

A Study of Gender  
Representation on  
Canadian Radio  
(2013-2023)

BY Jada Watson  
WITH THE COLLABORATION OF  
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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
WOMEN IN MUSIC CANADA AND  
THE NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE



This study emerges from the ongoing work of Dr. Jada Watson through her research program, SongData. It is the fourth study she's done on Canadian radio, and the first to study and compare representation across all radio formats. Her previous work has focused on Country radio and programming on CKOI-FM in Montréal, QC.

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**This study is dedicated to the Canadian women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour  
who have for too long been denied their share of the air.**

— Dr. Jada Watson —





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# INTRODUCTION

In March 2019, Stéphanie Vallet wrote an article in *La Presse* about the declining presence of women on *Billboard's* (all genre) Canadian Hot 100 chart. They had crunched the numbers at *La Presse* and discovered that songs by women had declined from 41% in 2008 to a 5-year average of 30% from 2012 to 2016 and then to a decade low of 16% in 2018.<sup>1</sup> Questioning the possible role of radio in the declining presence of women on this chart, Vallet spoke with a Bell Media music director, who told her that gender is not a factor in programming. The results, however, suggest otherwise through the decline of songs by women in the industry ecosystem via one of the most important means for building connection between an artist's creative work, audiences, and the market.

Representation within the industry was certainly not a new topic of conversation in 2019. Indeed, gender inequity has long been an issue in the popular music industry and Canadian women have played a major role on an international stage in highlighting these issues. Perhaps most notable is the work of singer-songwriter

Sarah McLachlan who in 1997 built the community-oriented Lilith Fair concert tour to spotlight women. Launched in response to a decades' old practice of radio and concert programmers refusing to feature two women in a row (on station playlists and on stages), McLachlan brought together women from across all genres and proved to the industry that women could fill venues, sell albums, and do so alongside (back-to-back) all while championing each other.<sup>2</sup> To say that Lilith Fair has left a mark on musicians and fans that experienced it – whether in-person at the festival or through the three volume live album compilations – would be an understatement. It lives in collective memories as a period of community and comradery, of safety and security in entertainment spaces, and of creativity and productivity.<sup>3</sup> It's also often the moment writers point to when speaking about a period in which women ruled the airwaves, the charts, the market.<sup>4</sup>

Two decades later, the conversation was unfolding again.<sup>5</sup> In Canada, artists were speaking out about the lack of women on festival stages,<sup>6</sup> addressing the absence of women in production and engineering roles,<sup>7</sup> and the decline of women in Juno nominations.<sup>8</sup> Others addressed the history of rampant sexism, harassment, and abuse within the industry.<sup>9</sup>

Like McLachlan, artists were using their platforms to create opportunities for emerging women in the industry.<sup>10</sup> Critically, this conversation has expanded to include discussion about the systemic barrier faced by Indigenous, Black, and people of colour within the music industry, moving toward an intersectional understanding of the representation gap in Canada.<sup>11</sup> Vallet's article, then, marked an important moment of reflection on representation at a national level in the popular music industry at a time when artists themselves were (again) questioning the absence of women in the industry and the lack of opportunities for them to build and maintain sustainable careers in Canada.

Much of the attention in Canada has centred on festival lineups and award nominations, with limited attention to one of the key entry points for new music in the industry: radio airplay. Certainly radio has not been ignored entirely within this discussion. Artists have relayed the challenges of having their music added to station playlists and studies of representation on Canadian Country format radio have highlighted the declining presence of women within the format's programming between 2005 and 2018, a topic that resurfaced in February 2020 when Pure Country in Kingston, Ontario

1 Stéphanie Vallet, "Palmarès - Où sont passées les femmes ?" *La Presse* (8 March 2018).

2 Donna Freydkin, "Lilith Fair: Lovely, Lively and Long Overdue," *CNN.com* (28 July 1998).

3 Jessica Hopper with Sasha Geffen and Jenn Pelly, "Building a Mystery: An Oral History of Lilith Fair," *Vanity Fair* (30 September 2019).

4 Marc Lafrance, Lara Worcester, and Lori Burns, "Gender and the Billboard Top 40 Charts between 1997 and 2007," *Popular Music & Society* 34/5 (2011).

5 While a comprehensive list of writing the growth of the conversation is outside of the scope of the conversation, we have compiled a list of key interviews, research, and organisations participating globally in the push for equity and diversity in the music industry. See the Resources list at the end of the study.

6 Read the open letter by Mélanie Bouley, Stéphanie Boulay, Ariane Brunet, Catherine Durand, Ariane Moffatt, Safia Nolin and Amylie, "Un talent est un talent, peu importe le sexe," *Le Devoir* (2 June 2017); Teghan Beaudette, "'You're always erased': Electronic Musician Tired of Excuses for Lack of Women at Festivals," *CBC News* (3 June 2017). Laurianne Croteau exposed the absence of women on music festival stages in Québec that summer, lining up stations from the highest representation of women on stages (40% at POP Montréal) to the lowest (4% at Montebello Rock). See "Festivals de musique québécois : où sont les femmes ?" *Radio-Canada* (1 August 2019). This issue returned to headlines in 2023 in Andrea Lubeck, "Trop d'hommes (et pas assez de femmes) dans les festivals punk, dénonce une page Facebook," *24 heures* (27 November 2023).

7 "Film about Gender Gap in Music Industry Screens at Reel 2 Reel Festival," *CBC News* (3 April 2018).

8 As in Tegan and Sara's Open letter on gender diversity at the Junos (17 February 2017); Melody Lau, "Why Do Women Make Up Only 1/3 of Juno Nominees?" *CBC Music* (19 January 2019). See also Zulekha Nathoo, "Juno Awards Host Sarah McLachlan on the Music Industry's 'Unspoken Rule' She Battled to Succeed," *CBC News* (10 March 2019).

9 Jennifer Van Evra, "'Where are all the women?' A new Canadian Doc Looks at Sexism in the Music Biz," *CBC* (6 April 2017); *CBC News*. "Film about Gender Gap in Music Industry Screens at Reel 2 Reel Festival," *CBC News* (3 April 2017); Jim Wilson, "Radio Personality Claims Toxic Culture at Former Employment," *Canadian HRReporter* (25 May 2022); Karen Bliss, "Women say Top Canadian Radio Promoter is a Longtime Sexual Predator," *Billboard* (26 July 2023).

10 Nigel Hunt, "How Lights, IsKwé and other women are making change in the Canadian music industry," *CBC News* (24 March 2018).

11 Canadian Live Music Association, "Closing the Gap: Impact and Representation of Indigenous, Black, and People of Colour Live Music workers in Canada" (March 2022).

announced it would program songs by women at 50% of their playlists.<sup>12</sup> In 2021, a study by Musique Bleue found that on French-language stations like CKOI, Énergie, Rouge FM or Rythme FM, the proportion of songs by women fluctuated between just 2% and 30%.<sup>13</sup>

Even though streaming has become an important tool through which artists distribute their music today, radio still holds a central role within the industry for music discovery. Radio airplay has long been the primary pathway to market charts, which in turn leads to opportunities to participate in festivals, to tour, and to eligibility for industry awards. Within the industry, then, systems of production, distribution, and recognition are intimately linked, with radio at the centre of the network.

**SHARE THE AIR** focuses on radio as an entry point to discovery and exposure within the industry and examines gender representation across six radio formats in Canada. Taking an intersectional approach, this study focuses on the rate of play for songs by women and Trans\* artists between 2013 and 2023 to investigate how often their songs are played across Country, Alternative Rock, Active Rock, Top 40, Mainstream Adult Contemporary, and Hot Adult Contemporary radio. Shared in six chapters, the findings offer a portrait of representation in commercial terrestrial radio and the low rate at which songs by women and Trans\* artists are programmed. These findings suggest not only that they are underrepresented, but that Canadian women in particular are disadvantaged within the industry ecosystem through a practice that prioritises songs by men within compliance of Canadian Content regulations. This report is shared with the goal of calling in members of the industry community to acknowledge inequity in radio programming and encouraging meaningful conversation about developing

ethical and just practices so that women and Trans\* artists can build sustainable careers in Canada.

## Study Objectives

This report shares results of a study investigating representation across six mainstream radio formats in Canada, focusing on the rate of airplay for songs by women and Trans\* artists through an intersectional lens between 2013 and 2023. The project draws on two datasets for each format. The first includes the top 150 most played songs as aggregated and tabulated by Mediabase for each format's year-end airplay reports for the 11-year study period. The second dataset includes the weekly reports of all songs played in 2023. Using these two datasets enables the ability to discover longer-term trends on the format. In particular, they offer context for a deeper investigation of programming in 2023, also generated by Mediabase, that includes evaluation of not just how much airplay songs by women and Indigenous, Black and artists of colour received in 2023, but also the time of day at which their songs are heard. It also allows for exploration of the rate at which songs by these artists are retained within recurrent and gold catalogue programming.

In addition to these questions about the identity of the artists responsible for the songs played on each format and station included in this study, analysis will also consider representation on French language stations in the Mainstream AC and Hot AC formats. These two formats were chosen because of the significant number of reporting stations monitored by Mediabase, which enabled the development of portfolios of French-language stations. This data will facilitate a greater understanding of representation on French-language stations as it pertains to gender identity, race and ethnicity, and federal policy regarding Canadian content.

## Radio Programming

Radio plays a critical role in the music industry ecosystem. Since the early twentieth century, radio has been central to the recording industry's distribution strategies. And this relationship has been mutually beneficial: through radio, labels gained a mechanism for advertising new music, while radio gained access to material to program around advertisements. Even though streaming has become an important tool for music distribution, radio still remains foundational for artist exposure and discovery and indeed influences the algorithms underpinning digital service provider recommender systems.

While a detailed discussion of this history is outside of the scope of this report, it is important from the outset to acknowledge the influence that radio has on shaping the industry and careers of artists. Songs that receive radio support have historically had a greater chance for commercial success in the industry's mainstream and, as a result, artists careers have long often been determined by whether or not they were supported by radio. Radio airplay offers a pathway for artists to develop their fanbase and leads to opportunities within the industry, including exposure via curated streaming playlists, industry charts, festivals, touring, award nominations, and more. The branches of the industry – production, distribution, performance, and recognition – are deeply intertwined within the popular music industry, with radio acting as gatekeeper to industry opportunity. This is true for radio in all parts of the world, including Canada.<sup>14</sup>

12 Jada Watson, Gender representation on Canadian country format radio: A study of published reports from 2005-2018, SongData Reports (September 2019); Connie Thiessen, Study finds men outplaying women on Canadian country radio 8.7 to 1, Broadcast dialogue (11 September 2019); Connie Thiessen, "Kingston's Pure Country Commits to Week of Equal Play," Broadcast Dialogue (20 January 2020).

13 "Les artistes féminines boudées par les radios québécoises, selon Musique bleue," Radio-Canada (8 March 2021). See also a study of the top 100 songs played on CKOI-FM between 2010 and 2020, Jada Watson, "Changer le monde un hit à la fois? Programmation et diversité à CKOI-FM," Les Cahiers 22/1-2 (2021), p. 69-81.

14 See the list of resources at the end of the report for more on the history of radio and the music industry in Canada.

## Daypart Programming

The time of day at which songs are played is of critical importance to the development of a musician's career. The 24-hour cycle is divided into five dayparts at radio:

- › **Overnights (0:00 to 6:00)**
- › **Morning Drive (6:00 to 10:00)**
- › **Midday (10:00 to 15:00)**
- › **Afternoon Drive (15:00 to 19:00)**
- › **Evenings (19:00 to 24:00)**

The three daytime dayparts – Morning Drive, Midday, and Afternoon Drive – are the most critical for exposure as they are the periods with the highest rate of listenership. Fewer songs tend to be played in these dayparts because they are programmed around news segments, specialty programming, talk-radio, and advertisements. Thus, programming across these periods are prime for musicians who are vying for exposure and chart contention.

The Overnight and Evening periods frame the day, with a higher percentage of songs programmed not just in part to their slightly longer duration, but also the reduced amount of news and specialty programming (features, interviews, etc.). But these are also periods with the lowest rate of listenership, as they coincide with times during the day that individuals may find other pathways to entertainment (television, movies, socialising) or are sleeping. While desirable to be programmed, in general, these are not ideal dayparts for new songs and new artists, as they are less likely to be heard by listeners.

## Current, Recurrent, and Gold Songs

Radio airplay is divided into three different song “types”. Typically, stations prioritise **current singles** in their top-programmed songs. These are new releases from artists that are vying for chart contention.

The second type are **recurrent tracks** – songs that are still new (recent), but are past their peak position and declining in chart position. This is a natural part of a song's radio lifecycle (songs that go up, will always come down in playlisting), but is governed by rules that are meant to keep weekly charts moving and avoid what might be termed a “bottleneck” situation when a song declines slowly from its chart peak. Within Mediabase, the recurrent rule states that “Songs trending down in spins below No. 10 are removed after 20 weeks.” This means that songs that are outside of the Top 20 and have for consecutive weeks been losing spins and are also entering their twentieth week on the chart will be removed from the chart and shifted into recurrent status.<sup>15</sup> Recurrent airplay is an important transitionway for songs, as those retained within recurrent programming are often later moved into longer-term programming spots in a station's **gold catalogue**. This gold status denotes older hits (typically more than two years), songs that are “canonical” to the format and have been retained by a station for long-term programming.<sup>16</sup> While there is no hard and fast rule, songs are generally moved to gold 18-24 months after their release.

Stations play a blend of these songs, with the smallest percentage tending to be for recurrent tracks. Depending on whether a format leans toward contemporary or classic music programming the distribution between current singles

and gold catalogue songs differs. Some formats (like Country), program a near-even distribution blend of current and gold songs, Alternative, Active Rock, and Mainstream AC lean gold in their programming.

## Canadian Programming Regulations

What makes the Canadian radio industry different from those in other countries are the federal regulations that guide programming. Canadian content regulations were instituted in 1971 through the *Broadcasting Act*, which was developed in response to a growing concern at the lack of support for Canadian artists.<sup>17</sup> Research shows that in the late 1960s, just 4% to 7% of songs broadcasted on terrestrial radio were by Canadian artists, with the remaining songs by musical imports from the USA and the UK.<sup>18</sup> This practice made it difficult for Canadian artists to make a career in the country. In January 1971, the government passed the *Broadcasting Act*, which outlined Canadian content regulations that would be regulated by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). These regulations were designed to carve out space for Canadian music on AM and (later) FM radio, governing the minimum percentage of songs aired and their time of day – to ensure that Canadian songs are not restricted in the overnights. Since of 1998, stations have been required to play 35% Canadian content between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.<sup>19</sup>

To qualify as Canadian content, it is not enough for an artist to be a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident. The CRTC defines a Canadian musical selection via regulations that use four elements to determine qualification: Music, Artist,

15 Front Side, “Think Tank: What does ‘Recurrent’ Mean?” (n.d.).

16 Sarah Osborne, “Categorizing a Music Library,” Live 365 (20 October 2017).

17 Canada, “Chapter XVIII: Radio broadcasting,” Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences: Report (Ottawa, ON: King's Printer, 1951).

18 Paul Audley, *Canada's Cultural Industries: Broadcasting, Publishing, Records and Film* (Toronto, Ontario: J. Lorimer in association with the Canadian Institute for Economic Policy, 1983); Eric Spalding, “Turning point: The origins of Canadian content requirement for commercial radio,” *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 50/30 (2016): 669-690.

19 Canada, *Broadcasting Act* (S.C. 1991, c.11). See also Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, “Content made by Canadians,” Gov. of Canada (last modified 7 December 2022); “The history of Canadian broadcast regulation,” History of Canadian broadcasting, Canadian communications foundation (2020).

Performance and Lyrics (known as MAPL).<sup>20</sup> To qualify as “Canadian content”, a song must fulfil at least two of the MAPL conditions:

- › **Music** - the music must be composed entirely by a Canadian;
- › **Artist** - the music or lyrics must be performed primarily by a Canadian;
- › **Performance** - the musical work is a live performance that is either (1) recorded in its entirety in Canada or (2) performed in its entirety in Canada and broadcast live in Canada;
- › **Lyrics** - the lyrics are written entirely by a Canadian.<sup>21</sup>

This system, as the regulation defining a Canadian song states, “is designed primarily to increase exposure of Canadian musical performers, lyricists and composers to Canadian artists. It also strives to strengthen the Canadian music industry, including the creative and production components.” But even still, there are plenty of songs recorded by Canadian artists that do not comply with these regulations. And so even if Canadian audiences gain exposure to Canadian artists via radio, there are songs that do not count toward a station’s licensing.

In addition to the “Canadianness” of musical works programmed, French-language stations are governed by an additional regulation. These regulations also govern language to protect the presence of the French language on commercial popular music radio.<sup>22</sup> The regulations for a Category 2 popular music station stipulate that stations must

broadcast at least 35% Canadian music, and that French-language stations must devote at least 65% of their broadcast content to French-language selections. Furthermore, these stations must ensure that at least 55% of popular music broadcast between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday to Friday, consists of selections in French.<sup>23</sup>

French language stations are included in this study to offer a deeper understanding of representation on Canadian radio, but linguistic representation does not factor into the present analysis. We aim in future studies to consider more deeply the French-language policy on programming at these stations, and aim to include in future work community radio stations which play a critical role in defining regional identity. While linguistic analysis is not an analytic frame here, the results do offer an opportunity to reflect on representation from the perspective of language. Through analysis of the most played artists within the portfolios developed for analysing Mainstream AC and Hot AC format radio, we are able to reflect on which artists are prioritised in programming and how language factors into these results. Through this study, then, we begin building a framework for better understanding of how federal policies impact artists that are marginalised within the Canadian music industry and a foundation for future work.

20 Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, “The MAPL system – defining a Canadian song,” Gov. of Canada (last modified 7 December 2022).

21 CRTC, “The MAPL system.” The MAPL system does have four special cases wherein a musical work may also qualify as Canadian content (even if not meeting two of the four conditions), including if the work (1) was recorded before January 1971 and meets only one of the conditions; (2) is an instrumental performance of a composition written or composed by a Canadian; (3) is a performance of an instrumental work composed by a Canadian; and (4) was performed live or recorded after 1 September 1991. More details on these cases can be read at the link above.

22 Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, “French-language music and Canadian content on radio,” Gov. of Canada (last modified 7 December 2022).

23 See Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, “Canadian content requirements for music on Canadian Radio,” Gov. of Canada (last modified 7 December 2022); CRTC, “French-language music and Canadian content on radio.” Contrary to Canadian content, the CRTC’s Radio Regulation (1986) does not currently define what qualifies as a French-language musical selection. This being said, the CRTC clarified its practice in 2015, stating that musical selections are considered French vocal music when more than 50% of the selection’s vocal content is in French. See CRTC, “Notice of Hearing: Review of the regulatory framework for French-language vocal music applicable to the French-language commercial radio sector,” Broadcasting Notice of Consultation CRTC 2015-318, Gov. of Canada (last modified 20 July 2015), and CRTC, “Commercial radio policy framework review,” Broadcasting Notice of Proceeding CRTC 2020-25, Gov. of Canada (last modified 9 July 2021).



# STUDY METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this study is drawn from the lead researcher's work on radio, which was developed through her SongData research project. Quantitative in nature, this study uses descriptive statistics to explore gender representation on Canadian radio stations. These questions centre on the percentage of airplay for songs by women and Trans\* artists, through an intersectional lens, that appear within the top 150 played on the 6 formats each year between 2013 and 2023 and all songs played in 2023.

This study takes an intersectional approach to analysing representation, a framework that considers not just gender identity, but also race and ethnicity of the artists whose songs are programmed. This study is also concerned with the linguistic identity of performers, addressed through the final discussion of the top-played artists within the French language station portfolios developed for this study. Intersectionality is based on the fundamental understanding that identity cannot be fully defined via a single lens of gender or race or class (or others) alone. In her foundational work, legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw highlighted multidimensionality of identity and the ways in which individuals experience multiple forms of oppression

simultaneously in their daily and professional lives.<sup>1</sup> Gender identity remains at the fore of this report, but the inclusion of race and ethnicity of artists and (where possible) language in which songs are performed in this discussion affords a deeper understanding of the dynamics of power and oppression based on the overlapping identity of artists included – and excluded – from programming on radio.

Intersectionality is critical for studies of social and cultural systems like the music industry – a system racially segregated in the early 1900s, built through genre classifications that are racially coded and remain structural poles around which the industry continues to revolve today.<sup>2</sup> The racial segregation of the industry has typically been discussed within a US framework through the division of the recording industry into Hillbilly and Race records and the chart and radio formatting systems that followed in the mid-1900s. But these systems are not unique to the US industry and the genre classifications that separates musicians, their recordings, and radio formats south of the 49th parallel is embedded in the industry in Canada, as well.<sup>3</sup> In Canada, as in the USA, the systems navigated by artists include not just radio programming, but it also the legislative systems that govern programmatic decision-making, and charting systems that regulate movement onto and up charts and their pathways out of them. Each of these systems become barriers to entry for artists that are marginalised with industries, and overlap in ways that exacerbate those barriers.

Within this structural framework other forms of oppressions exist that have for the last century prioritised the careers of cisgendered, heterosexual white men over all others across all genres and formats. Intersectionality allows us not just to understand representation in a more nuanced way, but it also allows us to consider how forms of discrimination (racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, etc.) overlap within this complex industry of overlapping systems and provides a starting point for asking questions about inequitable policies, practices, and conventions.

To undertake this study, the research team manually researched each artist in the datasets to identify their ensemble type, gender identity, race and ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Once all artists were identified in the datasets, they were analysed with the use of RapidMiner, a data-mining tool, in order to answer questions about the rate and time of day of programming, as well as the rate of retention within a station's playlist through analysis of recurrent and gold catalogue programming.

## Data Sources

Data for this project was extracted from Mediabase, a radio-monitoring service that tracks airplay across reporting stations. Mediabase aggregates data for each format, generating both annual and weekly reports that tabulate airplay for all songs played. This report uses both annual and weekly reports to facilitate analysis of

<sup>1</sup> The theoretic concept of Intersectionality has a long history in the writings and work of Black feminist advocates and scholars with roots the writings of the Combahee River Collective in the 1970s and in Sojourner Truth's foundational "Ain't I A Woman?" (1863). The term itself was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in her groundbreaking legal scholarship in the late 1980s. See Kimberlé Crenshaw, "The Urgency of Intersectionality," TedTalk (2016).

<sup>2</sup> Karl Hagstrom Miller, *Segregating Sound: Inventing Folk and Pop Music in the Age of Jim Crow* (Duke UP, 2010); David Brackett, *Categorizing Sound: Genre and Twentieth-Century Popular Music* (UC Berkeley Press, 2016); Michael T. Bertrand, *Southern History Remixed: On Rock'n'Roll and the Dilemma of Race* (UP of Florida, 2024).

<sup>3</sup> Leslie Norville (creator.), *Episode 3: North Beats, Black Life: Untold Stories* (2023). See also Michael Barclay, *Hearts on Fire: Six Years that Changed Canadian Music: 2000-2005* (ECW Press, 2022).

longer-term trends in representation on each format, as well as deep analysis of weekly reports for 2023 to gain a better sense of the programming practices on 6 radio formats in Canada:

- › **Country** (35 stations)
- › **Alternative Rock** (13 stations)
- › **Active Rock** (18 stations)
- › **Top 40** (22 stations)
- › **Mainstream Adult Contemporary** (32 stations) + a portfolio of 6 French language stations
- › **Hot Adult Contemporary** (29 stations) + a portfolio of 5 French language stations

**YEAR-END REPORTS** of the Top 150 songs played each year from 2013 to 2023 were extracted from Mediabase, with one report per year for each of the 6 formats (11 reports each, 66 overall). These reports include metadata for the artist/ensemble and featured artist, as well as the song title, label, and total spins received in the calendar year.

**WEEKLY REPORTS** including all songs played in 2023 were extracted from Mediabase as well. Two separate reports were downloaded for each week on each of the 6 formats. One report contained all current singles and recurrent tracks, and another of all gold songs. This amounted to 104 reports for each format, and 624 reports overall. The two report-types were cleaned separately and then merged. These reports include the same information regarding the artist/ensemble and featured artist, song title, and label, but also include metadata designating the song type (current rankings, recurrent tracks, and gold songs), CanCon status, and the number of spins for each of the five radio programming dayparts.

Given that the format reports tabulate data mainly from English-language stations in Canada, we curated for this study two **PORTFOLIOS FOR FRENCH-LANGUAGE STATIONS** containing weekly reports from 2023. Within Mediabase, there is a function to build a portfolio of monitored stations and extract aggregated data for the group. These reports include the overall rank of each song within the portfolio (akin to chart ranking), as well as the artists' names, song titles, total accumulated

spins, and a breakdown by station. This data can then be downloaded by day part. We built two portfolios – one including 6 French-language Mainstream AC stations and another of 5 French-language Hot AC stations – and downloaded one report per daypart for each week in 2023 (amounting to 260 weekly reports). The reports were compiled first by daypart, and then all dayparts compiled into a full portfolio dataset.

Taken together, the year-end and weekly reports offer a more detailed picture of representation on Canadian radio, with a focus on French language stations within the two Adult Contemporary formats studied.

## Data Preparation

Once extracted from Mediabase, the data was prepared for curation prior to analysis by the lead researcher. The data extracted from Mediabase often includes inconsistent spellings that require manual correction. For example, artists' names are oftentimes inconsistently spelled: the data input could be different between songs by a single artist or there might be alternate spellings of artists' names (including instances of a first initial with a family name, just a family name, or a truncated version of a band name – this is especially true for collaborative records). Sometimes, the featured artist on a collaborative recording is listed with the song title instead of within the artist field, requiring the manual separation of that data and its rejoining with the song's lead artist. To ensure consistency in the dataset, each artist's name was evaluated and corrected when some alternate spelling was input.

The same was true for song titles, which are often cut off in the system if they contain too many characters. This means that every row of data in all datasets was manually reviewed during the data preparation phase of this project to ensure that every artist name and song title for each dataset for all 6 formats (yearend and weekly reports) and the 2 French-language portfolios was corrected to eliminate duplicates and other typographical errors.

## Data Coding

The second step for data preparation entailed the creation of a list of artists with songs played on each format to enable biographic description of the solo artists, groups, and collaborations. This amounted to research on the identity of 13,926 artists. This research was required to define the **ensemble type** (solo, band, collaboration), **gender identity**, and **race and ethnicity** of each artist with songs played across all 6 formats and 2 French-language portfolios included in the study.

In order to approach this project through an intersectional lens, we need to have as much biographic information about artists as possible. To do so, each artist, ensemble, and collaboration was researched to be able to identify the gender-identity and race/ethnicity of all artists (solo, band, collaboration) in the dataset. The research method used in SongData projects prioritises identity based on the terms used by artists themselves, which are identified through manually researching each artist, reading biographies, interviews, articles, and any other media that facilitates the identification of an artist's gender identity, race and ethnicity. In absence of clear statements by the artist about gender identity, pronouns used in biographies and interviews are used. The resulting analysis, then, shares the codes as discovered through research of the artists, rather than forcing a term on to artists.

It is critical to note that gender identity is fluid and for many changes over time. This is taken into consideration in this analysis, where an artist whose songs appear in the earlier years of the yearend reports may identify in a different way in later years. In these instances, the artist's gender identity at the time in which the song is played is considered. For instance, if an artist identifies as a man from 2014 to 2018, then songs that appear in the yearend reports in those years will be coded as such. If they then identify as transgender, nonbinary or genderqueer from 2019 to the end of the study period, they are coded appropriately.



Biographic description is done in two ways:

1. **ensemble level** (for the solo artist or full ensemble)
2. **artist level** (by lead vocalist heard on recorded musical work. This coding impacts bands/collabs. as well as multiethnic bands/collabs., as it accounts for the lead voices rather than the full group).

This allows for two levels of detail – one that accounts for the full composition of a group, and another for the lead voice heard. The primary level of analysis is conducted through the ensemble-level, but detail is offered throughout the study on the artist-level for bands and collaborations.

For ensemble type, three codes were used:

- › **Solo** (used for artists performing on their own)
- › **Band** (used for duos, trios, or groups with more than 4 members)
- › **Collaborations** (used for recordings that feature more than one solo artist or group)

For gender identity, the artists with songs played on Canadian radio identified as:

- › **Women** (she/her/hers)
- › **Men** (he/him/his)
- › **Trans\* artists** (nonbinary, genderqueer, transgender) (they/them or she/her/hers, he/him/his)
- › **Bands** of men, women, and Trans\* artists (same pronouns as above)
- › **Collaborations** of men, women, and Trans\* artists (same pronouns as above)

As described above, the coding was done at two levels to allow for a nuanced analysis of the artists' identity. The first code captured at the **ensemble-level** for solo, group, collaboration as either men, women, or Trans\* artists, or bands/collabs of multiple gender identities. The second level is coded based on the **lead artist** as either men, women, Trans\* artists or again

ensembles of multiple gender identities. These levels of description allow for a more nuanced discussion surrounding composition of bands and collaborative recordings by men, women, and Trans\* artists, as determined by the practices of the formats. This analysis differs by format, as some program more bands and others collaborations. The analysis is thus tailored to each format's programming. For Country, Top 40, and both Mainstream and Hot AC, collaborations emerge as an important component of programming, while Alternative and Active Rock prioritise bands.

For **race and ethnicity**, the exact terms used by artists were used in the project coding. The artists were then grouped in a way that facilitated analysis and visualisation. As with gender identity, the coding was done at the **ensemble-level** and at the **lead artist-level**. This allows for deeper understanding of multiethnic or multiracial ensembles and bands.

- › **White artists** (solo, group, collabs)
- › **Black artists** (solo, group, collabs)
- › **Indigenous artists** (solo, group, collabs)
- › **Artists of colour** (solo, group, collabs of one ethnicity) *Biracial, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Jamaican, Haitian, Venezuelan, Chilean, Native Hawaiian, Korean, South Korean, Japanese, Filipino, Vietnamese, Pakistani, Iranian, Iraqi, Indian*
- › **Multiethnic band/collabs** (group or collaboration with artists of more than one ethnicity)

The main report tabulates representation for race and ethnicities within the five groupings listed above in all tables presenting summary statistics, with IBPOC artists combined in visualisations. It is imperative to recognize from the outset that combining artists that are not white, Black or Indigenous together in one category is not ideal. To prepare this dataset and develop these codes, the lead researcher referred to previous studies examining race and gender on *Billboard* charts.<sup>4</sup> Like these studies, using one term to draw together artists

of several ethnicities might be read as an attempt to reinforce the hierarchy of racial importance by positioning white and Black artists as a standard and Biracial, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian, or Middle Eastern artists as an exception. Rather, this decision was taken in order to ensure coherent and consistent analysis across datasets but also to ensure contributions would be visible within all graphics, and allow for comparison with other published studies.

## Data Analysis

Using these two yearend and weekly datasets has allowed the research team to discover for the first time, long-term trends on the format, offering context for a deeper investigation of programming in 2023. There are 6 sections in this report, one per format. The Country, Alternative Rock, Active Rock, and Top 40 formats have two parts – one on the yearend reports from 2013 to 2023 and another on the weekly reports for 2023. The Mainstream AC and Hot AC formats have the same two parts, but they have a third part that focuses on the French-language portfolio constructed for this project.

These sections follow the same structure for ease of reading, and can be read individually for those interested in just one format. Each section opens with a brief definition of the format size and a geographic mapping, and concludes with a summary of the key findings.

## Yearend Reports (11-year trends)

Yearend reports offer an opportunity to explore longer-term trends on the 6 formats studied. Through analysis of the top 150 songs played on each format between 2013 and 2023, the sections on yearend reports considers the following questions:

<sup>4</sup> Marc Lafrance, Lara Worcester, and Lori Burns, "Gender and the Billboard Top 40 Charts between 1997 and 2007," *Popular Music & Society* 34/5 (2011): 557-70; Marc Lafrance, Casey Scheibling, Lori Burns, and Jean Durr, "Race, gender, and the Billboard Top 40 Charts between 1997 and 2007," *Popular Music & Society* 41/5 (2018): 522-38; Jada Watson, "Programming Inequality: Gender Representation on Canadian Country Radio (2005-2019)," *Proceedings of the 21st conference of the International Society for Music Information Retrieval*, (October 2020): 392-99; Jada Watson "Redlining in Country Music: Representation in the Country Music Industry (2000-2020)," *SongData Reports* (21 March 2021).

- › How many unique artists had songs within the top 150 played in this 11-year period? And how many unique songs achieved this designation?
- › What is the percentage airplay for songs within the top 150 appearing on the yearend airplay reports?
- › What is the percentage of songs that appear on the 50-position yearend charts over this period? How often do songs by women and Trans\* artists peak within the top positions of the chart?
- › What is their distribution by peak position (i.e. are songs by women and Trans\* artists reaching the top 50 positions or landing in the backend)?

## Weekly Reports and French-language Station Portfolios for 2023

Study of the weekly airplay reports will provide context for a deeper investigation of programming in 2023. This component of the study will apply the questions above to the full weekly airplay reports for the two French-language portfolios, but will answer the following additional questions:

- › How many unique artists had songs on radio played in 2023? And how many unique songs received airplay?
- › What is the distribution of airplay overall? And how much of this airplay was for songs with CanCon designation?
- › Drilling into CanCon designation in 2023, what is the distribution of play for current singles, versus recurrent tracks and gold record catalogues?
- › Do their current singles receive adequate airplay to appear on radio charts? At what rate? How long do they chart? And at what position do they peak?
- › At what rate are gold catalogue songs included in programming?
- › How is airplay distributed by time of day? What is the average distribution of songs played across each of the five radio dayparts? When are audiences most likely to hear songs by these artists?
- › How does this programming impact the charts? How often do songs by

women and Trans\* artists chart? And what is the distribution of CanCon songs on the chart?

In addition to these questions about the identity of the artists responsible for the songs played on each format and station included in this study, analysis of weekly reports will also consider representation via Canadian Content designation on French language stations.

- › What is the distribution of songs by Canadian artists (in general) and for women (specifically) in 2023?
- › Are these formats meeting Canadian Content regulations? Or are they surpassing them?
- › What is the rate of airplay for songs by Canadian women and IBPOC artists? At what time of day are their songs most likely to be heard?

This data will facilitate a greater understanding of how the 6 radio formats and French-language stations are complying with current content regulations and how these requirements impact women and IBPOC artists.









## Project Legend

Visualisations of the data are always presented (whether horizontally or vertically) in the same order: men, women, mixed gender groups, then Trans\* artists. This means that where there is no data representing women or Trans\* artists (as is the case through certain elements of the analysis) there will be an empty space where there would otherwise be a column.

The main focus of this report is gender representation on Canadian radio, with discussions of race and ethnicity emerging through the analysis. As such, the legend for the study uses four base colours to capture representation of men, women, Trans\* artists, and ensembles (of men, women, and Trans\* artists).

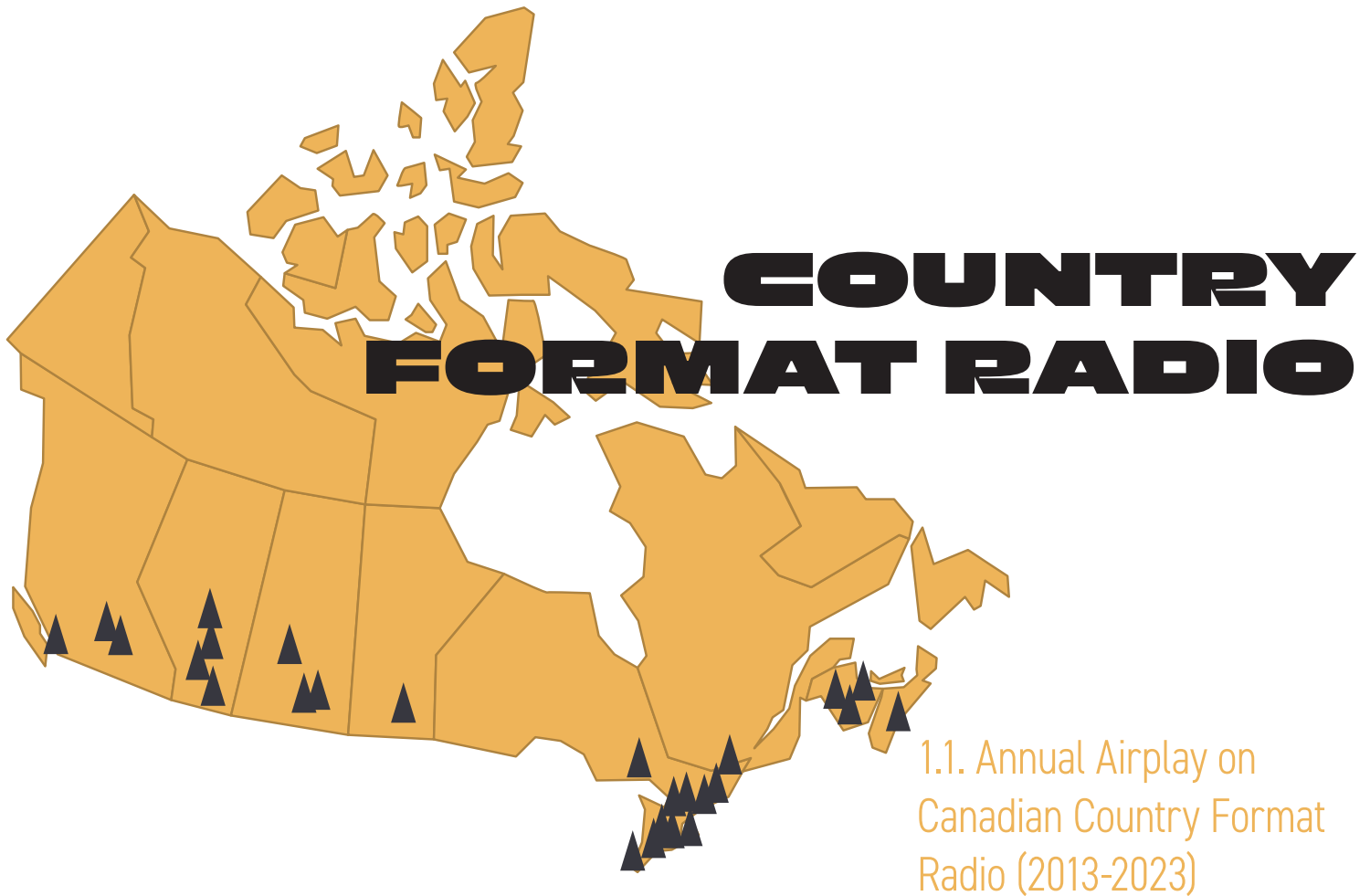
These four colours are the foundation of the colour scheme used throughout the report, but variations are introduced when graphics aim to show both gender identity and race/ethnicity at the same time, as well as for gender identity and CanCon certification, and gender identity and

language of song. Notes are included with each graphic for clarity.

	White Men (solo, bands, collabs)
	IBPOC Men (solo, bands, collabs)
	White Women (solo, bands, collabs)
	IBPOC Women (solo, bands, collabs)
	White Trans* artists (solo, collabs)
	IBPOC Trans* artists (solo, collabs)
	White mixed gender bands and Collabs (of men, women, and Trans* artists)
	Multiethnic mixed gender bands and Collabs (of men, women, and Trans* artists)

Variations within a colour scheme are not always perfect in cultural industries with inequitable programming practices. As will be seen throughout this report, there are instances where IBPOC artists and multiethnic ensembles are underrepresented across all formats and on Country, Alternative Rock, and Active Rock their contributions are not clearly visible in visualisations of the findings. To attempt to rectify this, we use darker shades for smaller percentages so that they are as visible as possible in formats that prioritise white artists.

Tables in this study provide granular detail on representation within the datasets used for this study. We used yellow, grey, purple, and teal highlight in these tables to provide detail on the lead vocal of mixed gender ensembles. For Country, Top 40, Mainstream AC and Hot AC this detail is provided for mixed gender collaborations. For Alternative and Active Rock this detail is provided for mixed gender bands. The combined percentages for mixed gender ensemble type (collaboration or band) is always presented in the row directly above these highlighted rows.



Country radio is one of the three formats in this study to be defined by playing predominantly the music of just one genre. While stations within the format do play a few songs by folk, rock, hip-hop, and pop music, the majority of songs played are Country. There are 35 Country stations that report to Mediabase's charting system. Most of the stations (43%) are in Ontario, with 17% in Alberta, and 11% in both Saskatchewan and New Brunswick, and 9% in British Columbia. The remaining stations are in Nova Scotia and Manitoba. None of these stations is a French-language station, they are all English language reporters.

The dataset for analysing representation on Country format radio between 2013 and 2023 includes the top 150 current singles played across this format each year, totalling 1,650 records. Within these records, 282 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs ranked within the top 150 songs played on Country format radio. This data, summarising this data, revealing that 16.0% of the artists with songs played were women, 60.9% were men, and 23.1% were mixed gender bands or collaborations. The majority (90.4%) of these artists were white, 1.8% are Black, 0.7% are Indigenous, 0.6% are artists of colour, and 6.5% are multiethnic bands.

The mixed gender bands with songs in this dataset are all ensembles wherein men and women share vocals either as co-leads (that trade off throughout a song or from one song to another) or with one as lead and others as consistent background vocalists. Representing 4.3% of the artists in the dataset, they are predominantly white (90.7%). Collaborations between men and women have always been a part

of Country industry culture, but the last few years have seen an increase in their occurrence (discussed below). Notably, mixed gender collaborations make-up most of the ensembles of men and women performers (18.8% of the artists), and 16.0% were collaborations led by men. The percentage of male artists, then, could be seen to increase to 78.9% if we group together men with collaborations led by men, and the percentage of women to 18.8%.

No Trans\* artists had songs within the top 150 songs played on Country format radio between 2013 and 2023.

Within these 1,650 records, 1,166 songs had enough annual airplay to appear within the top 150 songs played on Canadian Country format radio (Table 1.1b). The reason for there being just 1,166 unique songs in this dataset (instead of 1,650) is that some songs receive enough

annual airplay to rank within the top 150 for consecutive years: 26 songs appeared for three years, while 432 appeared for two years, and the remaining 708 for just one year. Most of the songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played over this period were by men (76.7%), with just 14.8% by women, 3.8% by mixed gender bands, and 4.7% by mixed gender collaborations (again, most collaborations led by men). Here, as before, the majority of these songs (93.2%) were by white artists, with 2.8% by Black artists, 0.2% by Indigenous artists, 1.5% by artists of colour, and 2.3% by multiethnic bands

Within this snapshot of the artists and songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played each year between 2013 and 2023, a racial and gender hierarchy emerges with white men appearing as the most prioritised within programming at Country radio, with white women coming in (a distant) second, songs by Black,

Indigenous, and Artists of colour are marginalised within the industry – songs by men with greater representation than those by women.

The following analysis investigates the rate at which these songs are played on Canadian Country radio and how this programming influences contention for the Yearend Airplay Charts.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	56.0%	1.4%	0.0%	0.3%	3.2%	<b>60.9%</b>
Women	14.2%	0.4%	0.7%	0.3%	0.4%	<b>16.0%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	<b>4.3%</b>
Collaborations	16.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	<b>18.8%</b>
Led by men	13.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	16.0%
Led by women	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	<b>90.4%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	

TABLE 1.1A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	71.7%	2.7%	0.0%	0.8%	1.5%	<b>76.7%</b>
Women	13.7%	0.1%	0.2%	0.7%	0.1%	<b>14.8%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	<b>3.8%</b>
Collaborations	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>4.7%</b>
Led by men	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	4.0%
Led by women	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	<b>93.2%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	

TABLE 1.1B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS ON CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

### 1.1.1. Airplay within the Top 150 Songs Played between 2013 to 2023

Within the top 150 songs played each year over the last decade on Country format radio, songs by women have received an average of 12.7% of the airplay. Figure 1.1a maps the percentage of the distribution of airplay of songs by men, women and mixed gender bands and collaborations, revealing that songs by women that received enough airplay to land within the top 150 songs played averaged about 10.5% of the airplay from 2013 to 2018 increasing to a peak of 17.5% in both 2020 and 2021 and ended this 11-year period with 15.1% in 2023.

Most of this airplay – an average of 95.4% – was for songs by white women. Figure 1.1a details representation by race and ethnicity as well as gender identity, with lighter shades for white artists and darker shades for Black, Indigenous, Artists of colour, and Multiethnic bands and collaborations. Songs by women of colour average 4.6% of the airplay for songs by women artists, but this amounts to 0.6% overall (0.0% for Black women,

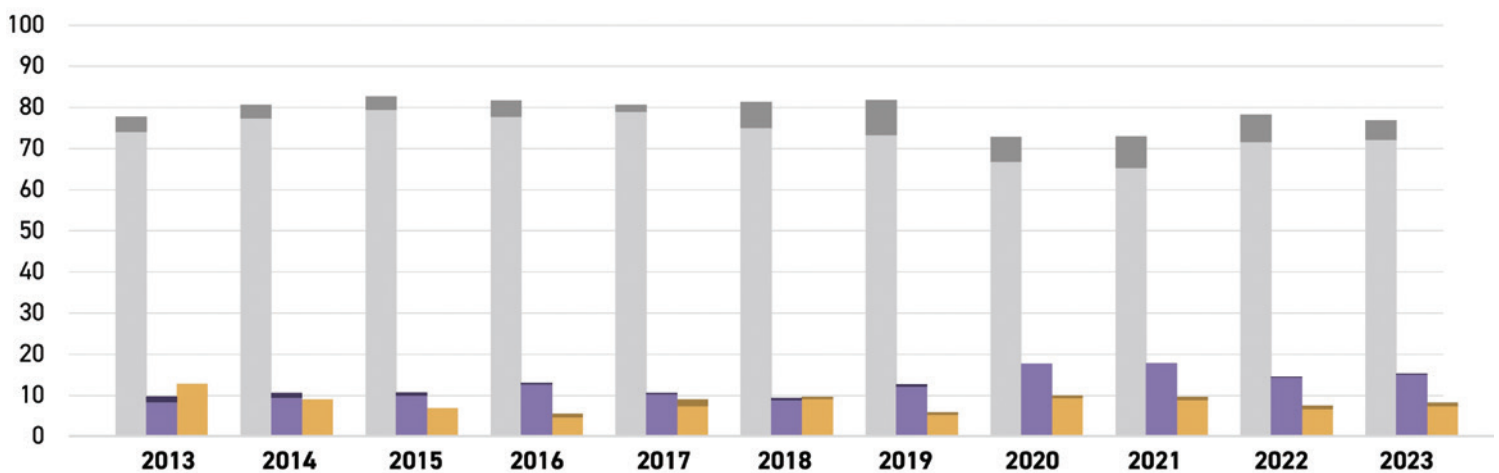
0.1% for Indigenous women, 0.4% for women of colour, and 0.1% for multiethnic ens./collabs of women artists). Songs by women of colour receive the most airplay in 2013, with 1.5%, and otherwise receive less than 1.0% in all other years – except for 2020 and 2021, where no songs by women of colour appear within the top 150 songs played.

Songs by men, then, dominate programming at Country format radio, averaging 73.7% of the airplay over this 11-year period with 93.4% of the airplay for songs by white men. Songs by men of colour received 6.6% of the airplay for songs by men, which amounts for 5.2% overall (2.6% for Black men, 0.0% for Indigenous men, 1.0% for men of colour, and 1.6% for multiethnic ens./collabs of men artists).

The remaining 8.3% of the airplay was accorded to songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations (92.1% for white ens./collabs and 7.9% for multiethnic ens./collabs). Drilling into the composition of these bands further, though, we see less airplay for songs by mixed gender bands from 10% in 2013 to 2.3% by the period's end in 2023, and a rise in airplay for collaborations of men and women artists from 2.5% in 2013 to a period high of 7.3% in 2018 and ending the period with 5.7% in 2023.

The rise in collaborative recordings parallels industry discourse surrounding the underrepresentation of women in the Country music industry in North America. Representation has long been an issue for the industry, but the conversation surrounding radio airplay became public following the #TomatoGate controversy that erupted in Nashville following radio consultant Keith Hill's comments on intentionally limiting programming for songs by women to achieve high station ratings.<sup>1</sup> Even though the conversation started in the USA, the underrepresentation of women has been an issue on Canadian Country radio, which follows the same gender-based programming practices.<sup>2</sup>

And while these collaborations seemingly increase the presence of women's voices on terrestrial radio from 10% in 2013 to a period peak of 18.6% in 2020 (ending the period at 15.3% by 2023) when combining songs by women and collaborations led-by women artists, the percentage of airplay for songs by collaborations still leans towards songs with men in the lead. Table 1.1c drills into the airplay data even further to parse representation of



**FIGURE 1.1A. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)** NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

<sup>1</sup> Keith Hill in interview with Russ Penuell, "On Music and Scheduling," *Country Aircheck* vol. 449 (26 May 2015); Beverly Keel, "'Tomato-gate' Galvanizes Women in Country Music," *The Tennessean* (22 June 2015).

<sup>2</sup> Chris Jancelewicz, "Female Country Singers Have Far Less Radio Time, and It's Not Changing Any Time Soon," *Global News* (13 August 2017); Jada Watson, "Gender Representation on Canadian Country Format Radio: A Study of Published Reports from 2005-2018," *SongData Reports* (September 2019).



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Collaborations	2.5%	2.5%	2.8%	4.6%	6.1%	7.3%	1.9%	6.7%	6.2%	6.1%	5.8%
Led by men	2.1%	2.5%	2.8%	4.6%	5.5%	5.9%	1.6%	5.5%	5.8%	4.9%	5.5%
Led by women	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	1.4%	0.3%	1.2%	0.4%	1.2%	0.3%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

TABLE 1.1C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS BY COLLABORATIONS ON CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

women's voices in these mixed gender collaborations, revealing a significant increase in the percentage of airplay for collaborative recordings led by men wherein women artists are featured in duet. These percentages may be small overall, but across this period songs by male-led collaborations increased 155% against minimal change for songs led by women, which averaged 0.5% of the airplay over this 11-year period.

## 1.1.2. Representation on the Yearend Country Airplay Charts between 2013 and 2023

Mediabase's Yearend Country Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played in a calendar year. They are the songs with enough airplay to have peaked within the top positions of the weekly charts – many achieving a #1 peak position. Drilling into the yearend reports to these top 50-positions offers greater perspective on those most-played songs played on terrestrial radio.

Table 1.1d summarises representation of the 175 solo artists, bands, and collaborations with songs ranked within the Yearend Country Airplay Charts, 68.1% of them men, 11.4% women, 3.4% mixed gender bands and 17.1% mixed gender collaborations. Most of the artists are white (92.5%), and all artists of colour are men: 2.3% are Black men, 0.0% are men of colour, and 5.2% are multiethnic bands – all are men. No Indigenous artists had songs appear within the Yearend charts.

Over the 11-year period studied, 549 songs appeared on the Yearend Charts. Nate Smith's "Whiskey on You" appeared on both the 2022 and 2023 Yearend Charts,

the reason for there being 549 (instead of 550) unique songs in this dataset. As Table 1.1e details, 81.6% were by men, 9.7% were by women, 3.1% were by mixed gender bands, 5.6% by mixed gender collaborations (5.3% songs led by men). An even higher percentage of the Yearend Charts were songs by white artists (95.1%), 2.9% by Black men, 0.0% by artists of colour, and 2.0% by multiethnic male bands. Here, as with the broader top 150 songs played on Country radio, representation increases for white artists, men in particular, while the percentage of white women and men of colour decreases, and women of colour are eliminated entirely from the top 50 played songs on Canadian Country Radio's Yearend Charts.

Songs by women average 9.6% of the titles within the 50-position yearend reports. The charts reflect the same general trends as with discussion of airplay of the top 150 songs played annually, but Figure 1.1b shows the impact of a decline in airplay for songs by women, as their songs are eliminated from high-rotating positions and drop from 6.0% in 2013 to a period low of 2.0% in 2015. Although the eight years following this period increase in representation (except for 2018), songs by women only average 11.8% in these years and end the 11 years at a period high of 16.0%. Perhaps more critically, these songs are entirely by white women: not a single song by a woman of colour landed within the annual 50-position chart.

Songs by men average 81.6% of the yearend charts with particularly dominant years in 2014-2016 where 2015 emerges at a period high of 92.0%. By the end of this 11-year period, songs by men made up 76.0% of the charts. Most of these songs are by white men, averaging 94.9% of the charting songs by men, against 5.1% by men of colour (1.8% by Black men, 0.0% by Indigenous men, 1.8% by men of colour, and 1.6% by multiethnic ens./collabs.). The

Figure 1.1b indicates the years in which songs by men of colour charted, with strong years at 8.0% of the charts in 2018, 2021, and 2022.

The remaining charting songs are those by mixed gender bands and collaborations, whose songs average 8.7% of the charts (8.0% for white bands and 0.7% for multiethnic bands). As with the discussion surrounding collaborations above, yearend chart activity reflects the same decline for mixed gender bands and a rise of collaborations led by men. Table 1.1f offers the same detail as discussed with airplay, revealing only two years in which 2.0% of the charting songs (1 song each year) were collaborations led by women artists. The increase noted in Figure 1.1b for songs by mixed gender bands, then, is almost entirely for collaborations led by men from 2013 to 2023.

What is most striking here is the size of the increase for songs by men on the charts when combining them with those by collaborations led by men, especially from 2016 onwards – a period with increased discussion surrounding the decline of women on the format. Songs by men averaged 79.8% by previous calculation, but increase to 87.0% when including collaborations led by men. Despite industry attempts to weave in more representation of women via these collaborations following the 2015 interview that launched #TomatoGate, they have instead led to gains for men that outpace the minimal increase for songs by women in the last four years of this period.

Songs by women begin to vanish from the top positions, as mapped in Figures 1.1c-1.1e. Songs by white women average 6.8% of the Top 20 songs across this period, with no songs in the Top 20 in 2015, 2017, and 2018 (thus increasing the average to 9.4% based on the years in which their songs do peak in the Top 20).

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	62.9%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	<b>68.1%</b>
Women	11.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>11.4%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>3.4%</b>
Collaborations	14.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	<b>17.1%</b>
Led by men	13.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	<b>16.0%</b>
Led by women	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>1.1%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
	<b>92.5%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	

TABLE 1.1D. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE YEAREND COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	77.4%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	<b>81.6%</b>
Women	9.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>9.7%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>3.1%</b>
Collaborations	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	<b>5.6%</b>
Led by men	4.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	<b>5.3%</b>
Led by women	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.3%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
	<b>95.1%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	

TABLE 1.1E. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE YEAREND COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

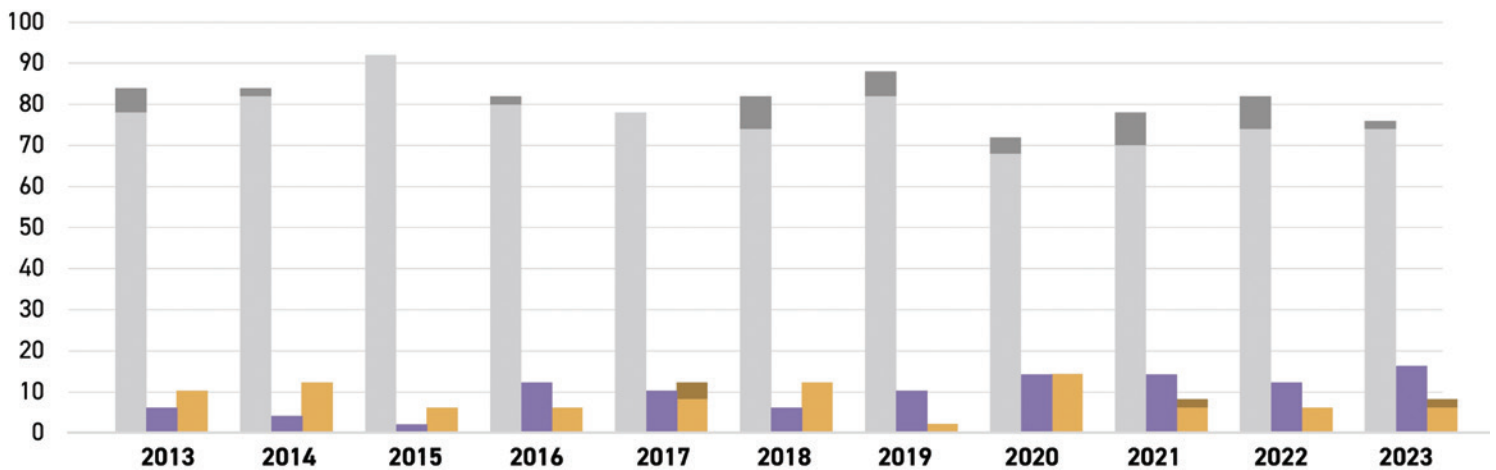


FIGURE 1.1B. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE YEAREND COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Collaborations	2.0%	4.0%	2.0%	6.0%	8.0%	10.0%	0.0%	12.0%	6.0%	4.0%	8.0%
Led by men	2.0%	4.0%	2.0%	6.0%	8.0%	8.0%	0.0%	10.0%	6.0%	4.0%	8.0%
Led by women	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

TABLE 1.1F. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS BY COLLABORATIONS ON THE YEAREND COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

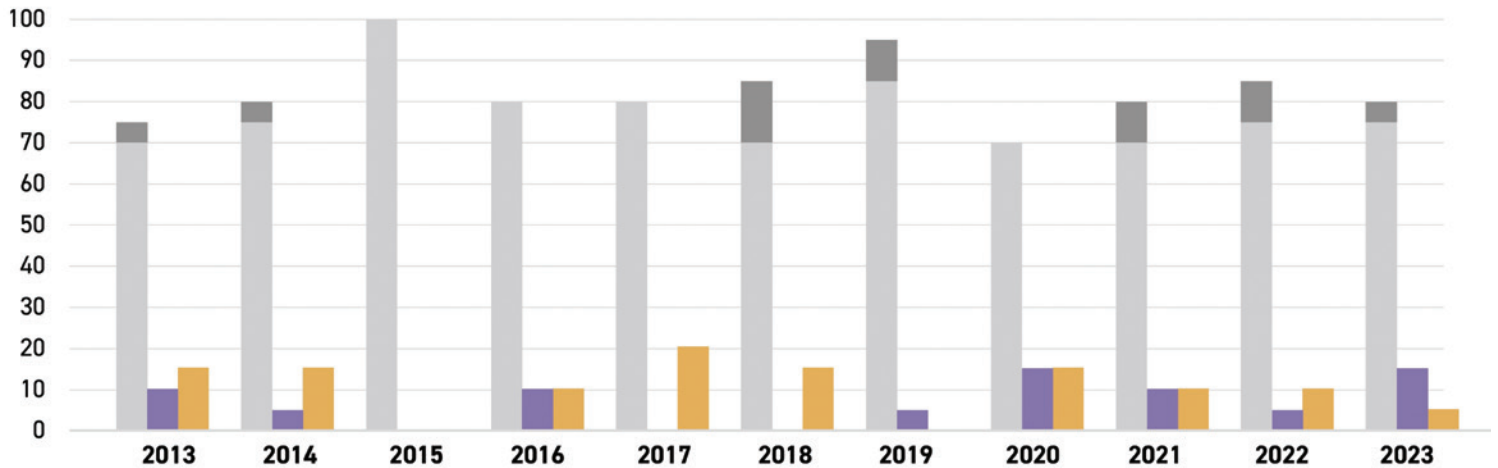


FIGURE 1.1C. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 20 OF THE YEAREND COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

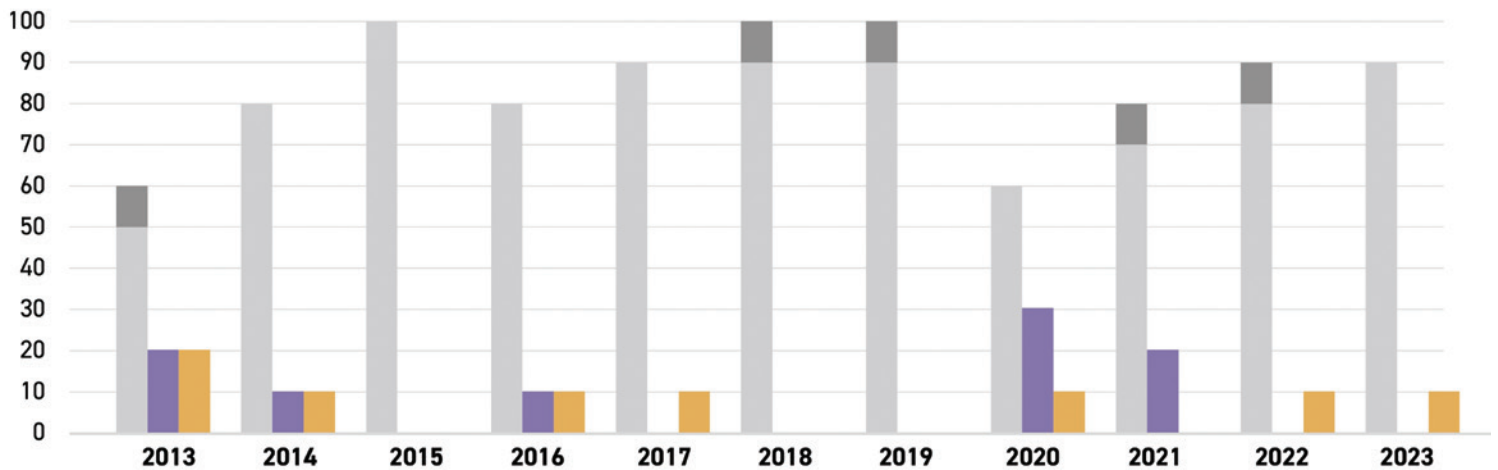


FIGURE 1.1D. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 10 OF THE YEAREND COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.



Songs by white women then average 7.3% of the Top 10 (again, increasing to 18.0% when calculating based on the years in which their songs achieve this yearend status). Their songs are absent from the Top 10 in most years in this 11-year period, with just nine songs appearing across 2013, 2014, 2016, 2020, and 2022. Not only are their songs underrepresented from the Top 10, but they are absent from the #1 position

Songs by men are prioritised within programming at Country format radio. Their songs average 82.7% of the Top 20 (capturing 100.0% and 95.0% in 2015 and 2019, respectively) and 84.5% of the Top 10 (again, capturing 100.0% in 2015, 2018, and 2019 and 90.0% in 2017, 2022, and 2023). Their songs dominate annual programming: songs by men capture the top chart position every year between 2013 and 2023 (81.8% by white men, 18.1% for songs by men of colour).

The histogram in Figure 1.1f further articulates the inequity within programming over this 11-year period. This Figure graphs the 1,166 songs by their peak position achieved by the number of titles within each 10-position range of the top 150 songs played ranked in the dataset. About 90 songs by men capture each 10-position range within the top five ranges (the yearend charts), while women have under 10 songs in the first two 10-position ranges, then average 14 songs between 21-50 (the remaining chart

positions). In fact, just 30.6% of the songs by women rank within the yearend chart range (1-50), while 69.4% (the majority) fall outside of those charts. Songs by women peak in the middle of this histogram, with the most songs peaking from 61-70 and 71-80 (18 songs each).

Half of the songs by men, by contrast, peak within the yearend chart range (1-50), while the remaining 50% appear in the remaining 100 positions. It is clear from the histogram that songs by men do not just dominate the chart and its top positions, but they dominate in all ranges of the top 150 songs played ranking. Their songs capture the chart positions about 9 times more than women, and the remaining positions about 3 times more.

Where the extent to which songs by men are prioritised becomes most troubling is in the consideration of mixed gender collaborations. Although songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations make up just 10.5% of the top 20 songs across this 11-year period, 4.1% of them are by bands, while 5.9% of them are collaborations led by men and just 0.5% (one song) is a collaboration led by a woman. The 220 songs that peaked in the Top 20, revealing that 88.6% of the songs with enough airplay to reach this peak within the yearend charts are by men or collaborations led by men. Songs by women and led by women represent just 7.3% of those Top 20 songs.

2013	<b>WAGON WHEEL</b> Darius Rucker
2014	<b>GIVE ME BACK MY HOMETOWN</b> Eric Church
2015	<b>HOMEGROWN</b> Zac Brown Band
2016	<b>SNAPBACK</b> Old Dominion
2017	<b>BODY LIKE A BACKROAD</b> Sam Hunt
2018	<b>WOMAN, AMEN</b> Dierks Bentley
2019	<b>WHISKEY GLASSES</b> Morgan Wallen
2020	<b>WHY WE DRINK</b> Justin Moore
2021	<b>FAMOUS FRIENDS</b> Chris Young w/Kane Brown
2022	<b>TIL YOU CAN'T</b> Cody Johnson
2023	<b>DANCIN' IN THE COUNTRY</b> Tyler Hubbard

FIGURE 1.1E. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) AT THE #1 POSITION OF CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO'S YEAREND CHARTS (2013-2023)

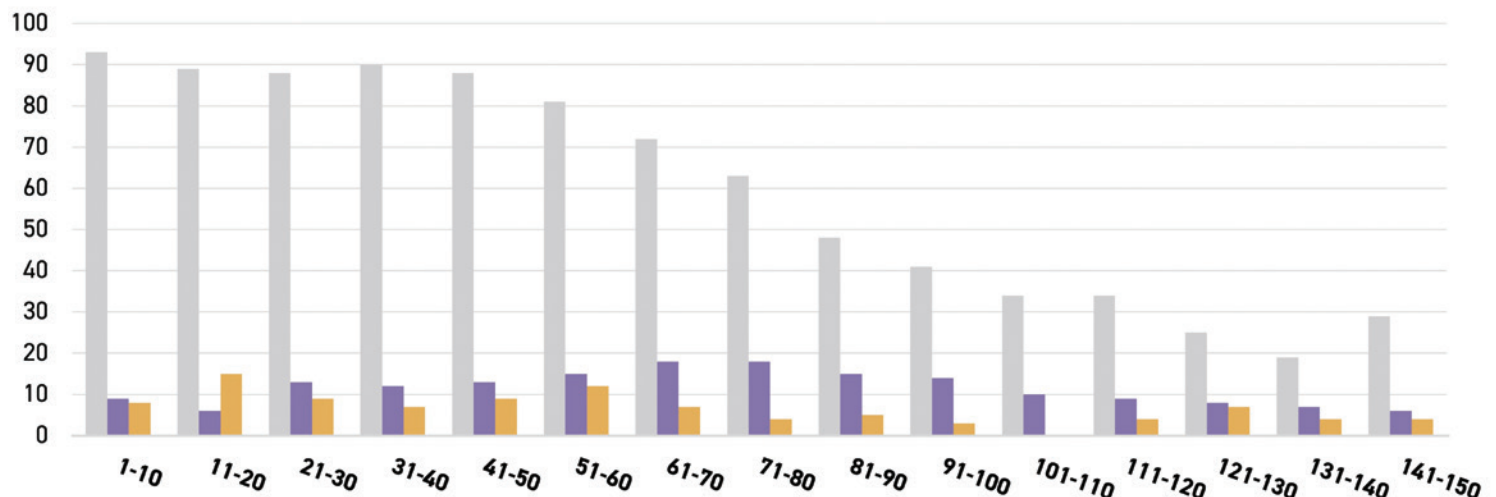


FIGURE 1.1F. HISTOGRAM BY PEAK POSITION (BY NUMBER OF TITLES) OF SONGS WITHIN TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN COUNTRY FORMAT RADIO (2013-2023)

## 1.2. Weekly Airplay on Canadian Country Format Radio in 2023

Weekly airplay reports for the 35-reporting Country stations offer the opportunity to explore more deeply the programming practices of the format, including the rate of airplay for all songs, the distribution of spins by song type (for current singles, recurrent tracks, and gold catalogue records) and by time of day – all within the context of Canadian Content regulations. How much are CanCon songs played? What type of song? And at what time of day? This section explores these questions more deeply, then investigates how programming influences contention for the weekly Airplay Charts.

This dataset includes the 197,255 records capturing every song played on the format, 36,811 for current singles, 9,364

for recurrent tracks, and 151,080 for gold records. Within this dataset capturing 2023 airplay, 3,403 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs played across the 35 stations that Mediabase monitors. As Table 1.2a summarises, 63.1% of those artists are men, 21.4% were women, 4.8% are mixed gender bands and 10.6% are mixed gender collaborations. Two Trans\* artists had songs played on Country format radio in 2023 – one song each, representing 0.1% of the artists with songs played.

As with the yearend data examined above, 90.7% of the artists are white, 3.0% are Black, 1.2% are Indigenous, 0.9% are artists of colour, and 4.2% are multiethnic bands. Here, as with the Yearend charts, we see a prevalence for programming a high percentage of collaborations led by men, who represent 7.0% of the artists with songs played and increasing representation of men to 70.1%. Combining women with women-led collaborations increases their representation to 25.0%.

These artists were responsible for the 14,104 songs played across the 35 reporting stations. As Table 1.2b summarises, 70.5% of those songs are by men, 22.6% by women, 3.6% by mixed gender bands and 3.3% by mixed gender collaborations. With just two songs played in 2023, songs by Trans\* artists represent 0.01% of the songs played. As with the yearend data examined above, 94.8% of the songs are by white artists, 1.9% by Black, 0.8% by Indigenous, 1.0% by artists of colour, and 1.5% by multiethnic bands. The same racial and gender hierarchy described regarding the top played songs from 2013 to 2023 remains true of the full programming context that includes current singles, recurrent tracks, and gold catalogue songs on Country radio.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	57.8%	2.2%	0.7%	0.5%	1.9%	<b>63.1%</b>
Women	19.7%	0.7%	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%	<b>21.4%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.9%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.7%	<b>4.8%</b>
Collaborations	9.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	<b>10.6%</b>
Led by men	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	7.0%
Led by women	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	3.6%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	<b>90.7%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	

TABLE 1.2A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	67.0%	1.5%	0.5%	0.7%	0.8%	<b>70.5%</b>
Women	21.7%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%	<b>22.6%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	<b>3.6%</b>
Collaborations	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	<b>3.3%</b>
Led by men	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	2.2%
Led by women	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	1.1%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	<b>94.8%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	

TABLE 1.2B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO IN 2023

## 1.2.1. Airplay of All Songs Played on Country Format Radio in 2023

The following analysis investigates the rate at which songs are played on Canadian Country format radio. This section looks more deeply at the amount of airplay overall, as well as discusses the distribution of spins for songs by Canadian Content status, by song type (current, recurrent, and gold), the time of day at which they are played, and by chart activity.

Songs by women received 15.6% of the airplay on Country format radio in 2023. Table 1.2c summarises airplay data for the year, providing granulate detail by race and ethnicity of the artists whose

songs were played. From the outset, a note should be made regarding Trans\* artists. Two songs by two different white Trans\* artists received airplay in 2023, totaling to 5 spins, which amounts to 0.00009% of the airplay. Thus, even though the Table indicates 0.0%, there were a small number of spins for Trans\* artists - one of whom, Adeem the Artist, is a Country and Americana musician.

The majority of the spins for songs by women (97.7%) are for songs by white women, with 0.05% of the overall spins for songs by Black women, 0.3% for Indigenous women, 0.02% for women of colour, and 0.01% for multiethnic bands or collaborations. (With the exception of airplay for songs by Indigenous women, the percentage is so small that it does not appear in Table 1.2a.) This same information is graphed in Figure 1.2a for a view of the distribution of spins

each month in 2023 revealing that the distribution of spins for songs by women was fairly consistent at around 15.0% throughout the year.

Songs by men averaged 77.3% of the airplay in 2023, again with most airplay for songs by white men (93.7%). Songs by Black men received 1.7% of the airplay, while songs by Indigenous men received 0.07% of the airplay, men of colour 1.4%, and Multiethnic bands 1.6%. Songs by men, as with those by women, were fairly consistently programmed in 2023, hovering just under 80% of the spins.

Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations received 7.1% of the spins divided between white bands (6.4%) and multiethnic bands (0.7%). As with discussion of the yearend reports, songs by collaborations between men and women artists received more airplay

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	72.5%	1.7%	0.1%	1.4%	1.6%	<b>77.3%</b>
Women	15.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>15.6%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>2.8%</b>
Collaborations	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>4.3%</b>
Led by men	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	3.6%
Led by women	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	<b>94.3%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	

TABLE 1.2C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO IN 2023

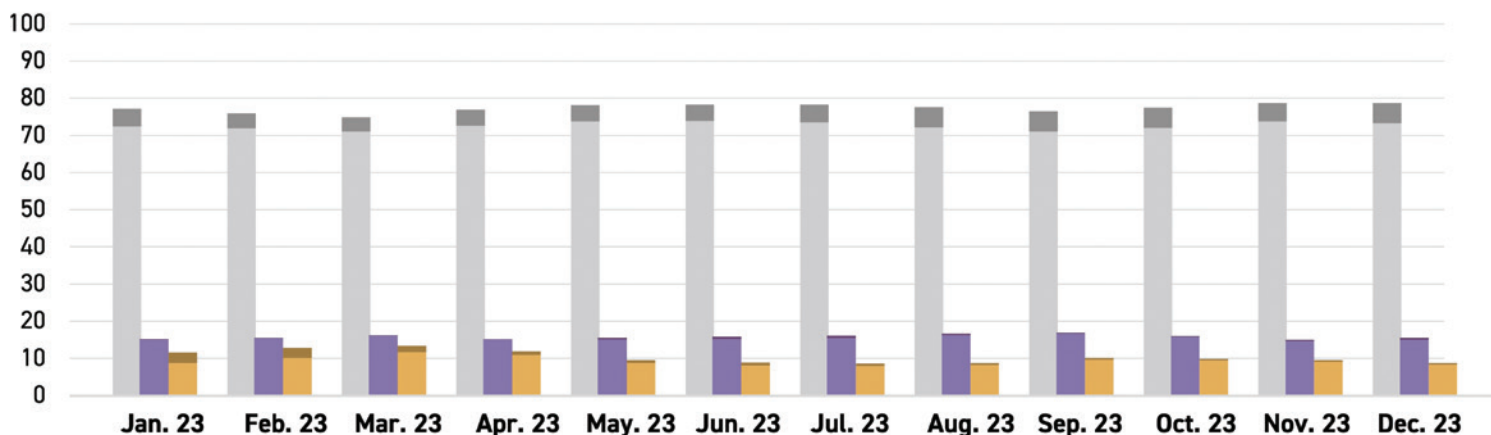


FIGURE 1.2A DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN COUNTRY FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

than mixed gender bands, and the collaborative recordings led by men were prioritised within programming. As Table 1.2c reveals, collaborations led by men received 3.5% of the airplay versus those led by women at 0.8%. If we then consider the distribution of spins in 2023, songs by men and collaborations led by men, received 80.9% of the airplay, and women and collaborations led by women received 16.4%.

A note should be made regarding the percentage of songs by multiethnic bands and collaborations, which has increased through this period from 0.0% of the top 150 songs played in 2013 to a peak of 6.2% in 2021 and ended the 11-year period at 3.6% in 2023. Multiethnic ensembles are bands or collaborations of musicians of multiple races and ethnicities. As with mixed gender bands/collaborations, wherein most have been typically led by male singers, most of the multiethnic ensembles have been led by white artists (39.2% of the ensembles) and white men in particular (37.2%). While not necessarily significant within the overall ecosystem (because multiethnic ensembles received just 2.3% of the airplay in 2023), this brings more perspective to representation in 2023, increasing representation of white musicians to 95.0%. The overwhelming whiteness (and maleness) of this format should be cause for industry reflection, given the multiethnic roots of the genre and the pioneering role of Black musicians.

### 1.2.1.1. Evaluation of Airplay by CanCon Status

What this distribution means for Canadian artists is particularly important in the context of the federal regulations guiding programming and how it impacts women. An average of 35.3% songs certified as CanCon were registered in the weekly reports for Canadian country format radio – just meeting the regulations across the 35 reporting stations. The remaining and indeed majority of the airplay – 64.7% – were for non-CanCon songs. While in other formats this might include songs by Canadians that are not certified CanCon because they do not meet the MAPL designation, on Country format radio this percentage is entirely songs by non-Canadian artists (nearly entirely from the United States). Even though most Canadian Country artists live outside of the country (mainly in Nashville, Tennessee), their consistent production of CanCon certified music suggests a strong commitment to the Canadian industry, ensuring that their music meets federal criteria for radio to meet regulations while also actively building and maintaining their presence in the country.

Distribution of airplay by CanCon certification is detailed in Figure 1.2b. Given that Country radio is just meeting the 35.0% CanCon requirement, it is not surprising that the percentage of CanCon

songs by men, women, and mixed gender bands and collaborations lie below those that are not CanCon. Airplay for songs by women divide the 15.6% in favour of non-CanCon songs by women at 8.5% with 7.1% for CanCon songs.

### 1.2.1.2. Evaluation of Airplay for Songs by Time of Day

The time of day at which these songs are heard is of critical importance to the development of a musician's career. As described earlier, the 24-hour cycle is divided into five dayparts, with the three day-time periods – the Morning Drive (AMD from 6:00-10:00), the Midday period (MID from 10:00-15:00) and the Afternoon Drive (PMD from 15:00 to 19:00) – are the most important for exposure as they are the periods with the highest rate of listenership. The Overnight (OVN from 0:00 to 6:00) and Evening (EVE from 19:00 to 24:00) periods frame the day and are periods with a higher percentage of songs played due not just in part to their slightly longer duration, but also the reduced amount of news and specialty programming (features, interviews, etc.).

