

# Abstract: A Study of the British Animation Industry's approach to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion 2000-2020

The aim of this thesis is to investigate equality, diversity and inclusion in British preschool animation. This was examined through on-screen depictions and participation within the British Animation Industry. In order to do this, this thesis conducted a semiotic content analysis and a narrative, thematic qualitative content analysis. The programmes selected for analysis in this thesis are *Peppa Pig* (winner of the BAFTA Preschool Animation in 2005, 2011 and 2012), *Charlie and Lola* (BAFTA winners in 2007 and 2008), *Timmy Time* (winners in 2010 and 2013), *Sarah & Duck* (winner in 2014) and *Numberblocks* (winner in 2019). In addition, this thesis included *JoJo and Gran Gran* in its analysis, which was first broadcast in 2020, after the preschool BAFTA award was suspended. These programmes were all examined against the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. These protected characteristics are sex, race, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religious belief, marriage and civil partnership, and finally, pregnancy and maternity. In addition, the names of creators, writers, directors and animators of these programmes were gathered using on-screen credits. This data was then compared to census data compiled by the UK Government to identify how the depictions of characters on-screen and participation within the industry compare with the British population. The data revealed that equality, diversity and inclusion do not exist on-screen when looking at the combined data from all programmes. The analysis revealed that representation across all protected characteristics was below the demographics of the British population and that several characteristics were not depicted at all on-screen. Male characters were over represented on-screen and within the animation industry. Additionally, the participation of women within the animation industry was low within the three roles identified as most likely to influence depictions on-screen, creator, writer and director.

# A Study of the British Animation Industry's approach to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion 2000-2020

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 A Study of the British Animation Industry's approach to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion 2000-2020

This thesis seeks to investigate representations of equality, diversity and inclusion on-screen within the British Animation industry. Whilst equality, diversity and inclusion are more commonly known under the abbreviation of EDI, the ideal is equity in representation, not simply equality. These differences are explored further within the thesis. The British Animation industry is worth over £1.6 billion, with preschool animation contributing significantly to this revenue generation. For example, the British preschool animation and global phenomenon *Peppa Pig* generates £200m in UK sales of licensed products each year, is watched in 180 countries and is estimated to become a \$2bn brand and currently part of a \$4 billion deal (Lang 2023; UKBAA, 2021). Despite this commercial success, *Peppa Pig* has faced controversy over the years. Sources as varied as Huffington Post, Washington Post and the London Fire Brigade have objected to its content and it has been accused of being sexist, body shaming and exclusively promoting heteronormative lifestyles. In 2019, *Peppa Pig* released an episode called *The Fire Engine*. In the scene, the narrator announces that Mummy Pig is dressed as a 'fireman'. The London Fire Brigade (LFB) reminded the creators that this term hadn't been used by them for over 30 years (LFB, 2019). Their statement pointed out that *Peppa Pig* episodes can 'have a huge influence on kids & using out of date stereotypical gender specific wording prevents young girls from becoming firefighters,' (LFB, 2019). The LFB have been battling outdated notions of who can be a firefighter and attempts to drive more women into firefighting roles have been largely unsuccessful as less than 10% of firefighters in London are women (LFB, 2022).



London Fire Brigade  
@LondonFire

Come on @peppapig, we've not been firemen for 30 years. You have a huge influence on kids & using out of date stereotypical gender specific wording prevents young girls from becoming firefighters. Join our #Firefightingsexism campaign



Jay @JPWR\_1984 · 17 Mar 2019

Replying to @LondonFire

The memo didn't reach the @peppapig team...

#FireFighter



8:59 am · 17 Mar 2019

(LFB, 2019)

The LFB draws a clear line between little girls watching *Peppa Pig* and this influencing their interest in becoming a firefighter. This speaks to the idea that consuming mass media has some influence on consumers, in this case the *Peppa Pig* and child consumers. The LFB clearly feel that *Peppa Pig* has the power to positively impact the numbers of women going into firefighting and also promote the acceptance of female firefighters. This notion is grounded by two theories concerned with media effects, George Gerbner's Cultivation theory and Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory. Gerbner's Cultivation Theory posited that sustained, long term exposure to mass media influenced how viewers interpreted the real world around them, chiefly that it reflected what they saw on television (Gerbner *et al.*, 1996; Gerbner *et al.*, 1977). This theory is relevant to this thesis as it speaks to the idea that a child's aspirations are in part informed by exposure to television. It is also a framework for several content reviews of children's television that are discussed in this thesis (Eyal *et*

*al.*, 2021; Eide 2020; Walsh and Leaper, 2019; Martin, 2017; Larson, 2001; Aladé, 2000; Morgan and Shanahan, 1999). This thesis also used Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which has also been used by other authors content analysis of preschool animation (Hamlen and Imbesi, 2019; Walsh and Leaper, 2019; Martin, 2017; de Leeuw *et al.*, 2015; Larson, 2001; Aladé, 2000; Morgan and Shanahan, 1999). These two theories are used throughout this thesis and as they both speak to influencing factors throughout childhood and how media is one of the most prominent influencing factors in a child's learning. Bandura also utilised Gerbner's work within his own research, in his explanations of how social realities are influenced in part by mass media (Bandura, 1999, p34).

Of course, these theories are not without their limitations, and this will be discussed in more detail in the Literature Review section of this thesis, but in short other researchers felt that more weight should be given to viewers' ability to differentiate and mediate between real world experiences and depictions of characters on television. Roger Silverstone affirms that 'Television is a central dimension of our everyday lives and yet its meaning and its potency vary according to our individual circumstances. Its power will always be mediated by the social and cultural worlds which we inhabit,' (Silverstone, 1994, no pagination). One theory that offers an alternative model to Bandura and Gerbner is Bradley Greenberg's Drench Theory, which posits that viewing an influential character in a significant role has greater potential to impact viewers more than a large number of incidental characters in a similar role (Greenberg, 1988). Greenberg argued that traditionally screen viewing was argued by academics to have either no effect on viewers or Gerbner and Bandura's 'gradual, cumulative drip-drip-drip' effect (Greenberg, 1998, p.97). He sought to offer an alternative understanding of how mass media consumption impacts viewers. This thesis builds on this work by Gerbner, Bandura and Greenberg to argue that children are influenced by what they see on television and that this is why scrutiny of contemporary British preschool animation is so relevant. This is explored in more detail within Chapter Three, section 3.1 *Theoretical Framework*. Drench Theory is potentially applicable in the firefighter episode of *Peppa Pig* as Mummy Pig is an influential figure and seeing her as a firefighter arguably does have the potential to positively impact the way children view that role; namely that it is not exclusive to men. The episode is entirely about female firefighters, which is



unusual from other episodes which do not feature the firefighters regularly. If they had used the correct language around the role, that could have had a significant positive effect, particularly if Greenberg's Drench Theory is utilised. Dany Cotton, the head of the LFB also criticised *Fireman Sam*, another British preschool animation for maintaining the programme's title and using the word fireman when firefighter is more appropriate (Topping, 2018). The creators of the programme reportedly justified retaining the name as *Fireman Sam* was originally created in the 1980's and pointed out that they have a female firefighter (Kolirin, 2019). Here, one could draw from Greenberg's idea that one prominent female firefighter is more important than a team made of men and women. However, the LFB pointed out that any positives from including a female character were negated by the programme's title (Kolirin, 2019).

*Peppa Pig* has also been criticised for being sexist and for body shaming (Richards, 2019; McCombs, 2017). There are several episodes mentioned in the popular press and within the Case Study included in Chapter 4: Representations of Sex, where Daddy Pig is shamed by Peppa for his big tummy, and shamed by other family members as well including his wife and in-laws. Chapter 4 also includes a detailed narrative linguistic and semiotic analysis of all of the episodes in Season 1 of *Peppa Pig* and investigates all of the ways that men are presented and coded negatively, whether that is as lazy, grumpy, fat or other negative terms that are used to describe male characters. When examined against the protected characteristics within the Equality Act, *Peppa Pig* can be criticised for its representations of Sex, Sexual Orientation, Maternity and Pregnancy, Age, Disability – a comprehensive list of poor representations or omissions against the protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act. *Peppa Pig* has reacted positively to other criticisms of the show and attempted to be more inclusive. However, these efforts towards representations could arguably be seen as reactive to external pressure rather than a genuine desire to move towards representation and inclusivity. It could also be a result of the move in production studio to Karrot studios, who also produce *Sarah & Duck* and a new female director, Andrea Tran (Animation UK, 2021b). In 2019, a petition was launched to force the creators to create a same sex parent family (Hancock, 2022; Paúl., 2022). Louise Mansfield criticises the default use of heteronormative family set ups as 'stable connection between sex, gender, sexual desire and practice, and a belief that opposite-sex sexual

relations are the only legitimate/normal form of sexuality,' (Mansfield, 2011, p.242). Parents and viewers accused *Peppa Pig* of focussing too heavily on family life within a heterosexual marriage and nuclear family and for not representing other types of families. The petition was signed by 24,000 participants and as a result, in 2022 *Peppa Pig* launched its first co-parenting lesbian couple. The LGBT rights charity Stonewall described the inclusion of a same sex couple as 'fantastic', sharing that for families with same sex parents this was a significant move (Duggins, 2022; Hancock, 2022). This is a positive step not only for those with same sex parents, but also positive in terms of introducing plurality of family life and representations of sexual orientation to the wider population of what it means to be a family.

All of these comments, tweets and petitions indicate that television is perceived as an influencing factor for children's perceptions on gender, families, occupations and other areas. This thesis is responding to these and other popular criticisms and offering a wider, critical analysis of content available to young audiences. The motivations for this research stem from observations of these criticisms, my time within the British animation industry 2010 – 2015 and my experiences of becoming a parent in 2016. Whilst co-viewing as a parent, several programmes struck me as problematic, including *Paw Patrol*, a global hit which has generated over \$1 billion, which made me aware of how females were being portrayed on-screen (Bloomberg, 2018). *Paw Patrol* stars six adventurous puppies who work with Ryder, a ten-year-old boy, on various missions around their home in Adventure Bay. The puppies can speak English and have an array of technologically advanced machinery, tools and gadgets to carry out their missions with. In the initial four seasons, there is only one female puppy, Skye. She is dressed in pink and spends a lot of time at the spa. There is a female mayor, which could be positive, however she is portrayed as inept and chaotic. This imbalance in representation and the way that female characters were depicted led me to redirect our television watching predominantly to CBeebies which I felt was a more trusted source of entertainment than Amazon Prime, an opinion I formed from having worked on a pre-school animated series for CBeebies. From these first hand experiences of watching preschool television, questions around representation in animation formed the foundation of my research and led to the desire to investigate equality, diversity and inclusion within British preschool animation.

## **1.2 Research Framework**

### **1.2.1 Research Question and Objectives**

#### **Research Question: Does equality, diversity and inclusion exist on-screen within contemporary British preschool animation?**

In order to answer this question, I have conducted a quantitative semiotic content analysis and narrative linguistic analysis on six BAFTA winning preschool animation programmes. The primary data generated by this research method has been examined against the protected characteristics set out within the Equality Act, 2010.

The term equality is used throughout the thesis within the research question as the Equality Act was used to examine the programming. However, it is ultimately equity in representation that this thesis is investigating. The difference between these two terms has been defined as 'equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome,' (GWU, 2020). Whilst the initial quantitative semiotic data is concerned with equality in representation, it is equity of representation that this thesis is searching for. This resulted in two research objectives (ROs) which can be articulated as:

#### **RO 1) To what extent do depictions of characters on-screen match the demographic identities of the British population?**

Using the primary data gathered, I examined animated characters depicted on-screen against census data for all of the protected characteristics outlined by the Equality Act. For example, using a head count method, I recorded all of the female characters and compared this to the census data to reveal whether 50% of characters were female. Census data provided a broad framework of representation within the population of the UK. The Office for National Statistics does detail limitations of the accuracy of the census, including people being missed or counted twice (Roskams, 2023). However, with a respondent rate of between 88 and 97% of the population, it is a useful framework

(Roskams, 2023). If programming truly reflected the British population, it should correlate to this census data. For example, as disability is estimated at approximately 8% of children in the population, this should be reflected in programming and 8% of children should be depicted as disabled on-screen. By gathering this data across approximately twenty years from 2000-2020, this thesis was also able to explore whether representation within programming improved between this time period after the introduction of the Equality Act 2010. Whilst the data primarily answered the questions around equality, the data was also examined around the question of equity, interrogating whether depictions were appropriate or stereotyped. For example, we might see equality in terms of an equal number of male and female depictions on-screen, but if these female characters are in non-speaking roles, this is not equity.

## **R0 2) Does participation within the animation industry's workforce reflect the demographics of the UK population?**

This was investigated in order to understand the context behind the findings in Research Objective 1. There is a significant body of research that acknowledges the effect that participation behind the screen has on on-screen depictions (Smith, Pieper and Wheeler, 2023). The data around participation in industry was gathered through multiple sources. For example, participation of female creatives within the animation industry was gathered by looking at on-screen credits. This was to determine whether animators, writers, creators and directors were male or female. Other characteristics were examined within the industry context through other secondary sources such as reports of industry trade body Animation UK, reports from streaming platform Hopster and other articles in the popular press with representatives from the animation industry. The use of data gathered from industry representation is vital as it balances the sole reliance of primary data gathered from visual research methods with the need to situate this data within a production context. Gillian Rose affirms that there are two areas that the content analysis of images cannot address, that of the 'site of its production, and the site of its audiencing,' (Rose, 2001, p67).

The purpose of these questions is to understand whether British preschool animation contains representations of people that match census data. For instance, as women are fifty per cent of the population, fair representation would mean that female characters on-screen should make up

fifty percent of characters that we see as viewers. Using the same example, this thesis also sought to identify whether participation in the workforce was also fifty per cent. More detail around the protected characteristics that were investigated are contained within Chapter 3: Methodology. These research questions and objectives will be referred back to within Chapter 4, 5 and 6 and summarised in Chapter 7: Conclusions.

### **1.2.2 The Equality Act 2010**

Given the desire to analyse themes of equality, diversity, and inclusion within the British animation industry, the Equality Act 2010 presented itself as a valuable framework, although not without limitations as mentioned previously. The 2010 Act brought together over 119 separate pieces of legislation, some of these were created because of domestic initiatives and others because of European Directives (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2019; GOV.UK, 2010). At the time, the Government summarised the Act's primary purpose as 'to harmonise discrimination law, and to strengthen the law to support progress on equality,' (GOV.UK, 2010). The Equality and Human Rights Commission affirms that the Act 'provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all,' (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2019). The Equality Act of 2010 set out nine protected characteristics and acknowledges inequalities that arise from socio-economic disadvantage or class, but does not list this as a protected characteristic (GOV.UK, 2010). These characteristics and details on the number of people within these characteristics are shared below:

- **Sex**

The ratio of women to men is approximated at 51% to 49% (GOV.UK, 2018a).

- **Race**

In the 2011 Census, 80.5% of people in England and Wales said they were White British, and 19.5% were from ethnic minorities. Of these 7.5% identified as Asian (Indian 2.5%, Pakistani 2%, Asian other 1.5%, Bangladeshi 0.8% and Chinese 0.7%) and 3.3 were Black ethnic groups (1.8 Black African, 1.1% Black Caribbean and 0.5% Black Other) (GOV.UK,

2011a).

- **Age**

21% of the overall population of England and Wales was aged under 18 years, 29% was aged 18 to 39 years, 27% was aged 40 to 59 years, and 22% was aged 60 years and over. The working age population is currently defined as 16 - 64 (GOV.UK, 2018b).

- **Disability**

Government figures put disability at 45% of state pension age adults, 19% of working age adults and 8% of children, a figure that is matched by the disability charity SCOPE and the Disabled Living Foundation (SCOPE, no date; DLF, 2017).

- **Sexual Orientation**

In 2016, 93.4% of the UK population identified as heterosexual or straight and 1.2% identified themselves as gay or lesbian and 0.8% identified themselves as bisexual bringing the LGB population to 2.2% (ONS, 2016a).

- **Marriage and Civil partnerships**

Approximately 50.4% of the population identified as married or in a civil partnership. There were 249,793 marriages in 2016, and 908 civil partnerships in 2017 (ONS, 2016b)

- **Gender Reassignment**

There is no accurate data on this, but the government estimates that there are between 200,000 to 500,000 people who identify as transsexual and has released documentation on the significant challenges this group faces from discrimination. This would be 0.31-0.76% of the population (GOV.UK, 2018c).

- **Religion or belief**

The largest religious groups in the UK were defined as 59% Christian, 5% Muslim, Hindus at 1.3% and 25% people reported as having no religion (ONS, 2013).

- **Pregnancy and maternity**

There were 847,204 conceptions in 2017 (ONS, 2019c).

As mentioned previously, there are limitations to using the Equality Act as a framework by which to interrogate representation. The Act does not include class which is of increasing interest to investigations of representation within industry and programming (Holliday, 2020; Nwonka, 2020; Lemish and Johnson 2019, Keys, 2016; Randle and Hardy 2016; BBC Ignite, n.d.). Additionally, whilst Marriage is a protected characteristic, this will not be investigated independently as the other characteristics have been. Previous research conducted by the University of Leicester into workforce diversity also attempted uncover suitable research on marriage discrimination within the screen industries but concluded that, 'the evidence base contained no research of sufficient scope and relevance that explicitly analysed how these diversity characteristics might affect workforce participation and advancement,' (CAMEo, 2018, p.38). This thesis also reported insufficient literature and presence within the programming selected to provide an in-depth analysis of representation both on-screen depictions and participation within the workforce. Secondly, it is hard to examine how marriage could and should be portrayed and how it could be discriminated against within the industry in a way that is not covered by Sex, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity or Race and is examined within these sections. This is the only characteristic that is entirely dependent on intersectionality with other characteristics. The law protecting marriage as a characteristic is specifically designed to protect women from being paid less if she is married as a belief that her income is secondary, or if an employer was to dismiss a woman who was a night shift worker once she got married as her manager thought married women should be at home in the evenings (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2020). These concerns will be examined in more detail in Chapter 4: Representations of Sex. The Equality and Human Rights Commission also refers to discrimination which one can face when either marriage or civil partnership intersects with sexual orientation harassment, so being treated differently because you are in a marriage or civil partnership within a same sex relationship. This will be examined in more detail in Chapter 6. As an example,

the research within this thesis revealed no examples of marriage on television, except for a wedding picture on the wall of Gran Gran's house in *JoJo and Gran Gran*, a preschool animation aired on CBeebies. This inclusion could be seen as a deliberate counter to the stereotype of the absent black father (Tyrell, *et al.*, 2021; Edwards. *et al.*, 2015; Reynolds, 2009). Whilst the census reveals that 23.8% of black households are made up of lone parents, 26.2% were married (GOV.UK, 2019). This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, within section 5.1 *Representations of Race*. With all of this in mind, this research has chosen to include marriage as a part of the discrimination faced by the protected characteristics with Race, Sex and Sexual Orientation and not within a subsection of its own.

### **1.2.3 Selection Criteria**

The decision to focus on BAFTA winning programming is motivated by the fact the shows in question have, by virtue of their BAFTA success, received a form of validation as being award-winning examples of UK animation, at least according to BAFTA members. The admissions criteria for BAFTA means that these programs have been vetted by peers within the industry, although in the case of children's programming, not by the target audience. Entrants are requested to send in one full episode, stating its target age range, a short 120-word synopsis and no information about previous awards the creative team or studio have won or the programme's ratings. Entrants are also required to send three names who are part of the creative production team, not broadcast executives or commissioners. Entrants are then expected to make their programme open to voting by BAFTA members. Anyone working in film or television who can meet the admissions criteria can apply for BAFTA membership and whilst there is no cap in membership, there is a cap on those members being able to vote for BAFTAs (BAFTA, no date). After the BAFTA members voting deadline, these programmes are only open to BAFTA jurors. The BAFTA jurors are not named until the night of the Awards, when their names are published in the awards brochure (BAFTA, 2019). This indicates that there are arguably some industry standards that BAFTA winning animation must satisfy, although again this is amongst its peers and not the target audience. Secondly, the BAFTA award can be seen as an endorsement of representational values advanced within the animated worlds of successful



recipients. Thirdly, their BAFTA success has also provided the shows in question with a platform to secure persistent mainstream broadcast arrangements.

The programmes selected for analysis in this thesis are *Peppa Pig* (winner of the BAFTA Preschool Animation in 2005, 2011 and 2012), *Charlie and Lola* (BAFTA winners in 2007 and 2008), *Timmy Time* (winners in 2010 and 2013), *Sarah & Duck* (winner in 2014) and *Numberblocks* (winner in 2019). In addition, this thesis included *JoJo and Gran Gran* in its analysis, which was first broadcast in 2020, after the preschool BAFTA award was suspended. These programmes were all examined against the protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. In addition, the names of creators, writers, directors and animators of these programmes were gathered using on-screen credits and a secondary data source IMDB. This data was then compared to census data compiled by the UK Government to identify how the demographics of characters on-screen compare with the British population.

In addition to this headcount method, this thesis also investigated representation through narrative qualitative analysis and particularly focussed on stereotypes on-screen. This helped this thesis to move beyond equality of representation towards investigating equity. Stereotypes are complex, often negative impressions of social groups. Mark Schaller and Bibb Latané (1996) detail their importance and state that, 'stereotypes help shape and channel social space by affecting who communicates to whom, and about what. Thus, they have the capacity to change the environment in which they and other forms of social representation adapt and evolve,' (Schaller and Latané, 1996, p.64). Charles daCosta (2010) refers to them as a 'basic strategy used to reduce the amount of diversity to manageable proportions,' (daCosta, 2010, p.43). He argues that stereotypes work best when 'fed with visual representations', something which an animated medium is well able to do (daCosta, 2022, p.43). Throughout this thesis, stereotypes are examined and named. King *et al.*, remind us that 'animated films do not simply impose values or create meaning through allegories; they also actively encourage forgetting through distortion and erasure,' (King, 2005, p.6). The medium of animation allows the creator to build a new world for their characters, one that does not have to replicate the real world at all. The images that you see within animation are all choices that are made by the creators, the stereotypes that are portrayed and the alternate images that you do not see are active choices that are made to create a

particular worldview. This is what makes animation different to live action, as Lily Husbands and Caroline Ruddell define it, 'animation is entirely constructed, whereas live action has a profilmic world that exists in front of the camera,' (Husbands and Ruddell, 2019, p.6). Gerbner's Cultivation Theory also posited that stereotypes that existed on-screen formed the basis of impressions of that particular group in real life. Greenberg did not support this theory however and argued that it 'demeans the capacity of individual viewers,' to acknowledge that there are differences between on-screen individuals and those in real life (Greenberg, 1998, p.98). Whilst that could be argued for adult viewers, the argument of this thesis is that children are still forming a world view and are not necessarily exposed to any or enough people within all of the protected characteristics to form their own views. For instance, without exposure to people with disability in real life, children may adopt stereotypical opinions on disability based on its limited depictions on-screen. Greenberg goes on to argue that not all portrayals have the same impact and affirms that not every woman is the same, no minority character is the same as another etc. This largely ignores the idea of a stereotypical portrayal of minorities within the protected characteristics and gives the impression that stereotypical performances are not problematic. The problem is not that viewers are able to distinguish between reality and a stereotype, but that stereotypical representations are often negative and therefore should not exist. The best way to counter these are varied and authentic portrayals and an active decision to move away from stereotypes.

Within this thesis particular attention was given to stereotypes around representations. Whilst speaking on representation of Black people in animation, daCosta (2010) shared that whilst 'marginalisation or misrepresentations many not be intentional... the very fact they occur unconsciously, functioning as common sense and normality, demonstrates the operation of an ideology fundamentally indifferent to black sensitivities,' (daCosta, 2010, p.27). Here daCosta is arguing that underrepresentation is not always deliberate in the sense that content creators set out to actively, but rather that they are simply unaware that Black underrepresentation and misrepresentation exists and should be remedied. This could be said of anyone within the protected characteristics. This again furthers the argument that equity is as important as equality. If the central argument of this thesis and

many supporting texts is that without representation at a creator level, there can be no representation on-screen - then this will never be resolved if writers, directors, creators and lead animators are traditionally white, cisgender males. Authentic representation can only be facilitated by actual representation at all levels of the animation process including decision makers within broadcast and streaming organisations.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

No comparable content analysis on British Preschool animation to the one being conducted in this thesis exists. This is not to say that others have not attempted to engage with this topic internationally before, just that what has gone before has not focussed on British preschool children's animation. There may be several reasons for this including Paul Wells' declaration that 'the idea that animation is an innocent medium, ostensibly for children . . . has done much to inhibit the proper discussion of issues concerning representation,' (Wells, 1998). Here, Wells is arguing that children's animation is perceived as innocent and thereby erroneously absent from discussions of a lack of representation. This thesis would also argue that representation, equality and equity are vital within children's programming in order to share a representative and fair view of the population. The closest comparable study of British preschool animation was completed by Galit Rovner-Lev and Nelly Elias (2020), who presented a content analysis in relation to the subject of Age for the live action CBeebies show *Grandpa in My Pocket*, which was aired between 2009 and 2014. As this was not a BAFTA winning programme and not animated, this programme was out of the scope for analysis within this thesis, but the research around this was shared within the literature review for Age later in this chapter. There was also an industry-led content analysis completed by Hopster, the British children's on demand television and games streaming provider, and Dubit, a games creator, which focussed on preschool content available to British audiences on CBeebies and internet and subscription services which has been referred to where appropriate. This is the closest comparable example of a content analysis conducted of British programming.

In contrast to the British context, there are several international studies, particularly from the US, that investigate representation within American preschool animation and are explored in depth in this chapter. The absence of academic literature on representation within preschool animation in British animation demonstrates a knowledge gap which this thesis hopes to fill. It also indicates that there is a growing global awareness of the importance of representation in preschool animation and a growing consensus that preschool animation should be monitored and examined carefully to ensure that it is representative. For this reason, this thesis interrogates international literature, in particular that from the US. Similarly, daCosta (2010) also relied heavily on US literature for his review around the representation of Black people in animation. His statement affirms that its 'sheer size...commercial success... and its cultural dominance,' makes US academic literature on animation relevant even within a British context (daCosta, 2020, p7).

This literature review explores the protected characteristics individually, but also examines through the lens of intersectionality. The term intersectionality first appeared in 1989 by Professor Kimberly Crenshaw. She used the term in an effort to describe the effect of belonging in two separate protected classes which often meant that this could create a unique disadvantage. This was unearthed during two cases where black women were unable to claim race and sex discrimination as they could not prove sex discrimination, as other white females were not discriminated against, nor could they prove race discrimination, as black males were not discriminated against (Crenshaw, 1989). Intersectionality is now a term that is used widely in discussions around equality, diversity and inclusion. Lelise McCall defines intersectionality as 'the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations,' (McCall, 2005). This idea can be extended to all of the protected characteristics.

## **2.1 Literature Review: Intersectionality of Sex and Race; and Sex and Pregnancy & Maternity**

This section explores Sex and Race individually, but also through an intersectional lens through content analysis that speak specifically to these interpretations. It is possible to view any and all of the characteristics through

an intersectional lens, and this thesis has sought to interrogate the protected characteristics through the content analysis that were available. In their examination of gender, race and sexuality, King *et al.*, argue that the 'interplay among them affords privileged insights into the cultural meaning and social structures that enliven them,' (King *et al.*, 2011, p.5). In her article titled 'The Complexity of intersectionality', McCall states that feminist researchers are 'acutely aware of the limitations of gender as a single analytical category,' (McCall, 2005, p.1771). King *et al.*, go further to argue that 'race, gender and sexuality do not have meaning or power alone but materialise and have significance in relation to one another; they are co produced,' (King *et al.*, 2011, p.5). Kimberlé Crenshaw concluded that feminism 'must include an analysis of race if it hopes to express the aspirations of non-white women,' (Crenshaw, 1989, p.166). With this in mind, the literature review will look at Sex both as an independent characteristic and then within the context of Race and Pregnancy and Maternity.

Fashina Aladé *et al.*, looked at STEM representations across race and gender for children's programming (2021) . The objectives of their research were to uncover the representation of gender and race in television programming for young children in the US and compare this to the US population. This mirrors the objectives of this thesis to look at representations characteristics and compare these to the UK population, although this thesis goes further by examining all the protected characteristics and not just gender and race. Drawing on Bandura and Gerbner as their theoretical framework, they interrogate the decades of research that have preceded their work and in doing so support the idea that television does influence children's views of themselves and the world (Aladé, 2021, p.339). Aladé *et al.*, looked at both race and gender as their focus was investigating the representation of women of colour within STEM fields. In order to do this, they identified thirty programmes which had a STEM focus that were aimed at 3-6 year olds. From this selection, they chose three shows at random from the programme list. Within these 90 episodes they recorded gender, age, type of filming, type of being and race. Further to this, they investigated whether characters were either walk-on characters, supporting characters, major characters or protagonists. This is significant as whilst gender or race may seem balanced using a headcount method, if female or ethnic minority characters are

consistently relegated to support or background roles, this is not an equitable representation. This again speaks to the key difference between equality and equity. These methods were also employed by this thesis to address Research Objective One, the investigation into on-screen depictions. They also looked at how characters engaged in STEM activities, by either teaching, questioning, making observations, investigating and problem solving and occupations were also recorded against a list of STEM occupations. Aladé *et al.*, identified that both women and in particular women of colour are underrepresented in STEM, highlighting how intersectionality affects women of colour in additional ways. Their findings across 1036 characters pointed to a significant gender gap between adults. However, amongst child characters, they found that gender representation was close to equal. They posited that the gender difference between adults is not as important as the difference between children as they develop parasocial relationships with characters they identify with and therefore are more likely to pick up gender cues from children on-screen and not adults. Although ethnic/minority representation was low, this was not because white characters were over-represented. Instead, they identified a significant percentage of racially ambiguous characters. They highlighted one programme, *Sid the Science Kid*, whose characters were shaded orange, pink and purple. Aladé *et al.*, noted that although this avoided complications around representation, it was unlikely to 'provide on-screen role models that children can see themselves in... it seems that these racially ambiguous characters may not be cutting it,' (Aladé, 2021, p.14). Instead of avoiding portrayals of race, Aladé *et al.*, argue that including race would be more beneficial to children particularly when certain race/ethnicity groups that are underrepresented in US STEM fields (i.e., Black, Hispanic/Latino, Native American/Indigenous, and Mixed race) were significantly underrepresented in their programming sample. Instead of tackling this issue by including more racial groups within STEM programming, children's programming is creating racially ambiguous characters. Dill-Shackleford *et al.*, referred to this as 'compelling absence notable by exceptions,' and can be seen as an erasure rather than inclusion (Dill-Shackleford *et al.*, 2017, p.158). This is particularly relevant to this thesis as two of the programmes selected included characters that made it difficult to represent race, *Timmy Time* and *Numberblocks* as characters were portrayed as animals who did not speak in a human language or as coloured blocks.

*Peppa Pig* was able to navigate the difficulties of having animals as characters by having characters that identified as French (Delphine Donkey) or with a strong European accent (Madame Gazelle). However, as explored in Chapter 4, these representations are superficial as the actor who plays Madame Gazelle is an English actor putting on an accent. Also, the depictions of Delphine Donkey and her family rely heavily on stereotypes, such as feeling superior about their food. In contrast, Hopster and Dubit praised CBeebies animation *Go Jetters* for their inclusion of BAME actors such as Akie Kotabe, who play Kyan, the programme's Chinese – American character (Twitter, 2016). It appears however, that Akie Kotabe is Japanese-American, not Chinese, although this information has been obtained from IMDB (IMDB, no date 6). If this is the case, then this is not equality or equity as using one Asian actor to represent an Asian character from another country plays into the stereotype that all Asians look the same. This is identified by the term 'interchangeable Asian' which is used in another article to describe the experience of being mistaken for another Asian and is clearly a significant barrier that Asian people face (Chen, 2021). These terms are explored in more detail in Chapter 5.1. There are several limitations to this study. Firstly, Aladé *et al.*, chose three episodes from 30 different programmes, whereas this thesis investigated a whole season of six programmes. Whilst Aladé *et al.*, has chosen more programmes overall, using just 3 episodes of each would not be representative of the season as a whole and it is very possible that certain characters would be missing from these three random episodes chosen. Their study also only focussed on gender, age, type of filming, type of being and race/ethnicity, whereas this study was extended to all of the protected characteristics within the Equality Act.

Whilst Fashina Aladé *et al.*, (2021) make no specific mentions of intersectionality, there are many salient content analyses that focus on preschool animation that do. Jobia Keys (2016) also looked at preschool animated content in the US. Whilst these are again US programmes, some of these are available to UK audiences. Keys does not use Gerbner or Bandura, but instead focuses on intersectionality as her theoretical framework. Keys challenges the idea of identity being binary and restricted to either race or gender (Keys, 2016, p.356). She continues by defining intersectionality as a space where overlapping identities are voiced and heard, which speaks to the idea of otherwise being silenced or not given a platform to speak as a woman

or member of a racial minority (Keys, 2016, p.356). Keys also challenges traditional feminism, contending that it has placed gender as the primary identifier, with others following. This point advances the argument that only the individual can articulate through which lens or lenses they see themselves through. However, they are largely unable to control the lens through which they are viewed by others. Keys *et al.*, does utilise the work of Greenberg which has been introduced earlier in this thesis and his work will be explored in more detail within *3.1 Theoretical Framework* section later in this thesis. Keys' draws on Greenberg's assertions that early exposure to media forms young viewers attitudes (Keys, 2016, p.357) Taking two programmes, *Doc McStuffins* and *Dora the Explorer*, Keys watched one season of each programme, and watched each programme twice, which mirrors the methodology used in the thesis, which also viewed an entire series of each of the programmes selected. Keys looked at representations of race, gender and class. Whilst class is mentioned in the Equality Act 2010, it is not a protected characteristic and therefore was not investigated within the framework that the Act provides. Keys states that this is relevant as 'representations within animated programming generate, establish, and promote knowledge and meaning about ourselves and the world,' (Keys, 2016, p.359). Keys selected these shows as they were amongst the top three highest rated US shows and both featured a female of colour as the lead protagonist. *Doc McStuffins* is a doctor for toys and *Dora* is an explorer and adventurer. Keys highlights that *Doc's* expertise lies in science and nature, while *Dora's* is in nature and maths. This is significant as the gender gap in STEM fields is 7 to 1 in the US which is 14%. This is echoed by their depictions on-screen, with the World Economic Forum (2020) reporting the same gap on-screen 'on-screen, engineers, scientists and mathematicians are largely played by men, with seven times more male STEM roles in movies than female roles'. In the UK, the STEM female workforce is even lower at 11% (Women in Stem, 2019a). Research by Women in STEM revealed that just 9% of children aged 9-16 years identify the word engineer with a woman and are more likely to imagine a middle-aged white male with a beard and glasses as an engineer (Women in Stem, 2019b). This research is critical as it connects depictions on-screen to participation in the workforce, idealising programming as aspirational and encouraging. This echoes the two research objectives within this thesis which investigates on-screen depictions



and off-screen depictions in order to answer questions around equality, diversity and inclusion with British preschool animation. Keys' study investigates the main protagonist, Doc McStuffins, who is a 6-year-old African American girl. Keys reports that this has disrupted the stereotype of the expert being a white male, and 'the power dynamics between Doc and the supporting white male characters challenge traditional portrayals of female and black animated characters,' (Keys, 2016, p.361). Keys points to *Dora the Explorer* as also disrupting gender stereotypes by placing Dora as a hero, adventurer and leader. Overall, Keys points out that by putting race and genders as key identifiers of the character creates a positive effect and that 'intersectionality represents layers of progress and hope for diversity in children's animation,' (Keys, 2016, p.365). This study posits that by putting a female character from a racially diverse background into a lead role, this confounds existing stereotypes and promotes diversity. Within the content analysis of this thesis, only one programme featured a Black female protagonist, *JoJo and Gran Gran*. This was reported in the popular press as the first animated children's programme on British television that starred a Black family (Duffield, 2020; ITV News, 2020). Whilst this is the first for British programming, American programming has already had a black, female protagonists such as Penny Proud on *The Proud Family*, which was on air on Disney from 2001 – 2005, *Doc McStuffins* which debuted in 2012 on Disney +, and *Ada Twist* which was released internationally on Netflix in 2021. All these protagonists are portrayed with their natural hair. This is relevant to UK audiences as nearly half of black children in the UK have been sent home for wearing their hair naturally which is unacceptable (Dove, 2022). These programmes not only represent black children, but represent them in the right way and also showcase black diversity educating non-black children and parents on black representation. Whilst Keys looked at two programmes, this thesis investigated representation on six programmes. This thesis also looked at representation over a twenty year period, whereas Keys did not. Keys also sought to investigate two programmes which had female protagonists from a BAME background.

Moving on from intersectional studies, and content analysis exploring multiple characteristics, Abigail Walsh and Campbell Leaper (2019) looked solely at gender representations in preschool animation in the US. They utilised the work of Bandura and Gerbner to ground their methodology. They were

particularly interested in ways that children interpret images of male and female characters and how these are likely to inform their perceptions of the world around them. Interestingly, they draw on evidence to explain that once they form stereotyped impressions of male and female roles, they are more likely to gravitate to similar stereotypes rather than seek out alternative models (Walsh and Leaper, 2019, p.332). This would indicate that once children receive and accept programming that is stereotyped, they seek more examples of the same, compounding their limited notions of what it means to be part of a particular protected characteristic. Their methodology involved analysing three episodes of thirty-four preschool television programmes across four American networks. Their study focussed on preschool animation as they felt that ‘early childhood or preschool-age is an especially critical period when children are formulating their understandings of the activities, traits, appearances, and roles associated with each gender group,’ (Walsh and Leaper, 2019, p.333) and they reported that ‘children form stereotyped expectations about the activities, personal attributes, stylistic appearances, and roles associated with each gender’ through programming (Walsh and Leaper, 2019, p.332). Their study looked at talkativeness, speech behaviours, aggressive behaviours, activities, relative prominence of female and male leads. Their research noted that ‘one of the most pervasive forms of gender bias in television shows across age levels is the predominance of male characters,’ (Walsh and Leaper, 2019, p.347). They observed an average of twice as many males than female characters in preschool television. They warned that this signalled to children that it is ‘a man’s world’ and that ‘the stories of boys and men are more valued than those of girls and women,’ (Walsh and Leaper, 2019, p.347). Contrary to their hypothesis, they found that more female characters spoke to male characters but countered that this might be due to a stereotype that women talk more than men. They also discovered that whilst aggression in preschool animation was rare, it was exclusively committed by boys. Their study also reported that females were more likely to wear gender stereotypical colours such as pink and purple and wear jewellery, while male characters were more likely to wear a tool belt and other masculine stereotyped accessories. These semiotic clues have become shorthand for portrayals of feminine and masculine activities. Walsh and Leaper concluded that these are subtle ways in which children infer how girls

and boys are supposed to appear and act. Whilst this study was conducted using American television, it is still relevant to this thesis as it also looks at the number of males and females on-screen as well as talkativeness, aggressive behaviours and activities which this thesis also recorded. The Walsh and Leaper content analysis not only looked at the numbers of males and females on-screen, but also the way in which they were portrayed on-screen, which mirrors the qualitative narrative analysis of this thesis, as well as its focus on stereotypes and equity. In addition, this thesis recorded negative portrayals of males' characters as well as looking at all of the other characteristics within the Equality Act 2010, going further in its scope than Walsh and Leaper. Additionally, whilst Walsh and Leaper focused on on-screen representations, which would cover Research Objective One, it did not look at industry participation which is answered by Research Objective Two within this thesis.

Another content analysis of children's programming in the US focussing on one specific area within the protected characteristic is that conducted by Rebecca Martin (2017). Martin also used the work Bandura as a foundation to her content analysis. She also drew on the work of scholars such as Signorelli, who worked closely with Gerbner. She also drew on the work of Morgan and Shanahan which are also utilised in this thesis within the theoretical framework. This study looked at ten episodes from eight television shows on PBS, Disney and Nickelodeon/Nick Jr in the US and six of the eight were aimed at a preschool audience. They commented that 'in terms of balancing representation of male and female characters in television programming, much work is still needed,' (Martin, 2017, p.512). Martin states that by watching television for just '1 hour a day is one of the early ways in which children become indoctrinated to gender stereotypes,' (Martin, 2017, p.499). This would suggest that the way females are portrayed in children's programming is highly influential as one of the ways in which a child's view of what it means to be female or male is created. Their research noted that 'children will likely see far more males represented in the media than females from the earliest ages onward,' (Martin, 2017, p.512). Martin commented that whilst it was encouraging to see female leads in children programming, overall the same programmes had more male characters than female. They posited that this might convince young children that intelligent females in leading roles are an exception, rather than a norm. Their research showed that in American

television stereotypes for boys were changing, with more male characters showing fear or sadness. They found that educational content, rather than entertainment, had a more even distribution of boys to girls which echo earlier findings that indicate that educational television is of more benefit to preschool aged children than entertainment. Whilst this study was based in the US, it shares the aims of this thesis to record the number of males and females on British screens and investigates whether there are more male characters on-screen than female ones, even on shows that are aimed at a preschool audience. Martin (2017) was limited in that their paper focussed on Sex only, whereas this thesis investigates all of the protected characteristics. However, it does make interesting observations about the nature of representation, which this thesis also investigates. Its' comments on *Dora the Explorer* were especially relevant to *Sarah & Duck*, which also had a key female character, but then a limited number of female characters, which could highlight the idea of a female protagonist as exceptional. This idea is echoed by DaCosta (2010) in his examination of Black representation on-screen, who states that whilst there may be more Black representation on-screen, audiences cannot feel 'gratitude of satisfaction' in these representations (daCosta, 2010, p.25).

### **2.3 Literature Review: Intersectionality of Sex and Age; and Sex and Disability**

Another area that offers insights into the effects of intersectionality is Age, which can be seen through multiple lenses such as Gender and Disability. In his analysis of Age in media programming, Carl Carmichael (1978) stated almost half a century ago that 'it is no longer appropriate to begin an article on the topic of media and ageing with apologetic statements of 'how little we know, how much to discover,' (Carmichael, 1978, p.6). He also states that 'emotional appeals to television producers to program more for the older generation are no longer effective. Such appeals now need to be logical and expressed in understandable and persuasive terms to media decision-makers,' (Carmichael, 1978, p.6). Carmichael asks key questions around how programming decisions are made and whether they can be influenced. This builds on the argument for investigating off-screen participation as investigated by Research Objective Two. Building on this, as far back as 1979, Gerbner and Signorelli highlighted

that portrayals of Age on television were 'gloomy'. In the content analysis completed as part of the Cultural Indicators project (discussed in more detail within the theoretical framework), they resolved that ageing characters were largely invisible, and that females were likely to be hurt, killed or to fail. They found that older people were likely to be portrayed as stubborn, eccentric and foolish (Gerbner and Signorelli, 1979). In addition, Greenberg *et al.*, conducted a study in the early 80's that revealed that the average age of a female was ten years younger than males. This confirms that the invisibility of older women on-screen is historic and continues. Their study revealed that one fifth of males are over 50 and less than 10 percent of females are visible on-screen (Greenberg *et al.*, 1982, p.187).

Three contemporary content analyses indicate similar findings in relation to older women's invisibility and negative, violent outcomes for them. Galit Rovner-Lev and Nelly Elias (2020) completed a content analysis for the CBeebies live action show *Grandpa in my Pocket*, which aired between 2009 and 2014. Selecting 28 episodes, they identified eight older men and five older women and using an interpretive content analysis they mapped ageist and sexist depictions of the characters. This thesis employed a similar methodology to interrogate Research Objective One. They noted five main themes from which they noted instances of inappropriate depictions of older people, these were: 1) Older women's weirdness through physical appearance, accents, habits and behaviours; 2) *Nasty witch versus Perfect grandpa*; 3) Professional devaluation, based on analysis of professional background and skills; 4) Social isolation and exclusion; 5) Humiliation through intimidation, and physical violence (Rovner-Lev and Elias, 2020, p.209). Their disturbing findings identified examples of all the above. The only 'positive' older female character was portrayed as useful for her domestic services. The other female characters identified as older were humiliated, intimidated, and experienced physical violence including biting and inciting a fall, which caused the older female character to feel pain, an outcome that was celebrated. These were all directed at a character who was innocent and therefore completely out of context as to why she would be deserving of such treatment, if such a justification for violence could exist. These findings are particularly disturbing as the programme is aimed for a preschool and primary school age audience. Their findings reported that:

In total, we found six cases of older women being humiliated and ridiculed; eight cases of older women being intimidated and terrified; and seven cases of physical violence. In stark comparison, we found only two occasions where older men were the victims of Grandpa's "rescue missions": one instance of intimidation and one – of physical violence. In both cases, however, these men were not the Grandpa's primary target, but were accompanied by an older woman, who (in Grandpa's opinion) had to be stopped (Rovner-Lev and Elias, 2020, p.214).

Whilst the programme in the study was not BAFTA winning animation and therefore out of the scope of this study, it was screened on-air at the same time and with the same broadcaster as many of the programmes examined in this list. Rovner-Lev and Elias highlight many instances of violence and rightly warn that 'such inexcusable misogynic images of older women are particularly problematic,' (Rovner-Lev and Elias, 2020, p.216). They stress that this is particularly considering pre-schoolers' difficulty in differentiating effectively between fiction and reality, their limited life experience and insufficient moral judgement capacity for critical evaluation of the stereotypic representations of different social groups. Their study calls for producers to 'acknowledge and condemn the negative stereotypes embedded in their products as a first step in providing more realistic and balanced representations of older adults in general and older women,' (Rovner-Lev and Elias, 2020, p.216). Within the programming selected for this thesis, examples of humiliation, weirdness, accents, and behaviours were also noted whilst viewing the programmes. Rovner-Lev and Elias (2020) highlighted some very unpleasant exchanges within a programme that was aired on CBeebies, which is generally viewed as a safe platform, particularly in comparison to YouTube or other unregulated platforms. It highlights that Age is an area of discrimination that is still prevalent and the intersectionality with Sex is clear in the examples above.

The absence of literature on age representation within preschool animation is itself indicative of how little value is placed on age discrimination. In an effort to gather more observations around Age discrimination within animation, this thesis explored the work of Jessica D. Zurcher and Tom

Robinson (2018). They also completed a content analysis for older characters, but this was within Disney animation from the years 2004 to 2016. They also utilised Gerbner's Cultivation Theory to explain how repeated negative impressions could imprint onto younger viewers (Zurcher and Robinson, 2018, p.11). Whilst Disney animation is not the focus of this thesis, the study identifies some key findings about older representation within animated content and reminds us that 'Disney animated films continue to be a medium viewed by millions of young audiences across the world. As such, content messages – which are often repeatedly viewed by children – and correlating implications should frequently be assessed,' (Zurcher and Robinson, 2018, p.11). In total, their study identified 131 older characters out of 42 films. They reported that the most frequent depictions included the following: loving/caring 37%, angry/grumpy 33%, and happy/content 32%, followed by intelligent/wise 30%. Other personality types included senile/ crazy 15% and helpless 8%. These codings are similar to other content analysis which highlights how prevalent these stereotypes are. Their study also indicated a low number of depictions within programming, which they identified as 'perpetuating lack of representation of older adults across children's media,' (Zurcher and Robinson, 2018, p.9). They also pointed out that programming continued a trend of more male characters than female, at 66%, but pointed out that this is more acute in this age bracket because older females outnumber older males within the US population. This demographic trend is also true of the UK, where there are twice as many women aged over 90 than there are men (ONS, 2020). This thesis also recorded qualitative data against representations of Age and looked at programming, not films.

Tom Robinson and Caitlin Anderson (2006) also conducted a content analysis of 45 hours of children's programming available on five different networks in the US and also utilised Gerbner's Cultivation Theory. Whilst this study is now sixteen years old and was conducted on US programming, it is one of the few content analyses of Age within children's animated television. From the 45 hours of children's animated programming examined, the study drew on 121 different episodes of 41 different programs, of which 62 (52%) had at least one older character. There was a total of 1,356 characters, with 107 (8%) coded as older characters. Their study highlighted both negative and positive portrayals as being the most recurring. Within personality traits they recorded

characterisation of old people as: intelligent at 37%, angry at 28%, happy at 27%, senile/crazy at 22%, friendly at 17% and eccentric 16%. These traits will be explored in more detail against the characteristics of old people within the programmes selected for this thesis. Other personality traits which they identified were 'overly conservative 9%, forgetful 6%, evil 5%, wise 5%, humorous 5%, uncooperative 4%, grumpy 4%, mean 4%, nosey 2%, object of ridicule 2%, helpless 2%, overly affectionate 1% and helpful 1%,' (Robinson and Anderson, 2006, p.295). The study also highlighted physical characteristics that were attributed to older characters were 'grey hair 82%, bald/balding 39%, glasses 32%, wrinkles 31%, ugly 21%, active/healthy 21%, overweight 21% and toothless 12%,' (Robinson and Anderson, 2006, p.295). Other physical attributes that appeared less regularly were: slow moving 10%, use of physical aid 7%, loss of sight 6%, loss of hearing 4%, sick 2%, wig/toupee (2%), dentures 1%, hunched over 1%,' (Robinson and Anderson, 2006, p.296). It is important to note that several of these identifiers indicate a physical disability, indicating intersectionality within these two characteristics. All of these coding categories can be seen as semiotic. Whilst most appearances by older people were positive at 67%, they found that 33% were negative. It is worth noting that within animation, when characters are drawn with wrinkles, infirmities, ugly or grey, these are deliberate choices and not in any way led by a live action actor. These are active decisions that the programme has made about how they want to portray an older character. The report did not accept that the positive representations were consistent and countered that 'there were enough negative images and characteristics that children are learning at an early age (as early as 12 months) that older characters are of little importance to the programs; that they are portrayed as angry, senile, and crazy; and that they are often the villain,' (Robinson and Anderson, 2006, p.298). Robinson and Anderson argue that this is important because 'when animated programs portray certain groups of people in a consistent, unvarying manner or stereotype them, children begin to believe that the images they see are acceptable and normal,' (Robinson and Anderson, 2006, p.298). This statement could apply to any of the protected characteristics and clearly states the problematic nature of stereotypes. Their report also highlighted that there were more older men than older women within the programming. The Centre for Ageing Better (2020) refers to this intersectionality as a 'double jeopardy'



and highlights that it can lead to an increase in marginalisation as people get older. Robinson and Anderson (2006) report concluded that:

This research provides a vital step toward understanding why children entering school have already developed stereotyped beliefs about older people. Television and animated programs may not be the only cause of these stereotypes, but the results of this study clearly indicate that they contribute to the cultivation of children's beliefs and attitudes by creating characters who are unvarying and shown in a negative manner (Robinson and Anderson, 2006, p.298).

As with other characteristics, it is not simply the presence of older characters within these programmes that is important, but the way in which age is represented that is important. This is the key difference between equality and equity. If the number of older people in the animations matched the census data, but these negative portrayals persist, then that is arguably worse than having no Age representation on-screen. Children would still be able to utilise their own interactions with older people in real life, without an overwhelmingly negative portrayal. Robinson and Anderson's (2006) focus on age meant that they provided a comprehensive amount of data on this one area. This thesis did not use the same extensive coding structure, looking instead to note all appearances of older characters and make notes on the type of activities they were engaging in. For example, in *JoJo and Gran Gran*, one episode featured three older characters engaged in community work and brief notes were made against the episode within the comments of the Age column, 'Age - Animated Grandad in park and painting, neighbour and Gran Gran painting,' to indicate that they were engaging in physically demanding, community minded work countering stereotypes about agency.

## **2.4 Literature Review: Intersections of Disability and Age**

Having looked at Age and Gender, this study now moves onto the study of Age and Disability. This is examined through older and younger age. Whilst depictions of older people with disability are exposed in many content reviews, depictions of young children with disabilities are rare. This invisibility extends to the available literature around disability in children's programming. This

study was able to locate only two content reviews, Dafna Lemish and Colleen R. Johnson (2019) and Bradley J. Bond (2013) related to disability. The former dealt with programming in the US and Canada with a focus on and off-screen representation in multiple areas including disability. Bond (2013) was also an American study; however, it is still relevant in that many of the programmes assessed are available to British audiences, including *Charlie and Lola* which was included in Bond's study and is a British pre-school animated programme selected for investigation by this thesis. The lack of salient academic research papers on disability within children's programming highlights the need for more research in this area and in particular more content reviews. As a result, this literature review also covers several studies from Angharad E. Beckett (2010), Karen E. Diamond and Katherine R. Kensinger (2002), Bruno J. Anthony *et al.*, (2019). that provided valuable insight into children's perceptions of disability which are explored briefly below, and later going on to examine the two content reviews conducted by Lemish and Johnson, and Bond in more detail.

Angharad E. Beckett (2010) explored non-disabled children's responses to disability and disabled people. Beckett's research involved 12 focus groups with non-disabled children aged six to seven years and aged 10–11 years (six focus groups within each age group). Beckett worked within six English primary schools and a total of seventy-four children took part in the research. The findings from their paper highlighted the need for better representation of disability within programming and highlighted two programmes that children had viewed referring to the comments from children as 'ghoulish' and stating that 'the programmes appeared to have engendered both fear and fascination,' (Beckett, 2010, p.870). The programmes that children in Year 6 watched were Discovery Channel and Channel 5's *My Shocking Story* series and Channel 4's *BodyShock*, which featured people with various disabilities. It is possible that this was aimed at an adult audience – there is no age ratings information available for these programmes on IMDB. However, the report revealed that comments about this series were made at two separate focus groups across two separate schools. When considering the use of the word 'shock' within the title of both of these programmes, it is obvious that representations of disability were never going to be positive, and this type of programming is

intended to showcase cases of disability in a way that disrupts the viewer. Whilst this programme was not preschool animation programming and the children were considerably older than the focus of this thesis, it does highlight how children can access inappropriate material and draw conclusions about disabled people from this programming. Children's programming should include positive representations of disabled characters to counter these stereotypes and negative perceptions of disability. Beckett pointed to the power of television to form opinions and noted that 'importantly, children's discussions about their television viewing formed part of their wider discussions about 'normality' and 'abnormality' and demonstrated the hegemony of the normal/abnormal binary,' (Beckett, 2010, p.870). This binary view of the world as normal and not normal could be disrupted by positive inclusions of disabled characters. This study highlights the absolute need for quality programming that delivers fair and representative depictions of disability, otherwise children and caregivers might only come across disability on-screen through unsympathetic content intended to shock the viewer and sensationalise disability in a negative way.

There is programming that is sensitive to issues around disability and acts as an indicator of good practice for producers. Karen E. Diamond and Katherine R. Kensinger (2002) investigated preschool children's impressions of children with Down's Syndrome and physical disability using preschool programme Sesame Street. They highlight that 1.5 million preschool children in the US are likely to have one to two classmates who have a disability. They point out that as they are likely to meet a disabled child from a very young age, research on whether preschool children can identify different types of disability has merit. They showed clips of Sesame Street to 44 preschool children. One clip showed a girl in a wheelchair, Tara, who showed Big Bird how she could do lots of activities including dancing with her wheelchair. The second clip showed a boy with Down's Syndrome, Jason, who was asked to make faces with another Sesame Street character Ernie. Diamond and Kensinger noted that his disability was not mentioned. The children were asked a series of questions about the children in the clip and drew some interesting observations about children's perceptions of disability. They shared that most children felt that Jason could engage in more independent activities than Tara, that the majority of children thought Tara had sustained an injury, and finally 87% thought that

Tara would grow up and be an adult free of disabilities and 90% thought the same about Jason. They also pointed to results which showed that children thought that both children had approximately the same level of speech and language skills, despite this not being the case on the clips, with Tara speaking extensively and Jason using minimal verbal responses. Diamond and Kessinger point out however that Tara's disability was specifically discussed, alongside things she can and cannot do. Jason's disability was never named, and a preschool aged child would need to know what the features of Down's Syndrome are, which they are unlikely to have learnt about. They make a very salient point stating that: 'this presents a conundrum for media portrayals that are designed to promote preschool children's positive attitudes toward people with disabilities when the preschool child does not recognize that the person who is featured actually has a disability,' (Diamond and Kessinger, 2002, p.418). Their study ends with two questions:

'Is it possible to create realistic, understandable explanations of disabilities such as Down syndrome that are accessible to preschool children? Would explanations of a child's disability promote sensitivity and acceptance by peers, or would such explanations increase the likelihood that peers would think of the child with a disability as someone different from themselves?,' (Diamond and Kessinger, 2002, p.419).

Their research lends itself to the argument that realistic, understandable explanations of disability are necessary although the best approach to this is unclear. Clearly stating a disability, examining its limitations and positives is one way to educate the audience to varying levels of success. Conversely, by not naming a disability and engaging with a disabled child in activities that a non-disabled child is able to connect with might be another way of exploring portrayals of disability. Diamond and Kessinger end their research on a note about parental co-viewing, arguing that as parents potentially watch the programme alongside their own children, this could educate them also which is useful as they too are sources of information on disability. However, this relies on carers and parents as being sensitive and informed on disability. Whilst this is an older study, on an American series, it is one of the few sources that deals

with preschool aged children watching preschool television with representations of disability, and their reactions and interpretations of disability through programming. It is also relevant to this study in that it shows that children are able to make some observations about disability from television. This strengthens the argument for positive disability representation within preschool animation. Their research differs from this in that they have used focus groups with children, which I did not consider appropriate for this stage of the research. Thy ethical considerations around such research have changed significantly over the last twenty years and how children interpret such messaging was not the focus of this study. It does however strengthen the argument for an interrogation of depictions of disability on screen which Research Objective One investigates.

*Sesame Street* has appeared in other research related to disability, in this case conducted by Bruno J. Anthony *et al.*, (2019). Their study looked at *Sesame Street's* 'Everyone in Amazing' campaign which sought to foster understanding of Autism. This was not through programming alone as the *Sesame Street Workshop* created a series of resources for families with or without autistic children. They reported that:

After exposure to the resources, (1) both groups of parents felt that the See Amazing materials were engaging and useful, particularly the daily routine cards; (2) parents of non-autistic children showed significant increases in knowledge about autism and feelings of acceptance of autistic children; and (3) parents of autistic children reported less strain related to raising their autistic child, increased community inclusion, and feelings of parenting competence,' (Anthony *et al.*, 2019, p.104).

They caveat these experiences by stating that these positive outcomes were small, which was potentially due to parent's brief exposure to the material. Whilst this is another American study, it does deal with preschool programming and the potential that children's programming has to educate children and parents about disability, in this case Autism. In addition, it also highlights that this material is beneficial to families who have a disabled child especially in the areas of community inclusion and confidence in their own parenting. It highlights the benefits of inclusive programming are wider than just representation for that individual within the characteristic. Dafna Lemish and Colleen R. Johnson (2019) completed a content analysis of US and

Canadian children's programming and drew similar conclusions to this study. They concluded that 'Television also provides a way to normalise and model acceptance for others, regardless of disability or illness. Content creators should strive to find ways to feature productive and happy people with disabilities, both on-screen and off, particularly given that nearly 20% of the population lives with a disability,' (Lemish and Johnson, 2019, p.16). This comment echoes earlier statements of the potential for children's programming to model acceptance and that considering 20% of the population have a disability this is not being represented adequately on television. They focussed on US broadcasters the Cartoon Network, Disney Channel, Disney Jr., Nick Jr., Nickelodeon, Sprout–Universal Kids, and PBS Kids and analysed a total of 196 hours across 476 (431 fiction) programmes. Lemish and Johnson employed five coders to record genre, country of origin, target age, creative teams, and to record the following about the characters on-screen – their gender, race, age, ability, class, appearance, behaviour. Their analysis revealed that just 1% of characters in the US sampling had a disability and 0% in the Canadian programming selected for their analysis.

These three papers provided a different point of research, not content analysis of depictions on screen, but focus groups which gave an insight into how disability is mediated on screen and how it is interpreted by young viewers. Moving onto content analysis, Bond (2013) completed his research in a format that was unique from this thesis and other academic papers that were selected for this research. Bond (2013) did not select certain programmes, but instead taped a 5-hour period for 7 days on eight networks, creating 280 hours of programming. From this, only 120 hours and ten minutes were used to collate data on disability representation on television. Its focus was not solely on preschool animation, but on all children's programming ages 2-12. It also looked for instances of physical disability and not on unseen or invisible disabilities. This was then coded against both the characters themselves in terms of 'moral portrayal; attractiveness; mobility difficulties because of the disability; satisfaction with life; image as odd, mysterious, or eccentric; and resentment toward society,' (Bond, 2013, p.411). Additionally, the study also noted the treatment by able-bodied characters towards disabled characters. This was measured by noting attitudes of sympathy, attraction, fear, aggression, avoidance, patronization, equality, sadness, and discrimination. By

noting both the number of characters and the way in which they were perceived, this mirrored the methodology used in the current study, although the presentation of the characters was not coded, but qualitative, textual analysis was applied, and observations of the characters were noted by this study. Both Bond and this thesis compared data to census data to understand whether these depictions correlated with disability off-screen. This ensured that Research Objective One around depictions of the characteristics on-screen was interrogated fully. Bond (2013) went further than this study was able to, which is reflected in the fact that three undergraduate students assisted in the coding, having first received two weeks of training, a 12-page coding handbook, and they watched each programme twice. This again is unique to many of the content analysis examined by this literature review and mirrors the work of the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative who also utilised a team of researchers. This is detailed by Bond (2013):

The first viewing was used to code the characters with a disability, their personality characteristics, and how they were treated by able-bodied characters. The second viewing was used to code the total number of major, minor, and background characters in the program. The total number of characters was counted on each program so that real-world comparisons could be made between the percentage of characters on children's television programming who have a physical disability and the percentage of individuals in the United States who have a physical disability (Bond, 2013, p.412).

Bond (2013) was able to detail that despite the disabled population of America standing at approximately 14%, the sample of programming selected showed only 0.4% of characters with a disability. Eighteen of 407 episodes had one disabled character, and none showed more than one disabled character in each episode. Their research revealed that every single disabled character that was portrayed on-screen was animated. Their findings also pointed out that disabled characters were likely to be male 61.1%, white 88.9% and elderly 61.1%. Of the characters that were disabled, children made up only 11.1% and 72% were background characters. Bond (2013) utilised Cultivation theory, alongside many other content analyses referenced by this research, which

details that seeing disabled characters on-screen, particularly children they could relate to, would help children in the audience see and understand disability. However, Bond (2013) also referred to the 'Drench hypothesis', first mentioned by Greenberg in 1988. This hypothesis argues that seeing one key character regularly is more important than seeing a set of homogenous characters with disabled characteristics. Bond posits that having a character that was central to the plot, and had a recurring role was more important than regularly showing background characters with a disability. His study showed that when disabled characters were on-screen, they were mostly in the background and not within the target audience's age classification. His conclusion pointed out that due to the lack of disabled characters on-screen, the fact that the disabled characters were shown as being agentic and equal was not relevant. This is because, of all the disabled characters that he identified, only two were children. One had a temporary disability, and the other was an incidental character within the programme and not a recurring one. Bond (2013) concludes that his findings are both 'alarming and enlightening,' because whilst viewers might think of disability in favourable terms, as disabled characters were depicted in a positive light, there were so few appearances, viewers might think that disability did not exist in the real world and certainly not in children (Bond, 2013, p.416). In his conclusion, Bond was encouraged that 'characters with a physical disability in the current study were good, attractive, satisfied individuals who were treated as equals to able-bodied individuals,' and as with many other content analysis authors, indicated that these findings 'could be used by policymakers, media professionals, and educators searching for ways to increase the visibility of physical disability in their communities and classrooms,' (Bond, 2013, p.417). This thesis also hopes that stakeholders use this content analysis to strengthen representation.

## **2.6 Literature Review: Intersectionality of Sex and Sexual Orientation & Gender Reassignment**

Another protected characteristic where intersectionality impacts Sex is Sexual Orientation. A study completed in 23 countries around the world revealed that lesbians were more acceptable than gay men (Bettinsoli, Suppes & Napier, 2020; Fitzsimmons, 2020). This reveals how perceptions of acceptable forms of



sexuality fall along gender bias and have a hierarchy with heteronormative lifestyles being the most accepted. This thesis sought out examples of content reviews for LGBTQI representation in preschool animation available. In the absence of literature that investigated British preschool animation specifically, this literature review expanded its focus to LGBT representation in other animated content, beyond preschool animation, focussing on academic research conducted on the history of inferred LGBTQI+ representation from the 1950's to 2003 (Dennis, 2003), and look at examples of successful representation within the programmes *Adventure Time* (Jane, 2014), and *Steven Universe* (Mihailova, 2019). This was to investigate how representation could be brought into preschool animation and investigate what type of representation is working domestically and internationally. The absence of literature on preschool animation reflects the very recent changes in the rights of members of the LGBTQI+ community, without which depictions on-screen could not be included overtly. Mihailova (2019) asserts that the first overt same-sex couple on an animated series for children was in 2014 in *The Legend of Korra* which is aimed for children aged 10+. *The Legend of Korra* 2012-2014 and ended with its two female protagonists holding hands and the 'implication of something more,' (Dong, 2020). This pattern of suggestive relationship rather than overt was broken by the two showrunners, who published private articles confirming that the two were in a romantic friendship, confirming that:

You can celebrate it, embrace it, accept it, get over it, or whatever you feel the need to do, but there is no denying it. That is the official story. We received some wonderful press in the wake of the series finale at the end of last week, and just about every piece I read got it right: Korra and Asami fell in love (Konietzko, 2014).

Jeffery P. Dennis (2010) argues that there were no overt, clearly defined same sex couples in his overview of same sex relationships in American television animation from the 1950's to the early 2000's. Whilst this historic study is American, his research focuses on programming that was regularly and readily available to a British television audience at the time of its release on public broadcasters. This research is also included because Dennis gives us a framework to ascertain the difference between characters that are same sex

and friends or in a romantic or sexual relationship, such as ‘sharing a living space or a bed; participating in social activities as a couple; being accepted as a couple by others; failing to pursue other substantive relationships, especially those with the opposite sex; rejecting romantic overtures from others; or overtly expressing desire through flirting and sexual talk,’ (Dennis, 2010, p.133). In this way Dennis is able to differentiate between Yogi from *Yogi Bear*, who shared a cave and bed with Boo Boo which was released in 1958, and the stars of *Tom and Jerry* which was released in the 1940’s or Scooby and Shaggy in *Scooby Doo* which was released in 1969. Dennis argues that Yogi and Boo Boo were clearly a couple because of their living arrangements, shared activities and friends and lack of any other meaningful romantic relationships. Moving through the decades, Dennis (2010) refers to the 1980s as an era when ‘most cartoon characters had become aggressively heterosexual,’ (Dennis, 2010, p.134). In the case of *Ren and Stimpy* released in 1991, despite them sharing a bed, a home and frequent use of sexual innuendo, Dennis argues that they are ‘instead presenting a parody of heterosexual relationships, supposedly funny because they are both men, yet one of them is acting like a woman,’ (Dennis, 2010, p.135). He also points out that the very crudeness and deliberately unpleasant nature of the programme is problematic. This is because the programme does not attempt to portray a same sex relationship authentically or positively which is essential in order to be truly representative. It is important to note that *Ren and Stimpy* is the only animation mentioned in Dennis’ paper that is not a programme aimed specifically at children, this may be why its portrayals are not considered, supportive, measured or truly representative in any way at all. These findings mirror those in relation to disability, where disabilities were broadcast in a way to shock the viewer and also touch on themes of queer baiting and the demonisation of the LGBTQI+ community which are discussed shortly.

None of the programmes mentioned by Dennis are overt and confirmed same sex couples. These ambiguous identities are reflective of the laws surrounding the acceptance of LGBT communities at the time of their release. Historic reasons for this not being broadcast any earlier can be linked to the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s. On the 5th June 1981, the CDC in America released a paper on a new viral infection found in five males and by the 3rd July, the term ‘gay cancer’ was used widely by the public (HIV.gov, no date). Although

Dennis makes no links to this, it is possible that the political climate and an unsympathetic public and governmental response from the Reagan administration was reflected in popular culture at the time (BBC, 2020; La Ganga 2016). This thesis uses Research Objective Two, concerned with participation in industry, to investigate the context for on-screen depictions. Representation for the LGBTQI community within programming relies on this wider context. The US has only recognised gay rights in recent decades, after the release of all these programmes, with crimes against the LGBT community being named as a hate crime in 2009 and same sex marriage was only approved in all fifty states in 2015 amongst other laws that eventually allowed people from the LGBT community the same rights as heteronormative people. The timeline for LGBT rights in the UK has followed a similar route with the Sexual Offences Act 1967, which made sexual acts between men legal over the age of 21; they had been illegal at any age before this. Gay rights in the UK took a backward step with Section 28 of the Local Government Act 1988, which 'banned local authorities from 'promoting homosexuality' or 'pretended family relationships' and prohibited councils from funding educational materials and projects perceived to 'promote homosexuality'. The legislation prevented the discussion of LGBT issues and stopped pupils getting the support they needed,' (British Library, no date). This aggressively regressive measure is reflective of the political and public reaction to the AIDS epidemic at the time. It was eventually discarded in 2003, and the Civil partnerships Act followed in 2004 and eventually replaced by the Marriage (Same Sex partners) Act in 2014, four years after the Equality Act. The Gender Recognition Act was passed in the UK in 2004, allowing trans people to reassign their own birth certificates to reflect the lived reality of their gender. This brief history of American and UK LGBT rights is inserted here to indicate that the lack of representation within animation is reflective of the recent developments in rights for the LGBT community.

