

## A Class Above: *Unmasking the Super Rich in Canadian News Media*



A Media Analysis Report

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Sam Walton (1918-1992), Founder of Walmart Stores Inc.

It is a well-established truth that our news media dwell at the crossroad between Canadian citizens and powerful figureheads. At this intersection in the public sphere the most fundamental images and information are produced, which in effect become an essential component of the general public consciousness. At the same time, much research has brought light to the fact that we live with unrealistic ideas about ourselves – especially when it comes to class. A myth of a classless society has emerged, whereby class has largely disappeared from our news dialogue (Kumar, 2004, p.6). It is therefore essential to examine the few places that class does present itself in our media to determine whether or not its surrounding issues are directly and honestly addressed.

Worrisome statistics explain the increasingly polarized categories of the poor and the rich in the highly concentrated Canadian media environment it is essential to look through the glass ceiling at the country's most powerful players: the super rich. How are these individuals represented within Canadian media?

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Canada is often considered a cornerstone of western democracy, yet the monopoly of corporate media owner

incorporate research into this question. In structure, *The Province* is a tabloid paper, seeking to attract a more suburban audience with middle to high incomes. Therefore, this paper captures the remainder of British Columbian audiences, a low income readership (CanWest Readership Profile, 2008).

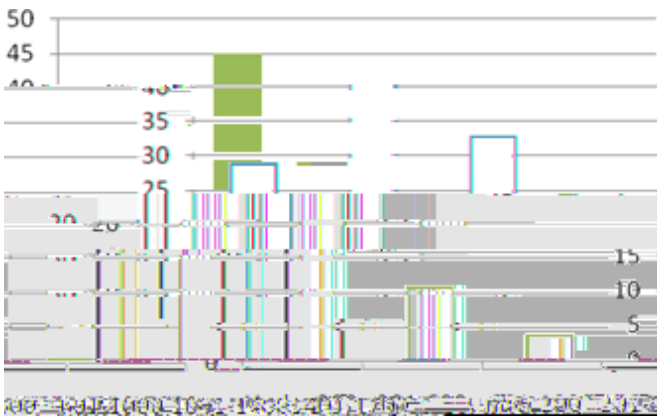
The target audience of these respective publications explains how certain issues and topics garner more or less media coverage. "News managers and producers often actively select stories on the basis of whether they believed the story would appeal to a certain demographic profile of a viewer," (Heider & Fuse, 2004, p. 95). As these major national and provincial dailies target an educated, professional and so-called "elite" audience over other demographics of the p<sup>o</sup> f

The statistics that demonstrate class inequalities i

income inequality that result could potentially be solved two ways: through government regulating or ameliorating our tax system, and through media appropriately covering and addressing this pressing inequality.

If our economy and our equality correlated appropriately, it then follows that everything ought to be fine. In a 2007 report, *The Rich and the Rest of Us*, it is clear that the Canadian economy is faring well. We are producing about \$1 trillion more in goods and services each year than we did in 1981 (Yalnizyan, 2007, p. 9). With the nint

reasons, mainly that they are the two most prominent publications in British Columbia.  
This is signi



larger structural factors that are involved with the individual's particular class (Kendall, 96). This more "intimate" style of framing results in readers feeling informed about