Figure 1.2c tracks the distribution of airplay by daypart, graphing the data in accordance with the 24-hour cycle beginning with the Overnights on the

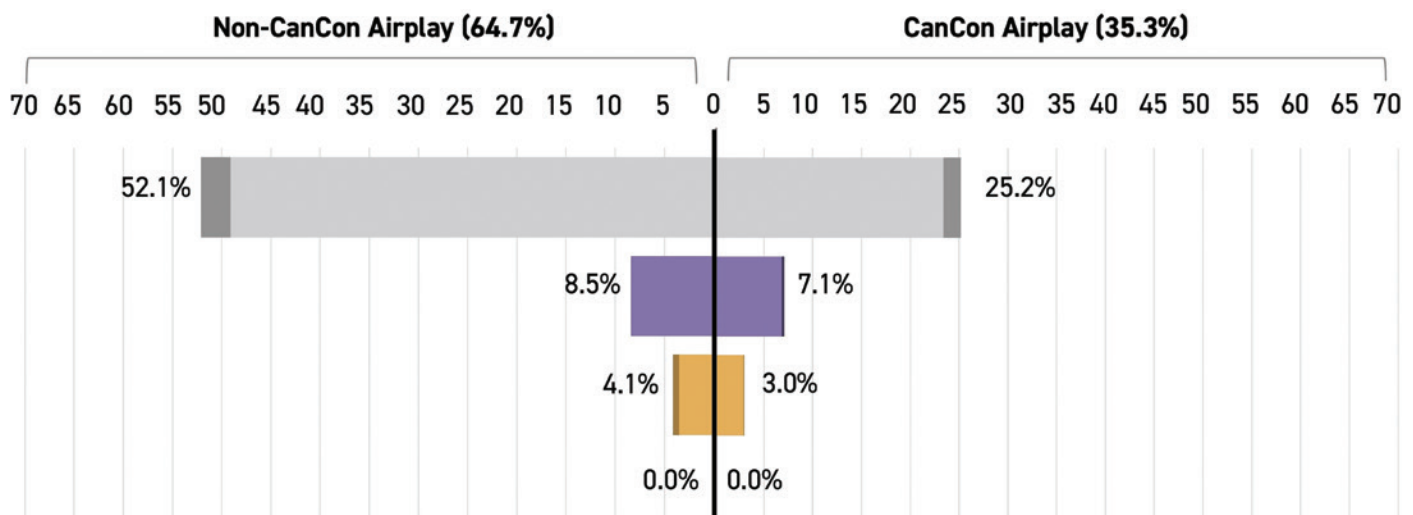


FIGURE 1.2B. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN COUNTRY FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

left, through the Morning Drive, Midday and Afternoon Drive, to the Evening on the right for each group of artists. The columns are separated by a white line to distinguish between non-CanCon airplay (at the bottom of the column) and CanCon airplay (at the top of the column).

The highest percentage of airplay for all artists occurs in the Overnight and Evening periods, as expected. For all groups, about 28.0% of their overall airplay occurs in the Overnight, with 13.8% in the Morning, 20.3% in the Midday, 15.9% in the Afternoon, and 21.9% in the Evening. Despite this even distribution for songs by men, women, and mixed gender bands and collaborations, though, the distribution overall shows considerable inequity for women, whose songs are underprogrammed in each daypart. Half of radio programming occurs during the three daypart hours (Morning, Midday,

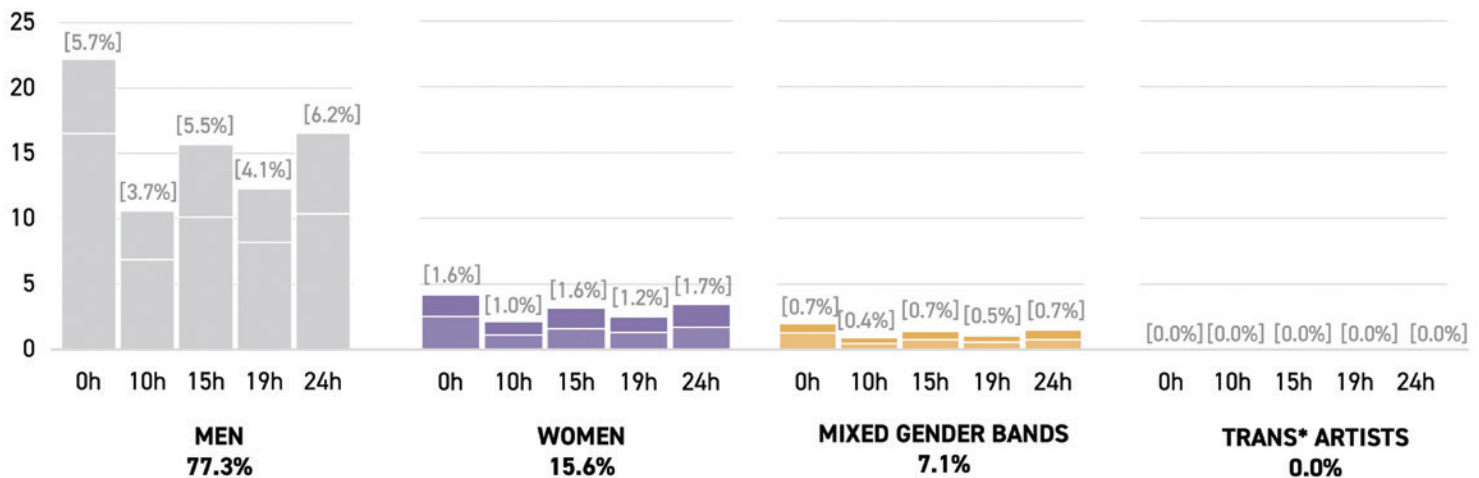
and Afternoon) at 50.0% of the spins. Federal broadcasting regulations require that Canadian radio play 35.0% Canadian Content between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to ensure listeners are exposed to music of Canadian artists. While the periods do not align perfectly (the Afternoon daypart ends at 7:00 p.m.), Country radio stations played 37.2% CanCon songs across the Morning, Midday, and Afternoon dayparts in 2023, with 26.8% for songs by men, 7.5% for songs by women, and 3.2% for mixed gender bands and collaborations.

To provide greater perspective on what this means, we calculated down to the level of daytime programming to provide an example of what a typical 24-hour cycle would look like for the average station and listener. Across the 35 reporting stations, an average of 305 songs are played per day, with 236 songs by men, 48 by women, and 21 by mixed gender bands

and collaborations. Table 1.2d breaks this down further to show how many songs by each group would be played.

For women, the distribution of spins for CanCon songs is even in the Midday, Afternoon and Evenings, but with more non-CanCon songs in the Overnight and Morning (8/5 and 4/3, respectively). The same is true for songs by men, though with a far greater difference in each daypart as a result of the volume of spins accorded to songs by men.

Although near equal distribution for songs by women - especially across two of the three most important dayparts, it is critical to note that hearing even just one fewer CanCon song in the Morning drive means that there is an hour within that four-hour stretch in which audiences won't hear a Canadian woman's voice.



**FIGURE 1.2C. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY BY TIME OF DAY FOR ALL SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN COUNTRY FORMAT RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

	SONGS BY MEN	SONGS BY WOMEN	SONGS BY TRANS* ARTISTS	SONGS BY MIXED GENDER BANDS
<b>OVERNIGHT (0:00-6:00)</b>	68 [50/18]	13 [8/5]	0 [0/0]	6 [4/2]
<b>AM DRIVE (6:00-10:00)</b>	32 [21/11]	7 [4/3]	0 [0/0]	3 [2/1]
<b>MIDDAY (10:00-15:00)</b>	48 [31/17]	10 [5/5]	0 [0/0]	4 [2/2]
<b>PM DRIVE (15:00-19:00)</b>	37 [25/12]	8 [4/4]	0 [0/0]	3 [2/1]
<b>EVENING (19:00-24:00)</b>	51 [32/19]	10 [5/5]	0 [0/0]	5 [3/2]
	<b>236</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>

**TABLE 1.2D. DISTRIBUTION OF SPINS FOR SONGS BY TIME OF DAY ON CANADIAN COUNTRY FORMAT RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE THE DISTRIBUTION FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS (RESPECTIVELY)



This analysis shows that songs by men are played 4.9 times more than those by women on Canadian country radio, and the way in which that airplay is distributed across song status (current, recurrent, gold), by time of day, and by CanCon certification. The trends thus far show that songs by men are prioritised within programming and that non-CanCon songs are played at a higher rate than CanCon songs. Critically, the data also shows that non-CanCon men are programmed at a much higher rate than CanCon songs by men, whereas songs by women are nearly evenly distributed in all facets.

### 1.2.1.3. Evaluation of Airplay for Current, Recurrent and Gold Status Songs

Radio airplay is divided into three different song “types” – current singles that are vying for top-programming (and, by extension, chart) contention, recurrent tracks that have reached their peak programming position but are still in regular rotation, and gold catalogue records of older but “canonical” songs that have been retained by a station for long-term programming. Figure 1.2d tracks airplay by these three programming types, showing on the left the overall airplay on Country format radio, parsed by airplay for current singles (37.9%), recurrent tracks (20.1%), and gold records (42.0%).

Songs by women receive a fairly equal distribution across current singles (6.4%) and gold records (6.3%) but are retained at a much smaller percentage of recurrent programming (at 2.9%). This suggests that their songs are let go from regular programming at a higher rate than those by men once they reach their peak position.

While Canadian women are certainly underrepresented in the format, it is important to highlight the distribution difference by CanCon status. Table 1.2e calculates the distribution of airplay by certification status, showing that non-CanCon songs by women make up a much smaller percentage of the airplay for songs that are not CanCon (at 13.1%), while CanCon songs by women register 20.1% of the airplay within the programming accorded to Canadian songs. Although CanCon songs by women make up a larger percentage of the CanCon programming, their position is still marginal within this programming ecosystem.

These findings are further highlighted in lists of the top 10 ranked artists and collaborations by their spins (Table 1.2f), shows that the tenth most played man still receives more spins than the most played woman. The number beside each artist's name provide the overall ranking for the top 10 artists, with CA to identify CanCon status designation beside the names of the Canadian artists whose songs meet MAPL regulations. Lainey Wilson comes in at 20 overall on the list of top artists, between established-artist Brett Kissel (69,196) and newcomer Josh Ross (64,806) – both CanCon men. While there are more CanCon women within the Top 10 list, their rankings are quite low by comparison to the Top 10 men, suggesting that while the

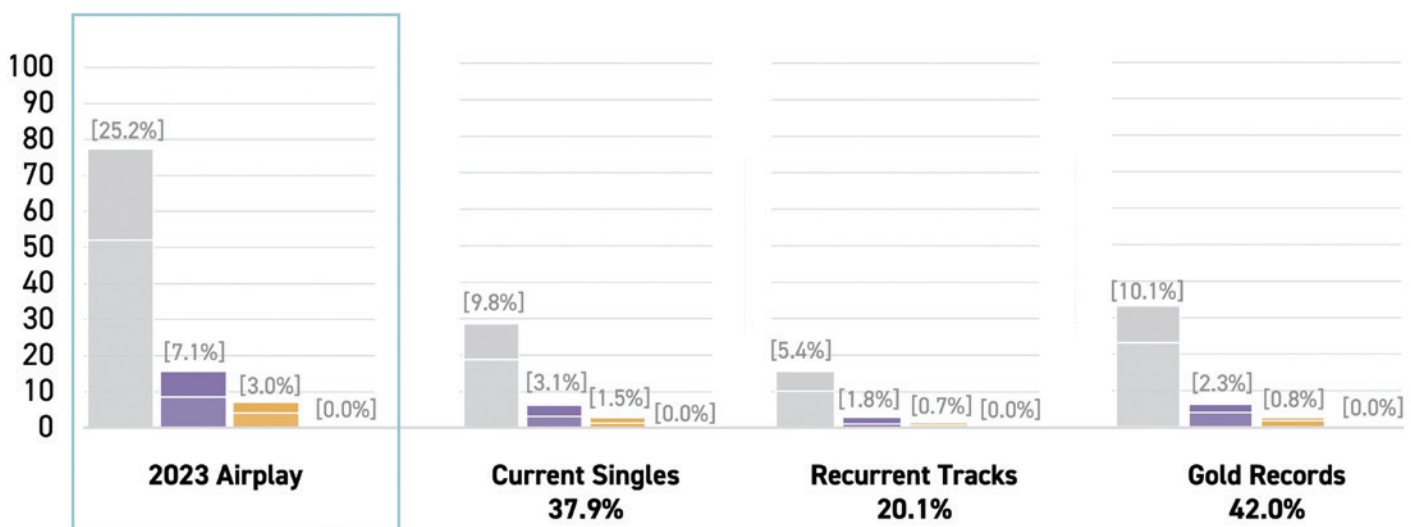


FIGURE 1.2D. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY FOR CURRENT, RECURRENT AND GOLD SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN COUNTRY FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

CanCon distribution amongst women is near equal, songs by Canadian women are still underprogrammed in a way that limits their potential within the industry. This will be further explored in the next section on Airplay charts.

The list of mixed gender bands and collaborations further emphasises the position of men within programming. First, it's notable that other than the top 2 ranked bands, the top 10 most played mixed gender bands are collaborations. The high ranking of these contemporary collaborative recordings within this list shows the significant programming space granted to collaborations within programming. Second, except for the two collaborations led by brother-sister duo

the Reklaws, the six most-spun mixed gender collaborations are all led by men with women as featured vocalists. While these collaborations are not as high-ranking as the top 10 men and women (which makes sense, given they are song rather than artist-catalogue dependent), they contribute significantly to a programming culture that seems to be using collaborations (especially those led by men) as replacement for songs by women.

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [64.6%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [35.4%]
Songs by Men	80.7%	71.4%
Songs by Women	13.1%	20.1%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	1.4%	5.0%
Songs by Collaborations	4.8%	3.5%
Led by men	3.9%	2.9%
Led by women	0.9%	0.6%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%

TABLE 1.2E. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN COUNTRY FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

TOP 10 MEN	TOP 10 WOMEN	TOP 10 TRANS* ARTISTS	TOP 10 MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
1 Morgan Wallen 185,654	20 Lainey Wilson, 67,481	711 Adeem the Artist, 3	35 Reklaws, 48,879 CA
2 Luke Combs 160,436	24 Jess Moskaluke, 63,585 CA	712 Sam Smith w/Normani, 2	51 Lady Antebellum, 32,819
3 Dean Brody 111,891 CA	30 Carrie Underwood, 54,967		61 High Valley w/Alison Krauss, 28,928 CA
4 Luke Bryan 109,393	31 MacKenzie Porter, 54,836 CA		64 Justin Moore w/Priscilla Block, 27,870
5 Dallas Smith 92,743 CA	37 Kelsea Ballerini, 44,350		72 Hardy w/Lainey Wilson, 26,372
6 Keith Urban 86,202	39 Tenille Arts, 43,695 CA		78 Reklaws w/Drake Milligan, 24,050 CA
7 Bailey Zimmerman 85,495	40 Madeline Merlo, 42,436 CA		83 Kane Brown w/Katelyn Brown, 22,867
8 Jade Eagleson 83,110 CA	44 Tenille Townes, 38,448 CA		106 Reklaws w/Jake Owen, 13,521 CA
9 James Barker Band 79,561 CA	54 Meghan Patrick, 30,559 CA		115 Aaron Goodvin w/Meghan Patrick, 10,683 CA
10 Jon Pardi 77,985	56 Hailey Whitters, 29,782		123 Dustin Lynch w/MacKenzie Porter, 9,080

TABLE 1.2F. TOP 10 MOST PLAYED ARTISTS ON CANADIAN COUNTRY FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

## 1.2.2. Representation on the Weekly Airplay Charts for Canadian Country Radio in 2023

Airplay charts offer an important lens not just on representation in an industry, but also the inner workings of programming practices. They offer a view into the most repeated current singles in a format, but also how the distribution impacts Canadian artists within the industry ecosystem. Mediabase's Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played each week on radio.

In 2023, 121 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs on the weekly Country Airplay charts, 69.4% are men, 19.0% are women, 2.5% are mixed gender

bands, and 9.1% are mixed gender collaborations (5.8% male led and 3.3% female led). As Table 1.2g summarises, 91.0% of the artists are white, while 3.3% are Black, 0.8% are Indigenous, 0.8% are artists of colour, and 4.1% are multiethnic bands.

Over the course of the year, 178 songs charted, with the same gender and racial representation as detailed throughout this section on Canadian Country format radio. As Table 1.2h summarises, 72.4% of those songs are by men, 19.2% by women, 2.2% by mixed gender bands and 6.2% by mixed gender collaborations. Most songs are by white artists (91.5%), with 2.3% by Black artists, 1.7% by Indigenous artists, 1.1% by artists of colour, and 3.4% by multiethnic bands. Despite continued attention in the Country industry to racial inequity, the Country format remains a white, male-dominated ecosystem.

### 1.2.2.1. Evaluation of Songs on the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

Scaling up to the 2,600 records for the top 50 songs ranked each week in 2023 reveals that songs by men capture 73.1% of the charts, with 18.6% by women, 2.5% by mixed gender bands, and 5.8% by mixed gender collaborations. Here, songs by women represent a slightly higher percentage of the airplay chart than in overall programming (Table 1.2i). Most of the charting songs (17.0%) are by white women, which amounts to 91.5% of the songs by women. The percentage of charting songs by women of colour captures the remaining 1.5%, with 0.4% of the charting songs by women by Black women, and 1.2% by Indigenous women.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	63.6%	2.5%	0.0%	0.8%	2.5%	<b>69.4%</b>
Women	17.4%	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>19.0%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>2.5%</b>
Collaborations	7.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	<b>9.1%</b>
Led by men	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	5.8%
Led by women	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	3.3%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	<b>91.0%</b>	<b>3.3%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	

TABLE 1.2G. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHARTS IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	67.4%	1.7%	0.0%	1.1%	2.2%	<b>72.4%</b>
Women	16.9%	0.6%	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>19.2%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>2.2%</b>
Collaborations	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	<b>6.2%</b>
Led by men	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	3.9%
Led by women	1.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	2.2%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	<b>91.5%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	

TABLE 1.2H. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN COUNTRY AIRPLAY CHARTS IN 2023



	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	67.9%	0.5%	0.0%	1.5%	3.2%	73.1%
Women	17.0%	0.4%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	18.6%
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mixed gender bands	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%
Collaborations	5.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	5.8%
Led by men	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	3.8%
Led by women	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	2.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	92.6%	0.9%	1.2%	1.5%	3.8%	

TABLE 1.2I. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO IN 2023

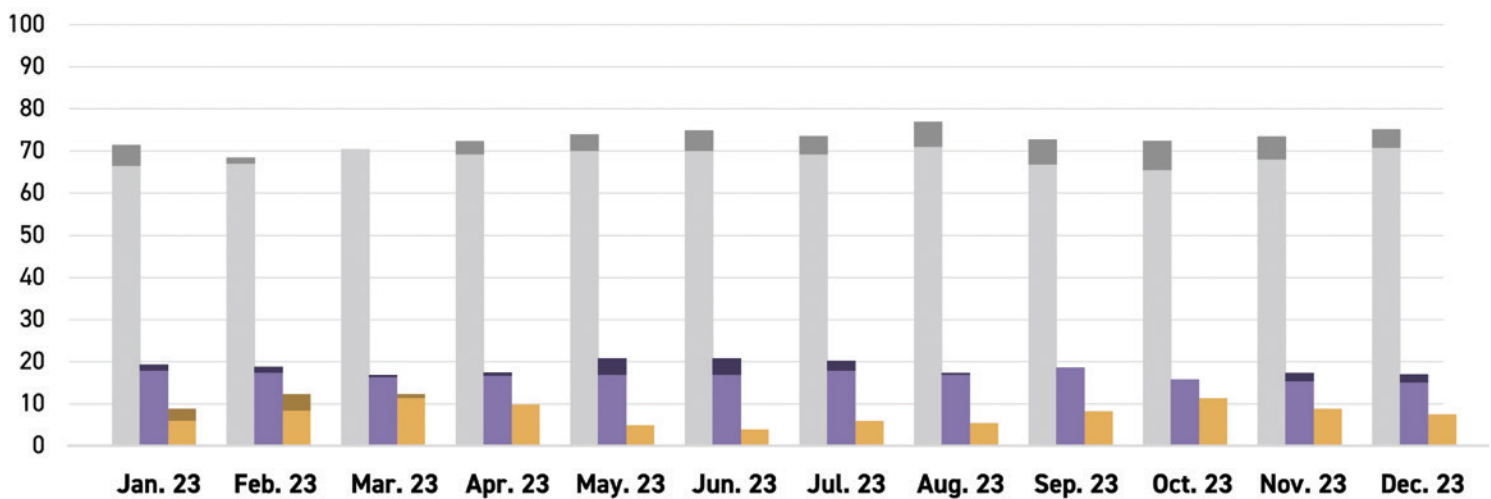


FIGURE 1.2E DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY CHART [57.6%]	CANCON AIRPLAY CHART [42.4%]
Songs by Men	45.5%	27.6%
Songs by Women	8.5%	10.0%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	0.0%	2.5%
Songs by Collaborations	3.6%	2.2%
Led by men	2.6%	1.2%
Led by women	1.0%	1.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%

TABLE 1.2J. PERCENTAGE OF CANCON SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO IN 2023

Figure 1.2e tracks the distribution across the calendar year, revealing that here (as with overall airplay) songs by women charted fairly consistently at 18.5% – with just over 20.0% from May to July.

Songs by men, too, were consistently charting at 73.1% in 2023 with the same general pattern for songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations as well (averaging 8.4% with a dip in the summer months), following the broader airplay trend.

Table 1.2j further details chart data by CanCon designation, revealing that 42.4% of the songs that chart are amongst the most played on Canadian radio – with enough support to land these songs on the airplay chart. And while most of the songs by men are non-CanCon, CanCon songs by women appear at a slightly higher percentage of the charts than those that are non-CanCon by women.

### 1.2.2.2. Evaluation of Representation in the Top Positions of the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

This changes, however, within the top charting songs on the format. Figures 1.2f-1.2h show that the percentage of songs by women decreases within the top positions of the charts. Songs by women represent 13.9% of the Top 20 charting songs, with significant drops from 20% in February and March (split nearly equally between CanCon and non-CanCon songs by women) down to 5.0% by June (with no CanCon songs by women). Despite an increase to 26.0% by September, the number of songs by women again decreased down to 1.0% by December. Just one non-CanCon song by a woman peaked in the Top 20 in the month of December, appearing on 2 December 2023: Kelsea Ballerini's "If You Go Down (I'm Going Down Too)."

Songs by men captured 78.1% of the Top 20 songs – peaking at 92.5% in June and 94.0% in December. Over the course of the year, non-CanCon songs dominated,

averaging 52.2% of the charts (with CanCon songs averaging 25.9%). Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations average the remaining 8.0% with CanCon songs emerging at a higher percentage (4.2%). But every single song by a mixed gender ensemble that peaked within the Top 20 from January to April was a collaboration led by a man, which would increase representation of men to 80% of the Top 20 at the start of the year.

Songs by women continue to disappear from the top positions, making up 11.3% of the Top 10 songs in 2023. The distribution echoes the periods in which songs by women receive less airplay, their songs eliminated within the Top 20 songs. The year begins with songs by women representing just 5.0% of the Top 10 songs, increasing to a peak of 22.5% then dropping down again in May. This pattern repeats (increase to 20% in September and October) before declining and disappearing by yearend where no songs by women were in the Top 10 songs.

Songs by men maintain a similar 79.7% of the Top 10 songs, following the same rise and fall as well. Here, too, non-CanCon songs by men out-chart CanCon songs (63.8% and 15.9%, respectively). But unlike the Top 20 songs, songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations make up a larger percentage of the Top 10 songs at the start of the year at an average of 18.3% from January to March. But these songs, we know, were entirely collaborations led by men, which increased representation of songs by men in the Top 10 to 95% in January and 87% in February, before a significant decline to 2.5% by May and June, 0.0% in July, and then averaging 7.9% for the final four months of the year. Given this context of decline for songs by women in the top positions and the prioritising of songs by men in overall programming, representation is most dire at the top position of the chart where just five songs (9.6%) achieve this ranking. Songs by women peaked at the top of the chart with one song in March, August and October and two in September (one each for non-CanCon and CanCon songs). Songs by men, then, capture the #1 position 84.6% of the year, and entirely for seven months of the year.

These findings suggest that while CanCon songs are accorded enough radio support to chart, they are not prioritised in a way that puts songs by Canadian women into a high-enough rotation to climb into the chart's top positions thereby rendering them invisible within the mainstream ecosystem. Just 4 of the 52 top charting songs of 2023 were by Canadians, with one by a woman (MacKenzie Porter). The remaining 48 chart-topping songs were non-CanCon, with four by American women (three for Lainey Wilson – the top-spun female artist of the format – and one by Hailey Whitters, ranked at 10th for women and 56th overall).

These Figures also reveal that non-CanCon songs (in general) and by men (specifically) increase through each top charting position. Non-CanCon songs capture 57.6% of the chart, increasing to 64.1% of the Top 20, 78.3% of the Top 10 and an astonishing 92.3% of the top position. Most of that activity is for non-CanCon songs by men, with 45.5% of the charts, to 52.2% of the Top 20, 64.0% of the Top 10 and 84.6% of the #1 positions in 2023.

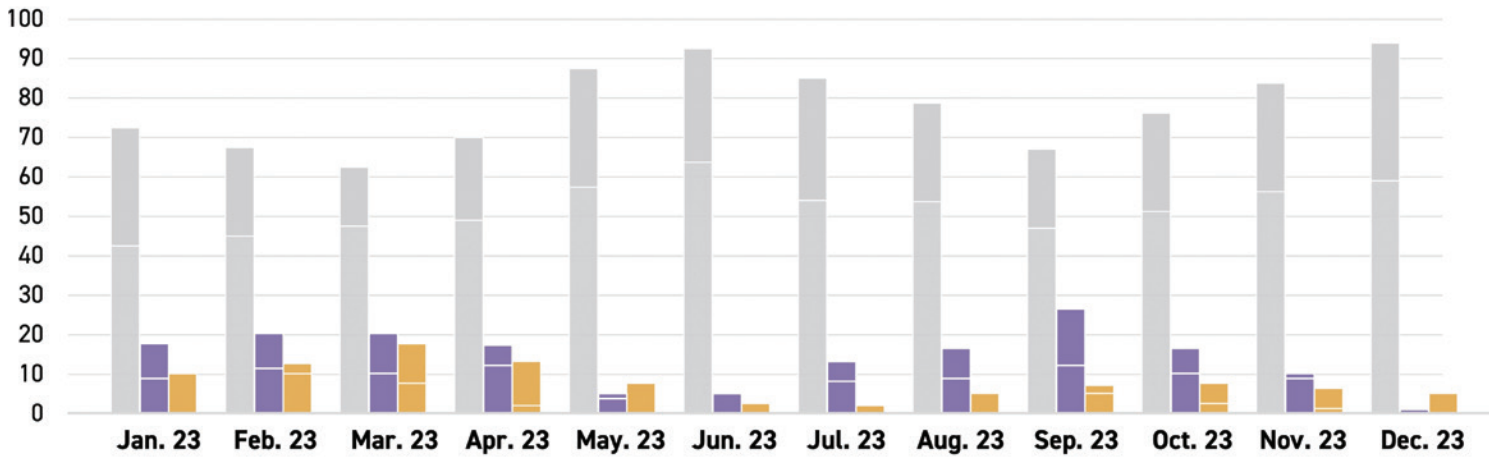


FIGURE 1.2F. DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 20 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO IN 2023

NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION.

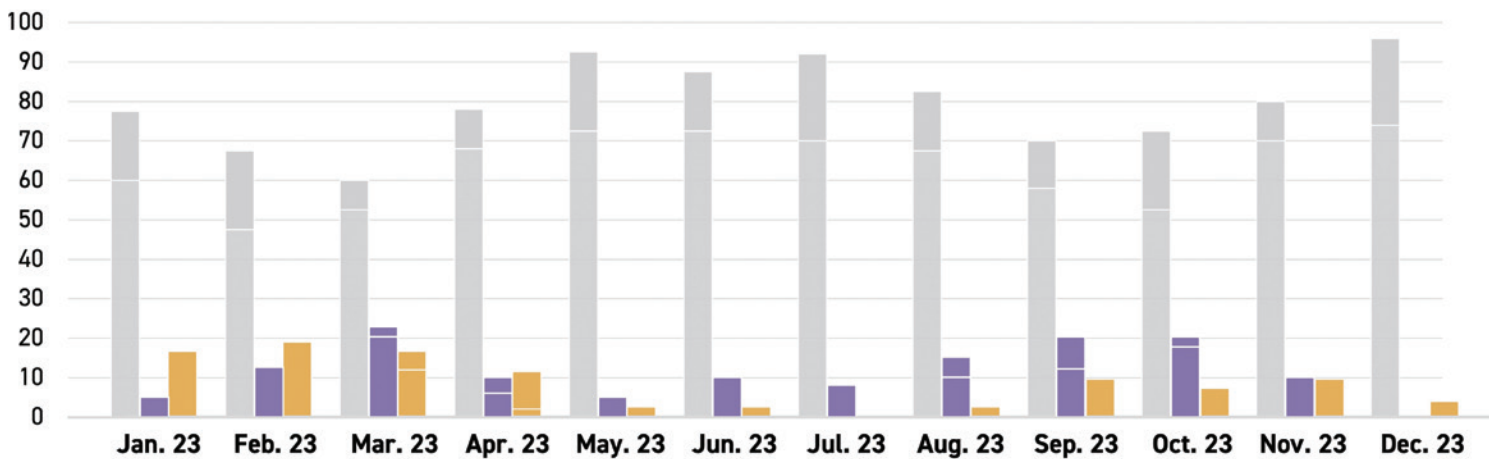


FIGURE 1.2G. DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 10 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO IN 2023

NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. CANCON SONGS ARE ALSO REPRESENTED IN A HORIZONTAL LINE PATTERN.

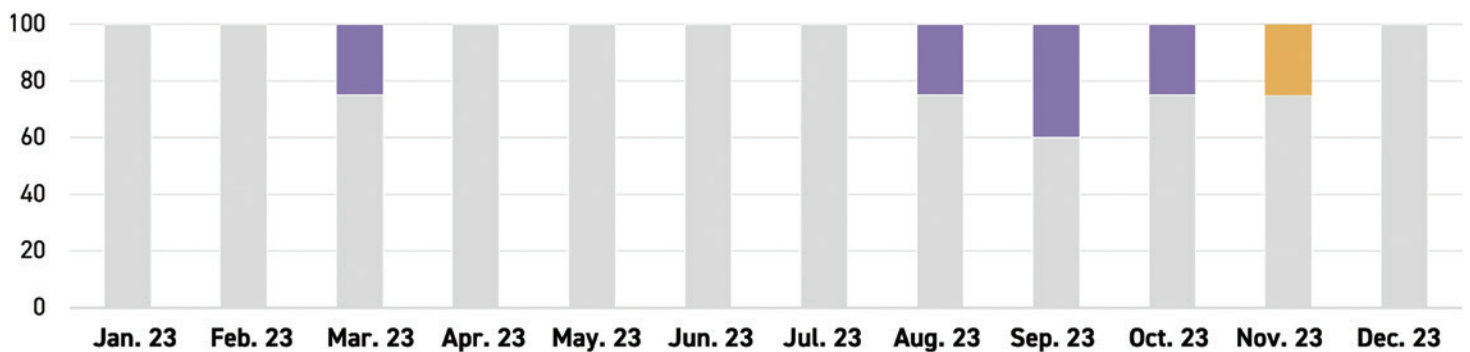


FIGURE 1.2H. DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE #1 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN COUNTRY RADIO IN 2023

NOTE: 4 CANCON CERTIFIED SONGS REACHED #1 IN 2023 (2 BY MEN, 1 BY A WOMAN, AND 2 BY A MIXED GENDER COLLAB), SPENDING A COMBINED 4 WEEKS AT THE TOP OF THE CHART.

# KEY FINDINGS

## Representation on Canadian Country Radio

Gender representation has long been a point of discussion within the Country music industry and the results here show the continued inequity in programming. Despite a marginal increase in the top played songs over the last 11 years, songs by women remain underprogrammed in 2023.

- › Songs by women were consistently programmed at 15.6% in 2023, with nearly all of the airplay for songs by white women.
- › The rise in collaborations between men and women performers over the course of this study period coincides with decline in songs by women and while this increases the presence of women's voices on radio, the majority of these collaborations have been led by men (with women playing a secondary role).
- › Distribution of airplay for songs by women show that CanCon songs (7.1%) are played less than non-CanCon songs (8.5%) and that few songs by women (in general) and Canadians (specifically) are retained for recurrent airplay (6.3%).
- › As a result, songs by women are being filtered out of programming in a way that limits their potential for both the charts and long-term preservation in the format's gold catalogue songs (currently at 2.9% of programmed songs).
- › Songs by women are more likely to be heard in the evening and overnight dayparts, and an average of 2 songs per hour are played during daytime programming.
- › Songs by women average 18.5% of the chart in 2023, but decline through the year as their songs are eliminated from high-rotation spots in station playlists. As a result, they are also filtered out of the chart's top positions and entirely absent from the #1 position for 8 months of the year.
- › IBPOC women and Trans\* artists are invisible in Country radio programming, their songs receiving less than 0.1% in 2023 — not anywhere near the amount needed for their songs to be within the range of the weekly charts.

Celebrating the Canadian women and Trans\* artists whose songs spun onto the Country Airplay charts in 2023

Tenille Arts

Hailey Benedict

Lindsay Ell

Teigen Gayse

Parker Graye

Kalsey Kulyk

Madeline Merlo

Jess Moskaluke

Robyn Ottolini

Meghan Patrick

Mackenzie Porter

Dayna Reid

Sacha

Tenille Townes





Alternative Rock radio is one of the three formats in this study to be defined by playing predominantly the music of just one genre. While stations within the format play songs from a range of genres, most songs played are within various styles and substyles of Rock music. There are 13 Alternative Rock stations in Canada that report to Mediabase's charting system. Most of the stations (46.2%) are in Ontario, with 23.1% in Alberta and British Columbia, and the remaining station in Nova Scotia. None of these stations is a French-language station, they are all English language reporters.

The dataset for analysing representation on Alternative Rock format radio between 2013 and 2023 includes the top 150 current singles played across this format each year, totalling 1,650 records. Within these records, 454 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs ranked within the top 150 songs played on Alternative Rock format radio. Table 2.a summarises representation of these artists, revealing that 71.2% are men, 11.3% are women, 17.3% are mixed gender bands and collaborations. Just one white Trans\* artist (0.2%) had a song appear within the top 150 songs played over this 11-year period. The majority (79.7%) of these artists are white, 2.7% are Black, 0.8% are Indigenous, 2.5% are artists of colour, and 14.3% are multiethnic bands or collaborations.

Given the ensemble-oriented nature of Rock music, the composition of mixed gender bands warrants deeper investigation. Mixed gender bands make up a higher percentage of the ensembles (14.3%) than collaborations (3.0%) and the Table 2.1a offers greater detail on the

composition of those bands: 3.2% were bands with shared vocals between men and women, 5.1% were led by men, and 5.9% were led by women. If we look at this data in another way, combining the data for men and male-led bands and for women and female-led bands reveals that 76.3% of the artists featured men vocalists, while 17.2% featured women. Regardless of how this data is analysed, women (whether solo, in an all woman ensemble, or with a woman fronting a band with male members) are significantly underrepresented on Alternative Rock format radio over the 11-year study period.

Within these 1,650 records are the 1,143 unique songs that received enough annual airplay to appear within the top 150 songs played on Canadian Alternative Rock format radio. The reason for there being just 1,143 unique songs in this dataset (instead of 1,650) is that some songs

receive enough annual airplay to rank within the top 150 two years in a row: 48 songs appeared in three different years, 411 appeared in two different years, and 684 appeared just once. Most of the songs that ranked within the top 150 played over this period were by men (70.2%), with just 8.2% by women, 0.1% by Trans\* artists, 20.3% by mixed gender bands, and 1.2% by mixed gender collaborations (Table 2.1b).

The detail captured in Table 2.1b shows that most of the mixed gender bands are led by men (7.6%), while 5.9% are bands with shared mixed gender vocals and 6.7% are led by women. These figures increase the percentage of unique songs by men and women to 77.8% and 14.9%, respectively. Most songs (85.1%) were by white artists, with 1.4% by Black artists, 0.7% by Indigenous artists, 1.3% by artists of colour, and 11.5% by multiethnic bands. Within this snapshot of the artists and

songs that ranked within the top 150 played each year between 2013 and 2023, a racial and gender hierarchy emerges with white men emerging as the most prioritised within programming at Alternative Rock radio, with white women coming in (a distant) second, songs by Black, Indigenous, and Artists of colour marginalised within the industry – songs by men with greater representation than those by women.

The following analysis investigates the rate at which these songs are played on Canadian Alternative Rock radio and how programming influences contention for the Yearend Airplay Charts.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	57.7%	2.0%	0.2%	1.8%	9.5%	<b>71.2%</b>
Women	9.3%	0.7%	0.4%	0.7%	0.2%	<b>11.3%</b>
Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.2%</b>
Mixed gender bands	11.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	3.1%	<b>14.3%</b>
With shared vocals	2.8%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	3.2%
Led by men	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	5.1%
Led by women	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	5.9%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mixed gender collaborations	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	<b>3.0%</b>
	<b>79.7%</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	

TABLE 2.1A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	61.3%	1.1%	0.2%	0.7%	6.9%	<b>70.2%</b>
Women	6.8%	0.3%	0.4%	0.6%	0.1%	<b>8.2%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender bands	16.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	3.9%	<b>20.3%</b>
With shared vocals	5.8%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	5.9%
Led by men	6.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	7.6%
Led by women	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	6.7%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mixed gender collaborations	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>1.2%</b>
	<b>85.1%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	

TABLE 2.1B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)



## 2.1.1. Airplay within the Top 150 Songs Played on Alternative Rock Radio between 2013 to 2023

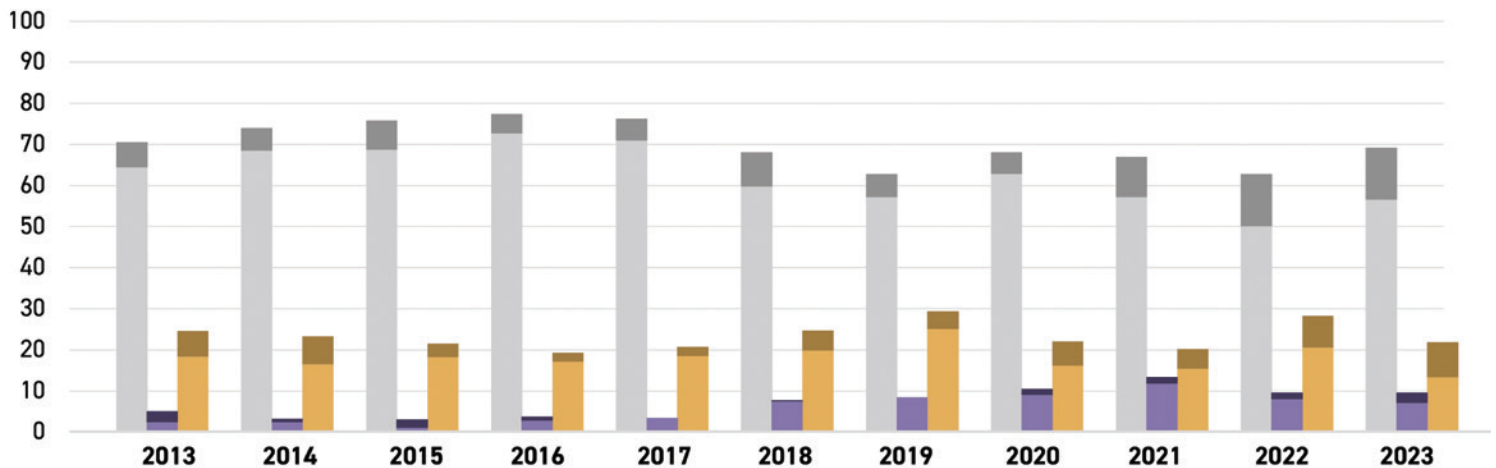
Within the top 150 songs played annually between 2013 and 2023 on Alternative Rock format radio, songs by women have received an average of just 6.9% of the airplay. Figure 2.1a maps the distribution of airplay of songs by men, women and mixed gender bands and collaborations (in percentages), revealing that songs by women that received enough airplay to land within the top 150 songs played averaged about 3.6% of the airplay between 2013 and 2017, before increasing to a peak of 13.2% in 2021, then dropping to 9.4% in the final two years of this 11-year period.

Most of the airplay for songs by women – an average of 81.5% – was for songs by white women. Figure 2.1a details representation by race and ethnicity as well as gender identity, with lighter shades for white artists and darker shades for Black, Indigenous, Artists of colour, and Multiethnic bands and collaborations. Songs by women of colour average 9.0% of the airplay accorded to songs by women artists, but this amounts to 1.3% overall (0.1% for Black women, 0.1% for Indigenous women, 0.6% for women of colour, and 0.0% for multiethnic ens./collabs of women artists). Songs by women of colour receive the most airplay in 2013 (2.7%) and 2023 (2.5%), and otherwise average just 1.0% in all other years - except for 2017 and 2019, where no songs by women of colour appear within the top 150 songs.

Songs by men, then, dominate programming at Alternative Rock format radio, averaging 70.2% of the airplay over this 11-year period with 89.2% for songs

by white men. Songs by men of colour received 10.8% of the airplay for songs by men, which amounts for 7.6% overall (0.8% for Black men, 0.3% for Indigenous men, 0.4% for men of colour, and 6.1% for multiethnic ens./collabs of men artists).

The remaining 22.8% of the airplay was accorded to songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations (77.4% for white ens./collabs and 22.6% for multiethnic ens./collabs). Most of this airplay (20.9%) is for bands composed of both men and women. Table 2.1c parses the percentage of airplay for songs by bands according to the lead vocal contributions further. Bands with shared vocals average 6.9%. Bands with men on lead vocals average 7.7% with 10% in 3 years (2013, 2018, 2019) and 11.7% in 2017, while bands with women in lead average 7.3% with 10.1% in 2015, 20.4% in 2022, and 13.1% in 2023. Redistributing this airplay, increasing the average airplay for men to 76.9% and women to 14.2% within the top 150 songs played on Alternative Rock radio.



**FIGURE 2.1A. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)** NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Songs by mixed gender bands	24.1%	22.8%	21.1%	18.9%	20.3%	24.0%	28.9%	19.9%	16.8%	24.3%	21.5%
With shared vocals	10.0%	7.4%	8.6%	5.8%	8.0%	5.0%	8.4%	9.2%	5.9%	5.3%	2.5%
Led by men	8.7%	10.0%	2.4%	9.0%	11.7%	10.6%	10.1%	4.7%	4.5%	8.1%	4.6%
Led by women	5.4%	5.4%	10.1%	4.1%	0.6%	8.4%	10.4%	6.1%	6.4%	10.4%	13.1%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

**TABLE 2.1C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS BY MIXED GENDER BANDS ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)**

## 2.1.2. Representation on the Yearend Alternative Rock Airplay Charts between 2013 and 2023

Mediabase's Yearend Alternative Rock Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played in a calendar year. They are the songs with enough airplay to have peaked within the top positions of the weekly charts – many achieving a #1 peak position. Drilling into the yearend reports to these top 50-positions offers greater perspective on those most-played songs and whose voices are heard most on terrestrial radio.

Table 2.1d summarises representation of the 185 solo artists, bands, and collaborations with songs ranked within the Yearend Alternative Rock Airplay Charts, 75.8% of them men, 7.5% women, 15.1% mixed gender bands and 1.6% mixed gender collaborations. Most of the artists are white (83.8%), with 1.6% Black artists, 1.1% Indigenous artists, 2.2% Artists of colour, and 11.3% multiethnic bands and collaborations. None of the artists with songs in the Yearend Airplay Charts are Trans\* artists.

Over the 11-year period studied, 460 songs appeared on the Yearend Charts – some of which received enough airplay over the course of several years to appear in more than one year: one song charted 3 consecutive years, while 88 charted two years. As Table 2.1e details, 71.1% were by men, 6.6% were by women, 21.7% were by mixed gender bands, 0.6% by mixed gender collaborations.

Most of the songs on the Yearend Charts were songs by white artists (85.2%), 0.7% by Black men, 1.3% by Indigenous artists, 1.1% by artists of colour, and 11.7% by multiethnic bands. Here, as

with the broader top 150 songs played on Alternative Rock radio, representation is higher for white artists, men in particular, while the percentage of women decreases from the top 50 played songs on Canadian Alternative Rock Radio's Yearend Charts and artists of colour remain the most underserved by radio programming in Canada.

Figure 2.1b maps the distribution of these songs across the 11-year period, showing that songs by women average 6.4% of the titles within the 50-position yearend charts. Their songs increase from an average of 4.0% from 2013 to 2018 to 10.5% from 2019 to 2023 (with the exception of a drop to 4.0% in 2022). Most of these songs (80%) are by white women, with smaller representation by Indigenous women and women of colour (whose songs average 0.7% and 0.5% over this period). Six years in this period saw no songs by a woman of colour on the Yearend Airplay Charts (2014, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2022).

Songs by men average 71.5% of the Yearend Airplay Charts with a peak of 84.0% in 2015 – a year with extremely low representation of women (at 2%), where songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations make up 18.0%. As with songs by women, the average of songs by men are predominantly by white artists (89.3%), with an average of 0.7% for songs by Black artists, 0.4% by Indigenous artists, 0.4% by artists of colour, and 6.2% by multiethnic bands and collaborations.

The remaining charting songs are those by mixed gender bands and collaborations. Their songs combined average 22.2% of the charts (divided 16.5% for white bands and 5.6% for multiethnic bands) with a drop to 12.0% in 2016, rising to 28.0% in 2019 before declining again to 16.0% by 2023. As with the discussion surrounding the composition of bands within the top 150 songs played, Yearend Airplay Charts activity reflects the same distribution wherein songs average about 7.0% for each group, summarised in Table 2.1f. The same is true of the percentage of titles by group, too, with near equal representation of mixed gender shared vocals and bands with men in the lead across this charting period. Bands with women in the lead

have lower representation at the start of the period, with no songs in 2016 and 2017. They end the period with higher representation, and 14.0% of the charting songs in 2023.

Songs by women gradually vanish from the top positions of the Yearend Charts, as mapped in Figures 2.1c-2.e. Songs by white women average 5.5% of the Top 20 songs across this period, with 1.8% by women of colour – making up 7.3% overall across the period. But songs by women only appear in the Top 20 in seven of the 11 years in this study period (averaging 11.4% across those years), with no songs in 2014, 2016, 2017, and 2019.

Although songs by women average 8.0% of the Top 10 (Figure 2.d), their songs chart in just six years with just one song between 2013 and 2017 and two in 2018, 2019, and 2021, before dropping to one in 2022/2023. Just one song by women appears at the Top of the Yearend charts ("Want What You Got" by The Beaches in 2020) (Figure 2.e), with the caveat that "Alligator" by Of Monsters and Men, which features co-lead singer Nanna Bryndís Hilmarsdóttir prominently in lead.

Songs by men are clearly programmed at a higher rate on Alternative Rock format radio than those by women, and that becomes clearer with each Figure tracking representation within the Top 20, Top 10, and #1 chart positions. Their songs average 68.2% of the Top 20 and 62.7% of the Top 10, and achieve the #1 position in eight of the 11 years (72.7%) in this study period. All of the artists that have #1 songs between 2013 and 2023 are white.

Mixed gender bands and collaborations average 24.5% of the Top 20, 29.1% of the Top 10, and have two songs in the #1 position of the Yearend Airplay Charts.

Their songs are more consistently represented in both the Top 20 and Top 10 than those by women, with a peak year in 2019 (when "Alligators" by Of Monsters and Men ended the year at #1). Of the songs peaking in the Top 20 over this 11-year period, bands led by men and bands led by women represent 6.8% and 9.1% of the top-charting songs, respectively. Combining these songs with those by

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	65.1%	1.6%	0.5%	1.1%	7.5%	<b>75.8%</b>
Women	5.9%	0.0%	0.5%	1.1%	0.0%	<b>7.5%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	11.7%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	3.3%	<b>15.1%</b>
With shared vocals	5.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	5.4%
Led by men	4.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	5.3%
Led by women	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.2%	4.4%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mixed gender collaborations	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	<b>1.6%</b>
	<b>83.8%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>11.3%</b>	

TABLE 2.1D. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE YEAREND ALTERNATIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	63.5%	0.7%	0.4%	0.4%	6.1%	<b>71.1%</b>
Women	5.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.7%	0.0%	<b>6.6%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	16.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.4%	<b>21.7%</b>
With shared vocals	7.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.8%
Led by men	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	6.7%
Led by women	3.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%	7.2%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mixed gender collaborations	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	<b>0.6%</b>
	<b>85.2%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	

TABLE 2.1E. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE YEAREND ALTERNATIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

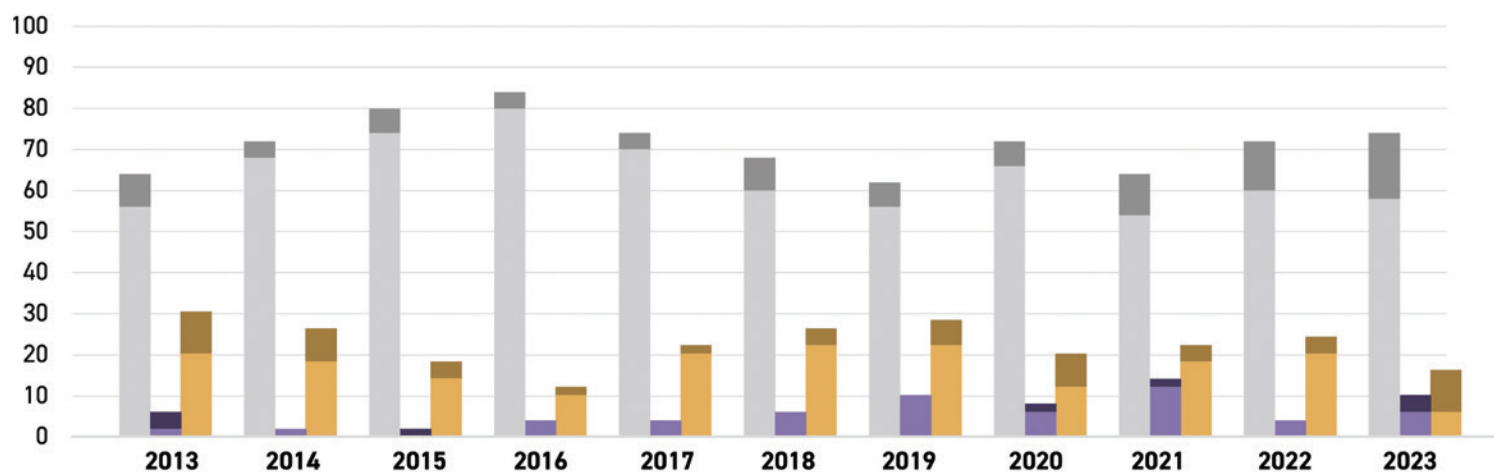


FIGURE 2.1B. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE YEAREND ALTERNATIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Songs by mixed gender bands	30.0%	26.0%	18.0%	12.0%	22.0%	26.0%	28.0%	18.0%	18.0%	22.0%	14.0%
With shared vocals	12.0%	10.0%	8.0%	2.0%	10.0%	6.0%	8.0%	10.0%	6.0%	4.0%	0.0%
Led by men	12.0%	12.0%	0.0%	10.0%	12.0%	10.0%	8.0%	2.0%	6.0%	6.0%	0.0%
Led by women	6.0%	4.0%	10.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	12.0%	6.0%	6.0%	12.0%	14.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

TABLE 2.1F. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS BY MIXED GENDER COLLABORATIONS ON THE YEAREND ALTERNATIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

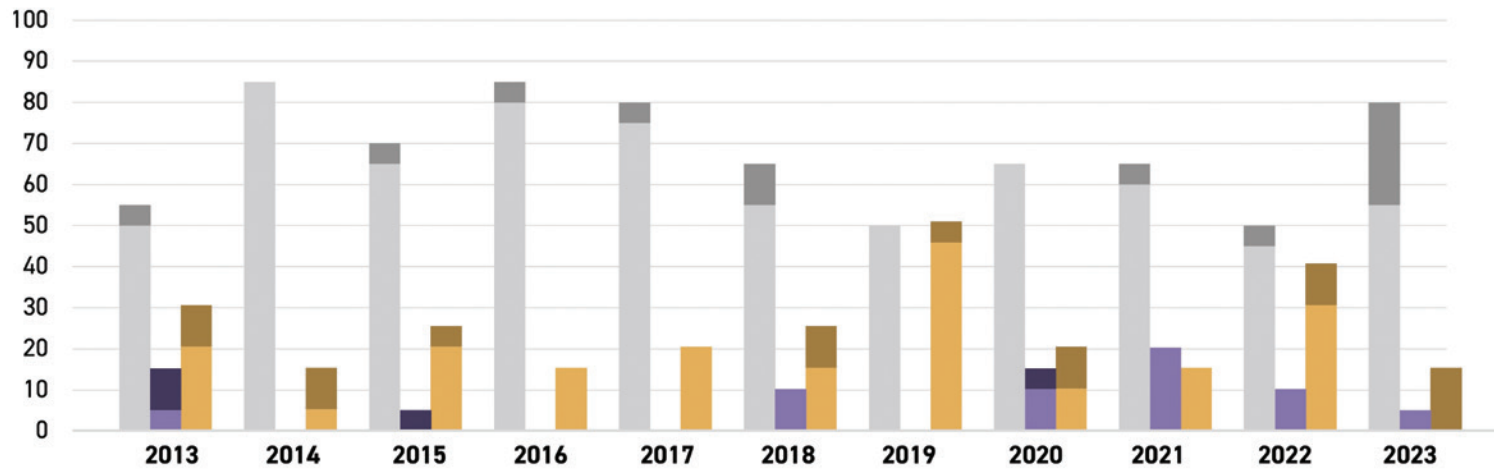


FIGURE 2.1C. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 20 OF THE YEAREND ALTERNATIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

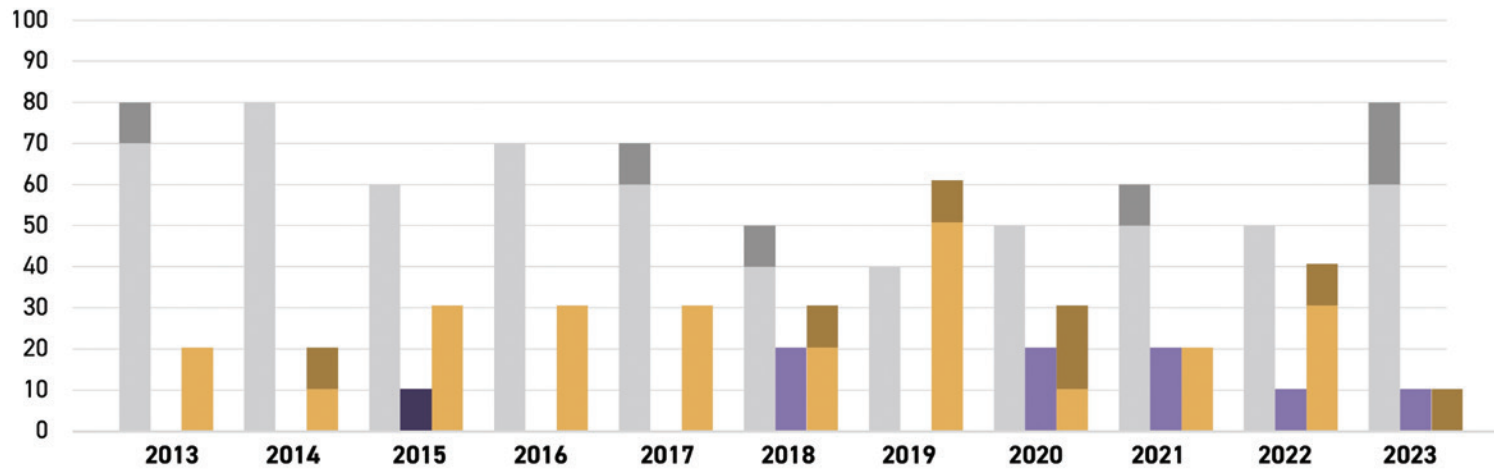


FIGURE 2.1D. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 10 OF THE YEAREND ALTERNATIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

men and women increase those counts to 75.0% and 16.4%, respectively. This still leaves women in a position of significant underrepresentation and precarity within the indie/alt-rock world. It's important to note, however, that their songs increase in representation of the Top 20 songs between 2018 and 2023 (three songs in 2018, 2019, and 2023, and four songs in 2022).

The histogram in Figure 2.1f further articulates the inequity within programming over this 11-year period. This Figure graphs the 1,143 songs by their peak position achieved by the number of titles within each 10-position range of the top 150 songs ranked in the dataset. About 70 songs by men capture each 10-position range within the top three ranges (top 30 of the the yearend charts), while women have less than 10 songs within all 10-position ranges except for between 131-40 (with 16 songs). Just 31.9% of the songs by women rank within the yearend chart range (1-50), while the remaining 68.1% (the majority) fall outside of the charts. There is no discernable trend for where songs by women "peak" within this charting culture; while 9 songs in this 11-year period peaked in the Top 10, the 5-song per 10-range bin average holds fairly stable between positions 31 and 130.

By contrast, 40.4% of the songs by men peak within the yearend chart range (1-50), while the remaining 59.6% appear in the remaining 100 positions. It is clear

from the histogram that songs by men do not just dominate the chart and its top positions, but they dominate in all ranges of the top 150 ranking over both songs by women and mixed gender bands. Their songs capture the chart positions about 9 times more than women, and the remaining positions an average of 8.5 times more overall.

Where the extent to which songs by men are prioritised becomes most troubling is in the consideration of mixed gender bands. Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations make up 26.0% of the Top 20 songs across this 11-year period, 25.1% of them are by bands, while 0.9% of them are collaborations. Out of the 215 songs that peaked in the Top 20, 74.0% of the songs with enough airplay to reach this peak within the yearend charts are by men or bands led by men, with just 17.2% by or led by women.

2013	<b>SWEATER WEATHER</b> Neighbourhood
2014	<b>COME WITH ME NOW</b> Kongos
2015	<b>LAMPSHADES ON FIRE</b> Modest Mouse
2016	<b>SPIRITS</b> The Strumbellas
2017	<b>BELIEVER</b> Imagine Dragons
2018	<b>BROKEN</b> The Lovelyband
2019	<b>ALLIGATOR</b> Of Monsters And Men
2020	<b>WANT WHAT YOU GOT</b> The Beaches
2021	<b>DIRTY</b> Grandson
2022	<b>LOVE BRAND NEW</b> Bob Moses
2023	<b>UNDERGROUND</b> City and Colour

FIGURE 2.1E. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) AT THE #1 POSITION OF THE YEAREND ALTERNATIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

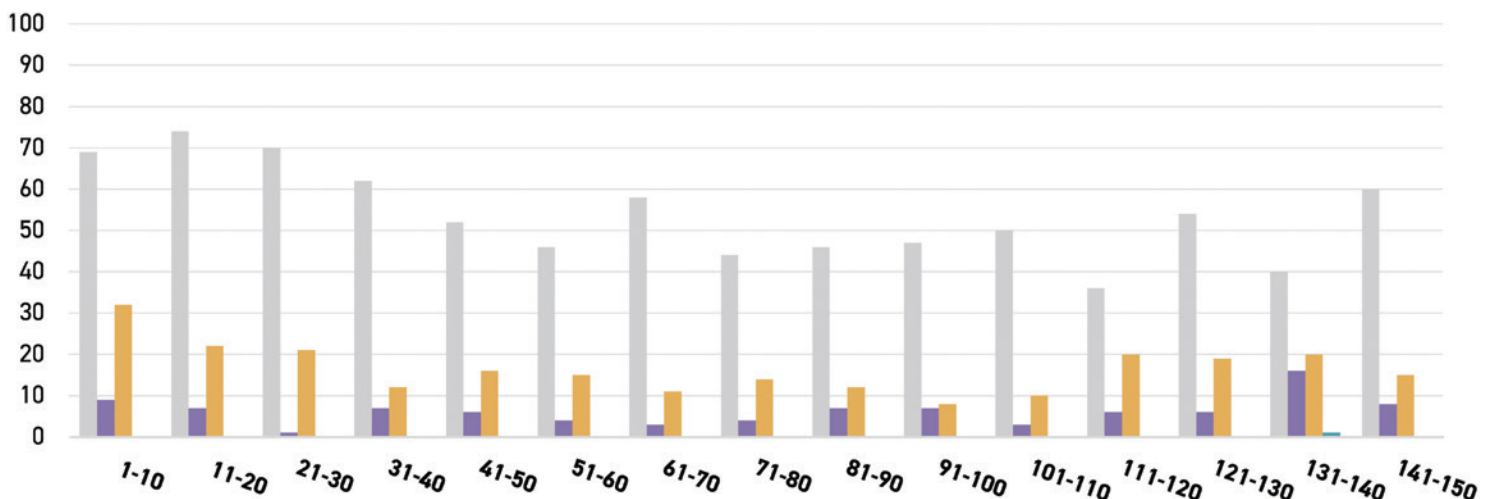


FIGURE 2.1F. HISTOGRAM BY PEAK POSITION (BY NUMBER OF TITLES) OF SONGS WITHIN TOP 150 PLAYED ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO (2013-2023)

## 2.2. Weekly Airplay on Canadian Alternative Rock Format Radio in 2023

Weekly airplay reports for the 13-reporting Alternative Rock stations offer the opportunity to explore more deeply the programming practices of the format, including the rate of airplay for all songs, the distribution of spins by song type (for current singles, recurrent tracks, and gold catalogue records) and by time of day – all within the context of Canadian Content regulations. How much are CanCon songs played? What type of song? And at what time of day? This section explores these questions more deeply, then investigates how programming influences contention for the weekly Airplay Charts.

This dataset includes the 144,847 records capturing every song played on the format, 25,766 for current singles, 5,941 for recurrent tracks, and 113,141 for gold records. Within this dataset capturing 2023 airplay, 2,863 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs played across the 13 stations that Mediabase monitors. As Table 2.2a summarises, 72.6% of those artists are men, 10.7% are women, 0.2% are Trans\* artists, 12.6% are mixed gender bands, 3.9% are mixed gender collaborations.

As with the yearend data examined above, 75.6% of the artists are white, 7.8% are Black, 1.2% are Indigenous, 2.1% are artists of colour, and 13.3% are multiethnic bands. These results show the continued prioritising of men within the broader programming picture at Alternative Rock radio.

These artists were responsible for the 8,823 songs that were played across the 13 reporting stations in 2023. As Table 2.2b summarises, 78.1% of those songs were by men, 7.5% by women, 0.1% by Trans\* artists, 12.9% by mixed gender bands, and 1.4% by mixed gender collaboration. Combining the percentage of songs by male-led and female-led bands to those by men and women, there is an increase to 81.9% and 11.3%, respectively. Most of the songs (80.1%) were by white artists, with 4.6% by Black artists, 0.8% by Indigenous artists, 1.5% by artists of colour, and 13.0% by multiethnic ensembles.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	56.0%	5.9%	0.7%	1.4%	8.6%	<b>72.6%</b>
Women	8.0%	1.1%	0.4%	0.7%	0.5%	<b>10.7%</b>
Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.2%</b>
Mixed gender bands	9.4%	0.5%	0.1%	0.0%	2.6%	<b>12.6%</b>
With shared vocals	5.3%	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	1.6%	<b>7.4%</b>
Led by men	1.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	<b>1.9%</b>
Led by women	2.6%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	<b>3.2%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender collaborations	2.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	<b>3.9%</b>
	<b>75.6%</b>	<b>7.8%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	

TABLE 2.2A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	64.2%	3.7%	0.4%	0.9%	8.9%	<b>78.1%</b>
Women	5.8%	0.6%	0.3%	0.6%	0.2%	<b>7.5%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender bands	9.3%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	3.3%	<b>12.9%</b>
With shared vocals	4.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.9%	<b>5.3%</b>
Led by men	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	<b>3.7%</b>
Led by women	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	<b>3.8%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender collaborations	0.7%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>1.4%</b>
	<b>80.1%</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	

TABLE 2.2B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023



## 2.2.1. Airplay of All Songs Played on Alternative Rock Format Radio in 2023

The following analysis investigates the rate at which songs by women (and women-led bands) are played on Canadian Alternative Rock radio. This section looks more deeply at the amount of airplay overall, as well as discusses the distribution of spins for songs by Canadian Content status, by song type (current, recurrent, and gold), the time of day at which they are played, and by chart activity.

Songs by women received 6.4% of the airplay on Alternative Rock format radio in 2023. Table 2.2c summarises airplay

data for the year, providing granular detail by race and ethnicity of the artists whose songs were played. From the outset, a note should be made regarding Trans\* artists; although 7 solo Trans\* artists had songs played on Alternative Rock radio in 2023, their songs received just 51 spins (total), amounting to 0.003% of the overall airplay. When adding the airplay for bands led by Trans\* artists (0.01%) the overall airplay received is still low (0.013%). As a result of the low number of spins and that the collaborations fall into the mixed gender band (and are not the lead), their contributions are not visible within the Tables or Figures in this section of the analysis.

The racial inequity observed at the higher-level analysis of the top 150 songs played each year between 2013 and 2023 remains true of the full programming picture: In

2023, 80.5% of the airplay was for songs by white artists, with 1.1% for songs by Black artists, 1.6% for Indigenous artists, 1.0% for artists of colour, and 15.9% by multiethnic ensembles.

This same information on airplay is graphed in Figure 2.2a for a view of the monthly distribution of spins, revealing that the distribution of spins was consistent with the statistics in the table above. There was no significant fluctuation in programming from month to month with songs by men averaging 75.4%, with 6.4% by women, and mixed gender bands 17.6% and collaborations 0.6%. Here, Trans\* artists (solo artists) averaged 0.003% of the monthly airplay.

The same is true for distribution of this data by race and ethnicity of the musicians. Songs by white artists consistently receive

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	63.4%	1.0%	0.9%	0.5%	9.6%	<b>75.4%</b>
Women	5.1%	0.1%	0.7%	0.5%	0.0%	<b>6.4%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	11.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.8%	<b>17.6%</b>
With shared vocals	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	<b>3.3%</b>
Led by men	5.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	<b>6.9%</b>
Led by women	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	<b>7.3%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender collaborations	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	<b>0.6%</b>
	<b>80.5%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>15.8%</b>	

TABLE 2.2C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

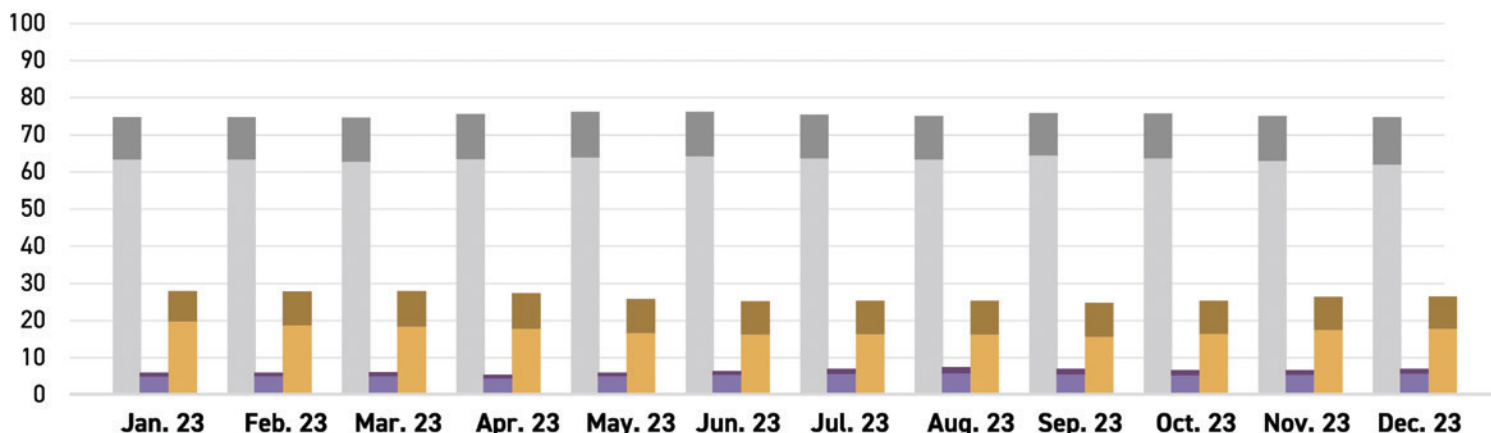


FIGURE 2.2A DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.



80.5% of the airplay, with 1.1% for songs by Black artists, 1.6% for songs by indigenous artists, 1.0% by artists of colour, and 15.9% by multiethnic ensembles. In each instance, songs by women of colour received less airplay than those by men of colour, though this difference is quite negligible when dealing with airplay of a value near or less than 1.0% (as it is for Black, Indigenous, and artists of colour).

A note should be made regarding the percentage of songs by multiethnic bands and collaborations, which has increased through this period from 11.4% of the top 150 songs played in 2013 to 17.3% by 2023. Multiethnic ensembles are bands of musicians of multiple races and ethnicities. As with mixed gender bands, wherein most have been typically led by male singers, most of the multiethnic ensembles have been led by white artists (57.5% of the ensembles, or 9.1% overall) and white men in particular (34.7%, or 5.5% overall). This brings greater perspective to representation in 2023, increasing representation of white musicians to 89.6%. The overwhelming whiteness (and maleness) of this format should be cause for industry reflection, given the multiethnic roots of the genre and the pioneering role of Black musicians.

### 2.2.1.1. Evaluation of Airplay by CanCon Status

What this distribution means for Canadian artists is particularly important in the context of the federal regulations guiding programming and how it shapes exposure for Canadian audiences, and impacts women in the industry. An average of 41.1% of the airplay in 2023 was for songs certified as CanCon – surpassing the minimum regulations by 6.1%. The remaining 58.9% of the airplay went to non-CanCon songs.

Distribution of airplay by CanCon certification is detailed in Figure 2.2b, further defining the distribution of airplay in 2023. Given what is already known about representation on Alternative Rock radio, it is unsurprising that songs by women make up such small percentages within both non-CanCon and CanCon songs, with 2.0% and 4.4%, respectively. These percentages increase when adding to them the airplay for songs by women-led bands – to 5.4% for non-CanCon songs and 8.3% for CanCon songs. Even with this increase, songs by women are underrepresented within the broader picture of Alternative Rock programming. Not visible within this graphic is the airplay for songs by solo Trans\* artists, which is distributed 0.0003% for non-CanCon songs and 0.003% for CanCon songs.

Table 2.2d calculates the distribution of airplay by certification status, showing that non-CanCon songs by women (including those of bands led by women) make up a much smaller percentage of the airplay for songs that are not CanCon (9.3%), while CanCon songs register 20.2% of the airplay within the programming accorded to Canadian songs. Here, non-CanCon songs by Trans\* artists received 0.0005% and CanCon songs 0.007% of the airplay.

### 2.2.1.2. Evaluation of Airplay for Songs by Time of Day

The time of day at which these songs are heard is of critical importance to the development of a musician's career. As described earlier, the 24-hour cycle is divided into five dayparts, with the three day-time periods – the Morning Drive (AMD from 6:00-10:00), the Midday period (MID from 10:00-15:00) and the Afternoon Drive (PMD from 15:00 to 19:00) – are the most important for exposure as they are the periods with the highest rate of listenership. The Overnight (OVN from 0:00 to 6:00) and Evening (EVE from 19:00 to 24:00) periods frame the day and are periods with a higher percentage of songs played due not just in part to their slightly longer duration, but also the reduced amount of news and specialty programming (features, interviews, etc.).

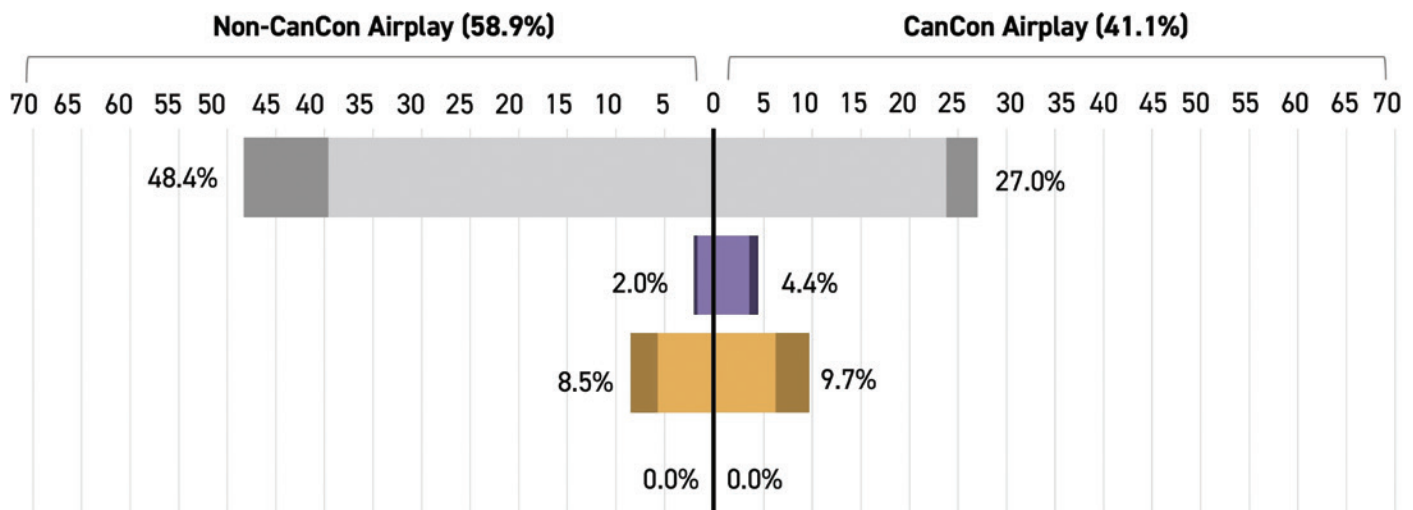


FIGURE 2.2B. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

Figure 2.2c tracks the distribution of airplay by daypart, graphing the data in accordance with the 24-hour cycle beginning with the Overnights on the left, through the Morning Drive, Midday and Afternoon Drive, to the Evening on the right for each group of artists. The columns are separated by a white line to distinguish between non-CanCon airplay (at the bottom of the column) and CanCon airplay (at the top of the column).

The highest percentage of airplay for all artists occurs in the Overnight and Evening periods, as expected. For all groups, about 28.2% of their overall airplay occurs in the Overnight, with 14.0% in the Morning, 20.5% in the Midday, 15.8% in the Afternoon, and 21.5% in the Evening. Despite this even distribution for songs by men, women, and mixed gender bands and collaborations, though, the distribution overall shows considerable inequity for women and mixed gender bands, whose songs are under-programmed in each daypart.

Half of radio programming occurs during the three daypart hours (Morning, Midday, and Afternoon) at 50.4% of the spins. Federal broadcasting regulations require that Canadian radio play 35.0% Canadian Content between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to ensure listeners are exposed to music of Canadian artists. While the periods do not align perfectly (the Afternoon daypart ends at 7:00 p.m.), Alternative Rock radio stations played 42.8% CanCon songs across the Morning, Midday, and Afternoon dayparts in 2023, with 27.0% for songs by men, 4.4% for songs by women, and 9.7% for mixed gender bands and collaborations.

To provide greater perspective on what this means, we calculated down to the level of daytime programming to provide an example of what a typical 24-hour cycle would look like for the average station and listener. Across the 13 reporting stations, an average of 328 songs are played per day, with 247 songs by men, 21 by women, and 60 by mixed gender bands and collaborations. Table 2.2e breaks this down further to show how many songs by each group would be played. For women, the distribution of spins for CanCon songs is even across all dayparts,

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [58.8%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [41.2%]
Songs by Men	82.2%	65.7%
Songs by Women	3.5%	10.6%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	13.7%	23.1%
With shared vocals	2.7%	4.1%
Led by men	5.2%	9.4%
Led by women	5.8%	9.6%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%
Songs by mixed gender collaborations	0.6%	0.6%

TABLE 2.2D. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

with one less song in the Afternoon drive. The same is true for mixed gender bands and collaborations, with slightly greater fluctuation for CanCon songs by men across the five dayparts.