Moving through to the 1990's, Dennis presents compelling evidence of Pinky and the Brain, released in 1995, as a same sex couple:

Pinky and Brain share more than physical attraction, however: they begin to represent themselves as a closeted gay couple. A prospective employer asks Brain, "Are you married?" After a brief,

awkward pause, he responds, “No. I do have a . . . roommate.” Considering various responses and then deciding on “roommate” is (or was) a familiar strategy for hiding same-sex partners from potential homophobes. Brain gets the job and enters corporate culture as a closeted gay man (or mouse), clumsily rejecting a female suitor and inventing a lame explanation for the picture of Pinky on his desk. When Brain’s parents visit, Brain again introduces Pinky as “my . . . um . . . roommate.” The liberated parents are not fooled, however. While constantly criticising Brain for his poor housekeeping, poor cooking, and unrealistic career goals, they never nag him to “meet a nice girl” and get married; obviously, they are aware that he already has a partner. At the end of the episode, Mom and Dad invite the two to visit as a couple at Thanksgiving. (Dennis, 2010, p.136)

This can be viewed as an example of how to portray a couple that are not yet fully able or ready to confirm their relationship status to the outside world. Instead of reacting negatively, Brain’s parents respond positively and go on to include them as a couple in their holiday celebrations at their home. This could be seen as a positive representation of a same sex couple. They hide their relationship status from Brain’s parents, but when the parents visit and discover the truth, they respond positively. This could be seen as an attempt to educate parents on how to react to having a child that is in a same sex relationship and also give children confidence that parents might react positively. Dennis goes on to examine *SpongeBob SquarePants*, released in 1999 and points to one particular episode where SpongeBob gifts Patrick a chocolate heart on Valentine’s Day, (Dennis, 2010, p.137). Such a romantic overture, on Valentine’s Day, would surely indicate a same sex relationship, even though they live in different houses. However, SpongeBob’s creator, Stephen Hillenburg commented that SpongeBob was not gay, but that he considered him to be asexual (BBC, 2002). Again, this is another example of queer coding, where the LGBT community see themselves within the character, but the character is not explicitly named as coming from the LGBTQI+ community. It may be that as the creator passed away in 2018, Nickelodeon has decided to retrospectively make SpongeBob a gay character. This has never been confirmed by Nickelodeon, but in 2020 they came close by tweeting a

picture of *SpongeBob SquarePants* in front of a rainbow flag (Guardian, 2020e; France, 2020). This could have been seen as allyship, as the picture was included alongside actor Michael D. Cohen who is transgender, and on the children's programme *Henry Danger*, a live action programme aimed at audiences 6+ (Ashby, no date 3) and the character of Avatar Korra, from *The Legend of Korra*, which is aimed an 8+ audience (Ashby, no date 4) who is bisexual. Stephen Hillenburg was widely reported to have said that *SpongeBob* was asexual, which is included in the wider family of inclusive terms LGBTQQIAAP (Locker, 2020).

Whilst Dennis is correct in pointing out that these examples do not contain overt examples of overt characters, both *He-Man* and *G.I Joe* which were both released in the 1980s have become icons within the LGBT community. Cartoon Brew printed an article titled 'He-Man's five gayest adventure', and BuzzFeed proclaimed that 'Masters Of The Universe Is Actually A Tragic Gay Love Story Between He-Man And Skeletor,' (Edwards, 2013 and Vary, 2013). The writers of the 2021 reboot of *He-Man* released on Netflix acknowledge He-Man's status as a gay icon and confirm that the creative team and Mattel are comfortable and encourage this but confirm that he is not actually gay (Reddish, 2021). Disney has also been identified as having characters in whom the LGBTQI community can see themselves in, with Will Letts (2016) exploring the characters Ursula, Jafar, Scar, General Ratcliffe, and Hades under the heading 'Camp Disney'. Letts talks about queer audiences finding hidden meaning in suggestive behaviour, but this thesis is seeking representations that go beyond inferred queer identity. By not allowing characters to fully express their identities, and by forcing LGBTQI+ communities to search for hidden clues, is simply another form of censure. This thesis is looking for overt examples of representation from the LGBTQI+ community. Adam Key (2015) identifies Mulan, another Disney character as a bisexual. However, this is not evident in the original film and the announcement was instead made through the series *Once Upon a Time*, which is rated 12+. This again is not helping to represent or educate younger children through programming. Key also notes that the announcement could actually be seen as damaging, as he argues that by labelling the most masculine of all the Disney princesses as bisexual plays into regressive stereotypes of women in the LGBTQI+ community. Key calls for Disney to 'create a unique bisexual or lesbian

Disney Princess who shares the feminine qualities of the other princesses. In doing so, Disney will achieve legitimacy in its role as a moral educator and, in turn, increase self-esteem, lower harassment and physical assault, and likely prevent more tragic suicides,' (Key, 2015, p.282). Key's powerful statement is indicative of how a lack of representation affects the mental health of those within the protected characteristics and how vital representation is. It also gives weight to the argument that depictions on-screen have the ability to influence society. In Ginger White's (2021) essay on the Disney release *Luca*, she refers to Disney's history of queer baiting and rightly points out that when queer sensibilities are attributed continually to villains within Disney films, this is not representation but 'demonisation.' Queer baiting, the practice of using queer narratives to draw an audience, but not follow through and give LGBTQI+ characters the same experiences of heteronormative characters, is highlighted as problematic not only in academic literature but also in the popular press (Maier, 2021; White, 2021; Ritschel, 2019). This highlights how the practice has become prevalent and audiences are able to recognise and articulate the difference. Maier provides a clear definition of queer baiting and queer coding here:

Queer coding is when LGBTQIA+ creatives insert queer themes, characters and relationships into content without making them explicitly so, in order to fly under the radar of conservative censors and critics. Queerbaiting is when creators hint that characters might be queer in order to attract progressive audience but without providing any real queer representation that could risk losing conservative audiences (Maier, 2021).

There is other scholarly research that focuses specifically on the industry context to understand representation on-screen. Misha Mihailova (2019) details how changes in the way programming is commissioned and created is making it possible for LGBT characters to appear in animation by using non-traditional routes into animation. Her research relates that due to 'distinctive form of independent female production that thrives at the intersection of twenty-first century television marketing, funding, and distribution strategies and contemporary online fan discourses and practices,' (Mihailova, 2019,

p.1009). The three creators and programmes that Mihailova selected for analysis are Natasha Allegri (*Bee and PuppyCat*), Shadi Petosky (*Danger and Eggs*, co-created with Mike Owens), and Rebecca Sugar (*Steven Universe*). Shadi Petosky is the first openly trans showrunner and Rebecca Sugar identifies as bisexual. Both programmes feature characters that are from the LGBTQ community and the article details how ‘emergent online distribution and funding models and the rising influence of fragmented audiences and online fan communities in the post-network era to make space for diverse, feminist, and LGBTQ-inclusive narratives and aesthetics,’ (Mihailova, 2019, p.1009). This alludes to the idea that traditional programme commissioning and creation excluded anyone that did not fit into the traditional aesthetic of the ‘boys club’ in animation, and are defined as ‘creators traditionally excluded from legacy development processes,’ (Mihailova, 2019, p.1009). This refers back to the definition of queer coding from Maier as something that comes from LGBTQI creatives, allowing these portrayals to be authentic representations. Mihailova also identifies that ‘direct and sustained engagement with animation audiences underserved by traditional TV programming at every stage of production—from initial financing to post-show online discussions—has made their shows uniquely positioned to expand our current understanding of independent production within the realm of TV by reframing independence as contingent on female labour—both creative and affective—performed outside, and often in response to, conventional industry structures,’ (Mihailova, 2019, p.1010). Mihailova’s argument here is that through the very nature of how these shows originated, outside of more rigid, formal commissioning, has meant that they could create content that is more diverse. Mihailova goes on to say that ‘the distinct platforms they work within demonstrate how contemporary TV animation allows for independence itself to manifest in a multiplicity of shapes,’ (Mihailova, 2019, p.1011). Navigating early changes in the way that these industries work, give women an opportunity to bypass traditional hierarchies. The article talks about platforms such as YouTube and Amazon, not public service broadcasters. Mihailova points out that ‘Together, all three shows represent an important step towards gender and LGBTQ representation for and by (queer) women in animated TV, particularly in the context of children’s media,’ (Mihailova, 2019, p.1016). Another conclusion would be that it is not simply the changes in law that have empowered these women to make

content that represents their own lived experiences. There also needs to be modern technologies and new non-traditional production processes that enable people to make new content. These have also been investigated within Chapters 4 - 6 as the thesis investigates Research Objective Two, participation in industry. For example, within Chapter 4 particular attention has been made to the changes in female university participation in order to question the data around on-screen depictions.

Emma Jane (2015) provides an analysis of the LGBT characters on Nickelodeon's *Adventure Time* which is aimed at audiences 10+ (Ashby, E, no date 2). Jane investigates 'some of the ways gender can be portrayed more progressively and equitably in children's film and television entertainment,' (Jane, 2015, p.231). Her research aims to move beyond the qualitative and quantitative analysis that many researchers focus on, including this thesis, to provide real world examples and move debate around representation into what she refers to as the "what next?" question by looking at *Adventure Time* which she argues 'is already portraying gender in a subversive and liberatory fashion,' (Jane, 2015, p.232). She argues that this would add to the discourse as 'Our conception of the phenomenon—in this case, progressive representations of gender in children's media entertainment—can then be built up by aggregating and extrapolating from these particulars,' (Jane, 2015, p.232). Jane notes that the commercial success of *Adventure Time* is indicative of children's appetites to watch more challenging and inclusive programming and rails against historic reluctance from broadcasters who felt such content might be too complex for younger audiences. Similarly, to this research project, the origins of her research also have autoethnographic roots, with her interest in the series coming from her personal experience of watching *Adventure Time* with her daughter. She observes that the programmes 'approach to gender, as well as its absurdist humour, its dark subtexts, its emotional intelligence, its posing of (often unanswerable) philosophical questions, its quirky word play, and its fluid depictions of identity,' (Jane, 2015, p.233). She emerges with a framework by which she identifies *Adventure Time* as unique in the way that it presents gender:

- the inclusion of roughly equal numbers of female and male characters in protagonist, antagonist, and minor roles.



- the inclusion of a significant number of characters who have multiple and/or indeterminate genders.
- the use of gendered “design elements” such as eyelashes and facial hair to illustrate character traits rather than as blunt, gender-signalling instruments.
- the distribution of traits such as intelligence, courage, loyalty, power lust, sentimentality, selfishness, altruism, artistic temperament, and a “gross” sense of humour equally among characters regardless of gender.
- the privileging of extended or “found” families (often including members of other species) over nuclear family arrangements.
- the deployment of characterisations and plot devices which frame gender and identity as being fluid rather than fixed; and
- the inclusion of queer and transgender sub-texts (Jane, 2015, p.235).

Jane (2015) goes on to reveal that ‘Arguably even more progressive than *Adventure Time’s* transgressive depiction of female and male characters is its inclusion of eight recurring characters of indeterminate and/or poly gender,’ (Jane, 2015, p.238). One character, BMO is referred to as ‘he’ but is voiced by a Korean woman and instead,’ BMO does not have a strictly assigned gender, self-identifies as both male and female, and loves other ambiguously gendered beings,’ (Jane, 2015, p.239). She presents another character, Gunter, a penguin, who similarly is referred to as a he, but then goes on to give birth to a glowing pink kitten. Jane provides these examples as emblematic of the programme’s intention of ‘anti-essentialist sensibility, in that neither gender nor identity are presented as fixed,’ (Jane, 2015, p.239). Jane also examines the presentation of ‘found families’, families that are chosen not by birth and blood but by active choices. The phrase is familiar to people within the LGBTQ community, who are overwhelmingly at risk of being rejected by their birth families once they come out. Research puts these figures at 39% of queer adults, whilst 33% of homeless youth in America are LGBTQ (Pew Research Centre, 2013; UCLA, 2015). This figure is 24% in the UK, with 77% of young people linking their homelessness to coming out to family (AKT, no date). In the UK, a YouGov poll revealed that over a quarter would not be proud if their child came out as LGBT and one in ten would feel uncomfortable living at home with their child once they had come out as LGBTQ (AKT, 2019). Speaking about the

report, AKT, a charity that supports LGBT homeless youth said 'Up to a quarter of young homeless people living in the UK identify as LGBT, and 77% of those find themselves in their predicament because of a hostile or unsafe environment at home. People often talk about the 'unconditional love' that parents have for their children, however we know first-hand that in many cases, the act of coming out can result in parental rejection and abuse for many young people,' (AKT, 2019). *Adventure Time's* focus on validating and providing numerous examples of found families gives LGBT youth an alternative model to the nuclear family and provides allies with an example of how they can support LGBT friends and family. Jane concludes by stating that:

*Adventure Time* serves as an exemplar for those groups looking for tangible examples of what "gender progressive" or "gender positive" children's entertainment might look like. Feminist scholars and media commentators could, for example, cite *Adventure Time's* representations of gender if they wish to follow Lemish's advice and move away from critique and towards conversations about the construction of workable alternatives. *Adventure Time* might also be useful for activists who are lobbying television producers, as it demonstrates that children's television programs which incorporate alternative representations of gender can still result in significant commercial success. (Jane, 2015, p.243).

These statements indicate that representation for LGBTQI+ communities are vital as they often do not have support from their families or the wider community. It moves back into questions of the purpose of representation in giving LGBT clues to the existence of found families and gives allies an insight into how they can support LGBT individuals who do not have support. It could even be used to educate adult co-viewers, opening them up to ideas of plurality in identity and expression and giving parents and caregivers an insight into the lived realities of people within the LGBTQI+ community and guidance on how to react to, adapt with and support their children.

An American study by Smith *et al.*, (2017b) investigated representation within 100 of the most popular movies released in America every year from 2007 and 2016 and gives us an indication of LGBT representation in wider

popular culture, in film and cinema where budgets are often much larger and funding models more established. In total, their study analysed 900 films. Characters between the ages of six and twenty were evaluated for a variety of markers including their LGBT identity. Out of 947 characters that had a speaking role or that were named, only 4 child or teenaged characters were LGBT – which would be 0.42% of the population. Of these, 3 were gay males and 1 was a bisexual male. Three of these characters were Black and 1 was White. Whilst this can be seen as an attempt to be inclusive, this could also be seen as an attempt to ‘double up’ representation through utilising minority characteristics. Effectively, instead of having two minority characters, say a black character and a character from the LGBTQI+ community, producers and content creators roll both characteristics into one character. It could also potentially further the idea of being ‘othered’ as a minority within a minority. The report came to some similar conclusions and pointed out that ‘female characters are predominantly White, straight, and able-bodied...This is particularly problematic, given that 47.8% of children under 18 in the U.S. were not White in 2015.<sup>12</sup> Young female viewers who are Black, Latino, or Asian may be a large portion of the population and therefore the audience, but they do not see themselves reflected on-screen. Females from the LGBT community were absent in film,’ (Smith *et al.*, 2017b, p.14). Including females in film is not enough to represent the demographics of females and they should represent their racial identities, as well as any other characteristics that they embody. Additionally, the study discovered that there were no female child or teen LGBT characters across 200 films from 2015-2016, indicating that film is becoming less inclusive and representative. Their study concluded that ‘these findings reveal that teenage and elementary-aged girls are still not shown equally on-screen—especially younger females from underrepresented racial/ethnic backgrounds, from the LGBT community, and those with disabilities,’ (Smith *et al.*, 2017b, p.10). These disappointing findings reflect political attempts to repeal LGBT freedoms in the US and highlight the precarious nature of rights for the LGBT communities (Human Rights Watch, 2021; Simmons-Duffin, 2020). Jane’s focus was on a programme that highlighted good practice in terms of representation different from the content analysis that is used in this thesis which included a wider range of programming.

In their analysis of *Transformers: Rescue Bots*, Dobson investigates the character Blades, an alien that takes on the form of a helicopter (Dobson, 2019). Whilst he is often heroic, she shares that he is queer coded in a problematic, stereotypical way as ‘cowardly, silly and could read as effeminate,’ (Dobson, 2019, p.252). Whilst she generously caveats that this could help children view this as an alternative model of masculinity there are clues that this is not the case. The character's consumption of musicals, his gossiping with his female best friend, and his concern about whether his new scoop claw attachments makes his ‘hip look big’, are all well-worn clichés (Dobson, 2022, p.253). In correspondence with one of the writers, they argue that ‘kids who are struggling with their sexuality will recognise themselves in Blades and see that the character is accepted and loved for who he is’. This is problematic as being gay should be identified through the character's interest in another character of the same sex, not through their behaviour. Padva (2008) identifies a similar problem in their review of an episode of *The Simpsons*, where upon seeing Bart dance to a Cher song, Homer decides that Bart is gay not because Bart has shown any indication of being attracted to boys,’ but because he does not behave manly enough,’ (Dobson, 2008; p.62). In this episode, the gay character featured in the episode is also characterised as effeminate and interested in gossip. Whilst the creators of *Transformers: Rescue Bots* should be commended for choosing to have the character voiced by an openly gay actor, Dobson shares that his voice is much higher in the programme than in real life. This echoes Loader’s term of ‘yellow voice’, in that actors use a ‘voice’ that is stereotypical of the visual character and one that does not match their own real world speech (Loader in Roe *et al.*, 2019, p242). Whether this has been requested is unclear, but that it is a part of the programme leads to the idea that the voice is expected.

## **2.7 Literature Review: Religious Belief**

The final protected characteristic examined within this literature review is Religious Belief. This was the only characteristic that was not interrogated through an intersectional lens. As with many other characteristics, there was no comparable literature on representations of religion within British preschool programming. As a result of this, this thesis turned to Christmas specials for the programmes selected and then looked for any appropriate literature around

Christmas specials. In his review of animated programming, daCosta also turned to Christmas programming, revealing that this was guided by the idea that Christmas viewing held a predominance of family viewing and was a good indicator of Britain's 'favourite' programming (daCosta, 2020, p.27). An American study of preschool programming conducted in 2020 also investigated Christian iconography and symbolism through programming commonly referred to as Christmas Specials. Megan Eide (2020) refers to this literature gap as 'surprising' and as with this thesis, refers to Bandura's theory of Social Cognitive Theory as a compelling motivation for the study of religion within children's programming. Eide asserts that 'by failing to address how the media portray religious practices and convictions to its youngest and most impressionable audiences, scholars are missing a critical opportunity to understand the pervasiveness and power of religion in children's media,' (Eide, 2020, p.109). The study concludes that whilst its findings are pertinent, more critical scholarly research must be conducted as currently Eide, one researcher with a data set of 44 programmes on American television, is the sole academic researcher looking at religious representation in preschool animation. Eide argues that the purpose of studying religion within children's television is 'in addition to its scholarly contribution, this study has implications for parents and religious leaders by helping them critically discuss the prevalence and influence of religion in children's television and for increasing their media literacy on the subject,' (Eide, 2020, p.109). She highlights key stakeholders as parents, religious leaders, as well as religious and media scholars. This study goes further than that arguing that depictions of religion not only reflect religious identities back to viewers, but also educate viewers on other religions, highlighting plurality of religion and potentially depicting religions accurately and positively. Eide (2020) investigated depictions of religion in 44 Christmas Specials across three platforms in the US that provide preschool animated content, these were Disney Jr., Nick Jr. and PBS Kids. Eide's study noted depictions of Christmas as either 'generalised', 'commercialised', and 'religious' appearances. These were categorised as events and images such as snowflakes or snowman building; seasonal shopping, presents and preparations, and finally all religious activities, lessons and symbols. Eide caveats these categorisations by stating that 'The terms general, commercial, and religious are, of course, ambiguous and complex and thus subject to interpretation

depending on the academic, cultural, and religious contexts in which they are used. Scholars heavily debate what is secular vs. religious in our contemporary, capitalist society,' (Eide, 2020, p.114).

This study limited itself to coding against any depictions of Christian iconography such as an angel, star, narrations around the topic of Jesus, God and the Nativity, as well as religious activities such as going to church and prayer. Eide's study utilised a quantitative analysis and revealed that programming was moving away from religion and towards a more 'commercialised, generalised, and secularised portrayals of Christmas,' (Eide, 2020, p.109) and that 'the religious aspects and significance of Christmas are rarely illustrated but instead obscured by commercialised and generalised illustrations of holiday activities, lessons, and symbols,' (Eide, 2020, p.114). She also revealed that whilst the Jewish festival of Chanukah and other non-Christian religious holidays were portrayed far less than Christmas, they were more religiously focussed than representations of Christmas. Eide revealed that Christmas Specials were focussed heavily on shopping, exchanging gifts and writing Christmas wish lists and that a third of programming involved helping Santa Claus. Her study highlighted the idea of perfectionism and characters' frequent fears that Christmas would be ruined if not perfectly executed. Eide reveals that only two of the 44 programmes referred to Christianity through depicting characters going to church, discussing Christmas as a celebration of the birth of Jesus. This was on *Arthur*, an animated programme originally aired on PBS in America, but is also regularly shown on CBeebies and *Blue's Clues* which was originally aired on Nick Jr. Eide reveals that in the episode, Arthur and his family go to church, they imagine their dinner during Jesus' time in Bethlehem. She mentions that despite this, even within these two episodes, the focus is 'still revolves around gifts, secular decorations, and general winter activities,' highlighting the idea that Christmas has become inextricably linked with consumerism and is a secular seasonal winter holiday (Eide, 2020, p.117).

Eide's conclusions are that whilst Christmas specials are prevalent on children's programming they are 'shifting away from religious diversity and depth toward a more secularised, generalised, and commercialised portrayal of the holidays in which images of Santa and presents and simple prosocial lessons obscure the traditional religious meanings of the holidays,' (Eide, 2020, p.114). Eide also looked at the nature of religious representation over time, in

this instance from 1999 - 2020, which mirrors this study. By using data from an extended time period, two decades, she was able to conclude that 'while older specials in this QCA (from as early as 1999) were, on average, longer and more likely to illustrate more than one religious holiday and the religious significance of the holidays, newer holiday specials were more likely to portray a commercialised and generalised depiction of Christmas or non-specified winter holiday without illustrating any traditional religious aspects of the holidays,' (Eide, 2020, p.118). Eide questions whether this reflects American society becoming more secular, an increase in the plurality of religion, or an increase in the commercialisation of Christmas, arguing that:

Perhaps preschool holiday specials' illustrations of Christmas commercial activities and symbols mirror the boom of US retail business during the holiday season, the nationwide proliferation of images of Santa and presents in winter store displays and advertisements, and the symbol of the Christmas tree standing as the ultimate "metonym for the season" ... If so, this could, as some scholars argue, represent an increasingly secularised America in which fewer and fewer Americans identify as religious and religion loses prevalence in society (Eide, 2020, p.114).

Eide argues that the overwhelming commercial representation of Christmas could 'give children an impression leading to a negative view of Christianity as a shallow religion, too corrupted by capitalism and too distant from tradition to still hold spiritual truth in today's world,' (Eide, 2020, p.119). Eide argues that in the context of other holiday specials around Hanukkah or Kwanza, this could be especially pertinent as these holidays are discussed in more intentional and traditional terms making them seem more 'authentic and wholesome,' (Eide, 2020, p.119). Conversely, it could be argued that by being able to traverse and evolve to be a part of modern, capitalist, commercial society ensures its longevity and adoption by those who might not traditionally celebrate Christmas as Christians. Eide refers to this tension between capitalism and consumerism vs the prosocial messaging around Christmas (helping others, the importance of friends and family) as evident within the plotlines of many of the Christmas Specials. Eide suggests that further research

should be done on whether children are influenced by explicit prosocial messaging vs implicit commercial ones. Eide concludes that:

Future studies on the portrayal of religion in children's holiday specials must examine the extent to which children learn explicit prosocial messages versus the extent to which children absorb implicit commercialistic messages. Such conclusions can then help researchers understand what televised ideas inform children's fundamental beliefs about religion and the ways in which those beliefs influence children's lifelong spiritual behaviours and attitudes toward religion. It could also be argued that as many of these explicit messaging is verbal (telling the audience about the 'true' meaning of Christmas) and implicit images rely on commercial ones (presents, shopping, Santa) further study on which holds more immediacy for children would add to the literature considerably (Eide, 2020, p.119).

Eide concludes by asking stakeholders to engage with producers, arguing that religious leaders such as rabbis and Sunday School teachers engage with the material online, stating that 'religious educators must first critically evaluate how their tradition is presented to children on-screen and decide how their institution as a whole should respond,' (Eide, 2020, p.120). She argues that 'parents, religious educators, and religion and media studies scholars may also engage in dialogue with media producers and ask how producers may portray religion in children's programming in ways that remain authentic to diverse religious traditions and best meet children's developmental and educational needs,' (Eide, 2020, p.119). This thesis makes similar conclusions in its effort to align In her analysis of the only public broadcaster on the list, Eide has this criticism: 'PBS Kids is leaning away from cultural education toward non-alienating secularisation, thereby sending mixed messages about the significance and meanings of religious holidays,' (Eide, 2020, p.119). Her conclusion inferred that in its efforts to be non-alienating, PBS may be overlooking its commitment to represent Christianity.

Eide's study was conducted on Christmas specials, but even within these programmes there was very little religious representation in this programme. This study was also unable to locate any other literature on the subject of



religious representation within preschool children's programming. Eide's study suggests that portrayals of Christianity shy away from true religious representations of Christianity and that other religious celebrations in America have more success in conveying their religious holiday. By examining Christmas specials in the context of British children's programming, this thesis is looking into whether the problems that Christianity face in terms of representation are global or whether British Christmas is distinct from an American one. The gap in the literature shows that this area is not valued, which was apparent in the review of religion within the original content review of six programmes. If religion is not represented within the Christmas specials, this would indicate that religion, in this case Christianity, is truly not valued even through its own religious festival. This would indicate that British society is uncomfortable or uninterested with religious programming, or that broadcasters are wary of being seen promoting a particular ideology, or that broadcasters are simply not paying attention to this area. However, the central argument of this thesis is that all groups protected under the Equality Act, including those covered by Religious Belief, should see themselves represented on-screen.

### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

The literature review for preschool animation has been fully established and has provided an insight into existing methods of content analysis and given an indication of what methodologies and findings are useful and their shortcomings. Whilst most of these studies were global, by extrapolating from them and considering their ideas in a British context, this thesis seeks to provide original insights into the representative nature of British preschool animation. By building on what has come before, this thesis now takes the discussion forward and establishes the methodology employed for gathering original content analysis, starting with the theoretical framework, the methodology behind this primary data collection and outlines the thesis in the subsequent chapters.

### 3.1 Theoretical Framework: A Brief History of the Chosen Methods

As mentioned briefly within Chapter 1, this study is grounded by two theories concerned with media effects, George Gerbner's Cultivation theory and Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory. Gerbner's Cultivation Theory posited that sustained, long term exposure to mass media influenced how viewers interpreted the real world around them, chiefly that it reflected what they saw on television (Gerbner *et al.*, 1996; Gerbner *et al.*, 1977). This theory is relevant to this thesis as it speaks to the idea that children's world view is also informed by exposure to television. It is also a framework for several content reviews of children's television that are discussed in this thesis (Eyal *et al.*, 2021; Eide 2020; Hamlen and Imbesi, 2019; Walsh and Leaper 2019, Zurcher and Robinson 2018, Martin 2017, de Leeuw *et al.*, 2015, Robinson and Caitlin 2006, Larson 2001, Aladé 2000, Morgan and Shanahan, 1999).

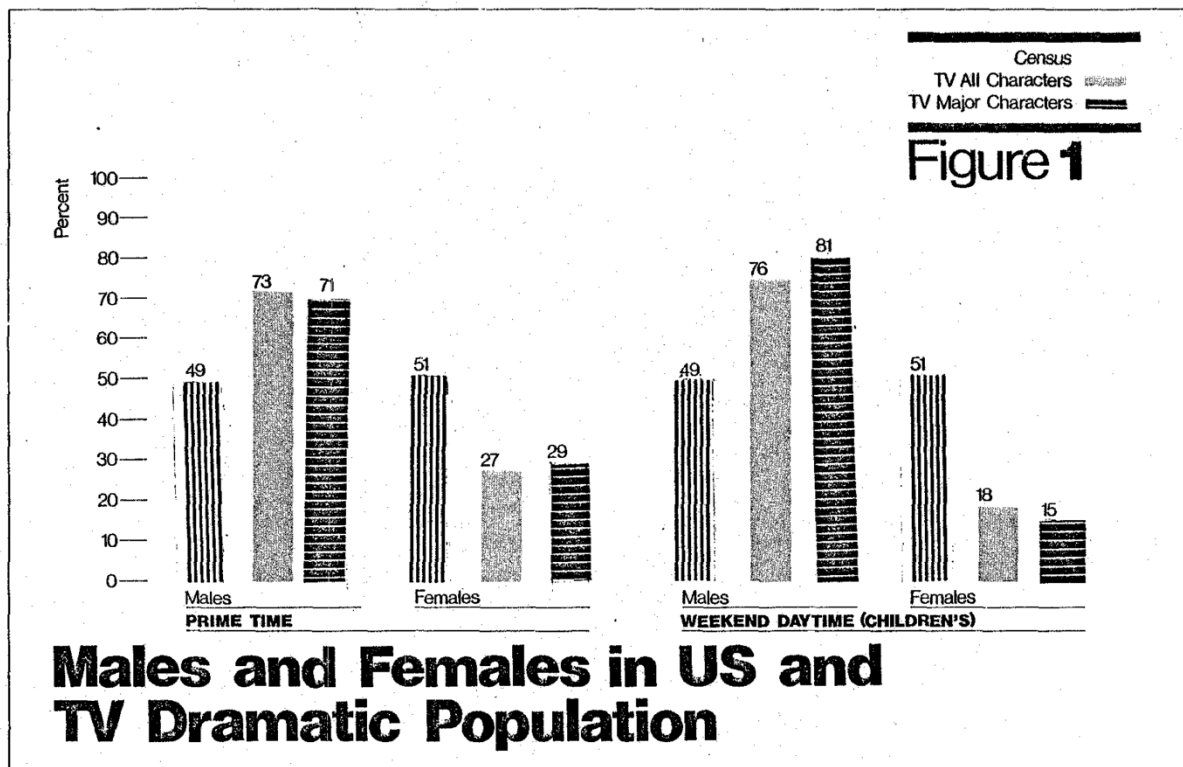
Gerbner's interests in the link between television and society began in the 1950's with his Master's thesis titled 'Television and Education' and his PhD, titled 'Towards a General Theory of Communication (Annenberg, no date). In the 1960's Gerbner joined the Annenberg School of Communication, establishing the Journal of Communication and launching the Cultural Indicators Project. Cultivation Theory was introduced as part of the Cultural Indicators Project (CIP) 1972 – 1996, which specifically looked at the influence of television on its viewers. The project's database analysed over 3,000 television programs and 40,000 characters (Annenberg, no date 2). James Shanahan and Michael Morgan argue that the intention of the project was to add a 'disinterested third voice,' to the ongoing debate between government and industry over cultural policy (Morgan and Shanahan, 1999, p.22). Whilst their research began with a study for the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, it moved into broader areas under the sponsorship of several other groups including the Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behaviour. Gerbner lists eighteen interested institutions which sponsored Gerbner's research, and it seems clear that this research is valued by groups looking to investigate links between media and social behaviour. The project investigated a broad range of areas including: women and minorities, sex-role stereotypes, occupations, political

orientation, ageing, disability, mental health, death and dying, school achievement and aspirations, safety, nutrition and medicine, science and scientists, family life, religion, adoption, images of animals, expressions of anger, their representations of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, and other issues (Gerbner, 1996). Some of the areas mentioned here are being investigated within this thesis also, including stereotypes and expressions of anger and will be extrapolated on later in the thesis when examining representations of Chapter 4: Representations of Sex.

Gerbner evidenced this theory through several US centred examples. He identified that despite less than 1% of people in America being a victim of a violent crime, crime is represented ten times more on television than in official crime statistics. Gerbner *et al.*, (1986) coined this imbalance between perception and reality as 'Mean World Syndrome', as people who took part in the project perceived the world and people to be more threatening than could be actually evidenced. Other examples of skewed representation were through the predominance of the middle class, who are overrepresented on American TV. America has a working-class population of 67%, which sees only a 25% representation on television. Another example given is within the older demographic, particularly the over 65 demographic, which is referred to as the 'vanishing breed', on television. In actuality, this demographic is the fastest growing segment as people live longer, and in better health than ever (Gerbner *et al.*, 1986, p27). Gerbner *et al.*, argued that 'public conceptions of and responses to issues, policies, people, products, and institutions can no longer be understood without relating them to their most central, common and pervasive source. Television is that source,' (Gerbner *et al.*, 1996, p.2).

Gerbner and Signorielli investigated female and minority portrayals on television and identified significant disparities between female representation on-screen and set these against the demographics of the US population (Gerbner and Signorielli, 1979). The diagram below shows how Gerbner and Signiorelli looked specifically at the differences between prime-time adult television and what was children's prime time television, weekends between 8am – 2pm. It clearly shows that males were over represented in both areas, but that this was even more apparent within children's programming. These can be viewed as early models of content analysis that subsequent academic research has been built on, including those within the literature review of this

thesis, the current work by the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, and this thesis. Gerbner used the data to explain through Cultivation Theory would audiences could infer males to be in more prominent roles in television and therefore their stories are more vital, interesting and agentic.



(Gerbner and Signorielli, 1979)

Gerbner *et al.*, explore this further by claiming that ‘Television cultivates from infancy the very predispositions and preferences that used to be acquired from other primary sources,’ (Gerbner *et al.*, 1986, p17). Here Gerbner *et al.*, explore how predispositions and preferences are being informed by television watching from childhood. Messaging around areas such as gender roles and stereotypes around race are being shared through programming. Gerbner *et al.*, affirmed that ‘Most of what we know, or think we know, we have not personally experienced,’ (Gerbner, in Morgan and Shanahan, 1999, p.IX), which is particularly true of children whose experiences are just beginning. Gerbner also referred to viewing as ‘Transcending historic barriers of literacy and mobility, television has become the primary common source of socialisation and everyday information (mostly in the form of entertainment) of an

otherwise heterogeneous population,' (Gerbner *et al.*, 1986, p.17). Both of these points could be seen in both positive and negative lights. For instance, if viewers were not used to seeing images of women or people in power or influence, but did see this through programming, this could be hugely beneficial for viewers, particularly young girls who could view this programming as aspirational. Conversely, if viewers were exposed to programming that showed entrenched, stereotyped and limiting gender roles, this could be harmful. Gerbner also mentions how the repetitive nature of television of viewing affects consumers, arguing that it 'which serves to define the world and legitimise the social order,' (Gerbner *et al.*, 1986, p18). This is exacerbated in the contemporary context of children's viewing as they are able to access content on demand, and watch the same programme repeatedly without any variety of messaging. Gerbner's idea that it is this that legitimises the social order, is key in the context of children's viewing as they are forming their foundational impressions of the world.

Furthermore, Gerbner *et al.*, also talk about other factors beyond television that might affect a child's interpretation of the world around them, but argue that this is a symbiotic process stating that the relationship 'are subtle, complex, and intermingled with other influences,' (Gerbner *et al.*, 1986, p.23). Gerbner also draws interesting conclusions from analysing heavy and light consumers of television, arguing that for those viewers whose tv viewing is supplemented with interaction, particularly those whose parents are involved in their television viewing and those who have strong peer relationships, concluding that children in these groups are less likely to be influenced by cultivation process (Gerbner *et al.*, 1986, p30). This insight provides clues to other influences being able to complement and disrupt messaging from television.

This interest in children's programming is clearly present in Gerbner's early thinking about Cultivation Theory and therefore applies to children as much as to adult television. Speaking specifically about children, Gerbner states that:

For the first time in human history, children are born into homes where mass-produced stories can reach them on the average

of more than 7 hours a day. Most waking hours, and often dreams, are filled with these stories. The stories do not come from their families, schools, churches, neighbourhoods, and often not even from their native countries, or, in fact, from anyone with anything relevant to tell. They come from a small group of distant conglomerates with something to sell (Gerbner, 1998, p.176).

Gerbner was speaking in 1998 and the landscape of contemporary children's programming has changed significantly since then, particularly as television in some form is now available to them 24 hours a day, not 7. Whilst television is still being supplied from 'distant conglomerates,' it is also being supplied by individuals. With the advent of subscription video on demand services such as Amazon Prime, Netflix, Disney + and the rise of YouTube, the choices for children have increased considerably. Whilst YouTube has become a place for some animation providers to showcase their work, with programmes such as Cocomelon, now on CBeebies, having started life on YouTube, this is still rare. YouTube has provided an opportunity for children to view a type of programming that has never been available to children before, from *Hamster Maze* videos to Lego Speed builds, programming that is unlikely to be shown by a traditional broadcaster. The fifth most popular children's YouTube channel is *Ryan's World* with a viewership of 31 million users (Statista, 2021). It is simply a daily short video uploaded by a family and is described as a mixture of vlogger and unboxing videos (Popper, 2016). This type of content simply did not exist in Gerbner's time. Research from Ofcom (2021) shows that whilst 48% of children watch live broadcast television, 88% watch content on demand videos. Whilst this does include BBC iPlayer, an excerpt from the report reveals just how popular YouTube is amongst 5-15:

Ofcom's media literacy research found that YouTube was the most-used VSP among children aged 5- 15 for watching content in 2020 (87%). And research by CHILDWISE highlights YouTube's sizeable presence in children's daily lives: 58% of children said that they used YouTube every day, spending on average almost two and a half hours a day doing so (Ofcom, 2012, p.13)

Whilst the age bracket is above the preschool focus of this thesis, it does also detail usage for 3-4 and detailed that: 'YouTube was most commonly used to watch content - among 86% of preschoolers; TikTok was the second most-used platform, at a distant 15%'. YouTube is discussed in more detail later in this chapter, and TikTok is a surprise entry for preschoolers, and is a video sharing app where users can upload 15 second videos of themselves. Whilst acknowledging the dramatic changes in the viewing landscape for children as young as 3, this thesis is focussed on children's programming that is available on British broadcasting channels and in particular those programmes that have won BAFTAs. The programmes selected have come from CBeebies and Milkshake! which are both available on BBC and Channel 5. Gerbner (1998) also addresses the idea that television is the initial influence for children as 'Television enters life in infancy; there is no "before exposure" condition. Television plays a role in the formation of those very "predispositions" that later intervene (and often resist) other influences and attempts at persuasion,' (Gerbner, 1998, p.191). This would indicate that Gerbner felt that television had a direct influence on the way children view the world. Whilst television was very different in 1998, when this theory was first introduced, it is still relevant as screen viewing still enters in infancy.

Gerbner *et al.*, also highlight the differences between heavy and light users. Their research linked heavy users of television with being more receptive to the cultivation process. Through a process coined as *mainstreaming*, Gerbner *et al.*, argued that heavy television viewing overrode the effect of other forms of influence, such as social, cultural and demographic differences (Gerbner *et al.*, 1986, p.31). For those people who were heavy consumers of television, their world view was aligned with the mainstream – that is the world that is portrayed on television. Their evidence to support this includes looking at adults who identified with the mean world syndrome, and found that heavy users found that the world was more opportunistic and violent than light users. From this, Gerbner *et al.*, argued that negative skewed portrayals of the world on television mean that consumers adopt this as a given, Within the context of this thesis, that can be seen as problematic for younger viewers when, for instance, they see women portrayed within domestic roles, or that there are no portrayals of people with the LGBTQI+ community. From this research we can infer that if television was to portray the world accurately and

be used as an educational and aspirational tool, then heavy users of television in particular, could potentially adopt this as their world view.

Forty years after the emergence of Cultivation Theory and the cultural indicators project, Morgan and Shanahan (1999) investigated the relevance of the theory. They did this by conducting an analysis of papers that utilised the theory as a theoretical framework for content analysis within a twenty-year period. Morgan and Shanahan, who worked closely with Gerbner and published widely around Cultivation Theory, explain that Cultivation Theory is about 'stable, repetitive, pervasive and virtually inescapable patterns of images and ideologies,' (Morgan and Shanahan, 1999, p.21). It does not argue that watching a particular programme influences imitable behaviour, but that heavy viewing influences the viewers world view to one they see on television, rather than the reality of the world around them. This would enforce the idea that looking at one programme is not enough to establish whether or not messaging around any of the protected characteristics is influencing consumers. Rather it is the long-term viewing of multiple programmes that would affect a child's world view and provides a confirmation of this study's use of six programmes over a time period of 2000-2020.

It is clear throughout Gerbner's writings in the years since the launch of the cultural indicators project that he believes in the influence on television as a tool that doesn't reflect the world, but informs it through its storytelling capabilities. He states that 'Stories socialise us into roles of gender, age, class, vocation and lifestyle, and offer models of conformity or targets for rebellion,' (Gerbner, in Morgan and Shanahan, 1999). Gerbner argues that the stories that we now get from programming are now market led and mass produced. These are what he identifies as stories that traditionally would have been personal, and community led. This assumes that community messages are more positive than those that are market led and mass produced, which perhaps are not always the case. If a viewer lived in a homogenous community, viewing images of different cultures would be hugely beneficial and serve to expand your worldview. Gerbner sums up his impressions of the importance of television viewing by stating that by 'shaping consciousness, defining our "reality," drawing us together, and pulling us apart, in ways that will uniquely enshrine this historical period as The Age of Television,' (Gerbner in Morgan and Shanahan, 1999, p.17). In the contemporary landscape, these differences



within storytelling could be explained through broadcasters conflicting aims. For streaming giants such as Netflix, Amazon Prime etc, their goal is to create contact that can reach a global audience.

Moving into the era that this thesis is concerned with, 2010 onwards, Michael Morgan and James Shanahan (2010) define Cultivation Theory as an investigation into 'television's contributions to viewers' conceptions of social reality...The most familiar version of "the cultivation hypothesis" is that those who spend more time watching television are more likely to perceive the real world in ways that reflect the most common and recurrent messages of the world of fictional television,' (Morgan and Shanahan, 2010, p.337). This would be particularly apt to a preschool audience whose real-world interactions are limited by their age and by the amount of television that they watch. This is especially relevant in the period after 2018, where video on demand viewing amongst 3-4 year olds jumped from 32% to 64% undoubtedly due to the COVID pandemic (Statista, 2022).

This thesis also used Bandura's Social Learning Theory, which has also been used by other authors content analysis of preschool animation as a natural evolution of the work of Gerbner (Walsh and Leaper 2019, Martin 2017, Eide 2020, Larson 2001, Aladé 2000, Morgan and Shanahan, 1999). Bandura also utilised Gerbner's work within his own research, in his explanations of how social realities are influenced in part by mass media (Bandura, 1999, p34). These two theories are used interchangeably throughout this thesis and others' content analysis as they both speak to influencing factors throughout childhood and how media is one of the most prominent influencing factors in a child's learning. This is not to say that there are no other influencing factors. Both Bandura and Gerbner fully acknowledged that family and socio-economic contexts were also significant factors in the lives of all viewers, including children. However, their research argued that media is an influencing factor on viewers' perceptions of themselves, others and the world around them.

Bandura believed that children learn through observing others in three ways. One was through directly observing their real world, so their parents, friends, school and physical environment. The second was through television and media, and the third was being told about behaviours verbally. Bandura emphasised the importance of learning through observing, modelling, and

imitating the behaviours, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. However, in order for behaviours to become encoded within children, Bandura argued there were four stages of social learning: attention, retention, reproduction and motivation (McLeod, 2023). Bandura argued that it was cognitive and environmental factors working together which influenced learning and behaviour. These ideas utilised existing ideas around classical and operant conditioning, but added two new ideas:

1. Mediating processes occur between stimuli and responses.
2. Behaviour is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning. (Bandura, 1988)

This idea of observational learning is relevant to this thesis as children are observing interactions with peers and adults on television. Bandura's early work with children includes his 1961 Bobo doll experiment. This experiment utilised 72 children who were split into three groups and the details of the experiment are described by Bandura here:

Subjects were divided into eight experimental groups of six subjects each and a control group consisting of 24 subjects. Half the experimental subjects were exposed to aggressive models and half were exposed to models that were subdued and nonaggressive in their behaviour. These groups were further subdivided into male and female subjects. Half the subjects in the aggressive and nonaggressive conditions observed same-sex models, while the remaining subjects in each group viewed models of the opposite sex. The control group had no prior exposure to the adult models and was tested only in the generalisation situation. (Bandura *et al.*, 1961, p.576)

The study revealed that those children who observed an adult being aggressive with the Bobo doll, mimicked these behaviours both physically and verbally. This experiment also drew complex conclusions from using same-sex models and opposite sex, and observed that aggression was highest in boys who had a male model. Interestingly, those who observed a 'subdued' male

model were less likely to be aggressive than the control group. This brings about interesting observations around hyper aggressive masculine behaviours and the expectations and rewards around mimicking this behaviour. This experiment is however over sixty years old, and was conducted at a time when the ethics around using children were not as robust as they are today. Whilst it would be easy to confirm that children who watch aggressive adults, become aggressive themselves, this experiment has a number of deficits. The number of children in the study are relatively small as they are split into groups of eight, the experiment doesn't tell us if these children grow up in violent families, or whether these effects are long lasting. It also doesn't reflect the societal changes that have happened in the last sixty years around traditional gender roles and the rejection of male aggression. Despite all of these concerns, it's clear that Bandura is influenced by the idea that children mimic behaviours they see, particularly from same sex adults. In recognition of the influencing effects of thoughts and feelings over our actions, Bandura modified his theory in 1986, reframing Social Learning Theory as Social Cognitive Theory. He argued that existing models of psychological theory around influencing factors did not give enough attention to the influence that television and its 'symbolic environment' has on behaviour. Bandura argued that television allowed observers to 'transcend the bounds' of their physical environment, an argument that this thesis also makes. The thesis would argue that this allows broadcasters an opportunity to positively impact children's lives by exposing them to behaviours and opportunities that they may not see within their physical environment (Bandura, 1989, p.22). Interestingly, Bandura argues that people are more likely to mimic behaviours they see if it has 'valued' outcomes, such as rewarded behaviours. Behaviours that have adverse outcomes or are punished are less likely to be emulated. In this case, the Bobo doll experiment could potentially have had one more control group identifying whether children would have mimicked aggressive behaviour if they had seen their modelling adult punished or reprimanded in some way. This would identify whether showing negative behaviours with real world consequences would better inform children of the existence and consequences of such behaviours then shielding children from negative behaviours altogether. This would further the argument that media could be utilised as a means to educate

children, not only by modelling positive behaviours, but also by showing children consequences of negative behaviour.

Karla Hamlen and Krista Imbesi utilise Bandura's theory and posits that 'child learning and development occur within a dynamic social context in which models and the environment play a strong role in children's understanding of the world and subsequent actions,' (Hamlen and Imbesi, 2019, p.306). Their study refers to television as one of the early ways in which children encode observations into concepts and theories to 'make sense of the world around them,' (Hamlen and Imbesi, 2019, p.302). They conclude that 'seeing representations of children of a particular race and gender on television gives children information, whether intentionally or unintentionally, about the types of people who can fill particular roles and can influence the way they see their own roles in society,' (Hamlen and Imbesi, 2019, p.307). Bandura describes the conceptualisation behind his theory by reporting 'because of the influential role the mass media play in society, understanding the psychosocial mechanisms through which symbolic communication influences human thought, affect, and action is of considerable import. Social cognitive theory provides an agentic conceptual framework within which to examine the determinants and mechanisms of such effects,' (Bandura, 1994, p.1). Rebecca N. H. De Leeuw (2015) also employed this theory for its exploration of prosocial acts inspired by television viewing and explains that individuals learn from observing models, which can also be depicted on television.

Beyond content analysis for pre-school television, the theory is also used by Larson (2001) when looking at portrayals of boys and girls within children's advertising. Larson uses Bandura's work around Social Learning Theory, to draw conclusions around the impact of children's advertising and children. Larson uses Gerbner's Cultivation Theory to preface her study, noting that heavy consumers of television are more likely to believe that the world they see on television is the real world. Larson also draws from other scholarly work completed by Hogben in 1998 to note that children were more susceptible than adults to mimicking aggression which they were exposed to through television. This could indicate that adults have more real life experiences from which to draw conclusions about engaging in aggressive behaviours. In the absence of this, children are more likely to be influenced by television. Larson also notes how Gerbner's theories have been evolved as television viewing

habits have evolved, and also highlights the theory of mainstreaming, noting that subgroups from different political beliefs will become more homogenous if they view the same types of mass media. This indicates the influence of television and its positive potential to steer children into more progressive thinking even if their physical world experience might not indicate the same possibilities. For example, for young girls surrounded by traditional domestic roles within their home and family, seeing examples of females in STEM roles could inspire them to aspire to these roles. However, in reality Larson confirms that heavy viewers of television hold more traditional gender stereotyped notions of proper role behaviour than light viewers of television – this is because the world that is portrayed on television is gender stereotypical (Larson, 2001, p.41). Larson uses these theories to ground her content analysis of representation of children in television advertising and highlight the link between portrayals of children and how this might influence how they might see themselves. However, she makes no conclusions about whether children are definitively influenced by advertising and to what extent (Larson, 2001, p.55)

Another theory relating to the influence of media on viewers was posited by Bradley Greenberg in 1988. Greenberg did not feel that the work of Gerbner or Bandura were suitable in describing media effects on consumers. He felt that the headcount method used by Gerbner, Bandura, and now this thesis, were insufficient. He coined the term Drench Theory to describe a novel way of encouraging diversity on-screen. He argued that ‘critical portrayals’ were more important than large numbers of incidental character portrayals (Greenberg, 1988, p.97). He argued that this would be more beneficial to minority groups on a ‘quest for equity or balanced’ representations. Here, it can be inferred that Greenberg put the responsibility on minority groups to affect changes in equitable representation. Greenberg argued against what he felt was a ‘gradual, cumulative drip-drip-drip’ of equitable representation on-screen (Greenberg, 1998, p.97). He argued that a minority figure in a key role would provide a greater impact. Drench hypothesis has not been utilised in the same way as Gerbner or Bandura’s theories have. Some contemporary academics such as Rebecca Martin have warned against the notion of having a key female character in a programme with an overwhelmingly male cast as this promotes the idea of exceptionalism (Martin, 2017). DaCosta drew the same

conclusions when speaking about people of colour on-screen (daCosta, 2010). Greenberg's point misses another point completely, that programming should not need a critical portrayal in order to highlight that minority figures are able to be protagonists and to tell their stories. Instead, the focus should be on creating a world on-screen that mirrors off-screen representation in the population, whilst also creating key portrayals. There is some evidence that Greenberg's theory holds weight, using the example of the so - called 'Scully Effect'. Within the television programme *X-Files*, Dr Dana Scully was a fictional character who appeared on television-screens originally from 1993 – 2002 with a subsequent series from 2016. She was one of two main protagonists and was an FBI agent and doctor in a programme that was dominated by male characters. The Geena Davis Institute measured her influence on women in STEM fields and gathered data from over 2000 female participants within the STEM industries. Over 60% of participants felt that Dr Dana Scully was their role model and over half claimed that she was one of the reasons that they had gone into a STEM field (Geena Davis Institute, 2018). This echoes Greenberg's assertion that some characters are so significant, that they become the role images that viewers maintain (Greenberg, 1988, p.87). However, it is worth noting that this is the only study to define and coin the Scully Effect, and that subsequent reporting on the Scully Effect have all used this study from the Geena Davis institute (Livingston and House, 2022; Penhall, 2018). This is exactly the type of representation that Greenberg had in mind when espousing his theory. Greenberg's argument is that one significant portrayal has the power to form an impression of people from that group – whether it is a female character or person of colour. The inference here is that this would be a positive encounter. However, he goes on to explain that if this were a negative portrayal of a character from one of the protected characteristics, viewers would not be influenced by this. However, if Drench Theory has the power to influence viewers through positive interactions, then the same must be true of negative impressions. Historical portrayals of women, people of colour, age etc have relied on negative stereotypes.

Greenberg points to the headcount method as incomplete, arguing that this ignores differences – although it is unclear how – and that it ignored the 'power of individual performances,' (Greenberg, 1988, p.98). Greenberg admits that disagreeable or unconscionable depictions can be incessant, yet does not

believe that these become stereotypes that endure in viewers minds. Instead he argues that here Cultivation Theory has limited research support and that this does not give viewers enough credit to notice differences between negative stereotypes and real-life encounters. Greenberg goes further and argues that this 'deprecates the television industry's ability' to showcase minority depictions in a range of roles,' (Greenberg, 1998, p.98).

Using Greenberg's own theory, one could argue that 'incessant' negative portrayals are overriding any positive impressions we have through daily interactions. It does not consider that if viewers do not encounter elderly people or people from different sexual orientations in real life scenarios, that they would potentially then take them from the media. Children are unlikely to have a wide social circle that includes people from all of the protected characteristics and are limited to the social and geographical interactions that parents and carers expose them to. Greenberg argues that arguing 'equivalent group representation provides equity is a doubtful claim,' but it is not clear how one critical portrayal does. Whilst equity and equality of representation are not the same, and this is argued in this thesis also, equality of representation should exist alongside significant portrayals.

Greenberg, rather unfortunately, uses *The Cosby Show* as an example of programming that counters the 'smart alecks or loudmouths,' that he identifies from other programmes that centre around Black families (Greenberg, 1988, p.98). The language that Greenberg uses suggests a lack of sensitivity around race. His outdated language, whilst rooted in the late 1980's, infers an ignorance about what people within the protected characteristics envisage representation to be. All representations, when done authentically, can co-exist. Additionally, he does not argue for plurality or equality in representation or equality and relies on the ability of the public to be able to determine what is a stereotype and what isn't. He doesn't identify that the stereotype is offensive, and viewers should not have to draw on their own lived experiences to counter them. They should simply not exist on-screen.

Greenberg proposes an alternative to the headcount method. Instead of focussing on-screen, he proposes investigating viewers perceptions of key characters. As an example, he proposed asking people who their key female character was and why this character resonated with them. He believed this would reveal a finite set of attributes from which academics could ascertain

what attributes were important to a character representation (Greenberg, 1998, p.99 - 100). He also suggested using a group of children to engage with a popular show or film and then assess what specific characters and situations children were drawn to. Greenberg acknowledged that these ideas were in a primitive form. His essential definition of Drench Theory, that a 'striking, new image can make a difference' does resonate, but by not having equality of representation within the programme around this character, creators risk creating a character that appears unique because they are not like others within the group they represent (Greenberg, 1998, p.100).

The evolution of Gerbner and Bandura's theories and methodologies are evidenced in many of the content analysis reviewed within Chapter 2 of the Literature review. Over the decades, these have evolved through the work of Morgan and Shanahan (1999), Larson (2001), Robinson and Caitlin (2006), Smith *et al.*, (2008), Smith *et al.*, (2013) Bond (2013), Jane (2015), Keys (2016), Smith *et al.*, (2017) Martin (2017), Zurcher and Robinson (2018), Walsh and Leaper (2019), Lemish and Johnson (2019), Smith *et al.*, (2019) Rovner-Lev and Elias (2020), Eide (2020) and Aladé (2021), Smith, Pieper and Wheeler, 2023.

As can be seen from its prevalence within the list of content analysis referred to within the literature review, arguably the most interesting research in this field is now being conducted by Stacy Smith, Founder and Director of the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. Situated within the School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Pennsylvania, where Gerbner himself worked, the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative builds on the scholarly work that Gerbner refined through his work on the Cultural Indicators project. In the same way that Gerbner's research was commissioned by a diverse group of stakeholders, the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative is now working with broadcasters such as Netflix to monitor topics such as diversity. The work of Stacy Smith and colleagues was influential and significant to this thesis as this research hopes to sit within that tradition of content analysis that proposes to be of use within an industry landscape. Being of use to and influencing policy makers, educators, producers, broadcasters and other stakeholders is a key potential outcome for this work.

Stacy L. Smith *et al.*, (2019) published a report titled *Inclusion in Animation? Investigating Opportunities, Challenges and the Classroom to the C-Suite Pipeline*. This report was released after the commencement of this thesis



and affirmed many of the areas and methods by which depictions on-screen and participation in industry were being scrutinised. By looking at the pipeline, they sought to understand why so few women and women of colour were in senior positions in animation and why they were so poorly represented on-screen in America. Their comprehensive study looked at the 120 top animated films and the top 100 animated series on broadcast and cable television in the US from 2007 to 2018. These are relevant to this study as the majority of these will be aimed at children. It identified that the three key pathways to directing were story, animation or writing roles. The table below is populated with data from their research and highlights that that within film, female representation was low in these key areas:

<b>120 top animated films</b>		
Department	Female Representation as a Lead character	Female representation at team level
on-screen	17% lead or co-lead	n/a
Story	7%	18%
Animation Department	8%	16%
Writers	9%	n/a
Director	2.5% (4 female directors on 5 films out of 120)	n/a
<b>100 top animated series</b>		
Department	Female Representation as a Lead	Female representation at team level
on-screen	39% female characters	

Executive Producers	20% executive producers	
Writer/Creator	17% writer/creator	
Director	13% director	

The findings within the research from Smith *et al.*, (2019) have prompted this study to also record who are the programme creators, writers, and directors, by using on-screen titles and can be found within Chapters 4 - 6 and within the *Appendices A2: Primary Data Graphs on each programme*. By including these figures on the number of women within the US animation industry and the number of females on-screen side by side in the same paper, Smith *et al.*, (2019) drew a correlation between underrepresentation within participation within the industry and how this translates on-screen. This thesis investigated whether a similar correlation exists within and between the number of women in key creative roles such as writer, creator, director, within the British animation industry and the number of female characters in speaking roles on-screen. This was done by collating the names of people in those three key roles from IMDB and cross checking these against programme credits and recording whether they were male or female. This thesis also included the names of the animators, recording how many were male and how many were female. This information was taken from the on-screen credits of every programme that was viewed for the thesis. The Smith (2019) study did not include these figures for television programming, this is presumably because of the volume of data that would need to be investigated for 100 series. By recording the number of animators working on the programmes, this thesis was able to provide insight into the demographic composition of crews, and we can then draw conclusions about how many women are working on each episode. Without this information, there is potential for the data to be misleading. For example, an analysis of *Peppa Pig* revealed that there were four female writers and four male writers, which on the surface might look like equality. However, closer inspection of the credit sequences revealed that the four female writers wrote just 30 episodes in comparison to the 214 male credits for writers on-screen. This is highlighted on the next page in Figure 1.02. This page also shows that whilst 1 female Director worked on one

episode, 5 male Directors directed 97 episodes. A full analysis will be available in Chapter 4. This careful, thorough investigation of the data is essential in order to truly understand participation within the British animation industry.

Figure 1.02

# Peppa Pig: Directors, Writers and Creators

**BAFTA Winner 2005, 2011, 2012**

**Directors**

- Female: 1 and 1 episode
- Male: 5 and 97 episodes

**Writers**

- Female: 4 and 30 episodes
- Male: 4 and 214 episodes

**Creators**

- Female: 0
- Male: 3

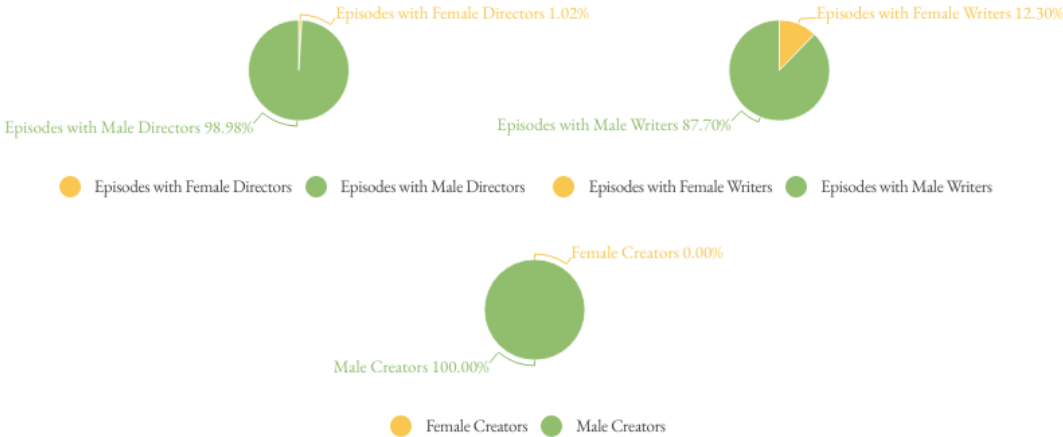
	Female	Male
Directors	1	5
Writers	4	4
Creators	0	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>

No. of Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	1	97
Writers	30	214
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>311</b>



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators



Stacy L. Smith *et al.*, (2017) looked at representation of females in 100 popular films per year across nine years dating from 2007-2016, a total of 900 films in the US. Quantitatively, they looked at demographics, disability, and hyper sexualization in children and teenage characters. Smith *et al.*, (2017) were conducting a semiotic content analysis, coding for indicators such as nudity is key to investigate areas such as the sexualisation of young girls within television. Smith *et al.*, (2017) also gathered qualitative data on primary and secondary female child and teen characters who were assessed on school attendance, STEM, aspirations, interpersonal relationships and hobbies, sports and clubs. Their findings revealed that out of 37,912 speaking characters in 900 films, just 12.5% were aged 6 to 20 despite children making up 20.4% of the US population. Their study looked at a total of 4,730 elementary school and teen aged children across 900 movies. Only 39.7% of these characters were female and 60.3% were male. They reveal that gender parity was achieved in 2016, with younger females in 48.2% of all speaking or named roles, which would indicate that messaging around gender representation on-screen has influenced the media industry. This is further evidenced by an independent impact study conducted by the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media (2012) which found that executives in the content creation, development and production fields who attended their presentations and symposiums were influenced by messages around gender representation in media. They recorded that a quarter of respondents had changed the aspirations/occupations of female characters or their dialogue. A further 18% had changed story development and 16% had increased female characters as secondary characters. Despite this, Smith *et al.*, (2017) did not find an equal proportion of females in lead and co-lead roles across the 200 of the most popular films of 2015 and 2016. They identified only eight young female leads or co-leads in 2016 and highlighted that in ten years the situation had not improved with only six female leads or co-leads in 2007. Looking beyond the headcount of females in film, their study also looked at how females were portrayed on-screen which indicates that they are also concerned with equity not just equality. They found that female teenagers were almost four times as likely as male teenagers to be

depicted wearing tight or alluring attire (39.5% vs. 10.2%), twice as likely to be shown with some nudity (35% vs. 14.1%) and more likely to be thin than teenage males (60.7% than 38.4%). They note that this has not changed from 2007-2016. They did find however that female teen nudity has increased from 23.3% to 35.4% of characters. Female teens were more likely to be depicted as thin in 2016 than they were in 2007. They identified a nine year high during the period 2009 and 2010, where over 80% of female teens were portrayed as either thin or extremely thin on-screen. Smith *et al.*, (2017) further highlighted that less than 31% were shown in a classroom setting or doing homework. Only 8.1% of females had discernible academic interests or goals with only 15.4% of younger females referenced as intelligent. 12.2% of female characters mentioned or were shown taking part in science, technology, engineering, or maths activities. Just 7.3% of the elementary or teenage female characters assessed remarked on professional aspirations. In contrast, they found that 35% of girls and teens were shown doing chores and most of them were stereotypically female chores with just two female characters engaged in chores that went against this stereotype - repairing a roof and farming. Their research concluded that: 'the picture young female viewers see of themselves in the media is one of erasure and marginalisation, and reinforces the idea that a girl's value is not only on her appearance but also her romantic interests, rather than what she can do or be [and] The storytelling bias starts early, and for young female viewers may be a sign that the stories of girls and women carry little value compared to those of boys and men,' (Smith *et al.*, 2017, p.4) This study by Smith *et al.*, (2017) indicates that it is not merely representation in terms of headcount that matters, but how characters are physically portrayed and the activities that they engage in.

### **3.2 Methodology Progression**

In addition to this theoretical framework and grounding of this thesis, this thesis was rooted by an ethnographic and auto ethnographic search for an appropriate research question around equality, diversity and inclusion in the animation sector. Having graduated from Central Saint Martins with a PGDip in Animation in 2010 and having worked within animation for five years, I initially sought out peers and colleagues for an insight into the industry and the challenges facing animators within the industry. I originally wanted to take an

ethnographic approach to the thesis and collect a record of the challenges faced by women in the animation industry. However, it soon became apparent that friends and colleagues were wary of speaking on the record as the animation industry was so small and they did not want to be seen as being troublemakers. This reinforces the idea of the Insider-Outsider theory of employment first defined by Assar Lindbeck and Dennis J. Snower in 1989 (Lindbeck and Snower, 1989). They shared that insiders, who they defined as 'incumbent' employees, manage to gain power and privilege within a sector and how their activities affect the outsiders who typically work in the informal sector. In this case, females within industry felt uncomfortable sharing their experiences as this might affect their precarious employment in an industry dominated by men. I also found that when speaking to female friends about the animation industry that so many of their difficulties within the animation industry intersected with race, age, sexual orientation and other factors such as when they graduated and even their personalities. The time spent in these conversations guided this thesis in another direction, moving away from narrative analysis and towards a mixed methods content analysis approach. These fluid and dynamic early investigations are in line with Hammerleys (2018) evaluation of ethnography, which he described as 'by its very nature ethnographic fieldwork changes over its course, rather than simply involving the 'implementation' of an agreed research design,' (Hammerleys, 2018, p.3). This led me to believe by focussing simply on women in animation, this would be too narrow a focus for a PhD and overlook the complications created by intersectionality.

My own career experience within the animation industry also influenced my research. I graduated from Central Saint Martins in 2010, two years after the financial crash of 2008, at a time when the animation industry was struggling. Having moved from project to project, some lasting for just days, I eventually worked on a CBeebies series as a Digital Librarian and then as Production Coordinator within an independent studio based in London. I worked in a non-creative, production role for over two years. As one of the first people hired to work on the series I worked on the series from inception to delivery. I was able to see how stringent the rules were surrounding CBeebies television programming and how much influence the broadcaster had and how they were able to make changes to content to prevent things such as imitable

behaviour. However, my overall experiences within the animation industry between 2008 to 2015 left me with the impression that the industry was hostile to women. I felt that due to the nature of animation work, which was often project based, self-employed with little long term job security, meant that the barriers to re-entry as a new parent were too high. The nature of my abrupt departure from industry also made me reluctant to be in that same vulnerable position and the search for an appropriate research question has led me to an area that I was initially reluctant to investigate due to my own first hand experiences in the industry. Jane Agee (2009) notes that 'Some qualitative researchers, especially those who write about grounded theory, recommend waiting until one is in the field and collecting data to fully develop research questions,' (Agee, 2019, p.432). I was certainly overwhelmed with narratives of challenges within the industry and eventually, part of the motivations of this project became to investigate whether other women, and in particular women of colour felt that the industry had created barriers to entry, progression and re-entry and if so, whether this has shaped the industry and content it produces. Eventually, this was broadened to all the protected characteristics under the Equality Act.

During this time, I was also able to attend many events that focused on representation in the animation industry and have proved useful to this thesis. At the Mend the Gap event organised by Escape Studios, the gap between animation university graduates was debated with representatives from academia, studios and Animation UK, the trade body for animation. Whilst this felt more like an understanding gap between academia and studios, I was left with the impression that certain studios were hostile to UK graduates, with Nexus Studio openly professing a preference to go abroad to see graduate shows rather than visiting UK graduate shows. This impression that they did not have time or capacity in a competitive global field to take on UK students who they felt were less equipped than French graduates was affirmed by colleagues at Central Saint Martins. This was echoed by research completed by Middlesex University who organised a 'Listening Tour' between universities and studios to bridge this gap (McCaffrey and Healey, 2018). I spent a great deal of time researching barriers to entry into the industry and how this started at university, with this perceived skills gap between university and industry. I questioned whether these factors influenced equality, diversity, and inclusion

by impacting who is entering into the industry and therefore shaping content. These opinions have evolved with the passage of time, and the repercussions of Brexit and COVID. I attended diversity events organised by Animated Women UK, BECTU, the broadcast union, BAFTA, the London International Film Festival, Encounters Film Festival, Westminster Media Forum and the Manchester Animation Festival who held an educating animators conference day. These events also afforded an opportunity to speak informally to several industry leaders who provided insight into the industry. The aims of this research have emerged slowly from conversations with representatives from Animation UK, We Are Stripes, ACCESS:VFX and from being a part of BECTU's Animation and VFX Branch and its Black Members Branch. I moved on from questions around female representation in the animation industry and looked at factors that were shaping the animation industry. I spoke to Kate O'Connor at Animation UK, a trade lobby group for the animation industry and Tom Box, co-founder of Blue Zoo, a BAFTA winning studio who had published the 50/50 gender ratio at their studio. I was interested in the story behind Animation UK and the Animation Tax Relief 2015, where a small group of animators successfully lobbied the government to include tax reliefs for animation as part of its budget announcement, which led me to explore how government interventions had impacted the animation industry. As well as considering the Equality Act, I explored how the animation industry had responded to the 2003 Communications Act and the Digital Economy Act in 2017. These two pieces of legislation have had a significant impact on broadcasters' responsibilities and regulatory oversight. However, at this point, my research question was still evolving and as a result my research branched into multiple overlapping areas.

Agee (2009) warns that 'The reflective and interrogative processes required for developing effective qualitative research questions can give shape and direction to a study in ways that are often underestimated. Good research questions do not necessarily produce good research, but poorly conceived or constructed questions will likely create problems that affect all subsequent stages of a study,' (Agee, 2009, p.432). This was certainly the case at this stage of my own research, where I focussed a lot of my efforts on researching how government legislation and intervention had shaped the animation industry which overlapped but detracted from a focussed study of representation in



industry. Mariam Attia and Julian Edge (2017) note that 'reflexivity involves a process of on-going mutual shaping between researcher and research' and the broad nature of my research meant that the thesis required a framework by which to examine representation (Attia and Edge, 2017, p.33). Consequently, this exploratory phase of investigation led me to the following conclusion: the Equality Act 2010, and the nine protected characteristics discussed within it, presented an important framework through which to investigate on-screen and industry representation.

Once the framework had been established, this thesis selected preschool animated content to examine. Whilst I initially considered British animation features, it was my work experience within industry and my experiences as a new parent that informed the decision to focus on preschool television series animation. By this time, my daughter was three and I was forced at times to utilise television as a tool to complete essential tasks, effectively using it as an electronic babysitter. I discovered I was far from alone in this respect, and there was a body of literature around this topic. Robin Nabi and Marina Krcmar (2016) explained that whilst parental motivation for letting children watch television includes benefits for the child whether to help them relax, as a reward or because they enjoy it, parents were also motivated by the desire to have some time alone. Nabi and Krcmar were referring to television before the rise of video on demand services when letting children watch television alone did not involve leaving children in front of unregulated content from providers such as YouTube and TikTok. There is evidence that children as young as five and six are able to access inappropriate content such as the violent South Korean series *Squid Games* on Netflix (BBC, 2021). My own daughter's primary school was forced to send out letter to parents warning them that children in Year 1 (five and six year olds) had claimed to watched *Venom*, *Squid Games*, *Black Panther* and played the game *Among Us* all of which have an age rating of 15 (Appendix: Email 1).

Georgina Bentley *et al.*, (2016) also recorded parents who used screen time as a way of pacifying children away from them, allowing parents to sleep more in the morning and allowing parents to have some 'quiet time'. Ine Beyens and Amy Eggermont (2014) note that television has a long history as an electronic baby-sitter. Ellen Wartella *et al.*, (2013) noted that between 69-81% of parents used television whilst they were doing chores. Marina Krcmar and

Drew Cingal (2014) also reported that one of the motivations for letting children watch media was that it meant parents could get on with chores. Georgina Bentley *et al.*, (2016) reported that parents use it as a reward, its removal as a punishment and sometimes as a pacifier to calm children down. Jenny Radesky *et al.*, (2015) warns about the potential dangers this has in terms of children not being able to self-regulate their behaviour and moods and 'detrimental to later social-emotional outcomes when used as the principal way in which children are taught to calm themselves down'. They also highlighted that there is a paucity of research around whether children who employ screen time to regulate their distress have better or worse outcomes in the long term. All of these sources predate the significant rise of alternate platforms such as Netflix, YouTube, TikTok. However, as the literature review of age revealed, even CBeebies has broadcast content that had inappropriate depictions of age that need to be at the very least mediated by co-viewing.

