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POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES**

Jason Bouzanis

AUTEUR DE LA THÈSE / AUTHOR OF THESIS

M.A. (Communication)

GRADE / DEGRÉ

Department of Communication

FACULTÉ, ÉCOLE, DÉPARTEMENT / FACULTY, SCHOOL, DEPARTMENT

**Québec's public diplomacy:
A study on the conceptual convergence of public diplomacy and public relations**

TITRE DE LA THÈSE / TITLE OF THESIS

Evan Potter

DIRECTEUR (DIRECTRICE) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS SUPERVISOR

CO-DIRECTEUR (CO-DIRECTRICE) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS CO-SUPERVISOR

EXAMINATEURS (EXAMINATRICES) DE LA THÈSE / THESIS EXAMINERS

Mark Lowes

Isaac Nahon Serfaty

Gary W. Slater

Le Doyen de la Faculté des études supérieures et postdoctorales / Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

**Québec's public diplomacy:
A study on the conceptual convergence of
public diplomacy and public relations**

Jason Bouzanis

Thesis submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
In partial fulfillment of the requirements
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To do anything in this world worth doing, we must not stand back shivering and thinking of the cold and danger, but jump in, and scramble through as well as we can.

- Sydney Smith

Dedicated to my mother, who has made my hopes and dreams possible; to my friends and loved ones, may this inspire you to keep on chasin'; and to Evan Potter, my friend, guide and mentor, who has inspired my nobler ambitions.

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Abstract

Keywords: public diplomacy, public relations, Québec international relations, international communications, nation branding, cultural relations, academic relations, investment promotion, tourism promotion, sports diplomacy, conceptual convergence

The thesis expands Signitzer and Coombs' (1992) seminal study on the conceptual convergence of public diplomacy and public relations. Similar to international public relations, public diplomacy serves to transmit information, promote influence, create understanding and build relationships. However, a review of the existing academic literature reveals that the public diplomacy / public relations nexus has received insufficient attention from scholars. The purpose of the study is to determine whether there exists a strong enough similarity between the two domains to actively theorize public diplomacy from a communications (public relations) perspective.

The research systematically applies the Signitzer and Coombs comparative model to interpret evidence of conceptual convergence in five areas of Québec's public diplomacy (academic and cultural relations, investment and tourism promotion, and sports diplomacy). It is demonstrated that public diplomacy and public relations are both premised on the concept of symmetry, but also share asymmetrical tendencies. The findings suggest that the two disciplines are experiencing a process of convergence and support the value of exploring public diplomacy with public relations-based theories and models. However, public diplomacy practitioners are generally unwilling to recognize the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations. The development of shared concepts is therefore encouraged to overcome these perceptual gaps. Future research centred on common functions, such as reputation management and relationship building, is proposed and the thesis concludes that interdisciplinary cooperation is necessary to advance the public diplomacy scholarship.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The current global environment has been defined by the communications revolution and is increasingly characterized by high levels of interconnectedness and democratization as well as more competition at the international level for a share of the global conversation. Governments today are required to communicate with foreign publics more than ever before and employ public diplomacy to promote their images in support of national interests. Likewise, globalization and competition for international consumers defines the contemporary landscape for multi-national corporations; many of which are more economically powerful than small or developing countries. Public and private actors on the global stage are compelled to engage in branding to successfully differentiate themselves in pursuit of competitive advantages. International corporations regard public relations as an essential activity and have long recognized that a strong brand confers economic and political benefits, however the understanding that nation states must also cultivate their image is a relatively recent phenomenon.

Potter (2006) notes that, over the past decade, there has been an upsurge in interest among policy makers and scholars in the function and role of public diplomacy. In the wake of the events of September 11, 2001, there was considerable concern among American politicians about why they had lost the 'hearts and minds' of the Islamic world and public diplomacy has since come to the forefront of diplomatic affairs. Unlike classic diplomacy, public diplomacy does not involve privileged government-to-government interactions, rather initiatives target change in the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs of foreign constituencies, though government officials may also be targets. Public diplomacy shapes international images and reputations, enhances the ability of nations to attract international trade and

investment, tourism and immigration, and translates into foreign influence. Governments and academics alike have acknowledged the importance of public diplomacy and it is not just national governments that practice public diplomacy, but sub-national governments as well. Cities, provinces (or similar federate entities) and regions have begun to actively brand themselves internationally to capitalize on the opportunities and minimize the threats of globalization, increased competition and economic integration.

Recognizing that communication and interaction with foreign audiences has become a defining feature of the international system for governments and multi-national corporations alike, the thesis examines the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations. Sharing similar approaches and techniques, public diplomacy and public relations are important drivers of contemporary international communications. Signitzer and Coombs (1992) first advanced the notion that the two domains were experiencing a process of convergence in their article, "Public Relations and Public Diplomacy: Conceptual Convergences". However, the public diplomacy / public relations nexus has received only limited attention in the existing academic literature. Nations and corporations both "seek to influence ... international political decisions in their favour and also manage the way in which issues are perceived and media agendas set", however rigorous discussion on common premises and practices is scarce and research that tests the transfer of ideas and models from one sphere to the other is rarer still (L'Étang, 2006a, p.376). This study endeavours to theoretically bridge the gap between public diplomacy and public relations through an examination of the province of Québec's public diplomacy.

Québec was chosen as subject of enquiry because the province is one of the most active sub-national brands in the world, more so than any other Canadian province,

American state or German Lander. According to Fry, “Québec is perhaps the most notable player among non-central governments in attempting to adjust rapidly and aggressively to the special challenges and opportunities found in a new era of globalization and unprecedented technological change” (2002, p.2). Québec’s Ministère des Relations internationales has a budget of over \$100 million and maintains twenty-five foreign missions in fifteen different countries, plus Hong Kong and Taipei - a greater foreign presence than several nation states. Huijgh (2008) explains that public diplomacy is a chief instrument of statecraft for federate entities and regions because it allows sub-national governments to influence and shape the international agenda in ways that exceed their (very) limited hard power resources. Paquin (2005) compares the province with similar regional governments. Catalonia has more offices abroad, close to fifty, but a much smaller budget of \$60 million, and Flanders has almost one hundred international delegations, but most are located within Belgium’s embassies. Furthermore, the Conservative Government’s first Speech from the Throne (2007) outlined a commitment to recognize the Québec’s international presence and special cultural responsibilities and invited the province to play a role in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Given a Canadian political environment characterized by more open federalism and increased provincial participation in foreign affairs, research on Québec’s internationalism is timely and topical. The thesis provides an overview of Québec’s international outreach activities in the areas of academic and cultural relations, investment and tourism promotion, and sports diplomacy, analyzes how the province communicates and interacts with foreign audiences and connects Québec’s public diplomacy with concepts from public relations.

Central research focus

The research is a response to Signitzer and Coombs' call for empirically-based studies that establish the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations. The thesis examines evidence of conceptual convergence through a case study on Québec's public diplomacy. The central research problem considers whether there exists a strong enough similarity between the two domains to actively theorize public diplomacy from a communications (public relations) perspective. The purpose of the study is to broadly situate public diplomacy within the field of communications research that examines the external interactions of public organizations at the international level and, more specifically, investigate the public diplomacy / public relations nexus. The study is not intended to be a definitive investigation of the congruencies between public diplomacy and the functions, activities and techniques of public relations, rather the goal is to identify patterns and trends that foster a better understanding of the relationship between the two domains and contribute to future research that explores common frameworks and advances shared theoretical approaches.

Theoretical context

A traditional definition of public diplomacy, which was set out by Hans Tuch (1990), states that public diplomacy is “... a government's process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation's ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies” (p.3). Potter (2006) defines public diplomacy as “the effort by the official institutions of one nation to influence the public or elite opinion of another nation for the purpose of turning the policies or views

of that target nation to advantage.” An alternative conception of public diplomacy, developed at the Ditchley Conference in 2005¹, suggests that “public diplomacy is action at the initiative of government to influence foreign public opinion for a diplomatic purpose or for wider national interests.” The thesis presents a more diverse consideration of what constitutes public diplomacy (more akin to nation branding) and suggests that a broadening of definitions to include both traditional public diplomacy - academic and cultural relations - and non-traditional public diplomacy - investment and tourism promotion and sports diplomacy - more properly accounts for the totality of government-supported, either directly or indirectly, activities that inform, influence and create understanding in foreign audiences for the purpose of national advantage. Moreover, the research focuses exclusively on Québec’s medium (destination branding) to long-term (academic and cultural relations, and sports diplomacy) public diplomacy. A consideration of the province’s short-term public diplomacy involving strategic communications (media relations and advocacy) was omitted from the theoretical discussion because the longer term range is traditionally associated with public diplomacy and issues of dialogue and relationship building are fundamental to the long-term end of goals of both public diplomacy and public relations.

The purpose of the study is to present evidence of the convergence of the two domains using the Signitzer and Coombs comparative model of public diplomacy that integrates Peisert’s (1978) public diplomacy models (exchange and cooperation, one-way transmission of own culture abroad, information exchange and self-portrayal) and Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) public relations models (press agency, public information, two-way asymmetric, two-way symmetric).

¹ As cited from Potter’s conference notes.

Below is a summary of the relationship between Peisert's four models and Grunig and Hunt's four models (Signitzer and Coombs, 1992, p.144-5).

1. PRESS AGENCY = ONE-WAY TRANSMISSION OF OWN CULTURE ABROAD
 - both models are one-way
 - propaganda = aggressive language policy
 - unbalanced relationship
2. PUBLIC INFORMATION = SELF-PORTRAYAL
 - both one-way information, very little persuasion
 - both concerned with comprehension
3. TWO-WAY ASYMMETRIC = INFORMATION
 - goal is sympathy and acceptance
 - careful; scientific planning
 - no change of one's own behaviour
4. TWO-WAY SYMMETRIC = EXCHANGE AND CO-OPERATION
 - dialogue, balanced effects
 - change of own behaviour on each side

Signitzer and Coombs suggest that Peisert's models provide a practical way of categorizing the various approaches to communications that different countries adopt. This thesis will determine which of Peisert's four models best represent Québec's various international outreach activities. In this way, Québec's public diplomacy is also being considered in the context of Grunig and Hunt's four models of public relations to determine to what extent public relations and public diplomacy seek similar objectives and employ similar tools. Primary research on Québec's public diplomacy and in-depth interviews with key provincial officials add to the discussion. Thus, the thesis answers Signitzer and Coombs' call for a further examination of the conceptual convergence of the two domains. Based on the sum qualitative data, the thesis contributes knowledge from the communications scholarship on the relationship between public diplomacy and public

relations and contemplates the value of applying more advanced theories of public relations to the study of public diplomacy.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis is organized into the following chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The chapter provides the rationale for the topic, introduces key issues and concepts related to the public diplomacy / public relations nexus, raises the central research problem, establishes definitions and the analytical parameters, and explains the theoretical context that guides the study. The structural outline of the thesis is also presented.

Chapter 2: Literature review

The chapter examines the conceptual influences that have shaped the study of the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations, and the relevant scholarly literature is connected to the central research problem.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The chapter details the chosen theoretical approach, assesses the strengths and weaknesses of various methodologies and validates the research design.

Chapter 4: Case study: Québec's public diplomacy

The chapter details the history of Québec's public diplomacy and describes five of the province's public diplomacy instruments: international academic and cultural relations, investment and tourism promotion, and sports diplomacy.

Chapter 5: Analysis of findings

The chapter considers the conceptual convergence of public diplomacy and public relations in five of Québec's public diplomacy instruments and theoretically interprets the evidence.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The chapter discusses the findings and their implications for the central research problem.

The study's limitations are addressed and the section concludes with a reflection on the merits of embracing interdisciplinary cooperation and suggests directions for researching public diplomacy from a public relations perspective.

Chapter 2: Literature review

Public diplomacy is situated at the confluence of four areas of scholarly inquiry - international communications, international relations, international marketing and public relations. This chapter offers a critical review of the academic literature pertaining to the study of the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations. Existing literature on Canada and Québec's public diplomacy is also introduced. Research from each domain is considered and connected to the public diplomacy / public relations nexus and the relevant findings and debates are highlighted and discussed. The resulting analysis and presentation of the study's theoretical approach leads to a formulation of the research problem.

International communications

International communications research has traditionally focused on the function of communications in international development, international flows of information and the role of international institutions, such as the International Telecommunications Union, but does not pursue the common threads between public diplomacy and public relations. Mowlana (1997) summarizes the four basic approaches (idealistic-humanistic, political proselytization, information as economic power, information as political power) to the study of international communications. The first two perspectives are relevant to the public diplomacy / public relations nexus. The concepts of exchange and cooperation (public diplomacy) and two-way symmetrical communications (public relations) are comparable to the idealistic-humanistic approach because international communications is understood to bridge people and nations together and contribute to understanding amongst global constituencies. The political proselytization approach parallels short- to medium-term public

diplomacy based on the one-way transmission / self-portrayal (public diplomacy) and press agency / public information (public relations) models that view international communications as mostly one-way propaganda and advertising originating from a central authority. Mowlana suggests that political proselytization characterizes contemporary international relations, but his conclusion fails to account for the current trend towards dialogue and collaboration in public diplomacy.

Mowlana's discussion of the role of human interaction and its effects on international communications raises issues directly related to public diplomacy and nation branding. Mowlana argues that, at the human level, international communication and intercultural communication are one in the same because communication across national boundaries necessitates communication between peoples of different cultures. Developments in communications technologies and the ease and speed of international travel have led to increased exchanges between the peoples of the world. Global mobility creates the opportunity for interpersonal communication - a richer more contextualized form of communication. The transfer of ideas, attitudes, beliefs and opinions is facilitated through immigration, tourism, educational, scientific and cultural exchanges, international business travel and international sport. The flow of information that results from international academic and cultural relations is a particularly important form of international communications because the interactions involve current and future leaders and decision makers.

The most comprehensive treatment of public diplomacy in the international communications literature from a historical perspective can be found in Taylor (1997). Taylor traces developments in public diplomacy since 1945. During the Cold War, the

“control, manipulation and dissemination of information” reshaped international relations and propaganda became a principal instrument of foreign policy (Taylor, 1997). The role of the media evolved during this time from an observer of international events to an active participant in their outcomes. As the speed of global information flows increased, world public opinion became more important. World leaders paid increasing attention to public perceptions and competed outwardly for international favour. The power of the media to affect public opinion was recognized and public diplomacy became increasingly influential in foreign policy and international affairs. Taylor’s historical account of Cold War propaganda offers a promising starting point for the investigation of the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations, however the author neglects to follow-up on the connections.

Communications in international relations

The literature on communications in the international relations scholarship agrees with the prevailing international communications research that public opinion has become increasingly important in the conduct of international affairs and that government attempts to influence foreign audiences are characteristic of contemporary international relations. However, it is generally confined to the study of propaganda² and only tangentially links ideas from public relations and public diplomacy. Holsti’s (1995) analysis of propaganda in international politics is representative. He argues that propaganda provides a means to “maximize persuasiveness” and shape the behaviour of foreign publics (p.154). Propaganda

² The approaches to understanding communications in international relations that do not centre on propaganda can be traced to Deutsch’s (1968) book on transatlantic relations. In his discussion of diplomacy, Deutsch mentions that governments direct information at the mass media of other countries in an effort to maintain or change the attitudes and beliefs of foreign publics and notes that academic and cultural relations programs can influence the opinions of foreign elites and make them more receptive to external ideas.

involves identifying key groups in a society that share the beliefs of the communicator and employing persuasion to strengthen these common attitudes. After selecting the target audience, effective propaganda solicits the attention of the audience to evoke an emotional response that translates into actions favourable to the interests of the communicator.