Although near equal distribution for songs by women, it is critical to note that with this low level of programming songs by women (in general) and CanCon songs by women (specifically) it would be possible to listen for an hour and not hear a song by a woman – unless that woman is sharing vocals with a man.

### 2.2.1.3. Evaluation of Airplay for Current, Recurrent and Gold Status Songs

Radio airplay is divided into three different song “types” – current singles that are vying for top-programming (and, by extension, chart) contention, recurrent tracks that have reached their peak programming position but are still in regular rotation, and gold catalogue records of older but “canonical” songs that have been retained by a station for long-term programming.

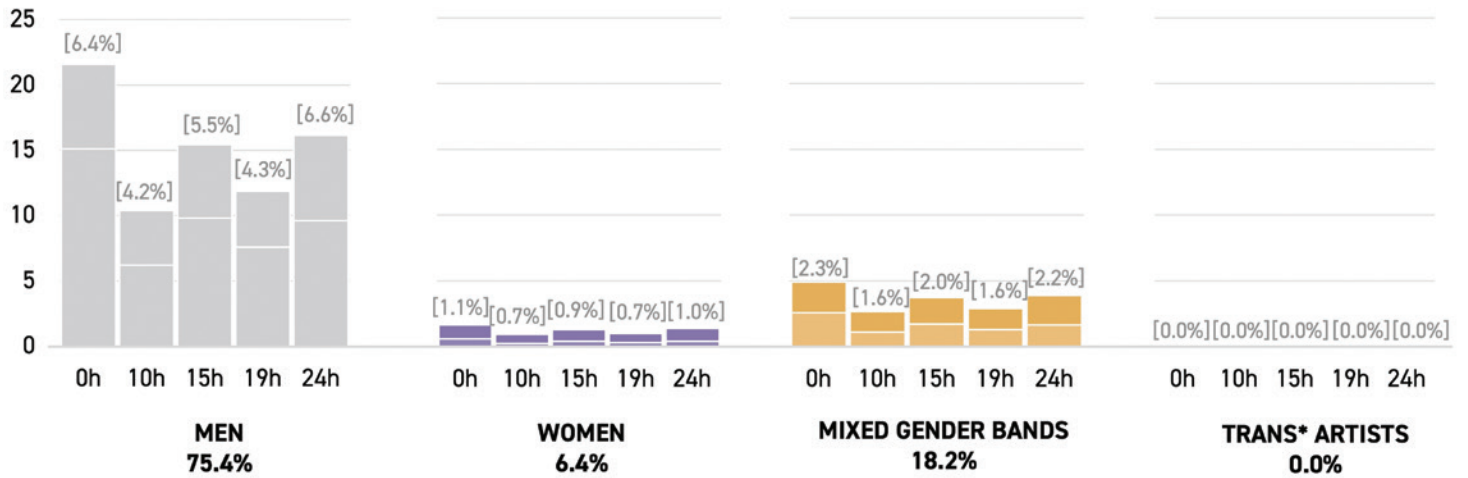
Figure 2.2d tracks the breakdown of airplay by these three programming types, showing on the left the overall airplay on Alternative format radio, parsed by airplay for current singles (27.3%), recurrent tracks (12.0%), and gold records (60.7%).

Songs by women receive a fairly low distribution across current singles (3.0%) and recurrent programming (1.1%) and are programmed at a marginally higher rate in gold catalogue songs (2.3%). This suggests that their songs in 2023 were not just not accorded high-ranking spins for their current singles, but also that they are not represented with the stations’ gold catalogue songs of the format’s “canonical” and genre-defining records.

For both non-CanCon songs and CanCon songs, spins for solo Trans\* artists were only in current airplay (0.0003% and 0.003%, respectively). Airplay for Trans\* artists is marginally more present when focusing on non-CanCon songs by bands whose singers are transgender or trans-nonbinary, with 0.001% in currents and 0.02% in golds.

Combining, as before, airplay for women-led bands with the airplay granted to songs by women offers more perspective on this programming. With 13.7% of the airplay overall (when combined [see Table 2.2f]), songs by gold catalogue records by women and women-led bands are programmed at a higher rate than current singles and recurrent tracks, and with near equal distribution amongst the groups within each song status category. The difference between women and women-led bands within each grouping is negligible.

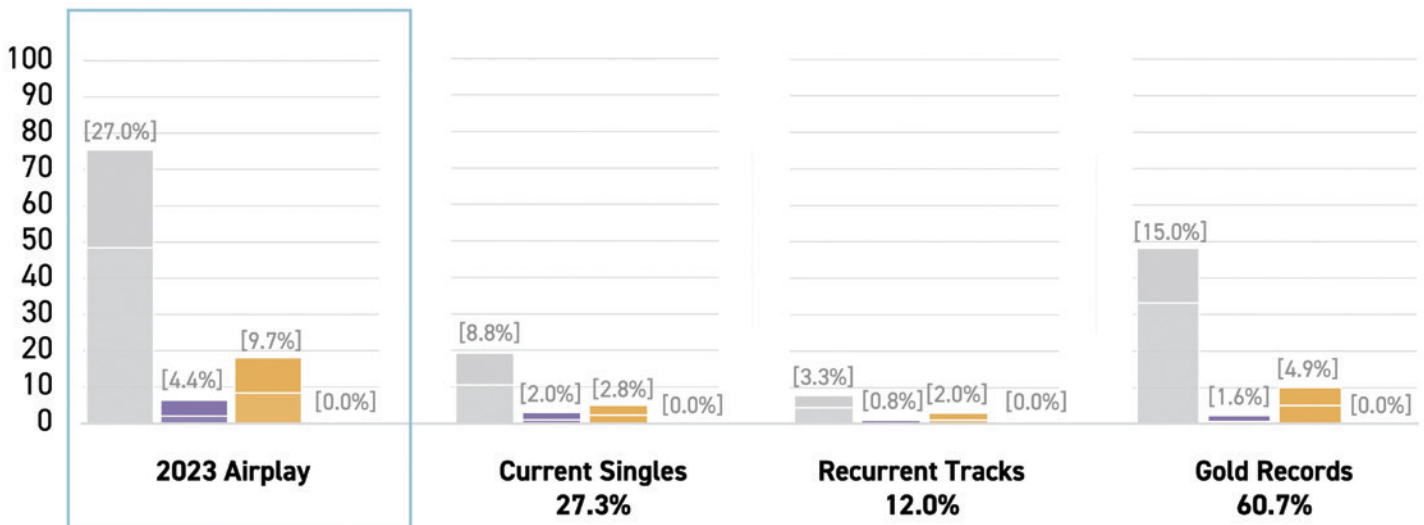
These findings are further highlighted in lists of the Top 10 men, women, and mixed gender bands by their spins (Table 2.2g), which shows that The Beaches are the only all-women band to rank within the Top



**FIGURE 2.2C. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY BY TIME OF DAY FOR ALL SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

	SONGS BY MEN	SONGS BY WOMEN	SONGS BY TRANS* ARTISTS	SONGS BY MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
<b>OVERNIGHT (0:00-6:00)</b>	71 [50/21]	5 [2/3]	0 [0/0]	17 [9/8]
<b>AM DRIVE (6:00-10:00)</b>	34 [20/14]	4 [1/3]	0 [0/0]	9 [4/5]
<b>MIDDAY (10:00-15:00)</b>	50 [32/18]	4 [1/3]	0 [0/0]	13 [6/7]
<b>PM DRIVE (15:00-19:00)</b>	39 [25/14]	3 [1/2]	0 [0/0]	9 [4/5]
<b>EVENING (19:00-24:00)</b>	53 [32/21]	5 [2/3]	0 [0/0]	12 [5/7]
	<b>247</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>60</b>

**TABLE 2.2E. DISTRIBUTION OF SPINS FOR SONGS BY TIME OF DAY ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE THE DISTRIBUTION FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS (RESPECTIVELY)



**FIGURE 2.2D. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CURRENT, RECURRENT AND GOLD SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

10 (overall). The square brackets provide the overall ranking for the Top 10 artists with CanCon status designation beside the names of the Canadian artists whose songs meet MAPL regulations. There are two striking points to be made here. First, the disparity between the most played woman and the tenth most played woman is particularly troubling, The Beaches may be third overall, but iskwē emerges as the 180th most played artist in 2023. The picture changes for women when considering mixed gender ensembles with bands like Metric (first ranked overall), Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Monowhales, and Florence + The Machine were all highly-spun bands in 2023.

The second point concerns the high number of CanCon artists within the top 10 women (spread out though they may be) and within the top ranked mixed gender bands (with two in the top 10 overall). This is in contrast to the top 10 men, which is predominantly comprised of American Rock bands that formed in the 1990s – Foo Fighters, Green Day, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Blink 192, and Weezer. Just three of the top 10 male bands are CanCon. But while there are more CanCon women within the top 10 list, their low rankings suggest that Canadian women are still underprogrammed in a way that limits their potential within the industry. This will be further explored in the next section on Airplay charts.

This analysis shows that songs by men are played 11.8 times more than those by women on Canadian Alternative Rock radio, and the way in which that airplay is distributed across song status (current/recurrent/gold), by time of day, and by CanCon certification reveals harmful inequity and a difficult context for women to build and sustain careers in this genre. The data also shows that non-CanCon men are programmed at a much higher rate than CanCon songs by men, whereas songs by women are nearly evenly distributed in all facets. The trends thus far show that songs by men and male-led bands are prioritised within programming and that non-CanCon songs are played at a higher rate than CanCon songs. Critically, even when adding women-led bands to the percentages of songs and airplay by women artists they are still starkly underrepresented within the format.

	CURRENT SINGLES	RECURRENT TRACKS	GOLD RECORDS
Non-CanCon Women	1.0%	0.3%	0.7%
Non-CanCon Women-led bands	0.8%	0.6%	1.9%
CanCon Women	1.0%	1.1%	2.3%
CanCon Women-led bands	1.0%	1.0%	1.3%
	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>

TABLE 2.2F. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CURRENT, RECURRENT AND GOLD SONGS BY WOMEN AND WOMEN-LED BANDS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

TOP 10 MEN	TOP 10 WOMEN	TOP 10 TRANS* ARTISTS	TOP 10 MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
2 Foo Fighters, 29,286	3 The Beaches, 24,228 CA	698 Laura Jane Grace, 2 698 Sister Ray, 2 CA 698 Yves Tumor, 2	1 Metric, 30,455 CA
4 City and Colour, 23,156 CA	31 Ruby Waters, 10,269 CA	699 Rykka, 1	5 Mother Mother, 21,490 CA
6 Green Day, 20,711	54 Tegan and Sara, 7,142 CA		12 July Talk, 15,895 CA
7 Arkells, 20,709 CA	76 Wet Leg, 5,667		20 Dear Rouge, 13,427 CA
8 Red Hot Chili Peppers, 19,671	85 JJ Wilde, 5,168 CA		21 Yeah Yeah Yeahs, 13,203
9 Blink 182, 19,071	108 Charlotte Cardin, 4,317 CA		24 Monowhales, 11,951 CA
10 The Black Keys, 18,530	120 K.Flay, 3,691		25 Florence + The Machine, 11,217
11 The Tragically Hip, 18,390 CA	144 Feist, 2,901 CA		29 Smashing Pumpkins, 10,510
13 Weezer, 15,261	168 Lorde, 2,296		39 White Stripes, 9,396
14 Nirvana, 15,148	180 iskwē, 2,062 CA		41 Lumineers, 9,300

TABLE 2.2G. TOP 10 MOST PLAYED ARTISTS ON CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

## 2.2.2. Representation on the Weekly Airplay Charts for Alternative Rock Radio in 2023

Airplay charts offer an important lens not just on representation in an industry, but also the inner workings of programming practices. They offer a view into the most repeated current singles in a format, but also how the distribution impacts Canadian artists within the industry ecosystem. Mediabase's Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played each week on radio. In 2023, 159 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs on the weekly Alternative Rock Airplay charts, 66.0% are men, 13.2% are women, 18.9% are mixed

gender bands, and 1.9% are mixed gender collaborations. None of the solo artists that charted at Trans\*, and none of the bands or collaborations were led by or featured Trans\* artists. As Table 2.2h summarises, 79.3% of the artists are white, while 2.5% are Black, 1.2% are Indigenous, 3.8% are artists of colour, and 13.2% are multiethnic bands.

Over the course of the year, 222 songs charted, with the same gender and racial representation as detailed throughout this section on Canadian Alternative Rock programming in 2023. As Table 2.2i summarises, 65.3% of those songs were by men, 13.9% by women, 19.4% by mixed gender bands and 1.4% by mixed gender collaborations. Most songs were by white artists (77.7%), with 2.8% by black artists, 2.3% by Indigenous artists, 4.1% by artists of colour, and 13.1% by multiethnic bands.

### 2.2.2.1. Evaluation of Songs on the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

Scaling up to the 2,600 records for the top 50 songs ranked each week in 2023, songs by men captured 68.7% of the chart, with songs by women at 9.9%, songs by mixed gender bands at 19.8%, mixed gender collaborations at 1.6%, and Trans\* artists with no songs on the chart (Table 2.2j). As with programming, most of the charting songs (7.6%) are by white women, which amounts to 77.6% of the songs by women. The remaining 2.2% of songs are by women of colour, with 0.3% of the charting songs by Black women, and 1.2% by Indigenous women, and 0.8% by women of colour.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	53.5%	1.9%	0.6%	2.5%	7.5%	<b>66.0%</b>
Women	10.7%	0.6%	0.6%	1.3%	0.0%	<b>13.2%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	15.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%	<b>18.9%</b>
With shared vocals	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	4.1%
Led by men	7.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	8.6%
Led by women	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	6.3%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mixed gender collaborations	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	<b>1.9%</b>
	<b>79.3%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	

TABLE 2.2H. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO CHARTS IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	52.6%	2.3%	1.4%	2.3%	6.7%	<b>65.3%</b>
Women	10.7%	0.5%	0.9%	1.8%	0.0%	<b>13.9%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	14.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	<b>19.4%</b>
With shared vocals	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%
Led by men	7.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	8.6%
Led by women	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	7.2%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mixed gender collaborations	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	<b>1.4%</b>
	<b>77.7%</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>4.1%</b>	<b>13.1%</b>	

TABLE 2.2I. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS IN 2023



Figure 2.2e tracks the distribution across the calendar year, revealing that songs by women averaged 9.8% throughout the year, dropping from 12.5% of the charts in January to 3.0% by March and then increased to a peak of 17.0% in August, before declining back to an average of 11.0% from September to December. Most of these charting songs were for white women, with an average of 0.3% for songs by Black women that charted in November and December, 1.2% for Indigenous women, and 0.8% for women of colour.

Songs by men had a more consistent record across the year, averaging 68.6% with a peak of 74% in April when songs by women were at their lowest in 2023. Here, too, songs by white men dominate the charts (82.2%), with 0.7% average for songs by Black men, 1.8% for Indigenous

men, 1.6% for men of colour, and 8.0% for multiethnic ensembles.

Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations average 21.6% of the charts. Their songs increase from 22.0% in January to a peak of 26.5% in March, then decline to 15.6% in July before returning to an average of around 20% for the final months of the year. Most of these songs are by women-led bands, which average 9.9% of the charts over the period, with male-led bands averaging 8.6%. But their activity crosses over the year: songs by male-led bands start the year with 11.5% of the chart and then decline to 4.5% by August where they do start to climb again but end the year in December at 8.4% of the charts. The opposite is true for women, whose songs begin the year at 8.0% of the charts and increase to 12.0% in April,

fluctuating across the summer months and then peaking again at 12.0% in October before declining to 8.03% by the end of the year.

Table 2.2k further details chart data by CanCon designation, revealing that 45.8% of the songs that chart are amongst the most played on Canadian radio – with enough support to land these songs on the airplay chart. And while most of the songs by men are non-CanCon, CanCon songs by women appear at a slightly higher percentage of the charts than those that are non-CanCon by women. Combining these percentages with men- and women-led bands increases representation slightly to 32.6% CanCon songs by men and 12.4% CanCon songs by women.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	56.4%	0.8%	1.8%	1.6%	8.1%	<b>68.7%</b>
Women	7.6%	0.3%	1.2%	0.8%	0.0%	<b>9.9%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	13.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.3%	<b>19.8%</b>
With shared vocals	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>1.6%</b>
Led by men	7.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	<b>8.5%</b>
Led by women	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%	<b>9.7%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender collaborations	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	<b>1.6%</b>
	<b>77.5%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>	

TABLE 2.2J. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

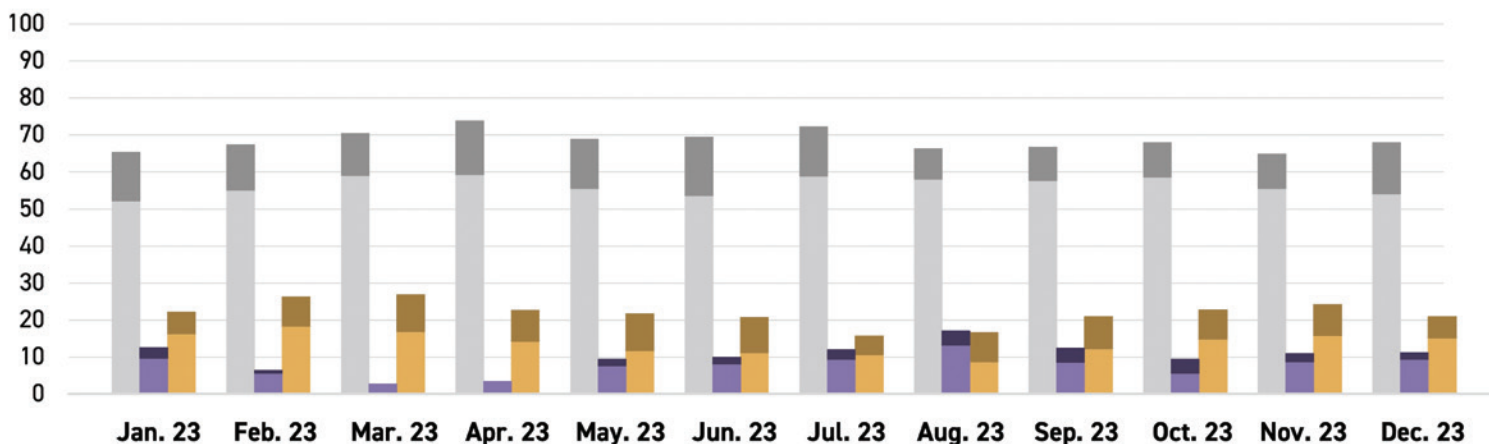


FIGURE 2.2E DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

## 2.2.2.2. Evaluation of Representation in the Top Positions of the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

Songs by women continue to hold an average of 9.0% of the charts in the Top 20 and Top 10, but increase significantly at the #1 position of the weekly Airplay Charts. Figures 2.2f-2.2h track the percentage of songs in each of these three charting categories over the course of the calendar year. In each instance, the trend of representation on the charts (of initial decline to increase through the late Summer and Fall months for songs by women) holds true through to the top position of the chart.

Songs by men averaged 73.5% of the Top 20 songs (Figure 2.2f), peaking at 82.5% in October. Over the course of the year, non-CanCon songs averaged 43.3% of the Top 20, with CanCon songs averaging 30.3%. Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations average the remaining 17.3%, divided 7.5% and 9.8% non-CanCon and CanCon songs, respectively. Nearly all of this activity in the Top 20 was for mixed gender bands, with women-led bands at 60.7% of this activity.

Just 11 songs by 8 women reached the Top 20. After three months with no songs by women in the Top 10, activity begins in May with The Beaches' "Blame Brett" and then in June with Ruby Waters' "Flash Flood", which together charted consistently and are the only songs by women in the Top 10 until the end of the year (Figure 2.2g). For a period of 16 weeks, from 8 July to 4 November, The Beaches held the #1 position of the chart, as noted by the plum column in Figure 2.2h. As a result of the airplay accorded to their music (this song, in particular), The Beaches did not just rank third overall in airplay on Active Rock radio, "Blame Brett" was #1 for 32.3% of the year.

Songs by men maintain a similar 76.5% average of the Top 10 (Figure 2.2f), with little change from their Top 20 standing. Here, too, non-CanCon songs by men out-

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [54.2%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [45.8%]
Songs by Men	40.0%	28.7%
Songs by Women	3.8%	6.0%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	8.9%	11.0%
With shared vocals	0.9%	0.7%
Led by men	4.6%	3.9%
Led by women	3.4%	6.4%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%
Songs by mixed gender collaborations	1.5%	0.1%

TABLE 2.2K. PERCENTAGE OF CANCON SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

chart CanCon songs (47.7% and 28.9%, respectively). Mixed gender bands make up a smaller percentage of the Top 10 than the Top 20, at 14.2% – with Yeah Yeah Yeahs and Metric charting consistently from January to April, Monowholes from May to July, and Metric from August to the end of November.

Figure 2.2h tracks representation in the #1 position of the Alternative Rock chart, showing clear periods with songs by women programmed in the top positions. Like The Beaches, Yeah Yeah Yeahs held the #1 position for 11 near-consecutive weeks from 28 January to 15 April (Aysanabee interrupted their run on 11 March). Combining these long runs for female-led Yeah Yeah Yeahs and The Beaches, make 2023 a strong year for women at top of the Alternative Rock Airplay chart, holding the #1 position for 52.0% of the year. But the Foo Fighters also had a long run with 9 weeks for "Rescued" and then 3 weeks with "Under You" (23.1% of the year). Seven other artists had songs reach the #1 the remaining 13 weeks of the year (24.9%) – all songs by men.

In 2023, CanCon songs received enough support from radio for their songs to hold the top position of the chart 42% of the year and 46.5% of the Top 10 and 48.5% of the Top 20. But while CanCon artists (women, in particular) had a strong year at the top of the chart, this success is made through the tokenising of singular artists in a way that doesn't advantage other CanCon women. Not only were The Beaches the third most played artist

overall, but they were the only women within the top 10 most spun artists – the second ranked woman overall having received less than half their spins. Indeed, the list of top 10 artists by their accumulated airplay in 2023 throws into stark relief the culture of inequitable programming on the format, one that supported just one female band at high capacity (two if we include the top-ranked Metric).

There is a great consistency to programming on this format, as discussion of the overall airplay and weekly charts reveals nearly unchanging activity for men, women and mixed gender ensembles, which changes in the top chart positions. While the format is playing a higher volume of CanCon songs by women and mixed gender bands than non CanCon songs, their programming in 2023 did not show that they did so with the same strategies used for programming songs by men. Songs by men are consistently programmed at a higher rate overall – and even though CanCon songs by men are programmed at a lower rate than songs non-CanCon songs, their songs are still prioritised within programming in a way that offers greater pathways for multiple artists and bands at the same time.



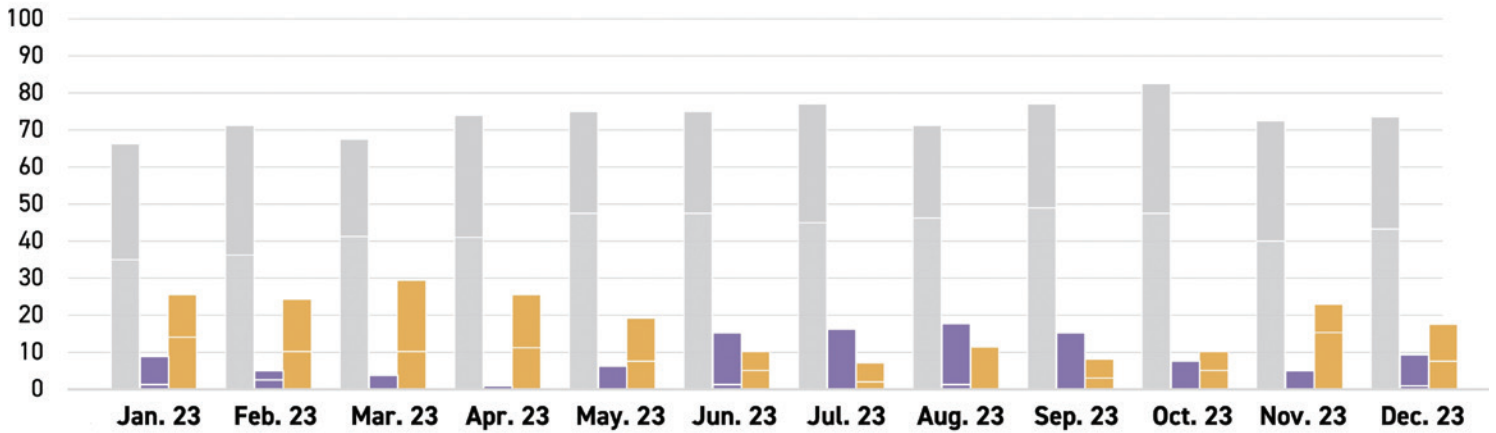


FIGURE 2.2F DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 20 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023  
NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION.

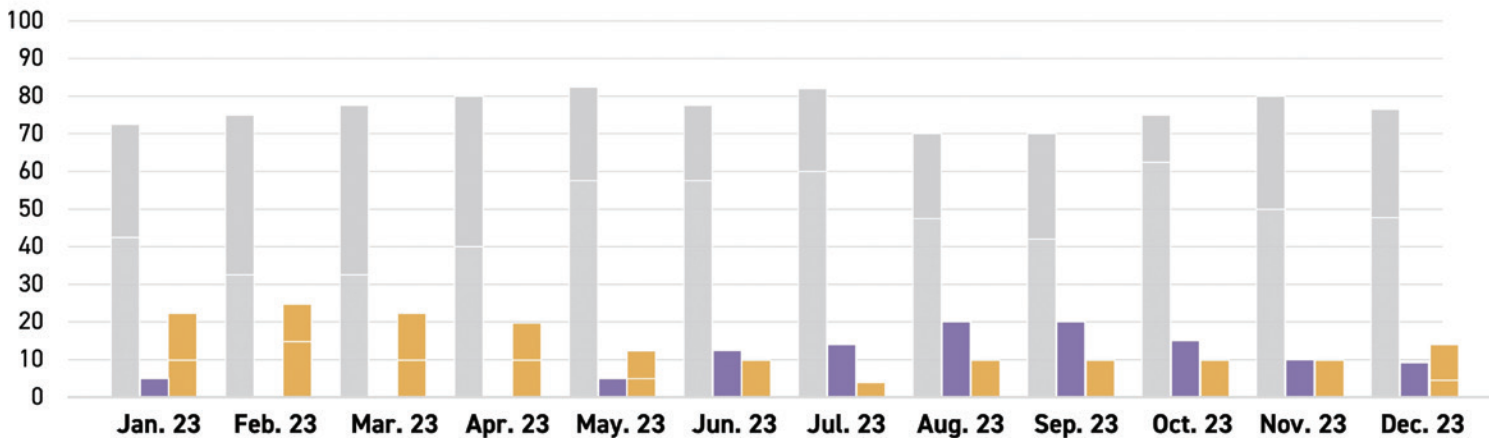


FIGURE 2.2G DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 10 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023  
NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. CANCON SONGS ARE ALSO REPRESENTED IN A HORIZONTAL LINE PATTERN.

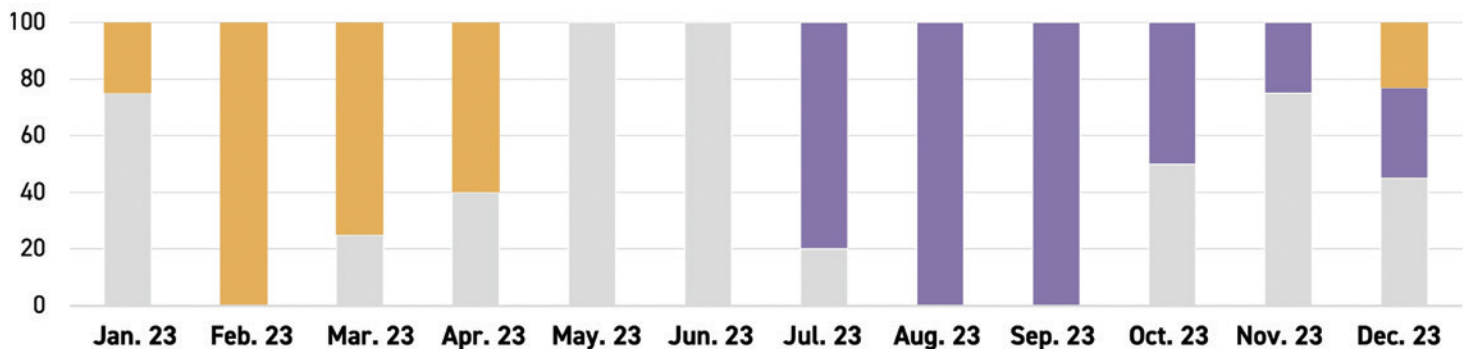


FIGURE 2.2H DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE #1 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ALTERNATIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023  
NOTE: 5 CANCON CERTIFIED SONGS REACHED #1 IN 2023 (4 BY MEN, 1 BY A WOMAN), SPENDING A COMBINED 22 WEEKS AT THE CHART (16 FOR "BLAME BRETT" BY THE BEACHES).

# KEY FINDINGS

## Representation on Canadian Alternative Rock Radio

Rock genres have long been dominated by men's voices, though in recent years bands composed of both men and women have been on the rise in Alternative and Indie Rock spaces. The findings here show that songs by women more than doubled in airplay over this period, but this is still incredibly marginal and women remain underprogrammed (overall) on the format in 2023.

- › Songs by women averaged 6.4% in 2023, with most airplay for songs by white women.
- › Women's voices are more likely to be heard in union with voices of men in bands; while male-led bands received more airplay at the start of this study period, women-led bands increased in representation and by 2023 had more airplay than those led by men.
- › Distribution of airplay for songs by women show that CanCon songs (4.4%) are played more than non-CanCon songs (2.0%) and that few songs by women (in general) and Canadians (specifically) are retained for recurrent airplay (0.8%).
- › As a result, most songs by women are being filtered out of programming in a way that limits their potential for both the charts and long-term preservation in the format's gold catalogue songs (currently at 1.6% of programmed songs).
- › Despite a stellar year at the top of the chart for songs by women, this success is for just 2 bands – a type of programming that suggests tokenized playlisting, not an increasing diversity of programming.
- › Songs by women are more likely to be heard in the evening and overnight dayparts, and an average of 1 song per hour are played during daytime programming.
- › IBPOC women and Trans\* artists are invisible in Alternative Rock radio programming, their songs receiving about 1.3% in 2023 (with no airplay for Trans\* artists). Aside from a stellar year for Aysanabee, IBPOC artists are not receiving anywhere near the amount needed for their songs to be within the range of the weekly charts.

Celebrating the Canadian women and Trans\* artists whose songs spun onto the Alternative Rock Airplay charts in 2023

The Beaches

Charlotte Cardin

Feist

Fionn

iskwē

Blair Lee

Mekel

Les Shirley

Ruby Waters

JJ Wilde





Active Rock radio is the final of the three formats in this study to be defined by playing predominantly the music of just one genre. While stations within the format play songs from a range of genres, most songs played are Rock, predominantly hard rock, metal, and classic rock. Unlike the other formats studied here, Active Rock radio plays a larger percentage of gold catalogue songs – songs that have become canonical to the genre and are not new singles vying for chart contention.

There are 18 Active Rock stations in Canada that report to Mediabase's charting system. Most of the stations (33.3%) are in Ontario, with 22.2% in British Columbia, and 2 stations in Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. Just one of the 18 stations is a French-language station, the remaining 17 are English language reporters.

The dataset for analysing representation on Active Rock format radio between 2013 and 2023 includes the top 150 current songs played across this format each year, totalling 1,650 records. Within these records, 388 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs ranked within the top 150 songs played on Active Rock format radio. Table 3.1a summarises representation of these artists, revealing that 85.1% are men, 2.6% are women, 12.3% are mixed gender bands and collaborations. No Trans\* artists had a song appear within the top 150 songs played over this 11-year period. The majority (81.8%) of these artists are white, 1.5% are Black men, 0.5% are Indigenous men, 2.1% are artists of colour, and 14.1% are multiethnic ensembles.

Given the ensemble-oriented nature of Rock music, the composition of bands with both men and women warrants deeper investigation. Bands with both men and women members make up a higher percentage of the ensembles (8.5%) than collaborations (3.8%) and Table 3.1a offers

greater detail on the composition of those bands: 1.3% were bands with shared vocals between men and women, 4.1% were led by men, and 3.1% were led by women, and one band by a transgender woman. If we look at this data in another way, combining the data for men and male-led bands and for women and female-led bands reveals that 89.2% of the artists featured men vocalists, while 5.4% featured women. Regardless of how this data is analysed, women (whether solo, in an all woman ensemble, or with a woman fronting a band with male members) are significantly underrepresented on Active Rock format radio over the 11-year study period.

Within these 1,650 records are the 1,090 unique songs that received enough annual airplay to appear within the top 150 songs played on Canadian Active Rock format

radio. The reason for there being just 1,090 unique songs in this dataset (instead of 1,650) is that some songs receive enough annual airplay to rank within the top 150 for more than one year: 1 song appeared for 5 consecutive years, 1 for 4 years, 67 for 3 years, 419 for 2 years, and the remaining 602 for 1 year. Most of the songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played over this period were by men (85.9%), with just 2.5% by women, 10.2% by mixed gender bands, and 1.4% by mixed gender collaborations (Table 3.1b).

The detail captured in Table 3.1b shows that most of the mixed gender bands are led by men (5.9%), while 1.4% are bands with shared mixed gender vocals and 2.9% are led by women. These figures increase the percentage of unique songs by men and women to 91.8% and 5.4%, respectively. Most songs (85.6%) were by

white artists, with 0.7% by Black men, 0.3% by Indigenous artists, 1.2% by artists of colour, and 12.2% by multiethnic bands.

Within this snapshot of the artists and songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played each year between 2013 and 2023, a racial and gender hierarchy emerges with white men emerging as the most prioritised within programming at Active Rock radio, with white women coming in (a distant) second, songs by Black, Indigenous, and Artists of colour marginalised within the industry – songs by men with greater representation than those by women.

The following analysis investigates the rate at which these songs are played on Canadian Active Rock radio and how programming influences contention for the Yearend Airplay Charts.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	71.7%	1.5%	0.5%	1.3%	10.1%	<b>85.1%</b>
Women	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	<b>2.6%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	<b>8.5%</b>
With shared vocals	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%
Led by men	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	4.1%
Led by women	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	2.8%
Led by Trans* artists	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Mixed gender collaborations	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	<b>3.8%</b>
	<b>81.8%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>14.1%</b>	

TABLE 3.1A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	75.8%	0.7%	0.3%	0.6%	8.5%	<b>85.9%</b>
Women	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	<b>2.5%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	<b>10.2%</b>
With shared vocals	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%
Led by men	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	5.9%
Led by women	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	2.8%
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Mixed gender collaborations	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>1.4%</b>
	<b>85.6%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	

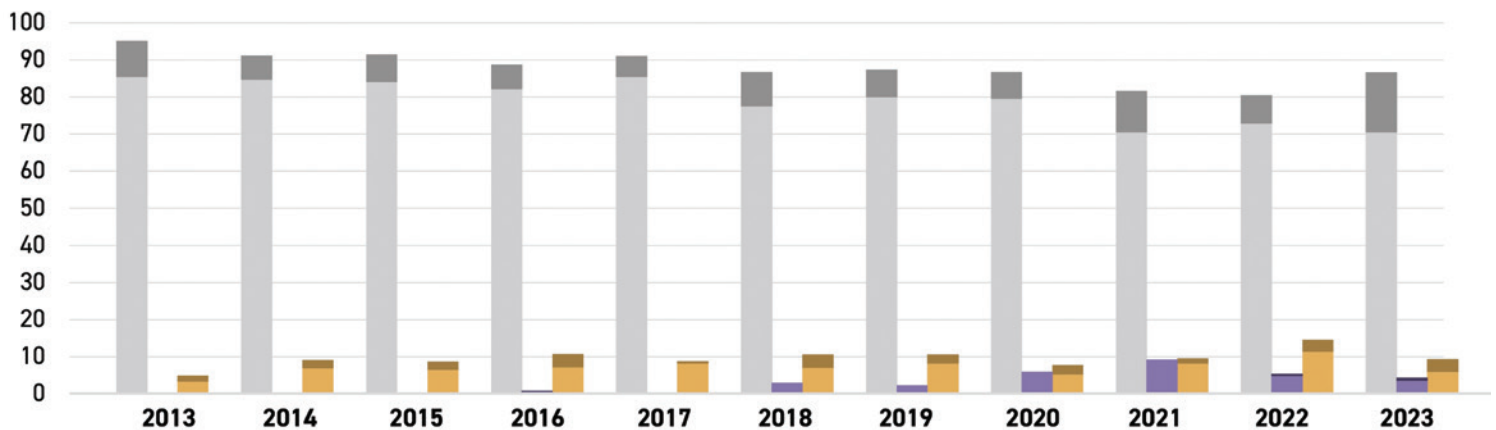
TABLE 3.1B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

### 3.1.1. Airplay within the Top 150 Songs Played on Active Rock Radio between 2013 to 2023

Within the top 150 songs played annually between 2013 and 2023 on Active Rock format radio, songs by women have received an average of just 2.7% of the airplay (consistent with the number of unique artists and titles within the records). Figure 3.1a maps the distribution of airplay of songs by men, women and mixed gender bands and collaborations (in percentages), revealing that songs by women did not receive enough annual airplay within this 11-year period to land within the top 150 songs played until 2016, where their songs received 0.9% of the overall airplay, increasing to a peak of 9.0% by 2021 before declining to 4.3% in 2023.

Most of the airplay for songs by women – an average of 93.1% – was for songs by white women. Figure 3.1a details representation by race and ethnicity as well as gender identity, with lighter shades for white artists and darker shades for Black, Indigenous, Artists of colour, and Multiethnic bands and collaborations. Songs by women of colour average 6.9% of the airplay accorded to songs by women artists, but this amounts to 0.2% overall. Songs by women of colour receive the most airplay in 2023 (0.9%) with 0.4% in 2015 and 0.7% in 2022. White women, marginalised though they may certainly be, are prioritised within Active Rock programming.

Songs by men, then, dominate programming at Active Rock format radio, averaging 87.9% of the airplay over this 11-year period with 79.3% for songs by white men. Songs by men of colour received 9.3% of the airplay for songs by men, which amounts for 8.2% overall (0.2% for Black men, 0.1% for Indigenous men, 0.3% for men of colour, and 8.3% for



**FIGURE 3.1A. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)** NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Songs by mixed gender bands	4.8%	9.9%	8.7%	9.0%	8.5%	10.0%	10.2%	7.6%	8.8%	13.2%	5.2%
With shared vocals	0.3%	1.0%	0.4%	1.6%	2.5%	1.8%	0.5%	1.0%	0.4%	0.5%	0.7%
Led by men	3.5%	3.9%	3.7%	5.7%	4.4%	7.2%	5.8%	2.8%	3.5%	10.2%	3.7%
Led by women	1.0%	4.0%	4.4%	1.7%	1.6%	1.0%	3.9%	3.8%	4.9%	2.5%	0.8%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	1.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

**TABLE 3.1C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS BY MIXED GENDER BANDS ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)**



multiethnic ens./collabs of men artists). The remaining 9.2% of the airplay was accorded to songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations (6.8% for white ens./collabs and 2.5% for multiethnic ens./collabs). Nearly all of this airplay (20.9%) is for bands composed of both men and women. Table 3.1c parses the percentage of airplay for songs by bands according to the vocal contributions. Bands with shared vocals average 5.2%. Bands with men on lead vocals average 5.0%, increasing from 3.5% in 2013 to peaks of 7.2% in 2018 and 10.2% in 2022, ending the 11-year period with 3.7% in 2023. Bands with women in the lead average 2.7%, with peaks of 4.4% in 2015 and 4.9% in 2021, ending the period with a low of 0.8% of the airplay. One band with songs played is led by a Trans\* artist, with songs included within the top 150 played in 2014 and 2015. This distribution of spins prioritises songs by men (averaging 92.9% of the airplay) and marginalises women (averaging 5.5% of the airplay) within the top 150 songs played on Active Rock radio. Recalculating the data in this way, songs led by women appear in the top 150 songs played between 2013 and 2018, but still in a marginal way and at less than 5.0% of the airplay in these years (except for 2016).

### 3.1.2. Representation on the Yearend Active Rock Airplay Charts between 2013 and 2023

Mediabase's Yearend Active Rock Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played in a calendar year. They are the songs with enough airplay to have peaked within the top positions of the weekly charts – many achieving a #1 peak position. Drilling into the yearend reports to these top 50-positions offers greater perspective on those most-played songs and whose voices are heard most on terrestrial radio.

Table 3.1d summarises representation of the 155 solo artists, bands, and collaborations with songs ranked within the Yearend Alternative Rock Airplay Charts, 84.7% of them men, 2.5% women, 9.6% mixed gender bands and 3.2% mixed

gender collaborations. Most of the artists are white (89.2%), with 0.0% Black artists, 0.0% Indigenous artists, 1.2% Artists of colour, and 9.6% multiethnic bands and collaborations. None of the artists with songs in the Yearend Airplay Charts are Trans\*, but one band has a Trans\* lead singer.

Over the 11-year period studied, 422 songs appeared on the Yearend Charts – some of which received enough airplay over a two year period to appear in more than one year: 8 songs charted 3 consecutive years, while 112 charted 2 years, the remaining 302 songs charted just 1 year. As Table 3.1e details, 87.4% were by men, 3.3% were by women, 8.2% were by mixed gender bands, 1.1% by mixed gender collaborations.

Most of the songs on the Yearend Charts were songs by white artists (89.2%), 0.0% by Black men, 0.0% by Indigenous artists, 0.7% by artists of colour, and 10.1% by multiethnic bands. Here, as with the broader top 150 songs played on Active Rock radio, representation is higher for white artists, men in particular, while the percentage of women sits at 3.3% of the top 50 songs played on Canadian Active Rock Radio's Yearend Charts and artists of colour remain the most underserved by radio programming in Canada. There are no Black or Indigenous artists with songs on the charts in this period.

Figure 3.1b maps the distribution of these songs across the 11-year period, showing that songs by women average 3.5% of the titles within the 50-position yearend charts, but their songs don't appear in the chart until 2018. Their songs increase from 4.0% in 2018 to a peak of 12.0% in 2021, before declining to 6.0% in 2023. Most of these songs (89.5%) are by white women, with smaller representation by women of colour with 2.0% in both 2022 and 2023.

Songs by men average 88.2% of the Yearend Airplay Charts beginning the period with a peak of 98.0% of the charting songs. Their songs average 90.8% from 2013 to 2020, before they drop to 78.0% in 2020 increasing again to 86.0% in 2023. Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations average 8.4% over this period, increasing from 2.0% in 2013 to

an average of 9.6% for the rest of the period (except for a drop to 4.0% in 2020). As with songs by women, the average of songs by men are predominantly by white artists (90.4%), with an average of 0.0% for songs by Black artists, 0.0% by Indigenous artists, 0.2% by artists of colour, and 7.1% by multiethnic bands and collaborations.

The remaining charting songs are those by mixed gender bands and collaborations. Their songs combined average 8.4% of the charts (divided 6.4% for white bands and 2.0% for multiethnic bands). Their songs increased from 2.0% in 2013 to an average of 9.0% for the remaining 10 years (except for 4.0% in 2020). As with the discussion surrounding the composition of bands within the top 150 songs played, bands with shared vocals average 0.9%, while songs by male-led bands average 4.4% and female-led bands 2.2%. One of the female-led bands has a transgender woman lead singer. Activity of mixed gender bands is summarised in Table 3.1f.

Barely within the charts to begin with, songs by women nearly vanish from the top positions of the Yearend Charts, as mapped in Figures 3.1c-3.1e. Songs by white women average 2.3% of the Top 20 songs across this period – but that average is deceiving given that just five songs by women peak in the Top 20 in four of the 11 years in this period (2018, 2020, 2021, and 2023). All five of these songs are by white women.

Figure 3.1d tracks the songs charting within the Top 10 most played songs across this 11-year period; just 2 of the 5 songs peaking in the Top 20 are programmed enough on Active Rock radio to peak in the Top 10 (2020 and 2021). And just one song by a woman (JJ Wilde's "The Rush") achieved a #1 yearend position in 2020 (Figure 3.1e), with the caveat that "Heaven Knows" by Pretty Reckless, which features lead singer Taylor Michel Momsen in lead.

Songs by men are incontestably prioritised within Active Rock programming, increasing in high-rotation placement into the top positions of the yearend chart, as made clear in the Figures tracking representation in the Top 20, Top 10, and #1 chart positions. Their songs average

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	77.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	7.1%	<b>84.5%</b>
Women	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	<b>2.5%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	<b>9.6%</b>
With shared vocals	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%
Led by men	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	1.4%
Led by women	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%
Led by Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
Mixed gender collaborations	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>3.2%</b>
	<b>89.2%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	

TABLE 3.1D. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE YEAREND ACTIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	79.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	7.8%	<b>87.4%</b>
Women	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	<b>3.3%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	6.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	<b>8.2%</b>
With shared vocals	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%
Led by men	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	4.8%
Led by women	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%
Led by Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Mixed gender collaborations	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	<b>1.1%</b>
	<b>89.2%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>10.1%</b>	

TABLE 3.1E. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE YEAREND ACTIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

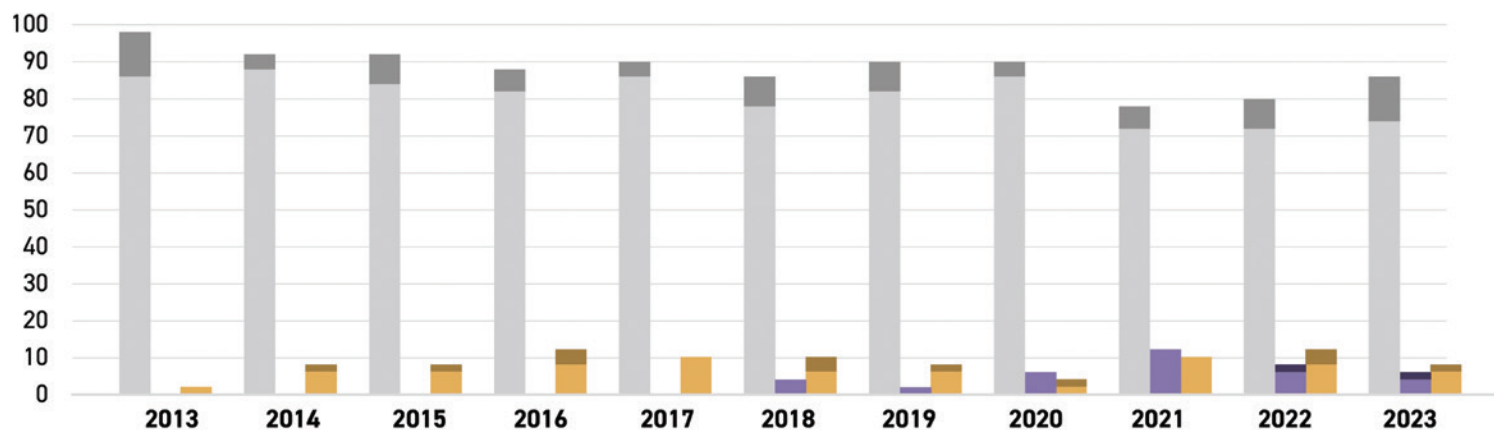


FIGURE 3.1B. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE YEAREND ACTIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Songs by mixed gender bands	2.0%	8.0%	8.0%	12.0%	10.0%	10.0%	8.0%	4.0%	8.0%	10.0%	2.0%
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	4.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%
Led by men	2.0%	4.0%	4.0%	8.0%	4.0%	8.0%	4.0%	2.0%	2.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Led by women	0.0%	2.0%	4.0%	2.0%	2.0%	0.0%	4.0%	2.0%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

TABLE 3.1F. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS BY MIXED GENDER COLLABORATIONS ON THE YEAREND ACTIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

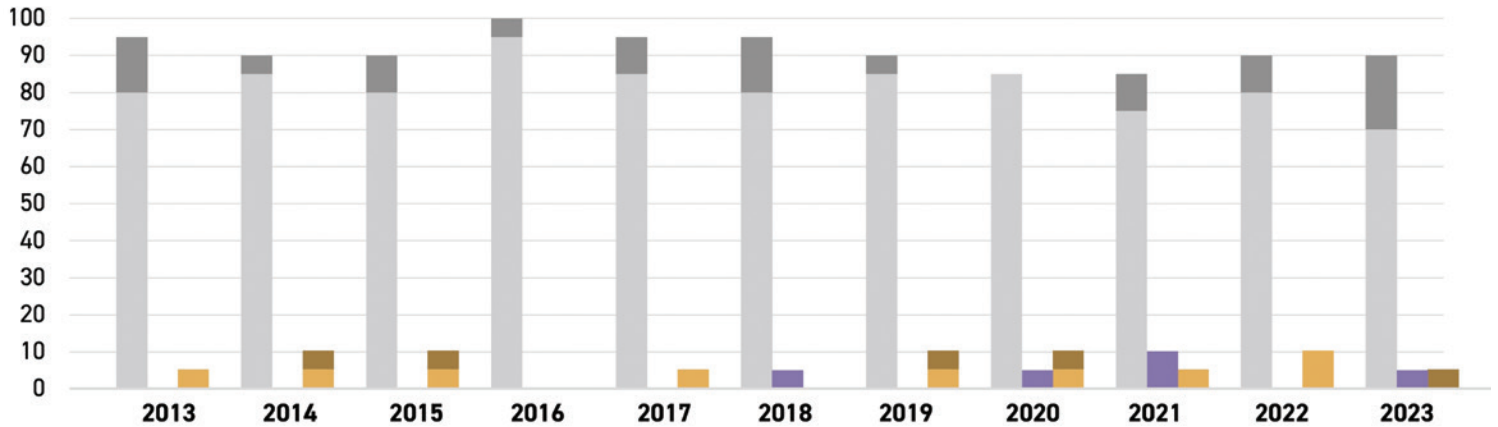


FIGURE 3.1C. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 20 OF THE YEAREND ACTIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

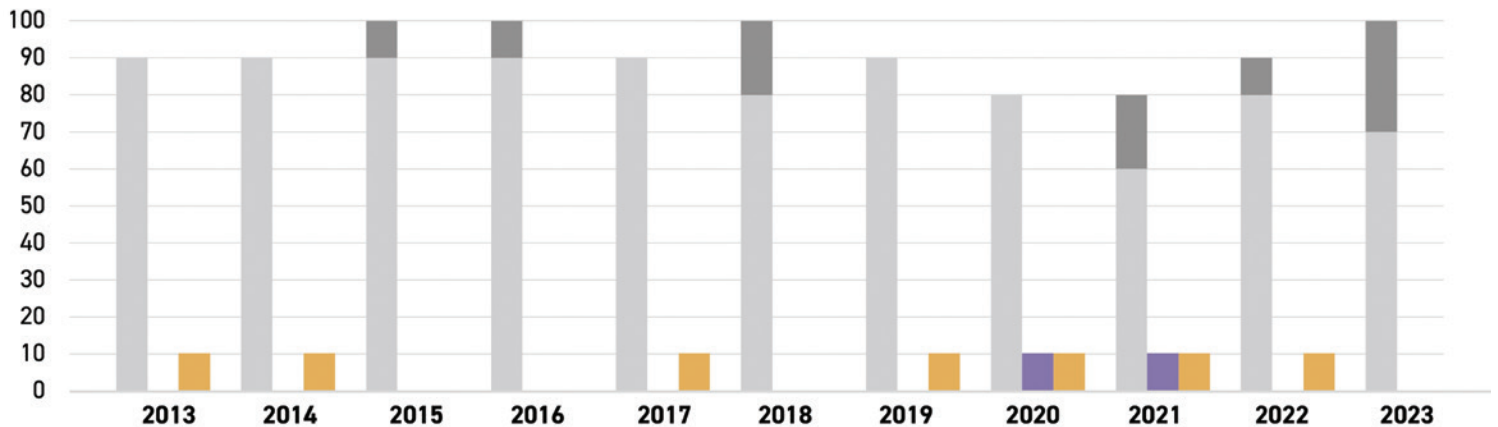


FIGURE 3.1D. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 10 OF THE YEAREND ACTIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

91.4% of the Top 20 and 91.8% of the Top 10. Their songs capture the #1 position of 9 of the 11 (81.8%) years in this study period. All artists are white.

Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations, like those by women, also disappear from the top positions of the chart. Their songs average 6.4% of the Top 20 and of the Top 10, and capture the #1 position just once (with female-led Pretty Reckless's "Heaven Knows" in 2014). Their songs are not consistently represented in both the Top 20 and Top 10, but are more present than songs by women.

The histogram in Figure 3.1f further articulates the overwhelming inequity within programming over this 11-year period. This Figure graphs songs by their peak position achieved by the number of titles within each 10-position range of the top 150 songs ranked in the dataset. Men are responsible for 99 of the 108 songs that peak within the Top 10, 92 of the 102 songs ranked between #11-20, and an average of 56 songs within all remaining 10-position ranges. Women have an average of 2 songs per 10-position range within the ranges containing their songs with a peak of 4 songs between #121-30. For women, half of their charting songs appear in the top 50 positions, with the other 50% in the 100 bottom positions.

Songs by men do not just dominate the chart and its top positions, but they

dominate in all ranges of the top 150 ranking over both songs by women and mixed gender bands. Their songs capture

the chart positions about 40 times more than women in the Top 20 positions and 34.7 times more overall.

Where the extent to which songs by men are prioritised becomes more troubling is in the consideration of mixed gender collaborations. Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations make up just 6.7% of the Top 20 songs across this 11-year period, but 6.2% of them are by bands, while 0.5% of them are collaborations. Out of the the 210 unique songs that peaked in the Top 20, 93.8% of the songs with enough airplay to reach this peak within the yearend charts are by men or men-led bands, while just 4.8% are by women or women-led bands. This leaves women in a position of significant underrepresentation and precarity within the active rock world

2013	<b>FEELING GOOD</b> The Sheepdogs
2014	<b>HEAVEN KNOWS</b> Pretty Reckless
2015	<b>HEAVY IS THE HEAD</b> Zac Brown w/Chris Cornell
2016	<b>DARK NECESSITIES</b> Red Hot Chili Peppers
2017	<b>KNOCKING AT THE DOOR</b> Arkells
2018	<b>SAFARI SONG</b> Greta Van Fleet
2019	<b>DO YOUR WORST</b> Rival Sons
2020	<b>THE RUSH</b> JJ Wilde
2021	<b>LET THE BAD TIMES ROLL</b> Offspring
2022	<b>WILD CHILD</b> Black Keys
2023	<b>TOGETHER RIGHT</b> Finger Eleven

FIGURE 3.1E. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS AT THE #1 POSITION OF THE YEAREND ACTIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

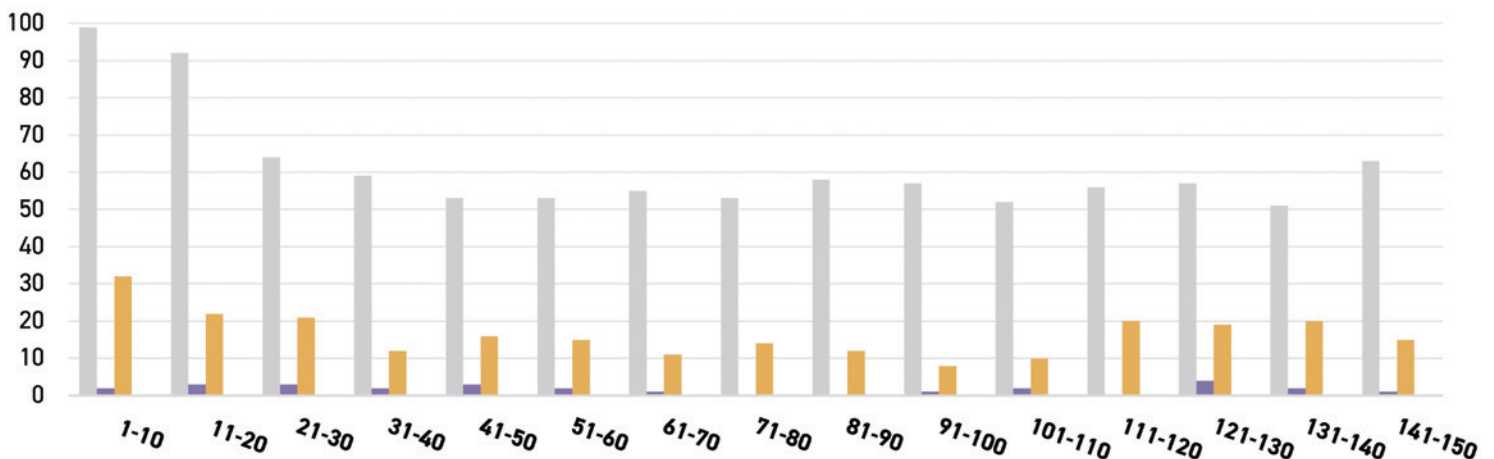


FIGURE 3.1F. HISTOGRAM BY PEAK POSITION (BY NUMBER OF TITLES) OF SONGS WITHIN TOP 150 PLAYED ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO (2013-2023)

## 3.2. Weekly Airplay on Canadian Active Rock Format Radio in 2023

Weekly airplay reports for the 18-reporting Active Rock stations offer the opportunity to explore more deeply the programming practices of the format, including the rate of airplay for all songs, the distribution of spins by song type (for current singles, recurrent tracks, and gold catalogue records) and by time of day – all within the context of Canadian Content regulations. How much are CanCon songs played? What type of song? And at what time of day? This section explores these questions more deeply, then investigates how programming influences contention for the weekly Airplay Charts.

This dataset includes the 129,447 records capturing every song played on the format, 11,756 for current singles, 4,900 for recurrent tracks, and 112,791 for gold records. Within this dataset capturing 2023 airplay, 2,300 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs played across the 18 stations that Mediabase monitors. As Table 3.2a summarises, 81.6% of those artists are men, 7.0% are women, 0.0% are Trans\* artists, 7.9% are mixed gender bands, and 3.5% were mixed gender collaborations. As with the yearend data examined above, 81.7% of the artists are white, 6.2% are Black, 0.5% are Indigenous, 1.2% are artists of colour, and 10.4% are multiethnic bands. These results show the continued prioritising of men within the broader programming picture at Active Rock radio.

These artists were responsible for the 9,204 songs that were played across the

18 reporting stations in 2023. As Table 3.2b summarises, 89.3% of those songs were by men, 3.5% by women, 6.2% by mixed gender bands, and 1.0% by mixed gender collaborations. Combining the percentage of songs by male-led and female-led bands to those by men and women, there is an increase to 91.2% and 5.4%, respectively. Most of the songs (86.6%) were by white artists, with 3.4% by Black artists, 0.3% by Indigenous artists, 0.5% by artists of colour, and 9.2% by multiethnic ensembles.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	68.7%	4.6%	0.4%	0.9%	7.0%	<b>81.6%</b>
Women	5.1%	1.3%	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%	<b>7.0%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	5.6%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	<b>7.9%</b>
With shared vocals	2.8%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	<b>4.0%</b>
Led by men	1.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	<b>1.7%</b>
Led by women	1.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	<b>2.1%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender collaborations	2.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	<b>3.5%</b>
	<b>81.7%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	

TABLE 3.2A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	79.0%	2.8%	0.2%	0.3%	7.0%	<b>89.3%</b>
Women	2.6%	0.5%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	<b>3.5%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	<b>6.2%</b>
With shared vocals	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	<b>2.3%</b>
Led by men	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	<b>1.9%</b>
Led by women	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>1.9%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender collaborations	0.6%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	<b>1.0%</b>
	<b>86.6%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	

TABLE 3.2B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

### 3.2.1. Airplay of All Songs Played on Active Rock Format Radio in 2023

The following analysis investigates the rate at which songs by women (and women-led bands) are played on Canadian Active Rock radio. This section looks more deeply at the amount of airplay overall, as well as discusses the distribution of spins for songs by Canadian Content status, by song type (current, recurrent, and gold), the time of day at which they are played, and by chart activity.

Songs by women received 1.9% of the airplay on Active Rock format radio in 2023. Table 3.2c summarises airplay data for the year, providing granular detail by

race and ethnicity of the artists whose songs were played. Songs by men received 91.4% of the airplay and mixed gender bands and collabs 6.7%. Just two bands led by Trans\* artists had airplay in 2023, but their spins totalled 197 (combined), amounting to 0.01% of the airplay. As a result, their contributions are not visible within the table.

The racial inequity observed at the higher-level analysis of the top 150 songs played each year between 2013 and 2023 remains true of the full programming picture. In 2023, 84.7% of the airplay was for songs by white artists, with 1.1% for songs by Black artists, 0.4% for Indigenous artists, 0.3% for artists of colour, and 13.3% by multiethnic ensembles.

This same information on airplay is graphed in Figure 3.2a for a view of the

monthly distribution of spins, revealing that the distribution of spins was consistent with the statistics in the table above. There was no significant fluctuation in programming from month to month with songs by men averaging 91.4%, with 1.9% by women, and mixed gender bands 5.9% and collaborations 0.3%.

The same is true for distribution of this data by race and ethnicity of the musicians. Songs by white artists consistently receive 84.6% of the airplay, with 1.1% for songs by Black artists, 0.4% for songs by indigenous artists, 0.4% by artists of colour, and 13.6% by multiethnic ensembles. Songs by women of colour received less airplay than those by men of colour, though this difference is quite negligible when dealing with airplay of a value near or less than 1.0% (as it is for Black, Indigenous, and artists of colour).

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	79.3%	1.1%	0.4%	0.0%	10.6%	<b>91.4%</b>
Women	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	<b>1.9%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.6%	<b>5.9%</b>
With shared vocals	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.9%</b>
Led by men	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	<b>3.3%</b>
Led by women	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	<b>1.7%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender collaborations	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	<b>0.8%</b>
	<b>84.7%</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	

TABLE 3.2C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

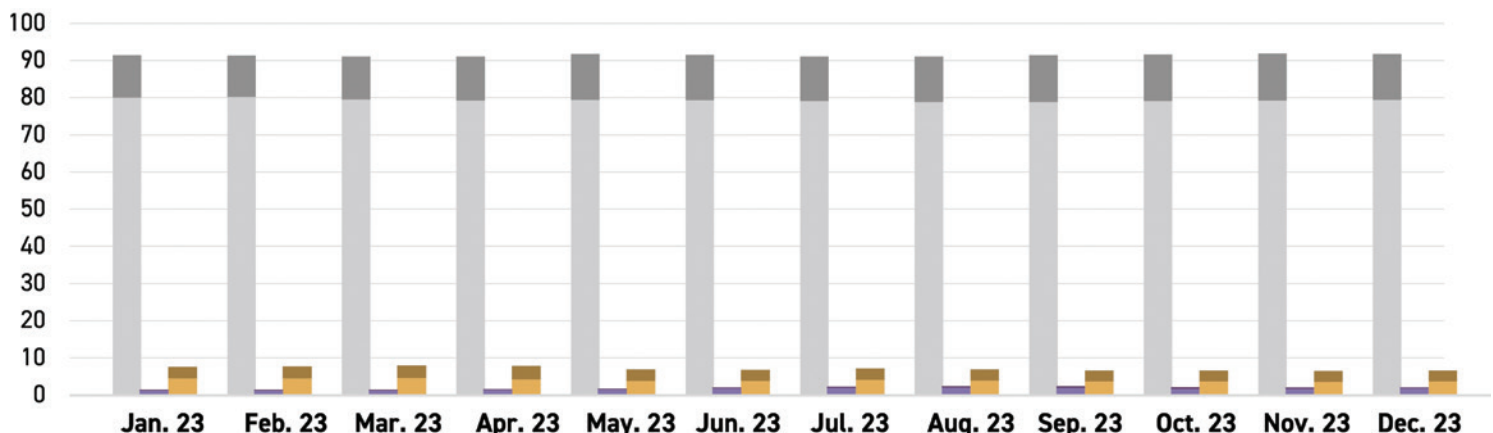


FIGURE 3.2A DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.



### 3.2.1.1. Evaluation of Airplay by CanCon Status

What this distribution means for Canadian artists is particularly important in the context of the federal regulations guiding programming and how it shapes exposure for Canadian audiences, and impacts women in the industry. Most of the airplay – 65.5% – went to non-CanCon songs. An average of 34.5% of the airplay in 2023 was for songs certified as CanCon. While this would suggest that the format is perhaps not complying with the minimum 35.0% requirement, that question must be evaluated at the station-level – not the aggregate of 18 stations, which averages the data across the format. Of course, not all songs by Canadian artists fulfil CanCon requirements. And so there are some tracks within this dataset of songs played on Active Rock radio in 2023 for a band that produced predominantly CanCon records wherein a few songs are not counted toward CanCon Airplay. This is true for The Tragically Hip, for example, where 0.8% of the airplay their songs accumulated in 2023 was not for CanCon designated songs and even Rush, with 0.5% of their accumulated airplay. Very small percentages, to be sure, but a point of importance for consideration when reflecting on CanCon requirements when combining these two percentages would

increase the average to just above the minimum requirement.

Distribution of airplay by CanCon certification is detailed in Figure 3.2b, further defining the distribution of airplay in 2023. Given what is already known about representation on Active Rock radio, it is unsurprising that songs by women make up such small percentages within both non-CanCon and CanCon songs, with 0.5% and 1.4%, respectively. These percentages increase when adding to them the airplay for songs by women-led bands – to 1.7% for nonCanCon songs and 1.8% for CanCon songs. Even with this increase, songs by women are underrepresented within the broader picture of Active Rock programming.

Table 3.2d calculates the distribution of airplay by certification status, showing that non-CanCon songs by women make up a much smaller percentage of the airplay for songs that are not CanCon (0.8%), while CanCon songs register 4.1% of the airplay within the programming accorded to Canadian songs. Combining these percentages with the airplay for songs by women-led bands does little to improve the situation for women vocalists in Active Rock programming, increasing the percentage of airplay marginally to 2.7% (non-CanCon songs) and 5.4% (CanCon songs).

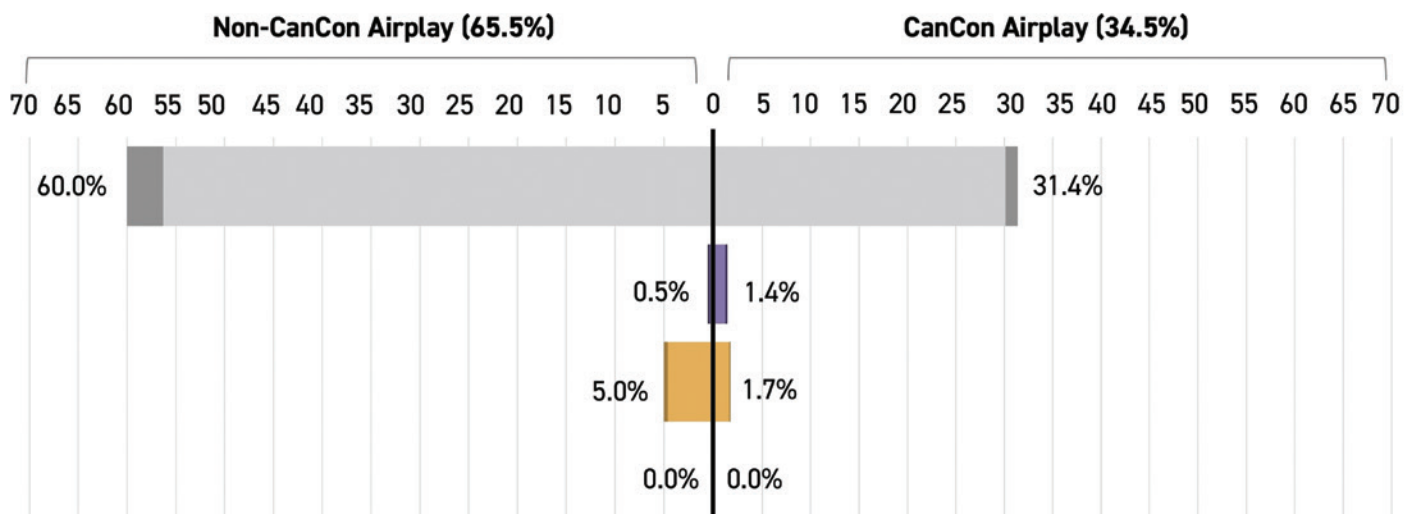


FIGURE 3.2B. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023



### 3.2.1.2. Evaluation of Airplay for Songs by Time of Day

The time of day at which these songs are heard is of critical importance to the development of a musician's career. As described earlier, the 24-hour cycle is divided into five dayparts, with the three day-time periods – the Morning Drive (AMD from 6:00-10:00), the Midday period (MID from 10:00-15:00) and the Afternoon Drive (PMD from 15:00 to 19:00) – are the most important for exposure as they are the periods with the highest rate of listenership. The Overnight (OVN from 0:00 to 6:00) and Evening (EVE from 19:00 to 24:00) periods frame the day and are periods with a higher percentage of songs played due not just in part to their slightly longer duration, but also the reduced amount of news and specialty programming (features, interviews, etc.).

Figure 3.2c tracks the distribution of airplay by daypart, graphing the data in accordance with the 24-hour cycle beginning with the Overnights on the left, through the Morning Drive, Midday and Afternoon Drive, to the Evening on the right for each group of artists. The columns are separated by a white line to distinguish non-CanCon airplay (at the bottom of the column) against CanCon airplay (at the top of the column).

The highest percentage of airplay for all artists occurs in the Overnight and Evening periods, as expected. For all groups, about 27.9% of their overall airplay occurs in the Overnight, with 13.8% in the Morning, 20.5% in the Midday, 16.0% in the Afternoon, and 21.8% in the Evening. Despite this even distribution for songs by men, women, and mixed gender bands and collaborations, though, the distribution overall shows considerable inequity for women and mixed gender bands, whose songs are under-programmed in each daypart.

Half of radio programming occurs during the three daypart hours (Morning, Midday, and Afternoon) at 50.3% of the spins. Federal broadcasting regulations require

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [65.5%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [34.5%]
Songs by Men	91.6%	91.0%
Songs by Women	0.8%	4.1%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	6.8%	4.3%
With shared vocals	1.2%	0.6%
Led by men	3.7%	2.4%
Led by women	1.9%	1.3%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%
Songs by mixed gender collaborations	0.8%	0.6%

TABLE 3.2D. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

that Canadian radio play 35.0% Canadian Content between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to ensure listeners are exposed to music of Canadian artists. While the periods do not align perfectly (the Afternoon daypart ends at 7:00 p.m.), Active Rock radio stations played 36.5% CanCon songs across the Morning, Midday, and Afternoon dayparts in 2023, with 33.3% for songs by men, 1.5% for songs by women, and 1.8% for mixed gender bands and collaborations.

To provide greater perspective on what this might sound like for radio listeners, Table 3.2e presents a breakdown of how this translates at the level of daytime programming to provide an example of what a typical 24-hour cycle would look like for the average station and listener. Across the 18 reporting stations, an average of 280 songs are played per day, with 256 songs by men, 5 by women, and 19 by mixed gender bands and collaborations.

For women, the distribution across all five dayparts is dire: the average station plays about 1 song per daypart by women. Representation is higher for mixed gender bands and collaborations, but they are also significantly underrepresented in daily programming.

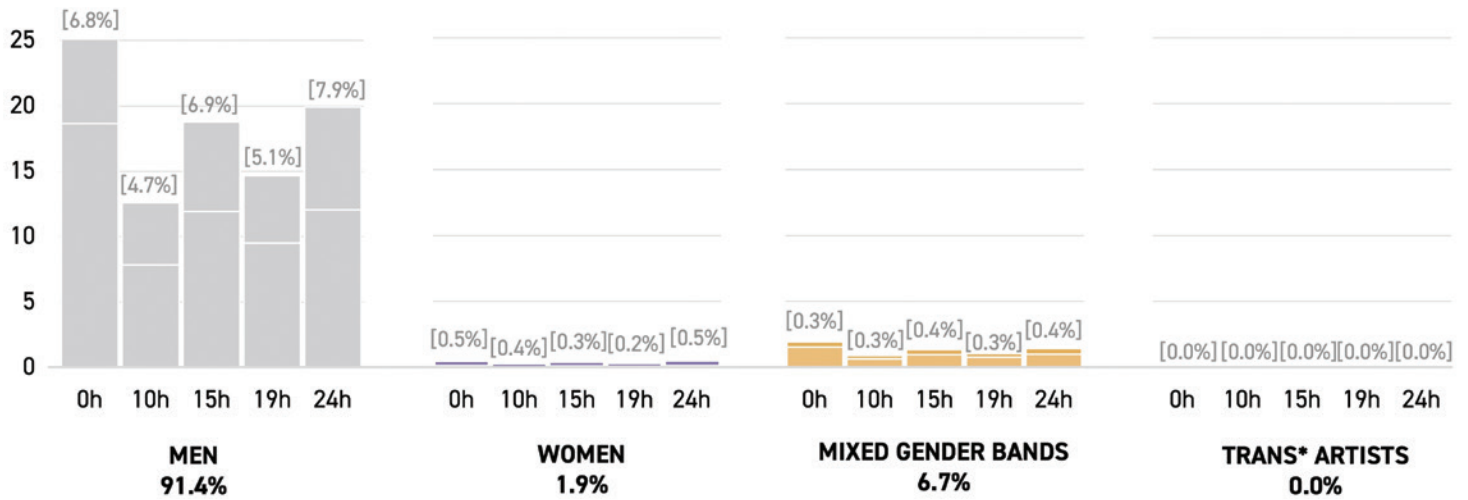
Although near equal distribution for songs by women, it is critical to note that with this low level of programming songs by women (in general) and CanCon songs by women (specifically) it is not just possible to listen for an hour and not hear a song by a woman, it is likely that only 1 song is programmed for a 4-, 5-, or 6-hour stretch of time. That is, unless that woman is

sharing vocals with a man.

This analysis shows that songs by men are played 47 times more that those by women on Canadian Active Rock radio, and the way in which that airplay is distributed across song status (current/recurrent/gold), by time of day, and by CanCon certification reveals not just inequity, but an incredibly challenging context for women to build and sustain careers in this genre. Women are nearly invisible in the format, unless they are sharing vocal responsibilities with men. The data also shows that non-CanCon men are programmed at nearly double the rate than CanCon songs by men, whereas songs by women are nearly evenly distributed in all facets. The trends thus far show that songs by men and male-led bands are prioritised within programming and that non-CanCon songs are played at a higher rate than CanCon songs. Critically, even when adding women-led bands to the percentages of songs and airplay by women artists they are still starkly underrepresented within the format.

### 3.2.1.3. Evaluation of Airplay for Current, Recurrent and Gold Status Songs

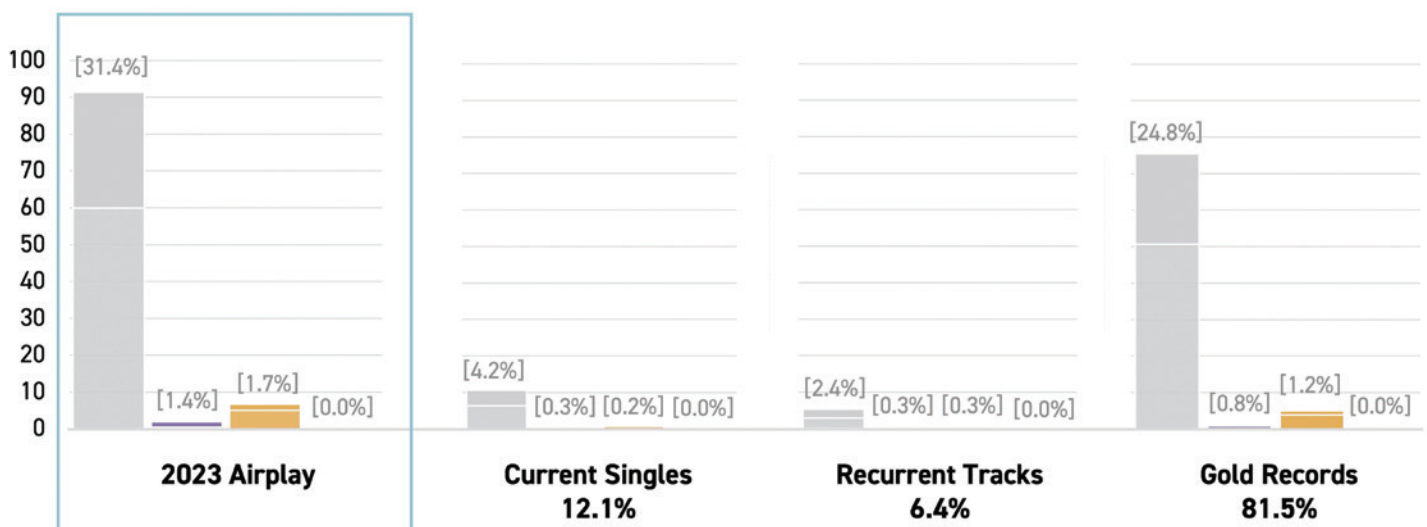
Radio airplay is divided into three different song “types” – current singles that are vying for top-programming (and, by extension, chart) contention,



**FIGURE 3.2C. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY BY TIME OF DAY FOR ALL SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

	SONGS BY MEN	SONGS BY WOMEN	SONGS BY TRANS* ARTISTS	SONGS BY MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
<b>OVERNIGHT</b> (0:00-6:00)	71 [52/19]	1 [0/1]	0 [0/0]	5 [4/1]
<b>AM DRIVE</b> (6:00-10:00)	35 [22/13]	1 [0/1]	0 [0/0]	3 [2/1]
<b>MIDDAY</b> (10:00-15:00)	53 [33/19]	1 [1/0]	0 [0/0]	4 [3/1]
<b>PM DRIVE</b> (15:00-19:00)	41 [27/14]	1 [0/1]	0 [0/0]	3 [2/1]
<b>EVENING</b> (19:00-24:00)	56 [34/22]	1 [0/1]	0 [0/0]	4 [3/1]
	<b>256</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>

**TABLE 3.2E. DISTRIBUTION OF SPINS FOR SONGS BY TIME OF DAY ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN IN 2023** NOTE: NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE THE DISTRIBUTION FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS (RESPECTIVELY)



**FIGURE 3.2D. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CURRENT, RECURRENT AND GOLD SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

recurrent tracks that have reached their peak programming position but are still in regular rotation, and gold catalogue records of older but “canonical” songs that have been retained by a station for long-term programming.

