

**BUYING IN OR DROPPING OUT:
THE PUBLIC POLICY IMPLICATIONS
OF SOCIAL COHESION RESEARCH**

by

M. Sharon Jeannotte, Dick Stanley, Ravi Pendakur, Bruce Jamieson,
Maureen Williams and Amanda Aizlewood
Strategic Research and Analysis (SRA)
Strategic Planning and Policy Coordination
Department of Canadian Heritage

25 Eddy Street, 12th Floor
Hull, Québec
CANADA K1A 0M5

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For a PDF copy of this report contact us at:
sradoc_docras@pch.gc.ca
or Fax: (819) 997-6765

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Buying in or Dropping Out: The Public Policy Implications of Social Cohesion Research

1. WHAT IS SOCIAL COHESION AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO PUBLIC POLICY?

This paper is intended as a “primer” on the subject of social cohesion and as a summary of what we know about it so far. In it, we describe the framework for Canadian research on this topic, outline our research findings, draw tentative conclusions from those findings and suggest possible next steps for our research. But before launching into the intricacies of this topic, it may be useful to address several questions that are undoubtedly springing into the reader’s mind. First, why is there so much interest in this seemingly obscure analytical concept? Second, can it help us to understand current issues of concern to the Canadian public? Third, is it a useful framework for public policy discourse? Fourth, can it be measured or tested empirically? And, finally, can an understanding of social cohesion help policy makers in all fields make better decisions?

1.1. Growing interest

The first question – why there is so much interest in the topic – is perhaps the easiest to answer. The concept, while relatively unknown in Canada until recently, has been the focus of much policy discussion in Europe for a number of years. The European Union (EU), the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) have published a vast amount of literature on political, economic, social and cultural threats to social cohesion. The EU has committed approximately 213 billion euros (C\$302 billion) to economic and social cohesion over the 2000-2006 period and has recommended that member states “mainstream” social inclusion and social cohesion within existing housing, health, education, transport, communication and social protection programs. The Council of Europe has created the European Committee on Social Cohesion with a Specialised Unit on Social Cohesion to support its work.¹

Canada, while less active on the policy front, is viewed as a leader in the search for conceptual clarity in this field. A research network on social cohesion has existed within the federal government for five years. On the basis of both domestic and international comparative research undertaken by the Social Cohesion Network, we have concluded that:

- There are faultlines and growing cleavages in Canadian society.
- These cleavages are contributing to a weakening of the axes of community identification in Canada. These axes – fundamental democratic values, mutual attachments and willingness to engage in collective action – form the basis of a social citizenship which is being threatened by the forces of globalization.
- The consequences of weakened axes of community identification are poorer social and economic outcomes for Canadians, growing political disenchantment and, possibly, a lessening of commitment to Canada.

¹ M. Sharon Jeannotte, *SRA-309 - Social Cohesion Around the World: An International Comparison of Definitions and Issues*, (Ottawa, 2000), p. 18 and p. 22.

It is the potent mixture of globalization, growing diversity and weakened citizenship ties that has brought the topic of social cohesion to the fore. If “getting the economic fundamentals right” was the mantra of the 1990s, “getting the social fundamentals right” may prove to be the over-riding theme of the first decade of the 21st century. The events of September 11 highlighted the importance of understanding how globalization, diversity and changing conceptions of citizenship affect social cohesion within Canada, within North America and throughout the world. Managing the tensions created by the interplay of these factors and minimizing the “drop-outs” will be key policy challenges for governments at all levels.

1.2 Understanding the concept

To answer the second question — whether a grasp of the concept can help us to understand current issues of concern to the Canadian public – requires that we turn to the contested domain of definitions.

In 1996, the Social Cohesion Network viewed social cohesion as the process that makes it possible for societies to function, providing the prerequisites for all major social processes. The Network adopted a *working definition* which reflected the consensus *at that time* within the Canadian federal government:

“Social Cohesion is the ongoing process of developing a community of shared values, shared challenges and equal opportunity within Canada, based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity among all Canadians.”

This working definition, while recognized as having faults, was a valuable starting point for the Network’s research framework.²

Further work, carried out by researchers both in Canadian universities and the federal government, has produced a more nuanced view of social cohesion. Jane Jenson of the Canadian Policy Research Networks described the theoretical and ideological origins of social cohesion, making a clear link between cohesion and the more fundamental issue of social order.³ She deconstructed the concept into five dimensions:

- belonging / isolation
- inclusion / exclusion
- participation / non-involvement
- recognition / rejection
- legitimacy / illegitimacy.⁴

² It should be noted that, while descriptions of social cohesion are to be found in both academic and institutional literature, many with shared components, there is no agreed upon definition. Canada is alone in having an explicit definition to guide research and policy interventions.

³ Seminal work on social cohesion was carried out at the beginning of the twentieth century by sociologist Emile Durkheim. While many others have concerned themselves with the issue of social order, such as Alexis de Tocqueville and Talcott Parsons, Jenson notes that *only some theoretical approaches identify social cohesion as the basis for social order* “other traditions privilege other mechanisms and put the accent on institutional processes and conflicting interests more than on values” (*Mapping Social Cohesion: The State of Canadian Research*, CPRN Study No.F|03, (Ottawa, 1998), p.13).

⁴ *Mapping Social Cohesion: The State of Canadian Research*, p.15.

Paul Bernard of the Université de Montréal built upon Jenson's initial research by presenting a critique of the concept of social cohesion based upon the "dialectic of democracy." He suggested that liberty, equality and solidarity are fundamental to democracy and that a truly cohesive society must strive to maintain a balance between these three elements. His analysis led him to conclude that the dimension of "**equality/inequality**" must be added to Jenson's five elements to complete the conceptual framework.⁵

Overall, our research suggests that our definition should be modified as follows:

Social cohesion is based on the willingness of individuals to cooperate and work together at all levels of society to achieve collective goals.

Social cohesion of any given society can be determined by understanding where that society is situated on the continua represented by each of Jenson's and Bernard's six dimensions. It requires **both** support for collective social activities and goals **and** trust in others and in institutions. In other words, in a cohesive society, citizens have a sense of belonging and inclusion, they participate actively, their differences are recognized and they are both treated equally and enjoy a relative measure of equality in an environment where public and private institutions are trusted and recognized as legitimate.

Additionally, is it evident that social cohesion and fundamental liberal social values exist in a reciprocal and mutually reinforcing relationship. Values such as freedom, equality, democracy, respect for human rights, tolerance, inclusion, collective responsibility, and the rule of law are the main reasons why members of Canadian society are prepared to cooperate and work together. As a corollary, it should be noted that authoritarian regimes can imitate the signs of social cohesion by creating orderliness, shared values and the ability to undertake collective action. Nevertheless, these processes are usually coercive, exclusionary and unsustainable – factors that undermine the very conditions necessary for social cohesion to exist.

1.3 Utility of the framework in a public policy context

In late 2001, the Minister of Canadian Heritage made two presentations on the subject of social cohesion. In them, she emphasized the need to strengthen connections among Canadians across linguistic, regional and ethnic groups. She noted that the "Canadian model" of social cohesion is based on diversity and on trust, echoing the message of the Prime Minister in a speech given in Berlin in June 2000, when he characterized the distinct Canadian way as including the following elements:

- accommodation of cultures
- recognition of diversity
- partnership between citizens and state
- a balanced approach that promotes individual freedom and economic prosperity while at the same time sharing risks and benefits
- an understanding that government is an instrument of collective action serving the broader public interest.⁶

⁵ Paul Bernard, *SRA-491 - Social Cohesion: A Dialectical Critique of a Quasi-concept?*, (Ottawa, 2000), p.13.

⁶ Prime Minister of Canada, "The Canadian Way in the 21st Century" presented at *Progressive Governance for the 21st Century*, (Berlin, June 2-3, 2000), pp. 1-2. (Accessed on January 22, 2002 at <http://pm.gc.ca/default.asp?Language=E&Page=Keyinitiatives&sub=TheCanadianWayinthecen>).

This perspective on social cohesion implies that many policies and programs play an important role in strengthening the connections that have historically linked Canadians. These include measures as diverse as social protection, health, education, safety and security, culture, communications, transportation, multiculturalism, official languages and even equalization payments. These public policies and programs represent, in fact, concrete manifestations of Canadians' willingness to collaborate to achieve collective goals. They are part of what used to be called the "social contract" with Canadians – an unfashionable term which, nonetheless, remains useful as a shorthand way of describing the reciprocal relationship between public policy makers and citizens that is one of the pillars of social cohesion.

1.4 Measuring social cohesion

Our research suggests that looking at public policies and programs provides only a partial picture of the state of social cohesion. As yet, we have only fragmentary answers to the fourth question – how do you measure social cohesion? Part of the problem is that there is little agreement on what should be measured. However, the Social Cohesion Network, in partnership with the Canadian Council on Social Development, has undertaken preliminary work to identify a set of possible indicators, based, for the most part, on readily available data sources. This preliminary list includes the following elements, about half of which measure individual citizen behaviours and attributes, while the remainder can be described as performance indicators for public policy programs:

Indicators of conditions favourable for social cohesion

- 1) Economic conditions that promote social cohesion (e.g. distribution of income, employment)
- 2) Life chances (e.g. education, housing)
- 3) Quality of life (e.g. population health, personal and family security)

Indicators of socially cohesive activity

- 1) Willingness to cooperate (e.g. trust in people, confidence in institutions, respect for diversity)
- 2) Participation (e.g. participation in networks and groups, political participation)
- 3) Literacy⁷

This research recognizes that perceptions and democratic values are clearly an important part of social cohesion that is not reducible to objective socio-economic conditions. However, tracking trends in values and perceptions must often rely on inconsistently worded polling questions or infrequent surveys, such as the World Values Survey, and represents a more long-term and challenging data gap.

Understanding and measuring the ongoing process of building social cohesion are prerequisites to helping policy makers frame their interventions, but does this address the final question posed above? Can the concept contribute to better public policy decisions? We will return to this question at the end of this paper, after a review of the evidence gleaned from the past five years of research by the Social Cohesion Network.

⁷ A. Aizlewood, *SRA-511 - Social Cohesion Indicators Workshop Report*, (Ottawa, July 2000), p.9.

2. WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED ABOUT SOCIAL COHESION SINCE 1997?

2.1 The research framework

In 1997 the Social Cohesion Network developed a framework to organize its research. This framework consisted of three themes incorporating 12 sub-issues that were identified as being central to a fuller understanding of the concept. These three themes were:

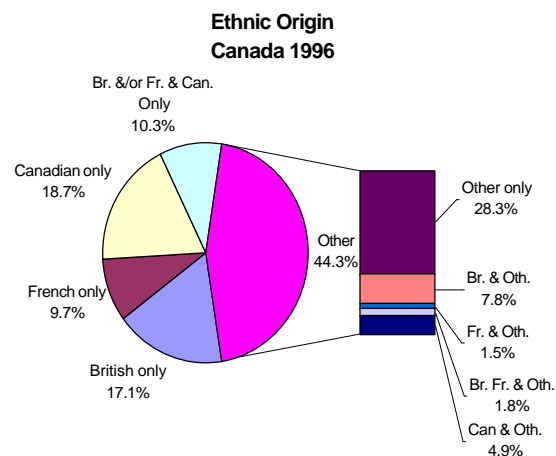
- 1) emerging faultlines;
- 2) changing axes of community identification;
- 3) implications of changes in social cohesion.