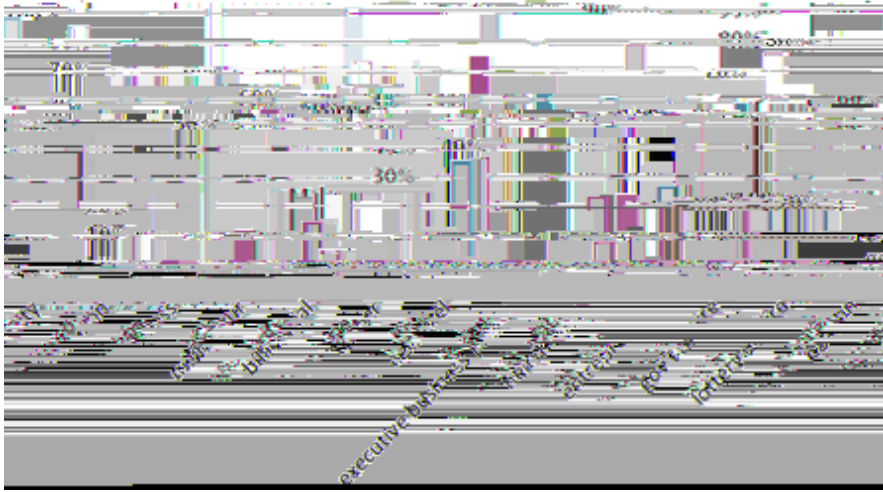


frequent section was D (14%), followed by A (8%). The B section typically features National and World News with in-depth analysis. It's A section, on the other hand, tends to have more of a local focus. That nearly half of items codeds



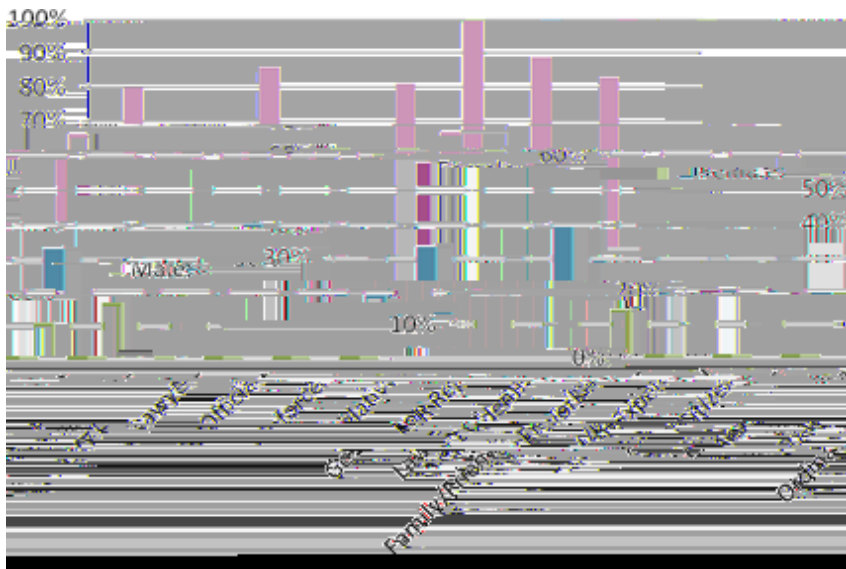
workers, and lawyers were also often cited as sources. Research documents, ordinary citizens, and family, friends or relatives of elite subjects were the least likely of

100%



Female

rings true to these findings (Hackett &



countries, it still falls victim to gender inequality, as “a report released in February 2010 by the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action and the Canadian Labour Congress documents how child care, pay equity and advocacy rights have lost ground since 2004,” (Cross, 2010, p. 4). According to recent research conducted by the Canadian Media Monitoring Project, these inequalities are reinforced through news media in their under-representation of women. This project monitored how women are portrayed in major Canadian newspapers, television news broadcasts, and radio across Canada in a single day. This study concluded that women are rarely



Despite the fact that our analysis yielded vast results that allowed for a thorough analysis and discussion involving news representation of the super rich, there were some limitations to our study. One major drawback to designing our initial research plan - setting up the search terms, defining coding protocols, deciding on how to define an elite class - was that there was no similar research article found on this specific topic. Therefore, t



occurs when media corporations are also given the responsibility to report on themselves: “for most corporate owners of the media, the news is above all else a business – a commodity to be bought and sold. And like most businesses, news corporations have interests to protect and secrets to guard,” (Hackett and Gruneau, 2000, p. 207). In terms of thematic critiques of the wealthy class as a whole, our analysis indicates that this is a narrative that does receive any medi- nM hd a n s ie

[www.GrowingGap.ca](http://www.GrowingGap.ca).