Figure 3.2d tracks the breakdown of airplay by these three programming types, showing on the left the overall airplay on Active Rock format radio, parsed by airplay for current singles (12.1%), recurrent tracks (6.4%), and gold records (81.5%) – the latter (more canonical “gold” records) making up a significant component of the overall programming. Songs by women receive a dangerously low distribution across current singles (0.9%) and recurrent programming (0.7%) and are programmed at a slightly higher rate in gold catalogue songs (5.1%). This suggests that their songs in 2023 were not just not accorded high-ranking spins for their current singles (limiting the potential for established and emerging artists), but also that they are not represented with the stations’ gold catalogue songs of the format’s “canonical” and genre-defining records.

Combining, as before, airplay for women-led bands with the airplay granted to songs by women offers more perspective on this programming (Table 3.2f). With 3.6% of the airplay overall (when combined), songs by gold catalogue records by women and women-led bands are programmed at a higher rate than current singles and recurrent tracks, and with near equal distribution amongst the

groups within each song status category. The difference between women and women-led bands within each grouping is negligible.

These findings are further highlighted in lists of the Top 10 men, women, and mixed gender bands by their spins (Table 3.2g), which shows that none of the most played women rank in the Top 10. The most played women, The Beaches, rank 39th overall with 10,783 accumulated spins. The remaining 9 women with the most spins on Active Rock radio are spread throughout the top 400 artists. The square brackets provide the overall ranking for the Top 10 artists with CanCon status designation beside the names of the Canadian artists whose songs meet MAPL regulations. There are two striking points to be made here. First, the disparity between the most played woman and the tenth most played woman is particularly troubling: not only do The Beaches rank 39th, but the tenth most played woman (Serena Ryder) ranked 379th. The ecosystem does not improve when factoring mixed gender bands into

the context. Metric, for example, ranks 101 overall with other female-led bands falling below that positioning in 2023.

The second point concerns the high number of CanCon artists within the top 10 women. Although there is a significant gap between the most and tenth most played women artists, the songs of six of these women are designated CanCon, while there are fewer men and mixed gender bands with CanCon designation in their respective lists. While the Tragically Hip ranks first overall, most of the men are from other countries, as are most of the mixed gender bands. But while there are more CanCon women within the top 10 list, their dire rankings suggest that Canadian women are underprogrammed in a way that limits their potential within the industry. This will be further explored in the next section on Airplay charts.

	CURRENT SINGLES	RECURRENT TRACKS	GOLD RECORDS
Non-CanCon Women	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%
Non-CanCon Women-led bands	0.1%	0.1%	1.1%
CanCon Women	0.3%	0.3%	0.8%
CanCon Women-led bands	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%
	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>

TABLE 3.2F. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CURRENT, RECURRENT AND GOLD SONGS BY WOMEN AND WOMEN-LED BANDS PLAYED ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

TOP 10 MEN	TOP 10 WOMEN	TOP 10 TRANS* ARTISTS	TOP 10 MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
1 Tragically Hip, 39,883 CA	39 The Beaches, 10,783 CA		24 Smashing Pumpkins, 16,680
2 Foo Fighters, 38,105	53 JJ Wilde, 9,184 CA		73 White Stripes, 16,680
3 Red Hot Chili Peppers, 34,098	157 The Warning, 3,008		80 July Talk, 6,431 CA
4 Metallica, 33,709	160 Dorothy, 2,993		93 Måneskin w/Tom Morello, 5,155
5 Green Day, 32,207	175 Bif Naked, 2,730 CA		101 Metric, 4,839 CA
6 Nirvana, 29,694	280 Pat Benatar, 1,018		106 Heart, 4,670
7 AC/DC, 25,571	281 Alanis Morissette, 1,003 CA		120 Evanescence, 4,055
8 Our Lady Peace, 25,092 CA	303 Nita Strauss w/Dorothy, 875		123 Cranberries, 4,001
9 Offspring, 24,788	375 Sara Dufour, 494 CA		128 Pop Evil, 3,873
10 Glorious Sons, 22,559 CA	379 Serena Ryder, 486 CA		144 Mother Mother, 3,409 CA

TABLE 3.2G. TOP 10 MOST PLAYED ARTISTS ON CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

## 3.2.2. Representation on the Weekly Airplay Charts for Active Rock Radio in 2023

Airplay charts offer an important lens not just on representation in an industry, but also the inner workings of programming practices. They offer a view into the most repeated current singles in a format, but also how the distribution impacts Canadian artists within the industry ecosystem. Mediabase's Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played each week on radio.

In 2023, 158 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs on the weekly Active Rock Airplay charts, 82.3% are men, 5.6% are women, 7.6% are mixed gender bands, and 4.5% are mixed gender

collaborations. As Table 3.2h summarises, 83.5% of the artists are white, while 1.3% are Black, 1.9% are Indigenous, 2.5% are artists of colour, and 10.8% are multiethnic bands. None of the charting songs were by a Trans\* artist.

Over the course of the year, 218 songs charted, with the same gender and racial representation as detailed throughout this section on Canadian Active Rock programming in 2023. As Table 3.2i summarises, 84.4% of those songs were by men, 5.0% by women, 7.4% by mixed gender bands and 3.2% by mixed gender collaborations. Most songs were by white artists (82.6%), with 1.4% by Black artists, 1.9% by Indigenous artists, 2.2% by artists of colour, and 11.9% by multiethnic bands. Combining the percentage of songs by bands led by men and women to the tallies for those by men and women, increases the percentage to 90.4% and 5.9%, respectively.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	70.2%	1.3%	1.3%	1.9%	7.6%	<b>82.3%</b>
Women	4.4%	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%	0.0%	<b>5.6%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	5.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	<b>7.6%</b>
With shared vocals	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
Led by men	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	5.7%
Led by women	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mixed gender collaborations	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	<b>4.5%</b>
	<b>83.5%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	

TABLE 3.2H. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	71.5%	1.4%	1.4%	1.4%	8.7%	<b>84.4%</b>
Women	3.7%	0.0%	0.5%	0.8%	0.0%	<b>5.0%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	5.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	<b>7.4%</b>
With shared vocals	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
Led by men	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	6.0%
Led by women	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mixed gender collaborations	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	<b>3.2%</b>
	<b>82.6%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	

TABLE 3.2I. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK AIRPLAY CHARTS IN 2023

### 3.2.2.1. Evaluation of Songs on the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

Scaling up to the 2,600 records for the top 50 songs ranked each week in 2023, songs by men captured 84.9% of the chart, with songs by women at 5.0%, songs by mixed gender bands at 7.0%, mixed gender collaborations at 3.2%, and Trans\* artists with no songs on the chart. As with programming, Table 3.2j shows that most of the charting songs (80.7%) are by white artists, with 1.3% of the charting songs by Black artists, and 2.9% by Indigenous artists, 1.9% by artists of colour, and 13.2% by multiethnic bands.

Figure 3.2e tracks the distribution across the calendar year, revealing that songs by women averaged 4.8% throughout the year, increasing from 3.0% in January to a peak of 8.5% in August, declining to 6.0% by December. Most of these charting songs (68.24%) were for white women, with an average of 0.23% for songs by Indigenous women and 1.3% for women of colour.

Songs by men had a more consistent record across the year, averaging 84.9% with a slight dip to 81.0% in August. Here, too, songs by white men dominate the charts (83.4%), with 1.2% average for songs by Black men, 2.7% for Indigenous men, 0.6% for men of colour, and 9.5% for multiethnic ensembles.

Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations average 10.1%. Their

songs decline in the charts, from an 11.0% average from January to August, to a low of 6.0% in October and November before climbing back to 10.4% by December. Most of this chart activity was for songs by mixed gender bands (an average of 8.4%) with a smaller average in 2023 for songs by mixed gender collaborations (2.0%). Within the charting songs by mixed gender bands, an average of 5.1% was for bands led by men, which increases the annual percentage of charting songs by men to 90.0% and bands led by women to 6.3%. Table 3.2k further details chart data by CanCon designation, revealing that 39.4% of the songs that chart are amongst the most played on Canadian radio – with enough support to land these songs on the airplay chart. For both men and women, non-CanCon songs are represented more in the charts than CanCon songs.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	70.7%	1.3%	2.7%	0.6%	9.6%	<b>84.9%</b>
Women	3.5%	0.0%	0.2%	1.3%	0.0%	<b>5.0%</b>
Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	<b>7.0%</b>
With shared vocals	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.4%</b>
Led by men	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	<b>5.1%</b>
Led by women	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>1.5%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Mixed gender collaborations	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	<b>3.2%</b>
	<b>80.7%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	

TABLE 3.2J. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

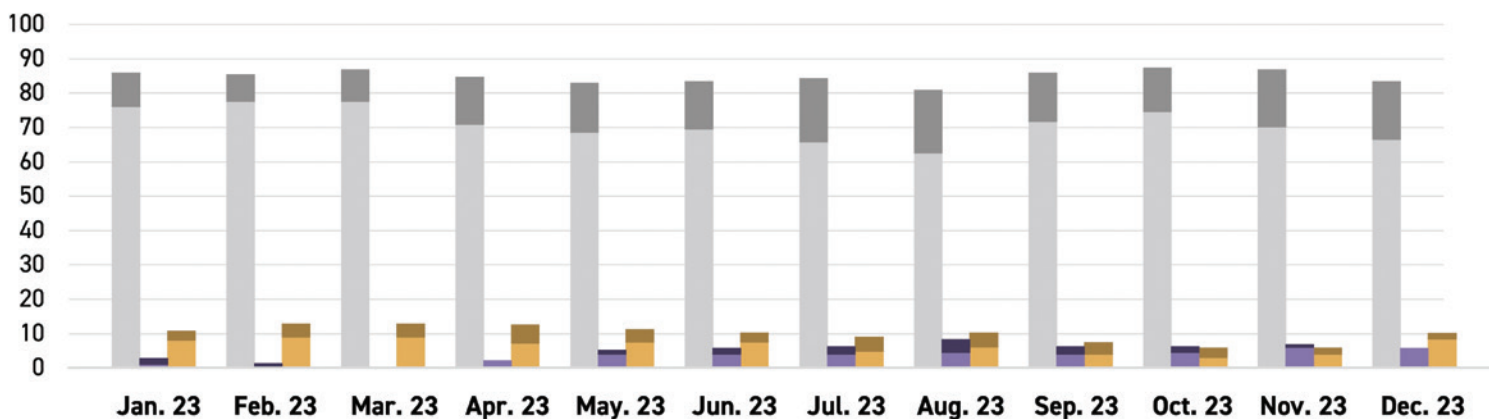


FIGURE 3.2E DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.



### 3.2.2.2. Evaluation of Representation in the Top Positions of the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

Despite their low positioning within airplay and the 50-position weekly charts, songs by women are not entirely absent from the chart's Top 20, but are eliminated on their path up the chart to the #1 position. Songs by women average 6.3% of the Top 20 songs, with an 11.0% average from June to October. Their songs are absent from the Top 10 between January and May, but slowly begin to enter this ranking by June and reach a peak of 17.5% in August before declining again in the final months of the year. Figures 3.2f-3.2h track the percentage of songs in each of these three charting categories over the course of the calendar year, and show that none of the songs in the #1 position are by women. While most of the songs in the Top 20 are non-CanCon by women (3.8%), CanCon songs by women are more represented in the Top 10 (an average of 4.1%).

Songs by men averaged 86.4% of the Top 20 songs (Figure 3.2f), peaking at 90.0% in both September and November. Over the course of the year, non-CanCon songs averaged 53.2% of the Top 20, with CanCon songs averaging 33.1%. Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations average the remaining 7.3%, divided 3.8% and 2.5% non-CanCon and CanCon songs, respectively. Unlike the larger programming picture, most of the Top 20 activity by mixed gender bands was by collaborative recordings (4.9%, versus 2.1% for bands), wherein most of the songs are led by male artists (3.3%). This increases representation of men in the Top 20 to 89.6%.

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [60.6%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [39.4%]
Songs by Men	49.2%	35.6%
Songs by Women	3.0%	2.0%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	5.7%	1.3%
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.4%
Led by men	4.2%	0.9%
Led by women	1.5%	0.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%
Songs by mixed gender collaborations	2.7%	0.5%

TABLE 3.2K. PERCENTAGE OF CANCON SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

Just 7 songs by 5 women reached the Top 20 (Figure 3.2f). Activity for songs by women picked up at the midpoint of the year, then The Beaches' "Blame Brett", then Dorothy's "Black Sheep", followed by The Warning's "More" received enough airplay to enter the Top 20. Only "Blame Brett" and "Black Sheep" had the airplay to push their songs into the Top 10 (Figure 3.2g), their songs peaking at #5 and #8, respectively.

Songs by men are programmed at a high rate to average 88.1% of the Top 10 (Figure 3.2g), beginning the year with 100% of the Top 10 songs in January and another peak of 97.5% in November. Here, too, non-CanCon songs by men out-chart CanCon songs (57.5% and 30.6%, respectively). mixed gender bands make up a slightly smaller percentage of the Top 10 than the Top 20, at 6.6% – all collaborative singles between Daughtry ft. Izzy Hale, July Talk ft. Spence Krug, and Måneskin ft. Tom Morello.

Figure 3.2h tracks representation in the #1 position of the Active Rock chart, that men captured the top position for the entire year. Perhaps more critically, just 6 bands held the #1 position beginning with Blink-182 ("Edging") for 1 week, then Metallica with "Lux Aeterna" for 9 weeks, Linkin Park's "Lost" for 7 weeks, Foo Fighters' "Rescued" for 13 weeks, Finger Eleven's "Together Right" for 5 weeks, Foo Fighters' "Under You" for 10 weeks and the remaining 7 weeks by Green Day's "American Dream is Killing Me."

In 2023, CanCon songs received enough support from radio for their songs to hold the top position of the chart 9.6% of the year and 36.7% of the Top 10 and 37.0% of the Top 20. Despite capturing a third of the Top 10 and 20 positions (mostly songs by men), CanCon songs are just meeting federal regulations in Active Rock programming. Stations played just enough CanCon songs to meet regulations in 2023, but failed to prioritise these songs to offer clearer pathways to the top positions within programming to result in greater representation within the Airplay charts. With just one band (Finger Eleven) having a clearer pathway to the top of the chart, CanCon songs (in general) are underrepresented, and those by women are nearly absent.

There is a great consistency to programming for this format – one that privileges the contributions of men and holds songs by women at 1.9% of the weekly airplay, which resulted in an average of 5.0% of the charts in 2023. With about 5 songs by women played each day on the average station, women are more likely to be heard on Active Rock radio if they are in vocal collaboration with men. Because of the incredibly low-rate of airplay for songs by women (and women-led bands) and the way in which they are programmed with an average of 1 song in each of the five radio dayparts, songs by women are invisibilized within Active Rock radio programming.

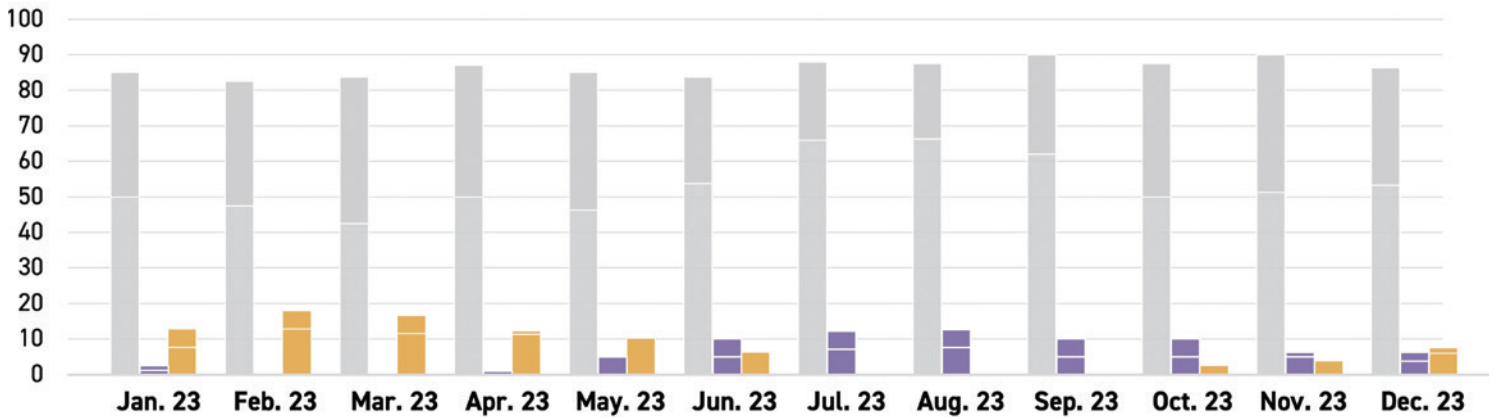


FIGURE 3.2F DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 20 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. CANCON SONGS ARE ALSO REPRESENTED IN A HORIZONTAL LINE PATTERN.

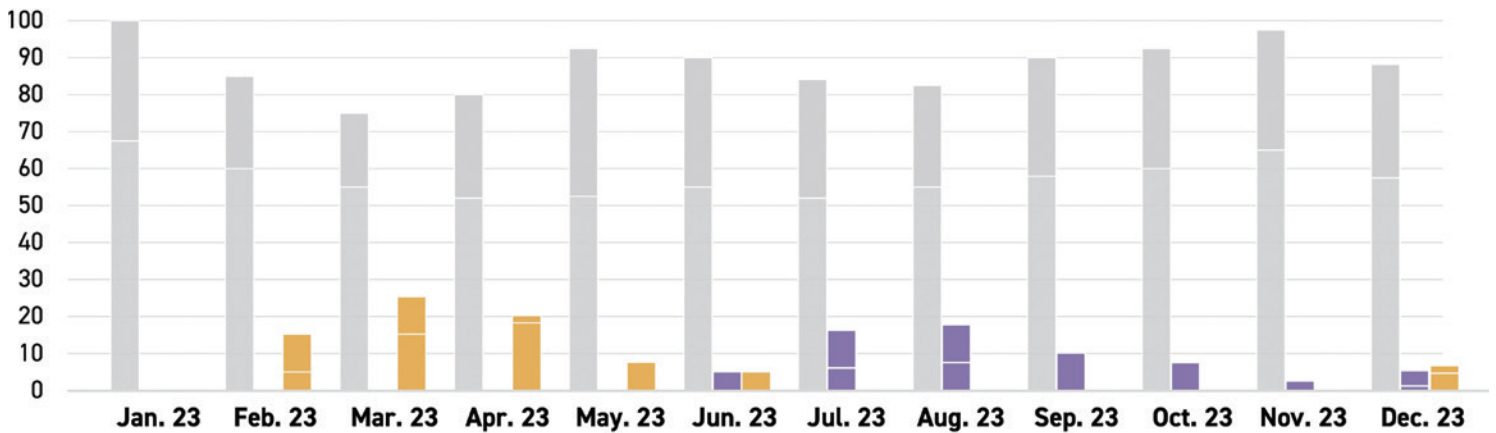


FIGURE 3.2G DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 10 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. CANCON SONGS ARE ALSO REPRESENTED IN A HORIZONTAL LINE PATTERN

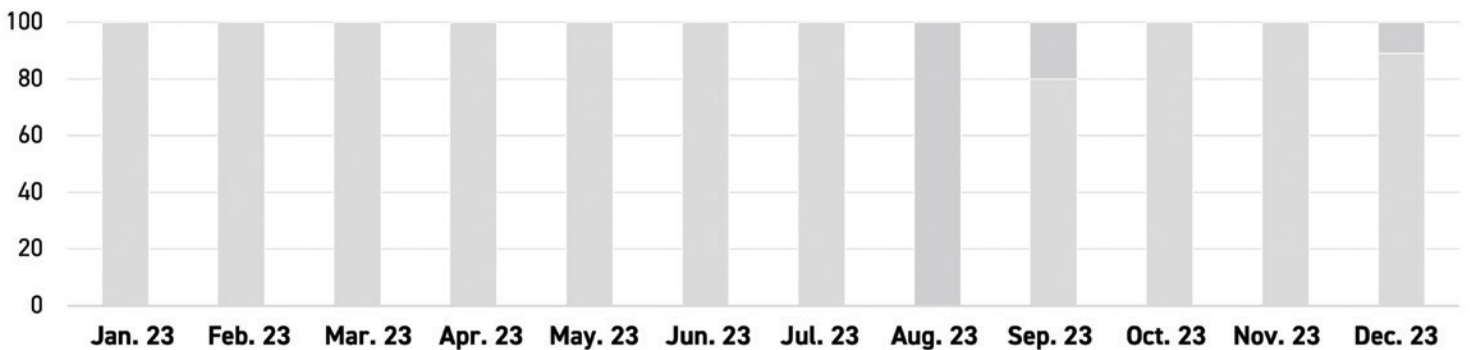


FIGURE 3.2H DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE #1 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN ACTIVE ROCK RADIO IN 2023

NOTE: 1 CANCON CERTIFIED SONG (BY AN ALL-MALE GROUP) REACHED #1 IN 2023, SPENDING 5 WEEKS AT THE TOP OF THE CHART



# KEY FINDINGS

## Representation on Canadian Active Rock Radio

Active Rock, a predominantly hard rock and metal dominated format, invisibilizes women in its programming. The findings of this study show that songs by women are completely absent from the top 150 most played songs in 2013-2015 with a slow and marginal increase in the years that followed and end the period at 3.7% in 2023.

- › Songs by women were consistently programmed at 1.9% in 2023, with nearly all of the airplay for songs by white women.
- › Women's voices are just as likely to be heard alongside men in co-lead vocal bands (1.7%) as they are in lead/solo vocal arrangements (1.9%) and in both instances they are dangerously low in programming to a point of absence.
- › Distribution of airplay for songs by women show that CanCon songs (1.4%) are played slightly more than non-CanCon songs (0.5%) and that few songs by women (in general) and Canadians (specifically) are retained for recurrent airplay (0.3%).
- › As a result, songs by women are being filtered out of programming in a way that limits their potential for both the charts and long-term preservation in the format's gold catalogue songs (currently at 1.2% of programmed songs).
- › Songs by women are not more likely to be heard in the evening and overnight dayparts; with an average of 1 song being played per daypart in 2023, wrestling in about 1 spin for a song by women every 4-6 hours. This only improves in co-lead arrangements with men, which increases the presence of women's voices to about 1 song per hour per daypart.
- › Songs by women and women-led bands are dangerously underrepresented on the charts as a result of their extremely low level of airplay on the format; as a result just two songs had enough airplay to reach the Top 10 of the charts in 2023.
- › IBPOC women and Trans\* artists are invisible in Alternative Rock radio programming, their songs receiving about 1.3% in 2023 (with no airplay for Trans\* artists) — not anywhere near the amount needed for their songs to be within the range of the weekly charts.

## Celebrating the Canadian women and Trans\* artists whose songs spun onto the Active Rock Airplay charts in 2023

**The Beaches**

**Sara Dufour**

**Vilivant**

**Ruby Waters**

**JJ Wilde**





Top 40 radio is one of the three formats in this study defined by programming that features music from across all genres. It may be predominantly pop-driven, but songs from other genres are played and creates a space for many styles to thrive. As a concept within the music industry, Top 40 typically refers to the 40 most popular current singles of a particular genre. They are frequently the most broadcast, best-selling, and (today) most streamed singles. As a radio format, Top 40 originated around 1955 in the USA with several key individuals – programmers Todd Storz, Bill Stewart, and Bill Gavin – playing roles in pioneering a form of contemporary hit radio.<sup>1</sup> The format revolves not around a single genre (like Country and Rock), but a method of programming centred around a tight playlist of 40 “hit” songs from a range of genres mixed with news and advertisements.

There are 22 Top 40 stations that report to Mediabase’s charting system. Most of the stations (54.5%) are in Ontario, with 13.6% each in Alberta and British Columbia, 9.1% in Manitoba, and 1 station each in Nova Scotia and Quebec. All of these stations offer English language programming, with no French-language stations reporting to the Top 40 chart system.

The dataset for analysing representation on Top 40 format radio between 2013 and 2023 includes the top 150 current singles played across this format each year, totalling 1,650 records. Within these records, 720 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs ranked within the top 150 songs played on Top 40 format radio.

Table 4.1a summarises this data, revealing that 51.5% of the artists with songs played over this period are men, 19.7% are women, 0.3% are Trans\* artists, and 28.5% are bands or collaborations with men, women and Trans\* artists. Most (49.9%) of these artists are white, but there is more racial diversity than on Country and Rock formats, with Black artists representing 11.9% of the artists with songs in the top 150 songs played on Top 40 radio, 5.8% artists of colour, and 32.4% multiethnic bands and collaborations. Indigenous artists are underrepresented within this format, with just one collaboration led by an Indigenous woman (not captured in the table).

<sup>1</sup> See Eric Weisbard, *Top 40 Democracy: The Rival of Mainstreams of American Music* (University of Chicago Press, 2014); Richard W. Fatherly and David T Macfarland, *The Birth of Top 40 Radio: The Storz Stations’ Revolution of the 1950s and 1960s* (McFarland & Company, 2013); William Barlow, *Voice Over: The Making of Black Radio* (Temple University Press, 1998). See also Kathryn Milewski, ‘Why Do We Have Top 40 Radio?’ (*Live365 History of Radio*, “Live 365 (4 February 2022).

Collaborative recordings make up a significant component of Top 40 programming, representing 26.3% of the artists with songs in the top 150 most played on the format. Table 4.1a further details the composition of those collaborations, showing that collaborations led by men and women are near-equally represented as 12.2% and 12.8%, respectively. There are also collaborations led by Trans\* artists (0.6%). Recalculating representation to combine collaborations led by men, women and Trans\* artists reveals increases in the totals of men to 63.9%, women to 32.4%, Trans\* artists to 0.9%, and mixed gender bands/collabs to 3.0%.

Within these 1,650 records, 1,161 songs received enough annual airplay to appear within the top 150 songs played on Canadian Top 40 format radio. The reason for there being just 1,161 unique songs in

this dataset (instead of 1,650) is that some songs receive enough annual airplay to rank within the top 150 for consecutive years: 1 song appeared for 4 years, while 50 appeared for 3 years, 386 for 2 years, and the remaining 724 songs for just 1 year.

Half of the songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played over this period were by men (52.5%), with 28.3% by women, 0.4% by Trans\* artists, 2.0% by mixed gender bands, and 16.8% by collaborations (as above, divided nearly equally with those led by men at 7.9% and by women at 8.0%), and 0.3% by collaborations led by Trans\* artists. Here, as before, the half of these songs (56.8%) are by white artists, with 12.4% by Black artists, 0.0% by Indigenous artists, 9.3% by artists of colour, and 21.7% by multiethnic ensembles (Table 4.1b).

Within this snapshot of the artists and

songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played each year between 2013 and 2023, men emerge at a higher percentage of programming, with just over half of the songs that ranked within the top 150 most played over the 11-year period. This increases to 60.4% when combined with collaborations led by men. White artists, too, are responsible for more than half of the songs, but the format tends toward greater racial diversity than Country and Rock formats. Women (specifically Black, Indigenous and women of colour) are underrepresented here, with most of the songs by white women (18.4%).

The following analysis investigates the rate at which these songs are played on Canadian Top 40 radio and how this programming influences contention for the Yearend Airplay Charts.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	25.0%	7.1%	0.0%	2.6%	16.8%	<b>51.5%</b>
Women	11.8%	3.1%	0.0%	3.2%	1.6%	<b>19.7%</b>
Trans* artists	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.3%</b>
Mixed gender bands	1.7%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	<b>2.2%</b>
Collaborations	11.1%	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	13.6%	<b>26.3%</b>
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%
Led by men	4.7%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	12.2%
Led by women	6.3%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	5.7%	12.8%
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.6%
	<b>49.9%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>32.4%</b>	

TABLE 4.1A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	29.0%	7.9%	0.0%	3.7%	11.9%	<b>52.5%</b>
Women	18.6%	3.4%	0.0%	5.3%	1.0%	<b>28.3%</b>
Trans* artists	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.4%</b>
Mixed gender bands	1.6%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	<b>2.0%</b>
Collaborations	7.2%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.5%	<b>16.8%</b>
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
Led by men	3.2%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	7.9%
Led by women	4.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.5%	8.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%
	<b>56.8%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>21.7%</b>	

TABLE 4.1B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS ON CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

### 4.1.1. Airplay within the Top 150 Songs Played between 2013 to 2023

Within the top 150 songs played each year over the last decade on Top 40 format radio, songs by women have received an average of 27.1% of the airplay. Figure 4.1a maps the percentage of the distribution of airplay of songs by men, women, mixed gender bands and collaborations, and Trans\* artists revealing that songs by women that landed within the top 150 songs played initially received less airplay, declining from 27.6% in 2013 to 16.3% in 2017. But after this point, their songs received increasingly more airplay, and in 2023 there was a boost in nearly 20 percentage points to 48.5% of the airplay for the top 150 played songs.

Most of this airplay – an average of 18.21% – was for songs by white women, but that picture changes through this 11-year period. Figure 4.1a details representation by race and ethnicity as well as gender identity, with lighter shades for white artists and darker shades for Black, Indigenous, Artists of colour, and Multiethnic bands and collaborations. Songs by women of colour average 8.9% of the airplay, but like the overall airplay for songs by women, airplay for women of colour at first declines from 9.4% to 5.5% by 2018 and increases to 23.4% by 2023. In

the final year of this period, songs by white women received 26.1% of the spins for the top 150 songs played, and women of colour 22.4%. Songs by Black women may have averaged 3.7% across the 11-year period, but their songs captured 15.0% in 2023, while women of colour averaged 4.3% and captured 4.7% in 2023.

While songs by men average a higher percentage across the 11-year period (53.5%) and certainly make up the most played each year, in 2023 their songs received 31.9% of the airplay in a year that revealed considerable improvement for songs by women. Airplay for songs by white men are programmed at a higher rate than those by men of colour by an average of 4.8% from 2013 to 2020, but songs by men of colour that ranked within the top 150 songs played receive more airplay from 2021 to 2023.

Songs by Trans\* artists averaged 0.6% across the 11-year period, with airplay beginning in 2019 when Sam Smith affirmed their identity as trans-nonbinary. This, of course, does not mean that Smith did not identify as trans-nonbinary before 2019, but that this was not publicly known until that point. From 2019 to the end of the study period, songs by Trans\* artists averaged 1.3% of the airplay.

The remaining 19.0% average of the airplay was accorded to songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations (8.9% for white ens./collabs and 9.3% for

multiethnic ens./collabs). Drilling into the composition of these collaborations further, though, we see not just an increase in collaboration to a peak of 27.7% in 2018, but also steady representation of women-led collaborations. Collaborations led by men average 8.5% (with a peak of 14.3% in 2017 and ending the period at 10.2%), and collaborations led by women average 7.9% with a peak of 13.4% in 2018 declining to 5.9% by 2023. Collaborations led by Trans\* artists peak at 2.6% in 2019.

These collaborations do increase the presence of women's voices on terrestrial Top 40 radio, but the most significant year of representation was 2023 (see Table 4.1c). Following the initial trend to decline, songs by women and women-led collaborations declined from 35.1% of the airplay in 2013 to a period low of 23.4% in 2017, but then averaged 37.7% from 2018 to 2022 and end the period at 54.4% to the top 150 songs played in 2023. Songs by men and collaborations led by men increased against the decline of songs by women from 60.3% in 2013 to a peak of 74.1% in 2017 and hold a 61.3% average until 2023 where their songs receive 42.0%.

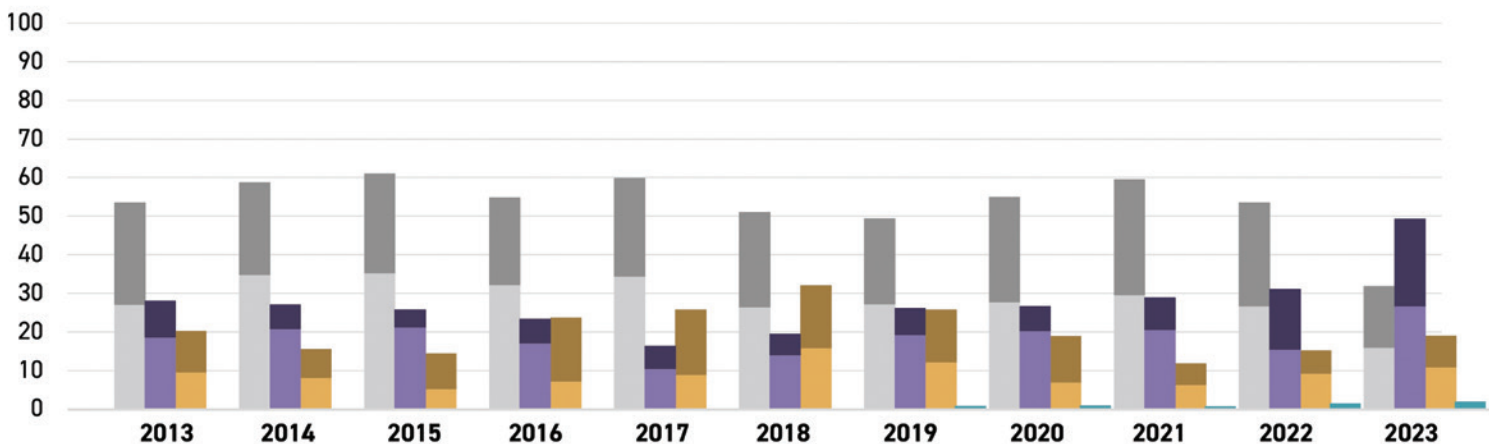


FIGURE 4.1A. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Songs by Collaborations	14.3%	12.2%	12.2%	18.9%	22.0%	28.2%	23.6%	17.6%	10.1%	12.7%	16.7%
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	0.7%	0.4%	0.7%
Led by men	6.8%	5.9%	2.0%	10.1%	14.3%	14.1%	10.5%	7.4%	4.8%	7.1%	10.1%
Led by women	7.5%	6.3%	10.2%	8.8%	7.1%	13.8%	10.5%	7.4%	4.6%	5.2%	5.9%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	2.6%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

TABLE 4.1C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS BY COLLABORATIONS ON CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

## 4.1.2. Representation on the Yearend Top 40 Airplay Charts between 2013 and 2023

Mediabase's Yearend Top 40 Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played in a calendar year. They are the songs with enough airplay to have peaked within the top positions of the weekly charts – many achieving a #1 peak position. Drilling into the yearend reports to these top 50-positions offers greater perspective on those most-played songs and whose voices are heard most on terrestrial radio. Table 4.1d summarises representation of the 324 solo artists, bands, and collaborations with songs ranked within the Yearend Top 40 Airplay Charts, 50.5% of them men, 19.7% women, 0.6% are Trans\* artists, and 2.1% mixed gender bands and 27.1% collaborations. Most of the artists are white (49.4%), with 11.1% Black artists, 4.7% artists of colour, and 34.8% multiethnic ensembles. None of the songs in the yearend Top 40 charts are by Indigenous artists.

Over the 11-year period studied, 495 songs appeared on the Yearend Charts. One of the songs charted for 3 consecutive years, 53 songs charted for 2 years, with the remaining 441 songs for just 1 year. As Table 4.1e details, 52.0% were by men, 27.9% were by women, 0.5% by Trans\* artists, 1.6% were by mixed gender bands, 18.0% by collaborations (8.5% led by men, 8.7% by women). As has been the trend so far, just over half the songs are by white artists (58.0%), with 12.5% by Black artists, 6.2% by artists of colour, and 23.3% by multiethnic ensembles and collaborations. Here, as with the broader

top 150 songs played on Top 40 radio, Top 40 charts appear more diverse than Country and Rock radio but songs by men are still double those by women – even when the percentage of collaborations led by men and women are included into the calculation.

Songs by women average 26.7% of the titles within the 50-position yearend reports. The charts reflect the same general trends as with discussion of airplay of the top 150 songs played annually, but Figure 4.1b reveals the same trend toward airplay that reduces representation of women from 30.0% of the charting songs in 2013 down to 12.0% in 2017, after which songs begin to increase and capture 48.0% of the charts in 2023. As with overall airplay, songs by white women appear in the chart at a higher percentage than those by women of colour – averaging 19.1% for songs by white women and 7.4% by women of colour.

Songs by men average 53.1% of the yearend charts increasing from 48.0% in 2013 to a peak of 62.0% in 2017 and 28.0% of the songs in 2023. Most of these songs are by white men (averaging 27.8%), but the gap between white men and men of colour is within a 2.0-4.0% range in most years except for a significant gap in 2014 (60.0% by white men and 26.0% by men of colour) and more songs by men of colour in 2013, 2020-2022. Songs by Trans\* artists average 1.6% of the charts starting from the point at which there are charting songs in 2019. This amounts to 1 song per year from 2019 to 2023 (except for 2020).

The remaining charting songs are those by mixed gender bands and collaborations, whose songs average 19.5% of the charts (9.1% for white bands and 10.4% for multiethnic bands). As with the discussion surrounding collaborations above, yearend



	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	23.0%	6.5%	0.0%	2.2%	18.8%	<b>50.5%</b>
Women	12.3%	3.4%	0.0%	2.5%	1.5%	<b>19.7%</b>
Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.6%</b>
Mixed gender bands	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>2.1%</b>
Collaborations	12.0%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	13.9%	<b>27.1%</b>
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.9%
Led by men	5.2%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	12.6%
Led by women	6.5%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	6.2%	13.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.6%
	<b>49.4%</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>34.8%</b>	

TABLE 4.1D. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE YEAREND TOP 40 AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	28.0%	8.1%	0.0%	3.0%	12.9%	<b>52.0%</b>
Women	20.2%	3.6%	0.0%	3.2%	1.0%	<b>27.9%</b>
Trans* artists	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.5%</b>
Mixed gender bands	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	<b>1.6%</b>
Collaborations	8.2%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	9.0%	<b>18.0%</b>
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.6%
Led by men	3.6%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	8.5%
Led by women	4.4%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	8.7%
Led by Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%
	<b>58.0%</b>	<b>12.5%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>23.3%</b>	

TABLE 4.1E. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE YEAREND TOP 40 AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

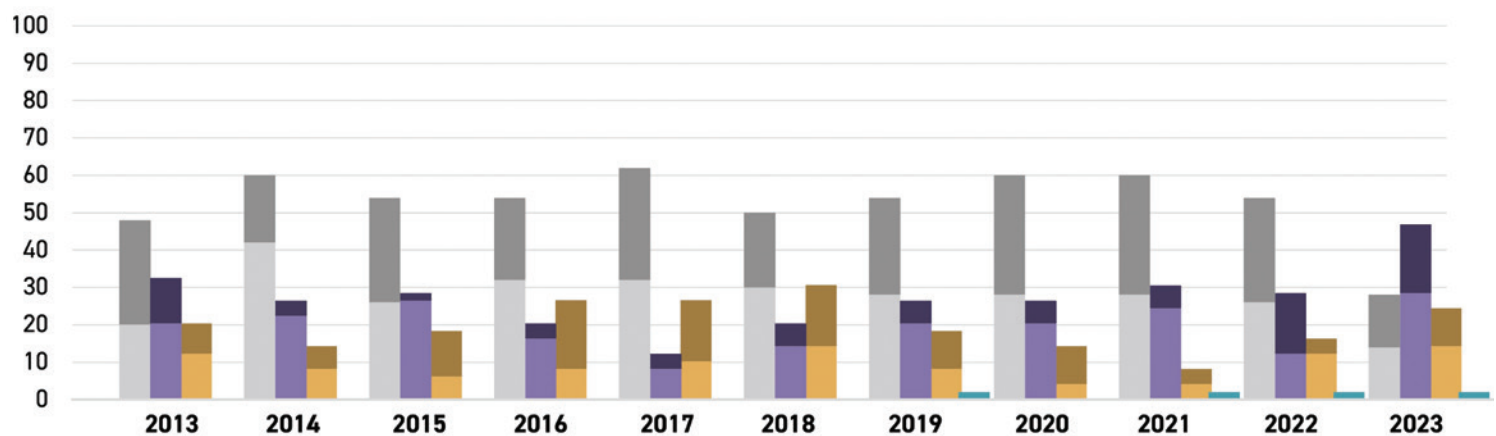


FIGURE 4.1B. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE YEAREND TOP 40 AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Collaborations	14.0%	14.0%	16.0%	22.0%	24.0%	28.0%	18.0%	14.0%	8.0%	16.0%	22.0%
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%
Led by men	6.0%	8.0%	2.0%	12.0%	20.0%	10.0%	8.0%	6.0%	4.0%	10.0%	12.0%
Led by women	8.0%	6.0%	14.0%	10.0%	4.0%	18.0%	8.0%	4.0%	4.0%	6.0%	8.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

TABLE 4.1F. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS BY COLLABORATIONS ON THE YEAREND TOP 40 AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

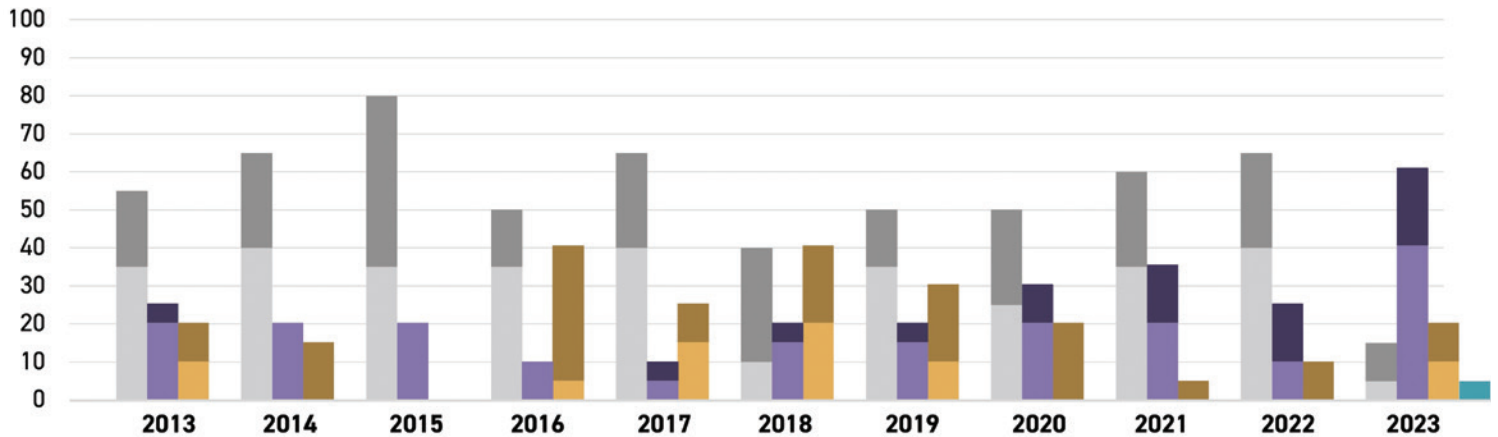


FIGURE 4.1C. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 20 OF THE YEAREND TOP 40 AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

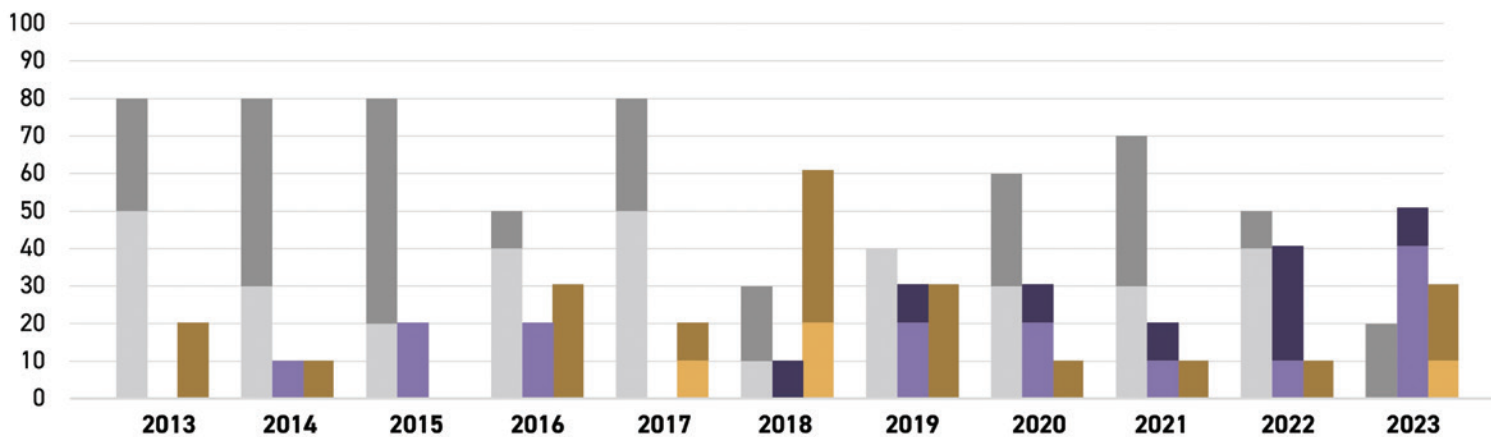


FIGURE 4.1D. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 10 OF THE YEAREND TOP 40 AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

chart activity reflects the same increase toward 2018 where collaborations peak at 30.0% of the charts and then decline to a low of 8.0% in 2021 and end the period at 22.0% of the 2023 yearend charts. Table 4.1f offers the same detail as discussed with airplay of the top 150 songs played, that collaborations led by men (8.9%) and women (8.0%) are close in their 11-year average. However, despite a similar average, there are years in which collaborations led by men are significantly higher than those by women (2017, 2022, and 2023) and vice versa (2015 and 2018). Collaborations with Trans\* artists in the lead average 0.9%, but it's imperative to observe here that just one year has a collaboration featuring a Trans\* artist. The other collaboration is not included in this table because it's a collaboration between two Trans\* artists (this data is captured in 4.1c, which details representation of collaborations).

Drilling deeper into the chart, songs by women are underrepresented from the top positions from 2013 to 2018, after which point they begin to appear in higher numbers in the Top 20 and Top 10, and emerges as the most played songs by these rankings in 2023. Figures 4.1c-4.1e track representation in the chart's top positions across this 11-year period showing that songs by women average 25.5% of the Top 20, but again the trajectory follows the pathway of reduced airplay resulting in decline on the charts from 2013 to 2017 (25.0% down to 10.0%) before a gradual increase to a peak of 60% in 2023. Most of these songs are by white women (17.7% versus 7.3% for women of colour) – with no songs by women of colour in the Top 20 between 2014 and 2016 but ending on an 11-year period high at 20.0% in 2023.

Songs by women are nearly absent from the Top 10 from 2013-2018, with no songs in 2013 and 2017, 1 song in 2014 and 2018, and 2 songs in 2015 and 2016. But following this period low, songs by women begin to increase in representation in the Top 10 and again conclude the period

with an incredible 60% of the Top 10 songs (40.0% by white women and 10.0% by women of colour). Because of the low representation across the first half of this 11-year period, songs by women do not have the programming support to achieve a #1 song. Of course, the caveat here being that two of the #1 songs in that period are by a mixed gender collaboration, one led by Katy Perry. So women's voices are not entirely absent, but they are presented alongside a man's voice. "Big Energy" by Latto is the only song by a woman to end the year at #1 (in 2022).

Two songs with Trans\* artists appear in the Top 20 – with songs in 2019 and 2023 receiving enough airplay to be included within the top positions. Because the 2019 songs are a collaboration, they do not appear in the graphic. Sam Smith's collaboration with Normani on "Dancing With a Stranger" reached #3 in 2019 and their pathbreaking collaboration with Kim Petras on "Unholy" at #11 in 2023. Not only are Smith and Petras the first trans-nonbinary and transgender artists to top the Billboard Hot 100 chart, but they also made history when they won Best Pop Duo/Band at the 2023 Grammy Awards.<sup>1</sup>

The trend across this period is one of initial reduction in airplay for songs by women, followed by a rebuild toward practices that include their songs in higher rotation. This is most visible in the return of songs by women to the Top 20 and Top 10 most played songs. The distribution in airplay within the top 150 songs played over the final three years of this study period suggests a form of programming that has created pathways to support a more diverse range of voices. The distribution still reveals a prioritising of white artists and a practice that emphasises a gender binary, but movement in a direction toward programming the songs of a wider range of artists.

Songs by men capture 55.0% of the Top 20 songs in 2013 and increase to 80.0% by 2015, before hovering at an average of 55.0-60.0% from 2017 to 2022. But with the

1 Toyin Owoseje, "Sam Smith and Kim Petras are First Nonbinary and Trans Artists to Reach Number 1 on Billboard Chart," CNN (26 October 2022); Grammys, "Sam Smith and Kim Petras Make History By Winning Best Pop Duo/Group Performance for 'Unholy'." Grammy News (30 January 2023).

distribution of airplay within these top 150 most spun records, songs by men capture 15.0% of the Top 20 in 2023. A similar trajectory is visible within the Top 10 most spun songs over this period. While songs by men were initially programmed at a high and privileged rate, pushing their songs to capturing 80.0% of the Top 10 (2013-2015 and 2017), the gradual shift in programming resulted in change in the top programmed spots. As a result, the programming of 2023 suggests that songs by women and Trans\* artists had slightly more pathways to the top positions of the airplay charts than in previous years.

This is true of the top position in the yearend Charts, too. Songs by men were the most played on the Top 40 format across 7 years of this period (see Figure 4.1a), with 2 additional years as lead of mixed gender collaborations. As a result, they capture 90.1% of the top chart position across this 11-year period. But it's critical to note this potential shift in programming – one that in the last 3 years has suggested within these top-spun songs an ecosystem that is creating more pathways to exposure.

The histogram in Figure 4.1f offers another perspective to programming on Top 40 radio for the top 150 songs played over this 11-year period. This Figure graphs the 1,161 songs by their peak position achieved and by the number of titles within each 10-position range of the top

150 songs played ranked in the dataset. While songs by women appear at a might higher rate than viewed with Country and Rock formats, this histogram suggests a still inequitable programming ecosystem. And indeed, the previous results of the Top 40 format revealed that their songs capture about 26.0% of programming and it's only in 2023 when their songs appear at a higher rate of the top 150 songs played, the chart and its top positions. The histogram reinforces this, because not only do songs by men capture most of the top 10 positions, but they are still capturing more songs in each 10-position range of the reports studied here. There are at least 2 times more songs by men in each grouping - 2.6 within the top 10.

These findings hold true with consideration of the collaborative recordings programmed with the capacity to peak within the Top 20. Collaborations make up 18.8% of the Top 20 songs over this 11-year period, 10.0% led by men, 7.8% led by women, and 0.9% led by Trans\* artists. Combining collaborations by their lead artists increases all groups of artists, bringing the percentage of songs led by men to 63.9%, by women to 32.9%, Trans\* artists to 0.9%, and mixed gender ensembles to 2.3%.

2013	<b>THIS IS WHAT IT FEELS LIKE</b> Armin Van Buuren
2014	<b>DARK HORSE</b> Katy Perry w/Juicy J
2015	<b>UPTOWN FUNK</b> Mark Ronson w/Bruno Mars
2016	<b>ONCE DANCE</b> Drake w/Wizkid & Kyla
2017	<b>SHAPE OF YOU</b> Ed Sheeran
2018	<b>BODY</b> Loud Luxury w/Brando
2019	<b>SUCKER</b> Jonas Brothers
2020	<b>BLINDING LIGHTS</b> The Weeknd
2021	<b>SAVE YOUR TEARS</b> The Weeknd
2022	<b>BIG ENERGY</b> Latto
2023	<b>CALM DOWN</b> Rema w/Selena Gomez

FIGURE 4.1E. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) AT THE #1 POSITION OF CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO'S YEAREND CHARTS (2013-2023)

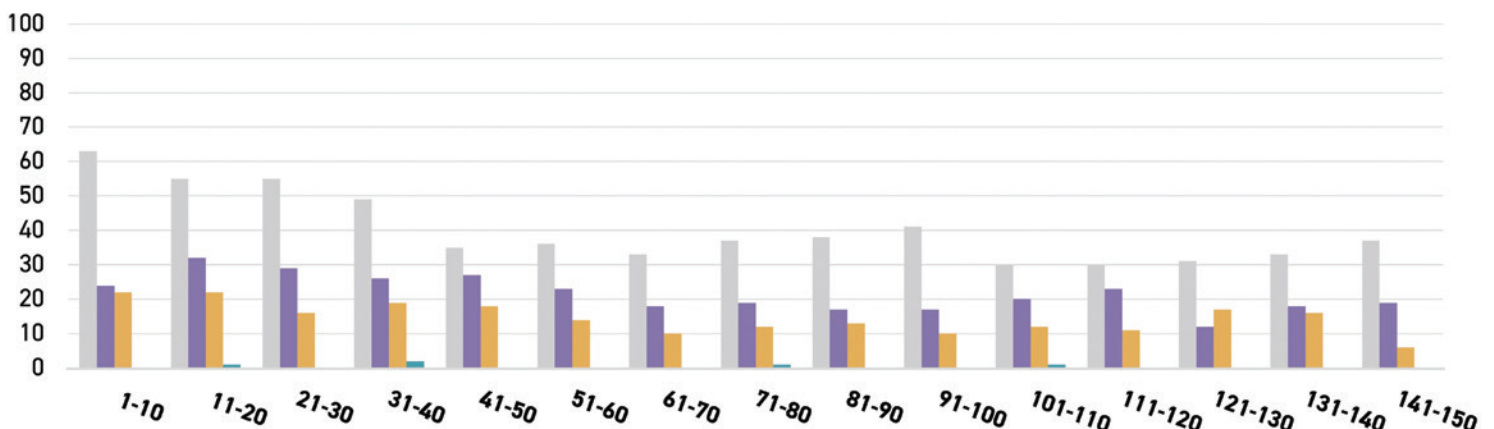


FIGURE 4.1F. HISTOGRAM BY PEAK POSITION (BY NUMBER OF TITLES) OF SONGS WITHIN TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN TOP 40 FORMAT RADIO (2013-2023)

## 4.2. Weekly Airplay on Canadian Top 40 Format Radio in 2023

Weekly airplay reports for the 22-reporting Top 40 stations offer the opportunity to explore more deeply the programming practices of the format, including the rate of airplay for all songs, the distribution of spins by song type (for current singles, recurrent tracks, and gold catalogue records) and by time of day – all within the context of Canadian Content regulations. How much are CanCon songs played? What type of song? And at what time of day? This section explores these questions more deeply, then investigates how programming influences contention for the weekly Airplay Charts.

This dataset includes the 84,279 records capturing every song played on the format, 17,495 for current singles, 6,423 for recurrent tracks, and 60,361 for gold records. Within this dataset capturing 2023 airplay, 4,397 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs played across the 22 stations that Mediabase monitors. As Table 4.2a summarises, 61.6% of those artists are men, 14.8% are women, 0.1% are Trans\* artists, and 4.7% are mixed gender bands and 18.8% are collaborations. Most of the artists are white (45.9%), while 23.6% are Black, 0.2% are Indigenous, 6.3% are artists of colour, and 24.0% are multiethnic bands. Although there appears to be greater racial and ethnic diversity than Country and Rock, the notable low percentage for Indigenous artists is concerning for the pop-driven format.

These artists were responsible for the 8,422 songs that were played across the 22 reporting stations in 2023. As Table 4.2b summarises, 59.3% of those songs were by men, 23.2% by women, 0.4% by Trans\* artists, with 5.3% by mixed gender bands and 11.8% by collaborations. Combining the percentage of songs by male-led and female-led collaborations to those by men and women, there is an increase to 64.9% and 28.3%, respectively. Most of the songs (49.7%) were by white artists, with 24.5% by Black artists, 0.1% by Indigenous artists, 8.6% by artists of colour, and 17.1% by multiethnic ensembles.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	29.3%	16.1%	0.1%	3.6%	12.5%	<b>61.6%</b>
Women	7.3%	4.1%	0.1%	2.2%	1.1%	<b>14.8%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.5%	0.6%	0.0%	0.1%	1.5%	<b>4.7%</b>
Collaborations	6.7%	2.8%	0.0%	0.4%	8.9%	<b>18.8%</b>
With shared vocals	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.9%	<b>1.4%</b>
Led by men	2.6%	1.7%	0.0%	0.1%	4.6%	<b>9.0%</b>
Led by women	3.6%	1.0%	0.0%	0.2%	3.1%	<b>7.9%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	<b>0.5%</b>
	<b>45.9%</b>	<b>23.6%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>24.0%</b>	

TABLE 4.2A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	29.8%	16.3%	0.0%	4.5%	8.7%	<b>59.3%</b>
Women	12.6%	5.8%	0.1%	3.7%	1.0%	<b>23.2%</b>
Trans* artists	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	<b>0.4%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.5%	0.8%	0.0%	0.1%	1.9%	<b>5.3%</b>
Collaborations	4.5%	1.6%	0.0%	0.2%	5.5%	<b>11.8%</b>
With shared vocals	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	<b>0.6%</b>
Led by men	1.8%	1.0%	0.0%	0.1%	2.8%	<b>5.7%</b>
Led by women	2.5%	0.6%	0.0%	0.1%	2.0%	<b>5.2%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	<b>0.3%</b>
	<b>49.7%</b>	<b>24.5%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	<b>17.1%</b>	

TABLE 4.2B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO IN 2023

## 4.2.1. Airplay of All Songs Played on Top 40 Format Radio in 2023

The following analysis investigates the rate at which songs by women are played on Canadian Top 40 radio. This section looks more deeply at the amount of airplay overall, examines the distribution of spins for songs by Canadian Content status, by song type (current, recurrent, and gold), the time of day at which they are played, and by chart activity.

Songs by women received 39.1% of the airplay on Top 40 format radio in 2023. Table 4.2c summarises airplay data for the year, providing granular detail by race and ethnicity of the artists whose songs

were played. Songs by men received 41.3% of the airplay, while songs by Trans\* artists received 1.3%, and mixed gender bands received 1.1% and mixed gender collaborations received 17.2%.

The racial inequity observed at the higher-level analysis of the top 150 songs played each year between 2013 and 2023 remains true of the full programming picture. In 2023, 52.3% of the airplay was for songs by white artists, with 21.9% for songs by Black artists, less than 0.0% overall for Indigenous artists (coming in at 0.01%), 6.8% for artists of colour, and 19.0% by multiethnic ensembles.

This same information on airplay is graphed in Figure 4.2a for a view of the monthly distribution of spins, revealing that the distribution of spins was consistent with the statistics in the

table above. The gap in airplay between songs by men and by women was just 2.1 percentage points, and Figure 4.2a reveals that songs by women increased in airplay throughout the year, from 33.2% in January to 47.4% by December. Songs by Trans\* artists declined from 3.0% in January to 0.2% in December, as did airplay for mixed gender bands and collaborations from 18.8% to 14.8% over the year.

Songs by white artists consistently receive 52.4% of the airplay, with 21.9% for songs by Black artists, 0.01% for songs by Indigenous artists, 6.8% by artists of colour, and 18.9% by multiethnic ensembles. Songs by men of colour and women of colour receive about the same amount of airplay in 2023 and songs by white women (23.1%) receive more airplay than those by white men (18.6%).

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	18.6%	10.1%	0.0%	2.9%	9.7%	<b>41.3%</b>
Women	23.0%	10.5%	0.0%	3.9%	1.7%	<b>39.1%</b>
Trans* artists	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>1.3%</b>
Mixed gender bands	0.7%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	<b>1.1%</b>
Collaborations	8.7%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	7.3%	<b>17.2%</b>
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%
Led by men	1.8%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.3%	7.0%
Led by women	6.7%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	9.4%
Led by Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.5%
	<b>52.3%</b>	<b>21.9%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>19.0%</b>	

TABLE 4.2C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO IN 2023

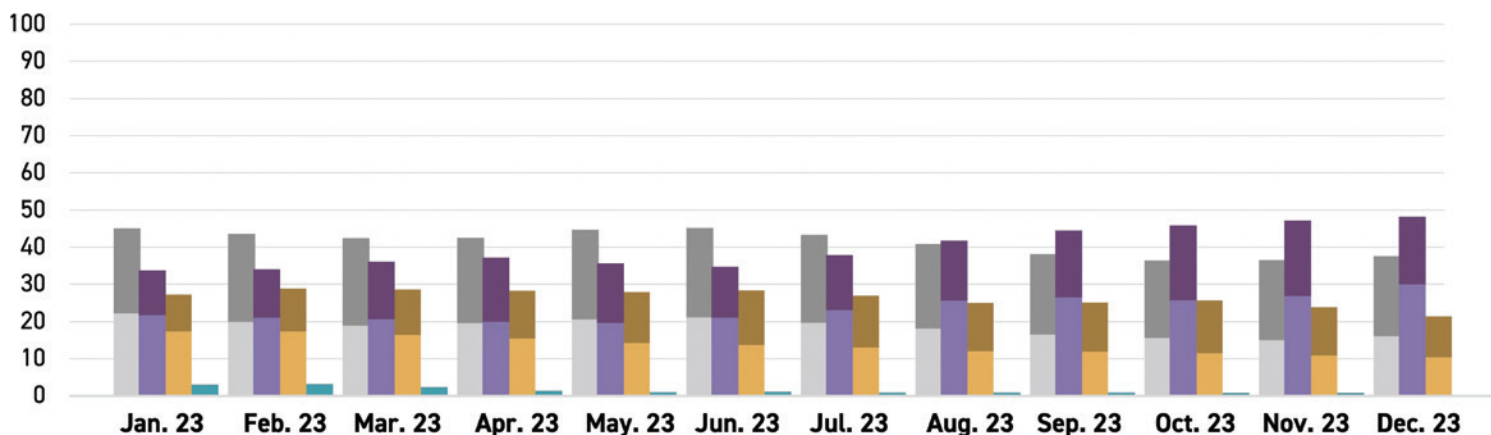


FIGURE 4.2A DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN TOP 40 FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.



### 4.2.1.1. Evaluation of Airplay by CanCon Status

What this distribution means for Canadian artists is particularly important in the context of the federal regulations guiding programming and how it shapes exposure for Canadian audiences, and impacts women in the industry. Most of the airplay – 64.5% – went to non-CanCon songs. An average of 35.5% of the airplay in 2023 was for songs certified as CanCon. The format appears on one level to be meeting its station requirements, which will be further explored below in discussion of the distribution by daypart (a critical element to the requirement).

Distribution of airplay by CanCon certification is detailed in Figure 4.2b, further defining the distribution of airplay in 2023. Given what is already known about representation on Top 40 radio, this Figure reveals that non-CanCon songs by women receive the most airplay overall (28.1%) with 11.0% for CanCon songs by women. CanCon songs by men (17.1%) receive more than those by CanCon women, as well. Songs by non-CanCon ensembles and collaborations (10.9%) receive about the same airplay overall as CanCon songs by women. In this context, we see clearly, too, that airplay for songs by Trans\* artists is only accorded to non-CanCon songs (1.3%), with no airplay for CanCon songs by Trans\* artists.

Table 4.2d calculates the distribution of

airplay by certification status, showing that non-CanCon songs by women receive 43.7% of the airplay accorded to non-CanCon songs (6.2 percentage points more than those by men). The opposite is true for CanCon songs, where 31.0% of the airplay designated for CanCon songs by women (17.2 percentage points less than those by men). Combining these percentages with the airplay for songs by women-led bands increases representation for women on both sides of the CanCon line: non-CanCon songs led by women receive 50.3% of the airplay, while CanCon songs led by women receive 46.1%. Combining songs led by women with women-led collaborations shifts the percentage for CanCon songs in a way that brings them in proximity to the airplay designated to CanCon songs by men.

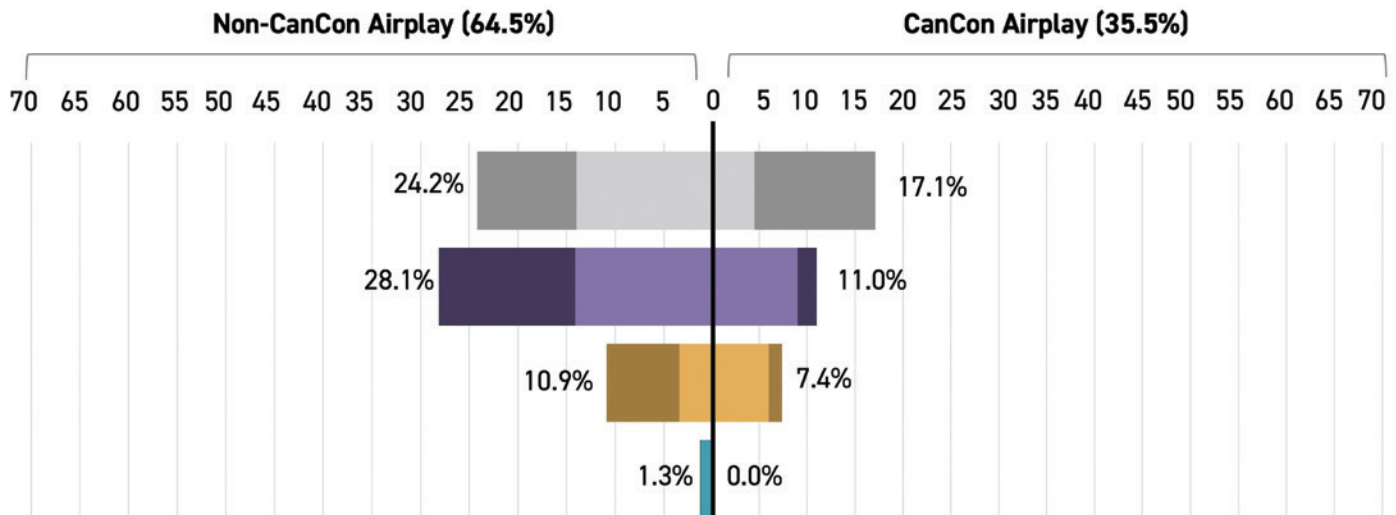


FIGURE 4.2B. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN TOP 40 FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [64.5%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [35.5%]
Songs by Men	37.5%	48.2%
Songs by Women	43.7%	31.0%
Songs by Trans* artists	2.0%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	0.7%	1.7%
Songs by Collaborations	16.1%	19.1%
With shared vocals	0.4%	0.0%
Led by men	8.4%	4.0%
Led by women	6.6%	15.1%
Led by Trans* artists	0.7%	0.0%

TABLE 4.2D. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN TOP 40 FORMAT RADIO IN 2023



### 4.2.1.2. Evaluation of Airplay for Songs by Time of Day

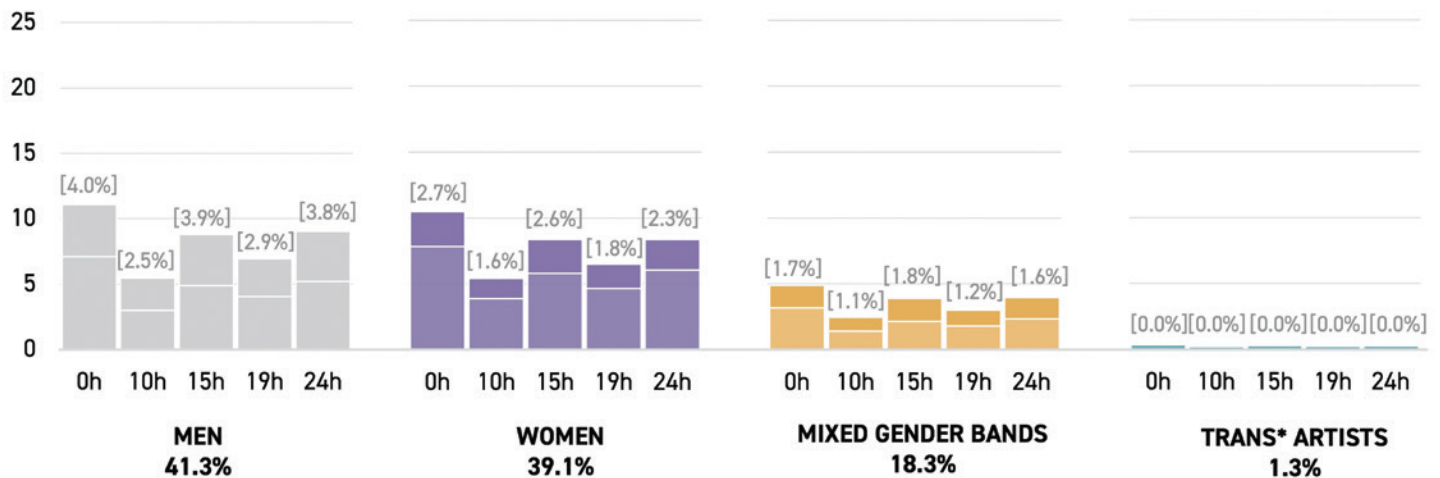
The time of day at which these songs are heard is of critical importance to the development of a musician's career. As described earlier, the 24-hour cycle is divided into five dayparts, with the three day-time periods – the Morning Drive (AMD from 6:00-10:00), the Midday period (MID from 10:00-15:00) and the Afternoon Drive (PMD from 15:00 to 19:00) – are the most important for exposure as they are the periods with the highest rate of listenership. The Overnight (OVN from 0:00 to 6:00) and Evening (EVE from 19:00 to 24:00) periods frame the day and are periods with a higher percentage of songs played due not just in part to their

slightly longer duration, but also the reduced amount of news and specialty programming (features, interviews, etc.).

Figure 4.2c tracks the distribution of airplay by daypart, graphing the data in accordance with the 24-hour cycle beginning with the Overnights on the left, through the Morning Drive, Midday and Afternoon Drive, to the Evening on the right for each group of artists. The columns are then split with a white dividing line to designate by CanCon airplay on the top, with non-CanCon airplay on the bottom of each column. The highest percentage of airplay for all artists occurs in the Overnight and Evening periods, as expected. For all groups, about 27.0% of their overall airplay occurs in the Overnight, with 13.0% in the Morning, 21.0% in the Midday, 17.0% in the Afternoon, and 22.0% in the Evening. Despite this even distribution for songs

by men, women, and mixed gender bands and collaborations, though, the distribution overall shows that songs by women are (as would be expected given overall airplay), just slightly under songs by men by less than 1% in each daypart.

Half of radio programming occurs during the three daypart hours (Morning, Midday, and Afternoon) at 51.6% of the spins. Federal broadcasting regulations require that Canadian radio play 35.0% Canadian Content between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to ensure listeners are exposed to music of Canadian artists. While the periods do not align perfectly (the Afternoon daypart ends at 7:00 p.m.), Top 40 radio stations played 37.5% CanCon songs across the Morning, Midday, and Afternoon dayparts in 2023, with 18.0% for songs by men, 11.6% for songs by women, 0.0% by Trans\* artists, and 7.8% for mixed gender bands and collaborations.



**FIGURE 4.2C. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY BY TIME OF DAY FOR ALL SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN TOP 40 FORMAT RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

	SONGS BY MEN	SONGS BY WOMEN	SONGS BY TRANS* ARTISTS	SONGS BY MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
<b>OVERNIGHT (0:00-6:00)</b>	42 [27/15]	39 [29/10]	1 [1/0]	18 [11/7]
<b>AM DRIVE (6:00-10:00)</b>	21 [11/10]	21 [15/6]	1 [1/0]	9 [5/4]
<b>MIDDAY (10:00-15:00)</b>	33 [18/15]	31 [21/10]	1 [1/0]	15 [8/7]
<b>PM DRIVE (15:00-19:00)</b>	26 [15/11]	24 [17/7]	1 [1/0]	12 [7/5]
<b>EVENING (19:00-24:00)</b>	34 [20/14]	32 [23/9]	1 [1/0]	15 [9/6]
	<b>156</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>69</b>

**TABLE 4.2E. DISTRIBUTION OF SPINS FOR SONGS BY TIME OF DAY ON CANADIAN TOP 40 FORMAT RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE THE DISTRIBUTION FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS (RESPECTIVELY)

To provide greater perspective on what this might sound like for radio listeners, Table 4.2e offers a breakdown of how this translates at the level of daytime programming to provide an example of what a typical 24-hour cycle would look like for the average station and listener. Across the 22 reporting stations, an average of 377 songs are played per day, with 156 songs by men, 147 by women, 5 by Trans\* artists, and 69 by mixed gender bands and collaborations.

The average distribution across the dayparts for songs by men and women shows that, overall, their songs are programmed at near similar rates in 2023. But the situation is not equitable when considering how this distribution impacts CanCon songs by women: they may be played at a higher rate than Country and Rock formats, but they are played at such a low rate in comparison to non-CanCon songs that it suggests Canadian women aren't prioritised within programming.

### 4.2.1.3. Evaluation of Airplay for Current, Recurrent and Gold Status Songs

Radio airplay is divided into three different song “types” – current singles that are vying for top-programming (and, by extension, chart) contention, recurrent tracks that have reached their peak programming position but are still in regular rotation, and gold catalogue records of older but “canonical” songs that have been retained by a station for long-term programming.

Figure 4.2d tracks the distribution of airplay by these three programming types, showing on the left the overall airplay on Top 40 format radio, parsed by airplay for current singles (41.3%), recurrent tracks (24.6%), and gold records (34.1%). Songs by women are the highest played overall in current programming (21.9%) but are played at a lower rate than those by men in recurrent (7.8%) and gold (9.4%) programming. With the increase

in programming for (largely non-CanCon) songs by women through the year, this Figure shows that the increase was for current singles (17.1% for non-CanCon songs and 4.8% for CanCon songs), and that songs by women are transitioned into recurrent programming at a lower rate for both non-CanCon songs by women (5.2%) and CanCon songs by women (2.6%). This has the potential to narrow the pathway for songs by women to gold catalogue records, which in 2023 received just 5.8% and 3.6% of the airplay, respectively). Of course, it is too soon to tell for this format, because the bulk of that current airplay occurred in the later month of the year – and those songs will be transitioning to recurrent in 2024.

This analysis shows that songs by men and women are played at similar rates on Top 40 radio in 2023, with airplay increasing for songs by (mostly white) women throughout the calendar year. But drilling into this data reveals that the way in which that airplay is distributed across song status (current/recurrent/gold), by time of day, and by CanCon certification has resulted in a challenging context for Canadian women to build and sustain careers in this genre. Women may not be invisible in this format, but Canadian women are at a programmatic disadvantage, unless they are sharing vocal responsibilities with men. As mentioned above, CanCon mixed gender collaborative songs are close in representation at the level of daytime programming as CanCon songs by women. Non-CanCon men are programmed at about 1.5 times the rate of CanCon songs by men. While men and male-led bands are not necessarily prioritised within programming in 2023, non-CanCon songs surely are.

These findings are further highlighted in lists of the Top 10 men, women, and Trans\* artists, and mixed gender bands and collaborations, by their spins (Table 4.2f) which shows that the first 7 women in the list rank in the top 10 most spun artists (overall), all of them within the top 20. While remarkable to see women rank so high within the most played artists, this Table confirms findings about the placement of CanCon songs by women. Just 4 of the top 10 women are Canadian,

but the gap between the top played artist (Taylor Swift) and the first Canadian (Tate McRae, who ranks 4th overall) is a drastic difference: McRae has less than half the spins accorded to Swift's songs. Interestingly, Swift has nearly more than double the spins of the most played man – Canadian artist The Weeknd. Setting aside the airplay accumulated for songs by Swift and Cyrus (ranked 1 and 2), improves the programmatic context for Canadian women, whose songs accumulated more airplay than those by CanCon men in 2023.

However, it's critical to note that not all of the songs played by these artists were designated CanCon songs. So while they certainly represent Canadian artistry on the airwaves, they don't necessarily all count toward the station's CanCon practices.

