

**Children's Television Worldwide:  
Gender Representation  
in**



**Canada**

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## **Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television**

### **Introduction**

Children's television in Canada differs in several ways from the situation in the United States and may be best understood by contextualizing it within geographical and historical factors. Canada is a country with a very large geographical area bordering the United States to the north from the Atlantic to the Pacific and extending into and including the Arctic region. In this vast territory, a relatively small population of 34 million lives mainly in urban areas dispersed along the southern rim. The territory was first colonized in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by the French, followed by the British in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which explains the presence of two official languages. The political system is a democracy modelled after that of the United Kingdom with an elected prime minister and an appointed governor general who maintains a symbolic tie with the British monarchy.

In light of these facts, it is understandable why television in Canada resembles television in the United Kingdom much more than in the United States, the most notable feature being a strong public broadcasting system. In fact, as early as the 1930's, the political necessity of having a public national broadcasting system from coast to coast arose out of the fear that the airwaves would quite simply be taken over by the massive spill-over of commercial broadcasters south of the border, first by radio, and quickly thereafter by television. Thus, early on, the *Canadian Broadcasting Company* (CBC) and its French-language counterpart, *Société Radio-Canada* (SRC) were created. Although the public television system enjoyed an early period of exclusivity in the 1950's, it soon had to learn to coexist with an ever-expanding private system, which today includes multiple specialty channels (including some directed towards a young audience) in addition to several conventional ones, available through cable or satellite. Financial investment in public broadcasting has wavered over the years and it has been consistently under pressure to compete with private broadcasters for audience ratings, resulting in an increase in less demanding content solely for entertainment/diversion, and a reduction in informal educational content, including children's programming. Nonetheless, the national public system remains an institution, highly respected for the quality of its news service and for establishing a tradition in quality children's television from the outset. In addition to this nation-wide channel, some provinces also have their own educational television channel, wherein children's programs hold an important place. Finally, let it be mentioned that public funds are available on a competitive

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basis to producers of television content to help compensate its limited markets. Therefore, it will not be surprising that, relative to many other countries, Canada produces a significant proportion of the children's programs that are aired at home and that are also sold on the international market. In addition, Canadian networks are generally required to air a certain amount of domestic programming (50 to 60 percent on average, depending on prime time and overall broadcasting). Although the sheer volume of production does not come close to that of the United States, Canadian programs are highly regarded throughout the world as quality children's content.

In addition to its strong commitment to public broadcasting (like Australia and Great Britain), Canada has a distinctive communications system that reflects its dual cultural origins. In other words, it would be fair to say that we are dealing with a multiple system: French-language public (generalist and educational) and private television broadcasters (including generalist and speciality) on the one hand, and English-language public (generalist and educational) and private television broadcasters (including generalist and speciality) on the other.

### **General information about the Study of Children's Television in Canada**

The Canadian study was sponsored and supported by the Alliance for Children and Television (ACT) and CTVglobemedia (CTVgm), through the CTVgm/CHUM tangible benefits. This study also received support from the International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television (IZI). The reported data is part of a much larger representative sample that consisted of a full week Canadian children's programming. Hence, several of our original variables were adapted and simplified to allow the comparison with the international data form IZI.

#### **Sample selection:**

In the week of the 30th of March to the 5th of April, 2009, over 4,000 (4,102) children's television programs were recorded for this study from the major Canadian television broadcasters. In total, these programs included over a thousand hours (1,065) of children's programming across 19 different television broadcasters. These broadcasters include ACCESS, APTN, BBC Kids (CANWEST MEDIAWORKS), CBC, CFTO/CTV, Discovery Kids, Family Channel, Knowledge, SRC, SCN, Teletoon English, Télétoon French, Treehouse,

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TQS, TVO, TFO, Télé-Québec, VRAK. TV, and YTV. One third of them broadcast in French, and two thirds in English. APTN was the only broadcaster that programmed children's content in aboriginal languages (in addition to French and English). To select a representative sample, two criteria were employed: the program unit and the length of the program. That is, all individual programs and at least one program of each of the series were selected, and those programs had to be at least five minutes in length.<sup>1</sup> In the end, the final representative sample included close to 200 hours (precisely 196 hours and 22 minutes) and more than 500 (563) programs. Over sixteen hundred (1,613) unique main characters were identified in this representative sample.

### **Coding reliability:**

This study is the largest study to date on Canadian television programming for children. Its goal was to gain insight on the presence and role of television in the lives of our children. A group of 6 undergraduate and graduate students at the Université de Montréal served as coders for the project. The coders were trained over a three-week period by using a detailed codebook. The average percentage of agreement was 80%, which showed consistent judgment among independent coders.

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<sup>1</sup> Of the 1,000 hours plus of recorded programs, about 30 hours were excluded.

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## I. Characteristics of Children's Programming

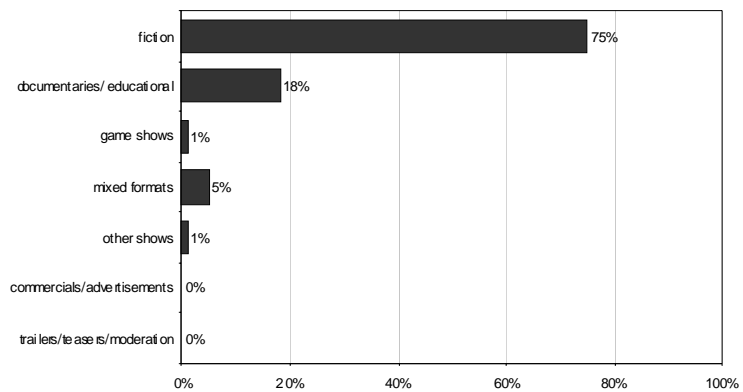
### What is offered to children - Results at program level:

#### More fictional or more non-fictional programs?

The sample comprised 563 shows that were categorized into different program types. Among them, 75% were fictional programs, 18% were documentaries, 5% were with mixed formats, and 1% were game shows.

Differentiation between fiction and non-fiction

For the purpose of comparison with the international data, we will focus the rest of our analysis on the 424 fictional children's programs that were broadcast.