However, deeds are more important than words. Holsti notes that the actions of foreign governments are more likely to influence foreign opinion than propaganda and in cases where there is discrepancy between the two, the communicator risks damaging its credibility.

Holsti correctly notes that not all propaganda is nefarious. Governments regularly try to sway the attitudes and actions of foreign populations for commercial reasons; for example, to increase investment and tourism. Governments also actively employ cultural relations and participate in international sporting events to foster a positive image in the minds of international audiences. Furthermore, Holsti recognizes that a variety of non-state actors and transnational organizations are active in efforts to create favourable foreign public perceptions. The impact of propaganda and other forms of persuasion are difficult to measure, but Holsti suggests that the amount of resources invested in government information programs are indicative that countries consider such efforts necessary and beneficial, if only to increase awareness and enhance their image.

Aside from propaganda, the study of communications in international relations investigates few topics that bridge the public diplomacy / public relations divide. However, Nye's analysis of international relations and the concepts of hard and soft power are germane because the notion of international public relations by governments and nation states is synonymous with soft power. According to Nye (2004a), nation states employ hard power

(or command resources, both military and economic) to coerce or induce foreign states into actions favourable to their national interests. Soft power, or the practice of public diplomacy, is the other part of the equation. Traditionally, nation states have invested in soft power as an alternative to hard power to achieve foreign policy objectives by co-opting other nations to their preferences. Through academic and cultural relations countries attempt to set the international agenda or win a general international following through the power of attraction. The idea is that other countries become more favourable to your international policies and perspectives when they have been exposed to your language, your culture and your people.

Today there are fewer issues that can be resolved through military might and economic sanctions, therefore to achieve foreign policy objectives countries must employ soft power. The traditional hard power resources that for centuries have been used to coerce and induce nations to accept the foreign policy decisions of structurally powerful countries are no longer sufficient in a world where information is plentiful and global public opinion matters. This does not mean that traditional sources of power are no longer relevant, rather public forms of diplomacy will increasingly have to complement the use of military and economic resources. Soft power can make the use of command resources more palatable to the world community and effectively counter negative perceptions abroad that effect the image a country represents. Nye (2004b) has termed the exercise of both hard and soft power to achieve foreign policy objectives 'smart power'.

Nye (2004b) explains that credibility is an important source of soft power. Credibility is associated with long-term relationship building strategies. International cultural and academic relations promote a general feeling of goodwill and position foreign public perception over the long-term in pursuit of national interests. Countries that encourage a

diversity of perspectives in their public diplomacy programming, including those that are critical of the government itself, will elicit more credibility on the global stage. In times of crisis, the investment in prolonged cultural and academic relations campaigns can be drawn against and will lend to a more sympathetic audience with a greater understanding of the context³. According to Gregory (2005), governments that have credibility will be able to gain a proportionately larger amount of attention for their messages. Credibility is therefore a crucial resource that must be established and maintained and public relations type activities provide a means to promote the national image and nurture relationships with foreign publics.

The theory of complex interdependence is also noteworthy and closely linked to the role of communications in foreign policy (Hawes, 1990; Keohane & Nye, 2001). Complex interdependence suggests that as nations become more interdependent the solutions to global problems will depend on broader communications and the interchange of ideas. The current global environment has been defined by the communications revolution and is increasingly characterized by high-levels of interconnectedness and democratization as well as increased competition at the international level for a share of the global conversation. Governments today are therefore required to interact with foreign publics more than ever before and they must leverage two-way communications to enhance their image in support of national interests. Public diplomacy provides a way to do this. As the number and variety of players on the international scene increases in a highly interdependent system, communications become more complex and symmetrical communications challenges traditional one-way flows of information for effectiveness. Hawes (1984) provides a discussion of complex interdependence from a Canadian foreign policy perspective. The public diplomacy / public

³ Multi-national corporations similarly employ public relations.

relations nexus offers a method of interpreting the elements of two-way communications described in theory of complex interdependence.

International marketing

The international marketing literature has provided the most detailed empirical work on nation branding and directly influences the study of the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations. Business studies research has established that image matters and how a country is perceived has an important effect on foreign investment, tourism, immigration, etc. The scholarship also recognizes that sub-national actors, such as cities and regions, are actively involved in branding.

Anholt (2002, 2003, 2006) and van Ham (2001) provide a theoretical framework for nation branding from a marketing perspective. Anholt's work investigates the role of the state in global branding. His research, based on the original Anholt-GMI Nation Brands Index, provided the first analytical ranking of the nation brands. The Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index, the current quarterly survey, polls 25, 900 consumers in 35 nations to gauge people's perceptions of particular countries across the six defining characteristics of 'national competence' or national brand (tourism, exports, governance, investment and immigration, culture and heritage, and people)⁴. Anholt's pioneering research and ongoing studies in the area of nation and city⁵ branding provide insight into the public diplomacy / public relations nexus.

⁴ Potter's (2006) typology of public diplomacy corresponds closely with Anholt's six characteristics of the national brand. According to Potter, the public diplomacy process for the world's major industrialized countries (G7 + other members of the Anglo-American world such as Australia and New Zealand) have eight objectives centred around export and investment attraction, science and technology collaboration, immigration, tourism, international academic relations, promoting good governance, creating support for international trade and security, and projecting international success back to domestic audiences in support of national identity.

⁵ Anholt uses a similar method to evaluate city brands.

In the foreword to a 2002 special edition of *Brand Management*, Anholt notes that despite hundreds of major articles published on nation branding since the 1950's, there are few real case histories and a limited amount of scholarly enquiry of direct benefit to the public diplomacy practitioner. Anholt argues that the wealthiest countries owe much of their status to marketing, namely through value-added exports that capitalize on country-of-origin effect, and tourism and investment promotion, but also from the coordinated communication of foreign policy as well as cultural and sporting activities. In addition, he addresses the domestic feedback loop - the image a country projects to the world will effect the population's perceptions of itself. In his book, *Brand New Justice: The upside of global branding*, Anholt states that "a proper national branding campaign can unite a nation in a common sense of purpose and national pride" (2003, p.234).

Anholt discusses the role of the commercial brand as a vehicle for the transmission of national culture. He argues that brands play an important role in defining national identity in the minds of foreign consumers. One consequence of the impact of commercial brands on national images is that they reinforce stereotypes. For example, Italy is associated internationally with style and fashion, Germany with technical sophistication and automotive excellence, and Japan with state-of-the-art electronics. According to Anholt, the problem with successful brands defining national stereotypes is that it limits the capacity for foreign audiences to understand a country's real identity based on cultural, rather than commercial grounds. Anholt suggests that countries must "push the other channels" - better communicate foreign policy decisions, emphasize national culture, encourage tourism - in order to overcome stereotypes, and, for Anholt, it is culture that is the essential ingredient to a successful national brand (2003, pp.233-4). Despite culture being perceived as having

limited economic potential, it is through exposure to culture that foreign audiences are able to develop a three-dimensional image of a country and it is this process that adds value to a country's brand. Anholt argues that culture enriches the national brand because it is a unique representation of a country's values and a direct reflection on its people and its institutions.

Whereas, Anholt's analysis considers the similarities of the country and corporate brand, van Ham draws his parallels between nation branding and product marketing. Despite the differences in approach, both authors reinforce the similarities between nation branding and public diplomacy. Both nation branding and public diplomacy contribute directly to how foreign audiences perceive a country; however, the nation brand encompasses the entirety of audience experiences as consumers of a country's products and messages and not just with government supported activities. Van Ham suggests that the 'brand state' is an extension of the image developed in the minds of foreign audiences based on their consumption of a country's goods and services. In today's globalized, media-centric world, countries market themselves in much the same way that corporations promote their products internationally. According to van Ham, both rely on assertive branding and customer satisfaction to engender the trust that is essential for success (p.3). A recognized brand confers the status that allows a country to thrive on the international stage. For van Ham, a country that is unable to develop a relevant brand in today's increasingly crowded international arena is doomed to the periphery of global influence.

Gertner and Kotler's (2002) article, featured in the special edition of *Brand Management*, "Country as brand, product, and beyond: A place marketing and brand management perspective", examines the effect a country's image has on its products and its ability to attract investment and tourism. A good brand is defined as one that adds value to a

product and differentiates it from the competition, while brand equity results from customer loyalty and economic return. From these basic definitions, the authors ask: “can a country be a brand?” (p.250). The authors contend that countries amount to brands in the eyes of foreign consumers. Emotional associations with countries help determine value and effect purchasing decisions. The article cites research that indicates that a product’s country-of-origin shapes consumer behaviour. A reputation for high quality products translates into increased brand equity. Country images are also likely to influence investment, travel and immigration decisions. Many elements, the media chief among them, come together to form the perceptions of a country’s people, products and places in foreign audiences. It is suggested that most of these images are, in fact, stereotypes. For better or worse, a country’s perceived attractiveness will determine its brand equity. Gertner and Kotler argue that in order for nations to compete internationally for a share of exports, investment and tourism, they must actively engage in nation branding. For a country to establish its position on the global stage, it must understand its strengths and weaknesses and monitor the external environment to capitalize on opportunities and minimize threats, similar to the exemplary organizations in Dozier, Grunig and Grunig’s Excellence Study (see p.30). To be successful, “the process must involve government, citizens and business, all with a shared vision” (Gertner & Kotler, 2002, p.254).

A case study expressly relevant to the thesis was also published in the special edition of *Brand Management*. Lodge’s (2002) article, “Success and failure: The brand stories of two countries”, contrasts the branding exercises undertaken by the governments of New

Zealand and Ontario respectively⁶. In addition, Lodge discusses the role of brand equity and the need to overcome stereotypes in the minds of foreign audiences.

Lodge relates the New Zealand experience. In the early 1990's, New Zealand was faced with declining exports and experiencing a heavy recession. In response to these threats, New Zealand's Market Development Board considered strategies to boost its sagging international image. Money was committed from each of the organizations represented on the Board. A strategy directed at the European market was developed with the goal of raising awareness of New Zealand. The campaign that proved most successful parlayed the country's strengths - pristine geography, exotic location, and quality food and wines - and promoted all aspects of the New Zealand brand, including culture, foreign investment and tourism. Similar to Gertner and Kotler, Lodge argues that an ability to appreciate the external environment and a unified commitment on the behalf of internal stakeholders are primary to the success of a nation brand. She also suggests that strong international performance gives rise to national pride; an interdisciplinary theme in research on public diplomacy.

Lodge contrasts the New Zealand case study with Ontario. Sharing characteristics with New Zealand, Ontario was overshadowed by the United States, a bigger, better branded neighbour, and experiencing a period of economic downturn in the mid-1990's. The provincial government identified tourism as a potential growth industry and likewise decided to focus on the European market. Ontario was associated with many of the same stereotypes as Canada (both positive and negative) and suffered from limited awareness in the minds of European audiences. Various strategies were considered; however government restructuring and a decision to concentrate on the U.S. market resulted in Ontario closing its offices in

⁶ The word country is used in the article in reference to both New Zealand and the province of Ontario.

Frankfurt, London and Paris and the project to brand Ontario was never realized. When comparing the two case studies, Lodge concludes that there must be a “collective will” behind the brand for it to be successful (p.384).

Today’s economic reality is characterized by many interests competing at the international level for foreign investment and tourism, which has placed additional importance on nation branding. Foreign investment, in particular, has grown in both volume and value in the last decade, which has led more and more countries to engage in proactive destination branding and adopt national strategies to attract investment. As Papadopoulos and Heslop (2002) state: “Branding a place as a choice destination for investment has emerged as a key strategy used by ... governments - and this was a major catalyst in catapulting the notion of ‘countries as brands’ to the forefront” (p.302). However, Papadopoulos and Heslop’s review of the research over the last 40 years reveals that, despite a considerable amount of literature on country images and country branding, knowledge of the key strategic issues driving international investment attraction are limited.

Every country has an image that is based on information and input from various sources. This is equally true of nation branding for investment purposes. Business leaders’ opinions of a target country matter and many factors influence their decisions to invest abroad, including personal contact with competitors, customers and business associates as well as direct experiences with a nation’s people, culture and businesses. Papadopoulos and Heslop note that as sub-national governments, regions and cities become increasingly active in investment promotion, they are bound to come into conflict with the interests of their national governments. Therefore, the authors support the previously discussed notion that for a publicly-funded branding programme to be successful, a coordinated campaign involving

all levels of government is necessary. The challenge for many countries is to project a unified vision of an attractive investment destination that limits conflicting messages and capably dispels unwanted stereotypes (e.g., countering the traditional image of Canada as a 'hewer of wood and drawer of water', while raising awareness of Canada's knowledge economy). Literature directly relevant to Canada's investment attraction strategies is scarce. Potter (2004) provides a detailed historical account of Canadian investment promotion and Bélanger (2005) discusses Canada's trade diplomacy in the context of an evolving international trade system. Studies on tourism promotion are equally limited and not well represented in the tourism literature. Blain, Levy and Ritchie (2005) offer a comprehensive examination of the subject. However, their research concentrates on formulating a definition for destination branding in tourism.

Public diplomacy

The literature on public diplomacy shapes the discipline's debates and research directions and scholars consistently exclude discussions on the synergies that exist between public diplomacy and public relations, thus serving to accentuate the on-going gap between the two fields. Nonetheless, the definitions and concepts relevant to the study of public diplomacy are important influences on the formulation of the thesis' central research problem.

Tuch (1990), in his touchstone book on U.S. public diplomacy since the Second World War, defines public diplomacy as "a government's process of communicating with foreign publics in order to transmit ideals, institutions, culture, national goals and policies"

(p.3). Malone (1988) suggests that understanding others - dialogue - is integral to the concept of public diplomacy:

If we strive to be successful in our efforts to create understanding for our society and for our policies, we must first understand the motives, culture, history, and psychology of the people with whom we wish to communicate, and certainly their language. (p.12)

Potter (2006) views public diplomacy as “the effort by the official institutions of one nation to influence the public or elite opinion of another nation for the purpose of turning the policies or views of that target nation to advantage.” In sum, public diplomacy, like public relations, is an exercise in profile building - it seeks to create a positive image of a country in foreign audiences.

Recently, the concept of the *new* diplomacy has received considerable attention in the public diplomacy literature. Melissen (2005) contends that public diplomacy has become a standard component of diplomatic practice in the twenty-first century. That is not to say that public diplomacy programs will ever replace privileged government-to-government interactions in foreign affairs, however public diplomacy increasingly defines international relations between interdependent countries engaged in political and economic partnerships. Public diplomacy is also no longer the exclusive domain of nation states. According to Melissen, not only are supranational organizations, such as the United Nations and the European Union, engaging in public diplomacy, but non-governmental organizations and multi-national corporations are also implementing public diplomacy-based approaches. Hocking (2005) suggests that network diplomacy is fundamental to contemporary international affairs. The major foreign policy problems of the 21st century - infectious

disease, failed and fragile states, international terrorism - cannot be solved by governments alone and will require the assistance of non-governmental actors. The diplomat increasingly acts as a coordinator and facilitator to a wide array of societal players to address global issues. According to Hocking, the role of the diplomat is being redefined as a stakeholder in a policy network. Diplomats must negotiate with and leverage the capabilities of a range of actors from the largest non-governmental organizations to small community groups in affected areas to achieve results. Gregory (2005) elaborates on public diplomacy in the current international environment and Leonard (2002) provides an in-depth analysis of public diplomacy's temporal dimensions.