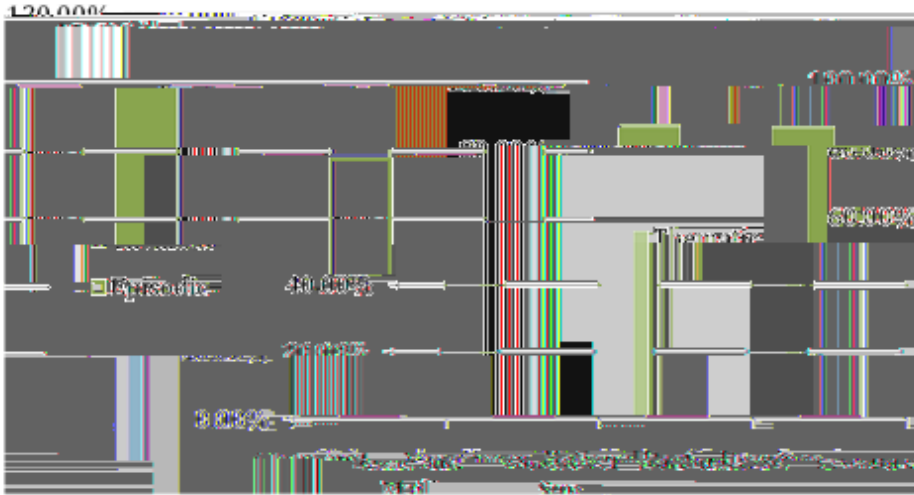
Mackenzie, H. (2010). A soft landing: Recession and Canada's highest paid CEM





Lifestyle

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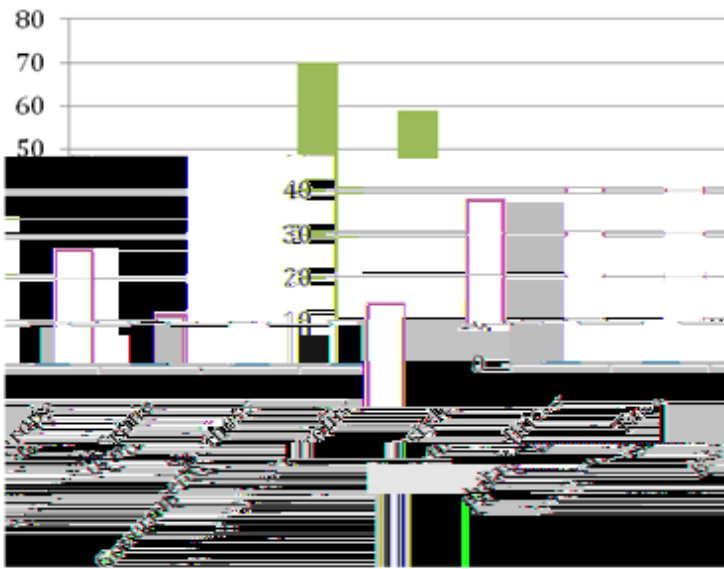


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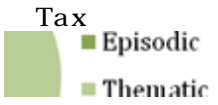
Story Topic

