

CHILDREN'S ANIMATED TELEVISION

The "Good Girls": Exploring Features of Female Characters in Children's
Animated Television

A thesis submitted by

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Abstract

This study was designed to identify the frequency and portrayals of female characters in a sample of animated television shows geared for children aged six to twelve. Using a sample of thirty episodes from ten animated cartoons, this content analysis coded characters for demographic information, physical attributes, and several personality traits. Results from the present study found that males continue to outnumber females in children's animated television nearly two to one. Female characters were also rated as skinnier and more beautiful by coders, and were more likely to be rated as good, kind, and peaceful than were male characters. Several significant associations between character sex, age, and species were also found. Qualitative analyses on gendered conversation topics from a smaller sample of episodes reveal that female character conversations are more stereotyped than males' in the educational/informational genre, but less so in particular action-adventure shows. These results and the literature discussed throughout this paper should inform parents, educators, and caregivers about the content of children's animated media as well as encourage scholars to continue research that can demonstrate the implications of regularly viewing such content.

Keywords: children's television, content analysis, sex roles, diversity, Children's Television Project, Cartoons (humor), minority groups.

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The “Good Girls”: Exploring Features of Female characters in Children’s
Animated Television

Since its inception, television has been a cause of both alarm and marvel. A nearly ubiquitous item in today’s average American home, the television seems to be a product that draws an equal amount of praise and concern from parents and caregivers. On the one hand, television can orient children to people and places that some may never have the opportunity to interact with in real time (Bryson, n.d.; Kenney, 2015). On the other hand, many of those with concern about television worry about the negative impact television viewing can have on children’s development by limiting their time spent in other activities such as outdoor play, interaction with peers, and reading (Bickham & Rich, 2006; Comstock & Scharrer, 1999; Neuman, 1991; Pagani; Fitzpatrick, Barnett, & Dubow, 2010; Van Evra, 1998; Vandewater, Bickham, & Lee, 2006; Williams, 1986). Still others are concerned about the lack of fair representation of race and gender on children’s television programs (Van Evra, 2004).

According to the Nielsen Company’s 2010-2011 annual report, children aged two to eleven spent nearly twenty-six hours of their week watching television. That time is nearly equivalent to the hours children spend in school per week (“Television audience report”, 2011). Television remains the primary source of media for young children, but as they age, youth are more likely to look to different screen media (Comstock & Scharrer, 2012). Even as technology continues to change and we see more television viewing done on other platforms, it is still true that traditional television is king for young children (Pallotta, 2014).

Furthermore, one of the most popular forms of children's television has always been cartoons or animation. There is little evidence that children prefer animated programs to live action ones, but the media industry loves them because they are relatively cheap to produce compared to live action programs and are extremely profitable abroad, since they are not necessarily bound to any one culture or environment like live-action (von Feilitzen, 2012). Animated television shows may not be on Saturday morning blocks as regularly anymore, but there are plenty still readily available on DVD, streaming websites, children's cable, premium channels, and other platforms (Nussbaum, 2012). More programs and platforms are available than ever for children to choose from, and they still often choose to watch television animation.

While some might argue that television and cartoons are simply a part of youth culture, there is research that suggests that the time spent watching television can have an adverse impact on children's development. Increased exposure to television can produce sleep problems (Johnson, Cohen, Kasen, First & Brook, 2004; Thompson & Christakis, 2005), promote unhealthy eating behaviors (Jago, Baranowski, Baranowski, Thompson, & Greaves, 2005; Lumeng, Rahnema, Appugliese, Kaciroti, & Bradley, 2006; Viner & Cole, 2005), provide inappropriate or incorrect information about sex, sexuality, and pregnancy (Kunkel, Cope, Farinola, Biely, Rollin & Donnerstein, 1999), and can contribute to aggressive behavior (Coker, et al., 2015; Huesmann, Moise-Titus, Podolski, & Eron, 2003; Johnson, Cohen, Smailes, Kasen, & Brook, 2002). As if these issues are not problematic enough, research also demonstrates that

television unevenly represents sex/gender and race/ethnicity (Götz & Lemish, 2012; Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005; Mastro & Stern, 2003; Mok, 1998, Signorielli, 2012). With these trends in mind, we should be concerned about the content itself, especially given the amount of exposure to these images.

To address the issue of images featured on children's television programs, many content analyses have been conducted over the years to identify the representation of sex and different age groups, as well as the portrayals of race and ethnicity (Baker & Raney, 2004; Baker & Raney, 2007; Barner, 1999; Dohrmann, 1975; Hentges & Case, 2013; Klein & Shiffman, 2006; Long, Steinke, Applegate, Lapinski, Johnson, & Ghosh, 2010). Dobrow and Gidney's (1998) content analysis of children's animated television found that while character demographics were moving closer to a more diverse set of characters, there was still much work to be done to accurately reflect the national diversity of people and cultures within the United States.

The present study seeks to examine images that were featured in children's animated television programs aired from 2013-2015 by performing a comprehensive content and sociolinguistic analysis of ten animated television shows popular among children six to twelve years old. This content analysis is part of a larger project; the Children's Television Project at Tufts University under the supervision of Drs. Julie Dobrow, Calvin Gidney, and Jennifer Burton. The goal of the content analysis in the current project is to generate a richer and more nuanced understanding of the children's entertainment media landscape by assessing not only how characters look and act, but also how they sound using

sociolinguistic analysis. More specifically, this author is interested in understanding how the variables of age, sex, race, and ethnicity are related to one another in the physical, personality, and vocal attributes of the characters in children's animation. The current project will provide detailed examples of age, sex, race, and ethnicity in contemporary animated television to lay the groundwork for future analyses.

Using cultivation theory and social learning/cognitive theory, the implications of regularly viewing cartoon images (in the form of character drawings, descriptions, and language used) on how children understand the concept of sex and gender roles (i.e. the set of social and behavior norms around a specific sex) and perform them will also be discussed throughout this work.

The research questions addressed by the current project are:

R1: What are the demographics of sex, race, age, nationality, and species in this sample of animated television shows for children aged 6-12?

R2: What physical traits are attributed to male and female characters? Are these traits related to one another?

R3: What personality traits are attributed to male and female characters? Are these traits related to one another?

R4: Do female characters engage in gender stereotypical topics of conversation?

By addressing these questions, this study hopes to contribute to our understanding of the gender roles featured on television and the value of quantity and quality representations of gender/sex in the media. In addition to content

analyses mentioned earlier, this study also presents sociolinguistic analyses, which are a unique contribution to the growing body of literature on children's animated television. Sociolinguistics studies how language differs based on certain social variables (i.e. race/ethnicity, gender, age, religion, socioeconomic status, etc.) and how these differences become "rules" for categorizing individuals into these groups (Holmes, 2013). The sociolinguistic analysis in this study will attempt to demonstrate that misrepresentations of sex/gender portrayals in children's animated television are also present in the form of gendered language.

Hopefully, by providing a current view of the children's television landscape, this research will make people more aware of the possible inequities playing out on children's animated television. The first step toward any major change is awareness. Several groups, such as Media Girls and the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media, are already heavily invested in this work; creating research and workshops to demonstrate inappropriate and unequal representation of females in children's media while also empowering young girls to create less biased media themselves ("Media Girls," n.d.; "Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media," n.d.). The results of this study should provide greater support for the work of these groups, and may encourage them to incorporate these more recent findings from the cartoon genre into their media literacy programs for young females. Ideally, over time, parents and caregivers will also become more aware of character portrayals on the television shows their children watch and will be able to make more educated decisions around monitoring children's television viewing. Though unlikely in the current political moment, this research may also

encourage policy makers to apply increased pressure on the entertainment industry to eliminate some of the more negative stereotypes about sex/gender on their programs and encourage them to provide more educational opportunities.

Review of the Literature

Television Consumption

It is important first to quantify, on average, the amount of television, both live action and animated, that children are viewing. According to the Nielsen Company, in 2009, children aged six to eleven spent over 28 hours in front of a television screen per week. Twenty-two of those hours were spent watching television, approximately one hour watching DVR (digital video recording), two and a half hours watching DVD's, and 18 minutes watching VCR (video cassette recording) (McDonough, 2009). The Kaiser Family Foundation's survey on youth aged eight to eighteen indicated that they spent about 2 hours and 39 minutes watching live television, about 22 minutes watching time-shifted television on a television set, and nearly another hour watching television on a different media platform (Rideout, Foehr, & Roberts, 2010). While time spent watching live television decreased from the 1999 and 2004 data, total time spent watching television actually increased due to the nature of time-shifting and the use of other platforms to watch television (Rideout et al., 2010; Bleakley, Vaala, Jordan, & Romer, 2014).

Media platforms. Time shifting and multiple platform use raise several questions about the new media landscape. Tablets with applications for viewing television, internet sites (both legal and illegal), cell phones, iPods, or other electronic devices that can stream television content have made television sets seem obsolete for some. Additionally, streaming services like Hulu, Netflix, and Amazon Prime, have added to the abundance of children's programming by either

featuring their own in-house productions or providing access to other child-centered cable television shows through a variety of internet capable devices. However, it is unclear whether any research has evaluated the impact of alternate media platforms on the overall viewing habits or choices of youth. Multiple platforms often go hand-in-hand with time shifting because they contribute to the “on demand” nature of television. A recent survey in a small undergraduate class on Children and Mass Media found that only a handful of students (arguably the older ones) actually watch a particular television show on a “real” television screen when it originally airs. The remaining students discussed watching the same television shows on their laptop computers, iPad, and tablet devices any time after they originally air (J. Dobrow, personal communication, February 27, 2015).

Time shifting and multiple platforms have also seemed to encourage the media-multitasking of youth. Results from the Kaiser Family Foundation survey suggest that mobile mediums (cell phones in particular) allow youth to be exposed to several more hours of media than they actually even attend to (Rideout et al., 2010). This increase in media multi-tasking behaviors becomes particularly important in assessing television consumption for this age group. Is it fair to include hours of television on in the background as a variable in media effects research when we do not know much about how children and youth multi-task? It is unclear whether youth are successful at this media multi-tasking and further research is needed to determine if this divided attention across a variety of screens affects their perception of the television shows they might be watching. All that

said, more attention and retention studies on youth media multi-tasking are necessary.

Television consumption by race, gender, and ethnicity. The Kaiser Family Foundation research also determined that there were gender and racial differences in youth media use reports (Rideout et al., 2010). The researchers concluded that, on the whole, boys consume more media than girls, due to boys' longer time spent playing games on video game consoles and computers. Females reported spending more time on social media, but this usage did not appear to close the gap (Rideout et al., 2010). Unfortunately, information about television viewership among the sexes was unavailable, but if the largest difference was around video game play, it could be argued that television viewing is probably about equal for the sexes. However, more research would be needed in order to make such a claim.

Television viewing was significantly different across racial and ethnic groups in the Kaiser Family Foundation survey (Rideout et al., 2010). The survey found that White youth indicated an average of three hours and thirty minutes of television consumption each day via media use diaries. Hispanics averaged about five hours and twenty minutes and Black respondents averaged nearly six hours of television viewing. The results posit that this difference could be due to 54% of Black youth indicating that a television is left on in their home, even if no one is watching, compared to 43% of White respondents that stated the same. In addition, those who identified as Black or Hispanic were more likely to report that television was on during mealtime (Rideout et al., 2010). These results are

consistent with earlier research on race and television viewing patterns (Anderson, Mead, & Sullivan, 1986; Atkin, Greenberg, & Baldwin, 1991; Blosser, 1988; Comstock, 1991; Comstock & Scharrer, 1999). These longstanding differences also raise further questions to consider: why does this relation exist and what might it mean in terms of media effects? While more research would be needed to determine the impact of such differences, it is important to note them here.

Overall, the Kaiser Family Foundation survey results indicate what many personally believe to be true; television is an important part of a child's average day as well as a preferred activity. Even though this research is five years old, it stands to reason that understanding children television patterns and viewership across multiple platforms is extremely important. Indeed, given the likelihood that growing numbers of platforms for media consumption are increasing total media exposure overall and that media is an already large and growing part of a child's life, it is all the more important to assess the quality of shows that children watch in terms of character diversity.

Television as a Learning Tool

Since research on children's television habits has demonstrated television's staying power, it is not unreasonable to reflect on the potential influence that television has to educate children. Many have debated whether entertainment or commercial television can actually produce educational or academic effects (Cook, Appleton, Connor, Schaffer, Tamkin & Weber, 1975; Comstock & Scharrer, 1999; Wright & Huston, 1995; Zill, Davies & Daly, 1994).

Most of the empirical research on children and television can be divided into two categories; systematic short-term studies researching the effects of viewing particular television programs on a specific skill or knowledge being tested, or correlational, usually survey based studies, attempting to relate television consumption to academic achievement, among other things (Van Evra, 2004). While the results from both types of research are mixed, it appears that the term “educational” has been operationalized in multiple ways for a range of age groups, making it difficult to determine the simple answer to a seemingly simple question.

One can point to the Children’s Television Workshop (now known as Sesame Workshop) as the leader in formative and summative research on educational television (Shalom & Truglio, 2001). For children three to six years of age, *Sesame Street* appears to have significant effects on school-readiness and can be most helpful to those from disadvantaged backgrounds (Anderson, Huston, Schmitt, Linebarger, & Wright, 2001; Ball & Bogatz, 1970; Kirsh, 2010; Zill et al., 1994). Research on other educational programs further demonstrates the power of television in learning literacy, mathematics, science, and social/emotional skills (Anderson, Bryant, Wilder, Santomero, Williams, & Crawley, 2000; Fisch, 2004; Linebarger, Kosanic, Greenwood, & Doku, 2004; Wright et. al., 2001). However, those effects might not hold as well for older children, particularly those with already well-developed skills. It also appears that educational programs for both younger and older demographics can improve

knowledge-based learning, but are most successful when co-viewed with an informed adult or as part of in-class instruction (Kirsh, 2010).