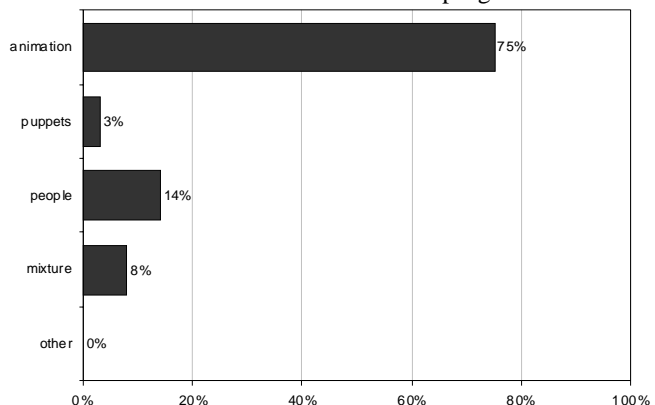


IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; Basis: Canada, n = 563 children's program

#### What types of fictional program could be found? A high percentage of animation!

Four types of program genre were coded in fictional programs: (1) animation, (2) live-action or real people, (3) puppets, and (4) mixed genre. Among the 424 recorded fictions, 75% were animation; 14% of the programs were live-action with real people; 8% of them were a mixture of several genres, and 3% were puppets.

Differentiation within fictional programs



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; Basis: Canada, n = 424 children's fictional programs

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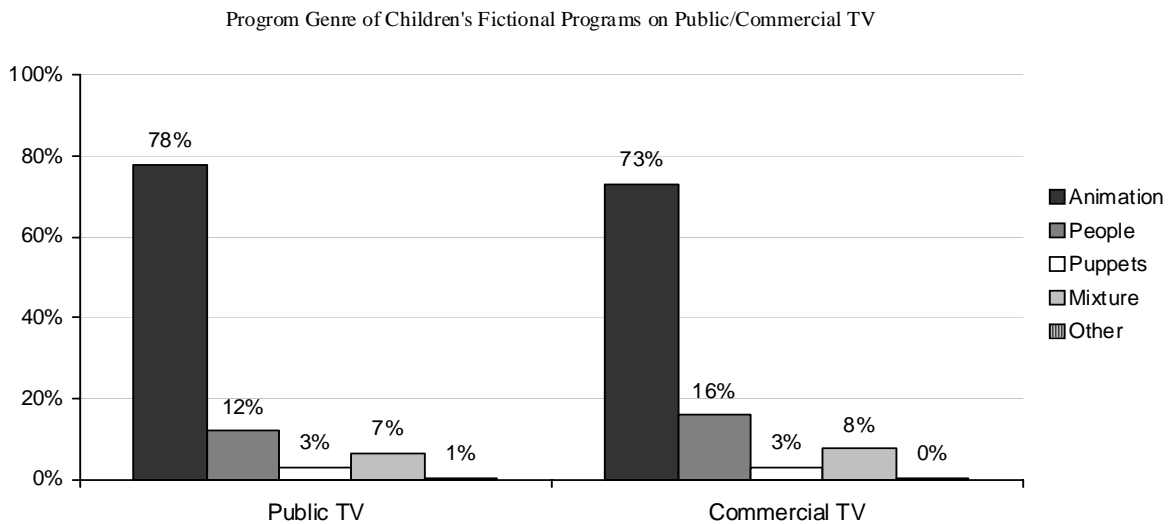
	Animation	Puppets	People	Mixture	Other
Slovenia	96,50%	0,90%	1,90%	0,70%	0,00%
China	96,40%	0,70%	2,90%	0,00%	0,00%
Egypt	95,30%	0,00%	2,60%	2,10%	0,00%
Cuba	94,50%	0,30%	2,80%	2,40%	0,00%
Syria	93,50%	0,00%	3,20%	0,00%	3,20%
Kenya	90,60%	0,70%	8,10%	0,70%	0,00%
Netherlands	90,00%	0,80%	9,20%	0,00%	0,00%
Germany	88,80%	1,80%	7,00%	2,40%	0,00%
Austria	88,30%	2,60%	6,40%	2,60%	0,00%
Hong Kong	85,80%	3,60%	8,90%	1,80%	0,00%
Hungary	85,80%	12,10%	0,70%	1,40%	0,00%
South Africa	85,30%	3,90%	8,30%	2,50%	0,00%
USA	84,80%	1,30%	8,50%	5,50%	0,00%
Norway	84,60%	2,60%	10,30%	2,60%	0,00%
Brazil	84,20%	1,10%	12,60%	2,10%	0,00%
India	81,00%	0,00%	19,00%	0,00%	0,00%
New Zealand	80,60%	0,00%	13,90%	5,50%	0,00%
Australia	80,40%	1,10%	11,00%	2,80%	4,60%
Canada	75,00%	3,00%	14,00%	8,00%	0,00%
Israel	74,70%	0,80%	21,40%	3,10%	0,00%
Malaysia	72,40%	0,00%	13,80%	13,80%	0,00%
Argentina	58,80%	17,60%	17,60%	5,90%	0,00%
UK	55,00%	10,80%	12,30%	20,80%	1,20%
Belgium	54,80%	4,30%	18,70%	21,80%	0,40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>82,38%</b>	<b>2,92%</b>	<b>9,80%</b>	<b>4,52%</b>	<b>0,39%</b>

With a percentage of 75% of children's animated fictional programs, Canada appears below the international average (82.38%) but higher than the international average (9.80%) in terms of live-action/people programs. In fact, for this latter genre, Canada is among the top five countries.

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### Is there a difference in program genre between commercial and public television?

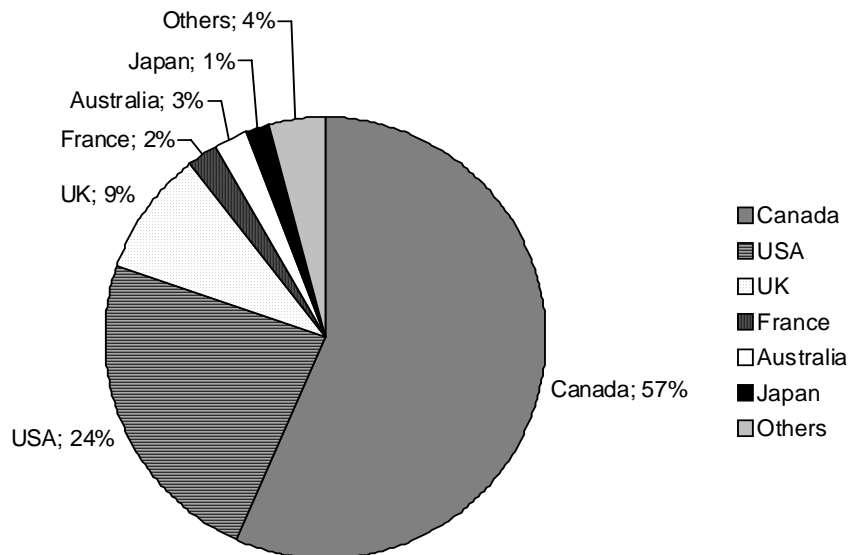
Regarding fictional programs provided by public versus commercial television broadcasters, it is clear that both types of broadcasters air animation programs the most. In fact, the respective proportions of each genre are quite similar. Within public broadcasters (n = 198), 78% of their fictional programs were animation, followed by programs with real people (12%), programs with mixed genre (7%), and puppets (3%). For commercial broadcasters (n = 226), 73% of the fictional programs were animation, and the rest were programs with real people (16%), mixed-genre (8%), and puppets (3%).



