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EXECUTIVE BRIEF [CONT'D]

behaviours of generations X and Y are fairly different from those of the baby-boomers, whether it be the age at which they leave home, entering a relationship or fertility (and recourse to abortion), or even participation in the labour market. On the whole, the authors find that people belonging to generations X and Y lead less comfortable lives than boomers.

The article by Merrill Cooper presents the results of a contextual study on young Calgarians. Using indicators based on health and welfare determinants, the author paints a sombre picture of the risks faced by many young people. Despite a strong economy, Calgary's particular demographics suggest that the population of "vulnerable youth" will continue to rise. The author presents a strategy advanced by the United Way to counter this phenomenon.

While the PRI has been focusing on regulatory reform in the context of North American Linkages, James Martin examines regulatory reform history in Canada. He argues that the entire system is much better than it was three decades ago that the process is infinitely better, and that the impact analysis of regulation, despite problems, is better as well. Nevertheless, the External Advisory Committee on Smart Regulation certainly found further changes were needed. The Smart Regulation Action Plan has important initiatives, but may benefit significantly from a greater focus on improving accountability and contestability in the system.

Recent polls show the environment is an important concern for Canadians.

The discussion on the Georgia Basin Ecosystem by Justin Longo and R. Anthony Hodge demonstrated that when crafting ecosystem initiatives, designers must be mindful of the presence of discordant "cultural ecosystems" that do not align with or map onto the natural ecosystem. An ecosystem perspective cannot simply be pushed onto people when the ecosystem definition is either inconsistent with or unimportant to their story. When cultural and natural ecosystems are aligned, it can lead to vibrant institutional arrangements rooted in natural landscapes, with the resulting synergies contributing to the institution's success.

The Canadian Council on Learning funded the state-of-the-field review upon which this article is based, under a contract to Abrami, Bernard, Wade, and Schmid. The review encompasses public, research, policy, and practitioner perspectives, assesses what is incomplete in the various literatures, explores what works (best practices), and provides a vision for promising new lines of research.

The review focused on the role of e-learning in the following areas: early childhood learning; elementary and secondary learning; post-secondary learning; adult learning; and health and learning.

We thank all our collaborators for their contribution, and hope that the new format of *Horizons* better serves our readers needs.

Thomas Townsend
Acting Executive Head

Social Participation through the Life-Course

Theoretical and Empirical Tool for Social Policy Development

Stéphanie Gaudet
University of Ottawa

Since 2004, the fictitious character of Olivia has become a household name in the world of federal government policy development and research. This heuristic model graphically presents the changes in an individual's occupational and family schedules over the course of life, as well as the individual's economic and social resources over time (PRI, 2004). This analytical framework has elicited many positive and negative reactions on the part of both the academic and government communities. One of the comments we have heard is that this model does not succeed in including the notion of society and of a societal link. These notions are essential for developing overarching policy objectives, such as that of social cohesion (Banting, 2006).

In this paper we will try to understand what society Olivia lives in and how she interacts within her personal networks or within local institutions. What does she do outside her professional life? How does she participate in the community? What social determinants limit her participation? Thus, we are trying to comprehend the social context while using as our analytical unit the individual and his or her life-course. We will present the preliminary results of a research project on Canadians' social participation over the course of their lives.¹ One aspect² of our research consists in using the 1998 General Social Survey (GSS) data on how Canadians spend their time. This database enables us to revisit, both theoretically and empirically, the notion of social participation. In presenting our results, we have emphasized the comparison between the practices of native-born

Canadians and those of immigrants, since this is a particularly useful comparison for understanding participation within the private and public spheres.

Life-Course Perspective at the Heart of the Socio-Economic Context

By taking the individual as a unit of analysis, it is far easier to reconcile knowledge in sociology and in economics to help develop policy instruments. The risk in applying such a model, however, is to omit two major premises: 1) life contexts at various levels (country, province, community, neighbourhood, family, etc.) and during various periods shape individuals; and 2) society exists beyond the sum of individuals (e.g., institutions, social movements, etc.). Obviously, the theory on life-course integrates these elements, since individuals are not products of spontaneous generations and are rooted in a transmission of values, cultures and practices (Elder, 2005). Thus, from one generation to another, there is production and reproduction of social representations and practices. The theory on life-course integrates this aspect of social reality, but the methodological and policy tools that are developed do not always manage to include this dimension.

The challenge of including the societal dimension based on the life-course analysis derives therefore from a policy issue, but it raises two theoretical and empirical questions that we will be underscoring in this paper: 1) the need to reinterpret social participation at the methodological

level; and 2) the importance of redefining social participation within the private and public spheres. We will present preliminary data from our research project to illustrate what we are saying.

What is Social Participation?

In recent years, the academic and policy communities have shown an interest in the concept of social capital, i.e., the outcome of exchanges

It is recognized that being active on the labour market is one of the factors that increases someone's likelihood of participating in society.

among individuals within different networks (PRI, 2005). In this paradigm, it has been emphasized time and again that participation is an important element of democracy and of the feeling of belonging, and that certain forms of social commitment were on the decline, while other forms of commitment were emerging (Portes, 1998). In this research, we are anxious to understand which factors influence social participation. These questions are particularly interesting in a context where individuals lack time. What makes our research distinctive is that it questions participation practices and their context rather than their impacts, as does the social capital approach. For this reason, we are using the broader notion of social participation, which we define as donated time that circulates freely outside the State and the market sphere. As defined by Jacques T. Godbout (1992, 2000), studying this donation allows us to understand what is circulating on the basis of social links. This theoretical

perspective enables us to analyse the social link from the individual perspective.

Social Participation in the Public and Private Spheres

Social participation is commonly understood to mean a form of commitment in the public sphere. By using a definition of social participation based on the donation of time, we are revisiting this concept

and integrating the dimension of public interest at the heart of the private sphere.

Underlying a number of discussions at the heart of social policy is the notion of public interest. Indeed, the policy instrument must serve the public interest and not intervene in the domestic sphere, which many erroneously call the private sphere. Indeed, the domestic sphere is just one of the elements of the private sphere. The activities within the private sphere (mutual assistance within personal networks, exchanges between colleagues or neighbours, the role played by adults in dealings with neighbourhood children, etc.) are often of public interest, contrary to practices in the domestic sphere. For example, the policies having to do with the need to reconcile one's work and family life come under the private sphere, but are of public interest. Some observers distance these questions from the public domain, since they make no distinctions between the private and domestic

sphere. Conversely, when it comes to defining social participation that is of public interest, a number of observers fail to include the private sphere dimension.

There are numerous lines of research on the new forms of commitment, mainly within the new generations, which are described as sporadic, informal and deterritorialized, and are emerging in the private sphere (Quéniart, 2001; Gaudet, 2002). However, a number of databases or research designs continue to account for and observe social participation in the traditional form of membership in associations or voluntary participation in formal volunteer and political organizations. For this reason, we believe that we must methodically review our way of gathering information on social participation.

In order to revisit these concepts and their empirical operationalization, we used the 1998 GSS data on use of time. Such a database allows two important advances: we can assess actual practices relating to participation, as opposed to the perception of participation by the participants; and we can obtain special information on emerging forms of social participation, in both the private and public spheres. Indeed, the logbook filled out by the respondents offers precise information on the type of activities engaged in by the individual over the course of a 24-hour day. Some activities are traditional, such as volunteer work within an organization, while others, such as standing watch free of charge outside the house, provide us with information on the time that is offered free of charge through the

members of a social network – thus within the private sphere. We use the variable of social participation³ that includes donating at least one minute of time per week to someone in a private sphere or to an institution in the public sphere. We excluded domestic activities (time spent on children). We use the variable of traditional participation,⁴ which consists of a rate of participation within a volunteer organization over the course of the year. To compare the rates of traditional versus social participation, we analyse the differences between the participation of native-born Canadians and immigrants. The case of immigrants is interesting to analyse, because most investigations reveal a very low rate of their participation within formal institutions (Couton and Gaudet, forthcoming).

In Table 1, we compare the rates of traditional participation (annual voluntary participation) with social participation in the public sphere. We observe that 34% of Canadians report having given of their time during the year to a formal organization, while only 8.4% of Canadians donated their time on a weekly basis. These data can explain a gap between participation representations and practices, but they can also show that Canadians are involved in institutions very sporadically.

The distinction made between traditional versus social participation is particularly worth noting when it comes to comparing immigrants' participation. Indeed, numerous studies have shown lower participation by immigrants in formal organizations. Our findings on traditional participation confirm this,

TABLE 1
Rate of Participation Distributed by Place of Birth (%)

		Total	Canadians	Immigrants
Traditional participation (annual basis)	yes	34	36	26.5
	no	66	64	74.5
Social participation (weekly basis)	yes	18.6	19.2	16.4
	no	81.4	80.8	83.6
Participation in private sphere	yes	12.5	13	10.5
	no	87.5	87	89.5
Participation in public sphere	yes	8.4	8.8	6.8
	no	91.6	91.2	93.2

since 36% of native-born Canadians report having participated on a voluntary basis at least once in an organization during the year, as against 26.5% of immigrants. When we compare all social participation by the population, we see a less pronounced disparity between native-born Canadians (19.2%) and immigrants (16.4%). When we confine our comparison to participation within the private sphere, 8.8% of native-born Canadians participate, compared to 6.8% of immigrants. It seems that participation by immigrants, although slightly lower than that by native-born Canadians, is less imperilled than the annual voluntary participation rates would have one believe. These results confirm the research findings that show that immigrants are less present within formal institutions in the host country, but are active within other types of social networks.

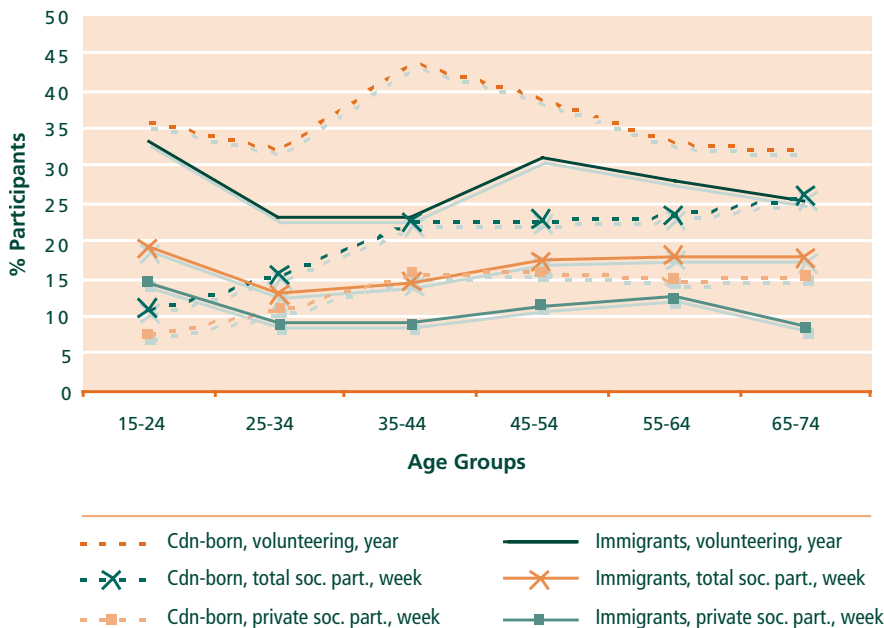
Participation over the Life-Course

The distinction we are making between traditional and social participation is particularly

interesting when it comes to understanding the various trends from a life-course perspective.

Figure 1 illustrates some trends worth watching among the Canadian-born and foreign-born populations. First, we can see a very wide gap between immigrants and native-born Canadians in the 35 to 44 age group regarding the rates of traditional participation. Immigrants have one of the lowest participation rates in this age group, while native-born Canadians are the most active at this age. The other aspect worth noting is that, although the rate of social participation is lower than the traditional participation rate, it changes constantly throughout the life of both native-born Canadians and immigrants. Participation in the private sphere peaks among Canadians aged 35 to 54 and then dips slightly among those aged 54 to 64. Among immigrants, the trend is the reverse: starting with the 35 to 44 age group, participation increases steadily before peaking among those aged 55 to 64. This table indicates three things:

FIGURE 1
Volunteering and Social Participation by Age Group and Immigrant Status



Source: Couton, Gaudet.

TABLE 2
Rate of Social Participation by Principal Activity and Place of Birth

Activities		Canadian born	Foreign born
Paid employment	yes	17.7	14.7
	no	82.3	85.3
Looking for work	yes	20	21.8
	no	80	78.2
Student	yes	10.3	16.6
	no	89.7	83.4
Unpaid work	yes	26	17.6
	no	74	82.4
Retirement	yes	24.2	19.7
	no	75.8	80.3
Other ⁵	yes	24.9	21.4
	no	75.1	78.6

- participation by immigrants grows over the course of a lifetime, attributed to such factors as the number of years they spend within the country and the fact that they likely have more time and opportunities to participate towards the end of their active life;
- older Canadians spend more time in the public sphere, to the detriment of the private sphere; and
- young immigrants in the 35 to 44 age group are the group most excluded from the three forms of participation.

Immigrants between the ages of 35 and 44 comprise the group most excluded from formal and informal participation practices. This exclusion seems especially worrisome given the fact that the most active age group among native-born Canadians is part of this age group. The high participation rate of this age group among Canadians can be attributed to the presence of children in the household. When we analyse people's participation based on the presence of children in the household, what we see in Figure 1 is a rate of participation by immigrants of 16.9% and by Canadians of 22%. This disparity is all the more pronounced when one considers that proportionately, more immigrants have children in their households (44.8%) than do native-born Canadians (37.5%).

The high participation by adults living with children is attributable to such factors as their increased likelihood to be solicited to give of their time to educational or recreational organizations. Particularly among women, participation has shifted toward activities where they can share

time with their kids while becoming involved socially (Roos, 2006). The family is also a trigger for participating socially, since individuals want to transmit values to their children not only through the family, but also through institutions. The family is therefore an important socialization factor, and it often ties the individual to civil society (Gaudet and Reed, 2004). In the case of immigrant families, it seems that the presence of children has a contrary effect on their social participation.