Theoretical Frames

After identifying the television consumption patterns of children and the idea that television can indeed be used as a teaching tool, the literature review now turns its attention to theoretical frames for the current study. First, cultivation theory is used as a media effects theory. The next three theories are presented to explain the learning process of sex/gender specifically, but could also be used more broadly to understand race/ethnicity and age.

Cultivation Theory. Another way to envision television as a learning tool outside of educational media is to consider television viewership in light of Gerbner's cultivation theory. According to Gerbner and Gross' (1976) research, the cultivation hypothesis claims that television slowly inoculates viewers with its viewpoints, making the heaviest consumers of television most susceptible to indoctrination of television portrayals. That is, high-frequency viewers are most likely to hold beliefs and attitudes consistent with television depictions. This theory becomes especially troublesome when we imagine a television viewer for whom interaction with minorities occurs only on-screen (Van Evra, 2004). Cultivation theory has since diminished in prominence as a media effects theory due to its exclusion of developmental, environmental, and other factors that can surround television viewing (Kirsh, 2010). However, it is still important to consider this theory with respect to television exposure and the portrayals that may be associated with animated television.

How children learn/understand sex and gender. Gerbner's cultivation theory may be useful to consider in light of children's increasing exposure to television, but does little to explain how children come to learn about sex and gender roles apart from television. For the purposes of this study and its possible implications, sex and gender are defined in the following ways. According to the American Psychological Association (2012), sex is referred to as "a person's biological status and is typically categorized as male, female, or intersex." According to the APA, biological sex can be determined based on "external genitalia, sex chromosomes, and/or internal reproductive organs" (American Psychological Association, 2012). Throughout the body of this work, even though coders could not see these biological markers, they used other external, physical features (i.e. secondary sex characteristics like breasts, facial hair) to categorize characters as male and female. Discussion and results will include references to character sex.

In terms of gender, the American Psychological Association (2012) defines gender as "the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person's biological sex." Due to the recent shifts in gender studies, the World Health Organization (n.d.) offers a definition of gender that is not necessarily linked to a particular person's biological sex (which may or may not be the sex they identify with), but rather defines it as the "socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women." This definition embraces individuals who identify with and externally appear to be a member of a sex that differs from their

biological sex characteristics. Gender is categorized as masculine, feminine and androgynous (or having features of both sexes) (Beere, 1990). Gender will be addressed throughout the results and discussion section of this paper as the performance of character sex, using coded personality traits and qualitative analysis on conversation topics. Even though the definitions of these terms might seem straightforward, it is difficult to assess how exactly children learn about concepts as complex as sex and gender. Three main theories that can be used to evaluate sex/gender socialization are social learning theory, social cognitive theory, and cognitive developmental theory.

Social learning theory. According to Albert Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, children acquire and maintain behaviors through the process of observation in their environment. When children act out and imitate the behaviors they see, they are either rewarded or punished, further reinforcing or diminishing those behaviors (Sammons, "Gender: Social learning theory"). Intons-Peterson (1988) argues that children accumulate knowledge about gender and sex by observing models' behaviors and reinforcement patterns. Children begin to assign value to behaviors that have rewarded them and other models in the past and devalue behaviors that have been deemed inappropriate through punishment.

Laboratory studies, such as the often-cited Bobo doll experiment (Bandura, Ross, & Ross, 1961), along with naturalistic observation, provide support for social learning theory. In the Bobo doll experiment, some children were presented a video of an adult hitting a blow-up Bobo doll and then relocated to a room with the Bobo doll. Children who watched the adult aggressing towards

the Bobo doll were likely to mimic that behavior. This experiment has been replicated numerous times since its conception, with plentiful variable manipulations. Overall, what seems to be true of children's imitation for some of these manipulations is less likely to occur in others. While the Bobo doll study is not without its significant flaws, it helped spark conversation about the environmental processes implicated in children's behaviors (Cherry, n.d.).

Unfortunately, social learning theory does little to explain how children develop concepts of "others" whom they are not observing directly. This notion becomes particularly important when children have limited models or the reinforcement pattern they are exposed to is dysfunctional in some way. In these cases, Perry and Bussey's (1979) version of social learning theory helps to explain the child's more active role interacting with his or her environment, but becomes less helpful when used to explain learning done in the absence of models (Intons-Peterson, 1988). Perry and Bussey (1979) found that children are more likely to imitate their same-sex adult counterparts; particularly when these adults are shown in larger groups and especially when the opposite sex group is doing something different. Even though the tapes that children watched in the conditions were not television content per se, Bussey and Bandura (1999) make an excellent case that media representations of sex/gender roles can be as powerful of models as those seen in our everyday lives. Furthermore, if groups of same-sex models facilitate more imitation, then the current representation of sex on children's television might dictate that males are more likely to imitate what they see since

there are more groups of male characters overall; an interesting area of future research.

Social cognitive theory. A product of social learning theory and time, Albert Bandura (1986) developed social cognitive theory in the 1980's to include the dynamic reciprocity of the person, his or her environment, and his or her behaviors. This theory assumes that there is triarchic reciprocity in interactions between individual factors (such as cognition, affect, and biological happenings), environment, and behavior (Pajares, 2002). This theory postulates that children learn to understand sex and gender through modeling, similar to social learning theory, but acknowledges that a person's past experiences can be instrumental in what behavioral action may result at a later time ("The social cognitive," n.d.). Therefore, the performance of gender is not purely an imitation of a rewarded model, but also incorporates an individual's biology, past experience, beliefs, and values (Bussey & Bandura, 2002). Furthermore, almost any behavior performed elicits some type of social reaction. This social reaction, in turn, can change behaviors and actions in the future (Davidson & Davidson, 2003). It could be argued that this reciprocity Bandura describes helps to emphasize the importance of the individual's experience in the social context. In his words, "people are producers of their environment, not just products of it" (Davidson & Davidson, 2003).

In Davidson and Davidson's (2003) film, Bandura also explains that a given model's "personal characteristics such as age, gender, race, ethnicity and social status can also evoke differing reactions in others [even] when the

behavior is the same.” Bandura (2002) describes four processes involved in observational learning. First, the viewer needs to pay attention to the model, picking up the significant aspects. After attending to the model, the viewer has to symbolically code the action, noting the different features and translating them into something they will remember. In the third step, individuals retrieve their conceptions and perform them in action. Of course, none of these processes would mean anything without having some motivation or incentive (the fourth process) to elicit (and continue to elicit) the action that was modeled and put into memory earlier (Bandura, 2001).

Interestingly, social cognitive theory is often used in communication research as a framework for understanding media effects (Bandura, 2001). It is not a difficult connection to make since social cognitive theory explains how someone may incorporate a model (even one seen on television) into their understanding of others and then chose to eventually reenact or play it out in their own lives (Jamieson, More, Lee, Busse, & Romer, 2008). According to Bandura (2001) as cited in Jamieson et al. (2008), media portrayals can provide models for learning purposes and/or can contribute to the motivation to enact already learned models. Even though media effects are not addressed by the present study, it is an important next direction.

Cognitive developmental theory. Unlike Bandura’s social learning theory and social cognitive theory, cognitive developmental theory attempts to bridge the inherited biological differences of the sexes with the environment (Kohlberg & Zigler, 1967). Sex roles, then, develop as a result of maturation and environmental

experience. According to Kohlberg, the child's cognition around physical differences accounts for his or her understanding of sex and gender (Intons-Peterson, 1988). He argues that children pass through three characteristically distinct stages in gender development. It is important to keep in mind that Kohlberg's use of the word "gender" here is more in line with the current definition of "sex" differences. He argues that at the first stage, children are able to correctly identify their own sex at about two years of age. Around four years of age, children understand that sex is a stable attribute throughout the lifespan, but rely on external cues to assign sex to others (Sammons, "Gender: Social cognitive"). They begin to value behaviors of their same-sex counterparts as they seek sex roles they relate to (Intons-Peterson, 1988). Later, the child learns that sex/gender is constant, irrespective of changes in the individual's external appearance or actions. Children at this third stage actively process gender information, assigning value to experiences that fit their gender identity and devaluing those that do not (Craddock, 2002). Again, children's changes in cognition facilitate movement through the different stages. Considering cognitive developmental theory, performance of gender, especially at the last stage, is done through the process of first identifying with one's sex and then engaging in behaviors and actions that are associated with that sex. Considerably less work has been done using cognitive developmental theory to discuss media's influence in gender/sex development, but intuitively, it seems like media might provide the models or information of sex and gender for children to consider. Although Kohlberg's cognitive developmental theory on sex/gender development has lost

favor among scholars due to its outdated terminology and more current research from brain and cognitive science fields, it is still relevant to understanding the history of theories devoted to understanding sex and gender identity.

It is clear that no one theory can accurately describe the intricate process of learning about differences between and among people. The three theories mentioned here have been discussed in relation to gender identity and development, but are the cornerstone of identity development in general. The theories described either implicitly (social learning theory, cognitive developmental theory) or explicitly (cultivation theory, social cognitive theory) implicate television as models from which children can learn the performance of different identities and how they are received in society. These theories and possible performance issues also play an important role in the next topic, stereotypes in children's television.

Portrayals on Television

The theories listed earlier serve to provide background information about the possible ways that children develop understanding of gender and sex as well as race/ethnicity and age. It is now important to understand what content children might have been exposed to that would form the media basis for their learning about these constructs. Numerous articles have addressed the stereotypical ways that ethnic and racial minorities are featured in children's television (Baker & Raney, 2004; Barner, 1999; Dohrmann, 1975; Hentges & Case, 2013; Long et al., 2010) as well as the portrayal of sex and gender (Gerding & Signorielli, 2013; Lauzen & Dozier, 1999; Levinson, 1975; Signorielli, 2012). With the growing

importance of media among children, it is not surprising that minority portrayals on television could have lasting effect on how children continue to conceptualize sex/gender, race/ethnicity, and age.

Sex and gender portrayals on children's television. Quite a bit of research has identified stereotypical images of gender and race/ethnicity in children's live action shows and advertisements aimed at children (Bartsch, Burnett, Dinner, & Rankin-Williams, 2000; Peirce, 1989; Powell & Abels, 2002; Signorielli, 2004; Signorielli, 2008; Smith & Cook, 2008). Signorielli has been particularly interested in discussing the portrayal of gender roles in television since the 1980's (Signorielli, 1989). In this study, the researcher found that while more females were featured in prime time television than in previous content analyses, they were still underrepresented in terms of the actual population statistics (Signorielli, 1989). In Signorielli and Bacue's (1999) content analysis, the researchers found that this divide was decreasing, but women were still underrepresented. However, they noted that women in prime time television demonstrated a greater variety of occupations which they believed was certainly a step in the right direction. This study analyzed only main and supporting characters that were essential to the plot line (Signorielli & Bacue, 1999). By eliminating characters that did not advance the plot, this data does not account for all of the possible characters on television shows.

More recently, Gerding and Signorielli (2013) conducted a similar content analysis for popular 'tween' television shows. When focusing on main characters only, the researchers found that males outnumbered females in their sample,

particularly in the action-adventure genre. They also found that significantly more females were coded as being attractive; suggesting that males can be unattractive and still advance the plot, but females should be attractive in order to do the same. The research mentioned here is only a small subset of the research on sex and gender in television, but should begin to highlight the major trends.

Sex and gender portrayals in children's animated television. Particularly with respect to children's animated television, Kirsh (2010) and Signorielli (2012) identified several studies that originally indicated males' overrepresentation in children's animated cartoons. Signorielli's (2008) research addressed the landscape of children's programming, particularly cartoons, and noted that male characters consistently outnumber female characters by four or five to one. Thompson and Zerbinos (1995) reported this finding several years earlier, but also suggested that there had been some change in male and female character depictions over time. The researchers found that female characters in the latter part of their sample were rated as more assertive, intelligent, and independent than earlier cartoon females. However, they were still likely to be portrayed in traditional feminine stereotypes (e.g. emotional, domestic, and romantic). Moreover, unlike male characters, female characters did not have recognizable occupations, another stereotype of the female as the caregiver or domesticated woman (Thompson & Zerbinos, 1995). In a more recent set of studies, males were more likely to be represented as the heroic leaders in the cartoons as opposed to the females who were more likely to be minor characters, reflecting the more emotional and less physically aggressive stereotypes of women (Baker & Raney,

2004; Baker & Raney, 2007). These findings seem to hold true for the traditional action-adventure cartoons, but not as well for the nontraditional animated genres (Kirsh, 2010). When controlling for genre type, however, male to female representation was virtually equal in the “nontraditional adventure” and “educational/family” television series according to Leaper, Breed, Hoffman, & Perlman (2002). While the authors note that this change seems promising, overall, male characters were still more likely to demonstrate physical aggression. Women, by contrast, were still depicted as more fearful compared to male characters and as more nurturing, polite, and romantic than males. One major limitation of the Leaper et al. (2002) study is that data were only collected for the first eight minutes of each episode in the sample, unable to account for any characters that appeared later. It is possible that characters appearing after the first eight minutes in a series could further support their claims about gender stereotypes or potentially challenge them if the characters were less stereotyped in personality traits. It is also possible that characters may have changed or become more developed throughout the remainder of the episode.

Baker and Raney's (2007) research on superhero roles in children's animated television also indicated that while male and female superheroes were similar on more than 85% of character traits, males were still depicted as tough, muscular, and aggressive characters. Female superheroes were shown as excitable, emotional, and more concerned with appearance. It should be noted that Baker and Raney's (2007) updated sampling included only animated superheroes; a similar feature of the earlier study. Superheroes were defined as those who

drove the plot line, embodied the force of good, fought against evil or villains, and had some sort of extraordinary characteristics. Using this definition for superheroes likely eliminated a great deal of animated children's shows that could have been analyzed as well.