The objective of the research framework was to guide investigations over the medium to long-term (5-10 years). In sub-sections 2.2, 2.3. and 2.4, we describe what we have learned under each of the research themes. However, before proceeding to specific findings, it will be helpful to clarify the linkages between globalization, diversity, citizenship and social cohesion, since there has been some misunderstanding about how these factors interact within contemporary Canadian society.

Citizenship is a complex, multidimensional concept that is rarely approached from a holistic perspective. Historical examinations of the nature and condition of citizenship suggest that it is primarily a reflection of national purpose: the institutionalization of a political and cultural community and a partnership at the national level to solve problems that affect the whole country (e.g. defence, justice, health, the economy). It represents “the willingness to cooperate” at the national level.

In the past 50 years, citizenship has become bound to the evolution of the welfare state, as the concept of social citizenship grew to be a much more prominent feature of advanced liberal democracies. Contemporary forces such as the rise of global information and communication networks, a pluralistic citizenry with multiple identities and belongings, the diminished role of the nation-state, and emerging concepts such as cultural rights are now putting pressure on the notion of social citizenship – particularly a social citizenship confined within increasingly porous national boundaries or favouring certain groups over others. Despite these pressures, a key function of social citizenship remains to embody a sense of community or social cohesion that in turn reinforces national identity, supports a sense of belonging and attachment and serves as an instrument of social integration in divided societies.⁸

Figure 1



⁸ For a full discussion of social citizenship and social cohesion see Keith G. Banting, “Social Citizenship and the Multicultural Welfare State” in *Citizenship, Diversity and Pluralism: Canadian and Comparative Perspectives*, (Papers presented at a conference held in Saskatoon, October 30 -

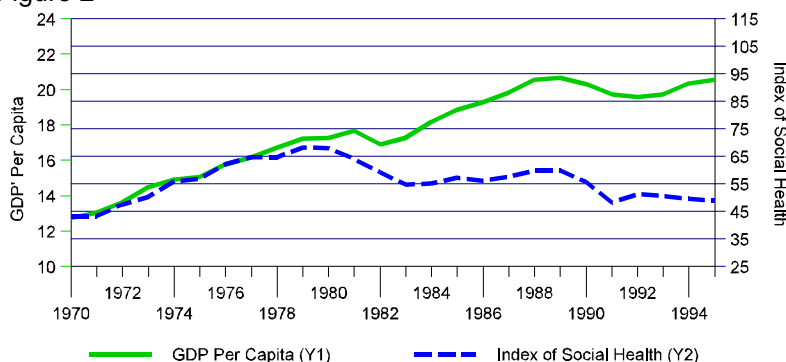
As a settler society, Canada is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world. In the 1996 Census, over 8 million people (28% of the population) reported having only ethnic origins other than British, French or Canadian. An additional 4.6 million people (16% of the population) reported having “other” origins in combination with British, French or Canadian origins. Another one million people reported having either German, Italian, Aboriginal or Ukrainian origins. Over 700,000 people reported Chinese or South Asian origins. (See Figure 1)

Canadian approaches to accommodating diversity within the symbolic and institutional frameworks of citizenship have always been shaped by demographics, but in recent years, this approach has begun to be modified as a result of the pressures of globalization. As people, information and goods cross national boundaries at an ever-quicken pace and in ever-greater numbers, issues of citizenship in the modern state can no longer be understood within a purely national framework. Our research shows that when compared internationally, Canadian conceptions of citizenship are the most inclusive and open to multicultural principles compared to other liberal democracies.⁹ However, our flexibility and relative openness, coupled with a recent marked weakening in the social safety net, may be putting our social cohesion at risk – particularly that part of our social cohesion that has traditionally been reinforced by our commitment to accommodation of diversity within the framework of social citizenship.

2.2 Faultlines

Our research addressed two issues in particular: the intersection of ethnic, gender and age related faultlines with economic disadvantage; and the linkages between economic exclusion and political, social and cultural exclusion.

Figure 2



Index of Social Health is composite measure of health, mortality, inequality and access to services which affect individuals over their whole life cycle and society as a whole

Source: Zeesman and Brink, HRDC

We found that gross domestic product has continued to grow, but social health is not keeping pace (see Figure 2). We also found significant differences between sectors of society, between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals, between ethnic minorities and the majority, and between men and women.

In examining the impact of contemporary diversity, we took a broad view which incorporated the age structure of the population, ethno-cultural

affiliation, family structures and economic difference. However, while we found growing cleavages in Canadian society, they were not the result of diversity *per se*. Instead, we discovered that being young or old, being an Aboriginal person or a member of a visible

November 1, 1997), (Montreal, 1999), pp. 108-136.

⁹ A.. Aizlewood, *SRA-470 - Comparing Conceptions of Citizenship: An Analysis of Public Attitudes in Five Liberal Democracies* (Ottawa,1999); A. Aizlewood, R. Butt and D. Price., *SRA-434 - Diversity in the United States: Understanding the Role of the State*, (Ottawa,1999)

minority or being a single mother was only a “problem” when it intersected with exclusionary factors. This is usually economic exclusion, but economic exclusion is frequently a marker for other forms of exclusion – social, cultural or political – which also serve to marginalize individuals.

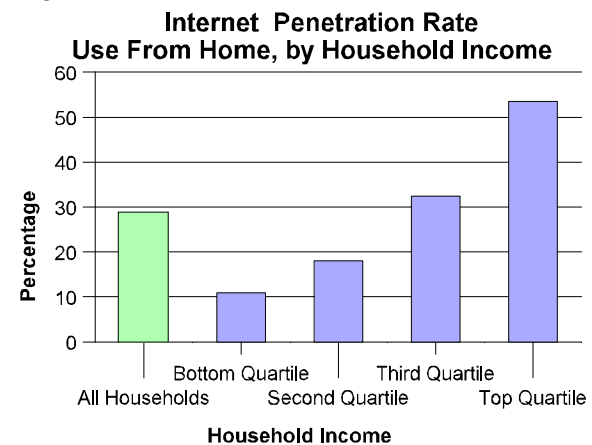
Socially cohesive societies do not require homogeneity, uniformity in values, or lack of dissent or conflict. On the contrary, competing values and differing attitudes are critical contributors to long term social sustainability, and cohesive societies recognize that diversity is a source of energy for development. Nevertheless, when some elements of diversity intersect (e.g. poor Aboriginal single mothers or homeless youth), the potential exists for individuals to experience exclusion.

2.2.1 Economic exclusion

The close relationship between economic exclusion and other forms of exclusion emerged as a serious threat to social cohesion. Our research has shown that those individuals who experience economic exclusion are also likely to be isolated from the political, social and cultural aspects of their everyday lives. These links are important because the experience of participation in a community goes beyond the simple exchange of a wage for labour. As Bob Glossop of the Vanier Institute recently pointed out, “the danger [is] that dignity and self-esteem are reduced to the status of commodities.”¹⁰

Despite the tendency for exclusion to have multiple dimensions, labour force participation remains a key integration mechanism for most Canadians. The rise of the welfare state during the 1960s and 1970s meant that the number of jobs in social service related industries (health, education and welfare) increased by almost five times over the course of the three decades and went from 9% to 15% of all jobs by 1991. During the same period, the number of jobs in manufacturing dropped from almost a third of all jobs in 1961 to 16 percent of all jobs in 1991.¹¹ At the same time, evidence suggests, access to information technologies – the new key to “good jobs” – began to be segmented along class lines (see Figure 3). These changes had a tremendous impact on workers because the emerging labour force is much more segmented by schooling, skill requirements and earnings, creating the potential to intensify social and economic cleavages within Canadian society. Within this context, a number of processes may act against minorities, reducing job prospects and productivity and increasing marginalization. Among others, these processes include **labour force discrimination** and **non-recognition of credentials**.

Figure 3



Source: Statistics Canada, Household Internet Use Survey, 1999

The population segment most negatively affected by labour market discrimination is Aboriginal Canadians. A study carried out by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada in 1998 applied the

¹⁰ Robert Glossop, “Opening Remarks”, *A New Way of Thinking? Towards a Vision of Social Inclusion Conference*, Ottawa, 8-9th November, 2001.

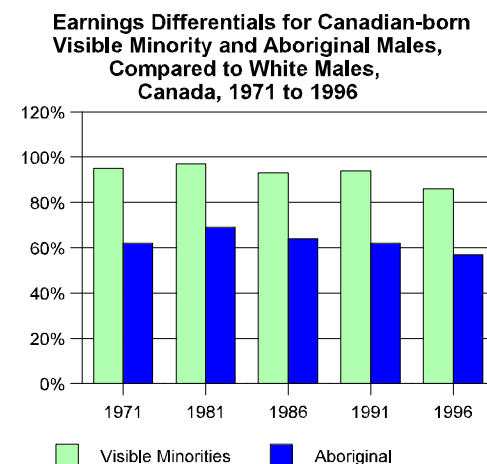
¹¹ R. Pendakur, *Immigrants and the Labour Force: Policy, Regulation and Impact*, (Montreal, 2000).

United Nation's Human Development Index (HDI) to Canada's Aboriginal population and found that, while Canada ranked first overall, off-reserve registered Indians ranked 34th and on-reserve registered Indians ranked 62nd.¹²

While the overall population of Canada is becoming older, the Aboriginal population is experiencing a significant 'baby-boom' with an estimated 50% being under 25 years of age. To improve or even maintain levels of labour market participation for those who live on-reserve, employment opportunities will have to grow at rates significantly higher than in the rest of the country. This hardly seems likely, however, given that most reserves are in rural areas which are experiencing job losses as employment in primary industries continue to decline.¹³

If one of the routes to inclusion is labour market participation, trends for both Aboriginal and visible minority workers have been negative. Work on the earnings of Aboriginals in Canada has been sparse, but George and Kuhn, using 1986 Census data, found that Aboriginal men and women have wages 8% and 6% lower, respectively, than white men and women with similar characteristics.¹⁴ A more recent study by Pendakur and Pendakur compared Canadian-born visible minority and Aboriginal workers to Canadian-born white minority workers with similar qualifications and found a pattern of improving differentials through the seventies, stability through the eighties and enlargement of the gaps between 1991 and 1996. This is the case among both men and women. Thus, where visible minority men faced earnings penalties of about -6% in 1991, in 1996, they could expect to earn about 15% less in 1996. As indicated in Figure 4, the situation for Aboriginal men has also deteriorated to the point where, in 1996, they could expect to earn about 40% less than white men with similar characteristics.¹⁵

Figure 4



Source: Pendakur, PCH

Our research has found that a major barrier faced by immigrants to Canada is the non-recognition of academic credentials. Jeffery Reitz found that on average "highly-educated immigrants receive a much smaller earnings premium for their education than do native-born Canadians". Accordingly he argues, "Immigrants' skill under-utilisation ... represents one form of 'employment discrimination' based on immigrant status or immigrant origins"¹⁶ Basran and Zong examined how foreign credentials are being devalued for foreign-trained Indo- and Chinese-Canadian professionals. Their findings indicated that a large number of

¹² Daniel Beavon and Martin Cooke, *Measuring the Well-Being of First Nation Peoples*, (Ottawa, undated deck), p. 17. The HDI is a composite measure combining measures of educational attainment, life experience and GDP per capita.

