

**GENDERED ADVERTISING
TO CHILDREN:
AN ANALYSIS OF DIFFERENCES IN
MALE- AND FEMALE-TARGETED
TELEVISION COMMERCIALS**

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CHILDREN'S MEDIA USE

- Increase in popularity of child-targeted TV programming and near universal access to televisions (Vandewater et al., 2007)
- 58% of children ages 0- to 8-years-old watch TV at least once a day (Common Sense Media, 2013)

IMPACT OF ADVERTISING ON CHILDREN

- Children are impressionable consumers but don't understand advertising intent until they reach 8-years-old (Kunkel et al., 2014)
- Children emulate what they see on screen

PRESENT STUDY

- Wanted to explore gender representation in commercials targeting boys and girls given today's social climate around gender inequity
- RQ1: How do networks differ in commercials targeting boys and girls?
- RQ2: How are spokescharacters used in commercials targeting boys compared to commercials targeting girls?
- RQ3: How is each character's gender represented in commercials targeting their own gender and commercials targeting the opposite gender?

METHOD

- **Initial Sample**
 - 467 total commercials from 20 episodes of children's programming
- **Coded Variables**
 - TV network
 - Spokescharacters
 - Number of characters & character gender
 - Male- or female-targeted
 - Product, color, pacing, voiceover, clothing & accessories
- **Final Sample**
 - 323 gender-targeted commercials aimed at children

RESULTS – RQ1

- Largest number of male-targeted commercials (n=84) was on Cartoon Network
- Largest number of female-targeted commercials (n=59) was on Nickelodeon
- Nickelodeon was the only network to feature more female- than male-targeted commercials (60% female-targeted)

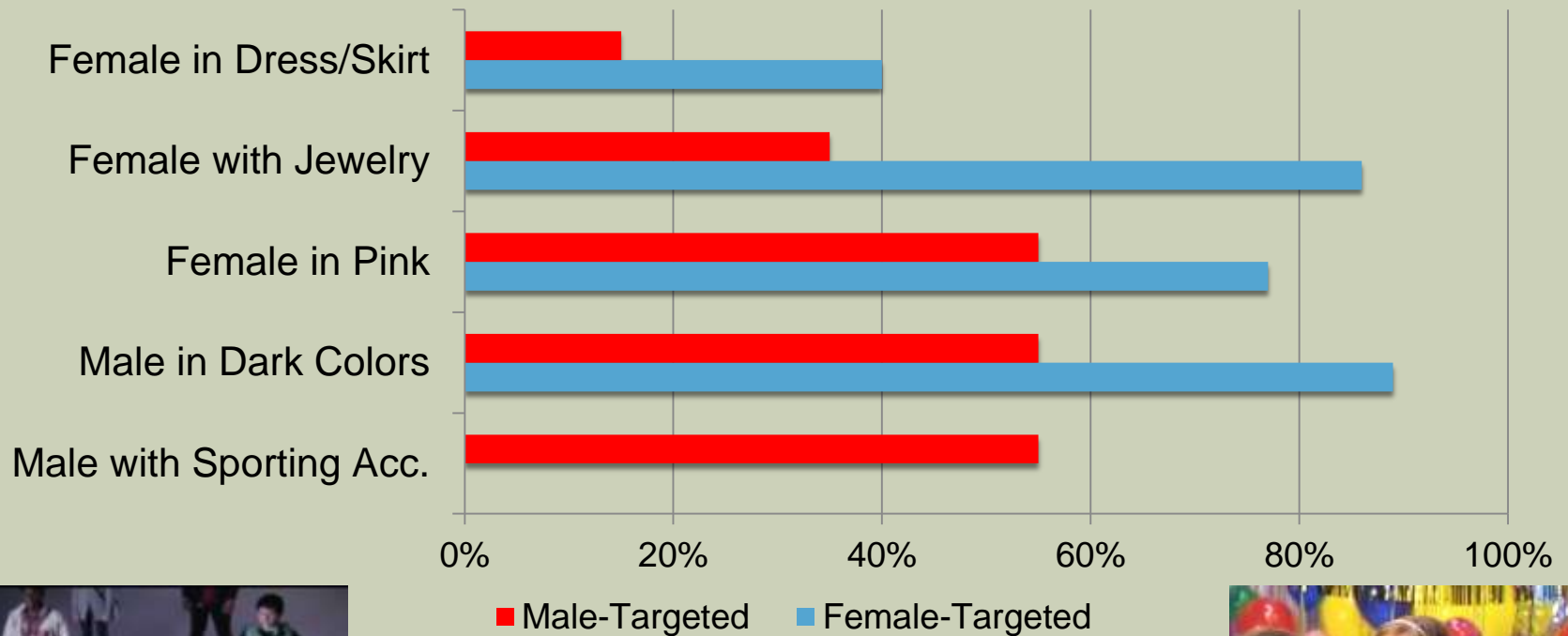
RESULTS – RQ2

- 76% of male-targeted commercials had zero female spokescharacters
- 91% of female-targeted commercials had zero male spokescharacters
- 90% of female-targeted commercials featured 2 or more female spokescharacters
- 70% of male-targeted commercials featured 2 or more male spokescharacters



RESULTS – RQ3

Spokescharacter Dress in Male- and Female-Targeted Commercials



IMPLICATIONS

- Male-targeted commercials feature boys, female-targeted commercials feature girls
- Boys are less likely to cross gender lines and girls are more likely to be stereotypically portrayed
- Despite prominent changes, there are strides that still need to be taken to present children in less stereotyped ways in the media

THANK YOU