Story Topic Frequencies



Episodio

o i



Philanthropy

Gender and Story Topic

Crime



Business

Individual Profile



Lifestyle

Government or Politics

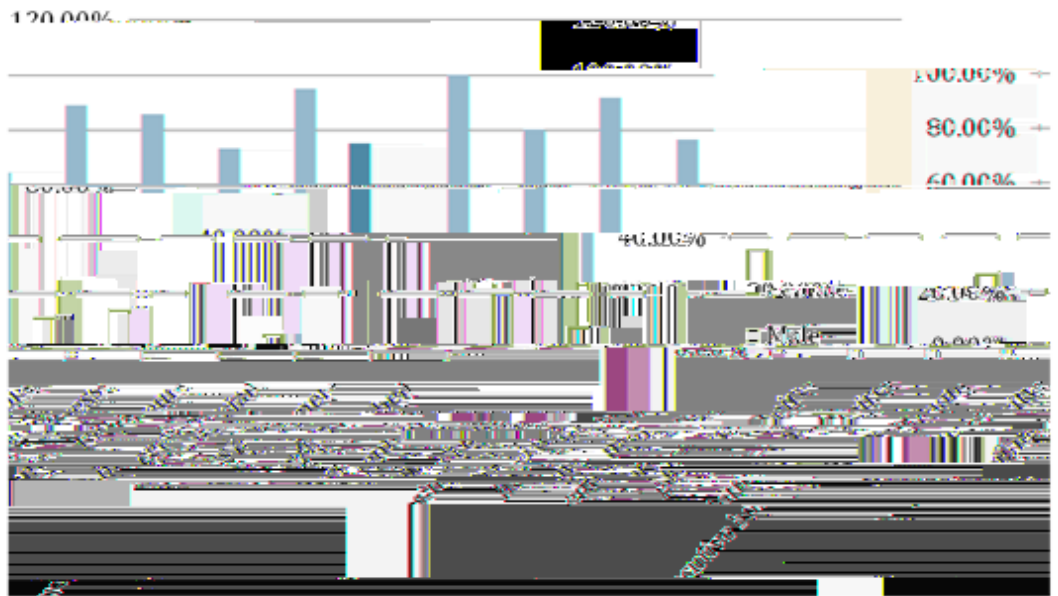


Tax



## Gender

Gender: Frequency of Elite Subject



Gender: ES First Label  
Gender of Elite Subjects Quotes



# Gender of Elite Subjects for Industry Affiliation

Female