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### Where are the children's programs produced?

Programs were assessed in terms of their country of origin by considering all the elements of production of the program, including the country, the production company, as well as the nationality of the director and/or illustrator during the production process. More than 30 different countries of origin were found, including programs produced by a single country (e.g., Canada, the USA, the UK, France, etc.) and coproductions including or excluding Canada.



In our sample, more than half (57%) of children's fictional programs on Canadian television were domestically produced/coproduced, 24% of them were produced in the U.S., 9% were made in the U.K., 4% were produced in a variety of other countries, 3% in Australia, 2% in France, and 1% in Japan. Hence, 43% of the fictional programs were produced or coproduced by other foreign countries.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For the international data, the rule of country of production was applied in the following way: any co-production programs were fully credited to each of the foreign countries. For this analysis, we applied this rule only to Canadian productions and Canadian coproductions programs as domestic production.



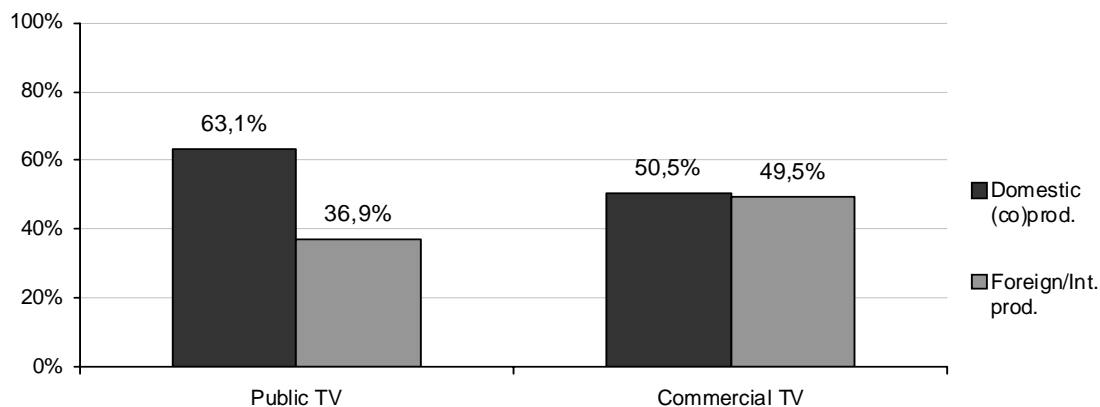
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Domestic Prod.	
Malaysia	82,80%
USA	82,70%
UK	67,70%
Canada	57,00%
China	53,40%
Belgium	39,80%
Germany	17,30%
India	15,80%
Hungary	13,20%
Israel	13,10%
Australia	11,10%
Norway	9,00%
Egypt	8,90%
Netherlands	7,30%
South Africa	6,40%
Brazil	6,30%
Argentina	5,90%
Cuba	5,50%
Syria	3,20%
Slovenia	2,30%
Austria	0,80%
Hong Kong	0,60%
New Zealand	0,50%
Kenya	0,00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,19%</b>

The context of Canadian television set forth in the introduction explains to a certain extent the higher proportion of Canadian domestic content compared to most other countries. With 57% of domestically produced/co-produced programs, Canada ranks in fourth place and is quite above the international average (21.19%). It broadcasts twice as many domestically produced programs than the international average.

In the sample we analyzed, public television broadcasters had more Canadian produced/co-produced fictional programs (63%) than international/foreign productions (37%). For commercial television broadcasters, the proportion of each type of production was about equal.

Country of Production of Children's Fictional Programs on Public/Commercial TV



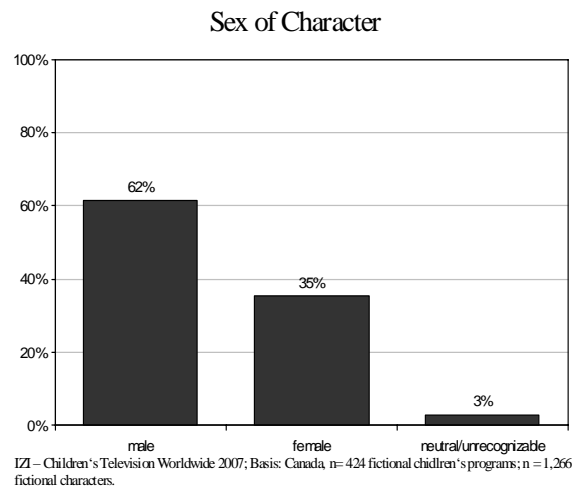
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## II. Analysis of Main Characters in Children's Fictional Programs

### Who are the main characters? - Results at character level:

In this study, we focused on the main characters of the program, which we defined as individual personalities or characters who (1) are central to the plot; (2) are a participant in a conversation (speaks and/or listens); and (3) perform actions important to the story.

In our sample, 1,266 main characters were identified in the 424 fictional programs. In terms of gender, 62% of the main characters were males, and 35% of them females. For 3% of the characters, it was not possible to determine the gender.



## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television

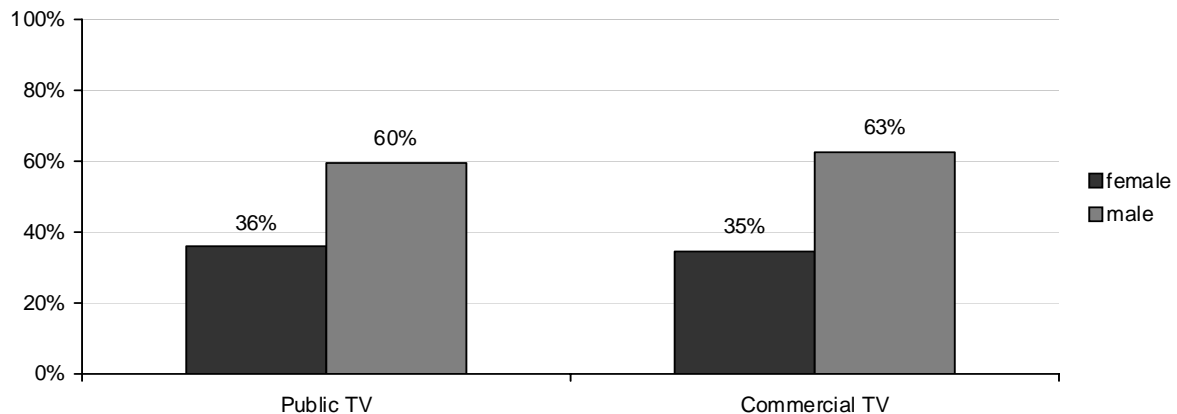
Female		Male	
Norway	41,60%	Argentina	81,50%
Syria	38,90%	Cuba	79,90%
Canada	38,00%	Malaysia	77,20%
Israel	37,40%	Egypt	71,40%
UK	37,30%	Slovenia	71,20%
India	36,10%	South Africa	70,30%
New Zealand	35,20%	Austria	69,40%
Hong Kong	34,90%	China	69,10%
Belgium	34,50%	Germany	69,00%
Kenya	33,20%	Australia	68,50%
USA	33,10%	Brazil	68,50%
Hungary	32,60%	Netherlands	68,40%
Netherlands	31,60%	Hungary	67,40%
Australia	31,50%	Kenya	66,80%
Brazil	31,50%	USA	66,90%
Germany	31,00%	Belgium	65,50%
China	30,90%	Hong Kong	65,10%
Austria	30,60%	New Zealand	64,80%
South Africa	29,70%	India	63,90%
Slovenia	28,80%	UK	62,70%
Egypt	28,60%	Israel	62,60%
Malaysia	22,80%	Canada	62,00%
Cuba	20,10%	Syria	61,10%
Argentina	18,50%	Norway	58,40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>32,02%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>67,98%</b>

Looking at the international data, Canadian children's TV ranks third (38%) in terms of female characters, which is also above the international average (32.02%), while the proportion of male character (62%) is slightly under the international average (67.98%).

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In terms of public and commercial television, fictional program characters' gender distribution was very similar. On public TV, 36% of the main characters were female, compared to 35% on commercial TV, while 60% of the main characters were male on public TV, compared to 63% on commercial TV.

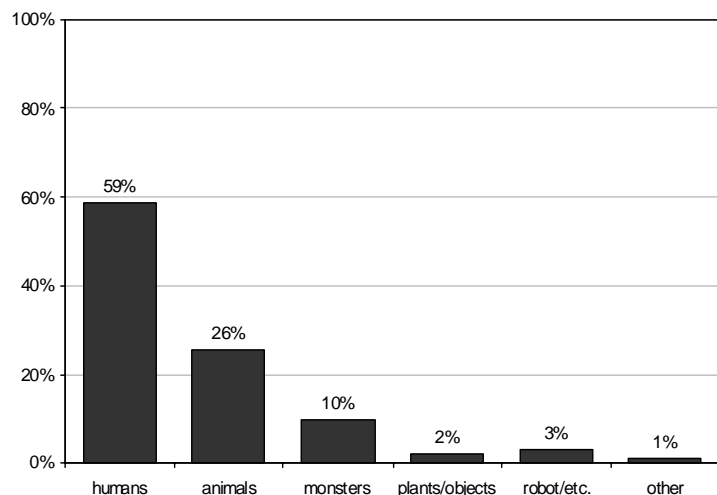
Gender of Fictional Characters of Children's Programs on Public/Commercial TV



### Is the main character a human - animal – monster – object – machine etc.?

Several types of characters based on his, her or its natural form were coded, including human, animal, monster, plant/object, and machine. Out of 1,266 main characters of Canadian children's fictional programs, 59% were coded as humans. For example, Miley is a human character in *Hannah Montana*. Next, 26% of the main characters were coded as animals. Jiggers (a 2D-animation beaver) from *Iggy Arbuckle* is one example of an animal character. Monsters and mythical creatures appeared as the third largest group (10%). An example of this group is the Beast from *Maggie and the Ferocious Beast*. Furthermore, 3% of the main characters were classified as robots or machines, 2% as plants or objects, and 1% as other type of characters.

Type of Character



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; Basis: Canada, n = 424 fict. children's programs; n = 1266 fict. characters

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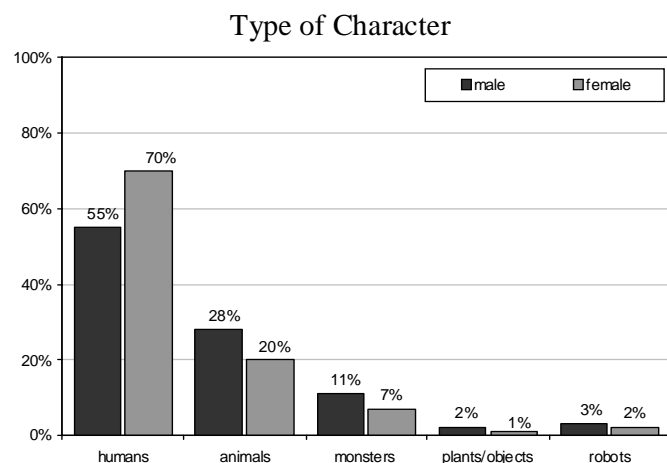
	Human	Animal	Monster	Plant/Object	Robot	Other
Kenya	77,00%	12,80%	9,20%	0,30%	0,60%	0,10%
South Africa	74,30%	12,60%	1,50%	0,10%	11,10%	0,50%
Malaysia	72,80%	6,40%	4,60%	16,20%	0,00%	0,00%
Slovenia	70,90%	17,90%	4,90%	0,50%	4,40%	1,40%
Egypt	70,00%	21,70%	3,20%	0,30%	4,30%	0,40%
Israel	66,90%	26,80%	3,10%	1,60%	1,50%	0,10%
Netherlands	65,20%	19,70%	10,40%	3,70%	1,00%	0,00%
New Zealand	64,50%	23,50%	4,10%	4,10%	2,80%	1,10%
Syria	62,70%	23,10%	11,90%	0,00%	0,00%	2,20%
Hong Kong	62,00%	22,80%	8,50%	0,40%	2,00%	4,30%
Norway	60,10%	25,80%	2,80%	5,50%	2,80%	3,00%
China	59,20%	32,70%	0,40%	1,60%	4,50%	1,60%
Canada	59,00%	26,00%	10,00%	2,00%	3,00%	1,00%
Brazil	59,00%	22,80%	6,20%	6,10%	1,00%	4,90%
Australia	58,80%	26,00%	4,10%	5,40%	5,70%	0,00%
Belgium	57,80%	20,20%	8,90%	2,30%	4,80%	6,00%
Hungary	54,90%	35,20%	3,80%	2,20%	2,70%	1,10%
Germany	54,80%	30,70%	4,20%	8,00%	1,20%	1,10%
UK	54,30%	27,80%	0,80%	0,00%	6,00%	11,20%
Austria	53,60%	31,70%	4,70%	7,70%	1,20%	1,10%
India	50,60%	22,20%	1,50%	8,90%	2,50%	14,30%
USA	47,30%	34,20%	6,00%	3,70%	2,20%	6,60%
Argentina	45,50%	30,00%	10,00%	13,60%	0,90%	0,00%
Cuba	29,40%	55,50%	7,30%	2,10%	2,30%	3,50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>59,61%</b>	<b>25,34%</b>	<b>5,50%</b>	<b>4,01%</b>	<b>2,85%</b>	<b>2,73%</b>

