

English 345: Women Filmmakers

# Introducing Alice Guy Blaché

# Film Career

- [Born 1873](#)
- Begins working with Léon Gaumont in 1894 as secretary
- Sees demonstrations of Georges Demeny's [Phonoscope](#) and the [Lumière brothers' cinématographe](#) in 1894/95



# Film Career, Cont'd

- Using Gaumont camera, Guy makes [La Fée aux Choux](#) in 1896
- Made head of Gaumont film production in 1897
- Produces over 400 films between 1897 and 1906, including color films and “phonoscènes” for the [Chronophone](#)



# Film Career, cont'd

- Goes to America in 1907 to promote phonoscènes in US with husband, who also works for Gaumont
- Creates Solax in 1910, eventually building own studio in Fort Lee, NJ in 1912 (“Studio Saunterings”)
- Produces hundreds of films (two one-reelers per week)

# Guy Blaché Shapes Her Image

“Not only is a woman as well fitted to stage a photodrama as a man, but in many ways she has a distinct advantage over him because of her very nature and because much of the knowledge called for in the telling of the story and the creation of the stage is absolutely within her province as a member of the gentler sex. She is an authority on the emotions.”

Alice Guy Blaché, “Woman’s Place in Photoplay Production.”  
*Moving Picture World* 11 July 1914.

# End of Solax

- Makes Blaché president of Solax in 1913.
- He quits after 3 months to start Blaché Features using Solax's plant, inventory, and actors. Solax subsumed.
- Blachés rent out Solax facilities to other filmmakers (1917) and eventually facilities are auctioned off (1920).
- Last film, *Tarnished Reputations*, released in 1920.