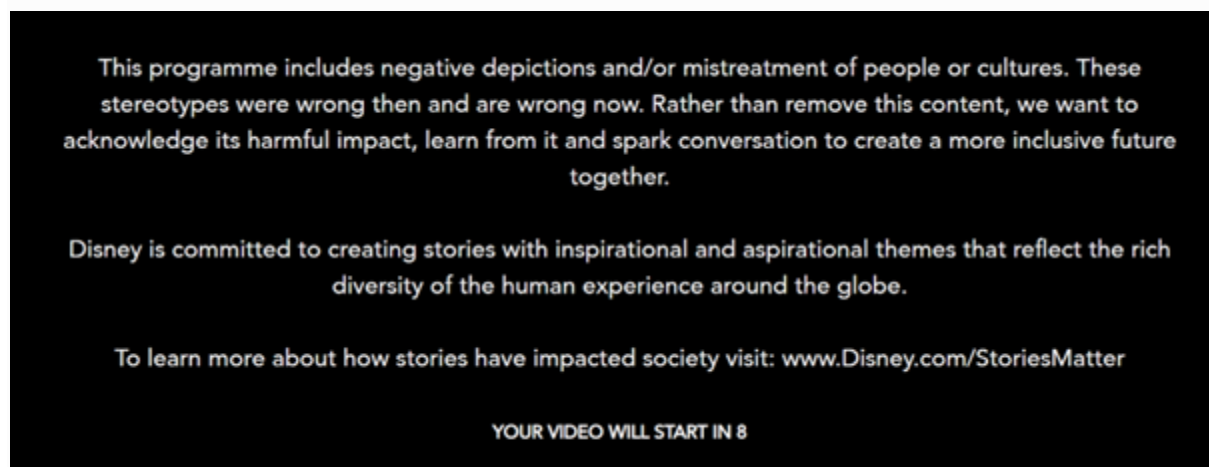
Whilst all these reasons are perfectly understandable, it highlights that children are often being left to watch television unmonitored. This is supported by media literacy reports from Ofcom, the broadcast regulator. The first media literacy report that Ofcom authored which included data on 3–4-year-olds was published in 2012. Looking at this data gives an indication of how the digital landscape has changed in the last eight years. In 2012, the majority (97%) of 3-4 year-olds watched television programmes on a TV set, but 18% watched TV programmes on a device other than a TV set, including 12% on a PC, laptop or netbook and 7% on a games console or player. These methods of watching television were not even included in the 2019 report and have been replaced with smartphones and tablets. The 2012 report did mention that 6% of 3-4 year olds watched television on a tablet computer which is less than the 36% that use them in 2019 and the 24% that own their own tablets. The data also suggest that a third (33%) of 3-4 year olds have a television in their bedroom and 53% use a DVR (Ofcom, 2012, p.3). The 2021 report does not give any indication of how many children currently have a television or device they take or have in their bedroom, however evidence from YouGov. Indicates that 10% of children aged six have a smartphone, 40% have their own tablet aged 6 (YouGov, 2020). Although the latest report does not mention how many children own a television set in their room, it does say that 15% have a tablet

that they can take into bed with them. This would indicate that a considerable number of children are watching television alone.

There are several problems with children watching television alone or watching channels that contain inappropriate material, including that children are potentially being exposed to age-inappropriate material. Whilst Ofcom has regulatory oversight over public service broadcasters (PSB) channels, other channels such as Amazon, Netflix and YouTube are independent and therefore unregulated by any authority. Ofcom hopes that consumers will turn to PSBs for children's programming rather than alternative viewing platforms such as Netflix, Amazon Prime and YouTube. Ofcom argues that 'while online platforms, such as video sharing sites and social media, offer flexibility and access to a wide range of content, they also pose greater risks to children. This is because these providers operate under a much lower level of regulation in the UK than broadcasters', (Ofcom, 2018, p.2). Ofcom hopes that by strengthening the content that is provided by PSBs, there is less interest in accessing these platforms for which there is little or no responsible oversight and that PSBs are increasingly seen as a safe and informative platform for content. CBeebies (no date) proclaim that 'On all platforms we must preserve our reputation as a safe place for children. Tried, tested, trusted'. In contrast, YouTube has been accused in the national press of 'infrastructural violence' against children and allowing 'sadistic' material to multiply on their site (Hern, 2018; BBC, 2017). A report authored by Dubit and Hopster (2019), highlighted several examples of inappropriate programmes, including an animated episode of Tom and Jerry, featuring African American housemaid, Mama Two Shoes, which was made available on Amazon Prime Video and YouTube.

However, Ofcom's own figures show that there have been significant changes in viewership. In 2012, 11% of 3-4 year olds used on demand services. In 2019 this figure was up to 65%. On demand service Netflix was only launched that year in 2012, and two years later Amazon Prime video was launched in 2014 (Spangler, 2021). Viewing habits changed dramatically in 2020 in response to COVID-19. Ofcom (2020) reported that 'among children aged 3-11, Disney+ was used in a third of homes (32%) by June – overtaking BBC iPlayer which saw use among these children fall from 26% to 22% during the spring,' (Spangler, 2021; Ofcom, 2020) It also reported that despite its recent launch date, March 2020 – just as the UK went into the first COVID

lockdown, within months it became the UK's third most popular streaming service. Even before its launch, Disney was exemplified by its willingness to embrace technological advancements. Chris Pallant (2011) refers to Disney's engagement to develop 'existing technologies to a fractionally higher standard or capitalising on emergent ones and then using them to enhance the Studios animation and reputation,' (Pallant, 2011, p.27). Whilst the statement predates the launch of Disney +, Disney's decision to release their own streaming service has followed a history of investing into new areas. However, it has not been without its problems and as Disney+ has made available to children a back catalogue of films which have been accused of perpetuating racist stereotypes. These include *Dumbo* (1941) *Lady and the Tramp* (1955), *The Jungle Book* (1967), *Peter Pan* (1953), *Aristocats* (1970), *Swiss Family Robinson* (1960). Whilst it contains a content warning, it is not clear how many children accessing those films can read the warning, bother to read the warning or understand the wording which is only available for 12 seconds and is available below:



*(Disney+, Lady and The Tramp)*

All of this highlights the problems associated with children watching television alone and from unregulated sources. Allowing children to watch content from video on demand services goes against recommendations from several sources that speak to the benefits and importance of parents and carers watching television with their children socially and to monitor content. Kühhirt and Klein (2020) reveal that parents who actively co-view with their

children exhibit more 'attention and responsiveness' to media exposure. They identified negative associations between the amount of television children were exposed to and the quantity and quality of parent-child interactions. Taggart, Eisen and Lillard (2019) point out that it is not simply children's content itself that needs to be examined, but 'the context within which they encounter it'. The RCPCH (2018a) released a fact sheet for parents concerned about screen time and asked them to produce a family media plan for children and adults, asking them to consider their own screen consumption. Dias and Brito (2017) call parents role models, gatekeepers, companions and supervisors. Chassiakos *et al.*, (2016) call for parents to develop a 'Family Media Use Plan' for their families to actively manage children's media diet to ensure a healthy diet, enough sleep, promote physical activity and positive social interaction. Bentley *et al.*, (2016) talk about parental rule setting as a significant factor in limiting children's screen time. Jago *et al.*, (2013) also pointed to the lack of research around parents sitting with children and collaboratively producing rules around screen time. Rasmussen *et al.*, (2017) argued that children who watch television with their parents display higher levels of empathy, self-efficacy, and emotion recognition and posited that 'the mere presence of a co-viewing parent is sufficient to alter children's processing of television messages' and that children were more motivated to learn when parents were around (Science Daily, 2017). The idea of parents as role models is echoed by Anderson *et al.*, (2017) who recommend that clinicians talk to parents about their own media use and how they reflect this to their children. Jago *et al.*, (2013) surveyed 237 parents in the UK and found that children whose parents watched over two hours of television a day were five times more likely to watch two hours of television a day themselves. They concluded that access to screen media and parental self-efficacy were key to reducing the number of hours of television that children watched. Bleakley, Jordan and Hennessy (2013) record benefits that include a way for family members to bond with each other and something to talk about with their children as well as being a strategy used to promote media literacy and to reduce exposure to age-inappropriate content.

All of this became the auto ethnographic ignition, the priming process that led to quantitative content analysis and qualitative textual analysis of popular preschool animation programmes. Whilst, this thesis moved into a

more formal data analysis, it was this initial multifaceted ethnography and auto ethnography that was the fuel that drove this thesis towards that final process. Geoffrey Walford (2018) argues that qualitative research needs numerical data to fully understand the context of people's experiences. Walford's notes on how 'The effects of social class, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and so on can only be fully studied if information on these variables is seen as valuable data by ethnographers and some sort of researcher numerical data is generated,' were especially relevant to this research (Walford, 2018, p.131). My own assumptions as a parent to a small child on the suitability of programmes we regularly viewed and enjoyed were brought into question once the primary data collection was finalised. The importance of this data cannot be overstated as without it, it is simply not possible to have an accurate picture of diversity in British preschool animation.

Gillian Rose mentions that visual research methods can provide data that other methods such as surveys and interviews do not (Rose, 2014, p.7). Rose defines visual data material as 'part of the process of generating evidence in order to explore research question,' (Rose, 2014, p.2). She draws attention to its increasing use in research and links this to its increasing importance in contemporary social and cultural practice (Rose, 2014, p.2). This thesis relied heavily on visual research methods. All of the primary data which was used to interrogate Research Objective One was gathered through watching depictions of characters in animation presented on-screen. All of the data investigating Research Objective Two, participation within the industry, was also gathered from visual research methods through on-screen credits. Whilst other traditional sources have been used to inform the literature review and methodology, it is the animation on-screen that has generated all of the primary data. I chose this approach in order to have a definitive data set that could not be procured by other methods such as interviews and survey data which I felt was too subjective for the research question and objectives.

The approach to data collation used by this thesis builds on the work of Bandura and Gerbner and is a natural extension of these methods which are also used by contemporary researchers such as the Annenberg Institute and other researchers mentioned within the literature review. Rose shares that within visual research methods that there is a 'hegemony of an implicit methodology,' (Rose, 2012, p.2). Rose (2012) also draws attention to the

limitations of using visual data. These depictions on-screen are inherently influenced by the creators, the viewers and the context in which they are viewed. She refers to them as 'communicational tools rather than representational texts,' (Rose, 2012, p.2). Whilst other forms of data collation were considered and this thesis did employ a mixed methods approach, the basic content analysis (essentially a headcount method of gathering information around depictions on-screen) remains the most effective method of gathering data on representations on-screen. However, there is an argument made throughout this thesis that this type of data analysis is limited and that is why other types of analysis have also been conducted. In order to counter Rose's criticisms of a lack of interest around plurality, this thesis also offers a narrative analysis of *Peppa Pig*, as well as several case studies which interrogate areas such as Religion, and Sexual orientation in different ways. Additionally, this thesis gathered information on participation within the industry by examining the credits of the crew who were employed in the creation of the animation. This can be viewed as a combination of basic content analysis, an interpretive content analysis and a qualitative content analysis as defined by James Drisko and Tina Maschi (2015).

One significant factor in data gathering that has not been discussed is context. Marcus Banks reminds us that photography and film have been used to record society since the early 20th century (Banks, 1995). However, he confirms that these are not necessarily an accurate encoding of society, but instead 'subject to the influences of their social, cultural and historical contexts of production and consumption,' (Banks, 1995, no pagination). Rose echoes this sentiment, stating that any type of visual rendering is 'never innocent', and that they inherently interpret the world (Rose, 2001, p.6). Rose defines this distinction as the difference between vision and visuality. This thesis not only acknowledges these differences, but is interrogating why on-screen depictions are the way they are within the industry and wider social context. For instance, when examining the differences in male and female representation depictions on-screen, this thesis has examined participation within the industry to understand if this is an influencing factor. Rose also examines the work of Donna Haraway who shares that the hierarchy of race, class and sexuality depicted on-screen is a result of the 'oppressions and tyrannies of capitalism, colonialism, patriarchy and so on,' (Rose, 2001, p.9).

With all this in mind, content analysis seemed the most objective way in which to gather data around depictions and participation of people within the protected characteristics. The data that was collated was stratified, as I watched each episode within an entire series (Rose, 2001, p.57). Other content analyses shared within the literature review were either random episodes from a series, or three from each season, or in one example given - an overview of all children's programming available to view within a predetermined time period. By watching an entire series, this thesis acknowledges that the number of minutes viewed varies from programme to programme. The coding for these programmes was based on the framework supplied by the Equality Act with additional categories identified through the process of data collection. This was completed initially manually as this was more reactive to the speed of the data collection and then recorded digitally and is available within the Appendices A1 - A3. This data was then compared to another value, the census data. This data was presented using Prezi, to present the data in a more visually comprehensible manner. Additionally, there was a need to gather qualitative narrative and thematic analysis, through reflexivity as part of the data analysis. The analysis of the data was set out against the research objectives and utilised both the primary data and secondary sources to present conclusions and offer insights into representation of the protected characteristics.

Whilst submitting this as the foundation for the content analysis, there are several biases and shortcomings that I as the researcher bring to the analyses. In terms of consumption, whilst this data was collated by myself, as an adult with a background in animation, the natural audience for this programming is preschool children. Whilst my own child was in preschool at the time of the data collection, this data was not gathered with her. Therefore, there was no observational data around whether children drew the same conclusions as I did - for instance around negative male portrayals in *Peppa Pig* and an absence of employed females in *Sarah & Duck*. The data was gathered using VOD services, meaning that episodes were watched one after the other, often without breaks. These programmes are likely to be consumed in a myriad of different contexts, including being watched whilst children are employed in different tasks, or perhaps whilst the television has been left on in the background, at homes, schools, cars etc. I instead watched intently, repeatedly, deliberately and as an individual. This is echoed by Toby Miller who argues that



researchers fail to question whether 'occasionality' has any influence, and gives examples of watching films on dvd as opposed to the cinema, watching alone versus communal watching, or in an office or study (Miller in Rose, 2012). Additionally, there are natural biases that occur from watching this material as a woman of colour, and ones that I cannot experience such as disability.

Mansfield *et al.*, (2015) shares that methods might not be inherently gendered, but feminist questions should infuse all parts of the research. Whilst I have given each protected equal attention in terms of the data collation, it is accurate that Representation of Sex forms a chapter of its own, whilst other chapters combine data from several protected characteristics. This reflects the amount of data that can be gathered from the programmes around the characteristics and the proportional representation of these characteristics against the census data. It could also be argued that my own position as a female researcher has influenced these decisions. However, the feminist epistemological gaze has promoted not only an interrogation of how females are portrayed on-screen but also enabled research into negative male portrayals on-screen. The benefit of the feminist gaze is that this lends itself to being aware that representation is about more than depictions on-screen, but the nature of these depictions. Without it, an analysis of the same data might conclude that equality, diversity and inclusion do exist as the numbers of men and women on-screen are equal. However, if these representations have women as homemakers and secondary characters, then that is not equity.

Additionally, the findings from all of the primary data have been shared through visual representations of data. Within each chapter, I have shared images from different programming to highlight key points. The use of visual data in this thesis is an attempt to draw large data sets into an informative, concise format for fellow researchers and one that could be potentially shown to industry in an accessible manner. Other researchers have used similar means to share their data with industry (Smith, Pieper and Wheeler, 2023).

Roger Silverstone referred to television as an 'ontological and phenomenological reality,' (Silverstone, 1994, p.2). Silverstone argues that television provides what he terms as an 'ontological security' through its routine and presence in everyday life (Silverstone, 1994, p.19). Silverstone shares that any analysis of television should be completed through the interrogations 'of ontology and individual psychology, domestic and suburban

spaces, and industrial and technological structures, all of which are related, both in their collusion and contradiction, through the dynamics of consumption,' (Silverstone, 1994, preface). This leads to questions of constructivist challenges to the relevance of television consumption and its effects on audiences. Constructivism dictates that learning is achieved through active and not passive means. However, Silverstone argues that there is a natural tension between what is meant by passive and active audiences and the 'ontological difference between activity and passivity,' (Silverstone, 1995, p.144). Drawing on the work of Denis McQuail, mediation within television is expressed as both 'limited and motivated by complicated forces in society by complex and interacting forces in society and in the personal biography of the individual,' (McQuail in Silverstone, 1995, p.143). Silverstone also discusses the mediation process between media and the audience, and the active way that images on-screen are deciphered. Any discussion on deciphering and interpreting images lends itself towards semiotics. John Fiske's works on semiotics within television drew on semiology's history through Peirce and Saussure and what he terms as 'the essential developments and mediation' of Roland Barthes (Fiske, 1985, p.176). Roland Barthes described images as an 'emanation of a past reality', (Barthes, 1980, p.88). Fiske shares that Barthes and others were not interested in television and therefore the application of their works to television are open to interpretations (Fiske, 1985, p.176). This thesis employed a semiotic content analysis for all programming, and a narrative linguistic analysis to examine key areas in greater depth, such as representations of maternity. Daniel Chandler refers to the tensions of using semiotics within a quantitative data analysis, as has been done within this thesis as images are used as codes for Sex, behaviours and fat - shaming amongst other visual interpretations (Chandler, 1994, no pagination). Semiotics plays a key role within the analysis of religious representation of Christmas, with each episode recording instances of Christmas imagery such as a Christmas tree. Chandler reminds us that within the definition of semiotics across all disciplines is the idea that images are produced within not just their intentional communication 'but also with our ascription of significance to anything in the world,' (Chandler, 1994, no pagination). Chandler adopted a constructivist approach to children's television watching and also termed the phrase socially-inflicted constructivism (Chandler, 1997, p.66). In their

examination of the Piaget constructivist model and its application to a child's learning, Paour noted that 'In fact, according to the constructivist position, it is the subject who is, in the last instance, the actual builder of his own knowledge and therefore is ultimately responsible for its progressive transformation: the child understand, learns and develops as a function of his own activity which depends itself upon his prior knowledge,' (Paour, 1990, p.179). This thesis proposes that it is rhizomatic learning that is most applicable to this thesis. The term rhizomes within this context originated from French post structuralist and philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. In their work, *A thousand plateaus* they use the rhizome as a metaphor for the complex journey in which a learner travels, bringing their own knowledge and thoughts and these evolving continually. It has been described as 'continuously spreading and self-replicating in a 'nomadic' style to reconceptualise sense-making,' (HEA, no date). Rhizomatic thinking has been applied to early years pedagogy and contexts before and it has been argued that 'knowledge generation becomes negotiable, not codified by what and how to learn,' (Cliffe and Solvason, 2016, no pagination). Within this context, that would indicate that children's learning is not contained to traditional spheres of school, but to the environment that they are immersed in. The thesis argues that television forms a part of that environment, and is another influencing factor on children's perceptions of the people that they encounter.

### **3.3 Methodology: Primary Data collection**

This thesis gathered data through a quantitative semiotic content analysis and narrative qualitative data analysis from programmes that had won a BAFTA in the Preschool Animation category. Whilst these programmes are compared to each other, it is also the changes in representation over time that are being investigated. This thesis is not judging each show by how popular or commercially successful it is. This thesis is interested in investigating whether television is reflective of British society and as a result equality, diversity and inclusion. A total of 1668 minutes, or 27.8 hours of programming was examined in detail.

The following BAFTA winning programmes were chosen: *Peppa Pig* (winner of the Preschool Animation in 2005, 2011 and 2012), *Charlie and Lola* (2007 and 2008), *Timmy Time* (2010 and 2013), *Sarah & Duck* (2014) and

*Numberblocks* (2019) and in addition, *JoJo and Gran Gran* (2020) which was broadcast in 2020 after the BAFTA awards were paused in 2020 to enable BAFTA to review the children's award (BAFTA, 2020). *Peppa Pig* and *Charlie and Lola* were selected as they pre date the Equality Act. This would allow the thesis to examine representation to see if the Equality Act had any impact on representation within children's preschool animated programming. Where the content analysis revealed no representation of a particular characteristic within the programme, I selected a case study of a similar programme in order to conduct a thematic analysis of that episode. An example would be LGBTQI+ representation. As there was no representation of the characteristic within the original set of programmes I had selected, I chose an episode of the pre-school animation *Arthur* which featured his teacher, Mr Ratburn, marrying his partner Patrick. This episode was then examined in the context of LGBTQI+ representation and is available to a British audience through BBC iPlayer.

### **Data Gathering Methods**

All of the original data analysis is available in the Appendices in section A1, A2 and A3. Using a semiotic coding approach, I initially coded my spreadsheet into the following headings taken from the Equality Act: Male and Female (Sex), Race, Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment and Religious Belief. Semiotics is used here as each depiction of a character is a symbol of a person occupying that particular characteristic, for instance a person who is shown to be in a wheelchair is a signifier for a disabled person. My aim was to record the number of characters that represented each of these characteristics.

Season and Episode Name were for record keeping and so that I could go back to episodes if I needed to.

I started with *Peppa Pig* and did an initial data collection, which resulted in some reflexive changes to the data collation. One of these was the inclusion of data around Male and Female characters speaking on-screen. I also started including the abbreviations of characters that were on-screen. For *Peppa Pig*, I also included data around negative representations around Males, which was unique to this programme. Once this was finished, the same data collection method was utilised for all of the programmes and characteristics, with the exception of the case studies that were selected for those characteristics which

showed no representation. These will be explained in more detail shortly. Starting with *Peppa Pig*, I entered the following values in columns into Google Sheets:

Season	As all the shows had more than one season, it was important to record which season had been recorded. I always chose the season from which the BAFTA award winning episode had been chosen. Initially I intended to watch every season of <i>Peppa Pig</i> , to see how the programme had progressed from 2005 to 2020, to see if there were any changes across the seasons of the programme and to see if they were progressively more diverse and inclusive. The problem with this approach is that it deals only with one programme, produced by one creative team and not necessarily reflective of the British animation industry. I realised that it would be preferable to view different programmes over time, rather than different seasons of the same show, therefore broadening the scope of the thesis.
Episode Name	This was noted to keep a record of which episode contained which storylines and for record keeping. I watched each episode at least once, pausing the programme frequently to allow time for notes.
Characters	Here, all the male and female characters were noted using their initials, whether they had speaking roles or not, and included background characters where this was possible. There were some crowd scenes, such as in <i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i> that were so fast, that it is possible that a small number of background characters were missed. I did pause and or rewind the episodes multiple times in order to collate these as accurately as possible. Characters were all abbreviated, with a key for each show contained within the comments section of the spreadsheet. For example, Daddy Pig became DP in <i>Peppa Pig</i> , Soren Lorenson became SL in <i>Charlie and Lola</i> . This would allow me to see if any characters featured more heavily than others.
Female	Here a numerical record of how many females were on-screen were counted, this included background characters.

Male	As above, this was simply the total number of male characters on-screen.
Speaking	As with the 'characters' field, here all of the male and female characters who were speaking were noted using their abbreviated forms. This revealed some interesting observations, such as Grandad Pig appearing on-screen but not speaking in a number of episodes.
Female	In this column, the total number of female characters who were speaking were recorded numerically.
Male	As above.
Race	Here, the thesis was interested in seeing what races were depicted and whether there was any diversity in characters on-screen. <i>Peppa Pig</i> is populated with characters that are animals, which might be an argument for how difficult it is to show race, however in later seasons they do have a French character, Delphine Donkey who visits with her family which could have been a simple way to include race in this earlier season. However, it would be difficult to see how a non-verbal, anthropomorphised show like <i>Timmy Time</i> could display diversity of race.

Age	<p>This thesis noted the number of characters that were noticeably older and if there were any negative portrayals, I noted these within the comments section next to the episode. Robinson and Howatson-Jones (2013) detailed that negative perceptions around age could include ‘loss of capacity, losing power, unattractive, needing help, foolish, eccentric, unsuccessful, lacking common sense, helpless, an object of ridicule, sexually neutral, evil, sinister, incompetent, grumpy, passive, angry, senile, crazy, villainous, and not respected,’ (Robinson and Howatson-Jones, 2014). Whilst this section was not coded under these headings, by being aware of what were perceived as negative perceptions, I made a note of the nature of the interactions. I also made notes on positive interactions, for instance where older people were displayed as active and helpful and also made a note of the type of activity they were engaged with on-screen.</p>
Disability	<p>This thesis interrogated whether there were any characters that had a disability, and how those disabilities were represented. In the comments section, information on the nature of this inclusion was noted. For example, in <i>JoJo and Gran Gran</i>, where there was a character that was disabled, this was entered in as 1, and then in the comments section it was noted ‘Black male adult animated background character wheelchair’ or ‘White male boy live action speaking character’. I wanted to see what age group’s disability was represented. By being reactive to the data I was collating, I was able to make qualitative notes that formed the basis of the original qualitative discussions within each chapter.</p>
Sexual Orientation	<p>Here, I was particularly interested to see if there were any same sex parents, or any other indications that the programme was seeking to be more inclusive by including characters that represented anyone from the LGBTQI+ community.</p>

Marriage/Civil partnership	Here I did not include characters whose marriage is inferred, such as Peppa Pig's parents or grandparents as it was not conclusively clear that they were married. However, in <i>JoJo and Gran Gran</i> , there was a wedding photo on the wall and that was counted as a depiction of marriage.
Gender reassignment	I did not expect this to be represented in preschool animation although there is programming available on CBBC which is aimed at children aged 6+. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.
Religion/belief	Here I wanted to see if there was any diversity in the types of religion or beliefs that the characters had, whether this was mentioned at all or not. I was looking for any characters walking by a church or synagogue or wearing a turban or a headscarf. For example, <i>JoJo and Gran Gran</i> had one person that appeared in the opening title sequence of the programme with a headscarf, which was not counted as it was hard to spot to a casual viewer and not specific enough to warrant recording in the content review.
Pregnancy	Here, I wanted to see if programming depicted pregnant women in a negative light, for instance as if they were physically incapable, treated as invalids, singled out, stereotyped as having strange cravings etc.



M Negative	<p>Whilst examining each of the shows, it became important to be responsive to the data and add more columns for investigation where appropriate. For <i>Peppa Pig</i> the following two columns were added. As my analysis of <i>Peppa Pig</i> continued, a pattern emerged where male characters were displayed as being aggressive, scary, incompetent or at the receiving end of taunts, such as fat or greedy. These innocuous portrayals presented as a form of comedy, started to accumulate over the course of 52 episodes. Initially, these were recorded as notes in the comments section against each episode name to describe in more detail what had happened. Eventually, I decided to add this as a column and to put a numerical value next to each one. Whilst this column was included for subsequent programmes, it was not relevant for other programmes.</p>
F Negative	<p>This was only entered in response to adding a column labelled M Negative, to see if there were any overtly negative portrayals against female characters. Within <i>Peppa Pig</i>, although there were some subtle differences, such as Mummy Pig always reading a book and not a newspaper, or Miss Rabbit doing a lot of small gig economy type work, whereas male characters were portrayed as having full time professional work, however there were no instances of females being scary, aggressive or being ridiculed.</p>

All episodes were examined using the coding framework set out above. However, where there was a limited amount of data around a particular characteristic, this thesis endeavoured to gather more specific data that might reveal more about on-screen depictions. Within the chapters there was additional semiotic and narrative content analysis on particular episodes. This is detailed below:

Race: Within this section I examined two episodes from both *Charlie and Lola* and *JoJo and Gran Gran*. I examined these using a semiotic and narrative analysis looking for images, words and descriptions that would signify race. For

example, these were identified through the images of cherry blossoms and Japanese architecture in *Sarah & Duck*, and through narrative analysis of words such as 'Alvida' in *Sarah & Duck* and 'Soursop soup' in *JoJo and Gran Gran*.

Age: Three episodes were chosen *Sarah & Duck* and *Charlie and Lola* in order to examine depictions of race. These were examined against coding evolved from research detailed within the literature review and through reflexive viewing. For instance, within *Sarah & Duck* whilst there were plenty of both positive representations of Age, there were some negative depictions that correlated with established coding such as the humiliation of older female characters. With *JoJo and Gran Gran* the positive depictions of race were identified through semiotics such as the great grandmother ice skating and narrative analysis such as the same character wanting to be active and not rest after a long flight.

Pregnancy and Maternity: In the absence of data from the programmes around these characteristics this thesis provides an auto ethnographic account of my own experience of pregnancy within the industry. This thesis also completed a thematic and narrative analysis of an episode of *Peppa Pig* that was not within the Season selected for this thesis. This episode examines stereotypes of pregnant women such as eating strange combinations of food and 'baby brain'.

Sexual Orientation: As there was no data gathered around this, this thesis identified another preschool animation series available to British audiences, *Arthur*. Again, a semiotic, narrative analysis was employed to identify and stereotypes.

Religious Belief: As there were no representations of religion at all within the episodes selected, this thesis selected all of

The limitations of the approach that this thesis takes is available within the Chapter 7: Conclusion, section 7.3 *Limitations of the Study*. This section shares the limitations of using the headcount method, primarily that this records equality but not equity which is the ultimate goal for fair representation. It also shares the limitations of using just one season of a series, which doesn't give scope for a series' attempts to become more representative over time. Other limitations include using series that are BAFTA winning which means they have been vetted by an adult audience, whereas the most popular programmes should have been chosen. Additionally, a

reminder that whilst informal interviews were foundational to this study, and my gratitude to these voices has been included in the acknowledgements, most interviewees within the industry were reluctant to have their opinions and experiences recorded as Case Studies within this thesis. This was because of concerns that this might affect their employment within industry and there might be some negative consequences as a result of being honest about issues within industry. The problems of ethnography are detailed within Chapter 6 after my own auto ethnographic account of being pregnant whilst working within the animation industry. Ultimately, it was this semiotic and narrative data content analysis which provided an insight into depictions and participation of people within the protected characteristics within the British animation industry. The raw data from the content analysis is all available within the Appendices: A1. The data visualisation is included in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 under the headings Primary Data and within the appendices A1 - A3. The next section details the structure of the thesis and provides an overview of each chapter.

### **3.4 Chapters Structure and Overview**

This section discusses the overview of the remaining chapters. Where some characteristics have been analysed in more detail than other characteristics, this is reflective only on the available literature on the subject and not on their importance. The lack of literature on the topic is reflective of how important it is to highlight their absence within the animation industry both through on-screen depictions and off-screen participation, particularly for the British animation industry.

#### **Chapter Structure**

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 all follow the same structure and have been divided into the following subsections:

##### **1. Primary Data**

This section will reveal the results of the content analysis which was completed on all of the programmes within the six programmes selected for this thesis. In areas where there was no data available, efforts have

been made to find other preschool animation that would reveal representation on-screen.

## **2. Research Objective 1: on-screen Depictions**

### **To what extent do depictions of characters on-screen match the demographic identities of the British population?**

This section answers the research objectives defined in the Introduction. The census data was used as a baseline of what on-screen depictions should look like. This was also examined in terms of improvements through the period 2010 - 2020.

## **3. Research Objective 2: off-screen Participation**

### **Does participation within the industry reflect the demographics of the UK population?**

This section also responds to the research objective that was detailed in the introduction. This is a review of participation within the industry and relies heavily on industry led reports, news reports, and other secondary sources to give an indication of representation within the industry where possible. This is to interrogate what parallels exist between off-screen participation and on-screen depictions.

## **Chapter Overview**

### **Chapter Four: Representations of Sex**

This chapter investigates representations of Sex within all of the six programmes selected within the structure shared above. In order to balance the heavy focus on the lack of female representation on and off-screen, this chapter also provided a case study of the depiction of male character depictions on *Peppa Pig*. This additional semiotic and narrative analysis was collated on the negative portrayals of male characters within the programme. This protected characteristic where on screen depiction are examined alongside off-screen industry participation. This is because it was possible to gather accurate data through on screen credits on who was male or female. It was not possible to gather this for race, age etc.

### **Chapter Five: Race, Age and Disability**

As above, this chapter shared on and off-screen representation within these three protected characteristics. This chapter analysed representation of Race, Age and Disability through primary data as well as additional secondary sources. The section on Race contains additional semiotic content analysis episodes of *Sarah & Duck* which examines how Race is described through cultural signifiers such as cherry blossom, and *JoJo and Gran Gran*, through cultural identifiers such as soursop soup.

## **Chapter Six: Pregnancy and Maternity, Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment, Religious Belief**

This chapter examines the low instances of representation on the remaining characteristics protected under the Equality Act. Each characteristic was examined using the structure named above. Some additional changes were made in order to ensure that the area was still examined thoroughly, despite a lack of primary data available from on-screen depictions. These are outlined briefly below:

### **Pregnancy and Maternity**

Within this section, the absence of industry data available for pregnancy and maternity, meant that it was not possible to find any information on the number of women who remained or left the animation industry after pregnancy. With this in mind, I have provided an auto ethnographic account of pregnancy within the industry without naming the individuals or studio involved, primarily as I have signed an NDA. In addition, this thesis provides a Case Study of an episode of *Peppa Pig* which features a character that is pregnant. For this section, I used a thematic analysis method to look at themes and stereotypes within the episode.

### **Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment**

As primary data from the six chosen programmes was so scarce, this thesis has included a case study from another CBeebies Preschool animation, *Arthur*. Whilst American, it is available to a UK audience and contained the only depiction of a character from the LGBTQI+ community in a preschool animation that this thesis was able to locate.

## **Religious Belief**

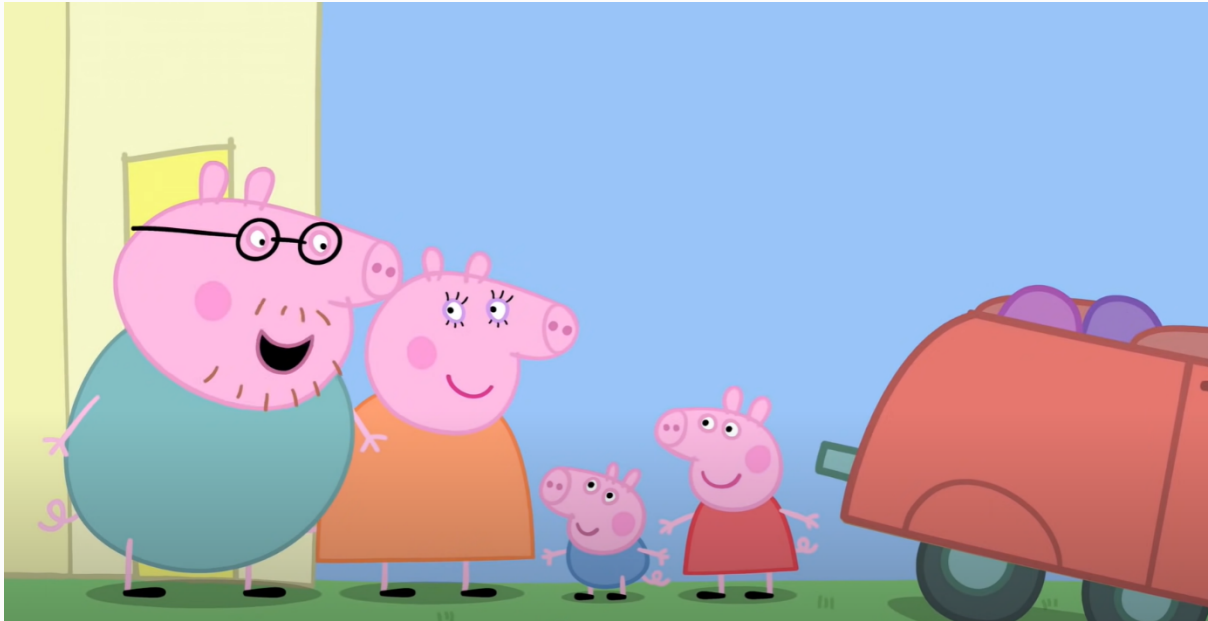
Additionally, as there was no original data on Religious Belief within the programmes selected, this thesis explored the Christmas Specials of the programmes selected instead. This data analysis was slightly different, by looking into Christian iconography and a brief thematic analysis of each episode instead. This was investigated against the backdrop of waning Christian religiosity in Britain.

## **Chapter Six: Conclusion**

### **Research Question: Does equality, diversity and inclusion exist on-screen within contemporary British preschool animation?**

This chapter brings all the discussions around each chapter and characteristics together to answer the research questions and research objectives. It concludes with aspirations for its utility within the screen industries, and in particular within animation.

## Chapter 4: Representations of Sex



*Peppa: What's Windy Castle Daddy?*

*Daddy: It's a castle, on a very high hill!*

*George: Oink Oink!*

*Narrator: George likes castles.*

*Peppa: Oink! Windy Castle sounds like a boring thing for boys.*

*(Peppa Pig, Season 2 Episode 7, Windy Castle)*

*Peppa Pig* does offer examples of positive critique over sex-based values. However, over the course of fifty two episodes, examples such as the one above reveal how unhelpfully limiting representations of sex could influence a young viewer, especially if this episode is watched out of context, out of sequence, or on repeat, which is common viewer behaviour for a child. To engage with this particular subject, this chapter is divided under three headings. The Primary data highlighting the differences between female and male depictions on-screen and participation within the industry is shared on the following three diagrams. The first 1.13 details Female to Male depictions in representation, the second 1.14 contains the same details but for those characters with speaking roles - a vital distinction that helps to understand equity better. Having female characters appear on-screen is not enough, they need to be active depictions and not background characters. The final three

diagrams 1.15, 1.22 and 1.23 detail participation in industry at Writer, Creator and Director level. The next section titled *Sex: Research Objectives One and Two* is unique to this chapter. This is because data was gathered which allowed this research to examine one screen depictions and off-screen industry participation simultaneously. This was not possible for any other other characteristics and provides a unique insight into the affect representation in industry to programming.

The section titled *Sex: Primary Data* also contains additional primary data through a Case Study on male representation within *Peppa Pig*. This was included to balance the focus on female representation in all other areas. It also contains additional data through details on female participation in industry at animator level. Finally, the section titled *Sex: Research Objective* examines participation within the British Animation Industry and examines the considerable amount of data surrounding the challenges that women face in industry.



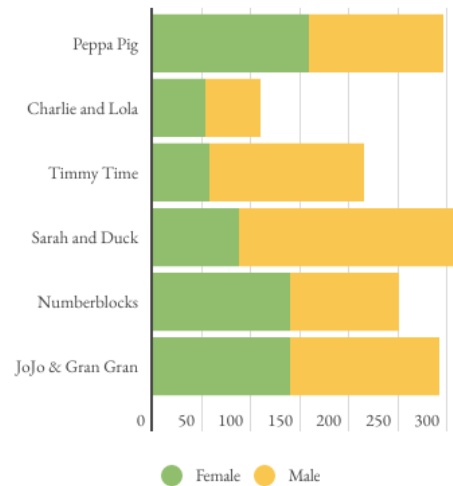
## Sex: Primary Data

Figure 1.13

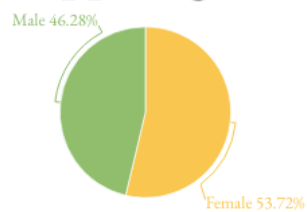
## Female to Male

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, across all six programmes selected.

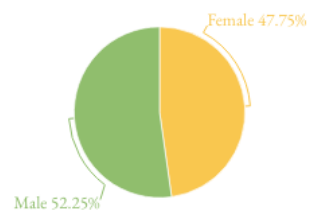
		Female	%	Male	%
1	Peppa Pig	159	54%	137	46%
2	Charlie and Lola	53	48%	57	52%
3	Timmy Time	58	27%	157	73%
4	Sarah and Duck	87	22%	232	78%
5	Numberblocks	139	55%	112	45%
6	JoJo and Gran Gran	140	48%	152	52%
7	<b>Total: 1483</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>847</b>	<b>57%</b>



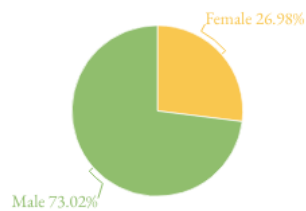
### Peppa Pig



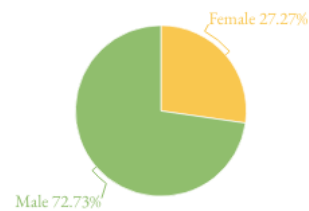
### Charlie and Lola



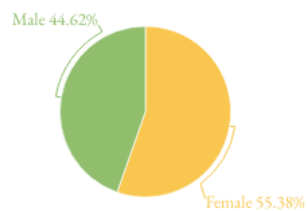
### Timmy Time



### Sarah and Duck



### Numberblocks



### JoJo and Gran Gran

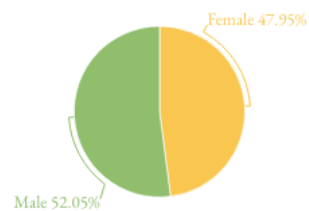
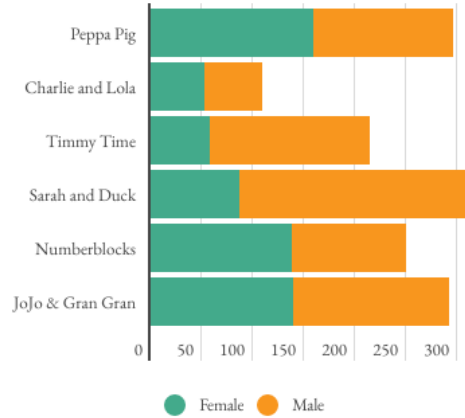


Figure 1.14

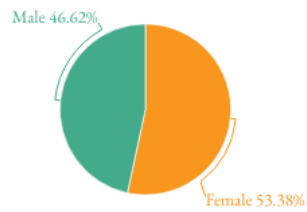
## Female to Male speaking

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that have a speaking role across all six programmes selected.

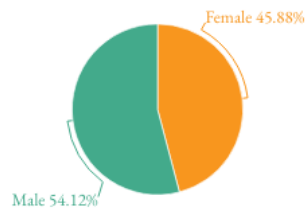
		Female		Male	
1	Peppa Pig	142	53%	124	47%
2	Charlie and Lola	39	46%	46	54%
3	Timmy Time	58	26%	157	73%
4	Sarah and Duck	65	25%	193	75%
5	Numberblocks	139	55%	112	45%
6	Jojo and Gran Gran	26	60%	17	40%
7	Total 1118	469	42%	649	58%



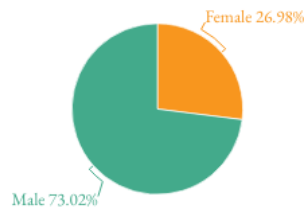
### Peppa Pig



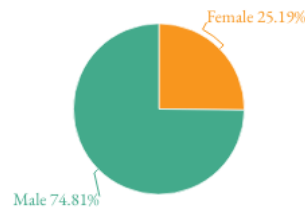
### Charlie and Lola



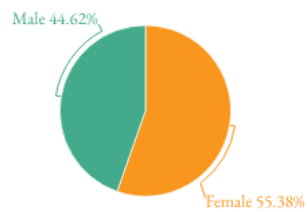
### Timmy Time



### Sarah and Duck



### Numberblocks



### Jojo and Gran Gran

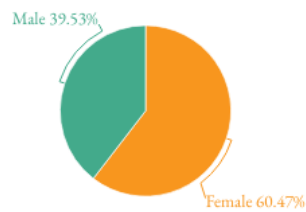


Figure 1.15

## Directors, Writers and Creators

### All programmes

#### Female representation as a Director

53% of directors were women

32% of episodes directed by a woman

#### Female representation as a Writer

40% of writers were women

32% of episodes were written by a woman

#### Female representation as a Creator

44%

Individuals	Female	Male
1. Directors	8	7
2. Writers	25	38
3. Creators	4	5

<b>Total</b>	37	50
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Episodes	Female	Male
1. Directors	88	188
2. Writers	276	589
<b>Total</b>	364	777



● Female Directors, Writers and Creators  
● Males Directors, Writers and Creators



● Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators  
● Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators



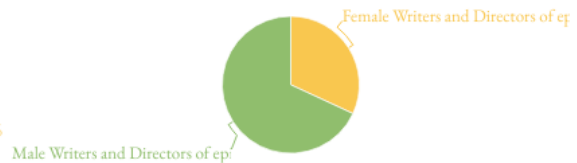
● Female Directors ● Male Directors



● Female Writers ● Male Writers



● Female Creators ● Male Creators



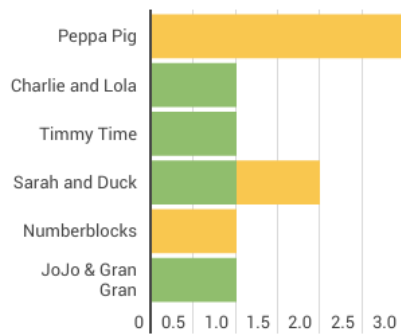
● Female Writers and Directors of episodes  
● Male Writers and Directors of episodes

Figure 1.22

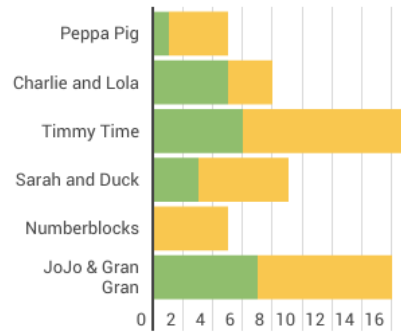
## Creators, Writers and Directors

This page details all of the male and female creators, directors and writers who worked on each programme.

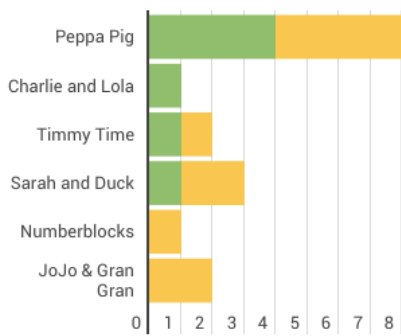
		Female Creators	Male Creators	Female Writer	Male Writer	Female Director	Male Director
1	Peppa Pig	0	3	1	4	4	4
2	Charlie and Lola	1	0	5	3	1	0
3	Timmy Time	1	0	6	11	1	1
4	Sarah and Duck	1	1	3	6	1	2
5	Numberblocks	0	1	0	5	0	1
6	Jojo and Gran Gran	1	0	7	9	0	2
7	Total	4	5	22	38	7	10



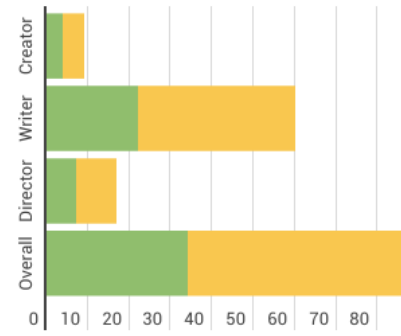
● Female Creators ● Male Creators



● Female Writers ● Male Writers



● Female Writers ● Male Writers



● Female Writers ● Male Writers

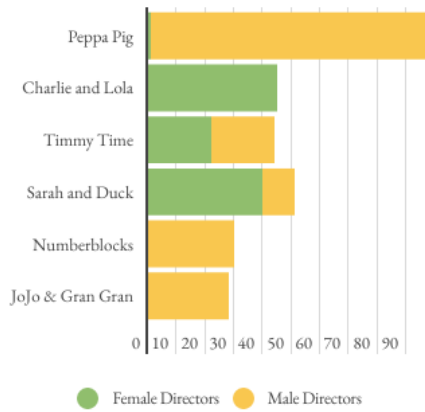
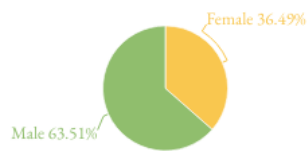
Figure 1.23

## Creators, Writers and Directors

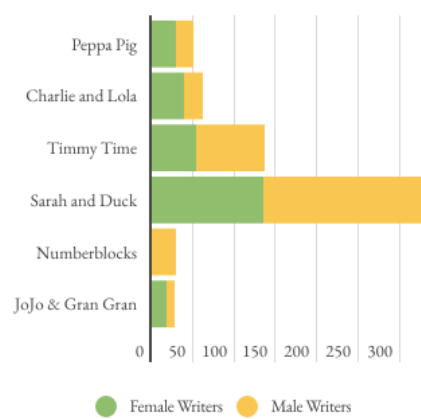
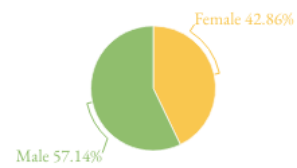
This page details all of the male and female creators, directors and writers who worked on each programme by the number of episodes that they worked on

		Female Director	Male Director	Female Writer	Male Writer
1	<b>Peppa Pig</b>	1	97	30	21
2	<b>Charlie and Lola</b>	45	0	39	22
3	<b>Timmy Time</b>	22	22	54	82
4	<b>Sarah and Duck</b>	40	11	135	204
5	<b>Numberblocks</b>	0	30	0	30
6	<b>Jojo and Gran Gran</b>	0	28	18	9
7	Total	108	188	276	368

### Directors



### Writers



### Case Study: Primary data on male representations in *Peppa Pig*

In order to balance the focus on women in animation, this thesis also covered representations of male characters within *Peppa Pig*. Whilst viewing *Peppa Pig*, it became apparent that male characters were persistently being portrayed as grumpy, aggressive and fat-shamed in a way that other female characters were not. Smaller incidents of cheating, burping, and not being proficient at household tasks also became apparent through this studied viewing. These episodes were noted and then a brief overview of interactions within the episode were noted and are related below. They showed a pattern of negative interactions with male characters:

Episode Name	Negative portrayals of male characters
Daddy Loses his glasses	Daddy Pig (DP) is reading the newspaper; he is called grumpy when he loses his glasses.
Picnic	DP is driving, they make fun of DP as his tummy is too big. He intends to exercise but naps instead. They make fun of him for it.
Windy castle	Peppa says 'Windy castle sounds like a boring thing for boys.' Daddy Pig misreads the map and gets grumpy.
Thunderstorm	Daddy pig gets it wrong, says it will not rain for ages, and then gets drenched. He is ignored while Teddy (a toy) gets all the attention.
Cleaning the car	'Naughty messy daddy' says MP and PP.
Camping	Peppa makes fun of Daddy's tummy.  Daddy pig must sleep outside of the tent as he is too big to fit inside. DP burps - we do not see MP burp in this entire season.
The Sleepy Princess	Daddy Pig is too scary in his storytelling and George cries. DP burps.

Tree House	Secret password is 'Daddy Pig's Big Tummy'. DP is upset and they make fun of Daddy Pig. He is too big to fit through the door - this also happened within the camping episode.
Chloe's Puppet show	Make fun of Uncle Pig and his big tummy - they both fall asleep after lunch and come across as figures of fun.
Daddy gets fit	Children make fun of Daddy and his big tummy. Mummy Pig yells at him to start now. He cheats at his exercise. PP says naughty Daddy. He rides Peppa's bike into a pond. DP is surprised and disappointed to learn that he must exercise every day.
Tidying Up	Daddy Pig reading newspaper, Mummy Pig reading a book. Competition of who tidies first, boys vs girls. DP and G get distracted by a pop-up book and in the meantime and stop tidying up. Peppa tells DP that he is terribly slow at tidying up.
The playground	Children make fun of Daddy's pig tummy again as he gets stuck on the slide, then bounce on him like he is a bouncy castle.
Daddy puts up a picture	Daddy pig puts up the picture - hopeless at DIY. Mummy Pig puts it up in the end. Daddy Pig is a bit pompous about it.



Mister Skinnylegs	Peppa is being very bossy. Both she and George are playing with dolls and the doll's house. George is friends with the spider. Peppa is very scared of the Spider, but later loves him. More fat shaming of daddy pig having eaten all the chocolate biscuits. Daddy Pig fetches Mummy Pig to get rid of the spider. So, it reverses the idea that women are afraid and need rescuing. But again, Daddy Pig is a bit useless and Mummy pig is stepping in to fix things.
Grandpa Pig's Boat	Grandpa Pig is called silly by Granny Pig. Grandad Dog and Grandpa Pig argue with each other - they have a race and Grandpa Dog cheats. They call each other names, Sea Dog, Water Hog, and have a race. Granny questions 'will they ever grow up'. The kids force the grandpas to apologise to each other.
Shopping	Daddy Pig has secretly put a chocolate cake in the shopping, he is embarrassed. Peppa says -'Naughty Daddy!'
Daddy's movie camera	George cries at seeing himself on the TV. Peppa fat shames Daddy - she makes fun of him, does an impression of him and says that he's got a big tummy because of all the cookies he eats.
School Play	Daddy Pig is the only dad to help with lines. Grandad Dog helps with his lines with his mum but is a bit too scary. Suzy and Rebecca both have their mums help them with their lines.  Pedro the hunter is there to rescue Peppa, and he saves Red Riding Hood and the Grandma. Peppa gives him a kiss.

In total, 16 out of 52 episodes had negative portrayals of male characters which amounts to 31% of episodes. Whilst female figures were also portrayed negatively, this was often done in a less overt way. For example, every instance of Peppa fat shaming Daddy Pig can be seen as rude, unkind or mean feeding into stereotypes of females being seen as 'bitchy or bossy,' (McKinnon and O'Connell, 2020). Content studies going back as far as 2008 have commented on the gender-stereotyped portrayal of the 'mean girl', in programming that otherwise professes to empower girls (Behm-Morawitz and Mastro, 2008). It can also be viewed as a stereotype of a female preoccupation with physical appearance. In a study from 2011, anti-fat bias has been identified in groups as young as preschool age (Meers *et al.*, 2011). Whilst this study is ten years old, it is five years after the release of *Peppa Pig*. The study relates that anti-fat bias can present as 'weight-based teasing and social exclusion' both of which Daddy Pig has experienced. The study also reported that children associated being overweight as being lazy, which is certainly an accusation that is levelled at Daddy Pig in numerous episodes. This behaviour or statements are never corrected, and Mummy Pig never berates Peppa for saying these things and occasionally joins in, also calling Daddy Pig grumpy, naughty and messy. Despite all the characters on *Peppa Pig* looking overweight because of the design of the characters, Daddy Pig is the only one singled out for being overweight. This makes these statements redundant and could easily be avoided as within the design of the show Daddy Pig is not significantly bigger than anyone in the programme, and even if he were, programme makers should not be fuelling anti-fat bias in children. Whilst the headcount method has been useful in giving an overview of representation, further study of an analysis of what this representation looks like on-screen would also be useful. Using stereotypical markers such as males being grumpy, aggressive, poor at housework would provide insight into how many stereotypes are routinely employed in preschool animation and embedded at such an early age. Whether these are negative or provide excuses for negative behaviour they should be avoided in preschool animation.

# Sex: Research Objectives One: On-Screen Depictions

To what extent do depictions of characters on-screen match the demographic identities of the British population?

## Primary Data on female depictions on-screen and female participation at Director, Writer and Creator level

Moving on from male representations within *Peppa Pig*, the data gathered below shows female depictions on-screen and participation within three key areas of animation production at the following percentages within each programme. These have been placed side by side to simultaneously examine any correlation between the two. A reminder that this is the only protected characteristic to be examined in this way, and for the remaining characteristics on-screen depictions and off-screen participation will be examined separately. However, while this data is available, it should be interrogated for any potential correlation.

	Female depictions on-screen	Female participation within the number of Directors, Writers and Creators	Female participation within the number of episodes by Directors, Writers and Creators
<i>Peppa Pig</i>	54%	29%	9%
<i>Charlie and Lola</i>	48%	70%	79%
<i>Timmy Time</i>	27%	43%	42%
<i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i>	22%	26%	45%
<i>Numberblocks</i>	55%	0%	0%
<i>JoJo and Gran Gran</i>	48%	42%	32%
Target as a percentage of the population	51%	51%	51%

Surprisingly, when looking at the percentages of female representations on and off-screen, it is not clear that representation on-screen has any significant bearing on representation behind the screen. Looking at the figures for the two programmes before the introduction of the Equality Act, *Peppa Pig* and *Charlie and Lola* it could be argued that the absence of the Equality Act had little effect on representation on-screen, they both had high levels of female representation on-screen. It could be argued that *Peppa Pig* suffered from a stereotypical view of men and women by not having a balanced creative team behind it. *Charlie and Lola's* creator is Lauren Child, who is a successful children's illustrator and author. She was named Children's Laureate in 2017 and awarded an MBE in 2010. Child has published close to 50 books, and her publishing career started in 1999 when she published two picture books, *I Want a Pet!* and *Clarice Bean, That's Me*. Child has won three Kate Greenaway Medal awards, one in 2000 for a *Charlie and Lola* book, *I Will Not Ever, Never Eat a Tomato* and won the Nestle Smarties Book Prize three times amongst other awards (British Council, no date). Watching *Charlie and Lola*, there was a difference in the quality of the programming and that it seemed more considered. This could be for a number of reasons, including the longer format, meaning that it has more time to tell a story, that it is aimed at a slightly older audience or that its creator was a successful award-winning author and Children's Laureate before the programme was created. It is here that *Charlie and Lola* differs from *Peppa Pig*. As the *Charlie and Lola* books have enjoyed so much commercial and critical success, and its author has been the Children's Laureate, it could be argued that they have been vetted by the publishing industry and by readers. Its director, Kitty Taylor has also directed other CBeebies programmes, including *Tree Fu Tom* and *Bitz and Bob* (LinkedIn, no date a).

Two programmes, *Peppa Pig* and *Numberblocks* showed female representation beyond the demographics of the UK population, however these two programmes had the lowest representation of females behind the screen. Two programmes that had a high number of episodes written by females, *Timmy Time* and *Sarah & Duck* had the lowest amount of representation on-screen. The two remaining programmes, *Charlie and Lola* and *JoJo and Gran Gran*, both created by a female author, show better representation on-screen, with *Charlie and Lola* having the highest representation of episodes by female

directors, writers and creators but again there is little discernible correlation between these. Perceiving a difference in the quality of *Charlie and Lola* to *Peppa Pig* led me to select *JoJo and Gran Gran*, as the show was created from the characters authored by Laura Henry-Allain, an Early Years specialist who was awarded an MBE in 2021. It was selected because it is the first UK animation featuring a Black British family and the lead character is a grandmother. Whilst it has not won a BAFTA, it seemed that a programme whose creator had won significant recognition and is an early years' specialist, as well as featuring a British black family would be pertinent to this thesis. I also wanted to compare the BAFTA winning programming to a show that is celebrated and acknowledged to address a key diversity gap in the current programming. The next section details how this original data was gathered.

The data proved that the last two programmes, *Numberblocks* and *JoJo and Gran Gran* were more representative at 55% and 48% on-screen, but had the lowest levels of representation at director, writer and creator level, except for *Peppa Pig*, which was lower. It was *Timmy Time* and *Sarah & Duck* that had the lowest levels of female representation at 27% and 22%. The findings in Figure 1.13 on the next page proved that female representation on-screen was below male representation, at 43%. This dropped even lower in figure 1.14 on the following page, to 42% when women were investigating the speaking role of each character. Behind the screen at creator, director and writer level, women outnumbered men as the number of directors, but the 88 episodes that they directed was significantly lower than men who directed 188 episodes. Similarly, Figure 1.15 shows that female writers numbered 25 whilst male writers numbered 38, however they only wrote 276 episodes whereas men wrote 589 which would mean 31% of these episodes were written by women and 69% were written by men. This is a significant difference between these figures and is an example of how counting the number of women in the role of creator, director and writer is not enough. The most accurate barometer is how many episodes were written, directed and created by women, which is always significantly less as a percentage than solely looking at the number of women. All these figures fall below the demographics of the British public, where women number 51% of the population.

This thesis was also interested in whether programming would become more representative over time, with *Numberblocks* and *JoJo and Gran Gran*

showing high levels of on-screen female participation. However, these two programmes did not support the assumption that more female representation behind the screen would mirror representation on-screen. This would support the idea that although visibility on-screen has become a sign of change, there is still work that the animation industry needs to do to ensure that crew lists for programmes are fair. The two programmes with the lowest levels of female characters, *Sarah & Duck* and *Timmy Time*, did have the lowest levels of representation behind the screen. Two programmes *Peppa Pig* and *Numberblocks* showed that on-screen at least, female characters were higher than this figure. As there was a significant amount of data available for this characteristic, representation behind the screen is examined against representation on-screen is examined in relation to each individual programme. It was not possible to include this analysis with any other characteristic as it is not possible to comprehensively gather data on directors', writers' and creators' race, age, disability etc. as this information is not publicly available. The next section investigates each programme separately and in more detail.

### *Peppa Pig*

This programme did not support the assumption that representation behind the screen would mirror representation on-screen. Whilst *Peppa Pig* scored highly in terms of female representation on-screen at 54%, representation at Director, Writer and Creator level were low. IMDB credited 1 female director to direct on one programme, whilst 5 male directors were credited for 97 programmes. Despite equity in the number of male and female writers, 4 each, the number of episodes that were scripted by female writers was only 30 in comparison to 214 for male writers which would equate to 12%. Looking at the numbers, we can see that director credits were used for 98 episodes, but there were 244 writer credits, as many of the episodes were co-written by two male writers, Mark Baker and Neville Astley. Using IMDB was important here because it is often used by creatives within the animation industry to ensure that they are credited publicly for their work. All the programmes were double checked through on-screen credits available for each episode, and the on-screen credits were the definitive data used for this thesis. Looking at the credits for Season 1 that are available on Netflix and Amazon Prime, all the

episodes in the season selected had one male Director and only one episode was written by a woman, bringing representation at director level for season one to 0% for women and 2% for female writers on the series. Whilst this would indicate that as the seasons went on there was more representation of female writers, from 1% to 12% this is still low. Within the creative team, 4 animators were male and two were female. This would bring female representation within the animation department at 33%.

	Female representation
on-screen	54%
Director	0%
Writers	2%
Creators	0%
Animators	33%

*Peppa Pig* also reveals that mere representation is not enough when both male and female representations are steeped in problematic portrayal. This programme indicates clearly that a headcount method is not enough to determine whether a programme has made appropriate representations of either sexes. Much of this thesis centres around the idea that in order to have authentic representation, those within the protected characteristic need to be able to give voice to that particular experience. *Peppa Pig* confounds that opinion. The majority of the creative team were men, however there were an overwhelming number of negative depictions of male characters within the programming. This opens more questions, about this being indicative of their personal experiences, or utilising stereotypes and tropes in order to portray them comedically rather than negatively. Figure 1.01 details the findings from the data collection. The first page of data shares the results of representation on-screen across all characteristics. The second page of data Figure 1.02 shares the data collated from male and female Directors, Writers and Creators.

Figure 1.01

# Peppa Pig

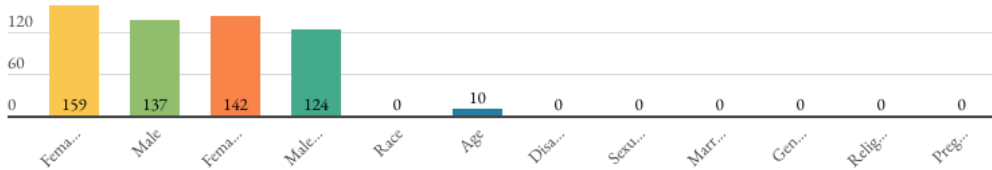
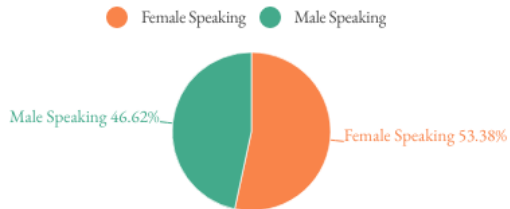
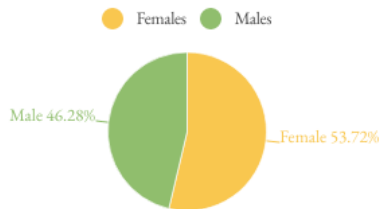
BAFTA Winner 2005, 2011, 2012

## Data overview

- Female representation 54%
- Female in a speaking role 53%
- Race representation 0%
- Age representation 3%

None of the other characteristics were depicted in any way, including disability.

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	<b>Sex</b>	
1.1	Female	159
1.2	Male	137
1.3	Female Speaking	142
1.4	Male Speaking	124
2	<b>Race</b>	0
3	<b>Age</b>	14
4	<b>Disability</b>	0
5	<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	0
6	<b>Marriage</b>	0
7	<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	0
8	<b>Religion</b>	0
9	<b>Pregnancy</b>	0



- Female
- Male
- Female Speaking
- Male Speaking
- Race
- Age
- Disability
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership
- Gender Reassignment
- Religion
- Pregnancy and Maternity



Figure 1.02

# Peppa Pig: Directors, Writers and Creators

BAFTA Winner 2005, 2011, 2012

## Directors

- Female: 1 and 1 episode
- Male: 5 and 97 episodes

## Writers

- Female: 4 and 30 episodes
- Male: 4 and 214 episodes

## Creators

- Female: 0
- Male: 3

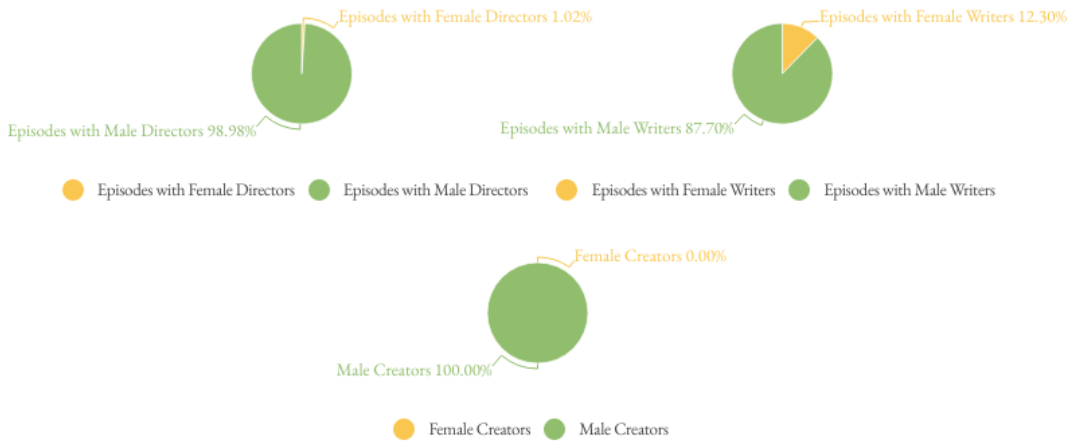
	Female	Male
Directors	1	5
Writers	4	4
Creators	0	3
Total	5	12

No. of Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	1	97
Writers	30	214
Total	31	311



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators



### *Charlie and Lola*

This programme did support the assumption that strong representation at Director, Creator and Writer would create strong female representation on-screen also. Female representation in *Charlie and Lola* was at 48% with female representation in a speaking role at 46%. This is of interest because this programme was the only one that had 63% female representation at a writer level and 100% for Director and Creator. Even with these significant percentages, representation was just shy of 50% and certainly did not go over. As with all the programmes, these IMDB figures were also checked against on-screen credits available for each episode. Female representation as Director was 100% for the season selected and representation as a writer was even higher, at 77%.

	Female representation
On-screen	48%
Director	100%
Writers	63%
Creators	100%
Animators	22%

Representation was however significantly low at animator level. The figures below were gathered from the credit sequences available on BBC iPlayer. I collated all of the names of the animators from the credit sequence and double checked any names that were ambiguous to determine whether they were male or female animators. This revealed that female representation was 22% with male representation at 78% of the animation team. This could reflect the demographics of females to males within the animation industry at the time that this programme was aired. It is not realistic to expect that 50% of animators would be female when significantly less than that are present in the industry.

Within *Charlie and Lola*, there were no significant examples of negative gender stereotyping. Whilst one episode had Lola appearing as a ballerina, in

another she wanted to buy a doctor's kit. In another episode, Lola wanted to buy a gift for Lotta, and she chose a toy pony, skipping rope and colouring pencils. Although these can be seen as gender specific, the skipping rope is an active toy related to exercise and in a later episode Charlie and his friend Marv both jump rope with Lola and Lotta. In another episode both Charlie and Marv are sitting at the table being creative and making artwork so instances of what might appear to be gender stereotyping are countered in other episodes. Figure 1.03 looks at representation across all of the protected characteristics, and Figure 1.04 looks at representation of women and men at Director, Writer and Creator level.

Figure 1.03

# Charlie and Lola

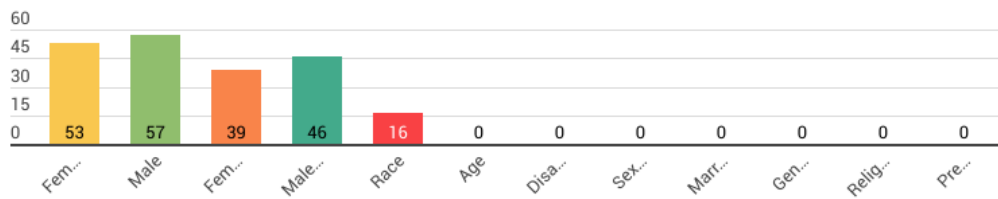
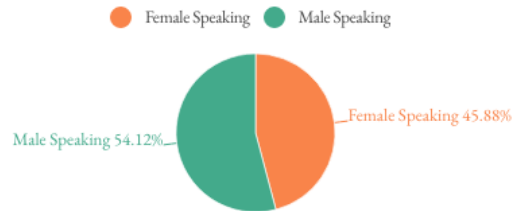
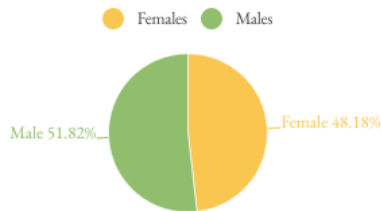
## BAFTA Winner 2007 & 2008

### Data overview

- Female representation 48%
- Female in a speaking role 46%
- Race representation 15%

None of the other characteristics were depicted in any way, including disability.

