For Ada, Clare, Eric, Lars, Rob, Sadie, and Zach

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Chapter 1

Women's Cinema and the Russian and Soviet Animation Industry

> "Women's cinema" is a complex critical, theoretical and institutional construction, brought into existence by audiences, film-makers, journalists, curators, and academics and maintained only by their continuing interest: a hybrid concept, arising from a number of overlapping practices and discourses. . . .
>
> —Alison Butler, *Women's Cinema: The Contested Screen*[1]

Introduction

Imagine, if you will, a time when female directors are so prevalent that their gender is no longer an issue. Unfortunately, not only are female directors still a rarity in most of the world, their contributions have also historically been downplayed, minimized, or even omitted from the canons. In the last twenty to thirty years media scholars, the filmmaking community, and, at times, even executives have attempted to call attention to the lack of women in positions of power within the film industry and to highlight the work women have done in an effort to encourage more women to participate, and to promote parity.

1 Alison Butler, *Women's Cinema: The Contested Screen* (London: Wallflower Press, 2002), 2.

Despite the lack of parity, film scholars have illustrated that cinema has long been a place where some women have excelled and their contributions have been distinctive. One such investigation is *Women and the Cinema: A Critical Anthology*, by Karyn Kay and Gerald Peary, which points to the cinema as one site where "vestiges of 'female culture' have grown—usually unnoticed or condescendingly ignored."[2] Kay and Peary point out that even in such a male-dominated profession, women have made a place for themselves. Since that seminal work, great strides have been made to not only foreground those unnoticed and ignored women, to uncover how they helped to shape and form this burgeoning industry, but also to explore the amazing ways in which women have contributed to a uniquely female culture of filmmaking. Some recent examples include works like *The Women Film Pioneers Project* founded by Jane Gaines and Shelley Stamp's work on Lois Weber.[3] The *Women Film Pioneers Project* is an online resource of scholarly research which explores women who were working in a variety of professions during the silent era in film industries all over the world, including Russia. Stamp's recent scholarship offers groundbreaking research on Weber's career as an actress, screenwriter, and director, underscoring how she was pivotal in the development of film culture within the growing studio system in Hollywood.

By comparison, relatively few scholars have tackled the subject of women within Eastern European cinema. However, those few scholars have made important contributions on women's roles in live-action film in Russia and the Soviet Union. A noteworthy contribution is Judith Mayne's 1989 *Kino and the Woman Question,* which focuses on the issue of the woman question in Soviet montage film. Because there were virtually no female directors at the time, Mayne looks specifically at how male montage directors addressed or ignored the issue of women's emancipation in their films. Additionally, Lynn Attwood's seminal *Red Women on the Silver Screen* examines the role of women both as characters in Soviet cinema and as workers in the film industry and in particular as women who worked towards changing the industry and the representations of women.[4] More recently, Rachel Morely's 2017 *Performing Femininity: Woman as Performer in Early Russian Cinema*

2 Karyn Kay and Gerald Peary, eds., *Women and the Cinema: A Critical Anthology* (New York: E. P. Dutton Press, 1977), xiii.

3 *The Women Film Pioneers Project*, accessed June 18, 2018, https://wfpp.cdrs.columbia.edu/.

4 Lynne Attwood and Maiia Turovskaia, *Red Women on the Silver Screen: Soviet Women and Cinema from the Beginning to the End of the Communist Era* (London: Pandora, 1993).

analyzes the concept of female performance in the cinema of pre-Revolutionary Russia.[5] Works such as these are changing our understanding of film history, which until recently has been primarily a history of great men.[6]