As an interesting side note, this area of research on children's animated cartoons is most commonly published in international journals in which U.S.-produced content is aired and evaluated as part of content analyses (Ahmed & Wahab, 2014; Al-Shehab, 2008; Chu & McIntyre, 1995). Perhaps the sex misrepresentation present in U.S. exported cartoons is of great concern internationally, but less so here. Results from the current study seek to address this gap in the literature.

Race and ethnic portrayals on children's television. Race-related content on children's television has not been studied nearly as extensively as sex and gender, but research in this area reveals that White characters dominate children's television (Graves, 1996; Greenberg & Brand, 1993; Greenberg & Mastro, 2008). In primetime television alone, Children Now (2004) found that 73% of characters were White, 16% African-American, 6.5% Latino, and the remaining 5.5% were Asian/Pacific Islander, Indian/Pakistani, Arab/Middle Eastern, Native American or Other. The last of these groups were grossly underrepresented (Children Now, 2004). Gerding and Signorielli (2013) also found a similar theme in their sample of 'tween' programming. The majority of characters in the sample were Caucasian (68%), 7% were Black, 4% were Asian, 1% denoted as Latino/Hispanic, and 16% unidentifiable (Gerding & Signorielli,

2013). The researchers did not perform statistical tests to determine if these differences were significant by genre or in relation to the U.S census information, though it would appear that if they had, the tests might have demonstrated significance. Content analyses also found that African-American and Latino characters were largely confined to sitcoms or crime dramas (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005; Mastro & Greenberg, 2000). In the dramas, they are more likely to be among a mixed race cast, but in the sitcoms, the entire show is often exclusively cast one race (Children Now, 2004). Many of the African-American, Latino, and Asian-American characters are often found in minor or non-recurring roles throughout primetime television (Children Now). The lack of diversity is troublesome, especially for non-White children who are looking to find characters like themselves on television.

Race and ethnic portrayals in children's animated television. Klein and Shiffman (2006) were the first to systematically and exclusively describe race representation in children's animated television. According to Klein and Shiffman (2006), as published in Kirsh (2010), most ethnic minorities were largely unseen in children's animated television until about the late 1960's. Since then, there has been an increase in the number of minority characters featured in children's cartoons, however, most are merely supporting characters (Klein & Shiffman, 2006; Klein & Shiffman, 2009; Maltin, 1980; Towbin, Haddock, Zimmerman, Lund, & Tanner, 2004). The researchers found that between 1965 and 1996, ethnic and racial minorities were generally similar to Caucasians with some notable differences. African-American characters were shown as more likely to

take part in pro-social acts and less likely than other races to engage in anti-social acts. This difference is an important one as it represents a movement towards less stereotyped behaviors. The authors also indicated that their content analysis revealed that African-American characters were more likely to be entertainers. While not necessarily a negative portrayal, it is certainly an older stereotype of the African-American culture. Moreover, African-American characters were depicted as engaging in leisure activities two times as often as other races. In terms of other races, the study found that, in their sample, Latinos were less likely to be portrayed doing work than other races (Klein & Shiffman, 2006).

The authors were clear to note that possible limitations of their study lie within the sample and the operational definitions that they made prior to coding. They suggest that further research be done to evaluate cartoons created after 1996, especially long-form cartoons and animated movies that were not included as part of their sample. While the authors argue that they created their operational definitions in order to foster high face validity and inter-rater reliability, they recognize that choosing other operational definitions could have produced different research findings (Klein & Shiffman, 2006). Nonetheless, lack of research on race in cartoons indicates that there is more to explore in the area of diversity in children's animation.

Age portrayals in children's (animated) television. When considering diversity in children's television, it appears that even less is known about age portrayals in children's television. Only a few studies have looked at age as a main variable of interest (Barcus, 1971; Dail, 1988; Mason, Darnell & Prifti,

2010; Robinson & Skill, 1995; Robinson, Skill, & Turner, 2004). Most of these studies were not interested exclusively in children's television, but included some children's television as part of their samples. Robinson and Skill (1995) found that characters over 65 are largely invisible in children's television and when they do appear they often have merely minor roles. These findings are supported by the research done specifically on children's animated television.

One of the seminal studies on age in animated television is Bishop and Krause's (1984) content analysis on Saturday morning broadcast network cartoons. They found that old age was underrepresented in children's animation and the concept of aging was rarely addressed. When elder characters did exist, they seemed to demonstrate both of the positive (e.g. wisdom, knowledge from the "Elders") and negative (e.g. lacking health, unattractive, declining senses) stereotypes associated with aging in the media and general public (Bishop & Krause, 1984). More recently, research from Robinson and Anderson (2006) found that while older adults are still underrepresented in children's animation, the ones that do exist are marked with more positive personality traits and variety of role. In line with other research done on minorities in television, the researchers found that the majority of older characters were White and male. The percentage of older characters in minority racial/ethnic groups was also much less than U.S. population percentages at the time of the study. Additionally, older characters continued to hold minor roles in the television episodes (Robinson & Anderson, 2006). Continuing this line of research, Robinson, Callister, Magoffin, & Moore (2007) found that older characters in Disney films were portrayed with

more positive personality traits even though the same findings on sex and race continue to hold. They also found that the Disney films released in the 1990's and early 2000s had the most older characters per film, leading them to believe that Disney was making a concerted effort to feature older adults even if only in minor roles (Robinson et al., 2007). The representation of age in children's animated television is one area that this project hopes to shed light on and aims to provide more current information.

Limitations in content analyses. Although there is strong, albeit less (comparatively), research done on stereotypes in children's animated television specifically, content analyses point to an inequity on television. It is important to remember that the results listed above are data confined to those particular studies and samples. It is also important to mention that the research presented on sex and ethnic representations in children's television (animated and live action) are primarily the results of content analyses. Content analysis is an excellent tool for identifying patterns throughout media surveyed, but does nothing to attempt to understand how these images might affect the children watching them. It is difficult to determine the effects on children viewing these stereotypes on television because it is difficult to entangle what precisely a child attends to, remembers, and how it affects his or her existing knowledge. Content analysis is ideal for conducting unobtrusive research, but has other limitations such as sample issues, problems with validity, and reliability concerns. In terms of sample, a content analysis with a more conservative inclusion category may miss important differences, but an overly liberal one is problematic as well. Samples

chosen for content analyses merely provide a snapshot in time. Sample characteristics are useful for describing what was representative when the sample was chosen, but quickly become outdated. There are, of course, issues of sample in every study making the rationale behind any given sample imperative. Validity becomes important in determining the extent to which the variables in the content analysis actually measure what they are intended to measure. It is possible that the operational definition of the variable of interest is not, in fact, a good representation of that variable. Ideally, when variables have been appropriately operationalized, raters should be consistent not only between shows, but also amongst themselves. Considering content analysis in light of these limitations, the current project seeks to maximize benefits and minimize risks in content analysis.

Gender Differences in Conversation Topics

Not only do children see sex/gender, race/ethnicity, and age stereotypes in animated character images and actions, but they also presumably hear these differences in the character vocals. A whole bulk of literature is devoted to dialect differences in race/ethnicity and age, but this project is most focused on evaluating differences in conversation topics between the sexes. It is well known that male and female vocal qualities differ based on biology (Titze, 1989). Things like vocal fold, laryngeal prominence (known as the Adam's apple), and larynx development are sometimes considered part of the secondary sex characteristics because this development differs between the sexes (Gavin, 2013). Of course men and women sound differently due to biology, but the differences should end there, should they not?

In some of the seminal work on gender and language, Lakoff (1973), as described in Holmes (2013), identified several patterns of 'women's language' that differed from males. For one thing, Lakoff (1973) noticed that women used more filler words (e.g. *like, well, you know*). They also used what she called 'empty' adjectives (e.g. *divine, cute, adorable*) as well as more precise color words (e.g. *mauve, lavender*). Additionally, women avoided swearing more than males. The differences did not end there; she also identified other lexical and syntactic differences between males and females (Lakoff, 1973; Lakoff & Bucholtz, 2004). It is important to note that Lakoff's work is often criticized for the lack of empirical supporting evidence, but others find her claims to be intuitively truthful. Another gendered issue in conversation is amount of speech. Contrary to the widely held belief that women talk more than men, James & Drakich (1993) argued that a great deal of the research on amount of talk finds that males actually talk more than females. To be fair, some research found no difference and others found women talk more than males in some circumstances. The authors attribute these inconsistencies to the context. There are certain topics that males and females are expected to be more knowledgeable about, respectively. When the topic is one that a particular sex is expected to be more knowledgeable about, they tend to talk more about it while the other (likely less knowledgeable) sex is less likely to speak up (James & Drakich, 1993).

Based on the research mentioned earlier, it should not come as a surprise then, that topics of conversation are also gendered. Tannen (1990) and Schiffrin (1994) mentioned several ethnographic studies that found that females are more

likely than males to talk about people (including the opposite sex, family, friends, etc.), relationships, appearance (usually around weight control), and feelings or beliefs. Interestingly, there is also a developmental piece to gendered conversation topics. For instance, among adolescents, much of the talk around people is considered “gossip,” though that is only one part of the ‘people talk’ Tannen (1993) describes. Aries (1976) also described this difference among college undergraduates, but less so for much older adults. Lange (1988) and Deakins (1989) found that when mixed sexes interact, the topic of conversation tends to follow the topics that males prefer; nearly the same ones males discuss in a same-sex group.

Gendered conversations in the media. Nothing is known empirically about gendered conversation in the media, but Lakoff (1975; 2004) strongly believes that gendered conversations in the media (on television programs and commercials) largely “mirror[s] the speech of the television watching community.” Of course, these patterns of speech and conversation topics are not identical on television, but are certainly similar enough to be construed as “normal.” She argues that if it did not reflect the language spoken elsewhere, these programs and commercials would not be successful at targeting and maintaining audiences. Gender atypical language, then, is less likely on television because it might make people uncomfortable so they would choose not to watch it. Although not discussed in Lakoff’s (2004) work, the same argument might hold true for racial and ethnic speech patterns, a topic beyond the scope of the current work, but an important one nonetheless.

Limitations. Research on topics of conversation is difficult, and rightfully so, because ethnographic (or careful observation) methods are necessary. The researcher must infiltrate the group so as not to be seen as an outsider. Ideally, when the researcher (also known as the fieldworker) has become completely immersed in the group they are studying, they are able to capture their subjects accurately, eliminating the feeling of surveillance for participants. Not only are there methodological issues with research on gendered topics, but developmental differences are also at play, making a sample of children very different from adolescents and young adults and those groups are seen as even more removed from adults and the elderly. Additionally, the context of the conversation is important. Eckert (1990) reminds us that gender differences in conversation topics should always be examined within the situation they took place. Conversation topics in the workplace are different than those in the cafeteria or break rooms which are different from conversations at home or at school. Along the same lines of context, conversations will always differ between groups of people. For example, friends and family will invariably have different conversations than those between employee and employer. All of this information to say that the research on gendered topics is interesting to consider, but lacks the ability to generalize to all conversations. With these limitations in mind, this project will seek to determine any patterns or themes in gendered language topics within a smaller sample of children's animated television.

Television Viewing and Stereotyped Beliefs

The content analyses and gendered conversation topics mentioned previously discuss possible stereotypes of males and females on television and otherwise, but this literature review has not yet described “stereotype” and its importance to the topic at hand. Stereotypes are defined as “generalizations about a group of people in which the same characteristics are assigned to all members of a group” (Gerrig & Zimbardo, 2002). Often, stereotypes have a negative connotation. They can certainly be used negatively when the stereotype is not true of all individuals in a given group or when the generalization is demeaning or hurtful in some way, but whether we like it or not, stereotypes are commonly used to reserve mental energy when we are confronted with new information (McLeod, 2008). Stereotypes provide quick mental shortcuts so that we can respond quickly in novel situations. Because stereotypes about a given sex are related to the actions and behavior of that sex and do not have a biological basis for these differences, they should be considered gender role stereotypes instead. Brewer (n.d.) lists several common stereotypes of feminine and masculine gender roles. Females are more loving, caring, nurturing, and are often tending to the home and the children. On the other hand, males are competitive, assertive, forceful, and aggressive. Males are to be the breadwinners of the home, providing financially for the family, but less by way of caretaking (Brewer, n.d.).

Because of the limitations of content analyses described earlier, empirical research on media effects is needed to ascertain how children react to the television they watch. Research on the association between television viewing and advocating more traditional (or stereotypical) beliefs about sex/gender roles is

inconsistent. Several studies suggest that the amount of television viewing is not or at least only modestly correlated with belief in more traditional gender roles (Kalof, 1999; McCauley, Thangavelu, & Rozin, 1998; Meyer, 1980; Morgan, 1982; Morgan, 1987; Morgan & Shanahan, 1997). Meta-analyses of studies in this area, however, actually support a connection between television viewing and holding more stereotypical beliefs about gender roles. Herrett-Skejjlum and Allen (1996) calculated a positive relation between television viewing and endorsement of gender stereotyped occupations when they performed the appropriate statistical analyses on the breadth of studies in this field. This evidence was strongest among those studies using non-experimental design. This meta-analysis excluded two studies that found very high correlations (r above .81) and two studies with no correlation (r close to .00). This exclusion category removed the major outliers, helping to determine the most likely correlation, but not necessarily the 'true' correlation. One particular study used in this meta-analysis was Davidson, Yasuna & Tower's (1979) research on cartoons and young girls' sex-role stereotyping. The experimental design in this study randomly assigned five and six year old girls to view either a highly stereotyped, neutral, or counter-stereotyped cartoon program. After viewing the program, the children were assessed using the Bem Sex Role Inventory. The researchers found that the girls who watched the non-traditional, counter-stereotyped program had lower scores (referring to less sex role stereotypes) than the girls in the other two conditions. The girls' scores from the other two conditions did not significantly differ. Though this study is certainly older and an experimental style, it is important to consider that this area of

research has been interesting to scholars since the late 1970's. It also supports the idea that there may be a link between television exposure and gender role stereotypes, though this particular study identified that counter-stereotyped or non-traditional programs may help disentangle this link.