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	<b>Sex</b>	
1.1	Female	53
1.2	Male	57
1.3	Female Speaking	39
1.4	Male Speaking	46
2	<b>Race</b>	16
3	<b>Age</b>	0
4	<b>Disability</b>	0
5	<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	0
6	<b>Marriage</b>	0
7	<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	0
8	<b>Religion</b>	0
9	<b>Pregnancy</b>	0



- Female ● Male ● Female Speaking ● Male Speaking ● Race ● Age ● Disability ● Sexual Orientation
- Marriage or Civil Partnership ● Gender Reassignment ● Religion ● Pregnancy and Maternity

Figure 1.04

## Charlie and Lola: Directors, Writers and Creators

### BAFTA Winner 2007 & 2008

#### Directors

- Female: 1
- Male: 0

#### Writers

- Female: 5 and 39 episodes
- Male: 3 and 22 episodes

#### Creators

- Female: 1
- Male: 0

Individuals	Female	Male
Directors	1	0
Writers	5	3
Creators	1	0

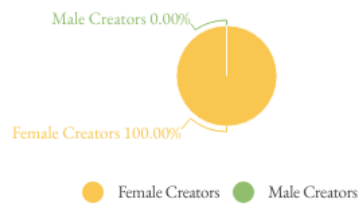
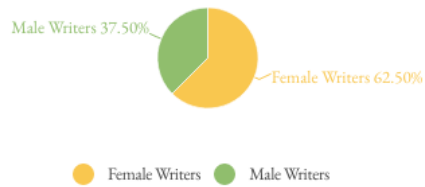
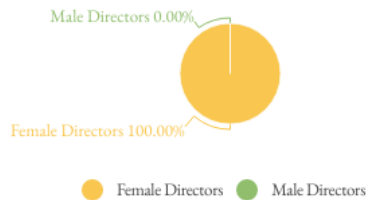
<b>Total</b>	7	3
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Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	45	0
Writers	39	22
<b>Total</b>	84	22



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators



### *Timmy Time*

Female representation within *Timmy Time* was significantly low, at 27% for both characters on-screen and speaking characters. Using IMDB figures, representation behind the screen was high, with 50% of episodes directed by a woman. However female representation as a writer was low, at 35%. Cross checking this by using on-screen information available on BBC iPlayer, Director representation was 50%. Representation at writer level was even lower however at 32%. Two of these instances of representation were also within a husband and wife team of writers<sup>7</sup>. Looking at the credits that were available on the credit sequence when viewed on BBC iPlayer, the level of animators was also considerably low at 23%.

	Female representation
on-screen	27%
Director	50%
Writers	32%
Creators	100%
Animators	23%

There were no significant notes made on *Timmy Time* as all the interactions were age appropriate and the fact that the characters do not speak limits the amount of negative gender stereotypes. Also, as the age of the characters is so young, they all participate in activities together. There was one episode where the male characters all played football with no female characters present, but this was the only instance. All other activities were done together including activities that could be seen as gender specific such as painting and dancing.

The reasons for high female participation could be that the creator is female. *Timmy Time* was created for CBeebies by Jackie Cockle at Bristol-based Aardman Animations. Jackie Cockle has worked on many other television series, including Pingu and Bob the Builder (IMDB, no date 3) and started off her career by working for Cosgrove Hall for 21 years, the studio behind Noddy,

Animal Shelf and Postman Pat as well as The BFG (1989), Kenneth Graham's Wind in the Willows (1983), and Terry Pratchett's Truckers (1992) (Cosgrave Hall, no date). In an interview with Steve Henderson, Jackie Cockle relates how she was given Timmy as a character by Aardman, and within two weeks had produced a world for the character. It was her decision to make it non-verbal, a decision influenced by her work with Pingu. In the interview, she relates how she sees herself as a creator of programmes and has worked in all the various disciplines, from model making to producing and felt that it was a natural progression in becoming a director (Henderson and Mitchell, 2015). Figures 1.05 and 1.06 overleaf detail representation within all the protected characteristics, and then representation of females to males behind the screen at Director, Creator and Writer level.

Figure 1.05

# Timmy Time

## BAFTA Winner 2010

### Data overview

- Female representation 27%
- Female in a speaking role 27%

None of the other characteristics were depicted in any way.

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	<b>Sex</b>	
1.1	Female	58
1.2	Male	157
1.3	Female Speaking	58
1.4	Male Speaking	157
2	<b>Race</b>	0
3	<b>Age</b>	0
4	<b>Disability</b>	0
5	<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	0
6	<b>Marriage</b>	0
7	<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	0
8	<b>Religion</b>	0
9	<b>Pregnancy</b>	0

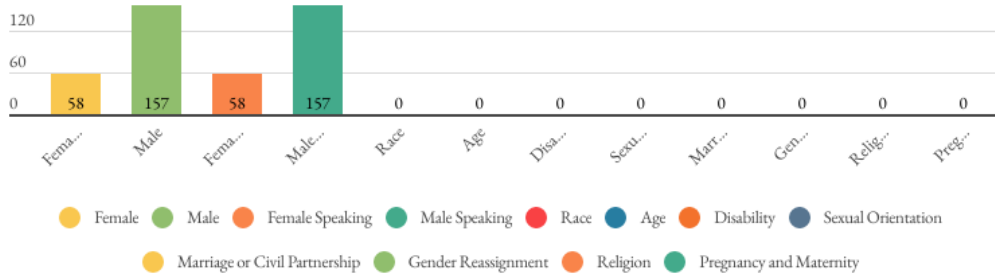
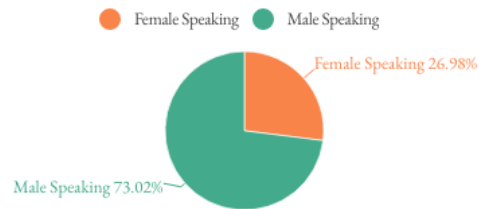
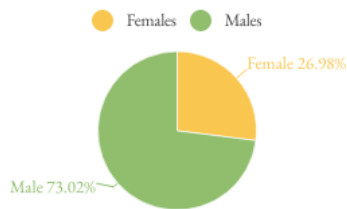




Figure 1.06

## Timmy Time: Directors, Writers and Creators

### BAFTA Winner 2010

#### Directors

- Female: 1 and 22 episodes
- Male: 1 and 22 episodes

#### Writers

- Female: 6 and 54 episodes
- Male: 11 and 82 episodes

#### Creators

- Female: 1
- Male: 0

Individuals	Female	Male
Directors	1	1
Writers	6	11
Creators	1	0

Total	9	12
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Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	22	22
Writers	54	82
Total	76	104



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

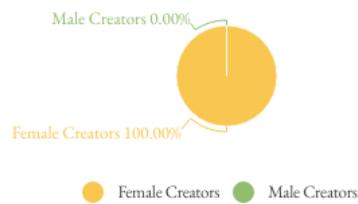
- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators



- Female Directors
- Male Directors



- Female Writers
- Male Writers



- Female Creators
- Male Creators

### *Sarah & Duck*

Female representation on-screen was 27% and dropped down to 25% in a speaking role. Despite its female co-creator, only a third of episodes were written and directed by women according to figures from IMDB. According to IMDB, one female director was credited, however this was as Creative Director, not series or episode Director, which is misleading as it does not accurately convey the differences in the roles. This would bring female representation across Director, writer and creator level to 27% according to IMDB for all seasons listed within its database. Figures collated from the episodes themselves via BBC iPlayer show that for the season selected, there were two male Directors only, bringing female representation to 0%. The number of episodes written by female writers was 37 compared to 20 written by male writers, bringing female representation to 64%, although many of these episodes were co-written. Female representation across Director, Writer and Creator level would be 38% according to credits available on BBC iPlayer. The data for animators working on episodes was just 80 females compared to 238 episodes animated by a male<sup>8</sup>. This would bring female representation to 25% at animator level.

	Female representation
on-screen	27%
Director	0%
Writers	64%
Creators	50%
Animators	25%

Despite having a female protagonist, Sarah, and two other recurring female characters that were featured heavily, Scarf Lady and Plate Girl, there were a considerable number of male characters. This was particularly apparent with those adults that were in professional roles. Almost all of the adults in professional roles that Sarah interacted with were male. These included the zookeeper, librarian, Olympic narrator, art shopkeeper, news reader, bike

shopkeeper and others. Out of 14 working adults that Sarah interacted with, only one was a female - this was a receptionist<sup>9</sup>. This promotes the idea that there are certain jobs that are gender specific to men and women. Greenberg states that 'Surely a child's knowledge about job-holders job attributes and job prestige is quite limited...jobs portrayed on television, with which they are unfamiliar, should be able to exert a primary influence,' (Greenberg, 1982, p.135). He goes on to state that 'prestige comes with the job, and men get more of both; twice as many females as males are in low-prestige occupations,' and also reveals a study conducted by McNeil in 1975s which showed that 90 percent of supervisors were male (Greenberg, 1982, p.135). These studies are fifty and forty years old. In a contemporary context, having a programme that displays males in 93% of professional roles cannot be seen as progression.

In addition, two female characters, the Ribbon sisters, are portrayed as voiceless. This perpetuates stereotypes of Asian girls as quiet, submissive and shy, or employing the 'model minority rule of Asian silence', (Loader in Roe *et al.*, 2019, p.245). Whilst we cannot be sure of the Ribbon Sisters heritage, in Season Three there is an episode titled Ribbon Alvida. Alvida is an Urdu word for goodbye so it could be assumed that they are of either Pakistani or Indian heritage<sup>10</sup>.

Sarah is surrounded by male characters, the moon, mars, rainbow, donkey and her sidekick Duck and the narrator. Once these appearances and crowd scenes with background characters were collated, they formed significant levels of male over-representation. In addition, Scarf Lady, Plate Girl and the Ribbon sisters are portrayed as eccentric and in unusual terms. Whilst this could be seen as in line with the programme, Scooter Boy and John are not similarly portrayed. This echoes Martin (2017) research which indicated that programmes that have a strong female protagonist, but an overabundance of male characters might lead an audience to view Sarah as the exception rather than the norm.

*Sarah & Duck* is a personal favourite, and I was disappointed to see the results of the data collection. It has a vastly different story-telling style than the other shows and been referred to in the popular press as 'dusted with such a thin layer of whimsy, such a slight hint of slowly-unfolding psychedelia, that you can trace a direct line back to anything made by Oliver Postgate,' (Heritage, 2016, no pagination). Steve Henderson of Skwigly magazine referred

to the programme as having ‘playful charm and delightfully eccentric support characters,’ (Henderson, 2020a, no pagination). Animator and director Tim McCourt echoes these statements on the popular animation podcast Pegbar and Grill, who references the Magic Roundabout in relation to the programme (Podbay, 2014). It clearly appeals to both children and adults. It enjoys considerable success and is available in over 100 countries and has been developed into a stage show (Karrot, 2021). The inclusion of an equal number of background characters, more female characters in professional positions on-screen, and an increase in the number of animators and directors would ensure that representation is being highlighted in a programme with such global and universal appeal. Figure 1.07 shares the results of the content analysis of representation across all of the protected characteristics, and Figure 1.08 shares the ratio of women and men in industry at Creator, Director and Writer level.

Figure 1.07

# Sarah and Duck

## BAFTA Winner 2014

### Data overview

- Female representation 27%
- Female in a speaking role 25%
- Race representation 6.9%
- Age representation 4.4%

None of the other characteristics were depicted in any way, including disability.

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	Sex	
1.1	Female	87
1.2	Male	232
1.3	Female Speaking	65
1.4	Male Speaking	193
2	Race	22
3	Age	14
4	Disability	0
5	Sexual Orientation	0
6	Marriage	0
7	Gender Reassignment	0
8	Religion	0
9	Pregnancy	0

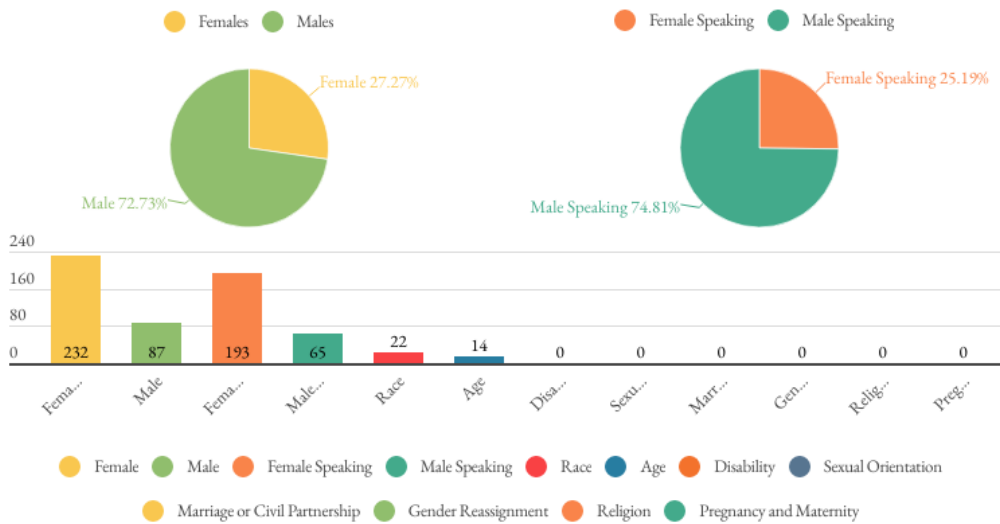


Figure 1.08

## Sarah and Duck: Directors, Writers and Creators

### BAFTA Winner 2014

#### Directors

- Female: 1 and 40 episodes
- Male: 2 and 11 episodes

#### Writers

- Female: 3 and 135 episodes
- Male: 6 and 204 episodes

#### Creators

- Female: 1
- Male: 1

Individuals	Female	Male
Directors	1	2
Writers	3	6
Creators	1	1

Total	5	9
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Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	40	11
Writers	135	204
Total	175	215



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators



- Female Directors
- Male Directors

- Female Writers
- Male Writers



- Female Creators
- Male Creators

*Numberblocks* showed high levels of female representation as both characters and characters in a speaking role were recorded at 55%. This was at odds with female representation behind the screen within the three key roles identified as Director, Writer and Creator. According to IMDB these were all at 0% which was also true when cross referenced with all the available episodes in Season Three on BBC iPlayer. All the list of animators on this season was also collated and this was 62 female animators and 52 male animators, which brought female representation at 54%. Despite the low levels of female representation at Director, Writer and Creator level, the programme did well in terms of on-screen representation and animators. Due to the educational content of the programme, there were no incidents of gender specific stereotyping. The only pink character was male, and all characters shared distinct roles and interests regardless of gender. For instance, the female red character One was a detective, in another episode about football all the characters participated equally and the same in an episode about superheroes.

	Female representation
on-screen	54%
Director	0%
Writers	0%
Creators	0%
Animators	54%

The complete absence of representation at Director, Writer and Creator level is at odds with Blue Zoo’s industry reputation as a leader in gender diverse hiring practices and focus on diversity. Co-founder Tom Box was recently named a ‘Superperson’ by Pitch (2021). The promotional image and message by Nene Patterson, are below:



// "Tom is another member of D&I initiatives I am very happy to have worked with and still work with. Working with him is fantastic. He clearly cares about his work, D&I, and supporting and giving opportunities to emerging creatives. He always full of great ideas for working with communities but he's humble enough to reach out and ask questions for guidance when needed. But above that, he's always completely hands-on. No job is too small and he produces, edits, curates, writes, and totally gets involved. We need more like him." // Nominated by Nene Parsotam, Executive Creative Director, VINE Creatives

// #PitchList2021

(LinkedIn, 2021)

The Pitch Fanzine was founded in 2015 to 'challenge inequality, discrimination and the lack of diversity in the creative industries, while simultaneously showcasing outstanding diverse creative talent.' Tom Box was nominated by Nene Patterson, founder of We Are Stripes who seek to 'create and increase opportunities for ethnic diversity and creative talent.' Tom Box, BlueZoo's co-founder also manages Blue Zoo's AnimDojo (an online training platform), is the Chair of the ScreenSkills Animation Skills Council and sits on the board of the NextGen Skills Academy (ACCESS:VFX, no date). Whilst representation at Creator, Writer and Director level were low, the percentage of female animators is 54% which is high. It could be that Blue Zoo has a gender diverse studio in junior creative positions and this is still filtering through to Creator, Writer and Director level. Or it could be indicative of the industry still losing women around the age of 35, just when they could be moving into positions of power. The studio recently received \$30 million of funding through an international partnership with a Chinese studio (Televisual, 2017) and has launched a new 2D animation studio creating 60 jobs (Televisual, 2018), which should give them an opportunity to create a diverse workforce



are evident in the animation pipeline all the way to senior levels. Figures 1.09 and 1.10 reveal the data analysis that was completed for *Numberblocks*.

Figure 1.09

# Numberblocks

## BAFTA Winner 2019

### Data overview

- Female representation 55%
- Female in a speaking role 55%

None of the other characteristics were depicted in any way.

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	Sex	
1.1	Female	139
1.2	Male	112
1.3	Female Speaking	139
1.4	Male Speaking	112
2	Race	0
3	Age	0
4	Disability	0
5	Sexual Orientation	0
6	Marriage	0
7	Gender Reassignment	0
8	Religion	0
9	Pregnancy	0

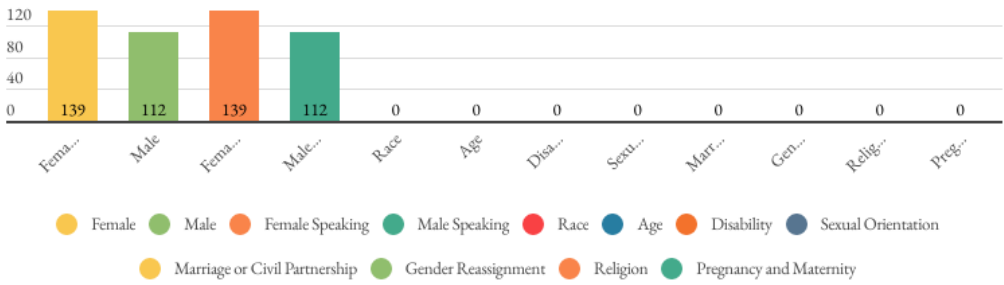
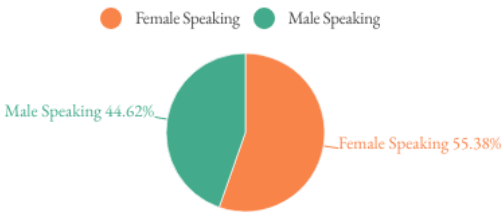
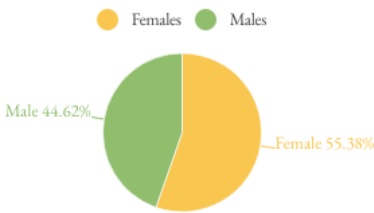


Figure 1.10

# Numberblocks: Directors, Writers and Creators

## BAFTA Winner 2019

### Directors

- Female: 0 and 0 episodes
- Male: 1 and 30 episodes

### Writers

- Female: 0 and 0 episodes
- Male: 5 and 30 episodes

### Creators

- Female: 0
- Male: 1

Individuals	Female	Male
Directors	0	1
Writers	0	5
Creators	0	1

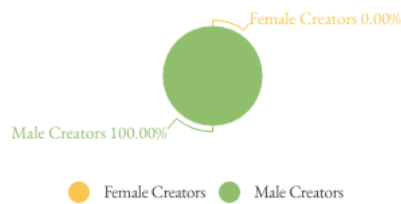
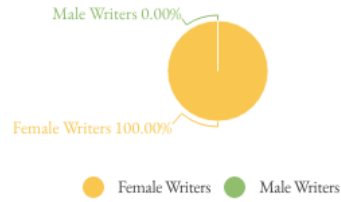
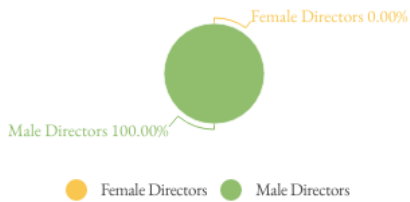
<b>Total</b>	0	7
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Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	0	30
Writers	0	30
<b>Total</b>	0	60



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators



### *JoJo and Gran Gran*

Female representation within this programme with 48% of all characters being female and 60% of all speaking characters being female. Whilst this was at odds with no female representation at Director level. Writer level representation was at 48% according to IMDB and 42% when examining the credits of Season One which was available on BBC iPlayer. Looking at the credits available on BBC iPlayer, shows that 55 instances of a female animator to 88 males, bring female representation at Animator level to 38%.

	Female representation
on-screen	48%
Director	0%
Writers	48%
Creators	100%
Animators	38%

Whilst the interactions within *JoJo and Gran Gran* were non-gender stereotyping, there was one episode which featured night workers. All of these, the pilot, rubbish men, police, paramedics, fishermen and milkmen were all male. According to the TUC, male night workers outnumber women night workers 1,891,000 compared to 1,247,000 (TUC, 2018) but there are still a considerable number of female night workers that were not represented at all in the episode. This mirrors the findings within *Sarah & Duck* who also featured males in all but one job. Figures 1.11 and 1.12 detail the results of the content analysis for *JoJo and Gran Gran*.

Figure 1.11

# JoJo & Gran Gran

## Data overview

- Female representation 48%
- Female in a speaking role 60%
- Race representation 57%
- Age representation 23%
- Disability representation 12%
- Marriage representation at 2.7%
- Religion representation at 3.42%

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	<b>Sex</b>	
1.1	Female	140
1.2	Male	152
1.3	Female Speaking	26
1.4	Male Speaking	17
2	<b>Race</b>	166
3	<b>Age</b>	23
4	<b>Disability</b>	9
5	<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	0
6	<b>Marriage</b>	8
7	<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	0
8	<b>Religion</b>	10
9	<b>Pregnancy</b>	0

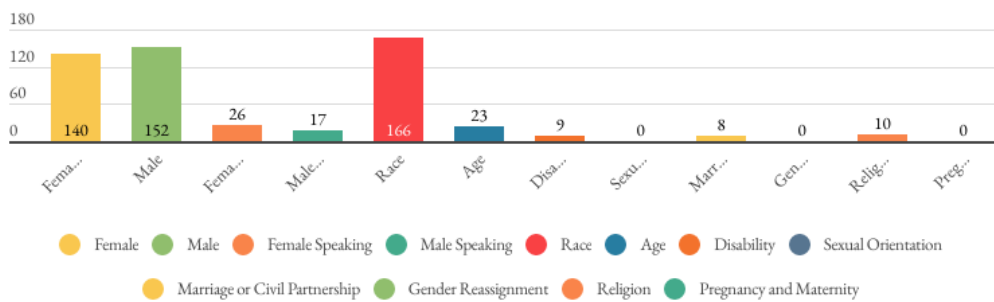
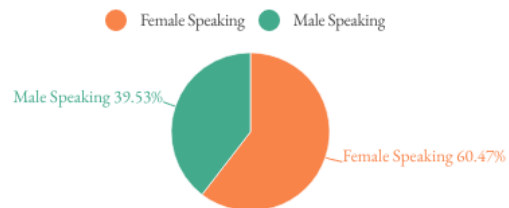
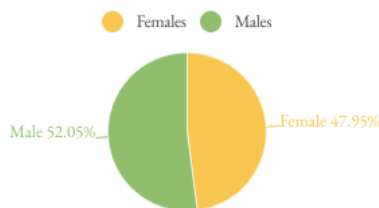


Figure 1.12

## JoJo and Gran Gran: Directors, Writers and Creators

### BAFTA Winner 2019

#### Directors

- Female: 0 and 0 episodes
- Male: 2 and 28 episodes

#### Writers

- Female: 7 and 9 episodes
- Male: 9 and 18 episodes

#### Creators

- Female: 1
- Male: 0

Individuals	Female	Male
Directors	0	2
Writers	7	9
Creators	1	0

Total	8	11
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Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	0	28
Writers	18	9
Total	18	37



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators

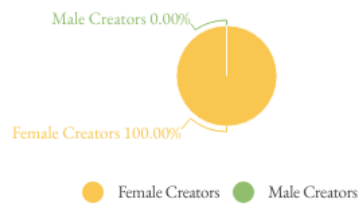
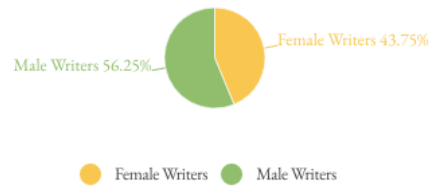
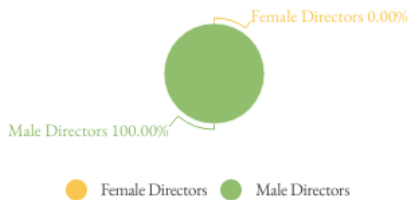
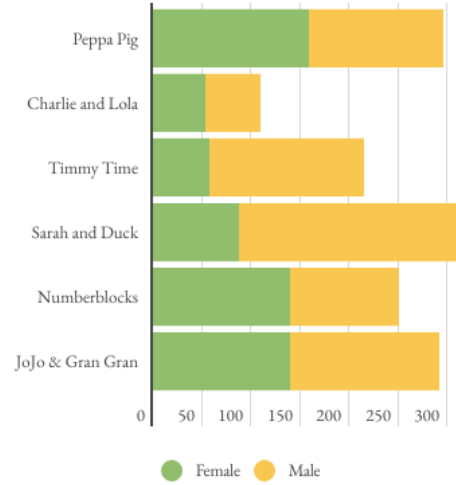


Figure 1.13

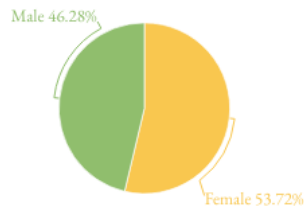
## Female to Male

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, across all six programmes selected.

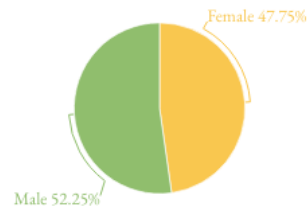
		Female	%	Male	%
1	Peppa Pig	159	54%	137	46%
2	Charlie and Lola	53	48%	57	52%
3	Timmy Time	58	27%	157	73%
4	Sarah and Duck	87	22%	232	78%
5	Numberblocks	139	55%	112	45%
6	Jojo & Gran Gran	140	48%	152	52%
7	<b>Total: 1483</b>	<b>636</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>847</b>	<b>57%</b>



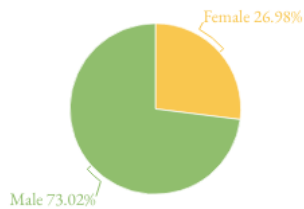
### Peppa Pig



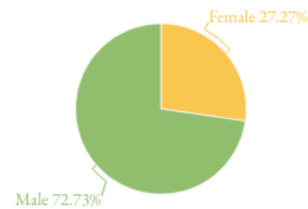
### Charlie and Lola



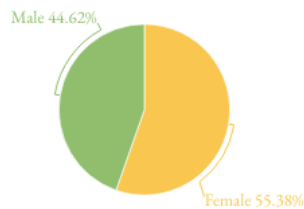
### Timmy Time



### Sarah and Duck



### Numberblocks



### Jojo and Gran Gran

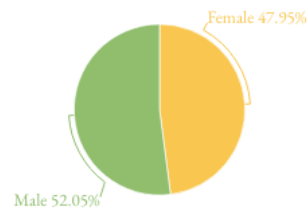
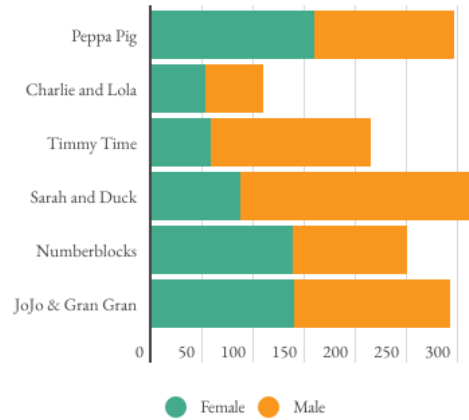


Figure 1.14

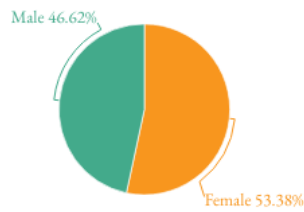
## Female to Male speaking

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that have a speaking role across all six programmes selected.

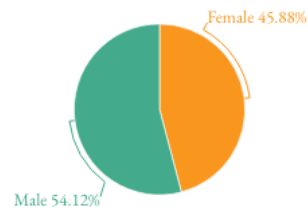
		Female		Male	
1	Peppa Pig	142	53%	124	47%
2	Charlie and Lola	39	46%	46	54%
3	Timmy Time	58	26%	157	73%
4	Sarah and Duck	65	25%	193	75%
5	Numberblocks	139	55%	112	45%
6	Jojo and Gran Gran	26	60%	17	40%
7	<b>Total 1118</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>58%</b>



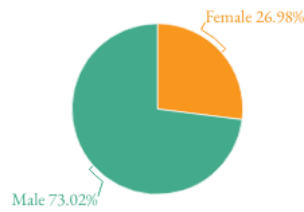
### Peppa Pig



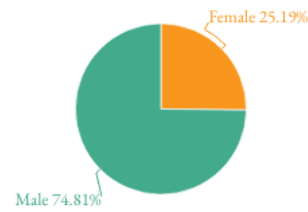
### Charlie and Lola



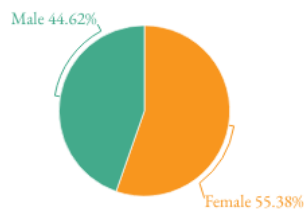
### Timmy Time



### Sarah and Duck



### Numberblocks



### Jojo and Gran Gran

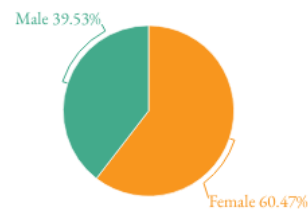


Figure 1.15

## Directors, Writers and Creators

### All programmes

#### Female representation as a Director

53% of directors were women

32% of episodes directed by a woman

#### Female representation as a Writer

40% of writers were women

32% of episodes were written by a woman

#### Female representation as a Creator

44%

Individuals	Female	Male
1. Directors	8	7
2. Writers	25	38
3. Creators	4	5

<b>Total</b>	37	50
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Episodes	Female	Male
1. Directors	88	188
2. Writers	276	589
<b>Total</b>	364	777



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators



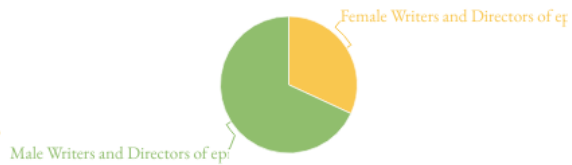
- Female Directors
- Male Directors



- Female Writers
- Male Writers



- Female Creators
- Male Creators



- Female Writers and Directors of episodes
- Male Writers and Directors of episodes



## **Sex: Research Objective Two: Participation within the British Animation Industry**

### **Does participation within the industry reflect the demographics of the UK population?**

As the previous section also examined participation in industry but through primary data, this section will now focus on secondary sources to examine the wider context of female participation in industry. An industry review completed by the BFI in 2018 revealed that whilst there are available sources of demographic information on workforce diversity for film and television, this was not the case for the animation sector (CAMEo, 2018). In 2019, UK Screen Alliance, Animation UK and ACCESS:VFX published a report into inclusion and diversity in the UK's VFX, animation and post-production sectors. Their report was titled the 'Inclusion and Diversity in the UK Visual Effects, Animation and Post Production,' (Animation UK, 2019). Their data were gathered from a group of 1120 workers involved in those three sectors across the UK. Their report identified the total number of people in direct, full time employment in animation as being around 1,790. However, other sources such as Creative Skillset (2016) and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Labour Force Survey, put this figure closer to 4600 in 2014 (ScreenSkills, 2014). The respondent rate, whilst impressive for a voluntary survey, is low when compared to the size of the animation industry. The survey was able to garner 338 valid survey responses and they estimated that the industry was made up of around 1,790. This would give them an engagement rate of 19%. However, if the other figures of 4600 are correct, this would make the respondent rate at 7% at 2012 rates. The industry has seen significant growth in the ten years since then. Cinla Akinci and Mark NK Saunders (2015) detail that 'the response rates of between approximately 35 per cent and 55 per cent are considered realistic ... Moreover, since response rate is an important factor in assessing the value of research findings, higher response rates provide greater credibility,' (Akinci and Saunders, 2015, p.358). At 7% this is unlikely to be an accurate snapshot of the industry; however it is acknowledged as the largest survey completed in industry to date. With the government considering linking tax breaks to diversity, the animation industry needs to address issues surrounding the inclusion of women and people of colour, amongst other underrepresented

groups to access this funding. In fact, this was cited as a prompt for an industry wide report, with Animation UK (2019) and UK Screen Alliance stating that: 'There are currently several groups proposing or consulting on creating legislative links between eligibility for screen sector tax credits and diversity criteria, and we have used our survey to make a data-informed response to these proposals,' (UK Screen Alliance, 2019, p.3). Given that the hope of the report writers is that funding is not linked to diversity, it is in their interests to report their findings as conclusive evidence of diversity, whilst within the same report acknowledging that this is not a fully accurate picture. This report and the representation of people within the other protective characteristics will be explored further in the following chapters.

The reported figures by the UK Screen Alliance for female participation that were at odds with other historic industry reports give an example of survey bias. Before the report, figures for female participation in animation were often cited at being 20% despite females making up between 70-80% of the student population (Women in Animation, no date.). Animated Women UK (2017b) put that figure at 30% in May 2017. Data gathered in 2012 by Creative Skillset, now ScreenSkills, indicated that women made up approximately 36% of the workforce. Figures collected by the DCMS in 2015 put women at 36% (University of Leicester, 2018). However, these figures were across both film and TV, not specifically animation. The 2019 survey revealed that 51% of workers are women - 89% in production, 55% in senior creative production, and 49% in creative artist roles (Animation UK, 2019). Although they identified a lack of females in technical support roles, which was only 14%, the report indicates that they are otherwise apparently well represented across the board. However, this figure of 51% is also at odds with a figure of 40%, which the UK Screen Alliance Workforce Survey 2018 revealed. The report released by UK Screen Alliance in 2019 recognised this and caveated that:

We do not think that in the space of a year, the representation of women has increased by such a large percentage and there may be an element of survey bias here with women being more energised than men to respond to a survey about inclusion, particularly in post-production. Whilst the pattern of representation is the same between the two surveys, we are more inclined to trust the figures from our 2018 survey as

it was collated from accurate data provided by the HR departments of companies and had a sample size of 5,400.

(UK Screen Alliance, 2019, p.18)

This jump of 11% in one year questions the validity of the data contained within the UK Animation report. This highlights one of the key problems of collecting voluntary data. Women and other minority groups may feel more invested in participating in a survey that is promoted by using the words 'diversity' and 'inclusion'. The concrete figures that are gathered from HR departments on gender and the gender pay gap are more accurate barometers of what is going on in industry. The data may be skewed by the type of studios that responded as they may be ACCESS:VFX members. Blue Zoo is currently the only studio in London to have achieved a 50/50 gender ratio across its entire workforce. Their website states that: 'Across modelling, animation and lighting/compositing for three of our biggest productions we are also gender equal in our lead roles. Fantastic news, but we're not resting on our laurels as there's work to do to remove the barriers that are inhibiting women from taking on many of the technical roles, still held by men (Blue Zoo, 2019). Women in Animation (no date) has launched a campaign for 50/50 women across the workforce by 2025. The Mill has also adopted this call and is one of the biggest post production houses in the UK. By focusing on the biggest and those actively seeking to address the gender balance, it is possible that the small to mid-sized studios are being overlooked. This is especially true of the 2D animation studios which are significantly smaller. Ed Vaizey, MP and Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Creative Diversity said of the UK Screen Alliance report that 'These are encouraging statistics from the UK Screen Alliance, but much remains to be done to improve diversity across the creative industries. The APPG for Creative Diversity welcomes the positive work being done by the likes of ACCESS:VFX in providing opportunities for minority groups and to inspire a new wave of diverse talent to enter this sector,' (Animation UK, 2019). Whilst the report included some encouraging statistics on the growing number of women in animation, there is still much more the industry can do to encourage equality, remunerate women fairly and protect them from hostile work environments. These challenges are discussed in the next section.

## Challenges facing women within the Animation Industry

The idea that women face erasure, marginalisation and the story of their lives is devalued by the media is shared by multiple groups that promote equality. Free the Bid (no date), a group that advocates for female directors in advertising, argue that by having a disproportionate number of males in key creative roles such as Director, Writer and Creator roles means that ‘cultural misrepresentations of women are perpetuated by an overabundance of male storytelling’. In an article for *Its Nice That* (2018) magazine, titled ‘Why is there a lack of women in animation and what can we do about it?’, award winning animation director Niki Lindroth von Bahr stated that ‘For too long, a male dominated view of the world has been shared through film...It’s so important to get inside the minds of women, to share our experiences and world views.’ Kitty Turley, executive producer at *Strange Beast*, affirms this, explaining that in a typical animation studio, ‘men are the creative leads and women are the jobbing crew animators or producers. Women are there to facilitate and enable the creative voice and vision of men... It’s a restrictive pattern that upholds the status quo.’ In the same article, animation director Nina Gantz agreed and detailed how ‘a woman can bring a different outlook’. Natalie Busuttil, studio manager at *Nexus*, alluded to the idea that the type of creative content being made was influencing who was coming into and progressing in the animation industry ‘I think there is an idea as to what being a successful 3D artist involves, which errs towards sci-fi, fantasy and action films. For some women this is great, but it is not everyone’s cup of tea. I think we can do more to shatter this perception. Animation is a varied and multifaceted world – you don’t have to work on photorealistic alien horrors or the latest superhero action movie to be a 3D artist’.

This overabundance of male storytelling can be clearly seen than in the frequent examples of female experiences and stories being hijacked. One example of this is Dove (2018) Brazil’s animated advert titled *I’m Fine*. The advert tracks the troubles faced by a group of female teenagers. Animated in the UK by Soho animation house Picasso Pictures, it had a female producer, but its entire creative crew list was male. Eleven male artists worked on a project that was entirely about the challenges that teenage girls faced navigating puberty, make-up, hair and female friendships. An all-male team cannot add an

authentic lens to that experience. The experience of hijacking a woman's experience is echoed in Brenda Chapman's experience of Disney Pixar's *Brave*. Initially hailed as Pixar's first female Director, she was pulled off the project due to creative differences. Disney's Pixar is relevant here because of its global dominance and was bought by Disney in 2006 for \$7.4 billion and *Frozen II* its biggest earning title earning \$1.5 billion globally (BBC, 2006). Speaking on the experience Chapman reported that 'We are replaced on a regular basis – and that was a real issue for me. This was a story that I created, which came from a very personal place, as a woman and a mother. To have it taken away and given to someone else, and a man at that, was truly distressing on so many levels,' (New York Times, 2012). After Rashida Jones and writing partner Will McCormack removed themselves from Disney Pixar's *Toy Story 4*, they released a statement saying that they could not work somewhere 'women and people of colour do not have an equal creative voice, as is demonstrated by their director demographics: out of the 20 films in the company's history, only one was co-directed by a woman and only one was directed by a person of colour. We encourage Pixar to be leaders in bolstering, hiring, and promoting more diverse and female storytellers and leaders. We hope we can encourage all those who have felt like their voices could not be heard in the past to feel empowered,' (Amidi, 2017). Smith *et al.*, (2019) concurred that there was a 'culture that does not value women' amongst US animation studios who reported that this was felt by 47% of early career women and 19% of decision makers and Animation Guild members.

Another challenge for women is the stereotype of women's roles within animation. In an online interview titled 'Inside the Persistent Boys Club of Animation' Sabrina Cotugno, currently director at Disney Television Animation, detailed how CalArts encourages males into story and women into design (Lange, 2015). Whilst classes were gender-balanced, it was 'primarily guys who would get known for being great storytellers... Female students would be rewarded for colour or graphic choices, which Cotugno termed 'the pretty part'. She goes on to state that 'many women would start out thinking they wanted to storyboard and decide against it, saying, 'I can't really articulate why but I just don't feel good about it'. Kitty Turley, executive producer at UK animation studio Strange Beast 'self-doubt is the patriarchy's most insidious weapon'. Smith *et al.*, (2017) also note this lack of confidence, reporting that

‘Sixteen percent of the early-career women we interviewed stated that internal barriers such as doubts or lack of confidence - feelings largely stemming from a lack of role models and their day-to-day experiences in the industry - hindered their career trajectory’. These stereotypes also include a perceived lack of interest in technical skills. *It’s Nice That* (2018) also detailed how this stems from upbringing which often feeds into the types of roles available in the industry and that ‘technical roles such as composers, FX artists and Generalists are hugely male dominated, and that the imbalance can be put down to the way we, as a society, have historically pushed girls and boys towards different preferences’. The article quotes Rosanna Morley, creative coordinator at British animation studio Blinkink, who affirms this stating ‘It goes back to a time when boys were encouraged to like things such as technology and football, and girls to art and ballet dancing’. The industry also has a high number of women in production as opposed to creative roles, which Kitty Turley puts down to women having their ‘more feminine qualities praised – nurturing, a willingness to please’. One group advocating to change this is Women in VFX (2017). In 2017 they launched a video series which detailed women in a variety of VFX roles to highlight the diversity of roles that are available and currently occupied by women.

Stereotypes of women as having no ambitions to rise the ranks and that they are better suited to production dominate the animation industry. Smith *et al.*, (2019) found that ‘women are perceived to lack ambition or interest in the field’. One-quarter of early-career women cited this explanation for both directors and when discussing general employment. Thirty-five percent of decision-makers claimed women’s ambition was a reason for the lack of women directing, and 30% gave this reason for women’s employment overall. Finally, 21% of Animation Guild members stated women’s interest steered them away from directing, while 20% offered this explanation for women’s participation across the industry. In contrast to these statements, 90% of women interviewed stated that they aspired to leadership positions in animation, including being a showrunner, director, art director, or other key roles. Smith *et al.*, (2019) conclude that:

The uncertainties that women have in their own ability or likelihood to succeed may inhibit them from sharing their ambitions or

desires to pursue a leadership track in the industry. Women's ambitions or interest in the field of animation may not be evident for several reasons. For one, expressing ambition or self-promoting may result in lower evaluations of women. Second, stereotypical environments may reduce women's perceptions of success or interest in the field, as noted earlier. Third, conditions of social identity threat may influence women's career choices. For example, when women feel they are at risk of confirming a negative stereotype about their gender, they may elect to pursue more stereotypically feminine career paths. Fourth, when individuals see that organisations or positions are only open to a few token members of their group, they may be less likely to believe that they will be personally successful in a job or company. Thus, women may be aware of potential negative consequences for speaking up or demonstrating interest in animation, and refrain from declaring their ambitions to others who could facilitate their success. (Smith *et al.*, 2019, p.3)

In my own personal experience, I moved from a creative role into a non-creative production coordinator role quickly within two years of graduating from my animation degree. I found it a relief to find long term paid work after two years of jumping from project to project and for me it was an extension of project management roles I had occupied in the seven years before I retrained and entered the animation industry. The person in the role before me was a woman, the entire production team were women only, and by the time I left, the entire creative team were men. Outside of my personal experience, there is compelling evidence that this stereotype threat can harm female participation and effectiveness. Hoyt and Murphy (2016) confirm that 'A robust body of research demonstrates the power of stereotypes in impairing the performance of stigmatised individuals, those individuals with devalued social identities in a particular context, on a wide variety of cognitive and social tasks,' (Hoyt and Murphy, 2016, p.387). Fine (2010) provides an example about a maths test, which is comparable because there is no evidence that men are better at maths than women, but a stereotype, much in the same way that men are better leaders making them directors, lead animators, or better at technical roles such as those found on 3D animation and VFX etc. Fine recounts a study completed at City University of New York who used over 100 university

students enrolled in a complex calculus class that was seen as a pipeline to the hard sciences, a field traditionally dominated by men. She details that 'Researchers found that females performed better in the non threat condition, and this was particularly striking among Anglo-American participants, who generally show the greatest sex difference in maths performance. Among these participants, men and women in the threat condition, as well as men in the non-threat condition, all scored about 19 percent on this very difficult test. But women in the non-threat group scored an average of 30 percent correctly, thus outperforming every other group – including both groups of men. In other words, the standard presentation of a test seemed to suppress women's ability, but when the same test was presented to women as equally hard for men and women, it 'unleashed their mathematics potential,' (Fine, 2010, p.30) Other examples from Fine's book confirmed that 'negatively stereotyped participants (that is, females doing maths and non-Asian minority students), matched on real-world academic tests like the SAT, performed worse than non-stereotyped groups under stereotype threat. But importantly, when stereotype threat was removed, the stereotyped groups actually outperformed non stereotyped peers who, from real-world tests, one would think had the same ability,' (Fine, 2010, p.37). Within the context of British animation, if the stereotype is that women gravitate to colouring, producing, assistant animation roles and have difficulty progressing, this becomes a reality. Women are entering an industry where they know that men dominate as directors, creators, writers, story boarders, and in VFX heavy roles, features and because of this knowledge do not have confidence in those areas. Hoyt and Murphy (2018) confirm this idea 'stereotype-based lack of fit between women's characteristics, skills, and aspirations and those deemed necessary for effective leadership. Gender stereotype-based expectations not only affect who people see as "fitting" the preconceived notion of a leader, but they also affect women themselves.' Fine's research is even more interesting when thinking about how many female animators find themselves dominated in a room full of men, as Fine shares results from a study 'found that the more men there are taking a maths test in the same room as a solo woman, the lower women's performance becomes...' And goes further when we explore why there is such a drop off women when they work their way up the ladder:



As our mathematical woman moves up the ranks, she will also progressively lose one very effective protection against stereotype threat: a female role model to look up to. People's self-evaluations, aspirations and performance are all enhanced by encountering the success of similar role models – and the more similar, the better. In line with this, it's been found that the presence – real or symbolic – of a woman who excels in maths somehow serves to alleviate stereotype threat. But of course, the higher up the ladder a woman climbs, the harder she will have to look to find someone successful above her – either contemporary or historical – who is like her (Fine, 2010, p.40).

This is directly applicable to animation, where there are so few women in senior leadership roles. The importance of role models in negating the stereotype was confirmed by Clarissa I. Cortland and Zoe Kineas (2018) in a wider context of women in global leadership positions. The success of series such as *Steven Universe* and other high profile female animation directors such as Brenda Chapman (*Brave*) and Disney's Chief Creative Officer, Jennifer Lee (*Frozen 2*) has been credited for inspiring female entrants into animation (Vankin, 2015).

Whilst Fine's account is now over ten years old, her findings are echoed in more other salient research. In 2011, Ofsted released a report into girls careers aspirations (Ofsted, 2011). Reading the report, there is a clear sense that stereotypes are already ingrained into primary school aged children. The report revealed that despite girls doing better educationally at age 16 and more females than males entering university, this did not translate into better paid work or careers. They found that as early as seven, girls referred to careers as teachers or vets, whereas boys wanted to be footballers or pilots. Both boys and girls questioned felt that there were boys' jobs and girls' jobs with neither group considering that a boy could be a nursery nurse or childminder or that a girl could be a plumber. These stereotypes became muted to a degree with age, and were less pronounced in single sex schools, however around 25% of year 7, 10 and 11 aged girls still wanted to work in a health service route, with education and performing arts the next most popular. This strengthens the argument for equality and diversity to be taught through children's programming before they reach primary school before

stereotypes can become entrenched and in time for counter-stereotypes to be effectively employed. The importance and effectiveness of this is confirmed by Stefanie Simon and Susan L. Hoyt (2013) whose research on counter-stereotypical messaging in media led them to conclude that ‘a positive perspective on the potential for media images of women in counter stereotypical roles to help increase women’s leadership aspirations, and eventually closing the gender gap that currently exists between men and women in top-level leadership positions,’ (Simon and Hoyt, 2013, p.242). This statement strengthens the argument for investigation of representation not simply in numbers but in the quality of that representation. An abundance of females on children’s programming in traditional roles does not support girls’ future aspirations.

Further evidence for the gap in female potential and participation can be seen in the drop off between film festivals and the industry. Whilst the USC Annenberg (2019) report on the pipeline from classroom to C-Suite report was based on the American animation industry, there are some strong parallels with the current climate within British animation, particularly in relation to the animation ‘boys club’ and female success at university and film festivals. Smith *et al.*, (2019) noted that despite women making up 65% of animation students and 47% animation directors at notable film festivals such as Sundance, Tribeca and NYFF, this did not translate into senior roles in industry. They concluded that ‘clearly the drop off in female participation is between Festival screening and working within animation companies. Females do not have the same access and opportunity as males do not seem to be moving up the ranks as quickly,’ (Smith *et al.*, 2019, p.3) . Films sent out to film festivals are usually student films or solo film projects completed between friends or small animation collectives. At this point, female animators have the freedom to work without industry bias or constraints. Furthermore, the USC Annenberg research reported that: ‘a culture of homophily prevents women from feeling a sense of belonging and moving forward in their careers. Responses from 50% of early-career women, 32% of decision-makers, and 25% of Animation Guild members indicated that a ‘boys club’ interfered with women becoming directors,’ (Smith *et al.*, 2019, p.3). Their report infers that women at the beginning of their careers are unfettered in their success. Once they enter industry, their opportunities become limited and that an unbalanced industry

can be a hostile place for female animation graduates to enter. Smith *et al.*, (2019) rails against the term 'boys club' and states that 'it tells us very little about the reasons women are left out of animation...(instead) the primary issues facing women in a lack of belonging to an organisational culture in which preference is given to male employees,' (Smith *et al.*, 2019, p.14). Leading British creative magazine, *It's Nice That* (2018) interviewed a series of female animation directors to hear about their experience within the British animation industry. An excerpt from the article reported that:

'BAFTA winner Nina Gantz says she saw an equal balance at school, and even on the indie film circuit, but when it came to the commercial world it became more male dominated. "It can be a bit 'laddy'," she says, "which could be why it's less inviting for women to get into. I found it intimidating at the beginning." Fellow animation director Anna Ginsburg says the same, referring to a set as being "like a boy's club" with "mad, macho energy flying around." Animation director Niki Lindroth von Bahr puts this in a wider context: "It is of course a matter of the total male domination in all powerful positions, that's been going on forever". Professor Teal Triggs, associate dean at the RCA's school of communication and current head of animation, feels that the reasons behind the drop in female representation between university and industry "are historical and often reflect personal circumstances, but also suggest an urgent need to review current industry practices," she says. "This may be in terms of examining the role of bias in interviewing practices, introducing robust mentoring schemes upon graduation, and raising awareness on gender and diversity in judging panels for awards and festivals. As educators, we need to work together with the animation industry to ensure women have equal opportunities.'

This excerpt serves to detail the importance of creating equitable safe spaces for women to create work and not hostile spaces where they cannot rise up through the ranks making the industry more equitable. As industry moves slowly towards parity, it still needs to address the gender pay gap. The UK Screen Alliance report (2019) identified that 'These statistics echo the

statutory Gender Pay Gap quartile reporting by large companies in our sector, which show many more men than women being employed in the top 25% of roles which attract the highest salaries,' (Animation UK, 2019). Companies have only been required, by law, to publish this data since 2018. The impact of this data being made public is yet to be seen. In an article titled 'Advancing women's equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth,' McKinsey argued that 'Gender inequality is not only a pressing moral and social issue but also a critical economic challenge. If women—who account for half the world's working-age population—do not achieve their full economic potential, the global economy will suffer,' (McKinsey, 2015, no pagination). Crystal L. Hoyt and Susan E. Murphy (2016) argue that 'Evidence is clear that fostering full participation for women is important for promoting a prosperous and civil society,' Hoyt and Murphy, 2016, p.3). Equality and diversity within the animation industry could also lead to more profitability. A report published by management consultants McKinsey, revealed that 'companies in the top quartile for gender or racial and ethnic diversity are more likely to have financial returns above their national industry medians,' (McKinsey, 2015a, no pagination). The Government Equalities Office report on the gender pay gap across all industries noted that 'When there is a lack of clarity around the standards for recruitment, promotion or pay negotiation decisions are more likely to be made in ways that disadvantage women, whether because people in power seek those who are like them or because who you know is more important than what you know,' (Jones, 2019, no pagination). This echoes its own earlier findings that 'The widespread use of unpaid work experience and informal entry routes into the industries, which discriminate against those without connections, while making it unlikely that those recruited are the most able,' (Lords Select Committee, 2010, no pagination). This lack of clarity is a hallmark of the animation industry. Data for the animation industry has only been available since 2018 and only for animation companies that have 250 or more employees. The British animation firms listed do not produce preschool animated content, but it is still relevant to see how the British animation industry fares with the gender pay gap (Animation UK, 2018).

Table 3 – Reported Gender Pay Gap data 2018/19 from the largest VFX and post-production companies

Employer	Employer Size	% Difference in hourly rate (Mean)	% Difference in hourly rate (Median)	% Women in lower pay quartile	% Women in lower middle pay quartile	% Women in upper middle pay quartile	% Women in top pay quartile	% Who received bonus pay (Women)	% Who received bonus pay (Men)	% Difference in bonus pay (Mean)	% Difference in bonus pay (Median)
DELUXE 142	250 to 499	12.9	12	37.5	40	28.8	24.1	30	29.2	27	-3.9
DOUBLE NEGATIVE	1000 to 4999	23	29.8	40.2	28	18	16.5	5.9	7.6	-61	-179.8
FRAMESTORE	1000 to 4999	21.1	24	37	30	23	15	13.5	8.4	-5.1	-5.6
MOVING PICTURE COMPANY	500 to 999	31	33.3	42.5	35	20.4	13.6	8.8	16.2	34.7	-36.2
THE FARM POST PRODUCTION	250 to 499	-1.1	15	33	24	22	25	7	7	30.4	-88.5
THE MILL	250 to 499	28	31	38.7	41.9	23.9	16.3	32.2	18.5	72.7	43.2
INDUSTRIAL LIGHT & MAGIC (UK)	500 to 999	25.6	28.4	40.9	16.5	13.4	11.1	58.7	64.9	-7.6	32.5

(Animation UK, 2018).

The figures supplied by the industry report show that there is a significant difference in hourly rate in all but one studio listed. There are significantly less women in the upper middle and top pay quartile in all studios. Although the percentage of women who got bonus pay is more than men, as they are in the lower pay quartile, and it is not clear whether they earned bonuses at this level as a means of topping up pay. We also have no way of knowing what the amount the bonuses paid to women or men were, and it is possible that women were paid lower bonuses. The figures that were gathered and that are now included shortly and detailed within the Appendices A5: Secondary data on Gender Pay Gap. This data is supplied by the studios themselves and publicly available directly from <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/> and detail figures from three of the biggest animation studios in the UK, MPC, Framestore and The Mill.. In summary, the figures from British studio Moving Picture Company (MPC) 2018-2019 shows that women earn 67p for every £1 that men earn, and their median hourly wage is 33.3% lower. They also show that women at MPC make up only 14% of the highest pay quartile. At Framestore the figures below show the gender pay gap in 2018-2019 to be 76p for every £1 that men earn. Their median hourly wage is 25% lower than men's. The data they supplied confirmed that women make up

only 15% of the top pay quartile. The gender pay gap at the Mill 2018 -2019 indicated that women earn 69p for every £1 that they earn and their median hourly wage is 31% Women make up only 16.3% of workers in the highest pay quartile.

These figures clearly indicate that women are significantly under-represented in the highest paid jobs. This could be because there are more female entrants into the industry who are still progressing towards higher salaried positions. This is refuted by Leung *et al.*, (2015) who asserted that 'this benign reading is not borne out by the evidence'. Their research on women in film and television evidence that it is more likely that because women are slowly forced out of industry over time. This theory is backed by Lindsay Watson, founder of Animated Women UK, who stated 'I don't want to end up another female statistic; having to leave the industry at 35 (un-married, no kids) because I can't find the work I want. I'm too afraid to ask for investment in my own projects, yet too ambitious to want to spend another 10 years 'working my way up' to a position where I get to choose projects,' (Animated Women UK, 2017, no pagination). If women are dropping out of industry before they reach a position where they can create or guide storylines, character development and character design, then women's voices continue to be absent from the creative process.

At the worst end of outcomes of this imbalance of women to men is a hostile and dangerous work environment for women. The American animation industry had been hit by several scandals in 2017 most notably John Lasseter and Chris Savino (Birnbaum, 2017). Lasseter was a co-founder of Pixar and went on to join Disney Animation. When allegations surrounding his assault of numerous employees emerged, he admitted to various 'missteps' and 'unwanted hugs' and left Pixar on a sabbatical (Associated Press, 2018c). These characterisations of his actions are at odds with the comprehensive list of the accusations levelled against Lasseter (Amidi, 2019a). Within months he went on to join Skydance who were accused of not taking allegations of sexual harassment and sexual assault seriously (Amidi, 2019a). Times Up (2019), an organisation set up in the wake of the #MeToo Movement stated that '@Skydance Media's decision to hire John Lasseter as head of animation endorses and perpetuates a broken system that allows powerful men to act without consequence'. Another critique of Skydance's hiring of Lasseter

pointed out that Disney's tactic of barring attractive women from being around Lasseter lest they tempt him 'literally barred (women) from the conversations that would help them advance their careers because they are women and the people in positions of power are men,' (McNamara, 2018, no paginations). His move prompted Emma Thompson to write a very public letter stating unequivocally that Lasseter was the reason she could no longer work Skydance on their latest animation Luck. Her letter to Skydance was printed in the LA Times and stated that 'Skydance has revealed that no women received settlements from Pixar or Disney as a result of being harassed by John Lasseter (McNamara, 2018). But given all the abuse that has been heaped on women who have come forward to make accusations against powerful men, do we really think that no settlements means that there was no harassment or no hostile work environment? Are we supposed to feel comforted that women who feel that their careers were derailed by working for Lasseter DID NOT receive money?'. Lasseter is worth around £100 million. None of the women who have had their careers or opportunities in the animation industry curtailed by Lasseter have been compensated. Time's Up (2019) released a statement on Twitter, which called for anyone seeking to come back into industry after a long history of sexual harassment to '1) Demonstrate true remorse. 2) Work deeply to reform your behavior. 3) Deliver restitution to those you harmed'. It is clear from Lasseter's statement and Thompson's letter that none of these has been achieved. Thompson also pointed out that 'If John Lasseter started his own company, then every employee would have been given the opportunity to choose whether or not to give him a second chance. But any Skydance employees who don't want to give him a second chance have to stay and be uncomfortable or lose their jobs,' (McNamara, 2018). More reports in the press detailed animation directors refusing to work with Skydance, with one animator quoted as saying 'So much progress was made last year in terms of people being able to speak out about experiences they had with harassment. John Lasseter had so clearly violated peoples' boundaries. The message they are sending by giving him this immense power and authority is just 'We don't care', (Hollywood Reporter, 2019). If heavyweights such as Emma Thompson, Brenda Chapman and Rashida Jones are not immune from the culture of bullying and harassment or feel compelled to remove themselves from projects in response to this, it sets a precedent that women will lose work because of

challenging an abuser. Whilst this is an American studio, reports on all of these were shared widely in the international press and are undoubtedly off putting for women entering the industry, particularly when the British animation industry has an established reputation as a 'boys club' in the same way that US animation does.

In 2019, Full Frontal with Samantha Bee, a popular late-night talk show and news satire television show in the US, aired a six minute animation that detailed how women had challenged Chris Savino, creator of Loud House (Amidi, 2019). Nickelodeon took a different stance to Disney and Skydance and released a statement saying that 'Chris Savino is no longer working with Nickelodeon...We take allegations of misconduct very seriously, and we are committed to fostering a safe and professional workplace environment that is free of harassment or other kinds of inappropriate conduct.' The animation detailed how ninety-seven women shared their experiences on a secret Facebook channel and eventually got the animation guild to force Savino into:

1. Forty hours of community service with an organisation of the charging parties choice.
2. \$4,000 fine, to be donated to an organisation of the charging parties' choice.
3. Certificate of Sexual Harassment training.
4. Ongoing counselling with a therapist.
5. A letter distributed to all Guild signatory studios informing them of the ruling.

Whilst this is promising and the public and global scale of coverage means that other predators may be put off by the potential ramifications in engaging in such behaviour, the guild's sanctions do not seem to reflect the damage that Savino caused his victims. Nickelodeon were also allegedly aware of allegations of misconduct for years before they acted (Amidi, 2017b). In the case of Chris Savino, one female animator was actively discouraged from raising a complaint by her manager, the Animation Guild's former business manager, and when she did finally meet with human resources, she was told they could not guarantee her job if she continued with her complaint (Deadline, 2018). In the wake of these events, two hundred women signed a



letter to all major LA animation studios including Disney, DreamWorks, Warner Bros., Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon, Paramount, Sony Pictures Animation, Titmouse (Amidi,, 2017c). It drew attention to a number of disturbing practices including how ‘some have seen the entrance of more women into the industry as an opportunity to exploit and victimise younger workers on their crews who are looking for mentorship.’ The mentorship point is significant as it points to the fact that at this early stage in their careers, women are leaving the industry because they are prey to sexual harassment. The letter made three suggestions:

1. Every studio puts in place clear and enforceable sexual harassment policies and takes every report seriously. It must be clear to studio leadership, including producers, that, no matter who the abuser is, they must investigate every report or face consequences themselves.
2. The Animation Guild adds language in our constitution that states that it can “censure, fine, suspend or expel any member of the guild’ To craft and support the new language, we ask that an Anti-Harassment and Discrimination Committee be created to help educate and prevent future occurrences.
3. Our male colleagues start speaking up and standing up for us. When their co-workers make sexist remarks, or when they see sexual harassment happening, we expect them to say something. Stop making excuses for bad behaviour in your friends and co-workers and tell them what they are doing is wrong. (Amidi, 2017)

Whilst these are American examples, it highlights how a power imbalance creates a hostile working environment for women. American animators have an animation guild that they can utilise, although it is unclear if the animation guild was able to do anything for John Lasseter's victims, in the UK there is no guild. The high-profile events in the US prompted the BFI and BAFTA (2018) to release their own set of industry guidelines, acknowledging and highlighting that because ‘the industry depends on a large freelance and casual workforce, on-set and studio workspaces are often stressful and tough environments with long working hours and constantly shifting workforces. Under these conditions, if things go wrong, it can be unclear who to turn to or

what to do, leading to anxiety for workers in what is a highly competitive, and by its nature, insecure job market. Most people at the brunt of ill-treatment fear losing future job opportunities if they do speak out. Inadequate routes for raising confidential concerns further create a culture of silence'. The US animation industry's problems of a freelance workforce, an insecure job market, inadequate routes for complaints and fear of reprisals and lost job opportunities mirror those of the British screen industry. In an open letter to members, Lindsay Watson, founder of Animated Women UK (2017), detailed that 'I can't go very far without addressing the prevalent issue of sexual harassment in the workplace. It was the reason I set up Animated Women UK.... I started Animated Women UK because I was angry, but I used my anger to fuel creative action and produce positive change'. In response to the Me Too and Time's Up movements, Animated Women UK (2018) launched their own Deeds Not Words campaign with support from Animation UK with an event hosted by The Mill studio. Their own #MeToo survey revealed that 70% of respondents had suffered some form of sexual harassment. Clearly, it is happening within the British animation industry, but has not made the national press let alone international press in the same way that Lasseter and Savino did. A hostile work environment is one in which women are not able to progress effectively and inevitably a considerable number will move out of industry.

### **Reasons behind the increase in women: Funding, University, Advocacy groups and Changes in Technology**

Despite these significant challenges, there is evidence that despite the number of women in animation being below the expected 50%, there has been a significant increase in the number of women into the industry. This is backed by research conducted by the founder of Animated Women UK, Lindsey Watson which found that 'aided by the animation tax credit, the number of women in the industry has almost doubled between 2012 and 2015 to 5,325,' (Animated Women UK 2017c). Any increase in the numbers of women reflect the significant changes in funding available to the industry since the introduction of the Animation Tax Relief in 2013. The table shows how revenue generated by animation programmes jumped by over £37 million pounds from

2015 - 2016 and increased from £65.9 million in 2013 (before the introduction of the animation tax relief) to £107.1 million in 2016 (BFI 2018).

**Table 43**  
**HM Treasury Revenue Generated by Animation Programmes, 2013-16**

	2013 (£m)	2014 (£m)	2015 (£m)	2016 (£m)
Direct VAT	2.1	2.3	3.0	3.4
Direct	26.1	30.1	23.1	32.3
Indirect	6.2	7.2	5.3	7.9
Induced	3.9	4.6	3.2	4.9
Spillover	27.7	33.8	35.4	58.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>65.9</b>	<b>78.0</b>	<b>70.0</b>	<b>107.1</b>

Source: Olsberg+SPI/Nordicity estimates based on data from BFI, Attentional, Ofcom, I.H.S., ABS, IDBR, BRES, CAA, comScore, CRTIC, public financial reports, Official Charts Company, BASE, ASHE, ONS and HM Revenue

Note: Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding. See Appendix 4, Section 14.1.4 for methodology

(*Animation UK, 2018*).

It is possible that the influx of funding has corrected a historical problem. The number of young people entering the industry may be more gender diverse than ever before and this is driving equality. The Animation UK (2019) report revealed that ‘This is predominantly a young industry with the highest proportion of the workforce being in the age range 25-34 and very few people over the age of 55’. It is possible that there is so much work in industry that studios are hiring as many people as they can and hiring on merit rather than excluding people because of conscious and unconscious bias.

The increase in women in industry may also reflect global changes in the number of women entering the animation workforce. Numbers from animation schools as geographically far apart as Central Saint Martins and CalArts report that female students make up 70-80% of their student body. When CalArts introduced a blind admission process around 2010, it has seen a steady year on year growth in the number of female animators. In 2015, 71% of its animation students were women. Other Universities report similar figures:

- USC’s John C. Hench Division of Animation and Digital Arts - 65%,
- UCLA’s master’s program in animation - 68%, and
- Florida’s Ringling College of Art and Design’s computer animation program 70% women (Vankin, 2015).

Industry has a long way to go to reflect these numbers, but as the pool of new recruits skews so heavily to women, this naturally means more women entering the industry. Steve Roberts, formerly Lead Animation Tutor at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London, reported that the demographics of students on this Animation programme mirrors this trend. They have no blind submissions process and places are offered on the strength of portfolios alone. Added to this is the fact that the sheer number of women applying for the programme eclipses male applicants. Certain animation schools are seen as the place for 2D animation as opposed to 3D animation. Roberts hypothesised that this could be responsible for the drop in male applicants to CSM which meant that the 2018-2020 intake had twenty five female students to five male students. It is not only within animation that more female students are applying. Figures published by UCAS revealed that 30,000 more female entrants got a place at university than males (Press Association, 2017).

There are several groups and studios that are actively pushing to change the animation industry. Animated Women UK was set up to support women in the VFX and Animation industries. They set up the Helen North Achieve Programme to provide twenty-four of their members with strategic career management. Their focus is on eight women in the early years of their career, eight mid-level career women and eight women in senior leadership who want to access their full potential and help other women in their field. Other programmes include Aspiring Women, a six month coaching programme which included a mentor for all participants (NextGen Skills Academy, 2019). Studios such as the Mill challenged themselves to ensure its workforce was 40% female by the end of 2019, and currently report a 42% female workforce, whilst acknowledging that maintaining that whilst they crew up for larger projects will be a challenge. Blue Zoo, one of the largest studios in London has made diversity and inclusion a core business strategy, pointing out that 'In the creative industries it's essential that every voice is heard - so we can tell authentic stories that fully represent society. Diversity fosters creativity,' (Blue Zoo, 2019). Women in Animation has its own mentoring programme that supports its goal of 50/50 representation by 2025 (Women in Animation, no date). ACCESS:VFX is a group of forty studios, educational establishments and

industry bodies and focuses on diversity and inclusion throughout animation VFX and games and 57% of their mentees are women (Animation UK, 2020).

Changes in technology are also credited for bringing changes into the industry and giving new opportunities to women. The advent of the internet has been credited for creating online forums and communities for women to post work and fan art which are often posted using androgynous handles (Vankin, 2015). They are then judged for their ability alone. In the US, three new animated television series are helmed by women who all have a background in independent comics and online art. Misha Mihailova (2019) revealed that Natasha Allegri (Bee and PuppyCat), Shadi Petosky (Danger and Eggs, co-created with Mike Owens), and Rebecca Sugar (Steven Universe) all utilised alternate approaches to securing their own television show. Whilst these animations are neither preschool or created within the UK, it is relevant in describing a new nascent path to becoming a show creator that circumvents traditional industry structures that women could adopt in the UK and that suits women who are already well represented as independents. It is also relevant as animation now exists within a post-network world, meaning that there are a number of new platforms for animation such as Amazon, Netflix and YouTube and new production companies such as Mattel's newly formed Playground Productions. Marge Dean, co-president and production director at Playground Productions shared that 'because animation is primarily kids and family content, we will be able to show a different representation of female characters in both quantity and quality to a younger and more impressionable audience, leading to a very different view of women and their role in the world,' (Mayorga, 2015). Netflix was reported to be spending \$1.1 billion on animated content and Amazon is planning on spending \$300 million (Vankin, 2015). Claire Perkins and Michelle Schreiber (2019) affirm that the emergence of global streaming platforms 'Netflix and Amazon and the transnational flows of content they have enabled, is also bringing to visibility the work of women from elsewhere around the world, most notably the UK, Australia and Europe,' (Perkins and Schreiber, 2019, p.919). By adding and changing the ways in which funding is accessed, this allows a more diverse range of people into the industry as creators, directors and animators.

Mihailova (2019) reports that emergent online distribution, online funding models and online fan communities have made it possible for 'diverse,

feminist, and LGBTQ-inclusive narratives and aesthetic' to be produced and succeed. Mihailova posits that because of these new avenues, independent animation now expands to include animation that is created by women and created for underserved communities. Perkins and Schreiber (2019) argue that 'Independent' has functioned throughout film and television history as an important euphemism for 'feminist'. The 'independent' tag meant that Steven Universe creator Rebecca Sugar was hired as a storyboard revisionist on *Adventure Time*. Cartoon Network had launched an initiative to hire young independent cartoonists and aimed to train them in house. Thanks to this initiative, Sugar became Cartoon Network's first solo female series creator, and the show is aired on Cartoon Network. Mihailova reports that Allegri was hired on the strength of her online blog and went on to raise \$870,000 on Kickstarter to create her animated series *Bee and PuppyCat*. The *Bee and PuppyCat* creators expand on this and describe how the series started with two shorts on the *Too Cool! Cartoons* series, a project that was released on YouTube and was designed to introduce original characters and animation creators. They report that based on the reception to those two episodes, over 18,000 fans contributed to a Kickstarter campaign to create a full series of the show, which went on to become the most-backed animation project in Kickstarter history. It is now aired on an ad-supported digital TV platform. The *Too Cool! Cartoons* project was created by the producers of two hundred animation shorts that have been turned into fifteen series for Cartoon network, Nickelodeon and Channel Frederator, a new animation platform founded by the producers of *Adventure Time*. Those involved in *Adventure Time* are supporters and advocates of emerging talent. Mihailova reports that Petosky self-published comics whilst working as a web designer. She co-founded a Big Time Attic, an illustration and alternative comics studio and then a video game and animation studio Puny Entertainment. In 2015, Shadi Petosky co-created the queer-inclusive animated series *Danger and Eggs* for Amazon's Prime Video as the only openly trans showrunner in American animation.