In addition to work on female labor in cinema, in the past twenty years scholars of Russian and Soviet cinema have written on issues related to gender, especially in regard to the characterization of women in live-action film. Scholars such as Mayne and Attwood have examined characters in live-action film, revealing the ambiguities and anxieties about gender that pervade periods across Soviet and Russian history. While some of the gender issues raised by live-action cinema are also applicable to animation, many are not. For example, Rimgaila Salys in her article "Life into Art: Laying Bare the Theme in 'Bed and Sofa,'" explores the ways in which male domination and female subservience in the 1920s are conveyed directly through character development in Abram Room's *Bed and Sofa* (*Tretia meshchanskaia*, 1927).[7] Salys concludes that Room's film dramatizes and represents the full cultural complexity of the difficult question regarding female self-sufficiency and self-determination without instructing or solving these problems.[8] Beth Holmgren, when discussing the Stalinist film *Circus* (*Tsirk*, 1936) by Grigori Aleksandrov, uncovers the contradictions in the myth of Soviet gender equality during the Stalinist years.[9] Holmgren further suggests that when *Circus* undertakes the redemption of its fallen heroine, Marion Dixon, she is stripped of her eroticism and her sexuality, which liberates her as an authentic human being, falsely oppressed by capitalist culture, and naturalizes her glamour into an acceptable Soviet form.[10] This type of scholarship evaluates live-action films utilizing current feminist theories in relation to character development, attempting to recover women's struggles for self-realization while offering a more nuanced understanding of gender and power dynamics. Character analysis of live-action film does not directly

5 Rachel Morely, *Performing Femininity: Woman as Performer in Early Russian Cinema* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co. Ltd., 2017).

6 This is of course, by no means an exhaustive list of works that explore female representation in cinema, nor female industrial labor.

7 Rimgaila Salys, "Life into Art: Laying Bare the Theme in 'Bed and Sofa,'" *Russian Language Journal / Russkii iazyk* 52, no. 171/173 (1998): 294, www.jstor.org/stable/43669091.

8 Ibid., 303.

9 Alexander Prokhorov, "Revisioning Aleksandrov's 'Circus': Seventy Years of the Great Family," *The Russian Review* 66, no. 1 (2007): 4, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20620474.

10 Beth Holmgren, "'The Blue Angel' and Blackface: Redeeming Entertainment in Aleksandrov's 'Circus,'" *The Russian Review* 66, no. 1 (2007): 5–22, http://www.jstor.org/stable/20620475.

translate to discussions of Soviet and Russian animation, which rarely, if ever, focuses on interpersonal romantic relationships between men and women, fallen women, or sexuality, as these subjects would not have been considered appropriate for children.[11] While adult topics were considered taboo, we will demonstrate that on certain occasions female self-determination and the contradictions of Soviet gender equality were addressed in the animation made by women.

The scholarship on Soviet cinema shifts with the new generation of Soviet filmmakers from the 1960s onwards, who attempted to reframe the world of their films and set themselves counter to the cinema of Stalinism as they focused their films on the private lives and daily routines of Soviet citizens.[12] The 1960s were also the period that saw more Soviet women become live-action filmmakers, which in our opinion changed the way scholars analyzed these films. For instance, rather than ignoring gender, as was the official stance, scholars began to look at films directed by women, discerning their differences, and attributing them to gender. In one such instance, Susan Larsen's 2007 chapter "Kira Muratova's *Brief Encounters*," builds on Laura Mulvey's famous 1975 essay "Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema" and suggests that Muratova's film disrupts "the viewer's ability to identify with the male gaze (the normative identification presupposed by classical narrative cinema) at every level of the film's structure, which repeatedly locates the origin of the on-screen gaze within the memories of her two female characters."[13] In other words, it is Muratova's status as a female director which allows her to unseat the usual male gaze and the pleasure derived by male spectators by focusing on her female characters. Lilya Kaganovsky in "Ways of Seeing: On Kira Muratova's 'Brief Encounters' and Larisa Shepit'ko's 'Wings'" (2012) suggests that the women directors who began their careers during the Thaw represent a kind of Soviet "counter-cinema," one that posits the question of "seeing" differently, that is, a gendered seeing, at the center of its interrogations.[14] For scholars, like Larsen and Kaganovsky, as well as the authors of this book, women directors often

11 See section on Children's Animation later in this chapter.

12 Lilya Kaganovsky, "Ways of Seeing: On Kira Muratova's 'Brief Encounters' and Larisa Shepit'ko's 'Wings.'" *Russian Review* 71, no. 3 (July 2012): 482–483.

13 Susan Larsen, "Kira Muratova's *Brief Encounters*," in *The Cinema of Russia and the Former Soviet Union (24 Frames Series)*, ed. Birgit Beumers (London: Wallflower Press, 2007), 124.

14 See chapter 5 for more explanation of the Thaw in the 1960s.

address female spectators and issues related to women in unique ways and hence their works can be categorized as women's cinema. While only Kaganovsky engages specifically with the term women's cinema, a point we will return to, all of the scholars we have been discussing raise aesthetic and narrative particularities that relate to broader concerns of female representation and bring new insights into the discourse of gender in live-action cinema throughout the Soviet and post-Soviet period.