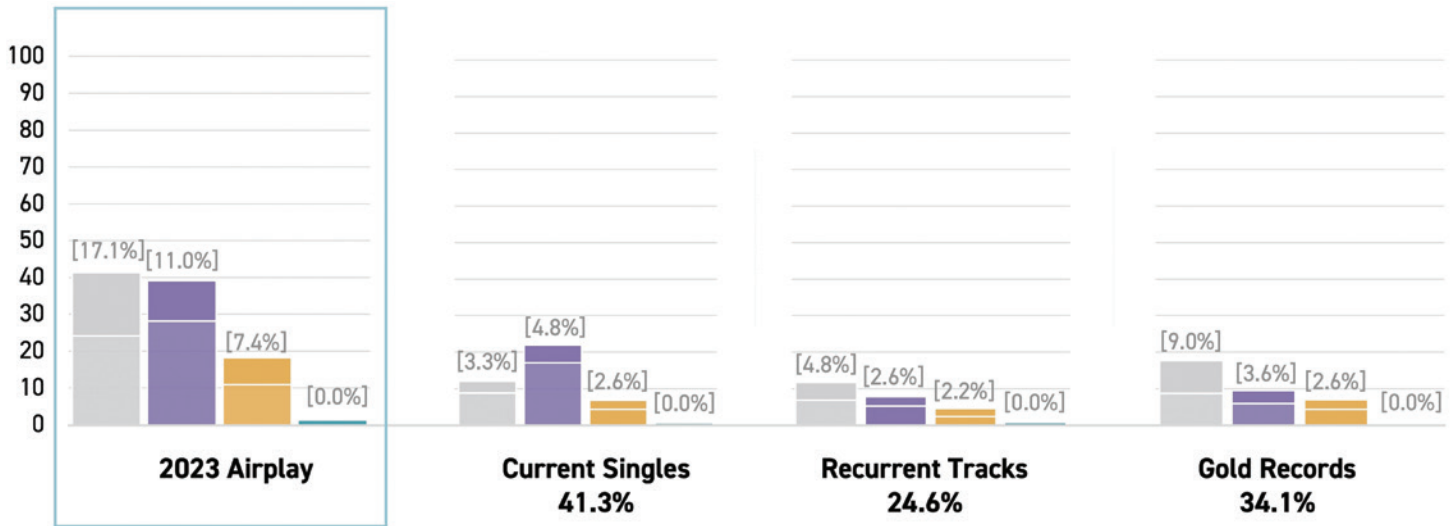


FIGURE 4.2D. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CURRENT, RECURRENT AND GOLD SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN TOP 40 FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

TOP 10 MEN	TOP 10 WOMEN	TOP 10 TRANS* ARTISTS	TOP 10 MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
3 The Weeknd, 68,403 [CA]	1 Taylor Swift, 134,480	24 Sam Smith w/Kim Petras, 30,137	10 Rema w/Selena Gomez, 53,388
6 Harry Styles, 55,202	2 Miley Cyrus, 96,301	91 Sam Smith, 7,589	15 David Guetta w/Bebe Rexha, 37,948
11 Ed Sheeran, 52,371	4 Tate McRae, 61,897 [CA]	477 Demi Lovato, 283	27 Frank Walker w/Ella Henderson, 26,749 CA
12 Post Malone, 49,796	5 Sza, 56,656	570 Lil Uzi Vert, 150	31 KX5 w/Kaskade, Deadmau5, and Hayla, 24,727 CA
14 Metro Boomin w/The Weeknd and 21 Savage, 38,210	7 Doja Cat, 54,946	709 Forever, 1	39 Loud Luxury w/Two Friends and Bebe Rexha, 17 723 CA
19 Drake, 34,616 [CA]	8 Dua Lipa, 54,481		46 Nicki Minaj w/Ice Spice and Aqua, 15,416
20 Shawn Mendes, 33,534 [CA]	9 Olivia Rodrigo, 54,083		49 Elton John w/Dua Lipa, 14,858
21 Virginia to Vegas, 32,558 CA	13 Reve, 49,406 CA		50 Valley, 13,940 CA
22 Lil Nas X, 32,422	16 Charlotte Cardin, 37,630 CA		51 Post Malone w/Doja Cat, 13,901
23 Loud Luxury w/Dvbbs and Kane Brown, 30,882 CA	17 Lu Kala, 34,915 [CA]		53 Loud Luxury w/Kiddo, 13,789 CA

TABLE 4.2F. TOP 10 MOST PLAYED ARTISTS ON CANADIAN TOP 40 FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: SQUARE BRACKETS FRAMING THE [CA] DENOTE CANADIAN ARTISTS WHOSE ACCUMULATED SPINS ARE FOR SONGS THAT ARE BOTH CANCON CERTIFIED AND NOT.

## 4.2.2. Representation on the Weekly Airplay Charts for Top 40 Radio in 2023

Airplay charts offer an important lens not just on representation in an industry, but also the inner workings of programming practices. They offer a view into the most repeated current singles in a format, but also how the distribution impacts Canadian artists within the industry ecosystem. Mediabase's Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played each week on radio. In 2023, 197 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs on the weekly Top 40 Airplay charts, 45.7% are men, 30.5% are women, 1.0% are Trans\* artists, and 2.0% are mixed gender bands and 20.8% collaborations. As Table 4.2g summarises, 48.2% of the artists are

white, while 19.8% are Black, 0.0% are Indigenous, 12.2% are artists of colour, and 19.8% are multiethnic bands.

Over the course of the year, 242 songs charted, with the same gender and racial representation as detailed throughout this section on Canadian Top 40 programming in 2023. As Table 4.2h summarises, 41.3% of those songs were by men, 39.3% by women, 0.8% by Trans\* artists, and 1.7% by mixed gender bands and 16.9% by collaborations. Most songs were by white artists (51.2%), with 20.7% by Black artists, 0.0% by Indigenous artists, 12.0% by artists of colour, and 16.1% by multiethnic bands. Combining the percentage of songs by bands led by men and women to the tallies for those by men and women, increases the percentage to 47.9% and 47.1%, respectively.

### 4.2.2.1. Evaluation of Songs on the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

Scaling up to the 2,600 records for the top 50 songs ranked each week in 2023, songs by men captured 38.0% of the chart, with songs by women at 44.5%, Trans\* artists at 0.7%, and those by mixed gender bands at 1.8% and collaborations at 15.0%. As with programming, most of the charting songs (52.0%) are by white artists, with 20.9% of the charting songs by Black artists, and 0.0% by Indigenous artists, 11.5% by artists of colour, and 15.6% by multiethnic bands (Table 4.2i).

Figure 4.2e tracks the distribution across the calendar year, revealing that songs by women averaged 44.5% throughout the

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	20.3%	11.7%	0.0%	5.1%	8.6%	<b>45.7%</b>
Women	15.8%	6.6%	0.0%	7.1%	1.0%	<b>30.5%</b>
Trans* artists	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>1.0%</b>
Mixed gender bands	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	<b>2.0%</b>
Collaborations	9.6%	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%	9.7%	<b>20.8%</b>
With shared vocals	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	2.0%
Led by men	2.5%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.6%	8.1%
Led by women	5.6%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	9.6%
Led by Trans* artists	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%
	<b>48.2%</b>	<b>19.8%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>19.8%</b>	

TABLE 4.2G. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN TOP 40 AIRPLAY CHARTS IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	19.0%	10.3%	0.0%	5.0%	7.0%	<b>41.3%</b>
Women	22.3%	9.1%	0.0%	7.0%	0.9%	<b>39.3%</b>
Trans* artists	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.8%</b>
Mixed gender bands	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	<b>1.7%</b>
Collaborations	7.9%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	7.8%	<b>16.9%</b>
With shared vocals	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	1.6%
Led by men	2.1%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%	6.6%
Led by women	4.6%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	2.9%	7.9%
Led by Trans* artists	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
	<b>51.2%</b>	<b>20.7%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>16.1%</b>	

TABLE 4.2H. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN TOP 40 AIRPLAY CHARTS IN 2023

year, increasing from 44.0% in January to a peak of 57.5% in November. Most of these charting songs (24.8%) were by white women, with an average of 10.7% overall for songs by Black women, 7.2% by women of colour, and 1.8% by multiethnic ensembles.

Songs by men averaged 38.0% of the charts, with 39.5% in January to a peak of 47.2% in July and ending the year with 28.4%. Songs by Trans\* artists captured the chart in January, by Sam Smith and Kim Petras' collaboration, which had peaked at #1 in the first 2 weeks of 2023 and then declined and exited the chart by March 2023. Sam Smith's solo song "I'm Not Here" also exited the chart by April. Mixed gender ensembles and collaborations averaged 16.7% remaining fairly consistent around that percentage with a peak of 20.8% in July.

Table 4.2j details chart data by CanCon designation, revealing that 30.1% of the songs that chart are amongst the most played on Canadian radio – with enough support to land these songs on the airplay chart. For all artists, non-CanCon songs are represented more in the charts than CanCon songs.

#### 4.2.2.2. Evaluation of Representation in the Top Positions of the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

The increase in airplay and chart activity for songs by women in 2023 resulted in high representation within the top positions of the chart. Just as Barbie dominated the box office and Taylor Swift and Beyoncé dominated concert sales in the summer of 2023 (and later box office through their concert films), songs by women had a strong year at the top of the Airplay chart.<sup>2</sup> Figures 4.2f-4.2h track the percentage of songs with enough airplay to boost them into the Top 20, Top 10 and #1 spot of the weekly charts in 2023, and show that their songs captured the very

top position for the 6 final months of the year (all non-CanCon songs). While most of the songs in the Top 20 are non-CanCon by women (40.8%), CanCon songs by women averaged 14.9% of the Top 20, with 21.3% of the Top 20 in January and declining to 13.0% by December.

Songs by men averaged 19.9% of the Top 20 songs, peaking at 35.0% in June and August. Over the course of the year, non-CanCon songs by men averaged 19.9% of the Top 20, with CanCon songs averaging 6.6%. Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations average the remaining 15.6%, divided 11.4% and 4.2% non-CanCon and CanCon songs, respectively. Like the larger programming picture, most of the Top 20 activity for songs by mixed gender bands was for collaborative recordings (14.6%, versus 1.8% for bands), wherein most of the songs are led by women (8.8%).

In 2023, 47 songs by 31 women reached the Top 20, 28 of them reaching the Top 10 and 8 the #1 spot. Figure 4.2h tracks representation in the #1 position of the Top 40 Airplay chart, revealing the high rate at which women's voices were heard in high-rotating playlist positions. The year began with 2 weeks by Trans\* artists Sam Smith and Kim Petras at the top of the chart, coming off their critical success with "Unholy." Unsurprisingly (given her status as the most played artist on Top 40 radio), Taylor Swift captured the top of the chart for 13 weeks in 2023 with 2 different songs ("Karma" and "Cruel Summer"), while Miley Cyrus ("Flowers") and Tate McRae (with non-CanCon song "Greedy") held the spot for 4 weeks each. Doechii, Doja Cat and Dua Lipa each held it for 3 weeks, and Olivia Rodrigo for 1. One song by an all-male collaboration held the top spot for 1 week, and the remaining weeks (18 of them) saw mixed gender collaborations at the top of the chart.

Songs by women were heard far more on Top 40 radio in 2023 than in previous years (as described in the first part of this chapter evaluating representation within the top 150 most played on the formats). These findings show that their songs were

played nearly equally to those by men, but that when drilling into airplay data for the year, that airplay was distributed in inequitable capacity for non-CanCon songs by women. Even though 10 Canadian women had enough airplay for their songs to appear within the top spun positions (as detailed in the weekly Airplay charts), just 4 of them appear amongst the top-spun women over the course of the year, and not all of their songs were certified CanCon. Critically, too, most of the airplay and chart activity – whether Canadian women or not – was for songs by white women. Indeed songs by white women had the highest representation according to airplay, with 19.5% of the spins for songs by women for those by Taylor Swift and Miley Cyrus – and 53.6% of it for the top 10 most spun women on the format.

The prominent programming for songs by Sam Smith and their collaboration with Kim Petras follows with the broader global success of this collaboration. Smith and Petras, as well as Lil Uzi Vert and Demi Lovato are all being played on this format and while a handful of songs in high rotation is certainly not a sign of equitable programming for Trans\* artists, visibility is incredibly important for young Trans\* artists hoping to build their career in the industry mainstream.

2 Sarah Krouse and Anne Steele, "Women Own This Summer. The Economy Proves It." The Wall Street Journal (10 August 2023).

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	18.1%	9.4%	0.0%	4.3%	6.2%	<b>38.0%</b>
Women	24.9%	10.6%	0.0%	7.2%	1.8%	<b>44.5%</b>
Trans* artists	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.7%</b>
Mixed gender bands	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	<b>1.8%</b>
Collaborations	6.7%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%	<b>15.0%</b>
With shared vocals	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.6%
Led by men	1.5%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	3.2%	5.4%
Led by women	4.7%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%	8.6%
Led by Trans* artists	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
	<b>52.0%</b>	<b>20.9%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	

TABLE 4.2I. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO IN 2023

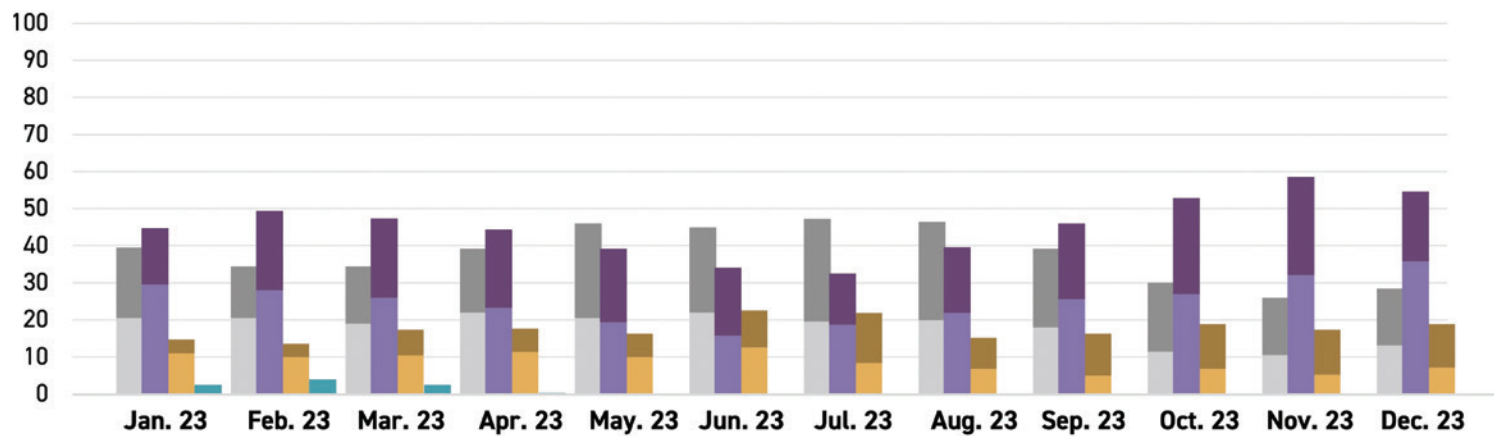


FIGURE 4.2E DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [69.9%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [30.1%]
Songs by Men	26.1%	11.9%
Songs by Women	33.1%	11.3%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.7%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	0.1%	1.7%
Songs by Collaborations	9.9%	5.2%
With shared vocals	0.7%	0.0%
Led by men	4.3%	1.0%
Led by women	4.6%	4.2%
Led by Trans* artists	0.3%	0.0%

TABLE 4.2J. PERCENTAGE OF CANCON SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO IN 2023



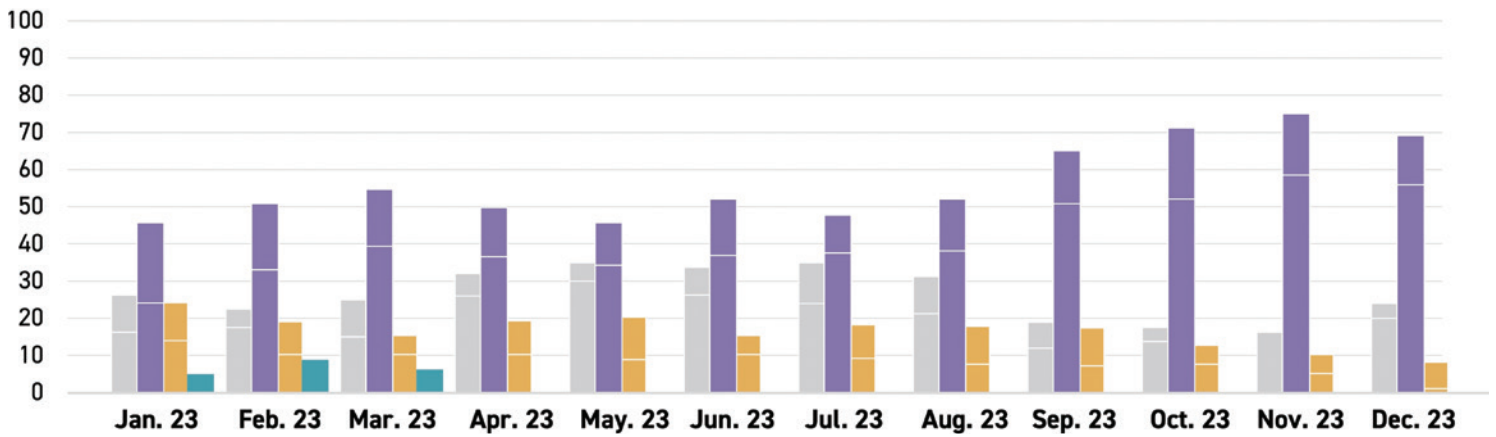


FIGURE 4.2F DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 20 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION.

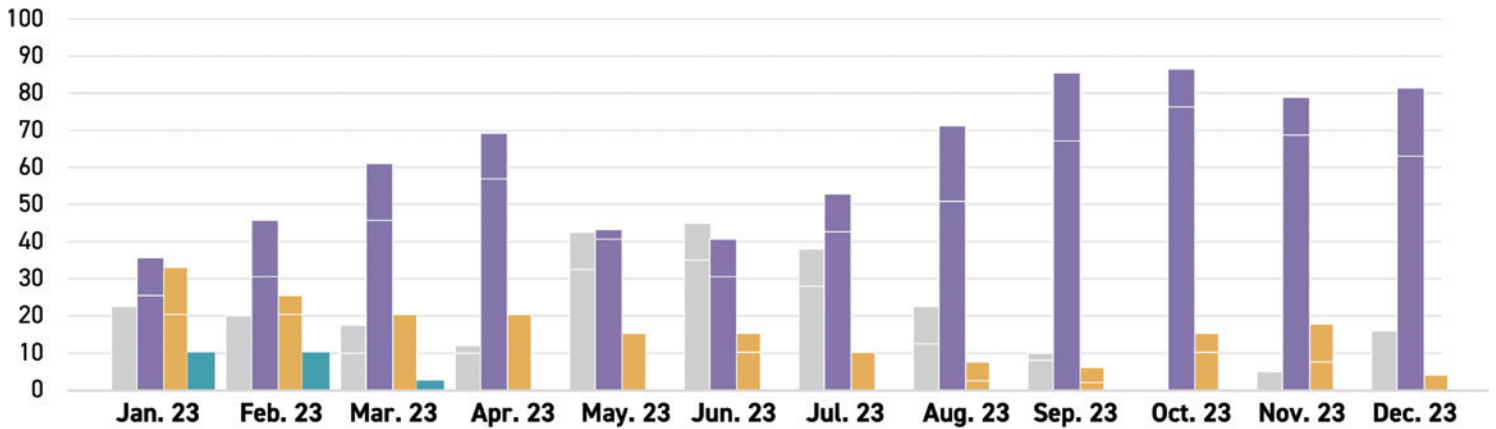


FIGURE 4.2G DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 10 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION.

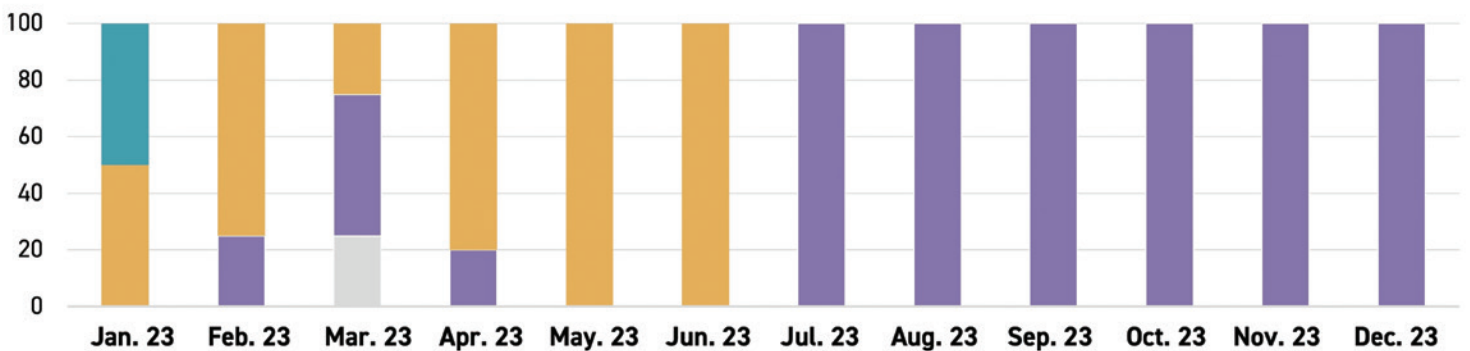


FIGURE 4.2H DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE #1 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN TOP 40 RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: NO CANCON CERTIFIED SONGS REACHED #1 IN 2023.

# KEY FINDINGS

## Representation on Canadian Top 40 Radio

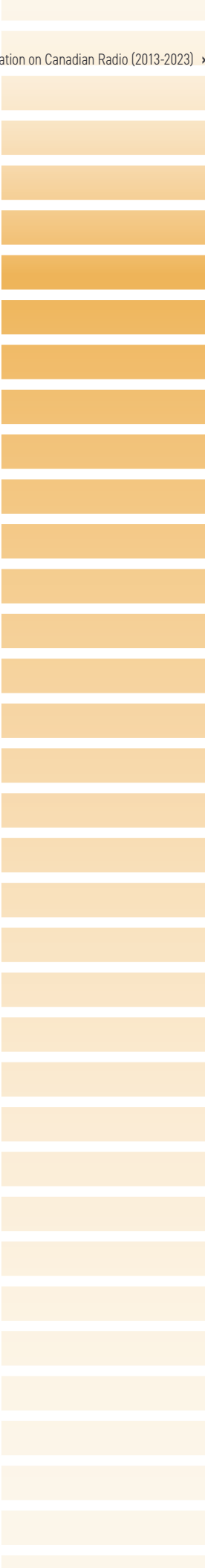
These findings show improvements for representation of women and Trans\* artists on Top 40 radio over the last 11 years. Not only has there been a steady increase in airplay (with a big boost in 2023), songs by women have increased in their inclusion in the top rotated positions over the course of this period, too. Despite these changes, however, there is room for continued improvements within Top 40 programming, notably with a focus on distribution amongst more women (especially Canadian women) rather than a consolidation of airplay for a small handful of artists.

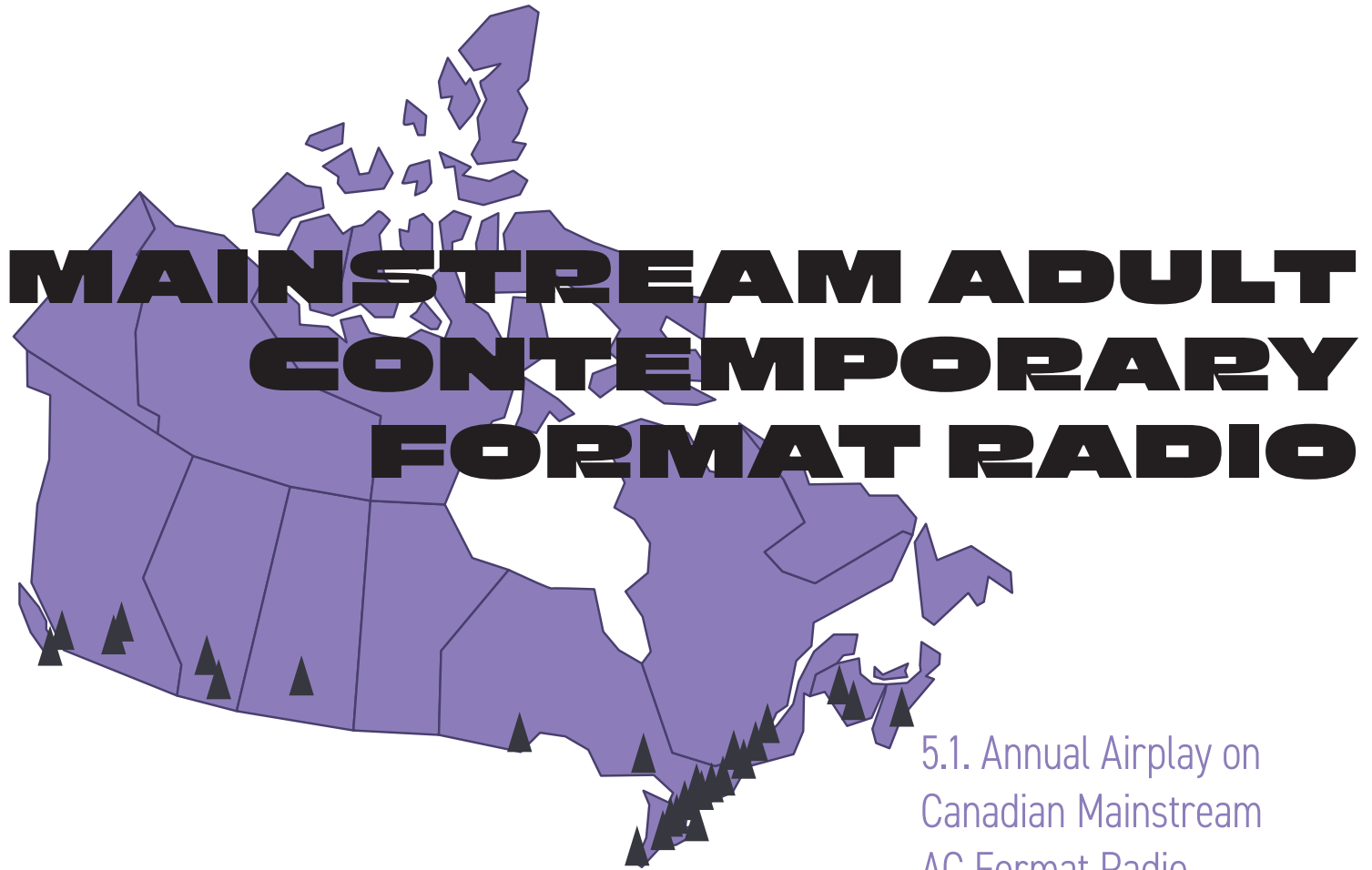
Analysis of Top 40 radio, then, suggests a trend toward increasing visibility for women in its programming over the last 5 years with a strong year in 2023 and some improvements for Trans\* artists. The findings of this study show that songs by women initially decline from 27.6% in 2013 amongst the top 150 songs played to 16.3% in 2017, but increase to 48.5% of the songs in 2023. With this increase in airplay, their songs are also represented within the top positions of the yearend reports.

- › Songs by women averaged 39.1% of the airplay in 2023, increasing from 33.2% to 47.4% over the course of the year.
- › In addition to more airplay for their solo efforts, their voices were also prominent in collaborations, which resulted in similar distribution in airplay as songs by/led by men.
- › Distribution of airplay for songs by women show that CanCon songs (11.0%) are played at less than half the rate of non-CanCon songs (28.1%) and that most of the airplay (55.9% of all spins for songs by women) was for Current singles.
- › The 2023 distribution shows a much lower rate of their songs being retained for recurrent airplay (7.8% versus 11.7% for songs by men), and more critically that most of those songs retained for recurrent and gold status are non-CanCon songs by women (5.2% and 5.9% versus 2.6% and 3.6%).
- › While it is too soon to know how the 2023 boost in airplay for songs by women will impact the recurrent to gold programming pipeline for women whose songs were played in high rotation, there is concern for the historic trend of their songs being filtered from long-term preservation and a need to ensure that this does not continue going forward.
- › Songs by women increased not just in airplay through the year, but also in chart representation; their songs were in high-rotation spots from July through to the end of the year, with 8 songs by women holding the #1 position through the year.
- › Perhaps most interestingly for Top 40 radio, songs by women were played throughout the 24-hour radio cycle nearly equally to those by men, and the findings show that at least 1 song by a Trans\* was played each daypart. Given this is an average across 22 stations, there is reason to believe that Trans\* artists are in higher daytime rotation on this format than others.
- › While the format does still play a majority of songs by white artists (52.4% of the spins), there is greater racial and ethnic diversity at each level of analysis – overall spins (47.6%), charting songs (48.0%) and Top 20 songs (46.0%) of the chart.

Celebrating the Canadian women and Trans\* artists whose songs spun onto the Top 40 Airplay charts in 2023

- Sofia Camara
- Charlotte Cardin
- Devon Cole
- Fefe Dobson
- Jamie Fine
- Jessia
- Lu Kala
- Yung Leo
- Tate McRae
- Niiva
- Olivia Lunny
- Alex Porat
- Reve
- Jessie Reyez
- Sophie Simmons





## 5.1. Annual Airplay on Canadian Mainstream AC Format Radio (2013-2023)

Mainstream Adult Contemporary (AC) radio is one of the three formats in this study to be defined by playing music from across all genres. As a concept within the music industry, AC originally referred to ballad-heavy popular music that might be categorised within a range of easy listening, pop, soul, R&B, and soft rock styles. Over the course of the second half of the twentieth century, AC formats evolved from Easy Listening to predominantly mainstream pop and R&B music of the 1990s. The format revolves not around a single genre (like Country and Rock), but now programs a blend of contemporary singles (like Top 40) with a broader rotation of classic hits from past decades.<sup>1</sup>

There are 32 Mainstream AC stations that report to Mediabase's charting system. Most of the stations (59.4%) are in Ontario, with 12.5% in British Columbia, 9.4% in Alberta, 6.3% in both New Brunswick and Quebec, and one station each (3.1%) in Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan. Thirty of these stations program in English, while the two stations in Quebec programming in French.

The dataset for analysing representation on Mainstream AC format radio between 2013 and 2023 includes the top 150 current singles played across this format each year, totalling 1,650 records. Within these records, 544 artists, bands, and collaborations had songs ranked within the top 150 songs played on Mainstream AC format radio. Table 5.1a summarises this data, revealing that 52.1% of the artists with songs played over this period are men, 24.0% are women, 0.4% are Trans\* artists, and 23.5% are bands or collaborations with men, women and Trans\* artists. Most (65.9%) artists are white, but there is more racial diversity than Country and Rock, with Black artists representing 5.3% of the artists with songs in the top 150 songs played on Mainstream AC radio, 6.2% artists of colour, and 22.6% multiethnic bands and collaborations. Indigenous artists are underrepresented within this format, with just two collaborations including an Indigenous artist (0.4% overall).

<sup>1</sup> Some of the language surrounding the historic definition of AC radio tends to be quite sexist – defining the format as one that caters to women (often “moms and daughters”). This language is inherently problematic for its reliance on defining its audience through a gender binary (for starters), and is derogatory in nature in the way that it judges or infantilizes its audiences. See “With CHR Polarizing, Are AC & Hot AC the New Top 40?” *InsideRadio* (29 May 2018). Rather than focusing on the demographic in demeaning terms, more recent discussion has centred on the power of AC subformats as one that offers pathways to breaking the careers of new artists (see Elias Leight, “Adult Radio Was Once the Butt of Jokes.” *Rolling Stone* (20 October 2018). For a discussion of popular music terminology see Larry Starr, Christopher Waterman, and Brad Osborn, “Chapter 11: Key Terms and Definitions,” in *American Popular Music: From Minstrelsy to MP3* (Oxford University Press, 2021). For more on changing conceptions of categorization within the popular music industry, see David Brackett, *Categorizing Sound: Genre and Twentieth-Century Popular Music* (UC Berkeley Press, 2015).

Collaborative recordings make up a significant component of Mainstream AC programming, representing 20.0% of the artists with songs in the top 150 songs played on the format. The Table details the composition of those collaborations, showing that collaborations led by men and women are closely represented as 7.1% and 10.1%, respectively. We also see collaborations led by Trans\* artists (0.6%). Though still vastly underrepresented in the format, the improvement on Mainstream AC (in comparison to Country and Rock) is important to note.

Recalculating representation to combine collaborations led by men, women and Trans\* artists reveals increases in the totals of men to 59.3%, women to 34.1%, Trans\* artists to 1.0%, and mixed gender bands to 5.7%.

Within these 1,650 records, 1,014 songs had enough annual airplay to appear within the top 150 songs played on Canadian Mainstream AC format radio. The reason for there being just 1,014 unique songs in this dataset (instead of 1,650) is that some songs receive enough annual airplay to rank within the top 150 for consecutive years: 1 song appeared for 5 years, while 5 songs appeared for 4 years, 102 songs for 3 years, 413 songs for 2 years, and the remaining 493 songs for just 1 year.

Just over half of the songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played over this period were by men (55.5%), with 29.7% by women, 0.4% by Trans\* artists, 3.5% by mixed gender bands, and 10.9% by collaborations (Table 5.1b). As above, representation of collaborations is divided

nearly equally with those led by men at 4.0% and by women at 5.4%, with 0.3% collaborations featuring Trans\* artists. Here, as before, the most of these songs (74.5%) are by white artists, with 5.4% by Black artists, 0.0% by Indigenous artists, 3.9% by artists of colour, and 16.2% by multiethnic ensembles.

Within this snapshot of the artists and songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played each year between 2013 and 2023, men emerge at a higher percentage of programming, with just over half of the songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played over the 11-year period. This increases to 58.9% when combined with collaborations led by men. White artists, too, are responsible for most of the songs, with more racial diversity than Country and Rock formats, but less than Top 40. Women (specifically Black, Indigenous and

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	34.6%	2.9%	0.0%	2.9%	11.7%	<b>52.1%</b>
Women	18.5%	2.2%	0.0%	3.1%	0.2%	<b>24.0%</b>
Trans* artists	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0	<b>0.4%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>3.5%</b>
Collaborations	9.5%	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%	10.1%	<b>20.0%</b>
With shared vocals	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	2.2%
Led by men	2.7%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	4.2%	7.1%
Led by women	6.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	3.7%	10.1%
Led by Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.6%
	<b>65.9%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>22.6%</b>	

TABLE 5.1A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	40.9%	3.6%	0.0%	3.7%	7.3%	<b>55.5%</b>
Women	24.7%	1.7%	0.0%	0.1%	3.2%	<b>29.7%</b>
Trans* artists	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	<b>0.4%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	<b>3.5%</b>
Collaborations	5.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	5.3%	<b>10.9%</b>
With shared vocals	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.2%
Led by men	1.6%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	2.3%	4.0%
Led by women	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	1.9%	5.4%
Led by Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%
	<b>74.5%</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>16.2%</b>	

TABLE 5.1B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

women of colour) are underrepresented here, with most of the songs by white women.

The following analysis investigates the rate at which these songs are played on Canadian Mainstream AC radio and how this programming influences contention for the Yearend Airplay Charts.

### 5.1.1. Airplay within the Top 150 Songs Played between 2013 to 2023

Within the top 150 songs played each year over the last decade on Mainstream AC format radio, songs by women have received an average of 28.2% of the airplay. Figure 5.1a maps the percentage of the distribution of airplay of songs by men, women, mixed gender bands and collaborations, and Trans\* artists. This Figure reveals the decline in airplay for songs by women within the top 150 songs played on Mainstream AC from 34.2% in 2013 to a low of 21.1% in 2018. As with Top 40, this low point of 2017-2018 was followed by a gradual increase in airplay to an 11-year high of 37.1% in 2023.

Most of this airplay – an average of 24.1% – was for songs by white women, and that picture remains relatively unchanged through this 11-year period. Figure 5.1a details representation by race and

ethnicity as well as gender identity, with lighter shades for white artists and darker shades for Black, Indigenous, Artists of colour, and Multiethnic bands and collaborations. Songs by women of colour average 4.1% of the airplay, dropping from 5.5% of the top 150 songs played in 2013 to a period low of 2.7% from 2019-2021 and increase to 4.8% by 2023.

Songs by men may average a higher percentage across the 11-year period (56.6%) and certainly make up the most played each year. Their songs increased from 51.7% in 2013 to a period high of 64.9% in 2017 (increasing in distributions against a decline in allotment of spins for songs by women). Their songs end the study period with 48.7% of the airplay amongst the top 150 songs played.

Songs by Trans\* artists averaged 0.6% from 2018 to 2023, the years in which songs by Trans\* artists were amongst the top 150 played on the format. The remaining 14.8% average of the airplay was accorded to songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations (8.3% for white ens./collabs and 6.5% for multiethnic ens./collabs). Drilling into the composition of these collaborations further (Table 5.1c), though, we see not just an increase in collaboration to a peak of 23.1% in 2019, but also steady representation of women-led collaborations. Collaborations led by men average 5.2% (with a peak of 8.6% in 2018 and ending the period at 5.3%), and collaborations led by women average 5.6%

with a peak of 11.4% in 2019 declining to 5.6% by 2023. Collaborations led by Trans\* artists average 0.6%, with a peak of 2.1% in 2019.

These collaborations do increase the presence of women's voices on terrestrial Mainstream AC radio, but the most significant year of representation was 2019. Songs by women and women-led collaborations declined in airplay distribution from 37.3% of the airplay in 2013 to a period low of 25.2% in 2017, but then averaged 35.4% from 2018 to 2022 and ended the period at 42.6% to the top 150 songs played in 2023. Songs by men and collaborations led by men were given more prominent positioning within station playlisting, resulting in an increase in the airplay of their songs against the decline of songs by women from 55.9% in 2013 to a peak of 69.2% in 2017 and hold a 60.1% average until 2023 where they represent 54.1%.

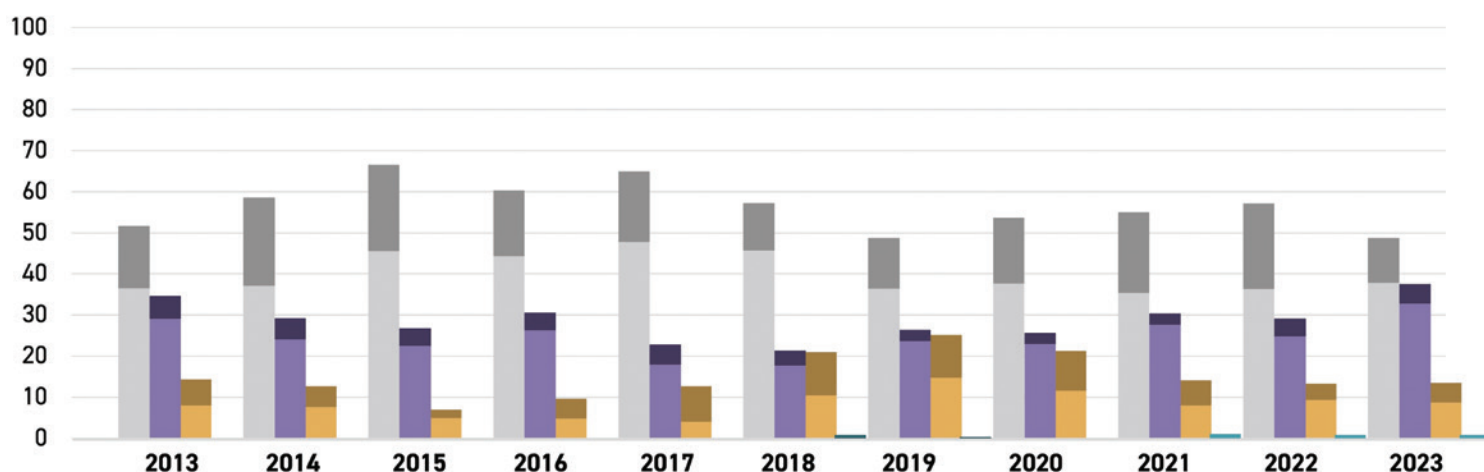


FIGURE 5.1A. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.



	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Songs by Collaborations	8.0%	8.1%	4.7%	3.9%	8.2%	18.7%	23.1%	17.0%	11.5%	12.0%	11.5%
With shared vocals	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	1.3%	1.1%	2.1%	0.9%	0.8%	0.6%
Led by men	4.2%	4.3%	1.2%	0.9%	4.2%	8.6%	8.5%	5.8%	5.6%	5.9%	5.3%
Led by women	3.1%	3.8%	3.5%	3.0%	2.7%	8.6%	11.4%	8.0%	5.0%	5.3%	5.6%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	2.1%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

TABLE 5.1C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS BY COLLABORATIONS ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

## 5.1.2. Representation on the Yearend Mainstream AC Airplay Charts between 2013 and 2023

Mediabase's Yearend Mainstream AC Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played in a calendar year. They are the songs with enough airplay to have peaked within the top positions of the weekly charts – many achieving a #1 peak position. Drilling into the yearend reports to these top 50-positions offers greater perspective on those most-played songs and whose voices are heard most on terrestrial radio.

Table 5.1d summarises representation of the 229 artists with songs ranked within the Yearend Mainstream AC Airplay Charts, 53.9% of them men, 24.8% women, 0.4% are Trans\* artists, 3.5% mixed gender bands and 17.4% collaborations. Most of the artists are white (66.1%), with 5.6% Black artists, 4.3% artists of colour, and 24.0% multiethnic ensembles. None of the songs in the yearend Mainstream AC charts are Indigenous, but one of the collaborations includes an Indigenous artist (0.4% overall).

Over the 11-year period studied, 398 songs appeared on the Yearend Charts. Seventeen of the songs charted for 3 consecutive years, 118 songs charted for 2 years, with the remaining 263 songs for just 1 year. As Table 5.1e details, 55.5% were by men, 30.7% were by women, 0.5% by Trans\* artists, 3.0% by mixed gender bands, 10.3% by collaborations (5.3% led by men, 4.2% by women, and 0.3% by Trans\* artists). As has been the trend so far, just over half the songs are by white artists (72.8%), with 5.1% by

Black artists, 6.8% by artists of colour, and 15.3% by multiethnic ensembles and collaborations. Here, as with the broader top 150 songs played on Mainstream AC radio, the yearend charts appear slightly more diverse than Country and Rock radio but songs by men are nearly double those by women – even when the percentage of collaborations led by men and women are included into the calculation.

Songs by women average 28.2% of the titles within the 50-position yearend reports. The charts reflect the same general trends as with discussion of airplay of the top 150 songs played annually, but Figure 5.1b reveals the same pattern as with the broader picture of the top 150 most played songs: a distribution of airplay that gradually eliminates songs by women from the most spun positions. Their songs dropped from 34.0% of the charts in 2013 down to 20.0% in 2017. Again, after a 2-year period (2017-2018) of male-focused programming, songs by women are included in gradually higher positioning within programming and capture 36.0% of the charts in 2023. As with overall airplay, songs by white women appear in the chart at a higher percentage than those by women of colour – averaging 24.6% for songs by white women and 3.6% by women of colour.

Songs by men average 57.1% of the yearend charts increasing from 50.0% in 2013 to a peak of 66.0% in 2017, after which their songs drop to 44.0% and then end the year at 52.0% of the charting songs. Most of these songs are by white men (averaging 39.3%), but the gap between white men and men of colour is within a 20.0% range in most years except for a smaller gap in 2014 (6.0%) no years with more songs by men of colour. There is only one year in which a song by a solo Trans\* artists charts (2021).

The remaining charting songs are those by

mixed gender bands and collaborations, whose songs average a combined 14.5% of the charts (7.8% for white bands and 6.7% for multiethnic bands). As with the discussion surrounding collaborations above, songs by mixed gender collaborations dropped to a period low of 2.0% in 2015 in the top programmed songs, and then climbed to a peak at 26.0% of the charts in 2019 before declining to 12.0% by 2023. This is detailed in Table 5.1f, which shows representation amongst the collaboration types that charted between 2013 and 2023. Collaborations led by men averaged 5.5% of the charts, while those led by women averaged a slightly smaller 5.3%. There are no years with significant differences in their percentage of representation, maintaining a 2.0-4.0% range in most years. Collaborations with Trans\* artists in the lead occur in just 2019 and 2020.

Drilling deeper into the chart, songs by women are underrepresented from the top positions most years between 2013 and 2019, after which point songs by women begin to appear in higher numbers in the Top 20 and Top 10 and dominate all top positions in 2023. Figures 5.1c-5.1e track representation in the chart's top positions across this 11-year period showing that songs by women fluctuate within the Top 20, with peak years of 40.0% in 2016 and 55.0% in 2023. And while the first peak is followed by a period of decline in songs by women factoring into top-programmed playlisting spots (to a period low of 10.0% in 2018), their songs hold an average of 27.3% of this ranking.

In years of declining airplay for songs by women within the top 150 songs played (2013-2017), the charts offer perspective on how this influences their pathways to top playlisting positions. Songs by women received insufficient airplay to appear in the top positions in several years across



	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	35.7%	3.0%	0.0%	1.7%	13.5%	<b>53.9%</b>
Women	20.0%	2.2%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%	<b>24.8%</b>
Trans* artists	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.4%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	<b>3.5%</b>
Collaborations	7.4%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	9.6%	<b>17.4%</b>
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.9%
Led by men	2.6%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	5.2%	8.3%
Led by women	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	7.8%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%
	<b>66.1%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>4.3%</b>	<b>24.0%</b>	

TABLE 5.1D. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE YEAREND MAINSTREAM AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	38.9%	3.3%	0.0%	4.0%	9.3%	<b>55.5%</b>
Women	26.4%	1.5%	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	<b>30.7%</b>
Trans* artists	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.5%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	<b>3.0%</b>
Collaborations	4.5%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	5.5%	<b>10.3%</b>
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
Led by men	1.8%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	5.3%
Led by women	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	4.3%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%
	<b>72.8%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>15.3%</b>	

TABLE 5.1E. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE YEAREND MAINSTREAM AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

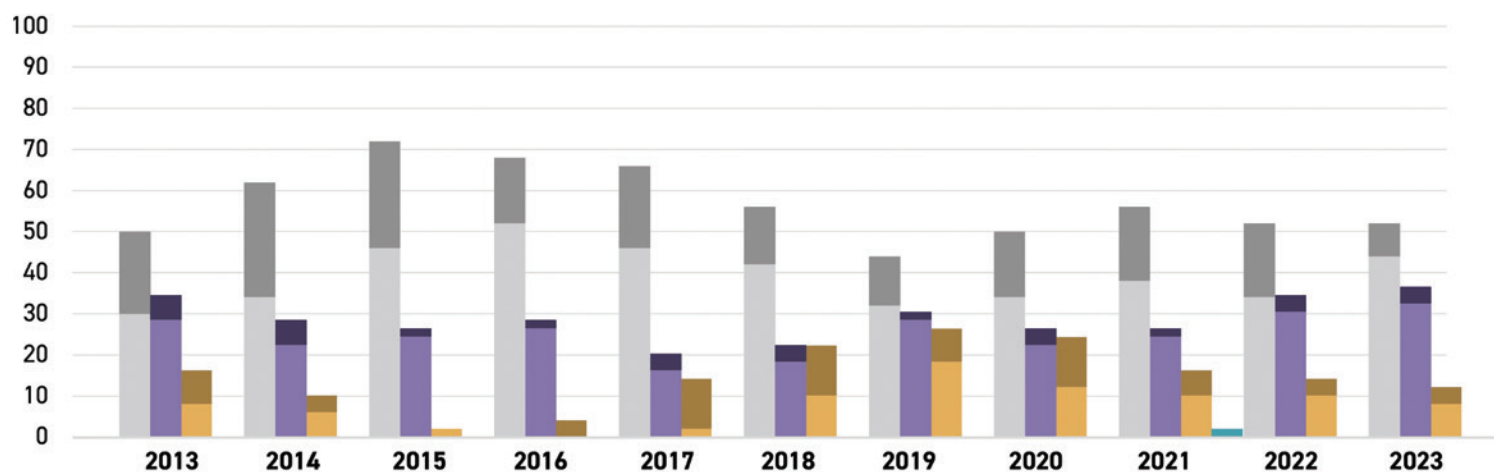


FIGURE 5.1B. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE YEAREND MAINSTREAM AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Collaborations	10.0%	8.0%	0.0%	2.0%	10.0%	20.0%	22.0%	18.0%	14.0%	12.0%	10.0%
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Led by men	4.0%	6.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.0%	10.0%	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%	6.0%	6.0%
Led by women	4.0%	2.0%	0.0%	2.0%	4.0%	10.0%	12.0%	6.0%	6.0%	6.0%	4.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

TABLE 5.1F. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS BY COLLABORATIONS ON THE YEAREND MAINSTREAM AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

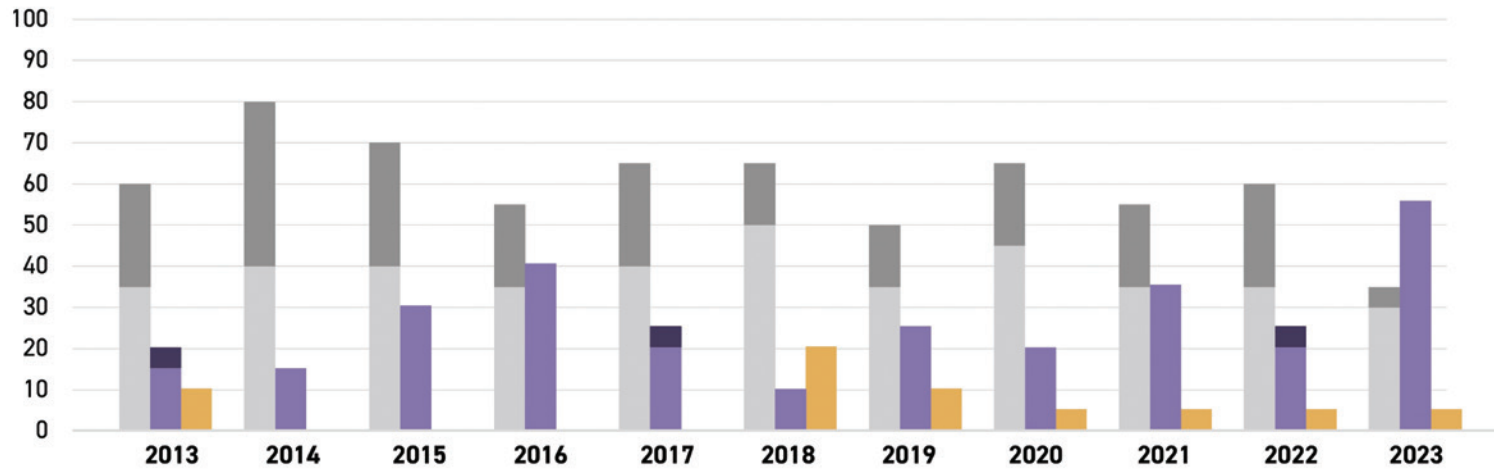


FIGURE 5.1C. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 20 OF THE YEAREND MAINSTREAM AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

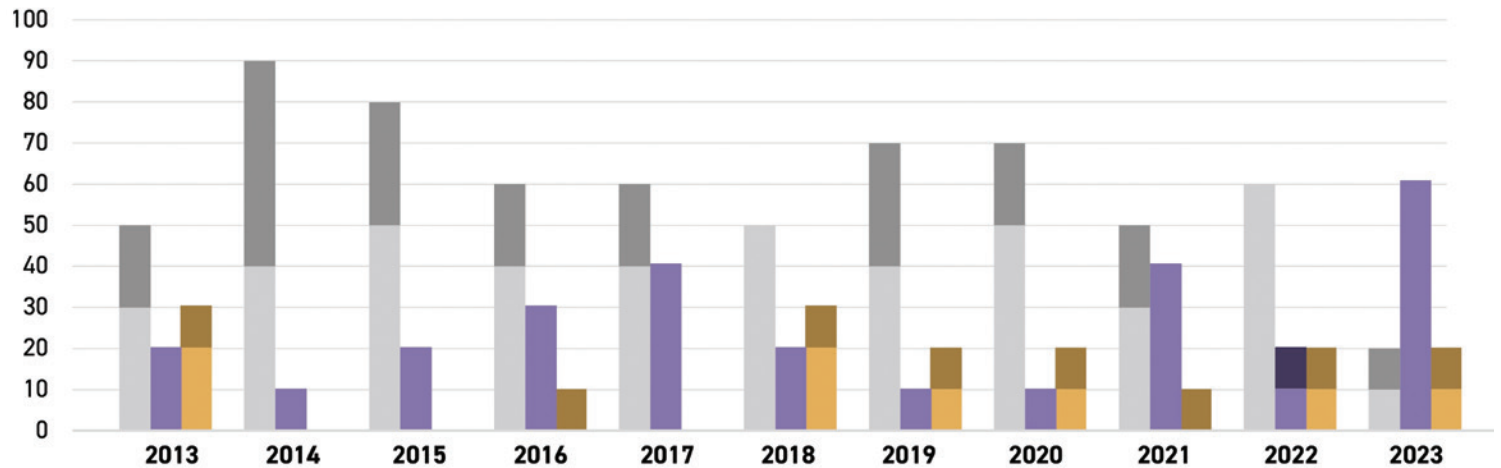


FIGURE 5.1D. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 10 OF THE YEAREND MAINSTREAM AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

this period, with low rates of inclusion within the Top 20 most spun songs in 2014 and 2018, and the Top 10 in 2013-2015 and 2018-2020). As with the Top 40 format, programming of the last 3 years on Mainstream AC suggests improvement in the inclusion of songs by women within the top-spun songs, to a period high of 60.0% of the Top 10 by 2023. Women are absent from the top position of the chart until P!nk landed at #1 with “Walk Me Home” in 2019 and are the most played songs in 2021 (“Levitating” by Dua Lipa) and 2023 (“Flowers” by Miley Cyrus).

With an average of 60.0% of the Top 20 and the Top 10, songs by men are amongst the most spun songs every year in this 11-year period. Even in the years that songs by women top the yearend charts, songs by men capture more of the charts, the Top 20, and the Top 10 – except for 2023. Just 3 songs by or featuring a nonbinary artist chart over this 11-year period, with none of them peaking in the Top 10.

As with the Top 40 yearend reports and charts, the trend across this period is one of initial decline then increase for songs by women across the most played songs. Within the chart’s top positions, songs by women fluctuate more from year to year – with high peaks and low drops – and dominate in the final year of the period. Songs by men dominate airplay and the charts in the first half of this study period and have overall higher representation. The histogram in Figure 5.1f offers

another perspective to programming on Mainstream AC radio for the top 150 most played songs over this 11-year period. This Figure graphs the 1,014 songs by their peak position achieved and by the number of titles within each 10-position range of the top 150 songs played ranked in the dataset. While songs by women appear at a might higher rate than viewed with Country and Rock formats, this histogram suggests a still inequitable programming ecosystem. And indeed, the previous results of the Mainstream AC format revealed that their songs capture about 28.2% of programming and it’s only in 2023 when their songs appear at a higher rate of the top 150 most played (37.1%), the chart (36.0%) and its top positions (60.0% of the Top 20 and Top 10). The histogram reinforces this, because not only do songs by men capture most of the Top 10 positions, but they are still capturing more songs in each 10-position range of the reports studied here. There are at least 2 times more songs by men in each grouping – 2.2 within the top 10.

These findings hold true with consideration of the collaborative recordings programmed with the capacity to peak within the Top 20. Collaborations make-up 11.1% of the Top 20 unique songs over this 11-year period, 5.8% led by men, 4.8% led by women, and 0.5% led by Trans\* artists. Combining the totals by collaborations by their lead artists increases all groups of artists, bringing the percentage of songs led by men to 62.8%, and by women to

2013	<b>HOME</b> Phillip Phillips
2014	<b>HAPPY</b> Pharrell Williams
2015	<b>UPTOWN FUNK</b> Mark Ronson w/Bruno Mars
2016	<b>CAKE BY THE OCEAN</b> DNCE
2017	<b>SHAPE OF YOU</b> Ed Sheeran
2018	<b>PERFECT</b> Ed Sheeran
2019	<b>WALK ME HOME</b> P!nk
2020	<b>BLINDING LIGHTS</b> The Weeknd
2021	<b>LEVITATING</b> Dua Lipa
2022	<b>COLD HEART</b> Elton John w/Dua Lipa
2023	<b>FLOWERS</b> Miley Cyrus

FIGURE 5.1E. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) AT THE #1 POSITION OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO’S YEAREND CHARTS (2013-2023)

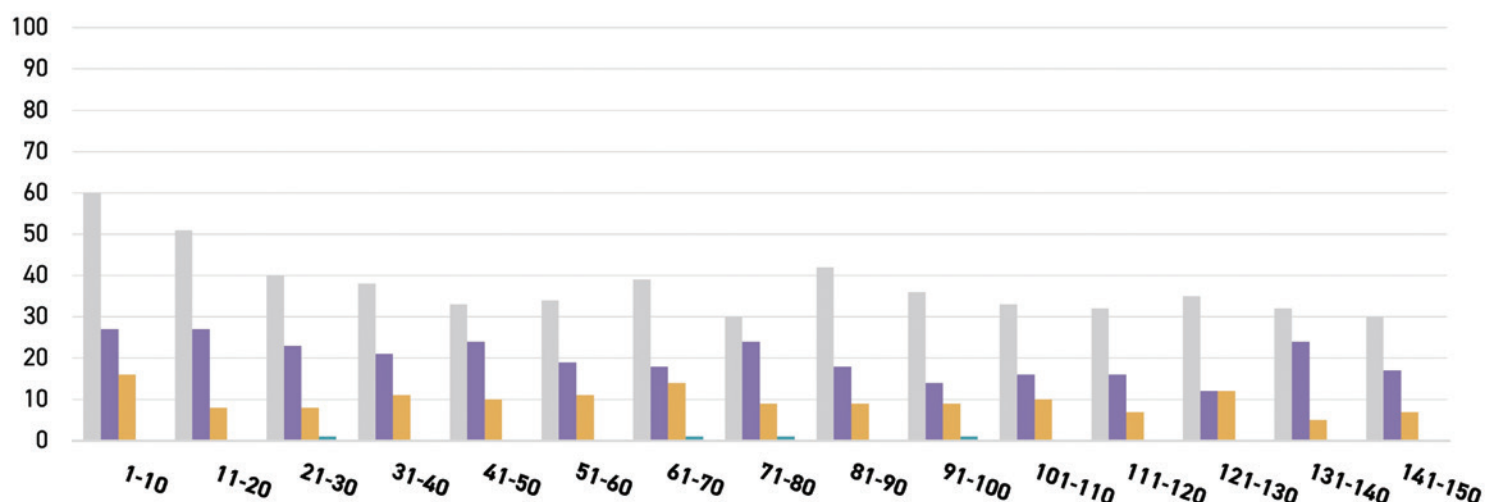


FIGURE 5.1F. HISTOGRAM BY PEAK POSITION (BY NUMBER OF TITLES) OF SONGS WITHIN TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC FORMAT RADIO (2013-2023)

33.8%, while Trans\* artists remain at 0.5%, and mixed gender ensembles at 2.9%.

## 5.2. Weekly Airplay on Canadian Mainstream AC Format Radio in 2023

Weekly airplay reports for the 32-reporting Mainstream AC stations offer the opportunity to explore more deeply the programming practices of the format, including the rate of airplay for all songs, the distribution of spins by song type (for current singles, recurrent tracks, and gold catalogue records) and by time of day – all within the context of Canadian Content regulations. How much are CanCon songs played? What type of song? And at what time of day? This section explores these questions more deeply, then investigates

how programming influences contention for the weekly Airplay Charts.

This dataset includes the 163,916 records capturing every song played on the format, 17,767 for current singles, 6,341 for recurrent tracks, and 139,808 for gold records. Within this dataset capturing 2023 airplay, 4,002 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs played across the 32 stations that Mediabase monitors.

As Table 5.2a summarises, 60.8% of those artists are men, 19.4% are women, 0.1% are Trans\* artists, 7.0% are mixed gender bands and 12.7% are collaborations. Most of the artists are white (64.5%), while 15.6% are Black, 0.5% are Indigenous, 4.0% are artists of colour, and 15.4% are multiethnic bands. Although there appears to be greater racial and ethnic diversity than Country and Rock, the notable low percentage for Indigenous artists is

concerning for the hit-driven format.

These artists were responsible for the 9,711 songs that were played across the 32 reporting stations in 2023. As Table 5.2b summarises, 61.5% of those songs were by men, 25.6% by women, 0.2% by Trans\* artists, and 7.1% by mixed gender bands and 5.7% by collaborations. Combining the percentage of songs by male-led and female-led bands to those by men and women, there is an increase to 64.5% and 28.1%, respectively. Most of the songs (72.6%) were by white artists, with 13.9% by Black artists, 0.3% by Indigenous artists, 4.4% by artists of colour, and 8.8% by multiethnic ensembles

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	41.5%	9.2%	0.3%	2.1%	7.7%	<b>60.8%</b>
Women	12.6%	3.9%	0.2%	1.7%	1.0%	<b>19.4%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.2%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	<b>7.0%</b>
Collaborations	6.1%	1.4%	0.0%	0.2%	5.0%	<b>12.7%</b>
With shared vocals	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.9%
Led by men	2.7%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	6.0%
Led by women	3.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.1%	1.8%	5.5%
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%
	<b>64.5%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	

TABLE 5.2A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	47.4%	7.9%	0.2%	1.9%	4.1%	<b>61.5%</b>
Women	18.0%	4.5%	0.1%	2.4%	0.6%	<b>25.6%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	<b>0.2%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.4%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	<b>7.1%</b>
Collaborations	2.7%	0.6%	0.0%	0.1%	2.2%	<b>5.7%</b>
With shared vocals	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%
Led by men	1.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	2.5%
Led by women	1.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.8%	2.5%
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%
	<b>72.6%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	

TABLE 5.2B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023

## 5.2.1. Airplay of All Songs Played on Mainstream AC Format Radio in 2023

The following analysis investigates the rate at which songs by women are played on Canadian Mainstream AC radio. This section looks more deeply at the amount of airplay overall, as well as discusses the distribution of spins for songs by Canadian Content status, by song type (current, recurrent, and gold), the time of day at which they are played, and by chart activity.

Songs by women received 35.5% of the overall airplay on Mainstream AC format radio in 2023. Table 5.2c summarises airplay data for the year, providing

granular detail by race and ethnicity of the artists whose songs were played. Songs by men received 50.4% of the airplay, songs by Trans\* artists received 0.3% of the airplay, while songs by mixed gender bands received 5.0% and collaborations received 8.8%.

This same information on airplay is graphed in Figure 5.2a for a view of the monthly distribution of spins, revealing that the distribution of spins was consistent with the statistics in the table above. There was no significant fluctuation in programming from month to month with songs by men averaging 50.3% (increasing to 54.3% in December), with 35.5% by women, and 14.0% for mixed gender bands and collaborations 0.3%.

Songs by white artists consistently average 70.4% of the airplay across this

12-month period, with 12.2% for songs by Black artists, 0.0% for songs by Indigenous artists (0.04% overall), 5.8% by artists of colour, and 11.6% by multiethnic ensembles. Songs by men of colour and women of colour receive about the same amount of airplay in 2023.

### 5.2.1.1. Evaluation of Airplay by CanCon Status

What this distribution means for Canadian artists is particularly important in the context of the federal regulations guiding programming and how it shapes exposure for Canadian audiences, and impacts women in the industry. Most of the airplay – 63.8% – went to non-CanCon songs. An average of 36.2% of the airplay in 2023 was for songs certified as CanCon. The

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	35.4%	5.8%	0.0%	2.9%	6.2%	<b>50.4%</b>
Women	26.7%	5.4%	0.0%	2.9%	0.5%	<b>35.5%</b>
Trans* artists	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.3%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	<b>5.0%</b>
Collaborations	4.5%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	<b>8.8%</b>
With shared vocals	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%
Led by men	1.5%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	3.8%
Led by women	2.8%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	4.2%
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%
	<b>70.4%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5.8%</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	

TABLE 5.2C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023

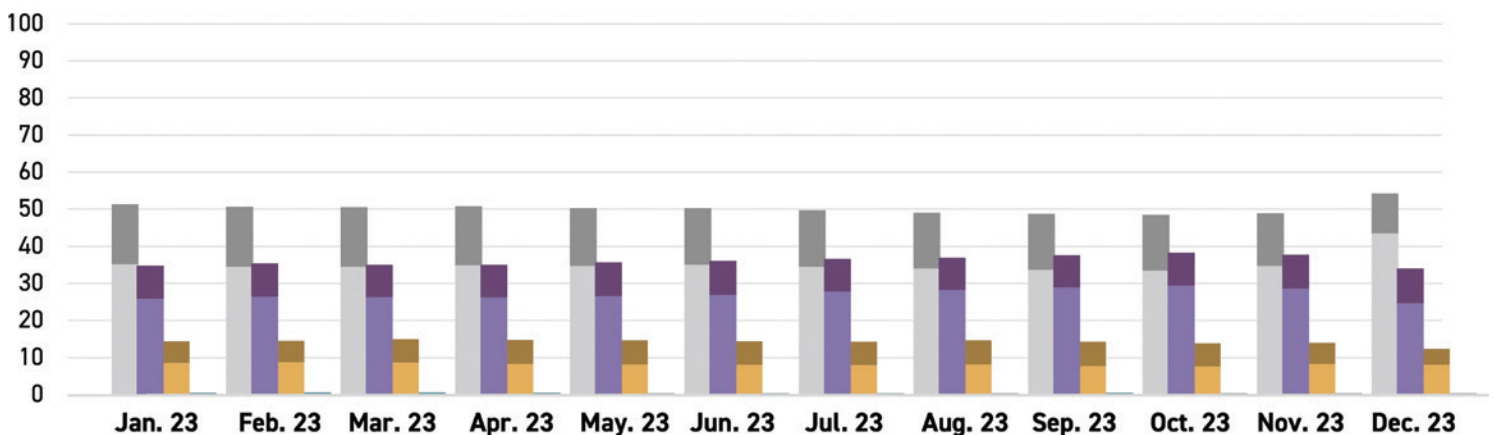


FIGURE 5.2A DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

format appears on one level to be meeting its station requirements, which will be further explored below in discussion of the distribution by daypart (which is a critical element to the requirement).

Distribution of airplay by CanCon certification is detailed in Figure 5.2b, further defining the distribution of airplay in 2023. Given what is already known about representation on Hot AC radio, it is unsurprising that songs by women make up such smaller percentages than those by men within both non-CanCon and CanCon songs, with 24.1% and 11.4%, respectively. These percentages increase when adding to them the airplay for songs by women-led collaborations – to 27.7% for nonCanCon songs and 13.5% for CanCon songs. With these tabulations combined,

songs led by women received 41.2% of the airplay on Mainstream AC radio in 2023. As with Top 40, there are no CanCon songs by Trans\* artists played on Mainstream AC radio in 2023.

Table 5.2d calculates the distribution of airplay by certification status, showing that non-CanCon songs by women make up a larger percentage of the airplay for songs that are not CanCon (37.8%), while CanCon songs register 31.4% of the airplay within the programming accorded to Canadian songs. As above, combining these percentages with the airplay for songs by women-led bands raises the percentage for both – to 41.6% and 36.4% (respectively).

### 5.2.1.2. Evaluation of Airplay for Songs by Time of Day

The time of day at which these songs are heard is of critical importance to the development of a musician's career. As described earlier, the 24-hour cycle is divided into five dayparts, with the three day-time periods – the Morning Drive (AMD from 6:00-10:00), the Midday period (MID from 10:00-15:00) and the Afternoon Drive (PMD from 15:00 to 19:00) – are the most important for exposure as they are the periods with the highest rate of listenership. The Overnight (OVN from 0:00 to 6:00) and Evening (EVE from

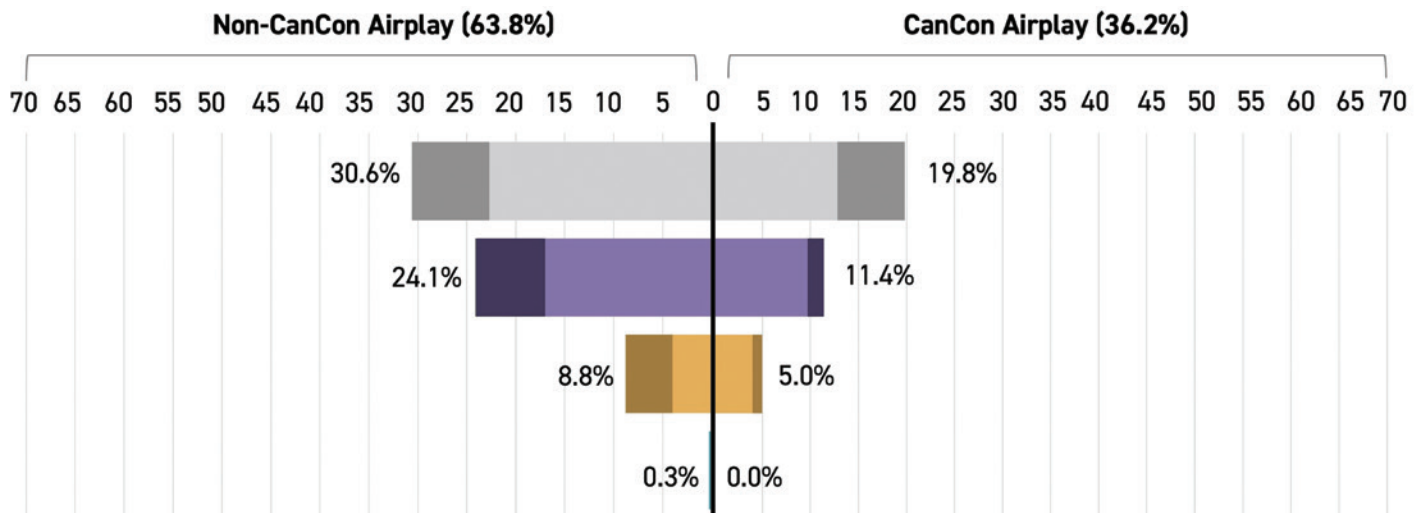


FIGURE 5.2B. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [63.8%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [36.2%]
Songs by Men	47.9%	54.7%
Songs by Women	37.8%	31.4%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.4%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	5.2%	4.9%
Songs by Collaborations	8.7%	9.0%
With shared vocals	0.5%	0.2%
Led by men	3.8%	3.8%
Led by women	3.8%	5.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%

TABLE 5.2D. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023



19:00 to 24:00) periods frame the day and are periods with a higher percentage of songs played due not just in part to their slightly longer duration, but also the reduced amount of news and specialty programming (features, interviews, etc.).

Figure 5.2c tracks the distribution of airplay by daypart, graphing the data in accordance with the 24-hour cycle beginning with the Overnights on the left, through the Morning Drive, Midday and Afternoon Drive, to the Evening on the right for each group of artists. The columns are separated by a white line to distinguish between non-CanCon airplay (at the bottom of the column) and CanCon airplay (at the top of the column).

The highest percentage of airplay for all artists occurs in the Overnight and Evening periods, as expected. For all groups, about 28.0% of their overall airplay

occurs in the Overnight, with 13.0% in the Morning, 20.0% in the Midday, 16.0% in the Afternoon, and 23.0% in the Evening. Despite this even distribution for songs by men, women, and mixed gender bands and collaborations, though, the distribution overall shows considerable inequity for women and mixed gender bands, whose songs are under-programmed in each daypart.

Half of radio programming occurs during the three daypart hours (Morning, Midday, and Afternoon) at 50.5% of the spins. Federal broadcasting regulations require that Canadian radio play 35% Canadian Content between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to ensure listeners are exposed to music of Canadian artists. While the periods to not align perfectly (the Afternoon daypart ends at 7:00 p.m.), Between 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Mainstream AC radio played 36.6% CanCon songs in 2023, with 20.0% for

songs by men, 11.4% for songs by women, none by Trans\* artists, and 5.1% for mixed gender bands and collaborations.

To provide greater perspective on what this might sound like for radio listeners, Table 5.2e presents a breakdown of how this translates at the level of daytime programming to provide an example of what a typical 24-hour cycle would look like for the average station and listener. Across the 32 reporting stations, a high average of 342 songs are distributed within this dataset per day, with 173 songs by men, 120 by women, 1 by a Trans\* artist, and 48 by mixed gender bands and collaborations.

For women, the distribution across all five dayparts shows that songs by men are programmed 1.4 times more than those by women. While this does mean that songs by men are played (and thus, heard) more

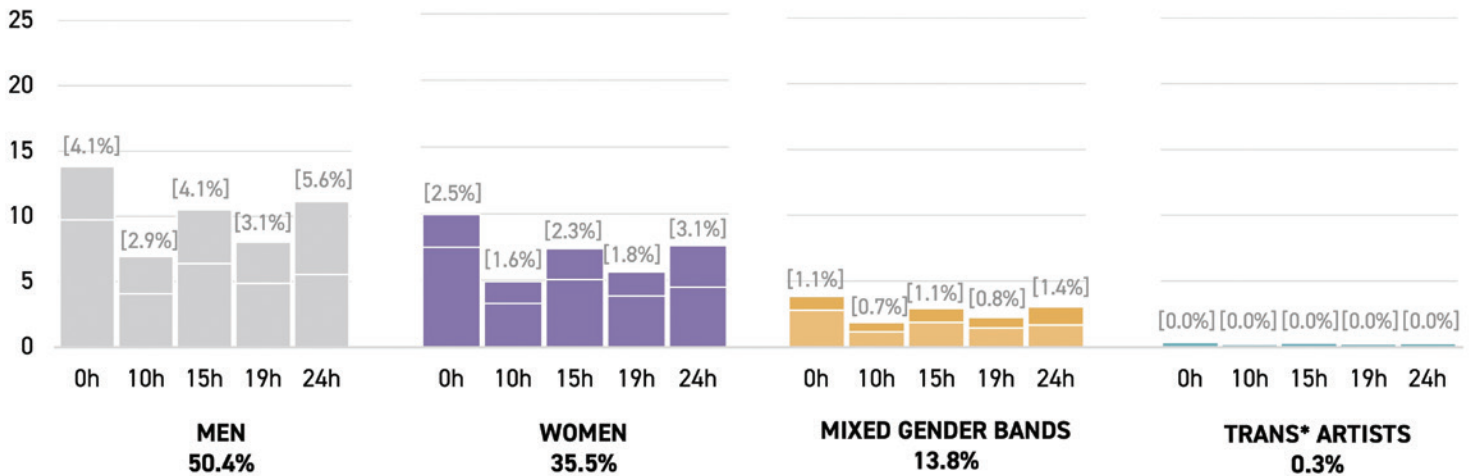


FIGURE 5.2C. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY BY TIME OF DAY FOR ALL SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

	SONGS BY MEN	SONGS BY WOMEN	SONGS BY TRANS* ARTISTS	SONGS BY MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
OVERNIGHT (0:00-6:00)	47 [33/14]	33 [25/8]	1 [1/0]	13 [9/4]
AM DRIVE (6:00-10:00)	24 [14/10]	17 [11/6]	0 [0/0]	6 [4/2]
MIDDAY (10:00-15:00)	36 [22/14]	25 [17/8]	0 [0/0]	10 [6/4]
PM DRIVE (15:00-19:00)	28 [17/11]	19 [13/6]	0 [0/0]	8 [5/3]
EVENING (19:00-24:00)	38 [19/19]	26 [15/11]	0 [0/0]	11 [6/5]
	172	120	1	48

TABLE 5.2E. DISTRIBUTION OF SPINS FOR SONGS BY TIME OF DAY ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE THE DISTRIBUTION FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS (RESPECTIVELY)

throughout each daypart, songs by women average about 4 an hour between 6am and 7pm.

Within this programming, non-CanCon songs by women are played 2 times more than CanCon songs – except for in the overnights when the gap increases to 3 times more. The trends thus far show that songs by men and male-led bands are prioritised within programming and that non-CanCon songs are played at a higher rate than CanCon songs, but the gap between songs by men and women is not as wide as Country and Rock, but wider than Top 40. CanCon songs by both men and women are underplayed on the format, those by women are in a more critical place concerning their exposure to Canadian audiences and the opportunities that then emerge from high-spun playlist positions.

### 5.2.1.3. Evaluation of Airplay for Current, Recurrent and Gold Status Songs

Radio airplay is divided into three different song “types” – current singles that are vying for top-programming (and, by extension, chart) contention, recurrent tracks that have reached their peak programming position but are still in regular rotation, and gold catalogue records of older but “canonical” songs that have been retained by a station for long-term programming.

Figure 5.2d tracks the breakdown of airplay by these three programming types, showing on the left the overall airplay on Mainstream AC format radio, parsed by airplay for current singles (16.2%), recurrent tracks (11.3%), and gold records (72.6%) – the latter (more canonical “gold” records) making up a significant component of the overall programming. Current singles by women (7.2%) receive nearly 1.0% more airplay to those by men (6.3%), but this representation flips and the gap between songs by men and women grows through recurrent tracks (5.3% for men and 3.4% for women) and

gold songs (37.7% for men and 24.9% for women). Most airplay for all artists occurs through gold records, with significantly smaller percentages in current/recurrent programming. As a result, there is an even narrower pathway to golds on this format, one that could be even more limiting for women who are already underprogrammed in golds.