¹³ Roland Beshiri, "Employment Structure in Rural and Small Town Canada: The Primary Sector", *Rural and Small Town Canada Analysis Bulletin*, Vol. 2, No. 7 (March 2001), p. 13.

¹⁴ P. George and P. Kuhn, "The Size and Structure of Native-White Differentials in Canada", *Canadian Journal of Economics*, Vol. 27, No. 1(1994), 20-42.

¹⁵ K. Pendakur and R. Pendakur, *SRA-538 - Colour My World: Has the minority-majority earnings gap changed over time?*, (Ottawa, 2000).

¹⁶ J. Reitz, *Immigrant Skill Utilisation in the Canadian Labour Market: Implications of Human Capital Research*, (Boston, 2001).

foreign-trained visible minority professional immigrants experience downward social mobility and under utilization of their human capital.¹⁷ A study done by Peter Li compared the earnings of native-born Canadian degree holders, immigrant Canadian degree holders, immigrant mixed education degree holders and immigrant foreign degree holders. He found that there is an economic penalty to immigrants' credentials compared to native-born Canadians, which he argues can be attributed to gender and race, as well as location of credentials.¹⁸ Abou-Najm looked at the costs of having foreign credentials using 1996 census data and observed that both males and females from Asia are economically disadvantaged across many fields of study regardless of where their degrees were earned. In contrast, those immigrants from traditional source regions such as the US and the UK were rarely penalized for their foreign degrees.¹⁹ Smith, in reviewing 33 studies of foreign accreditation issues, found a number of common impediments for immigrants: barriers of language and access to information; problems in establishing Canadian equivalencies for foreign-acquired education and professional practice; perceived discrimination by gatekeepers at the professional level; financial burdens and retraining requirements.²⁰ This form of labour market exclusion is undoubtedly a key faultline between new Canadians and the rest of the population which could be closed through a more consistent application of accreditation policies and practices across disciplines and jurisdictions.

2.2.2 Cultural Exclusion

While labour market discrimination may serve as a barrier to economic integration and equality, the degree to which minorities are able to participate in the culture of a society is often the critical determinant with regard to two other dimensions of social cohesion – belonging and recognition. Research within the Social Cohesion Network has shown that barriers to cultural participation still exist in Canada, despite many years of official multiculturalism and human rights activism.

Research has shown that the salience of ethnicity to Canadians is not disappearing. Polls have consistently found that respondents are generally more comfortable with some groups than others. A 1991 survey found that Canadians were less likely to be comfortable with people from non-European backgrounds even if the respondents were asked to think about non-Europeans born and raised in Canada.²¹ Similarly about a third of respondents to a 1999 Compas - National Post poll were more likely to respond that Chinese and Black / Afro Canadians needed to change to be 'more liked' than those of Italian or Scottish origin (19% and 13% respectively).²² In contrast, a recent EKOS poll suggests that the majority of Canadians (55%) think that "the fact we accept immigrants from many different cultures

¹⁷ G. Basran and Li Zong, "The Devaluation of Foreign Credentials as Perceived by Visible Minority Immigrants in Canada", *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 3, (1998) 6-23.

¹⁸ Peter Li, "The Market Worth of Immigrants' Educational Credentials", *Canadian Public Policy*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (2001), 23-38.

¹⁹ N. Abou Najm, *SRA-625 - The Devaluation of Foreign Credentials in Canada*, (Ottawa, 2001).

²⁰ M. Smith, *SRA-586-e - Recognition of Foreign Credentials: A Survey of Recent Community-Based and Research Projects (c. 1995-2001) Funded by the Multiculturalism Program, Department of Canadian Heritage*, (Ottawa, 2001), p. 4.

²¹ Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, *1991 Attitude Survey*, (Ottawa, 1991).

²² Compas-National Post, *Pluralism and Tolerance: Public Attitudes in Canada*, (Ottawa and Toronto, 1999).

makes our culture stronger”.²³ This progressive attitude is borne out by other polls which indicate that the percentage of Canadians believing that the level of immigration is too high dropped from 52% in 1994 to 31% in 2001.²⁴

Our research indicates that ethnic identities persist even in a postmodern social context. Lessard examined patterns of intermarriage for 20 ethnic groups using tabular data from the 1996 Census. She found that, while exogamy increases with passing generations, if there is an exogamous marriage, it is often with a similar ethnic or social group. Thus, immigrants are less likely to enter into exogamous relationships than people born in Canada, and exogamous relationships are often between groups that are at least in some way similar (i.e. pairings between Southern European groups).²⁵

Greg Baeker and Carol Tator, in a recent study, see cultural diversity in the arts as a potential site of transformation – a means of advancing a vision of a more inclusive society – as well as a powerful source of wealth creation and employment. However, shifting demographics present fundamental challenges for an infrastructure constructed in a context of European cultural traditions. They believe that those concerned with cultural institutions, production and dissemination in Canada are faced with a difficult challenge in responding to rapid social, economic and technological change with a set of tools and assumptions that now seem inadequate. They suggest that while various governments and funding agencies have pursued policy and program initiatives aimed at acknowledging and supporting greater pluralism, barriers remain which could undermine the legitimacy of institutions and the public policies that support them.²⁶

Baeker and Tator conclude that Canada’s experience points to the complexity of acknowledging difference and advancing equity in a diverse society. Canada has been faced with the challenge of sustaining a country that acknowledges the legitimate historical claims of Aboriginal peoples, English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians, while simultaneously seeking to advance equity and inclusion in an increasingly diverse society. They suggest that these “dual commitments” present conflicting diversity agendas.²⁷ In their view, the core policy issue is how these new claims are reconciled with the traditional claims of history (time) and territory (space) of the nation.

Although Canada is an acknowledged world leader in efforts to establish legal instruments acknowledging diversity and advancing equity, Baeker suggests in another study that, “Arguably, Canada’s approach has placed far greater emphasis on policy development than on policy *implementation and evaluation*.”²⁸ In his view, it is institutional structures, not amorphous concepts such as “community” or “nation” that are needed to work through the inevitable value conflicts resulting from increased diversity.²⁹

²³ EKOS Research, *Rethinking Government 2000: Wave II Final Report*, (Ottawa, June 2000).

²⁴ EKOS Research, *The Public Security Monitor*, (Ottawa, December 2001), p. 31.

²⁵ C. Lessard, *SRA-569 - Ethnic Exogamy in Canada in 1996: With a special focus on Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver*, (Ottawa, 2001).

²⁶ Greg Baeker and Carole Tator, *SRA-472 - Shifting Images: A Forum on the Arts in a Pluralist New Millennium: Mapping the Terrain of Cultural Pluralism and the Arts*, (Ottawa, August 2000), p.6.

²⁷ Baeker and Tator, p.6.

²⁸ Greg Baeker, *SRA-468 - Cultural Policy and Cultural Diversity in Canada*, (Ottawa, August 2000), pp. 15.

²⁹ Baeker, p. 20.

2.2.3 Bridging faultlines

In a recent CPRN discussion paper, Jane Jenson and Martin Papillon describe the dynamics of Canada's "diversity model" by constructing an analytical framework. They define the Canadian diversity model as a repertoire of practices in civil society and government policies that involves "an ongoing search for balance among competing conceptions of the political community." These four conceptions represent a range of value preferences:

- 1) uniformity/heterogeneity - ie. common social and cultural values versus common political values individual rights/group rights - ie. the principle of equality versus differentiated treatment based on need
- 2) symmetry/asymmetry - ie. identical versus differentiated political arrangements
- 3) economic freedom/economic security - ie. liberal versus social democratic approaches to economic issues.³⁰

The model, as they describe it, has two major components: 1) its content, which is a series of choices made along the four dimensions of competing values, and 2) the decisions, rules and practices of democracy needed to locate the points of choice on the four dimensions.³¹

In terms of the **uniformity - heterogeneity** dimension, they note that Canada's experience has been to acknowledge a certain degree of diversity while seeking a commitment to the commonality of being Canadian. In trying to find a balance between **individual and group rights**, they believe Canadians have enjoyed fundamental individual freedoms protected by law and a commitment to the principle of equality as well as some measure of protection and differentiated treatment of groups. In fact, many groups-based rights, such as linguistic, educational or Aboriginal rights, may be exercised either individually or collectively.

They see the **symmetry-asymmetry dimension** in institutional and political arrangements as a major source of tension. At the centre of the debate are contending views of Canada: Canada as a single nation-state or Canada as a multinational state incorporating institutions that explicitly recognize national minorities, an example being recent agreements on Aboriginal self-government. However, they note that from the country's inception, Canada's political institutions have been asymmetrical with federalism being recognized as serving a cultural purpose. This political heritage has not precluded a continuing argument that all provinces, and indeed all Canadians, should be equal in the sense of the liberal principle of universal equality. Jenson and Papillon observe that the Canadian model has not yet achieved a satisfactory resolution and that there is a need for ongoing discussion concerning the feasibility, the forms and the various repercussions of asymmetrical citizenship.³²

In terms of achieving a balance between **economic freedom and economic security**, Jenson and Papillon see Canada as choosing a position between end points of this dimension, a mix of liberal values and social-democratic ones. Market relations have been constrained in the name of social justice, without threatening basic commitments to principles of capitalism and economic liberalism. This has been achieved by instituting a range of social programs that expressed the notion of the collective good and by introducing equalization payments to redistribute wealth geographically. However, they note that globalization is confronting us with

³⁰ Jane Jenson and Martin Papillon, *The Canadian Diversity Model: A Repertoire in Search of a Framework*, (Ottawa, November 2001), p.2.

³¹ Jenson and Papillon, p.5.

³² Jenson and Papillon, pp. 15-17.

the question of how much diversity in socio-economic conditions we are willing to accept.³³

They believe that in addressing questions of diversity, process is as important as content - with democracy at its core. There is no right way but rather a range of possible choices because the diversity model depends on simultaneously seeking equal treatment while recognizing difference. The task is to find new and democratic practices to manage conflicts about legitimate differences. The concluding section of their study reviews a number of routes to enhance democratic practices through “institutions of interest intermediation” such as community groups, ethnic associations, lobbies, professional associations, social movements, and faith-based organizations; through various strategies and arrangements for involving and engaging citizens beyond elections and group representation; as well as through conventional practices of liberal democracy, such as elections and party politics.³⁴

2.3 Changing Axes of Community Identification

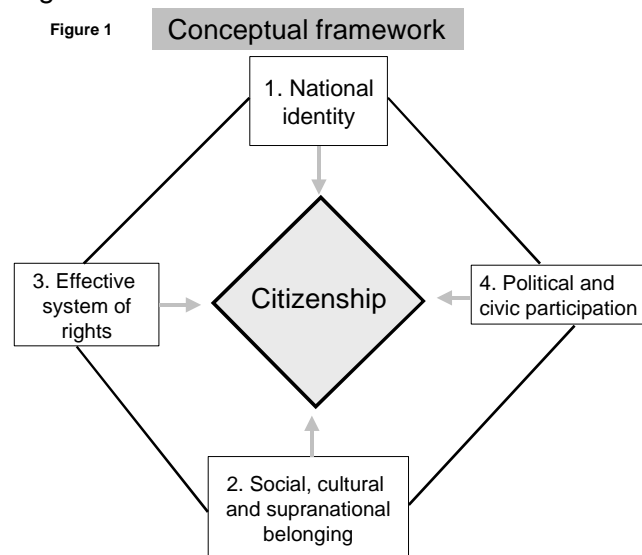
Given that the process of social cohesion is related to the existence of inclusive communities and, as pointed out by Jenson and Papillon, finding ways to bridge the faultlines that can potentially result from diversity, it is important to understand the conditions and nature of inclusion. We need to understand how people are participating and connecting in new and contemporary forms of democratic citizenship practices. In looking at this issue, we have examined:

- 1) citizenship as an element of social cohesion;
- 2) how values have changed over the 1990s; and
- 3) how changing levels of trust are eroding confidence in government but appear to be increasing citizen to citizen connections.