An issue these studies have in common is that they do not address the advances women have made in the animation industry. Soviet female directors have distinguished themselves in the animation industry despite having been largely ignored. We argue over the next several chapters that women's work in animation interacts with ideology in intricate and complex ways, often portraying females and femininity in ways that push the boundaries of ideological and aesthetic norms in the Soviet Union. Throughout this book we demonstrate how, despite dominant Soviet ideology and Russian cultural misogyny, animation made by women was and is, in fact, gendered and that gendering is crucial to understanding the impact women have in animation history. However, we do not employ a typical Western feminist approach to analyze these films, instead our approach attempts to situate these women directors and their films within the historical reality in which they lived. While there may be some theoretical overlap, our approach does not attempt to raise the same questions of gender provoked by live-action women directors. We believe that bringing the work of women animation directors together in one monograph is a necessary contribution to both feminist and animation studies, as these women deserve to have their work preserved as part of animation history. Our vision for this book is not to compare the animation of men and women, but rather point out the ways in which women imagine strong heroines, motherhood, femininity, and, at times, a more unique form of feminism than is found in the West.

Our study brings together the reconstruction of women's labor and animation history, with analysis specific to the field of animation, in order to bridge the gap between film and animation studies, Slavic studies, and gender studies. Our work is historically situated in order to accurately reassess the role of women, not only as we trace the establishment of the Soviet and Russian animation industry, but also as we attempt to understand the depictions of females and femininity in the films made by women. The three main concerns of our book are: 1) the recovery of the contributions women have made to Russian and Soviet animation over the last hundred

years; 2) the question of how the term women's cinema in Russia and the Soviet Union can be applied to animation; and 3) the complications and possible advantages posed by animation's ghettoized position as children's media. While there are many barriers to assessing women's success in the field of animation and their achievements may have been obscured over the last hundred years, our goal is to demonstrate that several female animators were able to overcome these barriers and have contributed to the shaping of animation culture and tradition in Russia.

We believe that many of the gender concerns raised by scholars of live-action cinema pose a complex set of problems when one takes into account all the relative factors of the animation industry: the medium of animation, the use of authorial point of view, the intended audience of animated work, Russian and Soviet cultural constraints in regard to animated film, and the woman question. We will discuss each of these constraints in turn in an attempt to understand the particular significance of female directors within Soviet and Russian children's animation. Only then can we explore why and how women's animation contributes to the notion of women's cinema and why studying this contribution is crucial for understanding the history of Soviet and Russian animation.

Children's Animation and Censorship

Animation was born alongside cinema, as a mostly adult form of amusement, it soon became associated primarily with children's entertainment.[15] The association of animation with children has led many to assume that it is less important and less serious than live-action cinema, and that because it is made for children it is harmless and innocent. These erroneous assumptions contributed to two significant outcomes within the Soviet Union: 1) because animation was considered less prestigious, women were allowed to reach top creative positions, especially working as directors; and 2) children's programming and animation actually became a site where artists were able to push back against dominant ideology and create changes in attitudes.[16]

15 Animation still held a place in the "grown-up" realms of experimental and art cinema, but in the American context, it was not until Ralph Bakshi's *Fritz the Cat* in 1965 that animation was again considered the purview of adults.

16 In the American context *Sesame Street* is a great example: having dealt with the death of a main character, it has also introduced a variety of characters who have challenged notions of "normal" and acceptable: a character with Down syndrome, an HIV-positive Muppet, and a Muppet with autism.

Children's animation has often been ignored by film scholars as lacking merit for scholarly investigation because of its connection to children. Jayne Pilling, in her instrumental book *Women in Animation*, admits that women have had more of an authoritative and creative role in pivotal films for children, yet she dismisses animation made for children as not belonging to her investigation because she sees it as neither an art form, nor a form of personal expression.[17] For Pilling, children's animation is too formulaic and does not tackle the personal, which is what separates the dross from the artistic. Her assessment is common among scholars of children's media, who tend to explore animation's intrinsic value as entertainment and/or as an educational vehicle, but often eschew any discussions of its artistic merit.[18] This devaluation of animation for children holds true especially within the Russian and Soviet context. Russian film scholar, Birgit Beumers, points out in her article "Comforting Creatures in Children's Cartoons" that children's animation in Russia has suffered from a lack of scholarly interest because of its connection to children.[19] Russian children's animation is further discredited because it is an area where women were working. Female directors and animators exercised tremendous creative and cultural influence, more so than their live-action counterparts.