Post-September 11, 2001, American research on public diplomacy has focused on the United States government's activities in response to global terrorism. In her 2003 book, *Information war: American propaganda, free speech and opinion control since 9-11*, Snow contrasts the current approach to U.S. public diplomacy with the one set out by Edward R. Murrow when he was Director of the United States Information Agency (U.S.I.A.) during the Kennedy administration. Public diplomacy was considered to contribute to a nation's international standing by understanding, informing and influencing foreign audiences. Murrow famously stressed the importance of the 'the last three feet' or long-term, unmediated relationship building strategies that rely on interpersonal communication. According to Snow, a renewed commitment to dialogue is necessary to increase mutual understanding between the United States and the world. Van Ham (2005) also examines the rising trend of anti-Americanism and the United States government's attempts to counter the decline of American popularity and argues that the problem with U.S. public diplomacy is the product that it is trying to sell. In his article "Power, Public Diplomacy, and the *Pax*

Americana”, van Ham revisits debates over credibility raised in the international relations literature. Public diplomacy is more than just messaging and U.S. actions overseas undermine the effectiveness of its soft power. Van Ham also contends that a more inclusive foreign policy founded on dialogue and understanding with key foreign publics is a precondition for U.S. public diplomacy to be successful.

The most recent research on public diplomacy, published in *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, focuses on the emerging trends of collaboration and partnerships at both the macro and micro levels. Hocking (2008) expands on his previous research and explains that the network model promotes a ‘whole-of-government’ approach to public diplomacy and emphasizes interactive dialogues and cooperative partnerships with domestic and international stakeholders from the public and private spheres to achieve favourable diplomatic outcomes. In turn, Arsenault and Cowan (2008) argue that monologue and dialogue are important public diplomacy tools for engaging foreign publics, but that collaboration may, in certain circumstances, be more effective. The authors define collaboration as initiatives that feature cross-national participation in joint-ventures at the local level with a clearly defined goal and suggest that cooperation on a common project breeds trust, fosters mutual respect and encourages reciprocity. Arsenault and Cowan argue that it is the focus on relationship building that separates public diplomacy from “propaganda, lobbying, and public relations” (p.11). However, collaboration is an idea that is conceptually linked with the notion two-way symmetric public relations.

Research on Canada's public diplomacy

According to Potter (2006), there has been no attempt to approach the topic of Canadian public diplomacy holistically. The most comprehensive studies on Canadian public diplomacy can be found in research conducted with Potter (2005, 2006). Ralston Saul's (1994) report prepared for a parliamentary review of Canadian foreign policy examines Canada's public diplomacy, specifically international academic and cultural relations. Davis (2004) writes about Canada's role as a middle power and its leadership in the campaign to ban landmines, and Morse (1987) and Hawes and Macintosh (1994) discuss sport and Canadian foreign policy, including the 1976 Montréal Olympics.

Canada has, however, been the subject of a few notable comparative analyses. Bátora (2005) compares Canada and Norway's public diplomacy strategies and notes that the academic literature has focussed primarily on the public diplomacy of the major powers. Bátora explains that the goal of public diplomacy for middle powers is to capture attention and therefore they tend to concentrate their resources in a few niche areas. Canada and Norway for example have traditionally been considered among the world's chief peacekeepers and peacemakers respectively. Moreover, the legitimacy of middle powers is defined less in terms hard power resources and more according to levels of attraction. Public diplomacy for countries like Canada and Norway provides an opportunity to gain influence and enhance their international visibility. Henrikson (2005) also compares Canada and Norway in his article on niche diplomacy. Despite differing approaches to the practice of public diplomacy, both countries have engendered high levels of international prestige and admiration with like-minded foreign policies based on the principles peace, charity and fraternity.

Research on Québec's public diplomacy

Bélanger (1975, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2005) and co-authors' (Balthazar, Bélanger & Mace, 1993; Bélanger, Gosselin & Thérien, 1994; Bélanger, Bernier & Mace, 1995; Beaudoin, Bélanger & Lavoie, 2002) offer an extensive treatment of the history of Québec's international relations and provide a key starting point for understanding the province's public diplomacy. Paquin (2005) provides an important essay on Québec's internationalism. A key overview of Québec's public diplomacy in the United States is presented in the work of Boucher (1999). The author, an official in the Ministère des Relations internationales du Québec, writing in *Politiques et Sociétés*, details the evolution of the image of Québec in the U.S. over the last twenty five years from a closed society to that of a open, dynamic and proud francophone culture. In his article published in the 2006 edition of the *Canada Among Nations* series, Michaud discusses Québec in the context of the Government of Canada's recent decision to recognize the province's special cultural responsibilities internationally. Michaud suggests that the decision to grant the province an active voice at UNESCO has redefined federal relations with Québec and will shape the future direction of Canadian foreign policy. In a political environment characterized by more open federalism and increased provincial participation on the global stage, Québec's public diplomacy clearly merits further study. Furthermore, Huijgh's (2008) study on Québec's international relations, on behalf of the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs, presents a detailed description of the provincial government's public diplomacy division and provides much-needed analysis on the public diplomacy activities of federated entities, an often neglected area in the broader study of image and diplomacy.

Public relations

Bernays' (1972) pioneering work and his book, *Propaganda* (originally published in 1928), contribute to the foundation of modern public relations. During the First World War, the Allies employed propaganda to manage public opinion and rally support. Thus, the profession of public relations was born and those employed in the war campaigns, including Bernays, later began practicing their craft for a corporate clientele. However, propaganda would always be associated with the deceitful drive to besmirch the enemy during the Great War. Bernays defends propaganda and argues that public relations shapes the public discourse and serves to order society. Similar to public diplomacy, Bernays' advocates the capacity of public relations to frame important issues for the general population and enable informed choice; it is considered a positive influence. Bernays' detailed examination of the role of government and corporate propagandists also recognizes the nascent communications revolution (i.e., newspapers, telegraph, telephone and radio) and foresees the importance of the transnational flow of information in displacing geography as the primary organizing unit of society. Today, public relations is a global enterprise and Agee, Ault and Wilcox (1989) define international public relations as "the planned and organized effort of a company, institution or government to establish mutually beneficial relations with the publics of other nations" (p.395).

Dozier, Grunig and Grunig's (2001) article "Public Relations as Communication Campaign" provides insight into the conceptual convergence of public relations and public communications campaigns and has implications for the study of public diplomacy. Public communication campaigns, like public diplomacy, seek to bring about some change in the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs of target publics. The authors consider Grunig and Hunt's

(see p.34-35) four models of public relations and suggest that asymmetrical public communications are often unethical because the goals and objectives of the sponsoring organization are advanced at the expense of audience interests. The article contends that the two-way symmetric approach, commonly promoted in public diplomacy, is most effective. In two-way symmetrical communications, research is employed to better understand the target public and both the interests of the sponsoring organization and the audience are taken into account. Goals are negotiated to ensure win-win scenarios and success is determined, in part, according to the degree to which the organization and its audience increase their understanding of one another.

Dozier, Grunig and Grunig (2002) present the Excellence Study as evidence that the two-way symmetric model is more effective than asymmetrical communications. The Excellence Study set out to determine what organizational characteristics contributed to effective communications departments and the extent to which excellence in communications, as defined in the research, facilitated the achievement of objectives. Using both quantitative and qualitative methods, the study sampled several different types of organizations in three countries in order to develop a model of communications excellence. The study determined that effective communications occurred in organizational cultures that emphasized teamwork and included the following characteristics: a highly valued communications function, a shared vision between strategic decision makers and communications managers, and a communications department that had the knowledge and expertise to execute two-way models of public relations. The study concluded that organizations that met the criteria for communications excellence and practice two-way symmetrical communications were more successful in meeting their objectives. Gilboa

(2008) suggests that the Excellence Study is a promising approach for advanced research in public diplomacy based on public relations theories and models. However, a key indicator of communications effectiveness in Dozier, Grunig and Grunig's analysis of private sector organizations, return on investment, is notoriously difficult to define in public diplomacy because program objectives are often ambiguous and predicated on creating goodwill, a concept that is not easily quantified. Barometers of success are less tangible than traditional diplomacy that results in bilateral or multilateral treaties and the 'impact' questions are much harder to conceptualize, so the effectiveness of long-term public diplomacy is less likely to be measured. The majority of evaluation, in the form of public opinion research, is conducted following advocacy campaigns, however evaluation is necessary for both short- and long-term initiatives to determine if public diplomacy has been successful in influencing foreign perceptions. The absence of baselines surveys also seriously hinders evaluation. For example, it is impossible to calculate the impact of Canada's public diplomacy over the past thirty or forty years because Canada does not have any public evaluation programs to serve as a baseline measure for its activities abroad.

One of the few comparisons of public diplomacy and public relations, L'Étang's (2006a) article, "Public Relations *as* Diplomacy", interprets evidence of convergence between the practices of public relations and international relations and provides a method for the critical analysis of public diplomacy. L'Étang examines the similarities between diplomats and public relations practitioners; they share boundary-spanning roles as representatives (advocates), dialogue participants (collaborators) and advisors (counselling), communicate information about issues and enlist the media to relay their messages. In addition, both professions rely on the management of public opinion to attain their

objectives. Nation states and multinational organizations also actively attempt to set the media agenda and invest considerable resources to influence political decisions.

L'Étang assesses the two-way symmetric approach and questions the practicality of its application in the domain of international relations. She argues that while an emphasis on fostering mutual understanding and promoting win-win scenarios may be ideal, it does not properly account for the difficulty in separating communications from politics in the international arena. In many cases, the need to achieve short-term policy objectives will trump the nobler ambitions of two-way symmetrical communications. Furthermore, the funding arrangements between the central government and the cultural agencies employed to deliver its programs abroad are likely to influence end-goals. The growing trend toward cost-recovery and return-on-investment considerations in the public sector also limits the extent to which government-funded and supported cultural institutions are able to pursue aims that do not directly support foreign policy priorities. For L'Étang, the claim that the symmetric approach is more ethical and effective overestimates the power of the public relations function in diplomacy and is incongruent with the realities of contemporary international relations. L'Étang's critique of two-way symmetrical communications informs the theoretical analysis of the public diplomacy / public relations nexus.

L'Étang's (2006b) article, "Public Relations in Sport, Health, and Tourism", explains that there has not been a great deal of attention given to sport or tourism in the existing public relations literature. Tourism showcases local culture to the world and is a significant driver of the global economy. L'Étang suggests that the scholarship extend beyond the traditional focus on the role of public relations in support of the tourism industry and pursue issues pertinent to public diplomacy, such as the relationships that result from traveler

experiences with host countries and their people, the impact that the portrayal of foreign lands and culture in film and travel literature has on the construction of national identities and the ability of the international news media's coverage of local events and the travel media to shape perceptions in international audiences. Furthermore, L'Étang posits that the sports tourism industry (i.e., fans and spectators that travel in support of their national teams at World Cups and to be a part of the Olympic experience) is an area that merits further investigation. Sport, like tourism, has become a central feature of contemporary society and governments invest enormous resources in support of mega-events such as the Olympics. L'Étang recognizes that the economic and cultural importance of elite international sporting competitions means "that sport is part of diplomacy and contributes to national identity" (L'Étang, 2006b, p.243). Sport and public relations also present several interesting research opportunities associated with public diplomacy, including the role of public relations in promoting national identity through elite sport and public relations campaigns in support of Olympic bids.

Conceptual framework

Signitzer and Coombs' (1992) study on the conceptual convergence of public diplomacy and public relations provides the foundation for the thesis. The authors argue that public diplomacy and public relations share similar objectives and use similar tools, and observe that nation states and multi-national corporations attempt to influence the policies and actions of foreign governments for the benefit of their countries or organizations respectively. For example, both public diplomacy and public relations pursue the exchange

of information between parties, aim to reduce misconceptions and limit misunderstandings, promote goodwill and add value to a brand.

Signitzer and Coombs present a comparative model that integrates Peisert's (1978) public diplomacy models, founded in cultural communications theory, and Grunig and Hunt's (1984) public relations models. The comparison is presented as evidence of the convergence of the two domains.

Peisert's breakdown of cultural communications is drawn from his investigation of the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Italy, and is based on four models: exchange and cooperation, one-way transmission of own culture abroad, information exchange and the self-portrayal approach. Despite some overlap, Signitzer and Coombs suggest that Peisert's models provide a practical way of categorizing the various approaches to communications that different countries adopt.

Peisert's exchange and cooperation model involves joint efforts to address problems of mutual concern. Examples include international scholarships and exchange programs. Peisert's one-way transmission of culture abroad model relies on a central institution to coordinate the communication of messages in support of foreign policy objectives. Signitzer and Coombs suggest that a systematic language policy is an example of this approach (e.g., the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme). Peisert's information model relies on the cultivation of relationships with scientific and cultural communities abroad and employs institutions in foreign countries, such as the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris, to foster mutual understanding. Self-portrayal, Peisert's final model, relies on a central organization for planning and coordinating policies and activities abroad. This approach is closely linked to foreign policy objectives and involves research on public perceptions abroad.

Signitzer and Coombs compare Peisert's classification of public diplomacy to Grunig and Hunt's four models of public relations. The press agency model is similar to the one-way transmission of culture abroad and asymmetrical communications, the use of propaganda and unbalanced relationships are shared features. Grunig and Hunt's second model is public information, which closely resembles self-portrayal. Again both are asymmetric, however these models involve less overt persuasion and are more concerned with improving understanding than the previous approaches. The two-way asymmetric model of public relations parallels Peisert's information approach. According to Signitzer and Coombs, the goal of both models is "sympathy and acceptance" and they involve strategic planning (p.144). The final set of models are also closely related. Grunig and Hunt's two-way symmetric model and the exchange and cooperation approach both rely on dialogue as a means of effecting a change in behaviour on both sides.

Signitzer and Coombs' analysis reveals that public diplomacy and public relations are experiencing a process of convergence and necessitates the further examination of the relationship between the two domains. Signitzer and Coombs' call for researchers to investigate shared concepts and approaches, however few scholars (Zöllner, 2006; Wang, 2007) have taken up the challenge.

In 2008, Signitzer renewed his theoretical exploration of conceptual convergence with a further contribution to the study of public diplomacy from a public relations perspective. The article, "Public Diplomacy and Public Relations: Some Conceptual Explorations", introduces the idea of *international public relations by governments and nation states*⁷. The, admittedly "not so elegant", term not only encompasses the foreign

⁷ In a summary discussion of the various activities that comprise international public relations, Szondi (2006) presents a similar umbrella term, international public relations for countries, that encompasses destination

policy and international relations dimensions of public diplomacy, but accounts for communicative activities with both traditional and new publics, such as supranational and non-governmental organizations, while firmly rooting the practice in public relations (Signitzer, 2008, p.209). The term also allows for the inclusion of national sub-units, such as Québec and Bavaria, in a discussion of mainstream public diplomacy and closely aligns with the more diverse consideration of what constitutes public diplomacy found in this thesis. Signitzer proceeds to argue that public relations-centred notions are well suited for the interpretation of 'hot issues' in public diplomacy. For example, audience segmentation, an analytical tool developed in public relations, is advanced as a fertile concept to examine the different types and levels of relations, based on institutional involvements or personal experiences, that determine national images in foreign publics. Signitzer then widens the horizons of the debate and applies three views of public relations, namely the organizational, societal and marketing approaches, to public diplomacy. Noting that public diplomacy and public relations have not shared a common academic or professional tradition, Signitzer concludes that, "in principle, public relations can contribute to a deeper understanding of public diplomacy" and that there should be "time and energy" allotted to interdisciplinary discourse and cooperation (p.215).