This Figure also displays information for CanCon songs, with the top half of each bar representing airplay for these songs within each category of airplay. What emerges through this Figure is a deeper understanding of airplay for CanCon songs by women, whose current singles receive half the spins for non-CanCon songs by women in a year that showed gains in airplay for songs by women. While most of the airplay for CanCon songs by women lies in this gold category of airplay (at 7.8%), these songs are still less than half the percentage of gold non-CanCon songs by women (17.1%) and just nearly half of the CanCon songs by men (13.9%). CanCon songs by women, then, are not programmed with a view to creating significant exposure through the top positions in station playlists and are thus retained through recurrences to gold songs at a much lower rate than songs by non-Canadian women and Canadian men.

These findings are further highlighted in lists of the Top 10 men, women, mixed gender bands and collaborations, and Trans\* artists by their spins (Table 5.2f), which shows that 5 of the women rank in the top 10 overall, all of them within the top 20. While remarkable to see women rank so high within the most played artists, this Table confirms findings about the placement of CanCon songs by women, as just 1 of the top 10 women is Canadian. The gap in airplay between the top played artist (P!nk) and the only Canadian (Alessia Cara) is more than 50.0%. It's also critical to note that the spins for songs by top Canadian men are not all designated as CanCon: while most of the accumulated airplay for each of the Canadian men in the top 10 list is CanCon designated, a significant component of Michael Bublé's (26.5%) and Shawn Mendes's (41.6%) recordings are not. Notably, all of Virginia to Vegas's are CanCon, and 99.8% of The Weeknd's are as well.

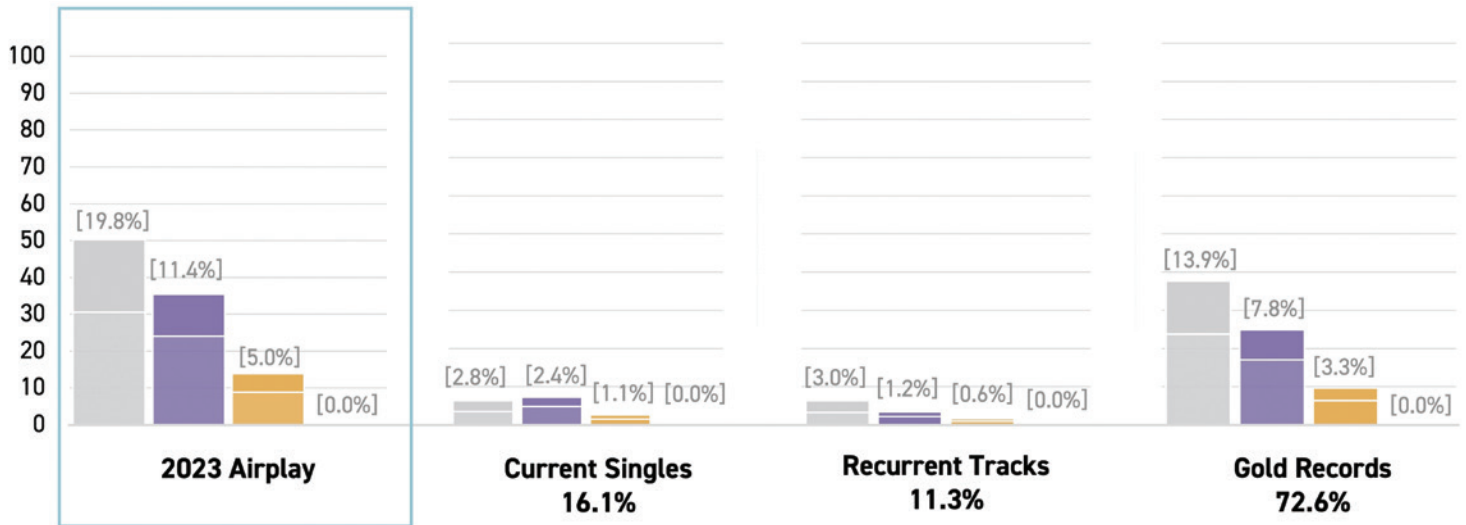


FIGURE 5.2D. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CURRENT, RECURRENT AND GOLD SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

TOP 10 MEN	TOP 10 WOMEN	TOP 10 TRANS* ARTISTS	TOP 10 MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
3 Ed Sheeran, 62,693	1 P!nk, 77,716	87 Sam Smith, 9,899	27 Walk off the Earth 24,620 CA
4 The Weeknd, 52,521 [CA]	2 Taylor Swift, 77,479	185 Sam Smith w/Kim Petras, 4,990	37 David Guetta w/Bebe Rexha, 22,075
6 Shawn Mendes, 42,653 [CA]	5 Miley Cyrus, 45,369	879 Demi Lovato, 279	47 Rema w/Selena Gomez, 17,645
7 Virginia to Vegas, 42,651 CA	8 Adele, 38,385	1064 LP, 69	61 Black eyed Peas, 12,308
9 Michael Bublé, 36,201 [CA]	10 Alessia Cara, 35,475 CA	1131 Lil Uzi Vert, 2	67 Ace of Base, 11,736
11 Lewis Capaldi, 34,575	12 Dua Lipa, 34,133		68 The Strumbellas, 11,714 CA
13 Harry Styles, 33,766	15 Sia, 33,256		70 Elton John w/Dua Lipa, 11,645
14 Bruno Mars, 33,665	16 Lady Gaga, 33,069		75 Elton John w/Britney Spears, 10,651
19 Backstreet Boys, 31,236	17 Kelly Clarkson, 32,659		78 The Eurythmics, 10,400
22 Michael Jackson, 25,637	18 Katy Perry, 32,447		93 Les Cowboys fringants, 9,127 CA

TABLE 5.2F. TOP 10 MOST PLAYED ARTISTS ON CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: SQUARE BRACKETS FRAMING THE [CA] DENOTE CANADIAN ARTISTS WHOSE ACCUMULATED SPINS ARE FOR SONGS THAT ARE BOTH CANCON CERTIFIED AND NOT.

## 5.2.2. Representation on the Weekly Airplay Charts for Mainstream AC Radio in 2023

Airplay charts offer an important lens not just on representation in an industry, but also the inner workings of programming practices. They offer a view into the most repeated current singles in a format, but also how the distribution impacts Canadian artists within the industry ecosystem. Mediabase's Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played each week on radio.

In 2023, 170 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs on the weekly Mainstream AC Airplay charts, 48.1% are men, 30.6% are women, 0.6% are Trans\*

artists, and 5.9% are mixed gender bands and 14.8% are collaborations. As Table 5.2g summarises, 71.1% of the artists are white, while 8.2% are Black, 0.0% are Indigenous, 5.3% are artists of colour, and 15.3% are multiethnic bands. None of the charting songs were by Indigenous artists. Over the course of the year, 203 songs charted, with the same gender and racial representation as detailed throughout this section on Canadian Mainstream AC programming in 2023. As Table 5.2h summarises, 45.4% of those songs were by men, 37.6% by women, 0.5% by Trans\* artists, and 5.5% by mixed gender bands and 11.0% by collaborations. Most songs were by white artists (75.8%), with 7.4% by Black artists, 0.0% by Indigenous artists, 5.1% by artists of colour, and 11.7% by multiethnic bands. Combining the percentage of songs by bands led by men and women to the tallies for those by men

and women, increases the percentage to 49.5% and 42.7%, respectively.

### 5.2.2.1. Evaluation of Songs on the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

Scaling up to the 2,600 records for the top 50 songs ranked each week in 2023, songs by men captured 44.4% of the chart, with songs by women at 39.3%, by Trans\* artists at 0.5% and by mixed gender bands at 4.0% and collaborations at 11.8% of the chart. Described in Table 5.2i, most of the charting songs (76.4%) are by white artists, with 6.4% of the charting songs by Black artists, and 0.0% by Indigenous artists, 5.0% by artists of colour, and 12.2% by multiethnic bands.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	32.9%	3.5%	0.0%	2.9%	8.8%	<b>48.1%</b>
Women	23.5%	4.1%	0.0%	2.4%	0.6%	<b>30.6%</b>
Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.6%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	<b>5.9%</b>
Collaborations	9.4%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	4.8%	<b>14.8%</b>
With shared vocals	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	1.8%
Led by men	2.9%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	5.9%
Led by women	4.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	6.5%
Led by Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
	<b>71.1%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	

TABLE 5.2G. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC AIRPLAY CHARTS IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	33.4%	2.8%	0.0%	2.3%	6.9%	<b>45.4%</b>
Women	30.2%	4.1%	0.0%	2.8%	0.5%	<b>37.6%</b>
Trans* artists	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.5%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	<b>5.5%</b>
Collaborations	7.2%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	<b>11.0%</b>
With shared vocals	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	1.3%
Led by men	2.2%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	4.1%
Led by women	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	5.1%
Led by Trans* artists	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
	<b>75.8%</b>	<b>7.4%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	

TABLE 5.2H. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC AIRPLAY CHARTS IN 2023

Figure 5.2e tracks the distribution across the calendar year, revealing that songs by women averaged 39.2% of the charts throughout the year, increasing from 39.5% in January to 45.2% in December. Most of these charting songs (32.6%) were for white women, with an average of 4.3% for Black women, 2.3% for women of colour, and 0.1% for multiethnic ensembles.

Songs by men averaged 44.3% of the chart, with 40.0%, increasing to a peak of 52.0% in August and then ending the year at 40.8%. As with songs by women, most (31.9%) were by white men, with 2.2% by Black men, 2.3% by men of colour, and 7.6% by multiethnic ensembles.

Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations average 16.0%. Their songs average about 20.0% until May, then start to decline and end the year at 14.0% of the charts. Given the distribution discussed so far, most of this chart activity was for songs by collaborations (11.8%) with 3.4% led by men, 6.1% led by women, and 0.9% by Trans\* artists.

Table 5.2j further details chart data by CanCon designation, revealing that 46.9% of the songs that chart are amongst the most played on Canadian radio – with enough support to land these songs on the airplay chart. For all artists, non-CanCon songs are represented more in the charts than CanCon songs.

### 5.2.2.2. Evaluation of Representation in the Top Positions of the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

Given the results so far that show the top 2 most spun artists are women, it is not surprising that songs by women are programmed at a rate that places their songs within the top charting positions. Figures 5.2f-5.2h track the percentage of songs in each of the Top 20, Top 10 and #1 charting categories over the course of the calendar year tracing the pathway through the top showing that songs by women average 60.8% of the most played songs. An average of 35.7% of the songs

in the Top 20 are CanCon certified, evenly distributed to songs by men (15.0%) and women (14.3%) and are filtered out of the Top 10 (5.7% by men and 11.9% by women) with only CanCon songs by men at the top of the chart in 2023.

Songs by men averaged 36.0% of the Top 20 songs (Figure 5.2f), beginning the year at 43.8% and ending the year at 36.0%. Over the course of the year, non-CanCon songs by men averaged 21.1% of the Top 20, with CanCon songs averaging 15.0%. Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations average the remaining 16.2%, divided 9.7% and 6.5% for non-CanCon and CanCon songs, respectively. Most of the Top 20 activity for songs by mixed gender bands was for collaborative recordings (12.7%, versus 3.5% for bands), wherein most of the collaborative songs are led by women (6.5%).

Songs by women averaged 47.8% of the Top 20 most-played songs (33.6% non-CanCon and 14.3%), increasing from 38.8% in January to peak of 58.8% in October and ending the year at 50.0%. The 18 songs by 13 women that peaked in the Top 10 averaged 58.4% of this ranking range in 2023 (Figure 5.2g), with 37.5% in January and increasing to a peak of 70% in September and October before ending the year at 48.0%. Songs by women capture the most played position of the year 31 out of the 52 weeks in 2023 – but this was for 6 songs by 4 women (2 by Taylor Swift, 2 by Miley Cyrus, and 1 each by Sia and Dua Lipa). Most of this programming was for 2 songs by Cyrus, whose “Flowers” and “Used to be Young” remained in the top-played position for 14 and later 2 weeks (respectively). Dua Lipa’s “Dance the Night” captured the top position for 4 weeks. Despite being the second most played woman on Mainstream AC radio, Taylor Swift’s “Anti-Hero” and “Cruel Summer” spent a combined 10 weeks at the top of the chart (see Figure 5.2h).

Just 3 songs by men captured to top of the chart – and 2 of them are CanCon certified: Preston Pablo w/Banx & Ranx’s “Flowers Need Rain” for 1 week in January, and Tyler Shaw’s “Christmas All Over Again” for 3 weeks in December. The remaining 17 weeks of the year were held by Ed Sheeran with “Eyes Closed” which held the spot for

one week in May and then 16 consecutive weeks from 3 June to 16 September.

Songs by women were heard far more on Mainstream AC radio in 2023 than in previous years (as described in the first part of this chapter evaluating representation within the top 150 songs played on the format). Even with the increase in representation, though, these findings show that their songs were still underplayed (at 35.5% overall) in comparison to those by men (50.4%). Drilling into the data shows that airplay was distributed in inequitable capacity for non-CanCon songs by women. Even though 7 Canadian women had enough airplay for their songs to appear within the top 10 most spun positions (as captured in the weekly Airplay charts), only 1 woman emerges as the most spun overall (and she doesn’t have a charting song in 2023). Critically, too, most of the airplay and chart activity – whether Canadian women or not – was for songs by white women. Songs by white women had the second highest representation according to airplay, and amongst the top 10 most played P!nk and Taylor Swift each captured 5.5% of the airplay for songs by women. And the top 10 most played women – all white, captured 31.3% of the airplay for songs by women. Interestingly, none of the songs by the most-spun woman (P!nk) peaked at the top of the chart. “Trustfall” spent 5 weeks at #2, but did not shift into the highest-rotating weekly position. Given the length of her stellar career, much of the airplay for her songs falls into gold records (50.7%). Conversely, Taylor Swift’s music falls most into currents (60.1%) with a smaller percentage in golds (27.8%).

Unlike Top 40, Trans\* artists did not appear within the top-spun positions of radio programming. Sam Smith may have been the most spun trans-nonbinary artist, but they ranked 87 overall. The same is true of their collaboration with Kim Petras, which ranked 185th overall and did not chart in the calendar year explored here.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	31.9%	2.2%	0.0%	2.7%	7.6%	<b>44.4%</b>
Women	32.7%	4.2%	0.0%	2.3%	0.1%	<b>39.3%</b>
Trans* artists	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.5%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>4.0%</b>
Collaborations	79%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	<b>11.8%</b>
With shared vocals	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	1.3%
Led by men	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	3.4%
Led by women	5.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	6.1%
Led by Trans* artists	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
	<b>76.4%</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	

TABLE 5.2I. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023

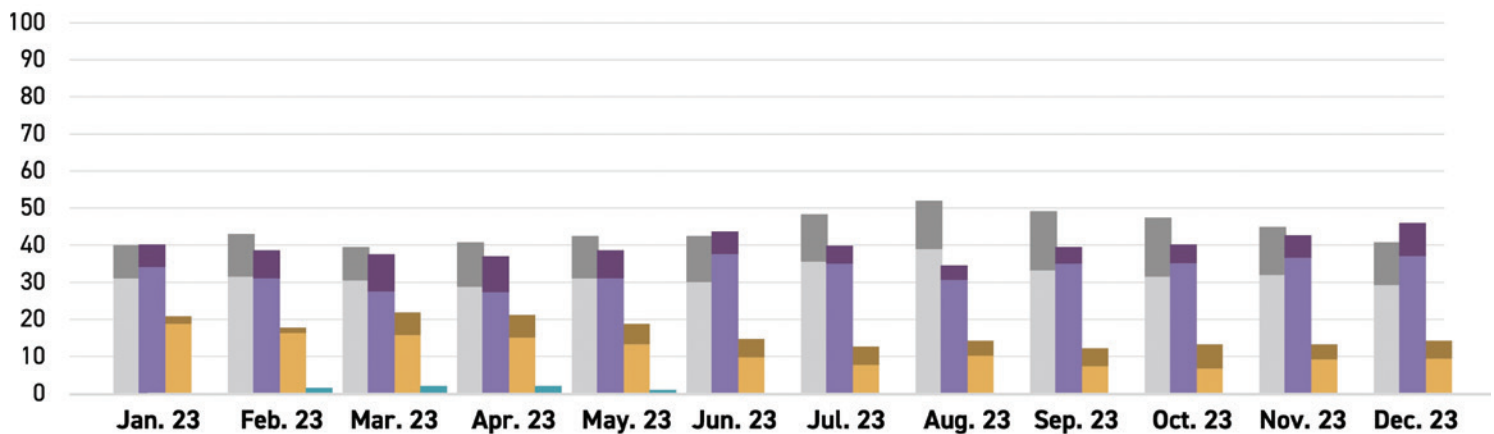


FIGURE 5.2E. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [52.8%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [46.9%]
Songs by Men	22.4%	21.9%
Songs by Women	22.8%	16.5%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.5%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	0.3%	3.2%
Songs by Collaborations	7.0%	5.4%
With shared vocals	1.3%	0.6%
Led by men	2.5%	1.0%
Led by women	2.3%	3.8%
Led by Trans* artists	0.9%	0.0%

TABLE 5.2J. PERCENTAGE OF CANCON SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023



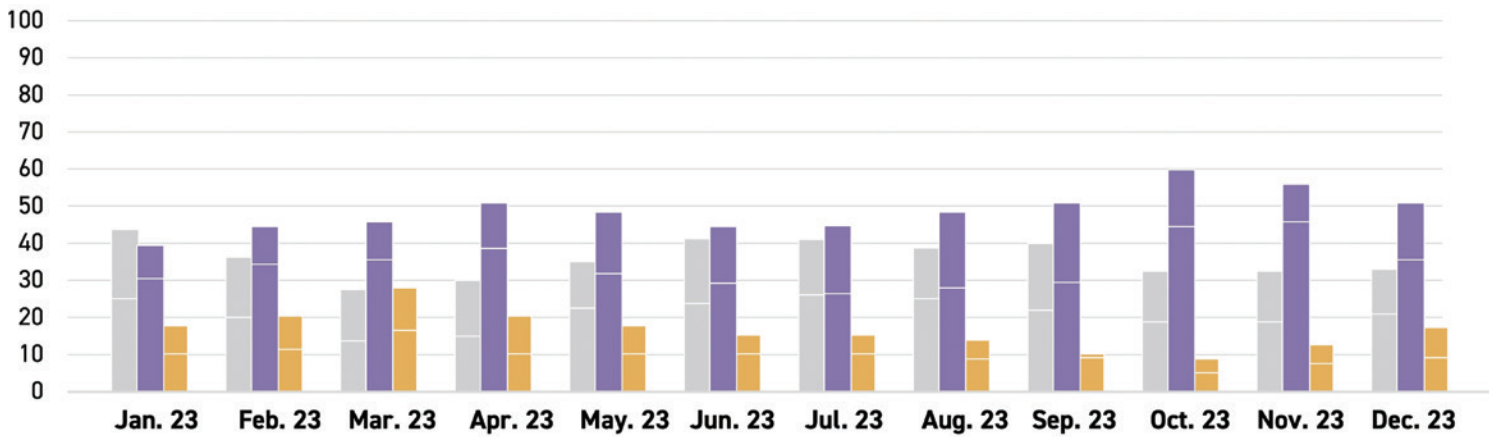


FIGURE 5.2F. DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 20 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023  
NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION.

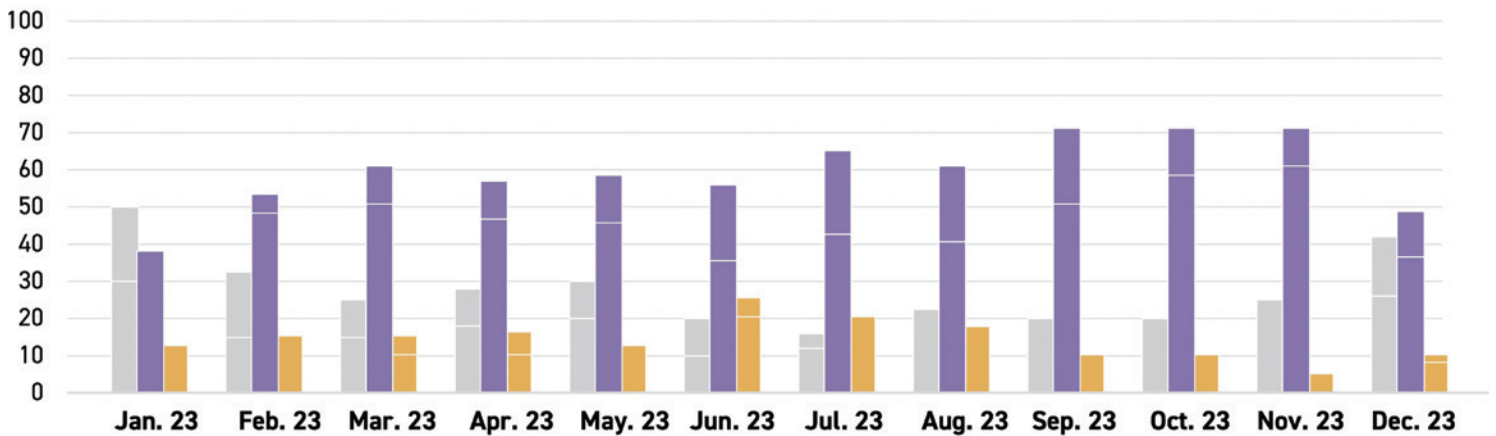


FIGURE 5.2G. DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 10 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023  
NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION.

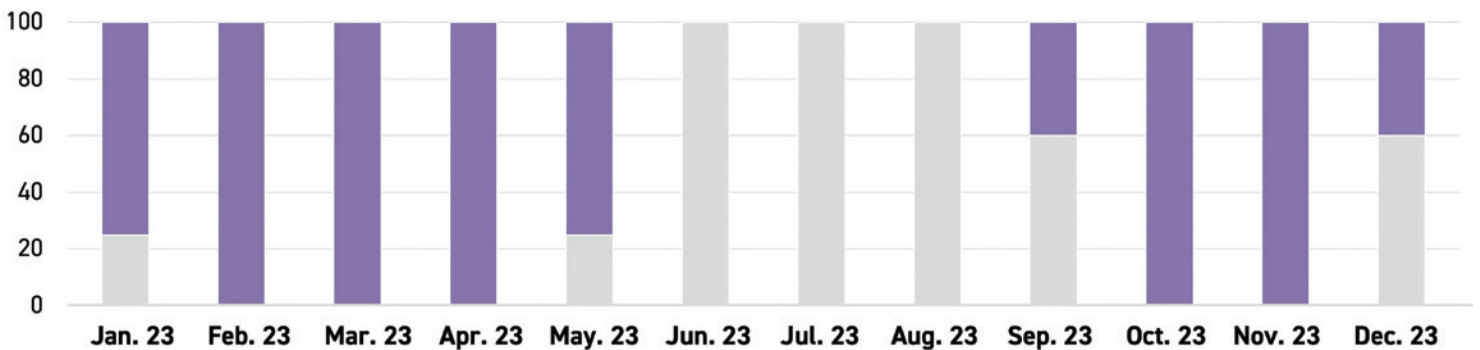


FIGURE 5.2H. DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE #1 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: 2 CANCON CERTIFIED SONGS REACHED #1 IN 2023 (BOTH BY MEN), SPENDING A COMBINED 4 WEEKS AT THE TOP OF THE CHART.

## 5.3. Weekly Airplay on French-language Mainstream AC Format Radio Stations in 2023

To address representation on French language radio, we used the Mediabase portfolio function to build a collection of Mainstream AC stations. While linguistic analysis is not an analytic lens applied in this section of the report, the results do offer an opportunity to reflect on representation from the perspective of language. This portfolio offers a deeper understanding of representation on Canadian radio, affording an opportunity to look at a body of songs and artists otherwise invisible in a largely Anglo-dominant Canadian music industry. Notably, while the mixed-gender francophone group Les Cowboys fringants held the 93rd position in the overall most played artists on the Mainstream format in 2023, they emerged as the most played artist overall in this portfolio. Thus, through analysis of the most played artists within the portfolios developed for analysing Mainstream AC format radio, we reflect on which artists are prioritised in programming and how language, at the intersection of gender as well as race and ethnicity, factors into these results.

This portfolio includes the reporting station with a licensed French language station, as well as 5 other stations that are monitored by Mediabase, ensuring as much diversity of ownership as possible in a market dominated by Cogeco-owned stations. The other element taken into consideration was program and music director, to ensure that we were not including stations programmed by the same two individuals. This was challenging, however, because most stations are directed by the same team – a consequence of consolidated ownership and centralised programming practices in commercial radio. Five of the stations are situated in Québec, with one station in Bathurst, New Brunswick.

These portfolios are structured in a different manner than the published

reports and so the analysis cannot follow the same sequence as the section on Weekly Airplay (section 5.2), but the focus of analysis continues to centre on gender identity and race and ethnicity within the broader context of Canadian content regulations.

To build the portfolio for Mainstream AC, we had to first build the portfolio of stations and then download 1 weekly report for each of the 5 radio dayparts – totaling 5 reports a week for each week of the year (260 reports in total). The end result is a dataset totaling 283,738 rows, 52,874 for current singles, 40,490 for recurrent tracks, and 190,374 for gold records.

In 2023, 3,893 unique artists, bands, and collaborations had songs played on the stations included in the French language portfolio for Mainstream AC radio. As described in Table 5.3a, 61.1% are men, 19.7% are women, 0.1% are Trans\* artists, 6.6% are mixed gender bands, and the remaining 12.5% are mixed gender collaborations of men, women, and Trans\* artists. Most of the artists are white (70.7%), while 11.2% are Black, 0.4% are Indigenous, 3.9% are artists of colour, and 13.8% are multiethnic ensembles and collaborations.

Within the dataset for the French language portfolio there are 9,501 unique songs that were played in 2023. Most of the songs (65.1%) are by men, with 22.6% by women, 0.2% by Trans\* artists, 6.8% by mixed gender bands, and 5.3% by mixed gender collaborations. As shown in Table 5.3b, 80.2% of the songs are by white artists, 8.4% by Black artists, 0.2% by Indigenous artists, 3.7% by artists of colour, and 7.5% by multiethnic bands and collaborations. The Mainstream AC French language portfolio stations have a similar racial and gendered hierarchy as in several other formats examined, with less diversity than on the broader pop-oriented formats.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	45.0%	7.0%	0.3%	2.0%	6.8%	<b>61.1%</b>
Women	14.3%	2.8%	0.1%	1.8%	0.7%	<b>19.7%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.5%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	<b>6.6%</b>
Collaborations	6.8%	0.8%	0.0%	0.1%	4.8%	<b>12.5%</b>
With shared vocals	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	1.2%
Led by men	3.4%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	6.3%
Led by women	2.9%	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%	1.4%	4.7%
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%
	<b>70.7%</b>	<b>11.2%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>3.9%</b>	<b>13.8%</b>	

TABLE 5.3A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	54.3%	5.0%	0.2%	1.9%	3.7%	<b>65.1%</b>
Women	18.0%	2.5%	0.0%	1.7%	0.4%	<b>22.6%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	<b>0.2%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.9%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.3%	<b>6.8%</b>
Collaborations	2.9%	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%	2.0%	<b>5.3%</b>
With shared vocals	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.5%
Led by men	1.4%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	2.6%
Led by women	1.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.6%	2.1%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
	<b>80.2%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>7.5%</b>	

TABLE 5.3B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023

### 5.3.1. Airplay of All Songs Played on French-language Mainstream AC Format Radio Stations in 2023

The following analysis investigates the rate at which songs by women are played on the 6 French-language Mainstream AC radio stations. This section looks more deeply at the amount of airplay overall, as well as discusses the distribution of spins for songs by Canadian Content status, by song type (current, recurrent, and gold), the time of day at which they are played, and by chart activity. Songs by women received 26.0% of the overall airplay on Mainstream AC format

radio in 2023. Table 5.3c summarises airplay data for the year, providing granular detail by race and ethnicity of the artists whose songs were played. Songs by men received 61.1% of the airplay, songs by Trans\* artists received 0.2% of the airplay, while songs by mixed gender bands received 6.2% and collaborations received 6.5%.

This same information on airplay is graphed in Figure 5.3a for a view of the monthly distribution of spins, revealing that the distribution of spins was consistent with the statistics in the table above. There was no significant fluctuation in programming from month to month with songs by men averaging 61.0%, with 26.0% by women, 0.2% by Trans\* artists, and 12.8% for mixed gender bands and collaborations.

Songs by white artists consistently average 75.4% of the airplay across this 12-month period, with 10.4% for songs by Black artists, 0.2% for songs by Indigenous artists, 4.9% by artists of colour, and 4.6% by multiethnic ensembles. Songs by women of colour (5.7%) received less than half the airplay accorded to songs by men of colour (13.7%) in 2023.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	47.4%	6.0%	0.2%	2.9%	4.6%	<b>61.1%</b>
Women	20.3%	3.4%	0.0%	1.8%	0.5%	<b>26.0%</b>
Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.2%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.3%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	<b>6.2%</b>
Collaborations	3.2%	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%	2.6%	<b>6.5%</b>
With shared vocals	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.8%
Led by men	1.6%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	3.0%
Led by women	1.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.2%	1.0%	2.6%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
	<b>75.4%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>4.9%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	

TABLE 5.3C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023

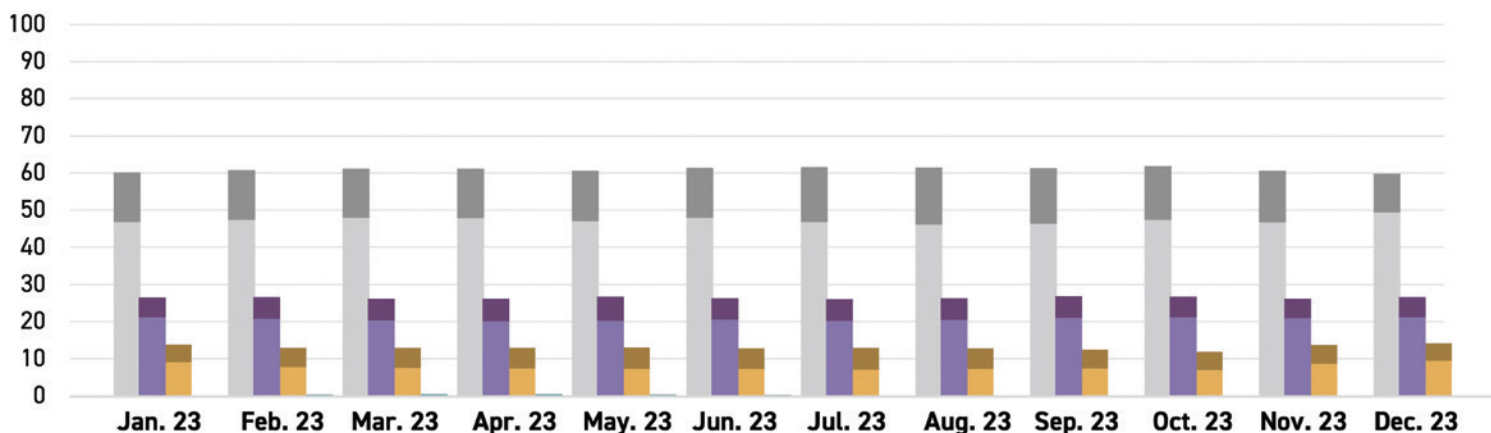


FIGURE 5.3A DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) FOR SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023  
NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

### 5.3.1.1. Evaluation of Airplay by CanCon Status

What this distribution means for Canadian artists is particularly important in the context of the federal regulations guiding programming and how it shapes exposure for Canadian audiences, and impacts women in the industry. Just over half of the airplay – 53.1% – went to non-CanCon songs. An average of 46.9% of the airplay in 2023 was for songs certified as CanCon. The stations included within the Mainstream AC portfolio are playing well-above the minimum required 35.0%. As a result, the stations within this portfolio are meeting and indeed surpassing their station requirements, which will be

further explored below in discussion of the distribution by daypart (which is a critical element to the requirement).

Distribution of airplay by CanCon certification is detailed in Figure 5.3b, further defining the distribution of airplay in 2023. Given what is already known about representation on Mainstream AC radio, it is unsurprising that songs by women make up such smaller percentages than those by men within both non-CanCon and CanCon songs, with 14.3% and 11.7%, respectively. These percentages increase (marginally) when adding to them the airplay for songs by women-led collaborations – to 16.1% for nonCanCon songs and 12.5% for CanCon songs. With these tabulations combined, songs led by women received 28.6% of the airplay

on the French language Mainstream AC stations in this portfolio in 2023. As with the broader format, there are no CanCon songs by Trans\* artists played in this portfolio in 2023.

Table 5.3d calculates the distribution of airplay by certification status. While non-CanCon and CanCon songs by men receive the same amount of airplay overall, when considering airplay within these respective groupings, CanCon songs by men receive more than half of the airplay (65.1%) that is accorded to CanCon songs. Here, as before, non-CanCon songs by women make up a larger percentage of the airplay for songs that are not CanCon (27.0%), while CanCon songs register 24.9% of the airplay within the programming accorded to Canadian songs. As above, combining

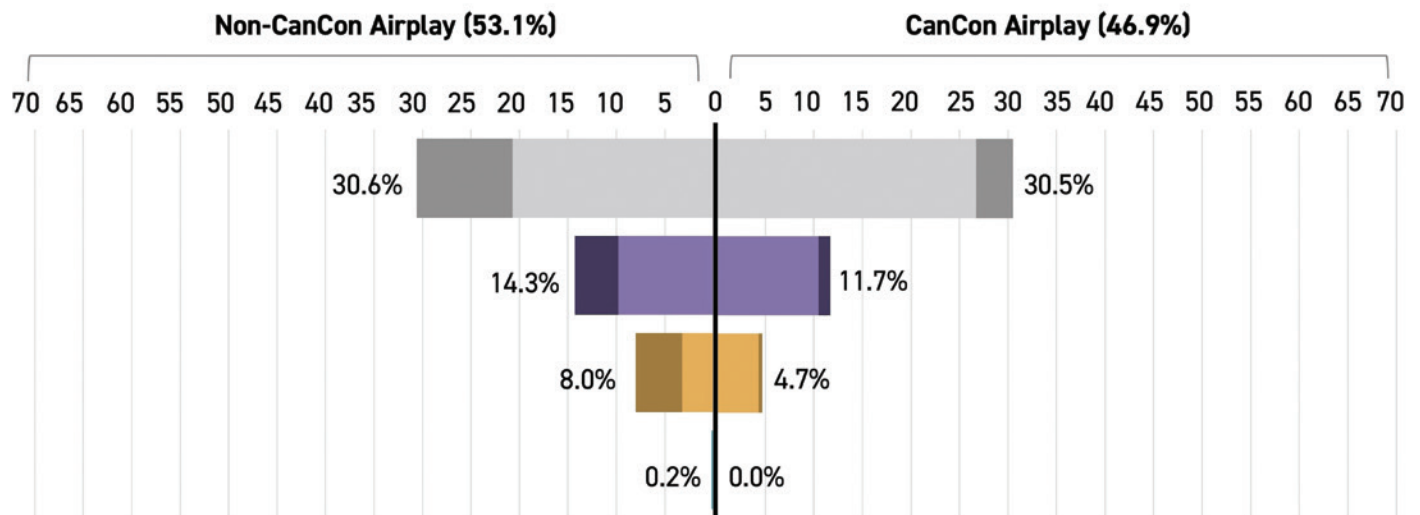


FIGURE 5.3B. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [53.1%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [46.9%]
Songs by Men	57.4%	65.1%
Songs by Women	27.0%	24.9%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.4%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	7.0%	5.3%
Songs by Collaborations	8.2%	4.7%
With shared vocals	1.1%	0.5%
Led by men	3.5%	2.5%
Led by women	3.4%	1.7%
Led by Trans* artists	0.3%	0.0%

TABLE 5.3D. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023

these percentages with the airplay for songs by women-led bands raises the percentage for both – to 30.4% and 26.6% (respectively).

### 5.3.1.2. Evaluation of Airplay for Songs by Time of Day

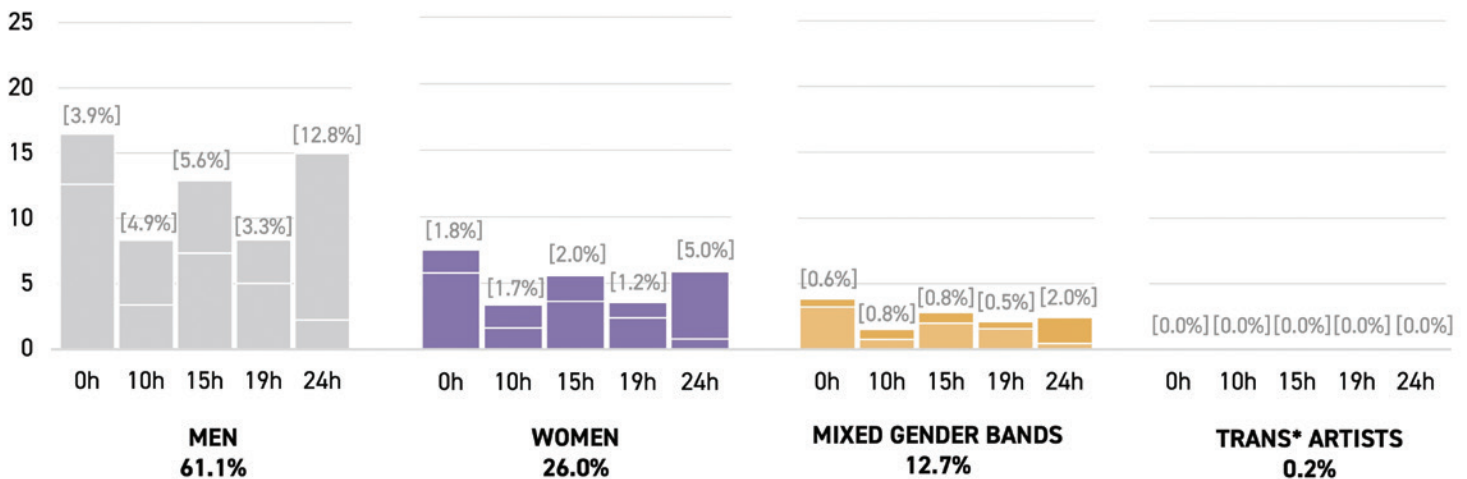
The time of day at which these songs are heard is of critical importance to the development of a musician's career. As described earlier, the 24-hour cycle is divided into five dayparts, with the three day-time periods – the Morning Drive (AMD from 6:00-10:00), the Midday period (MID from 10:00-15:00) and the Afternoon

Drive (PMD from 15:00 to 19:00) – are the most important for exposure as they are the periods with the highest rate of listenership. The Overnight (OVN from 0:00 to 6:00) and Evening (EVE from 19:00 to 24:00) periods frame the day and are periods with a higher percentage of songs played due not just in part to their slightly longer duration, but also the reduced amount of news and specialty programming (features, interviews, etc.).

Figure 5.3c tracks the distribution of airplay by daypart, graphing the data in accordance with the 24-hour cycle beginning with the Overnights on the left, through the Morning Drive, Midday and Afternoon Drive, to the Evening on the right for each group of artists. The columns are separated by a white line to

distinguish between non-CanCon airplay (at the bottom of the column) and CanCon airplay (at the top of the column).

The highest percentage of airplay for all artists occurs in the Overnight and Evening periods, as expected. For all groups, about 27.0% of their overall airplay occurs in the Overnight, with 13.0% in the Morning, 21.0% in the Midday, 14.0% in the Afternoon, and 25.0% in the Evening. Despite this even distribution for songs by men, women, and mixed gender bands and collaborations, though, the distribution overall shows considerable inequity for women and mixed gender bands, whose songs are under-programmed in each daypart.



**FIGURE 5.3C. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY BY TIME OF DAY FOR ALL SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

	SONGS BY MEN	SONGS BY WOMEN	SONGS BY TRANS* ARTISTS	SONGS BY MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
<b>OVERNIGHT (0:00-6:00)</b>	55 [42/13]	24 [19/6]	1 [1/0]	13 [11/2]
<b>AM DRIVE (6:00-10:00)</b>	27 [11/16]	11 [5/6]	0 [0/0]	5 [3/2]
<b>MIDDAY (10:00-15:00)</b>	42 [24/18]	19 [12/7]	0 [0/0]	10 [7/3]
<b>PM DRIVE (15:00-19:00)</b>	28 [17/11]	12 [8/4]	0 [0/0]	7 [5/2]
<b>EVENING (19:00-24:00)</b>	49 [7/42]	20 [3/17]	0 [0/0]	9 [2/7]
	<b>201</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>44</b>

**TABLE 5.3E. DISTRIBUTION OF SPINS FOR SONGS BY TIME OF DAY WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE THE DISTRIBUTION FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS (RESPECTIVELY)



Half of radio programming occurs during the three daypart hours (Morning, Midday, and Afternoon) at 54.7% of the spins. Federal broadcasting regulations require that Canadian radio play 35% Canadian Content between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to ensure listeners are exposed to music of Canadian artists. While the periods do not align perfectly (the Afternoon daypart ends at 7:00 p.m.), between 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Mainstream AC radio played 42.8% CanCon songs in 2023, with 28.5% for songs by men, 10.0% for songs by women, none by Trans\* artists, and 4.3% for mixed gender bands and collaborations.

To provide greater perspective on what this might sound like for radio listeners, Table 5.3e presents a breakdown of how this translates at the level of daytime programming to provide an example of what a typical 24-hour cycle would look like for the average station and listener. Across the 6 portfolio stations, an average of 332 songs are distributed within this dataset per day, with 201 songs by men, 87 by women, 1 by a Trans\* artist, and 44 by mixed gender bands and collaborations.

For women, the distribution across all five dayparts shows that songs by men are programmed 2 times more than those by women. While this does mean that songs by men are played (and thus, heard) more throughout each daypart, songs by women average about 2 an hour between 6am and 7pm.

Within this programming, non-CanCon songs by women are played in similar distribution overall, but about 2 times more than CanCon songs in the midday and afternoon dayparts, and three times more in the overnights. Interestingly, the calculation shows that CanCon songs by women are significantly boosted in the evenings (programmed 5 times more than non-CanCon songs by women). The same is true of CanCon songs by men, which are played 6 times more than non-CanCon songs by men in the evenings. This shift in programming is a disservice to Canadian artists, wherein their highest percentage of airplay occurs in off-peak listening hours, reducing their exposure to local audiences.

Like the broader Mainstream AC format, and indeed all other formats, songs by men and male-led bands are prioritised within programming. However, on these stations, non-CanCon songs are not played at such a drastically higher rate than CanCon songs. And while the gap between songs by men and women is not as wide as Country and Rock, it is wider than the nationally monitored pop-oriented formats.

### 5.3.1.3. Evaluation of Airplay for Current, Recurrent and Gold Status Songs

Radio airplay is divided into three different song “types” – current singles that are vying for top-programming (and, by extension, chart) contention, recurrent tracks that have reached their peak programming position but are still in regular rotation, and gold catalogue records of older but “canonical” songs that have been retained by a station for long-term programming.

Figure 5.3d tracks the breakdown of airplay by these three programming types, showing on the left the overall airplay within the French language Mainstream AC portfolio stations, parsed by airplay for current singles (19.4%), recurrent tracks (13.7%), and gold records (66.9%) – the latter (more canonical “gold” records) making up a sizeable component of the overall programming. Current singles by women (5.7%) receive about half the airplay to those by men (11.6%), and the gap widens through recurrent tracks (9.3% for men and 2.9% for women) and gold songs (40.1% for men and 17.4% for women). Most airplay for all artists occurs through gold records, with significantly

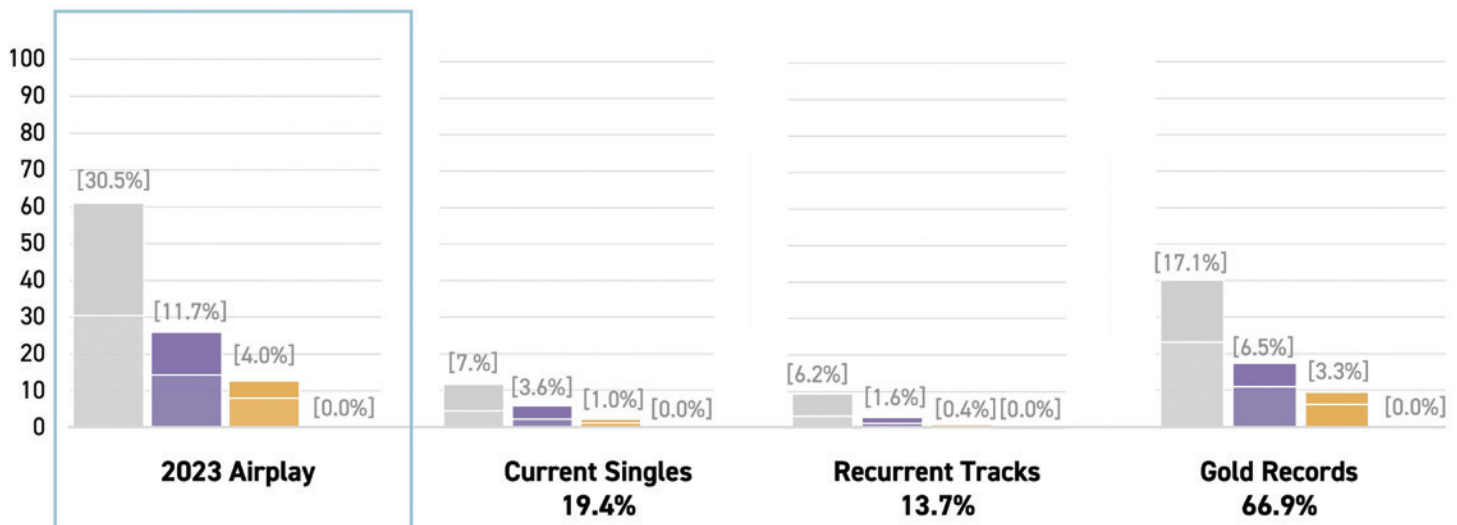


FIGURE 5.3D. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CURRENT, RECURRENT AND GOLD SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

smaller percentages in current/recurrent programming. As a result, there is an even narrower pathway to golds on this format, one that could be even more limiting for women who are already underprogrammed in golds.

This Figure also displays information for CanCon songs, with the top half of each bar representing airplay for these songs within each category of airplay. What emerges through this Figure is a deeper understanding of airplay for CanCon songs by women within the French language stations in the Mainstream AC portfolio, whose current singles (3.6%) receive slightly more spins than non-CanCon songs by women (2.1%), and nearly equal distribution amongst recurrent (at 1.3% for non-CanCon and 1.6% for CanCon). While most of the airplay for CanCon songs by women lies in this gold category of airplay (at 6.5%), these songs are still less than the percentage of gold non-CanCon songs by women (10.9%) and just about one third the CanCon songs by men (17.1%). CanCon songs by women, then, are not programmed with a view to creating significant exposure through the top positions in station playlists and are thus retained through recurrences to gold songs at a much lower rate than songs by non-Canadian women and Canadian men.

### 5.3.1.4. Evaluation of Top Played Songs

Just as there are no monitored formats for French-language radio in Canada, there are no industry charts that rank most played songs for French-language radio stations. While the absence of a monitored format can be addressed through the analysis of a portfolio of stations, a chart cannot truly be simulated because they also include measurement of audience impressions in the calculation of weekly rankings. But it remains critical to know who the most played artists are within French-language radio, and so we offer here analysis of the top 20 most played songs each week by the percentage of

airplay received to know how women and Trans\* artists are programmed in the top-end of station playlists.

Figure 5.3e tracks the top 20 songs each week according to the percentage of spins received and traces a slowly changing picture over the course of 2023 through programming at this level. Songs by men average 55.9% of the airplay over this period, but increase from 48.2% in January to 60.5% in May and despite a decline to 53.6% in July they rebound and increase again to end the year at 60.3%. Most of the airplay was for CanCon songs by men (averaging 32.0%) and are consistently programmed more than non-CanCon songs, except for in October and November where they drop below.

Songs by women, then move in the opposite direction. Though they average 33.0% of the airplay within these top 20 positions, they increase initially from 33.3% to 38.8% in February, but then decrease to a low of 26.4% in April and fluctuate through the rest of the year before ending in December with 26.7% of the airplay. Here, too, CanCon songs receive more airplay, averaging 19.3% for 2023. However, tracking the distribution over the year shows that they initially receive fewer spins in January, but increase to 25.8% of the spins for women (against 12.8% for non-CanCon songs by women) in July and decrease to 12.4% by December (with non-CanCon songs receiving 14.4%).

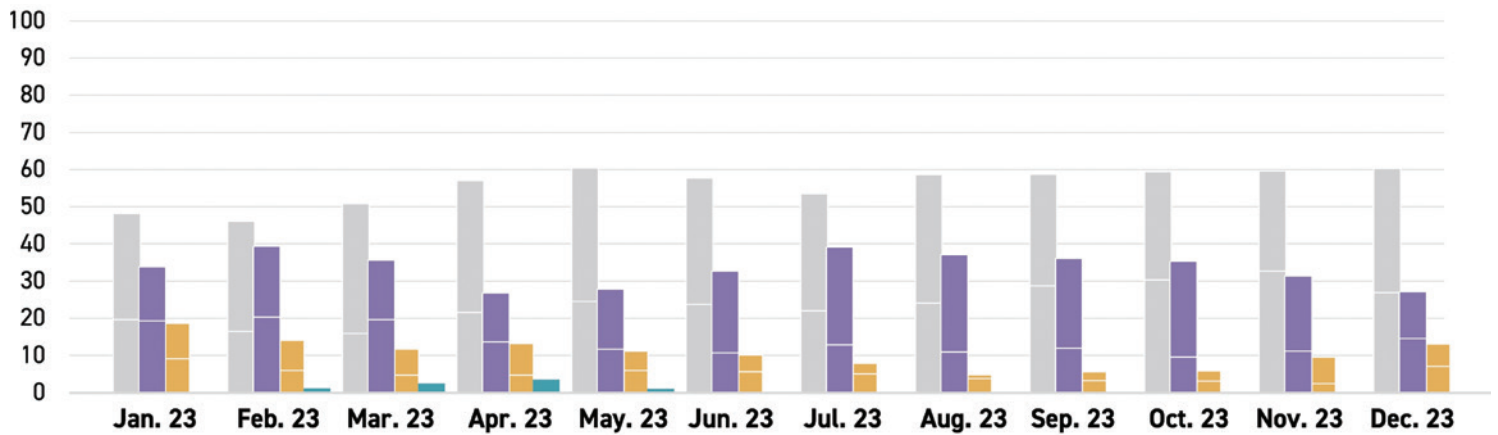
Songs by Trans\* artists are nearly absent from the top 20 most played songs over this period, but capture 3.5% of the airplay in April before declining and disappearing by June 2023. All of this airplay is for non-CanCon songs.

Mixed-gender bands and collaborations then fill in the picture. Their songs average 10.4% of the airplay amongst the top 20 most played songs (5.1% for non-CanCon songs and 5.3% for CanCon songs). Airplay for their songs declined from 18.4% in January to a low of 4.8% by August, and remained low in representation until

December where they received 12.9%. While the francophone mixed-gender band Les Cowboys fringants received consistent airplay throughout the year, this sudden increase can be partly explained by the significant wave of tributes paid to their lead singer, Karl Tremblay, who unfortunately passed away in November after a long battle with prostate cancer. Since the turn of the twenty-first century, Les Cowboys fringants have occupied an important role in cultural and political discourse in Québec. The group holds strong sovereigntist and environmentalist ideals that have admittedly contributed to many Québécois' sense of belonging.<sup>1</sup>

These findings are further highlighted in lists of the top 10 men, women, Trans\* artists, and mixed gender bands and collaborations by their spins (Table 5.3f), which shows that 4 of the women rank in the top 10 overall, and almost all of them within the top 30 overall. But these rankings confirm findings about the placement of CanCon songs by women within the stations included in the French-language portfolio. Songs by men rank higher overall and all within the top 20 and 9 of the 10 are Canadian men (all French-Canadian artists and bands). The prominence of songs by French-Canadian men within the top spun artists is remarkable within a format that plays more non-CanCon songs overall. But shifting to the top 10 most spun women, the findings show just 6 of them are Canadians and just 5 of them have majority CanCon certified songs played. As observed through each detail of analysis of the French-language portfolio of stations, songs by women are programmed 26.0% overall and 33.0% within the top positions, and that while CanCon songs by women are programmed at a slightly higher rate within these top positions they rank behind non-CanCon songs by women overall.

1 Marco Fortier and Étienne Paré, "Adieu Karl Tremblay," *Le Devoir* (28 November 2023). Their performance at the Festival d'été de Québec in the summer of 2023 attracted a crowd of 90 000, the largest recorded audience on the Plains of Abraham where this festival is held. Tremblay's life was celebrated at the Bell Centre in Montreal by 14 000 people.



**FIGURE 5.3E. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR TOP 20 SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

TOP 10 MEN	TOP 10 WOMEN	TOP 10 TRANS* ARTISTS	TOP 10 MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
2 2Frères, 8,292 <b>CA</b>	4 Roxane Bruneau, 6,409 <b>CA</b>	127 Sam Smith, 1,064	1 Les Cowboy Fringants, 9,800 <b>CA</b>
3 Marc Dupré, 7,924 <b>CA</b>	6 Pink, 5,750	469 Sam Smith w/Kim Petras, 275	71 Black Eyed Peas, 1,633
5 Kain, 5,784 <b>CA</b>	7 Céline Dion, 5,735 <b>[CA]</b>	514 LP, 225	97 Rema w/Selena Gomez, 1,347
8 Ludovick Bourgeois, 5,376 <b>CA</b>	10 Ariane Moffatt, 5,139 <b>CA</b>	695 Demi Lovato, 39	101 Ace of Base, 1,300
9 Patrice Michaud, 5,173 <b>CA</b>	11 Coeur de Pirate, 5,054 <b>CA</b>		109 Niagara, 1,192
13 Les Trois Accords, 4,585 <b>CA</b>	12 Charlotte Cardin, 4,777 <b>CA</b>		126 David Guetta w/Bebe Rexha, 1,068
15 Ed Sheeran, 4,326	14 Madonna, 4,533		147 David Guetta w/Anne-Marie & Coi Leray, 925
16 Salebarbes, 4,066 <b>CA</b>	24 Dua Lipa, 3,315		147 Kingdom Street, 925 <b>CA</b>
17 Jean Leloup, 3,880 <b>CA</b>	25 Miley Cyrus, 3,131		153 Måneskin, 897
18 Daniel Bélanger, 3,704 <b>CA</b>	31 France D'Amour, 2,734 <b>CA</b>		155 Doug St-Louis w/France D'Amour & Racine, 887 <b>CA</b>
			162 Sommm w/Clay and Friends, 868

**TABLE 5.3F. TOP 10 MOST PLAYED ARTISTS WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN MAINSTREAM AC RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: SQUARE BRACKETS FRAMING THE **[CA]** DENOTE CANADIAN ARTISTS WHOSE ACCUMULATED SPINS ARE FOR SONGS THAT ARE BOTH CANCON CERTIFIED AND NOT.

# KEY FINDINGS

## Representation on Canadian Mainstream AC Radio

As with Top 40 radio, the findings for Mainstream AC radio reveal more gender and racial diversity than the Country and Rock formats. But there are improvements to be made within programming as it concerns CanCon songs by women and greater distribution amongst more women rather than a consolidation of airplay for a small handful of women. A steady increase in airplay over this 11-year period, songs by women have been better represented in the last few years, with a notable improvement in 2023 that resulted in more songs by women within the top-spun playlist spots.

The analysis shows a trend toward increasing visibility for women in programming on Mainstream AC over the last 5 years. As with representation on all formats in this study, songs by women initially declined from 34.2% in 2013 to a low of 21.1% in 2018 amongst the top 150 songs played, but then slowly increased to an 11-year high of 37.1% in 2023.

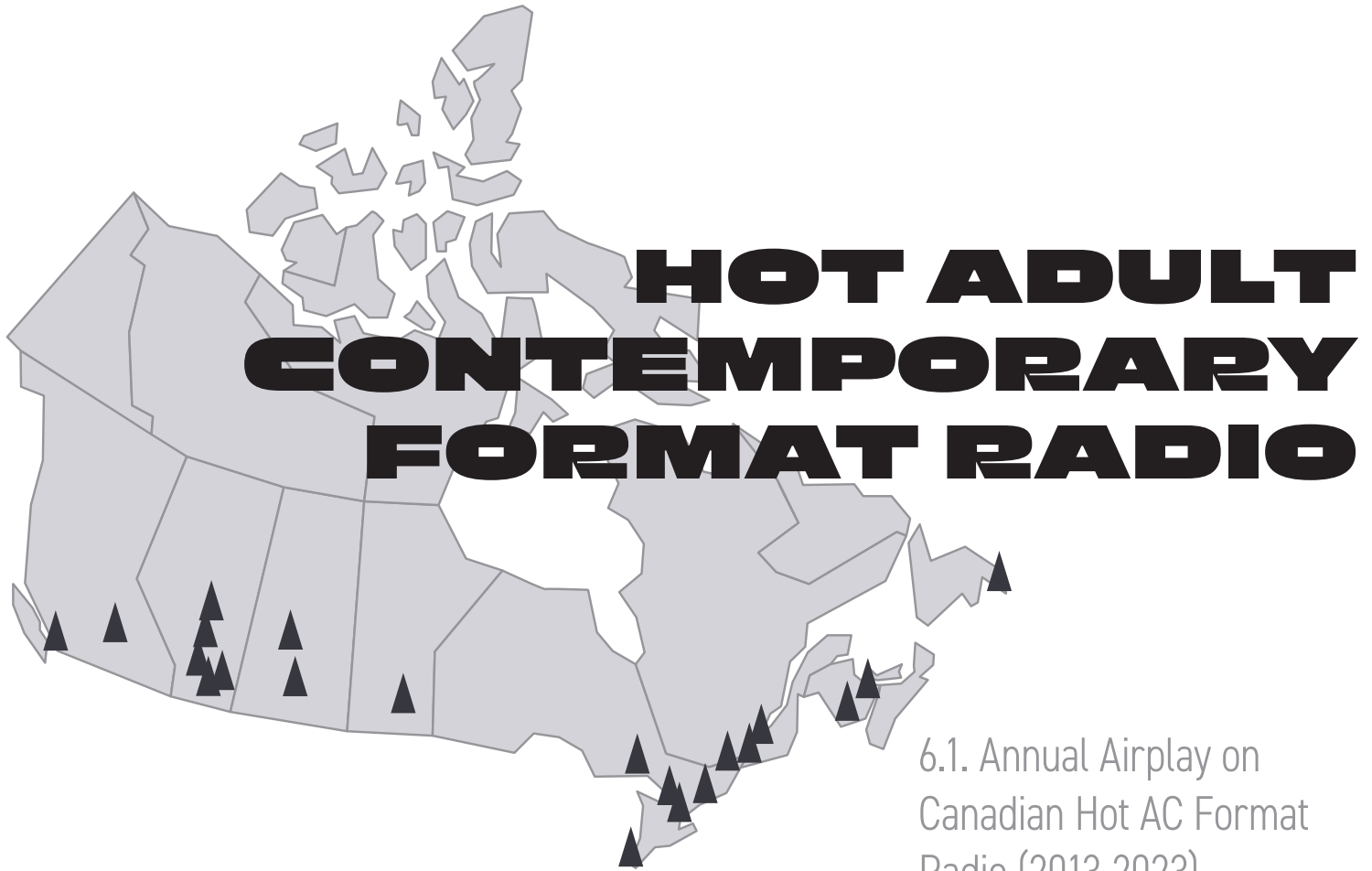
- › Songs by women averaged 35.5% of the airplay in 2023, with consistent playlisting until the final month of the year.
- › In addition to more airplay for their solo efforts, women's voices were also prominent in collaborations, which resulted in similar distribution in airplay as songs by/led by men.
- › Distribution of airplay for songs by women show that CanCon songs (11.4%) are played at less than half the rate of non-CanCon songs (24.1%) and that most of the airplay their gold catalogue songs.
- › The 2023 distribution shows a very low rate of current programming (7.2%), but slightly more than current programming for songs by men (6.3%). But outside of current singles, songs by women are lost through the programming pipeline of recurrent programming where their songs decrease and songs by men increase through to gold catalogue songs.
- › While it is too soon to know how the 2023 boost in airplay for songs by women will impact the recurrent to gold programming pipeline for women whose songs were played in high rotation this year, there is concern for the historic trend of their songs being filtered from long-term preservation and a need to ensure that this does not continue going forward.
- › And while the results show gains for women in Mainstream AC programming, they were largely the result of airplay accorded to songs by two women (P!nk and Taylor Swift), and not for Canadian women who are represented solely by 10th ranked artist overall Alessia Cara.
- › The format's programming reveals a heavier prioritising of songs by white artists (70.4%) than Top 40 radio, with critical need for improvement in exposure for Indigenous artists.
- › The portfolio of French language Mainstream AC stations show less gender and racial diversity in their programming than 32 stations reporting to Mediabase, and a consistent average of songs by women programmed at 26.0% of station playlists.
- › Where the French language portfolio differs from the reporting stations is in the distribution of spins for CanCon songs, which shows near equal distribution with non-CanCon songs. But within this split, CanCon songs by women are not prioritised within programming and are played at one third the rate of CanCon songs by men.
- › Most disconcertingly, the results show that while more Canadian women rank within the lists of the top 10 artists played, French Canadian women are so underplayed within the French language portfolio that their music received limited exposure in 2023.

## Celebrating the Canadian women and Trans\* artists whose songs spun onto the Mainstream AC Airplay charts in 2023

Belia	Lisa Leblanc
Lydia Blouin	Chloe Leclerc
Roxane Bruneau	Marie-Annick Lepine
Sofia Camara	Tate McRae
Charlotte Cardin	Ariane Moffatt
Clodelle	Naomi
Coeur De Pirate	Laurence Nerbonne
France D'Amour	Reve
Jamie Fine	Nathalie Simard
Shah Frank	Soraï
Jeanick Fournier	Lennon Stella
Leonie Gray	Trudy
Lu Kala	Celina Wolfe
Eleonore Lagace	







## 6.1. Annual Airplay on Canadian Hot AC Format Radio (2013-2023)

Hot Adult Contemporary radio is the final of the three formats in this study to be defined by playing music from across all genres. As discussed in the previous chapter on Mainstream AC, Adult Contemporary originally referred to ballad-heavy popular music that might be categorised within a range of easy listening, pop, soul, R&B, and soft rock styles. But with the evolution of the AC format and its broadening appeal, a “Hot” subformat emerged in the 1990s that programmed more “energetic” or up-tempo music than their easy-listening/softer counterparts.<sup>1</sup> In its early days, this “energetic” sound was largely through programming of pop-rock styles, but has broadened in the last two decades to include a more diverse sampling of musical genres. Today, Hot AC plays a similar playlist as Mainstream AC, but where Mainstream offers more classic hits from past decades, the Hot AC format leans toward uptempo popular music with wide appeal, including pop, rock, and hip-hop.

There are 29 Hot AC stations that report to Mediabase’s charting system. Most of the stations (24.1%) are in Ontario, with 20.7% in Alberta, 17.2% in Quebec, 10.3% stations in New Brunswick and British Columbia, 6.9% in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and one station in Newfoundland. Of all the formats included in this study, Hot AC has the most French-language reporters: 3 of the 29 stations (10.3%) program in French – all of these stations in Quebec. (One of the 4 reporting stations in Quebec programs in English.)

The dataset for analysing representation on Hot AC format radio between 2013 and 2023 includes the top 150 current singles played across this format each year, totalling 1,650 records. Within these records, 606 artists, bands, and collaborations had songs ranked within the top 150 songs played on Hot AC format radio. Table 6.1a summarises this data, revealing that 54.0% of the artists with songs played over this period are men, 19.9% are women, 0.3% are Trans\* artists, and 25.8% are bands or collaborations with men, women and Trans\* artists. Most (63.5%) of these artists are white, with Black artists representing 6.2% of the artists with songs in the top 150 songs played on Hot AC radio, 5.5% artists of colour, and 24.8% multiethnic bands and collaborations. Indigenous artists are underrepresented within this format as a solo artist or band member, but one collaboration includes an Indigenous artist.

<sup>1</sup> James Warren, “When ‘Easy’ Radio Goes ‘Soft,’ Things Can Get Hard,” Chicago Tribune (20 September 1990). For a discussion of changing conceptions of categorization within the popular music industry, see David Brackett, *Categorizing Sound: Genre and Twentieth-Century Popular Music* (UC Berkeley Press, 2015).

Collaborative recordings make up a significant component of Hot AC programming, representing 22.0% of

the artists with songs in the top 150 songs played on the format. The Table further details the composition of those collaborations, showing that collaborations led by men and women are near-equally represented as 9.0% and 10.8%, respectively. The table also reveals that Hot AC format programmed collaborations led by Trans\* artists (0.5%). Though still vastly underrepresented in the format, the improvement on Hot AC (in comparison to Country and Rock) is important to note. Recalculating representation to combine collaborations led by men, women and Trans\* artists reveals increases in the totals of men to 63.0%, women to 30.7%, Trans\* artists to 0.8% and mixed gender bands/collabs to 5.4%.

Within these 1,650 records, 1,084 songs had enough annual airplay to appear within the top 150 songs played on

Canadian Hot AC format radio. The reason for there being just 1,084 unique songs in this dataset (instead of 1,650) is that some songs receive enough annual airplay to rank within the top 150 for consecutive years: 85 songs appeared for 3 years, while 396 appeared for 2 years, and the remaining 603 songs for just 1 year. Just over half of the songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played over this period were by men (53.6%), with 29.6% by women, 0.5% by Trans\* artists, and 3.6% by mixed gender bands, and 12.7% by collaborations (with 5.4% led by men, 6.2% led by women, and 0.3% led by Trans\* artists). Here, as before, the most songs (70.1%) are by white artists, with 6.6% by Black artists, 7.7% by artists of colour, and 15.6% by multiethnic ensembles (Table 6.1b).

Within this snapshot of the artists and

songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played each year between 2013 and 2023, men emerge at a higher percentage of programming, with just over half of the songs that ranked within the top 150 songs played over the 11-year period. This increases to 59.0% when combined with collaborations led by men. White artists, too, are responsible for most of the songs, but the format tends toward greater racial diversity than Country and Rock formats largely through multiethnic ensembles and collaborations. Black, Indigenous and women of colour are underrepresented here: most of the songs programmed on Hot AC are by white women.

The following analysis investigates the rate at which these songs are played on Canadian Hot AC radio and how this programming influences contention for the Yearend Airplay Charts.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	35.4%	3.6%	0.0%	2.3%	12.7%	<b>54.0%</b>
Women	13.8%	2.1%	0.0%	3.0%	1.0%	<b>19.9%</b>
Trans* artists	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.3%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>3.8%</b>
Collaborations	11.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	10.5%	<b>22.0%</b>
With shared vocals	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	1.7%
Led by men	3.4%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	5.3%	9.0%
Led by women	7.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	3.4%	10.8%
Led by Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.5%
	<b>63.5%</b>	<b>6.2%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>24.8%</b>	

TABLE 6.1A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	38.3%	3.9%	0.0%	2.9%	8.5%	<b>53.6%</b>
Women	21.9%	2.4%	0.0%	4.7%	0.6%	<b>29.6%</b>
Trans* artists	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.5%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.9%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>3.6%</b>
Collaborations	6.5%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	5.9%	<b>12.7%</b>
With shared vocals	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.9%
Led by men	2.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	5.4%
Led by women	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	1.9%	6.1%
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%
	<b>70.1%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>7.7%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	

TABLE 6.1B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS ON CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

## 6.1.1. Airplay within the Top 150 Songs Played between 2013 to 2023

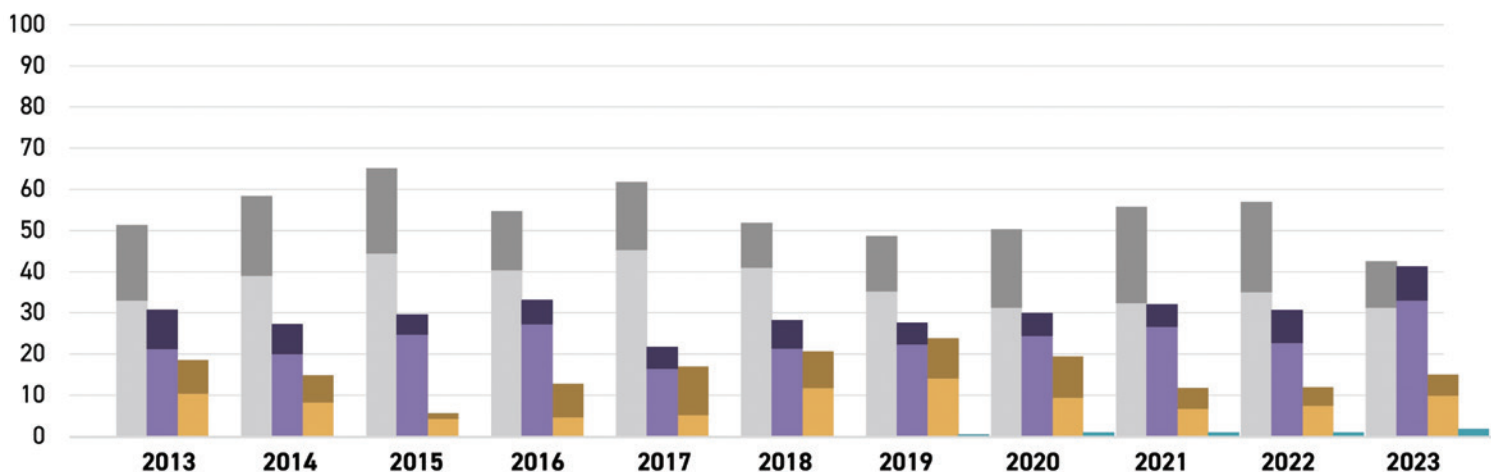
Within the top 150 songs played each year over the last decade on Hot AC format radio, songs by women have received an average of 29.8% of the airplay. Figure 6.1a maps the percentage of the distribution of airplay of songs by men, women, mixed gender bands and collaborations, and Trans\* artists revealing that songs by women that landed within the top 150 songs played may have initially declined from 30.4% in 2013 to 21.5% in 2017, and then slowly increased to a period high of 40.7% in 2023.

Most of this airplay – an average of 23.2% – was for songs by white women, and like Mainstream AC that picture holds through this 11-year period. Figure 6.1a details representation by race and ethnicity as well as gender identity, with lighter shades for white artists and darker shades for Black, Indigenous, Artists of colour, and Multiethnic bands and collaborations. Songs by women of colour average 6.6% of the airplay, and like the overall airplay for songs by women, airplay for songs by women of colour dropped in programming from 9.5% to 5.0% by 2015 and hover around a 5.0% average until increasing to 8.3% by 2023.

Songs by men averaged a higher percentage across the 11-year period (54.3%) and certainly make up the most played each year. But as with Top 40 and Mainstream AC, 2023 emerged as a year with a distribution of airplay that created a greater number of pathways for women and collaborations. Airplay for songs by white men (average 37.1%) are programmed at a higher rate than those by men of colour by an average of 17.3% and in no year did their songs surpass those by white men in terms of percentage of airplay.

Songs by Trans\* artists averaged 1.0% from about 2019 to 2023, with a peak year of 1.9% in 2023. The remaining 15.4% average of the airplay was accorded to songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations (8.2% for white ens./collabs and 7.2% for multiethnic ens./collabs). Drilling into the composition of these collaborations further, though, we see not just an increase in collaboration to a peak of 21.3% in 2019, but also steady representation of women-led collaborations. Collaborations led by men average 5.8% (with a peak of 8.3% in 2018 and ending the period at 6.1%), and collaborations led by women average 5.5% with a peak of 10.7% in 2019 declining to 7.0% by 2023. Collaborations led by Trans\* artists average 0.6%, with a peak of 2.4% in 2019.

These collaborations do increase the presence of women's voices on terrestrial Hot AC radio. Following the same pattern observed on the Top 40 and Mainstream AC formats thus far (Table 6.1c), songs by women and women-led collaborations received dwindling support from Hot AC radio, dropping from 35.0% of the top 150 most-spun songs in 2013 to a period low of 25.1% in 2017. In the years following, songs by women and women-led collaborations averaged 36.2% before ending the period at 47.7% of the top 150 songs played in 2023. Songs by men and collaborations led by men increased in programming from 57.1% in 2013 to a peak of 68.8% in 2017 and hold a 59.8% average until 2023 where they represent 47.7%.



**FIGURE 6.1A. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) WITHIN THE TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)** NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Songs by Collaborations	11.0%	9.6%	3.8%	6.9%	12.1%	17.6%	21.3%	16.2%	10.4%	10.6%	12.8%
With shared vocals	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.0%	0.3%	1.9%	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%
Led by men	5.7%	4.6%	1.1%	3.7%	7.0%	8.3%	7.9%	6.7%	6.7%	5.7%	6.1%
Led by women	4.7%	5.0%	2.7%	3.2%	3.6%	8.9%	10.7%	7.0%	3.2%	4.6%	7.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	2.4%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%

TABLE 6.1C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS BY COLLABORATIONS ON CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO'S YEAREND REPORTS (2013-2023)

## 6.1.2. Representation on the Yearend Hot AC Airplay Charts between 2013 and 2023

Mediabase's Yearend Hot AC Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played in a calendar year. They are the songs with enough airplay to have peaked within the top positions of the weekly charts – many achieving a #1 peak position. Drilling into the yearend reports to these top 50-positions offers greater perspective on those most-played songs and whose voices are heard most on terrestrial radio.

Table 6.1d summarises representation of the 247 artists, bands, and collaborations with songs ranked within the Yearend Country Airplay Charts, 52.8% of them men, 24.2% women, 0.8% Trans\* artists, and 2.8% mixed gender bands and 19.4% collaborations. Most of the artists are white (57.8%), with 7.6% Black artists, 6.0% artists of colour, and 28.6% multiethnic ensembles. None of the songs in the yearend Hot AC charts are Indigenous.

Over the 11-year period studied, 431 songs appeared on the Yearend Charts. Six of the songs charted for 3 consecutive years, 107 songs charted for 2 years, and the remaining 318 songs by 1 year. As Table 6.1e details, 53.4% were by men, 32.0% were by women, 0.5% were by Trans\* artists, 2.8% were by mixed gender bands, 11.3% by collaborations (5.5% led by men, 5.1% by women, and 0.2% by Trans\* artists). As has been the trend so far, most of the songs are by white artists (67.5%), with 6.7% by Black artists, 8.4% by artists of colour, and 17.4% by multiethnic ensembles and collaborations. Here, as with the broader top 150 songs played on

Hot AC radio, the Hot AC charts appear more diverse than Country and Rock radio, again, due to a higher representation of multiethnic bands and collaborations. And the percentage of songs by men is still higher than by women – even when the percentage of collaborations led by men and women are included into the calculation.

Songs by women average 30.7% of the titles within the 50-position yearend charts, reflecting the same general trends as with discussion of airplay of the top 150 songs played annually. Figure 6.1b maps the decline of songs by women from 28.0% of the yearend charts in 2013, down to 20.0% by 2017, after which songs begin to increase and capture 40.0% of the charts in 2023. As with overall airplay, songs by white women appear in the chart at a higher percentage than those by women of colour – averaging 24.2% for songs by white women and 6.5% by women of colour.

Songs by men average 54.7% of the yearend charts, averaging about 60.0% from 2013 to 2017. After this point, their songs drop to 44.0% by 2019, before another peak to 56.0% and drop back to 44.0% in 2023. Most of these songs are by white men (averaging 36.7%), with a significant gap between their songs and songs by men of colour in most years of this period. From 2013 to 2019, the gap expands from 22.0% to 32.0%, closing in 2020 to 2022 to about 7.0% and widens again to 24.0% in 2023.

Songs by Trans\* artists are absent from the yearend charts in most years of this study, with the exception of 1 song (2.0%) in both 2021 and 2023.