Male



# Industry Affiliation

Industry Affiliat

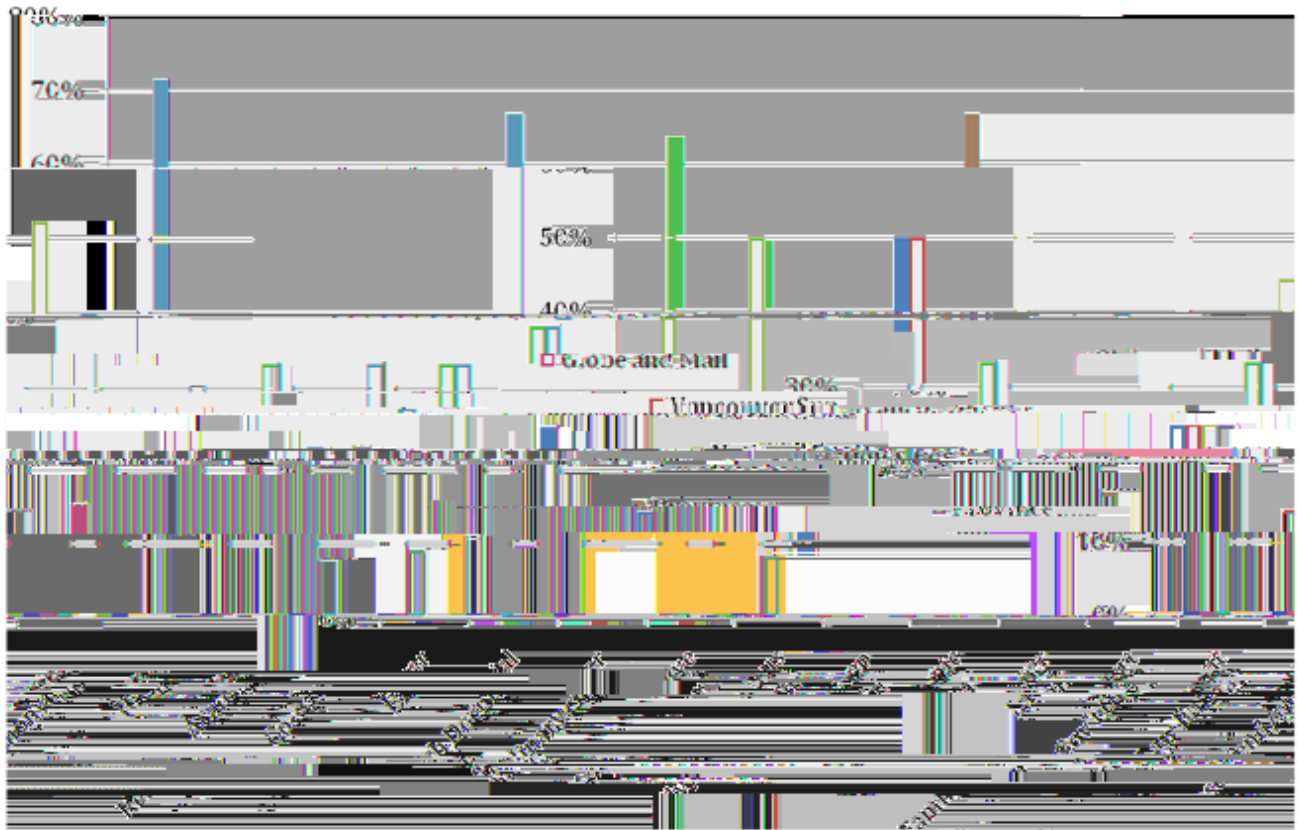


# Frequency



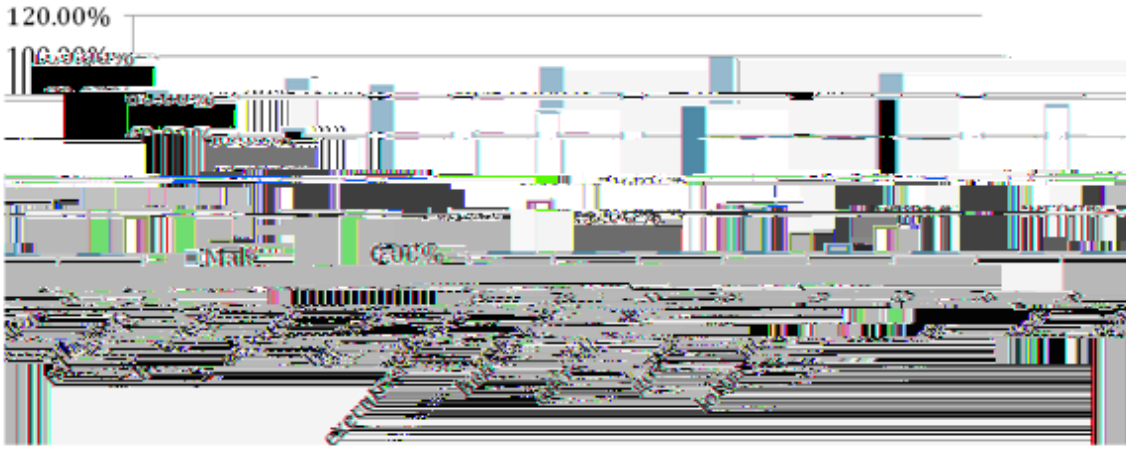
## Sources

Sources by Identifier and Publication



Sources by Position Identifier & Gender





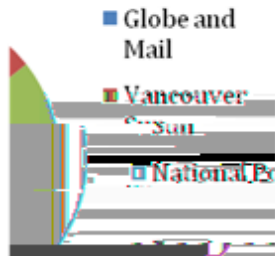
Percentage of Sources In Each Publication