Conclusion

Based on the close conceptual fit between the two disciplines, Signitzer and Coombs' appeal for research that examines the convergence of public diplomacy and public relations. Despite the similarities, Signitzer and Coombs remark that neither the theoretical or practical

branding, country (region) branding, cultural relations (cultural diplomacy), public diplomacy, and perception management (propaganda).

public relations literature examines the role of nation states as actors in international public relations. Though public relations theory acknowledges that nations do engage in international public relations, the interaction of nation states with foreign publics is considered the domain of political science and international relations. However, public diplomacy is not given significant consideration in these fields of academic enquiry either. The role of soft power from international relations and the focus on nation branding from international marketing have also not been adequately taken into account in the existing public relations literature. Likewise, the international marketing literature in business studies, the most developed of all literatures on the subject, has escaped the attention of most political scientists interested in public diplomacy. Potter (2006) writes in his analysis of Signitzer and Coombs' study on public diplomacy and public relations that the exact ideas and concepts, which have been transferred from one sphere to the other, have not yet been fully delineated and tested and that a series of theory-based empirical studies is necessary to properly consider the convergence of the models from the two domains - only then will the development of a comprehensive theory of public diplomacy be possible.

The purpose of the thesis is significantly more modest. The central research problem considers whether there is a strong enough similarity between the two disciplines to actively theorize public diplomacy from a communications (public relations) perspective. The study explores various components of Québec's public diplomacy, including academic and cultural relations, tourism and investment promotion as well as its participation in international sporting events, to identify congruencies in the aforementioned activities with the Signitzer and Coombs comparative model. The analysis strengthens the academic bonds between

public diplomacy and public relations and serves as a platform for further interdisciplinary cooperation.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Based on the literature review, the field of public diplomacy is under-theorized. In fact, critical observers, Potter (2006) and Gilboa (2008) chief among them, assert that no coherent theory of public diplomacy exists. Scholarship on the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations is particularly barren; however there appears to be a convergence between the two domains. This has not been empirically scrutinized. An evaluation of how Québec - one of the most the active practitioners of public diplomacy - conducts its international communications will serve to test the degree of convergence between public diplomacy and public relations. The evaluation will focus on a broad range of Québec's international outreach activities: academic and cultural relations, investment and tourism promotion, and sports diplomacy. The case study approach will be a fruitful exercise by which to explore conceptual convergence and determine whether there exists a strong enough similarity between the two domains to theoretically interpret public diplomacy from a communications (public relations) perspective.

The purpose of the thesis is to examine evidence of conceptual convergence in Québec's public diplomacy instruments by using the Signitzer and Coombs (1992) comparative model that integrates Peisert's (1978) public diplomacy models (exchange and cooperation, one-way transmission of own culture abroad, information exchange, self-portrayal) and Grunig and Hunt's (1984) public relations models (press agency, public information, two-way asymmetric, two-way symmetric). The research will determine which of Peisert's four models are represented in Québec's public diplomacy. As Signitzer and Coombs suggest, Peisert's models provide a practical way of categorizing the various approaches to communications that different countries adopt. At the same time, Québec's

public diplomacy will be considered in the context of Grunig and Hunt's four models of public relations to confirm that public diplomacy and public relations share similar goals and use similar tools. This thesis therefore answers Signitzer and Coombs' call for a further examination of the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations.

According to Gilboa (2008), "models are needed to develop knowledge because they focus on the most significant variables and the relations between them" and he adds that "very few scholars [have] developed specific models of public diplomacy" (p.59). Indeed, Gilboa states that public relations models, similar to Grunig and Hunt's, are "promising ... for empirical research" (p.67) and should be "further developed, refined and applied to public diplomacy issues" (p.74). The case study approach will help address a fundamental weakness in theorizing public diplomacy - the lack of empirical studies that consider the convergence of models from public diplomacy and public relations. The case study on Québec's public diplomacy is a useful methodology for the advancement of knowledge on the public diplomacy / public relations nexus and will enable the generalizations needed to validate Signitzer and Coombs' initial findings. Potter (2005, 2006) employs similar research techniques to study Canada's public diplomacy in the areas of media relations, academic and cultural relations, international broadcasting and branding. Lowes (2002) also adopts a similar approach in his research on world-class cities and argues that case studies "are a means of extending and fine tuning [theories] by holding them accountable to concrete experience" (p.123). Moreover, the chosen methodology permits public diplomacy practitioners to interpret the findings and apply the research in practice.

However, the ability of a single case study to generalize with accuracy is limited. A comparative case study that included an analysis of another actor and its public diplomacy

activities would have further revealed the similarities and differences between public diplomacy and public relations and strengthened the applicability of the findings to the current intellectual debates. Alternatively, the Signitzer and Coombs comparative model could be applied to one of Québec's public diplomacy campaigns to determine the presence of conceptual convergence; however this approach would focus on a particular incidence and fail to establish the broad insights that contribute to theory-building. Dozier, Grunig and Grunig's (2002) Excellence Study offers another approach to the analysis conceptual convergence. Yun applied the Excellence Study to the practices of embassies in Washington, D.C. (as cited in Gilboa, 2008). A similar investigation would involve a quantitative and qualitative analysis, using extensive surveys and long interviews, of the characteristics of the institutions involved in executing Québec's public diplomacy to determine parallels with the public relations principles from the Excellence Study, however the scale of such a project was not feasible for this study.

Nevertheless, the purpose of the thesis is to meaningfully explore the convergence of public diplomacy and public relations with practical examples because only by "attending to the details and 'practice of everyday life' can we begin to understand" relationships (L'Étang, 2006b, p.262). Therefore, a single case study that investigates conceptual convergence across an array of public diplomacy instruments that occur over different time frames is sufficient to address the research problem.

Research strategy

The case study investigates the contemporary phenomenon of the convergence of public diplomacy and public relations through a qualitative analysis of evidence from

multiple sources. The first phase of the research involved a critical review of the scholarly literature that has influenced the study of the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations and an extensive evidence collection process that entailed a qualitative examination of media reports and pertinent government information on Québec's public diplomacy from both print and online resources. Key documents included Québec's International Policy and Tourism Policy, the Ministère du Tourisme's annual report and marketing plan, and Investissement Québec's annual report. The following Web sites were also consulted: Ministère des Relations internationales, the Québec International portal, Ministère de la Culture, des Communications et de la Condition féminine, Invest Québec (Investissement Québec), Bonjour Québec (Tourisme Québec) and Sports-Québec. The second phase of the research consisted of open-ended expert interviews (see appendices). A phone interview was conducted with the director of public diplomacy and information at the Ministère des Relations internationales. The division is responsible for developing the province's public diplomacy strategy and coordinating international outreach. Primary research also comprised a visit to the Québec Government Office in New York City to interview the attaché in charge of the province's academic relations in the Mid-Atlantic United States. Thus, the research incorporated input from serving officials involved in both the planning and implementation of public diplomacy. In addition, a senior official from the Ministère des Relations internationales reviewed the study's findings and contributed their perspectives to the conclusion. The interviews and personal communication provide context for the study, offer privileged insight into Québec's public diplomacy and ensure that the findings are not solely based on the research's inferences. A previous interview with the

vice-president of marketing at the Canadian Tourism Commission initiated for other research purposes provides expert observations on tourism promotion.

The theoretical proposition that public diplomacy and public relations are experiencing a process of convergence orients the case study and guided the data collection and analysis. As described in the conceptual framework (see p. 33-36), the analytic strategy involves the systematic application of the Signitzer and Coombs comparative model to the five areas of Québec's public diplomacy described in the case study. The qualitative analysis identifies patterns and trends in the public diplomacy / public relations nexus and reveals the boundaries of conceptual convergence between the two domains. The researcher's knowledge of the phenomenon ensured sensitivity to novel and unexpected issues arising from data collection. The empirical findings inform the central research problem of whether there exists a strong enough similarity between the two domains to actively theorize public diplomacy from a communications (public relations) perspective and analytic generalizations are drawn to formulate conclusions about the phenomenon in question. Thus, the descriptive case study on Québec's public diplomacy provides a critical test of Signitzer and Coombs' conceptual convergence hypothesis.

Public diplomacy is considered an instrument of statecraft with multiple components. Therefore this thesis presents an expanded definition of public diplomacy (more akin to nation branding) that accounts for the totality of government-supported, either directly or indirectly, activities that inform, influence and create understanding in foreign audiences for the purpose of national advantage. The study explores Québec's efforts to communicate and interact with foreign audiences over the medium- to long-term through traditional public diplomacy - international academic and cultural relations - and non-

traditional public diplomacy - investment and tourism promotion and sports diplomacy. The activities comprising each of the areas described below are detailed and critically examined for evidence of the conceptual convergence of public diplomacy and public relations.

International academic and cultural relations

International academic and cultural relations are the traditional cornerstones of public diplomacy. Cultural relations typically involve government subsidies to artists that promote the national image abroad. Academic relations principally focus on creating mutual understanding with the populations of other countries through the exchange of students and professors. International academic and cultural relations promote a general feeling of goodwill and position foreign public perceptions over the long-term in pursuit of national interests. Not linked to one particular foreign policy objective, academic and cultural relations support broad themes; it is general constituency building. Academic and cultural activities are valued forms of public diplomacy because they are low-risk, communicate universal messages and generate a profile of excellence internationally.

Investment and tourism promotion

Investment and tourism promotion are frequently overlooked in the discussion of public diplomacy instruments, however they are among the most critical elements of international image management. The huge sums that nations spend to promote tourism and their efforts to attract foreign investment cannot be ignored when seeking to understand public diplomacy. The ability to successfully brand a country as a destination of choice for investment and tourism is central to the success of most national economies. Tourism

promotion creates an image of a place people want to visit and associates a country with positive connotations. Likewise, investment promotion profiles the economic advantages and favourable characteristics of an investment location. The unintended benefit of investment and tourism promotion is the positive images and goodwill that destination branding instils in target publics, even in those who never take action and visit or invest.

International sport

The role of international sport is an under researched area in the study of public diplomacy. Sport plays an essential part in defining a national image. Participation in international sporting events showcases a country's athletes to the world and is a manifestation of the excellence of the nation itself because athletes literally represent society - they are a country's ambassadors. Every nation uses international sport for diplomatic advantage. In fact, there is no difference between using sport and culture as instruments of public diplomacy. Both are means of gaining positive attention for a country; through the efforts of its athletes, nations garner international prestige. International sports exchanges also offer opportunities for countries to promote goodwill and build mutually beneficial relationships.

Conclusion

The case study on Québec's public diplomacy in the areas of academic and cultural relations, investment and tourism promotion as well as sports diplomacy will test Signitzer and Coombs' initial findings on the conceptual convergence of public diplomacy and public

relations. Thus, the thesis expands the body of research on public diplomacy from a public relations perspective and constructs a platform for future scholarly inquiry.

Chapter 4: Québec's public diplomacy

Public diplomacy is Québec's face to the world and serves to advance an accurate and favourable perception of the province internationally in support of three key objectives of the International Policy - strengthening influence, fostering growth and prosperity, and promoting identity and culture. Québec's brand finds its expression in a public diplomacy program that features academic and cultural relations, investment and tourism promotion, and sports diplomacy. The following chapter provides the historical context for Québec's international relations and describes the province's public diplomacy instruments.

A brief history of Québec public diplomacy

Michaud (2006) recounts the early history of Québec's internationalism. Québec's attempts to forge an international presence date from the nineteenth century when commercial agents were sent to London, Dublin, Paris and later Brussels. Following the adoption of the Statute of Westminster in 1931, Canada began conducting its own foreign relations. Decisions made by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the 1930's ruled that the provinces had the authority for international treaties in areas under their legislative jurisdiction. Québec's international outreach is based on this interpretation of the Canadian Constitution. In 1940, Québec opened a trade office in New York City with the aim of helping the province recover from the Great Depression and in recognition of the Québec's increasing reliance on access to the U.S. marketplace. The election of Jean Lesage's Liberal government in 1960 marked a major transformation. Known as the Quiet Revolution, Lesage embarked on an ambitious campaign to modernize the province's political, economic and socio-cultural institutions. Among these was an initiative to establish a professional public

service. The provincial government signed an agreement with France to facilitate the needed exchanges. Québec opened a delegation in Paris in 1961 and the idea soon followed that the province needed a “window on the world in order to sustain, and at the same time to assert, the fundamental character of Québec society” (Bélanger, Bernier & Mace, 1995, p.122).

The principle of Québec internationalism is founded on the Gérin-Lajoie doctrine. Penned in 1965 by Québec’s then Minister of Education, Paul Gérin-Lajoie, the doctrine contends that Québec and the other Canadian provinces have the right to defend and promote their interests in international affairs on questions related to provincial jurisdiction. Furthermore, Gérin-Lajoie argued that Québec is a distinct national entity that must be able to represent itself internationally on all matters related to its distinctiveness. In response, Ottawa held that the federal government was the sole representative of Canada and the only level of government able to sign international treaties. In time, the central government relented and permitted the provinces to participate in international conferences related to areas of provincial responsibility, but only as members of the Canadian delegation.

Regardless of Ottawa’s opposition to Québec’s initial forays onto the international stage, in 1968, at France’s suggestion, Québec received an invitation to, and subsequently attended, the meeting of the Conference of National Education Ministers in Libreville, Gabon. A compromise between Québec City and Ottawa was reached in 1971 that enabled Québec to work within the international francophone community’s Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (ACCT) as a ‘participating government’. The province again provoked Ottawa in 1968 when its separatist government opened a tourist office in Washington, D.C. in violation of the federal government’s rule forbidding any provinces to have advisors residing in the U.S. capitol; however the American government has

consistently applied a strict policy of respect for the unity of Canadian foreign representation in Washington, D.C.

Despite intermittently rankling the federal government, Québec managed to consolidate its international presence through the 1970's and early 1980's. The province added delegations in Brussels, Tokyo, Atlanta and Mexico City and established trade offices in Germany and several U.S. cities. Québec also signed numerous agreements with La Francophonie and the Québec-Mexico Working Group was established to allow the province to participate in the Canada-Mexico Cooperation Agreement in areas under its jurisdiction such as culture and education. In 1985, the federal government recognized the right of Québec and the other provinces to be involved in international affairs in domains of provincial jurisdiction, provided this was done within the federal framework. Thereafter, a second compromise was agreed to between the two governments that allowed Québec to participate in the new Summits of Francophone Heads of State and Government. The agreement gave Québec the same status as it had within the ACCT on issues of cooperation and development. In return, Québec agreed to recognize the federal government's authority over international political and economic issues. Since then a practice has been adopted that allows Québec to engage in international cooperation activities in areas that fall under its constitutional jurisdiction. By the 1990's, Québec had signed hundreds of international agreements and the provincial government had institutionalized the conduct of its foreign affairs through the creation of the Ministère des Relations internationales.

Today, Québec is one of the most active sub-national brands in the world. Through its foreign ministry, Québec devotes greater resources to its international activities than all fifty American states combined (Bélanger, 2000). Québec's Ministère des Relations

internationales employs 578 personnel and has a budget of over \$100 million (Gouvernement du Québec, 2006). The Québec government maintains twenty-five foreign offices in fifteen different countries, plus Hong Kong and Taipei, which represents one of the most extensive international networks of any sub-national government and exceeds the foreign presence of several nation states. Provincial representatives lead over 100 foreign economic, political and cultural missions each year and Québec hosts nearly as many visits from foreign delegations (Fry, 2002). Québec has also carved out an autonomous role within francophone international organizations and the province participates in major international cooperation projects such as the international French-speaking consortium, TV5. For more than forty years Québec governments have sought some kind of international political recognition, which is considered essential to the preservation and development of Québec's distinct identity. Québec's international policies and the scope of its activities may vary depending on which of the two main political parties are in power, but public diplomacy is a fundamental instrument in the promotion of Québec's political identity and the province's international affairs form the foundation of its legitimacy as a state. International activities play an integral role in defining Québec's image and expressing its distinctiveness both domestically and internationally.