More recently, Oppliger (2007) examined predominately non-experimental studies and found a similar positive relation between exposure to stereotyped gender roles on television and sex/gender stereotyped behaviors and/or attitudes among both adults and youth. One particular study in this meta-analysis suggests that children do notice the different sex role stereotypes in the cartoons they watch (Thompson & Zerbinos, 1997). Using a sample of 89 children aged four to nine from a university-affiliated day care center and two parochial schools nearby, these researchers administered structured interviews designed to gain demographic information about the children, their interpretations of what boy and girl characters on cartoons are like, what career the child would like to pursue, and their opinions about what boys and girls typically pursue as careers. The researchers concluded that noticing the stereotypical gender role differences in cartoons does appear to relate to indicating increased gender stereotypical job expectations for the child and others (Thompson & Zerbinos, 1997). This study and its findings are important because they help provide support for the hypothesis that there is, in fact, a relation between television viewing and perceived sex/gender role stereotypes.

Further research has suggested that this relation could be even more highly correlated with the specific type of television consumption (Ex, Janssen &

Korzilius, 2002). The authors found that while television viewing in and of itself was not correlated with women's beliefs about motherhood, there was, however, evidence to support that viewing specific genres (in this case, sitcoms and soap operas with more traditional gender roles for women and motherhood) did relate to holding more traditional gender roles (Ex et al., 2002). Effects of specific genres have also been reported by Buerkel-Rothfuss & Mayes (1981) and Ward, Hansbrough, & Walker (2005). These researchers found that those who watched more music videos, soap operas, and talk shows tended to support more stereotypical beliefs about gender roles (Buerkel-Rothfuss & Mayes, 1981; Ward et al., 2005).

Additionally, research cited in Van Evra (2004) and Signorielli (2012) suggests that television viewing is generally correlated with espousing more stereotypic views on sex and gender, but this link may also work in the reverse manner, meaning that those who hold more stereotypic views could watch more television in order to confirm their beliefs. Conversely, this link could be due to a third, extraneous variable. It is also possible that the audience's perception of sex/gender role stereotypes is more important than the depictions viewed in determining the possible behavioral effects of viewing the content (Van Evra, 2004; Signorielli, 2012).

Several studies have attempted to explore the relation between television images of racial/ethnic groups and majority individuals' racial stereotyped beliefs (Mastro, 2009). Most of these studies used 'priming' in order to understand the short term effects of exposure to stereotypical images in the media on espousing

these stereotypes or relied on correlational methods to map overall television consumption onto stereotypic beliefs (Givens & Monahan, 2005; Gilliam & Iyengar, 2000; Lee, Bichard, Irey, Walt, & Carlson, 2009). Research with children reveals that there is a relation between White children's television exposure and their perceptions about other racial and ethnic groups (Atkin, Greenberg, & McDermott, 1983; Zuckerman, Singer, & Singer, 1980). Zuckerman and colleagues (1980) found that White children who watched violent television perceived Blacks as "less competent and less obedient than Whites," but existing racial attitudes were also known to affect this relation (Mastro, 2009). Of course, the other important thing to keep in mind is that attitudes do not reliably predict behavior. In terms of viewing same-race characters, children seem to prefer these characters over those of other races (Greenberg, Mastro, & Brand, 2002). Exposure to these characters is also linked to children's more positive self-esteem; this finding is especially true for minority children (Greenberg & Mastro, 2008; McDermott & Greenberg, 1984). It may be enough for minority children to see a character of their own race on television, no matter how they are portrayed (Reese, 1998).

Research on the effects of viewing age stereotypes in the media is limited, but Donlon, Ashman, and Levy (2005) found that television exposure can significantly predict participants agreeing with the more negative stereotypes about aging. Be that as it may, the study also found that after completing media use diaries (both control and intervention groups) and listing how older characters were portrayed in the television they watched (intervention only); the intervention

group became more acutely aware of ageism in the shows they watched. This awareness led many of them to decide that they would work on watching less television or watch other shows that featured less of the negative stereotypes of aging. This research provides empirical evidence suggesting that awareness may be one way to alter the effect of viewing negative stereotypes. Research from Levy, Pilver, Chung, and Slade (2014) supports the idea that an intervention designed to address more positive stereotypes (in this case, of older age) strengthened the belief in those stereotypes for the participants involved which led to more positive self-perceptions of older age. These positive self-perceptions had a desired effect of increasing physical functioning. More than a decade earlier, Levy, Slade, and Kasl (2002) found that positive self-perceptions of age also significantly predicted improved health and well-being in the long-term. The Levy et al. (2002) work supports the idea that counter-stereotyped programming or implicit messages may influence people to develop more positive associations about age, therefore developing more positive self-perceptions of aging leading to improved health. These findings may only apply to age for now, but could be one avenue of research to consider for sex/gender and/or race/ethnic stereotypes on television.

Overall, the findings from research studying children and television are mixed. The literature described here demonstrates that television is an important part of a child's media landscape, exposing them to models of sex and gender. It is unclear to what extent these models are internalized, but it seems fair to imagine that they are certainly one of many factors at play when a child 'does'

gender and/or makes references to sex/gender roles. Using the literature discussed and a re-vamped coding manual, the Children's Television Project at large, and this project, more specifically, aim to determine what depictions of sex, race, ethnicity, and age exist in today's animated television shows and postulate how these depictions might affect the children who regularly view them.

Hypotheses

R1: What are the demographics of sex, race, age, nationality, and species in this sample of animated television shows for children aged 6-12?

H1: The content analysis of the present study will yield similar results to previous research on demographics in children's animated television; featuring more male characters overall and significantly more Caucasian characters as well.

R2: What physical traits are attributed to male and female characters? Are these traits related to one another?

Are male and female characters rated differently on these physical traits?

H2b: Females will be more likely shown as skinny, beautiful, light skin, and well-dressed characters while males will be more likely shown as fat, ugly, dark skin, and sloppily dressed.

Is there a relation between such physical traits (i.e. skinny v. fat, beautiful/handsome v. ugly, light v. dark skin, and well v. sloppily dressed) present in children's animated television?

H2a: There will be a positive relation between the four physical variables. As characters increase in the rating of fat (measured as a 5 on the scale), they also increase their rating of ugly, dark skin color, and sloppily dressed (all measured as a 5 on the respective scales).

R3: What personality traits are attributed to male and female characters? Are these traits related to one another?

Are male and female characters rated differently on these personality traits?

H3b: Females will be more likely shown as good, honest, kind, and peaceful characters while males will be more likely to be shown as bad, dishonest, cruel, and violent.

Is there a relation between personality traits (i.e. good v. bad, peaceful v. violent, kind v. cruel, and honest v. dishonest) present in children's animated television?

H3a: There will be a positive relation between the four personality variables. As characters increase in the rating of bad (measured as a 5 on the scale), they also increase in their rating of dishonesty, cruelty, and violence (all measured as a 5 on the respective scales).

R4: Do female characters engage in gender stereotypical topics of conversation?

H4: Females will be more likely to talk about their looks and appearance, the opposite sex, and marriage; gender stereotyped topics of conversation.

According to the cultivation theory, such misrepresentation of national demographics in children's animated television could inoculate the heavy television viewer over time, leading them to believe the depictions they see on television are their "reality." Likewise, social learning/cognitive theory postulates that children might learn from any model they see on television even if they are not regular television viewers. If there is little representation of a given group or stereotypical ones are seen at best, then according to these theories, children will cognitively incorporate this information and potentially play it out in their performance of gender (and other identities) in the "real world".

Method

Sample

A sample of ten animated television shows was selected from cross referencing several “top ten” lists for children’s animated television shows in 2013-2104. These lists were readily available on the Internet without fee. Inclusion in this sample required that a show be featured on at least two lists and be geared for children ages six to twelve years old. See Appendix C, Sample Information, for a complete list. Viewership of each program was not accounted for and while television shows in the sample had to appear on multiple lists, it is possible that they are not necessarily the most widely viewed animated television programs for children aged six to twelve.

The coding manual was edited collaboratively from the original 1998 coding scheme by the principal investigators and project manager (this author) for clarity and content. Several adjustments to the coding instrument were made as appropriate. The coding manual was converted to a google document and created as a form; CTV 2013 Character Coding Form. See Appendix A for complete manual. A similar coding manual was created for sociolinguistic analyses. See Appendix B for complete manual.

Three episodes of each television show were chosen from the latest DVD available and streamed live on our project Trunk site, yielding a total sample of 30 episodes of the ten shows. One episode consisted of two 11 minute shorts or one longer 22 minute episode. All episodes were also available on DVD from the Tisch Media Center at Tufts University.

Procedure

Thirty Tufts University undergraduate and graduate students were trained in the 2013 coding scheme and given access to the CTV 2013 Character Coding form, made available to the students through google documents. Coders were trained in the coding scheme over four different three hour sessions. They were given the same “homework” assignments in between meetings. Coding manuals were described in detail during the first meeting using examples from animated television shows not included in the present sample. At each subsequent meeting, the homework was discussed and questions about the coding manual were addressed. Several clarifications on the coding manuals were explained during these meetings and were later made available to coders through the announcements section on our project Trunk site. The first two homework assignments were 11 minute episodes, respectively, and the last two were 22 minute episodes, respectively. Episodes coded for homework were on shows not included in the sample and were available via YouTube. If coders were unable to attend these meetings, they met individually with the project manager (this author) to go over their questions from the homework

The coding scheme includes forced choice answers, questions about physical and personality characteristics using a 0-5 scale, as well as a comment box at the end to explain or justify any choices made. All speaking characters in each episode were coded. Since this project is interested in sociolinguistic analysis, any characters that did not speak (including animal noises) were excluded from the sample. Dialect coding was completed using the CTV 2013

Dialect Coding form. Coding was completed in three rounds over the course of a semester. For each round of coding, pairs were randomly assigned to code one episode of the television programs at a time. Coding was completed independently and then discussed in coding pairs over several weeks to provide standardization of characters. Reliability of coders was assessed using Cohen's Kappa for a random coding pair based on their raw data. In order to clean the first round of coding, discrepancies in forced choice answers were resolved between the coding pair by re-watching the episode together and referring to any of the comments made in the comments box. In this way, coding pairs made the executive decisions for the final cleaned data. For the second and third round of data, four undergraduates and one graduate student met in randomly assigned pairs to watch the remaining episodes and resolve discrepancies in coding. To clean the data gathered on physical and personality characteristics, scores were averaged to create one composite score for each domain.

Data Analysis Plan

Quantitative. Data analysis of the coding done on children's animated television calculated the proportions of male and female characters out of the total number of characters in the sample. Similar proportion calculations were also done to determine the proportion of male and female characters that were identified as the different race/ethnicity choices included in the coding form. Contingency tables, or cross tabulation statistics, established the prevalence of males and females represented in the different race/ethnicity groups throughout the sample. Chi-square tests of independence were done to evaluate if there was

an association between the variables of sex by race/ethnicity. It should be made clear here, that race/ethnicity of characters was chosen as a variable of interest and described within this proposal because of what these characteristics reveal about character sex on children's animated television. These analyses help us understand what proportion of male characters is African-American (and Caucasian, Latino, etc.) compared to the proportion of female characters that are indicated as such. The same analyses were done to determine any significant associations between nationality, age, and species among the two variables of interest; character sex and character race/ethnicity. Any significant findings in these variables created a more complete picture of character sex on children's animated television than images of sex/gender alone.

A scatter plot was created to map what type of relation, if any, existed between being labeled a good character (X axis) and being labeled a peaceful, honest, and kind character, respectively (Y axis). Since the scatterplot suggested that the relation between these variables was linear, but data violated the assumption of normality, Spearman's Rho (r_s) was calculated to describe the direction and magnitude of the relation(s). Contingency tables, or cross tabulation statistics, established the prevalence of males and females described through the personality traits of good v. bad, honest v. dishonest, kind v. cruel, and peaceful v. violent throughout the sample. Chi-square tests of independence were done to evaluate if there is an association between the variable of sex by any of these personality traits. The same sets of analyses were done for the variables of

physical traits; skinny v. fat, beautiful/handsome v. ugly, light skin v. dark skin, and well-dressed v. sloppily dressed.

The personality traits were chosen based on gender roles of masculinity and femininity from measures like the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI). This measure is one of the most widely used measures in gender research and has demonstrated strong reliability and validity (Beere, 1990). The Bem Sex Role Inventory (1974) lists several feminine traits that relate to the hypotheses in this study. Females are compassionate and sympathetic (these traits are related to kind). They are eager to soothe hurt feelings and are understanding (peaceful). Females are also sensitive to the needs of others and are gentle (good). On the other hand, males are forceful and aggressive (violent) and can be dominant and competitive (bad). Truthfulness (honest) is gender neutral according to BSRI, but this researcher was interested to see if this finding held in the particular sample.

Finally, regression analyses determined if the character's sex can be used to predict his or her score on the good, honest, kind, and peaceful personality traits, respectively. Regression analyses also identified if characters' sex can predict his or her scores on the four physical traits mentioned in the coding manual. For the purpose of these analyses, character's sex was made into a dummy variable with *0* denoting *male* and *1* denoting *female*. These regression analyses determined if a character's sex could significantly predict which physical attributes and personality traits he or she may have. It should be noted that the nature of this study cannot make any claims about causality, but instead is

interested in identifying a possible relation between character sex and perceived physical and personality traits.