2.3.1 Citizenship as an element of social cohesion

Historical examinations reveal that Canadians have developed a unique brand of citizenship that has grown out of our particular circumstances but is nevertheless

Figure 5



³³ Jenson and Papillon, p. 19.

³⁴ Jenson and Papillon, pp. 25-34.

grounded in established democratic theory.³⁵ Citizenship and attachment in Canada have been shaped by this country's multicultural history, our legacy as a country of immigration and settlement, our constitutional structure, and the room we have allowed for different identities to survive and flourish within and outside our national identity. The dimensions of social cohesion – belonging, inclusion, participation, recognition, legitimacy and equality – are manifested equally in social, economic, cultural and political activities, and it is by engaging in all of these activities that full citizenship is achieved.

Citizenship research carried out within the Social Cohesion Network was organized around four themes: **national identity**, including civic and societal culture, heritage, history, symbols and values; **poles of belonging**, including social, sub-national, transnational and supranational identities and attachments; **effective system of rights**, including political, social, and cultural rights; and **political and civic participation**, including political, civic and cultural participation, and access and skills required for participation (see Figure 5).³⁶

2.3.1.1 National Identity

National identity is a broad designation used to describe the characteristics that all citizens are invited or encouraged to share. At its base lies the legal structure of Canadian citizenship, whereby rights, duties and responsibilities are given meaning by the sense of commonality they provide to individuals and groups. The resulting 'civic culture' is composed of the normative elements of a democratic Canadian society as these are defined by legal and political principles.

Canadian 'societal culture' describes the ways in which our culture distinguishes itself from other cultures. As a nation, we express a strong emotional attachment to the land, to shared history, and to political and social ideals.³⁷ We are influenced by the presence of a population of diversified origins, cultures, religions and lifestyles that must be accommodated by existing ethno-cultural majorities.³⁸ Our shared heritage can bring about a sense of commonality, identification and attachment, provided that enough people are familiar with it and understand its significance. This shared heritage includes both natural and cultural heritage; Canadian landscapes; places of historic and spiritual significance; founding narratives and symbols; and artistic and cultural products.³⁹ Canadian depictions of heritage are diverse and pluralistic, encompassing both the collective and individual contributions by all citizens. Research has found that protection and promotion of Canadian natural and built heritage reinforces our

³⁵ F. Gagnon and M. Pagé, *SRA-366 - Conceptual Framework for an Analysis of Citizenship in the Liberal Democracies*, (Ottawa, May 1999); W. Kymlicka, (1992) *Recent Work in Citizenship Theory*, (Ottawa, 1992).

³⁶ Elemental themes are captured from a conceptual framework by Gagnon and Pagé of the University of Montreal in *SRA-366 - Conceptual Framework for an Analysis of Citizenship in Liberal Democracies*, (Ottawa, May 1999).

³⁷ M.S. Jeannotte and A. Aizlewood., *SRA-296 - Drifting Away: Canadian Trust, Hope and Pride in a Global Economy*, (Ottawa, 1999).

³⁸ M. Adsett and M. Wilmot. *Attitudes Toward Diversity in the Context of Social Cohesion*, (SPRM, Canadian Identity Sector, 1999); M. Adsett, *Identity, Attachment and Feelings of Belonging: A Review of Public Opinion Research*. (SPRM-Canadian Identity Sector, 1998); R. Pendakur, *SRA-416 - Diversity in the Making* (Ottawa, 1999).

³⁹ M. Adsett, *Analyzing Canada's Symbolic Order: An Empirical Analysis of the Perceived Importance of Selected Symbols of Canadian Identity*, (SPRM - Canadian Identity Sector, 1999); R. Butt, *SRA-156 - National Symbols and National Identity: An International Comparative Review*, (Ottawa, 1996).

collective attachments as citizens.⁴⁰

2.3.1.2 Poles of Belonging

In examining citizenship and attachment in the context of social cohesion, our research shows that Canadian society is made up of citizens who retain and express their attachment to their diverse origins to varying degrees.⁴¹ Citizens may belong or feel a sense of belonging to several countries as well as to various localities or ethnocultural groups within the nation-state.

Poles of belonging existing below the level of the nation-state include regional or provincial attachments, sociological (for example, age or gender), religious, ethnic, cultural and official or unofficial linguistic minorities.⁴² Attachments outside or above the level of the nation-state are referred to as 'transnational' or 'supranational' senses of belonging. Supranational belonging is a form of identity that transcends the nation by producing belonging based on shared interests, ethnic origins or other ties, while transnational belonging refers to a sense of belonging to more than one nation. These attachments have become particularly salient in this age of new information and communication technologies.⁴³ Our research on sub-national and transnational identities suggests that citizenship and attachment are complementary concepts. Attachment is often considered a sub-concept within or by-product of citizenship, but this is not a universally agreed-upon placement. Attachment does not necessarily flow from citizenship, nor does citizenship necessarily produce attachment. More research is necessary on the role of the Canadian government in maintaining and strengthening national-level attachments in the face of sub-national and transnational identity formation and retention.

⁴⁰ K. Karim, *SRA-349 - Relocating the Nexus of Citizenship, Heritage and Technology: Towards a New Social Contract?* (Ottawa, 1997); D. McClymont, *SRA-8 - Diversity in National Parks and National Historic Sites: An International Comparative Review*, (Ottawa, 1995); Canadian Conservation Institute, *Strategy To Ensure The Long-Lasting Protection Of Cultural Objects And Collections* (Arts and Heritage Sector, 2000).

⁴¹ K. Karim, T. Cowl, and R. Butt, *SRA-267- Beyond Nationalism: Identity and Attachment in a Post-modern World* (Ottawa, 1997); A. Aizlewood and M. Doody, *SRA Deck - Seeking Community on the Internet: Ethnocultural Use of Information Communication Technologies (Phases 1 and 2)*, (Ottawa, 2001).

⁴² M. Adsett, *Contact, Belonging and Linguistic Duality: Focusing on Youth and Region*, (SPRM, Canadian Identity Sector, 1997); M. Adsett, and F. Mata, *Multiculturalism, Immigration and Racism 1991-99*, (SPRM, Canadian Identity Sector, 1999); A. Aizlewood, *SRA-418 - Dividing Loyalties: Community Identification and Social Citizenship in an Era of Provincialism*, (Ottawa, 1998); R. Butt, and B. Motzney, *SRA-56 - International Comparative Review of Citizenship and Identity Youth Policies and Programming*, (Ottawa, 1994); C. Lessard, *SRA-57 - Youth and Canadian Identity: A Review of Academic Literature*, (Ottawa, 1994); *Regional Differentiation of Official-Language Communities in Quebec*, (Quebec Region – Canadian Heritage, 2000); *Attitudes, Experiences and Issues of the Anglophone Communities of Quebec* (Quebec Region – Canadian Heritage, 2000)

⁴³ A. Aizlewood and M. Doody, *SRA-forthcoming - Communities and the Internet: Renegotiating Identities in Cyberspace* (Ottawa, 2001); G. Baeker, *SRA-494 - Citizens vs. Consumers: Connections to What?* (Ottawa, 2000); M. Doody, *SRA-413 - Implications of a Knowledge-based Economy and Society*, (Ottawa, 1999); K. Karim, *SRA-371 - From Ethnic Media to Global Media: Transnational Communication Networks Among Diasporic Communities*, (Ottawa, 1998); V. Mosco, *SRA-372 - The Socio-cultural Implications of a Knowledge-based Society: A Prospective Research Survey*, (Ottawa, 1998); D. Patel, *Canada's Emerging Transnational Communities: Policy Issues*, (Canadian Identity Sector, 2000).

2.3.1.3 *Effective System of Rights*

An effective system of rights refers to the public norms that define the political and legal status of the citizen. These include: fundamental rights⁴⁴, political rights (the right to participate in the political process),⁴⁵ and social rights (including economic rights and the right to a minimum standard of living and to social welfare).⁴⁶ These elements comprise the necessary foundations for socially cohesive relationships to flourish.

While all Canadians are equally entitled to reap the benefits of political citizenship, common social rights are also believed to unite Canadians. These rights are not constitutionally entrenched, but they are widely supported by citizens and governments because benefits to national identity are achieved through national principles of social policy, national expression of shared values, and through collective investment in the infrastructure of socio-economic well-being.⁴⁷ Canadians strongly value their commitment to a sharing and caring society. In 1995, a comprehensive study of Canadians' social and political values entitled *Exploring Canadian Values* found substantial support for upholding and strengthening the nation's social fabric in order to maintain a cohesive and compassionate society.⁴⁸ Canadians increasingly view common social rights and a commitment to social equity as concomitant to citizenship. 'Cultural rights' -- the protection of a collective identity characterized by a distinct culture -- represents a potential area of exploration. Cultural rights of citizenship may well comprise the next phase in the evolution of citizenship after social rights. In this view, the state promotes itself not only as a guarantor of social rights, but also as a guarantor of cultural rights. The effect that guaranteeing cultural rights would have on feelings of attachment requires further investigation and research.

2.3.1.4 *Political and Civic Participation*

Healthy citizenship is intrinsically linked to the participation of citizens in the life of their communities. A democratic society depends on the informed and active involvement of all its members but requires a political community that empowers citizens. Our research shows that in Canada, attributes of citizenship such as knowledge, interest, efficacy and engagement have changed over time and differ between sexes, among age groups, and across regions.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ P. LeBlanc, *SRA-23 - International Comparative Review of Human Rights Policies*, (Ottawa, 1995). No research was found that examines the impact of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms on issues of citizenship and attachment.

⁴⁵ No departmental research was found in this area.

⁴⁶ P. Bernard, *SRA-491/CPRN – Social Cohesion: A Dialectical Critique of a Quasi-concept?* (Ottawa, 2000); J. Jenson, *SRA-321/CPRN - Mapping Social Cohesion*, (Ottawa, 1998); Dick Stanley, *SRA-302 - The Economic Consequences of Social Cohesion*, (Ottawa, 1997); A.. Aizlewood, *SRA-418 - Dividing Loyalties: Community Identification and Social Citizenship in an Era of Provincialism*, (Ottawa, 1998).