International cultural relations

International cultural relations anchor public diplomacy. Arts and cultural events and expositions create a favourable impression and increase understanding in foreign audiences over the long-term. Cultural activities help develop a three-dimensional image of a country that leads to a more complete and balanced perception of national political, economic and

social development. Long-term public diplomacy is designed to build goodwill with targeted publics and governments so that there is less friction on those occasions when interests diverge. In the words Hugh Stephens (1999), a former senior official⁸ responsible for Canada's public diplomacy, "a relationship with a solid foundation ... will be more reliable when the chips are down. And one of the best ways to foster a relationship in a non-threatening way is to engage in public diplomacy." International cultural relations are not linked to one particular foreign policy objective, but rather support broad themes; it is general constituency building. Cultural activities are low-risk, communicate universal messages and aim to generate a profile of excellence internationally. Profile and relationship building serve as the foundation for effective strategic communications. The success of advocacy in support of specific foreign policies is largely dependent on cultivating mutual understanding. Therefore, interpersonal connections with foreign publics must be maintained and continually strengthened.

Governments exercise only moderate control of cultural content and its creators often share unmediated exchanges with audiences abroad. Foreign publics interpret these experiences and interactions with foreign culture from their world view. Potter (2006) notes that cultural programs assume a more dialogical and therefore symmetric approach to public diplomacy, one that improves mutual understanding. Over time investments in cultural relations encourage foreign audiences to attach greater esteem and positive connotations to a nation's image. Cultural relations, less and less the exclusive purview of national agencies, are heavily linked with the cultural industries (both high and popular) and involve government subsidies to artists and performers that promote the nation abroad. International

⁸ Hugh Stephens was the Assistant Deputy Minister of Communications, Culture and Policy at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

cultural programs encompass a wide variety of government sponsored initiatives that express and increase awareness of national values. For example, foreign audiences exposed to contemporary Québec film, literature and music form a particular idea of the province. Government support enables authors or musicians to participate in foreign tours and project Québec's image around the world. However, the self-interested, profit driven pursuits of cultural producers on the international stage also enhance national visibility and have an important influence on foreign perceptions.

Culture makes an essential contribution to nation branding. According to Anholt (2002), "...culture, like geography, is an incontrovertible USP [Unique Selling Proposition]". Culture is a direct reflection of a nation's quiddity and infuses a personal dimension into a national brand. Globalization and the communications and media revolution have "...made each state more aware of itself, its image, its reputation, and its attitude - in short, its brand" (van Ham, 2001, p.3). Nations have recognized that culture is an essential part of their strategic equity and globalization and the rise of a world culture have led to a reflexive desire to protect cultural diversity. Cultural homogenization, often interpreted as Americanization, has raised concerns among nations about their ability to maintain cultural distinctiveness. Potter (2006) argues that culture is a tactical resource that, in today's knowledge-based society, drives innovation and creativity. Nations that present credible and distinct voices are considered interesting and able to leverage their status for advantage in the areas of diplomacy, trade and investment, and tourism.

Culture defines Québec's image and provides a means to raise awareness and promote the province internationally. Foreign impressions are founded mainly on cultural experiences and the success of Québec's foreign policy is dependent on public recognition

abroad. The exceptional contribution of culture to Québec's domestic and international identity has led the province to adopt a leading role in the international community for the protection of cultural diversity against trade agreements that emphasize the elimination of economic barriers and consider cultural policies, such as financial assistance for artists, caps on foreign ownership, and radio and television quotas, as impediments to commerce and growth. In 2002, the provincial government convinced the participants of the World Social Forum to accept a proposal, known as the 'Québec Amendment', that supports the principle of a binding international instrument that allows for the exemption of the cultural industries from regional and global economic liberalization treaties. In cooperation with the federal government and the members of the La Francophonie, Québec has since encouraged the negotiation of the UNESCO *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*. The province's foreign policy advocates for the Convention's ratification and implementation and Québec continues to lobby international bodies for the right of governments to shelter the cultural sector from the impact of free trade agreements.

Canada has recognized Québec's unique capacity to act on the international front in matters of language and culture and recently established a formal role for the province at UNESCO. The historic agreement is the culmination of four decades of requests from successive provincial governments and is considered the 'crowning jewel' of Québec's international relations. Québec is now a participating member of Canada's Permanent Delegation in Paris. The provincial representative will be able access to UNESCO's official documents, participate fully in proceedings, meetings and conferences and address the sessions to complete the Canadian position and express Québec's. The arrangement enshrines the federal government's assent of the province's legal authority over the

implementation of international commitments in the areas culture, science and education. From its seat at UNESCO, Québec will be able to shape discussions on international cultural issues to better preserve and develop its distinct identity.

Québec's voice in the United Nations strengthens the province's international presence and legitimacy, however responsibility for promoting and disseminating culture rests with the province's foreign offices. Québec invests an estimated \$20 million a year in cultural relations⁹ and the provincial delegations enable cultural industries and artistic disciplines to participate in foreign expeditions and explore new markets. Tasked with important cultural mandates, officials organize events, develop partnerships with local arts communities and grow networks for cultural trade. For example, the government office in Los Angeles arranges exhibits for provincial artists in the Western states and reciprocal showings in Québec. In 1998, Québec launched the ambitious 'cultural seasons' initiative. Diverse cultural programs were presented in key markets for an entire season. The budget for 'le printemps de Québec' in France was greater than \$10 million and involved more than 150 events throughout the country. Other hosts included Catalonia, Great Britain and Italy. The gatherings focused on demonstrating Québec's contribution to world culture and establishing dialogue with foreign publics.

More recent international cultural forays include Québec's involvement at the Universal Forum of Cultures in Monterrey, Mexico. The UNESCO event profiled culture, science and education from around the world and expected over two million visitors. The provincial contingent included more than 70 artists and speakers that participated in performances, exhibitions and roundtable discussions centred on the themes of cultural diversity, sustainable development, peace and knowledge. The government office in New

⁹ Based on Ministère de la Culture et des Communications figures.

York City partnered with the Smithsonian Institution to present the 'Old World Charm, New World Excitement' festival in Washington, D.C. to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the founding of Québec City. The program featured lectures, food tastings, folk and electronic music, children's shows and movie screenings. In Italy, the Orizzonte Québec Biennial showcased the province's literature, theatre, dance, film, visual arts and music at events in fifteen Italian cities, including Rome, Turin and Milan. Promoting Québec's identity and culture also means supporting the French language. Québec plays an important role as the leader of the French fraternity in North America. Québec has cultivated privileged relationships with minority linguistic communities in New England and Louisiana. Cooperation and exchange programs between Québec and their linguistic brethren in the United States help protect against the erosion of the French language and culture. Québec's cultural relations raise awareness abroad, expand the province's influence and contribute to mutually beneficial relationships with other nations.

Anholt (2002) writes that the challenge for all countries is "to find ways of continually presenting and re-presenting their past cultural achievements alongside their modern equivalents in ways that are fresh, relevant and appealing to younger audiences." Québec's commercial artists and cultural enterprises successfully produce salable content for international consumption that furthers the province's reach and advances its profile with foreign audiences. TVA, a privately owned television network in Québec, is the largest French-language broadcaster in the Americas. The chief producer of popular French television programming in Canada, TVA contributes local content to TV5 Monde¹⁰ for global distribution. In 2004, *Les Invasions barbares* won the French national film award for

¹⁰ TV5 Monde is the fourth largest global television network available around the world after the BBC, CNN and MTV.

Best Picture and the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film, in addition to numerous prizes at international festivals. Ralston Saul (1994) describes Montréal as the “only alternative metropolis to Paris in the French-speaking world” and the “centre of new and revolutionary French-language theatre.” A genuine cultural capital, Montréal is also home the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal. Founded in the 1934, the orchestra has frequently toured North America, Europe, Asia and South America and its recordings have won two Grammy awards and other prestigious international honours. Ralston Saul (1994) explains that symphony orchestras serve national interests because they perform in prominent theatres around the world and garner publicity. Montréal also hosts an international jazz festival that draws millions of visitors each year, the world’s biggest comedy festival and Les Francofolies, an important gathering of francophone music.

One of Québec’s most prolific cultural exports, *Cirque de Soleil* is a burgeoning entertainment empire. Since its inception in 1984, the performance ensemble has reinvented the circus. A critical and financial success, 80 million spectators in over 200 cities have experienced *Cirque de Soleil*’s unique brand of creative artistry (Cirque de Soleil, 2008). On any given night, the troupe will amuse audiences in Boston, Barcelona, Santiago, Sydney and Vienna and entertain tourists at resident shows in Tokyo, Macau, Las Vegas (six) and Walt Disney World. *Cirque de Soleil* also creates original, award-winning content for television and film and distributes its productions worldwide. Guiding influences on the contemporary circus, Québec acts and the renowned École nationale de cirque, a recognized academic and professional institution in Montréal, attract and produce top international circus talent. Québec’s associations with *Cirque de Soleil* and other performing arts companies bolster the province’s international reputation as a creative, dynamic and modern

entity. In popular culture, Céline Dion is a Québec born international superstar. First acclaimed as the winner, representing Switzerland, of the 1988 Eurovision Song Contest, Dion achieved worldwide success with several English and French albums in the 1990's. Considered one of the most successful artists in pop music history, she has sold over 200 million albums. The songstress has had multiple number one hits the United States, the United Kingdom and France. Most recently, Dion concluded a five-year stint performing nightly at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. However, foreign audiences do not necessarily associate Dion's image with Québec because of her many career incarnations coupled with a prolonged residence abroad. The British Council recognizes that relationships between domestic non-governmental parties and communities abroad - broadly defined to include, among others, dancers, web-surfers, film-makers and film-goers, theatres, singers and television viewers - while not public diplomacy, can have a significant impact on public diplomacy and is "in a sense a precondition of success" (Rose & Wadham-Smith, 2004, p.33).

Ralston Saul's prescient study on Canada's public diplomacy stresses that the success of cultural relations hinges as much on the robustness of the domestic cultural industries as it does on a nation's foreign policy objectives. For example, the heavy subsidization of German culture at home translates into a greater capacity to launch international programs. With the probable exception of the United States and the United Kingdom, because of the far-reaching international footprints left by the current and former global superpowers, the scope and impact of cultural diplomacy for other industrialized societies is directly related to the level of government support for domestic cultural production. In Québec, the provincial government defines culture as a necessity and a right for every citizen and the Ministère de

la Culture et des Communications invests more \$700 million in the sector annually¹¹. Québec's commitment and dedicated investment has positioned the province's artists and performers, provincial standard-bearers on the world scene, to realize international acclaim and commercial success. The province, in turn, gains a reputation for excellence and innovation. Québec's cultural industries also provide tangible economic benefits that contribute directly to prosperity. In 2003¹², Québec generated \$10 billion in cultural output and produced 30% of all Canadian exports. A net exporter, the sector accounted for over four percent of both the provincial GDP and employment. In addition, cultural relations also have an important domestic function. The province employs cultural diplomacy to demonstrate its 'national character' abroad and ensures that the remarkable success of its culture on the world stage is understood at home. Québec's displays of outward cultural expression engender pride among its citizens, nurture identity awareness and contribute to social cohesion.

Cultural relations are manifested in many forms, including performing arts tours, visual arts expositions and literary events. The projection of culture largely determines international profile and influences foreign attitudes about a nation's brand. For example, France is a cultural behemoth and has leveraged cultural diplomacy to cement its place in the world. Higham (2002) cleverly explains the potential impact of cultural relations: "If one has ever needed persuading that cultural diplomacy has exploitable economic and trade consequences, just note that we pay more for French *designer* bottled water than we do for a litre of high-octane for the BMW" (p.137). Furthermore, France's status as the world's

¹¹ Based on Statistics Canada, Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics Division, data for 1996-2003 and current population estimates.

¹² Based on Statistics Canada, Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics Division, data for 1996-2003.

premier tourist destination is founded on an almost universal appreciation for French culture. Culture, a direct expression of identity, shapes a nation's image and reputation and translates into more profitable export markets and increased investment and tourism over the long-term. Nations that stimulate imaginations and generate international interest in their culture are able to enhance mutual understanding with foreign publics and build lasting relationships. A strong brand that reflects attractive modern characteristics creates the necessary pre-conditions for successful advocacy and directly supports the national interests.

International academic relations

International academic and cultural relations are the traditional cornerstones of public diplomacy. The academic component is principally focused on creating mutual understanding with the populations of other countries over the long-term through the exchange of students and scholars, shared research and conference initiatives and the granting of international scholarships. International academic relations promote a general feeling of goodwill and rely on the power of attraction to win an international following. Successful programs eventually enable governments to exert influence over the international agenda and position foreign public perception in pursuit of national interests. The investment can be drawn against and will lend to a more sympathetic audience with a greater understanding of the context in times of crisis and make it easier to influence public opinion abroad to help achieve specific policy objectives. The idea is that other nations become more favourable to your foreign policies and perspectives when they have been exposed to your language, your culture and your people.

International academic relations is an exercise in image management, however the pay-off is not immediately visible or measurable because the activities occur over the long-term. The time frames involved, years in the case of a student exchange agreements, mean that governments cannot extensively control the message. Audiences abroad interpret messages from their world view and communication over time becomes increasingly unmediated. Though there is less opportunity for control, foreign publics will associate the messages with more validity because of their arms length relationship from government. Furthermore, one must consider the paradox of public diplomacy. The concept is most evident in academic relations when, for instance, intellectuals criticize the very government that is sponsoring their international lecture series. However, there is no paradox if diversity of perspective is:

An essential part of the values message [that a country] wishes to export. If diversity is a key message that [a country] wishes to project abroad, then [a country] will not want [their] cultural and academic programming to be rigorously on message as this would be perceived as a propaganda exercise. (Scott, 2005)

It is, therefore, helpful to demonstrate that there are “cleavages in [the country’s] society and different points of view, including those that are highly critical” of the government that is funding the academic and cultural activities (Scott, 2005). For example, Canada is the only G8 country that would allow touring academics to openly and freely support Québec independence and the breaking-up of the federation. This demonstrates confidence and increases credibility. While there are risks taken if foreign audiences are exposed to both a society’s positive and negative attributes, paradoxically, this process is often considered

beneficial because it bestows greater legitimacy on the state willing to embrace its triumphs and struggles.

Educational activities play a central role in international affairs and constitute an important source of the global flow of information. Mowlana (1997) suggests that international academic relations promote quality communication and interactions between intellectuals and future decisions makers and facilitate understanding and harmony among the peoples of the world. The United States and the Soviet Union engaged in academic exchanges during the Cold War that enabled the flow of information across an ideological divide, increased tolerance for each others social and political systems and prompted a realization among participants that co-existence was possible. Many of the Soviet leaders involved in the glasnost reforms spent time studying in the United States. Today, developing countries consider the foreign education of their most promising scholars an imperative for the promotion of national development. Faculty and student exchanges build and strengthen ties between nations and reciprocally improve cultural awareness and appreciation. International conferences also facilitate the exchange of information and ideas and provide a forum for discussion and debate. International academic relations serve to enhance the global identity of nations, promote a profile of excellence internationally, reduce misconceptions and expand business and trade networks.

Education is a constituent feature of Québec's public diplomacy and the province has built a reputation abroad as an attractive destination for advanced learning. Several post-secondary institutions are affiliated with major research networks and have developed international profiles. Québec's education system offers many advantages, such as the opportunity to study or conduct research in two languages and some of the lowest tuition

fees in North America. Every year, more than 20,000 foreign students attend Québec's schools, colleges and universities¹³. The provincial government's academic relations activities include Québec studies and student exchange programs, international scholarships and tuition exemptions for students from less developed countries. The majority of Québec's foreign offices have mandates that involve academic relations. The province's delegations promote and develop alliances with other governments in the areas of education, research, and science and technology. Québec is particularly active among the knowledge communities of France, the Benelux and the German Länders of Bavaria and Saxony. Québec's government offices coordinate educational initiatives, including faculty and student exchanges, with foreign government institutions, such as the British Council, and collaborate with centres for Québec studies. Québec's universities are also party to hundreds of bilateral agreements that encompass an array of study abroad programs and internships as well as joint research projects and publications.