With 59% of the main characters in children's fictional programs being human and 26% of them being animal, Canada matches the international average.

### Gender Perspective: Females are often human, males more often animals and monsters.

As mentioned earlier, there were 448 female characters and 779 male characters in all fictional programs. Of the 448 female characters, 70% were coded as human, 20% as animal, and 7% monsters; 2% of the female characters were coded as robot and 1% as plant/ object or other type.

Of the 779 male characters, 55% were coded as human and 28% as animal. Male monsters accounted for 11%; 3% of the male characters were part of the plot as robots or machines, and 2% as plants or objects.



EZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Canada, n = 424 fict. children's programs; n = 1266 fict. characters

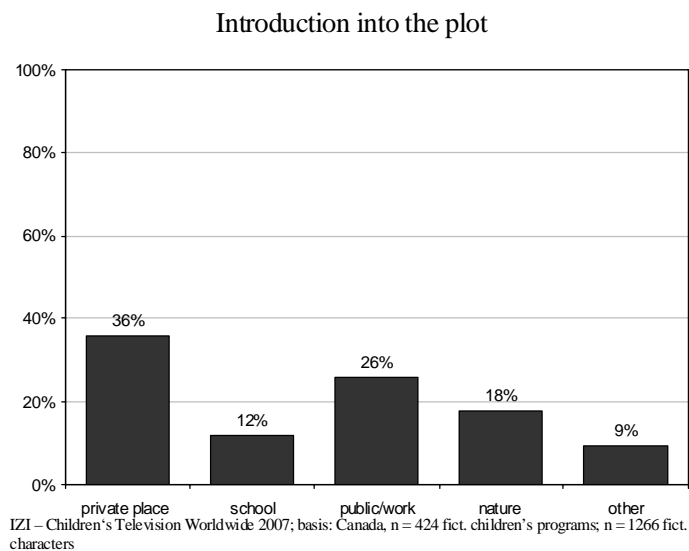
## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television

It is interesting to note that, overall, male and female main characters are still not presented equally in children's fictional programs. However, as far as the type of these characters is concerned, female characters are more likely to be humans than their counterparts, while male characters are more likely to be portrayed as animals, plants/objects, and/or robots and machines.

### At which location is the character introduced into the plot?

Several codes were developed to indicate where the main character is located when he, she, or it first appears in the program. Character appearance during the opening scene/song/titles that marked the beginning of a program was excluded.

The most common location in which the character was introduced was a private space (e.g., home, living room, etc.); 36% of the recorded characters appeared in this kind of context for the first time. Public or work places ranked second, since 26% of the characters were introduced for the first time (in this location). Finally, 18% of the main characters were shown in nature (e.g., beach, forests, etc.) in their introductory scene, 12% in school, and 9% in other locations.

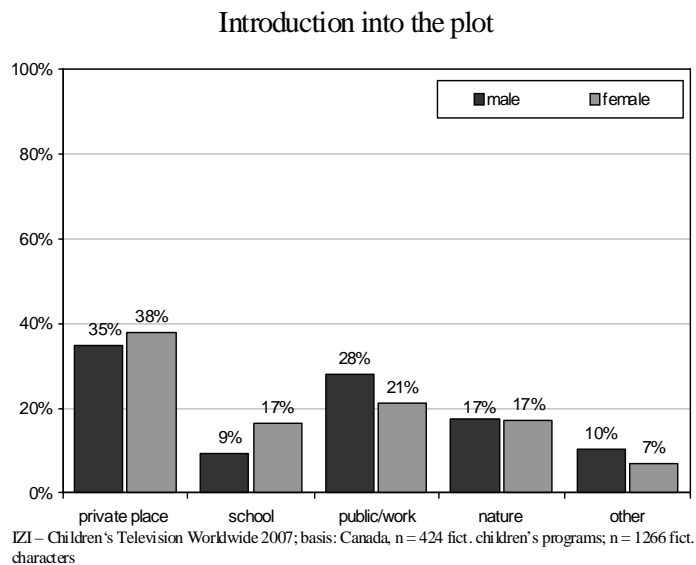


## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television

**Gender Perspective: Males and females both appear often in private space, whereas males more often appear in public space or at work, and females appear more often at school.**

Among the 779 male characters, more than one third (35%) were first introduced in private settings, followed by 28% in public space or at work. 17% of the male characters appeared in a nature location in their introductory scene. One in ten (10%) was introduced in other kinds of location, and 9% of the male characters were introduced for the first time at school.

Considering the 448 female characters in the sample, similarly to male characters, more than one third (38%) were introduced into the plot in private settings. About one in five (21%) were presented in public or at work; a similar proportion (17%) of the female characters appeared for the first time in nature as well as at school; 7% first appeared in locations other than these categories.



## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television

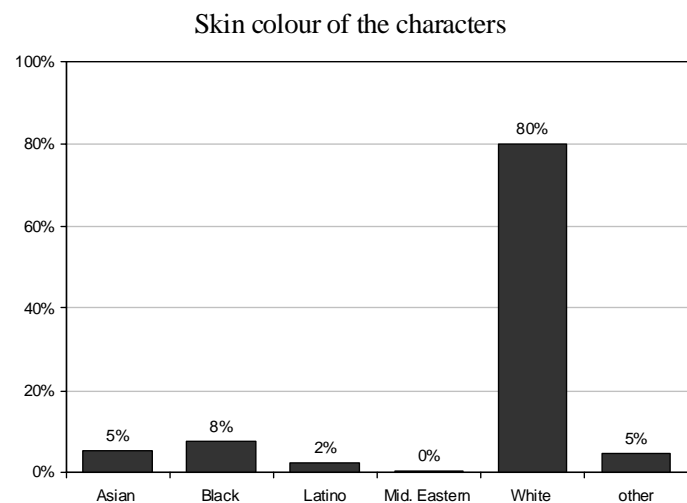
### III. Analysis of the Main Human Characters in Children's Fictional Programs

The characters that were coded as humans were further investigated in terms of their skin colour, age, and physique. In our sample, 742 main fictional characters were recorded as humans.<sup>3</sup>

#### What skin colour or general ethnic affiliation can we see?

The ethnicity of the main human characters was distinguished by the shape of the eyes, skin colour, identifiable ethnic attire, their accent, and/or any cultural references made in the plot.