The remaining charting songs are those by mixed gender bands and collaborations, whose songs average 14.2% of the

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	31.1%	4.4%	0.0%	1.6%	15.7%	<b>52.8%</b>
Women	16.6%	2.8%	0.0%	4.4%	0.4%	<b>24.2%</b>
Trans* artists	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.8%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	<b>2.8%</b>
Collaborations	7.3%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	11.7%	<b>19.4%</b>
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%
Led by men	2.0%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	6.9%	9.3%
Led by women	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%	8.9%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%
	<b>57.8%</b>	<b>7.6%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	

TABLE 6.1D. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE YEAREND HOT AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	35.5%	4.6%	0.0%	3.3%	10.0%	<b>53.4%</b>
Women	24.8%	1.9%	0.0%	5.1%	0.2%	<b>32.0%</b>
Trans* artists	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.5%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	<b>2.8%</b>
Collaborations	4.4%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	6.7%	<b>11.3%</b>
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
Led by men	1.4%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	5.5%
Led by women	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	5.1%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%
	<b>67.5%</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	

TABLE 6.1E. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE YEAREND HOT AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

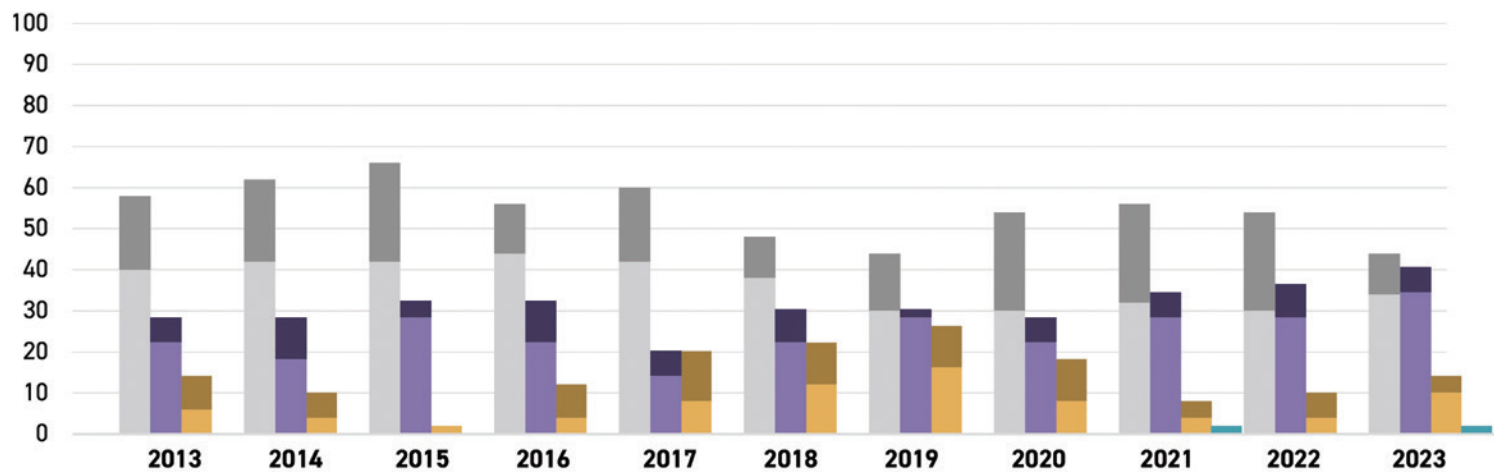


FIGURE 6.1B. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE YEAREND HOT AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Collaborations	8.0%	8.0%	0.0%	6.0%	12.0%	18.0%	24.0%	14.0%	8.0%	10.0%	14.0%
With shared vocals	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Led by men	6.0%	6.0%	0.0%	4.0%	8.0%	8.0%	10.0%	6.0%	4.0%	8.0%	6.0%
Led by women	2.0%	2.0%	0.0%	2.0%	2.0%	10.0%	12.0%	6.0%	4.0%	2.0%	8.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

TABLE 6.1F. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS BY COLLABORATIONS ON THE YEAREND HOT AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023)

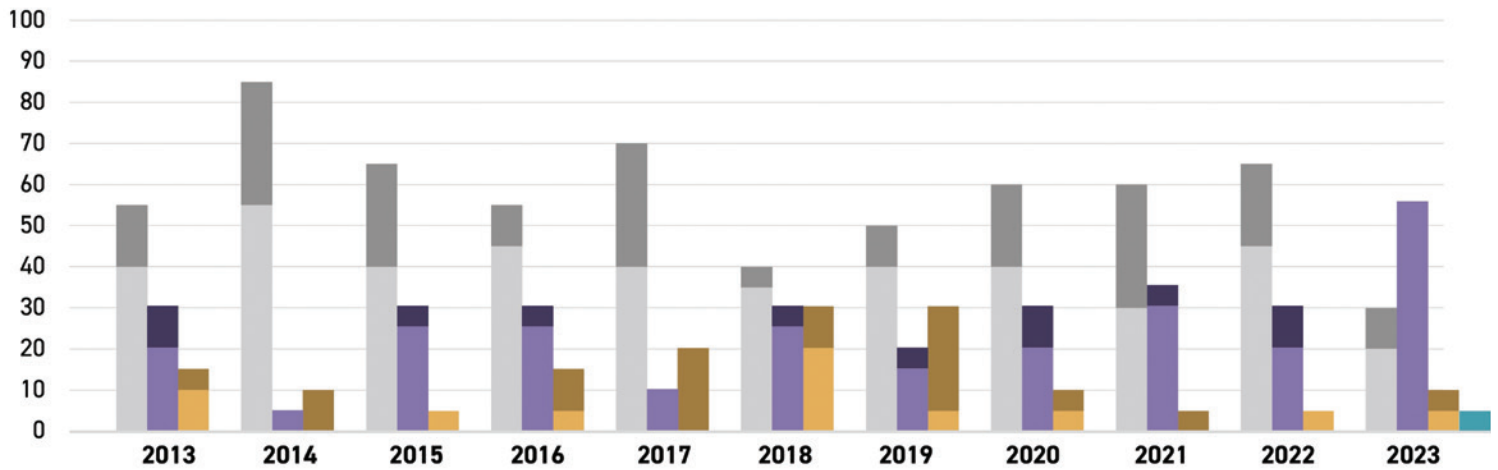


FIGURE 6.1C. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 20 OF THE YEAREND HOT AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

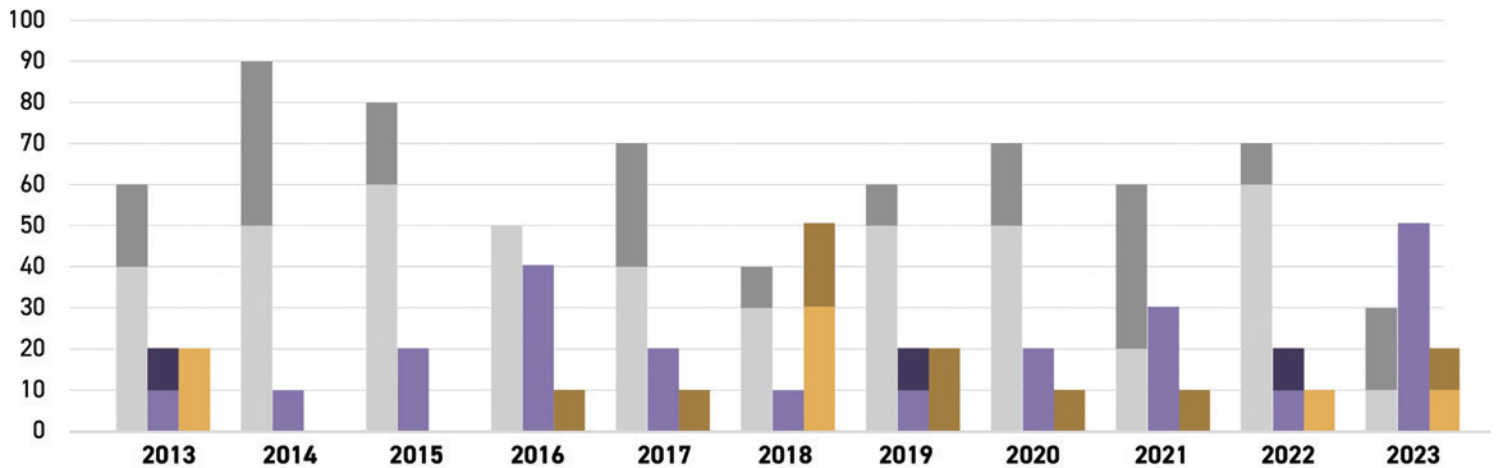


FIGURE 6.1D. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) IN THE TOP 10 OF THE YEAREND HOT AC AIRPLAY CHARTS (2013-2023) NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.



charts (7.1% for white bands and 7.1% for multiethnic bands). As with the discussion surrounding collaborations above, yearend chart activity reflects the same increase toward 2019 where collaborations peak at 24.0% of the charts and then decline to a low of 8.0% in 2021 and end the period at 14.0% of the 2023 yearend charts. Table 6.1f offers the same detail as discussed with airplay of the top 150 most played songs, that collaborations led by men (averaging 6.0%) and women (averaging 4.5%) are close in their 11-year average. Collaborations with Trans\* artists in the lead average 0.4%, but it's imperative to observe here that nine years have no songs featuring a Trans\* artist, and the 2 remaining years have 1 song (2.0%).

Drilling deeper into the chart, songs by women are underrepresented from the top positions from 2013 to 2018, after which point songs by women begin to appear in higher numbers in the Top 20 and Top 10 and dominate all top rankings in 2023. Figures 6.1c-6.1e track representation in the chart's top positions across this 11-year period showing that songs by women average 27.7% of the Top 20, but again the trajectory follows the pathway of reduced airplay resulting in decline from 2013 to 2017 (30.0% down to 10.0%, with just 5.0% in 2014) and then average 30.0% from 2018 to 2022 and end the year at a period high of 55.0% in 2023. Most of these songs are by white women (average of 22.7% versus 5.0% for women of colour) – with no songs by women of colour in the Top 20 in 2014, 2017, and 2023.

Songs by women are not entirely absent from the Top 10 (Figure 6.1d), but average 23.6% across the period before ending at 50.0% in 2023. Again, songs by white women are represented at a much higher rate across this period (an average of 20.9% versus 2.7% for women of colour), and there are no songs by women of colour in most years (2014-2018, 2020-2021, and 2023). Just two songs by women receive enough airplay to top the yearend charts at the end of this 11-year period (Figure 6.1e). Dua Lipa's "Levitating" and Miley

Cyrus's "Flowers" were the most played songs of 2021 and 2023 (respectively).

Two collaborations featuring Trans\* artists received enough airplay to be included within the Top 20 of the yearend reports. Both songs are by Sam Smith, including their collaboration with Normani "Dancing With a Stranger", which reached #7 in 2019, and their pathbreaking collaboration with Kim Petras on "Unholy" at #19 in 2023. Because Smith's collaboration with Normani falls within the mixed-gender category, their song is not represented in Figures 6.1d (Top 20 songs) and 6.1e (Top 10 songs). As discussed in the section on Top 40 radio, Smith and Petras were the first trans-nonbinary and transgender artists to top the Billboard Hot 100 chart, and made history when they won Best Pop Duo/band at the 2023 Grammy Awards.<sup>1</sup> Their high-ranking within both the Top 40 and Hot AC formats in 2023 is a significant moment for both formats and hopefully a pathway forward for more inclusive programming.

These findings reveal (as with Top 40 and Mainstream AC) an initial reduction in airplay and (by extension) chart activity for songs by women, with marginal increase until a standout year in 2023. Songs by men, then, were prioritised in programming through this period, and even in years of lower representation songs by men are programmed at a higher level of representation than women. Songs by men average 57.7% of the Top 20 with a peak of 85.0% in 2014 and 70.0% in 2017. Despite a drop (against a rise of collaborations), their songs maintain a strong 50.0% average until 2023 where their songs capture 30.0% of the Top 20. The trend holds for the Top 10, where their songs peak at 90.0% in 2014 and average 65.0% across the period before declining to 30.0% in 2023. As with the Top 40 format, their songs capture 7 of the #1 positions across this 11-year period plus 2 male-led bands, increasing the dominance of this top-spun position to 9 songs (81.8%).

1 Toyin Owoseje, "Sam Smith and Kim Petras are First Nonbinary and Trans Artists to Reach Number 1 on Billboard Chart," CNN (26 October 2022); Grammys, "Sam Smith and Kim Petras Make History By Winning Best Pop Duo/Group Performance for 'Unholy'." Grammy News (30 January 2023).

The histogram in Figure 6.1f offers another perspective to programming on Hot AC radio for the top 150 songs played over this 11-year period. This Figure graphs the 1,084 songs by their peak position achieved and by the number of titles within each 10-position range of the top 150 songs played ranked in the dataset. While songs by women appear at a higher rate than viewed with Country and Rock formats, this histogram suggests a still inequitable programming ecosystem. And indeed, the previous results of the Hot AC revealed that songs by women capture about 29.0% (or a third) of programming and it's only in 2023 when their songs appear at a higher rate of the top 150 most played (40.7%), the chart (40.0%) and its top positions (~50.0%). The histogram reinforces this, because not only do songs by men capture most of the Top 10 positions (2.5 times more), but they are still capturing more songs in each 10-position range of the reports studied here – an average of 1.5 times more from position 11 to 110. Within the bottom 40 positions, that cap increases to 2.8 times more.

These findings hold true with consideration of the collaborative recordings programmed with the capacity to peak within the Top 20. Collaborations make up 11.4% of the Top 20 songs over this 11-year period, 6.1% led by men, 4.2% led by women, and 1.0% led by Trans\* artists. Combining the totals by collaborations by

their lead artists increases all groups of artists, bringing the percentage of songs led by men to 62.4%, by women to 32.9%, Trans\* artists to 1.5%, and mixed gender ensembles down to 3.3%.

2013	<b>HO HEY</b> Lumineers
2014	<b>RUDE</b> Magic!
2015	<b>SHUT UP AND DANCE</b> Walk The Moon
2016	<b>CAKE BY THE OCEAN</b> DNCE
2017	<b>SHAPE OF YOU</b> Ed Sheeran
2018	<b>BODY</b> Loud Luxury w/Brando
2019	<b>SUCKER</b> Jonas Brothers
2020	<b>BLINDING LIGHTS</b> The Weeknd
2021	<b>LEVITATING</b> Dua Lipa
2022	<b>GHOST</b> Justin Bieber
2023	<b>FLOWERS</b> Miley Cyrus

FIGURE 6.1E. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) AT THE #1 POSITION OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO'S YEAREND CHARTS (2013-2023)

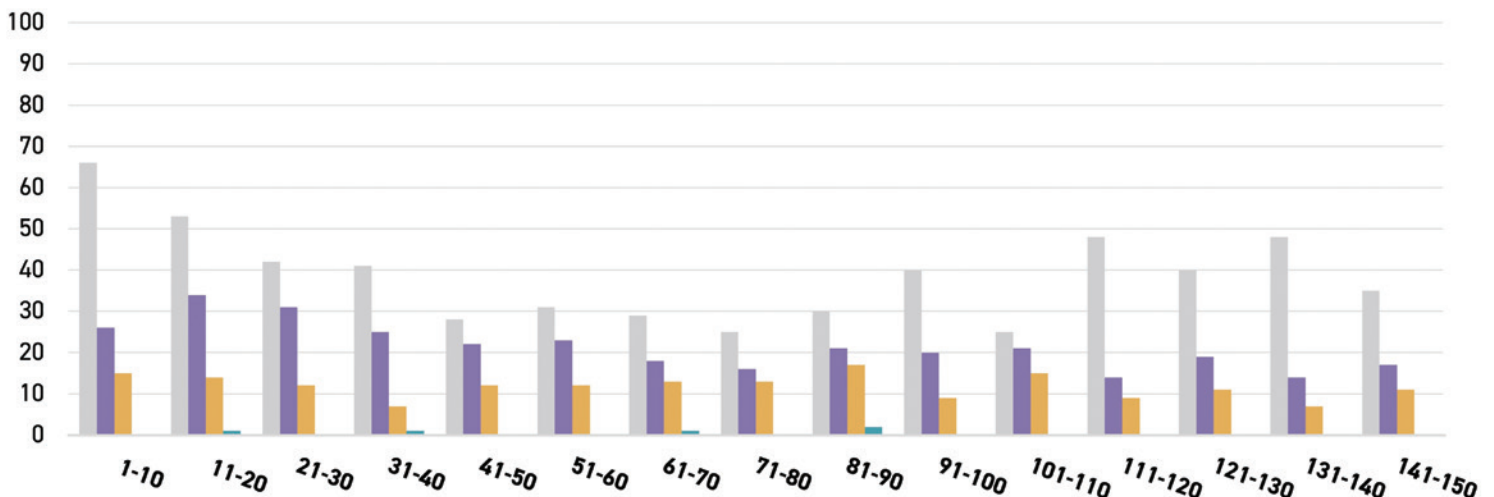


FIGURE 6.1F. HISTOGRAM BY PEAK POSITION (BY NUMBER OF TITLES) OF SONGS WITHIN TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN HOT AC FORMAT RADIO (2013-2023)

## 6.2. Weekly Airplay on Canadian Hot AC Format Radio in 2023

Weekly airplay reports for the 29-reporting Hot AC stations offer the opportunity to explore more deeply the programming practices of the format, including the rate of airplay for all songs, the distribution of spins by song type (for current singles, recurrent tracks, and gold catalogue records) and by time of day – all within the context of Canadian Content regulations. How much are CanCon songs played? What type of song? And at what time of day? This section explores these questions more deeply, then investigates how programming influences contention for the weekly Airplay Charts.

This dataset includes the 188,352 records capturing every song played on the format, 42,753 for current singles, 8,680 for recurrent tracks, and 136,919 for gold records. Within this dataset capturing 2023 airplay, 4,793 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs played across the 29 stations that Mediabase monitors. As Table 6.2a summarises, 63.6% of those artists are men, 16.0% are women, 0.1% are Trans\* artists, 6.6% are mixed gender bands and 13.7% are collaborations. Most of the artists are white (64.4%), while 14.4% are Black, 0.7% are Indigenous, 4.0% are artists of colour, and 16.5% are multiethnic bands. Although there appears to be greater racial and ethnic diversity than Country and Rock, the notable low percentage for Indigenous artists is concerning for the hit-driven format.

These artists were responsible for the 11,925 songs that were played across the 29 reporting stations in 2023. As Table 6.2b summarises, 66.5% of those songs were by men, 20.5% by women, 0.2% by Trans\* artists, 6.9% by mixed gender bands and 5.9% by collaborations. Combining the percentage of songs by male-led and female-led bands to those by men and women, there is an increase to 69.4% and 22.9%, respectively. Most of the songs (73.6%) were by white artists, with 11.8% by Black artists, 0.5% by Indigenous artists, 4.5% by artists of colour, and 9.6% by multiethnic ensembles.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	43.6%	9.0%	0.5%	2.2%	8.3%	<b>63.6%</b>
Women	10.0%	3.2%	0.2%	1.7%	0.9%	<b>16.0%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.5%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%	<b>6.6%</b>
Collaborations	6.2%	1.6%	0.0%	0.1%	5.8%	<b>13.7%</b>
With shared vocals	0.3%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	<b>1.2%</b>
Led by men	2.8%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	<b>6.7%</b>
Led by women	3.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.1%	1.7%	<b>5.4%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	<b>0.4%</b>
	<b>64.4%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>16.5%</b>	

TABLE 6.2A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	51.9%	7.3%	0.3%	1.9%	5.1%	<b>66.5%</b>
Women	14.1%	3.3%	0.2%	2.4%	0.5%	<b>20.5%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	<b>0.2%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.7%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	<b>6.9%</b>
Collaborations	2.8%	0.7%	0.0%	0.1%	2.3%	<b>5.9%</b>
With shared vocals	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	<b>0.4%</b>
Led by men	1.3%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	<b>2.9%</b>
Led by women	1.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.7%	<b>2.4%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	<b>0.2%</b>
	<b>73.6%</b>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>	

TABLE 6.2B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

## 6.2.1. Airplay of All Songs Played on Hot AC Format Radio in 2023

The following analysis investigates the rate at which songs by women are played on Canadian Hot AC radio. This section looks more deeply at the amount of airplay overall, as well as discusses the distribution of spins for songs by Canadian Content status, by song type (current, recurrent, and gold), the time of day at which they are played, and by chart activity.

Songs by women received 32.9% of the overall airplay on Hot AC format radio in

2023. Table 6.2c summarises airplay data for the year, providing granular detail by race and ethnicity of the artists whose songs were played. Songs by men received 51.7% of the airplay, while songs by Trans\* artists received 0.2%, by mixed gender bands received 3.7%, and collaborations received 11.5% of the airplay.

This same information on airplay is graphed in Figure 6.2a for a view of the monthly distribution of spins, revealing that the distribution of spins was consistent with the statistics in the table above. There was no significant fluctuation in programming from month to month with songs by men averaging 51.6%, with 32.8% by women, 0.2% by Trans\* artists, and 15.4% for mixed gender bands and collaborations.

Songs by white artists consistently average 69.1% of the airplay across this 12-month period, with 12.1% for songs by Black artists, 0.1% for songs by Indigenous artists, 5.3% by artists of colour, and 13.4% by multiethnic ensembles. Songs by all women of colour receive half the airplay of those by all men of colour.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	35.0%	6.9%	0.1%	2.5%	7.2%	<b>51.7%</b>
Women	25.3%	4.3%	0.0%	2.8%	0.5%	<b>32.9%</b>
Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.2%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	<b>3.7%</b>
Collaborations	6.2%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	<b>11.5%</b>
With shared vocals	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.4%
Led by men	1.4%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	4.7%
Led by women	4.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	5.6%
Led by Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.8%
	<b>69.1%</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	<b>5.3%</b>	<b>13.4%</b>	

TABLE 6.2C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

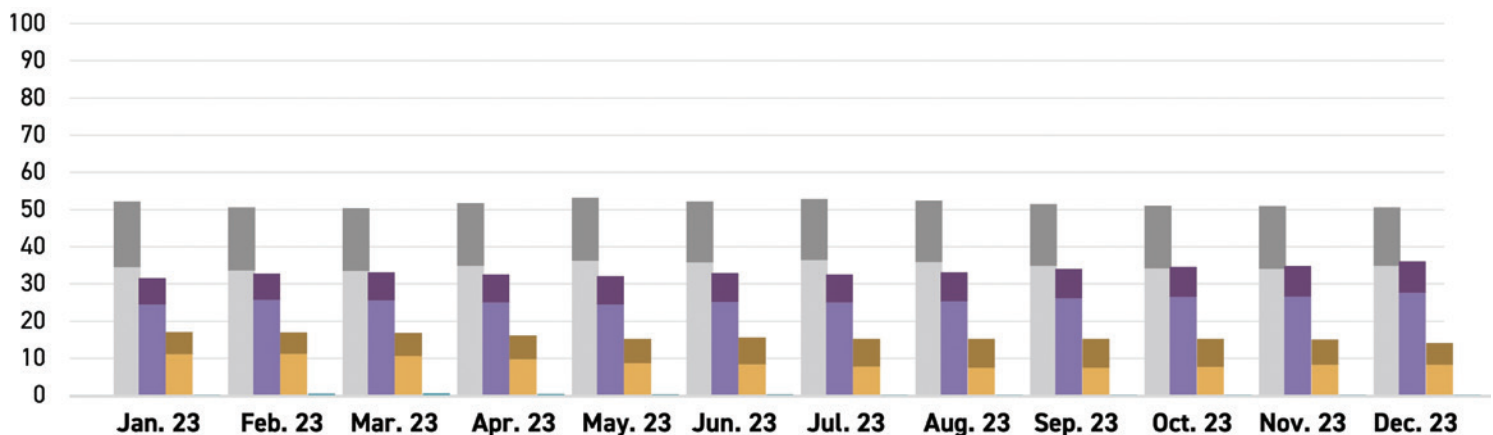


FIGURE 6.2A. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) FOR SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN HOT AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

### 6.2.1.1. Evaluation of Airplay by CanCon Status

What this distribution means for Canadian artists is particularly important in the context of the federal regulations guiding programming and how it shapes exposure for Canadian audiences, and impacts women in the industry. Most of the airplay – 64.2% – went to non-CanCon songs. An average of 35.8% of the airplay in 2023 was for songs certified as CanCon. The format appears on one level to be meeting its station requirements, which will be further explored below in discussion of the distribution by daypart (which is a critical element to the requirement).

Distribution of airplay by CanCon certification is detailed in Figure 6.2b, further defining the distribution of airplay in 2023. Given what is already known about representation on Hot AC radio, it is unsurprising that songs by women make up smaller percentages than songs by men within both non-CanCon and CanCon songs, with 22.7% and 10.2%, respectively. These percentages increase when adding to them the airplay for songs by women-led collaborations – to 35.6% for nonCanCon songs and 12.8% for CanCon songs. With these tabulations combined, songs led by women received 38.4% of the airplay on Hot AC radio in 2023.

Table 6.2d calculates the distribution of airplay by certification status, showing that non-CanCon songs by women make

up a larger percentage of the airplay for songs that are not CanCon (37.7%), while CanCon songs register 28.5% of the airplay within the programming accorded to Canadian songs. As above, combining these percentages with the airplay for songs by women-led bands raises the percentage for both – to 39.8% and 35.9% (respectively) – with more songs than Country and Rock-driven formats, but room for improvement for women in the industry.

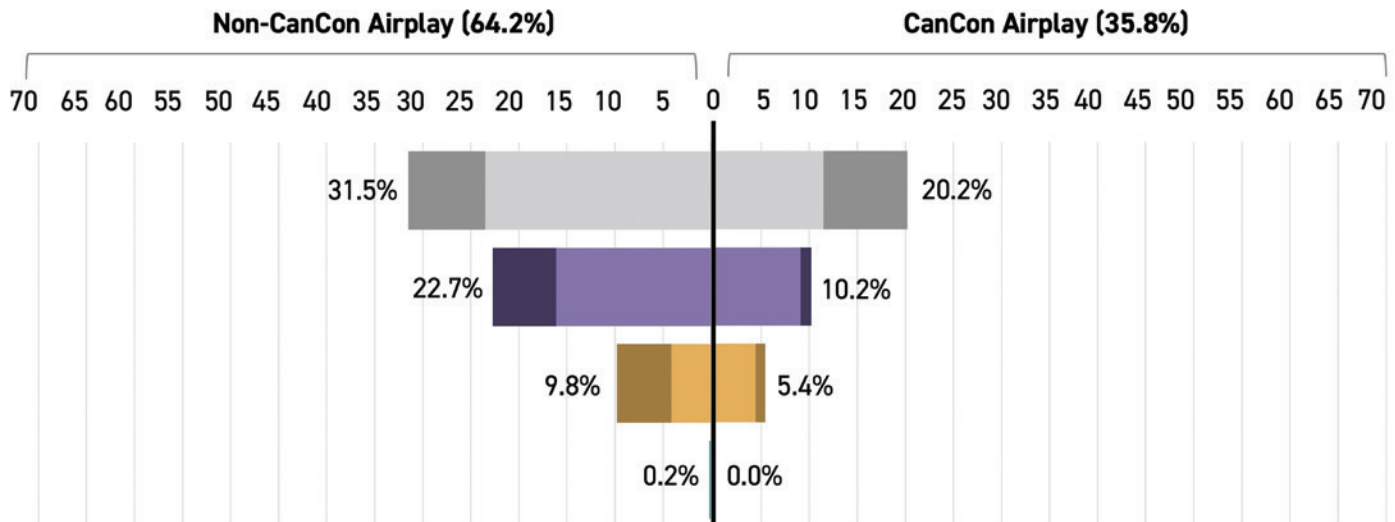


FIGURE 6.2B. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN HOT AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [64.2%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [35.8%]
Songs by Men	48.9%	56.4%
Songs by Women	35.3%	28.5%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.4%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	3.6%	4.0%
Songs by Collaborations	11.8%	11.1%
With shared vocals	0.5%	0.2%
Led by men	5.5%	3.5%
Led by women	4.5%	7.4%
Led by Trans* artists	1.3%	0.0%

TABLE 6.2D. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN HOT AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023

## 6.2.1.2. Evaluation of Airplay for Songs by Time of Day

The time of day at which these songs are heard is of critical importance to the development of a musician's career. As described earlier, the 24-hour cycle is divided into five dayparts, with the three day-time periods – the Morning Drive (AMD from 6:00-10:00), the Midday period (MID from 10:00-15:00) and the Afternoon Drive (PMD from 15:00 to 19:00) – are the most important for exposure as they are the periods with the highest rate of listenership. The Overnight (OVN from 0:00 to 6:00) and Evening (EVE from 19:00 to 24:00) periods frame the day and are periods with a higher percentage of songs played due not just in part to their slightly longer duration, but also the

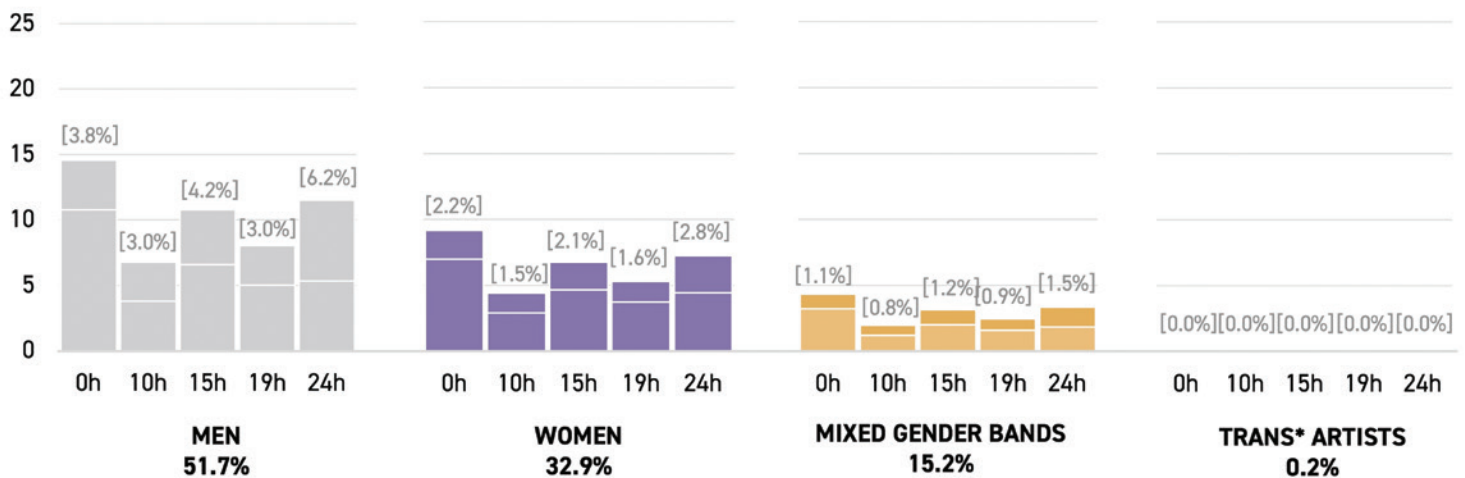
reduced amount of news and specialty programming (features, interviews, etc.).

Figure 6.2c tracks the distribution of airplay by daypart, graphing the data in accordance with the 24-hour cycle beginning with the Overnights on the left, through the Morning Drive, Midday and Afternoon Drive, to the Evening on the right for each group of artists. The columns are separated by a white line to distinguish between non-CanCon airplay (at the bottom of the column) and CanCon airplay (at the top of the column).

The highest percentage of airplay for all artists occurs in the Overnight and Evening periods, as expected. For all groups, about 28.0% of their overall airplay occurs in the Overnight, with 13.0% in the Morning, 21.0% in the Midday, 16.0% in the Afternoon, and 22.0% in the Evening. Despite this even distribution for songs by men, women, Trans\* artists, and

mixed gender bands and collaborations, though, the distribution overall shows considerable inequity for women and mixed gender bands, whose songs are under-programmed in each daypart.

Half of radio programming occurs during the three daypart hours (Morning, Midday, and Afternoon) at 49.7% of the spins. Federal broadcasting regulations require that Canadian radio play 35% Canadian Content between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to ensure listeners are exposed to music of Canadian artists. While the periods to not align perfectly (the Afternoon daypart ends at 7:00 p.m.), Between 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Hot AC radio played 36.6% CanCon songs in 2023, with 20.5% for songs by men, 10.5% for songs by women, 0.0% for Trans\* artists, and 5.6% for mixed gender bands and collaborations. Across these periods, CanCon songs by women received half the airplay as both CanCon songs by men and non-CanCon songs by women.



**FIGURE 6.2C. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY BY TIME OF DAY FOR ALL SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN HOT AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

	SONGS BY MEN	SONGS BY WOMEN	SONGS BY TRANS* ARTISTS	SONGS BY MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
<b>OVERNIGHT (0:00-6:00)</b>	47 [34/12]	29 [22/7]	1 [1/0]	14 [10/4]
<b>AM DRIVE (6:00-10:00)</b>	22 [12/10]	14 [9/5]	0 [0/0]	7 [4/3]
<b>MIDDAY (10:00-15:00)</b>	34 [21/13]	22 [15/7]	0 [0/0]	10 [6/4]
<b>PM DRIVE (15:00-19:00)</b>	26 [16/10]	17 [12/5]	0 [0/0]	8 [5/3]
<b>EVENING (19:00-24:00)</b>	37 [17/20]	23 [14/9]	0 [0/0]	11 [6/5]
	<b>165</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>50</b>

**TABLE 6.2E. DISTRIBUTION OF SPINS FOR SONGS BY TIME OF DAY ON CANADIAN HOT AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE THE DISTRIBUTION FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS (RESPECTIVELY)



To provide greater perspective on what this might sound like for radio listeners, Table 6.2e presents a breakdown of how this translates at the level of daytime programming to provide an example of what a typical 24-hour cycle would look like for the average station and listener. Across the 29 reporting stations, a high average of about 321 songs are distributed within this dataset per day, with 165 songs by men, 105 by women, 1 by a Trans\* artist, and 50 by mixed gender bands and collaborations.

For women, the distribution across all five dayparts shows that songs by men are programmed at a 1.6 times more than those by women. While this does mean that songs by men are played (and thus, heard) more throughout each daypart, songs by women average about 4 an hour between 6am and 7pm.

Within this programming, non-CanCon songs by women are played about 2 times more than CanCon songs – except for in the overnights when the gap increases to 3 times more. The trends thus far show that songs by men and male-led bands are prioritised within programming and that non-CanCon songs are played at a higher rate than CanCon songs, but the gap between songs by men and women is not as wide as Country and Rock, much the same as Mainstream AC. CanCon songs by both men and women are underplayed on the format, those by women are in a more critical place concerning their exposure to Canadian audiences and the opportunities that then emerge from high-spun playlist positions.

### 6.2.1.3. Evaluation of Airplay for Current, Recurrent and Gold Status Songs

Radio airplay is divided into three different song “types” – current singles that are vying for top-programming (and, by extension, chart) contention, recurrent tracks that have reached their peak programming position but are still in regular rotation, and gold catalogue

records of older but “canonical” songs that have been retained by a station for long-term programming.

Figure 6.2d tracks the breakdown of airplay by these three programming types, showing on the left the overall airplay on Hot AC format radio, parsed by airplay for current singles (28.8%), recurrent tracks (17.7%), and gold records (53.5%) – the latter (more canonical “gold” records) making up a larger component of the overall programming. Current singles by women (11.5%) receive nearly the same percentage of airplay to those by men (12.5%), but the gap between them grows through recurrent tracks (5.8% for women and 9.5% for men) and gold songs (15.6% for women and 29.7% for men). This suggests that current singles by women were accorded near-equal airplay distribution to songs by men, but that fewer of their songs transitioned into the recurrent airplay pathway to becoming gold catalogue songs.

This Figure also displays information for CanCon songs, with the top half of each bar representing airplay for these songs within each category of airplay. What emerges through this Figure is a deeper understanding of airplay for CanCon songs by women, whose current singles (2.8%) receive one-third the spins for non-CanCon songs by women (8.7%) in a year that showed gains in airplay for songs by women (as evidenced in the increase across the last few years of the top 150 songs played annually). While most of the airplay for CanCon songs by women lies in this gold category of airplay (at 5.0%), these songs are half the percentage of gold non-CanCon songs by women (10.5%) and just less than half of the CanCon songs by men (11.2%). CanCon songs by women, then, are not programmed with a view to creating significant exposure through the top positions in station playlists and are thus retained through recurrences to gold songs at a much lower rate than songs by non-Canadian women and Canadian men.

These findings are further highlighted in lists of the Top 10 men, women, Trans\* artists, and mixed gender bands and collaborations by their spins (Table 6.2f), which shows that 5 of the women rank in the top 10 overall, all of them within the

top 20. While remarkable to see women rank so high within the most played artists, this Table confirms findings about the placement of CanCon songs by women, as 3 of the top 10 women are Canadian. More critically, the gap between the top played artist (Taylor Swift) and the three Canadian women (Tate McRae, Reve, and Alessia Cara) ranges 54.0% to 71.2%.

While most of the spins for Alessia Cara's (99.9%) and Reve's (100.0%) songs are CanCon, 11.6% of Tate McRae's are not

designated CanCon. The same is true for the Canadian men within the top 10 most played list: while most of the accumulated airplay for each of the Canadian men in the top 10 list is CanCon designated, a significant component of Shawn Mendes's (35.3%) airplay is not. The Weeknd's (99.9%), Virginia to Vegas's (100.0%), and Talk's (100.0%) songs are majority CanCon designated, as is the airplay for Presto Pablo's collaboration with Banx & Ranx (100.0%).

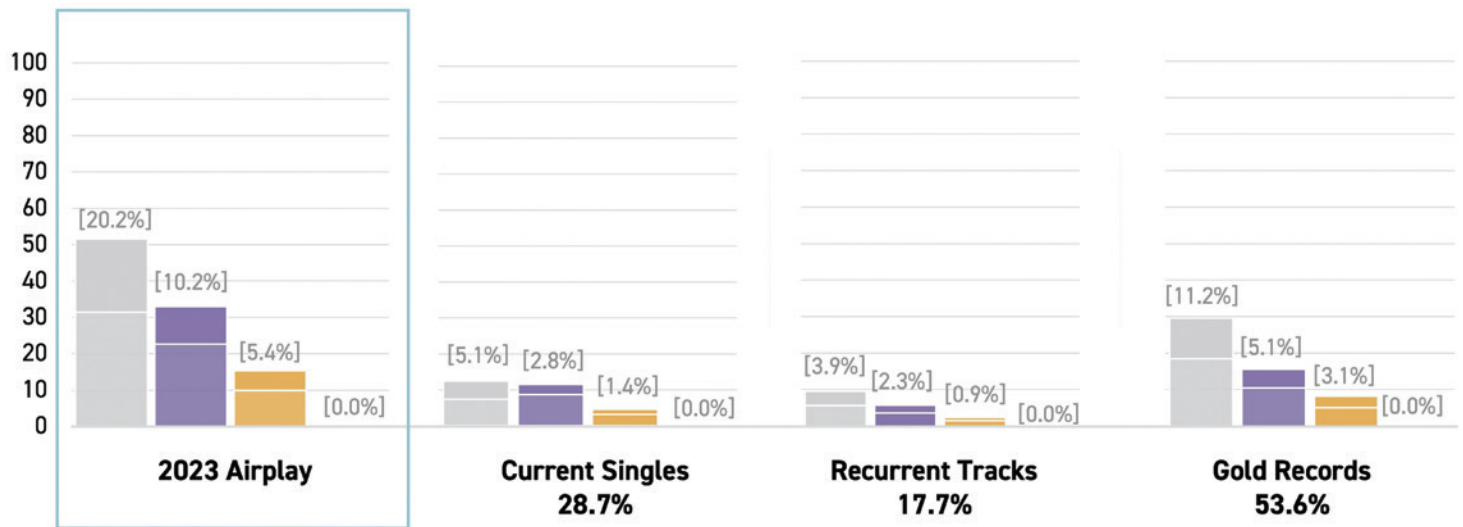


FIGURE 6.2D. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CURRENT, RECURRENT AND GOLD SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN HOT AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

TOP 10 MEN	TOP 10 WOMEN	TOP 10 TRANS* ARTISTS	TOP 10 MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
3 Ed Sheeran, 67,218	1 Taylor Swift, 107,867	37 Sam Smith w/Kim Petras, 18,726	10 Rema w/Selena Gomez, 35,080
4 The Weeknd, 65,218 CA	2 Miley Cyrus, 71,581	97 Sam Smith, 7,089	15 David Guetta w/Bebe Rexha, 30,488
8 Harry Styles, 43,176	5 P!nk, 57,790	626 Demi Lovato, 589	23 Walk off the Earth, 21,266 CA
9 Shawn Mendes, 35,367 [CA]	6 Dua Lipa, 53,948	955 LP, 123	56 Loud Luxury w/Two Friends & Bebe Rexha, 12,259 CA
12 Virginia to Vegas, 31,911 CA	7 Tate McRae, 48,592 [CA]	1066 Lil Uzi Vert, 12	59 Elton John w/Britney Spears, 11,754
13 Lewis Capaldi, 31,879	11 Reve, 32,018 CA	1074 Sam Smith w/Demi Lovato, 4	60 Black Eyed Peas, 11,739
17 Post Malone, 23,289	14 Alessia Cara, 31,092 CA	1077 Iniko, 1	68 Loud Luxury w/Kiddo, 9,858 CA
19 Bruno Mars, 22,917	16 Sia, 38,884	1077 Kehlani, 1	81 Felix Cartal w/Sophie Simmons, 8,641 CA
22 Talk, 21,536 CA	18 Olivia Rodrigo, 23,223	1077 Rykka, 1 CA	82 David Guetta w/Anne-Marie & Coi Leray, 8,595
25 Preston Pablo w/Banx & Ranx, 20,713 CA	[20] Katy Perry, 22,521		83 Elton John w/Dua Lipa, 8,485

TABLE 6.2F. TOP 10 MOST PLAYED ARTISTS ON CANADIAN HOT AC FORMAT RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: SQUARE BRACKETS FRAMING THE CANADIAN FLAG DENOTE CANADIAN ARTISTS WHOSE ACCUMULATED SPINS ARE FOR SONGS THAT ARE BOTH CANCON CERTIFIED AND NOT.

## 6.2.2. Representation on the Weekly Airplay Charts for Hot AC Radio in 2023

Airplay charts offer an important lens not just on representation in an industry, but also the inner workings of programming practices. They offer a view into the most repeated current singles in a format, but also how the distribution impacts Canadian artists within the industry ecosystem. Mediabase's Airplay Charts rank the top 50 songs played each week on radio.

In 2023, 166 solo artists, bands, and collaborations had songs on the weekly Hot AC Airplay charts, 54.3% are men, 25.3% are women, 0.6% are Trans\* artists, 3.6% are mixed gender bands, and 16.2% are collaborations. As Table 6.2g summarises, 69.4% of the artists are

white, while 12.0% are Black, 6.0% are artists of colour, and 12.6% are multiethnic bands. None of the charting songs were by Indigenous artists.

Over the course of the year, 203 songs charted, with the same gender and racial representation as detailed throughout this section on Canadian Hot AC programming in 2023. As Table 6.2h summarises, 51.1% of those songs were by men, 31.1% by women, 0.5% by Trans\* artists, 3.0% by mixed gender bands and 13.3% by collaborations. Most songs were by white artists (71.9%), with 11.3% by Black artists, 0.0% by Indigenous artists, 6.4% by artists of colour, and 10.4% by multiethnic bands. Combining the percentage of songs by bands led by men and women to the tallies for those by men and women, increases the percentage to 59.1% and 36.0%, respectively.

### 6.2.2.1. Evaluation of Songs on the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

Scaling up to the 2,600 records for the top 50 songs ranked each week in 2023, songs by men captured 45.8% of the chart, with songs by women at 35.3%, by Trans\* artists at 0.6%, by mixed gender bands at 3.6%, and collaborations at 14.7% of the chart (Table 6.2i). As with programming, most of the charting songs (69.1%) are by white artists, with 13.7% of the charting songs by Black artists, and 0.0% by Indigenous artists, 6.7% by artists of colour, and 10.5% by multiethnic bands.

Figure 6.2e tracks the distribution across the calendar year, revealing that songs by women averaged 35.1% of the charts throughout the year, increasing from 33.5%

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	41.1%	5.4%	0.0%	3.0%	4.8%	<b>54.3%</b>
Women	14.5%	6.6%	0.0%	3.0%	1.2%	<b>25.3%</b>
Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.6%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	<b>3.6%</b>
Collaborations	10.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.4%	<b>16.2%</b>
With shared vocals	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	1.2%
Led by men	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	8.4%
Led by women	4.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	6.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
	<b>69.4%</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>	

TABLE 6.2G. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS WITH SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN HOT AC AIRPLAY CHARTS IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	39.9%	4.9%	0.0%	3.4%	3.9%	<b>51.1%</b>
Women	20.7%	6.4%	0.0%	3.0%	1.0%	<b>31.1%</b>
Trans* artists	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.5%</b>
Mixed gender bands	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	<b>3.0%</b>
Collaborations	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	<b>13.3%</b>
With shared vocals	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	1.0%
Led by men	3.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	6.9%
Led by women	3.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	4.9%
Led by Trans* artists	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
	<b>71.9%</b>	<b>11.3%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.4%</b>	<b>10.4%</b>	

TABLE 6.2H. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS ON THE WEEKLY CANADIAN HOT AC AIRPLAY CHARTS IN 2023

in January to end the year at 42.4% in December. Most of these charting songs (22.2%) were for white women, with an average of 8.1% for Black women, 3.6% for women of colour, and 1.2% for multiethnic ensembles.

Songs by men averaged 45.8% of the chart, with 47.0% in January to a peak of 54.5% in August and ending the year at 41.6%. As with songs by women, most (34.4%) were by white men, with 5.6% by Black men, 3.0% by men of colour, and 2.9% by multiethnic ensembles.

Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations average 18.5%. Their songs initially increase to a peak of 23.5% in March and then average about 16.4% from July to the end of the calendar year. Given the distribution discussed so far, most of this chart activity was for songs by collaborations (14.2%) with 7.3% led by men, 6.0% led by women, and 0.6% by Trans\* artists.

Table 6.2j further details chart data by CanCon designation, revealing that 33.0% of the songs that chart are amongst the most played on Canadian radio – with enough support to land these songs on the airplay chart. For both men and women, non-CanCon songs are represented more in the charts than CanCon songs. Non-CanCon songs by men are double CanCon songs by men in the charts, while non-CanCon songs by women are 3 times more than CanCon songs by women.

### 6.2.2.2. Evaluation of Representation in the Top Positions of the Weekly Airplay Charts in 2023

Given the results so far that show the top 2 most spun artists are women (and by a large margin), it is not surprising that songs by women are programmed at a rate that places their songs within the top charting positions. Figures 6.2f-6.2h track the percentage of songs in each of the Top 20, Top 10 and No 1 charting categories over the course of the calendar year tracing the pathway through the top

showing that songs by women average 62.0% of the top played songs. An average of 25.0% of the songs in the Top 20 are CanCon certified, nearly evenly distributed to songs by men (10.3%) and women (11.7%) and are filtered out of the Top 10 (5.7% by men and 11.9% by women) with no CanCon songs at the top of the chart in 2023.

Songs by women averaged 45.0% of the Top 20 most-played songs (33.6% by white women, 11.0% by women of colour) beginning the year at 47.5% and ending it at 51.3% (Figure 6.2f). The 19 songs by 11 women that peaked in the Top 10 averaged 55.0% of this ranking range in 2023 (Figure 6.2g), with 32.5% in January and increasing to a peak of 70% in September and October before ending the year at 55.0%. Songs by women capture the most played position of the year 34 out of the 52 weeks in 2023 – but this was for 5 songs by 3 women (2 by Taylor Swift, 2 by Miley Cyrus, and 1 by Dua Lipa). Most of this programming was for 2 songs by Cyrus, whose “Flowers” and “Used to be Young” remained in the top-played position for 12 and later 8 weeks (respectively). Dua Lipa’s “Dance the Night” captured the top position for 10 weeks. Despite being the most played woman on Hot AC radio, Taylor Swift’s “Anti-Hero” and “Cruel Summer” spent a combined 4 weeks at the top of the chart (Figure 6.2g).

Songs by men are programmed at an average of 39.8% of the Top 20 songs and 27.3% of the Top 10 with just one song capturing the top of the chart (Ed Sheeran’s “Eyes Closed” for 9 weeks). Songs by mixed gender bands and collaborations average 14.6% of the Top 20, increasing to 17.7% of the Top 10. Two songs by two collaborations topped the chart for 9 weeks – David Guetta and Bebe Rexha’s “I’m Good (Blue)” (6 weeks) and Rema and Selena Gomez’s “Calm Down” (3 weeks).

Sam Smith was the only Trans\* artist to have a song in the Top 20, with “I’m Not Here to Make Friends” peaking at 13 in March. Their collaboration with Kim Petras on “Unholy” also appeared within the Top 10 of the most played songs (at #3 for most of January). Transgender artist Kim Petras also charted for a collaboration with

Nicki Minaj (“Alone”) in September 2023.

Hot AC’s programming in 2023 reveals an overall consistency in its overall airplay in 2023 with almost no deviation from the distribution of 50.2% spins for songs by men, 35.4% for songs by women, 0.3% by Trans\* artists, and 14.1% by mixed gender bands and collaborations. This distribution remains unchanged throughout the year and prioritises white artists and non-CanCon songs in programming. While songs by women emerge within the most programmed of the year, this is largely due to heavy programming for three women, whose songs dominate in all respects – including two women (Cyrus and Dua Lipa) in the most spun positions.

It is certainly a moment to applaud the achievements of women – whose songs had greater support on Hot AC to move into and up the chart in such a meaningful way. But it would be a mistake to take the over-indexing of a small number of women as gains for all women, especially when those women are not contributing to CanCon programming and Canadians (especially women) are filtered out through programming and into the chart. The programming here shows a heavy prevalence for non-CanCon programming and while the regulations are met, they are not met in a way that creates pathways and opportunities for Canadian artists to thrive in pop-oriented Hot AC radio.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	34.3%	5.5%	0.0%	3.1%	2.9%	<b>45.8%</b>
Women	22.3%	8.2%	0.0%	3.6%	1.2%	<b>35.3%</b>
Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.6%</b>
Mixed gender bands	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	<b>3.6%</b>
Collaborations	8.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.9%	<b>14.7%</b>
With shared vocals	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	<b>1.0%</b>
Led by men	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.9%	<b>7.3%</b>
Led by women	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	<b>5.8%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.6%</b>
	<b>69.1%</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	

TABLE 6.2I. PERCENTAGE OF SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

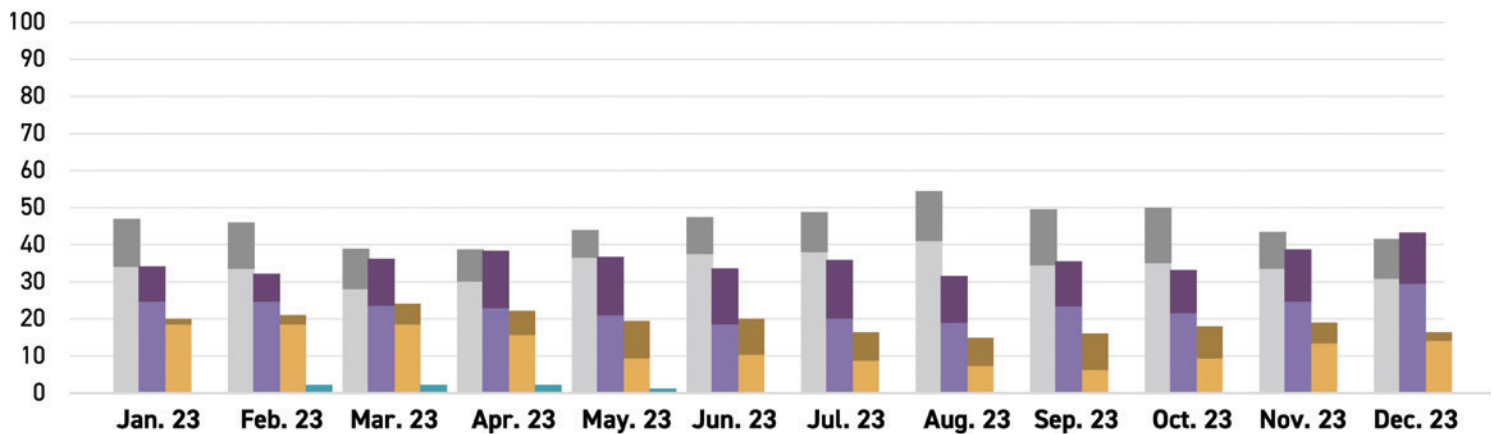


FIGURE 6.2E. DISTRIBUTION OF SONGS (IN PERCENTAGES) ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [67.0%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [33.0%]
Songs by Men	30.3%	15.5%
Songs by Women	26.2%	9.1%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	0.8%	2.8%
Songs by Collaborations	9.1%	5.7%
With shared vocals	1.0%	0.0%
Led by men	5.2%	2.1%
Led by women	2.3%	3.5%
Led by Trans* artists	0.6%	0.0%

TABLE 6.2J. PERCENTAGE OF CANCON SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

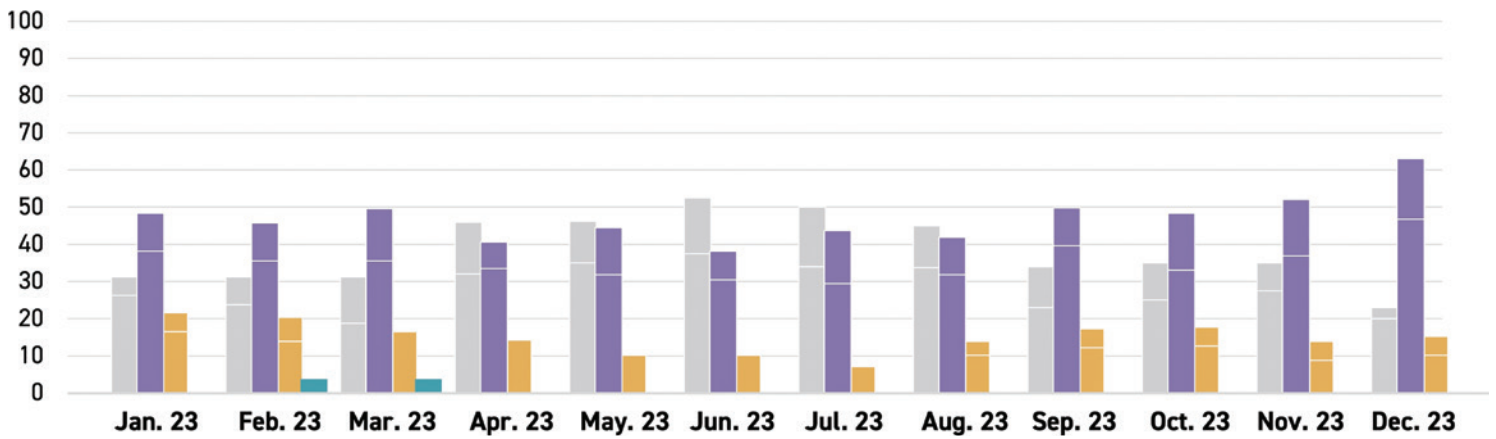


FIGURE 6.2F. DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 20 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION.

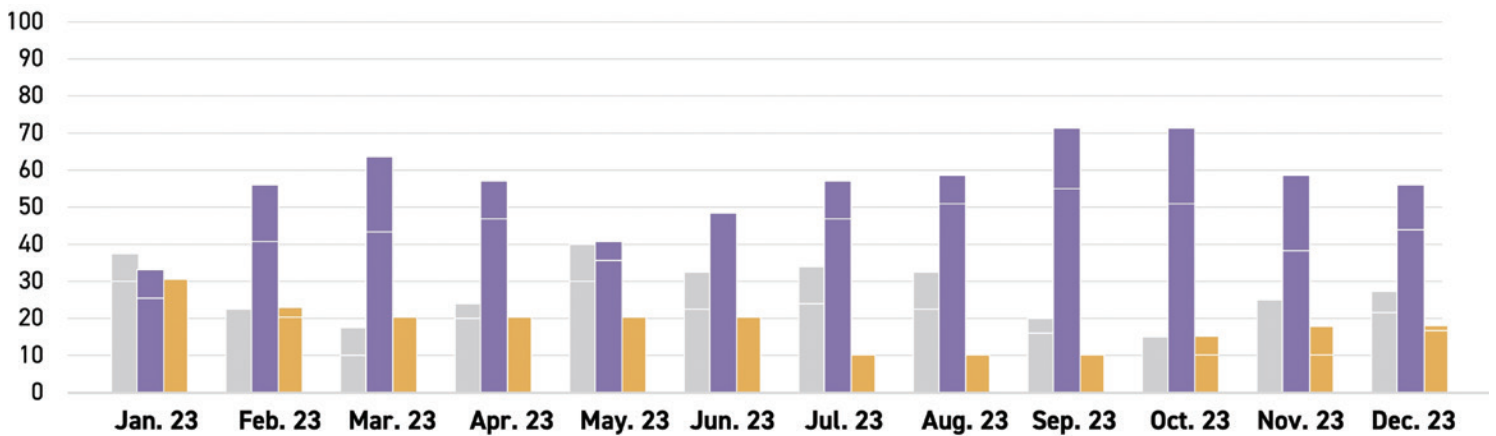


FIGURE 6.2G. DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE TOP 10 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION.

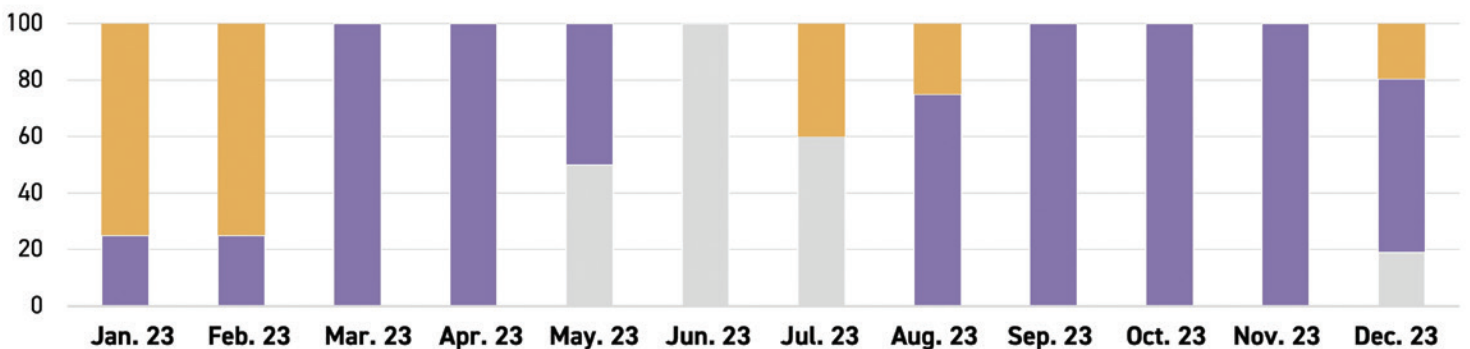


FIGURE 6.2H. DISTRIBUTION (IN PERCENTAGES) OF THE #1 SONGS ON THE WEEKLY AIRPLAY CHARTS FOR CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

NOTE: NO CANCON CERTIFIED SONGS REACHED #1 IN 2023.



### 6.3. Weekly Airplay on French-language Hot AC Format Radio Stations in 2023

To address representation on French language radio, we used the Mediabase portfolio function to build a portfolio of Hot AC stations. To address representation on French language radio, we used the Mediabase portfolio function to build a portfolio of Hot AC stations, as we did with Mainstream AC. While linguistic analysis is not an analytic lens applied in this section of the report, the results do offer an opportunity to reflect on representation from the perspective of language. This portfolio offers a deeper understanding of representation on Canadian radio, affording an opportunity to look at a body of songs and artists otherwise invisible in a largely Anglo-dominant Canadian music industry. Notably, while the mixed-gender francophone group Les Cowboys fringants held the 113th position in the overall most played artists on the Mainstream format in 2023 (20th in terms of the most played mixed gender bands), they emerged as the most played artist overall in this portfolio. Thus, through analysis of the most played artists within the portfolios developed for analysing Hot AC format radio, we reflect on which artists are prioritised in programming and how language, at the intersection of gender as well as race and ethnicity, factors into these results.

This portfolio includes the reporting station with a French language licence, as well as 4 other stations that are monitored by Mediabase, ensuring as much diversity of ownership as possible in a provincial market dominated by Cogeco-owned stations. Less a concern with this format was the dominance of just a small number of individuals in program and music direction roles. While some individuals play these roles in both Mainstream and Hot AC (another consequence of consolidated ownership and centralised programming), there was less repetition within the Hot AC portfolio stations. Four of the stations are situated in Québec, with one station in Sudbury, Ontario.

These portfolios are structured in a different manner than the published reports and so the analysis cannot follow the same sequence as the section on Weekly Airplay (6.2), but the focus of analysis continues to centre on gender identity and race and ethnicity within the broader context of Canadian content regulations.

To build the portfolio for Hot AC, we had to first build the portfolio of stations and then download 1 weekly report for each of the 5 radio dayparts – totaling 5 reports a week for each week of the year (260 reports in total). The end result is a dataset totaling 298,854 rows, 49,127 for current singles, 44,301 for recurrent tracks, and 205,428 for gold records.

In 2023, 3,852 unique artists, bands, and collaborations had songs played on the stations included in the French language portfolio for Hot AC radio. As described in Table 6.3a, 62.1% are men, 18.8% are women, 0.1% are Trans\* artists, 6.7% are mixed gender bands, and the remaining 12.3% are mixed gender collaborations of men, women, and Trans\* artists. Most of the artists are white (73.5%), while 9.9% are Black, 0.4% are Indigenous, 3.6% are artists of colour, and 12.6% are multiethnic ensembles and collaborations.

Within the dataset for the Hot AC French language portfolio there are 9,501 unique songs that were played in 2023. Most of the songs (67.2%) are by men, with 21.0% by women, 0.1% by Trans\* artists, 6.6% by mixed gender bands, and 5.1% by mixed gender collaborations. As shown in Table 6.3b, 82.8% of the songs are by white artists, 7.1% by Black artists, 0.3% by Indigenous artists, 3.2% by artists of colour, and 6.6% by multiethnic bands and collaborations. As with the Mainstream AC French language portfolio stations, the Hot AC portfolio has a similar racial and gendered hierarchy as in several other formats examined, with less diversity than on the broader pop-oriented formats.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	47.9%	5.8%	0.4%	1.8%	6.2%	<b>62.1%</b>
Women	13.7%	2.8%	0.0%	1.6%	0.7%	<b>18.8%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.9%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	<b>6.7%</b>
Collaborations	6.9%	0.7%	0.0%	0.2%	4.5%	12.3%
With shared vocals	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	1.1%
Led by men	3.2%	0.5%	0.0%	0.1%	2.1%	5.9%
Led by women	3.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	1.5%	5.0%
Led by Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.3%
	<b>73.5%</b>	<b>9.9%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>	

TABLE 6.3A. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE ARTISTS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	57.7%	4.2%	0.3%	1.6%	3.4%	<b>67.2%</b>
Women	17.0%	2.1%	0.0%	1.6%	0.3%	<b>21.0%</b>
Trans* artists	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.1%</b>
Mixed gender bands	5.0%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	<b>6.6%</b>
Collaborations	3.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	<b>5.1%</b>
With shared vocals	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.6%
Led by men	1.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%	2.2%
Led by women	1.5%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	2.2%
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
	<b>82.8%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	

TABLE 6.3B. PERCENTAGE OF UNIQUE SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

### 6.3.1. Airplay of All Songs Played on French-language Hot AC Format Radio Stations in 2023

The following analysis investigates the rate at which songs by women are played on the 6 French-language Hot AC radio stations. This section looks more deeply at the amount of airplay overall, as well as discusses the distribution of spins for songs by Canadian Content status, by song type (current, recurrent, and gold), the time of day at which they are played, and by chart activity.

Songs by women received 17.4% of the

overall airplay on Hot AC format radio in 2023. Table 6.3c summarises airplay data for the year, providing granular detail by race and ethnicity of the artists whose songs were played. Songs by men received 70.7% of the airplay, songs by Trans\* artists received 0.2% of the airplay, while songs by mixed gender bands received 6.0% and collaborations received 5.7%.

This same information on airplay is graphed in Figure 6.3a for a view of the monthly distribution of spins, revealing that the distribution of spins was consistent with the statistics in the table above. There was no significant fluctuation in programming from month to month with songs by men averaging 70.7%, with 17.4% by women, 0.2% by Trans\* artists, and 11.7% for mixed gender bands and collaborations.

Songs by white artists consistently average 83.3% of the airplay across this 12-month period, with 4.7% for songs by Black artists, 0.2% for songs by Indigenous artists, 3.2% by artists of colour, and 8.6% by multiethnic ensembles. Songs by women of colour (2.5%) received less than half the airplay accorded to songs by men of colour (5.3%) in 2023.

	WHITE ARTISTS	BLACK ARTISTS	INDIGENOUS ARTISTS	ARTISTS OF COLOUR	MULTIETHNIC BANDS	
Men	60.3%	3.4%	0.2%	1.7%	5.1%	<b>70.7%</b>
Women	14.7%	1.0%	0.0%	1.5%	0.2%	<b>17.4%</b>
Trans* artists	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.2%</b>
Mixed gender bands	4.8%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	<b>6.0%</b>
Collaborations	3.3%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	<b>5.7%</b>
With shared vocals	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	<b>0.9%</b>
Led by men	1.5%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%	<b>2.9%</b>
Led by women	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	<b>1.8%</b>
Led by Trans* artists	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	<b>0.1%</b>
	<b>83.3%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>3.2%</b>	<b>8.6%</b>	

TABLE 6.3C. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

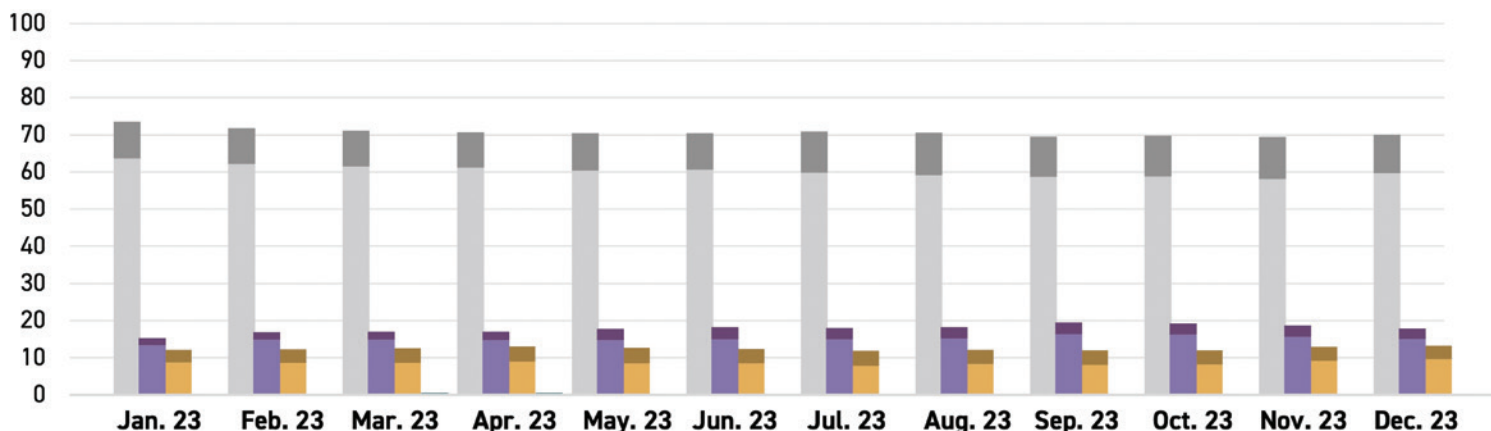


FIGURE 6.3A. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY (IN PERCENTAGES) FOR SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

### 6.3.1.1. Evaluation of Airplay by CanCon Status

What this distribution means for Canadian artists is particularly important in the context of the federal regulations guiding programming and how it shapes exposure for Canadian audiences, and impacts women in the industry. Just under half of the airplay – 43.5% – went to non-CanCon songs. An average of 56.5% of the airplay in 2023 was for songs certified as CanCon. The stations included within the Hot AC portfolio are playing well-above the minimum required 35.0%, the only format studied here to program more than half CanCon content. As a result, the stations within this portfolio are meeting and indeed surpassing

their station requirements, which will be further explored below in discussion of the distribution by daypart (which is a critical element to the requirement).

Distribution of airplay by CanCon certification is detailed in Figure 6.3b, further defining the distribution of airplay in 2023. Given what is already known about representation on Hot AC radio, it is unsurprising that songs by women make up such smaller percentages than those by men within both non-CanCon and CanCon songs, with 6.3% and 11.1%, respectively. These percentages increase (marginally) when adding to them the airplay for songs by women-led collaborations – to 7.4% for nonCanCon songs and 11.9% for CanCon songs. With these tabulations combined, songs led by women received 19.3% of the airplay on the French language Hot AC

stations in this portfolio in 2023. As with the broader format, there are no CanCon songs by Trans\* artists played in this portfolio in 2023.

Table 6.3d calculates the distribution of airplay by certification status. While non-CanCon and CanCon songs by men have a nearly 10 percentage point difference from each other (30.9% and 39.8%, respectively), they receive the same amount of airplay when considering airplay within these respective groupings – both at 70.0%. Non-CanCon songs by women make up a smaller percentage of the airplay for songs that are not CanCon (14.4%), while CanCon songs register 19.7% of the airplay within the programming accorded to Canadian songs. As above, combining these percentages with the airplay for songs by women-led bands raises the

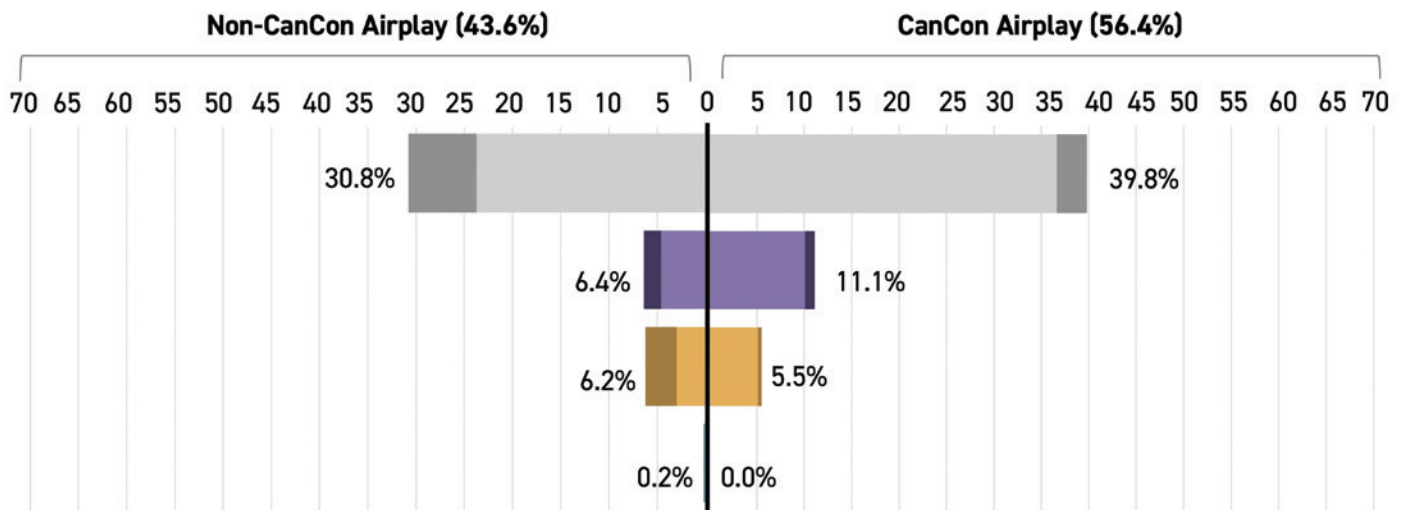


FIGURE 6.3B. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

	NON-CANCON AIRPLAY [43.6%]	CANCON AIRPLAY [56.4%]
Songs by Men	70.9%	70.5%
Songs by Women	14.4%	19.7%
Songs by Trans* artists	0.5%	0.0%
Songs by Mixed gender bands	5.9%	5.9%
Songs by Collaborations	8.3%	3.9%
With shared vocals	1.5%	0.6%
Led by men	3.9%	2.0%
Led by women	2.6%	1.3%
Led by Trans* artists	0.3%	0.0%

TABLE 6.3D. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

percentage for both – to 17.9% and 21.1% (respectively).

### 6.3.1.2. Evaluation of Airplay for Songs by Time of Day

The time of day at which these songs are heard is of critical importance to the development of a musician's career. As described earlier, the 24-hour cycle is divided into five dayparts, with the three day-time periods – the Morning Drive (AMD from 6:00-10:00), the Midday period (MID from 10:00-15:00) and the Afternoon Drive (PMD from 15:00 to 19:00) – are the most important for exposure as they are the periods with the highest rate of listenership. The Overnight (OVN from

0:00 to 6:00) and Evening (EVE from 19:00 to 24:00) periods frame the day and are periods with a higher percentage of songs played due not just in part to their slightly longer duration, but also the reduced amount of news and specialty programming (features, interviews, etc.).

Figure 6.3c tracks the distribution of airplay by daypart, graphing the data in accordance with the 24-hour cycle beginning with the Overnights on the left, through the Morning Drive, Midday and Afternoon Drive, to the Evening on the right for each group of artists. The columns are separated by a white line to distinguish between non-CanCon airplay (at the bottom of the column) and CanCon airplay (at the top of the column).

The highest percentage of airplay for all artists occurs in the Overnight and Evening

periods, but unlike all other formats they are not playing the same percentage in each daypart. Of the songs by men, 24.0% are in the overnights and 25.8% in the evenings, while for women it's 20.5% in the overnights and 27.5% in the evenings. This might seem like a small difference, but this differs from all formats discussed here, where the difference is less than one percentage for each group of artists. The effect that this creates is a distribution across the dayparts is less variation in the number of songs played per hour. To put it another way, instead of songs by men, women, Trans\* and mixed-gender bands/collabs being programmed at the same rate across the day, the percentages differ and result in the number of songs per hour remaining similar (within each group of artists), as shown below in Table 6.3e. Half of radio programming occurs during the three daypart hours (Morning, Midday,

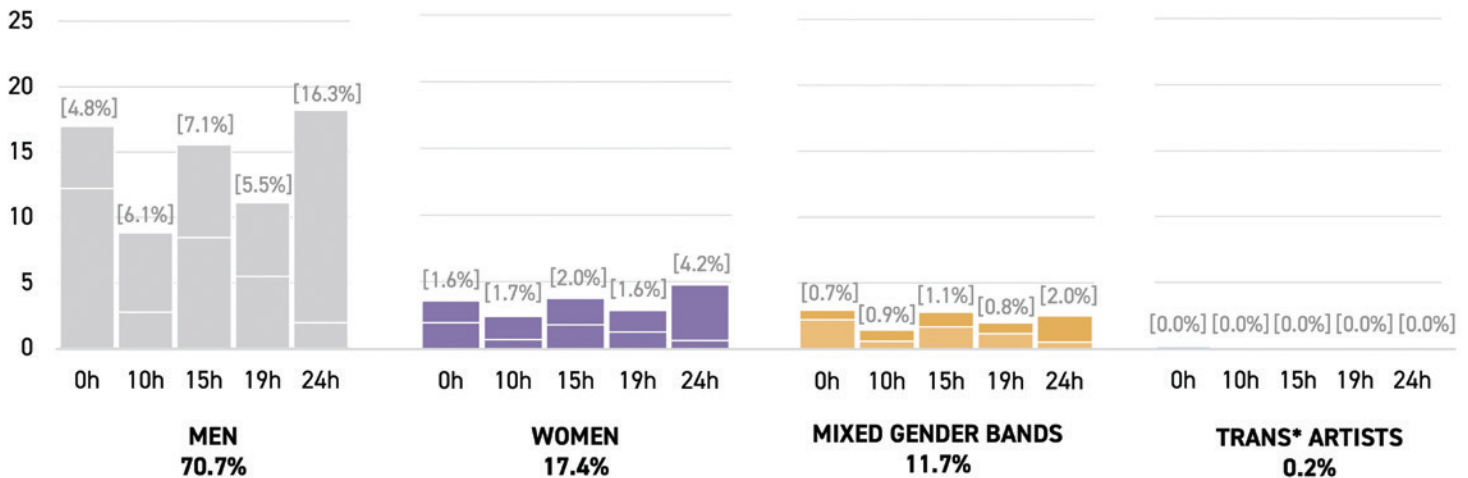


FIGURE 6.3C. DISTRIBUTION OF AIRPLAY BY TIME OF DAY FOR ALL SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023

NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.