Participation and Principal Activity

It is recognized that being active on the labour market is one of the factors that increases someone's likelihood of participating in society (Statistics Canada, 2001). The findings of the 1998 GSS confirm this tendency. Within the total population, individuals who work (51%) participate in greater numbers than do those who are retired (19.4%) and those who perform unpaid work at home (15.1%). However, we wanted to understand the distribution of individuals who participate socially on the basis of their principal activity and their place of birth.

If we analyse participation based on the types of activities carried out by an individual over the course of a given week, the results confirm the very high exclusion of immigrant women.

Table 2 sheds light on social participation by principal activity, which often corresponds to a period in the life-course such as school, retirement and unpaid work, which usually coincides with the presence of young children in the household. If we consider that on average, three percentage points

separate the social participation rates of native-born Canadians and immigrants, two of the table's statistics practically jump off the page. First, Canadians whose principal activity consists in working in the home have a high rate of participation (26%), while immigrants – often women – have a considerably lower rate (17.6%). This 8.4-point gap represents the largest disparity between immigrants and native-born Canadians from the standpoint of principal activity. Conversely, Canadian-born students tend not to participate (10.3%), while immigrant students are very inclined to participate (16.6%). This gap might be attributable to a high rate of participation within educational institutions or strong participation by young immigrants in activities involving their community.

The disparity in the participation rates between immigrants and native-born Canadians working in the home help us to understand the low rate of participation among the 35 to 44 age group illustrated in Figure 1. When we analyse participation rates by gender and place of birth, the rates among men are roughly the same among native-born Canadians (17.4%) as they are among immigrants (17.1), while these rates differ greatly among women: 20.9% among native-born Canadians versus 15.7% among immigrants, all age groups combined. These results confirm the hypothesis whereby women are excluded once they have children and invalidate the hypothesis whereby immigrant women who have children are more present in informal networks. Indeed, a recurring hypothesis in the scientific literature is that

modes of participation among immigrant women are more informal and cannot be observed with the help of indicators gauging formal participation. Our social participation indicator, which includes both formal and informal activities, confirms the low rate of participation by immigrants aged 35 to 44 who work in the home and are for the most part women.

Conclusion

A number of researchers and observers of political, civic and social participation hypothesized that social participation was, rather than declining, changing forms within young generations. The 1998 GSS helped us measure these emerging forms, since the survey describes an individual's activities over a 24-hour day. This database allowed us to pinpoint participation practices within both the private and public spheres. The fact of the matter is that based on our observations, we cannot show that there is a significant trend toward informal practices within the population. We could assume that these practices are so sporadic that they do not register in the calculation of how time is spent over the course of a week.

These preliminary research results do, however, offer a better understanding of Olivia's social context and the characteristics that influence her participation within society over the life-course. Thus, if Olivia is an immigrant mother between the ages of 35 and 44, she is very unlikely to give of her time in either the public or private sphere. She seems to be facing a number of obstacles that are preventing her participation. On the other hand, an Olivia born in Canada who is the same age and has children is the

person most likely to participate in the social and community life of Canadian society.

These new theories on social participation allow us to invalidate a hypothesis that immigrant women have informal participation practices. Indeed, our results show that they are absent from social participation in the private and social sphere. Those between the ages of 35 and 44, who have children and who are stay-at-home mothers seem particularly excluded from all forms of social participation. Thus, this period in life that, for native-born Canadians represents a point where time is in short supply for social and family involvement, seems to represent a period of social isolation for immigrant women. The presence of children seems to be a source of socialization and social ties among native-born Canadians, but not among immigrants. Can this phenomenon be attributed to difficulties associated with social adaptations and learning the language? To the number of children these women have? Further analyses are required to understand which factors and values lead adults with young children to participate or not.

Notes

1 This project is funded by the SSHRC and led by Stéphanie Gaudet of the University of Ottawa. Co-researchers: Paul Bernard, Université de Montréal, Martin Cooke, University of Waterloo, Susan McDaniel, University of Windsor.

- 2 In our project on Canadians' social participation through their life-course, we decided to conduct two types of investigations in order to understand the individual and contextual perspectives. The first is a qualitative investigation of the social participation that will take place in Ontario and Quebec. The other component of our research project consists in analysing quantitative data on the time spent participating in society.
- 3 To measure social participation practices, we used Statistics Canada's aggregate variable (VLNTORGN), which represents all voluntary activities carried out in service networks (institutions), secondary networks (help and support for a member of the secondary network) and primary networks (adults within the household). This information gives us the duration in minutes of time given in each of the networks. We counted rates of participation comprising involvement of at least one minute over the course of a day for one of the social participation activities.
- 4 So as to understand this bias in the perception of individuals, we compared – within the same 1998 GSS – a question dealing with traditional social participation, where individuals were asked to respond to the following: E8: The next questions refer to your participation in a variety of unpaid volunteer activities helping various groups or organizations. In the past 12 months, have you volunteered through a group or organization?
This question reflects the information that we generally obtain with investigations on the traditional forms of participation, i.e., participation within a volunteer organization.

- 5 The category "other" includes individuals on parental leave and other types of sick leave.

References are available on our web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>.



Best wishes for a long and successful life to a newcomer in the policy research periodicals community. *Horizons Stratégiques* is a quarterly review put out by France's Centre d'analyse stratégique (C.A.S.). The Centre publishes works dealing with the evolution of contemporary societies and with transformations in public policy. Founded a few months ago, the C.A.S. reports directly to the Prime Minister's Office and is charged with advising the government on how to define and implement its economic, social, environmental and cultural policies. <www.strategie.gouv.fr/revue/>

Generations Succeed but do not Resemble Each Other

The X, Y and Baby-boomer Generations in Quebec¹

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“One generation plants trees and the next takes it easy under their shade.”

- Chinese proverb

Introduction

Some researchers have described the generation born after the baby boom as the “sacrificed” generation. This generation has experienced high unemployment, insecure jobs and lower wages. What has been the situation in the Quebec context? Can it be said that this generation is truly different from its predecessors?

The purpose of this study is to draw a portrait of “Generation X” and “Generation Y” in Quebec. To provide an overview of these two groups, various aspects of their lives will be presented to provide a clear picture of the specific characteristics of the two groups in comparison with the benchmark baby-boomer generation.

It is appropriate to define who baby boomers, Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers are. For the purposes of this study, “baby boomers” are defined as people born immediately after World War II. In Quebec, the baby boom can be divided into two periods: a rapid rise in the birth rate followed by a sharp fall. We can thus define the people born between 1946 and 1956 as “old” baby boomers and those born between 1956 and 1966 as “young” baby boomers.

While the literature (Ricard, 1992; Foot, 1996) provides a clear-cut definition for baby boomers, it is quite another story for Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers. That is why we have arbitrarily decided to define Generation X as composed of people born between

1966 and 1976 (with 1966 representing the end of the baby boom) and those born between 1976 and 1986 as belonging to Generation Y.

1. Birth Numbers for Generations X and Y

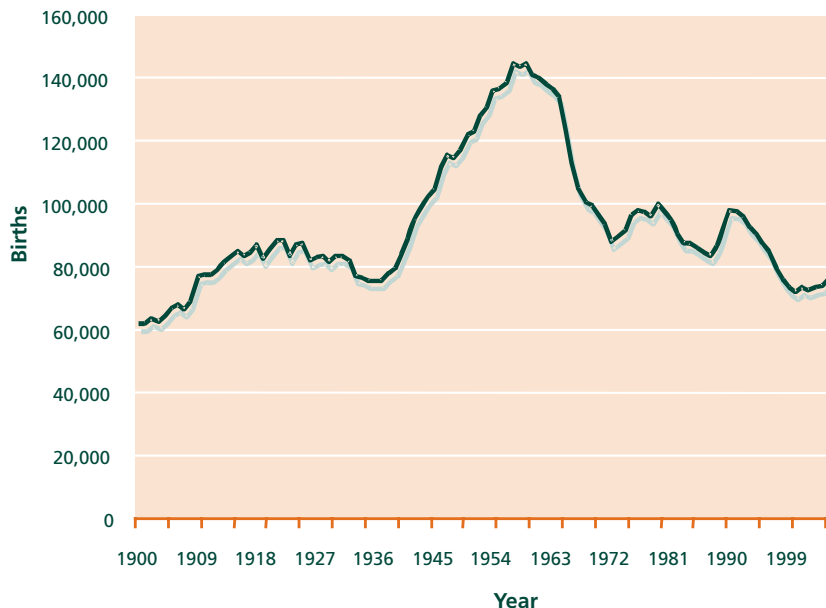
The starting point for our analysis is the average number of births per year for each of the groups. In the baby boomers’ case, there is a major increase in this parameter from 1946 to 1966. At its peak in 1957, 145,000 births were recorded in Quebec (Figure 1). While Gen-Xers are, not surprisingly, fewer in number than old and young baby boomers, they are also slightly more numerous than Gen-Yers (Table 1).

The first conclusion then, is that Gen-Xers and the Gen-Yers contribute less demographic weight than baby boomers to Quebec society as a whole. This first conclusion is often cited as the reason for the differences in the Gen-Xers and the Gen-Yers compared with the other groups and is not a major revelation. As will be shown below, the higher numbers of baby boomers has apparently overloaded the various branches of Quebec society, thereby leaving little room for the succeeding generations.

2. Gen-Xers, Gen-Yers and Their Families

The figures mentioned above can imply that baby-boomers, Gen-Xers, and Gen-Yers have experienced markedly different family realities. Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers have grown up in smaller families (approximately two children per family), whereas baby boomers generally come from

FIGURE 1
Births per Year in Quebec, 1900-2005



Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec.

TABLE 1
Average Number of Births per Year, by Generation

Old baby boomers	123,418
Young baby boomers	138,411
Generation X	97,310
Generation Y	93,603

Authors' calculations.

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec.

families with slightly more than three children on average. The type of family from which baby boomers come is also an important factor to take into consideration. The parents of baby boomers and Gen-Xers have adopted a similar type of marital structure: official marriages followed by few divorces. On the other hand, Gen-Yers have experienced more parental

divorce and a higher number have grown up in single-parent or blended families.

2.1 Leaving Home

Leaving home is a major stage in people's lives in western societies. However, over time, the different generations have not experienced this stage in the same way. Not only have the reasons for leaving changed,

but the older generation also left their parent's residence earlier than the younger generations have done. While people born in the first half of the twentieth century left the family home relatively young when they got married, later generations not only left the family home later, but also more of them have never left home at all or have done so at an increasingly older age. While this phenomenon very much exists in Canada, it is more prevalent in Quebec than in the rest of Canada and is particularly apparent in the case of men (Beaupré et al., 2006). Several factors have caused this situation; the economic situation in the 1980s and 1990s, characterized by both severe recessions and weak economic recoveries, is partly responsible for this phenomenon.

Another line of explanation is extended education: Gen-Xers are more educated than both old and young baby boomers. One result of their longer studies has been to delay the end of adolescence and thus prolong their dependency on their parents. One fact is undeniable: the younger generations leave the family home at an older age than the older generations – as one journalist has whimsically noted: “[*Translation*] They ‘fly with their own wings,’ but refuse to leave the nest!”

2.2 Marriage and Common-law Relationships

Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers marry less than baby boomers. Over the years, this type of union has tended to be replaced by common-law arrangements. Figure 2 clearly shows how cohabitational relationships have evolved in the various generations.

Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers prefer common-law relationships more than their pre-assessors. It is also noteworthy that common-law arrangements were adopted at a later age by old baby boomers than by the other groups. In the 25 to 29 age-group, approximately 30% of Gen-Xers live in common-law situations, compared with only 5% in the case of old baby boomers.

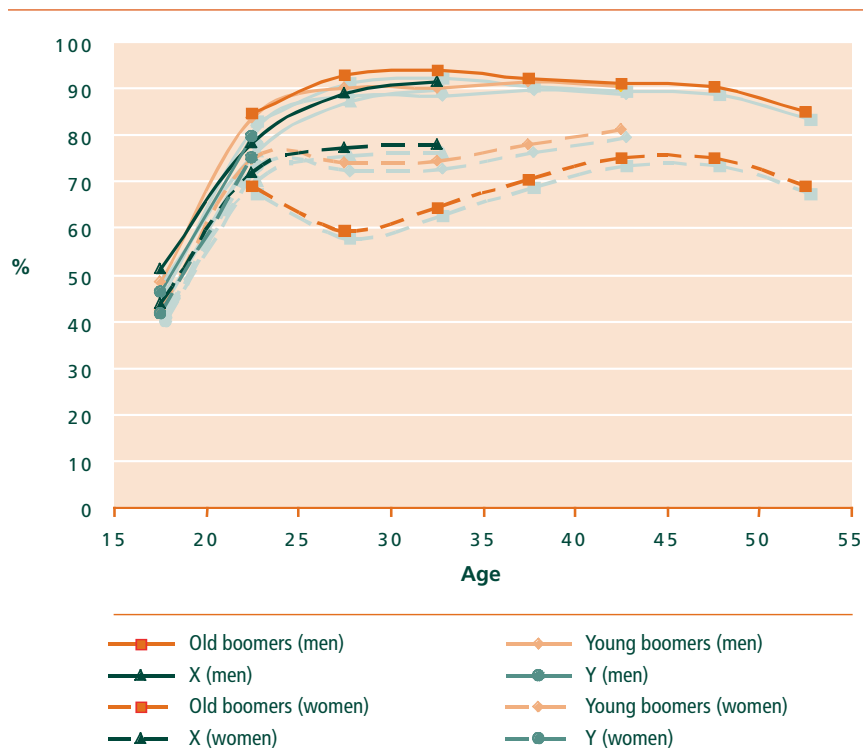
2.3 Fertility

A general observation: old baby boomers, young baby boomers and Gen-Xers (Gen-Yers are still too young) have had or will have roughly the same number of children. The final number of offspring observed and estimated for these three groups is 1.8 children per woman for old baby boomers, 1.6 for young baby boomers and 1.6 for Gen-Xers. In short, all these generations reproduce at a rate that does not exceed the generation-replacement threshold. In addition, it seems likely that young baby boomers, Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers have had or will have their children at a later age than old baby boomers did.