Qualitative. The researcher identified three shows in the sample that had characters consistently rated as 1 and 5 on the gender-stereotypical topic of conversation question in the CTV Dialect Coding sheet responses. A rating of one indicated “extremely stereotypical” topic of conversation and a five was given to conversation topics that were “extremely gender atypical.” These shows also had to have at least one female ‘lead’ recurring character. A character was considered lead and recurring if they were marked as either the ‘Major Hero / Heroine,’ ‘Major Villain,’ or ‘Heroic Sidekick’ in the Character Coding Sheet responses, appeared in the first episode coded, and were identified as recurring on the show’s IMDb page. If the dialect coding sheet responses indicated that at least one character in the episode was gender atypical and another gender stereotypical, the show was included in the preliminary sample. Examples of gendered topics in these response sheets also helped determine which shows to select. In order to select an appropriate sample, if the examples given were counter to the rating, they were rearranged to reflect the accurate rating. Then, any ratings of one or five without examples given were eliminated. Along with the identification of lead characters, the criteria mentioned above narrowed the qualitative sample to three shows: *The Legend of Korra*, *Dragons: Riders of Berk*, and *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*. The researcher then watched the first coded episode of these shows. Patterns or themes that emerged about gendered topics of conversation

were noted and included in the qualitative results section. Examples of topic differences are written throughout the results and discussion section.

Results

Quantitative

Frequencies. The sample included forty-two unique episodes of ten shows on six networks: Disney, Cartoon Network, Fox, Nickelodeon, PBS, and The Hub. See Appendix C for Sample Information. In order to address the question on demographics of sex, race, age, nationality, and species of characters in this sample of children's animated television, frequencies are reported below. Cohen's Kappa on all demographics for one episode coded by two unique coders was $\kappa = 0.46$, indicating a moderate agreement among coders.

Of the 554 characters in the sample, 179 (32%) were female, 369 (67%) were male, and 6 (1%) were 'uncertain.' Most the characters appeared to be middle aged (N = 190, 34%), teenagers aged 13-18 (22%), or children under 12 (18%). The rest were young adults (12%), elderly (6%), or uncertain (8%). The majority of characters were White, Non-Hispanic (N = 249, 45%) or uncertain (N = 243, 44%). 8% of characters (N = 45) were Asian, 2% of characters were Black (N = 12), and 1% of characters were Latino(a) / Hispanic (N = 4) or Arab /Middle Eastern (N = 1). Nearly half of the characters were of U.S. nationality (N = 264, 48%). The rest were Foreign/Non-U.S. (N = 160, 29%) or uncertain (N = 130, 24%). The majority of characters were human or humanoid (N = 350, 63%), followed closely by animal or animal like (N = 177, 32%). The rest were other or machine/robotic (N = 22, 4%) and 5 were uncertain (1%). The uncertain categories were subsequently removed from further analyses.

Demographic information. In order to understand the associations in the above demographics by character sex, cross tabulations with chi-square analyses were conducted. Table 1 describes the findings of these analyses. There was an association between a character's sex and their age $\chi^2(4, N = 508) = 37.98, p < .001$, such that males were more likely than female characters to be middle aged while females were more likely than male characters to be teenagers than would be expected by chance. Cramer's $V = .27$, a moderate effect size. There was no significant relation between character sex and race or character sex and nationality. Fisher's exact test was used to test the association between character sex and species since multiple cells had expected counts less than five, an assumption for performing Pearson chi-square tests. There was a significant relation between the two variables ($FE = 8.4, p = .03$). Cramer's $V = .07$, a very small effect size.

In order to understand the differences in the above demographics by character race, cross tabulations with chi-square analyses were conducted. Findings from these analyses are listed in Table 2. There was no significant relation between character race and species or character race and age. Fisher's exact test was used to test the association between character race and nationality since multiple cells had expected counts less than five, an assumption for performing Pearson chi-square tests. There was a significant relation between the two variables ($FE = 48.32, p < .001$) such that African-American / Black characters were least likely to be foreign and Asian characters were most likely to be foreign. Cramer's $V = .42$, a medium to large effect size.

Physical attributes. To answer the research question about physical traits that are attributed to males and females, t-tests were conducted. For each physical attribute, coders rated the characters on a scale of 1-5 (1 was denoted as one extreme end of the trait, 3 was average or neutral, and 5 was the other extreme of the trait). 0 was used when the coder could not see the character and/or was uncertain about some aspect of the physical trait for the character. 0's were eliminated from the analyses. See Table 5 for t-test results. On average, females were rated as skinnier than male characters. This difference was significant $t(367) = 5.88, p \leq .001$. Cohen's $d = .53$, a medium effect size. On average, females were also rated as more beautiful than were male characters. This difference was significant $t(283) = 7.20, p \leq .001$. Cohen's $d = .57$, a medium effect size. There were no significant differences in character sex and their dress rating (well-dressed to sloppily-dressed) or character sex and their skin color rating.

Regression, using bootstrapping methods, revealed that character sex significantly predicted skinny/fat ratings $\beta = -.23, t(531) = -5.39, p < .001$. Character sex also explained a significant a significant proportion of variance in fat/skinny scores. $R^2 = .05, F(1, 531) = 29.02, p < .001$. Using the same bootstrapping methods, another simple regression revealed that character sex significantly predicted beauty ratings as well, $\beta = -.62, t(529) = -8.03, p < .001$. Character sex also explained a significant a significant proportion of variance in beauty scores. $R^2 = .12, F(1, 529) = 64.62, p < .001$. Similarly to other findings, character sex did not significantly predict skin color or dress ratings. These results

held even when the scale variables were transformed into dichotomous variables and used to run chi-square analyses.

Spearman's Rho correlations with bootstrapping methods were conducted to address the question about how the physical traits are related to one another.

Spearman's rho was used since data violated assumptions of normality.

Skinny/Fat was significantly related to beauty ratings, $r_s = 0.34$, 95% BCa CI [0.26, 0.42], $p < .001$, skin color, $r_s = 0.18$, 95% BCa CI [0.08, 0.28], $p < .001$, and dress, $r_s = 0.15$, 95% BCa CI [0.05, 0.23], $p = .001$. Beauty ratings were not significantly related to skin color ratings, but were significantly related to dress ratings, $r_s = 0.31$, 95% BCa CI [0.22, 0.40], $p < .001$. See Table 3 for more details on these correlations.

Personality traits. To address the research question about personality traits that are attributed to males and females, t-tests were conducted. Coders rated each character on a variety of personality traits using a scale from 1-5 (1 being one extreme end of the trait, 3 being average or neutral, and 5 being the other extreme of the trait). 0 was used when coders were uncertain and/or did not "see" the personality trait. For the purposes of this project, 0's were excluded from the following analyses. See Table 6 for results on these t-tests. On average, females were more likely to be rated as good than were male characters. This difference was significant $t(268) = 2.91$, $p = .004$. Cohen's $d = .37$, a small effect size. On average, females were rated as more peaceful than were male characters. This difference was significant $t(315) = 4.57$, $p < .001$. Cohen's $d = .55$, a medium effect size. On average, females were rater as kinder than male

characters. This difference was significant $t(315) = 3.36, p = .001$. Cohen's $d = .44$, a small to medium effect size. On average, females were rated as more honest than male characters. This difference $t(315) = 2.55, p = .011$. Cohen's $d = .31$, a small effect size. This difference was not confirmed using chi-square analyses. When the Honest/Dishonest scale variable was made into a dichotomous variable making honest any values 1 – 2.5 and dishonest values 3.5 – 5, there was no association between a character's sex and their honest or dishonest rating, $\chi^2(1, N = 249) = 1.25, p = .26$.

Regression analysis, using bootstrapping methods, revealed that character sex significantly predicted goodness ratings $\beta = -.38, t(453) = -3.51, p < .001$. Character sex also explained a significant a significant proportion of variance in goodness scores. $R^2 = .03, F(1, 453) = 12.34, p < .001$. Bootstrapped regression analysis found that character sex significantly predicted character peaceful ratings, $\beta = -.50, t(425) = -4.85, p < .001$. Character sex also explained a significant a significant proportion of variance in peaceful scores. $R^2 = .05, F(1, 425) = 23.56, p < .001$. Character sex significantly predicted kindness ratings when simple regression analysis with bootstrapping was conducted, $\beta = -.38, t(454) = -3.74, p < .001$. Character sex continued to explain a significant a significant proportion of variance in kindness scores. $R^2 = .03, F(1, 454) = 13.92, p < .001$. Finally, simple regression, using bootstrapping methods, revealed that character sex significantly predicted honesty ratings, $\beta = -.26, t(348) = -2.49, p = .01$. Again, character sex explained a significant a significant proportion of variance in honesty scores. $R^2 = .02, F(1, 348) = 6.22, p = .01$.

In order to answer the research question on how the personality traits are related to one another Spearman's Rho correlations with bootstrapping methods were conducted. Spearman's Rho was used in this analysis because data violated assumptions of normality needed for Pearson's product-movement correlation. Good/Bad was significantly related to peaceful, $r_s = 0.65$, 95% BCa CI [0.56, 0.73], $p < .001$, kindness, $r_s = 0.81$, 95% BCa CI [0.74, 0.86], $p < .001$, and honesty, $r_s = 0.54$, 95% BCa CI [0.45, 0.63], $p < .001$. Peaceful ratings were significantly related to kindness ratings, $r_s = 0.71$, 95% BCa CI [0.65, 0.78], $p < .001$ and honesty, $r_s = 0.43$, 95% BCa CI [0.32, 0.54], $p < .001$. Kindness was also significantly related to honesty, $r_s = 0.55$, 95% BCa CI [0.45, 0.63], $p < .001$. Table 4 details the results of these correlations.

Qualitative

The researcher selected three shows that had characters of both sexes in the extremely gender stereotypical and atypical topic of conversation question on the dialect coding sheet. The shows selected were: *Dragons: Riders of Berk*, *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*, and *Legend of Korra*. After watching the first coded episode of each show, it appeared that female characters were more likely to engage in gender-stereotyped topics of conversation in *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*, but less so in the other two shows. Originally, based on literature found on gendered topics of conversation, it was hypothesized that females would engage in conversations around appearance, the opposite sex, and marriage. Interestingly, only the topics of appearance and the opposite sex were mentioned in *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*. They were not, however,

mentioned in the other two shows. Additionally, none of the shows discussed marriage.

The best example of discussion around appearance occurs in *My Little Pony* when the main character, Twilight Sparkle approaches another pony, Rarity. Rarity is busy looking at bows mentioning that “sparkle [referring to the décor] always does the trick!” When she turns around to meet Twilight Sparkle, Rarity screams, and the first things she notices about Twilight is that her mane is in disarray. Rarity asks “whatever happened to your coiffure?” Twilight responds that she is really only there to check in on the decorations for the celebration and she’ll “be out of her hair.” Rarity takes the opportunity to turn the conversation back to Twilight’s appearance by saying “Out of my hair? What about your hair?” With that, Rarity pushes Twilight away, beginning a montage of Twilight trying on several different “looks.” Rarity is heard in the background saying things like “Too poofy. Not poofy enough. Too frilly...” The whole interaction around her appearance is typical of women’s gendered language.

Ironically, the other gender stereotyped topic of conversation about the opposite sex was actually performed by the only male character in the episode. Spike talks about Rarity’s beauty and “puffs himself up” so as to impress the new pony. Interestingly enough, when Spike and Twilight leave Rarity in search of the next pony, Spike gazes dreamily in the direction of Rarity saying “Wasn’t she wonderful?” to which Twilight quips “Focus Casanova.” Talking about members of the opposite sex is extremely gender stereotypical for females, but atypical for males. When Spike reacts in this way, it is surprising. Though not what we

believe to be traditional stereotyped discussion around the opposite sex, it is only a few moments later upon meeting Fluttershy that this pony engages in gender stereotypical conversation about Spike as a baby of the opposite sex. At first, Fluttershy is so quiet that Twilight can barely hear her introducing herself, but then Fluttershy perks up after seeing Spike. She mentions that "He's so cute..." and asks "What's his name?" starting what appears to be a long conversation about his life even though the segment is edited.

The literature review described two other gendered topics of conversation that appear in this sample. They are discussions of diet/health and babies/children. The first of which occurs in *My Little Pony* after Twilight Sparkle meets Applejack. Applejack forces her to eat some of the desserts she's planned for the party and on her way to meet the next pony, Rainbow Dash, Twilight says "Ugh, I ate too much pie." This comment is very much in line with Tannen's (1990) finding on gendered conversation topics, namely talking about diet and health. It is especially interesting that Twilight mentions her overeating because her dragon companion, Spike, a male, does not mention anything of the sort. The latter topic, babies and children, is discussed by Pema and Katara in *Legend of Korra*. This topic is most evident when Tenzin's family arrives to see Katara, his mother. When Katara comments on a very pregnant Pema's (Tenzin's wife) strong fetal movements, the two continue to converse about the coming baby and Pema's three children already introduced in the episode.