Because children were the intended audience for most animated films during the Soviet and post-Soviet period, certain questions of gender or sexuality and some broader concerns of female representation, used by feminist scholars of live-action film, cannot be applied to animation studies in the same way. While ideas related to female self-sufficiency and self-determination do appear in animated films in the 1920s and beyond, issues of eroticism and sexuality are seen much less frequently. In the 1960s Soviet female directors did engage with different ways of seeing, yet utilizing Mulvey's psychoanalytic understanding of the spectator's gaze is not particularly helpful when discussing films that feature anthropomorphic

17 Jayne Pilling, ed., *Women and Animation: A Compendium* (London: British Film Institute, 1984), 5.

18 See L. A. Kort-Butler, "Justice League?: Depictions of Justice in Children's Superhero Cartoons," *Criminal Justice Review* 38, no. 1 (2013): 50–69, and S. M. Zehnder and S. L. Calvert, "Between the Hero and the Shadow: Developmental Differences in Adolescents' Perceptions and Understanding of Mythic Themes in Film," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 28 (2004): 122–137.

19 Birgit Beumers, "Comforting Creatures in Children's Cartoons," in *Russian Children's Literature and Culture*, ed. Marina Balina and Larissa Rudova (New York: Routledge: 2007), 153.

cats or turtles—although it certainly can be done, we feel it does not properly explain women's representation in animated films intended for children. There are some areas of overlap in potential scholarly approaches to animation and live-action film, for example, the focus on strong female characters who overcome obstacles and the image of woman as a version of mother earth. Still, the analysis of animated films cannot mirror the analysis of live-action films due to the specifics of their intended audience and the Russian and Soviet cultural constraints in regard to animated films for children.

Recently, however, scholars have become increasingly more interested in going beyond the supposed innocence of children's animation and exploring not only the ways in which it influences children, but also how it challenges hegemony and cultural constructs. Henry Giroux, an American cultural critic, in his book *The Mouse that Roared: Disney and the End of Innocence*, examines the social, gender, and ethnic constructs espoused by the Walt Disney Corporation and the influence Disney has on popular culture.[20] Giroux argues that Disney, through films, television and radio stations, theme parks, and advertisements, invades our society to espouse Disney-centric values (which by today's standards would be considered racist, sexist, and homophobic). He suggests that we must carefully evaluate the cultural hegemony established by the corporation and view Disney films as more than simple narratives of fantasy and escape or as forms of pure entertainment. Giroux warns that it is our responsibility to find a way to insert the political back into the discussion about these films and understand the relationship between childhood and innocence. Giroux's argument is also applicable to Soviet animation, which was perhaps more consciously didactic in its hegemonic overtones. While Disney and the Soviet Union had very different ideological approaches, both aimed to educate, shape, and indoctrinate children. The relationship between childhood and innocence and the propensity to overlook messages in animated films is crucial for understanding how Russian women directors influenced not only the technical and aesthetic aspects of Soviet animation but also the espoused cultural norms and modes of behavior.

The connection between innocence and animation has been explored by Natalie Kononenko, an expert on Ukrainian folklore, in her article

20 Henry A. Giroux and Grace Pollock, *The Mouse that Roared: Disney and the End of Innocence* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 2010), 84–91.

"The Politics of Innocence: Soviet and Post-Soviet Animation on Folklore Topics." Kononenko argues that because Soviet animation was "cloaked in a veneer of innocence," that is, rendered harmless by its association with children, it was able to get away with sometimes controversial representations. For example, ethnic and gender stereotypes that would have been censored in live-action film are allowed to remain in Soviet and, now, Russian animation, because they are somehow less dangerous when they are animated.[21] Soviet animated films are not innocent, and often push alternate ideologies. While Kononenko's article focuses on Ukrainian examples and only mentions a few women animators, she comments on the types of female characters that were created during the Soviet period, "Although the Communist party had originally promised to liberate women and make them strong and equal partners to men, by the time Soviet cartoons were created, independent women were no longer desired."[22] Instead of strong independent women, Kononenko identifies examples of female characters that are "passive, gentle, self-sacrificing . . . and hardworking."[23] Besides the hardworking aspect, in general, these character traits run contrary to the official goals of the Communist party. Kononenko's scholarship uncovers negative stereotypes about women in animation, but the scope of her article is rather narrow to make conclusions about specific female animation directors. Significantly, Kononenko pinpoints the unusual censorship structure in the animation industry which helped women directors have a voice in their films, in ways that would not have been permitted in live-action cinema because animated film was deemed beyond ideology.[24]