2.4 Abortions

While the latter three groups have or will have roughly the same number of children, they also use abortion to a greater extent. As shown in Figure 3, the abortion rate has increased sharply from generation to generation. Gen-Yers are the group that has used abortion the most, with Gen-Xers not very far behind. In the 20 to 24 age group, the abortion rate is approximately 0.6% for old baby boomers, 1.5% for young baby boomers, 3.0% for Gen-Xers, and 3.5% for Gen-Yers. In absolute terms,

FIGURE 2
Labour Market Participation Rate in Quebec by Age (M/F) and Generation



Source: Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Survey*.

for women under 20, the number of abortions almost doubled between 1980 and 1998, rising from 3,321 to 6,418 (Charest and Villeneuve, 2002). In short, this practice is much more prevalent in the lives of the younger generations than in their older counterparts.

3. Gen-Xers, Gen-Yers and Work

The analysis of individuals' educational attainment generally provides a good sense of their type of employment and income level in the future. Higher educational attainment generally implies "more prestigious" and

better-paid jobs. Study of educational attainment is thus of paramount importance in understanding generational behaviour.

Generally speaking, Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers have more college and university diplomas and degrees than baby boomers. This finding is nonetheless surprising since it appears to indicate that Quebec's educational reforms in 1960 and 1968, which facilitated access to education for all social classes, do not seem to have significantly affected the educational attainment of baby boomers, who were of college and university age at that time. On the other hand, some

caution is required in coming to such a conclusion, since it is also possible that this situation, which appears to reflect more favourably on Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers, could be related more to a less promising labour market than to a desire to pursue knowledge.

The Quebec labour market has been evolving constantly in recent years. The emergence of atypical work, characterized primarily by non-standard working hours and greater self-employment, has significantly upset labour market dynamics. However, these changes have affected the generations differently. For example, it is common to associate baby boomers with jobs that are better paid and

more secure. Conversely, Gen-Xers are perceived as taking more “McJobs” (Cheung, 1995), i.e., temporary and lower-paying jobs. However, do Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers have as bad working conditions as is often claimed?

While there are few discernible differences in labour market participation rates, a generation-based analysis of unemployment rates points to other conclusions. For men, young baby boomers and Gen-Xers have experienced higher unemployment rates than old baby boomers. These differences are particularly pronounced in the 15- to 30-year-old cohort, reflecting a less welcoming labour market. However, after these ages, the inter-

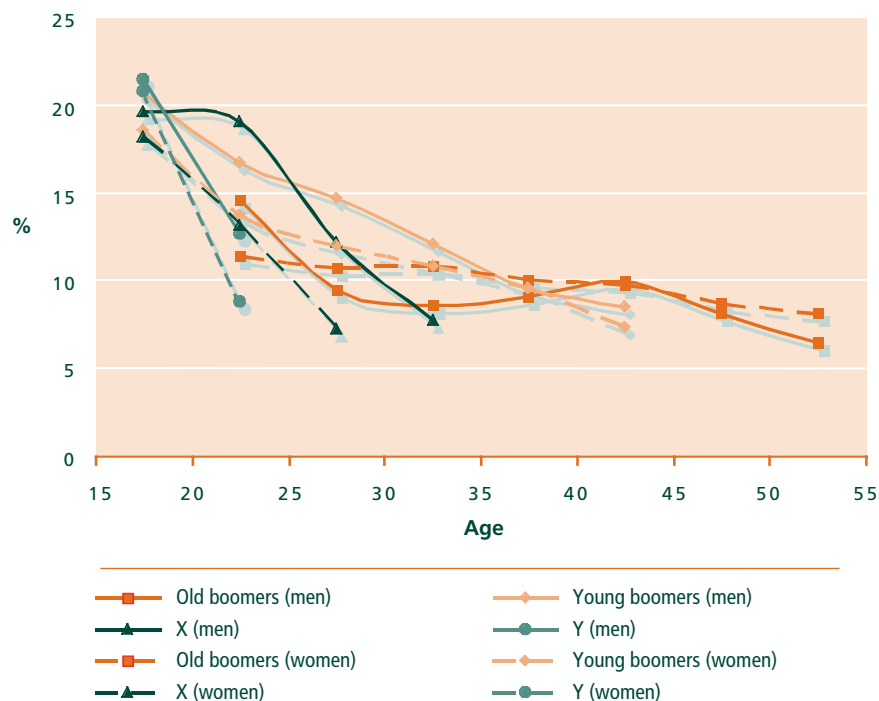
generational gap tends to diminish. In fact, from the age of 35 on, employment rates for the different generations are effectively the same. Although still young, Gen-Yers seem to integrate themselves more easily into the labour market, as reflected in their lower unemployment rates than those of the other two groups at the start of their working lives. Like men, women have not found it easy to enter the labour market. On the other hand, unlike men, these differences have quickly disappeared. It is even possible to state that, in certain cases, the situation of female Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers has been significantly better than that of their counterparts in the two baby-boomer groups.

Overall, it is possible to conclude that Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers have joined the labour market at a comparatively older age. However, it is also important to look at what type of jobs they have had.

It is often assumed that a person with a full-time job is better off than one with part-time employment: nonetheless, the trends are not conclusive in the case of either men or women.

Another employment quality indicator is the proportion of self-employment among workers. Self-employment has been expanding steadily in Quebec: between 1981 and 2001, the number of people considered self-employed has more than doubled – from 230,150 to 376,425. However, although this increase is impressive, the proportion of young people in the self-employed group has dropped. The reason for this is that the number of self-employed has increased in all age groups.

FIGURE 3
Unemployment Rate in Quebec by Age (M/F) and by Generation



Source: Statistics Canada, *Labour Market Survey*.

A last point concerning the labour market is the attitudes of the various generations toward employment. Having confronted different realities, the different generations have different perspectives. Baby boomers have tended to willingly submit to their job constraints – accepting overtime and heavier workloads without too much objection. On the other hand, while Gen-Xers are less inclined to accept heavier workloads, they are still determined to achieve professional success. For their part, Gen-Yers also want to be successful professionally (Howell, Servis and Bonham, 2005). However, given their relatively young age, it is still premature to draw more definite conclusions at this stage.

4. Gen-Xers, Gen-Yers and Various Other Social Aspects

The previous sections have presented certain demographic and economic facets of Generations X and Y with a view to revealing major current trends in these generations. We will now identify what motivates these generations.

4.1 Preparation for Retirement

According to specialists, it is important to prepare for retirement as early as possible in one's life.

In addition to participating in Quebec's pension plan, the Régime des rentes du Québec (RRQ) – which is compulsory for workers, contributing to Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs) is a more relevant indicator of individual willingness to save, given that this program is not compulsory.

Contrary to preconceptions, contributing to RRSPs is not something for the elderly. In fact, both male and female Gen-Xers have RRSP participation rates higher than those for the other generations. A possible explanation for this is the changes made to the RRSP program in the early 1990s.

Although participation in RRSPs gives us a relatively favourable picture of the younger generation's retirement preparations, we need to avoid coming to premature conclusions. As indicated above, employment quality and economic conditions have been very different from one generation to the next. Furthermore, we also need to take into account the sums invested – while participation may be more widespread, contribution levels may be lower.

It could also be asked whether the younger generations have access to supplemental pension plans (SPPs) from employers that are as generous as those that their predecessors enjoyed. As shown in Figure 3, there is a clear difference in favour of old baby boomers in terms of participation in SPPs: for the 25 to 29 age bracket, SPP participation dropped from 35% to around 22% between 1980 and 2000 (Langis, 2004).

For women, the situation is somewhat different with young female baby boomers enjoying the highest SPP participation rate. This situation is possibly due to the fact that old female baby boomers have participated less in the labour market than young baby boomers. Although this situation can be explained quite easily for women, it is still possible to make

a general comment concerning both sexes. In fact, some studies have shown a correlation between the shift in jobs toward sectors where SPP and unionization levels are lower. It is very likely that this dynamic will not change in the near future.

Overall, it can be stated that the younger generations – namely, Gen-Xers – have relatively high SPP and RRSP participation rates. However, in terms of all private saving vehicles, the picture is far less impressive, particularly because of the significant decline in defined benefit pension plans.

4.2 The World of Politics

Given the upheavals in recent years, it would be natural to think that relations between Gen-Yers and authority figures are relatively poor, but this is far from the case. Although the dynamics between politicians and young people is now very different from that experienced in previous generations, it is still very positive in Quebec. “[*Translation*] It is not true that the young are less “political,” but what we see are new forms of social involvement more rooted in direct one-off responses,” (Pronovost and Royer, 2004). Gen-Yers thus do not seem to belong to any particular political movement. “[*Translation*] On the political front, this generation does not seem to be mobilized around any particular ideology at this time,” (Martel, 2000). Gen-Yers are activists and not spectators. As evidenced by the spring 2005 student strike in Quebec, young people (in this case, Gen-Yers and, to a lesser extent Gen-Xers) are more “political” than is

generally believed. This attitude is expressed both in group action (against globalization, the Iraq war, etc.) and in direct social involvement (for example, volunteer projects).

According to some experts, this new dynamic is due to the freedom to travel that today's youth enjoys. In 2002 an estimated 50% of young people left not only their native region, but also their native country. "[*Translation*] Young people are champions of contemporary forms of nomadism, which gives them an international awareness that no previous generation possessed," (Gauthier and Gravel, 2004). Furthermore, advances in the media, which now offer increasingly broad coverage of international issues, have also had an effect in raising this generation's awareness.

Conclusion

Generally speaking, Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers are quite different from their predecessors. Such differences are perceptible in terms of their history and their current behaviour: higher education attainment, fewer children, greater recourse to abortion, etc. In short, Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers are different from baby boomers. The

social economic context in which they live is also quite different – recessions at the time of their entry into the labour market and the rise in self-employment have contributed to less favourable employment conditions.

Although Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers differ from baby boomers in certain respects, in others the differences have faded with time. For example, the high unemployment rate of Gen-Xers at the start of their working lives has dropped considerably. As a result, intergenerational differences at the same age are now minimal.

It is also important to stress that, in certain respects, the situation of young baby boomers is not very different from that of Gen-Xers. For example, there have been several years when the unemployment rates of young baby boomers have been higher than those of Gen-Xers. Furthermore, the proportion of self-employed workers has generally been higher for young baby boomers than for Gen-Xers and Gen-Yers. In other words, not all baby boomer groups have enjoyed better conditions than their successors – on the contrary, it is not only Generation X that has had a hard life!

So, what can these generations hope for the future? Unfortunately, it is difficult to answer this question. While the factors described here appear to indicate that the life paths of Gen-Xers will continue to be tortuous, those of Gen-Yers might be more straightforward.

Notes

- 1 The complete text of this study, together with all the tables and figures, is available online at <<http://socserv.socsci.mcmaster.ca/sedap/p/sedap158.pdf>>.
- 2 Jacques Légaré is an emeritus professor in the Department of Demography, University of Montréal.
- 3 Pierre-Olivier Ménard is a master's student in the Department of Demography, University of Montréal.

References are available on our web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>.

A Targeted Strategy for Vulnerable Youth in Calgary¹

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Information and Data Shortcomings

It should be noted from the outset that some kinds of data and information that would be helpful in assessing the depth and parameters of some risks and challenges faced by vulnerable youth and their families are not currently available at the local level. These include Calgary data on:

- indicators of school climate and school engagement among youth;
- number/percent of parents participating and volunteering in junior and senior high schools, and the nature of parental involvement;
- number/percent of youth participating in community-based organizations and activities, including out-of-school time and recreational programming;
- data on indicators of parental competency, nurturing, and supervision;
- data on indicators of hunger and household food shortages;
- number/percent of junior and senior high school students who work during the school year and number of hours worked; and
- data on indicators of peer connectedness and friendships.

In addition, there are no useful local data on youth with disabilities, and data on most indicators of risk and well-being specific to immigrant and Aboriginal youth are not available or accessible at the local level; in fact, some data are not available at all. There are several reasons for these gaps and omissions.

- On some indicators and outcomes, particularly for youth with disabilities, the data are simply not systematically collected or tracked. In some cases, this is because it would be extremely difficult, even impossible, to collect the data; in other cases, the reasons for lack of data collection are not clear.
- Risk and outcome data are often collected by way of national surveys, and response rates among immigrant and Aboriginal populations are often not high enough at the municipal level to allow for local analysis and reporting.
- Some data on immigrant and Aboriginal youth that may be of interest are deliberately not collected, because they could be misinterpreted or misused. An example would be data on involvement in crime and gangs that are specific to sub-populations of youth.

Calgary's Vulnerable Youth

A recent environmental scan on vulnerable youth in Calgary commissioned by United Way of Calgary and Area reveals that a significant

proportion of young people in Calgary fail to negotiate the often challenging transition between childhood and adulthood. United Way describes these young people as "vulnerable youth." A significant

Risk and Protective Factors

Risks are hazards in the individual or the environment that increase the likelihood of a problem occurring. The presence of a risk factor does not guarantee a negative developmental outcome, but it increases the odds of one occurring. Risk factors are cumulative; the research clearly shows that the more risk factors to which a young person is exposed, the greater the likelihood that he or she will develop problems in life. It must be emphasized that not all youth who experience risk factors fail to thrive. A growing body of research suggests that some people are, for a variety of reasons, more resilient than others and are able to emerge psychologically intact from high-risk situations.

Protective factors are individual characteristics and environmental safeguards that enhance a young person's ability to resist problems and deal with life's stresses. Again, the research shows that the more protective factors in a young person's life, the more likely it is that he or she will be able to avoid negative outcomes and succeed in the face of adversity. Protective factors contribute to resiliency, as described below.

proportion of youth in Calgary live in less than optimal circumstances and lack the basics – from adequate food and shelter to love and guidance – that young people need to become healthy, happy, responsible adults.