After viewing the coded episodes, other, less obvious, gendered topics of conversation appeared in all three shows. These topics were around relationships

and familiarity. According to Schiffrin (1994), females “emphasize human connections, caring, and the needs and situations of those affected by a problem.” The interactions of all females in these shows demonstrated this need to attend to connections among and between people. In *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*, Pinkie Pie shocks Twilight with a surprise party. Not only does Pinkie Pie talk extraordinarily quickly (a possible gendered vocal quality), but she also makes mention of throwing the party to help Twilight meet friends and to make her happy. Above all, Pinkie Pie desires to create connections between the ponies. In *Legend of Korra*, this relationship discussion takes place when Katara tells Korra’s supervisors that “if anyone can teach her what she [Korra] needs to learn, it’s Tenzin.” Katara also considers Korra’s need to learn from Tenzin when she allows Korra to escape the compound by looking the other way, but not before they talk about her departure. Unlike *Legend of Korra* and *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*, *Dragons: Riders of Berk* does not have a female heroine as part of the recurring cast. Instead, this show was chosen because of the two female heroic sidekicks; Astrid and Ruffnut. Since the *Dragons: Riders of Berk* episode so rarely featured its female sidekicks, it was quite noticeable when these characters were engaging in gendered topics of conversation around relationships and connections. For one thing, almost all of Astrid’s dialogue was spoken to another male. Only once did she speak to another female which happened to be her dragon. When she spoke to another male, she either talked to, or talked to someone else about, the main character, Hiccup. In one instance, Astrid tells Hiccup how it would be nice for someone to finally beat Snoutlout, another male

character, but warns Hiccup not to get so caught up in the games. Later, she mentions that what she liked about Hiccup was that he was “a gracious loser. Who knew you’d [Hiccup] be such lousy winner?” However, at the end of the tie break game between Snoutlout and Hiccup, Astrid becomes aware that Hiccup threw the race so that Snoutlout would not dishonor his family. She confronts Hiccup about it with an arm punch and later, a kiss on the mouth. Almost all of Astrid’s dialogue suggests her familiarity with Hiccup, using these statements to evoke the connection and relationship between these two characters. Her dialogue also reflects an attention to the “needs and situations of affected by a problem,” namely the Thawfest competition and a gloating Hiccup, which Schiffin (1994) marks as feminine gendered conversations.

The shows differed from the feminine stereotypical topics of conversation, however, by including conversations around fighting, competition, and competence for female characters. These topics are noted as gender stereotypical for males, but atypical for females. Furthermore, speaking with such confidence about these topics is also atypical of the feminine gender norms. In *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*, Rainbow Dash is ever the confident pony. After colliding with Twilight Sparkle in a puddle of mud, Rainbow Dash quickly gathers a rain cloud to hose her down and then orders up a “Rain Blow Dry” to finish. This dry leaves Twilight Sparkle agitated and with her mane in two bushy, unkempt lumps. Both Spike and Rainbow Dash laugh at her appearance, though Twilight Sparkle doesn’t say anything about it. Rainbow Dash then discusses

being the best at clearing the sky and seems to take great pride in her flying abilities.

In *Legend of Korra*, Korra is often seeing physically fighting males and sometimes interrupts or challenges the other male characters. Interruptions in speech were not mentioned in the literature review, but there is some research suggesting that men are more likely to interrupt women than the opposite (Aries, 1987; Holmes, 2013; Tannen, 1990). In one instance, Korra interrupts the anti-bending protestor and then starts a fight with three hoodlums who are trying to take money from an older gentleman. She verbally threatens them, saying “you’re the ones who are going to need a hospital, and I hope for your sake that there is one nearby.” Her hands move into a fist-like motion and she readies herself for the fight. After she wins the fight by using her water, earth, and fire bending abilities she says “got an idea who I am now, chumps?” Though she says it to them and it is not much of a conversation per se, it is definitely more gender atypical for a female to be saying that. Moreover, interruptions are not commonly associated with feminine gender, making the interruptions that appear much more gender atypical for these female characters. After the police arrest her for the damage she caused, another interesting gender atypical conversation between Korra and Police Chief Lin Beifong ensues. Like Korra, Chief Beifong not only interrupts Tenzin, an important male character, but she also says some very gender atypical things. For starters, “you’re in a whole mess of trouble, young lady” and “Can it” after interrupting Korra objecting to her counts of arrest. When Tenzin comes to rescue Korra, he starts by sweet-talking Chief Beifong with “Lin,

you're looking radiant as usual" to which she immediately responds "Cut the garbage, Tenzin." This conversation takes on opposite gender roles for maximum effect. Korra and Chief Beifong never discuss their appearance, others, or marriage, likely because of the nature of the plotline and show in general. It is certainly possible that just because this episode does not allude to these gender stereotyped topics of conversation, that other episodes do not.

Overall, even though several female characters engaged in gender atypical topics of conversation, few male characters did the same. *Dragons: Riders of Berk* includes one great example of this phenomenon. Fishlegs, a male heroic sidekick, is cast as the funny, fat friend in the episode coded. Part of the humor comes from his gender atypical conversation topics. When Gobber, the main characters' mentor brings the teens together to explain the different games in the festival, Fishlegs begins a gender atypical conversation by asking if there will be any intellectual games, like puzzles, in the festival. Fishlegs continues to engage in fairly gender atypical conversation when he later names his flying trick "the extreme butterfly," an insect usually associated with feminine gender stereotypes.

Because of the nature of these series, it was difficult to decide how gender stereotypical and atypical the topics of conversation were in these episodes. Many of the conversations did not seem to be on either extreme of the spectrum because they could be spoken by anyone, regardless of character sex. It is clear to this author, however that the conversations in *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic* played in to many gender stereotypes. It seems that *Dragons: Riders of Berk* and *Legend of Korra* did so less often. The author attributes this difference to

storylines and roles that females played in these shows. In this sample, *Legend of Korra* is the only action-adventure animated show that features a female lead. *Dragons: Riders of Berk* is also an action-adventure show, but the females described in the qualitative analysis are the heroic sidekicks on the show. Even though a small qualitative analysis of these shows is not nearly enough to make claims about the gender stereotypical and atypical topics of conversation on children's animated television today, highlighting some of these cases may help support many of the quantitative findings. These supports are mentioned in more detailed throughout the discussion section.

Discussion

Since this body of work is one of the first to be done with the latest round of Children's Television Project data, most of the analyses were relatively exploratory. Even though content analyses already suggested that males and female characters are unevenly represented in children's animated television, much less was known about race or age. For this reason, it was important to this author to first identify the frequency of each demographic in the sample before undertaking the more nuanced questions about sex and gender in the dataset. The research literature was helpful for creating hypotheses and guiding questions, but many more questions came *post hoc* once the data had been cleaned. Since this sample was the most current that this author was aware of, it was clear that even though frequency data, correlation, and chi-square statistics are neither the most sophisticated nor the most powerful of statistical tests, all would be needed to evaluate the content viewed as part of this content analysis.

In this sample, male characters continued to outnumber females around two to one. This finding was not surprising given all of the previous content analysis research showing large discrepancies between male and female characters, but thinking about the sample of the present study raises a few questions. Does every show in this sample follow this trend? Or does the genre of the show affect the number of males and females? Some shows like *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic* and *SpongeBob SquarePants* had almost exclusively same-sex casts, nearly all female and all male, respectively. Furthermore, only two shows in the whole sample had a relatively even number of male and female

characters: *Adventure Time* and *Arthur*. All of the other shows had between 16% and 30% females; a 1:2 ratio, very roughly. These analyses did not consider television genre or network differences, but it is possible that the results reported reflect such differences. More research would be needed to identify those patterns.

This researcher attributes *Adventure Time*'s equal representation to the plot lines of the particular episodes coded. In the *Slow Love* episode, Snorlock, a snail (who is actually a slug) looks to the main characters, Jake and Finn, for advice on finding a girlfriend. Throughout the plotline, the three males encounter several female prospects along the way, accounting for a relatively even representation of male and female characters in the episode. In another episode, the Ice King changes form, creating competition among the show's five or so princesses for dibs on the "new king." Perhaps without these episodes in the sample, *Adventure Time* would have demonstrated the expected 2:1 ratio of male to female characters. The same is unlikely to be said for *Arthur* which also had a relatively equal number of males and females in the episodes coded. The regular cast of characters is evenly split and most of the special guests are too ("*Arthur*"). As a television show on public access television, *Arthur* producers likely made intentional choices about male and female representation on the show. Making such a claim is beyond the scope of this project, but hopefully future research will definitively make these connections.

In terms of character demographics, it is interesting that character sex was related to age and species, but not race or nationality. Females were more likely to

be teenagers, but less likely to be middle aged. This finding is somewhat consistent with prior research on television's obsession with youthfulness for female characters (Signorielli, 2012). It is well documented that primetime television programs value, feature, and over represent young adults and the middle-aged; especially females of these age groups (e.g. Lauzen & Dozier, 1999, Signorielli & Baccue, 1999). Children's television, on the other hand, often includes characters of a similar age range as the target group (Harwood, 1997; Harwood, 1999). Children also prefer to watch same age characters, but they tend to idealize characters that are older than them (Hoffner & Buchanan, 2005). Particularly in 'tween' live action shows, actors are often much older than the characters they play; creating unrealistic images of age (Russnow, 2011). Given the nature of this sample, it was not surprising that female characters were more likely to be teenagers and less likely to be middle-aged. Teenage female characters are certainly young and youthful, but are slightly older than the target age group to account for children watching "up." Another possibility is that this difference in age is due to the sample of shows chosen and their respective plotlines. More research on images of age on television would be needed to explain this finding further.

This researcher expected that there would be a relation between sex and race, but the data did not support this assumption. There were of course, a greater proportion of White characters than any other racial or ethnic groups and this number may very well have been disproportionate in terms of U.S. Census information, but character race was still not related to character sex. The likely

reason that these two variables were not related is, in fact, because of the predominance of White, non-Hispanic characters. The few characters of color that did exist would not be enough to establish a relation. Character race, however, was related to nationality, but not age and species. That relation makes some sense because Asian characters were more likely to be rated foreign than African – American / Black characters. This finding might be related to the “perpetual foreigner” stereotype about Asian-Americans that is present in society. Asian-Americans are often regarded as unassimilated irrespective of their citizenship status or of the length of time residing in the United States (Conway & Wong, 2004). Asian-Americans may have been born in America, but to others, they continue to be perceived as inherently foreign, hence the “perpetual foreigner.” Vargas (2007) argues that this stereotype might contribute to the lack of Asian-American characters seen on television. While it is true that Asian characters were more likely to be foreign and there were very few of them in the first place, the results on the association between character race and nationality is more likely due to the inclusion of *Digimon* and *Legend of Korra* television shows in this sample. These shows are in the anime style of animation and appear to take place in a foreign land. Again, the few characters of color in this sample are probably not enough to come close to statistical significance in other chi square analyses.

Male and female differences in physical attributes were very interesting to this author. On average, females were more likely to be rated by coders skinnier and more beautiful than male characters. There were no significant differences in character sex and skin color or dress. The significant results support the finding

that at least some of the physical attributes of male and female characters were different. Even though this author believed that male and female characters would differ on all of the physical attributes, seeing that there was no significant difference in the light v. dark skin or well v. sloppily dressed ratings is somewhat promising. The findings on the skinny v. fat and beautiful/handsome v. ugly do, however, mirror past findings in published research of more attractive females in children's television (Baker & Raney, 2004; Fouts & Burggraf, 1999; Gerding & Signorielli, 2013). In terms of personality traits, female characters were more likely to be rated as "good," "peaceful," "kind," and "honest", but this honesty rating was only slightly different for male and female characters. These findings support the author's hypothesis that the personality traits attributed to males and females are different and unequal. These findings also follow the research literature around gender stereotypes in children's television, animation and otherwise (Hentges & Case, 2013; Signorielli, 2012; Thompson & Zerbinos, 1995). Due to restrictions in sample size and time, analyses on race in relation to physical and personality traits were not conducted. Future research interested in racial/ethnic portrayals in children's animated television would be wise to include such analyses, especially given the knowledge of racial and ethnic stereotypes (ie. the "model minority").

In terms of the whole sample, the finding that many of the physical attributes were related, though not perfectly, to one another was quite useful. The same could be said of the personality traits chosen. These findings were in line with the author's hypothesis. Correlation statistics on the physical and personality

traits were a check for reliability in the coding scheme. When characters had high scores on one of these traits, they also tended to have higher scores on the others. The same pattern was true of lower scores on one trait; meaning they would likely have lower scores on the others. For instance, characters that were rated as a '5' on the good/bad scale were likely to be rated as a four or five on the kind to cruel scale. The scatter plot in Figure 1 demonstrates this particular relation. In this way, a positive correlation was identified for many traits. Of course, not all of the traits were significantly correlated with one another so this finding only applies to those that were. Had coders rated characters the very same score on all of the traits of interest (the four personality traits or the four physical attributes, respectively) there would have been a perfect correlation. Especially since there was no perfect correlation in the sample, this researcher feels confident that the coders were extremely deliberate and careful in assigning codes. Even though the correlations were still positive, if there had been perfect correlation on any of these variables, it could have been argued that the variable definitions were too similar, indicating a lack of validity of the measure. Having some non-significant correlations were promising as well. Some traits were quite distinct and likely not related to one another at all, an important finding to note for future research in this area.

One rationale for the phenomenon that females are pro-social comes from character development research in film and media studies. It is well documented that women and those of color are less developed as characters (Eschholz, Bufkin, & Long, 2002; Horton, Price & Brown, 1999; Sarkeesian, 2009). A fully

developed character has easily identifiable personality traits and very obvious character flaws. These flaws are meant to make them appear more “human” and show hubris. Less developed characters do not demonstrate such hubris and are often quite superficial (“Develop character personality,” n.d.). This lack of development or superficiality may lead scriptwriters, directors, and producers to show the underdeveloped female characters as “pro-social” or make them “good” so that it’s not seen as sexist. If they are not planning to develop the character and expose her flaws, it is much easier to make her superficially “good” so that viewers will not associate a female in a minor role as a character that is “less than” for any reason. Ironically, in doing so, they are perpetuating certain stereotypes about females being more pro-social than males; a fairly sexist trope.