Mihailova explores this transition from comics to television is a new phenomenon with Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon lately attending indie comics events such as Small Press Expo and the Toronto Comic Arts Festival. Graphic novels, traditionally geared towards boys and seen as a precursor to animation, are now reported to be a more diverse field. Mihailova details how

both Allegri, Sugar and Petoskey all benefited from consumer support before their respective shows aired or were picked. She posits that this is due to a fanbase that has previously not been catered for by animation that is created by traditional animation studios and broadcast structures. This echoes previous statements surrounding the benefits of having diversity as showing new stories and viewpoints not previously seen. Mihailova concludes that 'For women with creative roots in independent art and relatively low-profile positions in the animation industry, leveraging contemporary online distribution patterns and corresponding audience viewing habits to generate demand for their content can be an essential first step towards opening up opportunities for career growth.' Whilst utilising alternate means for fundraising, broadcasting or gathering audience support highlights the problems with traditional routes into animation, these three auteurs have highlighted new ways into the industry. Spark (2016) warns that 'Despite the realms of internet distribution, wider-access television, and the explosion of short film and animation festivals around the world offering more outlets and greater entry options, it remains a rarity to see women in the roles of film director or TV show creator or conceiving and green-lighting new content in the commercial animation field. Mihailova echoes this by acknowledging that despite progress, gender equality is still 'out of reach'. This industry context provides us with some explanations for the levels of representations both on and off-screen which are revealed in the original empirical data in the next section.

### **Further observations**

Female representation on-screen and off-screen showed no real correlation to each other. It was possible to have strong representation on-screen and poor representation behind the screen, and the reverse was also true. It was also interesting to note that programmes that aired before the introduction of the Equality Act did very well in terms of representation on-screen. *Numberblocks* and *JoJo and Gran Gran* gave some indication that the landscape of the industry had changed, with the highest numbers of female animation teams within these two programmes. Whilst this can explain the lack of females behind the screen, there is no reasonable excuse for representation on-screen for being as low as 23%, which can be seen on Figure 1.13. This drops even lower when collating the number of women in speaking roles, which can be

seen in Figure 1.14. Two points that emerged as significant things to the data collection was that the number of females directing, or writing has to be counted by the number of episodes that they worked in, which is detailed in Figure 1.15 and Figure 1.22. All of this meant that males were overrepresented by 8% on-screen. As animators, males were overrepresented by 18.5%. Ultimately however, representation by numbers on-screen or in the industry is not enough. How females and males are portrayed is of vital importance. Whilst this thesis is rooted in the idea that authentic portrayals need representation to fuel them, *Peppa Pig* challenges this notion by having a male centred crew but negative representations of males within the programming. Perhaps it is not merely people within the characteristic, but directors, writers and creators should make considered choices about not just the demographics of characters but also how they are portrayed on-screen.

In her analysis of *Transformer: Rescue Bots*, an American animation, Dobson relates that early seasons rely on limited and stereotyped images of women, the smiling trophy wife, the cranky old cat woman or the silent trophy wife (Dobson in Roe *et al.*, 2019, p.250). She shares how this has improved over the seasons thanks to a fan base who demanded a female bot, and a production and writing team that has become increasingly mixed. Here she argues that change has been fuelled by consumers of programming asking for it, as well as creative teams becoming more balanced. She also argues that the use of stereotypes to create humour by challenging and addressing them is not always successful – it takes a measured thoroughness to fully understand stereotypes and how to counter them that may be beyond a team that is not balanced and therefore cannot authentically examine stereotypes.



## Chapter 5: Representations of Race, Age and Disability

### 5.1 Representations of Race



*John: Ichi taki mas.*

*John: It means, 'You are grateful for the food.'*

*(Sarah & Duck, Season 2, Episode 7, Fast Slow Bungalow)*

The quote above from *Sarah & Duck* displays a way of including race within programming, using language as well as food to show differences between cultures and educate viewers on both. This section looks at the Primary Data around depictions of race on-screen. There was no way to evidence participation in industry by looking at on-screen credits, as I could with Sex. Instead this thesis examined a number of secondary sources to examine participation in industry.

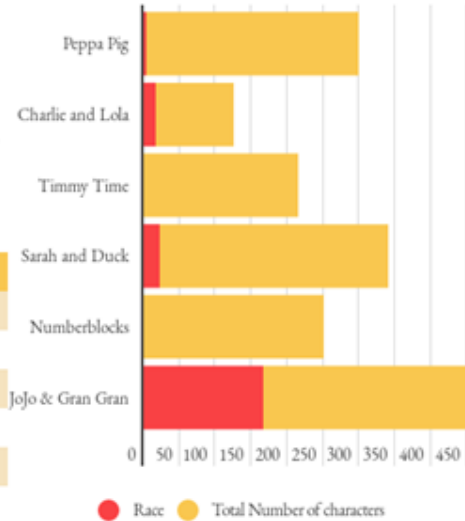
# Race: Primary Data

Figure 1.16

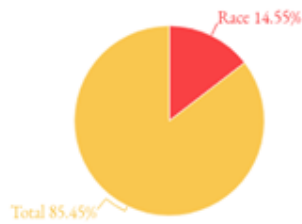
## Race

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented diversity in race and see how that compares with the UK population. In the UK 16% of the population identify as a minority, rising to 38% in London.

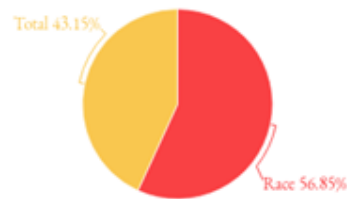
		Race	Total Number of characters
1	Peppa Pig	4	296
2	Charlie and Lola	16	110
3	Timmy Time	0	215
4	Sarah and Duck	22	319
5	Numberblocks	0	251
6	Jojo & Gran Gran	166	292



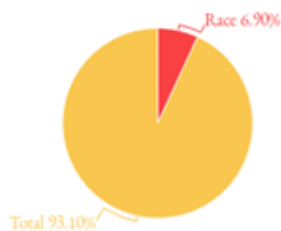
### Charlie and Lola



### Jojo and Gran Gran



### Sarah and Duck



### UK Population



Figure 1.20

## All characteristics against UK population

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented all nine characteristics against the UK Population.

This data has been split into two graphs to view the data in a more accessible format. The graph below details sex, race, age and disability only.

	In programmes %	% of the UK population	% difference
<b>Sex</b>			
Female	42.89	51	-8.11
Male	57.11	49	8.11
Female Speaking	41.95	51	-8.11
Male Speaking	58.05	49	8.11
<b>Race</b>			
Age	3.17	22	-18.83
Disability	0.61	20.65	-20.04
Sexual Orientation	0	2.2	-2.2
Marriage	0.54	50	-49.93
Gender Reassignment	0	0.3-0.7	-0.3
Religion	0.67	75	-75
Pregnancy and Maternity	0	1.29	-1.29

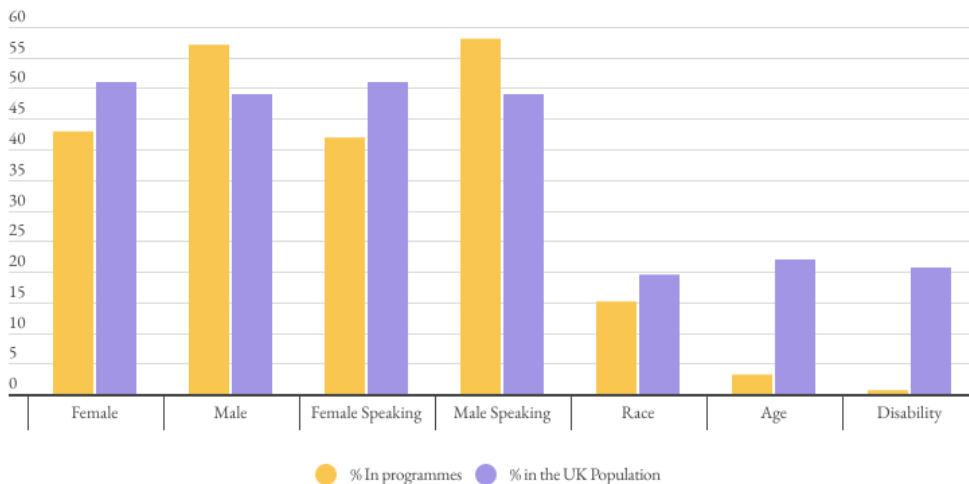


Figure 1.16 gives an indication of the low levels of representation. *Charlie and Lola*, *Sarah & Duck* and *JoJo and Gran Gran* were the only programmes that showed any representation of race, although perhaps this was complicated by all of the other characters in the programmes being animal figures or blocks.

However, this would not make representation impossible and the use of accents or even clearly stating that characters were of a different race is still possible within these programmes. Programmes did show a slight increase in representation over time, although this is still below the percentage of people from a BAME background within the UK population for both *Charlie and Lola*, and *Sarah & Duck*. *Sarah & Duck* showed again that representation in terms of putting characters on-screen is not enough and that these representations should be wary of falling into negative stereotypes within their portrayals of race in the case of the Ribbon Sisters. Their portrayal of John was much stronger and more effective, sharing parts of John's culture and showing his active participation in his culture through origami and food.

## **Race: Research Objective One: on-screen Depictions**

### **To what extent do depictions of characters on-screen match the demographic identities of the British population?**

The only recorded instance of Race in the *Peppa Pig* episodes that were analysed for this thesis was the appearance of the Madame Gazelle character, who speaks with a distinctive European accent. It could be argued that all of the different animals represent different races. However, the ambiguity of this interpretation, and the fact that accents have been used to create characters that come from other parts of the world, such as Delphine Donkey from France indicate that this is not the case. If Delphine is from France, that means all of the other countries exist and all of the characters live as humans do, on a human planet. Madame Gazelle appears 4 times out of 296 character appearances on-screen, this would mean that a person representing race equals 1.3%. As mentioned earlier, the actor who plays Madame Gazelle is an English actress putting on a European accent. However, Galit Rovner-Lev and Nelly Elias (2018), draw attention to the fact that 'several older women are portrayed as having a peculiar dialect or foreign accent, supporting children's comprehension of their otherness,' (Rovner-Lev and Elias, 2018, p.209). It is possible that any positive effects of seeing a different culture represented might be negated by having this example used by an older character. Drawing on this notion of othering of older people, it may have been safer to have the Madame Gazelle portrayed with an accent like the other characters and a

foreign accent used by another character of a similar age to Peppa instead. Across the seasons this is achieved in Season 3, episode 12 through the introduction of the Delphine Donkey character who is French.

*Charlie and Lola* contained the second highest instance of race representation, at 15%, primarily due to the inclusion of Lotta, a Black female character who is Lola's best friend who appeared in almost 50% of episodes in a speaking role. Lotta is portrayed with her natural hair, and without any of the stereotypes associated to female black girls such as loud, sassy, rude, difficult (UK Youth, 2020) or there to simply support Lola with 'sass, attitude and a keen insight,' (Nittle, 2021) or simply the 'black girl with an attitude,' (Sinclair, 2015). Whilst some of these examples refer to older characters, the 'adultification' of black females shows that these stereotypes are attached to black females as young as five. None of this is apparent in *Charlie and Lola*. The actress playing Lotta is Morgan Gayle, and as the images below show, representation off-screen and on-screen are appropriate.



*(Behind the Voice Actors, 2009)*

*Sarah & Duck's* race representation was 7% of all characters. This is due primarily to two sets of characters. Firstly John, who is Japanese and the Ribbon Sisters, who we presume are Pakistani or from another Urdu speaking country (BBC, 2014). With the Ribbon sisters, whilst it is clear they are from an ethnic minority, it is not until Season 3 that they use the word 'Alvida', which is an Urdu word for goodbye, although it would be unlikely that a preschool aged child would be able to identify what this word means or where it comes from. Whilst these observations could not be clearly defined in Season One, in

Seasons Two and Three race is more clearly defined. For this reason, two episodes from later seasons are analysed below. These episodes were not in the original list of programmes that were examined, but provide insight into positive portrayals of race representation within programming.

The first two are episodes that feature John and give an example of how race can be clearly shown on-screen, avoiding negative stereotypes. The following table details a brief content analysis on the *Sarah & Duck* episode Fast Slow Bungalow, Season 2, Episode 7, and Origami Overload Season 2 Episode 12:

Name	<i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i>
Runtime	7 minutes
Season and Episode	Season 2 Episode 7
Year	2014
Plot	<i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i> visit John and Flamingo at their home. John gives Sarah a tour, ending up in the observation deck. He introduces the game ‘fast slow bungalow’ to Sarah, they do various activities fast or slow depending on the game.
Thematic Analysis in relation to portrayals of race on-screen	Exterior scene of the house: Japanese inspired bungalow, cherry blossom, Japanese architecture, koi carp in the pond. Interior shot of those: low dining table, sliding doors, Introduction to mochi, description of sticky rice on the outside and ice cream on the inside, Japanese style painting on the wall, introduction to Tako, and an explanation from John that this means Octopus in Japanese. John tells Sarah how to say ‘I’m grateful for the food’ in Japanese.



*(Sarah & Duck, Origami Overload, Season 2, Episode 12)*

Name	<i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i> Origami Overload
Runtime	7 minutes
Season and Episode	Season 2 Episode 12
Year	2015
Plot	<i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i> visit John at his home, he introduces them to origami, he makes an origami flamingo, and it comes to life. The characters search for the little creature, only for Flamingo to become a maternal figure mummy to all of the origami flamingos.

Semiotic Analysis in relation to portrayals of race on-screen	Exterior scene of the house: Japanese inspired bungalow, cherry blossom, Japanese architecture, Interior shot of those: low dining table, sliding doors, Introduction to origami, Japanese style dolls on the shelf, Japanese lantern.
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Whilst we do not know where John is from until Season 2 Episode 7 (*Sarah & Duck*, no date), it is clear that he belongs to an ethnic minority. In the two episodes above John is quite clear in giving Sarah clear indications that he is from Japan. There are clear links to Japan within episodes such as origami, (*Origami Overload*, Season 2 Episode 12) Japanese architecture and interiors, mochi and mentioning the Japanese word for octopus (*Fast Slow Bungalow* Season 2 Episode 7). These can be viewed as successful ways for programming to include Race into programming. As the programme establishes John as Japanese in Episode 7, in Episode 12 whilst there are clear nods to his Japanese heritage, the focus is on the plot of an escaping origami flamingo.





*(Sarah & Duck, Season 3, Episode 40, Ribbon Alvida)*

Name	<i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i> Ribbon Alvida
Runtime	7 minutes
Season and Episode	Season 3 Episode 40
Year	2017
Plot	<i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i> take the shallots to the circus in the park. Sarah is disappointed to see that the Ribbon Sisters will be going on tour with the Circus, and she won't see them for some time. She makes them a farewell picture, but when returning to the park, the circus has already packed up. As they walk home, the circus drives past them, the Ribbon sisters shout out 'Thank you. Alvida' which Sarah repeats.

Semiotic and narrative analysis in relation to portrayals of race on-screen	The billboard outside highlights a host of Asian circus performers. Costumes/circus trucks are decorated in a style that appear to be South Asian. Ribbon sisters shout out 'Alvida', which Sarah repeats.
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As mentioned within an earlier chapter on strong representation, portraying the Ribbon Sisters as speaking in whispers perpetuates a myth of the quiet, submissive, invisible girl, often referred to as the docility myth (BBC, 2020; Mukkamala, S., and Suyemoto, KL. 2018;). This episode promotes that idea in the sense that the Ribbon sisters say six words/sounds in total: Bye, Bye, Ooh, Aah, Thank you, and Alvida. Considering it is one of the few portrayals of minorities within the programme, it would have been more appropriate to stay away from stereotypical representations of race as it does more harm than good. In daCosta's work on black representation in British animation, he asks the question 'has this [interpretation of race] been accidental or are these works the result of implicit racist ideologies that operate as common sense?', (daCosta 2022, p.26). There should be more emphasis on finding appropriate, authentic portrayals of Race in children's programming and an informed effort to steer away from problematic portrayals. It is hard to explain why the Ribbon Sisters do not communicate in the same way as all of the other children within the programme. When looking at the thematic analysis of the episodes that feature John and those that feature the Ribbon Sisters, there are hardly any representations or signposts to Race. This could have been tackled by either the Studio itself or the broadcaster, in this case the BBC. If there was a variety of Asian girls, and one whispered all of their dialogue, that could be seen as a creative choice. However, these are the only Asian characters in the programme, as it reinforces negative stereotypes. These stereotypes rely on intersectionality between race and sex, and that whilst the notion of women being silenced is prevalent regardless of skin colour, adding a racial dimension to this results in a compounding of discrimination, as is the case where any of the characteristics intersect with each other.

*JoJo and Gran Gran* scored the highest in terms of Race representation at 57% as its two main protagonists are of Caribbean heritage and is the first

animated series to centre on a Black British family (Duffield, 2020; The Voice, 2020 and ITV News, 2020). As well as these two characters, there are several other recurring characters that represent people from ethnic minorities and give an accurate picture of London’s ethnic diversity which is currently 40.2% (GOV.UK, 2018a). In contrast to *Sarah & Duck’s* ambiguous portrayal of the Ribbon sisters, it is made very clear that *JoJo and Gran Gran* have a Caribbean and more specifically St Lucian heritage which is referred to regularly. They also call JoJo’s great grandmother who is in St Lucia and is shown as speaking English with a St Lucian accent. There are several episodes that look at St Lucian culture specifically, two of which are analysed below. They were not a part of the original programmes selected by this thesis but were included to demonstrate positive examples of how representation of race in programming could be tackled.

Name	JoJo and Gran Gran: It’s time to dance
Runtime	11 minutes
Season and Episode	Season 1 Episode 11
Year	2021
Plot	Gran Gran teaches JoJo how to dance the Moulala, a traditional St Lucian dance. They enlist Great Gran Gran’s help and JoJo practises.
Semiotic and narrative analysis in relation to portrayals of race on-screen	Picture of St Lucia on the wall, traditional St Lucian art on the wall, Gran Gran teaches JoJo the Moulala. Pictures of Gran Gran dancing in St Lucia, JoJo and Gran Gran are shown with natural hair. They speak to Great Gran Gran using the tablet who is in St Lucia.



*(JoJo and Gran Gran: It's Time for a Carnival, Season 2, Episode 1)*

Name	JoJo and Gran Gran: It's time For a Carnival
Runtime	11 minutes
Season and Episode	Season 2 Episode 1
Year	2021
Plot	JoJo and Gran Gran invite friends from their local community to participate in a St Lucian inspired carnival, treating them to traditional food and making costumes and a carnival float. They decorate the garden and show Great Gran Gran their carnival.

<p>Semiotic and narrative analysis in relation to portrayals of race on-screen</p>	<p>House: Photos of St Lucia, family members at a wedding, graduation.</p> <p>Calling Great Gran Gran in St Lucia, she has a carnival costume on, she tells JoJo that its honour of the St Lucian Carnival, she tells JoJo that everyone on the island gathers to celebrate their St Lucian heritage. Gran Gran tells JoJo that they dance to good music, eat delicious food – the words ‘good’ and ‘delicious’ indicate a pride in their heritage. Great Gran Gran describes the parade and shows JoJo and a picture of a very colourful float. Gran Gran makes soursop juice. Gran Gran prepares guava, coconut milk, ice and lime to make it. Their garden part also features what could be a South East Asian lady in a sari. The live action portion of the programme shows a carnival featuring face painting, dancing, music, food and a costumed parade.</p>
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This episode can be viewed as an authentic portrayal of race on-screen. The pride that is displayed in showcasing St Lucian heritage is evident, and the episode presents a considered and interesting portrayal of race. Here traditions are shown and in the case of the carnival episode, it ends with *JoJo and Gran Gran* sharing their festival with members of their community who clearly are not from St Lucia. From this we can infer that everyone can enjoy and participate actively in other cultures. This is evident in the live action portion of the programme also, where the parade is made of people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, particularly the dancers within the parade. This echoes other examples of *JoJo and Gran Gran* focussing on other races within episodes. For example, in Season 4 Episode 10: It's time for a special visitor, the live action portion of the programme features a child whose family comes over from Hungary to visit. They share details about traditional foods that are eaten and show the children actively participating in preparing it. This focus on representation is undoubtedly through the work of Laura Henry-Allain work within anti-racism. As well as publishing the *JoJo and Gran Gran* books, in 2021, she published another book, titled *'My Skin, Your Skin'*. The book speaks directly to racism, and how to respond when witnessing racism or being a

victim of it. In an interview she states that 'All children need to be able to mix with people of different races and cultures. This shouldn't be a one-off experience, which is tokenistic,' (Waterstones, 2021). *JoJo and Gran Gran* explores race through on-screen representation and by sharing JoJo's heritage through a great grandparent overseas, making St Lucian food and discussing St Lucia throughout the series, it is not simply dropped into one episode and not discussed again. Here, we can see how Laura Henry-Allain's personal and authentic experiences, combined with her considered approach to race have created a more in-depth examination of race. It is no surprise that *JoJo and Gran Gran* provided the most effective examples of portrayals of race, considering the creators background as an effective author and race commentator. This speaks to the benefit of having someone within the creative team who not only has lived experience of being within that characteristic, but also is informed about the challenges that are faced and appropriate ways to portray that characteristic on-screen. *JoJo and Gran Gran* also gave some examples of how to disrupt negative examples of race in subtle ways. Gran Gran's house features photos of married couples, a member of the family graduating and by having all of the characters wear their hair naturally.

As discussed previously, these are in direct opposition to the stereotypes of the absent black father, black representation at university and inability of black people to wear their hair naturally for fear of backlash. In these ways, *JoJo and Gran Gran* subverts the stereotypes of black people on-screen. DaCosta (2010) discusses the absence of 'black ordinariness', as a deliberate attempt to erase the existence of black people within the UK (daCosta, 2020, p.7). *JoJo and Gran Gran* disrupts this by being a programme that has its characters engaging in ordinary activities; going to the park, spending time with family, visiting the library etc. Within his study of the representation on black people from the 1960s to 2010 daCosta argues that it has been historically 'easy to employ negative black stereotypes because they have been standard practise within animation,' (daCosta, 2020, p9). It is also important to note that the actors Taiya Samuel and Cathy Tyson were respectively selected to voice the characters *JoJo and Gran Gran* and are Black, again a conscious decision that reveals the efforts of the creators to ensure authentic representation. The positive nature of these representations becomes even more relevant when thinking about other representations of black people and culture in animation.

DaCosta highlights Disney's *The Lion King* as particularly problematic, where Simba is played by white actors Jonathon Taylor Thomas and Matthew Broderick, and the 'disloyal, vicious baddies' are voiced by African American actors Whoopie Goldberg and Cheech Marin, (daCosta, 2020, p.17), These representations are further interrogated by King *et al.*, with their insight into the way 'Africa is pictured through animals and not people'. By using black actors to portray black human characters engaging in normal everyday tasks, *JoJo and Gran Gran* is clearly a positive step towards representation.

Stacy L. Smith *et al.*, (2019) published a report titled 'Inclusion in Animation? Investigating Opportunities, Challenges and the Classroom to the C-Suite Pipeline'. By looking at the pipeline, they sought to expose the reasons behind why so few women and women of colour were in senior positions in animation and why they were so poorly represented on-screen in America. Their comprehensive study looked at the 120 top animated films and the top 100 animated series on broadcast and cable television in the US from 2007 to 2018. The following figures are not only representations of race, but how these intersect with sex, therefore women of colour. This highlights how intersectionality is a significant challenge for women of colour. Smith *et al.*, revealed that only 17% of the 120 top animated films contained a female lead or co-lead (Smith *et al.*, 2019, p.9). Of these, only 3% were women of colour. Furthermore, they found that out of the 100 top animated series on broadcast and cable television, just 12% were women of colour. Writer or Creator credits were even lower, at just 17%, and only three of these women were from a minority ethnic group. Within the 120 film sample, only 2.5% of directors were women. Four women held these five jobs. Only 1 was a woman of colour (Asian) who worked twice. Turning to TV, 13% of the episodes or 1st segments coded were directed by women. Only 3 or 2% were helmed by a woman of colour, all of whom were Asian. According to the United States Census Bureau (2019), the three largest demographic groups in the US are White 76.3%, Hispanic 18.5% and Black or Black African 13.4%. Asians are recorded at 5.9%, indicating that female Hispanic and Black female directors are completely absent from Director roles within the animation industry in the US despite being a part of the two largest minority groups in the US. By including these figures on the number of women within the US animation industry and the number of females on-screen side by side in the same paper, USC Annenberg's

Inclusion Initiative drew a correlation between underrepresentation within the industry and how this translates on-screen. This thesis investigated whether a similar correlation exists within and between the number of women in key creative roles such as writer, creator, director, within the British animation industry and the number of female characters in speaking roles on-screen. This was done by collating the names of people in those three key roles and listing whether they were male or female.

Hopster, the British subscription streaming service for programming and games, released their own content analysis of 50 children's programmes available to British audiences on Netflix, Amazon, YouTube and free to air channels such as CBeebies. Their report is titled 'Is TV making your child more prejudiced?', (Hopster, 2019). Hopster is an app that self-identifies as being 'designed just for kids and can be used offline, so all their favourite shows, songs, books and games can be in one place when you need them.' Their website asserts that its content is:

- Curriculum-based entertainment.
- Aligned with the UK early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework,
- Incorporating a number of early years curricula from around the world.
- Developed by academics in childhood education and cognitive development,' Hopster (no date).

Hopster arranged for an independent group of researchers to watch three episodes of 50 programmes. They found that minority characters were completely absent from half of the programmes selected. This would mean that in half of these programmes, the world that was depicted was entirely absent of any people from BAME backgrounds. This is not simply about characters that were not protagonists nor secondary characters, but rather they simply did not exist in the world that was created by children's programming. To erase entirely 20-40% of the population as if they did not exist in the world sends a message that these faces, and voices are not necessary within programming. This absence is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6: Conclusion of this thesis. Hopster revealed that in just under half of the cases where BAME characters were included, they were background or tokenistic. Other conclusions were that:



In shows where BAME characters were included, they were rarely portrayed as 'the star' of preschool content. Just three out of the 50 shows analysed had a BAME character as a consistent lead (*'Apple Tree House'*, *'Go Jettters'*, *'Blaze and the Monster Machines'*) as well as three of the YouTube nursery rhyme channels *'ChuChu TV'*, *'Mother Goose Club'* and *'Little Baby Bum'* - which included consistent BAME representation, albeit not through named characters. Also notable within the study are shows like *'Go Jettters'*, which evidence that non real-life characters can still achieve BAME representation amongst their lead roles, either visually, or using voice over artists (Hopster, 2019, p.11). Both Apple Tree House and Go Jettters are on CBeebies, although Apple Tree House is a live action series. Blaze and the Monster Machines is on Netflix and features a character from a BAME background and all of the actors who voice the character AJ are from a BAME background. The report makes no mention of the fact that the actor voicing Kyan in the Go Jettters is described on IMDB as a Japanese-American actor but playing a Chinese-American character on-screen. In an article titled 'Should We Be Concerned About "Asians-Are-Interchangeable" Casting?', Elena Zhang questioned casting a Korean-American actor in the role of a Taiwanese character in a different series (Zhang, 2016). She highlights this as problematic in the context of the stereotype of all Asians looking the same and makes the point that by doing so 'implies ignorance of the centuries of history, hardships, and culture each country has built up over the years that are wholly distinct and unique,' (Zhang, 2016, no pagination). The term 'interchangeable Asian' is used in another article to describe the experience of being mistaken for another Asian and is clearly a significant barrier that Asian people face (Chen, 2021). This has been coined by Alison R. Loader as 'yellow voice', which she explains is 'an accent not specific to any linguistic origin but one that fulfils audience expectations of what Asians sound like, thus racialising them as foreign and all the same, (Loader in Roe *et al.*, 2019, p242). She goes on to describe this as problematic as Asians are cast within ethnic roles and expected to perform with an accent, whilst white actors are free to take on roles across colour lines including for no visual speaking roles (Loader in Roe *et al.*, 2019, 2022, p.242). In contrast, the Spanish character Xuli is voiced by Pilar Orti, who does appear to be Spanish (LinkedIn, no date c). It is also important to note that there are also instances of British voice over artists simply impersonating other nationalities, as is the case with

Madame Gazelle who is voiced by actress Morwenna Banks, who is also the voice artist for Mummy Pig and Dr Hamster (IMDB, no date 5). The Hopster and Dubit report highlighted how programmes such as Teletubbies were able to incorporate racial diversity despite having characters that were non-human, by having actors that were from a BAME background. However, Teletubbies were aliens or at least non-human, so whilst they have achieved racial representation behind the screen, this is not relevant to the characters that appear on-screen. Whilst the diversity behind the characters did exist, there was no intention to match this to the ethnicity of the character as the character was not human. This is different to *Peppa Pig*, as she does not live in a world where humans exist, and the characters replicate human lives entirely. This is echoed in the statement by Wells 'It may be that animals in the Peppa series are simply anthropomorphised versions of ourselves,' (Brett Wells in Lynda M. Korimboccus, 2020, p.3). The animals within *Timmy Time* and *Peppa Pig* are living as humans would, Teletubbies were separate beings who were aware of humans and lived in an entirely different world. This echoes findings from content reviews in the US where racially diverse characters were absent and instead there was a high instance of racially ambiguous characters/characters that were obviously not human. This thesis analysed two programmes that feature animals and one programme that featured blocks that highlight how race is being circumvented or absent entirely.

## **Race: Research Objective Two: off-screen Participation**

### **Does participation within the industry reflect the demographics of the UK population?**

Developing an accurate picture of BAME<sup>11</sup> representation within the UK screen industries is challenging. Historically, BAME projections within film and tv have ranged between 3% - 9% (Creative Skillset 2012). This figure from a Creative Skillset survey (2012), had a total of only eighty-eight respondents from Post, VFX and Animation. Respondents solely from the animation industry numbered fifty-one. Despite this low respondent rate, these figures are still quoted in research papers in 2021. Figures collected by the DCMS in 2015 put BAME representation at 11%, although the original source for these figures could not be located (University of Leicester, 2018). The same report highlighted that whilst there was good demographic data available for the film and tv

industries, this was not the case for the data surrounding animation. This report quoted figures from the Creative Skillset (2012) survey as another source.

In September 2019, UK Screen Alliance, Animation UK and ACCESS:VFX published a report into inclusion and diversity in the UK's VFX, animation and post-production sectors. Their report was titled the 'Inclusion and Diversity in the UK Visual Effects, Animation and Post Production,' (Animation UK, 2019). Their data were gathered from a group of 1120 workers involved in those three sectors across the UK and identified the total number of people in direct, full time employment in animation as being around 1,790. The report revealed that BAME representation in animation is 14% which is approximately the UK BAME working-age population (GOV.UK, 2018a). The 14% figure is difficult to place within an industry where 73% of animation jobs are in London (Animation UK, 2019) where the working BAME population is approximately 3738% when considering the Black, Asian and Mixed ethnicities and rises to 55% when including White – Other and Other (GOV.UK, 2018b). The report itself pointed out that 'by analysing the regional pattern of recruitment in animation, a proportionate target of 16% BAME would be reasonable,' (Animation UK, 2019). This is less than the 20% target that the BFI have set themselves for 'people we employ and our National Lottery-funded activity to help drive real inclusion in our staff and the projects we support to work towards fairness and proportionality,' (BFI, no date a) and similarly the BBC.

The BBC's Creative Diversity Fund and the Creative Diversity Commitment will introduce a mandatory 20% diverse-talent target in all new network commissions from April 2021 (Ofcom, 2020). 'The BFI view on the report was that, 'Collecting data alone won't create a more representative workforce, but it is a vital barometer alongside other interventions and guidance offered in the BFI Diversity Standards to interrogate hiring and promotion practices to create lasting change,' (Animation UK, 2019). The 2019 report caveated their results with the explanation that 'Most companies do not routinely database BAME data about their employees, as there is no requirement in law to do this. Very few companies in our sample were able to provide ethnicity data and most of the information came from a single large company. However, we were pleasantly surprised to find a figure of 19% BAME for VFX, but with the caveat that it may be a result of high representation in

one exceptional company rather than being a true picture of the industry. It was however sufficiently different to the oft quoted 3% figure for the film industry to be intriguing,' (Animation UK, 2019). This report is referring again to 3% figure which the Creative Skillset report which had approximately 88 respondents from across all of the screen industries, film, TV, VFX and animation and just 51 from animation.

As there is no concrete data on BAME figures, this thesis is unable to explore the BAME pay gap, which the ONS has estimated to be around 24% in London for all industries (ONS, 2019). In news reports, the Resolution Foundation has previously calculated that Britain's 1.9 million black, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi employees are experiencing an annual pay penalty of £3.2bn (Siddique, 2019; Topham, 2018;). The Executive Director of Monetary Analysis and Statistics at the Bank of England made a case for this at a joint Bank of England and European Central Bank conference on gender and career progression. He argued that 'the ethnicity pay gap was similar to the gender pay gap and also required action. There is currently no compulsory system of company reporting on the ethnicity pay gap in the UK, though the government has consulted on doing so. In my opinion, there are therefore strong grounds for extending compulsory reporting to ethnicity as well as gender,' (Siddique, 2019c). He called for companies hiring thirty people or more to collate this information. He also said that 'it was important to look at how workers from different minority ethnic backgrounds fared in the UK labour market rather than treating them as a single group.' As with the case for female equality in the workplace, there is an economic as well as moral argument for race equality. A review conducted for the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy two years ago found that BME progression could add £24bn a year to the British economy (Allen, 2017). The report made twenty-six recommendations, but the first two advised that 'Listed companies and all businesses and public bodies with more than 50 employees should publish five-year aspirational targets and report against these annually... and all businesses and public bodies with more than 50 employees should publish a breakdown of employees by race and pay band,' (Race in the Workplace, 2017). Without this accurate data it is difficult to truly gauge BAME participation in industry.

The existence of groups whose focus is on BAME representation within Animation and VFX would indicate that this is not the case. The existence of

groups such as We are Stripes, Culture in the Clash and BECTU VFX and Animation Branch and Black Members Committee speak to a lack of representation within all three sectors. There are several reasons why these figures would not be accurate, which are contained within the report itself. As mentioned within the 2019 report, the data is likely to be from one 'exceptional' company which is not identified in the report. As mentioned previously, there might be some survey bias, that by using the terms 'diversity' and 'inclusion' those who fall into minority groups would feel more ownership and/or incentive to respond. For those groups that do not fall into this category they may not feel that it is relevant to them. Whilst the respondent rate is undoubtedly higher than previous surveys into the industry, it still falls short of our understanding of a high respondent rate. As mentioned previously, the survey was able to garner 338 valid survey responses and they estimated that the industry was made up of around 1,790. This would give them an engagement rate of 19%. However, if the Creative Skillset (2012) 4600 are correct, this would make the respondent rate at 7% at 2012 rates. Other sources place the industry at around 5400, making the respondent rate 6% (PRNewswire, 2019). The industry has seen significant growth since then. Cinla Akinci and Mark NK Saunders (2015) detail that 'the response rates of between approximately 35 per cent and 55 per cent are considered realistic ... Moreover, since response rate is a key factor in assessing the value of research findings, higher response rates provide greater credibility,' (Akinci and Saunders, 2015, p.358). At 7% this is unlikely to be an accurate snapshot of the industry, however it is the largest survey completed in industry to date.

This highlights how voluntary participation should be viewed as giving an indication rather than an accurate depiction of what is going on in the industry. It should not be the responsibility of a trade lobby group to collate data, but a legal requirement that compels studios and makes it easier to access these numbers. Otherwise, this data is insufficient and collated within its own inherent bias. This bias is openly discussed and cited as a prompt for the industry collating this information: 'There are currently several groups proposing or consulting on creating legislative links between eligibility for screen sector tax credits and diversity criteria, and we have used our survey to make a data-informed response to these proposals,' (Animation UK, 2019). If the industry plans to use these figures to avoid this, these figures should be

rigorously collected. Studios and other industries should gather BAME data in the same way that they are required to gather data for gender, which has been a successful barometer of how many women are in industry and reveal the gender pay gap. Without these concrete figures, it is hard to gauge the level of BAME engagement within the industry. The report itself highlights the need for more in depth BAME reporting to be done by HR groups. The report identified that ‘the key area to address is BAME representation overall and especially within creative roles. This is being addressed via the long-term ACCESS:VFX schools’ outreach and careers advice programme. There should also be efforts made to increase BAME representation in senior management, via mentoring and coaching’. Through Access: VFX, the animation industry feels it is making concerted efforts to build on and improve these figures.

Other evidence that the industry is not as representative or is hostile to animators from a BAME background comes from Women in VFX (2017b) who posted a video featuring Bimpe Allui, an artist at Industrial Light and Magic in London. In the interview she points out that ‘it’s difficult at a young age when you don’t see yourself represented ... you don’t always see women of colour...that may be something that stops women of colour approaching this (industry)...’ ‘Even seeing someone at entry level will give someone the confidence to go for it. My name is potentially a hindrance... I’ve been told that I’ve potentially missed jobs because of my name, but my name is my name and I like it. Keeping my name and wearing it with pride, helps other people do the same’. Research by the Centre for Social Investigation and Nuffield College confirms this idea that there is discrimination around ethnic names. In their report they detail their investigation:

‘[we] made fictitious applications to nearly 3,200 real jobs, randomly varying applicants’ minority background, but holding their skills, qualifications and work experience constant. On average, one in four applicants from the majority group (24%) received a call back from employers. The job search effort was less successful for ethnic minorities who, despite having identical CVs and cover letters, needed to send 60% more applications in order to receive as many call backs as the majority group...Comparing these results with those from previous field experiments conducted in Britain, we found no sign of

progress for Caribbeans or for South Asians over the past 50 years,' (CSI, 2019)

This is further supported by the government who already have name blind applications as part of their commitment to diversity (Manzoni, 2015). Chief Executive of the Civil Service and Cabinet Office Permanent Secretary John Manzoni affirmed that 'By removing the candidate's name and other personal information, such as their nationality or the university they attended, we aim to ensure that people will be judged on merit and not on their background, race or gender,' (Manzoni, 2015, no pagination). The government has offered a solution that could transfer to the animation industry easily, with names taken off showreels and submitted to studios this way.

Whilst information specific to the animation industry is not available, Clive Nwonka (2020) conducted a review of Race and Ethnicity in the Film Industry. The study analysed 235 films from between 2016 and 2019 that had received funding due to a commitment to the BFI's Diversity Standards. These standards required productions to include people from the protected characteristics in their feature. The purpose of the fund was to promote inclusion and widen participation for those within the characteristics within the film industry. Nwonka revealed that Black and ethnic minority groups face what he terms as 'tremendous levels of exclusion', within the industry. His study also looked at geographical exclusion and revealed that in some regions outside of London, BAME representation behind the screen did not exist. The study also revealed that productions with bigger budgets were no more representative than others. This study has ramifications for the animation industry as there are reports that the government is thinking of linking tax relief to diversity targets within productions. If this is the case, the criteria for accessing tax relief must be robust enough to truly affect representation within preschool children's animation. The 2020 study states that the existing BFI standards are not yet robust enough to convincingly affect representation within the film industry. They acknowledge that the standards are competing with the informality of work practises, 'white gatekeepers' and intersectionality of race and class discrimination (Nwonka, 2020, p.3). These barriers to entry have been mentioned before in relation to the animation industry, in particular the notion of a 'boys club'.

A report released by the Runnymede Trust, the All Party Parliamentary Group on Race and Community found that ‘the unemployment rates of Black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage women have remained consistently higher than those of white women since the early 1980s,’ (APPG, 2013, p.4). Indeed, despite the more frequent attention given to the unemployment rates of ethnic minority men, the overall unemployment rate of ethnic minority women is higher, 14.3% compared to 13.2%. When looking at the groups which are the focus of this inquiry – Black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi women – these women are far more likely to be unemployed than both white men and white women. Pakistani and Bangladeshi women are particularly affected, with 20.5% being unemployed compared to 6.8% of white women, with 17.7% of Black women also being unemployed,’ (APPG, 2013, p.4). The report recommended that the government ‘publish an action plan to increase take-up of blank name application forms, with the Government leading the way by piloting its use in at least one of its departments,’ (APPG, 2013, p.5). The government currently has name-blank application forms for all civil service jobs barring senior positions.

Within their larger study, Smith *et al.*, (2019) also drew some interesting conclusions about women of colour in the American animation industry using qualitative narrative analysis drawn from the experiences of twelve women of colour. When considering that there was only one female person woman of colour directing out of 120 animated films between 2007-2018, this number feels representative for the American animation industry:

Across 12 women of colour in their early careers who participated in the interview process, two-thirds stated that negative experiences were associated with their work in animation. This included being tokenized or “the only one” in their company or work group, resulting in isolation; feeling that they had to work harder or their contributions were erased or minimised; and the negative emotions they felt as a consequence of their status... Women noted that being identified for opportunities because they were women of colour created suspicion or negative feelings. This may affect their long-term career path and ability to be promoted into supervisory positions. Finally, women of colour who hold meritocratic beliefs about the industry or the world may experience lower self-esteem when confronted with discrimination. As women from underrepresented backgrounds navigate the field of animation, it is not surprising that they experience negative emotions or scepticism about the



industry. The lack of women from underrepresented backgrounds working as directors, producers, and executives in the field presents a clear indication that women of colour do not have opportunities to participate or are excluded from leadership roles (Smith *et al.*, 2019, p.20)

Whilst this relates to the American animation industry, it may indicate why there are so few women of colour in more senior roles within the British animation industry. Diversity in participation behind the screen is vital to diversity to depictions on-screen. and without it, animation risks inauthentic, stereotyped, inappropriate and or inaccurate representations of those within the protected characteristics. In their analysis of representation in Animation, King *et al.*, remind us that virtually every animated feature between 1990 – 2010 was ‘made by EuroAmerican writers, directors, and producers for largely EuroAmerican audiences,’ (King *et al.*, 2010, p29). In particular, they draw attention to Pocahontas whose romanticized depiction by Disney has been refuted since its inception, with representatives from the Powhatan community attempting to school Disney on the nature of EuroAmerican conquest (Dutka, 1995). King *et al.*, also point out that the romance between these celebrates ‘whiteness, masculinity, and hetero-sexuality’ (King *et al.*, 2010, p.26). This is discussed in more detail in the Chapter 7: Conclusion section titled *7.2 Significance of the research within an academic context.*

## 5.2 Representations of Age



*JoJo: I can't wait to show you all of my favourite places Great Gran Gran  
Mum: Great Gran Gran might want to relax today, JoJo. Travelling from St Lucia  
takes a long time.*

*Great Gran Gran: No, no, no. I was sat for hours on that plane. I'd love to get  
out and stretch my legs.*

*(JoJo and Gran Gran, Season: Winter, Episode 10: It's time for a special visitor)*

This quote from *JoJo and Gran Gran* and the picture above explores and disrupts the notion of an elderly relative as being frail. JoJo's Great Gran Gran is a woman who can step off a nine hour flight from St Lucia and straight into a host of outdoor activities including ice skating. This chapter explores Age, first through an analysis of representation within the industry and then through the original data analysis conducted for this thesis. The next section details two pages of original data. The first page details the findings of Age representation within each of the six programmes selected, focussing on those in the 60+ age bracket. The second page also details the original data that was collated for Age, amongst other characteristics, within the programme and compares it to the demographics of the UK population. The percentage difference between these two figures is also highlighted.

# Age: Primary Data

Figure 1.17

## Age

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented diversity in age. For the purposes of this thesis, all of those that represented the 60+ age group were recorded.

		Age	Total
1	Peppa Pig	10	296
2	Charlie and Lola	0	110
3	Timmy Time	0	215
4	Sarah and Duck	14	319
5	Numberblocks	0	251
6	Jojo and Gran Gran	23	292

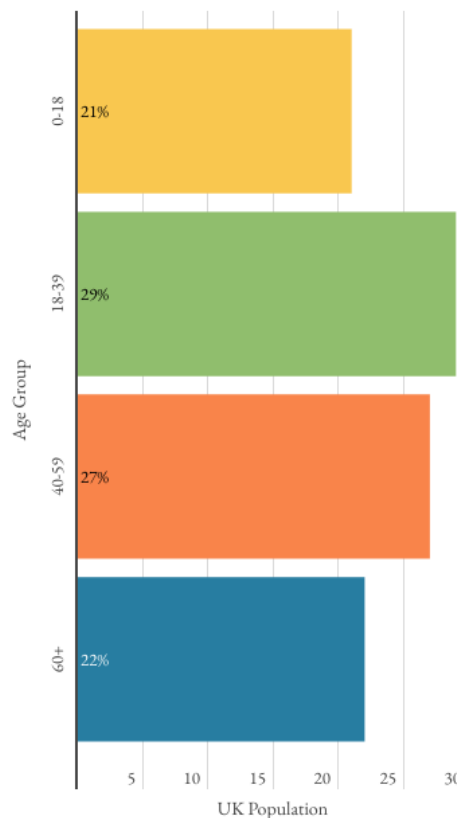
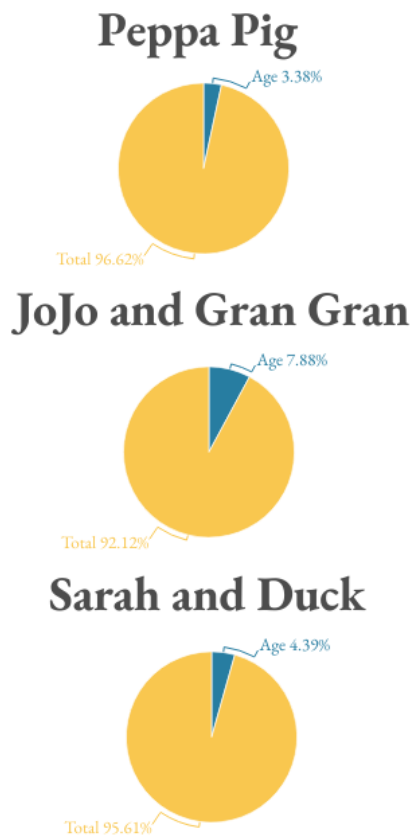
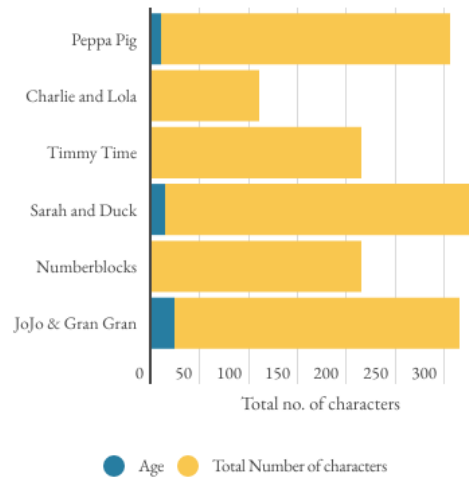


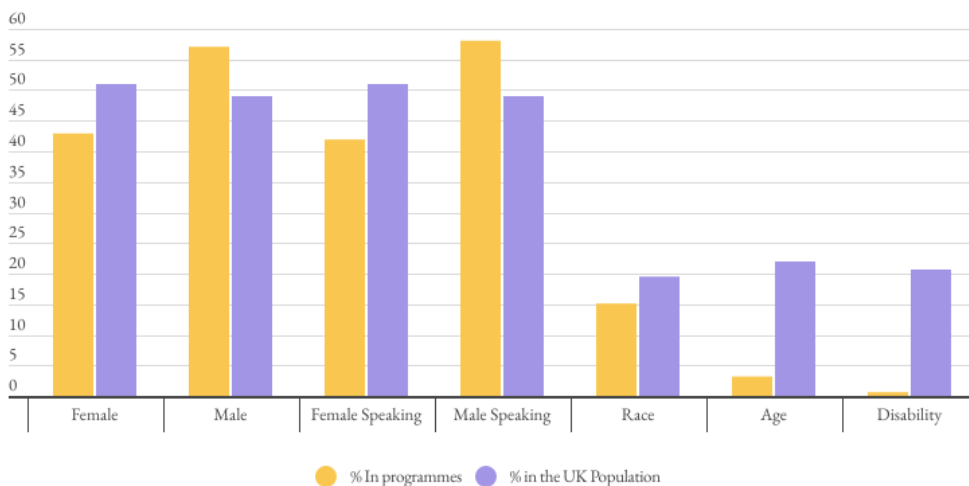
Figure 1.20

## All characteristics against UK population

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented all nine characteristics against the UK Population.

This data has been split into two graphs to view the data in a more accessible format. The graph below details sex, race, age and disability only.

	In programmes %	% of the UK population	% difference
<b>Sex</b>			
Female	42.89	51	-8.11
Male	57.11	49	8.11
Female Speaking	41.95	51	-8.11
Male Speaking	58.05	49	8.11
<b>Race</b>	15.11	19.5	-4.39
<b>Age</b>	3.17	22	-18.83
<b>Disability</b>	0.61	20.65	-20.04
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	0	2.2	-2.2
<b>Marriage</b>	0.54	50	-49.93
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>	0	0.3-0.7	-0.3
<b>Religion</b>	0.67	75	-75
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>	0	1.29	-1.29



This thesis was focussed on representation of age within the 60+ age bracket, which is measured at 22% of the population. Figure 1.17 shows the figures for age representation across all of the programmes and clearly shows that representations were below that in all three of the programmes. Programming

needs to better reflect the appearance of people in this 60+ bracket. Other than *JoJo and Gran Gran*, people in the 60+ bracket were not main characters within *Sarah & Duck* and *Peppa Pig*, they did not feature on every episode. Whilst portrayals of age were positive in *JoJo and Gran Gran*, with every older person being active, it could be argued that this does not recognise the intersectionality between age and disability. Whilst this is a refreshing take on age, we know 45% of pension age adults in the UK population have some kind of disability. This is not apparent in representation of Ezra, Cynthia, Gran Gran or Great Gran Gran. This was also not evident in the depictions of older characters in *Peppa Pig* or *Sarah & Duck*. This could be seen as an attempt to balance out traditional approaches to age within children's programming. The treatment of Scarf Lady in *Sarah & Duck* needs to be more closely examined in the context of a character abusing or mistreating an older character, particularly as they are reacting to something that Scarf Lady has no control over – her forgetfulness. Regardless of comedy effect, Scarf Lady is the only person who is on the receiving end of this type of ribaldry and as a result it sits uncomfortably that it is directed at her, and she does not rebuke or challenge the bag for speaking to her unpleasantly. As with all of the characteristics, programme makers should stay away from stereotypes, particularly when there are so few other characters representing that particular characteristic, in this case Age.

## **Age: Research Objective One: on-screen Depictions**

### **To what extent do depictions of characters on-screen match the demographic identities of the British population?**

In *Sarah & Duck*, Scarf Lady is subject to humiliation from her sentient Bag who rolls his eyes at her, corrects her, is condescending and unpleasant to her. This attempt to embarrass and humiliate her is mentioned as one of the five identifiers of ageist portrayals within the study completed by Rovner-Lev and Elias (2019) study within the Chapter 2: Literature Review. Within this study are also references to 'older women's weirdness' and detail that 'the full magnitude of this weirdness was emphasised by cynical remarks and even blatant offences that older women attributed to each other,' (Rovner-Lev and Elias, 2019, p.209). In the sample of the content analysis from the Scarf Lady's

House episode below, we can see that there are four examples of Scarf Lady being absent minded and five examples of bags being rude and short tempered with her. In Bobsleigh, Scarf Lady is forgetful on three occasions and on the receiving end of negativity on three occasions. On the other hand, Scarf Lady is dynamic and exciting, taking part in hot air balloon racing, bob sledding and ice skating throughout the series. In the episode analysed below, Bobsleigh, she details her previous experiences of being an athlete within the Winter Games, participating in figure skating, ski jumping, ice hockey and bobsleighbing. The wall is covered with photos and prize ribbons. When she takes *Sarah & Duck* out on a bobsleigh, she is an expert and helps them navigate with ease and professionalism. However, she is forgetful, eccentric and lives alone with a talking bag and a talking ball of wool to keep her company. Senility and eccentricity have been highlighted as two hallmarks of representation of older people within Robinson and Anderson’s (2006) study. It could be argued that this is therefore a well-rounded example, that whilst she displays some of the negatives associated with age, she is also dynamic, active and interesting to younger people.

Name	<i>Sarah &amp; Duck: Scarf Lady’s house</i>
Runtime	7 minutes
Season and Episode	Season 1 Episode 7
Year	2013
Plot	<i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i> are coming home from the park, when they run into Scarf Lady who invites them to her home. They explore her home which is filled with knitted homeware and meet a sentient pile of wool.

Thematic Analysis in relation to portrayals of age on-screen	<p>Forgetfulness: She loses her keys, can't remember that her scarf is around her neck and forgets that she knitted something for <i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i>, forgets the name of the item she knitted for Sarah.</p> <p>Bag being rude/bad tempered: 1. They're on your scarf; 2. It's around your neck; 3. And you're knitting; 4. You did! 5. It's a sea cow</p>
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Name	<i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i> : Bobsleigh Team
Runtime	7 minutes
Season and Episode	Season 1 Episode 23
Year	2013
Plot	<i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i> go to Scarf Lady's house, where she reveals her past as a Winter Games competitor in a range of winter sports. They all practise the bobsleigh at home, before Scarf Lady takes them out on a bobsleigh in the snow.
Thematic Analysis in relation to portrayals of age on-screen	<p>Forgetfulness:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Name of bobsleigh Team</li> <li>2. Name of sport.</li> </ol> <p>Bag is being rude and bad tempered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bobber Clobber</li> <li>2. Ice Hockey</li> <li>3. Doesn't want to bobsleigh.</li> </ol>

In *Peppa Pig*, Grandpa Pig says nothing in the first episode in which we meet him, enforcing the stereotype of 'invisibility, and irrelevance,' (North and Fiske, 2013, p.720). In a later episode that features him and Grandad Dog, they are aggressive and argumentative. Whilst this is all presented as a comedy, their exchange is unpleasant, and that style of combative interaction was not

seen in any other programme on the list. Being angry is identified as one of the more common instances of representations of older people in the study by Robinson and Anderson (2006). When Grandma Pig berates them and asks when they will grow up, it is reminiscent of that phrase, 'boys will be boys'. This infantilizing is highlighted in the report 'Dodderly but Dear' commissioned by the Centre for Ageing Better and completed by the University of Kent (Swift and Steeden, 2020). They state that 'using patronising and infantilizing language towards older people can encourage them to conform to negative stereotypes of old age,' (Swift and Steeden, 2020, p.9). Positive representations of age appear in later seasons. In Seasons 4, episode 26 it is revealed that Madame Gazelle was in a rock band named the Rocking Gazelles, and in other episodes she is shown enjoying swimming in freezing water, and it is revealed she was a champion skier. In Season 3 Episode 45, Grandpa Rabbit engages the children in a gym class that he has redesigned as an adventure obstacle course. Voiced by Brian Blessed, he is an enthusiastic character who lives in a lighthouse and has good relationships with the other characters. In this way, *Peppa Pig* could argue that its portrayal of older people is varied and showing distinctive personality traits. They have engaged, active, friendly older people as well as some portrayals that are negative but for comedic reasons. This echoes earlier statements on the use of the Ribbon Sisters in relation to race, which portrayed the set of Asian sisters as being stereotypically quiet. If all of the older people in *Peppa Pig* were stereotypical, this would be an inappropriate portrayal of age. However, they have five older characters that are all very different.

In contrast to both of these programmes, *JoJo and Gran Gran* display age solely as being active, warm, affectionate and involved. Gran Gran is the co-star and is actively involved in the community and knows people of all ages. The show also depicts grandparents in the park, in the library and in other public spaces. Gran Gran can be seen walking comfortably, accessing public spaces with confidence and taking part in activities such as ice skating, and in other series painting and decorating, dancing and taking part in a sports day with another older neighbour also participating. As the average age that a person becomes a grandparent is 63, the activities that Gran Gran participates in are accessible for this age group (ONS, 2019a). In one episode, Great Gran Gran comes to visit and is also seen as active, engaged, friendly and warm. She



is active, visiting the farm, museum, pushing JoJo on the swings and going ice skating on the same day that she arrives from St Lucia. She is social and warm, greeting one young person with a high five, fist bump and secret handshake. Whilst she is older than Gran Gran, she is not portrayed with excessive wrinkles, or any physical infirmities and the family take part in all the activities together. She does not display any difficulty on the ice rink or doing any of the other activities. In addition, Ezra, another grandparent featured in the series is working at the museum and of course Gran Gran is participating in all of these activities.

Name	JoJo and Gran Gran: It's Time for a Very Special Visitor
Runtime	11 minutes
Season and Episode	Season 4 Episode 10
Year	2021
Plot	Great Gran Gran comes to visit JoJo. They spend the day doing a variety of outdoor activities.
Thematic Analysis in relation to portrayals of age on-screen	Gran Gran and Great Gran Gran are sitting at the table, four generations are at the table for dinner. They visit the farm, the museum, the park and the café. They meet Ezra in the museum who is working there. The dad is struggling on the ice rink, but both Gran Gran and Great Gran Gran look very comfortable.

## Age: Research Objective Two: off-screen Participation

### Does participation within the industry reflect the demographics of the UK population

Definitive figures on age within the industry are not available due to the voluntary nature of this survey, as studios are not expected to report on age in the same way as gender. However, the Animation UK (2019) report on Inclusion and Diversity did include the following infographic:



(Animation UK, 2019)

Whilst this is by no means definitive, it does seem to indicate a significant drop off after 35+ and then in both age groups above that, 45+ and 55+. Reasons for this are the long hours, irregular contracts, as well as the difficulty of getting a mortgage as a freelancer, which lead many people to leave the industry in favour of roles that are employee based and not freelance/sole trader based (OMA, 2021). Mortgage criteria usually cover three years' worth of regular income for self-employed individuals which could be potentially difficult for animators given the prevalence of short-term contracts.

There is other evidence that ageism is a problem for the animation industry. In an article Tomm Moore Director at Cartoon Saloon (2021) commented that 'Sometimes I do wonder where does everyone go over the age of 40,' he questioned, 'I wonder why that is — what's in the culture that's stopping people progress,' (Dudok de Wit, 2021b). Julia Sawalha was reportedly told by studio producers that her voice was 'too old' for the *Chicken Run* sequel, although the actress who replaced her was only 4 years younger (Pulver, 2020). Pixar Animation Studios president Jim Morris declared that four of the top animation directors at Pixar would be unlikely to direct a film in ten years' time, stating that 'they're not going to necessarily be the ones that have their finger on the zeitgeist. And we knew that. Animated films come from people of their time,' (Amidi, 2019). In an interview with Motion Hatch (no date) Helen Piercy of Animated Women UK shared that industry burnout and family commitments were two factors in preventing women from progressing in industry.. In an article titled 'Am I too old for mograph?' Joey Korenman of School of Motion also shared that burnout was 'something that artists who've been in the game for long enough have to fend off. Long hours and late nights are sometimes part of the gig, which isn't a huge deal when you're younger and have less responsibility,' (Motionographer, 2017). He added that being time poor and therefore unable to work long hours, the lack of job security and being forced into non-creative managerial positions are amongst the reasons that creatives leave the industry. These factors affect women disproportionately to me.

Sofia Nunes and Maria João Antunes (2019) affirm that 'Identifying and analysing the representation of older people in animated films can be an important tool to understand how animated films represent the ageing process and the elderly, which represent a strong influence on the child and adolescent

public,' (Nunes and Antunes, 2019, p.1). It not only informs children about older people, but also prepares children for how they will feel about themselves within that age group. The anti-aging industry is tipped to reach \$271 billion by 2024, playing on fears of looking older, with the anti-wrinkle industry alone being worth \$12.8 billion by 2027 (Balasubramanian, 2020). Whilst it is fair to assume that preschool animation on-screen would feature more children in their target audience's age group, this thesis also looks at whether other age groups are represented, older age groups and how those other age groups are represented - for instance if older people are portrayed in a way that employs negative stereotypes. Liat Ayalon *et al.*, (2018) describe ageism as 'Ageism is a social construct of old age that portrays ageing and older people in a stereotypical, often negative, way,' (Ayalon *et al.*, 2018, p.6). The Centre for Ageing Better (2021b), describes ageism as 'Ageism is a combination of how we think about age (stereotypes), how we feel about age (prejudice) and how we behave in relation to age (discrimination)'. Firstly, Michael S. North and Susan T. Fiske (2012) points out that 'Age is the only social category identifying subgroups that everyone may eventually join,' (North and Fiske, 2012, p.1). Secondly, the percentage of the population that is over 65 in the UK is 18% of all age groups and there are 285 adults over the age of 65 to every 1000 adults between 16-64, which is around 22% of people over the age of 16 (ONS, 2017). These two points highlight that not only will everyone hopefully join this social category, but that the number of older people is large and growing, both of which reveal the absurdity of discriminating against age.

### 5.3 Representations of Disability



*(JoJo and Gran Gran, Season Winter, Episode 3, It's Time to Build a Snowman)*

The person in the wheelchair above is portrayed across four episodes in the ten that were reviewed for this thesis. He is always alone and always a background character. This is problematic if the purpose of using the character is to example diversity within disability and is discussed in more detail later in this section. The next page details the primary data for Disability across all programmes.

# Disability: Primary Data

Figure 1.18

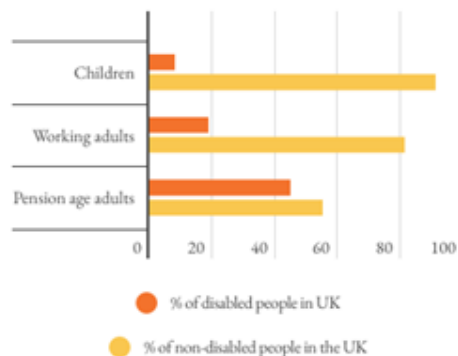
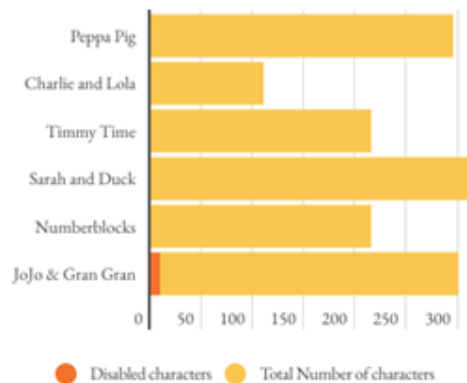
## Disability

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented disability on screen. UK disability figures are approximately 8% of children, 19% of working age adults and 65% of pension age adults.

### JoJo & Gran Gran

There were two disabled characters, which appeared on screen nine times. A male child appeared in five episodes and a working age male appeared on screen four times.

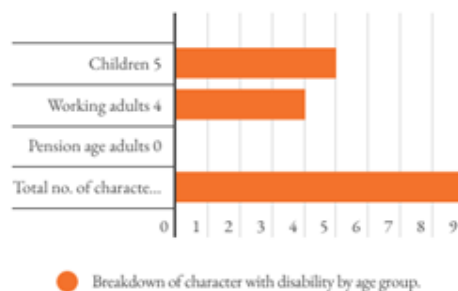
		Age	Total
1	Peppa Pig	0	296
2	Charlie and Lola	0	110
3	Timmy Time	0	215
4	Sarah and Duck	0	319
5	Numberblocks	0	251
6	Jojo and Gran Gran	9	292



### JoJo and Gran Gran



### JoJo and Gran Gran



Disability representation should have been around 19% for working age adults and 45% for pension age adults. Figures from industry sources tell us that industry representation is around 2-3%. As the data shared in Figure 1.18

below shows, representation on-screen is around 3% on-screen in *JoJo and Gran Gran*. Disability amongst children is around 8%. Disability on-screen and off-screen remains invisible on-screen throughout the twenty year period with the exception of *JoJo and Gran Gran* whose inclusion of a child with a physical disability is positive. It provides a framework for other programmes to include disability in their programming. CBeebies does have several programmes that feature disability prominently. However, disability should also be included in a way that does not make disability central to the programme and different types of disability should also be shown.

## **Disability: Research Objective One: on-screen Depictions**

**To what extent do depictions of characters on-screen match the demographic identities of the British population?**

Despite viewing close to 300 hours of programming, only one programme, *JoJo and Gran Gran* had any disabled characters. Whilst there were nine appearances of disabled characters, these were limited to two characters. One was a background character, an unnamed, silent black male in a wheelchair. It appears that a single piece of animation, of the wheelchair user moving in a direction was recycled for multiple episodes. The other individual was a live action boy, within the target audience age. He has restricted growth, also known as dwarfism, although this is not clearly defined in the programme, and none of the live action characters are listed in the credits of the programme. An extensive internet search gave no further clues to the identity or specific characteristic, but that is promising as the disability is not central to the character and he carries out the same activities as the other children. In Episode 8: Winter 'It's time for a jumble sale', the boy is seen gathering toys alongside his sister and Mother and placing them on a table outside his home and engaging in all of the physical activities without any difficulty. Using the parameters utilised by Bond (2013), none of the following appeared in any negative way: 'moral portrayal; attractiveness; mobility difficulties because of the disability; satisfaction with life; image as odd, mysterious, or eccentric; and resentment toward society,' (Bond, 2013, p.411). In relation to how the boy was treated by able-bodied peers within the show, there were no indications of 'sympathy, attraction, fear, aggression, avoidance, patronization, equality,

sadness, and discrimination,’ (Bond, 2013, p.411). Also, in the context of this study, the Drench Hypothesis mentioned by Bond (2013) would place the importance of the live action disabled boy character as having more impact than that of the background character in a wheelchair. Whilst the inclusion of a character regularly in a wheelchair in the background is more than other shows, it highlights how easy it is to include disabled characters into animated programmes. One could argue that his continued solo presence shows independence, but equally showing him in the cafe, sitting with friends would portray him as social. Phillip Connolly, at Disability Rights UK argues that creators need to display more kinds of disability, noting that ‘Only one in seven disabled people are wheelchair users. So, it is important to present disability in all its diversity ... [and] for the disabled person to be presented not as the vulnerable member of the band, but as the leader, the person who finds the solutions to challenges the group face. We need more stories like that’, (Smedley, 2015). The use of a background, disabled character seems more like a missed opportunity. As with all of the programmes, it is not simply about including people from minority backgrounds, but also how they are portrayed that is important.

Notable by absence was the use of disability in the portrayal of other characters. Not only were none of the older characters displayed having any kind of disability, but they were also portrayed as active, mobile, and interesting. Even JoJo’s great grandmother was not portrayed as having any significant mobility issues, although she was drawn with a slight stoop, she was still active, walking without aid, pushing JoJo on the swings and even ice skating. Whilst this is a refreshing take on age, it could be argued that 45% of the pension age adults within the show should have been portrayed as having a disability, as this would reflect the demographics of British society. However, there is also an argument that with age representation being so consistently linked with disability that having active, agentic pension age adults is a positive and helps representation across the channel. However, by being age positive, that could potentially lead to the idea of disability in old age as being a negative as opposed to a natural part of the ageing process. Again, this could be resolved by accurately portraying age within the population, by having a mixture of older characters that are disabled within the proportions of the population.



## **Disability: Research Objective Two: off-screen Participation**

### **Does participation within the industry reflect the demographics of the UK population**

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) was passed in 1995 and eventually superseded by the Equality Act 2010. The DDA was the first piece of UK legislation that protected the rights of disabled people (House of Lords Library, 2020). According to Government figures, there are approximately 14.1 million disabled people in the UK, 22% of the population. Among children, this is 8% of the population. With such a substantial number of adults and children reported as having a disability, how they are portrayed on-screen and seen and treated by non-disabled peers on television is important.

Without any regulatory obligation to report on disability on employers, accurate figures on the number of disabled workers within the Animation or even screen industries are impossible to locate. Two reports give an indication of disability representation within the screen industries. One is the CAMEo report (2018) from Leicester University commissioned by the BFI and the other is an industry report undertaken by Animation UK (2019), the animation industry trade body. A report commissioned by the BFI, revealed that disability is 'significantly under-represented across the board and that this situation has been slow to change,' (CAMEo, 2018, p.23). The report investigated workforce diversity across film, television, animation, video games and visual effects (VFX) industries by looking at a variety of sources published between 2012 and 2016. Whilst information particular to the animation industry was absent, they made some salient observations about the screen industries. Their research indicated that disabled workers are more likely to work on projects associated with disability-specific programming in film and television, which despite creating opportunities for entry, was also a way of 'ghettois[ing] workers', forming barriers to vertical and horizontal mobility within the sector (CAMEo, 2018, p.26).

In their 2019 report, Animation UK revealed that 2% of respondents to their survey identified as having a physical disability (e.g., sensory or mobility impairment) and a further 1% identified with both physical and mental conditions, significantly below the 22% identified nationally. Of the respondents, 9% of the workforce identified as having at least one neurological condition, with Dyslexia being the most common (6.5%) followed by ADHD

(2.2%), OCD (1.5%) and Autism (1.3%). The overall percentage in our workforce survey reporting a disability was 12%, which is below the UK average of 17% for working aged people. As mentioned previously, whilst this survey had the highest number of respondents for any survey within the industry, it still was 6% or less of the total workforce, strengthening the argument for rigorous data collection by studios as part of a regulatory obligation.

In their discussion on disability, Keith Randle and Kate Hardy (2016) argued that disabled entrants into the film and tv industries face two different strands of exclusion, one within labour markets and then within labour processes. Their argument is that disabled entrants, along with gender, race and class all face difficulties because they are a minority. However, they point out that disabled entrants face another level of discrimination as the planning of entering a workplace that may potentially need to adjust everyday work processes to accommodate disabled workers. The problems facing disabled entrants into the industry are varied. Animation UK (2018) highlighted that many jobs are in London and other large cities and this commuting presents a challenge for anyone with mobility or sensory disabilities. Of the studios that I personally worked in, most studios such were all housed in older buildings in Soho and Spitalfields that had no lift access and therefore effectively inaccessible to anyone with a mobility issue. COVID has certainly dramatically affected working practices in this record and could be seen as a way to remove barriers to entry for people with physical and mobility disabilities. In an interview, Blue Zoo revealed that during the pandemic, Blue Zoo hired 200 extra people, based globally and now only have 30% of their staff based in London (Dudok de Wit, 2021a). Whilst there is no information on how this might affect disabled workers, clearly working at home would be easier to navigate than travelling into cities like London for work. Randle and Hardy (2016) pointed out that entry into these sectors is typically via work as a runner, a position that requires mobility and long hours, which is particularly the case for VFX and 3D Animation. Within all forms of animation and particularly VFX, long, unpaid overtime is an industry norm and within all the animation roles I held, except for VooDooDog Studios. As pointed out by the University of Leicester's report on representation in the media. 'Importantly, tough competition can influence small companies' willingness, let alone ability, to make adjustments,' (CAMEo, 2018, p.32). As this frank statement from an

independent producer illustrates: 'Why should I even think about disability unless it is going to make me money? I'm in business, I'm not a charity,' (Randle and Hardy, 2016, p.455). While it has not been made clear in the report if this conservative viewpoint is considered the norm or unusual, that anyone would feel comfortable commenting on disability in such unsympathetic and ignorant terms highlights the difficulties facing people with disabilities within the industry. Another point that highlights the difficulty of many groups within animation, such as 'Lastly, many disabled workers find it difficult or impossible to participate in the networking and socialising that sector careers are built upon, e.g., when pubs or bars are not accessible or conversation is reliant on an interpreter,' (CAMEo, 2018, p.32).