Some vulnerable youth are at risk of losing their way; others have already crossed the line and become involved in dangerous and potentially destructive behaviours and activities.

Resilience

Resilience is an individual's capacity for adapting to change and stressful events in healthy and flexible ways. The individual factors identified as contributing to resiliency include sociability, self-esteem, skill-based competence, a sense of personal competency, the ability to plan, cognitive ability, a sense of meaning, problem-solving ability, optimism, internal locus of control, skills in coping with stress, and resourcefulness in seeking support. Resilience has been identified in research studies as a characteristic of youth who, when exposed to multiple risk factors, show successful responses to challenge, and use this learning to achieve successful outcomes. However, "[i]t must be noted that resilience is not the same as positive behaviour. In stressful circumstances with limited resources, one individual's gain must be at the expense of someone else's loss, a zero sum game. In such situations, resilience may take the form of anti-social behaviour, such as resources gained by criminality in inner city environments" (Sameroff, 2005: 4).

The environmental scan suggests that a few things have improved for Calgary youth in recent years. Among all young people in the city, rates of teen pregnancy, smoking, and youth crime have continued to decline, and it appears that rates of substance use and abuse have either leveled off or decreased.

On the other hand, youth homelessness has increased exponentially, high school completion rates remain among the lowest in Canada, rates of sexually transmitted infections are on the rise, and the use of crystal meth, and the crime and violence with which it is associated, appear to be escalating. Moreover, the incidence of problems and vulnerability is particularly high among specific groups of youth, most notably, youth living in poverty, homeless youth, Aboriginal youth, and immigrant and refugee youth. For example:

- Among Aboriginal youth, rates of smoking and cannabis use are at least double and the use of mushrooms/mescaline is triple those among youth as a whole. In addition, the percentage of Aboriginal youth reporting signs of alcohol abuse is almost three times that of youth as a whole.
- The high school drop-out rate among English as a second language students appears to be double that of other students, and only about half of Aboriginal youth complete high school.
- Most youth who are members of ethno-cultural minority groups who have been surveyed report that they have witnessed or experienced racial discrimination. Ethno-cultural tensions appear to be on the rise among youth.

- About half of street-involved youth report they have been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant and more than one quarter report they have been involved in sex work.

The environmental scan attributes the increasing numbers of vulnerable youth to burgeoning risk factors in the city which, collectively, can jeopardize their chances of optimal physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development, and diminish their life chances now and in the future. Many risk factors occur in clusters with few young people experiencing only one or two risk factors. These can include:

- a high proportion of youth (22 percent) living in lone-parent families;
- a possible increase in family dysfunction, as indicated by an increase in 2005 in calls to police for service for domestic violence issues, in which children or youth were present 42 percent of the time;
- more parents working multiple jobs to make ends meet, making it difficult to supervise their children;
- growing numbers of independent youth and families with children who are encountering difficulties in meeting basic needs in the areas of housing, food, and other necessities;
- affordable housing problems that have now reached crisis proportions;
- despite Calgary's economic prosperity, an escalating disparity between the incomes of the city's richest and poorest residents, along with high rates of poverty among immigrant and Aboriginal people; and

- an increase in the number of Calgary neighbourhoods that include high proportions of people with no market income, low educational attainment, low school enrolment among adolescents and young adults, and a high share of income from transfers.

changing demography. Aboriginal children and youth are the fastest-growing segment of Calgary's child and youth population and, although firm projections are not available, it is expected that Calgary's Aboriginal youth population may double over the next decade. The percentages

The environmental scan suggests that a few things have improved for Calgary youth in recent years. Among all young people in the city, rates of teen pregnancy, smoking, and youth crime have continued to decline, and it appears that rates of substance use and abuse have either leveled off or decreased.

Growing Problems on the Horizon

The environmental scan paints a rather dismal picture for vulnerable youth in the coming years. It is projected that the discrete population of vulnerable or "troubled" youth may increase significantly over the next decade and, possibly, beyond. As the demand for young, educated, flexible workers increases, there is likely to emerge a greater number of chronically unemployed youth with serious skill deficits who lag far behind their peers, and who will end up very marginalized. It is probable that the combined effects of these problems will be greater than the sum of their parts. More young people, many of them with less than ideal backgrounds, disenfranchised from the work force and subsisting on meagre incomes, living in unstable and inadequate housing, will almost certainly contribute to a spectrum of serious social problems in Calgary.

These problems may be compounded by ongoing population growth and

of youth who are immigrants and members of visible minority groups are expected to rise to about 15 and 33 percent respectively of all Calgary youth over the next decade. The number of English as a second language students in Calgary's public education system has increased by 400 percent in 10 years, and will continue to escalate for the foreseeable future. Even if all other risk factors hold constant, the growing number and proportion of refugee youth, English as a second language students, and Aboriginal youth mean that more young people face precarious futures.

Calgary appears to be failing vulnerable youth on many dimensions, for which all residents will pay the price in the coming years. We need only look to other Canadian cities, such as Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Montréal, and Toronto, to see how problems can evolve when youth are unable to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from all their cities have to offer. Solutions at both the policy and program levels are urgently required.

United Way's Targeted Strategy for Vulnerable Youth in Calgary

In 2005, United Way of Calgary and Area committed to developing its Impact Plan for Children and Youth with the goal of producing a clear, comprehensive strategy to guide United Way's children and youth

The environmental scan paints a rather dismal picture for vulnerable youth in the coming years. It is projected that the discrete population of vulnerable or "troubled" youth may increase significantly over the next decade.

investments at multiple levels (direct services, community partnerships and collaboration, policy work) over the next three years.

The Plan includes a strategy that specifically targets vulnerable youth. While United Way is committed to helping all young people succeed, it is recognized that youth who face obstacles to success require special attention. The term "vulnerable youth" was chosen deliberately to ensure that the targeted plan focuses on youth all along the broad continuum of risks that can undermine young people's life chances.

To this end, United Way is investing in programs and initiatives that reduce the risk factors that impede positive youth development and bolster the protective and supportive factors that contribute to successful life transitions in adolescence and early adulthood. Key transition points in these stages of life include moving from junior to senior high school,

dropping out of high school, entering post-secondary education, entering the work force, and moving from child welfare status and care to independence.

Based on a wealth of research about vulnerable youth, United Way identified three areas of focused investment over the next three years.

1. Build resiliency in families with vulnerable teens.

The importance of good parenting and strong families for child and youth development cannot be overemphasized and may be the most important factor influencing child and youth well-being, with the exception of adequate income.

2. Engage vulnerable youth during non-school hours.

Many youth are unsupervised and disengaged during "critical hours" (i.e., after school, on weekends, and during school holidays), which can lead to involvement in dangerous and unhealthy activities. The lack of adult supervision and participation in self-care for both children and adolescents has been linked to a range of problems and risk behaviours.

3. Improve outcomes for high-risk youth.

United Way wants to help vulnerable youth achieve the following developmental outcomes, which

studies have shown are essential in making a successful transition from adolescence to early adulthood:

- high school completion, commitment to learning, and an informed, forward-looking strategy;
- critical thinking skills and use of logic;
- clear values, positive interpersonal relationships, and pro-social attitudes;
- positive sense of identity and sense of belonging, self-regulation and restraint, and high levels of moral reasoning; and
- good physical health and avoidance of risky lifestyle behaviours.

To ensure that these strategies are fully implemented and achieve maximum impact, United Way will also convene a funders' table, facilitate collaboration among community stakeholders, identify and address policy issues, and evaluate the effectiveness of program and policy initiatives.

Note

- 1 This article is an abridged version of two papers (Cooper, 2006a,b) written for United Way of Calgary and Area. Complete references for the data and findings presented in this article can be found in these papers.

References are available on our web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>.

Improving the Quality of Regulation Accountability and Contestability

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Introduction

Modern governments have long sought to improve how they intervene in their economies and societies through regulation.² Globally, this has been manifested in several ways. For instance, standards have been set for regulatory initiatives in trade agreements (e.g., the Technical Barriers to Trade or Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Obligations of the World Trade Organization³), respecting both the evidentiary basis for regulations and transparency of the process for effecting them. As well, a condition of membership in the OECD is adherence to the Recommendation on Improving the Quality of Government Regulation⁴ (which specifies minimal standards in making of regulations). With respect to the approach to regulatory impact analysis, there has been a convergence of views on the quality requirements to be met (Jacobs and Associates, 2005: 3).

The Government of Canada has had formal policies and practices to improve quality in regulating since 1978. Yet, in 2004 the External Advisory Committee on Smart Regulation (EACSR) found areas for improvement, making 73 recommendations for change and thereby launching a new round of regulatory improvement (Canada, 2004). Recognizing that government is somewhat of an art and will never be “perfect,” it is still troubling that, after almost three decades of effort, significant concerns remain about the quality of the analysis underlying federal regulation.

This paper briefly reviews the recent history of federal “regulatory reform,”

argues that significant improvement has in fact been made, and then concludes that further progress depends, in large measure, on improving accountability and making analysis more contestable.⁵

A Brief History of Regulatory Reform in Canada

The 1970s and Early 1980s

During the 1970s and early 1980s, a key component of regulatory reform was the introduction, in 1972, of the *Statutory Instruments Act*, which governs the formal legal process of making subordinate legislation (regulations). That Act also established the review of regulations by the Joint Standing Committee on the Scrutiny of Regulations and Other Statutory Instrument⁶ (SJC), to ensure promulgated regulations are within authorities provided by the Parliament of Canada.

By the mid-1970s, disenchantment with effectiveness of “government” had set in. Canada was suffering from “stagflation,” which led to the introduction of wage and price controls, one of the most intrusive regulatory interventions in the economy ever attempted.

Besides economic challenges, the demographic, social, and political landscape shifted rapidly in the 1970s. In 1976, the Government of Canada policy statement, *The Way Ahead*, recognized important limits to government and called for the modernization of programs and policy.

The late 1970s saw a flurry of new policies, procedures, and organizations intended to improve regulatory

programs. Pushed along further by other studies,⁷ the focus was on:

- providing a solid legal framework for regulation making;
- having better analysis as the basis for decisions on regulatory initiatives and existing programs;
- having greater transparency and stakeholder involvement in the regulatory process;
- minimizing the economic effects of inappropriate regulation; and
- creating organizations to promote regulatory reform.

The Mid-1980s to Early-1990s

The second recognizable round of regulatory reform started in the mid-1980s and carried through until the mid-1990s. Reforms during this period laid the foundation for current regulatory policy and processes; they were a giant step forward.

In 1986, the Cabinet approved several major actions stemming from the Task Force on Program Review (a.k.a. the Nielsen Task Force). These focused on redressing the most egregious economic harms created by regulatory interventions, but also tried to open up the regulatory process to stakeholders. Initiatives⁸ included the first Canadian over-arching policy statement on the use of regulation as a government instrument and appointment of the Minister Responsible for Regulatory Affairs. Substantively, there were over 80 sector-specific reforms, some very significant such as deregulation of the transportation industry, elimination of the national energy program and introduction of a new broadcasting act.

As well, reforms included a new, more rigorous, open, and transparent regulatory process, managed by a new central agency. New requirements included pre-publication of proposals in the *Canada Gazette Part I*, mandatory stakeholder consultation, policy scrutiny of major proposals by Cabinet committees, and introduction of regulatory impact analysis statements (RIAS).

The RIAS was central to the process changes. This new decision-making document was to accompany all regulatory proposals. A RIAS was to summarize proposed regulations, identify associated benefits and costs, identify major alternatives and reasons for rejection, and summarize consultation results. Ministers were to use the RIAS in deciding whether to approve regulations. Breaking from past tradition, these Privy Council decision documents were published along with the regulations. The public saw the basis for government decisions.

In the early-1990s, policies and processes were modified in important ways. In 1991, ministers became responsible for approving and signing RIAS documents (instead of treating them as a bureaucratic document approved by departmental and central agency officials). In 1992, a new regulatory policy was issued as a Treasury Board directive, focused on a few key principles. A parliamentary committee was established to review the competitiveness of regulatory programs, and an internal review of all regulatory programs was launched (ultimately leading to 800 plus changes).

The 1992 policy did not focus exclusively on making new regulations; it addressed program management

issues for both existing and new regulations. The policy included requirements to have, inter alia, appropriate compliance and enforcement policies, and sufficient resources to fulfill related Government of Canada responsibilities.

Following its promulgation, the Treasury Board Secretariat devoted considerable time and effort to developing guidelines to help regulators do a better job, developing best practices, and generally trying to assure regulators the regulatory policy/process would help them do a demonstrably better job.

The Regulatory Policy was modified in 1995 but this represented a small shift in focus. The changes in the Policy provided more guidance on meeting trade obligations, introduced the ISO 9000-like Regulatory Process Management Standards (RPMS) – but did not require that they be formally audited periodically – and required regulators to give positive consideration to requests to meet regulatory obligations in alternative but equally effective ways.

In 1999, a new policy was issued as a Government (i.e., Cabinet) Directive on Regulating (GD-R), but is virtually identical to the 1995 policy. This policy currently governs regulating in the Government of Canada.

Smart Regulation: The Next Round of Regulatory Reform

In 2002 the OECD assessed Canada's regulatory environment⁹ and concluded Canada had “a mature and well-functioning system of regulatory governance” and was “a pioneer in many areas of reform,” including

introduction of noticeable innovations” such as the *RPMS*. The assessment also concluded, however, many practices could be sharpened:¹⁰

- further rationalization of criteria in the regulatory policy;

The Smart Regulation Action Plan has initiatives to improve guidance and training, but will they be enough? Others, for example William Stanbury, have argued that improved accountability is the key to success in improving impact analysis quality.