A similar justification on the underdevelopment of females stems from information about the medium. Television, in particular, is a relatively short medium. A 22 minute — and especially an 11 minute — episode is not nearly enough time to fully develop every character that will be shown. Script writers and producers seem to know this fact. Are they choosing to make girls “good” so they can save face or it is that they are choosing to employ the pro-social stereotypes that already exist about females because they want the audience to take their own mental shortcuts and immediately understand a character who will not be developed due to time constraints? If employing these stereotypes allows the media makers the time and energy to fully develop other characters in the television shows, should they be blamed for its use? Of course, it is unfair to make such sweeping generalizations about all media producers, but these ideas

might play a role in why this content analysis found differences in male and female characters' personality traits.

Another explanation is that these findings merely endorse the interpretation of females in a male-driven television industry. Most of the directors and creators of these series are male, the only notable exception being *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic*. It is possible that these directors and creators bring their implicit and explicit experience of the world into their art. In prime time television, several studies have found that who is working behind the scenes does indeed affect the portrayals of males and females on screen (Lauzen & Dozier, 1999; Lauzen, Dozier, & Cleveland, 2006; Lauzen, Dozier, & Hicks, 2001; Signorielli, 2012). Furthermore, portrayals of race and ethnicity might also be influenced by who is working behind the scenes. New shows like *Fresh off the Boat*, *Cristela* and *Black-ish* featured in ABC's fall lineup are encouraging in this area, but may fall flat by overly highlighting race (Procida, 2014).

Cultivation theory might also explain why these stereotypical tropes continue to exist. The more television that we watch, the more we are inclined to believe that what we see is normative. We see the same images and tropes over and over again that we start to hold them as truth. Perhaps writers, animators, and producers continue to utilize the images we have come to incorporate into our reality not only because it's a part of their own, but also because it is a convenient shortcut for the audience. Of course, these statements are only speculations, more information and research would be needed to determine if any of the rationales discussed are responsible for this phenomenon.

The qualitative analysis found that *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic* had the most instances of gender stereotyped conversation topics. The researcher hypothesized that females would be more likely to talk about their appearance, members of the opposite sex, and marriage. In the *My Little Pony* qualitative analysis, only two of those topics were identified; appearance and opposite sex. Marriage was not discussed throughout the coded episodes. None of these topics were discussed in *Legend of Korra* or *Dragons: Riders of Berk*. Instead, this author found that the females in those shows engaged in other features of women's language (i.e. discussion of babies and children, mentioning relationships, avoidance of swearing). As action-adventure shows geared for this audience, that finding is not surprising. Furthermore, avoidance of strong swear words might be due to the target age for these shows and the fact that they are on children's cable. What was surprising, however, were the male characters falling into gender stereotypical and atypical topics of conversation. *My Little Pony's* Spike and *Dragons' Fishlegs* discussed the most gender atypical conversation topics. The females in the two action-adventure shows often talked about competition or fighting and engaged in it, but were more gender stereotypical in other arenas such as their discussions around relationships to one another. Often, discussion about relationships and familiarity were directed towards the opposite sex, but this feature may be due to the story plotlines and appearance of more male characters overall rather than a gender bias. The author also attributes these differences to the nature of the show genre and number of females cast.

Limitations

The character coding manual was edited based on the original manual used by Dobrow and Gidney (1998), but operational definitions of certain aspects could differ from other content analyses and, as such, could result in different research findings. This researcher believes that the coding manual has strong face validity, but it is possible that the coding manual could reflect differences anyway. It is also possible that the coding team could have a different opinion of the characters in the sample than the children who watch these shows might. The coding team uses their adult decisions (influenced by many years of knowledge, not to mention, Tufts University critical thinking skills) to code characters in particular ways that children might not be thinking about. The same could be said for the choices coders made on the dialect coding manual. One example of this difference can be viewed in light of character sex decisions and personality trait choices. Coders were told to select character sex based on character appearance, but because of performance norms, they may have included information about gender in their categorization of character sex. In light of societal views on gender, coders may have also considered character gender when coding personality traits by using the character's behaviors and actions to inform their choices. For practical purposes, only a subset of personality traits and character demographics were considered as part of this analysis. By limiting the variables, this research is unable to account for all differences in male and female characters in this sample according to the coding scheme.

The present sample is also not without its own limitations. The sample was derived from cross-referencing several "top ten" lists of children's animated

television and includes two rather adult shows as well. These shows were chosen because they met the inclusion criteria for the sample and research indicates that children (especially at the top of our target age range – twelve year olds) tend to watch “up,” preferring shows that feature teenagers and that their older counterparts also enjoy (Harwood 1999). Additionally, the shows had to be available on DVD to be included in the sample. Because of DVD release dates, many of the episodes that students coded aired in 2011-2013, already outdated in terms of air time. While the coded episodes might currently be in reruns, they are certainly not new to television. The number of television shows and episodes used in this sample is on the smaller end for content analyses. Future research in content analysis could also look at more animated shows for children or include more episodes than the current study. A final limitation to consider is that the episodes were selected by the project manager for convenience and uniformity. They are the first three episodes on the first disc of the DVDs available for each television show. For some shows, this order was also the order in which they aired that season, but for others (e.g. *Phineas and Ferb*) the episodes were centered on a theme rather than a particular season. This issue of episode order leads to another concern that the coded episode plotlines might better reflect their position or inclusion on the DVD rather than being representative of the show at large. For these reasons and more, it is entirely possible that this sample is not representative of cartoon animation that children regularly view and as such, results should be considered only within this particular sample.

No discussion of research would be complete with describing the limitations of the quantitative and qualitative analysis. To begin with, the coding scheme design in this study limited the statistics possible to run on this dataset. For the personality traits, there were many missing data. Missing data were '0' or 'uncertain' in the coding scheme. Removing them from the master dataset made it difficult to compare findings on personality traits because some had less missing data than others. This author hopes that by excluding missing data pairwise, this limitation is less troublesome. As with all statistical tests, a significant result (when alpha is less than .05) is merely statistically significant. That result does not identify if the finding is also practically significant. To combat that issue, this author included effect sizes whenever possible. Additionally, since the data violated the assumption of normality required for most powerful statistical tests, different statistical tests were needed. It was unclear to this author that nonparametric tests would be needed until data analysis demonstrated this violation.

In terms of the qualitative analysis, the main issue is certainly sample size. Watching one episode of three shows is not nearly enough to make claims about the gendered conversations presented in the larger sample of children's animation. Not only was the sample small, but the analyses done were limited due to time and this author's knowledge of qualitative analysis. Additionally, the author's implicit bias of gender stereotypes as "good" and "bad" may play a role in the interpretations of these findings. Future research should take these limitations into consideration.

As previously mentioned, content analyses are also limiting in that they may describe what exists in the television world, but do not measure how much someone “gets” from it. This measurement would require research in the area of media effects. Media effects research is a growing area of study that can help discuss the impact of children’s exposure to images featured on television, particularly how those effects might translate to new media platforms that have not been as extensively studied.

Implications and Future Research

Given the results of this study, it is no wonder groups like Media Girls and the Geena Davis Institute exist. Where are all of the females in children’s animated television? Males continue to outnumber female characters. Not to mention that when they are shown, female characters are more likely to be younger (i.e. teenagers) and be more physically attractive (i.e. skinnier and more beautiful) than male characters. According to social learning/cognitive theory, these representations of character sex on television have the potential to not only teach females about “being” and “doing” female, but, according to cultivation theory, those who watch more television could develop a worldview on gender that is in line with these depictions. To this end, females who see that female characters are more beautiful, skinnier, concerned with their youthfulness, appearance, and marriage might begin to believe that they must also value these traits. Not only might females learn to value the traits of females on television, but they could also use them as models for performing what we consider to be

feminine gender. And what about for females who are watching American animation dubbed overseas? What do they make of these differences?

Of course, these are just some of the first issues to come to mind, but what about the effects of cartoon viewing on males? Do boys notice that it's a man's world on children's animated television? And how might acknowledging males' overrepresentation on children's animation translate to young boys' learning about gender from animated television?

If youth notice these differences in age, physical features, and personality traits in animated television, are they more inclined to perform in ways that mirror these differences in reality? If so, are females merely reinforcing negative stereotypes about feminine gender because the few females they see on television that they are copying are more pro-social and physically attractive? Social cognitive theory would argue that, of course, these models are providing the information needed for feminine gender performance, but they are only one part of the triadic reciprocity involved in behavioral action around gender. But it still begs a serious question. If the performance of feminine gender reflects some stereotypes gleaned from television, is it fair to assume that children who watch a great deal of television will continue to hold gender stereotypes? Research already points to the presence of a relation between gender stereotyped beliefs and television consumption (Signorielli, 2012). While the current project cannot make such bold claims, by noting sex/gender portrayals at the content level, this research can provide the information needed to design further research that would be able to do so.

The qualitative analysis in this study adds to the literature on gender roles in animated television by identifying some gender stereotypical and atypical topics of conversation in a small sample of children's animation. It is difficult to determine whether the gender stereotypical conversation topics are merely reflective of our current language patterns or if the media is influencing these patterns. Early on, Lakoff (1973) saw that females in the media were definitely speech role models. She mentions Edith Bunker from *All in the Family* in particular, but this finding could apply to any media character. Women's language, she argues, is built into female media characters because it mirrors the language we are used to hearing and children may seek to emulate those models. Holmes (2013) also speaks about the adaptation of language in terms of sociolinguistics. She argues that listening to an admired character or celebrities' speech may prompt those who watch them to emulate it, but in-person communication will always be more effective. This finding is particularly important for learning of "slang" or alternate language. This "chicken or the egg" issue may never be resolved, but it is central to the argument for eliminating some of the gender stereotypical conversation topics present. If young girls see and hear characters that speak in less stereotyped ways, they may be more likely to emulate them, possibly contributing to greater sex/gender equality in their communities.

One of the primary limitations of this study is that it is not a media effects study. Future research would not only analyze whether females have "cultivated" these messages from media they consume, but also how ethnic minority individuals are affected by media, particularly females of color. Though slightly

removed from the sex and race discussion, more research is definitely needed to determine how multiple platform use, multi-tasking, and time shifting is impacting how children watch television and the resulting effects on their development. Information gleaned from those studies would help media effects researchers understand the whole picture of children's' television/media consumption.

Not only is media effects research an important next step, but phase two of the Children's Television Project will also help triangulate the findings in this study. Though outside of the scope of this research, the principal investigators of the larger project plan to explore how script writers, television directors, voice actors, and vocal casting directors make decisions about the way characters are drawn and voiced in children's animated television by conducting semi-structured interviews with key folks in the industry. Cartoons are full of intentionality. Every detail of animated television must be planned out and considered, leaving little room for any "coincidence." If the researchers find that writers, voice actors, vocal casting directors, and directors are type casting for particular voices, that would support the finding that some roles are quite gendered in nature.

Conclusion

Overall, this research has added currency to the literature on television stereotypes and postulates how children might be affected by them. This content analysis found that there is somewhat more diversity on children's animated television than was found in content analyses of 1990's programming (Thompson & Zerbinos, 1995; Dobrow & Gidney, 1998), but echoed similar findings of more recent content analyses (Gerding & Signorielli, 2013; Klein & Shiffman, 2006). Males and Caucasians continue to be consistently overrepresented in children's animated television than their percentage in national statistics. Gendered stereotypical and atypical conversation topics are also present in this sample. Hopefully, results of this study will urge policy makers to push for more appropriate representation in children's television. However, the more likely pattern is that by making academics, parents, and educators aware of these inequities, these individuals will begin to take notice. If awareness of old age stereotypes on television can lead participants to watch less television, then perhaps the same can be said of other inaccurate portrayals (Donlon, Ashman, & Levy, 2005). If that is the case, children might also decide to watch less television. Children cutting down on television viewing would be the worst case scenario for Hollywood and the children's television industry, causing the media makers to reevaluate their money making plotlines. Considering youth culture is not abandoning screens anytime soon, maybe this research cannot effect change from the media, but it could certainly prompt and support interventions in media

literacy that will impact the way girls view themselves and the media. More research is necessary, but this work is a promising start.

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Table 1

Chi-square tests and descriptive statistics for character sex

Variables	Character Sex	
	Male	Female
Age		
Child Under 12	59 (18%)	38 (22%)
Teenager (13-18)	57 (17%)	66 (38%)
Young Adult	44 (13%)	19 (11%)
Middle Aged	151 (45%)	39 (22%)
Elderly	23 (7%)	12 (7%)
Race		
African-American / Black	9 (4%)	3 (3%)
White, Non-Hispanic	177 (81%)	72 (79%)
Asian	30 (14%)	15 (17%)
Latino(a), Middle Eastern, & Other	4 (2%)	1 (1%)
Nat'l		
U.S.	178 (60%)	86 (68%)
Foreign/ Non-US	119 (40%)	41 (32%)
Species		
Human / Humanoid	247 (68%)	103 (58%)
Animal / Animal-like	103 (28%)	70 (39%)
Machine / Robotic	5 (1%)	0 (0%)
Other	11(3%)	5 (3%)

Note. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages. **Bold and Underlined numbers** = Standardized Residual $\geq |1.97|$

Table 2

Chi-square tests and descriptive statistics for character race

Variables	Character Race			
	African-American / Black	White, Non-Hispanic	Asian	Latino(a), Middle Eastern, Other
Age				
Child Under 12	2 (17%)	32 (13%)	9 (20%)	0 (0%)
Teenager (13-18)	0 (0%)	73 (29%)	12 (27%)	0 (0%)
Young Adult	2 (17%)	17 (7%)	4 (9%)	0(0%)
Middle Aged	8 (66%)	106 (43%)	13 (29%)	<u>5</u> (100%)
Elderly	0 (0%)	21(8%)	7 (16%)	0 (0%)
Nat'l				
U.S.	12 (100%)	158 (71.5%)	<u>9</u> (20.5%)	4 (80%)
Foreign/ Non-US	<u>0</u> (0%)	63(28.5%)	<u>35</u> (79.5%)	1(20%)
Species				
Human / Humanoid	12 (100%)	248 (99.6%)	45 (100%)	5 (100%)
Animal / Animal-like	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Machine / Robotic	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Note. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages. **Bold and Underlined numbers** = Standardized Residual $\geq |1.97|$

Table 3

Spearman's Rho correlations among physical traits (N = 465)

Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Skinny/Fat	--	.34***	.18***	.15**
2. Beauty/Ugly		--	.41	.31***
3. Light/Dark			--	.09*
4. Well/Sloppy				--

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes. Light/Dark = skin color. Well/Sloppy = dress.

