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Advanced

<a href="#">Home</a>	<a href="#">About Ipsos</a>	<a href="#">Research Specializations</a>	<a href="#">News &amp; Polls</a>	<a href="#">Knowledge &amp; Ideas</a>	<a href="#">Products &amp; Tools</a>
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Global @dvisor Polls

**Europe**

- UK and Ireland
- Italy
- France

**Australia**

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Postmedia News/  
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**Telemundo Polls**

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**Consumer Goods**

**Consumer Trends**

**Education & History**

**Environment**

**Finance & Economy**

**Health**

**Hispanic Research**

**Lifestyle & Leisure**

**Loyalty & Satisfaction**

Media, Content  
& Technology

**Politics (Federal)**

**Politics (Regional)**

Social Issues,  
Foreign Affairs  
& Policy

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Home / News & Polls /

**Angus Reid Group Discovers 86% of Canadians Think Too Little Done to Honour Heroes**

**Angus Reid Group Discovers 86% of Canadians Think Too Little Done to Honour Heroes**

Wednesday, June 30, 1999

**Terry Fox Canada's Greatest Hero According to Mass Internet Survey**

**Angus Reid Group Discovers 86% of Canadians Think Too Little Done to Honour Heroes**

Terry Fox is Canada's greatest all-time hero according to a month-long Internet survey released today by **The Dominion Institute** and **The Council for Canadian Unity**. **Over one thousand different Canadian heroes were nominated with Frederick Banting, Nellie McClung, Louis Riel and Tommy Douglas, among others, making the Top Ten list.**

**The Institute and Council also commissioned from the Angus Reid Group a national telephone survey of Canadians' attitudes on heroes and heroism. Highlights of the telephone survey include: 78% of Canadians think heroes play an important role in keeping the country together; more than half (55%) learned about their hero through television or movies; and fully 86% think too little is being done to recognise heroes.**

**Both polls were conducted between May 19 and June 19, 1999. Over 28,000 people logged on to the survey Internet site [www.ourheroes.ca](http://www.ourheroes.ca) during the month-long nomination period. The Angus Reid Group study consisted of a telephone interview with a proportionately representative cross-section of 1,500 Canadian adults.**

**The Dominion Institute's Executive Director, Rudyard Griffiths comments: "Our research debunks the myth that America has a monopoly on heroes and heroism." Jocelyn Beaudoin, President and CEO of the Council states, "The depth of Canadians' connection to their heroes is clearly important to our identity and pride in our shared heritage."**

**An illustrated booklet containing short biographies of the Top Twenty heroes, as identified by the Internet poll, can be obtained free of charge by calling 1-888-566-8066. The Top Ten list and short biographies are also available online June 30th at [www.ourheroes.ca](http://www.ourheroes.ca).**

**The Dominion Institute is a national charity whose mission is to help Canadians rediscover links between their history and common identity. The CCI is a national non-profit non-partisan**



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**CONTACT**



**John Wright**  
Senior Vice President / Vice-président sénior  
Global @dvisor  
(416) 324-2002  
[john.wright@ipsos.com](mailto:john.wright@ipsos.com)

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**Rudyard Griffiths for the Dominion Institute, (416)  
368-9627 or,  
John Wright, Senior VP, Angus Reid Group, (416)  
324-2900 Full Results June 30 @ [www.OurHeroes.ca](http://www.OurHeroes.ca)**

**THE DOMINION INSTITUTE / THE  
COUNCIL FOR CANADIAN UNITY  
ANALYSIS OF INTERNET SURVEY RESULTS**

**Methodology**

**From May 19 to June 19, 1999, the Institute and Council conducted an Internet survey that asked respondents to nominate Canada's greatest hero. The purpose of the online survey was to generate a definitive Top Ten list of Canadian heroes for July 1, 1999.**

**It should be noted that only heroes who were no longer living and Canadian by birth or choice were eligible for nomination.**

**Overview**

**In total, more than one thousand different Canadian heroes were nominated with over 28,000 persons visiting the survey website. Ballots were cast for a range of heroes encompassing political leaders, artists, athletes, family members and community figures.**

**Terry Fox and Frederick Banting ranked numbers one and two respectively. Canadian political figures crowd the Top Ten with Lester B. Pearson in third place, John A. Macdonald in fourth, Louis Riel in fifth and Tommy Douglas in the number seven slot.**

**Military heroes and women also feature in the Top Ten: Isaac Brock, who defended Canada in the War of 1812, ranked number six; flying ace Billy Bishop ninth; Laura Secord, heroine of the War of 1812, eighth; and Nellie McClung, who fought for women's suffrage, tenth.**

**Top Ten by Age**

**Support for Terry Fox is strongest among the 35 to 54 year old age group. Nominations for the number two ranked hero, Frederick Banting were most often made by Canadians under the age of eighteen. Top Ten women heroes Laura Secord and Nellie McClung received many more nominations from those 18 and under as opposed to those aged 55 and older.**

**Tommy Douglas stands out as the only Top Ten hero to receive more than one third of nominations (36%) from those 55 and older. Sixth ranked Isaac Brock generated the most even distribution of nominations by age.**

**Top Ten by Gender**

**The largest variation between genders was**

**nominations. Banting followed a close second with 54% male nominations versus 46% female.**

## **THE ANGUS REID GROUP ANALYSIS OF ANGUS REID GROUP HEROES STUDY**

### **Overview**

The following analysis is based on a national telephone survey conducted in late May of a representative cross-section of 1,500 Canadian adults. The goal of the study was to better understand the value set that informs Canadians' perceptions of heroes and heroism.