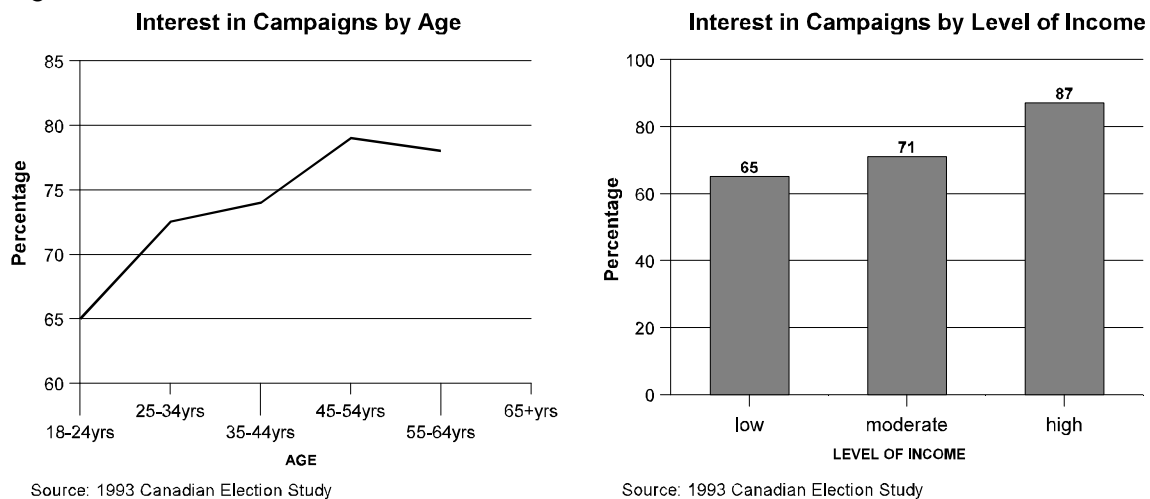
⁴⁷ A. Aizlewood, *SRA-418 - Dividing Loyalties: Community Identification and Social Citizenship in an Era of Provincialism*.

⁴⁸ The study by Suzanne Peters of the Canadian Policy Research Network *Exploring Canadian Values: Foundations for Well-being* (Ottawa, 1995), examined public opinion survey data sets from a variety of sources: 18 public opinion databases consisting of over 50 polls conducted between 1979 and 1995, as well as 25 focus/discussion groups. Data dealt with such issues as federal and provincial roles, and social, educational, economic and health issues.

⁴⁹ N. Nevitte, *SRA-377 - Attributes of Canadian Citizenship: An Empirical Analysis*, (Ottawa, 1998).

In order to participate fully, individuals must acquire skills and develop attitudes that allow them to fulfill effectively their role as citizens. Academics affiliated with the Citizenship Education Research Network (CERN) have found that civic participation is dependent on such factors as education, knowledge of democratic institutions, and tolerance. Citizens also require motivating factors, such as a sense that their participation has some positive result, and they require access to information that allows them to participate effectively.⁵⁰ Access to new information and communication technologies allows new forms of political and civic participation to take place. Several studies have examined the extent and possible impact of these technologies on citizen participation.⁵¹ Active participation in the public sphere reinforces citizenship values and in turn brings about an increased sense of attachment to the institutions of citizenship.

Figure 6



Volunteering is another form of civic participation that fosters community integration and cohesion. Canadians have discovered that volunteering is a useful tool in achieving social goals: it is a way to educate and mobilize citizens and fosters growth and development of our society. Volunteering takes place in many sectors such as recreation, arts and culture, social services, education and health care.⁵² In Canada, volunteer rates measured in these areas increased by 4.6% over from 1987 to 1997.⁵³ Although total volunteer hours have increased over the past decade, the average annual hours contributed per volunteer have decreased.

⁵⁰ A. Sears, G. Clarke and A.S. Hughes, *SRA-362 - Canadian Citizenship Participation: The Pluralist Ideal and Citizenship Education for a Multinational State*, (Ottawa, 1998); Y. Hébert and C. Ungerleider. *Citizenship Values: A State of the Art Study*, (Metropolis Project, 2001).

⁵¹ K. Karim, S. Smeltzer, and Y. Loucheur, *SRA-348 - Online Access and Participation in Canadian Society*, (Ottawa, 1998); D. Price, *SRA-403 - Online Citizen Deliberation and Engagement: An Analysis of Research and Models*, (Ottawa, 1998); D. Price, *SRA-160 – Canada Compared: Cross-National Indicators of Internet Access*, (Ottawa, 1998); D. Price, *SRA-404 - The Right to Communicate in the Information Society: An International Comparative Review of Policy Approaches and Options to Universal Access*, (Ottawa, 1999); *French on the Internet: Study of Internet Use by Francophones in Canada*, (Broadcasting, Cultural Development Sector, 2001-ongoing); M. Seguin, *SRA-47 - Electronic Democracy: Tele-voting – Enabling Participatory-Representative Virtual Democracy*, (Ottawa, 1994).

⁵² *Profile of the Canadian Volunteer: A Guide to the 1987 Survey of Volunteer Activity in Canada*, (November 1989) at <http://www.volunteer.ca/volunteer/index.html>.

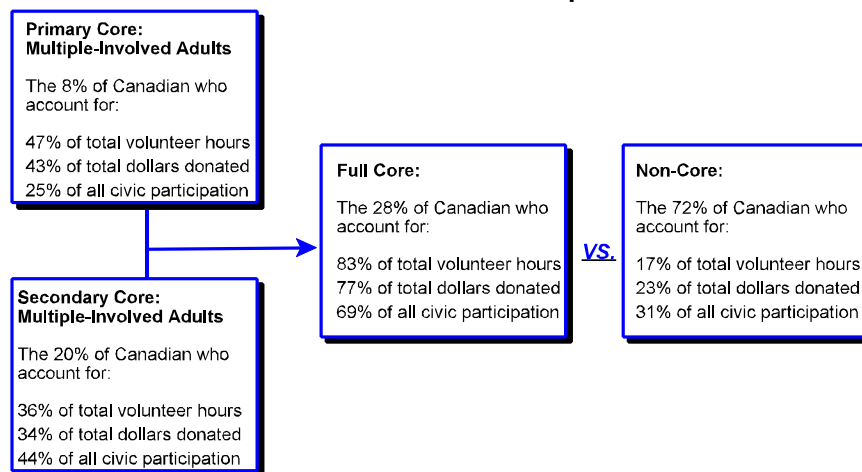
⁵³ *Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 1997 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating*, (Ottawa, 1998) at <http://www.statscan.ca>.

Over the past decade, benevolent social participation has exhibited a clear trend: those Canadians who already donate their time and money are increasing their commitments, while those disengaged from the civic sphere remain uninvolved.⁵⁴ (See Figure 7). Volunteering among youth is particularly important, since recent research suggests that those who are 'public spirited' are more likely to have been involved in extracurricular activities such as volunteering during their formative years.⁵⁵

Cultural participation exposes citizens to a diversity of people and ideas, encourages understanding, and creates linkages between community members.⁵⁶ New evidence is emerging which also suggests that investments in cultural capital (as manifested by individual cultural participation patterns) may have collective benefits by encouraging individual altruism in the form of community volunteerism.⁵⁷ In 1998, Canadians aged fifteen and over read fewer newspapers, magazines and books and borrowed fewer library materials than in 1992. Attendance at theatrical, popular musical, symphonic, and opera performances also declined over the same period, but visits to art galleries and cultural/heritage performances increased, as did movie going and visits to historical sites.⁵⁸

Figure 7

**Distribution of Contributing and Participating
across Canada's Adult Population**



Source: Reed and Selbee, STC , National Survey on Giving, Volunteering and Participating

⁵⁴ P. Reed and K. Selbee, *Patterns of Citizen Participation and the Civic Core in Canada*, Presentation at Social Cohesion Workshop, March 1, 2000. A core group – only 28% -- of volunteers account for nearly 84% of total volunteer hours, 77% of total dollars donated, and 69% of all civic participation in Canada.

⁵⁵ Frank Jones, "Community involvement: The influence of early experience", *Canadian Social Trends*, (Summer 2000).

⁵⁶ M.S. Jeannotte, *SRA-541 - Cultural Symbiosis: Cultural Participation and Cohesive Communities*, (Ottawa, 2000); L. Kirpitchenko, *SRA-436 - Social Cohesion and Cultural Practices: Beyond the Mainstream*, (Ottawa, 1999)

⁵⁷ M.S. Jeannotte, *SRA- 544 - Singing Alone? The Contribution of Cultural Capital to Social Cohesion and Sustainable Communities*, (Ottawa, January 2002), p.10.

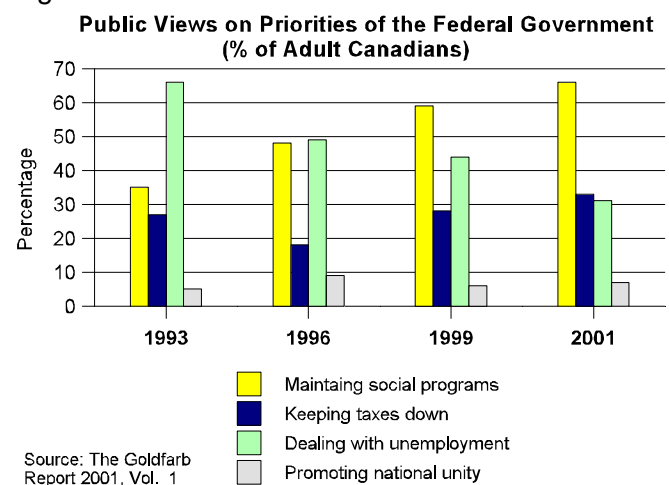
⁵⁸ Lucie Ogradnik, "Patterns in Culture Consumption and Participation", (Ottawa, December 2000), pp. 19-23, 61-77.

While individuals undertaking voluntary activities make significant contributions to social cohesion in their communities, the relationship between voluntarism and social cohesion is not as straightforward as may have been once thought. While there is evidence that links voluntarism to trust, the relationship between voluntarism and other social cohesion indicators, such as shared values or tolerance, is more complex. Voluntarism appears to be associated with less tolerance of social deviance with only a minority of voluntary activities appearing to create bridging social networks and reaching those at risk of social exclusion. Researchers acknowledge that, although shared values, the absence of extreme income inequality and a propensity for collective action are prerequisites for voluntarism, the presence of the ‘right’ conditions does not necessarily mean that people will undertake co-operative activities.⁵⁹

2.3.2 Value change

Values inhere in the complex social processes that underpin everyday life and, while the notion of a core set of values is appealing in times of increased uncertainty, the values held by Canadians are undergoing subtle changes. Polling data shows that public support for social programs has been growing over the past decade (see Figure 8). Nevertheless, there are increasing doubts about whether the social programs that have traditionally embodied some of the most cherished Canadian values can be sustained in the face of global pressures. Equally, Canadians also realize that fiscal imperatives are likely to require that choices be made.⁶⁰ It is perhaps useful to concede David Harvey’s point that “meaningful political action (and for that matter, even meaningful analysis) cannot proceed without some embedded notions of value, if only a determination as to what is or is not important to analyse intellectually let alone to struggle for politically.”⁶¹

Figure 8



Closely related to the issue of values is the question of Canadian identity. Unlike support for social programs, Canadians’ sense of attachment and belonging has remained relatively stable over the decade, with a sense of belonging to Canada second only to a sense of belonging to one’s family (see Figure 9). Values play a significant part in the expression of identity, and attachment to Canadian symbols is linked directly to the narratives that describe the foundation and nature of the Canadian “national community”. They can be regarded as outward signs of the values that Canadians hold in common, values that have developed as a result of our histories and democratic traditions. Understanding the functioning of the Canadian symbolic

⁵⁹ Frances Woolley, *SRA-508 - Social Cohesion and Voluntary Activity: Making Connections*, (Ottawa, 1999); Jeff Dayton-Johnson, *SRA-502 - Social Capital, Social Cohesion, Community: a Microeconomic Analysis*, (Ottawa, 1999) .

