

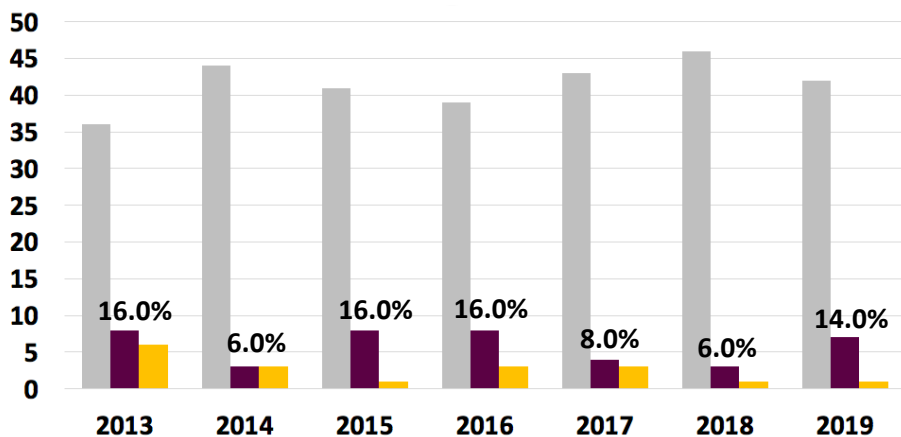
# Gender Representation on *Billboard's* Yearend Country Digital Songs Sales Charts from 2013-2019

JADA E. WATSON,  @data\_jada

in partnership with CMT's Equal Play Campaign,  @CMT #CMTEqualPlay

## FEWER THAN 10 SONGS BY WOMEN ON THE YEAREND SALES CHARTS

*Distribution of songs by men, women and male-female ensembles on Billboard's Yearend Digital Song Sales Chart (2013-2019)*



**92 unique artists**  
between 2013-2019

RATIO OF MEN TO WOMEN

**5 : 1**



*\*Male-female ensembles removed from ratio (7 groups)*

*Billboard's* Digital Song Sales chart ranks the top-downloaded country songs according to sales data compiled by Nielsen SoundScan. The data is one of the three components of the hybrid Hot Country Songs chart methodology. Between 2013 and 2019, fewer than 10 songs by women enter the chart every year, totaling 41 of the 350 charting songs (11.7%) on the Digital Sales chart.

## WOMEN FILTERED OUT OF TOP SPOTS

*Number of songs by women out of the 308 unique songs on Billboard's Yearend Digital Song Sales Chart (2013-2019)*



**37 SONGS**  
**12% SONG SALES**



**13 TOP 20 SONGS**  
**10% SONGS SALES**



**3 TOP 10 SONGS**  
**4.5% SONG SALES**

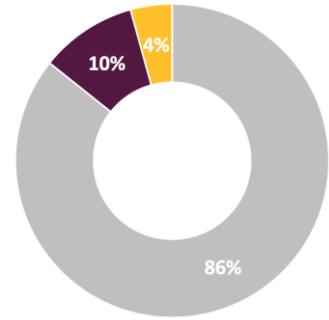
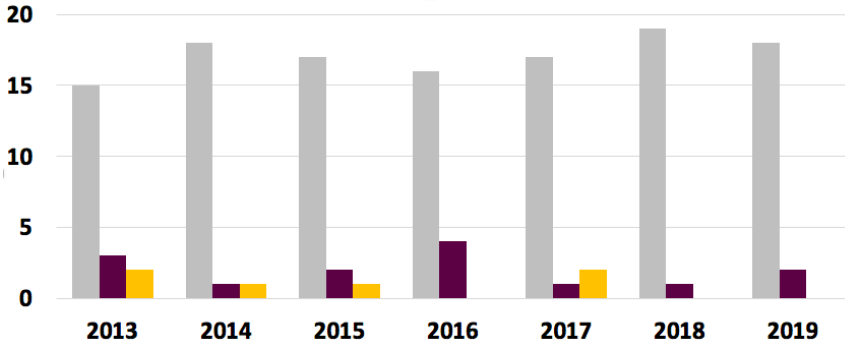


**0 NO. 1 SONGS**  
**0% SONG SALES**

What happens when audiences are presented with fewer songs by female artists on radio or by streaming platform algorithms? They are less familiar with female artists and purchase fewer songs and albums by them. Despite a belief that sales represent audience *preferences*, it is imperative that we consider the impact that inequalities outside of digital purchasing platforms have on purchasing *choices*. With fewer opportunities to hear songs by women through most music dissemination platforms, audiences become less likely to purchase songs by women. Audiences cannot purchase what they do not know, what they do not hear, what they are not exposed to. These results show the broader impact of programming on women's careers.