Boucher (1999) explains that academic relations have greatly influenced the image of Québec abroad. In the 1960s, Québec was depicted as a closed society and scholarly attention was limited to its traditional folk culture, however pioneering professors of language and Québec literature encouraged their students to consider the province as an open, dynamic and modern entity and influenced the expansion of the study of Québec into other disciplines. A decade later, dialogue and debate surrounding Québec separatism was an impetus for increased academic interest. The rise of Canadian studies programs in the 1980's contributed to a better understanding of the distinctions between Canada and Québec and decision makers and the media often called upon experts in Canadian studies to provide analysis and counsel on issues related to Québec. For over a quarter century, the provincial

¹³ Based on Ministère des Relations internationales figures.

government has worked in concert with foreign institutions to develop programs and create courses, organize conferences, speaking tours and seminars, and publish research on Québec.

Québec's academic relations with the United States highlight efforts to inform and create understanding in foreign audiences. Québec is the most active among all the Canadian provincial governments in engendering close academic links with the United States (Fry, 2002). The government supports the American Council of Québec Studies and maintains affiliations with the Association of Canadian Studies in the United States to encourage academics to conduct research that presents a balanced perspective and properly accounts for Québec's unique role in the federation. The province provides grants to American professors and researchers of Québec studies and funds libraries at U.S. universities. Moreover, once every four years, the American Association of Teachers of French, representing ten thousand academics, hold their annual meeting in the province. Québec studies and exchange programs also offer U.S. students the opportunity to learn French and discover Québec's culture and heritage. The image of Québec as a tolerant, liberal and democratic economic partner that has evolved in the United States is indebted to the province's investment in academic relations.

The ultimate aim of Québec's academic relations is to build solid and lasting connections with other nations. Québec has leveraged a mutual commitment to education to build significant ties with China. Québec's political relationship with China was inaugurated in 1978 with the first high-level Chinese mission to the province. Two years later, Québec's Minister of Education visited China and the two governments signed a memorandum on education. Further agreements on education and training, science and technology, economic development and culture have followed. Québec's premiers have participated in several

economic missions to China and the province has welcomed dozens of delegations from China's central government, provinces and cities. Québec maintains a government office in Beijing, a bureau in Shanghai and an immigration office in Hong Kong. Over a thousand Chinese students¹⁴ study in Québec each year and academic groups from Québec and China collaborate on scientific and technological projects. Education is a central to the relationship between the two governments and Québec has founded studies centres' in Beijing and Shanghai.

Québec studies centres contribute to spreading knowledge about Québec's distinct identity and culture and form a focal point for the province's academic presence abroad. The rationale behind the initiative to establish two learning institutes with companion libraries in China is to educate the future business and government leaders of one of Québec's major trading partners. According to a report from the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations and The Ditchley Foundation Conference held in 2005, educating foreign elites is a 'forceful impetus' for facilitating intercultural understanding. The Centres provide a forum to brand Québec and influence the next generation decision makers. Peter Harder (2008), former Deputy Minister of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, argues that it is vital to cultivate good relations with China to capitalize on the emerging superpower's huge market. Québec's emphasis on academic relations has favourably positioned the province to secure a place as an economic and cultural partner in China's future.

There are many forms of international academic relations, including educational exchanges, studies programs, international conferences and scholarships. Whether the initiatives involve exchange students or elite scholars, the participants become ambassadors and the unmediated relationships with foreign audiences that result lead to a wider, more

¹⁴ Based on Ministère des Relations internationales figures.

general understanding of each others nations and cultures. Academic relations strategies are dialogical and help mitigate short-term fluctuations in foreign relations with other governments. Building long-term relationships also increases the effectiveness of advocacy because the more familiar foreign publics are with another state's national identity and aspirations, the higher the likelihood that advocacy efforts, even unpopular ones, will receive a more sympathetic hearing from the receiving audience. Other benefits include greater research on topics that are important to the sponsoring nation, improved awareness among potential foreign investors and increased tourism. Academic relations generate international attention and provide a route for governments to achieve national interests and enhance the prosperity of their nations.

Investment promotion

The global environment is characterized by the communications revolution as well as greater and greater economic integration and the blurring of any distinction between domestic economies and the broader global marketplace. These features of the world system coupled with increased economic competition at the international level brought about a need for governments to reconsider traditional approaches to international trade in general and investment promotion specifically. Commercial diplomacy is now accorded a higher priority in foreign policy. Commercial diplomacy, of which investment promotion is an integral part, is defined as “the application of the tools of diplomacy to help bring about specific commercial gains through promoting exports, attracting inward investment and preserving outward investment opportunities” (Potter, 2004). Foreign direct investment is considered an important generator for growth and employment. According to Foreign Affairs and

International Trade Canada, the Conference Board of Canada, the C.D. Howe Institute and numerous international organizations, including the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, foreign investment is at the heart of innovation and leads to increased trade and research and development; this correlates into wealth, jobs, technology, productivity and an increased standard of living. Consequently, investment promotion has become one of the main pillars of larger foreign policy agendas.

The case of Québec is particularly representative of the new global economy. Québec was one of the strongest advocates in favour of Canada's Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States and later the North American Free Trade Agreement. In 1988, the year prior to the implementation of the FTA, Québec exported the equivalent of twenty-two percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP); by 2002, exports had increased to thirty-eight percent of provincial GDP (Fry, 2004). Today, trade amounts to more than fifty percent of Québec's GDP and the province's economy would rank twenty-seventh among nation states, comparable to that of Denmark¹⁵. The United States is Québec's largest trading partner. "Few noncentral governments have as great a dependency on a foreign nation for their economic well-being as Québec has on the United States" (Fry, 2002). Almost seventy-five percent of Québec's exports go to the United States, which accounts for nearly one-fifth of its GDP, and nearly half of its foreign direct investment comes from its southern neighbour. The United States market is far and away Québec's international economic priority. The proliferation of a world system dominated by free-market economics means that economic integration between the province and its closest trading partners will deepen and Québec's dependence on trade and foreign investment will only increase.

¹⁵ Based on World Bank data for 2006.

Foreign investment is central to Québec's economic interests and, consequently, its prosperity. In response to the competition at the international level for foreign investment that characterizes today's economic reality, the Government of Québec created Investissement Québec (Invest Québec) to help brand the province internationally. The independent agency's mission is to "promote the growth of investment in Québec and thereby contribute to economic development and job creation" (Gouvernement du Québec, 2007a). Its raison d'être is investment promotion¹⁶: to centralize and consolidate government initiatives to attract investors and promote Québec internationally as an investment destination of choice. Investissement Québec's role is considered so important that Ministère des Relations internationales officials refer to the agency as the "king of Government"¹⁷. Since 1998, Investissement Québec has coordinated over 300 foreign investment projects with a total value of \$6 billion that led directly to 24,000 jobs (Daoust, 2007). Last year, the agency secured fifty-two foreign investment ventures totalling \$960 million that will create another 6,726 jobs (Gouvernement du Québec, 2007a).

Investissement Québec's informs potential investors and other target publics, such as foreign media, Chambers of Commerce and economic associations, about the benefits of investing in Québec and organizes events that raise the province's profile with the global business community to help generate investment interest. Québec's foreign delegations also assist Investissement Québec. The primary mission of most of Québec's foreign offices is export development and investment promotion. A permanent presence in key foreign markets provides an effective means to promote the province's economic interests abroad

¹⁶ Investment promotion is different from promoting specific products and services in foreign markets. Investment promotion aims at positioning a country as an attractive investment destination, whereas trade promotion is international business development or marketing a nation's goods and services abroad.

¹⁷ Interview with Nicole McKinnon, Directrice, Information et diplomatie publique, Ministère des relations internationales.

and establish relationships with local and regional business communities. Québec's delegations facilitate meetings between provincial representatives and political and business leaders, and organize reciprocal trade missions.

Given the emphasis currently placed on innovation and technology in today's free-market economy, Investissement Québec brands the province with the elements of dynamism and competitiveness to associate it with positive images. Investissement Québec positions the province as an advanced economic partner that provides proximity and access to the North American market and promotes the province's quality of life, safe and vibrant cities, university resources, educated workforce and generous tax incentives to attract the foreign investment.

Reducing misconceptions is another important function of investment promotion. Lachapelle and Paquin (2005) note that "prejudice often critically influences investment decisions", therefore to excel in the global economy it is recognized that Canada, for example, must overcome traditional stereotypes (p. 80). As Potter (2004) writes:

By the turn of the century, it was apparent that there was a large gap between how Canadians viewed themselves and how broad swathes of foreign audiences perceived them ... in the eyes of the world, Canada remained largely what it was a century ago, namely a resource economy ... and, according to a review of Canada's international brand undertaken in 2000, contemporary elements - dynamism, innovation, technology, tolerance, competitiveness and multiculturalism - were conspicuously absent.

Branding Canada as an economic partner and investment destination therefore involves raising awareness of its knowledge economy. Québec faces many of the same challenges,

but it is re-inventing itself. Québec has successfully transitioned from pulp and paper to aerospace production and video game development. Today, provincial enterprises are considered less ‘hewers of wood and drawers of water’ and more readily associated with innovation and leading-edge technology. Globally recognizable brands also contribute to Québec’s new image. Bombardier, a Global Fortune 500 company, is one of the world’s leading aerospace and rail transportation firms. Commuters in New York, London and Shanghai ride Bombardier trains to work on the metro and travelers from every continent fly to their destinations on Bombardier’s suite of regional aircraft. Another Québec success story is Louis Garneau. Founded by its namesake, a former Olympic cyclist, the company is a niche specialist manufacturer of high-end bikes, cycling accessories and equipment, and athletic apparel. Louis Garneau sponsors national and international cycling and ski teams and the brand name is found on podiums at elite international sporting events around the world. Investissement Québec leverages the province’s contemporary image and profile of excellence internationally to promote Québec as a destination of choice and influence the decisions of foreign business leaders and investors into actions that contribute to Québec’s economic prosperity.

Investissement Québec has implemented a communications and marketing plan that targets foreign investors in specific priority economic sectors, including aerospace and life sciences. The agency promotes the province as an investment destination at international events, such as the Farnborough Air Show, Orlando’s HeliExpo and Chicago’s BIO 2006. Special attention is also paid to positioning Québec’s burgeoning multimedia and electronic games sector. Provincial representatives attend electronic expos and game developers conferences around the world and the province helps organize Montréal’s annual

International Game Summit. Last year, Investissement Québec also hosted twelve foreign journalists that penned several articles in international publications on the advantages of investing in Québec, including the prestigious British magazine *Develop*, which published a series of articles on the province's video gaming industry. Investissement Québec has won several awards for its promotional efforts from American investment site locator publications and the Economic Developers Association of Canada awarded the province first prize in the Promotion-Events category for the information kit on Québec's biopharmaceutical industry that was handed out to participants at the BIO 2006 show. The province also distributes a quarterly newsletter to thousands of clients and potential investors and its investment promotion efforts are facilitated through its Web site: www.InvestQuébec.biz.

The provincial government organizes dozens of trade missions a year that are equally important for the promotion of foreign investment. Since 1999, Québec has participated in the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. The mission, led by Québec's Premier, promotes economic development and international investment in the province. In 2002, Québec's Minister of Finance attended a special world economic summit in New York City and returned with contracts for the province worth \$750 million (Desrossiers, 2002). The Government of Québec has also participated in Team Canada missions. They were partnership initiatives with the provincial and territorial governments, led by Prime Minister Chrétien from 1994 to 2002, to enhance the image of Canada as an investment destination and place to do business. Team Canada Missions were a form of public diplomacy designed to "increase trade and investment, as well as create jobs and growth in Canada" (Government of Canada, 2005). Created, in part, as a response to Canada's diminishing

proportion of foreign direct investment, the missions provided Canadian firms with access to foreign political and business leaders and granted visibility to the Canadian delegates in key international markets. The presence of the Prime Minister lent credibility and created an environment conducive to establishing new business relationships. Other participants included the provincial premiers and territorial government leaders. According to Potter (2004), “these high-visibility missions ... evolved into a key component of Canada’s international business development efforts.” Despite Québec’s refusal for political reasons to participate in the inaugural Team Canada mission in 1994¹⁸, Premier Lucien Bouchard (1996-2001) was a regular participant in later Team Canada ventures, including the federal government’s hugely successful visit to China in 2001¹⁹.

Following the federal government’s initiative, Québec organized several Mission Québec tours, which included members of the Québécois business community, to promote trade and investment, most notably in the United States, Mexico, China, Argentina, Chile, France and Catalonia. Premier Bouchard was also particularly active in marketing Québec in the U.S. during his tenure. His purpose was two-fold; to resurrect Québec’s flagging economy and position the province for self-sufficiency in support of a separatist agenda. Supplementing Mission Québec trips with official visits, the Québec government’s trade and investment promotion in the United States were to culminate in September 2001 with the ‘Québec Season’ in New York state²⁰. An ‘Espaces Québec’ was to be created in New York City’s financial district featuring a number of cultural events and festivities. The vision of

¹⁸ An article published in *Le Devoir* on November 10, 1994, reported that, then Deputy Premier, Minister Bernard Landry argued that the province would be unable to represent itself with dignity because the provincial premiers would be reduced to following the federal limousines in mini-vans.

¹⁹ Representing the largest Team Canada mission with nearly 600 business participants, the mission resulted in over \$5.7 billion in new business deals for Canadian enterprises.

²⁰ ‘Québec Season’ in New York City was cancelled following the events of September 11, 2001.

the \$15 million initiative was to promote the new image of Québec as an innovative and sophisticated business partner. Under Bouchard, Québec's economy was substantially reinvigorated and the province continues to prosper through its privileged relationship with the United States.

More traditional forms of public diplomacy also lend to a favourable image of Québec as a place to do business. The province exercises its cultural capital to attract international investors. For example, Québec hosted exclusive Cirque de Soleil Tapis Rouge events for businesspeople in Brussels, New York and Dallas. Moreover, international academic relations further economic priorities through the promotion of goodwill and the positioning of foreign public perceptions over the long-term in pursuit of national interests. Québec studies programs and student exchanges provide a forum to brand the province and influence the next generation of business leaders and entrepreneurs. In this way, other tools of public diplomacy are employed to help support investment promotion efforts.

Investment promotion contributes directly to Québec's economic prosperity. It is a form of public diplomacy that brands Québec as an innovative and dynamic player on the world scene; an image that serves to promote the province as an investment destination of choice among potential international investors and business partners. Governments that are able to brand themselves successfully will have the capacity to influence foreign decision makers and secure a larger share of foreign investment, while other less visible nations will lack the appropriate identity to compete on the global stage.

Tourism promotion

Tourism is an important generator for growth and employment and contributes directly to a destination's prosperity. The World Tourism Organization, a specialized agency of the United Nations and the leading international organization in the field of tourism, reports that tourism is firmly established as the number one industry in many countries and has become one of the world's most important sources of employment. It stimulates enormous investment in infrastructure, such as parks, transport and rural development, and provides substantial revenues for national and regional economies. Therefore, governments and their agencies spend vast sums of money on tourism promotion. In 2006, the Canada Tourism Commission's (CTC) budget was \$86.8 million, an amount comparable to Foreign Affairs Canada's total expenditures on public diplomacy!

Tourism promotion contributes to defining the images of nations, regions and cities abroad and serves similar interests to public diplomacy. Tourism is linked to the concept of public diplomacy because they share the common goal of promoting national brands to the world. Tourism promotion is destination branding, a key component of nation branding. Anholt (2003) considers tourism one of the six defining characteristics of 'national competence' and the "primary stakeholder in promoting the national brand" (p.167). Tourism is the most advertised and marketed abroad of Anholt's competencies and therefore has a disproportionate effect on people's perceptions, even though tourism's impact on the economy is much lower than its perceived value against a nation's brand, in contrast to foreign investment for example. Tourism promotion is one of the most powerful ways to communicate an identity and Anholt (2003) argues that it is "often the closest a country gets to 'advertising' itself in a literal sense" (p.134).