⁶⁰ Suzanne Peters, *Exploring Canadian Values: a synthesis report*, (Ottawa, 1995). This report suggests that Canadian values include: self reliance, compassion leading to collective responsibility and investment in children as the future generation; democracy, freedom and equality; and fiscal responsibility.

⁶¹ David Harvey, *Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference*, (Oxford, 1996), p.10.

order and its links to feelings of belonging and inclusion are important facets of cohesion. Research has indicated that our traditional symbols such as the flag, the RCMP and the armed forces are still important, but they are being joined by more contemporary symbols such as our system of health-care, the natural environment (particularly national parks) and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.⁶²

Figure 9

Sense of Belonging (Ranking on 7-point Scale)

| | 1994 | 2001 |
|----------------|------|------|
| Your family | 6.7 | 6.6 |
| Canada | 5.8 | 5.8 |
| Your province | 5.5 | 5.5 |
| Your community | 5.6 | 5.4 |
| The world | 4.9 | 5.1 |
| North America | 5.2 | 5.1 |

SOURCE: EKOS Research Associates, *Rethinking Government*, January 2001

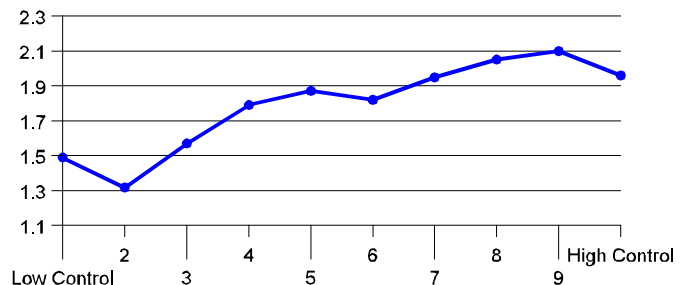
2.3.3 Trust and confidence

Our research has indicated that there have been substantial changes in the levels of trust exhibited by Canadians during the 1990s and that the most significant changes are observed among the young. When combined with low socio-economic status, young Canadians exhibit low levels of internal efficacy: they feel that they are unable to effect political change.⁶³ This has been shown to be directly related to levels of trust in government.

Lack of trust in government does not appear to have negatively affected pride in Canada. This suggests that, although political “buy-in” may be eroding as a result of lack of trust and confidence in public and economic institutions, Canadians still have a significant pride in their

Figure 10

Trust in Government - Variations By Sense of Control



Source: Jeannotte, Aizlewood, PCH

⁶² M.S. Jeannotte, N. Ellis and R. Butt, *SRA-230 - Canadian Identity, Culture and Values: Building a Cohesive Society*, (Ottawa, 1996), p. 9., M. Adsett, *Analyzing Canada’s Symbolic Order: An Empirical Analysis of the Perceived Importance of Selected Symbols of Canadian Identity*, (SPRM - Canadian Identity Sector, 1999).

⁶³ Neil Nevitte, *SRA-377 - Attributes of Canadian Citizenship: An Empirical Analysis*.

collective social achievements.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, the existence of a consistently significant relationship between how Canadians feel and responses to trust and confidence questions in various surveys appears to suggest that feelings of insecurity and disengagement **are** associated with distrust of government. Our research found that “those believing economic and political systems were ill-equipped to respond to changes in the global economy were also more likely to feel a lack of personal control over their lives, express low levels of life and financial satisfaction and feel least confident about the integrity of the system in general (see Figure 10).⁶⁵ We have concluded that those who benefit least from society’s economic and social arrangements are the least willing to engage in the willing cooperation that underpins social cohesion.

2.4 Implications of Changes in Social Cohesion

A significant body of research examines the consequences of changes in the social, economic and cultural life of Canadian communities and the reciprocal relationships between social cohesion and these changes. Several aspects of this theme have been investigated including: the positive relationship of social cohesion to economic development, health, the well-being of children, the security of communities; the degree to which social capital (as manifested in voluntarism) reinforces or fails to reinforce social cohesion and sustainable communities; and the functioning of institutions.

In considering the relationship between social cohesion and issues such as economic development, health, the well-being of children, the functioning of institutions and the security of communities, there is an implicit acknowledgement that experience of any one of these cannot be separated from the societies in which they are embedded. Each is both an **outcome** of social cohesion and the **medium** through which social cohesion is produced. Research in these areas supports this reciprocal relationship, but also shows that there is a direct relationship between social cohesion and social and economic goals. As Knack and Keefer have

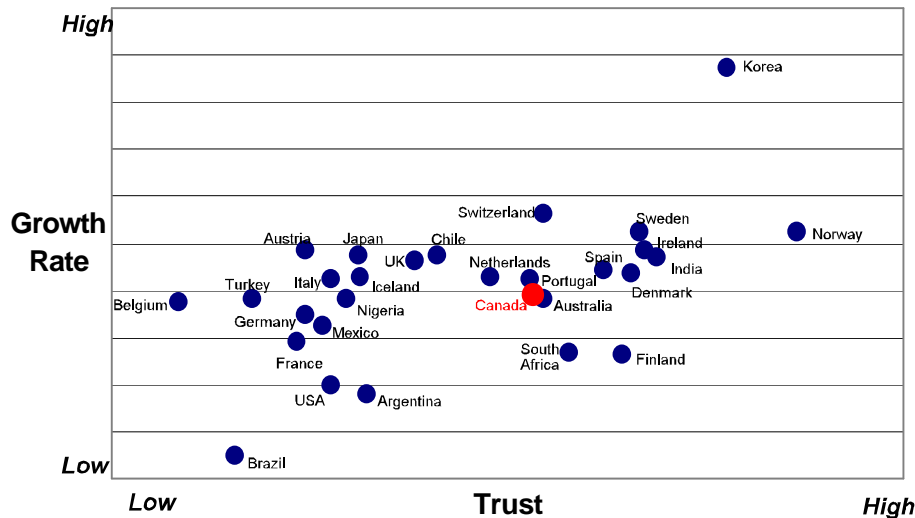
demonstrated, where social cohesion (as measured by levels of social trust) is low, economic growth is also low (see Figure 11).⁶⁶

⁶⁴ M. Sharon Jeannotte and Amanda Aizlewood, *SRA-296 - Drifting Away: Canadian Trust, Hope and Pride in a Global Economy*, p.4.

⁶⁵ Jeannotte and Aizlewood, p.6.

⁶⁶ Stephen Knack and Philip Keefer, “Does Social Capital have an Economic Payoff? A Cross-Country Investigation” , *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, (November 1997), pp. 1251-1288.

**Partial regression plot:
Economic growth (1980-1992) and trust for 29 countries**



In 29 developed countries, the higher the level of trust (social cohesion) the higher the rate of economic growth.

Source: Knack and Keefer, JPE, 1997

2.4.1 Economic implications

Research offers evidence that inequality acts to slow the long term growth rate through the political economy of tax policy, the private incentives for social stratification, the social inefficiencies of poverty ghettos, and the role of wage compression and incomes policies in encouraging structural change and productivity growth.⁶⁷

Declines in blue-collar job opportunities close avenues to economic security and social status. Unemployment, especially if it persists over an extended period, leads to increased rates of social dysfunction (chronic depression, alcoholism, marriage break-up, family violence, mental illness). This affects not only the individual, but can cause harm to subsequent generations. Both produce serious declines in productivity by making individuals less able to produce or making them unfit for the work force. Furthermore, the sense of hopelessness and loss of self-esteem brought on by unemployment and loss of job opportunities result in a declining willingness to obey the law and abide by social norms, so that transaction costs of all kinds in the economy are increased. Involuntary mobility imposed by the need to find employment can separate both the nuclear and extended family, resulting in loss of support and mutual assistance, thus creating further dysfunction. The result is an increased need for formal day-care institutions and support of the elderly, and greater demands on the welfare system, or on the law enforcement and correctional systems.

It is clear from available evidence that the social cohesiveness of society contributes in significant ways to the health and growth of the economy. This leads to two conclusions about policy. First, policies to promote *economic prosperity and growth* cannot ignore their effects on social cohesion, or they risk being counter-productive and doing as much damage to growth in

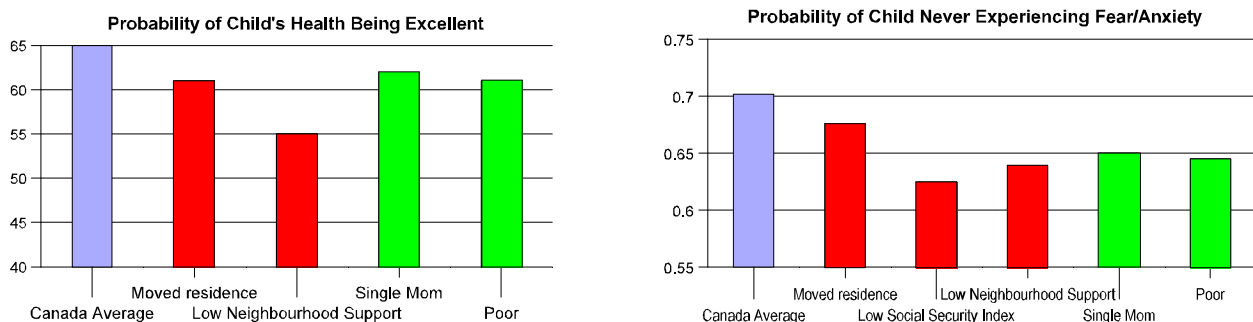
⁶⁷ L. Osberg, "Sustainable Social Development" in Allen and Rosenbluth (eds.), *False Promises: The Failure of Conservative Economics*, (Vancouver, 1992), pp. 227-242.

the long run as they purport to do good in the short run. Second, policies to promote *social cohesion* do not automatically achieve their results at the expense of economic growth. The trade-off between growth and social cohesion that the traditional, incomplete model of economic growth presents appears to be false.⁶⁸

2.4.2 Health and well-being implications

Studies from a number of international sources have also shown that mortality and ill health increase as social cohesion in a community decreases.⁶⁹ In Canada, Shelley Phipps has demonstrated that the probability of children being in excellent health and free of fear and anxiety is threatened more by residential instability and lack of neighbourhood support (both signs of low social cohesion) than by living with a single mother or being poor (see Figure 12).⁷⁰

Figure 12



2.4.3 Security implications

Research has also been done on the relationship between social cohesion and neighbourhood crime. In general, this research has confirmed that socially cohesive neighbourhoods experience fewer violent crimes. Robert J. Sampson and his colleagues hypothesized that “collective efficacy”, defined as social cohesion among neighbours, combined with their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good, was linked to reduced violence. In a study of 343 Chicago neighbourhoods in 1995, they measured collective efficacy levels and tested them against both perceived and actual crime rates, while controlling for race, concentrated disadvantage and residential instability. They found that neighbourhoods which scored very high in collective efficacy had a 30% reduction in the odds of being victimized and a homicide rate 40% lower than neighbourhoods with lower collective efficacy rates. While friendship and kinship ties, organizational participation and neighbourhood services were significantly correlated with collective efficacy, multivariate analysis indicated that these factors in themselves were not sufficient and that reductions in violence appeared to be more directly

⁶⁸ Dick Stanley, *SRA-302 - The Economic Consequences of Social Cohesion*, (Ottawa, 1997), p. 9.