- develop a stronger advocacy role for regulatory reform;
- strengthen capacities to prepare and review RIAS (RIAS quality was found lacking in many instances in such as areas as depth and clarity of analysis, the underlying assumptions, the data quality, risks and problems being addressed, real alternatives to the proposal, etc.);
- establish a systematic but targeted ex post evaluation of the compliance to the Regulatory Policy requirements and standards;
- act to address remaining shortcomings in the regulatory impact analysis system (targeting, addressing quasi-regulatory instruments, better training and methodology);
- review requirement to address alternatives to regulation; and
- accelerate implementation of the Agreement on Internal Trade.

In May 2003, the federal government established the External Advisory Committee on Smart Regulation “to provide an external perspective and expert advice on how the federal government needs to redesign its regulatory approach for Canada in the 21st century” (Canada, 2004: 5).

The Committee’s report, *Smart Regulation: A Strategy for Canada*, was released in 2004, making 73 recommendations. Important messages (Canada, 2004: 10) to be taken from the report were the need for:

- more regulatory co-operation and co-ordination within Canada;
- a more strategic international approach to regulatory co-operation;
- better reflection of the perspectives of key stakeholders;
- more cost-effective, timely processes;
- a greater focus on results;
- better performance and accountability mechanisms; and
- a cultural change among regulators (supported by better training and clear commitment).

The Government of Canada released its Action Plan, responding to the EACSR report, in March 2005. The Plan includes several sector-specific initiatives, new framework policies, and guidance to help regulators do a better job, improved international regulatory co-operation (now linked with the Security and Prosperity Partnership agreement, but the Action Plan did not include initiatives to strengthen the Agreement on Internal Trade), and finally a number of process changes intended to streamline the regulation-making process

through a new system of triaging proposals (this was also intended to allow TBS to focus their challenge on the more significant proposals).

It is still too early in the implementation stages of the Action Plan to assess its effectiveness as a reform initiative. Based on what can be learned from the past reform exercises summarized above, effective mechanisms to ensure accountability and contestability will be critical to success of the Smart Regulation initiative.

A Way Ahead

The Smart Regulation Action Plan has initiatives to improve guidance and training, but will they be enough? Others, for example William Stanbury,¹¹ have argued that improved accountability is the key to success in improving impact analysis quality.¹²

Stanbury argued in 1992 that the problem was a lack of self-discipline, requiring better accountability mechanisms. While Stanbury put forward some 28 recommendations,¹³ few were adapted by the parliamentary committee. Rejection may be because some – for example the review of major regulatory initiatives by standing committees – were already available; others were only minor process tweaks. His basic thesis, however, was deadily accurate in my view.

More effective mechanisms to ensure accountability and contestability can be found that will improve accountability to the public and Parliament. For instance, there can be better information on regulation provided to Parliament, individual regulators can be ascribed greater

personal accountability before parliamentary committees, and the parliamentary committees could engage in more in-depth scrutiny of regulatory programs and regulations.

As well, it can be argued that the quality of analysis, and of the resulting regulation, will improve if there is greater “contestability” of ideas, analysis, and decisions. This requires a better flow of pertinent information before and after decisions are taken, an enhanced capability to use that information, and new opportunities to “debate” (but without overturning traditions of collective Cabinet decision).

The following summarizes five ideas for achieving greater accountability and contestability.

1. Disseminate Performance Information on the Regulatory System

It has long been argued by some that the impact of regulation on competitiveness is primarily due to the combined impact of many regulations (i.e., the regulatory system as a whole). To address this aspect of performance information, the Treasury Board President could report annually to Parliament on the functioning of regulatory programs as a whole. Such a report could list the programs (about 150 of them when last counted in 1984), the number/size of new regulatory initiatives, the cost of regulatory programs to government, and an estimate of the aggregate economic costs (administrative costs or “paper burden,” compliance costs, and social-welfare cost). As well, it could estimate

benefits and costs of all initiatives over the past year.

Parliamentarians and the public can do a lot with such information over time to determine whether regulation in aggregate is becoming more cost effective. It is to be noted that the Smart Regulation Action Plan states initiatives will be taken to improve performance information on regulation.

The key to compliance with any government policy – including the Government of Canada Regulatory Policy – is to ensure that effective accountability mechanisms are in place.

Annual Reporting is not a simple task. There would be real challenges in developing adequate data, especially a “baseline” for reporting. Nevertheless, the Americans have addressed this issue (the Office of Management and Budget issues such a report to Congress each year¹⁴) and the Government of Canada can surely develop adequate procedures over time.

A more radical recommendation would be to force “discipline” in designing regulatory programs by focusing on aggregate costs through creation of a regulatory budget,¹⁵ but there are important disadvantages (and advantages) associated with such an initiative. No start in this direction, however, could even be contemplated unless reasonably adequate cost information could be developed.

2. Strengthen Parliamentary Review

It has already been mentioned that parliamentary standing committees can review regulatory programs. Indeed, one could argue that standing

committees already have a policy responsibility to review regulatory program effectiveness, and so should not require further encouragement nor require substantial new resources. Standing committees, of course, vary in the extent to which they chose to venture into regulatory territory.

However, parliamentary authority over regulation would be enhanced by strengthening the mandate¹⁶ of

the Standing Joint Committee on the Scrutiny of Regulations and Other Statutory Instruments to review and comment on the adequacy of the RIAs. The Committee would, of course, require additional human and financial resources.

Its current authority to recommend disallowance to Parliament could be extended to include cases where a RIA provides misleading information that would have significantly affected or precluded effective public debate.

The Standing Joint Committee has focused on legal drafting issues, which is an important function, but it would be natural to extend this Committee’s mandate – it already looks at each and every regulation in detail – to also review the quality of the published analysis.

This recognizes the critical importance of having good information available to the public as a substitute for the full and open parliamentary process in legislating.

3. Improving Accountability

The key to compliance with any government policy – including the Government of Canada Regulatory Policy – is to ensure that effective accountability mechanisms are in place.

The new *Accountability Act* embeds the concept of Deputy Minister as their department's "accounting officer." Essentially it means that the Deputy Head is personally accountable to Parliament for their department's adherence to Treasury Board policies. There is no possibility of saying "just following orders" if called to task before a Parliamentary Committee.

The new Act, therefore, can facilitate the "self-discipline" that Stanbury talked about,¹⁷ the new government directive on regulating (this is part of the Smart Regulation Action Plan) could be issued as a Treasury Board directive.

This would have several effects. First, the directive would then have a clear statutory basis being promulgated pursuant to section 7 of the *Financial Administration Act*. One would not have to rely on convention.

Second, the treatment under the new *Accountability Act* is different depending on whether Treasury Board or Cabinet issues the directive on regulating. That Act makes deputy heads accountable in their own right to parliamentary committees for ensuring compliance with government policies and directives. This includes regulatory policy no matter how they are issued. However, if the directive is issued as a Treasury Board directive then the new Act would also require

deputy heads to register, in writing, any disagreement with ministers over application of the regulatory policy with the Treasury Board Secretariat. This would then trigger consideration and decision by the Treasury Board on the matter with a record of decision deposited with the Auditor General. As deputy heads would have a legislated recourse mechanism open to them, they could be held accountable by committees in case a breach of the GD-R was observed. Individuals or organizations who felt that a serious breach of the policy had occurred would be able to appeal to Parliamentarians to investigate and challenge the appropriate Deputy Head.

Jayson Myers, Vice-President of the Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters, in discussing this option with a Senate Committee, stated "We believe [*issuing the GD-R as a TB Policy*], coupled with the provisions of the federal accountability bill, would promote greater compliance by regulating departments and agencies with government [*regulatory*] policy and would create more efficient and effectively enforced regulations for all Canadians."

4. Getting Better Analysis

One possibility for consideration is to create and fund a new quasi-government body to challenge the quality of analysis in the RIAS system or, in some cases, in policy development exercises, at several stages. In the case of significant regulations, it is suggested that the entity would intervene at the methodology development stage, and for larger regulations at both the pre-publication and

approval stages. By providing advice, guidance and substantive commentary to departments and agencies, this organization would help address many of the capacity issues identified by the OECD in their Assessment of Canada.

It is envisioned that the organization would provide these assessments to both the originating department and the Treasury Board ministers.

The organization could also publish an annual assessment of the adequacy of performance information on regulatory programs reported in departmental performance reports, and the adequacy of regulatory impact analyses conducted through a RIAS – by department. Moreover, they could provide comments on the proposed annual report by the Treasury Board President (Option 1 above) which could be published along with the Report.

Having a "third party" impartially review analysis can enhance its credibility. A Conference Board publication (2005), *Rebuilding Trust in Canadian Organizations*, argued there has been a general decline in trust in institutions. It then proposed to improve trust through greater use of "trusted intermediaries." These intermediaries would provide assurance to sceptical audiences. Ministers and stakeholders may put greater trust in analysis (i.e., use it) if the challenge to the analysis is carried out by a trusted intermediary and is made public. The Australian experience has shown that the use of third parties provides an incentive to conduct good analysis in the first place.

5. Periodically Audit Compliance with the Regulatory Process Management Standards

A final suggestion to improve accountability is to have the Treasury Board Secretariat audit compliance of the more significant regulating departments and agencies against the currently mandatory (but not audited) RPMS.

Conclusion

Regulatory reform has a long history of success in Canada. The entire system is much better than it was three decades ago at the start of these efforts. The process is infinitely better, and impact analysis, despite problems, is better as well.

Nevertheless, the EACSR certainly found further changes were needed. The Smart Regulation Action Plan has important initiatives, but may benefit significantly from a greater focus on improving accountability and contestability in the system.

Five practical ideas were put forward to achieve this. While not particularly new, they may be timely and certainly not costly in light of the annual cost of federal regulation to the economy.¹⁹

Notes

1 Dr. Martin is President, JK&E Martin Consulting Inc. and a senior associate with AMC Consulting Group Inc. From 1991-96 he was Executive Director, Regulatory Affairs, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.

- 2 Regulation can be defined as “rules” or “restrictions on behaviour” people or organizations are required by law to follow, with penalties for non-compliance.
- 3 See GATT Secretariat (1994).
- 4 OECD (1996) contains the original OECD reference checklist for regulatory decision making. The OECD guiding principles of regulatory quality and performance were updated in 2005.
- 5 Accountability and challenge mechanisms can lead to the behavioural changes required of regulators.
- 6 Joint House of Commons/Senate Committee.
- 7 These included the 1979 report of the Lambert Commission, with its focus on accountability; the 1980 report of the Economic Council, which identified a number of major failures in Government of Canada regulation; the 1980 Law Reform Commission report criticizing how these agencies were handled; and the 1980 report of the Parliamentary Task Force on Regulatory Reform.
- 8 For a full description see Office of Privatization and Regulatory Affairs (1988).
- 9 The 2002 OECD country review of Canadian practices noted that Canada has a mature and well-functioning system of regulatory governance, with institutions, procedures, and other regulatory tools that form an efficient, transparent and accountable whole. See OECD, *Regulatory Reform in Canada*, Paris, 2002. Available at <<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/47/42/1960472.pdf>>.
- 10 Ibid, page 51.
- 11 In this comprehensive history, see especially Chapter 8 in William Stanbury, *Reforming the federal Regulatory Process in Canada, 1971-1992*, published as part of the *Minutes of the Proceedings and Evidence of the Sub-Committee on Regulations and Competitiveness of the Standing Committee on Finance*, Third Session of the Thirty-fourth Parliament, Issue No. 23, House of Commons.
- 12 For a comprehensive view on what it means to have “quality” in regulatory impact analysis see Scott Jacobs, *Regulatory Impact Analysis in Regulatory Process, Method, and Co-operation: Lessons for Canada from International Trends* a Policy Research Initiative Working Paper available through the PRI web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>.
- 13 See Chapter 8 in Stanbury (1992).
- 14 See Office of Management and Budget, *Report to Congress on the Costs and Benefits of Federal Regulations* available for various years through <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg/regpol-reports_congress.html>.
- 15 See Chapter 8 in Stanbury (1992) for a description of the concept.
- 16 The mandate can be found in Marleau and Monpetit (2000).
- 17 See Chapter 8, Stanbury, OpCit.
- 18 See Proceedings of the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs, Issue 12 – Evidence, October 18, 2006.
- 19 The Fraser Institute (2001) estimated compliance costs for federal regulation was over \$68 billion a year plus more than \$3 billion a year in administrative costs.

References are available on our web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>.

The Ecosystem Dilemma

Discordance between Nature and Culture

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Introduction

Following advances in thinking and practice made during the past 40 years in such diverse places as the Great Lakes, the Baltic Sea, and the Mediterranean, ecosystem-based management (EbM) concepts were applied in the Georgia Basin Ecosystem, on Canada's west coast. The step taken was natural. The Georgia Basin represents a well-defined ecosystem experiencing a rapidly growing population and increasing stress from human activity. At the same time, institutional arrangements relevant to environmental conditions in this transboundary bioregion spanned a complex array of international, federal, provincial, state, regional, county, local, and First Nation/tribal mechanisms. There could not be a better place to let the concept of the ecosystem be the means to manage the impact of human activities on the natural environment. Or so it seemed.

In this article, we look back at the experience in the Georgia Basin Ecosystem and argue that, in the case of the Georgia Basin, natural ecosystem boundaries are not consistent with "cultural system" boundaries as illuminated by the concept of a "sense of place." This discordance may be a fundamental reason why application of EbM approaches in the Georgia Basin Ecosystem has had little acceptance by policy makers, politicians, and the public. The key lesson is that where such discord exists, EbM approaches may be less effective. Conversely, when ecosystem and cultural boundaries are aligned, an EbM approach can be expected to be embraced more readily. The key here is to ensure an understanding

of the relative concordance between ecosystem boundaries and peoples' "sense of place."