With a national sample of 1,500, one can say with 95 percent certainty that the overall results of the survey are within +2.5 percentage points of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. It should be noted that the margin of error will be larger for sub-groupings of the survey population.

### **Values We Associate With Heroes**

Eight in ten (80%) respondents were immediately, upon request, able to think of someone whom they consider a Canadian hero. Men (84%) and Canadians aged 18 to 24 (84%) more readily had a Canadian hero in mind than women (77%) or older Canadians (71%).

When they think about heroes, "bravery/courage" is foremost in the minds of more than one quarter (26%) of Canadians. Another one in five (19%) think heroes are "honest/trustworthy". One in nine (12%) associate "integrity/high morals/honour" with heroes. "Selflessness/unselfish" rounds out the top four personal qualities at 11%.

Residents from B.C. and Alberta are more likely than average to associate honesty with heroes (24%), whereas residents of Quebec (35%) are comparatively more likely to cite bravery/courage as the defining characteristic of heroism.

Of those aged 55 and over, fully 20 percent associate honesty with heroism. Canadians aged 18 to 24 are more likely than average (30%) to say heroes are brave, while are less likely to describe a hero as being honest or trustworthy (12%).

Generally men and women share a similar assessment of personal characteristics of heroes, except with regards to the quality of selflessness. Women are almost twice as likely to associate selflessness with heroism as compared to men (14% women, 9% men).

### **Heroes in Time and Space**

Most Canadians' heroes distinguished themselves internationally (46%). Slightly less (40%), saw their hero make his or her mark within Canada. Much less frequently do Canadians think of heroes who distinguished themselves in their own community (8%) or some other place in Canada (5%). An exception is those 18 to 24 and

provinces (47%) are more likely to have heroes who distinguished themselves in Canada.

And the majority (57%) of Canadians, when thinking of a hero have in mind someone from the past, as opposed to a present-day figure (43%). Only in Alberta and Saskatchewan/Manitoba are respondents as likely to think of a present-day hero as a hero from the past.

#### **Where We Learn About Heroes**

The majority (55%) of Canadians first learned about their hero through movies, television or books. Less frequently, knowledge about heroes comes through formal schooling (18%), this included those aged 18 to 24 (28%). Nine percent learned about their heroes from family or friends (9%).

Respondents aged 18 to 24 stand out as being more likely than others to have learned about their heroes from family and friends (14%).

#### **Heroes and Our Collective Identity**

More than three quarters (78%) of Canadians agree that "Canadian heroes play an important role in keeping Canada together". This is a view held particularly strongly by residents of the Atlantic provinces (89%), Alberta (86%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (86%), and Canadians aged 55 and older (84%).

Furthermore, nine in ten (93%) agree that "Canadian heroes are an important part of our history and common heritage". Again, this view is most notable among residents of the Atlantic provinces (97%), Alberta (97%), Saskatchewan/Manitoba (96%), and Canadians aged 55 and older (96%).

Canada, however, is not doing enough to celebrate its heroes: this, according to six in 10 (60%) Canadians who feel that Canada as a country does too little to recognise its heroes. Only three percent (3%) of Canadians think too much is being done to celebrate its heroes, including six percent (6%) of Quebec residents.

#### **Heroes in Our Communities**

Nine in ten (93%) Canadians agree that "a knowledge and appreciation of local heroes helps foster pride in your community and Canada". This figure is even higher among residents of Alberta (97%) and the Atlantic provinces (96%).

And more than eight in ten (84%) say they would be very or somewhat interested in information or events celebrating local heroes and their accomplishments in their community. Again, this sentiment is strongest among respondents from Alberta (89%) and the Atlantic provinces (93%).

For further information contact:

Rudyard Griffiths  
Executive Director  
The Dominion Institute  
(416) 368-9627  
*(416) 737-9626 call*

(416) 975-1889  
[Kfreeman@toronto.ccu-cuc.ca](mailto:Kfreeman@toronto.ccu-cuc.ca)

John Wright  
Senior Vice President  
Angus Reid Group  
(416) 324-2900  
[John.Wright@angusreid.ca](mailto:John.Wright@angusreid.ca)

**Top Ten list with written descriptions June 30 @**  
[www.ourheroes.ca](http://www.ourheroes.ca)

**Full data tables for telephone survey**

**To order illustrated guide to Top Twenty list call 1-888-566-8066**

*The Angus Reid Group is Canada's largest and most well known Canadian research company. Established in 1979 by Dr. Angus Reid, the company serves 1200 clients via its six offices in Canada, four offices in the United States and its European office in London, England. With a compliment of 250 full time qualitative and quantitative researchers, the company has annual revenues of \$65 Million and is growing at an average rate of 30 percent per year. The employee owned company also operates its own field service entity, Direct Reid, utilizing 450 CATI telephone interviewing stations for north American calling and a 50,000 household consumer panel in Canada.*

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