As many animation scholars have argued, censorship worked differently in Soviet animation than in other areas of the film industry.[25] Folklorist Jack Zipes offers the most common understanding of the censorship apparatus in the animation industry in Russia: "The fairy-tale shorts were screened by state authorities and were obliged to follow the cultural policies of the Communist regimes and emphasize pedagogical and moral aspects

21 See Natalie Kononenko's discussion of *Vasilisa the Beautiful* in "The Politics of Innocence: Soviet and Post-Soviet Animation on Folklore Topics," *Journal of American Folklore* 124, no. 494 (2011): 272–294.

22 Ibid., 277.

23 Ibid., 277.

24 Ibid., 273.

25 Georgii Borodin, "V bor'be za malen'kiye mysli. Neadekvatnost' tsenzury," *Kinovedcheskie zapiski* 73 (2005): 271; and idem, "'Soiuzmul'tfil'm': Nenapisannaia istoriia," *Kinovedcheskie zapiski* 80 (2006): 149–152.

of the fairy-tale films. These policies kept changing, and the animators were always faced with arbitrary standards and censorship."[26] Zipes is correct in his basic assessment of censorship as irrational and arbitrary, yet he misses the nuances that made the system work in favor of animation directors. Censorship was at once critical because children were being influenced, but also more lax because it was innocent animation. Maya Katz, in *Drawing the Iron Curtain: Jews and the Golden Age of Soviet Animation*,[27] challenges Zipes's understanding of censorship, suggesting that the 1,200 narrative films that came out of Soiuzmultfilm in 1936–1991 cannot be categorized as simply examples of propaganda or socialist realism. Directors of animated films were not blindly forced to follow the rigid standards of the cultural policies of the Communist regimes.[28] Instead, Katz argues, directors during the production process often were presented with conflicting evaluations, that allowed directors to act on only one opinion while ignoring others that conflicted with their artistic vision. Katz's work dismisses the idea that there was a centralized, cohesive body making informed and final decisions about Soviet ideology and forcing these ideas into animated films. While there was certainly censorship and decrees passed which inhibited animation production, we highlight some of the ways in which animation directors were allowed more freedom of expression than live-action film directors.[29] In particular, women directors who despite the censors, managed to push forward films that contained their own formations of female self-realization and self-reflexivity. It is precisely because of this relative freedom and the fact that the majority of animation produced during the Soviet and post-Soviet periods was designated for children that we choose animation made by women.

Women's Contributions to Animation

Throughout its one-hundred-plus-year history, Russian cinema, like cinemas in many other countries, was and is still dominated by men. Despite

26 Jack Zipes, *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy Tales Films* (London: Routledge, 2011), 79.

27 Maya Katz, *Drawing the Iron Curtain: Jews and the Golden Age of Soviet Animation* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2016).

28 For a discussion of censorship at Soiuzmultfilm see ibid., 19–24.

29 Semen S. Ginzburg, *Risovannyi i kukol'nyi fil'm: Ocherki razvitiia sovietskoi mul'tiplikatsionnoi kinematografii* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1957), 164.

this, there have been times when women have helped to shape the industry, such as Antonina Khanzhonkova who served as head of production for her husband's film studio Khanzhonkov & Co. prior to 1918.[30] This holds true for animation as well, where Russian women were among the first in the world to have successful careers and to reach the coveted and prestigious position of director. For instance, Olga Khodataeva and the sisters Valentina and Zinaida Brumberg began their animation careers in 1924 in the newly established Soviet State. By 1928 they were directing their own films, and continued to direct until the 1970s.