	SONGS BY MEN	SONGS BY WOMEN	SONGS BY TRANS* ARTISTS	SONGS BY MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
<b>OVERNIGHT (0:00-6:00)</b>	46 [33/13]	9 [5/4]	1 [1/0]	8 [6/2]
<b>AM DRIVE (6:00-10:00)</b>	24 [8/16]	7 [2/5]	0 [0/0]	4 [2/2]
<b>MIDDAY (10:00-15:00)</b>	42 [23/19]	10 [5/5]	0 [0/0]	8 [5/3]
<b>PM DRIVE (15:00-19:00)</b>	30 [15/15]	7 [3/4]	0 [0/0]	5 [3/2]
<b>EVENING (19:00-24:00)</b>	49 [5/44]	23 [2/11]	0 [0/0]	6 [1/5]
	<b>191</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>31</b>

TABLE 6.3E. DISTRIBUTION OF SPINS FOR SONGS BY TIME OF DAY WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE THE DISTRIBUTION FOR NON-CANCON AND CANCON SONGS (RESPECTIVELY)

and Afternoon) at 50.9% of the spins. Federal broadcasting regulations require that Canadian radio play 35% Canadian Content between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to ensure listeners are exposed to music of Canadian artists. While the periods do not align perfectly (the Afternoon daypart ends at 7:00 p.m.), Between 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Hot AC radio played 52.9% CanCon songs in 2023, with 36.9% for songs by men, 10.5% for songs by women, none by Trans\* artists, and 5.5% for mixed gender bands and collaborations.

To provide greater perspective on what this might sound like for radio listeners, Table 6.3e presents a breakdown of how this translates at the level of daytime programming to provide an example of what a typical 24-hour cycle would look like for the average station and listener. Across the 5 portfolio stations, an average of 269 songs are distributed within this dataset per day, with 191 songs by men, 46 by women, 1 by a Trans\* artist, and 31 by mixed gender bands and collaborations.

For women, the distribution across all five dayparts shows that songs by men are programmed about 4 times more than those by women. As with all formats, songs by men are played (and thus, heard) more throughout each daypart, but within this format there is more consistency in the number of songs heard per hour

throughout the day. About 8 songs by men are played an hour, 2 songs by women, and 1 song by mixed-gender bands/collabs. Less consistent is the rate for songs by Trans\* artists, as is true on all formats.

Within this programming, CanCon songs by men and women are programmed at a higher rate than non-CanCon songs in several dayparts – morning and evenings for men, and mornings, afternoons and evenings for women. While non-CanCon songs are programmed at a higher rate in overnights, the evening programming is such that CanCon songs are prioritised at a higher rate. Unlike the French portfolio for Mainstream AC where the increased evening and overnight programming is a disservice to Canadian artists, the overall higher rate of programming for CanCon artists through the day suggests that the Hot AC stations in this French portfolio are offering greater exposure to CanCon songs for local audiences.

Like the broader Hot AC format, and indeed all other formats, songs by men and male-led bands are prioritised within programming. On these stations, CanCon songs are played at a higher rate than non-CanCon songs. And while the gap between songs by men and women is not as wide as Country and Rock, it is wider than the nationally monitored pop-oriented formats.

### 6.3.1.3. Evaluation of Airplay for Current, Recurrent and Gold Status Songs

Radio airplay is divided into three different song “types” – current singles that are vying for top-programming (and, by extension, chart) contention, recurrent tracks that have reached their peak programming position but are still in regular rotation, and gold catalogue records of older but “canonical” songs that have been retained by a station for long-term programming.

Figure 6.3d tracks the breakdown of airplay by these three programming types, showing on the left the overall airplay within the French language Hot AC portfolio stations, parsed by airplay for current singles (25.2%), recurrent tracks (18.7%) and gold records (56.1%) – the latter (more canonical “gold” records) making up just over half of the overall programming. Current singles by women (6.4%) receive less than half the airplay to those by men (16.0%), and the gap widens through recurrent tracks (13.4% for men and 3.2% for women) and gold songs (41.3% for men and 7.8% for

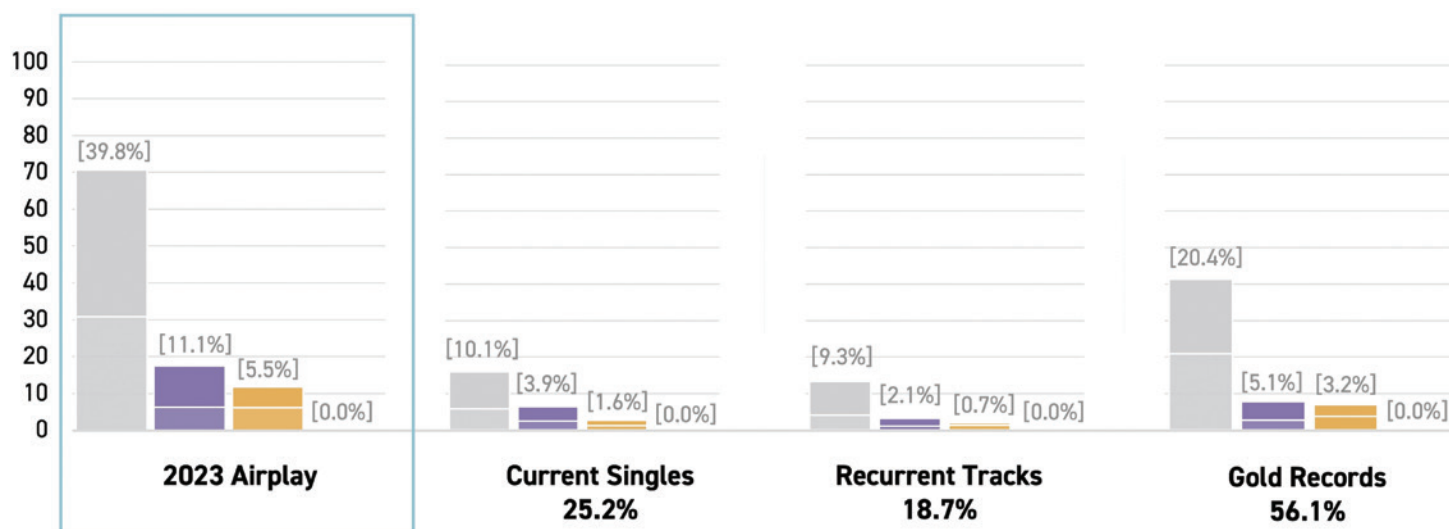


FIGURE 6.3D. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CURRENT, RECURRENT AND GOLD SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023 NOTE: THE WHITE LINE IN THE MIDDLE OF EACH COLUMN SEPARATES NON-CANCON (BOTTOM) FROM CANCON (TOP) REPRESENTATION. FOR CLARITY, NUMBERS IN SQUARE BRACKETS INDICATE PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS.



women). Most airplay for all artists occurs through gold records, with significantly smaller percentages in current/recurrent programming. As a result, there is a narrower pathway to gold programming, one that is limiting for women who are already underprogrammed in golds.

This Figure also displays information for CanCon songs, with the top half of each bar representing airplay for these songs within each category of airplay. What emerges through this Figure is a deeper understanding of airplay for CanCon songs by women within the French language stations in the Hot AC portfolio, whose songs receive more programming than non-CanCon songs in each song type. But there is just a 1 percentage point difference through current and recurrent programming, with a wider difference in gold programming (2.7% for non-CanCon women and 5.1% for CanCon women). While most of the airplay for CanCon songs by women lies in this gold category of airplay (at 5.1%) – and more than non-CanCon golds by women (2.7%) – they receive one quarter the airplay that CanCon songs by men (20.4%) receive. So even though overall the data shows that songs by women are not filtered out of golds (and indeed are in higher representation in the catalogue records), they are extremely underrepresented in this category. Furthermore, the low representation of songs by women in currents suggests that (at least for 2023) there are fewer songs that will be pathway to recurrent and later gold programming categories. As with all other formats, CanCon songs by women are not programmed with a view to creating significant exposure through the top positions in station playlists and are thus retained through recurrences at a much lower rate, with risk of loss in the gold catalogue, than songs by non-Canadian women and Canadian men.

### 6.3.1.4. Evaluation of Top Played Songs

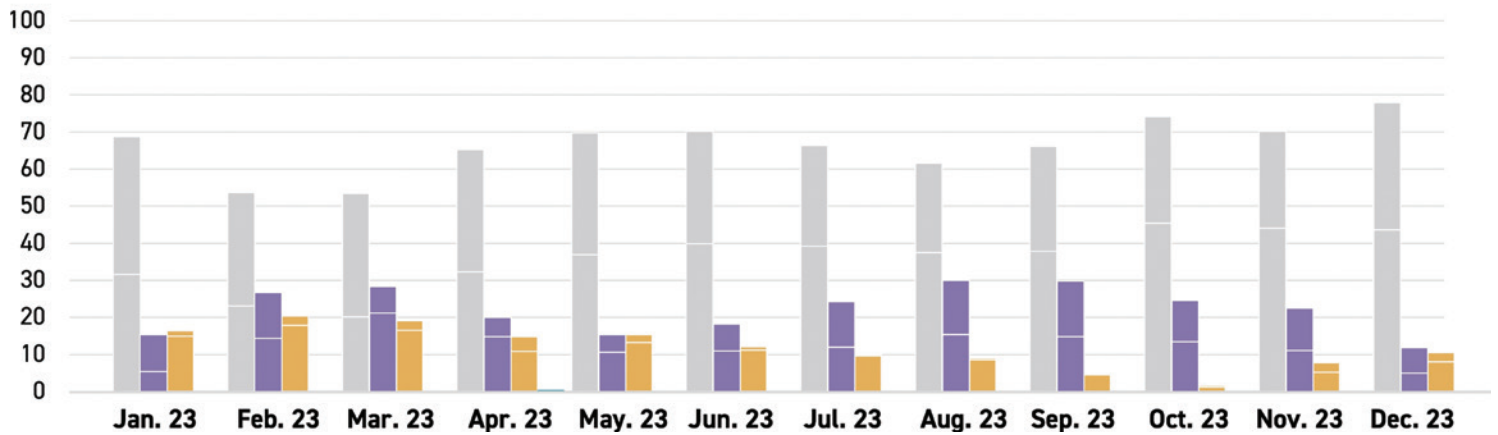
Just as there are no monitored formats for French-language radio in Canada, there are no industry charts that rank most played songs for French-language radio stations. While the absence of a monitored format can be addressed through the analysis of a portfolio of stations, the absence of a chart cannot truly be simulated because they also include measurement of audience impressions in the calculation of weekly rankings. But it remains critical to know who the most played artists are within French-language Hot AC radio, and so we offer here analysis of the top 20 most played songs each week by the percentage of airplay received to know how women and Trans\* artists are programmed in the top-end of station playlists.

Figure 6.3e tracks the top 20 songs each week according to the percentage of spins received and traces a slowly changing picture over the course of 2023 through programming at this level. Songs by men average 66.5% of the airplay over this period, but increase from 68.7% in January to 70.3% in May and despite a decline to 61.7% in July they rebound and increase again to end the year at 78.0%. Most of the airplay was for non-CanCon songs by men (averaging 36.0%) and are consistently programmed more than CanCon songs from May to December.

Overall, songs by women average 21.9% of the top 20 most played songs, increasing from 15.2% to 27.8% by March, then dropping back and increasing again to a peak of 29.4% in August and September before dropping to 11.7% by December. Non-CanCon songs by women average a higher percentage of the most played songs (12.3% to 9.7% for CanCon songs), but there is greater fluctuation between the two groups, alternating monthly. Songs by Trans\* artists are nearly absent from the top 20 most played songs over this period, with just 0.5% of the airplay within the top 20 played in April. All of this airplay is for non-CanCon songs.

Mixed-gender bands and collaborations then fill in the picture. Their songs average 11.6% of the airplay amongst the top 20 most played songs (9.9% for non-CanCon songs and 1.7% for CanCon songs). Airplay for their songs declined from 16.1% in January to a low of 1.6% by October, increasing quickly to 10.3% by December. Here, as with the Mainstream AC portfolio, the francophone mixed-gender band Les Cowboys fringants received consistent airplay throughout the year. In fact, their songs consistently received 10% of the airplay accorded by mixed gender bands in 2023. But this increase in airplay for mixed gender bands/collabs in November and December was in large part a result of the significant wave of tributes paid to their lead singer, Karl Tremblay, who passed away in November. The increase can also be attributed to the inclusion of new mixed gender collaborations to playlists in November, which coincided with the shift of top playlisted songs by women from current to recurrent programming.

These findings are further highlighted in lists of the top 10 men, women, Trans\* artists, and mixed gender bands and collaborations by their spins (Table 6.3f), which shows that just 1 of the women rank in the top 10 overall, 4 additional women rank within the top 20, with the remaining 5 women between the 20th and 55th overall. These rankings confirm findings about the placement of CanCon songs by women within the stations included in the French-language portfolio. Songs by men rank higher overall and all within the top 15, and 8 of the 10 are Canadian men (all French-Canadian artists and bands). The prominence of songs by French-Canadian men within the top spun artists is remarkable within the broader Canadian radio landscape because these stations also do program more CanCon songs. But these findings confirm the practice of prioritising CanCon songs by men – not just overall, but within the top-spun artists. While 7 of the top-spun women are Canadians – mostly French-performing women and all with CanCon certified songs, just 1 appears within the top 10 overall. The remaining Canadian women are not receiving sufficient support to place their songs within higher rotating positions that offer exposure to a wider listenership.



**FIGURE 6.3E. PERCENTAGE OF AIRPLAY FOR CANCON SONGS PLAYED WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: THE LIGHTER SHADE (BOTTOM) REPRESENTS WHITE ARTISTS, WHILE THE DARKER SHADE (TOP) REPRESENTS BLACK, INDIGENOUS AND ARTISTS OF COLOUR, AND MULTIETHNIC ENSEMBLES.

TOP 10 MEN	TOP 10 WOMEN	TOP 10 TRANS* ARTISTS	TOP 10 MIXED GENDER BANDS/ COLLABS
2 2Frères, 5,341 CA	9 Roxane Bruneau, 3,567 CA	193 Sam Smith w/Kim Petras, 548	1 Les Cowboys fringants, 6,087 CA
3 Les Trois Accords, 4,759 CA	11 P!nk, 3,259	362 Sam Smith, 261	34 Rema w/Selena Gomez, 1,866
4 Vincent Vallières, 4,366 CA	12 Miley Cyrus, 3,057	402 LP, 215	41 Måneskin, 1,692
5 Marc Dupré, 4,068 CA	14 Sara Dufour, 2,877 CA	593 Demi Lovato, 21	62 Kingdom Street, 1,209 CA
6 Kain, 3,908 CA	17 Charlotte Cardin, 2,736 CA		84 No Doubt, 1,009
7 Imagine Dragons, 3,893	25 Ariane Moffatt, 2,191 CA		86 David Guetta w/Anne-Marie & Coi Leray, 1,004
8 Jean Leloup, 3,591 CA	27 Coeur de Pirate, 2,056 CA		94 Black Eyed Peas, 960
10 Patrice Michaud, 3,533 CA	29 Dua Lipa, 2,022		99 Fredz w/Leslie Medina, 931
13 Bleu Jeans Bleu, 2,924 CA	48 Lisa LeBlanc, 1,447 CA		103 David Guetta w/Bebe Rexha, 907
15 Ed Sheeran, 2,810	51 Marie-Mai, 1,346 CA		131 Vulgaires machines, 766 CA

**TABLE 6.3F. TOP 10 MOST PLAYED ARTISTS WITHIN FRENCH PORTFOLIO OF CANADIAN HOT AC RADIO IN 2023** NOTE: SQUARE BRACKETS FRAMING THE [CA] DENOTE CANADIAN ARTISTS WHOSE ACCUMULATED SPINS ARE FOR SONGS THAT ARE BOTH CANCON CERTIFIED AND NOT.

# KEY FINDINGS

## Representation on Canadian Hot AC Radio

Of the three pop-oriented formats, Hot AC emerges between Top 40 and Mainstream AC in terms of representation on the stations reporting to Mediabase. Like Top 40 radio, representation within the top 150 songs played between 2013 and 2023 revealed a trend toward increased inclusion of songs by women not just overall, but within the top-spun positions. But unlike Top 40, there was less racial diversity of these artists, and the results show a prioritising of songs by white artists. As with Top 40 and Mainstream AC, there are improvements to be made within programming as it concerns CanCon songs by women and greater distribution amongst more women rather than a consolidation of airplay for a small handful of women.

The analysis shows a trend toward increasing visibility for women in programming on Hot AC over the last 5 years. As with representation on all formats in this study, songs by women initially declined from 30.4% in 2013 to 21.5% in 2017, and then slowly increased to a period high of 40.7% in 2023. Songs by women consistently averaged 32.8% of the airplay in 2023, mostly for songs by white women (25.3% average).

- › In addition to more airplay for their solo efforts, women's voices were prominent in collaborations, which resulted in women-led collaborations receiving slightly more airplay led by men.
- › Despite the gains for women in 2023, distribution of airplay for songs by women show that CanCon songs (10.2%) are played at less than half the rate of non-CanCon songs (22.7%) and that most of the airplay their gold catalogue songs.
- › The 2023 distribution shows a low rate of current programming (11.5%), with the gap between songs by men and women widening through recurrent and gold programmed songs.
- › While it is too soon to know how the 2023 boost in airplay for songs by women will impact the recurrent to gold pipeline for women whose songs were played in high rotation this year, there is concern for the historic trend of their songs being filtered from long-term preservation and a need to ensure that this does not continue going forward.
- › The format's programming reveals a heavier prioritising of songs by white artists (69.1%) than Top 40 radio, with critical need for improvement in exposure for Indigenous artists.
- › And while the results show gains for women in Hot AC programming, they were largely the result of airplay accorded to songs by two women (Taylor Swift and Miley Cyrus). While three Canadian women appear within the top 10 most spun women (and within the top 15 most played overall, the disparity between their airplay and Swift and Cyrus is significant. Without these two American artists, airplay for songs by women would not likely be as high as it was in 2023.
- › The portfolio of French language Hot AC stations show less gender and racial diversity in their programming than the 29 stations reporting to Mediabase, and a consistent average of songs by women programmed at 17.4% of station playlists.
- › Where the French language portfolio differs from the reporting stations is in the distribution of spins for CanCon songs, which shows near equal distribution with non-CanCon songs. But within this split, CanCon songs by women are not prioritised within programming (11.1%) and are played at one third the rate of CanCon songs by men (39.8%).
- › Most disconcertingly, the results show that while more Canadian women rank within the lists of the top 10 artists played, French Canadian women are so underplayed within the French language portfolio that their music received limited exposure.

Celebrating the Canadian women and Trans\* artists whose songs spun onto the Hot AC Airplay charts in 2023

The Beaches

Roxane Bruneau

Sofia Camara

Charlotte Cardin

Sara Dufour

Jamie Fine

Sophia Fracassi

Lu Kala

Tate McRae

Niiva

Reve

# RESULTS

The findings of this study reveal that songs by women have been underplayed on Canadian radio on all six formats for the last decade. Figure 7.1a reveals the 11-year averages of airplay across these six formats. Between 2013 and 2023, there has been a trend toward decline for songs by women in the top 150 songs played each year between 2013 and 2017/2018. These findings map on to results of Stéphanie Vallet's in her article on the Billboard Canadian Hot 100 chart. This is true for all formats, except for Active Rock, on which songs by women were nearly absent in these years. Even as songs by women increased in representation, though, their songs were not amongst the top played each year and as a result they were underrepresented in the 50-position yearend charts filtered out of the top positions from 2019 to 2022. While songs by women remain underrepresented on the Country, Alternative Rock, and Active Rock yearend reports in 2023, they increased quite significantly in the 3 pop-oriented formats (especially Top 40).

Trans\* artists are invisibilized within Canadian radio programming. Their songs are absent from the top 150 songs played until 2019, but even from this point until 2023, songs by just three Trans\* artists received enough rotation to be heard within station playlists.

Throughout the analysis of the top 150 songs played on the 6 mainstream formats, a significant racial inequity was observed wherein songs by white men received the most airplay and those by artists of colour – especially women – were underprogrammed. This is particularly troubling for Country and Rock radio, wherein racial inequity plagues programming – especially disheartening to see continuing into the twenty-first century given the multiethnic and multiracial roots of these genres, which lay deep in

Black musical traditions. Perhaps most disconcerting of these findings is the near absence of songs by Indigenous artists from all 6 formats. This is apparent not just in the full yearend reports, but at the top position of the annual charts (Figure 7.1b). Programming on Country, Alternative Rock and Active Rock does not just prioritise men in station playlisting, but the results reveal significant whiteness in programming. This is evident at all levels of analysis, including the top positions of the yearend charts, which are held predominantly by white men. While Top 40, Mainstream AC, Hot AC appears more racially diverse than the Country/Rock formats, these pop-oriented formats are likewise male-dominated spaces for the 11-year period studied here.

Drilling into the full weekly reports of 2023 for all formats to examine representation of all songs played illuminated the inequities within radio programming. Figure 7.1c offers a comparative snapshot of airplay on all 6 formats, showing in the order in which they were presented in this study, the prioritising of songs by men (notably those by white men) in programming on one end of the spectrum in Country, Alternative Rock and Active Rock Radio versus a more diverse culture of programming within Top 40, Mainstream AC and Hot AC on the other end.

While the increase in airplay for songs by women in 2023 on the pop-oriented formats of Top 40, Mainstream AC and Hot AC warrants recognition, it would be a mistake to see this as a sign of systemic change in the formats. Indeed, in all three instances (especially Top 40 radio) representation of women increased suddenly in 2023 representation and on the 2023 yearend reports, with deeper analysis of 2023 via weekly airplay reports, which reveals that the uptick in airplay for songs by women began

in the summer months. The increase in airplay for songs by women matched activity within the North American market, suggesting, perhaps, that the Barbie effect sweeping the continent was also impacting the music industry. Indeed, as journalists Sarah Krouse and Anne Steele wrote in *The Wall Street Journal*, women turned out in groups, creating a “multiplier effect and propelled watershed success for the ‘Barbie’ movie, Beyoncé and Taylor Swift.” In so doing, women’s art and women’s stories were not just supported financially, but they were embraced culturally.<sup>1</sup>

But while this increase in airplay followed a broader cultural trend toward a woman-dominated market following the release of Barbie, musically, this mapped on to the re-releases of Taylor Swift’s albums, the success of Swift’s and Beyoncé’s tours and concert films, and Miley Cyrus’s stellar year with “Flowers”. Indeed, without these artists (and P!nk), songs by women would not have had as strong a year in representation on radio.

Critically, the high rate of programming of songs by these artists reveals the heart of the problem on Canadian radio: the continued prioritising of musical imports. Despite federal content regulations mandating 35% Canadian content on terrestrial radio, songs by Canadian women – French Canadian women in particular – are underprogrammed, not retained for recurrent programming, and are filtered out of in gold catalogue programming. As a result, songs by Canadian women are not preserved as part of the national “canon” of songs for these formats. In this way, their songs are lost through the programming pipeline and eliminated from Canadian musical culture at a far faster rate than songs by men.

1 Sarah Krouse and Anne Steele, “Women Own This Summer. The Economy Proves It.” *The Wall Street Journal* (10 August 2023).

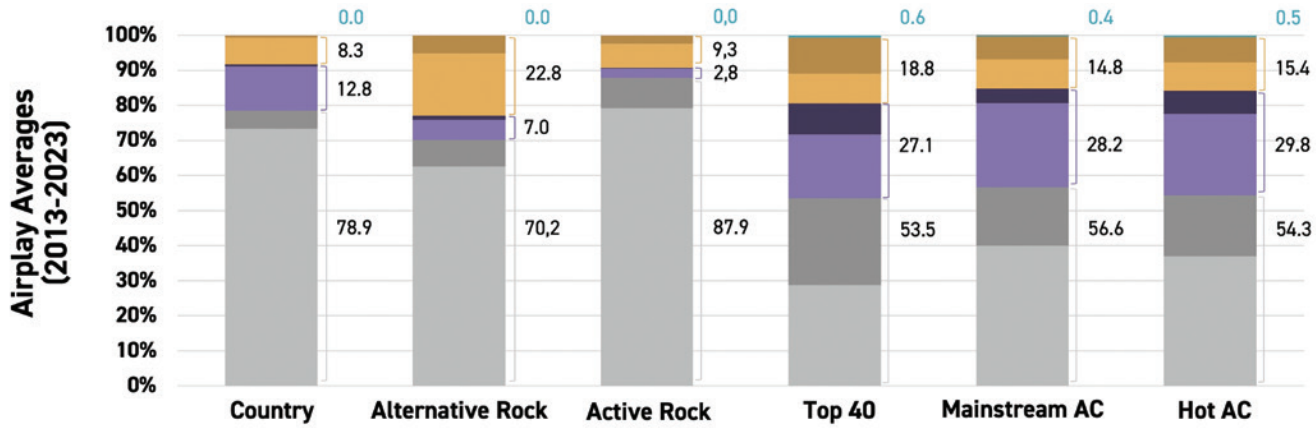


FIGURE 7.1A. COMPARISON OF ARTIST REPRESENTATION WITHIN TOP 150 SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN RADIO FROM 2013 TO 2023 NOTE: THIS FIGURE COMPARES THE 11-YEAR AVERAGES FOR EACH FORMAT, PROVIDING THE PERCENTAGE OVERTOP OF THE RESPECTIVE CATEGORIES.

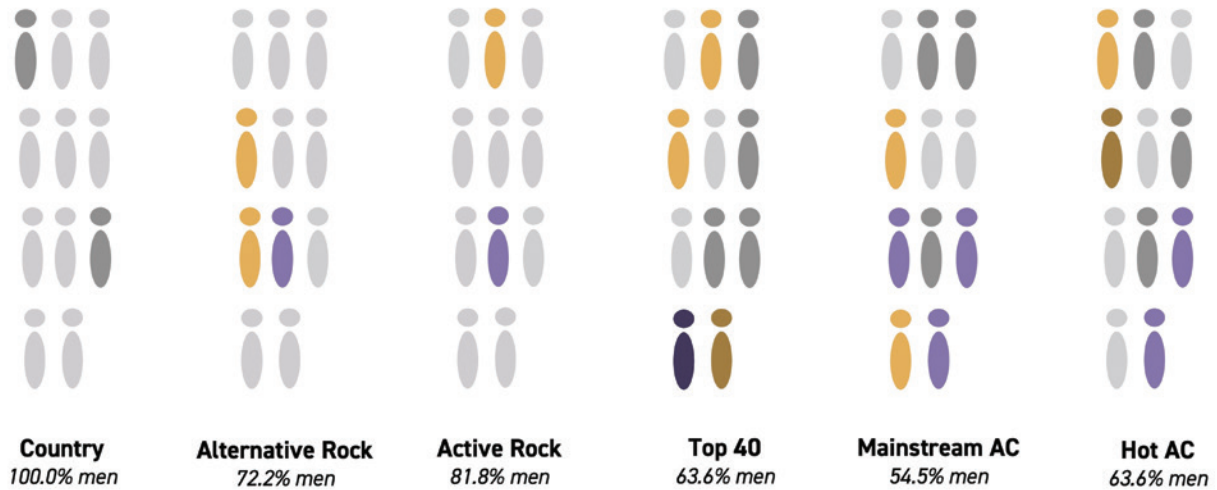


FIGURE 7.1B. COMPARISON OF ARTIST REPRESENTATION IN THE #1 POSITION OF THE YEAREND CANADIAN RADIO CHARTS FROM 2013 TO 2023 NOTE: THESE FIGURES REPRESENT ARTISTS IN THE #1 POSITION OF THE YEAREND AIRPLAY CHARTS, SHADED FOR BOTH GENDER AND RACIAL REPRESENTATION.

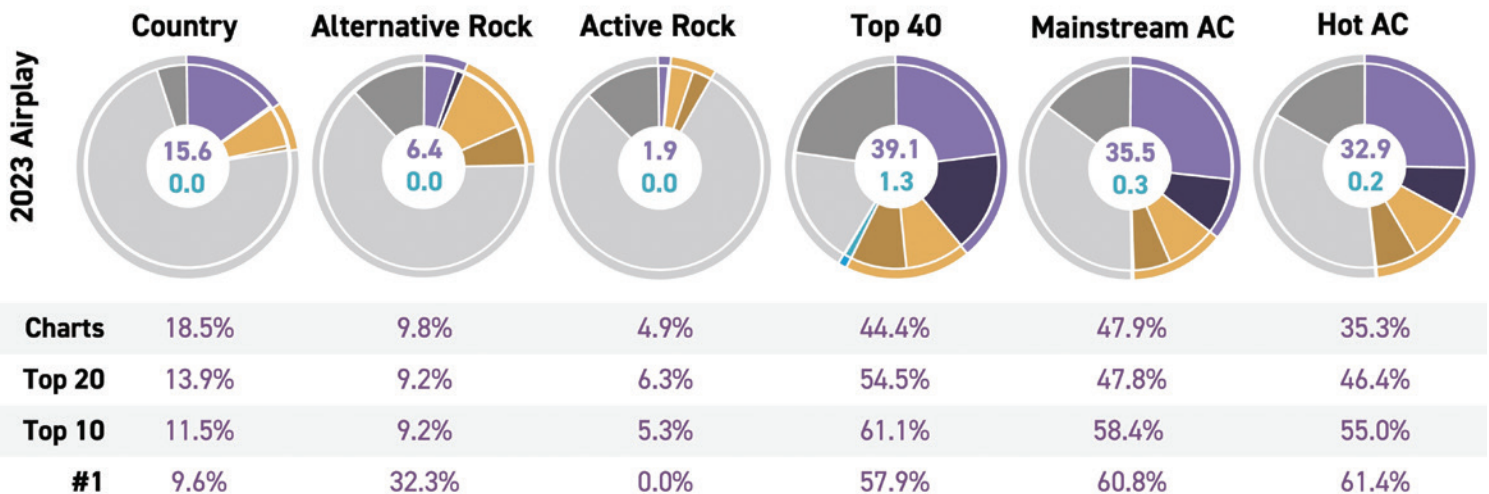


FIGURE 7.1C. COMPARISON OF ARTIST REPRESENTATION FOR AIRPLAY OF ALL SONGS PLAYED ON CANADIAN RADIO IN 2023



# SHARE THE AIR

The findings shared in this report reveal an alarming rate of inequity within the Canadian music industry ecosystem, but they are surely not surprising to the artists that have devoted their careers to music. They are also not surprising to the promoters that have championed women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour for decades and met with resistance at radio. Even within formats with stronger rates of representation for women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour the results reveal programming that prioritises (on national formats) non-Canadian women and (on French-language stations) French language music by men and English language songs by non-Canadian women.

Inequitable programming on commercial radio occurs not just with regard to the rate at which songs are played, but also the time of day at which they are spun, and the category of airplay. Disconcertingly, songs by women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour are lost through the programming pipeline, leaving their songs strikingly absent from gold catalogue records. In addition to the mechanics of programming, however, the results highlight the ways in which federal policy exacerbates inequities for these artists. Although stations appear to be meeting the requirements of the federal *Broadcasting Act* by programming Canadian Content at 35% of their playlists (between 6am and 6pm), results for each format and the two French language portfolios highlight the multiple ways in which women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour are disadvantaged by practices that prioritise songs by white Canadian men. Canadian women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour are significantly disadvantaged in this system.

While this federal regulation serves to “increase exposure of Canadian musical performers, lyricists and composers to Canadian artists” and to “strengthen the Canadian music industry,”<sup>2</sup> this study’s findings suggest that the only exposure being increased and strengthened is for white male artists. This inevitably impacts the broader Canadian industry, limiting opportunities for artists in their own country – artists that may follow the lead of others in leaving Canada to pursue their careers elsewhere. As such, it also limits the industry from growth nationally and also from participation in the global industry. As music journalist Michael Barclay recently observed, Canadian musicians were shockingly absent (again) from international best-of lists in 2019 and still nearly invisible by 2023.<sup>3</sup>

This type of programming, as discussed in the introduction, significantly impacts the trajectory of artists careers. Without radio support, songs by women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour – especially Canadians – are not entering the charts in strong numbers and their opportunities for festivals and tours are limited as a result. Their absence from radio and charts then also impacts representation in nominations for Juno Awards, the Canadian Country Music Awards, and the ADISQ Gala (to name a few). While not the only pathway for building a career in 2024, it’s one of the most established pathways and is a marker of activity within the broader music industry. Radio also influences other distribution services whether editorial curators at digital service providers (often former radio programmers) looking to commercial radio for trends or audiences that seek out music they hear on radio to build their own playlists. These actions (from inside and outside of the industry) then generate new data that becomes part

of the training data on which recommender systems make decisions, reproducing the inequity observed in radio programming.<sup>4</sup>

## Break the Feedback Loop.

Radio currently plays mostly songs serviced to them by labels, suggesting that the underrepresentation of women, Trans\* artists and artists of colour on playlists is in part influenced by a lack of support within other spheres of the industry. While there is a tendency for many in the industry to adopt an attitude that a “free market” informs the economic conditions under which radio (and the broader industry) operates, this is not entirely true for an industry governed by federal federal licensing, content and language regulations. Left to their own devices, the industry will continue to favour songs created and performed by white non-Canadian men, because it is their songs that have historically dictated radio’s ratings and profitability.

But it’s imperative to question the system and credibility of industry-generated data and charts that govern the industry (and have done so for a century) to consider the cyclical relationship that’s emerging between the various players in the music industry ecosystem. As noted elsewhere, “changes in one sphere of the industry (i.e., radio) will, over time, have an impact on other institutions (the charts, labels, publishers), all of which play a part in reinforcing this production and distribution model.”<sup>5</sup> Because each of these sectors has historically relied on the data generated by their own internal processes to make business decisions, they are reinforcing and indeed exacerbating pre-existing inequalities and discriminatory practices.

2 CRTC, “The MAPL system.”

3 Michael Barclay, “Where are the Canadians on Best of 2023 Lists,” CBC (10 January 2024). See also Barclay’s book *Hearts on Fire: Six Years that Changed Canadian Music* (ECW Press, 2022).

4 Jada Watson, “Reflecting on Spotify’s Recommender System,” SongData (1 October 2019); Liz Pelly, “Discover Weakly: Sexism on Spotify,” *The Baffler* (4 June 2018).

5 Jada Watson, “Changer le monde un hit à la fois”: Programmation et diversité à CKOI-FM,” *Les cahiers de la Société québécoise de recherche en musique* 22/1-2 (2021): 78.

The absence of airplay data and chart data for these artists is then used to justify and maintain programming practices that limit their inclusion in playlists. Within some format communities (like Country music), radio even influences streaming, and the algorithms that generate playlists train on data emerging from activity unfolding in the label-radio relationship, thereby recommending music based on the mainstream market.<sup>6</sup> Low rates of airplay (often matched with streaming stats) then deter labels from investing in women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour, which over time leads to fewer opportunities in the industry, including touring, festivals and awards.

An August 2018 study on the Status of Women in the Canadian Arts and Cultural Industries prepared for the Ontario Arts Council by Amanda Coles et. al. reported that 41 of 83 festivals (49.4%) studied had male-dominated lineups (7 with less than 10% women-led acts).<sup>7</sup> While this figure is now out of date, the rise in reporting on unbalanced festival lineups – especially since 2020 – points to the continued (and worsening) issues in representation on stages.<sup>8</sup> While there is no single method for building festival lineups, the process typically includes consideration of new musical releases, availability, budget, and radius clauses.<sup>9</sup>

Reporting on inequitable festival lineups in Canada over the last decade has centered on the problematic notion of “availability.” An oft-quoted justification is that a programmer can only book what’s in front of them, and of their inability “to find a single female musician or female-majority band” (as that given by the director of Festi-Plage in 2022).<sup>10</sup> Deeper explanations are not readily offered by festival programmers, with vague statements made about artist availability

both in terms of small number of artists that can be approached and alignment of schedules. The language used in the industry suggests a process that aims to book artists that are made popular through distribution channels to attract ticket buyers.<sup>11</sup>

But when festival bookers look to radio, streaming, and charts to build their lineups, they use male-dominated lists that reflect the decisions made at labels and radio that prioritise (as this report reveals) the songs of white men. The absence of women and Trans\* artists – especially Canadians and artists of colour – on these lists and rosters creates two problems. First, bookers have the false belief that there are fewer women and Trans\* artists (especially artists of colour) to invite to participate in festivals because they are represented in such small percentages on these lists. Second, the women that do make these lists and rosters are often already booked for tours and festivals, limiting significantly the number of women and Trans\* artists who are available to be booked for a lineup. As a result, they are increasingly absent on festival mainstages, and underrepresented on side stages. Both render their voices invisible to festival goers, who then make false assumptions about which artists participate in the music industry. But these conversations fail to consider that audiences appreciate a wider variety of artists than what’s played on radio.<sup>12</sup>

More critically, the absence of women on festival stages becomes part of this industry feedback loop – one that has become a self-fulfilling prophecy. As Dana Keith indicated in an interview with Carly Lewis: “If you continue to not put women there [on stages], they won’t be there.”<sup>13</sup> But herein lies the opportunity for change, as Brigitte Poupart indicated

in interview with Laurianne Croteau for her 2019 examination of representation on Quebec music festival stages: “If a festival chooses to put more women on stage, artist managers may decide to sign more of them, because it opens the door.”<sup>14</sup> The same is true for radio: if more songs by women and Trans\* artists are intentionally and thoughtfully built into programming practices, they begin to reshape the sound and culture of their format and that leads to change in other realms of the industry.

Where precise criteria and selection processes are not articulated for festivals, awards that include some measure of radio airplay or chart activity in their eligibility or selection criteria do articulate these details. For example, eligibility for the JUNO award for Single of the Year is not submission based. Instead, as their criteria indicate, “The Top 500 Canadian Singles released within the eligibility period are pulled from Luminate Data to determine the eligible singles for consideration.” A first step in adjudication includes a screen down process that narrows the pool of eligible songs to the Top 15 based on a formula that combines 75% consumption and 25% radio audience. These Top 15 songs are then voted on to determine the Top 5 singles for the final list of nominees. Within an industry that prioritises men and non-Canadian artists in their programming, singles by Canadian women and Trans\* artists (especially artists of colour) are less likely to be included within the Top 15 songs.<sup>15</sup>

Similarly, ADISQ, which manages the Félix Awards draws on radio data to determine its nominees for Song of the Year (Chanson de l’année). Entries, as their regulations indicate, are determined through a point system derived from a combination of Radio francophone BDS and Top francophone Correspondants from the

6 Watson, “Reflecting on Spotify’s Recommender System”; Pelly, “Discover Weakly: Sexism on Spotify.”

7 Amanda Coles et al., “The Status of Women in the Canadian Arts and Cultural Industries: Research Review 2010-2018,” Prepared for the Ontario Arts Council (August 2018): 24.

8 Croteau, “Festivals de musique québécois”; Virginie Ann, “Quebec Music Festival Facing Backlash for Not Including Female Artists, Headliner Pulls Out,” Global News (10 March 2022); Sophie Panton, “Ottawa Bluesfest Main Stage Lineup Has Many Asking: Where are the Women?” Capital Current (2024). See reference list for more media stories on festival lineups.

9 Billboard, “Billboard Explains: How Music Festivals Pick Their Lineups,” Billboard (28 July 2021).

10 Virginie Ann, “Quebec Music Festival Facing Backlash for Not Including Female Artists, Headliner Pulls Out.”

11 Carly Lewis, “Music Festivals Have a Serious Problem: They Don’t Book Enough Female Acts,” The Globe and Mail (26 June 2016).

12 Virginie Ann, “Quebec Music Festival Facing Backlash for Not Including Female Artists, Headliner Pulls Out.”

13 Lewis, “Music Festivals Have a Serious Problem: They Don’t Book Enough Female Acts.”

14 Croteau, “Festivals de musique québécois.”

15 JUNOS, Criteria by Category; JUNO, Junos Nomination Process (n.d.).

Top 25 Radio-Canada, Top 25 on-demand streaming, and Top 25 on the SoundScan sales charts.<sup>16</sup> While 4 of the 10 nominees in 2023 are women, the results of this study suggest that Québécois and French-Canadian women face barriers to accumulating the radio-driven component of the points needed to be included on the nomination ballot.

Even genre-focused associations, like the Canadian Country Music Association, use radio airplay as an element of their eligibility criteria for Single of the Year. As outlined in the CCMA's Award Rules and Regulations, Luminate Data provides a list of the top 200 spinning singles and the top 200 consumed (sales and streaming) singles, which are then scored based on a ranking system that gives equal weight (50/50) to spins and consumption. Ranking then determines the five final nominees, on which CCMA Members vote for the one nominee they deem most deserving.<sup>17</sup> In the period studied here, just 9 of the 58 nominations (15.5%) between 2013 and 2023 were for a Single by a woman, with 79.3% by men and 5.2% by mixed gender bands.<sup>18</sup> Songs by women only received nominations in 6 of the 11 years that align with this study period (all Top 10 songs on the Airplay charts). A woman has only won this award 3 times (27.3%) in the last 11 years, with the remaining 8 years for Singles by men (72.7%). In an ecosystem that privileges radio, as does Country, women face significant barriers to eligibility for awards – exacerbated for Trans\* artists and women of colour.

More research must be done on the festival, touring, and award systems within the industry to gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of these relationships. But what we see through these examples – and certainly through the work of journalists that have been covering these topics for the last decade – is a data-driven system that creates a feedback loop between radio, streaming,

live music performance, and awards that has become a self-fulfilling prophecy that eliminates opportunities for full participation in the industry.<sup>19</sup>

## Build Audience Familiarity.

Airplay does not just influence the trajectory of an artist's career, it also shapes audience experience and familiarity. While this report focuses on representation on the airwaves, it is imperative to consider how this representation influences perception of listeners.

Repetition is an essential element in the development of a format's sound and culture, but it also shapes the audience's experience and understanding of that culture. Research has shown the repeated airplay increases an artist's presence on radio, allowing their voice to be heard, to become known and ultimately to become familiar and likeable to a station's listening community.<sup>20</sup>

Underplayed (and in some instances absent) on Canadian radio, songs by women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour are heard less frequently – rendering their voices unfamiliar with station listeners. This type of programming alters the public's perception of the contributions of these artists to popular musical culture, both nationally (through the prioritising of non-CanCon songs) and locally (through the low-rate of programming of songs by French-Canadian women). As a result, there is danger that listeners will make false assumptions about the place of these artists in the industry, that only a handful participate in the creation of popular music, or that they don't make music of sufficient quality to be played on their trusted station. This situation is perhaps most critical for Trans\* artists and women of colour – particularly Indigenous women – whose songs are almost absent from

Country, Alternative Rock, and Active Rock radio and severely underrepresented on Top 40, Mainstream AC, and Hot AC radio, leaving listeners to assume that they do not participate in mainstream spaces.<sup>21</sup>

## Building a More Equitable System.

There will be a desire to advocate for simply adding more songs by missing artists as a means to correct inequities. And while certainly playing more songs by women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour is important, it will not fix inequity in the industry – nor is it fair to place the burden of inequity on the shoulders of marginalised artists. Adding and stirring is not the answer. Echoing Marcia J. Citron, there is danger in mechanically adding artists and works into the system without questioning the system and conceptualising its reconstitution. Visibility counts for a lot, it's powerful, but it is not the whole picture.<sup>22</sup> This work is as much about creating opportunities for artists as it is evaluating and understanding the impact of current practices on the careers of these artists and the ways in which they create barriers that limit their potential for success and longevity within the industry, effectively eliminating them from cultural memory. There is a moral and ethical imperative to consider how current practices impact artists and to take steps to mitigate harm.

## Avoid Specialty Programming.

Current practice tends to silo songs in specialty segments (devoted hours, weekend features, etc.) or in evening and overnight dayparts. Women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour are not a novelty. While it might seem like a solution to have

16 ADISQ, *Réglementation des Félix* (7 February 2018): 10, 15, 17.

17 CCMA, *Award Rules and Regulations* (n.d.).

18 A list of past CCMA Award nominees and winners can be found on their website: [https://members.ccma.org/cgi/page.cgi/past\\_award\\_winners.html](https://members.ccma.org/cgi/page.cgi/past_award_winners.html)

19 See list of relevant SongData studies in reference list.

20 Philip A. Russell, "Effects of Repetition on the familiarity and Likeability of Popular Music Recordings," *Psychology of Music* 15/2 (1987): 187-97.

21 Jada Watson, "Billboard's Hot Country Songs Chart and the Curation of Country Music Culture," *Journal of Popular Music History, Special Issue on Popular Music Curation* 13/1-2: 168-90.

22 Marcia J. Citron, "Women and the Western Canon: Where Are We Now?" *Notes* 64/2 (2007): 209-15.

specialty hours devoted to introducing their music, it actually separates their music from the playlist, isolates their voices, and reinforces differences in a way that exacerbates familiarity barriers.

Building in new practices for introducing and including music into the 24-hour radio cycle when audiences can hear their voices in succession, in alternation with a diversity of voices, and as part of the fabric of the sonic musical experience is critical to building equitable practices.

Introduce new music by women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour during daytime hours so that listeners are exposed to it and become familiar with their voices and stories. Building familiarity through exposure during peak listening is critical for new artists. It's equally critical for audience experience and engagement. Without regular contact between listeners and the voices of these artists, audience engagement is not a measurable or even relevant metric for stations.

## Play 'em Back-to-Back.

Current practices avoid playing songs by women, Trans\* artists and artists of colour back-to-back. While the study did not evaluate individual station logs to analyse the rate at which their songs are played in succession, the national average shows clearly that it's impossible for their songs to be played back-to-back when the average is 1 song an hour (or daypart). Future studies will engage in analysis of daily logs to understand more deeply how daily decisions are being made.

As a result of their songs being spaced out as either 1 per hour or per daypart, women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour are distributed in playlists in a way that limits their representation and reduces audience familiarity with their voices. Rebuilding practices in a way that allows for their songs to be heard more frequently, and in proximity, will reshape

audience experience.

## Rebuild Station Golds.

Important music has been lost to a practice that filters songs by women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour from recurrent programming, thereby eliminating their music from gold catalogues. An immediate action that can be taken is rebuilding station gold catalogues right now to include the music lost through this programming pipeline and building a healthier and more representative catalogue of the music – especially the Canadian music – of artists that have contributed to the evolution of musical culture.

Rebuilding station golds to include more songs by women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour is critical reconciliatory work to recover lost voices, reintroduce their stories, and reinvest in their careers through the long-term preservation of their music.

## Champion New Music.

The current commercial model depends on relationships with major labels, but this should not be the only route to championing new music by women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour who are already underrepresented on label rosters. Rather than continue to point fingers at labels for not promoting more music by women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour, move beyond the major-label system to seek out artists to platform and build new pathways that do not require the financial investment of an artist servicing their songs to the format or enduring a financially unsustainable radio tour to promote their music.<sup>23</sup>

Instead of passively waiting for label servicing of new music, be proactive, become an active agent in music discovery and be part of the pathway for new artists to build their careers (which may include for some that want it, being introduced

to labels). The internet puts the music of these artists at your fingertips. Do the research, find new (especially local and Canadian) artists, and build pathways for introducing new artists to listeners and the industry.

## Aim Higher than CanCon.

The current programming regulations require that stations play a minimum 35% Canadian Content between 6am and 6pm. This study shows that most formats are just meeting this requirement and the distribution within this portion of airplay Canadian artists are disadvantaged by current practices, particularly women, Trans\* artists, and Indigenous artists. If their songs are included in playlists at all, their songs are played enough to say they were spun but not enough to really support artists and help build pathways to audiences' ears and to charts in a way that then leads to opportunities to tour, to participate in festivals, and to be considered for industry awards. As a result, they meet significant barriers to opportunities within the industry wherein they cannot build financially viable careers in their own country.

CanCon should not be a target for Canadian radio to meet, it should be a place to start. Aim higher than 35%. Redistribute airplay amongst Canadians in an equitable way that (along with all of the suggestions above) ensures that Canadian women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour are played in daytime hours, are played in proximity and back-to-back, and are preserved through recurrent-to-gold programming to ensure that they are part of the canon of Canadian music.

## Develop New Audience Testing Metrics.

In the context of an industry that does not program the songs of women, Trans\* artists, and artists of colour in a way that

<sup>23</sup> Radio tour is not a financially viable activity for many artists – especially artists marginalized within this industry – and should be re-envisioned in a more equitable way that doesn't place the financial burden on artists. These tours can be done virtually, and stations can build relationships with organisations that invest in emerging artists to fund station visits and work with local venues to host shows.

allows their voices to be heard within daytime hours, in equitable volume, in regularity, in close proximity, audience metrics are not just incomplete, they are entirely irrelevant.

Current data and testing models engage station listeners through a survey that asks them to rate whether they like or dislike (and want to keep hearing) music played on the stations. But these tests (1) evaluate their audience on inequitable programming data for artists that they may not even hear during their listening hours and (2) replicate that inequity in the distribution of songs in their survey.

Results from the current method of audience testing distorts inequity and as a result perpetuates and reinforces practices that favour white men. Because their songs are prioritised in programming (including daytime programming and preservation in gold catalogue playlists), songs by white men test well with audiences. Because songs by women are played so infrequently, they do not test as well because they are unfamiliar.

This model invalidates audience testing and is perhaps the most flawed tool in the industry. Audiences need to hear the music on which they are being tested during the daytime dayparts and at a higher frequency to build familiarity and likeability with music. These practices are inherently flawed and provide an inaccurate picture of the market.

But it's not just the data used to test, it's the population being tested -- an audience that has been curated by each format through decades of listenership without consideration of the demographics of the audience. It's not just musicians that are excluded from or feel alienated by a format for a lack of representation, audiences have the same experience when they do not hear themselves and their experiences represented in the voices and stories sung in the tracks played on radio stations. Change in programming will be followed by change in the audience demography, and both will lead to more diverse and equitable cultures.

## Know Your Station.

This cannot be solitary work – it should be a collective industry-wide effort because it impacts the entire ecosystem -- including labels, publishers, festivals and live music organisations, and awarding agencies, and more. It also requires knowing where you're at with your station so you know the rate of representation and the areas in which improvement and change can be made. SongData is here to help. Please reach out to us at [info@SongData.ca](mailto:info@SongData.ca). We are invested in being part of the discussion and work around building a healthier, more sustainable ecosystem – one that aims to build pathways for stations to share the air in a more accessible, inclusive, equitable, and diverse way.



# WITH GRATITUDE

This project has been in development within SongData since the very first report I completed on Canadian Country radio in September 2019. With each subsequent project on Canadian radio, we were one step closer to a methodology that would support a project of this size and scope. It was thanks to the encouragement of Heather Gibson, Shauna de Cartier, Robyn Stewart, and Emily Smart that it finally became a reality. Thank you to Women in Music Canada and the National Arts Centre for partnering on this project.

There are many individuals who contributed along the way. First and foremost, to my research team of Eugénie Tessier and Unnati Patel, for working with me on this project. In particular, Eugénie Tessier, with whom I have worked for many years and who approached this project and the translation with sensitivity and a keen eye for developing the language for writing about radio programming.

Thank you to Bronwin Parks of Feisty Creative for designing this report. Bronwin's creative vision drew not just from the report's findings, but also from the research done with SongData in all facets of the design. The design is a reference to the LED lights of an EQ on a mixing board. The amount of opacity in the various colour bars is a direct reference to the four gender category colours used in the SongData report. They intentionally included the red line above where the highest of those three columns "peak", as a reference to my earlier research (Redlining in Country Music), and the barriers to success many of the artists from those underrepresented gender categories face everyday. Mixing boards also include a red line that indicates where a track peaks, creating a second reference to representation within the industry.

I also thank two former students, Abigail Alty and Dali Brisson, who did a project on Canadian Active Rock radio in Fall 2021 for a course at the University of Ottawa. They generously shared with me their artist directory with me, which was an important building block for the Rock datasets for this project. Their project is listed in the project methodology of the reference list.

I thank Sarah Burke, MJ, Tami Neilson, Rissi Palmer, Andrea Williams, Holly G, D'Orjay the Singing Shaman, Anneli Loepp Thiessen, and Nahal Vahdat for the many conversations about SongData research and this project and for offering support and guidance (even when they didn't realise it).

Finally, I thank my husband Julian, my daughter Senna, and my mother Cathy, for their support and encouragement.

**- DR. JADA WATSON**



# RESEARCH TEAM



## Principal Researcher

**DR. JADA WATSON** is a white settler scholar that lives and works on the unceded and unsundered territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation. Her research and teaching occur on Indigenous lands across Turtle Island, and she endeavours to engage and uphold recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission through her commitment to addressing the different forms of colonialism and white supremacist heteropatriarchal structures across culture and history. She is an Assistant Professor of Digital Humanities in the School of Information Studies at the University of Ottawa.

Radio played a big role in Watson's musical development – she spent many weekends taping weekly countdowns, using those recordings to teach herself to play popular songs of a variety of genres on piano. This was in the mid-1990s, when songs by women were in higher rotation on radio playlists and better-represented on the charts. And even still, that representation was insufficient and led to the development of the Lilith Fair concert tour by Sarah McLachlan as a platform for creating opportunities and community amongst women in the music industry.

Representation within the music industry is worse than the 1990s and is in dire need of attention. This is particularly true in a Canadian context that continues to prioritise musical imports. To address continued and (in some cases) growing inequity, Watson focuses her research on representation on radio programming, evaluating the rate at which songs by women, artists of colour, and 2SLGBTQ+ artists are played and how the lack of support limits pathways to charts, which

also influence opportunities beyond to funding, touring, festivals, award eligibility, and so much more.

Invested in research in the community with the goal of supporting the development of more equitable and diverse practices, SongData serves a larger interest in understanding how genre cultures and communities form and develop, with specific interest in the role of market data in the formation and evolution of genre categories. This report is the fourth SongData study to focus on radio in Canada and builds a foundation for future work on the Canadian industry. Check out [www.SongData.ca/Share-the-Air](http://www.SongData.ca/Share-the-Air) to view previous studies.

Much of her research is available publicly via SongData.ca. She has written for various news outlets (including NBC's Think series, Nashville Scene, The Nashville Briefing, and Toronto Star) and has spoken to industry audiences at MusicBiz, SXSW, Triple A radio's NonCommvention, and Country Radio Seminar. Her work on representation in the industry also appears in *Popular Music & Society*, *Popular Music History*, and *American Music Perspectives*. She has chapters in several edited collections and is co-editor of *Whose Country Music? Genre, Identity, and Belonging in Twenty-First Century Country Music Culture* with Paula J. Bishop (Cambridge UP).



## Researcher

**EUGÉNIE TESSIER** is a doctoral candidate in sociology at the University of Ottawa. Having completed both a Bachelor of Music and M.A. in Music with Specialization in Feminist and Gender Studies at the same institution, she recognizes that her home and primary workplace are located on unceded and unsundered territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe Nation.

Tessier is a longtime collaborator of Dr. Watson's research on American and Canadian radio broadcasting industries. She was first involved as a research assistant in 2018 on the SSHRC-funded project Gender Representation in Country Music. Having now worn many hats throughout the years, her work for SongData includes translation and copyediting of various publications, coding data, as well as bibliographical research.

Her own research engages with questions of representation through a sociohistorical approach, addressing issues surrounding perception of the aesthetic efficacy of artistic and musical practices in defining francophone minority communities in Canada. Engaging with feminist and decolonial epistemologies, her work reflects on the ways through which dominant discourse on art and its relation to the political tends to uphold patriarchal and colonial modes of reproduction. A Franco-Ontarian herself, Tessier's interests in questions of aesthetic inequality and efficacy has recently brought her to reflect on the performance of *québécois* – an untranslatable concept that has clumsily been associated to kitsch – in francophone Canada and the place that women and queer subjectivities occupy in the composition of minority francophone sociocultural realities.



## Research Assistant

**UNNATI PATEL** is a doctoral candidate in the Digital Transformation and Innovation program at the University of Ottawa, which is located on unceded territory of the Algonquin people who are the traditional guardians of this land. Her doctoral dissertation project addresses AI's "black box problem" where the opacity regarding the rationale behind its decisions and actions results in a lack of suitable explanations to human users. Focusing on explainable AI (xAI), a set of processes and methods that would allow human users to understand the outputs of AI systems, she is applying ideas from social sciences research on how humans explain our own actions and thoughts to xAI initiatives.

She is an accomplished business, program, and technology management expert with 25+ years experience at senior executive levels within multi-national corporations in aerospace (SPAR Aerospace, Honeywell

Aerospace, GE, Pratt & Whitney) and manufacturing (P&G, FORD) industries. She holds a BSc in Electrical Engineering from University of Toronto, an MBA from Heriot-Watt University, and an Honours BA and MA in Philosophy from University of Toronto. Her PhD is offering her a pathway for integrating her life experiences and education in multiple disciplines encompassing STEM and humanities to carry out interdisciplinary research that benefits society.

A lifelong music enthusiast, Patel is interested in increasing the involvement of more diverse populations in the creation of multiple music genres. She believes that expanding the participation of marginalised groups in the music industry will positively impact culture and society in general. She contributed to this study by assisting with the research of discographic and biographic metadata of artists.

# APPENDIX

## Country Format REPORTING STATIONS

CHSJ-FM: Saint John, NB (Acadia Broadcasting Ltd.). Program Director: Leo Melanson/Music Director: Andrew Gordon.

CKHZ-FM: Halifax, NS (Acadia Broadcasting Ltd.). Program Director: Jeremy Slattery/Music Director: Andrew Gordon.

CKHJ-AM: Fredericton, NB (Bell Media). Program Director: Matt Cleveland/Music Director: James Cormier.

CIMX-FM: Windsor, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Mark Cameron/Music Director: Mark Cameron.

CJBX-FM: London, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Mark Cameron/Music Director: Mark Cameron.

CKQM-FM: Peterborough, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Brian Young/Music Director: Vanessa Murphy.

CKKL-FM: Ottawa, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Brittany Grunig/Music Director: Rebecca Seabrook.

CICX-FM: Barrie, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Josh Duncan/Music Director: Josh Duncan.

CKLC-FM: Kingston, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Brittany Grunig/Music Director: Brittany Grunig.

CICS-FM: Sudbury, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Bryan Cooper/Music Director: Josh Corbett.

CHBD-FM: Regina, SK (Bell Media). Program Director: Tim Day/Music Director: Chase Hussey.

CJWF-FM: Windsor, ON (Blackburn Radio). Program Director: Cordell Green/Music Director: Cordell Green.

CISN-FM: Edmonton, AB (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Greg Johnson/Music Director: Stephanie Dunham.

CKRY-FM: Calgary, AB (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Greg Johnson/Music Director: Stephanie Dunham.

CKDK-FM: London, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Brad Gibb/Music Director: Matt Weaver.

CJKX-FM: Toronto, ON (Durham Radio Inc). Program Director: Steve Kassay/Music Director: Bryan Floyd.

CHKX-FM: Hamilton, ON (Durham Radio Inc). Program Director: Bill Toffan/Music Director: Bryan Floyd.

CILG-FM: Moose Jaw, SK (Golden West Radio). Program Director: Jordan Rivers/Music Director: Courtney Fielder.

CHFX-FM: Halifax, NS (Maritime Broadcasting System). Program Director: Mike Mitchell/Music Director: Erin Sullivan.

CKYY-FM: St. Catharines-Niagara Falls, ON (My Broadcasting Corporation). Program Director: Dave Devine/Music Director: Dave Devine.

CHLB-FM: Lethbridge, AB (Pattison Media). Program Director: Jasmin Doobay/Music Director: Chad Benson.

CKWD-FM: Calgary, AB (Pattison Media). Program Director: Jonathan Best/Music Director: Matt DiPaola.

CJJR-FM: Vancouver, BC (Pattison Media). Program Director: Russell James/Music Director: Jaxon Hawks.

CFQX-FM: Winnipeg, MB (Pattison Media). Program Director: Janet Trecarten/Music Director: Janet Trecarten.

CIKZ-FM: Kitchener, ON (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Wendy Duff/Music Director: Emily Szabo.

CKXC-FM: Kingston, ON (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Jacquie Beckett/Music Director: Jacquie Beckett.

CJWW-AM: Saskatoon, SK (Saskatoon Media Group). Program Director: Dave Thomas/Music Director: Matt Bradley.

CKBL-FM: Saskatoon, SK (Saskatoon Media Group). Program Director: Pat Dubois/Music Director: Matt Bradley.

CHCQ-FM: Belleville, ON (Starboard Communications). Program Director: Paul Ferguson/Music Director: Paul Ferguson.

CFCW-AM: Edmonton, AB (Stingray). Program Director: Jackie Rae Greening/Music Director: A.J. Keller.

CKGY-FM: Red Deer, AB (Stingray). Program Director: Kevin Becker/Music Director: Kevin Becker.

CIGV-FM: Kelowna, BC (Stingray). Program Director: Jennifer Dalen/Music Director: Scott Hackman.

CJKC-FM: Kamloops, BC (Stingray). Program Director: Jennifer Dalen/Music Director: Scott Hackman.

CJXL-FM: Moncton, NB (Stingray). Program Director: Geoff Walsh/Music Director: Shilo Bellis.

CFRK-FM: Fredericton, NB (Stingray). Program Director: Geoff Walsh/Music Director: John Riordan.

## Alternative Rock Format REPORTING STATIONS

CKHY-FM: Halifax, NS (Acadia Broadcasting Ltd.). Program Director: Jeremy Slattery/Music Director: Jeremy Slattery.

CISO-FM: Barrie, ON (Bayshore Broadcasting). Program Director: Ian Solecki/Music Director: Scott Penfold.

CIND-FM: Toronto, ON (Central Ontario Broadcasting). Program Director: Ian March/Music Director: Mike Religa.

CFNY-FM: Toronto, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Tammy Cole/Music Director: Rick Lee.

CFOX-FM: Vancouver, BC (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Dustin Collins/Music Director: Brittany Van Hemert.

CFEX-FM: Calgary, AB (Harvard Broadcasting). Program Director: Jim McCourtie/Music Director: Matt Berry.

CKEX-FM: Red Deer, AB (Harvard Broadcasting). Program Director: Matt Berry/Music Director: Matt Berry.  
 CJMB-FM: Peterborough, ON (My Broadcasting Corporation). Program Director: Emily Moore/Music Director: Dave Devine.  
 CJZN-FM: Victoria, BC (Pattison Media). Program Director: Mark Addams/Music Director: Bryan Capistrano.  
 CKKS-FM: Vancouver, BC (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd Media). Program Director: Christian Hall/Music Director: Corbet Rutzer.  
 CHDI-FM: Edmonton, AB (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd Media). Program Director: Al Ford/Music Director: Brandy Taylor.  
 The Verge: Toronto, ON (SiriusXM). Program Director: Jeff Leake/Music Director: Jeff Leake.  
 CILV-FM: Ottawa, ON (Stingray). Program Director: Dan Youngs/Music Director: Noah Sabourin.

## Active Rock Format

### REPORTING STATIONS

CHOM-FM: Montréal, QC (Bell Media). Program Director: Mathew Wood/Music Director: Pierre Landry.  
 CJAY-FM: Calgary, AB (Bell Media). Program Director: Chad Martin/Music Director: JD Anderson.  
 CFBR-FM: Edmonton, AB (Bell Media). Program Director: Boyd Leader/Music Director: Jessica Jackson.  
 CHTZ-FM: St. Catharines-Niagara Falls, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Lisa Vinc/Music Director: Ashleigh Darrach.  
 CFJB-FM: Barrie, ON (Central Ontario Broadcasting). Program Director: Dave Carr/Music Director: Craig Ross.  
 CJKR-FM: Winnipeg, MB (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: David Drake/Music Director: David Drake.  
 CJXY-FM: Hamilton, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Dave Blezard/Music Director: Rick Lee.  
 CFPL-FM: London, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Dave Blezard/Music Director: Rick Lee.  
 CKGE-FM: Toronto, ON (Durham Radio Inc.). Program Director: Doug Elliott/Music Director: LoriAnn Villani.  
 CFWF-FM: Regina, SK (Harvard Broadcasting). Program Director: Danny Kid/Music Director: Teagan Witko.  
 CFEL-FM: Québec, QC (Leclerc Communication). Program Director: Tommy Fontaine/Music Director: John Pedulla.  
 CKLZ-FM: Kelowna, BC (Pattison Media). Program Director: Corey Fischer/Music Director: Corey Fischer.  
 CHWF-FM: Nanaimo, BC (Pattison Media). Program Director: Kent Wilson/Music Director: Graeme Tait.  
 CIFM-FM: Kamloops, BC (Pattison Media). Program Director: Cheryl Blackwell/Music Director: Richard Woods.  
 CJDJ-FM: Saskatoon, SK (Rawlco Radio). Program Director: Ryan Zimmerman/Music Director: Joel Kleer.  
 CITI-FM: Winnipeg, MB (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd Media). Program Director: Mike Uhrich/Music Director: Ian Scharek.  
 CIDG-FM: Ottawa, ON (Torres Media Ottawa). Program Director: Tim Wieczorek/Music Director: Tim Wieczorek.  
 CIRX-FM: Prince George, BC (Vista Radio). Program Director: Kurt Flesher/Music Director: Silvio Gallo.

## Top 40 Format

### REPORTING STATIONS

CKFM-FM: Toronto, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Karen Steele/Music Director: Lisa Grossi.  
 CJFM-FM: Montréal, QC (Bell Media). Program Director: Mathew Wood/Music Director: Mathew Wood.  
 CFBT-FM: Vancouver, BC (Bell Media). Program Director: Jasmina Koga/Music Director: Jasmina Koga.  
 CIBK-FM: Calgary, AB (Bell Media). Program Director: Chad Martin/Music Director: Tyler Hall.  
 CFMG-FM: Edmonton, AB (Bell Media). Program Director: Boyd Leader/Music Director: Lisa Grossi.  
 CKMM-FM: Winnipeg, MB (Bell Media). Program Director: Jeff Molnar/Music Director: Lisa Grossi.  
 CFCA-FM: Kitchener, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: J Stevens/Music Director: Lisa Grossi.  
 CIQM-FM: London, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: J Stevens/Music Director: J Stevens.  
 CJCH-FM: Halifax, NS (Bell Media). Program Director: Matt Cleveland/Music Director: Katrina (Kat) Elliott.  
 CHBE-FM: Victoria, BC (Bell Media). Program Director: Brad Challoner/Music Director: Brad Challoner.  
 CIDR-FM: Windsor, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Jay Stevens/Music Director: Lisa Grossi.  
 CHSU-FM: Kelowna, BC (Bell Media). Program Director: Amy Gilbert/Music Director: Lisa Grossi.  
 CKQB-FM: Ottawa, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Stephanie Hunter/Music Director: Michael Lavallee.  
 CING-FM: Hamilton, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Tammy Cole/Music Director: Rick Lee.  
 CKBT-FM: Kitchener, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Dave Blezard/Music Director: Elle Dee.  
 CHAY-FM: Barrie, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Samantha Payne/Music Director: Chris Liedtke.  
 CKRU-FM: Peterborough, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Rob Seguin/Music Director: Rob Seguin.  
 CFQK-FM: Thunder Bay, ON (Dougall Media). Program Director: Greg Diamond/Music Director: JD Luchies.  
 CIDC-FM: Toronto, ON (Evanov Radio Group). Program Director: Matt Wreggitt/Music Director: Matt Wreggitt.  
 CHWE-FM: Winnipeg, MB (Evanov Radio Group). Program Director: Adam West/Music Director: Adam West.  
 CKIK-FM: Red Deer, AB (Harvard Broadcasting). Program Director: Matt Berry/Music Director: JR.  
 CIHT-FM: Ottawa, ON (Stingray). Program Director: Josie Fenech/Music Director: Amy Ballard.



## Mainstream AC Format

### REPORTING STATIONS

CITE-FM: Montréal, QC (Bell Media). Program Director: Jean-Philippe Marcil/Music Director: Vincent Garneau.

CHQM-FM: Vancouver, BC (Bell Media). Program Director: Jasmina Koga/Music Director: Jasmina Koga.

CJMJ-FM: Ottawa, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Brittany Grunig/Music Director: Rebecca Seabrook.

CIMF-FM: Ottawa, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Éric St-Louis/Music Director: Vincent Garneau.

CITF-FM: Québec, QC (Bell Media). Program Director: Marc Tanguay/Music Director: Jean-Pascal Lemelin.

CIOO-FM: Halifax, NS (Bell Media). Program Director: Matt Cleveland/Music Director: Katrina (Kat) Elliott.

CHRE-FM: St. Catharines-Niagara Falls, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Lisa Vinc/Music Director: Lisa Vinc.

CILK-FM: Kelowna, BC (Bell Media). Program Director: Amy Gilbert/Music Director: Amy Gilbert.

CFLY-FM: Kingston, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Brittany Thompson/Music Director: Brittany Thompson.

CKPT-FM: Peterborough, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Brian Young/Music Director: Brian Young.

CIBX-FM: Fredericton, NB (Bell Media). Program Director: Matt Cleveland/Music Director: James Cormier.

CJMG-FM: Penticton, BC (Bell Media). Program Director: Grant Scott/Music Director: Grant Scott.

CKSY-FM: Windsor, ON (Blackburn Radio). Program Director: Jay Poole/Music Director: Jay Poole.

CIHR-FM: London, ON (Byrnes Communications). Program Director: Dan Henry/Music Director: Kaitlin OShea.

CFHK-FM: London, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Dave Blezard/Music Director: Toni Ross.

CKWS-FM: Kingston, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Bob Willette/Music Director: Jess Williams.

CIMJ-FM: Guelph, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Dave Blezard/Music Director: William Menzies.

CFLG-FM: Cornwall, ON (Corus Entertainment Inc.). Program Director: Mike Lavalee/Music Director: Cairo McDonell.

CKPR-FM: Thunder Bay, ON (Dougall Media). Program Director: Greg Diamond/Music Director: Bill Hogan.

CJAW-FM: Moose Jaw, SK (Golden West Radio). Program Director: Jordan Rivers/Music Director: Jordan Rivers.

CIOK-FM: Saint John, NB (Maritime Broadcasting System). Program Director: Mike Mitchell/Music Director: Erin Sullivan.

CKSG-FM: Cobourg, ON (My Broadcasting Corporation). Program Director: Sara Johnston/Music Director: Sara Johnston.

CKCE-FM: Calgary, AB (Pattison Media). Program Director: Jonathan Best/Music Director: Taylor Daniels.

CHLX-FM: Ottawa, ON (RNC Media). Program Director: Sebastien Lavoie/Music Director: Sebastien Lavoie.

CHFI-FM: Toronto, ON (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Troy Scott/Music Director: Julie James.

CHYM-FM: Kitchener, ON (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Rob Basile/Music Director: Brady Kingsbury.

CKOT-FM: London, ON (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Al Smith/Music Director: Al Smith.

CIOC-FM: Victoria, BC (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Matty B. McIntyre/Music Director: Matty B. McIntyre.

CJMX-FM: Sudbury, ON (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Michelle Russell/Music Director: Michelle Russell.

CFRV-FM: Lethbridge, AB (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Shawna Prince/Music Director: Shawna Prince.

CHFM-FM: Calgary, AB (Rogers Sports & Media). Program Director: Al Tompson/Music Director: Kevin Britton.

CJOJ-FM: Belleville, ON (Starboard Communications). Program Director: Paul Ferguson/Music Director: Paul Ferguson.

### FRENCH LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO

CITF-FM: Québec, QC (Bell Media). Program Director: Marc Tanguay/Music Director: Vincent Garneau.

CFGE-FM: Sherbrooke, QC (Cogeco Media Inc.). Program Director: Pierre Vachon/Music Director: Étienne Grégoire.

CFGL-FM: Montréal, QC (Cogeco Media Inc.). Program Director: Isabelle Boulerice/Music Director: Étienne Grégoire.

CILM-FM: Saguenay, QC (Cogeco Media Inc.). Program Director: Bernard Laberge/Music Director: Étienne Grégoire.

CIBM-FM: Rivière-du-Loup, QC (Group Radio Simard). Program Director: Christian Duchesne.

CKLE-FM: Bathurst, NB (Radio de la Baie Ltee.). Program Director: Daniel Aubé/Music Director: Mélanie Duguay.

## Hot AC Format

### REPORTING STATIONS

CKNI-FM: Moncton, NB (Acadia Broadcasting Ltd). Program Director: Leo Melanson/Music Director: Leo Melanson.

CHWV-FM: Saint John, NB (Acadia Broadcasting Ltd). Program Director: Chelsea Smith/Music Director: Amy Clark.

CHEQ-FM: Québec, QC (Arsenal Media). Program Director: David Kègle/Music Director: Michael Gagnon.

CHUM-FM: Toronto, ON (Bell Media). Program Director: Heidi Baiden/Music Director: Lisa Grossi.

CHYR-FM: Leamington, ON (Blackburn Radio). Program Director: Matt Franklin/Music Director: Jay Marchillo.

CKMB-FM: Barrie, ON (Central Ontario Broadcasting). Program Director: Matt Cacchione/Music Director: Amy Aust.

CKOI-FM: Montréal, QC (Cogeco Media Inc.). Program Director: Christian Viau/Music Director: Eric Martel.

CKBE-FM: Montréal, QC (Cogeco Media Inc.). Program Director: Paul Awad/Music Director: Vâtienn GrV@goire.

CJPX-FM: Montréal, QC (Leclerc Communication). Program Director: Benoit Simard/Music Director: John Pedulla.

CJEC-FM: Québec, QC (Leclerc Communication). Program Director: Steven Croatto/Music Director: John Pedulla.

CKCW-FM: Moncton, NB (Maritime Broadcasting System). Program Director: Mike Mitchell/Music Director: Erin Sullivan.

CKPK-FM: Vancouver, BC (Pattison Media). Program Director: Russell James/Music Director: Russell James.

CKNO-FM: Edmonton, AB (Pattison Media). Program Director: Jay Stone/Music Director: Kat Nykolaychuk.

CHNW-FM: Winnipeg, MB (Pattison Media). Program Director: Ray Camphu/Music Director: Ray Camphu.

CJBZ-FM: Lethbridge, AB (Pattison Media). Program Director: Jasmin Doobay/Music Director: Jasmin Doobay.

CKBZ-FM: Kamloops, BC (Pattison Media). Program Director: Cheryl Blackwell/Music Director: Richard Woods.

CHUB-FM: Red Deer, AB (Pattison Media). Program Director: Jamie Rankin/Music Director: Jamie Rankin.

CFMY-FM: Medicine Hat, AB (Pattison Media). Program Director: Mike Doll/Music Director: Jesse Christianson.

"CIGL-FM: Belleville, ON (Quinte Broadcasting). Program Director: Sean Kelly/Music Director: Rick Harrington."

CFMC-FM: Saskatoon, SK (Rawlco Radio). Program Director: Ryan Zimmerman/Music Director: Joel Kleer.

CIZL-FM: Regina, SK (Rawlco Radio). Program Director: Bruce Elliot/Music Director: Joel Kleer.

CKIS-FM: Toronto, ON (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Alex Vladev/Music Director: Kevin Britton.

CHBN-FM: Edmonton, AB (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Liann Cameron/Music Director: Katie Stanners.

CISS-FM: Ottawa, ON (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Murray Brookshaw/Music Director: Kevin Britton.

CKY-FM: Winnipeg, MB (Rogers Broadcasting Ltd. Media). Program Director: Mike Uhrich/Music Director: Kevin Britton.

CKZZ-FM: Vancouver, BC (Stingray). Program Director: Zach Bedford/Music Director: Kav Molavi.

CKMP-FM: Calgary, AB (Stingray). Program Director: Zach Bedford/Music Director: DJ Kav.

CKIX-FM: St. John's, NL (Stingray). Program Director: Brad Michaels/Music Director: Brad Michaels.

CIGM-FM: Sudbury, ON (Stingray). Program Director: Sherri K/Music Director: Devin McNeil.

### FRENCH LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO

CHEQ-FM: Québec, QC (Arsenal Media). Program Director: David Kègle/Music Director: Michael Gagnon.

CJMF-FM: Québec, QC (Cogeco Media Inc.). Program Director: Brigitte Simard/Music Director: Laurent Boulet.

CKOI-FM: Montréal, QC (Cogeco Media Inc.). Program Director: Christian Viau/Music Director: Eric Martel.

CIQI-FM: Montmagny, QC (Groupe Radio Simard).

CHYC-FM: Sudbury, ON (Haliburton Broadcasting Group). Program Director: Sylvain Boucher/Music Director: Sylvain Boucher.



# RESOURCES

## Canadian Organisations and Research Teams to Follow

### **SongData**

[SongData.ca](https://songdata.ca)

### **Women in Music Canada**

[womeninmusic.ca/en](https://womeninmusic.ca/en)

### **MTL Women in Music**

[facebook.com/mtlwomeninmusic](https://facebook.com/mtlwomeninmusic)

### **Femmes\* en musique**

[facebook.com/groups/225263121312772](https://facebook.com/groups/225263121312772)

### **shesaid.soMTL**

[shesaid.so/montreal](https://shesaid.so/montreal)

### **Comité femmes, inclusion et diversité of the Guilde des musiciens et musiciennes du Québec**

[gmmq.com](https://gmmq.com)

### **DIG! Différences et inégalités de genre dans la musique au Québec**

[digmusiquequebec.ca](https://digmusiquequebec.ca)

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Porcaro, Lorenzo, Emilia Gómez, and Carlos Castillo. "Perceptions of diversity in electronic music: The impact of listener, artist, and track characteristics." Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction 6/CSCW1: 1-26.

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McCormack, Ange. "The Gender gap in Australian Music is Slowly Narrowing. Here's What Still Needs to Change." ABC Australia triple j Hack (7 March 2020). McCormack released studies for 2019, 2018, and 2017.

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