Information about public service providers provision for disabled children outside of CBeebies proved difficult to locate. In contrast, CBeebies includes a page on their website for parents to access on how several of the programmes were created for a range of disabilities (BBC, no date). For this reason, CBeebies was selected to case study disability within children's programming. In September 2021, CBeebies announced its first presenter with Down's Syndrome, George Webster. This was reported widely in the popular press and referred to as a landmark TV moment (Pidd, 2021; BBC 2021; Nugent, 2021). Although his disability was not mentioned on CBeebies, George Webster had appeared previously on CBBC, on the educational programme Bitesize to dispel myths about Down's Syndrome (Pidd, 2021). Another article in the popular press, referenced Cerrie Burnell, another CBeebies presenter who was born without the bottom half of her right arm and who was on air from 2009 - 2017 (Saner, 2011; Wynne Jones, 2021). Her appointment sparked some complaints from parents, including that she was frightening children with her disability. The small number of parental complaints about how she was 'scaring toddlers' highlights how broadcasters should be proactive in showing disability positively as some parents and carers are reinforcing stereotypes and negative views at home (Wynne Jones, 2021). This view was supported by Lucy Mangan, Guardian TV Critic, who argues that it was parents, not children, who could not face disability on TV (Mangan, 2009). This is supported by Jihee Han, Michaelene M. Ostrosky and Karen E. Diamond (2002) who state that 'it is imperative to consider adults' attitudes toward children with disabilities, for these may be transmitted to children in both direct and indirect ways.

Remembering that both positive and negative attitudes are acquired from important adults in a child's life (e.g., teachers, childcare providers, family members) calls for self-reflection on one's behaviour,' (Han, Ostrosky and Diamond, 2002, p.3). The negative comments that Cerrie Burnell received show how broadcasters have a responsibility to educate and inform, as well as entertain, to counter negative views on disability that children are exposed to at home (Saner, 2011). There are no reports that George Webster has received any negative complaints yet, which could indicate a number of things, that society has changed in the twenty years since Cerrie Burrell joined CBeebies or that those that would object have not realised that a disabled presenter is back on CBeebies.

Several comments in favour of George Webster that were reported in the press came from parents of children who also had Down syndrome and other disabilities such as autism (Nugent, 2021; Pidd, 2021). In another article in the press, Camilla Arnold, creative director of Flashing Lights Media, a deaf-led company behind the CBeebies programme Magic Hands, detailed how seeing a deaf character on Grange Hill was a 'turning point in her life [and] I could relate to her... (It means) children no longer have to solely measure themselves against a non-disabled community because they are properly represented (Smedley, 2015). The same article quoted Philip Conolly of Disability Rights UK detailed how 'It is like an acknowledgement or recognition that we are all human. We need to get away from this idea of 'perfection', the handsome prince and beautiful princess – these stories have a powerful grip on the imagination and how children come to see the world.' Jenny Sealey, co-director of the 2012 Paralympics Opening Ceremony was emailed by a mother who said that Hannah Sparkes (a character in Fireman Sam who uses a wheelchair) 'helped her to explain to her child about her dad being a wheelchair user.' This would infer that the benefits of seeing disabled characters are significant for people who are disabled, whose family and friends are disabled and the wider audience.

CBeebies has several programmes that deal with disability directly and each of these shows deal with several types of disability. Something Special uses Makaton signing and is aimed at children with communication signing (CBeebies, no date). Tree Fu Tom was specifically designed to help those with Dyspraxia and other movement disorders (CBeebies, no date a). Magic Hands

combines poetry with British Sign Language (CBeebies, no date b). Melody features a partially sighted girl and was created with the RNIB and employs high contrast colours, having centrally-focused action, bigger movements, longer shots and telling the story as much as possible with voiceover and sound effects,' (CBeebies, no date). Pablo is a part animation, part live action programme whose protagonist has autism (CBeebies, no date c). They also have a Magic Hands Black History Songs, which provides deaf children with an opportunity to see songs performed by black sign language interpreters. However, programming needs to go beyond simply informing a preschool audience to distinct types of disability, to fostering inclusion. Dyson's (2005) study of 77 Canadian preschool children found that whilst they had positive attitudes towards persons with disabilities, this did not necessarily translate into friendships with children with disabilities. CBeebies Something Special features only disabled children. It could be argued that showing both children with and without disabilities playing and learning together in the same show would allow children to see more similarities between themselves. Han, Ostrosky and Diamond (2005) support this by arguing that 'guided discussions should emphasise similarities between children, such as an interest in sports,' so that children can relate to each other as peers who despite some differences still have common interests and therefore a basis to form friendships (Han, Ostrosky and Diamond, 2005, p.7). This is something that *JoJo and Gran Gran* did effectively, with its inclusion of a boy with disability who engaged in activities with able bodied peers.

## **Chapter 6: Representation of Pregnancy and Maternity, Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment and Religious Belief**

This Chapter is divided into three sections, 6.1 Representations of Pregnancy and Maternity, 6.2 Representation of Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment and finally 6.3. Representations of Religious Belief. Each section introduces how the characteristic has been investigated, the industry context of that characteristic, the original quantitative and qualitative data and ends with a discussion on the data.

Before continuing with the chapter, I include an auto-ethnographic account of my own experience of being pregnant within the Animation industry. Autoethnography can be explained as ‘an approach to qualitative inquiry in which a researcher recounts a story of his or her own personal experience, coupled with an ethnographic analysis of the cultural context and implications of that experience,’ (Lapadat, 2017, p.589). The inclusion of my own personal experience has been deliberately included towards the end of the thesis and only after much deliberation over whether it added anything to the research. Lapadat states that ‘the method is rooted in ethical intent, yet autoethnography nevertheless face ethical challenges’ and that warns that ‘AE can fall short of its ideological promise due to a lack of distance that results from the subject and the researcher being the same person, and because it can be challenging to translate personal experience into sociocultural and political action,’ (Lapadat, 2017, p.589). I acknowledge that my own account does not include a response from the studio or individuals involved. However, by not including my own experience, I realised that I continue the pattern of censoring the lived experiences of people within the characteristics of the Equality Act. Silverman *et al.*, (2020) argues that ethnography can be used to ‘disrupt ideas on objective research... [and bring] heightened attention to human suffering, injustice, trauma, subjectivity, feeling, and loss,’ (Silverman, 2020, p.91). I initially moved away from ethnography as a research method and chose not to include the lived experiences of colleagues within the industry, and instead chose a quantitative content analysis. My motivations were several, the stories I heard were uncomfortable, personal and unverifiable. By moving to an impersonal approach not only moved me away from subjective accounts, but also provided a body of data that I felt was more reliable and easier to collate than the many varied and complex experiences of colleagues in the industry. The following inclusion of my own narrative seeks to give a real-world example of discrimination.

Due to a non-disclosure agreement, I was obliged to sign in January 2014, I am unable to name the studio or persons involved in the following incident. In June 2013 I started working at a studio which had just been commissioned to produce a series for CBeebies. I started as Junior Librarian, a role that had been created in house by this studio and not one that was common within Animation studios. The team hierarchy was a BAFTA winning

Director (male), Assistant Director (male), Producer (female), then all other creative staff such as the Production Coordinator (female), the editor (female), storyboard artists, designers and animators (approximately 12 staff, which consisted of 1 female in 2014, but by 2015 was entirely male). I was promoted quickly to Production Coordinator, was well liked and was the only member of staff given a gift at the end of Season One by one of the Studio Heads.

I returned to Season Two initially not knowing I was pregnant, and once I had found out decided to not divulge my pregnancy at the three-month point, once the pregnancy had passed its most vulnerable point. I anticipated that the Director would react badly to the news. The previous year, the Assistant Director announced that he and his partner were pregnant. The Assistant Director maintained his long hours throughout the pregnancy but was able to take two weeks off for paternity leave. In the second week of his paternity leave, the Director came in one morning, and was livid to find the Assistant Director still absent. I explained that statutory paternity leave was two weeks and that he would be back the following week. In the ensuing exchange, the Director demanded that I call him at home, and tell him to come into the studio. I refused and eventually called the Producer to tell her the situation and she had to come and placate him.

With this in mind, I called my union, BECTU and asked them for guidance in informing my employers. They advised me to send an email to the Producer and then arrange a meeting. I had just attended the Producer's wedding and felt we were friends as well as colleagues and felt that this would be seen as unfriendly. I ignored the excellent advice from my Union, and in my mind naively imagined she would be happy for me, and we would have a talk about the planning of finding and training a replacement when the time came in five months' time. I asked the Producer for a private meeting and informed her that I was three months pregnant. Her first comment was 'what about your career?' which I found odd and immediately replied that I felt that whilst I would be away for a time, I hoped that my job would be available when I returned. This point was never discussed again. We had a very sobering discussion about how I was letting everyone down and questioned why I would time this pregnancy for the start of Season Two. I was surprised and disappointed by her reaction, particularly as I imagined myself to be a well-liked member of the team and considering that I was thirty-five at the time,

pregnancy did not seem out of the ordinary. I was told to not mention it to anyone and that there would be a second meeting with the Studio Head, a female. At this second meeting I was asked by the Studio Head 'What are you going to do to fix this problem?' and asked whether I would consider 'The enormous pressure you are going to put on the Director,' (series creator and director). I told them that I did not consider my pregnancy a 'problem', and that I did not think that sourcing a replacement for me would be a problem and that a handover four or five months down the line would be a problem. I was also informed that my role was still in its probation period, a point which I instantly rejected. I pointed out there was no mention of a probation period in my contract, neither was any mentioned to me, and I had unofficially held that role for almost six months (without any salary increase) as the existing Production Coordinator was less than adequate. I realised that the introduction of a 'probationary period' was simply so I could be dismissed as soon as possible. I was told not to tell the Director myself, and that I should let them handle the 'situation'.

At this point I approached my union, BECTU. They advised me to put everything in writing and were assured that this was usually enough to set employers straight. I sent the Studio Head a message and she responded by saying there was no probation period, my contract was not to be shortened. I believed this email would effectively put my employer on notice that I was part of a union, that I knew my employment rights and they would let me work until the end of my pregnancy. As a result of my pregnancy the Director, with whom I shared a small room, with two other colleagues, would not speak to me for two days. Once he acknowledged my pregnancy, my real problems began. Despite being hailed as their top team member, and the only team member to receive a gift at the end of the first season, my work was constantly being questioned with the Director constantly giving contradictory instructions and would be irritable with me.

One example of this was that I created a design bible not as a digital copy on Adobe Photoshop or Illustrator, as was the industry standard, but to print out all the characters and backgrounds, cut them up with scissors and glue them into a book. Every senior member of the team objected, the Producer and Assistant Director included, especially as the design bible was not just used in house but by the various organisations that created merchandise.



This request highlights how ludicrous the demands had become. The Director then began to request a call out for me on the building-wide public address system when I went to the bathroom, which resulted in me timing my bathroom breaks. I approached the Director to kindly request him not to do this, as it was embarrassing and not necessary. He refused to stop. This only stopped, when I pointed out to the Assistant Director that I was gone for three minutes, which I was able to prove as I left a note next to the clock on my computer and took a photo of it, then another when I returned. I then began to take my bathroom breaks when the Director was in meetings, out of the building, or exclusively at lunch and after work. The absurdity of having to do this is only evident to me now, at the time it seemed like an excellent solution. Documents supporting this, including one from the director telling me he went to the bathroom to check if I was there – which my union representative called ‘bizarre’ – are available in the Appendices: Emails. These and many other incidents took place relentlessly over a period of two months and were designed to make me so uncomfortable and embarrassed that I would leave.

Finally, one morning I was in the kitchen with two other colleagues, when the Director passed us on his way to the bathroom and we all said good morning. He ignored us all and slammed the bathroom door shut. We scurried back to our desks, and I assumed that he was annoyed that we were chatting and not at our desks. A few minutes later he demanded that I come and talk to him, he ferried me into the stairwell and closed the door behind us. He demanded to know why I said good morning in such a rude way, I apologised and told him I had said Good Morning in a normal voice, and this could be corroborated immediately by the two other colleagues who were in the kitchen. He started ranting and flailing wildly in the corridor, and I was so concerned for my safety that I moved up two steps backwards, up the stairs, put my two hands out and told him he was scaring me and that I did not know what to say. He grabbed the handle for the door but simultaneously kicked it shut twice, repeatedly swearing ‘For f\_ sake’. He finally managed to get it open and stalked off. I was left intimidated and shaken. Colleagues privately, quietly asked me if I was OK, with no one wanting to face his wrath openly. I spoke to the Assistant Director, who was effectively my line manager and asked him to speak to the Director about what he wanted me to do and if he wanted me to leave I would, there was absolutely no need to intimidate me like that. The

Assistant Director did nothing, told me that I had made things awkward and refused to speak to me further about the matter. I sent an email to the Studio Head and Producer, stating that as they had not held him accountable for anything he had done, they had created a person who acted without impunity and was simply out of control. This email was ignored, and no one asked me what happened, if I was ok, or to check independently with colleagues what happened.

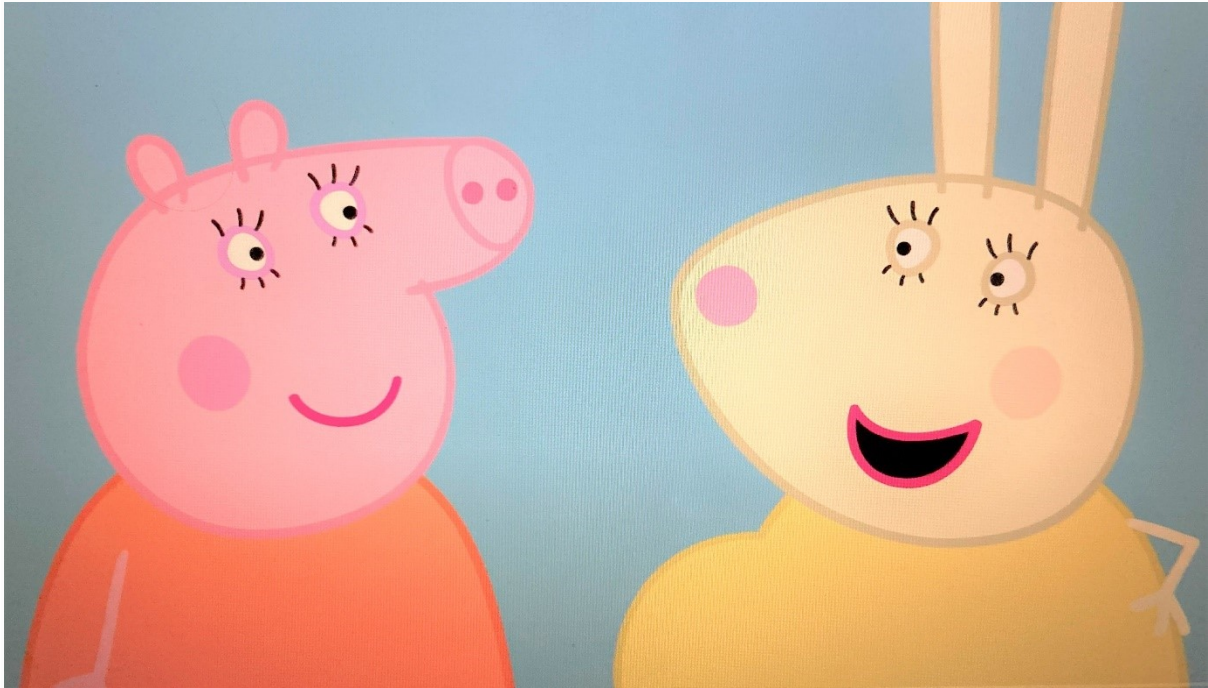
By this point I was five months pregnant. Two or three days later I had a routine check-up with my doctor and spoke to her about my workplace. She immediately advised me to leave. I called my Union representative and related the incident on the stairs. He immediately advised me to leave and that this was a dangerous escalation in his behaviour and told me that he would handle all the paperwork and that I wouldn't have to do anything, such as field emails, phone calls or attend any meetings with them. This came as a huge relief to me. The studio initially refused to make any reparations. Fortunately, I had an email exchange between myself and the director, in which he spoke about using the public address system and checking the toilets for me – which the union representative called 'bizarre'. I eventually settled for a small sum, the equivalent of three weeks' pay and signed an NDA stating that I would not share the name of the individuals and studio involved. Whilst I signed it, at the time and since I found it inappropriate that I had to sign an NDA and saw it as an attempt to silence and censor me, whilst covering up the facts of what had happened. I also felt it pointless as I had shared with all my family, friends, many of them within the animation industry, and most of my colleagues - effectively there was no one left to tell. The use of the NDA's has become more and more controversial, and a campaign to end their use has been spearheaded by the #Can'tbuymysilence group, headed by Zelda Perkins and Professor Julie Macfarlane who stated:

In Louise Mansfield's examination of feminist epistemologies and the importance of ethnography, she states that 'Involvement is a necessary requirement if ethnographers are to be able to understand the realities and identities of the members of different sports groups, to make what seems strange become familiar,' (Mansfield, 2017, p.124). Whilst speaking about sports, her words work within this context also. I have included my personal experience in the hope that it provides a unique insight into discrimination.

Naaeke *et al.*, argue that such emic perspectives are ‘consequential’ furthering that they ‘impact the research process, the findings of a study, and the argument made by the researcher about the implications of these findings,’ (Naaeke *et al.*, 2011, p.1). Naaeke *et al.*, go on to discuss the implications of bias that insider/outsider ethnography brings to research. This is acknowledged by this thesis, including the limitations presented by a one sided account, and one that happened almost a decade ago. Whilst there is documentation to support the account, I have not provided an account by anyone else. I do have the emails with my employer, with BECTU and the Non-Disclosure Agreement itself as proof. Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) have become the default solution for organisations, corporations, individuals and public bodies to settle cases of sexual misconduct, racism, pregnancy discrimination and other human rights violations. They are used not just to cover up misconduct and abuse in workplaces, universities and religious institutions – but to hide faulty products, addiction issues in gambling, the abuse of minors in sports training, the use of public funds in settlements and more – the list is long and shocking. These agreements, which threaten people with legal consequences, are being used to cover up abuse, and in some cases criminal acts (Can’t Buy My Silence, 2021). The group explains that NDA’s were originally meant to protect intellectual property use and are now widely being misused. In a sign that this view gaining traction, six universities have pledged to stop the use of NDA’s in relation to sexual harassment (GOV.UK, 2022). I was extremely fortunate to belong to BECTU, the broadcast union and have someone who dealt with the studio directly, and who provided legal advice. I am grateful to the union for negotiating on behalf, not least because due to the nature of my contract, I had less protection under the law than an employee. Everyone employed on the project was an independent contractor, a technical point that allowed the studio to not make any contributions to national insurance, sick pay or any other benefits. The stress of being unemployed, five months pregnant, without significant savings and the knowledge that I would be blacklisted by many other studios was significant. I knew that it jeopardised my prospects within the animation career, which I spent so long building, from leaving a lucrative career, to retraining in 2008, getting into Central Saint Martins in 2010, working for free or next to nothing for a significant period of time, all to get a long-term job in a studio. As far as I understand, there were no repercussions

for the person responsible for this and not long after this event, the same person was nominated for another prestigious national industry award.

## 6.1 Representations of Pregnancy and Maternity



*Mummy Pig: Hello Mummy Rabbit! Would you like a cup of coffee?*

*Mummy Rabbit: I can't have coffee, but I am quite hungry.*

*Mummy Pig: Would you like a carrot?*

*Mummy Rabbit: I'm a bit off carrots at the minute. Have you got any potatoes?*

*Mummy Pig: Yes, we do.*

*Mummy Rabbit: Maybe a potato, with jelly and cheese, and strawberry jam, please.*

*Children: Ew!*

*Narrator: A potato, with jelly, cheese and strawberry jam? What a funny mixture of food.*

*(Peppa Pig, Season 7, Episode 5, Mummy Rabbit's Bump)*

The scene above comes from the only example of pregnancy that I was able to find within preschool animated programming. Whilst played for humour it clearly shows how pregnancy is stereotyped. With no data available of representations of pregnancy within the British Animation industry, this Chapter investigates the data around discrimination in all sectors, with a focus on those within the screen industries. The chapter then moves to a content

analysis of an episode of *Peppa Pig* which featured a pregnant character which is contained within 5.1.2 Original Qualitative Data.

### **Pregnancy and Maternity: Primary Data**

The analysis below refers to *Peppa Pig: Mummy Rabbit's Bump* and was the only episode featuring a pregnant character. This was not within the season that I chose to complete the original data analysis, and so this additional case study was completed to provide some data and insight into how Pregnancy and Maternity are presented on-screen.

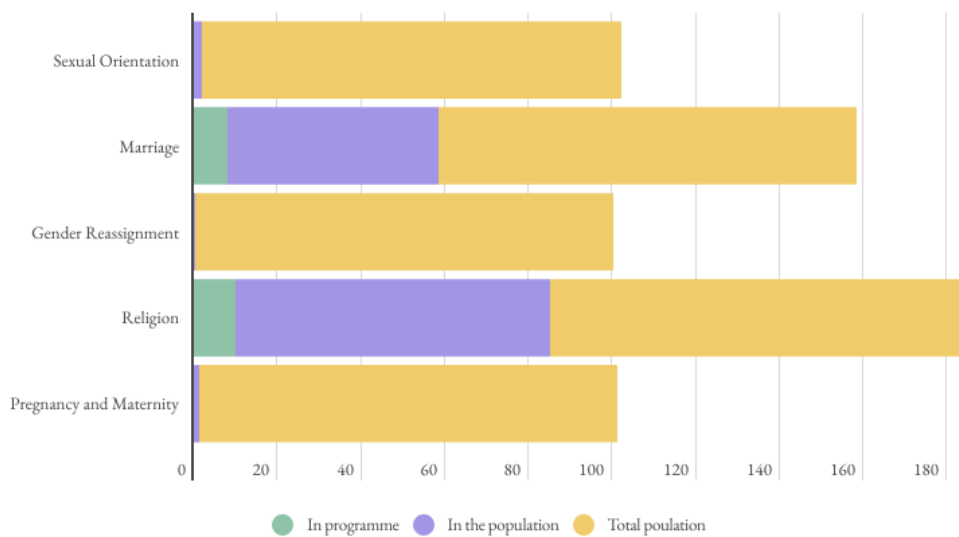
Figure 1.19

## Other protected characteristics

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented sexual orientation, marriage, gender reassignment, religion and pregnancy on screen.

Whilst it could be inferred that Peppa Pig's parents and grandparents were married, this was specifically referred to. In Jo Jo and Gran Gran, there was a wedding photo on a wall which was recorded 8 times and in the opening credits there is a person in a headscarf.

		Sexual Orientation	Marriage	Gender Reassignment	Religion	Pregnancy and Maternity	Total
1	Peppa Pig	0	0	0	0	0	296
2	Charlie and Lola	0	0	0	0	0	110
3	Timmy Time	0	0	0	0	0	215
4	Sarah and Duck	0	0	0	0	0	319
5	Numberblocks	0	0	0	0	0	251
6	Jojo and Gran Gran	0	8	0	10	0	292
	<b>Total</b>						1483



## **Pregnancy and Maternity: Research Objective One: on-screen Depictions**

**To what extent do depictions of characters on-screen match the demographic identities of the British population?**

There were no representations of pregnancy or maternity within the programmes chosen, and only one within a wider search of all seasons of all programmes. According to the credit sequence four men wrote the episode. It is not possible for men alone to authentically give voice to the experience of pregnancy, and by excluding women who have had children from the creative process within studios, this will continue. This censoring of the human experience, and exclusion of women who can give insight into that experience creates an invisibility. With just one example of pregnancy within preschool animation, it seems as if there is a causal link between excluding women who have experienced pregnancy and the portrayal of pregnancy on-screen. As with all the characteristics, an exclusion within the industry leads to either an absence or inauthentic depiction of people within each characteristic.

### **Case Study: *Peppa Pig: Mummy Rabbit's Bump***

Name	Peppa Pig: Mummy Rabbit's Bump
Runtime	11 minutes
Season and Episode	Season 7, Episode 5.
Year	2011



Plot	<p>Episode Description: Peppa Pig, George Pig, Suzy Sheep and Pedro Pony are playing outside Peppa Pig's house when Rebecca Rabbit, her brother Richard Rabbit and their parents Mummy Rabbit and Daddy Rabbit arrive by car. Rebecca tells them she has a secret, that her mummy has a bump in her tummy. Peppa asks if she has eaten too much, and Rebecca Rabbit says no and tells her that there is a baby rabbit in her tummy. The children exclaim 'ooh', and watch Mummy Rabbit climb out of the car with difficulty, with Daddy Rabbit holding the door open for her. The children run over to the adults and Peppa asks 'Mummy Rabbit, is there really a baby Rabbit in your tummy?'. Mummy Rabbit says yes and asks Peppa if she would like to listen to it. Peppa says 'Yes!' and hops forward to put her ear against Mummy Pigs tummy. Daddy Rabbit asks if she can hear a little heartbeat. Peppa listens to the heartbeat and says it is going 'boom, boom, boom'. She then says 'Oh!' As she feels the baby move. Mummy Rabbit explains that sometimes babies give a little kick. Mummy Rabbit asks if the children want to name the rabbit.</p> <p>Mummy Pig then opens the front door and asks if Mummy Rabbit wants a coffee, which Mummy Rabbit says she cannot have any although she is quite hungry. She explains that she is a bit off carrots, and instead asks for a potato with jelly, and cheese and strawberry jam. Mummy Pig looks at her in surprise and the kids say 'Ew!' and laugh, the narrator is incredulous and says, 'what a funny mixture of food'. Mummy Pig and Mummy Rabbit go inside, it is unclear where Daddy Rabbit has gone. The children start choosing names, Peppa, Suzy and Rebecca all choose names starting with the letter R and when Pedro makes suggestions that do not start with R, the girls shout no. Mummy Rabbit and Mummy Pig come out, and Mummy Rabbit thanks Mummy Pig for her snack.</p> <p>The children share their choice of names, which are Rosie and Robbie Rabbit, and Mummy Rabbit approves. Her tummy starts rumbling and she exclaims 'Oh my tummy!' Daddy Rabbit suddenly appears in between Mummy Rabbit and Mummy Pig and says it is all that funny food you've been eating! Both Mummy Pig and Mummy Rabbit are not happy with this comment. She says, 'I don't think so Daddy Rabbit, the baby is coming!'. He exclaims, 'Right,</p>
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Thematic Analysis in relation to portrayals of pregnancy on-screen	Daddy Rabbit : Stressed, panicked, takes care of the car, Mummy Rabbit: difficulty being mobile, food requests met with an urgh from the children, children go with her as she's about to give birth,
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Within this episode there are a number of stereotypes, the panic that Daddy Rabbit displays, his unhappy and stressed face at various points within the story, and in particular his panic when Mummy Rabbit announces the baby is coming. It is also interesting that he simply disappears at one point. This might simply be a continuity error, and not something that the audience would pick up. Daddy Rabbit also asks permission to accompany Mummy Rabbit into the hospital, whilst the children go in with Mummy Rabbit. It seems odd that they would accompany their Mother, who is about to give birth, but not stay with the Daddy Rabbit. It is Mr Bull who tells Daddy Rabbit that he must move the car first, and it's unclear why he is in the hospital, other than to be in a role that is unhelpful and comical. The stereotypes directed at Mummy Rabbit are that she has difficulty being mobile, is off her usual food and wants something that everyone else finds odd and unpleasant. When she exclaims, 'Oh my tummy,' Daddy Rabbit blames it on the food that she has been eating, as if she is to blame for it. She asks if Daddy Rabbit has packed everything, and he rattles off a list including enough food for three days and later unpacks a kettle from the car. Pownall (2017) argues that the 'baby brain stereotype serves to police women's understanding of their own competence through their pregnancy. It positions intelligence, logic and competence as diametrically opposed to hallmarks of femininity, and thus are inherently misogynistic and problematic'. The examples of Mummy Pig eating odd food, needing help to get out of the car, packing a kettle for the hospital can be seen as illogical or as lacking in competence. Pownall (2017) continues stating that 'Baby brain, in essence, serves to legitimise women's restrictions in the active and political world of men, reinforcing the idea that women are helpless, dependent, and incompetent, which in turn, maintains rigid patriarchal hierarchies,' (Pownall, 2017, p.759). Hurt (2011) also talks about how the idea of women's mental capabilities changing within pregnancy 'functions to legitimise gender stereotypes and deflect attention from a host of material conditions that

influence how women experience pregnancy and motherhood,' (Hurt, 2011, p.376). The examples of Mummy Pig craving food that is viewed as disgusting by others, highlights that her experience is odd at best and is certainly unsympathetic to pregnancy. Her obscure requests for candles and a kettle are attempts to perpetuate these ideas of strange, odd, unreasonable requests. Whilst Daddy Rabbit hardly appears competent, this does not detract from how Mummy Rabbit is portrayed. Ridiculing Daddy Rabbit does not 'even out' this experience and should not be seen as playing or lampooning both sexes for comedic purposes.

## **Pregnancy and Maternity: Research Objective Two: off-screen Participation**

### **Does participation within the industry reflect the demographics of the UK population**

Research into pregnancy discrimination reveals that 54,000 women a year are pushed out of their jobs because of their pregnancy or maternity leave (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2018). A reminder that there were 847,204 conceptions in 2017 (ONS, 2019c), meaning around 6.3% of these pregnancies resulted in a loss of employment. Research carried out by Equality and Human Rights Commission, in partnership with the Department for Business Innovation and Skills estimated that 11% will be forced out of their job as a result of being pregnant (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2015). The charity group Pregnant then Screwed has collated data that indicates 77% of mums have faced discriminatory treatment at work (Pregnant then Screwed, no date). My personal experience is mirrored by those collated by IFF Research on behalf of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Equality and Human Rights Commission, who in 2016 published a report titled Pregnancy and Maternity – Related Discrimination and Disadvantage: Experience of Mothers. Their study was based on survey interviews with 3,254 mothers and 60 follow-up in-depth interviews. Their survey revealed that 77% of mothers had experienced negative or discriminatory experiences during pregnancy; maternity leave; and on their return from maternity leave (IFF, 2016). This is echoed in historic research from the Institute of Employment Studies, who in 2004 conducted in-depth interviews with 34 women. Their accounts echo my own with statements such

as: 'I'd worked for him before I was pregnant, and obviously when I'd just became pregnant, so it was the first three or four months, and he made my life intolerable, he was just bullish, saying I wasn't doing my job properly any more ... In the end, it got so bad, he just kept complaining about my work, and he'd never said anything about it before, and kept saying I had loads of times in the toilet where I've been throwing up and he felt I wasn't pulling my weight in the office, and he found it difficult to work with me now because he never knew when I was going to shoot off to the toilet and throw up'. This would indicate that using bathroom breaks to embarrass or make a pregnant woman uncomfortable are tactical decisions. Needing the bathroom more frequently is a frequent problem for pregnant women and listed on the NHS website (NHS, 2021). The reasons for this are that the body produces more progesterone and hcg, as well as producing twice as much blood as usual, and pressure from the baby on the bladder (Medical News Today, 2021). Denying women access to facilities that are necessary due to biological changes in their body is an effective tactic in making women physically uncomfortable.

Their study also investigated long term effects on confidence, arguing that women are actively choosing not to return to work, to return to work in a different industry or preparing to accept adverse conditions such as a demotion as they feel they have no choice but to accept the conditions that employers place on them (IES, 2004). My personal experience in terms of a loss of confidence is the same and even attending animation events and networking with people within the animation studies for this research has prompted dread. More recent examples have been reported in the popular press, with one case against Google (Paul, 2021). The case of Chelsey Glasson echoes my own, where she was told that her pregnancy would 'stress the team'. Another point to note is the idea that fighting to keep your job is inherently not worth it when considering the health implications for both baby and Mother. I was advised by my doctor to think about the risk I was taking engaging in a hostile workplace. These risks are explained through research from Kaylee J. Hackney *et al.*, (2020) who discovered that 'that perceived pregnancy discrimination indirectly relates to increased levels of postpartum depressive symptoms for the mothers, and lower birth weights, lower gestational ages, and increased number of doctors' visits for the babies, via perceived stress of the mothers during pregnancy,' (Hackney *et al.*, 2020, p.1)

Whilst leaving my employer could be seen as a willing choice, it is hardly a fair one. All these examples highlight a pattern of discourse and tactics that are historic and common and are a result of stereotypes of pregnant women, and a lack of diverse workspaces. Workplaces that reflect the demographics of British society would mean that individuals are able to meet people from within the protected characteristics. The continued existence of homogenous workspaces that are hostile does nothing to create authentic, multifaceted content that tell interesting and new stories.

Figures on women who become pregnant in the animation industry are not available and in my personal experience, despite working at eight different studios, I do not recall having met a female animator in a studio with children. There were producers with children, but no one in a creative role. Two colleagues whose wives had been in animation earlier, did not return to animation once they had children. Whilst anecdotal, I have worked on two large long-term projects, and over eight studios in total. This is backed by evidence from Anna Maria Ozimek (2020) who shares that 3% of workers within the animation, television and film had child caring responsibilities compared to the national average of 38%. This would indicate that women who are pregnant leave the industry once their child is born in numbers that are not matched by other industries. Cartoon Brew interviewed eight women who held creative roles within the animation industry in America (Vollenbroek, 2017). The article interviewed Cecilia Aranovich, Director of Bob's burgers and Harley Quinn, two adult animation series who stated that 'A lot of women are hesitant to start a family because they think it's a career killer'. The article goes on to quote Brenda Chapman, director of Brave and Prince of Egypt, who had her child 22 years ago, at a time when she felt that she had no mothers to look up to as role models in feature animation as most of the directors and heads of story were male. She recalled that there were female animators and clean-up artists having children, 'but they would take a big chunk of time off, and they wouldn't go much further [in their career]'. The article goes on to discuss the complexities of juggling an animation career with maternal responsibilities and how due to the gender pay gap, it often makes financial sense for the higher earner to continue working whilst the mother juggles work. They also highlighted the need for better maternity leave and manageable childcare costs. These points were echoed in another article featuring four animation

creatives (Elle, 2016). In the article, Niki Yang stated that 'I think the next hurdle is how we support maternity and paternity. Being a new mother and a director, I see this as an ongoing conflict in the film industry, which has a long-hours working environment,' (Elle, 2016, no pagination). These challenges are also faced by women in the animation industry.

Leung Wing-Fai *et al.*, (2015) interviewed 100 people within the film and television industries, focussing on the difficulties faced by women and refer to them as 'career scramblers'. Their study looked at how gender inequality was mediated by age and parental status and pointed out that women 'fare better in larger organisations with more stable patterns of employment,' (Wing-Fai *et al.*, 2015, p.1). Studios are smaller and do not have stable, formal patterns of employment and the study further highlights how structural barriers within animation create a particular set of problems for those with children stating that:

The challenges posed by 'informality' in recruitment and as a means of finding work, pointing to the ways in which reputation, networking and homophily structure who gets in and gets on within these fields. It also looks at the issue of parenting, highlighting the practical difficulties of combining motherhood with a career in film or television, alongside subtle forms of discrimination that affect mothers and women more generally – highlighting particularly the ways in which not hiring women can be presented as 'rational' or 'understandable', producing what we call 'reasonable sexism'. The article further shows how an entrepreneurial ethic and an antipathy to 'whinging' mean that difficulties associated with inequality or with parenting are rarely voiced and are devolved to individuals to resolve themselves. (Wing-Fai *et al.*, 2015, pp 1-2)

Many of these difficulties affect persons in all of the protected characteristics, particularly the informal avenues to recruitment, networking opportunities and homophily. In relation to pregnancy and maternity, the excerpt refers to rational, understandable or reasonable sexism which includes withholding employment on the basis that a pregnant woman will be going on maternity leave at some point in the next 40 weeks. The study highlights the

precarious nature of employment within the screen industries and how despite protection under the Equality Act 2010, there are significant barriers to women who become pregnant. The excerpt above ends with this reference to 'whinging', meaning that anyone who draws attention to unfavourable treatment can exacerbate their employer's negative view of the pregnancy. This reflects later observations and comments about pregnant women not being a part of the team, causing the team and employers stress and ensures that legitimate concerns are not aired. This is explored in more detail in Chapter 6, section 6.1 *Representation of Pregnancy and Maternity*.

Tamsyn Dent (2010) provides a similarly discouraging view of pregnancy and motherhood within the screen industries in her narrative analysis of the experience of 35 women within the screen industries, 8 of which were part of a couple that had similar roles within industries. Her investigation revealed that women were devalued even before they were pregnant, with instances of open hostility to women's careers. One example given is shared below:

I worked with a male series producer and, and he was ranting at some point about . . . female APs and he said he'd been talking to his friend about why there are no female Directors and he said 'yeah, it might be the case that women are a little bit less creative than men that might be the case but the real reason is that you know female APs you give them all this time and they work their way up and it takes them a long time and they get there and then they fuck off and have kids' . . . And then he said, 'from that perspective everyone knows this so why put in all that effort, like, why encourage people to do that if they are just going to drop out?,' (Dent, 2010, p. 543)

Dent argues that these statements are internalised by those who hear them and are subjected to them. She argues that these statements influence a person's decision-making process as evidenced by the fact that the woman who reported these comments did not return to industry. Whilst it is impossible to know whether if the woman would have returned had she not heard the comment, it is clear that she is aware of senior members of the team being hostile to women, hostile to maternity leave, thinking women are less creative and that they are unworthy of training, mentorship and opportunities

as they are likely to leave the industry to have children. Dent goes on to demonstrate that of the 8 couples, the woman is always the one who leaves the industry or returns to a part time or otherwise demoted role. She notes that conversely, male partners see their salaries rise after they have children, whilst she records that these women all state that it is their choice, they also reveal that these decisions are based on two main considerations. Firstly, despite their equivalent seniority to their male partners, they are usually paid less, even if they work within the same company. Instead of calling out this gender-based pay disparity for what it is, discrimination, the women rationalise this and insist it is their choice, rather than something that is dictated by their economic inferiority.

Dent notes that the women frequently undervalue themselves and instead question their own abilities. Secondly, their partners decline the 'offer' of sharing child caring responsibilities thus denying them the opportunity to have the same amount of space and time to work. Dent highlights how problematic this is 'as it suggests that women's economic value in the creative media industry is undermined even before childbirth, that the assumptions of maternal withdrawal work to devalue all women's economic position within the industry, whether they have children or not,' (Dent, 2010, p.545). This is a destructive cycle of women not being given the same opportunities and pay because of the 'threat' of pregnancy to employers, then women leaving the industry because of these reasons, meaning the next generation of women are vulnerable to a stereotype of women not being ambitious and about women wanting to stay at home with their children once they are born. Dent also points to the invisible labour that women do in supporting their partners career in two distinct ways. One is the full commitment to household and caring responsibilities which leaves their partner focussed on his career. The second, is that in some cases the female partner was still providing professional advice to their partner, benefiting an employer that has not made significant accommodation for the female employee. The employer in this case is benefitting from free professional advice. Dent points out that the male partner's value is dependent on the support of his female partner's domestic and professional help, however this seems inconclusive. Whilst there can be no doubt that he benefits from his female partner immensely, it is clear that she is the dependent and pregnant, and motherhood has left her in a financially



vulnerable position. Dent concludes that 'The individual internalisation of this devalued position is productive of the symbolic and consistent cycle of injustice that operates within the creative workplace. Women are devalued as creative workers from the start, the transition to motherhood provides them with a sense of value as a middle-class mother,' (Dent, 2010, p.549). I see myself within these statements, as a creative forced out by a hostile work environment, and post pregnancy unwilling to return to the sector because of this and due to the inherent economic vulnerability of the sector and the nature of the work which is not compatible with caregiving duties. Dent states that 'the lack of resistance or collective action contributes to the continued devalued status of women across the industry,' (Dent, 2010, p.549). Dent's frustration with the women who recognise that they are undervalued in industry but do nothing to remedy this situation for the next generation of creatives entering the workforce, does not recognise that as sole traders, most creatives do not have the same employment rights as employees, that membership to the broadcast union BECTU is low, particularly within animation and the hostility against women can be physically and mentally detrimental to both the pregnant women and their baby. It would be better to create robust protection for women to encourage them back into industry if that is what they want. This way, younger women into industry are able to see examples of working mothers and realise that this is an industry that welcomes and supports women through all stages of their professional and personal lives, in the same way that it does for men.

## 6.2 Representations of the LGBTQI+ Community



*Arthur: Mr Ratburn is married. I still can't believe it!*

*Friend: Yep, it's a brand new world.*

*(Arthur, Season 22, Episode 1, Mr Ratburn's Special Someone)*

The quote above comes from Arthur and the line 'It's a brand new world' could be seen as being directed to adults watching alongside their children. This is explored in more detail later in the original data analysis that was conducted for this thesis. The section below details the experiences of the LGBTQI+ community on-screen by exploring inclusive programming on CBBC and on American television. As there was no data around this topic within the programming selected, this was expanded to include Arthur, which was available on CBeebies.

### LGBTQI+: Primary Data

The episode below was available to view on CBeebies via BBC iPlayer.

Name	Arthur: Mr Ratburn and the Special Someone
Runtime	13 minutes

Season and Episode	Season 22 Episode 1 Mr Ratburn's Special Someone
Year	2020
Plot	<p>Mr Ratburn takes a call in class and reveals that he is getting married. The children are horrified, because they cannot imagine that teachers have a life outside of school. They spot him with a woman named Patty and assume that she is the bride to be. She is very domineering and demanding and the children worry that she will make Mr Ratburn a lot tougher. They plot to make Mr Ratburn appear unattractive to Patty, using an app which makes any photo look like a hippie. They supply Patty with a video, but she just laughs. Arthur and a friend walk into a chocolatier, they buy a box of chocolate in the hopes of pushing Mr Ratburn into a chance meeting with Miss Turner, the school Librarian who they think is a better match. They send Ms Turner a love letter from Mr Ratburn, which she realises is a fake and returns to the children with their mistakes highlighted. The children receive invitations to the wedding and plot to stop the wedding at the ceremony when asked if anyone objects. The wedding day arrives, and Patty welcomes the children. The children are about to voice their objections to Mr Ratburn marrying Patty, when Patty reveals that she is actually his older sister. The children are confused and then suddenly Mr Ratburn and his partner, the chocolatier walk down the aisle arm in arm. The children are delighted and state 'it's a brand new world'</p>

Thematic Analysis in relation to portrayals of the LGBTQI+ community on-screen	Mr Ratburn: The wedding, Mr Ratburn and his partner walking down the aisle together and dance together. Patty: Wearing trousers, intimidating to the children.
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Although the programme is about Mr Ratburn's wedding to Patrick the chocolatier, this and the fact that Mr Ratburn is gay isn't revealed until 11 minutes and 45 seconds into the 13 minute episode. The plot revolves around the idea that the children think that his sister is actually his fiancé, and that may be why his identity as a gay person is not identified until quite late in the episode, but it seems as if his gay identity could have been given more space. The children even attempt to convince the female librarian that Mr Ratburn is in love with her, by producing a fake love letter. They clearly have no idea that he is gay. When they do realise, they are happy and react positively to the news. When Arthur says that he cannot believe that Mr Ratburn is married, his friend replies 'Yep. It's a brand new world.' This statement is delivered and then the children's attention is diverted to their teacher's dancing. The statement itself seems directed more to adults watching the programme to mark the occasion of a same sex couple in preschool children's programming. The children's joyful reaction to the realisation that Mr Ratburn has married another male mouse, and the fact that they do not mention their surprise that he is male could be seen as a way to introduce ideas of LGBTQI+ representation in children. They are not confused about it, nor do they react negatively.

The programme also features the actor Jane Lynch as Mr Ratburn's sister. Jane Lynch is openly gay and has spoken about her experiences of growing up as a child, feeling that she had to keep her identity a secret and feeling as if she had a 'disease,' (Rattenbury, 2014, no pagination). By introducing children to people with different sexualities prepares children to be more accepting and gives children who are in the LGBTQI+ community a chance to feel like they are accepted and do not need to grow up hiding a part of their identity. The inclusion of Jane Lynch can be seen as a deliberate effort to be inclusive and having a cast whose real life identity matches the character that they portray on-screen. The character of Patty is portrayed as always

wearing trousers, very blunt with exacting standards and slightly intimidating. This coding could be viewed as a stereotype of a lesbian woman (Raley and Lucas, 2008, p.24). However, she is seen laughing and the speech she gives at the wedding portrays a loving sister, softening the children's perception of her as harsh. Interestingly, the media furore surrounding the character Mr Ratburn does not appear to be directed to the Patty character. This could be because her sexuality has not been overtly named, rather it is through the casting, and then through her actions that this has been queer coded.

Tony Kelso (2015) asserts that 'Clearly, for emerging homosexual or transgender kids growing up, with few if any flesh-and-blood role models they can look up to regarding these core issues, LGBT images in the media take on especially heightened importance,' (Kelso, 2015, p.1060). He points out that whilst there are examples of LGBTQI+ adults in television in film, depictions of children are absent from the screen, questioning:

'But where is the 7-year-old boy on television or in the movies who loves pretending to be a princess and drawing beautiful mermaids? Where is the 5-year-old girl who shuns the pink dress for a session of rough-and-tumble play in the park or baseball—forget softball—with the boys?,' (Kelso, 2015, p.1060).

Whilst Arthur stands out in its depiction of a LGBTQI+ character, this is an adult, not a child. Considering the negative reaction that the episode received in some parts of America, this is unsurprising. Alabama public television refused to air the episode, stating that: 'parents trust that their children can watch APT without their supervision. We also know that children who are younger than the 'target' audience for Arthur also watch the program,' (Quinn, 2019). This homophobic comment that decries the content of this episode is dangerous for young children makes it clear how representations of LGBTQI+ communities are still viewed as controversial in many parts of the world. In response to this statement, PBS stood by its decision to air the episode and the creator, Marc Brown responded that 'I don't want children or people who are different to feel excluded. That's not the kind of world we want to live in. And we want children to be educated so they can see there's not just one type of family,' (Atlantic, 2019a). It is vital that content

creators continue making work that reflects the lived reality of everyone in the population, and not simply focus on a heteronormative view of the family and relationships. The creative team behind *Arthur* has faced criticism before, from the US Secretary of Education in 2005. A spin off series that they had created, titled *Postcards from Buster*, featured two mums as parents, at a time when same sex marriage was not permitted in the US. The letter to PBS declares that 'Many parents would not want their young children exposed to the life-styles portrayed in this episode. Congress' and the Department's purpose in funding this programming certainly was not to introduce this kind of subject matter to children, particularly through the powerful and intimate medium of television,' (US Department of Education, 2005). They went so far as to demand a refund of any money that went into the production of the episode. At that time, PBS made the decision not to send the episode to affiliates, although the Boston station WGBH who were also the producers offered to send it to any station who were 'willing to defy the Education Department,' (Fetters and Escobar, 2019). As a result of the furore, PBS did not approach the Education Department funding for the second season of *Postcards*, and the Congress-controlled Corporation for Public Broadcasting pulled out as a sponsor, as did other corporate sponsors. The programme was subsequently funded by PBS and other media and LGBTQ foundations. There are no press reports of negative British reaction to the episode which is currently on CBeebies. This history is inserted here to show that almost fifteen years later, after same sex marriage has been legalised in most states in the US, including Alabama, LGBTQI+ representation is still seen as controversial. The first same sex marriage was in 2014 in the UK. The UK still has not seen LGBTQI+ representation in preschool programming.

## **LGBTQI+: Research Objective One: on-screen Depictions**

**To what extent do depictions of characters on-screen match the demographic identities of the British population?**

Here is a reminder of the figures that were outlined within 1.2 Research Framework for Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment:

- Sexual Orientation: In 2016, 93.4% of the UK population identified as heterosexual or straight and 1.2% identified themselves as gay or lesbian and 0.8% identified themselves as bisexual bringing the LGB population to 2.2% (ONS, 2016a).
- Gender Reassignment: There is no accurate data on this, but the government estimates that there are between 200,000 to 500,000 people who identify as transsexual and has released documentation on the significant challenges this group faces from discrimination. This would be 0.31-0.76% of the population (GOV.UK, 2018c).

Figure 1.20 below shows that there was no representation in any of the programmes and as a result, 3% of the population is absent from screen. The example of Arthur was an American programme, but available to a British preschool audience on CBeebies and detailed how representation within children's preschool programming could be effectively tackled. However, the programme only really defined the character as gay within the last minute of the programme. Future representations could explore the character in greater detail and identify his family life earlier. Whilst the episode met with some opposition, it still aired. The research has shown that American children's programming is leading the way for LGBTQI+ representation on-screen and UK broadcasters and producers have a template of what is working well. Within the US context, the work of GLAAD within the US screen industries strengthens accountability and provides broadcasters with an organisation to discuss appropriate representation with or access their research. This is discussed further within the Chapter 7: Conclusion.

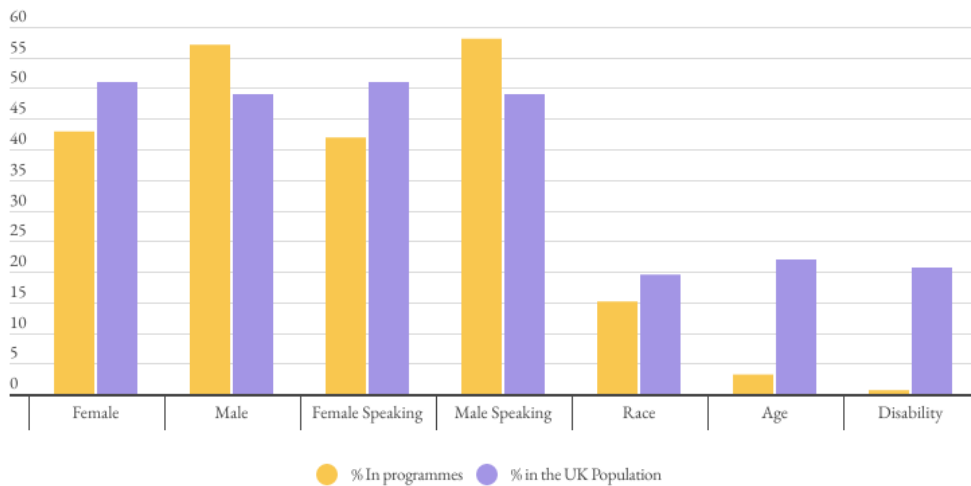
Figure 1.20

## All characteristics against UK population

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented all nine characteristics against the UK Population.

This data has been split into two graphs to view the data in a more accessible format. The graph below details sex, race, age and disability only.

	In programmes %	% of the UK population	% difference
<b>Sex</b>			
Female	42.89	51	-8.11
Male	57.11	49	8.11
<b>Female Speaking</b>			
	41.95	51	-8.11
<b>Male Speaking</b>			
	58.05	49	8.11
<b>Race</b>			
	15.11	19.5	-4.39
<b>Age</b>			
	3.17	22	-18.83
<b>Disability</b>			
	0.61	20.65	-20.04
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			
	0	2.2	-2.2
<b>Marriage</b>			
	0.54	50	-49.93
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>			
	0	0.3-0.7	-0.3
<b>Religion</b>			
	0.67	75	-75
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>			
	0	1.29	-1.29





## **LGBTQI+: Research Objective Two: off-screen Participation**

### **Does participation within the industry reflect the demographics of the UK population**

This section combines the protected characteristics Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment together. This reflects how the acronym LGBT is often used in the literature and is an acronym for the identifiers of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender. This is often expanded to LGBTQI+ to include queer or questioning and intersex, and to reflect this inclusion, this thesis also uses LGBTQI+ to be as inclusive as possible (BBC, 2015; Stonewall, no date). Whilst the preschool animation examined did not have any representation of LGBTQI+ characters, other programming aimed at older children does. In 2020, CBBC's *The Next Step* featured the first same sex kiss on the channel (O'Connor, 2020; Newsround, 2020). CBBC is content aimed at 6-12 (BBC, 2014) and it has already featured several shows with same sex relationships *Jamie Johnson*, *4 O Clock Club*, *Dixie* and *Marrying Mum and Dad* (O'Connor, 2020). The broadcaster received a number of complaints about *The Next Step*, over 100 and issued a statement defending the programme and reminding viewers that the first same sex kiss was in *Byker Grove* in 1994, 30 years ago (Bray, 2020). The BBC's statement stated that 'The decision to include this moment... was taken very carefully and with much consideration and came about after CBBC and Boatrockers (the production company who make the show) acknowledged that the series could and should do more to reflect the lives of LGBTQ+ young people,' (O'Connor, 2020).

Industry responses to the lack of available trans programming led Fox Fisher and Lewis Hancock to form the My Genderation film project in 2011 (My Genderation, 2021). Their biography reveals that 'Feeling frustrated that their experiences weren't portrayed authentically, they started to create films about the trans people around them. They wanted to represent trans people authentically and without the voyeuristic gaze of those that are not trans. This is the essence of what makes My Genderation unique – the fact that it is created entirely by trans people, about trans people, for everyone. It allows people to see more engaging, truthful and authentic representation of transgender people, and connect with them on a more human level,' (My Genderation, 2021) This theme is reflected in the central argument of this research, that content created by those within the protected characteristics

would create more engaging, truthful and authentic content. In the popular press, Owl and Fox Fisher also detailed a list of the five best representations of trans characters in animation. They introduced the list by explaining that 'Having those conversations with children will never be easy, and representation on TV can play a huge part in how people relate to the world and think about themselves,' (Fisher and Fisher, 2020). Again, this echoes the argument of the thesis, which is that children's television has an important role in educating and equipping children to understand other identities.

The same article lists *She Ra and the Princess of Power*, which is available on Netflix. Fisher explains that the series has multiple lead characters that identify as trans, which are voiced by trans actors. This is confirmed in other reports that also detail that one character has two fathers, another identifies as non-binary and that the lead character is in a same sex relationship with another central character (Opie, 2020). The article also mentions *Steven Universe* on Netflix, *Too Loud* on YouTube, *Rocko's Modern Life* on Netflix, and *Danger and Eggs* on Amazon Prime, which also has transgender actors in transgender roles. All these examples are on non-traditional platforms, which are not regulated by Ofcom or receive any funding as a public broadcaster. It may be that because these newer, digital platforms have the freedom to provide the content that they want, and they are able to respond to and better reflect viewer needs and appetites. Considering the complaints that the BBC received over *The Next Step*, it would seem likely that transgender representation would regrettably trigger a similar response. Other programs that feature within the article and include LGBT characters are *The Bravest Knight* on Hulu. The programme features two dads and their adoptive daughter. Whilst Hulu is not available to British audiences, it is available to purchase from Hopster, a digital platform that is dedicated to children's preschool programming and is also a learning app featuring educational content and games. Except for *Too Loud*, women and transgender women created all of these programmes. *She Ra and the Princess of Power* was created for television and written by Noelle Stevenson, who identifies as gay, and features six female directors and four male directors (Sherer, 2020). The female directors account for 49 episodes and male directors account for 23 episodes and six female writers who worked collaboratively to create 206 writing credits with three male writers who generated 5 writing credits (IMDB,

no date 1). *Steven Universe* was created by Rebecca Sugar, who identifies as bisexual and was directed by 5 male directors which accounted for 129 episodes and 2 female directors which accounted for 44 episodes (IMDB, no date 2). *Danger and Eggs* was co-created by Shadi Petosky, who identifies as a transgender woman, and Mike Owens and *The Bravest Knight* was directed by Shabnam Razaie. Those programmes that feature LGBT characters are made by people who identify as LGBT, strengthening the argument that giving opportunities to people from a diverse background would naturally lead to more diverse programming. Almost all of these programmes are also aimed at an older audience. Whilst *Hey Duggee!* and *Arthur* are available on CBeebies and CBBC, and *The Simpsons* has been aired on Channel 4, none of these other programmes listed in the article are available via a public service broadcaster. *Hey Duggee!*'s LGBT representation is delivered by secondary characters Mr and Mr Crab, and Mr Ratburn in *Arthur*. Neither are central characters and both examples are adult characters within a children's programme. In addition, research from Dubit and Hopster identified *Go Jetters*, on CBeebies and *True and the Rainbow Kingdom*, available on Netflix (Hopster, no date). Again, both female and male creators collaboratively created programmes. Whilst both *Steven Universe* and *She Ra the Princess of Power* are hailed as pioneering LGBT representation, both creators revealed that this was not always supported by Cartoon Network and that they were both told not to discuss LGBT representation in their own programmes, after the 2016 election where President Trump came into power in the US (Amidi, 2020). This is indicative of the precarious situation that LGBT showrunners find themselves in, that their content is seen to be controversial as opposed to inclusive and reflective of the lived reality for a significant number of people.

GLAAD, a media monitoring group that supports LGBT representation in America. They release an annual report that looks at representation across both adult, family and children's television. An excerpt from their latest published report reveals that:

Representation in daytime kids and family television continues to grow in leaps and bounds. Over the summer, GLAAD Media Award-nominee *Steven Universe* held the first same-gender wedding on children's television. Characters Ruby and Sapphire concluded an arc with a bright and

joyous wedding, officiated by protagonist Steven. This is just one of many queer characters and stories that *Steven Universe* continues to tell. Another popular Cartoon Network series *Adventure Time* recently wrapped its ten-season run. In the series finale, the show confirmed a queer relationship between fan favourite characters Princess Bubblegum and Marceline the Vampire Queen with a sweet kiss. Nickelodeon's *The Loud House*, another GLAAD Media Award nominee, follows the Loud family, which includes bisexual daughter Luna, a teenager who has had crushes on both girls and boys. *The Loud House* has also shown Howard and Harold McBride, the two dads of the main character's best friend. Disney's *Marvel Rising: Secret Warriors*, an animated TV film in their ongoing *Rising* franchise, includes lesbian hero America Chavez and her two moms when the audience sees a bit of her origin story. While this special did not address America being a lesbian in any way, the ending has set her up as a member of this superhero team with the possibility of further exploration (GLAAD, 2019, p.31)

Within American programming there is a clear engagement with the LGBTQI+ community. Whilst these programmes are aimed at a slightly older audience, they provide ways in which LGBTQI+ representation can be shown on-screen.

In an article for the *Hollywood Reporter*, Shadi Petosky makes the point that children's programming is often about nostalgia and the childhood experiences of the show creators. As *Danger and Eggs* creator is transgender, she was able to make a programme that was more a 'speculative social fiction', and reveals that the platform – Amazon – enabled Petoskey to move 'away from a campy take to the concept of chosen families, a hallmark of queer lives: 'You just have a really close friend who loves and supports you as much as family would,' trans teen Zadie explains in the episode. 'Sometimes more than some families would...I've seen so many incredible responses and one theme stands out. I wish I had something like this when I was a kid, my life would be — Different. Better in some way. Cycles broken. It turns out that what I and many of my LGBTQ+ peers want isn't so odd — just some sparkly-eyed nostalgia of our own,' (Petosky, 2017). These statements are indicative of the authentic lens that someone who has lived experience of being transgender

can bring to portrayals of transgender characters on-screen. Similarly, Rebecca Sugar, creator of *Steven Universe* stated that ‘I want to feel like I exist, and I want everyone else who wants to feel that way to feel that way too,’ (Dudok de Wit, 2016). In another interview Rebecca Sugar echoed the idea that animation is reflective of the creators own first hand experiences and the problems of historic animation being a single vision:

As I was working on Steven, these theories began to evolve because I started to realise that if the vast majority of animated content is being made by cis, heterosexual white men then millions of children, the conversations they’re having is always with someone with a very similar experience. This person is speaking very genuinely, but the story that we’re all hearing during our formative years is the story of his dreams and his hopes; the story of the women he finds attractive, these are the stories we’re growing up on. I began to think about what a difference it would make to have an LGBTQIA role model on the other side of the table — having a conversation about what it takes to have self-respect in a world that wants to kill you. (Moen, 2020, no pagination)

Rebecca Sugar goes on to state that: ‘The GLAAD kids and family category did not exist until 2018 and the reason is because this content was actively prohibited. It was being stopped from happening up until this point. That’s wrong and more people are recognizing that it’s wrong’ (Moen, 2020, no pagination). This statement makes it absolutely clear how showrunners on programmes such as *Steven Universe* are vanguards. With this in mind, her next statement is all the more compelling: ‘I know what an unbelievably emotional labour that is. I hope that people understand that the people that are fighting for this are really putting their mental and emotional health on the line to make this different.... That is so huge and deeply unfair that certain stories can sail through, and certain creators can write about their childhood crushes, write about their everyday lives and it’s no problem and then for some of us’ it’s a delicate dance in a bizarre, furious fight,’ (Moen, 2020, no pagination). This refers to the isolation and pressure that is felt by showrunners who want to make more inclusive content as having to challenge the status quo, old methods of working, creating new and original content, and

representing their communities. It is important to note that despite being a protected characteristic in the UK, globally there are countries where LGBT representation is seen as offensive and unsuitable for children. In 2012, a right wing group in the Ukraine took offence to *SpongeBob SquarePants*, which prompted the Ukrainian government to investigate the show (Morse, 2012; Blay, 2012; Tartar, 2012). In subsequent articles widely available online said that the Ukrainian government had banned the show (Blay, 2012; Tartar, 2012; Marson, 2012) although it is not clear if it was eventually banned. In the US, Alabama Public Television banned an episode of *Arthur*, which featured a male teacher marrying his same sex partner (BBC, 2019b; O'Neil, 2019). Disney's *Onward* was banned in multiple regions including Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, due to a reference of same sex parents by a secondary character, as was Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* which was redubbed and given a 16+ rating in Russia (BBC, 2020a). China has banned all depictions of gay relationships on television (Ellis-Peterson, 2016). In the *My Little Pony: Friendship is Magic* series, the '*The Last Crusader*,' features a same sex couple, Aunt Holiday and Auntie Lofty and was met with hostility from Australian conservatives (GLAAD, 2020b; Harmon, 2019). To counter this, by being progressive and inclusive, British animated content has the potential in advocating for the rights of people with the LGBTQI+ community to have accurate portrayals on television.

## 6.3 Representations of Religious Belief



*Sarah: Happy Christmas!*

*Duck: Quack!*

*Umbrella: Oh, Christmas.*

*(Sarah & Duck, Season 1, Episode 40, Christmas Special: Petal Light Picking)*

The scene above pictures Sarah, Duck and Umbrella with their Christmas Tree, with a flower on the top. Any indications that this is a religious holiday are completely absent from the episode, save for the words Happy Christmas in the last few seconds of the episode. This is discussed in more detail within the This section investigates representation within the industry and the reasons why broadcasters might be reluctant to engage with the topic. As there were no instances of religious representation within the programmes and series originally selected for this thesis, the content analysis within this section instead investigates Christmas Specials.

### Religious Belief: Primary Data

The tables below detail the original content analysis that was completed on Christmas Specials of the six programmes selected for this thesis. To analyse

the Christmas Specials, this thesis sought to identify any Christian iconography, anything that linked back to the nativity, Jesus' birth or specific references to Christianity or church. Looking at the programmes that had already been selected, this research investigated *Peppa Pig*, *Timmy Time*, *Sarah & Duck* and *JoJo and Gran Gran*. This thesis was unable to locate a Christmas special for *Numberblocks* and the Christmas Special for *Charlie and Lola* was no longer available for purchase in the UK, due to its age (2006). Both *JoJo and Gran Gran* and *Sarah & Duck* were available on BBC iPlayer, but both *Timmy Time* and *Peppa Pig* were purchased on Amazon Prime. Whilst it would have been available to the audience on a public broadcaster at the time of broadcast, it is no longer available on either BBC iPlayer, Channel 5 or on the standard Netflix or Amazon Prime memberships. This thesis recorded the Name, Runtime, Year, Plot, Christian iconography and Thematic Analysis on the episode.

Name	Peppa Pig: Father Christmas
Runtime	9 minutes
Year	2019



Plot	<p>The Children are at playgroup, and their teacher informs that they will be putting on a Christmas Play. The children all shout out what character they would like to be, which is Christmas Fairy, Santa, Elf, Snowflake, and Christmas Tree. Later, Peppa and her family are at the supermarket. Father Christmas is there, and she invites him to the play. The next day at school she tells her friends that she saw and spoke to him and that he will be attending the school play. Her friends all tell her that they too saw Father Christmas, but that he did not tell them he would be coming to the play. Later, Peppa sees Father Christmas at the Christmas Tree Farm and invites him again. The next day, the children are putting on the play for their parents. The snowflakes are singing an original song, and the children are in their various costumes: Father Christmas, Christmas nurse etc. Father Christmas is at the play and talks to the children, showing them his sleigh, and takes them and Daddy Pig on a magical trip, flying.</p>
Christian iconography	<p>Star costume on one child in the background.</p>

Thematic Analysis	<p>Even though the children are putting on a play at Christmas, this is not a nativity. A nativity is a traditional activity for primary school children in the UK and so it is unclear why this has been portrayed as a generic winter play. It could be that to appeal to a wider domestic or international audience, this has been turned into a generic play about winter. The inclusion of one child in one of the final scenes in a star costume, at the back would not be enough to represent religion within programming. Father Christmas is the central plot point in the story, with a joke about how he is at lots of different venues, with even Daddy Pig assuming he is not the real one, when he is and takes the children on a magical sleigh ride. Watching the programme, one could assume that there is no religion around Christmas and that the holiday is entirely about Father Christmas.</p>
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Name	<i>Charlie and Lola: How many minutes until Christmas?</i>
Runtime	22 minutes
Season and Episode	Season 2 Episode 16
Year	2006
	Not available to buy in the UK

Name	<i>Timmy Time: Timmy's Christmas Surprise</i>
Runtime	21 minutes
Year	2011

Plot	<p>Timmy wakes up on Christmas Day and gets on the bus with his friends. It is decorated with tinsel and other decorations. The nursery has also been decorated. The children are writing a letter to Father Christmas, Timmy wants a bike.</p> <p>Everyone is involved in holiday activities such as making decorations, sledding in the snow and singing Jingle Bells. Timmy and his teacher look for a Christmas tree in the forest, planting one in its place. The children decorate the tree with their handmade Christmas decorations. They put Father Christmas in place of the star or angel on the tree, but it falls to the floor and breaks. Timmy and a teacher fix it, and the teacher realises they are going to be snowed in at nursery. The teacher rings Timmy's mother to tell her, and Timmy cries thinking that Santa will not be able to deliver the bicycle. The two teachers and all the children go into the barn and have a Christmas party, singing songs, making stockings, and having mince pies. They settle in for the night. They leave out milk, a carrot and some milk for Father Christmas. As Timmy and his friends are sleeping, we see Father Christmas giving out gifts. The next morning, we see everyone opening their presents. Timmy thinks that Santa has forgotten him, but then finds his gift, a new bicycle. Timmy calls his Mummy to tell her all about the gift. Timmy's teacher makes a snow plough and takes all the children home. Timmy stares back at Father Christmas on the Christmas Tree and it sparkles magically. The children hop into the school bus and head home, singing Jingle Bells.</p>
Christian iconography	None identified.

Thematic Analysis	<p>The idea that it is Father Christmas who sits on top of the Christmas Tree boldly replacing religion and centring the season entirely around the tradition of Father Christmas. It is Father Christmas who provides the ‘miracle’ of Christmas, here being that he still managed to locate Timmy and his friends even though they were not at home. There is none of the commercialism that Eide (2020) mentions in her analysis of Christmas specials, and the point of making homemade decorations and planting a tree before taking a tree from the forest are interesting points to counter the impression that Christmas is not just about buying presents.</p>
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Name	<i>Sarah &amp; Duck: Petal Light Picking</i>
Runtime	7 minutes
Season and Episode	Season 1 Episode 40
Year	2013
Plot summary	<p>Sarah and Duck go shopping for Christmas lights in town. Sarah does not like any of the lights, and they return home disappointed. As it gets dark, a glowing bug leads them to a secret garden where the petals glow. Sarah and Duck choose decorations for the tree. They return home to decorate their tree. We see Christmas lights, baubles, trees, puddings, crackers, and snowflakes. Sarah and Duck return home with their decorations and are incredibly pleased with their Christmas tree, which has a glowing flower on the top. Sarah wishes Duck and Umbrella a happy Christmas.</p>
Christian iconography	None identified.

Thematic Analysis	This programme highlighted how easy it is to omit any Christian symbolism or reference to the religious roots of the holiday. It avoided any mention of Father Christmas and by not purchasing anything, Sarah and Duck turned from the commercialisation of Christmas, using natural materials to decorate the tree. The magic of the season was the secret garden.
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Name	JoJo and Gran Gran It's Time for Christmas
Runtime	11 minutes
Season and Episode	Season Autumn (3) Episode 12
Year	2020
Plot	JoJo and Gran Gran are at home making Christmas decorations. Great Gran Gran calls them from St Lucia, and they discuss their various Christmas traditions. <i>JoJo and Gran Gran</i> discuss an older picture of the family at Christmas time. The live action portion of the show has children discussing Christmas trees and shows a family and friends decorating a tree. <i>JoJo and Gran Gran</i> go to Christmas Tree Farm and invite members of their community to a Christmas party. They share their new tree with everyone at the party. The episode features lots of snow, snowmen, mince pies, Christmas trees and Christmas hats.
Christian iconography	Three kings on a Christmas card in the background (hard to spot), star on top of a tree, discussion around star or angel on top of a tree.

Thematic Analysis	<p>The only reference to the nativity was the inclusion of a Christmas card that featured the Three Kings, from the nativity story. However, this was in the background and small and unlikely that anyone who wasn't specially looking for references to the nativity would identify this. Whilst the children discussed whether they would put a star or an angel on top of the tree, there was no explanation of what the star or angel meant in relation to the nativity story.</p>
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## Religious Belief: Research Objective One: on-screen Depictions

### To what extent do depictions of characters on-screen match the demographic identities of the British population?

Religious belief became the largest group that was not represented at all within not only the original data analysis but also the extended content analysis that was specifically around Christmas. This was surprising, as the reason behind the selection of Christmas Specials was to enable a discussion of religious belief in children's programming. Whilst the reasons around broadcasters' reluctance to engage with religion have merit, broadcasters and producers should find a way to navigate these difficulties and find a way of representing religion in a way that does not alienate those outside of the religion they are depicting. Otherwise, 59% of the population who identify as Christian, 5% who identify as Muslim, and the 1.3% who identify as Hindus do not see their faith reflected back to them.