⁶⁹ See for example Richard Wilkinson, *Unhealthy Societies: The Afflictions of Inequality*, (New York, 1996), John N. Lavis and Gregory L. Stoddart, *SRA-507 - Social Cohesion and Health*, (Ottawa, August 1999), I. Kawachi, *Social Cohesion and Health*, (Paper presented to the Kansas Conference on Health and its Determinants, April 20-21, 1998).

⁷⁰ Shelley Phipps, *SRA-506 - Social Cohesion and the Well-Being of Canadian Children*, (Ottawa, January 1999).

attributable to informal social control and cohesion among residents.⁷¹

2.4.4 Institutional and governance implications

Research on the institutional and governance implications of social cohesion has been sparse. Robert Putnam's 1993 study of 20 regions in Italy is most often cited in support of the benign impact of social capital and social cohesion on governance. In this study he found that regions with low levels of membership in civil society organizations (such as sports leagues, choral societies and voluntary associations) tended to have regional governments that were corrupt and inefficient. Regions with high levels of membership were efficient in their internal operation, creative in their policy initiatives and effective in implementing these initiatives.⁷²

Most Social Cohesion Network research on governance and institutional issues has focussed on questions of identity and social citizenship, rather than on social cohesion *per se*. For example, a study by A. Aizlewood presented a brief overview of the linkages between a decentralized federal structure and conceptions of the Canadian national community. The review found that the notion of "shared citizenship" is closely tied to federal oversight in social policy and fiscal sharing among provinces and regions. Analysts have questioned the viability of long-term support for national social principles if the federal government withdraws its role in the social sphere and provinces increasingly assume primary oversight responsibilities.⁷³

The research by Jenson and Papillon cited earlier ends by considering of a range of possible democratic processes that might further support the Canadian diversity model - such as better practices for conflict management and for fostering inclusion and involvement; better use of intermediary institutions as a means to ensure equitable participation and greater public engagement of citizens; and a political discourse more respectful of different value positions. They also suggest that structural changes, such as electoral reform and an enhanced role for urban governments with respect to diversity, may also be needed.⁷⁴ They feel that the theoretical work on participatory democracy underlines the importance of a strong public sphere, "space for deliberation where political leaders, representative of various groups in society, and individual citizens discuss issues and influence decisions together."⁷⁵

As yet, there is little research in Canada on the implications of networks for governance and institutions, although it is generally acknowledged that governance mechanisms will have to become more flexible, open and transparent to address issues of diversity and social cohesion. There is, however, a growing international interest in the organizational implications of what sociologist John Urry calls "complex mobilities" based on an increasingly networked and fluidic global environment. Urry suggests that complex notions such as social citizenship and common identities have been traditionally based upon the concept of "region" or "territory", or "nation", geographic concepts that are now being challenged by "global fluids, the heterogenous, uneven and unpredictable mobilities of people, information, objects, money,

⁷¹ Robert J. Sampson, Stephen W. Raudenbush and Felton Earls, "Neighbourhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy", *Science*, Vol. 277 (15 August 1997), p. 923.

⁷² Robert Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Institutions in Modern Italy*, (Princeton, 1993).

⁷³ Amanda Aizlewood, *SRA-418 - Dividing Loyalties: Community Identification and Social Citizenship in an Era of Provincialism*, (Ottawa, October 1998), pp. 8-9.

⁷⁴ Jenson and Papillon, pp. 25-34.

⁷⁵ Jenson and Papillon, p. 38.

images and risks, that move across regions in strikingly faster and unpredictable shapes”.⁷⁶ Spiralling global disequilibrium, in his view, threatens existing public spheres, civil society and democratic norms since most governance systems are still centred on national authorities, acting within local contexts and are not equipped to act effectively within chaotic environments.⁷⁷

The events of September 11, 2001 appear to have sharpened the policy focus on this line of thought. Ronfeldt and Arquilla of the RAND Corporation have analyzed existing literature on organizational networks, examining their design and performance on five levels – organizational, narrative, doctrinal, technological and social. They have concluded that, “The strength of a network ... depends on its functioning well across all five levels. The strongest networks are those in which the organizational design is sustained by a winning story and a well-defined doctrine, and in which all this is layered atop advanced communications systems and rests on strong personal and social ties at the base”.⁷⁸ In their view, hierarchies have a difficult time dealing with networks, but those hierarchies that master the network form will gain major advantages. They concede that it is not necessary, or even desirable, to replace hierarchies with networks in governments, but suggest that “the challenge will be to blend these two forms skillfully, while retaining enough core authority to encourage and enforce adherence to networked processes”.⁷⁹ They believe therefore that working with non-governmental organizations to create new governance schemes for addressing social problems will become the cutting edge of research and policy development in the coming years.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 A tentative model of social cohesion

One of the challenges in doing research in the field of social cohesion is the problem of causation. What are the inputs and what are the outputs? Do the inputs feed directly into the outcome of social cohesion or do they work indirectly through other intervening processes? Are the processes recursive and, if so, how do the feedback loops work? Which feedback loops are critical determinants of social cohesion? What are the causal links? How did the apparent consequences of deteriorating social cohesion arise? How can public policy contribute to the “virtuous” loops and avoid perpetuating the “vicious” ones?

In an attempt to begin to answer some of these questions, researchers in the Department of Canadian Heritage have developed a preliminary model of how the process of maintaining social cohesion might work (see Figure 13). This model is far from final and, as our knowledge base slowly grows, it continues to undergo modification. However, it serves to illustrate some of the “complex mobilities” at play and the many feedback loops that exist among the various components of the model.

The model recognizes that there are multiple inputs to social cohesion or sustainable societies and that government policies represent only one set of these inputs. Civil society and the

⁷⁶ John Urry, ““Mobile sociology”, *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 51, No.1 (January/March 2000), p. 194.

⁷⁷ Urry, p. 198.

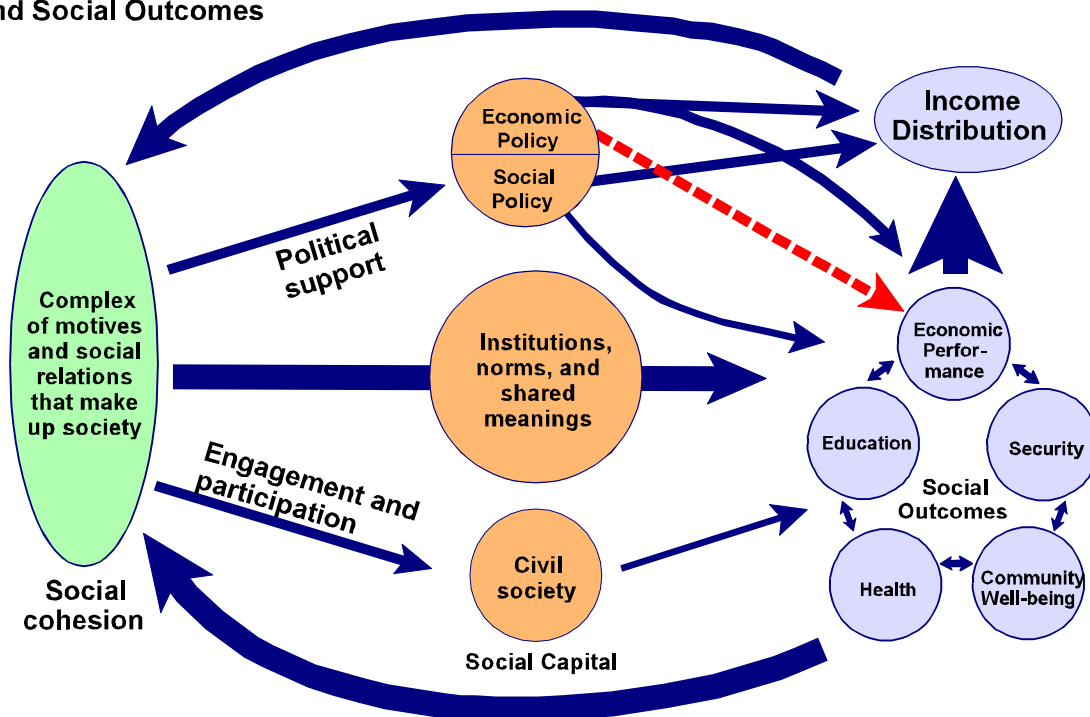
⁷⁸ David Ronfeldt and John Arquilla eds., *Networks, Netwars, and the Fight for the Future*, (Washington, 2001), Chapter 10, p. 10, available at <http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR1382/> .

⁷⁹ Ronfeldt and Arquilla, Chapter 10, p.22.

social capital it generates are also important components of the system, as are the institutions and

values that underpin society. Our research has also shown that there is a significant amount of systemic unpredictability in patterns of social cohesion, a factor that serves to complicate government responses.

Figure 13
Causal Links Between Social Cohesion and Social Outcomes



Source: Stanley, PCH; Lavis for PCH; McCracken for PCH

The model also illustrates how social cohesion influences social outcomes and how social outcomes in turn affect the degree of social cohesion in a society. There are three main causal connections of social cohesion to social outcomes. First, the higher the degree of social cohesion in a society, the more political support there will be for public policy for such beneficial universal programs as education, health insurance, and income distribution programs. These policies have demonstrable effects on improving social outcomes, particularly by providing universality of access. Second, the higher the degree of social cohesion, the higher the adherence to social norms of behaviour and support for social institutions and values (such as respect for law, trustworthiness and fair play) which make cooperation easier and more risk free, and so increase the efficiency of production of social outcomes. Third, higher social cohesion increases participation in civic society, which not only has the direct effect of producing additional good social outcomes but has the effect of enriching social capital which has been shown to enhance social outcomes indirectly.

The key component of the model, however, is not the causal links, but the mechanism whereby the enhanced social outcomes, if equitably distributed, enhance social cohesion. If members of society are getting their fair share (which they are likely to do in a society which politically supports collective action, which adheres to norms such as respect for law, trustworthiness and fair play, and which has a high degree of civic participation), then they will

be motivated to cooperate and contribute to society. This reciprocity has three main implications:

- 1) Social cohesion and good social outcomes reinforce each other in a virtuous circle. However, if the spiral ever turns downward, bad social outcomes, or inequitable distribution of social benefits erodes social cohesion, which in turn reinforces the deterioration of social outcomes. In other words, a vicious circle can be created instead of a virtuous one.
- 2) Any policy, or for that matter any change in the causal chain, can affect any other parts of the model. Reduction in political support for a social welfare program may seem to be unrelated to health or education outcomes, but by eroding social cohesion, will likely in the long run have widespread effects on a variety of social outcomes.
- 3) Good policy is the only sure lever available to enhance social cohesion, since political support cannot be dictated, values and adherence to informal norms can rarely be legislated and civic participation cannot be compelled. However, all policy can be social cohesion policy, since all policy can have the indirect effect of increasing or decreasing people's willingness to cooperate, their sense of inclusion and their sense of belonging.