Table 4

Spearman's Rho correlations among personality traits (N = 317)

Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.
1. Good/Bad	--	.65**	.81**	.54**
2. Peace/Viol		--	.71**	.43**
3. Kind/Cruel			--	.55**
4. Honest/Dis				--

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .001$

Notes. Peace/Viol = peaceful/violent. Honest/Dis = honest/dishonest.

Table 5

Ratings on physical traits by character sex

Variables	Male (SD)	Female (SD)	Mean Difference
Skinny/Fat	2.90 (.95)	2.40 (.88)	.50*** [0.33, 0.66]
Beauty/Ugly	3.13 (.79)	2.52 (.91)	.61*** [0.44, 0.78]
Light/Dark	2.05 (.88)	2.10 (1.0)	-.05 [-0.24, 0.12]
Well/Sloppy	2.53 (.90)	2.43 (.79)	.10 [-0.07, 0.27]

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ *Notes.* Light/Dark = skin color. Well/Sloppy = dress.

BCa 95% CI for Mean Difference in brackets.

Table 6

Ratings on personality traits by character sex

Variables	Male (SD)	Female (SD)	Mean Difference
Good/Bad	2.57 (1.16)	2.22 (.94)	.35** [0.12, 0.57]
Peace/Viol	2.94(.98)	2.42 (.94)	.52*** [0.32, 0.74]
Kind/Cruel	2.72 (1.06)	2.32 (.91)	.40*** [0.19, 0.62]
Honest/Dis	2.61(.94)	2.32 (.93)	.29* [0.07, 0.52]

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p \leq .001$

Notes. $N = 317$. Peace/Viol = peaceful/violent. Honest/Dis = honest/dishonest.
 BCa 95% CI for Mean Difference in brackets.

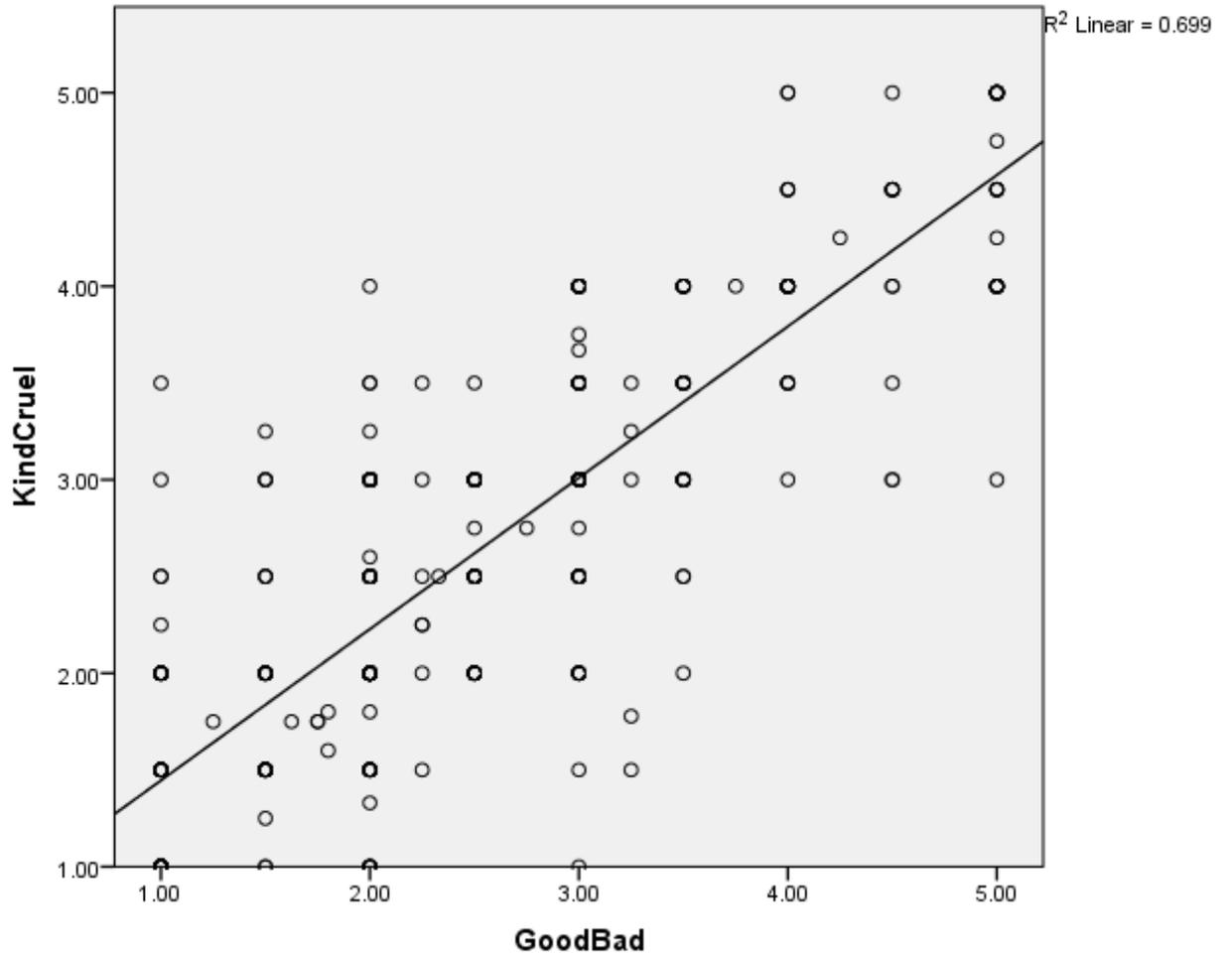


Figure 1. Scatterplot of good/bad ratings by kind cruel ratings.

Appendix A

CTV_13 Character Coding Sheet

* Required

Coder Name *

Coder Name

Show Title *

Write the show's title

Episode title *

Write the episode's title

Character Name *

Write the character's name

Age group * (choose one):

Baby or infant, Child (4-12), Teenager (13-18), Young Adult, Middle Aged, Elderly, Uncertain

What is the character's sex? * (choose one):

Female, Male, Uncertain

Race / Ethnicity / Ethnic Origin *

What is the character's ethnicity? (Choose one):

African-American/Black, American Indian, Anglo-Saxon/Nordic, Arab/Middle Eastern, East Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean), South Asian (Indian, Pakistani), Jewish / Jewish American, Latino(a) / Hispanic, French / Franco-American, Slavic, Other, Uncertain

If race/ethnicity is OTHER, please specify...

What is the character's social class? * (choose one):

Underclass / Criminal, Poor / Working class, Middle Class, Upper Class / Wealthy, Elite (kings, queens, princes, princess), Uncertain

Citizenship / Nationality *

What is the character's citizenship/nationality? (Choose one):

U.S., Foreign / Non-US, Uncertain

Dramatic Role *

What is the character's dramatic role? (Choose one):

Major hero / Major heroine, Major villain, Heroic sidekick, Villainous sidekick,
Minor character, Walk-on character

Species *

What species is the character? (Choose one):

Human / Humanoid, Animal / Animal-like, Machine / Robotic, Other, Uncertain

If species is other, please specify

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: Skinny (1) ... Fat (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't Tell Fat

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: Beautiful/Handsome (1) ... Ugly (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't Tell Ugly

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: Skin tone: Light Skin (1) ... Dark Skin (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't Tell Dark Skin

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS: Dress: Well-dressed (1) ... Sloppily Dressed (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't tell Sloppily dressed

PERSONALITY TRAITS: Serious (1) ... Comic (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't Tell Comic

PERSONALITY: Strong (1) ... Weak (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't Tell Weak

PERSONALITY: Good (1) ... Bad (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't Tell. Bad

PERSONALITY: Peaceful (1) ... Violent (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't tell Violent

PERSONALITY: Kind (1) ... Cruel (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't tell. Cruel

PERSONALITY: Smart (1) ... Stupid (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't tell Stupid

PERSONALITY: Independent (1) ... Dependent (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't tell. Dependent

PERSONALITY: Warm (1) ... Cold/Stand-offish (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't Tell Cold / Stand-offish

PERSONALITY: Honest (1) ... Dishonest (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't tell Dishonest

PERSONALITY: Active (1) ... Passive (5) *

Active = takes initiative, takes the lead ** Passive = lets things happen, takes no initiative

0 1 2 3 4 5

Can't tell Passive

PERSONALITY: Agile (1) ... Clumsy (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5
Can't tell Clumsy

PERSONALITY: Childlike (1) ... Adult-like (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5
Can't tell Adult-like

PERSONALITY: Competent (1) ... Incompetent (5) *

0 1 2 3 4 5
Can't tell Incompetent

Other comments?

Please use this textbox to note anything else you found important that was not previously listed or to defend a particular rating.

Appendix B

CTV_15 Dialect Coding

* Required

CODER NAME ***SHOW TITLE *****EPISODE TITLE *****CHARACTER NAME *****1. What type of accent does the character have? *****1A. If you answered OTHER, please specify:****2. If the character has an American accent, what type is it?**

Choose all applicable.

- SES (Class) - related
- Ethnically marked
- Regionally marked
- Gender-related
- Standard American English (SAE)
- Age-Related
- Other:

2A. If the American Accent is CLASS-RELATED, what class is it associated with?

- Upper-class / Elite
- Middle class
- Working-class / Poor

2B. If the American accent is ETHNIC, what ethnic group is it associated with?

- African-American
- Italian-American
- Jewish-American
- Irish-American
- Chinese-American
- Japanese-American
- Indian-American
- Native American
- Other:

2C. If the American accent is GENDER-RELATED, what gender is it associated with?

- Female
- Male
- Effeminate Male
- Masculine Female
- Other:

2D. If the American accent is REGIONAL, then what region is the accent associated with?

If you can specify a specific location (e.g., Brooklyn, Texas), then please write in OTHER box.

- Southern USA
- Northeastern USA
- Midwestern USA
- Western USA
- Other:

2E. If the American accent is AGE-RELATED, what age is it associated with?

- Children

- Teenagers
- Middle-aged
- Elderly
- Other:

3. If the accent is **FOREIGN**, then what type of foreign accent is it?

- British
- Irish
- Australian / New Zealand
- Foreign language
- Other:

3A. If the accent is **FOREIGN LANGUAGE**, please identify the country or region. If you cannot be specific, identify in general terms (e.g., "Slavic" or "East Asian").

4. List the distinctive **PHONOLOGICAL FEATURES** of the character's accent. Please write the word in **SAE** orthography and then an approximation of how the character pronounces the words.

EX. 'eggs' = EKS or 'we want' = 'VEE VANT'

▲

▼

5. List the distinctive **LEXICAL FEATURES** or **IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS** that the character uses.

EX.: 'cheerie-oh', 'dagnabbit!', 'awesome, dude!', 'cool beans!'

▲

▼

6. List the distinctive SYNTACTIC FEATURES that the character uses.

Ex. 'He don't know nothing', 'I ain't seen him.'

7. How gender stereotypical is the character's topic of conversation? *

1 = extremely gender stereotypical, 3 = neutral, 5 = extremely gender atypical

1 2 3 4 5

extremely gender stereotypical *extremely gender atypical*

7a. If you indicated that the character's topic of conversation is 1 or 5 in the previous question, please provide examples here.

ie. blond teenage girl talking about boys, make up and hair OR blond teenage girl talking about astrophysics like an expert

8. List any VOCAL QUALITIES that you have not already indicated

ie. very gruff male voice

9. If the character's voice is ELECTRONICALLY ALTERED, describe how.



Appendix C

Sample Information

Adventure Time**** - Cartoon Network

Loyalty to the King
Blood Under the Skin
It Came from the Nightosphere
The Eyes
Storytelling
Slow Love

American Dad* – Fox

Hot Water
Hurricane!
A Ward Show

Arthur** – PBS

Swept Away
Germophobia
Arthur Sells Out/
Mind Your Manners
D.W. on Ice
Spoiled Rotten

Bob's Burgers* – Fox

Bob Day Afternoon
Synchronized Swimming
Burger Boss

Digimon**** – Nickelodeon

Enter Flamedramon
The Digiteam Complete
A New Digtitude

Dragons: Riders of Berk**** – Cartoon Network

Thawfest
When Lightening Strikes
What Flies Beneath

Legend of Korra**** – Nickelodeon

Welcome to Republic City
A Leaf in the Wind
The Revelation

My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic**** – The Hub

Friendship is Magic Part 1
Friendship is Magic Part 2

The Ticketmaster

Phineas and Ferb*** – Disney

Jerk De Soliel

Toy to the World

A Hard Day's Knight

I Brobot

It's a Mud, Mud, Mud, Mud World

The Ballad of Bad Beard

SpongeBob SquarePants*** – Nickelodeon

Accidents will Happen

The Other Patty

Drive Thru

Hot Shot

Friendly Game

Sentimental Sponge

Broadcast Network*

Public Broadcasting**

Children's Cable***