Ecosystem-based Management

Ecosystem-based management is an integrated approach to land and resource management that considers an entire ecosystem² and seeks to maintain that ecosystem in a healthy, productive and resilient condition so it can provide the services humans want and need (McLeod et al., 2005). As distinct from "ecosystem management," EbM focuses on managing human activities as they affect ecosystems, rather than attempting to manage the natural dynamics of ecosystems. Ecosystem-based management has grown in popularity and application in recent years, providing the foundation of programs, such as Environment Canada's national Ecosystems Initiatives.³

There is a large literature related to EbM. A major contribution occurred in the 1970s in the Great Lakes region with the creation of the International Reference Group on Pollution from Land Use Activities (PLUARG) stemming from the 1972 US-Canada Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. As a result of the PLUARG studies, the 1978 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement entrenched the ecosystem approach to Great Lakes water management.⁴

The Concept of a Sense of Place

The concept of "sense of place" has been developed over the past three decades as a way to better understand the relationship between people and

FIGURE 1
The Georgia Basin / Puget Sound Transboundary Ecosystem



the ecosystems they occupy. Despite this development, the term remains ill defined and controversial as a concept in land and resource management (Williams and Stewart, 1998). Nonetheless, it has appeared with increasing frequency in recent years across a range of literature, from academic articles to government publications. But, despite the efforts by resource managers and academics in applying the sense of place concept to ecosystem-based management,

the contribution of the sense of place concept to applied land and resource management has been minimal (Stedman, 2003).

The sense of place literature draws on the observation that individuals or groups identify with a geographic place based on their experience and interaction with it. While geographic space can be defined using geometric principles of direction and distance, that *space* only becomes *place* when

humans experience it and “endow it with value” (Tuan, 1977: 6). Two definitions of sense of place that build on these concepts are “a collection of meanings, beliefs, symbols, values, and feelings that individuals or groups associate with a particular locality” (Williams and Stewart, 1998: 19), and “the importance of a setting held by an individual or group, based on an individual’s and group’s experience with the setting” (Stedman, 2003: 822).

These definitions lead to a focus on two terms: meaning and experience. The importance of *meaning* can be illustrated with reference to a forest, for example, which can mean a wilderness to one person, a place to make a living to another, and a recreation area to a third. Each meaning can be equally strong; each is based on the perceiver’s experience; and each is legitimate. That all three (and more) can exist simultaneously indicates why land and resource management conflicts can be so intractable (Stedman, 2003). *Experience* is also important, because a sense of place is affected by one’s experience with it. Relph (1976) described a sense of place along an experiential continuum: as individuals accumulate experience, they develop a stronger sense of place. This idea leads to the observation that those with more experience in a place (e.g., resident or active community member, etc.) will have a stronger sense of place than the dilettante or interloper.

Case in Point: The Georgia Basin

The Georgia Basin Ecosystem – also called the Georgia Basin/Puget Sound (GB/PS) region – contains the

watershed that drains the lands surrounding the Strait of Georgia, the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and Puget Sound (Figure 1). The region is also referred to as the Salish Sea, after the Coast Salish people whose traditional territory largely corresponds with the GB/PS. The region contains much of what the label “Pacific Northwest” evokes: mountains, rivers, rain forests, islands, and fjords. At the same time, it is also home to two dominant Asia-Pacific economic gateways, Vancouver and Seattle, as well as Victoria and Olympia, British Columbia and Washington’s, capital cities, and dozens of smaller communities.

With its temperate climate, impressive natural setting, and enviable quality of life, population growth is inevitable. Currently, nearly three million people in Canada, and four million people on the US side of the border, live in the GB/PS bioregion. Fully two thirds of the population of British Columbia lives in the Georgia Basin, an area that accounts for less than three percent of the land base of the province. This results in a population density over 20 times the provincial average. In the past 25 years, the Basin’s population has more than doubled and its 2020 population is expected to reach four million in Canada and exceed five million south of the border (Environment Canada, 2003a).

With this population growth has come a dramatic increase in the stress imposed on the natural ecosystem, human-built infrastructure, governance, and other aspects of social systems. Specific environmental issues that have arisen include deteriorating air quality, dominated by high ground-level ozone concentrations;

water quality concerns related to industrial effluent, municipal wastewater, marine-based discharges, and environmental accidents; water quantity issues related to the lack of an effective groundwater management regime as well as limits to storage infrastructure; losses in biodiversity and fish and wildlife habitat due to

The sense of place literature draws on the observation that individuals or groups identify with a geographic place based on their experience and interaction with it. While geographic space can be defined using geometric principles of direction and distance, that space only becomes place when humans experience it and “endow it with value.”

human encroachment; solid and liquid waste management challenges; conversion of agricultural lands to non-agricultural uses; soil erosion; high rates of energy use; and a range of transportation system challenges. A recently released indicators report shows conditions worsening for urbanization and forest change, river, stream and lake quality, marine species at risk, toxics in harbour seals and marine water quality (EPA, 2006).

The Institutional Response to the Georgia Basin Challenge

Over 35 years ago, the need to address the challenges in the Georgia Basin Ecosystem in an integrated “ecosystem” way was recognized (Paish and Assoc., 1970; Canada, 1971). Early expressions of concern in the 1970s and 1980s led to an appreciation that for efforts to address population growth pressures in the region to be effective, the Strait of Georgia, Strait of Juan de Fuca, and Puget Sound should be seen as a single integrated system (Barker, 1974). Despite these

early efforts, and while population pressures continued to grow in the region, institutional responses took some time to emerge.

Calls for a Georgia Basin-wide, bioregional growth management strategy surfaced in the late 1980s. By 1991, the British Columbia Round Table on the Environment and the

Economy had established a Georgia Basin Initiative. In its 1991 report, the Round Table addressed issues of growth management from a bioregional perspective and recommended co-operation with federal, state, local, and regional governments in both Canada and the United States. Specifically, the report recommended that an ecosystem approach be adopted for planning processes in the region, with a focus on two main goals: encouraging increased residential densities and compact community development, and changing individuals’ transportation use by encouraging transit and discouraging single occupancy vehicles (BCRTEE, 1993).

Abandoned by 1996 (along with the dissolution of the BC Round Table), key elements of the Georgia Basin Initiative endured in the Environment Canada-led Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative (GBEI). Established in 1998, the GBEI involved Health Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, the BC Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and the BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks as formal partners. The GBEI was a horizontally structured,

integrated action plan based on scientific inputs and aimed at affecting ecosystem sustainability. With its focus on community action for ecosystem protection, the goal of the initiative was to enhance coordination and collaboration among the ecosystem's stakeholders at all levels of involvement – government and non-government alike.⁵

In turn, the GBEI was renewed as the Georgia Basin Action Plan (GBAP) a five-year (2003-2008) Environment Canada-led horizontal collaborative undertaking, organized as the Pacific and Yukon Region component of Environment Canada's Ecosystems Initiatives program. The GBAP partnership sets out a framework for integrating social and economic priorities for the region with actions to protect and restore ecosystem health. Partnering with Environment Canada on the Action Plan are Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Parks Canada, the Province of British Columbia (through the BC Ministry of Environment), and the Coast Salish. Complementing this at the project level are more than 100 additional partners including individual Coast Salish communities, local and regional governments, additional federal departments and provincial ministries, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions. As a multiple-partnered program that spans a breadth of issues across economic, social, and environmental domains, the GBAP embodies a horizontal management approach to the challenges existing and emerging within the Georgia Basin. The Georgia Basin Action Plan includes a coordination mechanism (a steering committee made up of senior representatives of each of the

partner organizations), and a management structure that allows for collaborative planning and stakeholder involvement within and across individual mandates by a number of departments and ministries, as well as partnering with other organizations on specific projects (Environment Canada, 2003b).

Discordance between Nature and Culture

The current GBAP can thus be seen as the most recent in a line of institutional responses to the value of the Georgia Basin and the threats to it. Similar EbM approaches have been taken in other parts of the world with varying success, for example in the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem which, although not marine in nature, is similarly a large transboundary watershed with an even higher concentration of human activity. And as the Great Lakes experience demonstrates, centering institutional responses on a shared cultural and natural amenity can lead to powerful results. That a Great Lakes sense of place exists can be seen in the government, non-government, and academic institutions focused on the Great Lakes ecosystem that abound.⁶

In contrast to the Great Lakes however, we argue that in the case of the Georgia Basin Ecosystem, the ecological rationale for addressing issues from an ecosystem perspective – and creating institutions to reflect this perspective – has failed to resonate among the broader community of residents and decision makers. This, we argue, is because a sense of place for the Georgia Basin Ecosystem is not shared widely among its residents.

Public opinion surveys in the region reveal a high level of concern for shared environmental challenges (e.g., concern for air pollution, freshwater quality and quantity, land-use pressures, especially on agricultural land and wilderness areas, depletion of natural habitats, threatened species, marine contamination and toxins, and climate change impacts). But this is not rooted in a concern or appreciation for the Georgia Basin Ecosystem. While we are aware of no instances in social survey research of where the question of association with the Georgia Basin as a collective social landscape has been asked directly, our experience is that the Georgia Basin is neither a term that people are generally familiar with nor a concept that resonates deeply. In short, the Georgia Basin is a space that has not generated a broadly held corresponding sense of place.

In the absence of direct measures of public opinion of sympathy for (or even awareness of) the Georgia Basin, a second-best proxy of the lack of public affinity for the Georgia Basin can be seen in the response of the BC government to the concept of the Georgia Basin over the period as reflected in the debates of the British Columbia Legislature (Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, 2006). The Hansard record shows little mention of the Georgia Basin between 1970 and 1989, a flurry of entries between 1991 and 1996, then nothing of note up to the present. Clearly, the period 1990 to 1996 was the high mark in legislative affinity for the Georgia Basin, and represents an outlier rather than part of a trend.

For its part, over the past 15 years, the provincial government has gone from enthusiastic to willing to silent to disinterested “partner,” a partner in name only, not in spirit and certainly not in terms of an ongoing commitment of human and financial resources. The provincial government is a signatory partner to the 2003 GBAP Framework for Collaboration (Environment Canada, 2003b), but is hardly active on the file. Of the two original provincial government ministries named in the 2003 GBAP Framework, only one ministry remains following the June 2005 BC government reorganization. No financial contribution is made by the remaining ministry toward GBAP activities, and a search of the entire Government of British Columbia web domain revealed no references of substance to the Georgia Basin Action Plan.

Why has a widely accepted concept, such as ecosystem-based management as applied to a region that would appear to be a natural setting for attempting to stage such an approach, fail to resonate with the residents of the Georgia Basin and politicians of British Columbia? Drawing on the concept of sense of place, we argue that the Georgia Basin has not generated a sense of place endemic to the Georgia Basin bioregional space.

Alternatively, a number of other competing senses of place exist that would see residents identify with some sense of place other than the Georgia Basin (e.g., of the lower mainland, or Greater Vancouver, or the Sunshine Coast, or the Gulf Islands, or Vancouver Island, or countless other places of identity). People see

themselves as Vancouverites or as Saltspring Islanders or any number of other designations, but certainly not as “Georgia Basiners.”

Stated differently, we believe there is a dissonance between the natural ecosystem definition of the Georgia Basin and the “cultural systems” (i.e.,

Why has a widely accepted concept, such as ecosystem-based management as applied to a region that would appear to be a natural setting for attempting to stage such an approach, fail to resonate with the residents of the Georgia Basin and politicians of British Columbia?

senses of place) that exist within the region. The experience, meaning, and stories of people in the region today – individuals or communities – do not stem from, nor are they bounded by, the Georgia Basin Ecosystem.

We qualify this assertion with two caveats. First, we constrain this to the modern period. Drawing from ancient Aboriginal culture, the Salish Sea does exist as a sense of place that maps onto the natural ecosystem. That sense of place is a product of the natural ecosystem, where a shared culture developed in response to the landscape and the resources within it. Yet this simply reinforces the discordance between modern and First Nations cultures. The design of modern institutions does not resonate with how Aboriginal people see the world in which we live.

Second, the US part of the Georgia Basin/Puget Sound bioregion exhibits a stronger sense of place for Puget Sound as a concept and a cultural expression of identity. Whether recognized as a term or appreciated as a concept, a reference to Puget Sound

elicits a wider sense of recognition on the part of respondents in the Seattle area than would a corresponding question about the Georgia Basin if asked in Vancouver or Victoria. Whether it’s the Puget Sound Action Team operating out of the Office of the Governor in

Olympia, or the Seattle Sounders professional soccer team, Puget Sound culture exists as a sense of place and a complement to the natural landscape.

Moving Forward

The dilemma illuminated in this paper leads to our central conclusion: when crafting ecosystem initiatives, designers must be mindful of the sense of that place as humans understand it – as much as they seek to understand the complex dynamics of plants, animals, and features of the physical environment. An ecosystem perspective cannot simply be pushed onto people when the ecosystem definition is either inconsistent with or unimportant to their sense of place. When sense of place and natural ecosystems are aligned, the resulting resonance provides a tremendous impetus for success that can lead to vibrant institutional arrangements rooted in natural landscapes. When they do not coincide, the dissonance represents a major challenge to be overcome. Being mindful of the sense of place will naturally lead to an ecosystems approach that is built

from the ground up, rather than imposed as an elegant structure from the top down.

Yet the current dilemma does exist. In the Georgia Basin, the ecosystem lacks a corresponding sense of place. This raises the practical question: what can be done with the conflict between the need to address ecosystem concerns from an ecosystem perspective and the absence of a sense of place in respect of the Georgia Basin? To move forward in British Columbia, two clear options present themselves: either tear down the Georgia Basin Ecosystem concept, or build a Georgia Basin sense of place.

Despite the effort of many dedicated people over the past 15 years, it may be time to consider whether the lack of a sense of place coincident with the Georgia Basin Ecosystem fatally imperils efforts to adopt an EbM approach in the region. We do not imply that ecosystem approaches are misguided; rather, the search for the right ecosystem remains. An alternative approach to the Georgia Basin might rest in viewing Canada's Pacific Islands – from Vancouver Island, through the Gulf Island, Broughton Archipelago, and numerous coastal islands all the way to the Queen Charlotte Islands/Haida Gwaii – as a collective entity, worthy of its own ecosystem-based approach. Pressures on the environment and resources in this area call for an ecosystem-wide perspective. And given the common maritime heritage and the shared sense of place of islanders up and down the mainland coast, a focus on Canada's Pacific islands might provide a better ecosystem-based foundation.