While the economic benefits of a successful tourism industry are self-evident, the unintended benefits of the goodwill that tourism promotion creates in foreign publics and the positive images it instils about destinations, even in those who never take action and visit, are immense. According to Greg Klassen, vice-president, marketing, of the CTC, “the tourism perspective really focuses on ‘come and visit Canada’ as a tourism destination but that has a huge impact in terms of the perception of what our country stands for and what’s it’s all about.” Klassen suggests that the CTC has “a huge opportunity to prop up the idea of Canada and position it as this great place, not only just to visit but presumably it would trickle down to a great place to invest or a great place to immigrate to.” Consequently, tourism promotion has become a key international activity, not just for countries but for regions and cities too. Its primary function is to generate income for the host destination, however it has additional knock-on benefits that support broader government priorities than economic development. Tourism promotion also helps create a better understanding of the host country, its culture and its people through the personal experiences of travelers. In sum, it is a key for success in areas of the national interest.

In Québec, tourism is big business. According to Tourisme Québec²¹, the province received over 3 million international visitors in 2006. Tourism is Québec’s sixth largest export industry, accounting for nearly 2.8 percent of its GDP. The tourism sector directly employs close to 140,000 people and generates upwards of \$10 billion annually in economic activity. The Ministère du Tourisme promotes Québec through its destination management organization, Tourisme Québec, which operates on an annual marketing budget of

²¹ The following figures are based on Tourisme Québec statistics for 2005 and 2006.

approximately \$18.6 million²². Tourisme Québec's objective is to increase the province's economic development through tourism. Tourisme Québec promotes an image of the province as a place people want to visit and associates Québec with positive images in foreign audiences. Tourism promotion supports Québec by positioning it globally as a tourist destination, but that also provides intangible benefits for provincial investment promotion and immigration.

Québec has invested in its brand through tourism promotion. Québec is a four season travel destination for cultural tourism, festivals and events, active pursuits, ecotourism and business conventions. In 2005, Tourisme Québec launched a marketing strategy based on promoting four clusters of travel experiences - urban, maritime, holiday resort and wilderness - to international target markets. The refashioned brand aims to promote Québec as a more distinct tourist destination. Based on the slogan, "Providing emotions since 1534", the new brand seeks to associate Québec with evocative images. Québec's key target markets for tourism are New England, the Mid-Atlantic States (including New York), France and the United Kingdom.

More than two million of Québec's international visitors come from the United States²³. The Mid-Atlantic States account for over thirty-five percent of international travelers to the province, mostly from New York. Recently, tourism promotion in the region for summer travel was concentrated in New York, Hartford, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Newspaper, television, airport and online advertisements were employed. The winter campaign focused on audiences in New York State and included a television commercial in

²² Municipal and regional destination management organizations also have large funding envelopes to promote local tourism. For example, Tourisme Montréal draws on a sales, promotion and advertising budget of over \$20 million.

²³ Based on Tourisme Québec statistics for 2003-2006.

Plattsburg and advertising in ski and snowmobile magazines. Québec's other major U.S. market is New England, which represents thirty percent of the province's annual international tourist visits. The latest publicity campaigns promoting summer tourism consisted of radio, newspaper and airport advertising in Boston. Supplemented with television advertisements in Boston, Burlington and Portland marketing winter travel. Québec also engaged in an Internet campaign and participated in two editorial boards with Boston and Stowe-based media. In addition, media events, resulting in numerous articles, were organized to coincide with a provincial gastronomic tourism campaign that included advertisements in over eighty specialized publications. The Québec brand image is also promoted in leading U.S. travel publications. Furthermore, Tourisme Québec funds visits and press tours from foreign travel writers and the province was the subject of feature articles in *Travel & Leisure* and *National Geographic Traveler*.

Tourists from the United States may represent majority of all visitors to Québec, however international travelers from Europe and beyond are particularly important to the vitality of the province's tourism industry because their longer stays mean they spend more money. Québec's tourism promotion efforts outside the United States are primarily devoted to attracting tourists from France and the United Kingdom. France accounts for over a quarter of the province's non-U.S. visitors and one-third of their spending. In 2006, the Spring / Summer tourism promotion campaign in France was conducted in partnership with Air Canada and featured print, television and online advertising. To promote winter travel, the province employed print advertisements and a store front video display on the Champs Elysées. Other initiatives throughout the year included adverts on buses in Lyon, Nantes and Bordeaux and advertising hoardings in the Lyon airport. Tourisme Québec also organizes the

Destination Québec trade show in Paris to showcases the province to the travel industry. The United Kingdom represents Québec's third most important international market. During March 2007, Québec ran a poster campaign in the London metro and a gala event at the Comedy Store in London was organized to promote Montréal's Just for Laughs festival - invited guests included travel industry representatives and members of the press. Partnerships activities with airlines, travel companies and Web sites were also favoured tourism promotion strategies in the United Kingdom.

The success of Québec's tourism industry relies on the attraction of Montréal and Québec City as destinations of choice. The two cities receive almost seventy percent of the province's visitors. Celebrating its 400 year anniversary in 2008, Québec City is the heart of French culture in North America and its old city was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985. It also serves as a base for sport and nautical travel experiences. Québec City is one of the world's most popular travel destinations²⁴ and Montréal is one of the most globally recognizable cities. Montréal was ranked thirteenth overall in the Anholt City Brands Index²⁵ (2006) and it was the top Canadian city, one place above Toronto. Montréal scored in the top ten for affordability (5), safety (7), public services (8), and environment (9) - an enviable image for any tourist destination. Montréal hosts some of the world's great summer festivals and is considered a gastronomic capital. In the words of a former travel industry insider²⁶, "culture is tourism and tourism is culture", and Montréal and Québec City have been able to capitalize on their culture to promote tourism far more than any other Canadian destination

²⁴ Québec City was ranked the sixth most popular world travel destination on the *National Geographic Traveler* 2004 Destination Scoreboard and by readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* in 2002.

²⁵ An online survey of over 15,000 consumers from 20 countries.

²⁶ Jennifer Demers was the former Director of Government Relations for the Tourism Industry Association of Canada

(J. Demers, personal communication, Summer 2008). Québec profits from Montréal and Québec City's reputations and leverages its tourism promotion on their brands.

Québec's foreign offices also support tourism and promote the province as a unique travel destination linked to the French language and French-Canadian culture. The mandate of Québec's Washington, D.C. bureau includes providing tourist information and publicizing Montréal as a location for conferences and international conventions. The New York City delegation was responsible for organizing the 'Québec Season' in New York. In addition to the investment promotion events planned for New York City, the initiative was to feature a river caravan travelling from Québec City through upstate New York with stops in Plattsburgh, Albany and other communities to raise the profile of Québec and encourage more New Yorkers to visit the province. More recently, the New York office, in collaboration with the CTC, organized a public event to celebrate the Christmas holidays in New York's Bryant Park, which resulted in significant visibility and media coverage. Québec also leans on its cultural assets to promote tourism. Travel industry representatives from New York were invited to a Cirque de Soleil soirée hosted by Tourisme Québec, the province's casinos and regional tourism associations. Moreover, Québec's representatives abroad coordinate joint-promotional efforts with other governments. For example, the New England states and eastern Canadian provinces have engaged in campaigns to promote the region as a tourist destination to European audiences.

In today's increasingly contested marketplace, global mind space is at a premium. Aggressive international competition for tourist dollars and what Joseph Nye (as cited in Gregory, 2005) refers to as the 'paradox of plenty', that is the plenitude of information brought about by the rapid increase in global communication flows leads to a poverty of

attention in audiences, has made the need to differentiate Québec from other regions, and indeed nations, a priority. For Québec to succeed and increase its visibility internationally, both public diplomacy and destination branding have an important role to play.

Globalization means that countries are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of their national brands. A strong brand provides a competitive advantage on the international stage and facilitates the attainment of foreign policy objectives. The importance and pervasiveness of tourism promotion suggests that destination branding effects more than just those who take action and visit. Tourism promotion creates a mental picture of a place and the perceptions that it engenders in the minds of foreign audiences has the potential to influence decisions on where they invest, what products they buy and whether they support the foreign policy priorities of one nation or region over another.

Sport and public diplomacy

Sport is an essential feature of contemporary society and governments allocate considerable resources to hosting the international sporting events, developing the stadia and sports complexes and training the elite athletes that represent their nations to the world. Sport provides an ideal platform for public diplomacy. Nation branding through sports is significantly more effective than the individual acts of public affairs officers at embassies. Australia's international image received a big boost following the success of the 2004 Summer Olympics in Sydney. A country that was off most people's radar screen suddenly made a large impression. Australia and Sydney's image continue to resonate internationally. Based on the strength of its brand, Sydney was ranked as the world's top city in the most recent Anholt City Brands Index. Anholt (2006) notes that Sydney's reputation has risen to

become “universally and absolutely” admired. Hosting an international sporting event or having your country's team among the top contenders in the arenas of international competition captures massive global mind share and provides enormous economic benefits to host and participating countries. For example, the 2006 World Cup of soccer netted 30 billion viewers worldwide, seven times that of the Olympics, and it was estimated that the 32 participating countries received a £13 billion boost to their economies (“Net wealth: the global economic impact of the World Cup”, 2006).

One of soccer’s traditional powerhouses, Brazil, provides the quintessential example of the role that sport can play as a form of public diplomacy. Brazil exports its soccer players (footballers) to the far-flung corners of the world, such as Saudi Arabia and New Zealand, in addition to soccer hotspots like Europe and Latin America. According to Bellos (2005), author of *Futebol*, Brazilian soccer players can earn much more, even in remote outposts, than they would at home and they also play an important cross-cultural role.

The number of soccer players who leave Brazil is four times the number of diplomats sent to work in Brazilian missions abroad and their effect is often similar. There are so many Brazilian footballers around the world, spread across so many countries that they function like a parallel diplomatic service. They are cultural ambassadors as well as sporting ones since Brazilian lifestyle is so closely linked to how they play football. (Bellos, 2005)

Alternatively, Austria has very poor footballing pedigree. The country co-hosted the 2008 European soccer championships (Euro 2008) with Switzerland and the national team, ranked among the worst on the continent, was automatically qualified for the tournament. A group of fans petitioned Austrian football’s governing body to voluntarily resign its active

participation (Holland, 2008). The campaign expressed concerns that rather than showcasing Austria's culture and hospitality to a worldwide audience, Euro 2008 represented an occasion for possible national embarrassment.

Canada began recognizing the potential impact of international sports during the 1972 Summit Series. One of the most memorable events in Canadian sports history, the series generated unparalleled interest and swelled national pride. The diplomatic ties that resulted advanced Canada-U.S.S.R. relations and sports exchanges became a valuable feature of their wider bilateral relationship. International sport plays an important role in promoting sub-national brands too. The participation of Québec athletes in the Olympics, world championships and the Games of La Francophonie promote an image of Québec that is arguably more far-reaching and pervasive than those generated through traditional public diplomacy. The Montréal Canadiens and its superstar hockey players, both past and present, and prominent Olympic champions, such as Gaétan Boucher (speed skating), Jean-Luc Brassard (freestyle skiing) and David Pelletier (figure skating), are examples of how Québec is defined internationally through its athletes and teams competing at the highest levels.

Sport has an important influence on international perceptions of Québec. First and foremost, Québec is associated with hockey. The legacy of the Montréal Canadiens and their twenty-four Stanley Cups enriches Québec's brand. Despite what the name suggests, the hockey team is deeply rooted in Québec culture and a symbol of the province. *Les Canadiens* are the second most successful sports franchise in North America²⁷ and, according to Badenhausen and Ozanian's (2007) article on the business of hockey, the fourth most valuable team in the National Hockey League. Québec has produced some of the greatest hockey players of all-time. Maurice Richard, Jean Béliveau, Guy Lafleur and

²⁷ The New York Yankees have won twenty-six championships.

Patrick Roy have all played for the Montréal Canadiens and Mario Lemieux is a famous provincial export. One of the most prominent sports personalities to represent Québec on the international stage in recent times was race car driver Jacques Villeneuve. The son of Gilles Villeneuve, an iconic figure in the history of Formula One (F1), Jacques Villeneuve won the Indianapolis 500 in 1995 and won races in Brazil, Argentina, Spain, Great Britain, Hungary, Austria and Luxembourg in 1997 on his way to the F1 Championship. At his peak, Jacques Villeneuve was one of the world's most celebrated athletes and his star power translated into considerable prestige for Québec. The F1 Canadian Grand Prix continues to be the highlight of Montréal's tourist calendar. Internationally publicized, the race was the third most watched televised sporting event in the world in 2005, after the Super Bowl and the Champions League soccer final (Bruemmer, 2008). Every summer, Montréal attracts more than three hundred thousand F1 fans that spend an estimated \$100 million during the weekend long festivities that culminate in the race on the Gilles Villeneuve circuit (Bruemmer, 2008).

In 1976, Montréal hosted the Summer Olympics. In contrast to the Sydney Games, an unsophisticated approach to promoting the Olympics meant that Canada was unable to capitalize on the potential for commercial and diplomatic advantage. Morse (1987) reports that Canada's public diplomacy was limited to presenting sets of Olympic coins to the heads of state of the participating nations and distributing Olympic information materials through Canada's missions abroad. Despite resulting in financial disaster, Montréal was eventually able to translate its Olympic legacy to civic benefit. Olympic venues were converted into tourist attractions and the city profited from the increased international recognition to become a truly 'world city'. Today, high-performance athletes and their coaches from

around the world come to Montréal to train with top Canadians at the government-funded Centre national-multisport, which serves to link the province with a profile of excellence internationally. Québec's image also profits from a sister-city arrangement between Montréal and Hiroshima that emphasizes the exchange of sports teams. Morse explains that sport is a particularly effective form of public diplomacy in Japan because many leaders are sports enthusiasts. The value of sport lies in its universality. Sport has the capacity to bridge cultural and linguistic divides and most societies enjoy the spectacle of competition. Sport also reaches a wider audience than academic relations initiatives or public diplomacy that features 'high' culture. Sports exchanges, in particular, offer a unique opportunity to promote goodwill and build mutually beneficial relationships.

Sport can send a powerful message to the world. La Francophonie has long emphasized the value of sport for promoting positive relations among its membership. The Games of La Francophonie are an international event that, unlike other major competitions, places equal emphasis on sporting and cultural activities. Participants are drawn from the organization's states and governments. Canada allows Québec and New Brunswick to compete under their provincial flags, which demonstrates to the world Canada's commitment to its core values of tolerance and diversity. For Québec, the Games of La Francophonie are a platform to showcase the excellence of its athletes and artists and enhance its status among the French-speaking nations of the world.

The Games have been held five times - July 1989 in Morocco (30 countries, 1800 participants), July 1994 in France (43 countries, 3000 participants), August 1997 in Madagascar (36 countries, 1700 participants), July 2001 in Canada (51 countries, 3000 participants) and in December 2006 in Niger (44 countries, 2000 participants) (Canadian

Heritage, 2006). The sixth Games of La Francophonie are scheduled for Lebanon in 2009. In the most recent Games, Québec won six medals; one silver in boxing, one silver and three bronze in judo, and one silver in sculpture. Since their creation, the Games of the Francophonie have introduced a number of Québec athletes to the world. Québec's Nicolas Gill, a two-time Olympic medalist in judo, won his first international medal at the Games in Morocco and Bruny Surin, a member of Canada's gold-medal winning 4 x 100 m relay team in Atlanta, won the gold medal in the 100 m for Québec ahead of Canada's Donovan Bailey at the Paris Games in 1994. One of Canada's most successful wheelchair athletes, Chantal Petitclerc also represented Québec. The Games of La Francophonie provide Québec with exposure to foreign audiences that share a common language and culture and a unique opportunity to reach people in countries where there is no provincial representation, particularly in Africa. The members of La Francophonie therefore become more receptive to the idea of Québec as actor on the international scene and the foundation for further political and economic ties is established.