The majority of the human characters were White (80%); 8% of the human characters were identified as Black; 5% of these characters showed Asian physical traits. Another 5% showed a different kind of ethnicity (coded as "other"); 2% of them were identified as Latino, and only 0.3% as Middle Eastern.



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Canada, n = 424 fict. children's programs; n = 742 fict. human characters

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<sup>3</sup> The number of human characters varies in the following analysis. This variation is due to missing data for different variables. Overall, the maximum number of cases was used.



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Asian		Black		Latino		White	
Hong Kong	65,00%	UK	15,10%	Australia	10,60%	Cuba	91,50%
China	64,40%	USA	12,20%	USA	7,10%	Argentina	90,00%
Egypt	41,50%	New Zealand	10,60%	Israel	4,60%	Belgium	86,70%
Syria	26,20%	Germany	9,00%	Brazil	4,40%	Slovenia	86,50%
Hungary	18,60%	Austria	8,80%	Hong Kong	4,00%	South Africa	80,80%
Kenya	11,00%	South Africa	8,70%	Syria	3,60%	Canada	80,00%
USA	10,20%	Syria	8,30%	Kenya	3,50%	Netherlands	78,50%
Germany	9,20%	Canada	8,00%	Netherlands	3,10%	Brazil	78,30%
Austria	9,00%	Brazil	7,90%	New Zealand	2,90%	Hungary	78,20%
Israel	7,50%	Kenya	7,00%	South Africa	2,70%	Germany	77,50%
Netherlands	6,40%	Belgium	6,60%	Canada	2,00%	Austria	77,50%
New Zealand	6,30%	Argentina	6,00%	UK	1,90%	Norway	76,70%
India	6,30%	Israel	5,10%	Cuba	1,70%	Israel	76,40%
Brazil	5,90%	Australia	4,20%	Egypt	1,40%	Australia	74,90%
South Africa	5,70%	Netherlands	4,20%	Austria	1,40%	UK	72,80%
Canada	5,00%	Norway	3,70%	India	1,40%	New Zealand	72,60%
Belgium	4,30%	Slovenia	3,00%	Germany	1,40%	Kenya	68,90%
Slovenia	4,20%	Egypt	2,60%	Norway	0,90%	USA	67,80%
Norway	4,20%	China	2,00%	Belgium	0,90%	India	60,30%
Australia	3,20%	Cuba	1,70%	Hungary	0,90%	Syria	52,40%
UK	1,90%	India	1,60%	China	0,20%	Egypt	45,40%
Cuba	0,90%	Hungary	1,50%	Slovenia	0,10%	Hong Kong	30,30%
Argentina	0,00%	Hong Kong	0,40%	Argentina	0,00%	China	14,80%
Malaysia	0,00%	Malaysia	0,00%	Malaysia	0,00%	Malaysia	12,70%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,20%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>5,76%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,53%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>67,98%</b>

Compared to the international data, the presence of both Black (8%) and White (80%) characters on Canadian children's television is above the international average (5.76% and 67.98%, respectively). The presence of Asian characters (5%) is below the international average (13.20%) and that of Latino characters (2%) slightly below the international average (2.53%). This comparison on an international level however does raise serious methodological issues which we will discuss in the summary.

Interestingly, looking at the Canadian Census data (2006), the visible minority population accounts for 17.21% of total population. Of these visible minority groups in Canada<sup>4</sup>, 11.10% are Asians, 2.48% are Blacks, and about 1% are Latinos. These findings suggest that

<sup>4</sup>The concept of ethnicity is fluid and is probably one of the more complex concepts measured in the census. Reporting on the increasing complexity of the Canadian population shows that the foundation of this country is based on multiculturalism and diversity. The numbers reported here are an oversimplified version of the Canadian visible minority population in which one or more minority groups are combined.

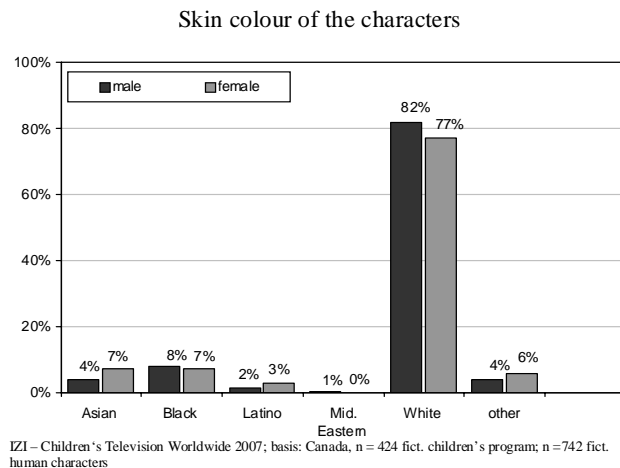
## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television

Canadian television shows more Black and less Asian characters in its children's programming, than are present in the actual population, where as the representation of White characters is about equal.

**Gender Perspective: Female and male characters are more often portrayed as White; however, gender differences in terms of their ethnic background are marginal.**

Out of the 303 female human characters, 77% were identified as White, followed by 7% of them as Asian, 7% as Black, 6% as other ethnicity, and 3% as Latina. None of the female human characters were identified as Middle Eastern. The majority of the 414 male human characters were classified as White (81%), followed by Black (8%), Asian (4%), other ethnicity (4%), Latino (2%) and Middle Eastern (1%).

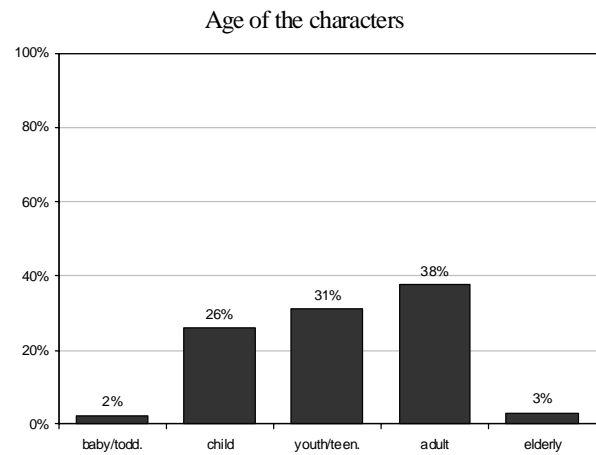
These results suggest that, in contrast to the international data, males and females were generally equally represented in terms of their skin colour.



## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television

### What age are the human characters?

We coded the age of the human characters based on their visible traits (e.g., physique, voice, etc.) and role in the plot. More than one third of the human characters were adults (38%). For example, these characters were recognizable due to characteristics, such as the salary they earned, whether they were a mother/father, etc. The second and third largest groups were teenagers (31%) and children 2-6 years old (26%); 3% of the characters were seniors (they usually played the role of grandma/grandpa, or walked with a cane, etc.). Finally, 2% of the human characters were classified as babies or toddlers.



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Canada, n = 424 fict. children's program; n = 742 fict. human characters

## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television

Baby/ Toddler		Child		Youth/ Teenager		Adult		Elderly	
Egypt	8,70%	Malaysia	64,30%	Hungary	58,10%	Argentina	62,00%	Argentina	12,00%
Kenya	6,70%	China	52,50%	Netherlands	42,90%	Brazil	54,90%	Norway	9,30%
Netherlands	6,10%	New Zealand	49,20%	Israel	41,60%	Cuba	48,60%	Brazil	8,80%
Cuba	4,10%	Germany	44,50%	Australia	40,30%	Egypt	47,70%	Syria	6,00%
UK	3,00%	Austria	44,10%	USA	37,80%	UK	46,70%	Kenya	5,70%
Canada	2,00%	Hong Kong	43,70%	South Africa	36,70%	Belgium	42,90%	Slovenia	5,40%
China	1,80%	Kenya	40,40%	India	36,40%	Canada	38,00%	Egypt	5,00%
Israel	1,60%	Syria	36,10%	Slovenia	35,10%	India	37,10%	Germany	4,90%
Germany	1,10%	Slovenia	34,10%	Hong Kong	31,80%	Norway	34,00%	Austria	4,90%
Austria	1,10%	Netherlands	32,20%	Canada	31,00%	Kenya	32,20%	South Africa	4,50%
New Zealand	0,50%	USA	31,20%	Norway	27,90%	Syria	31,30%	China	4,20%
South Africa	0,50%	UK	29,50%	Syria	26,50%	Australia	30,40%	Belgium	4,20%
Norway	0,50%	South Africa	29,50%	Belgium	24,90%	Malaysia	30,20%	Cuba	3,70%
USA	0,30%	Norway	27,00%	Germany	24,70%	South Africa	28,70%	Hungary	3,40%
Brazil	0,20%	Israel	26,80%	Austria	24,60%	USA	28,40%	Malaysia	3,20%
Belgium	0,10%	Belgium	26,60%	New Zealand	24,00%	Israel	25,90%	Australia	3,10%
Slovenia	0,10%	Australia	26,00%	China	22,10%	New Zealand	25,90%	Netherlands	3,10%
Argentina	0,00%	Canada	26,00%	Brazil	19,60%	Slovenia	25,30%	Canada	3,00%
Australia	0,00%	Egypt	25,50%	Cuba	18,90%	Austria	24,60%	Israel	2,80%
Hong Kong	0,00%	Cuba	24,70%	UK	18,50%	Germany	24,10%	India	2,50%
Hungary	0,00%	India	23,90%	Argentina	18,00%	Hungary	23,10%	UK	2,30%
India	0,00%	Brazil	15,90%	Kenya	15,00%	Hong Kong	22,70%	Hong Kong	1,80%
Malaysia	0,00%	Hungary	15,20%	Egypt	13,20%	China	19,30%	USA	1,80%
Syria	0,00%	Argentina	8,00%	Malaysia	2,40%	Netherlands	15,60%	New Zealand	0,40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,60%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>32,37%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>28,00%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>33,32%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>4,42%</b>

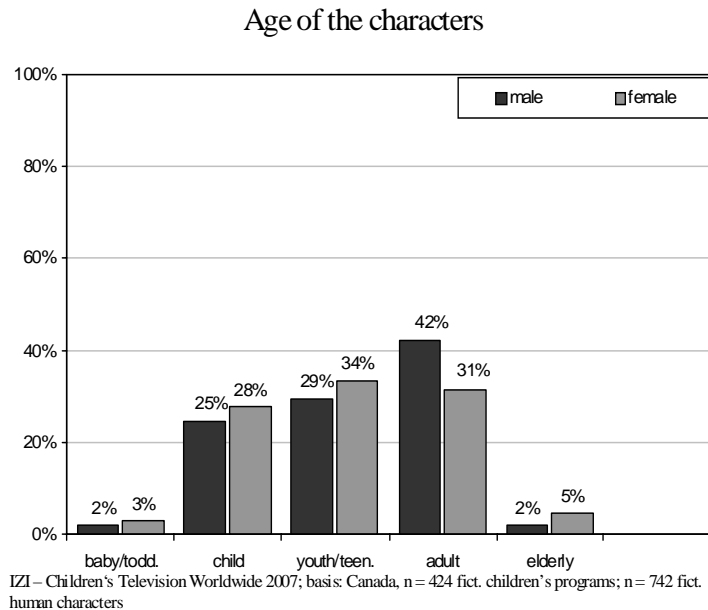
Considering the presence of children and the elderly, Canada is below the international average, while it is above the international average when it comes to teen and adult characters.

## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television

**Gender Perspective:** There tends to be a slightly higher percentage of females in the children and teen categories, and a higher percentage of males in the adult category.

Out of the 310 female human characters in fictional programs, about one third (34%) were teenagers, followed by 31% adults, 28% children, 5% elderly, and 3% babies or toddlers.

Out of the 422 male human characters, the majority were adults (42%), and the rest were teens (29%), children 6-12 years old (25%), babies (2%) and elderly (2%).