Women in other parts of the world have had varying success at directing animated films. Lotte Reiniger, a German animator, began animating for Paul Wegener's *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* (*Der Rattenfänger von Hameln*) in 1918. Reiniger, famous for her elaborate paper cut-out silhouette animation, is often celebrated as the first woman animator, having directed her first animated short in 1919, *The Ornament of the Enamored Heart* (*Das Ornament des verliebten Herzens*), and was often credited with having made the first feature-length animated film, *The Adventures of Prince Achmed* (*Die Abenteuer des Prinzen Achmed*) in 1926. [31] Within the American context, the Walt Disney Studio is often seen as the pinnacle of the early animation industry, however they did not hire women as directors during the early years. In fact, as late as 1938 one hopeful candidate leaned that "Women do not do any creative work in connection with preparing the cartoons for the screen, as that work is performed entirely by young men."[32] The letter writer, Mary Cleave for Walt Disney Productions, Ltd., went on to inform Miss Mary Ford that the best she could hope for was to be an inker

30 Michele Leigh, "Reading between the Lines: History and the Studio Owner's Wife," in *Doing Women's Film History: Reframing Cinemas, Past and Future*, ed. Julia Knight and Christine Gledhill (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015), 42–52.

31 Reiniger's film is the earliest extant film. The first feature-length animated film, which was also made of cut-outs, was the now lost Argentinian film *The Apostle* (*El Apóstol*), directed by Quirino Cristiani in 1917.

32 Mary Cleave, for Walt Disney Productions Ltd., to Miss Mary V. Ford, June 7, 1938, accessed June 19, 2018, http://www.openculture.com/2013/04/no_women_need_apply_a_disheartening_1938_rejection_letter_from_disney_animation.html. It is generally understood that this is a form letter, meant to discourage young hopefuls from moving to California without a job. Mindy Johnson's *book Ink & Paint* illustrates that the letter is not an example of Disney's wholesale disregard for female artists/employees, but points to the kinds of employment where women excelled at Disney, namely the Ink & Paint department, where Cleave herself worked. Mindy Johnson, *Ink & Paint: The Women of Walt Disney's Animation* (Los Angeles: Disney Editions, 2017).

(the person who worked on quality control, tracing the outlines with india ink before color paint was added) or painter (a person who worked in the color key department—coloring in the lines created by the inker in individual frames), but she did not advise traveling from Arkansas as those positions were rare compared to the number of young women who applied for them.[33] One of the first women to work at Walt Disney and receive screen credit as an animator was Retta Scott for her work on *Bambi* in 1942.[34] The perception within popular culture of sexism and an all-boys club mentality has historically been reinforced by the fact that Disney did not employ a woman as a director of a feature-length animated film until 2013, when Jennifer Lee co-directed and wrote *Frozen*.[35]

Because Disney was so reticent to hire women as lead animator or director, one must look elsewhere in the American system in order to find one the first female animators at a major studio. Lillian Friedman Astor in 1931 was hired by the Fleischer Studios, famous for *Betty Boop* in the 1930s, to work as an inker, painter, and an in-betweener, drawing the frames of movement in between the key frames created by the senior animator. Astor was eventually promoted to an assistant animator and then finally to animator in 1933; though she never directed her own film. Astor notes, in an interview with Harvey Deneroff, that her *Betty Boop* work was shown to the Fleischers "without telling them at first that it was done by a girl," hence Astor was promoted to animator based solely on her artwork.[36] Not many women were so lucky.

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33 Ibid.

34 Monique Peterson, *The Little Big Book of Disney* (New York: Disney, 2001), 303–319. Scott is also mentioned several times in Didier Ghez, *Walt's People: Talking Disney with the Artists Who Knew Him*, vol. 8 (Bloomington: Xlibris Corporation, 2009). See also Johnson, *Ink & Paint*, 155. It should be noted that Scott was most likely not the first women animator at Disney, but her case becomes an exemplar of the problems inherent in rewriting women back into film/animation history - so much of female labor has been lost without proper screen credit.

35 Terry Flores, "*Frozen*'s Jennifer Lee Melts Glass Ceilings," *Variety,* June 10, 2014, accessed December 16, 2018, https://variety.com/2014/film/awards/frozens-jennifer-lee-melts-ceilings-1201216961/. While Merida is claimed by Disney to be one of their princesses, Brenda Chapman's film *Brave* (2012) was produced by Pixar and they removed Chapman as director partway through the filming of the screenplay that she wrote.

36 Harvey Deneroff, "Lillian Friedman Astor: Pioneer Woman Animator," *ASIFA-East Program*, accessed October 12, 2018, http://deneroff.com/docs/Lillian%20Friedman%20Astor%20Pioneer%20Woman%20Animator.pdf.