It is clear from the research that understanding social cohesion requires a multi-sectoral and horizontal research approach in order to comprehend the complexities of the concept and its institutional and policy implications. International comparative research has indicated that the way in which social cohesion is perceived tends to determine the actions that have been taken to address the policy challenge. This apparent theoretical uncertainty does not imply lack of direction concerning policy decision-making. On the contrary, the organizations studied are making substantial interventions in the name of social cohesion thus supporting the contention that the essential ambiguity of the concept of social cohesion has the effect of opening up a space for action.⁸⁰

3.2 Research gaps and opportunities

Over the past several months, the Social Cohesion Network has been participating in a wide-ranging consultation with government officials, academics, think tanks and non-governmental organizations on possible priorities for future research. This consultation has confirmed that there are indeed several "spaces for action" with regard to both research and policy priorities.

Participants at these consultations told us that we need to build on the things that hold Canadian society together and to address those that have the potential to divide it. The major theme areas where further horizontal research could contribute to decision making in the domain of social cohesion included:

- Income distribution and poverty
- Inclusion and participation
- Diversity and ethnicity
- Governance, citizenship and confidence in institutions
- Measurement and causality

In addition, several **cross-cutting issues** - two of them of long-standing concern and one which has moved to the forefront of public attention in recent months – featured prominently in

⁸⁰ M. Sharon Jeannotte, *SRA-309 - Social Cohesion Around the World: An International Comparison of Definitions and Issues*, (Ottawa, 2000), p. 26.

the consultations. They were: 1) the experience of Aboriginal Canadians; 2) the differing but equally serious pressures on social cohesion in large urban and small rural areas; and 3) the role that social cohesion plays in the peace, safety and security of Canadian society.

These research themes explicitly incorporate several of Jenson's and Bernard's six dimensions of social cohesion – inclusion/exclusion, participation/non-involvement, recognition/rejection, legitimacy/illegitimacy and equality/inequality. The remaining dimension -- belonging/isolation – is arguably an outcome of positive developments in all these theme areas, particularly citizenship.

The research themes also avoid the trap of examining faultlines in isolation from issues of citizenship, governance, equality, and social, economic, cultural and political inclusion. They can potentially ground research within three key policy areas – the well-being of Aboriginal Canadians, the sustainability of both urban and rural communities and the safety and security of all Canadians – areas where the dynamics of social cohesion most urgently need to be understood and acted upon. The following sub-sections outline briefly why we are proposing these social cohesion research themes.

3.2.1 Income distribution and poverty

Our research has shown that income inequalities and economic exclusion can damage social cohesion. At the same time, deteriorating social cohesion affects income distribution. Income distribution is clearly one of the central issues of social cohesion, and while we know a great deal about income distribution in Canada (and the rest of the world), its reciprocal relationship with social cohesion is not well understood, and needs to be further explored. Some possible research questions include the following:

- What are the factors contributing to poverty and the social exclusion of certain Canadians? How do these factors combine?
- What are the links between economic and labour market exclusion and social, cultural and political exclusion?
- What are the effects on social cohesion of growing gaps between the rich and the poor and increasing numbers of “dropouts from the top” (affluent people who are disengaging from willing cooperation with others on behalf of the common good)?
- What are the linkages between social cohesion and health? Social cohesion and child welfare?
- To what extent might social cohesion help to explain unsatisfactory socio-economic outcomes for Aboriginal peoples? Is labour force participation a key to better outcomes?
- What are the consequences of socio-economic differentiation in urban areas?
- What are the keys to the social and economic sustainability of rural communities?

3.2.2 Inclusion and participation

Social inclusion is virtually a *sine qua non* for social cohesion. Policy affecting participation and inclusion therefore lies at the heart of social cohesion concerns. Our research has shown that the willingness and capacity to cooperate is essential for sustainable communities – whether they be national, regional, local or virtual communities. However, we have little information on the impact of government policies on community capacities to cooperate. Nor do we understand the optimum balance between public, private and third sector interventions which sustains social cohesion. Some possible research questions include:

- What are the determinants of participation? Do the policies of the federal government contribute or detract?
- What are the most important skills, resources and values needed by individuals to foster inclusion?
- What are the trends in Canada with regard to social capital? Is it increasing? Decreasing? Changing in its nature?
- What types of participation contribute most to inclusive and sustainable communities? Economic participation? Volunteerism? Cultural participation? Civic participation (e.g. voting, attending meetings)?
- What are the patterns of social capital and participation within Aboriginal communities? Do such patterns help to explain socio-economic outcomes?
- What are the characteristics of social capital in cohesive neighbourhoods? How do these patterns differ in dysfunctional neighbourhoods? What are the links to public safety?

3.2.3 Diversity and ethnicity

A socially cohesive society does not mean a homogeneous society or one where members hold uniform values. Nor does it mean a society without conflict or dissent. In fact, research to date suggests that a society where dissent has been eliminated is one that is very weak in social cohesion. Competing values and differing attitudes are critical contributors to long term social sustainability, and a cohesive society is one which knows how to use its diversity as a source of energy for development. Societies which do not know how to do this can often be torn apart by their diversity. How society maintains the balance between creative diversity and reliable structure is little understood. It is, however, the central question of social development and is also relevant to the domain of peace, order and security. Pertinent questions include:

- How do the elements of diversity (age, sex, race, language, physical and mental abilities, etc.) combine to provide advantage or disadvantage to individuals?
- What programs, policies and institutions have been most successful in mediating difference and building understanding?
- What mechanisms (laws, policies, programs) have been most successful in balancing the needs of majorities and minorities? How do imbalances in recognizing and providing for these needs affect social cohesion?
- What are the impacts of sexism, racism, ageism and other social tensions on social cohesion? What are the particular effects of these attitudes on Aboriginal peoples, recent immigrants and visible minorities? What are the consequences for public safety and security?
- What are the underlying causes of high incarceration rates among Aboriginal peoples? Is the Canadian justice system adequately equipped to deal with the cultural complexities of this issue?
- What are the policy implications of the differing diversity profiles of urban and rural Canada?

3.2.4 Governance, citizenship and confidence in institutions

The deteriorating levels of trust in governments and in traditional institutions, as well as the increasing difficulties that governments have in building consensus around collective actions, appear to be indicators of weakening social cohesion. Understanding the nature, extent, and causes of mistrust, the role of social cohesion in creating confidence in, and support for, institutions, and the role of institutions in sustaining social cohesion are critical for development of effective policy in all fields. In today's global society, new forms of more effective

governance appear to be needed if the notion of national citizenship is to survive in an environment of competing, multiple identities. Social cohesion research could potentially focus on questions such as the following:

- Do new forms of governance reinforce or erode social cohesion? Should centre/periphery models be adapted to better cope with a networked environment?
- What governance models are working? What models are not?
- How can the various levels of governments collaborate more effectively with each other and with the private and voluntary sectors in promoting social cohesion and social inclusion?
- Can information and communication technologies be used to create new, more inclusive forms of governance?
- What are the trends on trust and confidence in institutions and on interpersonal trust? What are the determinants of trust? Why is trust in governments and institutions declining among youth? What can be done to reverse this trend?
- What is the relationship between trust and social cohesion? Trust and active citizenship? Trust and social well-being?
- What are the most appropriate forms of governance for urban and rural Aboriginal communities?

3.2.5 *Measurement and causality*

If policy developers are to take into account the influence of a given policy on social cohesion, we need to know more about how social cohesion is created, what damages social cohesion, and how it is maintained. Ongoing efforts (described above) to develop a set of social cohesion indicators is only part of the challenge in this area. Our consultations have shown that we are “data rich” but “analysis poor”, in that there are many existing and potential sources of information on social cohesion that are not being used to the fullest extent to advance understanding of social cohesion. These include:

| <i>Information source</i> | <i>Analysis needed</i> |
|--|--|
| World Values Surveys (1981, 1990, 2000) | Trend and multivariate analysis |
| General Social Surveys (Cycle 12 on time use, Cycle 13 on victimization, Cycle 14 on access to information and communication technologies) | Multivariate and causal analysis |
| General Social Survey, Cycle 17 on Social Capital | Development and testing |
| Social Inclusion Index (York University) | Development and testing |
| Personal Security Index (CCSD) | Trend analysis |
| Population Health Index | Multivariate and trend analysis |
| ESC Project's Social Capital Survey (University of British Columbia) | Multivariate and causal analysis |
| Census data | Trend and causal analysis in the area of diversity and socio-economic outcomes |

3.3 Capacity issues

The information sources listed above are only examples of data that could potentially enhance our understanding of social cohesion and contribute to the policy process. Unfortunately, major human resource and financial barriers currently exist within the federal government, academic and non-profit sectors which limit our capacity to “harvest” this information for the benefit of policy makers.

While data analysis within the research themes identified above could be managed by lead departments, most of the departments interested in pursuing such social cohesion research lack the resources to proceed unilaterally. Pooling of resources by “clusters” of departments might partially alleviate this problem, but current mechanisms for collaborative financing of joint, horizontal research projects are cumbersome and time-consuming, acting more often to block, rather than facilitate, cooperation.

As in agricultural operations, “harvesting” of research is only the first step. The fruits of the harvest must be processed if they are to be digested by consumers. Doing this requires human capital – specifically knowledge workers who understand the use and limitations of data and who are adept at translating this information into a format that is comprehensible and useful for policy makers. Like most sectors of Canadian society, both the government and academia are on the verge of a massive exodus of trained knowledge workers, as the baby boom generation prepares for retirement. Replacement will take years, and it will require a creative approaches to ensure that enough existing intellectual capacity is retained until a new generation of researchers can take up the burden.

Finally, there is no avoiding the fact that good research takes time and money. Investments in high quality survey data can take several years and many millions of dollars. Analysis of this information can take several more years and more millions of dollars. However, research is an indispensable investment if we are to identify and strengthen the policies that help hold our society together, and it will be to our advantage to find the resources required for this investment.

3.4 Social cohesion and decision making

The attentive reader with a long memory will recall that at the beginning of this paper we promised to return to the final question in the introductory section: can an understanding of social cohesion help policy makers in all fields make better decisions? We believe that evidence-based decision making is always preferable to decision making that is crisis-driven or based on wishful thinking. Jocelyne Bourgon perhaps said it best in 1996 when she told delegates to a conference on strengthening policy capacity that “to the extent that we make a sustained and committed effort to look ahead, to anticipate issues, to trigger the research we will need two or three years from now, our policy-making capacity will be strengthened”.⁸¹

We would expand upon this idea to assert that an understanding of the role of social cohesion in sustaining Canadian society cannot help but improve our capacity to make sounder policy decisions in a variety of policy domains. The quality of decisions, made in institutions throughout a democratic society, determines how many citizens “buy in” to that society’s collective well-being and how many “drop out” in frustration. In this sense, good public policy is part of the “virtuous circle” that maintains social cohesion and reinforces the trust that underpins sustainable societies.

⁸¹ Jocelyne Bourgon, “The Fundamental Role of the Public Service”, *Rethinking Policy - Strengthening Policy Capacity: Conference Proceedings*, (Ottawa, 1996), p.28.

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