## AVERAGE OF 2 SONGS BY WOMEN IN THE TOP 20

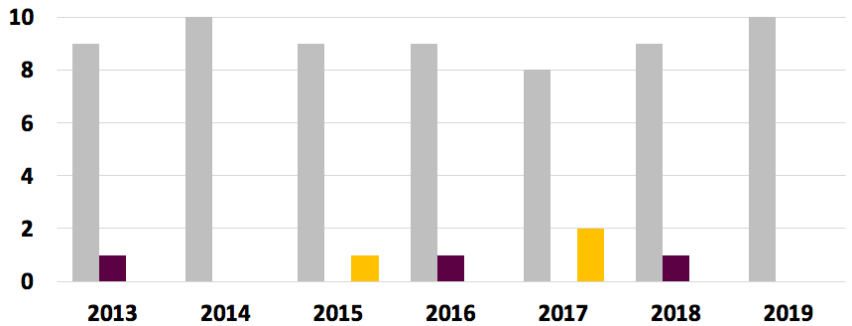
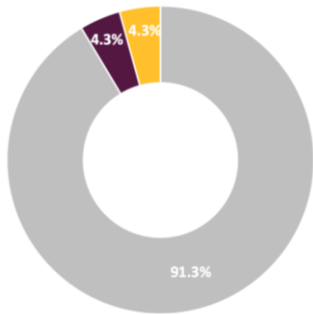
Distribution of songs in the Top 20 of Billboard's Yearend Digital Song Sales Chart (2013-2019)



With fewer than 10 songs a year on the Yearend Digital Song Sales charts, it is not surprising to see so few entering the Top 20 positions. Across this 7-year period, 34% of the songs by women that enter the chart rack up enough sales to reach the Top 20. Following a strong year in 2016 in which women had 20% of the Top 20 songs, the number of songs drops from 4 to 1 in 2017/2018 and ends the decade with 2 songs in the Top 20.

## WOMEN EXCLUDED FROM THE TOP 10

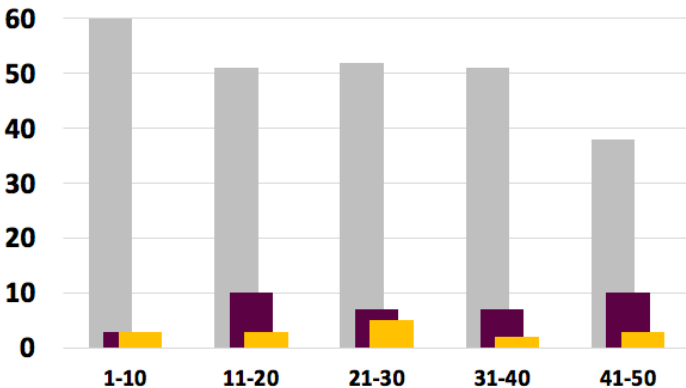
Distribution of songs in the Top 10 of Billboard's Yearend Digital Song Sales Chart (2013-2019)



Just 3 songs by women (7.3%) rack up enough sales in the last 7 years to rank in the Top 10 of the sales charts, this includes "Mama's Broken Heart" by Miranda Lambert in 2013, Maren Morris's "My Church" in 2016 and the pop-country collaboration of "Meant to Be" by Bebe Rexha and Florida Georgia Line in 2018. Adding songs by male-female ensembles to this tally doubles the number of songs including a female singer in the Top 10. Two of these songs – "Girl Crush" (2015) by Little Big Town and "Meant to Be" (2018) by Rexha and FGL were #1 songs on the Yearend Charts. Thus, there were no #1 songs by a female country artist.

## FREQUENCY BY PEAK POSITION

Distribution of by their peak position on Billboard's Yearend Digital Song Sales Chart (2013-2019)



Graphing the distribution of songs by their peak position on the Yearend Digital Song Sales Charts reveals the gravity of the impact of inequalities in the industry on the careers of women. With just 16% of the unique charting songs, the majority of the songs by women peak outside of the Top 10. As we have become accustomed to seeing, men have nearly twice as many songs in the Top 10 as women do overall and are marginalized throughout all positions of the chart.