Despite all of the programmes being aired specifically around Christmas, every single programme failed to deliver any meaningful representation of religion to their Christmas special, despite Christmas having its roots as a Christian celebration of the birth of Jesus. Two programmes stood out as examples of making a point of disrupting traditional Christmas activities. One was *Peppa Pig*, which chose to have a Christmas play that was pointedly not a nativity. This is a traditional primary school activity, and it is a deliberate decision to not reflect the experiences of preschool and primary school

children in the UK. The second was *Timmy Time*, which chose to have a Father Christmas doll on the top of the tree rather than an angel or star. This example is particularly noteworthy and could be seen as modern day iconoclasm. Howe (2009) states that 'Secularists tend not to destroy religious icons, but to displace them, or in this case, replace them,' (Howe, 2009, p.2).

*JoJo and Gran Gran* avoided any mention of religion or Father Christmas, as did *Sarah & Duck*. In contrast to Eide's conclusions about the focus of Christmas in children's programming (2020), there was no overt commercialism. *JoJo and Gran Gran* displayed an emphasis on Christmas being about family and friends, as did *Timmy Time*, although this was forced by the extreme weather. The exclusions of religion could be seen as an attempt to be more inclusive of a wider audience both domestically or internationally, and a recognition that Christmas and Britain have become more secular (Anthony, 2022). This theory is extrapolated by the former Vicar of Finedon in Northamptonshire Reverend Richard Coles explains that 'For most people, Santa and the Virgin Mary are equal members of the cast of Christmas,' (Anthony, 2022). Other reasons for the decline in Christian religiosity are that those people who were raised Christian are dying, this is explained by Professor Linda Woodhead of King's College, London who states that 'The Christian population is quite an aged population, and therefore the death rate affects it. People are simply dying,' (Oborne, 2022). This is echoed by Professor Abby Day, at Goldsmiths, University of London who shared that 'Baby boomers lost their religion in the 1960s and raised their millennial children to be non-religious. That's why the number ticking 'Christian' on the census has dropped as older people die out and younger people select the category of 'non religion', (Oborne, 2022). It could also be seen as a concerted effort to move away from Christianity which has become a source of controversy with its outdated views on key issues such equality and same sex marriage (Oborne, 2022). In contrast to Eide's (2020) conclusions around US animation, British preschool animation revealed none of the anxieties around the insistence of perfection, and that Christmas might be disrupted, or the rampant commercialism. There was no emphasis on shopping, in fact Sarah in *Sarah & Duck* turned away from shopping and came home empty-handed, although this does hint at perfectionism, the focus on using found, natural elements to decorate the tree counters this. It is not the search for the perfect

manufactured decorations that is the goal, Sarah could have been depicted going from shop to shop until they found the right one. The only exception to this could be *Timmy Time*, although it was an event outside of the control of children. In all the programmes, the Christmas Tree featured heavily, as Eide (2020) put it as the metonym for the Season. Ultimately, it is the absence of any religious messaging that can be viewed as a failure of representation for religion as a protected characteristic. Religion in this sense differs from all the other characteristics as there is an argument that by removing religion, it creates a more inclusive event that everyone can enjoy.

Whilst examining Eide's (2020) analysis and looking at the absence of representation in British animation, a key question emerges which is: What is the purpose of a Christmas holiday special? Is it to educate preschool children on the theological, religious roots of Christmas or is it to reflect in general terms the season, thereby reaching the largest audience possible? As with the other characteristics, religious stakeholders (religious leaders as well as parents and children) should be asked what they want from religious programming. Do they want their religion to be explicitly defined and the religious traditions shared with an audience? Or does the season transcend Christianity moving from a religious festival to a cultural event, a British holiday with its roots in religion? Khan *et al.*, (2018) assert that 'Christmas is not just for Christians' and introduce a new term, acculturation trade-offs, to explain 'how individuals reject, compromise, or submerge themselves in an others' behaviour,' (Khan *et al.*, 2018, p.290). Khan *et al.*, (2018) explores the same question, asking 'is Christmas a religious festival celebrating Jesus Christ's birth or a celebration of family and consumption?,' (Khan *et al.*, 2018, p.290). By making it about the latter, it becomes a seasonal holiday that can be enjoyed by a wider audience.

The lack of representation could also be seen as a recognition of waning Christianity in the UK. Reports in the popular press estimate that the percentage of people identifying themselves as Christian will fall considerably when the results of the 2021 will be made available (Osborne, 2021). The reasons behind why producers and broadcasters might want to move away from religiosity are complex. It could be argued that the question of why portraying religion, in particular Christianity could be seen as problematic is the Church's historic failure to address and engage on some key issues that are particularly relevant to young people. Day posits that 'Post-Christians are



motivated by ethics concerning gender and sexual equality, social justice, climate change and compassion. The churches failed to deliver on those moral issues and so lost moral authority... Today's younger generations have a different sense of soul, meaning and morality, and it's one that rejects the church's record of abuse, racism, homophobia and sexism.' In the article, she reports that millennials do not attend church, because baby boomers have not raised their children to go to church. Day goes on to talk about the negative engagement of religion as a means of furthering a xenophobic ideology, stating that 'The populist right has pushed the idea that we are a Christian country to reinforce its anti-immigration stance by fuelling rhetoric about Britain losing its identity.' The closure of significant numbers of churches has been regularly reported in the press. Whilst this has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, these reports are as early as 2015 (BBC, 2015b; Times 2021; Osborne 2021). Conversely, this could be an opportunity for programming to show Christianity in a positive light, free from populist messaging and to reflect a religious message free from these undertones.

## **Religious Belief: Research Objective Two: off-screen Participation**

### **Does participation within the industry reflect the demographics of the UK population**

In 2017, the BBC launched a report titled 'BBC Religion and Ethics Review' and committed themselves to 'a diverse range of religious and ethical content for children on CBeebies, CBBC and BBC Learning,' (BBC, 2017b). Whilst the report did not expand on what this means, it does provide an example of the channels' representation of Diwali, a Hindu celebration stating that:

Snapshot of BBC Diwali coverage, 19th October 2017:

- On CBBC, Newsround featured a piece broadcast over two days looking at Diwali celebrations in Leicester.
- CBeebies celebrated Diwali with themed links throughout the day and features within programmes such as Postman Pat. (BBC, 2017b)

A search on the CBeebies website reveals that the channel also features a programme titled My First Festivals on CBeebies. The programme has featured Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, Buddhism and Hindu celebrations and is available on BBC iPlayer (BBC, no date c). An older series, titled Let's Celebrate still has clips available on the CBeebies website, but is not available on BBC iPlayer and features a similar range of programmes and religions (BBC, no date d; IMDB, no date 4). This would indicate that CBeebies has included religious programming within its preschool offering. There was no clear indication of what other religious programming is provided by other public broadcasters. This could be a result of the sensitivity around religion. This sensitivity is laid out clearly by Ofcom in a report on Religion in programming stating:

Ofcom acknowledges that religion in itself is not harmful. However, Parliament, in this area, has specifically required Ofcom to set standards to protect listeners and viewers from the failure of a proper degree of responsibility, improper exploitation and abusive treatment of the religious views and beliefs of those belonging to a particular religion or religious denomination (Ofcom, 2009).

This statement acknowledges the challenges around including religion in a way that does not cause harm – making religion unique amongst the other characteristics in that there is no other characteristic whose inclusion might cause harm. The Broadcasting Code gives further insight into the concerns that Parliament and Ofcom have for religious programming, and in the section titled 'Section one: Protecting the under-eighteens' it states that:

Exorcism, the occult and the paranormal 1.27: Demonstrations of exorcisms, occult practices and the paranormal (which purport to be real), must not be shown before the watershed (in the case of television) or when children are particularly likely to be listening (in the case of radio), or when content is likely to be accessed by children (in the case of BBC ODPS). Paranormal practices which are for entertainment purposes must not be broadcast when significant numbers of children may be expected to be watching, or are particularly likely to be listening, or when content is

likely to be accessed by children (in the case of BBC ODPS), (This rule does not apply to drama, film or comedy.) (See Rules 2.6 to 2.8 in Section Two: Harm and Offence and Rule 4.7 in Section Four: Religion.)

That this statement is linked to Rule 4.7 in Section Four: Religion demonstrates some of the concerns that exist around religions. The link between the statement above and the rule below, which is a specific rule regarding religious programming and the safeguarding of children, demonstrates their concerns about the motivations of religious programming and its effect on an audience who might lack the ability to objectively view this programming:

Religious programmes that contain claims that a living person (or group) has special powers or abilities must treat such claims with due objectivity and must not broadcast such claims when significant numbers of children may be expected to be watching (in the case of television), or when children are particularly likely to be listening (in the case of radio), or when content is likely to be accessed by children (in the case of BBC ODPS)  
(Ofcom, 2021).

These statements may explain in part the lack of representation within the programmes selected.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusions**

### **7.1 Research Questions and Objectives**

This thesis asked one central question which created two research objectives. Whilst evidence has been provided within Chapters 4, 5 and 6 these observations are now concluded here:

## **Research Question: Does equality, diversity and inclusion exist on-screen within contemporary British preschool animation?**

The data shared within the chapters and provided again in Figure 1.20 - 1.23 within the Appendices A1: Primary data visualisation show that equality, diversity and inclusion do not exist on-screen when looking at the combined data from all programmes. The wider questions and research conducted around equity showed that this did not exist either. Both of these were evidenced through on-screen depictions and participation in the industry and are detailed below.

### **R0 1) To what extent do depictions of characters on-screen match the demographic identities of the British population?**

When looking at the data across all programmes, the primary data showed that the depictions of characters on-screen do not correlate with census data.

Figure 1.20 shares that for every protected characteristic, depictions on-screen are lower than the census data. The only exception is the representation in depictions of male characters, including those who were speaking which was well over the census data. Looking into each characteristic in detail gives more insight into representation through depictions of characters on-screen:

**Sex:** Looking at Figure 1.13 and 1.14, out of all six programmes, only four showed strong representation in depictions of females on-screen. These were *Peppa Pig*, *Charlie and Lola*, *Numberblocks* and *JoJo and Gran Gran*.

**Race:** When examining Race, the figures shared in Figure 1.16 were even lower. Only three programmes out of six showed any depictions of race on-screen, and two of these were well below the demographics of the UK and London. *JoJo and Gran Gran* had almost 56.85% of its characters were easily identifiable as coming from an ethnic minority background.

**Age:** Age was also considerably underrepresented, with only three programmes out of the six as having any significant depictions of the 60+ age bracket. These programmes as detailed in Figure 1.17 were *Peppa Pig*, *JoJo and Gran Gran* and *Sarah & Duck*. Figure 1.21 shows that the difference between on-screen depictions and the population was greater than -18%.

**Disability:** Figure 1.18 shares that disability was virtually invisible in the sample selected, with only *JoJo and Gran Gran* having any characters that were

disabled. Figure 1.21 shares that the percentage difference between depictions on-screen in comparison with the national population of people with disability was -20%. This was the highest difference between all of the characteristics.

**Remaining Characteristics:** Of concern in any search for equality, diversity and inclusion, was the absence of any representation of the remaining characteristics, Sexual Orientation, Marriage, Gender Reassignment, Religion and Pregnancy and Maternity.

## **R0 2) Does participation within the animation industry's workforce reflect the demographics of the UK population?**

The participation of women within the animation industry was low within the three roles identified as most likely to influence depictions on-screen.

Figures 1.22 and 1.23 share data around the participation of women in industry at creator, writer and director level. These figures show a high number of episodes as they may have multiple writers or directors credited and each name was collated. For example, *Peppa Pig* episodes usually had three male writers and three male directors credited for each episode. At Creator level, men and women were almost equal, with 5 male creators to 4 female creators. At writer level, figure 1.22 shares the disparity in equality between 22 female writers to 38 male writers. However, of greater interest is the data that was revealed within figure 1.23 that shares that these female writers would pen only 276 episodes in comparison to the 368 episodes written by men. This disparity was also highlighted at Director level, where 7 female directors helmed 108 episodes, where the 10 male directors were responsible for 108 episodes. Out of the six programmes, only *Charlie and Lola* and *JoJo and Gran Gran* had a higher participation of women than men at both director and writer level, but amongst the other programmes men were overwhelmingly represented at Director, Writer and Creator level. These two programmes both have a female creator. Looking at each programme individually revealed the following data:

***Peppa Pig* Figure 1.02:** Despite an equal number of writers, female writers were only able to work on 30 episodes whereas male writers penned 214 episodes. The total number of episodes written or directed by a woman was 31, whereas 311 episodes had a male director and/or writer.

**Charlie and Lola Figure 1.04:** This time the disparity in numbers swung towards female participation with the number of episodes written/and or directed by a woman were 84 and only 22 for men.

**Timmy Time Figure 1.06:** *Timmy Time* once again showed a higher proportion of male to female episodes directed and or written by men, with 104 to 76 episodes.

**Sarah & Duck Figure 1.08:** More episodes of this programme were directed by a woman, at 40 episodes to 11 episodes. However, the numbers at writer level meant that male credits for episodes appeared 204 times, compared to 135 times for women.

**Numberblocks Figure 1.10:** Here there was no female participation at any of the three levels.

**JoJo and Gran Gran Figure 1.12** Here there was no female participation at director level. Participation at writer level meant that female credits appeared 18 times in contrast to male credits appeared in 9 episodes.

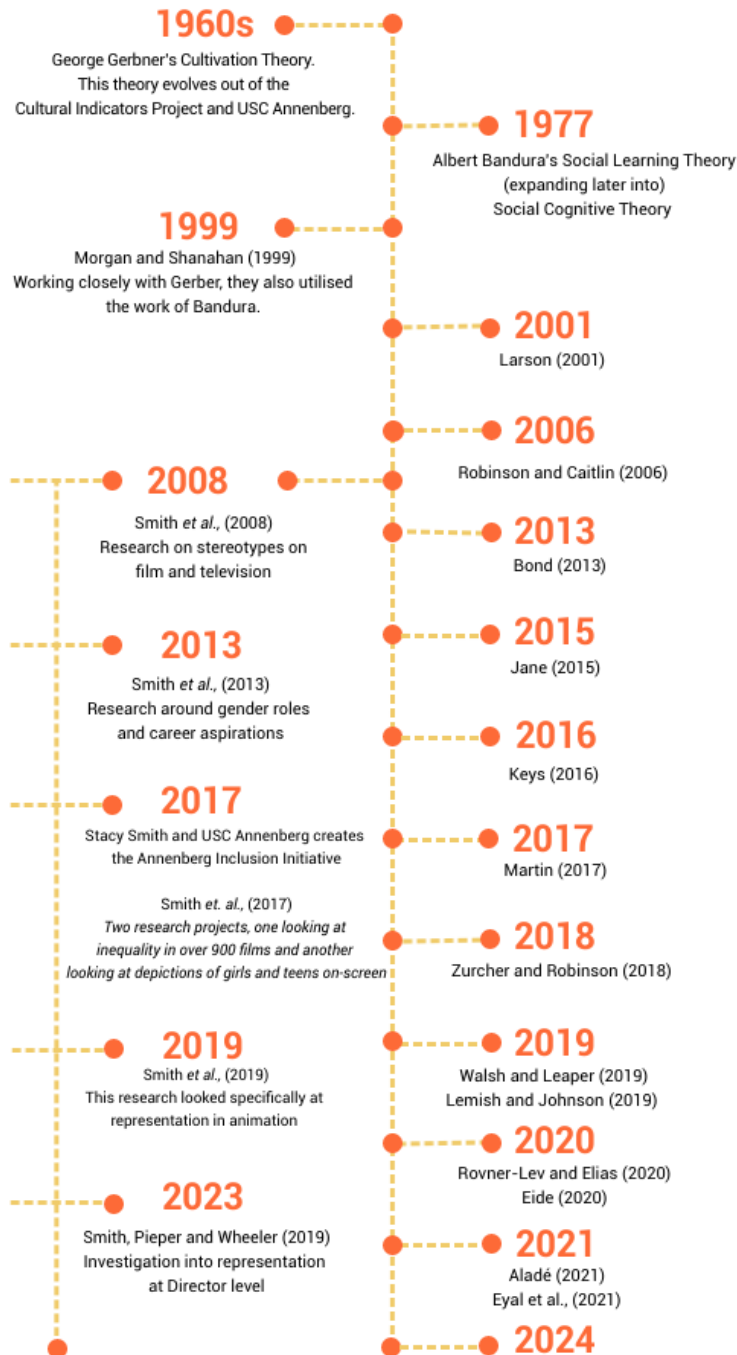
## 7.2 Significance of the research within an academic framework

This thesis sits as an extension of the work of Gerbner, Bandura and now sits alongside the work of the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative and Stacy Smith. Moving from headcount methods of early content analysis of television programming, this thesis has provided additional case study data. This thematic, narrative analysis has built on the initial headcount content analysis. The reason for this has been stated before, but equality alone is insufficient, equity is the ultimate goal for equality, diversity and inclusion. For instance, Smith *et al.*, (2017) looked into other areas that should be under closer scrutiny such as hyper sexualisation of teenage girls. In their study the depiction of female characters on-screen is not enough, especially if the way in which they are depicted is a cause for concern. Questions probed in this thesis such as negative portrayals of men, or depictions of employment in women are of significant interest. These insights would not have been uncovered without the repeated, focussed interrogation of representation of women on screen. It also highlights how research needs to be reflexive. This evolution of thought can be seen as distinctly feminist whilst acknowledging that the origins of these

methodologies were created by men. However, through feminist content analysis researchers we see the emergence of more questions around the nature of depictions on-screen, moving on from the headcount method. The diagram below situates this work within the theoretical lineage that was employed by this thesis which preceded this work.

# Timeline

Genesis of the theoretical framework that was employed within this thesis





Hermann, Morgan and Shanahan, (2022) refer to gender ‘as both an ideology and a social structure. As such, it is shaped (and reshaped) by culture and its stories,’ (Hermann, Morgan and Shanahan, 2022, p.398). This statement gives some insight into the importance placed onto television by researchers since the early 1960’s. It also speaks to the role that television has in shaping and educating perceptions around gender, age, disability etc. In their most recent research, Stacy Smith and the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative worked with Dr. Christine Yu Moutier, chief medical officer of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Dr Moutier highlighted the potential positive effects of accurate, authentic depictions of mental health problems on-screen:

“Media representation matters,” Moutier said. “We are seeing a greater degree of readiness among the public to engage with the topics of mental health and suicide prevention. When mental health experiences are depicted in nuanced and hopeful ways in storytelling, it promotes help-seeking, decreases social shame, and provides comfort to those who are struggling. Entertainment content creators can be reassured that it’s a win for all when stories provide sophisticated, helpful, safe content.” (USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, 2023, no pagination).

The potential positive effects of representation on television have been continually argued for within this thesis. Earlier within Chapter 5, this thesis mentioned the problematic nature of Pocahontas, which arose from having white, western, male writers and directors. However, the highlighting of a Euro American gaze within animation is not confined to animation production. It can also be levelled at many of the academic sources for this thesis also. Texts used heavily within this thesis, such as The Animation Studies Reader (2019) rely on an Anglo-centric lens by which it dissects animation and animation production. By strengthening the diversity of contributors, these texts could be strengthened by a diversity of thought. This point is acknowledged by Mansfield in her interrogation of gender and sport in Africa, and she acknowledges that western feminist thought can be limited (Mansfield, 2012, p.201). This is

vital as the industry is being interrogated by global research and in order for this scrutiny to be authentic and thorough, it must be completed through a variety of lenses. This lens must employ all of those voices within the protected characteristics. Even within contemporary scholarship, the controversy of retelling Pocahontas' story continues (Davis, 2019). In Davis' investigation of women in Disney's animated features, she relates the Pocahontas' story as being one of 'determination to overthrow evil and be true to herself even further when, behind her father's back, she meets John Smith and helps not only to stop a war between her people and Smith's but even helps to establish communication and respect between the two groups by the films ends,' (Davis, 2019. p.280). Davis also makes no reference to Indigenous American historic and continued rejection of this false narrative. Davis' wording around Pocahontas rejection of her people and alliance with John Smith sit uncomfortably within the context of Pocahontas age and the reality of colonial genocide (Holocaust Museum Houston, 2023).

Both Euro American and Indigenous historians and educators point to a very different, brutal story of Pocahontas. Pocahontas was not a woman when she met John Smith, but a young child - she would have been around 10. As an older teenager, she was married within her community and had a child. She was lured onto a ship and thereafter kidnapped (Clausen, 2007, Townsend, 2005, Dutka 1995). Her husband was murdered, and her child forcibly taken away from her. After her kidnapping, it is alleged that she willingly converted to Christianity, willingly changed her name to Rebecca and willingly married John Rolfe. Aside from the extreme unlikelihood that she did so, there is also evidence that John Smith's account is not accurate. His story of Pocahontas rescuing him does not appear in the first two publications of his diary, and he only mentions this in 1624, many years after they met (Smithsonian, 2017, Townsend, 2005). Additionally, he relates five other different beautiful women rescuing him from around the world from similar situations. Also, the story has parallels with a popular Scottish ballad dating from the 1300s, which tells the tale of an exotic princess rescuing a European man from death at the hands of her father. In the ballad the exotic princess also marries a European man and adopts his religion and leaves her own people (Garcia, 2012).

It is particularly galling to hear how self-congratulatory creators and Disney executives were at the time of the film's release, arguing that they had gone too far being too politically correct (Sharkey, 1995). There are reports of Disney creatives and executives believing that *Pocahontas* was a positive step for Native Americans. They believed that they were being 'ennobling and empowering' and Disney Animation President Peter Schneider is even reported to have said that 'this is a stupendous reaffirmation of a culture and language that's been lost,' (Dutka, 1995, no pagination). Even more disturbing is the justification of the romance between Pocahontas and John Smith,' as in all great love stories, the implication is there', (Dutka, 1995, no pagination). Davis also fails to highlight that in changing Pocahontas from a young child to an older teenager this is to serve the love story between John Smith and Pocahontas. King *et al.*, point out that this move is an attempt to use gender and heterosexuality to fit western notions of beauty (King *et al.*, 2010, p.159). It is worth noting that a young Disney audience has not asked for this, nor are they likely interested in a romance between the leading characters. Instead, this narrative has been created by the creative team at Disney, who are overwhelmingly white males, and thus *Pocahontas* takes shape 'through the white gaze,' (King *et al.*, 2010, p.161). Kiyomi also speaks to this, revealing the 'strategic tension involved in advocating a multicultural world on the one hand and on the other reproducing the structure of the white western male dominated one,' (Kiyomi, 2000, p.39). Educator Robert Eaglestaff referred to gross distortion of the romantic relationship between Pocahontas and her European counterpart of that of 'Anne Frank falling in love with a German officer' and that in creating this false narrative Disney were promoting child molestation, rape and kidnap (Kershaw, 1995). It is important to note that many within the Native American community are referring to Pocahontas as one of the first MMIW – Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and that the kidnap, rape and murder of indigenous women by colonialists was particularly prevalent during the 1600s (Baswan, 2022). Pocahontas also offers an opportunity to speak about intersectionality in several terms through race, religion, sex and sexual orientation. We have already shared sources that have refuted the romance between Pocahontas and John Smith because of their age difference, lack of historical accuracy and the nature of John Smith's intentions as a coloniser. King *et al.*, (2010) also criticises Disney's *Pocahontas* for relying

on heterosexual love to triumph over racial differences to peace and understanding between a colonising force and their victims – in this case the English and Powhatan people from going to war (King *et al.*, 2010, p.18). For King *et al.*, ‘race, gender, sexuality intersect ... [and] serves to complicate analyses beyond everyday stereotypes,’ (King *et al.*, 2010, p.18).



*The Abduction of Pocahontas by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris, 1910*  
(Virginia Museum of History & Culture, n.d.)

The argument for representation within television programming extends therefore to academic research in order to keep programme makers and broadcasters accountable. This thesis calls for plurality within this interrogation also and a more complete and thorough investigation representation. Davis’ views on *Pocahontas* may have been significantly different to someone sensitive to issues surrounding colonisation. No discussion of Pocahontas should exist without including all of these writings and more. As King *et al.*, put it ‘only those cloaked in racial privilege and settling in their relation to conquest could remain so silent about these issues,’ (King *et al.*, p.145).

## 7.3 Limitations of the study

Whilst this thesis has provided a large dataset that has not been available for British preschool animation, there are a number of ways in which the study can be furthered or improved. These are laid out below:

### Primary Data

The data that has been recovered has been for these six programmes only. There are over 224 programmes available currently on CBeebies on BBC iPlayer. This is just one broadcaster. In order to truly determine equality, diversity and inclusion, the study would need to be even broader.

Another limitation of the study could be seen as the assessment of a single season of a programme. For instance, whilst *Peppa Pig* had no single sex parents in the season viewed for this thesis, we know that in later seasons they did include two female parents. Other ways of conducting this study could have been to choose one programme and examine all of the episodes as a single researcher, or in the future employ multiple researchers so that every season of each programme could be examined. An alternate approach could be to examine a period of children's programming, for instance a day of all programmes available on a single broadcaster as was completed by Bond (2013). For instance, watch all of the programmes available from 7am - 7pm on CBeebies available on the 1st January 2020, 1st January 2021 etc. All of these examples have their limitations, and data that would be absent. There may be a programme that tackles an area such as disability that is only available on a certain day that would be lost on any of these approaches.

Another limitation in the selection was alluded to at the beginning of this thesis, which is that these programmes may not be the most popular choice for the target audience group. Those programmes and platforms that are most seen by preschool children should be the ones chosen for this study. Even within those selected from CBeebies, this may not necessarily have been the most popular programmes for that broadcaster.

### Headcount method

The limitations of the headcount method have been articulated by Greenberg earlier in the thesis (Greenberg, 1998, p.97). However, this thesis would argue that without it, a baseline for representation in programming would not exist. It is foundational and must be completed ahead of any more focussed investigation. It can be argued that the most interesting data was not the numeric headcount data gathered around whether each protected characteristic exists within programming. It was the data gathered around the way in which each character within the characteristic was presented that was of most interest as a researcher. For example, whilst the representation of men and women on *Peppa Pig* appeared to be fairly even, at 53% as Figure 1.01 details, it was the examination of how men were represented that revealed that these representations were negative. The use of negative stereotypes negated any positives around representation. Equally, within *Sarah & Duck*, the inclusion of two Asian girls cannot be seen as a positive which they play into submissive, silenced stereotypes. Also, of interest was that of all of the adult characters, only one female was in employment within *Sarah & Duck*. It is these observations that provided a unique insight into equity of representation. Also, of interest was the data around participation within the industry. For example, the data revealed an equal number of female writers on *Peppa Pig*. However, on closer examination, these female writers worked on 30 episodes, but male writers worked on 214 episodes of *Peppa Pig*. All of these points revealed through the data are original - there would be no way of knowing these points without this research. Equity of opportunity is also vital. Without this data collation, all of these observations would remain hidden within the programmes.

### **BAFTA nominated programmes**

Whilst this thesis used BAFTA winning programmes, these were not necessarily the most watched or popular programmes available at that time. Being BAFTA winning indicates that this has been selected by a group of adults and not the target audience. In order to understand which programmes are the most popular, this could also be inferred to be the most influential.

### **Insider vs Outsider and Emic vs Etic**

The tensions that exist within this thesis stem from my own proximity to the topic, which was most acutely felt when sharing my autoethnographic experiences of pregnancy discrimination. Approaching the study in a measured, methodical way and by using the Equality Act as a framework, provided a distance that meant this thesis could utilise to make useful observations. Whilst I bring my own experiences and bias to the work, I have done my best to hold back personal criticisms and provide evidence to support all statements and conclusions.

Conversely, the lack of primary data and scholarly content analysis on those protected characteristics that I had no personal experience of meant that I felt that I had not tackled the topic thoroughly. To counter this, I proffered alternative content analysis and data around the barriers to industry participation. Throughout the thesis, it has been argued that writers, creators and directors need to come from a diverse background in order to provide an authentic view of equality, diversity and inclusion. This has been extended to scholarly research also within the discussion of the failings of contemporary research around *Pocahontas*. Future research could be completed in partnership with researchers from all of the protected characteristics in order to lend an authentic lens to the thesis. However, a thesis of this nature must be, and is, the original contribution of one researcher. My hope is that this has been done sensitively and in the spirit of allyship to all of those within the protected characteristics.

Other tensions include the morphing status of myself as having been an insider in the animation world, but now an outsider. In addition, there is the tension of having thought I was an insider within the animation industry, but abruptly realising that in the hierarchy of belonging within the industry as a woman, I am inherently an outsider in a space traditionally occupied by men. This is further complicated by entering into academia and attempting to become an insider within a world where feminist epistemologies and ontological thought are expressed in new and complex ways. As Wheaton *et al.*, furthers that this complex 'specifically feminist approach is an understanding or awareness of the relationship between methodology (the theory and analysis of how research is approached and proceeds), method (the techniques we use) and epistemology (ways of knowing and what counts as knowledge),' (Wheaton *et al.*, 2018, no page). In their discussion of feminist

epistemologies and methodologies, Britta Wigginton and Michelle Lafrance share that these terms can seem 'daunting or impenetrable to a reader just beginning to explore these debates,' (Wigginton and Lafrance, 2019, no page). This thesis emerges not as it originated, but as a feminist interrogation of the animation industry.



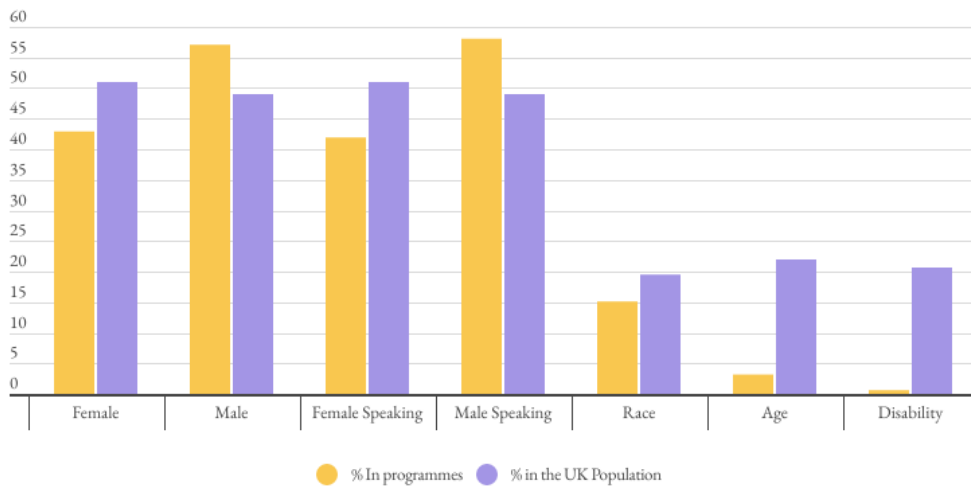
Figure 1.20

## All characteristics against UK population

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented all nine characteristics against the UK Population.

This data has been split into two graphs to view the data in a more accessible format. The graph below details sex, race, age and disability only.

	In programmes %	% of the UK population	% difference
<b>Sex</b>			
Female	42.89	51	-8.11
Male	57.11	49	8.11
<b>Female Speaking</b>			
Female Speaking	41.95	51	-8.11
<b>Male Speaking</b>			
Male Speaking	58.05	49	8.11
<b>Race</b>			
Race	15.11	19.5	-4.39
<b>Age</b>			
Age	3.17	22	-18.83
<b>Disability</b>			
Disability	0.61	20.65	-20.04
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			
Sexual Orientation	0	2.2	-2.2
<b>Marriage</b>			
Marriage	0.54	50	-49.93
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>			
Gender Reassignment	0	0.3-0.7	-0.3
<b>Religion</b>			
Religion	0.67	75	-75
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>			
Pregnancy and Maternity	0	1.29	-1.29



## 7.4 Significance for Industry

This conclusion now moves onto the question of how British animation could become more representative in the future. It looks at what measures are working domestically and internationally, the potential long term effects of children's programming and the future of funding in the UK, the creation of a media monitoring agency. Firstly, broadcasters and funding bodies could force diversity to the forefront of the commissioning process, a move that has already been made historically in America. Viacom CBS Networks International moved to a global 'no diversity, no commission' stance in 2020. Jules Borkent, its Executive Vice President of VCNI Kids and Family stated that:

Audiences around the world, particularly younger generations and kids, are becoming more and more diverse in composition, outlook and perspectives, and it's our responsibility to ensure that our content reflects the world in which our audiences live. (Televisual, 2020)

The policy refers not only to on-screen depictions of diversity, but also to participation behind the screen:

The policy will apply to VCNI's business across five continents and more than 180 countries. "No Diversity, No Commission," was initially launched by Viacom CBS Networks UK in July and will require production companies to adhere to diversity guidelines before budgets are signed off and productions are approved to begin. When budgets are agreed, the commissioner or project lead will check for appropriate diversity and recommend improvements, as needed. Additionally, the policy will increase representation behind the camera to ensure that a variety of balanced, diverse voices are involved in all areas of production. (Televisual, 2020).

Research from Viacom CBS echoes Ofcom's, and states that 'Our research tells us very clearly, that kids want to see themselves reflected on-screen,' (Televisual, 2020). This sentiment is shared by Nickelodeon's Nina Hahn, SVP of international production and development at Nick, who states

that Nickelodeon has always aspired to ‘authentically reflect the world in which kids live in at all times, from day one until today,’ (TBI, 2020). Broadcasters can look to the commercial and critical success of programmes such as *Steven Universe* and *Adventure Time* as examples of programmes that audiences are responding to. Jane (2015) confirms that ‘*Adventure Time* might also be useful for activists who are lobbying television producers, as it demonstrates that children’s television programs which incorporate alternative representations of gender can still result in significant commercial success,’ (Jane, 2015, p.243).

Within the British context, CBeebies have encouraged producers to create more diverse content setting aside a £300,000 annual fund for this. The fund specifically targets off-screen diversity and once a programme has been commissioned, producers can approach the BBC for a maximum of £10,000 (BBC, 2020d). In their page detailing their commission criteria for 0-6 year olds, the BBC have listed diversity and inclusion as one of their top priorities and state that they are looking to grow ‘authentic and appropriate portrayal in all their content,’ (BBC, 2020e). Animation UK (2021) announced a £7 million fund for film and tv, the details of which are yet to be published by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. Whilst children’s programming was not specifically mentioned, animation was.

This study highlights an interesting source of funding for children’s programming *Odd Squad, Ready, Jet Go!* – the U.S. Department of Education’s Ready To Learn (RTL). This shows there is a recognition for animated programming to be used as an educational tool as well as for governments to provide funding directly. Whilst this is another American study, Aladé *et al.*, (2020) points to its relevance for national and global efforts to encourage STEM subjects in industrialised countries as ‘essential for preparing children for an increasingly technological global workforce,’ (Aladé *et al.*, 2020, p.339). This echoes statements detailed by the No Outsiders programme utilised by many primary schools which claims that by promoting principles of equality, diversity and inclusion, prepares children for life in modern British society (No Outsiders, no date).

## **Funding for animation in the UK**

With this in mind, it is disappointing that as this thesis draws to an end, funding into Children's programming is once again under threat. The Young Audience Content Fund, was introduced in April and it was intended to make £57 million available to new diverse voices, although only £44 million was made available in the end, a move that the Children's Media Foundation called 'illogical and petty minded,' (Kidscreen, 2021, no pagination). In January 2022, it was announced that the fund itself would be scrapped. Steve Henderson called the move 'cruel and unnecessary' and warned that 'Things seem rather desperate for the future of children's content being made here in the UK,' (Henderson, 2021, no pagination). Henderson contends that the Young Audience Content Fund was a success a statement that is supported by the YACF annual statement which shared that in the first two years, the fund had generated '150 hours of new, UK-originated content that would not otherwise have been financed by the market,' (BFI, 2021). In a statement in response to the closure, the YACF stated that projects that it had funded, 'YACF backed projects have already drawn critical acclaim, won a string of awards and secured sales to countries around the world,' a clear demonstration of its commercial and critical success. This is coupled with the news that the government has decided to axe the BBC's licence fee and freeze funding (Waterson, 2022; BBC, 2022; Barker and Gray, 2022). The BBC is the largest commissioner of children's content and animation in the UK. Last year, the BBC Chairman warned that any changes to the BBC licence fee would result in 'sweeping cuts to children's content and potentially force CBeebies and CBBC to close', (Woode, 2020). In an article in the popular press, titled 'Wide awake club: children's TV that represents Britain's diversity' a list of diverse British programmes was collated and all of them were programmes available on CBeebies, (Holliday, 2020). With British funding and broadcasters under threat, this inevitably means less British made content on-screens, forcing viewers to engage with unregulated spaces such as Netflix and YouTube. As discussed earlier, the viewing landscape on these platforms range from programmes that do not reflect British lives to content that is dangerous for children. This thesis calls for more funding into this area, not less, and more intentional focus on equality, diversity and inclusion in the British Animation Industry.

Aside from these compelling moral and social reasons for equality, diversity and inclusion there are clear financial incentives to do so, with reports

of equality in the workplace driving revenue (Allen, 2017; McKinsey, 2015; McKinsey 2015a). This financial incentive is particularly important to the animation industry as both historically and specifically in the period 2010 – 2020 the British Animation industry has faced many financial challenges. These include the 2008 recession which led to a significant drop in advertising revenue, foreign competition through tax incentives which are offered abroad and significant cuts in government funding as recent as 2021 (BBC, 2011; Kenny and Broughton, 2011; The Independent, 2011; Dill-Shackleford *et al.*, 2017; Henderson, 2020b; Ofcom, 2020; Waterson, 2020; Waterson, 2022; Kidscreen, 2021; Henderson, 2021).

### **The future: A Media Monitoring organisation**

Ultimately, how an adult spends their time is not a matter of state oversight and intervention. Adult viewers choosing to spend their time watching programming in silos of true crime, or reality television or endless GB news is not of interest to this thesis. The foundational messaging of children's television should be regulated. Beyond the life of this thesis, I am convinced of the need for an organisation that provides media monitoring on children's programming. The case for data around representation, and the quality of this representation has been made clear. Even for myself personally, programmes that I thoroughly enjoyed, such as *Sarah & Duck*, once analysed within the context of the Equality Act, did not reflect the demographics of the UK population and highlighted that all the jobs were taken by male characters. Looking to the US, the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, now emerged to be a partner with industry, working to highlight the gaps in inclusion and offer proposals for how to create a more inclusive industry. The USC Annenberg collaborated with streaming service Netflix and their report analysed Netflix's U.S. original live-action films (126) and series (180) released in 2018 and 2019. The study examined on-screen inclusion across gender, race/ethnicity, LGBTQ+ and disability. Behind the camera, gender and race/ethnicity of key personnel were assessed, as well', (USC Annenberg, 2021). As well as discovering many positives, the report was able to highlight areas where women of colour were at risk of being excluded, that certain ethnic groups should be allowed more storytelling opportunities, and that LGBT and disabled viewers rarely saw themselves on-screen. These statements allow Netflix to respond to those

areas that need better representation, but this can only happen when data is made available to highlight the difference between where representation is and where it should be. GLAAD is another US organisation that has proven that media monitoring provides a partner organisation for broadcasters and a place for stakeholder to access research on representation.

Creating a British centred organisation that collates data on representation in children's programming in the UK would enable educationalists, policy makers, regulatory bodies, producers, broadcasters, studios and other stakeholders to create content that addressed representation. The Annenberg Inclusion Initiative has also made significant changes within industry, by creating the Inclusion Rider. This is defined as 'addendum to an actor/content creator's contract that stipulates that stories and storytellers should look like the world we actually live in — not a small fraction of the talent pool' and was mentioned by Actress Frances McDormand in her acceptance speech at the Oscars in 2018 (Belam and Levin, 2018; USC Annenberg, no date). This practical application of research, the way in which data driven research is creating original real-life changes in industry is the inspiration behind this thesis.

This thesis has been challenged by absence. The absence of data within literature reviews and the absence of representation within the programmes that were selected and within the industry it originates from. This absence reflects the research value that we place into that area. It reflects the lack of importance that has been placed on representation within children's preschool animation. The content analysis that we do have is all relatively recent, which indicates that this is an emerging area of research. Without adequate research into the protected characteristics and how the media is responding to these portrayals on-screen and within the industry we are unable to make any definite statements about diversity. By relying on industry led data, we rely on data that is inherently biased. It is concerning that the biggest industry-led report in diversity was motivated by a desire to stop plans to link funding through tax cuts to diversity (Animation UK, 2019). By partially filling those gaps in the available literature, this thesis has highlighted the need for more research in this area. More content reviews, with a focus on not simply representation in numbers, but also the nature of these representations should be completed. At a Media Diversity and Inclusion event organised by the

Westminster Enterprise Network, Sophie Moreau spoke about the phantom aspects of diversity, inclusion and diversity (Eventbrite, 2020). She spoke about the warmth you do not receive, the opportunities, the conversations you are not included into, that affect representation and inclusion. This can be extended here to the phantom research, the research that is not being done, and the phantom characters on-screen, the people we are not seeing, the experiences we are not able to witness, empathise with and be influenced by. This erasure of people within British society is an active decision by programme creators and can be remedied by choosing animators, creators, writers and directors from a more diverse pool and making active decisions about representation. Wiggington and Lafrance share that part of the 'methodological considerations for critical feminist research... [is the] mobilisation of research for social change,' (Wiggington and Lafrance, 2019, no pagination). Gerbner warned that 'Academic research, rarely able to influence media policy in any meaningful way, has become more specialised, arcane, complicated and increasingly divorced from the reality of people's everyday media consumption,' (Gerbner in Morgan and Shanahan, 1999, p.18). My hope is that this research takes place in a new sphere of influential research that convinces stakeholders that the formation of a media monitoring agency strengthens children's programming ensuring longevity, equality, diversity and inclusion within British preschool children's animation.

## **Appendices**

### **A1: Primary data visualisation**

**Data across all characteristics gathered by programme**



Figure 1.01

# Peppa Pig

BAFTA Winner 2005, 2011, 2012

## Data overview

- Female representation 54%
- Female in a speaking role 53%
- Race representation 0%
- Age representation 3%

None of the other characteristics were depicted in any way, including disability.

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	Sex	
1.1	Female	159
1.2	Male	137
1.3	Female Speaking	142
1.4	Male Speaking	124
2	Race	0
3	Age	14
4	Disability	0
5	Sexual Orientation	0
6	Marriage	0
7	Gender Reassignment	0
8	Religion	0
9	Pregnancy	0

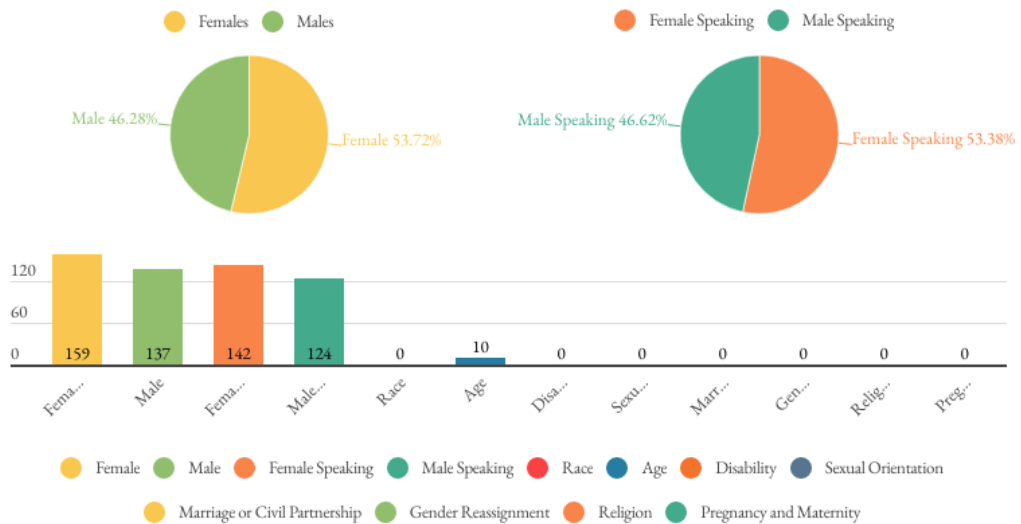


Figure 1.02

# Peppa Pig: Directors, Writers and Creators

BAFTA Winner 2005, 2011, 2012

## Directors

- Female: 1 and 1 episode
- Male: 5 and 97 episodes

## Writers

- Female: 4 and 30 episodes
- Male: 4 and 214 episodes

## Creators

- Female: 0
- Male: 3

	Female	Male
Directors	1	5
Writers	4	4
Creators	0	3
Total	5	12

No. of Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	1	97
Writers	30	214
Total	31	311



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators

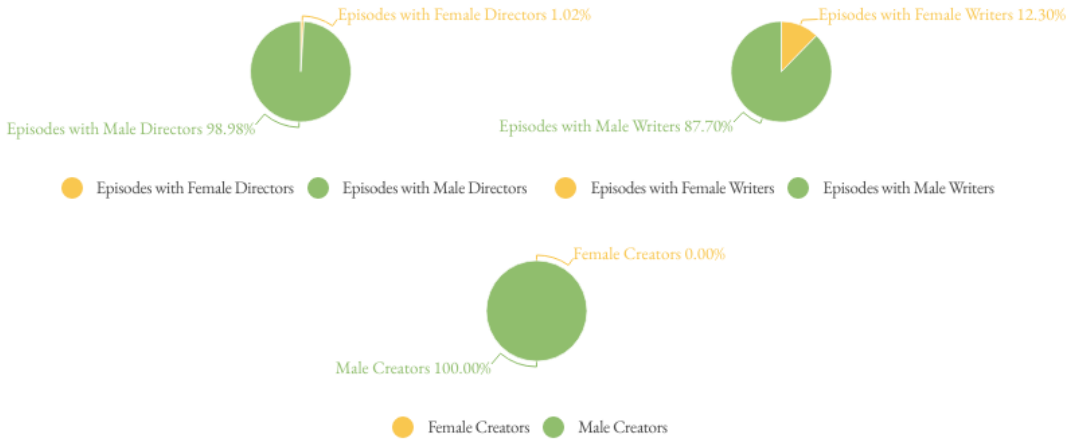


Figure 1.03

# Charlie and Lola

## BAFTA Winner 2007 & 2008

### Data overview

- Female representation 48%
- Female in a speaking role 46%
- Race representation 15%

None of the other characteristics were depicted in any way, including disability.

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	Sex	
1.1	Female	53
1.2	Male	57
1.3	Female Speaking	39
1.4	Male Speaking	46
2	Race	16
3	Age	0
4	Disability	0
5	Sexual Orientation	0
6	Marriage	0
7	Gender Reassignment	0
8	Religion	0
9	Pregnancy	0

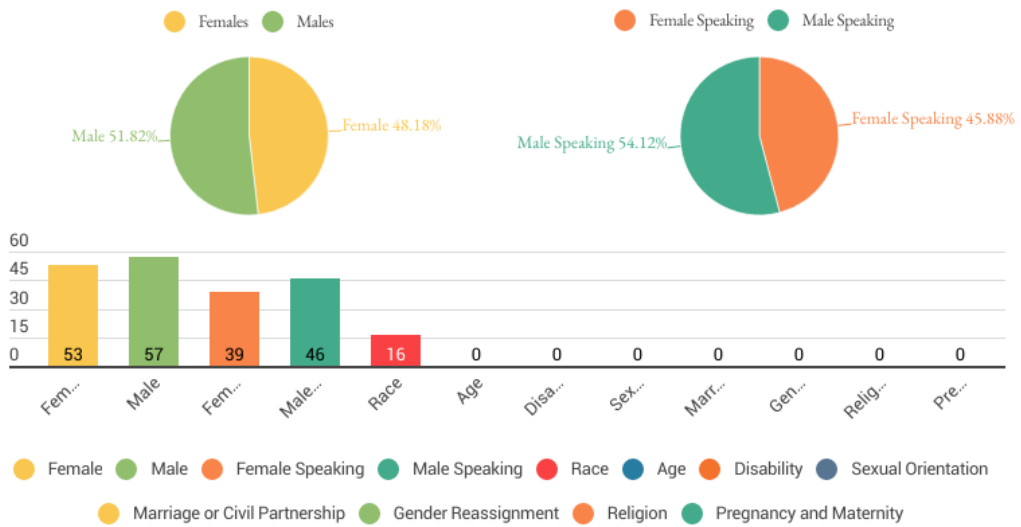


Figure 1.04

# Charlie and Lola: Directors, Writers and Creators

## BAFTA Winner 2007 & 2008

### Directors

- Female: 1
- Male: 0

### Writers

- Female: 5 and 39 episodes
- Male: 3 and 22 episodes

### Creators

- Female: 1
- Male: 0

Individuals	Female	Male
Directors	1	0
Writers	5	3
Creators	1	0

<b>Total</b>	7	3
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Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	45	0
Writers	39	22
<b>Total</b>	84	22



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators

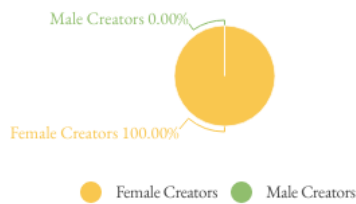
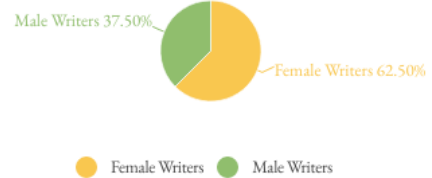
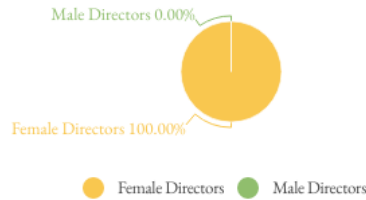


Figure 1.05

# Timmy Time

## BAFTA Winner 2010

### Data overview

- Female representation 27%
- Female in a speaking role 27%

None of the other characteristics were depicted in any way.

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	Sex	
1.1	Female	58
1.2	Male	157
1.3	Female Speaking	58
1.4	Male Speaking	157
2	Race	0
3	Age	0
4	Disability	0
5	Sexual Orientation	0
6	Marriage	0
7	Gender Reassignment	0
8	Religion	0
9	Pregnancy	0

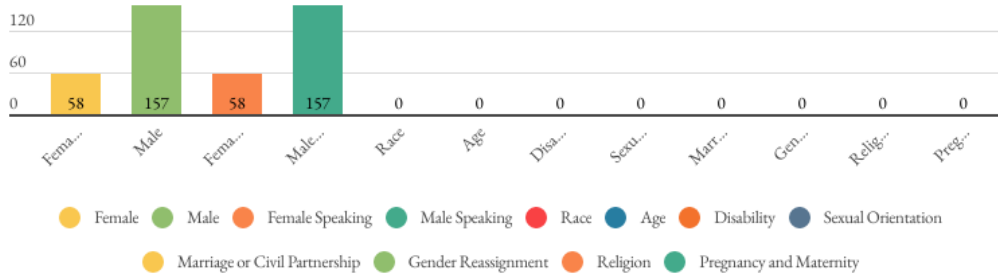
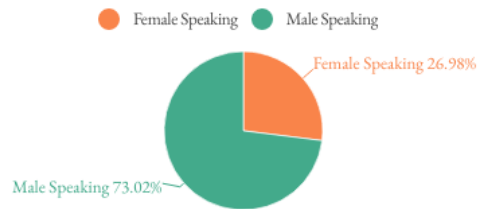
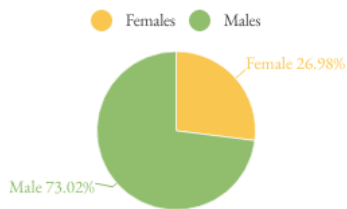


Figure 1.06

# Timmy Time: Directors, Writers and Creators

## BAFTA Winner 2010

### Directors

- Female: 1 and 22 episodes
- Male: 1 and 22 episodes

### Writers

- Female: 6 and 54 episodes
- Male: 11 and 82 episodes

### Creators

- Female: 1
- Male: 0

Individuals	Female	Male
Directors	1	1
Writers	6	11
Creators	1	0

<b>Total</b>	9	12
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Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	22	22
Writers	54	82
<b>Total</b>	76	104



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

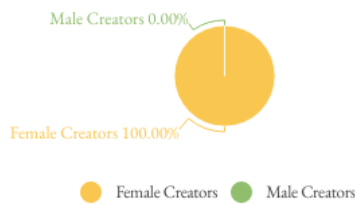
- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators



- Female Directors
- Male Directors



- Female Writers
- Male Writers



- Female Creators
- Male Creators

Figure 1.07

# Sarah and Duck

## BAFTA Winner 2014

### Data overview

- Female representation 27%
- Female in a speaking role 25%
- Race representation 6.9%
- Age representation 4.4%

None of the other characteristics were depicted in any way, including disability.

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	Sex	
1.1	Female	87
1.2	Male	232
1.3	Female Speaking	65
1.4	Male Speaking	193
2	Race	22
3	Age	14
4	Disability	0
5	Sexual Orientation	0
6	Marriage	0
7	Gender Reassignment	0
8	Religion	0
9	Pregnancy	0

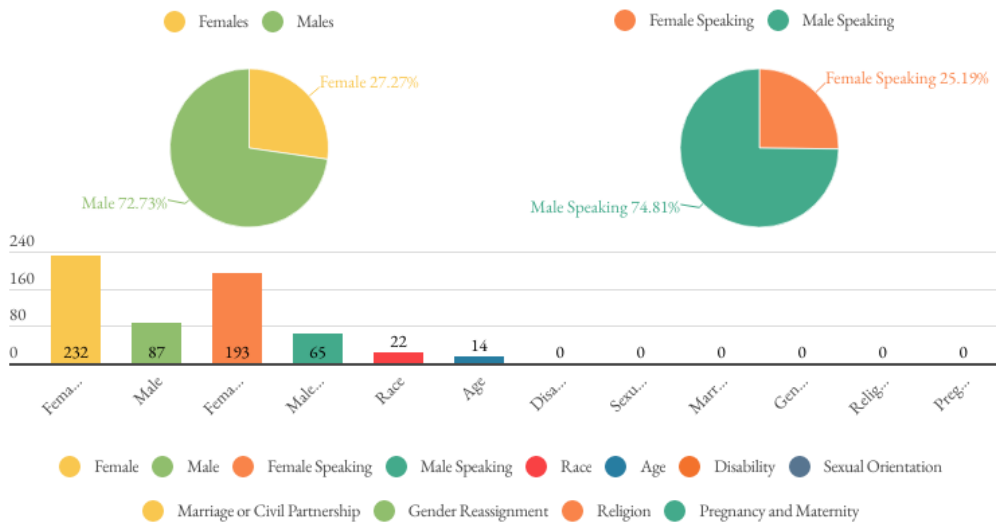


Figure 1.08

## Sarah and Duck: Directors, Writers and Creators

### BAFTA Winner 2014

#### Directors

- Female: 1 and 40 episodes
- Male: 2 and 11 episodes

#### Writers

- Female: 3 and 135 episodes
- Male: 6 and 204 episodes

#### Creators

- Female: 1
- Male: 1

Individuals	Female	Male
Directors	1	2
Writers	3	6
Creators	1	1

<b>Total</b>	5	9
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Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	40	11
Writers	135	204
<b>Total</b>	175	215



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators



- Female Directors
- Male Directors



- Female Writers
- Male Writers



- Female Creators
- Male Creators



Figure 1.09

# Numberblocks

## BAFTA Winner 2019

### Data overview

- Female representation 55%
- Female in a speaking role 55%

None of the other characteristics were depicted in any way.

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	Sex	
1.1	Female	139
1.2	Male	112
1.3	Female Speaking	139
1.4	Male Speaking	112
2	Race	0
3	Age	0
4	Disability	0
5	Sexual Orientation	0
6	Marriage	0
7	Gender Reassignment	0
8	Religion	0
9	Pregnancy	0

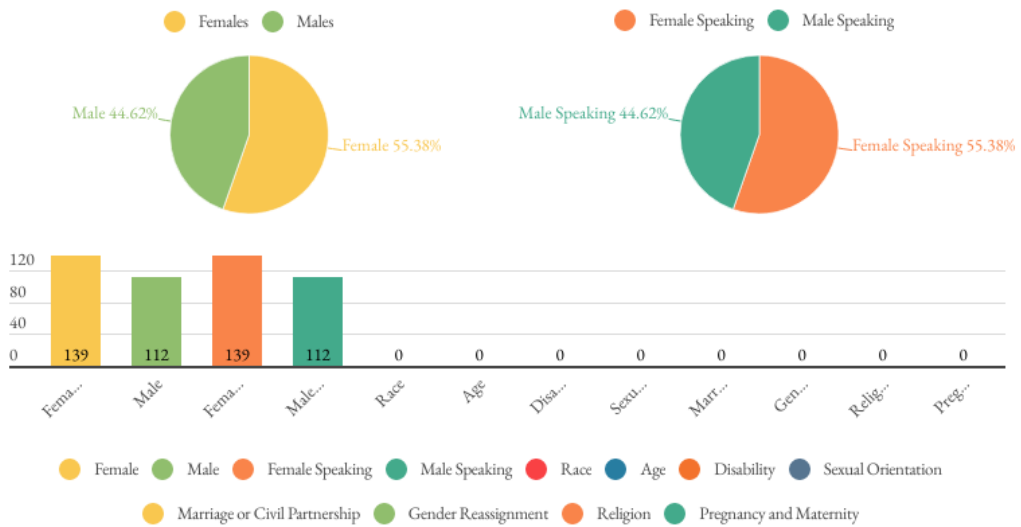


Figure 1.10

## Numberblocks: Directors, Writers and Creators

### BAFTA Winner 2019

#### Directors

- Female: 0 and 0 episodes
- Male: 1 and 30 episodes

#### Writers

- Female: 0 and 0 episodes
- Male: 5 and 30 episodes

#### Creators

- Female: 0
- Male: 1

Individuals	Female	Male
Directors	0	1
Writers	0	5
Creators	0	1

Total	Female	Male
	0	7

Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	0	30
Writers	0	30
Total	0	60



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators

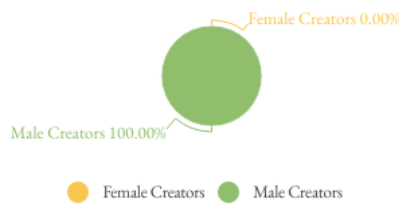
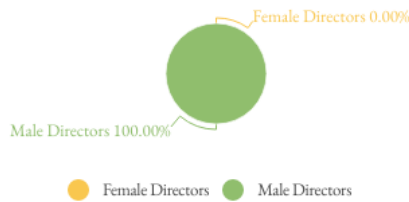


Figure 1.11

# JoJo & Gran Gran

## Data overview

- Female representation 48%
- Female in a speaking role 60%
- Race representation 57%
- Age representation 23%
- Disability representation 12%
- Marriage representation at 2.7%
- Religion representation at 3.42%

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	Sex	
1.1	Female	140
1.2	Male	152
1.3	Female Speaking	26
1.4	Male Speaking	17
2	Race	166
3	Age	23
4	Disability	9
5	Sexual Orientation	0
6	Marriage	8
7	Gender Reassignment	0
8	Religion	10
9	Pregnancy	0

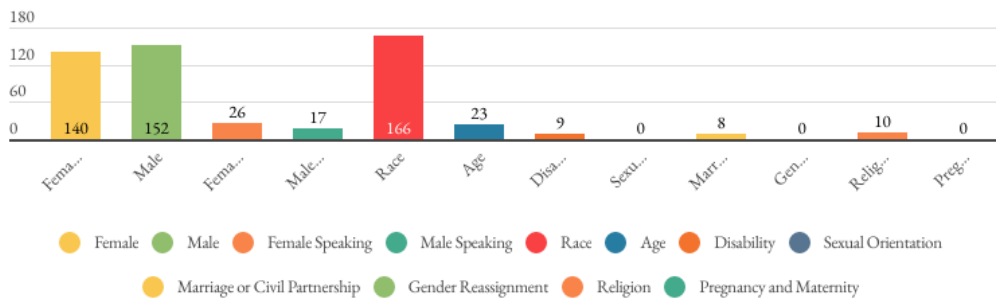
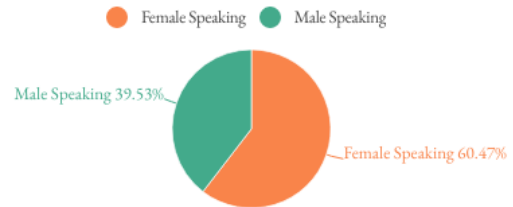
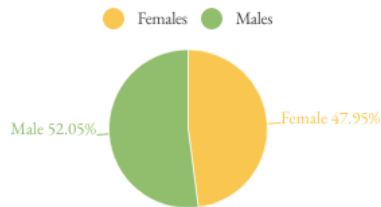


Figure 1.12

## JoJo and Gran Gran: Directors, Writers and Creators

### BAFTA Winner 2019

#### Directors

- Female: 0 and 0 episodes
- Male: 2 and 28 episodes

#### Writers

- Female: 7 and 9 episodes
- Male: 9 and 18 episodes

#### Creators

- Female: 1
- Male: 0

Individuals	Female	Male
Directors	0	2
Writers	7	9
Creators	1	0

<b>Total</b>	8	11
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Episodes	Female	Male
Directors	0	28
Writers	18	9
<b>Total</b>	18	37



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators

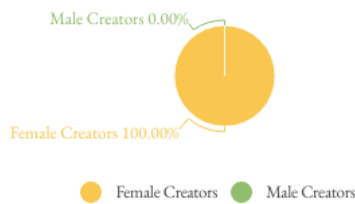
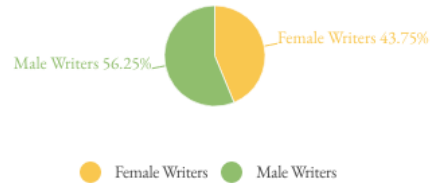
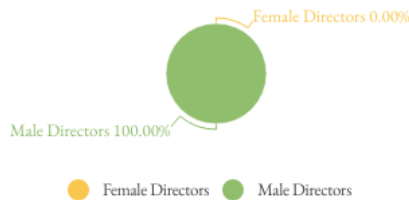
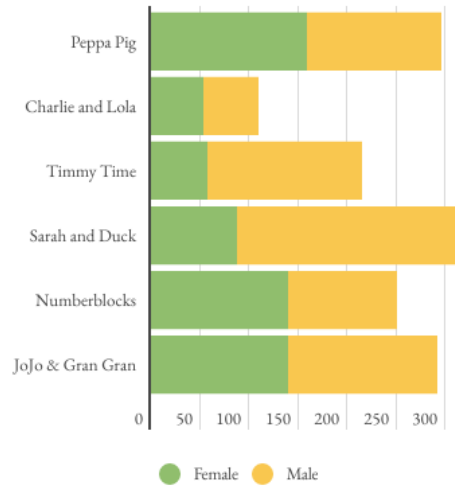


Figure 1.13

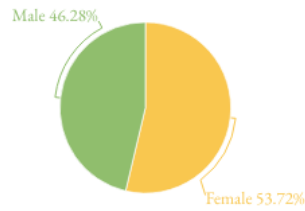
## Female to Male

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, across all six programmes selected.

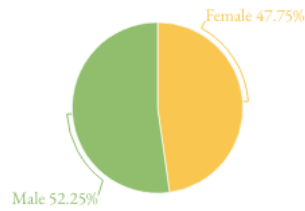
		Female	%	Male	%
1	Peppa Pig	159	54%	137	46%
2	Charlie and Lola	53	48%	57	52%
3	Timmy Time	58	27%	157	73%
4	Sarah and Duck	87	22%	232	78%
5	Numberblocks	139	55%	112	45%
6	Jojo and Gran Gran	140	48%	152	52%
7	Total: 1483	636	43%	847	57%



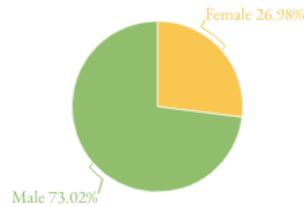
### Peppa Pig



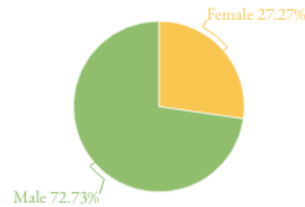
### Charlie and Lola



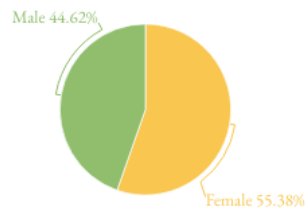
### Timmy Time



### Sarah and Duck



### Numberblocks



### Jojo and Gran Gran

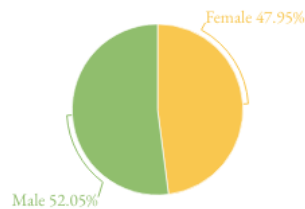
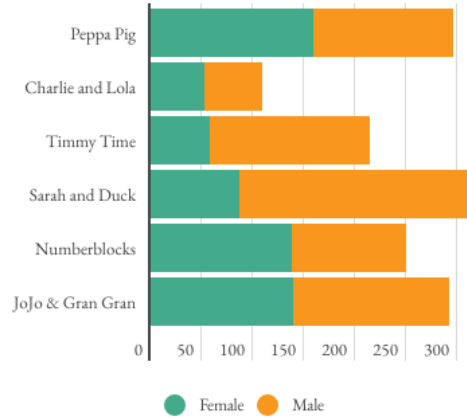


Figure 1.14

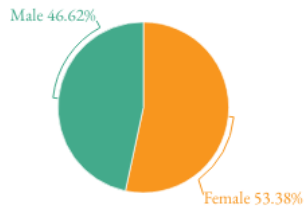
## Female to Male speaking

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that have a speaking role across all six programmes selected.

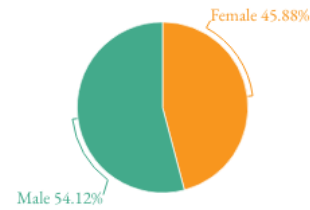
		Female		Male	
1	Peppa Pig	142	53%	124	47%
2	Charlie and Lola	39	46%	46	54%
3	Timmy Time	58	26%	157	73%
4	Sarah and Duck	65	25%	193	75%
5	Numberblocks	139	55%	112	45%
6	JoJo and Gran Gran	26	60%	17	40%
7	Total 1118	469	42%	649	58%



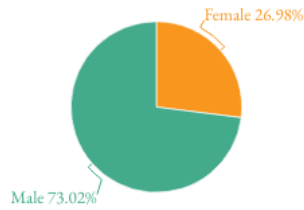
### Peppa Pig



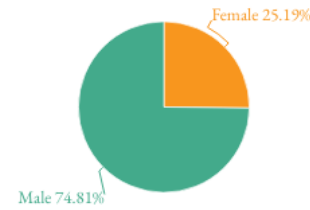
### Charlie and Lola



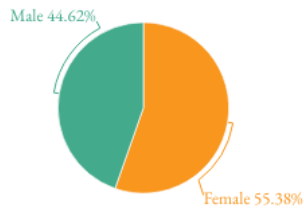
### Timmy Time



### Sarah and Duck



### Numberblocks



### JoJo and Gran Gran

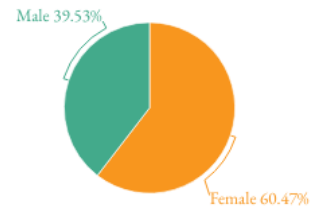


Figure 1.15

## Directors, Writers and Creators

### All programmes

#### Female representation as a Director

53% of directors were women

32% of episodes directed by a woman

#### Female representation as a Writer

40% of writers were women

32% of episodes were written by a woman

#### Female representation as a Creator

44%

Individuals	Female	Male
1. Directors	8	7
2. Writers	25	38
3. Creators	4	5

<b>Total</b>	37	50
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Episodes	Female	Male
1. Directors	88	188
2. Writers	276	589
<b>Total</b>	364	777



- Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Males Directors, Writers and Creators

- Episodes with Female Directors, Writers and Creators
- Episode with Male Directors, Writers and Creators



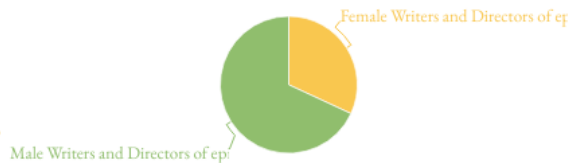
- Female Directors
- Male Directors



- Female Writers
- Male Writers



- Female Creators
- Male Creators



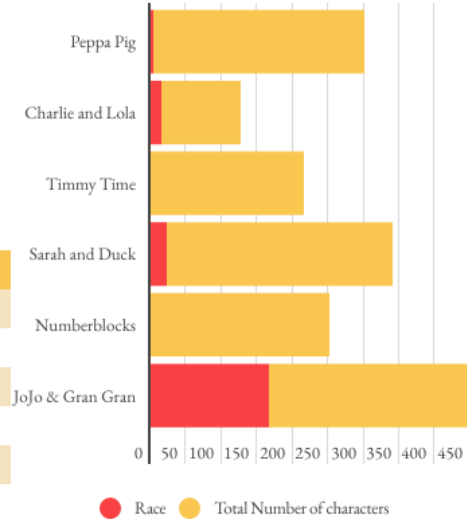
- Female Writers and Directors of episodes
- Male Writers and Directors of episodes

Figure 1.16

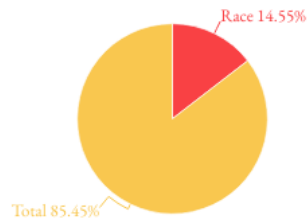
# Race

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented diversity in race and see how that compares with the UK population. In the UK 16% of the population identify as a minority, rising to 38% in London.

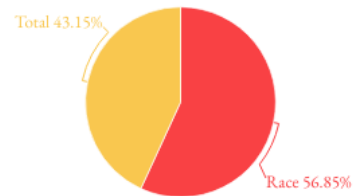
		Race	Total Number of characters
1	Peppa Pig	4	296
2	Charlie and Lola	16	110
3	Timmy Time	0	215
4	Sarah and Duck	22	319
5	Numberblocks	0	251
6	JoJo & Gran Gran	166	292



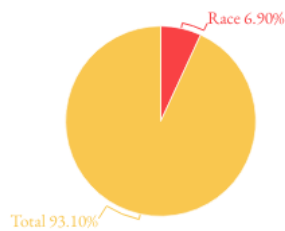
## Charlie and Lola



## JoJo and Gran Gran



## Sarah and Duck



## UK Population

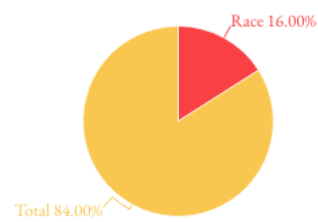




Figure 1.17

# Age

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented diversity in age. For the purposes of this thesis, all of those that represented the 60+ age group were recorded.

		Age	Total
1	Peppa Pig	10	296
2	Charlie and Lola	0	110
3	Timmy Time	0	215
4	Sarah and Duck	14	319
5	Numberblocks	0	251
6	Jojo and Gran Gran	23	292

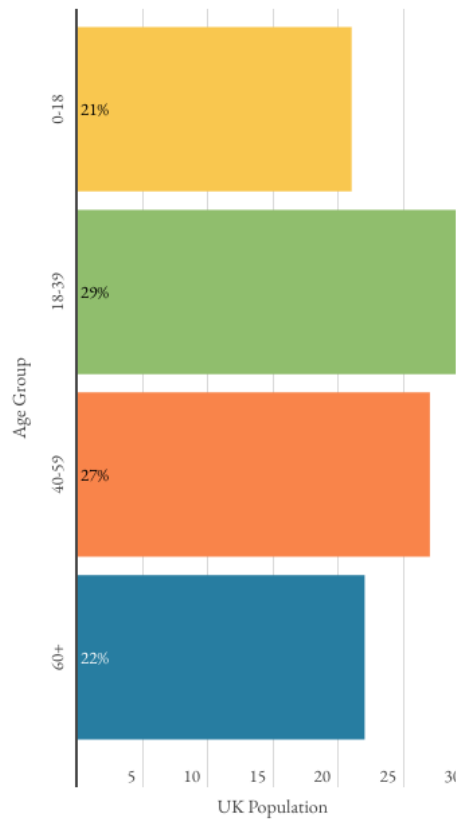
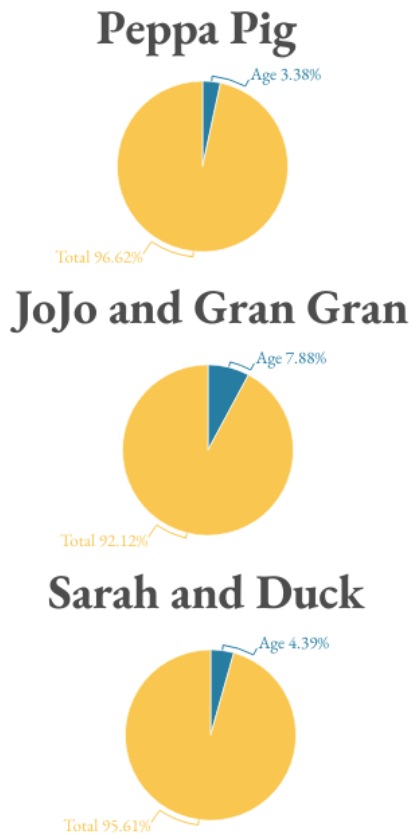
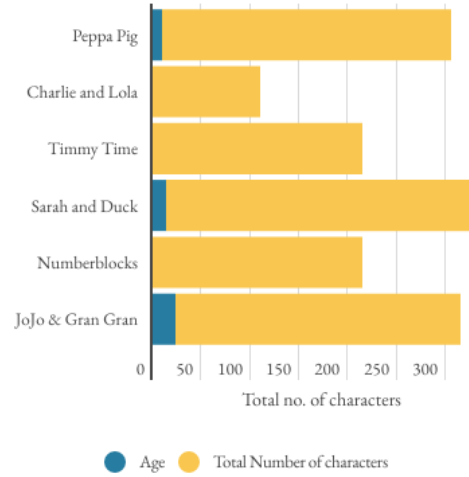


Figure 1.18

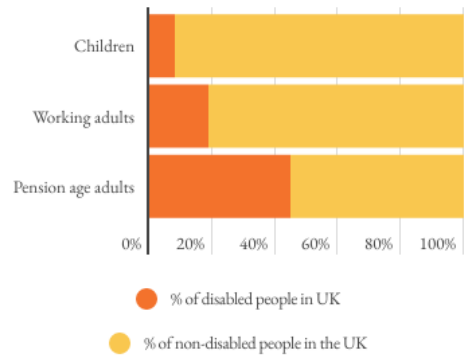
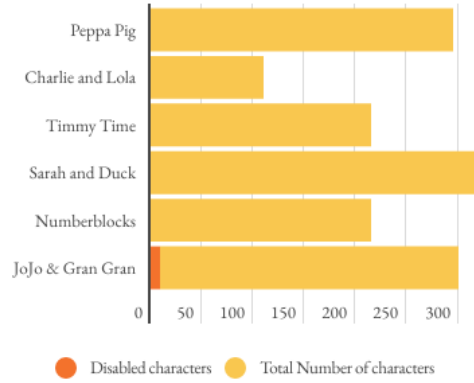
# Disability

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented disability on screen. UK disability figures are approximately 8% of children, 19% of working age adults and 65% of pension age adults.

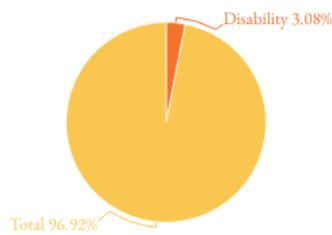
## JoJo & Gran Gran

There were two disabled characters, which appeared on screen nine times. A male child appeared in five episodes and a working age male appeared on screen four times.

		Age	Total
1	Peppa Pig	0	296
2	Charlie and Lola	0	110
3	Timmy Time	0	215
4	Sarah and Duck	0	319
5	Numberblocks	0	251
6	Jojo and Gran Gran	9	292



## JoJo and Gran Gran



## JoJo and Gran Gran

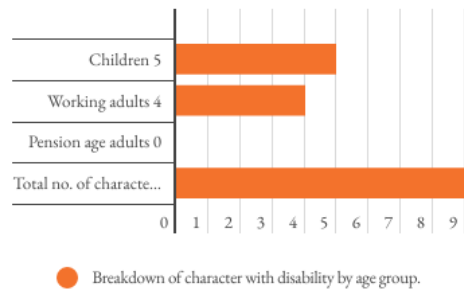


Figure 1.19

## Other protected characteristics

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented sexual orientation, marriage, gender reassignment, religion and pregnancy on screen.

Whilst it could be inferred that Peppa Pig's parents and grandparents were married, this was specifically referred to. In Jo Jo and Gran Gran, there was a wedding photo on a wall which was recorded 8 times and in the opening credits there is a person in a headscarf.

		Sexual Orientation	Marriage	Gender Reassignment	Religion	Pregnancy and Maternity	Total
1	Peppa Pig	0	0	0	0	0	296
2	Charlie and Lola	0	0	0	0	0	110
3	Timmy Time	0	0	0	0	0	215
4	Sarah and Duck	0	0	0	0	0	319
5	Numberblocks	0	0	0	0	0	251
6	Jojo and Gran Gran	0	8	0	10	0	292
	<b>Total</b>						1483

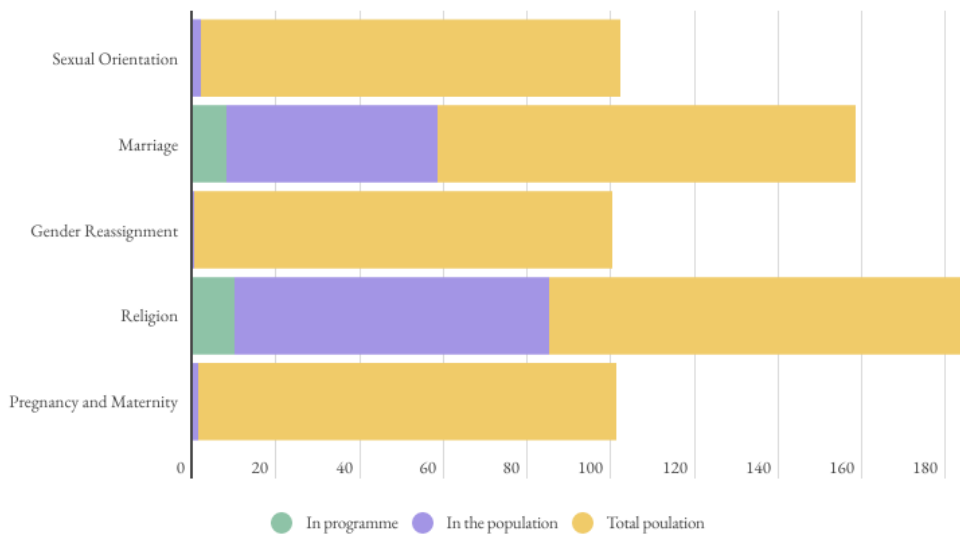


Figure 1.21

## All characteristics against UK population

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented all nine characteristics against the UK Population.

This data has been split into two graphs to view the data in a more accessible format. The graph below details sexual orientation, marriage, gender reassignments, religion and pregnancy and maternity.

	In programmes %	% of the UK population	% difference
Female	42.89	51%	-8.11
Male	57.11	49	8.11
Female Speaking	41.95	51	-8.11
Male Speaking	58.05	49	8.11
Race	15.11	19.5	-4.39
Age	3.17	22	-18.83
Disability	0.61	20.65	-20.04
Sexual Orientation	0	2.2	-2.2
Marriage	0.07	50	-49.93
Gender Reassignment	0	0.3-0.7	-0.3
Religion	0	75	-75
Pregnancy and Maternity	0	1.29	-1.29

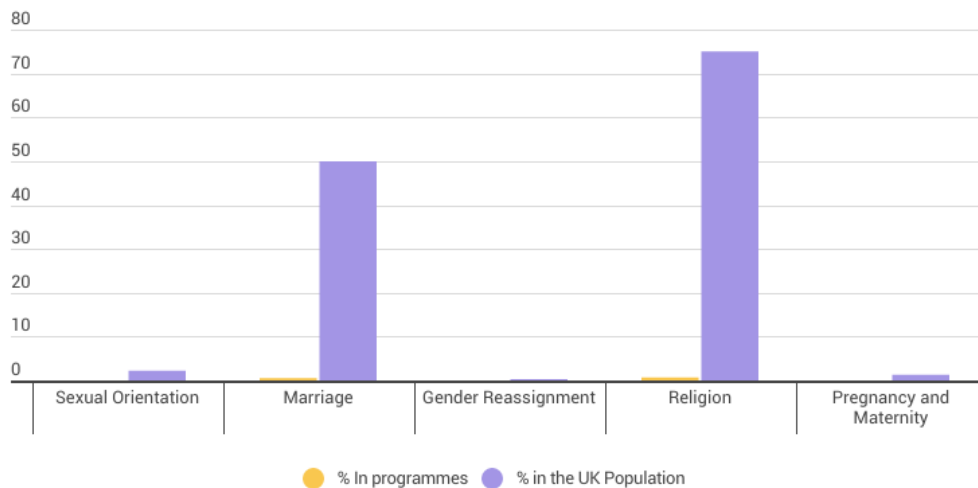


Figure 1.22

## Creators, Writers and Directors

This page details all of the male and female creators, directors and writers who worked on each programme.

		Female Creators	Male Creators	Female Writer	Male Writer	Female Director	Male Director
1	<b>Peppa Pig</b>	0	3	1	4	4	4
2	<b>Charlie and Lola</b>	1	0	5	3	1	0
3	<b>Timmy Time</b>	1	0	6	11	1	1
4	<b>Sarah and Duck</b>	1	1	3	6	1	2
5	<b>Numberblocks</b>	0	1	0	5	0	1
6	<b>JoJo and Gran Gran</b>	1	0	7	9	0	2
7	<b>Total</b>	4	5	22	38	7	10

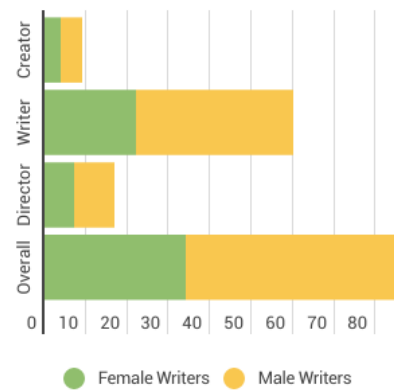
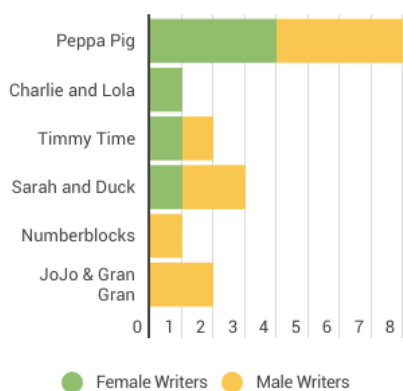
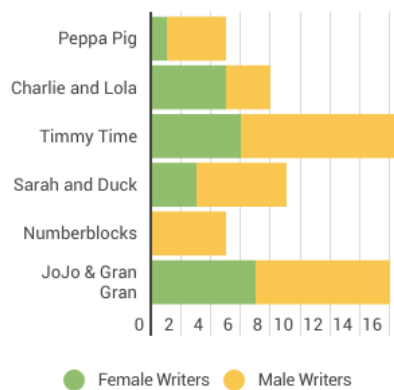
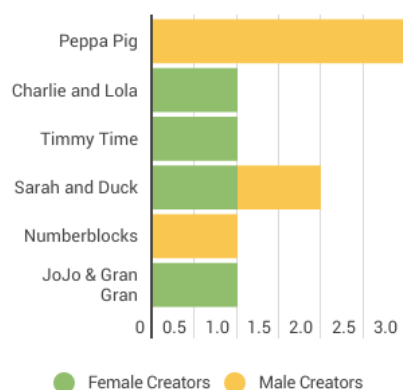


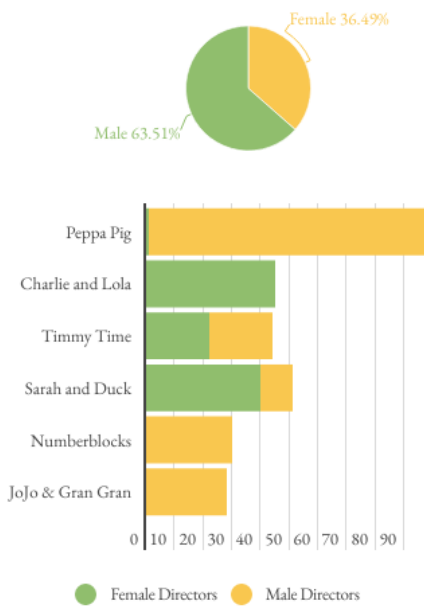
Figure 1.23

## Creators, Writers and Directors

This page details all of the male and female creators, directors and writers who worked on each programme by the number of episodes that they worked on

		Female Director	Male Director	Female Writer	Male Writer
1	Peppa Pig	1	97	30	21
2	Charlie and Lola	45	0	39	22
3	Timmy Time	22	22	54	82
4	Sarah and Duck	40	11	135	204
5	Numberblocks	0	30	0	30
6	Jojo and Gran Gran	0	28	18	9
7	Total	108	188	276	368

### Directors



### Writers

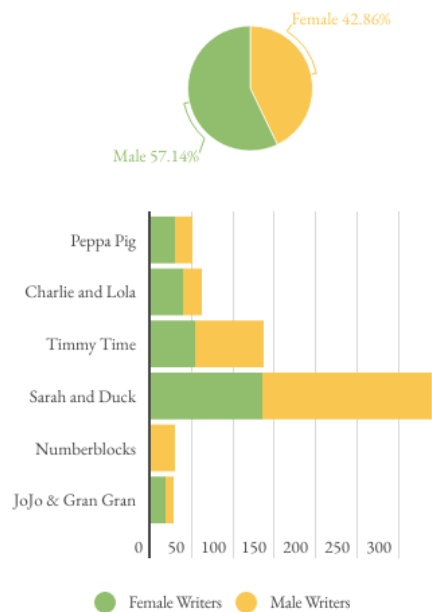


Figure 1.01

# Marvel Rising: Secret Warriors

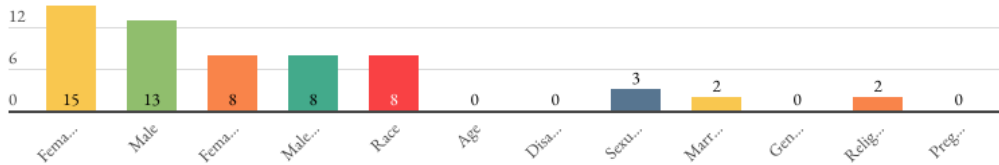
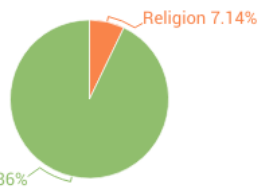
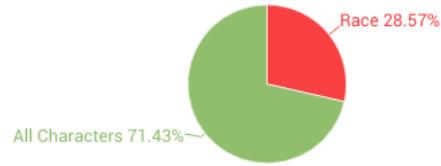
Disney + (2018)

Data overview

- Female representation 57%
- Race representation 29%
- Religious representation 7%
- Sexual Orientation 7-10%



● Females ● Males



● Female ● Male ● Female Speaking ● Male Speaking ● Race ● Age ● Disability ● Sexual Orientation  
 ● Marriage or Civil Partnership ● Gender Reassignment ● Religion ● Pregnancy and Maternity

	Protected Characteristic	No. of characters
1	Sex	
1.1	Female	15
1.2	Male	13
1.3	Female Speaking	9
1.4	Male Speaking	9
2	Race	8
3	Age	0
4	Disability	0
5	Sexual Orientation	3
6	Marriage	1
7	Gender Reassignment	0
8	Religion	2
9	Pregnancy	0

## A2: Primary data graphs on each programme

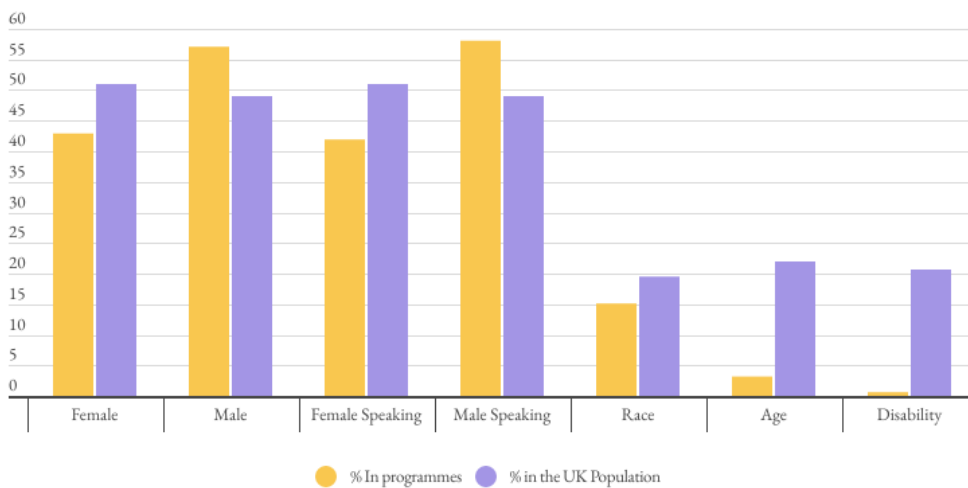
Figure 1.20

## All characteristics against UK population

This page details all of the characters seen on screen, including background characters, that represented all nine characteristics against the UK Population.

This data has been split into two graphs to view the data in a more accessible format. The graph below details sex, race, age and disability only.

	In programmes %	% of the UK population	% difference
<b>Sex</b>			
Female	42.89	51	-8.11
Male	57.11	49	8.11
Female Speaking	41.95	51	-8.11
Male Speaking	58.05	49	8.11
<b>Race</b>			
Age	3.17	22	-18.83
Disability	0.61	20.65	-20.04
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			
Marriage	0.54	50	-49.93
<b>Gender Reassignment</b>			
Religion	0.67	75	-75
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>			
	0	1.29	-1.29





<p><i>Peppa Pig</i></p> <p>Data from IMDB – Programme Overview</p>	<p>This programme is one of only two programmes to win three BAFTAs in 2005, 2011 and 2012. It has been on air from 2004 – 2021 and there have been six seasons of 52 episodes, with three specials and a new series Season 7 for 2021 which is currently airing. It is also the only show selected for the list of BAFTA winners that is not on CBeebies but was instead originally aired on Milkshake! on Channel 5, another public service broadcaster. In addition to the case study, for this thesis, 52 episodes from season one were analysed for this research. Each episode was approximately 4 minutes in length and each one was viewed on Amazon Prime.</p> <p><i>Peppa Pig</i> is worth over £1 billion in global retail sales and is translated into 40 languages and available in over 180 territories (Statista, 2020; Beaumont-Thomas, 2018; eOne, no date). According to an interview in The Guardian, creators Neville Astley, Mark Baker and Phil Davies, the creators met at Middlesex Polytechnic in the 1980's. Astley and Baker enjoyed some early success with another animated children's programme, The Big Knights. It aired on the BBC, but Astley and Baker grew frustrated when the BBC did not commission a second series. In 1999, with Phil Davies, they produced the idea for <i>Peppa Pig</i>. They secured funding with Contender Entertainment, Peppa's first distributor, along with Nickelodeon and Channel 5, which showed Nickelodeon content on its Milkshake! strand. However, there was a substantial £400,000 shortfall which the creators had to fund themselves. In 2015 eOne bought a 70% stake in Astley Baker Davies for £140 million, with each founder earning £47 million each. Kate O'Connor of Animation UK, the trade lobby group for the industry, reports that 'The British animated television series created, directed and produced by Astley Baker Davies, generates £200m in UK sales of licensed products each year.</p>
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	<p>This is 150 times its original production budget. First broadcast in 2004 on Channel 5, it is now a global phenomenon. <i>Peppa Pig</i> is watched in 180 countries, with DVD sales of over five million, a video game selling 225,000 copies and book sales exceeding £2 million and the <i>Peppa Pig</i> franchise is estimated to become a \$2bn brand,' (UKBAA, 2021). Despite this clear global success, and global influence, <i>Peppa Pig</i> is the only programme on the list that has faced significant criticism. A search for <i>Peppa Pig</i> on The Independent newspaper site brought up a list of articles on <i>Peppa Pig</i> that accused it of sexism, violence, promoting 'gangster attitudes', piling pressure on GPs (The Independent, no date). Creators Astley and Baker are reported to feel the scrutiny they are under to be unfair, with Baker stating that 'because people began to see it as a representation of the whole world, rather than just a stylised microcosm', (Usborne, 2019). For those that have not seen the programme, the main protagonist is a female, four-year-old pig named Peppa who lives with her parents and little brother, George. Their world is populated with other animal characters, and she attends preschool. The programme regularly features her parents, Mummy Pig and Daddy Pig as well as other adult characters. The episodes show <i>Peppa Pig</i> either at preschool, at home with her family or on day trips with her family. Each episode deals with experiences that are relatable to the audience such as ballet lessons, fearing a thunderstorm, camping, visiting cousins, not feeling very well and playing in the snow.</p>
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BAFTA	2005, 2011, 2012
Lead character	<i>Peppa Pig</i>
Originally aired on	Milkshake!
Series air date	2004 - 2021
Number of seasons	Seasons 1 Episodes 52 2004
Number of episodes	Seasons 2 Episodes 52 2006
	Seasons 3 Episodes 52 2009
	Seasons 4 Episodes 52 2011
	Seasons 5 Episodes 52 2016
	Seasons 6 Episodes 52 2019
	Seasons 7 Episodes 52 2021
	Specials in (2007, 2015 - 16)
	Film: Peppa Pig: My first cinema experience 2017
Studio	Astley Baker Davies
Created by	Neville Astley, Mark Baker and Phil Davies
Directors	1. Sarah Roper (2 episodes, 2016-2019)
Female: 1	2. Mark Baker (50 episodes, 2004-2019)
1 episode	3. Neville Astley (34 episodes, 2004-2019)
	4. Joris van Hulzen (7 episodes, 2011-2019)
Male: 5	5. Phil Hall (5 episodes, 2011-2012)
97 episodes	6. Caillou Scott (1 episode, 2007)

<p>Writers</p> <p>Female: 4 30 episodes</p> <p>Male: 4 214 episodes</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Matilda Tristram (26 episodes, 2019-2020)</li> <li>2. Sarah Ann Kennedy (2 episodes, 2004)</li> <li>3. Ange Palethorpe (1 episode, 2004)</li> <li>4. Alison Snowden (1 episode, 2004)</li> <li>5. Neville Astley (writer/creator) (71 episodes, 2004-2019)</li> <li>6. Mark Baker (creator) (63 episodes, 2004-2019)</li> <li>7. Sam Morrison (52 episodes, 2011-2012)</li> <li>8. Phil Hall (28 episodes, 2006-2019)</li> </ol>
Series number	1
Episodes analysed	52
Episode length	4 minutes
Total no. of minutes viewed	208 minutes
Platform that was used for the data collection	Amazon Prime

<i>Charlie and Lola</i>	
Programme Overview	<p><i>Charlie and Lola</i></p> <p>This programme originally aired on CBeebies and was created by London-based studio, Tiger Aspect Productions. A total of 26 episodes from series one were analysed for this thesis. <i>Charlie and Lola</i> won two BAFTA awards in 2007 and 2008 for preschool animation, and for Children’s Writer in 2007 and Children’s Animation in 2008 for its Autumn special. Each episode was approximately ten minutes in length and was viewed on Netflix as not all the episodes were available on BBC iPlayer. <i>Charlie and Lola</i> are siblings aged seven and four respectively. They live together with their parents, who are mentioned but never seen or heard. Each sibling has a best friend, Marv and Lotta, who appear in a considerable number of episodes. Each episode centres around the relationship between the siblings and other characters. Episodes usually take place in the home, school or the park.</p>
BAFTA	2007 and 2008
Lead Characters	<i>Charlie and Lola</i>
Originally aired on	CBeebies
Series air date	2005-2007
Number of seasons	Season 1 Episodes 26 2005
Number of episodes	Season 2 Episodes 26 2006 Season 3 Episodes 26 2007 Specials in 2006 and 2007
Studio	Tiger Aspect Productions
Created by	Lauren Child

Directors Female: 1 and 45 episodes	Kitty Taylor
Writers Female: 5 and 39 episodes  Male: 3 and 22 episodes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bridget Hurst (14 episodes, 2005-2007)</li> <li>2. Carol Noble (11 episodes, 2005-2008)</li> <li>3. Samantha Hill</li> <li>4. (8 episodes, 2005-2007)</li> <li>4. Anna Starkey (5 episodes, 2006-2007)</li> <li>5. Laura Beaumont (1 episode)</li> <li>6. Olly Smith (3 episodes, 2006)</li> <li>7. Paul Larson (2 episodes, 2007)</li> <li>8. Dave Ingham (17 episodes, 2005-2008)</li> </ol>
Series number	1
Episodes analysed	26
Episode length	10
Total no. of minutes viewed	260 minutes
Platform that was used for the data collection	Netflix

<i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i>		
Programme Overview	<p><i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i></p> <p>Also selected was <i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i>, the 2014 BAFTA award winner. This programme was also aired originally on CBeebies and was created by London based studio, Karrot Animation. There are three seasons of <i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i>, each with 40 episodes. For this thesis, Season 1 and all 40 episodes were analysed. <i>Sarah &amp; Duck</i> was selected as it has a female lead character and was co-created by a female artist, Sarah Gomes Harris alongside Tim O’Sullivan.</p> <p>Sarah lives at home with Duck and unusually, no parents are mentioned or appear in the show, which is narrated by a male. While there are adults in the programme, the children in the show are never seen with their parents. This differs from <i>Charlie and Lola</i> where parents are mentioned, but no other adults are seen, only children. The programme has many fantastical elements, including talking umbrellas, cakes, planets and hidden worlds of sentient bouncing balls. It is the only programme that is being analysed that has these elements, aside from the talking animals within <i>Peppa Pig</i> and <i>Timmy Time</i> although these characters replace human characters, and their lives are human. <i>Numberblocks</i> is also different because the characters are not human or meant to evoke human characteristics.</p>	
BAFTA	2014	
Lead Characters	Sarah and Duck	

Series air date	Season 1 Episodes 40 2013	
Number of seasons	Season 2 Episodes 40 2014	
Number of episodes	Season 3 Episodes 40 2016	
Originally aired on	CBeebies	
Studio	Karrot Animation	
Created by	Sarah Gomes Harris and Tim O'Sullivan	
Directors Female: 1 and 40 episodes Male: 2 and 11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tim O'Sullivan (78 episodes, 2013-2017)</li> <li>2. Sarah Gomes Harris (40 episodes, 2013)</li> <li>3. Tim Fehrenbach (37 episodes, 2013)</li> </ol>	
Writers Female: 3 and 135 episodes Male: 6 and 204 episodes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sarah Gomes Harris (120 episodes, 2013-2017)</li> <li>2. Matilda Tristram (11 episodes, 2016-2017)</li> <li>3. Ilana Darrant (4 episodes, 2014-2015)</li> <li>4. Tim O'Sullivan (created by) (120 episodes, 2013-2017)</li> <li>5. Benjamin Thomas Cook (76 episodes, 2013-2017)</li> <li>6. Eddie Robson (3 episodes, 2015-2016)</li> <li>7. Alex Howley (2 episodes, 2015-2016)</li> <li>8. John Randolph Davies (2 episodes, 2015)</li> <li>9. Tony Cooke (1 episode, 2017)</li> </ol>	
Series number	1	
Episodes analysed	40	
Episode length	7	



Total no. of minutes viewed	240 minutes	
Platform that was used for the data collection	CBeebies	
<i>Timmy Time</i>		

<p>Programme Overview</p>	<p><i>Timmy Time</i>  <i>Timmy Time</i> won two BAFTAs, in 2010 and 2013. There are three seasons with 26 episodes each. <i>Timmy Time</i> was selected because of this global success, as it is currently aired in over 150 territories and because it has a male lead character (Animation UK, 2019). A total of 26 episodes were viewed on BBC iPlayer and each were approximately ten minutes in length.</p> <p>It is the only programme that features a sole male protagonist, Timmy who is a lamb, and centres around his day at nursery. The show features other young animals, and the nursery is run by an owl and a heron. It is the only show that has been selected where the characters do not speak, but instead communicate using their respective animal sounds.</p> <p>Aardman Animation was founded by Peter Lord and David Sproxton in 1972 and in 1985 invited Nick Park to work with them. Nick Park had created two characters, Wallace and Gromit for his student film at the National Film and Television school. These characters have gone on to star in four films, <i>The Wrong Trousers</i> (1993), <i>A Close Shave</i> (1995), <i>The Curse of the Were-Rabbit</i> (2005) and <i>A Matter of Loaf and Death</i> (2008). Aardman's other feature films include <i>Chicken Run</i> (2000), <i>Flushed Away</i> (2006), <i>Arthur Christmas</i> (2006), <i>The Pirates! In an Adventure with Scientists</i> (2012), <i>Shaun the Sheep Movie</i> (2015) and <i>Early Man</i> (2018). Their films have been nominated for ten Academy Awards and won four and its success means their films have made over \$1.1 billion globally (The Numbers, 2020). The studio has also developed other series for television including <i>Shaun the Sheep</i>, and <i>Timmy Time</i> is a spin-off from this series.</p>
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BAFTA	2010 and 2013	
Lead character	Timmy	
Series air date	Season 1 Episodes 26 2009	
Number of seasons	Season 2 Episodes 26 2010	
Number of episodes	Season 3 Episodes 26 2011	
Originally aired on	CBeebies	
Studio	Aardman Studios	
Created by	Jackie Cockle	
Directors Female: 2 and 103 episodes  Male: 1 and 22 episodes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liz Whitaker (22 episodes, 2009-2012)</li> <li>2. David Scanlon (22 episodes, 2009-2011)</li> </ol>	

Writers Female: 6 and 54 episodes	1. Jackie Cockle (44 episodes, 2009-2012)
Male: 11 and 82 episodes	2. Louise Kramskoy (3 episodes, 2009-2010)
	3. Karen Wallace (3 episodes, 2009)
	4. Diane Redmond (2 episodes, 2009-2010)
	5. Julie Middleton (1 episode, 2009)
	6. Nuria Wicksman (1 episode, 2009)
	7. Dave Osmand (30 episodes, 2009-2012)
	8. Wayne Jackman (11 episodes, 2009-2012)
	9. Chris Parker (11 episodes, 2009-2011)
	10. Andrew Viner (10 episodes, 2010-2011)
	11. Dave Ingham (7 episodes, 2009-2010)
	12. Peter Richard Reeves (5 episodes, 2009-2010)
	13. Simon Nicholson (3 episodes, 2011)
	14. Simon Jowett (2 episodes, 2009)
	15. Steve Middleton (1 episode, 2009)
	16. Dan Wicksman (1 episode, 2009)
	17. Ian Carney (1 episode, 2011)
Series number	1
Episodes analysed	26
Episode length	10
Total no. of minutes viewed	260 minutes
Platform that was used for the data collection	CBeebies

<i>JoJo and Gran Gran</i>	
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Programme Overview	<p><i>JoJo and Gran Gran</i></p> <p><i>JoJo and Gran Gran</i> was created by Bristol based studio A Productions. A total of ten episodes were analysed. Each episode was approximately ten minutes in length and viewed on CBeebies through BBC iPlayer.</p> <p>JoJo is four and lives with her parents in London and is frequently looked after by her grandmother whilst her parents are at work. They go on trips to the park, library and other activities that are familiar to preschool aged children. The show also features a segment with live action children and adults, who speak documentary style, directly to the camera about a topic that is mentioned in the show. There is then a little video of the live action children taking part in an activity. The show then ends with JoJo and Gran Gran concluding the episode.</p>
BAFTA	N/A
Lead Character	JoJo and Gran Gran
Originally aired on	CBeebies
Studio	A Productions
Created by	Laura Henry - Allain
Directors Female: 0  Male: 2 and 28 episodes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Nick Clackett (24 episodes, 2020-2021)</li> <li>2. Steve Cannon (4 episodes, 2020)</li> </ol>

Writers	
Female: 7 and 9 episodes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trish Cooke (1 episode, 2020)</li> <li>2. Lizzie Ennever (1 episode, 2020)</li> <li>3. Kerri Grant (1 episode, 2020)</li> <li>4. Lucia Haynes (1 episode, 2020)</li> <li>5. Becky Overton (2 episodes, 2020)</li> <li>6. Karen Reed (2 episodes, 2020)</li> <li>7. Sharon Miller (1 episode, 2020)</li> </ol>
Male: 9 and 18 episodes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gerard Foster (3 episodes, 2020)</li> <li>2. Ian Carney (4 episodes, 2020)</li> <li>3. Nathan Caton (2 episodes, 2020)</li> <li>4. Mark Huckerby (co-writer) (1 episode, 2020)</li> <li>5. Stephen Hyams (1 episode, 2021)</li> <li>6. Omari McCarthy ( 2 episodes, 2020)</li> <li>7. Nick Ostler (co-writer) (1 episode, 2020)</li> <li>8. Liam Swann</li> <li>9. (3 episodes, 2020-2021)</li> <li>9. Seyi Odusanya (1 episode, 2020)</li> </ol>
Series number	1
Episodes analysed	10
Episode length	10
Total no. of minutes viewed	100
Platform that was used for the data collection	CBeebies

<p><i>Numberblocks</i> Programme Overview</p>	<p><i>Numberblocks</i> <i>Numberblocks</i> won a BAFTA in 2019. It was created by London-based animation studio Blue Zoo. A total of 30 episodes were analysed, which was Season Three, which was the season from which the BAFTA winning episode was selected, although the BAFTA is not for the episode or season, but the show. <i>Numberblocks</i> is the only educational show that was selected. Each episode was approximately 5 minutes in length and viewed on CBeebies through BBC iPlayer.</p> <p>Each character is a number represented by a series of blocks. The purpose of each episode is to introduce characters to a number and then introduce mathematical concepts such as addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. This is done through adventures, songs and games (Blue Zoo, 2020). <i>Numberblocks</i> was developed with the National Centre for Excellence in the Teaching of Mathematics (Heritage, 2021). The centre's Director, Debbie Morgan, is the programme's mathematical consultant (TES News, 2019). It is also utilised by primary schools as a teaching tool and was promoted by the BBC as part of their Lockdown Learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (BBC, 2020). Blue Zoo reported that views on its official channels went up from 1.6 million a day to 3.3 million during the pandemic (The Heritage, 2021).</p> <p>Blue Zoo was founded in 2000 by Bournemouth University classmates, Oli Hyatt, Tom Box and Adam Shaw. Blue Zoo was co-founded in 2000 by Tom Box, Oli Hyatt and Adam Shaw (Blue Zoo, no date). Blue Zoo was included in the list because of the considerable influence it has had on the animation industry.</p> <p>Blue Zoo announced in 2019 that they had achieved a 50/50 workforce of male to female employees</p>
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(Twitter, 2019). *Numberblocks* was selected to identify if that ethos was evident in their content also.



BAFTA	2019
Lead Character	Numberblocks
Originally aired on	CBeebies
Studio	Blue Zoo
Created by	Joe Elliot
Directors	Simon Taylor
Writers Female: 0 Male: 5 and 30 episodes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Max Allen (16 episodes, 2017-2019)</li> <li>2. Ciaran Murtagh (10 episodes, 2017)</li> <li>3. Ben Lee-Delisle (2 episodes, 2017)</li> <li>4. Joe Elliot (1 episode, 2017)</li> <li>5. Andrew Jones (1 episode, 2017)</li> </ol>
Series number	3
Episodes analysed	30
Episode length	5 minutes
Total no. of minutes viewed	600 minutes
Platform that was used for the data collection	CBeebies

### **A3: Primary data from google spreadsheets**

*Peppa Pig*

Season 1	Episode Name	Characters	Male	Female	Speaking	Male	Female	M	Negati	F	Negative Marriage	Race	Disability	Age	Gender Reassi	Race / Re	Pregn	Sexual Orientation	
<b>Character List</b>																			
Episode 1	Rainy Day	P, G, DP, MP	2	2	2	2	2												
	Mr Dinosaur is L	P, G, DP, MP	2	2	2	2	2												
	Best Friends	P, G, DP, MP, SS	2	3	3	3	3												
	Polly Parrot	P, G, DP, MP, Gpf	3	3	3	3	3							2					
Episode 2	Hide and Seek	P, G, DP, MP	2	2	2	2	2												
	The Playgroup	P, G, DP, MG, DD	4	5	5	5	5					1		3					
	Mummy Pig at V	P, G, DP, MP	2	2	2	2	2												
	Piggy in the Mid	P, G, DP, MP	2	2	2	2	2												
E 3	Daddy Loses his	P, G, DP, MP	2	2	2	2	2		1										
	Gardening	P, G, GpP, MP, Df	3	2	2	2	2											1	
	Hiccup	P, G, DP, MP	2	2	2	2	2												
	Bicycles	P, G, DP, MP, DD,	3	4	4	4	4												
E4	Secret	MP, P, G, DP	2	2	2	2	2												
	Kite Flying	MP, P, G, DP	2	2	2	2	2												
	Picnic	MP, P, G, DP	2	2	2	2	2		1										
	Musical Instrum	MP, P, G, DP	2	2	2	2	2												
E5	Frogs Worms an	MP, DP, GmP, Gp	3	3	3	3	3												
	Dressing Up	P, G, MP, DP	2	2	2	2	2												
	New shoes																		
	The School Fete	BB, MG, DP, MP,	6	9	9	9	9												
E6	Mummy Pigs Bir	P, G, MP, DP, Gpf	3	3	3	3	3												
	Tooth Fairy	P, G MP, DP, Toot	2	3	3	3	3												
	New Car	DP, MP, P, G, Gdf	3	2	2	2	2												
	Treasure Hunt	GpP, GmP, P, G, f	3	3	3	3	3												
E7	Not very well	DP, MP, P, G, BB,	4	5	5	5	5												
	Snow	P, G, MP, DP	2	2	2	2	2												
	Windy Castle	P, G, MP, DP, Gpf	3	3	3	3	3		1										
	My Cousin Chloe	P, G, MP, DP, CC,	2	4	4	4	4												
E8	Pancakes	P, G, MP, DP	2	2	2	2	2												
	Babysitting	GpP, GmP, P, G, f	3	3	3	3	3												
	Ballet Lessons	MG, P, CC, SS, Df	4	6	6	6	6												
	Thunderstorm	P, G, MP, DP	2	2	2	2	2		1										
E9	Cleaning the Car	P, G, MP, DP	2	2	2	2	2												
	Lunch	P, G, MP, DP, Gpf	3	3	3	3	3												
	Camping	P, G, MP, DP	2	2	2	2	2		1										

Season 1	Episode Name	Characters	Male	Female	Speaking	Male	Female	M	Negati	F	Negative Marriage	Race	Disability	Age	Gender Reassi	Race / Re	Pregn	Sexual Orientation	
<b>Character List</b>																			
E10	The Sleepy Princ	P, G, MP, DP	2	2	2	2	2				1								
	Tree House	P, G, MP, DP, Gm	3	3	3	3	3				1								
	Fancy Dress Part	P, G, MP, DP, SS,	4	6	6	6	6												
	The Museum	P, G, MP, DP, MR	2	3	3	3	3												
	Very Hot Day	P, G, MP, DP, RR	2	3	3	3	3												
E11	Chloe's Puppet	P, G, DP, MP, UP,	3	4	4	4	4				1								
	Daddy Gets ft	MP, DP, G, P	2	2	2	2	2				1								
	Tidying Up	MP, DP, G, P	2	2	2	2	2				1								
	The Playground	MP, DP, G, P, CC,	5	10	10	10	10												
E12	Daddy Puts up a	DP, MP, P, G	2	2	2	2	2				1								
	At the Beach	DP, MP, P, G	2	2	2	2	2												
	Mister Skinnyleg	DP, MP, P, G	2	2	2	2	2				1								
	Granda Pig's Bo	GnP, GmP, P, G,	4	2	2	2	2				1								
	Shopping	DP, MP, P, G, SS	2	3	3	3	3				1								
	My Birthday Parl	DP, MP, P, G, SS	4	5	5	5	5				1								
	Daddy Movie Ca	DP, MP, P, G, ZZ	3	2	2	2	2				1								
	School Play	G, DD, GdD, PP	5	10	10	10	10				1								
216 minutes																			
<b>Total</b>			137	159		124	142	18				4		14					
				296			266												
			127	139															
				266															
			47	53															

## Charlie and Lola

Season 1	Episode Name	Characters	Male	Female	Speaking	Male	Female	Marriage	Race	Disability	Age	Gender	Reass	Religion	Pregn	Sexual Orientation
<b>Character List</b>																
01:01	I will not ever never eat a tomato	C, L, Md	1	4	C, L	1	1									
01:02	I can do anything thats everything	C, L, Mv	5	1	C, L, Mv	2	1									
01:03	I am Not Sleepy and I will not Go t	C, L	1	1	C, L	1	1									
01:04	But that is my book	C, L, G1	1	2	C, L	1	1									
01:05	There is only one sun and that is n	C, L, Ltm Mv	6	8	C, L, Lt	1	2									
01:06	We do Promise Honestly We can l	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2									
01:07	I've Won, No I've Won, No I've Wc	C, L	1	1	C, L	1	1									
01:08	I like my hair complety the way it	C, L	1	1	C, L	1	1									
01:09	I'm Really Ever So Not Well	C, L, Mv	2	1	C, L	2	1									
01:10	I Am Hurrying I'm Almost Nearly R	C, L, Lt	1	2	C, L, Lt	1	2									
01:11	Boo! Made you jump	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2									
01:12	The most wonderfullest picnic in t	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2									
01:13	It wasn't me!	C, L, SL	2	1	C, L	2	2									
01:14	It's a secret	C, L, SL, Mv	3	1	C, L, SL, Mv	3	1									
01:15	I love going to granny and granpa	C, L, SL	2	1	C, L, SL	2	1									
01:16	I Do not ever, never want my wob	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2									
01:17	Say cheese	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2									
01:18	I'm just not keen on spiders	C, L	1	1	C, L	1	1									
01:19	Snow is my favourite and my best	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2									
01:20	You won't like this Present as muc	C, L, Lt, SL	3	2	C, L, Lt, SL	3	2									
01:21	I must take completely everything	C, L, Mv, Lt, SL	3	2	C, L, Mv, Lt, SL	2	2									
01:22	I want to play music too	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2	C, L, Mv, Lt	2	2									
01:23	I'm far too Extremely Busy	C, L, Md, Mv, SL	3	3	C, L, Mv, SL	3	1									
01:24	I want to be Much More Bigger Lil	C, L, Mv	4	4	C, L, Mv	2	1									
01:25	My Little Town	C, L	1	1	C, L	1	1									
01:26	But i am an alligator	C, L, Lt, Mv	2	2	C, L, Lt, Mv	2	2									
Total			57	53		46	39			16						
				110												

## Timmy Time

Season 1	Episode Name	Characters on Screen	Male	Female	Speaking (Male)	Female	MCP	R	D	A	GR	R	P	SO
T, Os, S, F, I	Timmys Jigsaw	T, Ot, K, A, Y, F, R, P, S, M, H, Os	9	3	T, Ot, K, A,	9	3							
	Timmy's Hiccup Cure	T, Ot, K, Y, S, R, Os, P, A,	8	1	T, Ot, K, Y,	8	1							
	Timmy Wants to Win	T, Y, Ot, Os, H, M, R, S, K, P,	8	2	T, Y, Ot, Os,	8	2							
	Timmy the Artist	T, Y, S, H, Os, M,	4	2	T, Y, S, H, C,	4	2							
	Timmy can't Dance	T, K, R, Y, P, M, A, Ot, H,	6	3	T, K, R, Y, P,	6	3							
	Timmy says Sorry	T, P, H, Ot, Os, R, M,	5	2	T, P, H, Ot,	5	2							
	Timmy steals the Show	T, P, R, Y, S, K, H, M, Os, Ot,	8	2	T, P, R, Y, S,	8	2							
	Timmy wants a Beret	T, M, P, Ot, R, H,	4	2	T, M, P, Ot,	4	2							
	Timmy wants the Blues	T, R, S, H, Y, P, M, Ot, Os,	7	2	T, R, S, H, Y,	7	2							
	Timmy Plays Ball	T, P, R, Ot, Os, M, H,	5	2	T, P, R, Ot,	5	2							
	Timmys Picnic	T, A, Y, S, P, Os, H, Ot,	6	2	T, A, Y, S, P,	6	2							
	Timmy Tries to Hide	T, A, M, R, S, P, H, Os	5	3	T, A, M, R,	5	3							
	Timmy on Wheels	T, H, Os, S, F, R, M, A,	5	3	T, H, Os, S,	5	3							
	Snapshot Timmy	T, Os, F, P, A, R, S, Y, H, Ot, M, H,	9	3	T, Os, F, P,	9	3							
	Timmy Goes Bang	T, R, M, S Os, H, A, Y,	5	3	T, R, M, S O,	5	3							
	Timmy Afloat	T, H, Os, R, M, K, Ot, S, F,	7	2	T, H, Os, R,	7	2							
	Timmy Gets the Job Done	Os, H, T, A, Ot, S, K, Y, M,	6	3	Os, H, T, A,	6	3							
	Timmy Needs A Bath	T, P, K, R, H, Y, A, Os, H,	6	3	T, P, K, R, H,	6	3							
	Timmy Wants the Drum	T, Y, K, H, Os, S, Ot, R, M, F,	8	2	T, Y, K, H, C,	8	2							
	Go Kart Timmy	T, H, Y, P, K, R, Os,	6	1	T, H, Y, P, K,	6	1							
	Timmy the Train	T, H, M, Y, Os, A, F, R,	5	3	T, H, M, Y,	5	3							
	Timmys Puppet	T, Y, H, Os, Ot, R, M,	5	2	T, Y, H, Os,	5	2							
	Timmy the Builder	T, Os, K, Ot, P,	5	0	T, Os, K, Ot,	5	0							
	Timmy Brings a Smile	T, R, P, M, A, H, Os, Y,	5	3	T, R, P, M,	5	3							
	Timmys Mask	T, Y, Ot, M, S, H, Os,	5	2	T, Y, Ot, M,	5	2							
	Timmys Spring Surprise	T, H, Ot, R, K, M, Os	5	2	T, H, Ot, R,	5	2							
			157	58										
					157	58								

*Sarah & Duck*

Season 1	Episode Name	Characters	Male	Female	Speaking	Male	Female	MCP	R	D	A	GR	R	P	SO
S, D, N, BM	Lots of Shallots	S, D, N, Sh	6	1	S, D, N, Sh	6	1								
	Sarah, Duck and the Penguins	S, D, N, Zk	3	1	S, D, N, Zk	3	1								
	Cheer Up Donkey	S, D, N, SL, Dky, I	5	2	S, D, N, SL, Dky, I	5	2						1		
	Cake Bake	S, D, N, Ck	3	1	S, D, N, Ck	3	1								
	Bouncy Ball	S, D, N, Sh, SL, B	7	2	S, D, N, Sh, SL, B	7	2						1		
	Robot Juice	S, D, N,	2	1	S, D, N,	2	1								
	Scarf Ladys House	S, D, N, SL, B, WC	4	2	S, D, N, SL, B, WC	4	2						1		
	Rainbow Lemon	S, D, N, R, SL, B	4	2	S, D, N, R, SL, B	4	2						1		
	Sit Shop	S, D, N, SL, B, Bg	5	2	S, D, N, SL, B, SB	5	2			1			1		
	Kite Flight	S, D, N, Sh x 4, Sl	7	2	S, D, N, Sh x 4, Sl	6	2						1		
	Umbrella and the Rain	S, D, N, U, ASO, f	8	1	S, D, N, U, ASO, f	7	1								
	Big Shop	S, D, N, SB, Mn, f	8	4	S, D, N, Mn	3	1			1					
	Woolen Music	S, D, N, SL, B, Bg	4	2	S, D, N, SL, B, Bg	4	2						1		
	Doubles	S, D, N, Sh x 4, J,	7	1	S, D, N, Sh x 4, J,	7	1								
	Fairground	S, D, N, CF, SL, B	16	6	S, D, N, CF, SL, B	5	2			1			1		
	Sarah Gets a Cold	S, D, N, Rct, SB,	3	2	S, D, N, Rct, SB,	3	2			1					
	Ribbon Sisters	S, D, N, Sh x 4, Rf	6	3	S, D, N, Sh x 4, Rf	6	1			1					
	Stargazing	S, D, N, PG, NR, f	7	3	S, D, N, PG, NR, f	6	3								
	Coloured Light	S, D, N, R, ASO,	4	1	S, D, N, R, ASO,	3	1								
	Camera	S, D, N, WG, Sh x	8	2	S, D, N, WG, Sh x	8	2						1		
	Tapping Shoes	S, D, N, Bln (2), J	4	3	S, D, N, Jz	3	1								
	Bobsleigh	S, D, N, ON, Sh, f	7	2	S, D, N, ON, Sh, f	7	2						1		
	Fireworks Dance	S, D, N, U, Mn, B	9	2	S, D, N, U, Mn,	4	1			1					
	Fancy Park	S, D, N, FP,	3	1	S, D, N, FP,	3	1								
	Pipe Conductor	S, D, N,	2	1	S, D, N,	2	1								
	Slow Quest	S, D, N, T, Sh x 4	7	1	S, D, N,	6	1								
	Strawberry Souffle	S, D, Sh x 4, N, R	11	2	S, D, Sh x 4, N, R	9	2			1			1		
	World Bread Day	S, D, N, SB, J, Fl	10	7	S, D, N, SB, J, Fl	5	2			6					
	Pond Princess	S, D, N, PG, R,	3	2	S, D, N, PG, R,	2	2								
	Scared of Stairs	S, D, N, J, FL	4	1	S, D, N, J, FL	4	1			1					

Season 1	Episode Name	Characters	Male	Female	Speaking	Male	Female	MCP	R	D	A	GR	R	P	SO
S, D, N, BM	Lots of Shallots	S, D, N, Sh	6	1	S, D, N, Sh	6	1								
	Balloon Race	S, D, N, SL, B, Dn	5	3	S, D, N, SL, B, Dn	5	3						1		
	Puncture Pump	S, D, N, BSK, BP,	5	1	S, D, N, BSK, BP,	5	1			1					
	Plate Fog	S, D, N, PG, Sh	7	2	S, D, N, PG, Sh	6	2								
	Moon Paint	S, D, N, Mn, Sh	7	1	S, D, N, Mn, Sh	7	1								
	The Play	S, D, N, U	3	1	S, D, N, U	3	1								
	Bread Bike	S, D, N, BM, SL, f	5	5	S, D, N, BM, SL, f	5	3			3			1		
	Bugs Button Bank	S, D, N, B, L,	4	1	S, D, N, B, L,	4	1								
	No More Wool	S, D, N, Dky, SL, f	5	2	S, D, N, Dky, SL, f	5	2						1		
	Octogan Club	S, D, N, RS, PG, S	8	4	S, D, N, RS, PG, S	8	4			3					
	Christmas Special: Petal Light Pic	S, D, N, U, B, Cro	6	4	S, D, N, U,	3	1			1					
			232	87		193	65			22			14		
				319											

## Numberblocks

Season 3	Episode Name	Characters	Male	Female	Speaking	Male	Female	R	D	A	GR	R	P	SO	MG	A
		2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 12,														
1	Once Upon a Time	1, 2, 3, 4, 5,	2	3		2	3									
2	Blockzilla	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8	2	4		2	4									
3	The Numberblocks Express	1, 2, 3, 4, 5,	2	3		2	3									
4	Fruit Salad	1, 2, 3, 4, 5,	2	3		2	3									
5	Zero	0, 1, 2, 3,	1	3		1	3									
6	Now we are six to ten	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	5	5		5	5									
7	Numberblobs	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	5	5		5	5									
8	Building Blocks	6, 7, 8, 9, 10	3	2		3	2									
9	Peekaboo!	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	5	5		5	5									
10	Hiccups	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	5	5		5	5									
11	Whats the Difference	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	5	5		5	5									
12	Numberblock Rally	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10	5	5		5	5									
13	Five and Friends	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,	5	5		5	5									
14	Octoblock to the Rescue	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,	4	4		4	4									
15	Ten Again	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,	5	5		5	5									
16	Flatland	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,	10	9		10	9									
17	Pattern Palace	1, 2, 3, 4, 5,	2	4		2	4									
18	The Legend of Big Turn	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,	6	5		6	5									
19	Mirror, Mirror	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,	5	5		5	5									
20	The Wrong Number	1, 3, 6, 9,	1	3		1	3									
21	Eleven	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11,	5	6		5	6									
22	Twelve	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 12,	2	5		2	5									
23	The way of the rectangle	2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 12,	3	3		3	3									
24	Ride the Rays	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 12,	1	7		1	7									
25	Block Star	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12,	5	5		5	5									
26	Thirteen	3, 10, 13,	1	2		1	2									
27	Fourteen	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14,	5	6		5	6									
28	Fifteen	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10, 15,	4	5		4	5									
29	Tween Scenes	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15,	4	8		4	8									
30	Step Squads	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 15,	2	4		2	4									
			112	139		112	139									

# JoJo and Gran Gran

JJ, GG, M, I Episode Name	Characters	Male	Female	Speaking Anima Male	Female	Speaking Liv Male	Female	Marriage	Race	Disability	Age	Gender Reassi	Religion	Pregn	Sexual Orientation
Character List															
It's Time to Ice Skate	JJ, GG, J	12	12	1	2	5	6	1	12		3				1
It's Time to Paint	JJ, GG, J, T	15	11	6	3	6	7		17	1	3				1
It's Time to build a Snowman	JJ, GG, J	15	11	1	2	4	5	1	13	1	1				1
It's Time to make a Rocket	JJ, GG,	7	10	0	2	7	7	1	11		1				1
It's Time for Night Time Workers	JJ, GG, T, J, N,	29	18	3	2	5	7	1	24	2	2				1
It's time to spot the Birds	JJ, GG, Jn	10	14	1	2	5	7	1	12		3				1
It's time to look after Monty	JJ, GG, Nd, Cyn	10	13	1	3	5	7	1	14	1	2				1
It's time for a Jumble Sale	JJ, GG, T, Jkn	13	13	2	3	6	10		19	1	3				1
It's Time to Catch the Train	JJ, GG,	21	17	0	3	6	7	1	17	2	2				1
It's time for a Special visitor	JJ, GG, GGG, M,	20	21	2	4	4	6	1	27	1	3				1
110 minutes															
Number of characters		152	140		17	26			8	166	9	23			10
Percentage								2.70%	86%	4.7	12%				3.42%
Total characters			292												

# Marvel Rising: Secret Warriors

JJ, GG, M, I Episode Name	Characters	Male	Female	Speaking Anima	Male	Female	Marriage	Race	Disability	Age	Gender Reassi	Religion	Pregn	Sexual Orientation
<b>Character List</b>														
MS Marvel   Marvel Rising: Secret Warriors		1 Male Teacher			1								1	
		1 Bully		1 KK		1								
kids - 2 girls one bou, makin gfun of her, two are colour		1 boy outside School	1 Mum		1	1	1	2						
		1 Bully			1									
			1 uman Girl			1		1						
Diverse student body		1 Cart Guy			1									
		1 Dante		1 ulirrel Girl		1								
			1 / Johnson			1								
Inhumans - you need to go back from where you came f		1 Victor Kohl/Exile				1								
costume shalwar kameez		1 Patriot / Rayshaun		1 America Chaves		1		1						1
Doreen: best friend: We've got determination courage a			2 nd a child											
		1 Bike Shop Owner			1									
			1 Mother					1						
writer mal/gread scott		1		1 g rescuin				1						
directed alfred gimeno				1 g rescuing										
		1 Pedestrian		1 e accuser			1							
I dont need				2 2 mums										1
marriage -				1 in Marvel			1							
all the kids that are pitted against eachother are boys vs girls		2 Kree Guards												
MM, SQ, AC, D, CM														
D, P, TT		13		15		9	9		8				1	2
I'll I've ever wanted is to be you														
Nobody needs to be anyone else... you just gotta be you														



## A4: Emails

1. The email below was sent from my daughter's school in relation to Year 1 students watching inappropriate material such as Venom, Suicide Squad and Squid games.

The image displays two screenshots of a Gmail interface. The top screenshot shows an email titled "Dear Year 1 Parents and Carers" with the following text:

Through our monitoring of playtime accidents and behaviour incidents, we have seen a rise in injuries that have been caused by, or are connected to, the games some children are playing. Through our regular monitoring we have seen an increase in accidents and behaviours incidents for Year 1 in the playground.

On further analysis and investigation, it seems that these are related to the games that children are playing. When speaking with the children after accidents and incidents it is clear that the games are often linked to video games or films/programmes that have been certified for much older children, and even adults. Children have told us that they are playing, or have watched: Squid game, Venom, Suicide Squad, Blank Panther, Jurassic Park and Among us. The children's games are then based on play interactions that are completely inappropriate for 5 or 6 years olds, resulting in children using language terms like, 'murder', 'serial killing', 'stabbing' and even 'assassinate' in their play.

Keeping children safe in an ever-increasing digitalised world is very challenging for parents. Several children have told us that they have watched inappropriate films, or played teenage certificated video games with either older siblings or family members without their adults knowing. We have shared this information with individual parents.

The bottom screenshot shows the same email with the following text:

To a fully developed adult brain, the content of superhero movies of these types may appear harmless, as we know they are fictional; however these rarely have full PG certification, and mostly have certificate 12 or above. All Marvel films for example, are rated PG-13, so they will all have some element that is not suitable for young children. Young minds will notice this content and imagery and it will be processed. It is also worth noting that quite innocent clips on Youtube can begin with adverts for violent content, or run click bait side windows, which children can then easily click and view.

The British Board of Film Certification has an extremely rigorous process of certifying films. Films and video games are carefully considered by compliance officers experienced in child development with a view to protecting young children from harmful content. When young children are exposed to violent scenes that are both very exciting and frightening, these can result in similar response behaviours in their play. Their play can then consist of re-enactments that involve 'fight or flight' responses, where behaviour is triggered by a fear response that is hard for young children to self-regulate. We have found that this results in children chasing each other frantically, often turning and not looking where they are going, leading to collisions and falls, but also violent reactions to being 'caught' and trying to 'get away'. This is very different from usual chase games such as 'tag' or 'stuck in the mud'.

In this way, we are asking parents to consider carefully what their children are viewing and experiencing at home and how this might be affecting their child's play. We would ask that children are not exposed to video games or film content that is certificated for older children. We hope that this will go some way to ensure the children play games that are exciting and fun because the children are able to self-regulate themselves and respond to each other appropriately and with care.

# A5: Secondary data on Gender Pay Gap

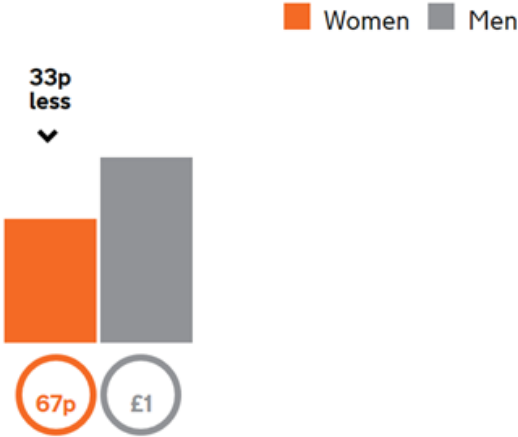
MPC

The figures in the diagram below are the figures from British studio Moving Picture Company (MPC) 2018-2019. The graph shows that women earn 67p for every £1 that men earn, and their median hourly is 33.3% lower.

The graph below shows that women at MPC make up only 14% of the highest pay quartile:

## Hourly wages pay gap

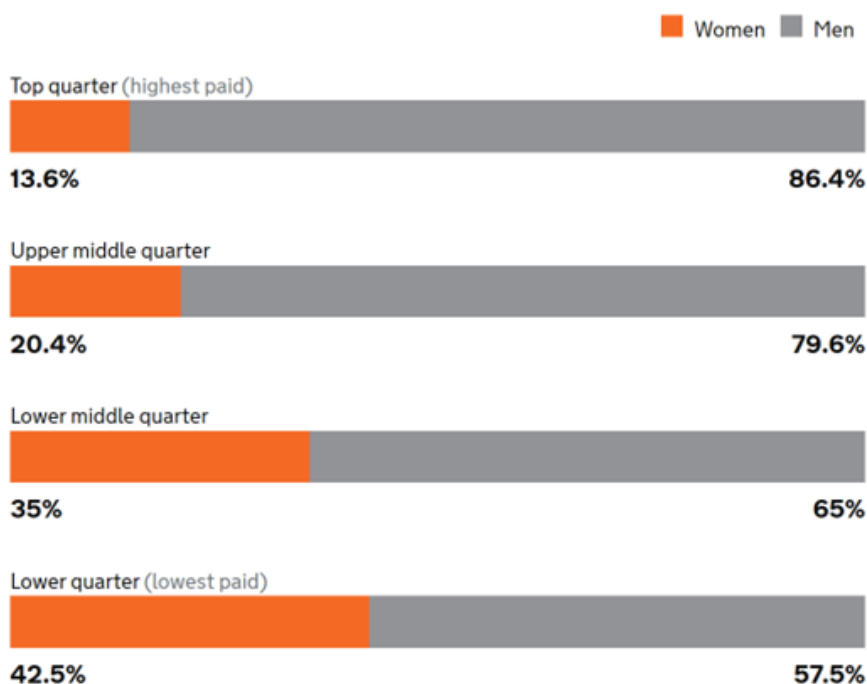
In this organisation, **women earn 67p** for every **£1** that men earn when comparing median hourly wages. Their median hourly wage is **33.3% lower** than men's.



When comparing mean hourly wages, women's mean hourly wage is **31% lower** than men's.

## Proportion of women in each pay quarter

In this organisation, women occupy **13.6%** of the highest paid jobs and **42.5%** of the lowest paid jobs.



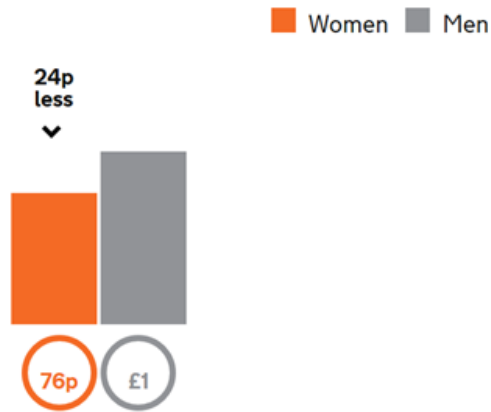
### Framestore

These figures below show the gender pay gap at Framestore 2018-2019. They indicate that women earn 76p for every £1 that men earn. Their median hourly wage is 25% lower than men's.

The graph below shows that women make up only 15% of the top pay quartile:

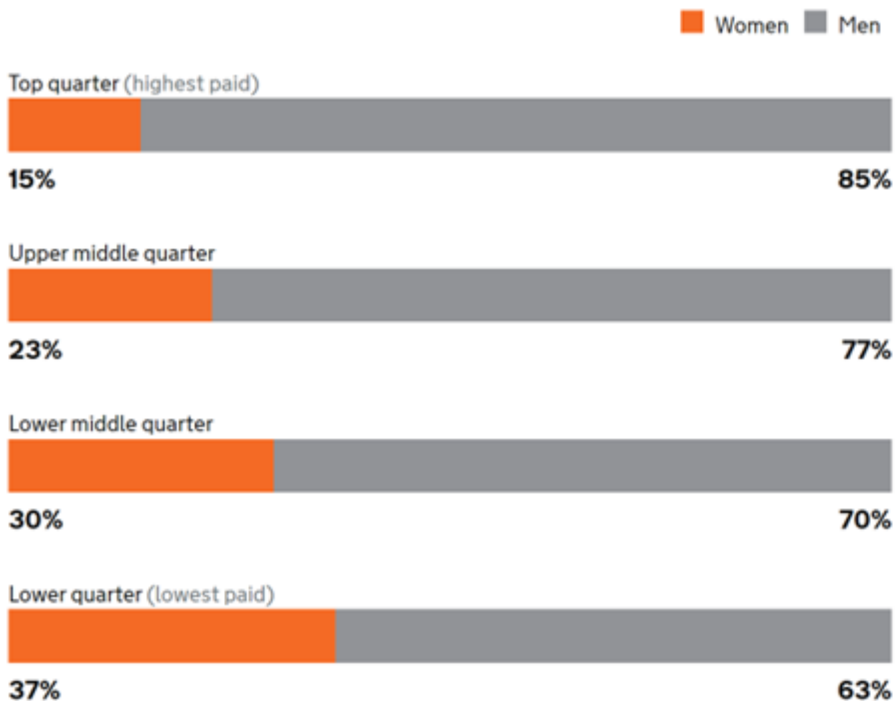
## Hourly wages pay gap

In this organisation, **women earn 76p** for every **£1** that men earn when comparing median hourly wages. Their median hourly wage is **24% lower** than men's.



## Proportion of women in each pay quarter

In this organisation, women occupy **15%** of the highest paid jobs and **37%** of the lowest paid jobs.



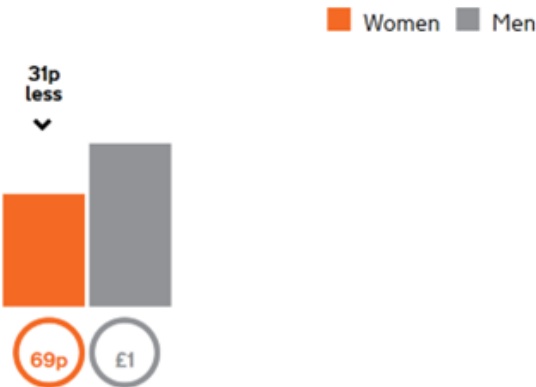
The Mill

The next figures indicate the gender pay gap at the Mill 2018 -2019. It shows that women earn 69p for every £1 that they earn, and their median hourly wage is 31%.

The next figures indicate that women make up only 16.3% of workers in the highest pay quartile.

### Hourly wages pay gap

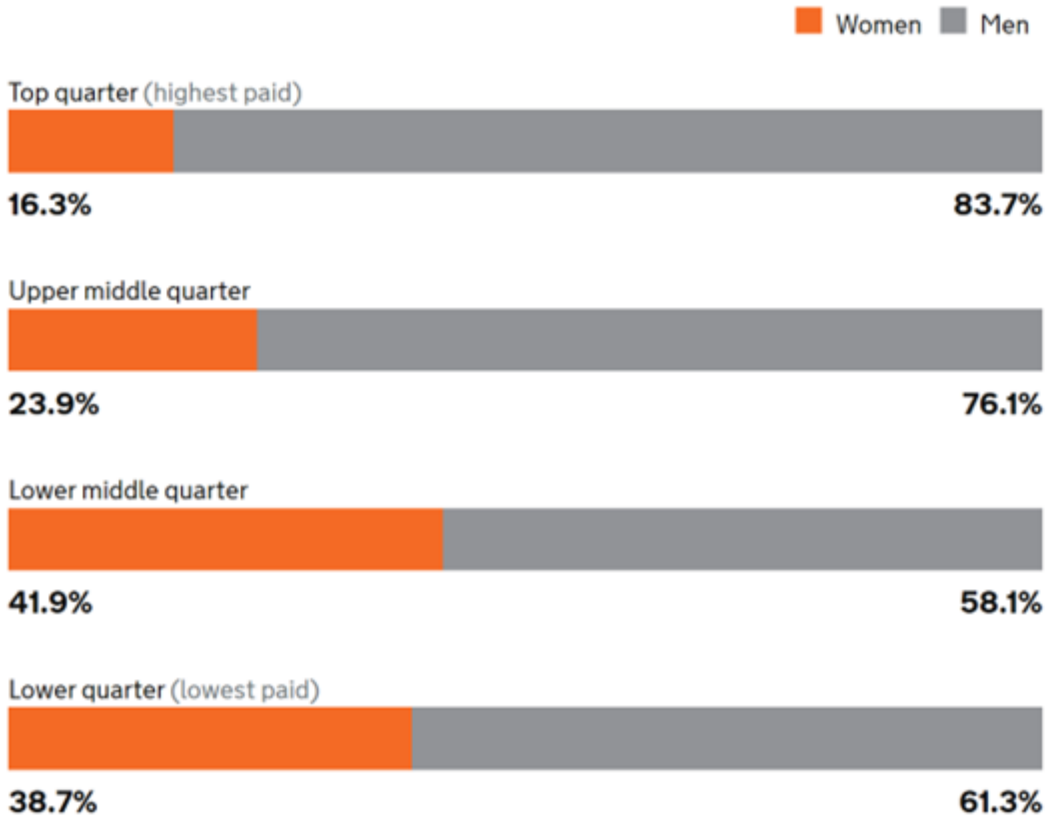
In this organisation, **women earn 69p** for every **£1** that men earn when comparing median hourly wages. Their median hourly wage is **31% lower** than men's.



When comparing mean hourly wages, women's mean hourly wage is **28% lower** than men's.

## Proportion of women in each pay quarter

In this organisation, women occupy **16.3%** of the highest paid jobs and **38.7%** of the lowest paid jobs.



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