But perhaps the problem isn't with the ecosystem, but rather with us. It may be possible to rehabilitate the Georgia Basin, to build on the nearly 40 years of effort and finally start to think and behave in an ecosystem fashion. But such an effort will require the development of a corresponding sense of place. Doing so will require not only that we transcend the existing senses of place, but that we strive to make the whole ecosystem meaningful to its inhabitants.

This is certainly easier said than done. But one significant place to start would be with the name of the ecosystem itself. Rather than referencing the distant King George III of nearly two centuries ago or a subordinate of Captain Vancouver from the same era (Lieutenant Peter Puget), if the bureaucratic and scientific sounding "Georgia Basin/Puget Sound Bioregion" were renamed as the "Salish Sea", we might begin to re-establish the link to the natural ecosystem that exists among the region's Aboriginal groups. Rather than a futile exercise in semantics, we believe that renaming the ecosystem as the Salish Sea would resonate with residents and their heritage, and represent an important step in developing a broader sense of place.

There is precedent for such a change in British Columbia's recent past. While the Queen Charlotte Islands still bear that official name (in honour of the queen consort of the same King George III of Georgia Basin fame), the Government of British Columbia now generally refers to those islands as Haida Gwaii. This change was made as

an act of respect for the Haida Nation, the original inhabitants of the islands, and stands as part of the emerging "New Relationship" the government has attempted to forge with First Nations in recent years (McInnes, 2003). While officially renaming a geographic place or feature can be a cumbersome process,⁷ it is a simple administrative act for a government to decide to refer to a place by another name – as the Haida Gwaii example shows. But while it would be a simple act, we argue that it would be enormously symbolic and potentially powerful.

Thus stands our challenge, to not only the Government of British Columbia, but of Canada, Washington State, and the United States of America: give this ecosystem a chance. Start with a simple, small, but potentially powerful first step: honour the past while looking to the future in the Salish Sea.

Notes

- 1 Authors: Justin Longo (Ph.D. Candidate, University of Victoria) and R. Anthony Hodge, Ph.D., P.Eng (President, Anthony Hodge Consultants Inc.).
- 2 An ecosystem is a defined subset of the biosphere (e.g., a terrestrial or marine environment of any size) and the dynamic complex of plants, animals, microbes, and physical environmental features that interact with one another within that environment (McLeod et al., 2005).
- 3 Environment Canada's Ecosystem Initiatives are characterized by a number of principles that support and require a horizontal policy approach, including:
 - an ecosystem approach: recognizing the interrelationships between land, air, water, wildlife, and human activities;

- decisions based on sound science: including natural and social sciences combined with local and traditional knowledge;
- federal-provincial-territorial partnerships: governments working together to achieve the highest level of environmental quality for all Canadians; and
- a citizen/community base: working with individuals, communities, Aboriginal peoples, industry, and governments in the design and implementation of initiatives.

Current large ecosystem initiatives being led by Environment Canada include the Atlantic Coastal Action Program; the St. Lawrence Action Plan Vision 2000; Great Lakes 2000; the Georgia Basin Action Plan; and the Northern Ecosystem Initiative. See Environment Canada (2006).

- 4 See, for example, PLUARG (1978).
- 5 See, for example, Kay (1998).
- 6 See the discussion in Colborn et al. (1990, Chapter 9).
- 7 Responsibility for formally re-designating a place or geographic feature rests with the Geographic Names Board of Canada, which generally considers requests to consider name changes made by the general public and organizations (see Natural Resources Canada, 2006).

References are available on our web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>.

Exchanging Experiences

The PRI was pleased to host a study mission from Denmark, led by the Danish Minister for Social Affairs and Gender Equality, Eva Kjer Hansen. The Danes were interested to learn of Canadian preparations and best practices for an aging society, and were provided with materials and explanations regarding population aging and labour market issues, providing incentives and flexibility for older workers, and broader issues and challenges facing seniors in Canada.

Canada in turn benefited from a Danish presentation and discussion of recent changes to Danish policies regarding retirement age, student educational subsidies, and other labour market policies. Denmark is considered a European leader in applying principles recently labelled as “flexicurity” in its labour market policies. In essence, their approach consists of low levels of employment protection – therefore resulting in short job tenures and high turnover – combined with high levels of income replacement for the unemployed and high investments in active labour market policies. Danish policy makes it mandatory after a short job search period, for workers to be either in work or in training. Consequently the country enjoys low levels of unemployment, an adaptable labour force, and high labour productivity. The PRI is currently monitoring new developments and concepts in labour market policies, and how they might relate to the future Canadian labour market.



From right to left at the PRI conference table: Poul E.D. Kristensen, Danish Ambassador to Canada; Thomas Boerner, Permanent Secretary, Danish Ministry of Social Affairs; Eva Kjer Hansen, Danish Minister for Social Affairs and Gender Equality; Susan Scotti, Assistant Deputy Minister, HRSDC; Terrance Hunsley, Senior Project Director, PRI; Mitch Bloom, Director General, Seniors and Pension Policy Secretariat, HRSDC; Barbara Glover, Director General, Labour Market Policy, HRSDC.

A Summary of “Review of E-Learning in Canada A Rough Sketch of the Evidence, Gaps, and Promising Directions”

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Philip C. Abrami
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Canadian Network for Knowledge
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Abstract

The review of the current literature on e-learning on which this summary is based was conducted under a contract with the Canadian Council on Learning.¹ The review develops an argument catalogue to encompass public, research, policy, and practitioner perspectives, assesses what is incomplete in the various literatures, explores what works (best practices), and provides a vision for promising new lines of research. The review focused on the role of e-learning in early childhood learning, elementary and secondary learning, post-secondary learning, adult learning, and health and learning.

Introduction

Ever since Thomas Edison declared in 1922: “I believe that the motion picture is destined to revolutionize our educational system and that in a few years it will supplant largely, if not entirely, the use of textbooks” (quoted in Cuban, 1986: 9), there has been a search for technologies that can improve teaching and learning in educational settings. Educational radio, television and videotape, computer-assisted and computer-based instruction, intelligent tutoring systems, videoconferencing and interactive video, multimedia, the Internet, web-based instruction, e-learning, university portals, on-line libraries and databases, learning management systems, on-line student services and, more recently, blogs, wikies, personal digital systems, and MP-3 players, represent but a partial list of technologies that have been variously touted as panaceas or as major revolutionary applications of learning technologies.

According to Jamie Rossiter (2002), all of the digital technologies mentioned above are encompassed under the commonly used term “e-learning.” He defined e-learning as the development of knowledge and skills through the use of information and communication technologies, particularly to support interactions for learning – interactions with content, with learning activities and tools, and with other people. It is not merely content related, nor limited to a particular technology, and can be a component of blended or hybrid learning. (J. Rossiter, 2002; also 2005 in an address at the CCL Workshop on E-Learning). It was with this definition, a contract for a review from the Canadian Council on Learning, and a newly developed review methodology called an argument catalogue that we undertook the project described here. A version of the report was published in a forthcoming special issue of the *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology* (Abrami et al., in press).

Methodology: What Is an Argument Catalogue?

An argument catalogue (Abrami et al., 2006) is a systematic compilation of views of a topic from various documented sources as they relate to a particular topic:

- the print media (i.e., an expression of the general public's exposure);
- policy-making documents;
- practitioner documents;
- scientific compilations and reviews of research; and
- empirical evidence gathered from the results of primary research studies.

An argument catalogue provides a rounded perspective of all relevant views, as well as the evidence contained in the research literature of the field. Another major purpose is to look for gaps and overlaps in different constituencies. Ultimately, we envision that the findings from an argument catalogue can be fed back into the community – the lay public, policy makers, practitioners, and researchers – to provide information, help in the development of government and institutional policy, aid practitioners in their day-to-day professional duties, and suggest promising new avenues for future research.

Developing the Argument Catalogue

The stages in developing an argument catalogue are as follows.

Stage 1: Formulate the purpose and research question(s).

Stage 2: Locate and retrieve documents.

Stage 3: Include and exclude documents.

Stage 4: Create an argument catalogue codebook.

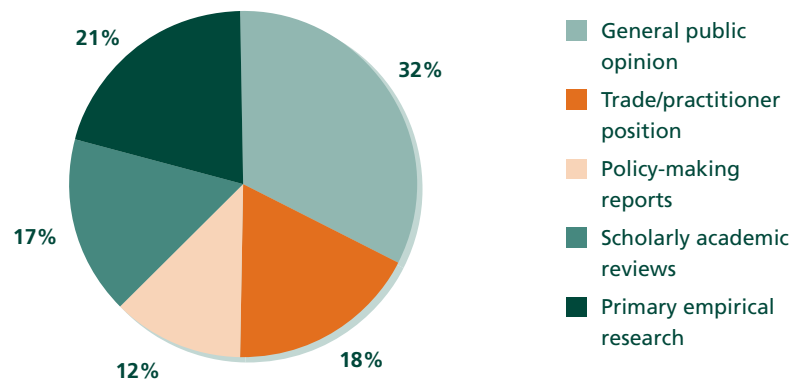
Stage 5: Code the documents.

Stage 6: Analyze and interpret the data.

Stage 7: Disseminate the results.

A total of 2,042 items were identified through on-line searches within the literatures of policy documents, public opinion (newspaper) articles, practitioner (trade) articles, scholarly reviews, and Canadian empirical studies. A subset of 1,146 items was reviewed with 726 items included. Reviewers counted positive, negative,

FIGURE 1
Relative Proportion of Each Document Source



Source: Abrami et al. (2005).

and neutral messages in each body of literature. The major messages were also extracted from each document. Figure 1 shows the relative proportion of each of the document sources that were retrieved and analyzed.

Our mandate from the CCL required that we look at documents across a variety of theme areas, including adult education, early childhood education, elementary/secondary education, post-secondary education, and health and learning. We encountered a disproportionate number of documents across these themes. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the 726 documents.

What We Found: Results from the Literature

Public Opinion (as expressed in the print media)

- E-learning is a rapidly growing field in education.
- E-learning provides greater access to educational programs.

- Funding the high costs of e-learning may divert resources away from other educational priorities.
- There is some concern about potential negative impacts of e-learning on the development of children's creative skills.
- Teachers and classrooms will remain essential in the world of e-learning.

Policy Documents

- Policy makers are mostly in favour of e-learning.
- There is a need to bridge the gap between theory, research, and practice.
- Technology should be introduced and used only in appropriate contexts.
- There are four major reasons for using e-learning: economic competitiveness, educational attainment, increased access, and as a catalyst for educational change.

Practitioners

- E-learning increases accessibility, flexibility, and opportunities for learning.
- E-learning requires careful attention to instructional design, pedagogical planning, professional training, and fiscal support.
- We need new policies and strategies to meet the emerging social demands of educational technology.

Reviews of Research

- The reviews of e-learning range from neutral to positive; it is at least as effective as traditional instruction.
- We need to address design issues and new strategies for teaching and learning.

- Effective e-learning requires the presence of immediate, extensive, and sustained support.
- There is an absence of strong empirical evidence to support the use of e-learning.

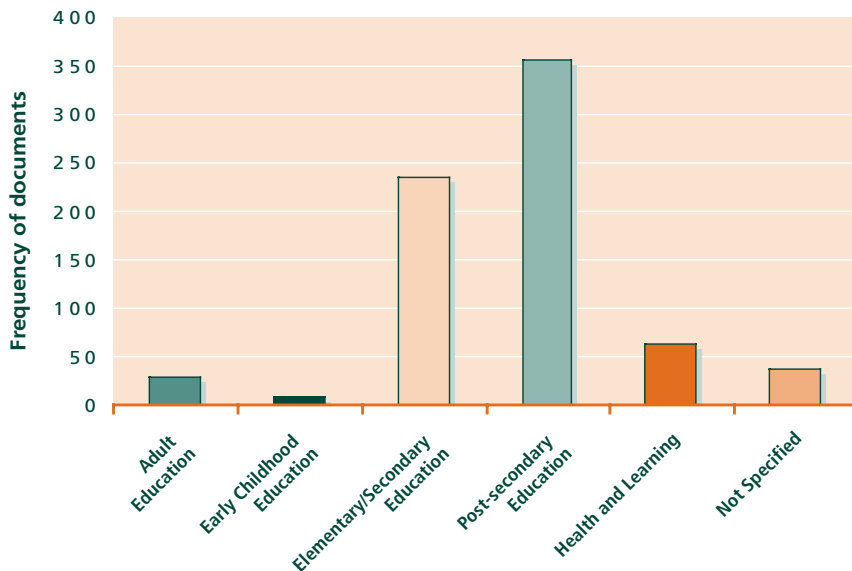
Primary Research

- Some learners are better prepared to use e-learning effectively than others.
- Effective instructional design for e-learning does not resemble traditional pedagogical methods.
- Teachers require professional development and training to use technology effectively.
- Collaborative methods afforded by on-line technologies facilitate the development of higher-order thinking.

- E-learning provides students who have a disability with previously unavailable educational opportunities.

In reviewing the documents, we extracted seven major themes and then rated the magnitude of the positive perceived impact on a 0-1.0 scale. Figure 3 shows the results of this analysis. The two lowest were the effect of e-learning on attrition/retention of students in courses and programs and the impact of e-learning on the cost of education. Four of the highest impact ratings (i.e., achievement, satisfaction, communication, and meeting social demands) directly reflect the impact of e-learning on the goals of education. Flexibility, among the most highly rated, reflects on issues of accessibility to education and feelings of empowerment that technology affords learners.

FIGURE 2
Frequency of Documents Across the CCL Theme Areas



Source: Abrami et al. (2005).

Quantitative Summary of Canadian Primary Research

The primary e-learning studies from the Canadian context that could be summarized quantitatively were identified. We examined 152 studies and found a total of seven that were truly experimental (i.e., random assignment with treatment and control groups) and 10 that were quasi-experimental (i.e., not randomized but possessing a pre-test and a post-test). From these studies, we extracted 29 effect sizes or standardized mean differences, which were included in the composite measure.

