 TV commercials a year.

Today, three years into the 3% Conference, the number of female directors working in the advertising industry has risen to about 11 percent, according to Gordon's research. But that's still not good enough for the young women who are looking to break into the more influential and affluent positions. According to the ACLU, the number of female students in prominent film programs who are focusing on directing is fairly equal to men. They're just not getting hired.

"It's not a pipeline problem," Gordon said. There are many women working in the industry, just not getting directorships, she said.

Rather, the problem is a combination of gender nuances such as confidence levels and self-promotion. For example, Gordon referenced a study that showed that, unlike men, women often do not apply for positions unless they meet all or nearly all the requirements of the job. Women also are less likely than men to put themselves forward for awards, she said. And there is work experience. It's hard to get on the popular lists — lists that circulate among clients — if you haven't been hired.

"I call it death by a thousand paper cuts," said Gordon, who has surveyed many women in the business through her work with the 3% Conference. "There were a lot of small things that become cumulatively intractable. There's an unconscious bias. There's difficulty with the unpredictability of the work,

if you have kids and are not available for all-night sessions or last-minute flights to China."

"Miss Representation," the 2011 documentary, is filled with statistics and studies about the impact of the male-dominated film and television industry. Women are underrepresented in movies and television and are almost always presented with an emphasis on appearance, positive or negative. They are more often than men shown in sexually revealing clothing, with an emphasis on thinness and sexuality, according to the documentary sources.

The popularity of the film prompted producer and director Jennifer Siebel Newsom to create The Representation Project, a multimedia educational movement aimed at ending stereotypes, gender or otherwise, in media.

The consumption of this kind of negative imagery has been linked to physical and mental health problems among women, along with low self-esteem and confidence levels.

"That, to me, gets to how women are portrayed in media," Lukasik said. "How do you truly give women the same chances as men if you are focused so much more on their looks, and everything but their brains? And that's what media does. Advertising and music videos are some of the worst offenders in terms of how women are portrayed in media. And if you could have more women in creative leadership roles, I think that pendulum would swing the other way."

As an example of doing it right, Lukasik notes the "I will what I want" campaign by Under Armour, which features strong female athletes defying stereotypes and overcoming adversity. A recent installment featured ballerina Misty Copeland, who this year

became the first African-American woman to be appointed principal dancer with the American Ballet Theater. The investment is paying off for Under Armour in the marketplace, Lukasik said.

On the other side of the spectrum, Gordon recently called out an advertisement by a Seattle-area real estate company. The company's ad had a split image, comparing a "part-time agent," portrayed as a mom at

home, overwhelmed by three unruly children, to "full-time professionals," embodied by two men in a business setting, dressed in suits and smiling for the camera. The message underneath was "Who would you rather represent you?"

The backlash against the ad was so severe, the company, Costello & Costello Real Estate Group, issued a public apology.

For the ACLU, which continues to collect stories from women in the film, television and commercial industries, the issue is one of civil justice.

"This is an employment and civil rights issue," said Melissa Goodman with the ACLU. "The industry is huge, large, important and

powerful, both in terms of not only employing a substantial number of people but the product has a tremendously huge cultural impact. Those two things were why we focused on this. The exclusion of women from a large, profitable and influential industry is very important to the ACLU."

It also has a tremendous ripple effect in our culture, said Goodman, who is the director of ACLU of Southern California's LGBTQ, Gender and Reproductive Justice Project.

"There have been many studies out there that show that when you have women behind

the camera, it can influence the type of stories told, the number of lines women have, the number of female characters on the screen and the quality of the discussion," Goodman said. "When you exclude women from behind the camera, it's not only exclusion from employment, but also skewing the actual cultural product we see on our screen."

The problem isn't so much straight-up gender discrimination as much as an unconscious bias, Goodman said. It's the notion that it is inherently more risky to hire women, to trust women with bigger-budget products and that they won't be as strong leaders on the set. The same sort of bias that holds women back in all sorts of positions, holds women back in directing, she said.

When it comes to the role of director, "most of us still think of a white man. That's a cultural bias problem," Goodman said. "Hirers may not be conscious of the fact that they prefer white male candidates."

They are not discriminatory on the face of it, but they have the effect of shutting women out, she said.

"The courts have recognized that when you have hiring systems based on network and word of mouth, they perpetuate bias," Goodman said. "People hire what looks like them and the stereotype of who has these jobs."

To help young women "see" their potential, Lukasik has created a job shadow program that gives students access to the world of commercial directing, which means making all the creative decisions, giving the orders to crews and actors, and getting things done post-production.

"It's very intimidating. It's very difficult," Lukasik said. "I just wanted other filmmakers to have the opportunity to see what it looked like to have a woman directing."

Lukasik is also working with a team to produce a public service announcement on the gender inequality issue and the job shadow program, hoping more directors get involved and open their sets. The piece, which will be animated, is expected to be completed this fall. Its release will be posted through the 3% Conference social media feeds.

"Everybody knows it's a problem," she said. "I'm tired of just chatting and talking about it."

BY THE NUMBERS Women and advertising

80%

Consumer spending influenced by women

3%

Creative directors at U.S. ad agencies in 2012 who were women

11%

Creative directors at U.S. ad agencies today who are women

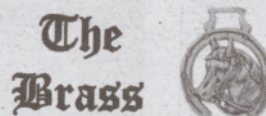
Source: The 3% Conference



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