Sources: Identifier and Publication

Lawyer

PR Representative



Law Enforcer



Government

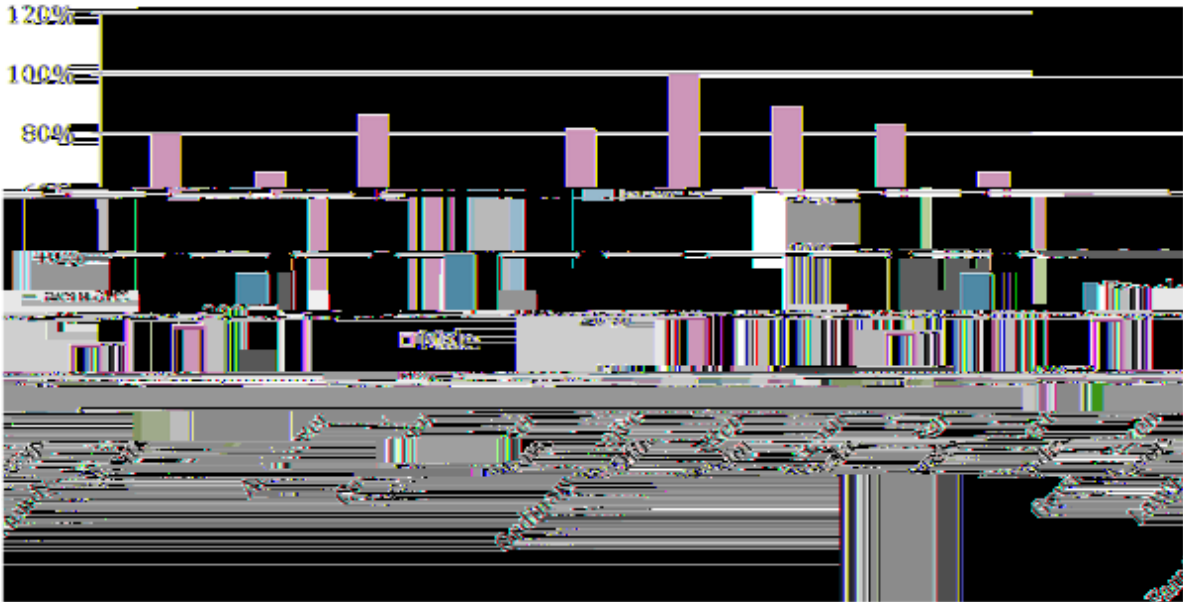
Family/Friend/Relative



Anonymous



AcademR



Source Identifier by Gender

Law Enforce

PR Representative



Government Official



Lawyer





## Appendix 2

## Coding Sheet

- Coder: \_\_\_\_\_
- Coded date: \_\_\_\_\_
- News Paper Source (check one):

The Globe & Mail       The National Post  
 The Vancouver Sun     The Province

- Date (dd/mm/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_
- Story Unit (code each story/unit by number): \_\_\_\_\_
- Page # (in the newspaper - as identified on a data sheet): \_\_\_0\_\_\_

q Yes (01)

q No (02)

- Does the article address taxation as a subject?

q Yes (01)

q No (02)

- Industry Affiliation (code for primary industry affiliation):  
(Check one of the following to indicate general category)

q Entertainment/Arts (01)

q Sports (04)

q Other (state): (99)

q Corporation (02)

q No Industry Affiliation (05)

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q Government (03)

q Unsure/Unknown (05)

- Story Scope (code for the widest geographical scope that applies to the story):  
(Check one of the following to indicate general category)

q Local (01)

q International (04)

q Other (state): (99)

q National (02)

q Unsure/Unknown (05)

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- Country Location (code for the country/geographical location that the story is reporting on):  
(Check one of the following to indicate general category)

q ~~Canada~~ (01) -----

q Asian Country (05)

q ~~Unsure/Unknown~~ (09)

q Un/

0

/

/



q Yes (01)                      q No (02)

- Does the article mention donations and charitable spending?

q Yes (01)                      q No (02)

- Does the article mention taxation expenses?

q Yes (01)                      q No (02)

- Does the article mention spending by the government or by governmental officials?

q Yes (01)                      q No (02)

- Mention any other spending that does not fall into any of these categories: \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECTS

- Gender of the primary elite subject:  
(Check one of the following to indicate general category)

q Female (01)                      q Unsure/Unknown (03)  
 q Male (02)                        q Other (state): (99)  
                   a                        \_\_\_a\_\_\_\_\_

- Is the primary subject referred to by their first name or last name? (Coders should choose how the primary elite subject is most often referred to (Name/title): C2 1 / CCCCCCT)  
(Check one of the following to indicate general category)

q First name only (01)    q First and last name (03)  
 q Las

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- Is the PES directly quoted?

q Yes (01)

q No (02)

- Gender of the secondary elite subject:  
(Check one of the following to indicate general category)

q Fema

q Last name only (02)    q Signifiers or labels of  
wealth (04)

- First Label of the TES in the story

q Lawyer (01)

q Friend/Family/Relative (05)

q Expert (09)

q Governm

Coding Protocol – Representation of the Super Rich In Canadian Media Project

\*\* Coders

hierarchies. Story units that are deemed political will be either governmental or business-related.  
Taxation: Code if the article focuses on any issue