A standardized mean difference, or effect size, expresses the difference between an experimental group and a control group in units of standard

deviation (SD). An effect size of +1.0, for example, tells us that the treatment group exceeded the control group by 1 SD. Conversely, an effect size of -1.0 tells us that the control group outperformed the treatment group by 1 SD. An effect size can be interpreted as a percentage of gain for one group over another group. For an effect size of +1.0, about 84 percent of the treatment participants performed at or above the mean of the control participants (50th percentile), or a gain of 34 percent. This is considered a large effect size (Bernard and Naidu, 1990).

The mean effect size was +0.117, a small positive effect. Approximately 54 percent of the e-learning participants performed at or above the mean of the control participants (50th percentile), an advantage of four percent. However, the heterogeneity analysis was significant, indicating that the effect sizes were widely dispersed. It is clearly not the case that e-learning is always the superior condition for educational impact.

Overall Generalizations from the Analysis of Retrieved and Coded Documents

- Remarkable consistency emerged across the sources of literature and, to a lesser extent, across the CCL theme areas of early childhood learning, elementary and secondary learning, post-secondary learning, adult learning, and health and learning.
- E-learning is generally believed to have positive impacts, especially on achievement, motivation,

communication, learning flexibility, and meeting social demands.

- Perceived impacts of e-learning are higher for distance education, where technology use is required, and lower for face-to-face instructional settings.
- Perceived impacts of e-learning are higher for network-based technologies than for non-networked technology integration in educational settings.
- Pedagogical uses of technology, student applications (i.e., students using technology), and communication applications had a higher impact than instructional or informal uses.
- Student-centred applications of technology are believed to be more effective than teacher-centred

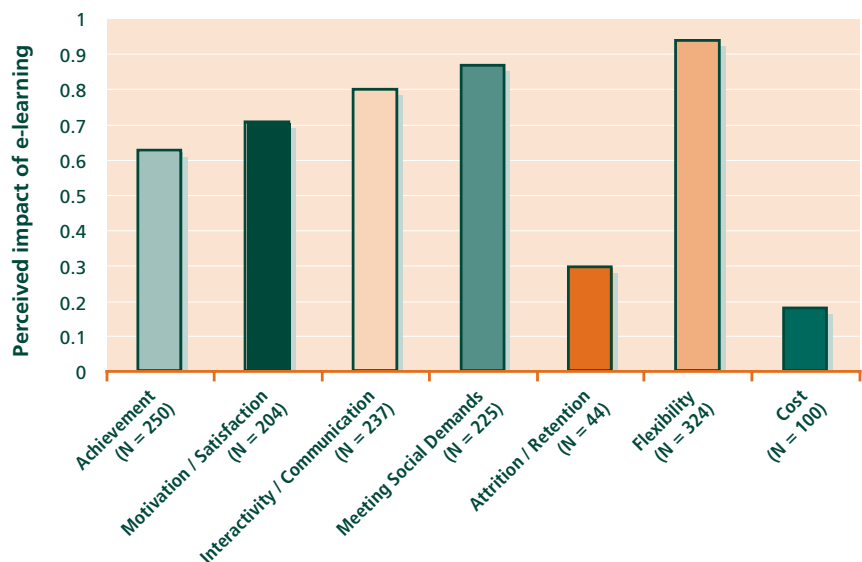
applications used for delivery of information.

- Compared to issues of course design and infrastructure/logistics, the issue of professional development received little attention.
- Technology is mostly used for communication and presentation purposes.
- Canadian research on e-learning is mainly qualitative in nature, offering little experimental evidence to identify “what works” in e-learning settings.

Discussion

The results of this study do not unequivocally support e-learning, but they are positive and encouraging. Anyone who is sensitive to the delicate balance that public organizations

FIGURE 3
Perceived Impacts of E-learning



Source: Abrami et al. (2005).

strike between scarce resources and the laundry list of needs that allow them to fulfill their mission knows that waste is the enemy of fiscal responsibility. In educational organizations (i.e., schools), too much of anything comes at the expense of something else, possibly of equal or greater importance. So it is with the acquisition of e-learning technologies. Technology and its support, in human and material terms, is expensive, so there exists a serious need to know what really helps learners learn, how it works, and when it works. It is also important to know how the learning technologies are perceived in government circles (policy makers), by teachers and administrators (practitioners), developers and researchers, and the general public who support schooling through tax dollars. This study looked at these joint perspectives through an examination of the various literatures in which the impact of e-learning, broadly defined, has been discussed.

The following is an excerpt from our report to the CCL. It is quoted here because it expresses, very succinctly, an important message, based on our findings, which we would like to convey.

In education, there is the mistaken view, repeated over the generations: 1) that technology represents a “magical solution” to the range of problems affecting schools and learners; and 2) that money for technology alone, thrown in large enough quantities at the problems of education, will effect the kinds of changes that are required to

produce a well-informed, literate and numerate citizenry. It is probably true that the wide range of electronic technologies that are now available stand a better chance of effecting educational change than the technologies of film, television, learning machines, intelligent tutoring systems, etc. However,

It has never been the case that money alone solves problems unless it is invested in equal amounts in human and physical resources.

it has never been the case that money alone solves problems unless it is invested in equal amounts in human and physical resources. We found among the many coded variables that might be classified as support for e-learning, that reference to professional development ranked the lowest across all document types and CCL theme groups (11.16% of all documents examined). By contrast, nearly half of the documents we examined (47.8%) referred to infrastructure and logistical support for e-learning. It is arguable that the education of Canadians would be better served by more emphasis on preparing and training practitioners to use technology effectively than a rush to adopt the “technology *du jour*” (p. 36).

Comments on our Methodology

Overall, the messages of the literatures converge, with e-learning perceived and demonstrated as having a positive impact on learning in the Canadian

context. However, here are the caveats to this outcome, which relate largely to the 90-day time frame we were afforded for producing the argument catalogue. First, we were unable to survey the complete literature. Second, we were unable to pursue each theme extracted from the literature for the depth of perception and opinion. Third, because of the time constraints,

we were unable to establish the reliability of the extraction process and the coding of themes and positive or negative impressions. Last, we were unable to deal effectively with the importance and overlap of opinion, especially in articles from the popular press. For instance, is an article that appears in a local daily newspaper (e.g., *The Gazette*) as important as an article that appears in a national magazine (e.g., *Maclean's*)? And should an item picked up by a wire service and featured in newspapers across Canada be judged as important as a story that does not receive national coverage?

Finally, a review such as the one we have produced and reported on here needs to be disseminated to the various constituencies (i.e., the public, practitioners, policy makers, and researchers) from whose sources the data were derived. The 47-page technical report, available on the CCL Web site, will not be read by even a fraction of the body of Canadians who are concerned about and interested in this topic. We established CanKnow, the Canadian Network for Knowledge

Utilization, as a dissemination arm of the Centre for the Study of Learning and Performance. We intend to take a targeted approach to dissemination by producing specialized results and interpretations, in readable and non-technical prose, for different audiences. Our first dissemination document (*Knowledge Link*, Volume 1, Number 1, April 2006) provides a succinct, point-by-point overall account of the findings of this study. Future efforts include dissemination through public presentations, articles in practitioner journals and magazines, and debate in professional forums, such as the upcoming special issue of the *Canadian Journal of Learning and Technology*.

We began this project with the intention of providing information for Canadians, with various levels of interest and concern, about the state of e-learning in Canada. In the process, we also pilot-tested the methodology originally envisioned for an argument catalogue. While, by our own admission, the product is imperfect, we are convinced that this form of systematic review has the potential to reveal aspects of important issues that normally go unaddressed in research reports and scholarly reviews. Because we believe this pilot-test has successfully demonstrated the value of our intended approach, we look forward to a process of continuous refinement of the methodology and the development of outlets for raising awareness across various audiences.

Note

- 1 The Canadian Council on Learning funded the state-of-the-field review upon which this article is based, under a contract to Abrami, Bernard, Wade, and Schmid. The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the authors. Inquiries should be directed to Dr. Robert M. Bernard, Centre for the Study of Learning and Performance, Concordia University, 1455 DeMaisonneuve Blvd. W., Montréal, Quebec, H3G 1M8. <bernard@education.concordia.ca>

References are available on our web site at <www.policyresearch.gc.ca>.

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The Politics of Environmental Taxes and Other Economic Instruments

Meriem Aït Ouyahia

Policy Research Initiative
Government of Canada

Environmental taxation and other market-based instruments can be effective and efficient tools for environmental policies. Environmental taxes send a price signal that helps ensure that polluters take into account the cost of polluting when they make production and consumption decisions. However, a gap exists between theory and practice and many barriers and side effects can occur in reality. Even if economic instruments have been used for more than two decades, their implementation is still a learning process.

This is exactly what the Seventh Annual Global Conference on Environmental Taxation, held on October 22-24, 2006 at the Fairmont Château Laurier in Ottawa and organized by the Faculty of Law of the University of Ottawa, was about. The theme of this year's conference was translating theory into practice, by focusing on issues, such as political feasibility, instrument choice and design, subsidies and competitiveness. Except for the opening and closing sessions, four panels were held simultaneously allowing for a variety of subjects to be treated, from the institutional and psychological dimensions of economic instruments to their use in transportation and climate change and energy policies, with a multitude of municipal, regional, and national case studies. This successful conference hosted a variety of speakers from

academia, government, and the private sector from over 30 countries, from diverse fields, such as law, economics, accounting, political sciences, and environmental studies.

Some case studies were presented as successes and others as failures, but all highlighted the challenges to implementing effective and efficient environmental taxation and other market-based instruments. An important barrier to implementation is often the fear of loss of competitiveness. It has led in many countries to exemptions and special provisions for the most polluting and energy-intensive sector of the economy putting the burden of environmental taxes on households and the transport sector.

Another obstacle is the political acceptance of environmental taxes. Public acceptance seems to be related to the degree of awareness of the environmental problem at stake. However, changing behaviour is not an easy task; some evidence shows that people prefer to invest in new technologies rather than change their behaviour.

Many subsidies encourage pollution and environmental destruction and undermine the beneficial effects of environmental taxes. Moreover, some subsidies are promoted as tax reforms, and there is a lack of transparency, which makes it difficult to evaluate whether an activity is, on the whole,

taxed or subsidized. Some argue that more could be achieved by removing perverse subsidies than by environmental taxation.

In many cases, income distribution has not been addressed properly in the design and implementation of environmental taxes and other market-based instruments. Many studies show that environmental taxes can

policy initiatives to develop cohesive instrument mixes and to allow synergies among policies. Moreover, the design and implementation of economic instruments needs to be more adaptive and able to respond to unpredictable events, for example, by clearly stating the goals of the policy and closely monitoring its success at reaching these goals.

The Eighth Annual Global Conference on Environmental taxation will be held on October 18-20, 2007 in Munich and is organized by Green Budget Germany. The main focus will be on the positive impacts of environmental fiscal reforms and other market-based instruments, such as the stimulation of innovation, the development of new technologies, and job creation.

Another obstacle is the political acceptance of environmental taxes. Public acceptance seems to be related to the degree of awareness of the environmental problem at stake. However, changing behaviour is not an easy task; some evidence shows that people prefer to invest in new technologies rather than change their behaviour.

have a regressive impact on the income distribution of households, placing a proportionately higher burden on lower income earners than higher income earners. Hence, distributional impacts need to be carefully considered.

Environmental taxes are rarely used alone; applied in combination with other instruments, there is often no unifying overall governance strategy or logic but rather a “layering” of environmental policies that can contain counterproductive instrument mixes. It is important to encourage

The devil and side effects are always in the details, and the context, the path history and dependency, the political structure and the legal framework are important factors for the successful implementation of environmental taxes and other market-based instruments. Moreover, synergies among policies are crucial. To better evaluate these instruments, there is also a need for better and more transparent information.

How to Spend \$50 Billion to Make the World a Better Place

Edited by Bjørn Lomborg

Reviewed by Alan Painter

Policy Research Initiative
Government of Canada



This book proves that a document can include 172 noteworthy passages and still be highly unsatisfactory.

One hundred and seventy-two is the number of yellow stickies I had attached to the book by the time I got to the end, each one indicating a point worth reflecting upon.

How to Spend \$50 Billion is unsatisfactory, because it makes poor use of its good content.

The book summarizes the results of the Copenhagen Consensus 2004, which brought 38 economists together to offer advice on how to spend \$50 billion to address some or all of what the book plausibly describes as the nine most serious challenges facing the world: climate change, the spread of communicable diseases, conflicts and arms proliferation, access to education, governance and corruption, malnutrition and hunger, migration, sanitation and access to clean water, and subsidies and trade barriers.

The editor of the book and key organizer of the Copenhagen Consensus is Bjørn Lomborg, an adjunct professor at the Copenhagen Business School and author of the 2001 best selling and controversial book *The Skeptical Environmentalist*.

Following an introduction by the editor, the consolidated view of from one to three of the experts is presented in each of nine chapters corresponding to the challenges. These chapters also present the opposing views of other experts. The book's conclusion provides and explains the

ranking of an expert panel of eight top economists (four Nobel prize winners among them), and concludes that \$27 billion should be spent on HIV/AIDS prevention, \$12 billion on malnutrition and hunger, an amount well below \$1 billion on trade liberalization that would realize some \$2.4 trillion in annual benefits, \$10 billion to fight malaria, and nothing to address the remaining challenges.

The book gives far too little attention to integrating and reconciling the considerable information and analysis provided by the experts. A much better book would have deployed all this content to identify what policy research and policy development should be carried out next to advance our understanding of and to address all nine challenges. The book does not demonstrate that it identifies the optimal way to allocate \$50 billion based on the current state of knowledge, which is its stated objective.

On what basis can I disagree with the consensus position of such a talented group? It appears to me that the process employed to develop the Copenhagen Consensus didn't spend enough time reconciling the excellent information and analysis presented in the book.

If you are exploring one of the issues covered in the book, and especially if you are in the international development field, you might want to check out the applicable chapter of *How to Spend \$50 Billion* for insights. I don't recommend the recommendations.

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