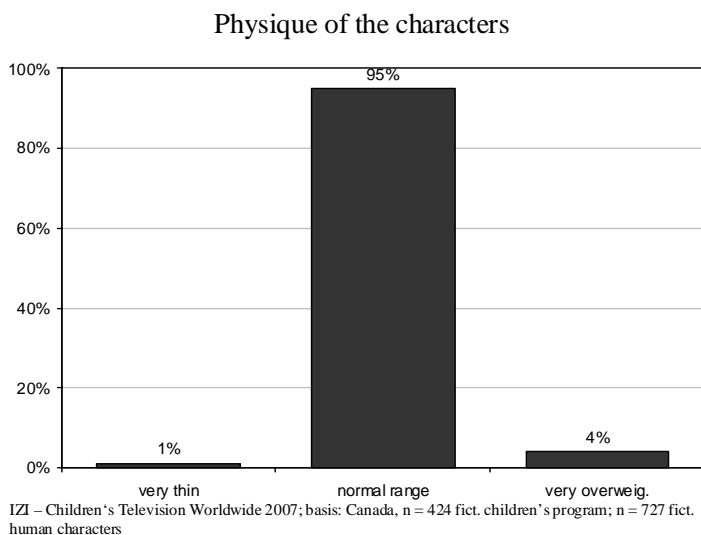


### Physique of characters

#### What weight or shape does the main character have?

Weight or body shape was also coded for the human characters. For instance, a normal range implied that the character was about average in terms of his/her weight and body shape. If the character was overweight or underweight, he or she was coded accordingly.

Overall, most of the human characters in our sample were of average weight (95%); 1% of the characters were underweight, and about 4% overweight.



## Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television

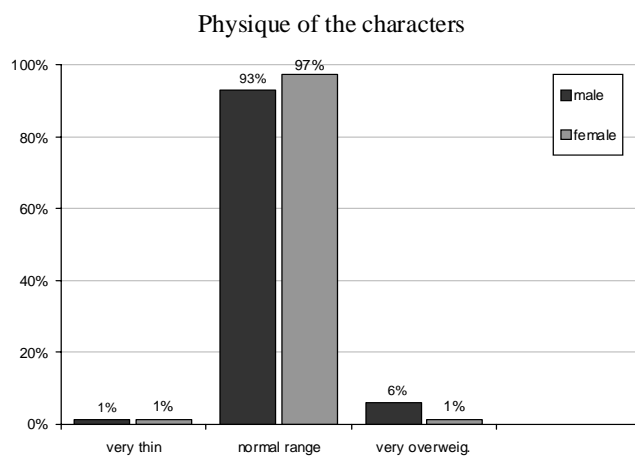
Very Thin		Normal Range		Very Overweight	
Australia	27,50%	Israel	97,70%	Argentina	14,00%
UK	27,40%	Hong Kong	97,10%	Kenya	12,70%
Norway	18,60%	Canada	95,00%	Germany	11,10%
New Zealand	18,10%	Hungary	94,20%	Belgium	10,90%
Syria	17,90%	South Africa	92,70%	Austria	10,90%
Germany	14,00%	Netherlands	92,60%	UK	8,90%
Austria	13,90%	Brazil	91,20%	China	7,90%
Egypt	11,70%	USA	91,10%	Norway	7,40%
Slovenia	11,30%	Malaysia	90,50%	Malaysia	7,10%
Kenya	10,20%	Cuba	88,90%	USA	7,10%
China	8,10%	India	88,80%	Egypt	7,10%
India	6,10%	Slovenia	88,20%	New Zealand	6,50%
Cuba	4,90%	Belgium	86,30%	Cuba	6,20%
Brazil	4,20%	China	84,10%	Netherlands	5,90%
Argentina	4,00%	Argentina	82,00%	South Africa	5,40%
Belgium	2,70%	Egypt	81,20%	India	5,10%
Malaysia	2,40%	Syria	78,60%	Brazil	4,70%
Hungary	2,40%	Kenya	77,10%	Canada	4,00%
South Africa	2,00%	New Zealand	75,40%	Australia	3,70%
USA	1,90%	Austria	75,20%	Syria	3,60%
Netherlands	1,50%	Germany	75,00%	Hungary	3,40%
Canada	1,00%	Norway	74,00%	Hong Kong	2,50%
Israel	0,60%	Australia	68,80%	Israel	1,70%
Hong Kong	0,40%	UK	63,70%	Slovenia	0,50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,87%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>84,56%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>6,60%</b>

Canadian programs showed less thin and obese characters than the international average, and thus had more characters of average weight presented in the programs.

**Gender Perspective: Both genders are normal in terms of their physique, and males are slightly more overweight than females.**

Out of the 307 female human characters, 97% were in the normal range, and just 1% were very thin or very overweight.

93% of the male characters (n = 420) were in the normal range. 1% of them were very thin and 6% very overweight.



IZI – Children's Television Worldwide 2007; basis: Canada, n = 424 fict. children's programs; n = 742 fict. human characters

## **Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television**

### **Summary**

Next to the USA and to the UK, Canada is the world's largest producer of children's television. Moreover, the country broadcasts 57% of domestically produced and coproduced children's TV. Hence, one can presume that Canadian children are exposed to a certain extent to their own traditions and culture. In spite of this high share of domestic productions and coproductions, animation is the most prevalent genre among Canadian children's programs, and the question remains to what extent this limits children's exposure to a diversity of program genres.

When it comes to gender, an interesting finding in this study is that Canadian children's programming, compared to the international data, is the third highest country in terms of female representation, though the overall representation between males and females is still not equal. However, when it comes to the type of characters, female characters are more likely to be humans than their counterparts, whereas male characters are more likely to be portrayed as animals, plants/objects, and/or robots and machines.

As we mentioned earlier, we find it somewhat problematic to compare averages when making international comparisons on ethnicity, given these are obviously dependent on what countries participated in the study. For these reasons, we think it is more appropriate to compare such data with each country's real demographic composition. When comparing to Canadian census data, Asian characters are shown less on children's television, and Black characters more than in the real population. White characters are presented in an equal proportion. In terms of gender, most males and females are equally represented for each ethnic background. Considering the age of the main fictional characters, Canadian children's television seems to have more teen and adult characters than the other countries. The male/female proportions within respective age categories are similar to the international data.

In addition, as shown in the international data, the overwhelming majority of characters fall within the normal weight range, which is quite similar to the depiction of characters' body weights in the Canadian programs. Few very thin and overweight characters are shown in children's programs, though there seem to be slightly more overweight male than female characters.

The gathering of international data presents a number of challenges in terms of data collection and the application of similar comparable scientific standards. Therefore, much precaution

## **Children's Television Worldwide: Gender Representation in Canadian Children's Television**

must be taken when referring to international averages. Ideally one hopes to have nationally representative data that allows you to appreciate the cultural specificities of each country. This being said, this study offers valuable information for gaining some insight into what children in various countries are offered in terms of children's programming while, at the same time, it points to ways in which the situation could be improved. In spite of the challenges involved in the comparison of international data, this research shows the commitment that governments and the media industries have (or do not have) toward their children.