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## Women Writers of Film & Television Project: Nancy Meyers

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## **Abstract: Nancy Meyers**

### **Presentation title: Women Writers of Film & Television Project: Nancy Meyers**

The suppression of women's voices in the film industry is of no secret to our society. For over a hundred years, many women have been placed in the background and were not given credit for their work in the industry, and only recently have the gates of Hollywood been open to more representation. In the 1980s, many women screenwriters were in creative partnerships with their husbands, and it was difficult for a woman screenwriter to be recognized for her own work and talents aside from the man in her life. One screenwriter, Nancy Meyers was able to garner more fame and notability than her ex-husband, Charles Shyer. Meyers and Shyer began working together in the late 1970s, initially writing together and eventually co-writing with Shyer directing. Meyers' work is renowned for featuring a focus on the female gaze, the woman's perspective in a story, rather than the widely common male gaze. In *Baby Boom* (1987), J.C. Wiatt, a stern businesswoman played by Goldie Hawn, inherits a baby from a relative. She is forced to give up her New York life for a calmer environment, an old cottage in Vermont. Taking the reins of her life into her own hands, J.C. starts her own business that becomes a great success. This is one of many Meyers creations that represent a woman being more than what society, and the woman herself, expected her to be. In this presentation, I discuss *Private Benjamin* (1980), *Baby Boom* (1987), *Irreconcilable Differences* (1984), and *The Parent Trap* (1998) and how the presence of a female central gaze represents a woman with agency.