Generally, the field of animation has always attracted a large number of women, perhaps a holdover from the early days of cinema when droves of women were employed to paint and stencil the individual film frames of live-action film. Despite the large number of women working in the animation industry, many struggled for recognition. Anna Belonogova, a current member of the teaching collective at VGIK (All-State Institute of Cinematography) suggests in her article "Shine, Supernova," that women were attracted to the field of animation because the profession demanded great care, preservation, and creativity. Belonogova goes on to remark that women animators are always in the shadows of their male counterparts, doing a disservice to their films and their contributions, which are varied and even sometimes well-known throughout the world.[37] The authors of this book, like Belonogova, feel that it is important to not only highlight the work women were doing, but to call attention to the importance of that work.

Part of the difficulty in recognizing the work of women in animation is due to the way in which these films are made. As Eric Herhuth points out in "Political Animation and Propaganda," animation labor has been a topic for critical study especially given the capacity for animated films to conceal the condition of their production.[38] With the exception of art films, most animated films are not made from start to finish by one person, and creative input in animation cannot easily be assigned to one individual as very few animated works have been created without the hands of a great number of people. In general, directors rely on other people to help make the film and often there is a certain amount of collaboration, so that a final work bears the imprint of many people. Even when crew members are credited, identifying and researching directors, animators, camera operators, art directors, and editors of a particular film can be challenging at best, as it is often difficult to delineate how each of these individuals contributed to the final film. This concealment of labor practices can lead to exploitation and discrimination—especially in regards

37 See Belonogova's history pages on the website for VGIK (All-State Institute of Cinematography). She discusses women animators in the section "Shine, Supernova." Belonogova is a current teacher at the VGIK college, a female animator, and a member of the Filmmakers' Union. Anna Belonogova, "Gori, sverkhnovaia," accessed August 2, 2017, http://www.vgik.info/college/history_of_animation/.

38 Eric Herhuth, "Political Animation and Propaganda," in *The Animation Studies Reader*, ed. Nichola Dobson, Annabelle Honess Roe, Amy Ratelle, and Caroline Ruddell (New York: Bloomsbury, 2018), 177.

to women's labor. Within Russian animation studies, especially in the early years, it is almost impossible to identify the women who worked as in-betweeners, inkers, and colorists. These positions in the Soviet Union and throughout the world were predominantly performed by women, yet they were routinely not given screen credit, so it is sometimes impossible to know where women were working. In this respect Belonogova is correct: many women have worked on animated films, they have influenced animation and, unfortunately, for the most part their names are still unknown because their work remains uncredited.

An illustration of the unrecognized, yet clearly visible, work of women in Soviet animation in the 1940s and 1950s can be found in animator Ivan Ivanov-Vano's text *Drawn Film*.[39] Often called the father of Soviet animation, Ivanov-Vano directed over sixty films during his career and worked with the Brumberg sisters as well as with Aleksandra Snezhko-Blotskaia. *Drawn Film* analyzes animation as an art form, while introducing practical skills to new animators. The book consists of a series of chapters, which taught beginning animators necessary technical skills, outlined procedural requirements of their profession, and mapped out the history of animation. This eighty-five-page pamphlet contains only five photographs, all of which show animators at work. Women at work are visible in four of the five photos: women sitting in rows in a workshop, women tracing and painting, women drawing, and even a woman behind the camera. However, nowhere in the text does Ivanov-Vano comment on the contributions of women to the field of animation and none of the photos have names. If the male-to-female ratio indicated by the photographs is indicative of women's representation in the animation industry, then it suggests that women were an important and significant part of the field. Ivanov-Vano's book reminds us of the fact that women did not get credit for the work they did. Despite their visual presence, his book, too, serves to erase their contributions.

If we examine contemporary scholarship on Russian and Soviet animation we find that while female animators are mentioned, their films are not discussed in terms of femininity, women's issues, or women's cinema, further obscuring any connection to gender. For example, David MacFadyen in his groundbreaking 2005 *Yellow Crocodiles and Blue Oranges: Russian Animated Film since World War II* is one of the first scholars to tackle the long-ignored field of Soviet animation. While MacFayden mentions several

39 Ivan Ivanov-Vano, *Risovannyi fil'm* (Moscow: Goskinoizdat, 1950).