Québec's international presence is strengthened through its participation in the Games of La Francophonie. Competing under the provincial flag provides Québec with a means for achieving greater recognition and legitimacy internationally. Hence, sport provides Québec with an opportunity to preserve and develop its distinct status among the cultures of the world. Sports diplomacy also has a very powerful domestic feedback loop because of its ability to engender pride at home and foster a national consciousness. Québec's international successes reinforce Québec's identity among its people. Citizens develop an attachment to the province and a distinct sense of self is cultivated.

Sport provides access and exposure to foreign audiences and hosting elite competitions benefits tourism and trade. Sport has evolved into a functional component of contemporary public diplomacy and the reputations of nations can rise and fall with success and scandal in international arenas. Potter (2006) remarks that the way Sale and Pelletier handled the controversy at the 2002 Winter Olympics did more for Canada's image internationally than one year's worth of official public diplomacy. Athletes have become cultural ambassadors and international sporting events are stages for gaining recognition and enhancing prestige abroad.

Conclusion

In sum, Québec's public diplomacy centres on transmitting information, promotion and influence building. Each instrument comes together to form an identifiable yet unique whole that contributes to the province's image. Despite limited resources, Québec has created a successful brand that supports its cultural and economic priorities and reinforces the province's political identity and legitimacy. The next chapter analyzes the findings revealed in the descriptive narrative on Québec's public diplomacy to establish the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations.

Chapter 5: Analysis of findings

The following chapter considers the level of conceptual convergence of public diplomacy and public relations in five of Québec's public diplomacy instruments and theoretically interprets the evidence from the perspective of the Signitzer and Coombs comparative model. The analysis will identify patterns and trends that provide a better understanding of the public diplomacy / public relations nexus

International cultural relations

Globalization, advances in communications technologies and increased competition between states for political and economic advantage have made it necessary for nations to actively promote themselves internationally. In this way, nations and multi-national corporations share an increasing need to connect with foreign audiences and cultivate a global image. Organizations employ public relations to establish and maintain an international presence and achieve influence among target publics; in turn, governments engage in cultural relations, a core instrument of public diplomacy, to express distinct national identities and develop relationships that support broad foreign policy objectives. Long-term international engagement positively positions countries and corporations to shape the public attitudes and opinions that directly affect the behaviour and decisions of foreign constituencies and governments. Cultural relations and public relations both involve communications programs designed to exchange information, build goodwill and create favourable perceptions in foreign audiences for the sponsor's benefit. The parallels imply that cultural relations and public relations warrant consideration from a common theoretical lens.

Signitzer and Coombs present Peisert's typology of public diplomacy as a useful method to classify the different communications 'styles' adopted by national governments, however it is acknowledged that the models are ideal types and overlap exists. Peisert's concepts of self-portrayal and information exchange are both applicable to the analysis of Québec's cultural relations. Nations that centre public diplomacy on self-portrayal are mainly concerned with projecting their image abroad in direct support of national interests. Centrally orchestrated, Québec's cultural relations initiatives are geared towards raising the province's profile in key territories and closely aligned with key foreign policy objectives. For example, Québec's International Policy prioritizes the development of "planning and organizational expertise to better market Québec's cultural products and events abroad" (Gouvernement du Québec, 2006). However, the province also seeks to encourage foreign understanding and sympathy for its distinctiveness, which is the defining characteristic of the information approach. Institutes in other countries that monitor germane cultural developments and close contacts with the domestic cultural industries are also features of the information model. Similarly, Québec's foreign offices and representatives in La Francophonie and UNESCO oversee global cultural issues and the province's robust relationship with local cultural communities enables its quest for international recognition and legitimacy. Therefore, Québec's cultural relations are best understood as a synthesis of the self-portrayal and information approaches.

Signitzer and Coombs match Peisert's concepts of self-portrayal and information with Grunig and Hunt's public information and two-way asymmetric models respectively. However, the two-way asymmetric approach is most relevant to the analysis of Québec's cultural relations because the public information model does not properly account for the

dialogical aspects inherent in intercultural communications. Two-way asymmetry suggests communications directed at target populations to stimulate change in their knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. Objectives are organizationally mandated and research and other inputs contribute to the design and implementation of campaigns. Likewise, Québec's cultural relations target attitudinal change in key publics to realize national interests. The province also uses statistical indicators to track international cultural trends, consults with artistic communities on strategies to target promising markets and leading international fairs and festivals, and provides financial assistance to the cultural industries to increase the province's reach and economic penetration. Hence, cultural relations and two-way asymmetric public relations share comparable approaches and objectives and the evidence from Québec demonstrates an especially strong theoretical correlation.

However, the academic literature from both disciplines advises that two-way asymmetrical communications poses ethical and strategic problems. From a public relations perspective, campaigns that 'engineer consent' in target populations to further the sponsoring organization's interests are unethical (Grunig & Hunt, 2001). "Asymmetric public relations is associated with, if not actually defined as, propaganda" (L'Étang, 2006a, p.380). Moreover, Grunig and Hunt deem two-way symmetric public relations more effective. The concept of two-way symmetry is based on the principles of negotiation and dispute resolution and involves research to better understand, rather than manipulate, target populations. Relationships based on dialogue that emphasize a mutual commitment to change satisfy the interests of both parties and produce equitable outcomes. According to Dozier, Grunig and Grunig's (2002) Excellence Study, organizations that practice two-way

symmetrical communications, incorporate external inputs in the decision making process and embrace internal change are more likely to achieve their communications objectives.

The British Council also advocates for two-way symmetrical communications in cultural relations. Rose and Wadham-Smith (2004) introduce the idea of mutuality and argue that open, constructive and mutually beneficial relationships serve the national interests. Signitzer and Coombs' examination of the applicable research suggests that "in cultural communication, two-way is more of two one-way 'exchanges'" (p.145). Québec's international initiatives in the area of cultural relations illustrate this reciprocal approach to hosting international artists and promoting trade networks, whereas the concept of mutuality focuses on developing deep and sustainable long-term relationships. An emphasis on mutual discovery and a willingness to constantly modify one's own understanding translates into trust and respect and an equal distribution of relational benefits results. Rose and Wadham-Smith posit mutuality as the "strongest possible basis for cultural relations" and a "strategic good" (pp.10-11). Other nations will choose to engage with governments that practice mutuality for practical and ethical reasons and thus, flexible and honest partnerships deliver competitive advantages.

Québec's cultural ventures are less symmetric and considerably more message-oriented and strategically driven. The province concentrates on strengthening its international presence and influencing foreign publics and governments in favour of export promotion as opposed to evoking partners' needs and fostering long-term understanding. However, L'Étang (2006a) contends that sovereign entities like Québec align their public diplomacy resources with foreign policy priorities in response to political realities. Funding provisions often limit the capacity of cultural relations practitioners to pursue altruistic

ambitions and governments reasonably expect investments in cultural relations to yield tangible results. A critical interpretation considers symmetrical communications an impractical notion because communications cannot be entirely divorced from politics and implies that symmetry undervalues the strong desire for gain in international relations.

Québec's international cultural relations reveal sufficient synergies with the Signitzer and Coombs comparative model to support the conclusion that public diplomacy and public relations are experiencing a process of convergence. The transfer of concepts from the two domains informs and enriches the analysis of cultural relations. The debate over two-way symmetrical communications exemplifies the value of the public diplomacy / public relations nexus and substantiates the premise that a union of theoretical perspectives permits a deeper exploration of public diplomacy.

International academic relations

International academic relations also present evidence of the conceptual convergence of public diplomacy and public relations. Key contributors to the international flow of information, academic relations and public relations involve the planned and organized efforts to engage and develop mutual understanding with foreign audiences. Both activities inform and shape the attitudes and beliefs of foreign communities and decision makers and enable influence over the policies and actions of foreign institutions over the long-term. Furthermore, academic relations and public relations involve exchanging information, reducing misconceptions, creating goodwill and image building.

Québec's academic ties and joint research projects with other governments are examples of Peisert's exchange and cooperation model, which describes balanced

relationships born of out of a mutual commitment to solve international scientific, social and cultural problems. However, the purpose of Québec's international academic relations is more closely related to Peisert's information model. In practice, the province employs educational programs to generate understanding and sympathy abroad. Québec's academic relations are designed to transmit messages about cultural, political and economic achievements and change the attitudes and behaviours of future leaders. Research suggests that genuinely new information gained through positive interactions with a nation and its people facilitates favourable change (Mowlana, 1997, p.157). Intercultural contact encourages understanding and fosters more nuanced perspectives that can be leveraged in times of crisis. It is accepted that audiences abroad will occasionally disapprove of a government's foreign policies, but it is hoped that through relationship building they will become more sympathetic to the nation in general and, at least, better appreciate the rationale behind a given policy. This is particularly crucial for Québec because of the historical complexities of its associations with the rest of Canada and advances the province's quest for international recognition and legitimacy. Thus framed, academic relations overlap Peisert's exchange and cooperation and information models and suggest that sympathy and acceptance are considerable motivators for government involvement in the area of international education.

The information model shares basic ideas with the two-way asymmetric approach to public relations. Québec's academic relations are founded on two-way flows of information that target change in the knowledge and opinions of key foreign publics in the pursuit of national interests. This tendency towards asymmetric practices can lead to unbalanced relationships. Mowlana (1997) illustrates that international exchanges between developing

countries and host nations in the industrialized world result in students learning about foreign cultures, values and world views with limited reciprocity (p.161). The 'brain drain' phenomenon further compounds the problem. Grunig and Hunt also argue that asymmetrical communications that focus on strategic advantage undermine effectiveness.

An emphasis on the exchange and cooperation features of academic relations that resemble two-way symmetric public relations is preferred. Premised on the goal of mutual behavioural change, symmetrical communications applies the principles of negotiation and dispute resolution to better understand rather than manipulate target populations. Academic relations involve long-term contact and the exchange of information and ideas. Though unmediated communications imply risk, this process is often considered beneficial because audiences associate messages with more legitimacy and genuine interactions lead to relationships that have the potential to resolve issues of shared concern. Furthermore, the participants in international exchanges are change agents and, similar to public relations practitioners, play a boundary spanning role that assists symmetrical communications. Ambassadors and advocates for their nations abroad, academics are able to espouse foreign interests in their research and studies and are well positioned to identify opportunities for cooperation and mutual benefit. Input from boundary spanners broadens domestic perspectives and are essential to an internationally aware and informed citizenry. Teachers in particular have a multiplier effect. In sum, nations that practice symmetrical communications and are amenable to change will realize balanced international relationships and stand to gain more from academic relations.

Similar to cultural relations, Québec's international academic relations are designed to promote strategic advantages in support of national interests. However, the theoretical

analysis reveals that symmetrical communications, comparable in concept to mutuality, improve the bridging potential and contribute to the effectiveness of both pursuits, thus demonstrating that Grunig and Hunt's ideas, founded in public relations theory, transfer well to public diplomacy. This enhances the case for the benefits of conceptual convergence.

Investment promotion

Destination branding, whether for investment or tourism, probably shares the most similar objectives and tools with public relations. The purpose of international public relations is to exchange information, reduce misconceptions, create goodwill and construct a positive image. Investment promotion shares all of these objectives. Investment promotion also fits Agee, Ault and Wilcox's (1989) definition of international public relations and is based on mutually beneficial relationships between investors and investment destinations. It is therefore conceptually related to public relations.

Contemporary conceptions of public diplomacy extend beyond traditional associations with the transmission of culture abroad to include destination branding. It is accepted that public diplomacy is no longer strictly predicated on international academic and cultural relations, but also includes attracting foreign investment and tourism promotion. Culture and economy are both representative features of a national image and serve equally to define foreign perceptions. Québec's investment promotion conforms closely with an expanded interpretation of Peisert's fourth model. Investment promotion is essentially self-portrayal; nation branding for the purpose of stimulating foreign investment. The intent is to portray a positive image of an investment destination to influence the decisions of foreign business leaders. In accordance with the model, Québec's economic prosperity is an essential

component of its foreign policy and a central organization, Investissement Québec, plans and coordinates the government's investment promotion activities. Investissement Québec also collects information about potential investors in target countries through the province's missions abroad to improve its understanding of foreign markets and identify investment opportunities. Investissement Québec strong international profile and staff that are experts about investing in Québec are other similar characteristics.

The relationship between public diplomacy and public relations is evident in Québec's investment promotion strategy. In public relations terms, destination branding is a form of public information. Grunig and Hunt's public information model corresponds with Peisert's self-portrayal model. Both involve asymmetrical communications. The approaches are more concerned with improving understanding and involve less overt persuasion than the 'one-way transmission of culture abroad / press agency' models. In the public information model, the emphasis is placed on the one-way dissemination of truthful and accurate information to target audiences, although Dozier, Grunig and Grunig (2001) note that "information harmful to the sponsoring organization might be withheld" (p.234). The self-portrayal and public information models are both reliant on persuasion, but not propaganda, to achieve objectives. Investment promotion is an attempt to persuade foreign decision makers where to invest and locate their businesses. Advertisements in international business publications that glorify the scientific and industrial achievements of countries and regions and list the prestigious multi-national companies which have built new factories there as well as Web sites that extol the favourable tax environments and skilled labour found in investment locales are all examples of investment promotion. Through its participation at international trade shows and its quarterly newsletter and Web site, Investissement Québec

practices asymmetrical communications to inform target audiences abroad about the merits of Québec as an investment destination and, by so doing, favourably differentiate the province from competing markets to secure a share of foreign direct investment.

Investment promotion also parallels Grunig and Hunt's two-way symmetric approach. Establishing a market as an investment destination of choice involves listening to potential foreign investors and understanding their needs. Governments go to great lengths to ensure that the pre-conditions for foreign investment exist, such as an educated workforce and supportive research and development networks, and provide generous economic incentives to encourage investment. International trade and investment is, by nature, also predicated on win-win scenarios. Both the sponsoring organizations - in this case governments and official institutions - and the target publics - foreign investors - seek to further their own interests. Outcomes are not maximized to the advantage of either party, however the resulting relationships are considered mutually beneficial. When Investissement Québec organizes trade missions, the agency's representatives and foreign service personnel act as advocates for the province in their dealings with target groups, however they also play a boundary spanning role and advance the interests of foreign investors in their discussions with the government. Only through engagement and dialogue with potential investment partners is Investissement Québec able to credibly brand the province internationally, effectively reduce misconceptions and successfully encourage the provincial government to adopt measures that translate into an advantageous investment environment. Two-way symmetrical communications facilitates an open system that is able to simultaneously promote the province's economic growth and respond to the needs of foreign investors.

Peisert's self-portrayal approach and Grunig and Hunt's public information and two-way symmetric models of public relations are constructs from public diplomacy and public relations that are applicable to a theoretical conception of investment promotion. The focus on public information in investment promotion campaigns coupled with the importance of two-way symmetrical communications to achieve objectives provides evidence of the conceptual convergence of public diplomacy and public relations. Therefore, it is argued that a relationship between public diplomacy and public relations is present in Québec's investment promotion.

Tourism promotion

Tourism promotion is another form of destination branding that shares characteristics with public relations. Tourism promotion is about managing communicative relationships with foreign audiences. Like public relations campaigns, branding a nation, region or city as a tourist destination targets changes in the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of designated populations. