

Visible Minorities

The portrayal of visible minority groups on English language Canadian television networks was examined in a 1980 content analysis study conducted by PEAC Developments for the Secretary of State, Multiculturalism Directorate. The findings included a breakdown of the ethnic identity of program characters which appeared during a typical week of prime time television on CBC and CTV. Less than 10 per cent of the actors in either major or minor roles were from visible minority groups. The visible minority groups represented were black, Southeast Asian and Native Canadian.

The percentage representation of visible minorities on Canadian television networks is probably higher today both on programs which originate in Canada and those from the United States. However, the majority of Canadian television viewers - 52 per cent - believe that visible minority groups continue to be underrepresented and that television programs should include more actors from racial minorities.

Francophones and Canadians whose home language is other than English or French feel most strongly about this issue. The majority of anglophones also agree but fewer are strongly convinced that television programs should include more actors from visible minority groups.

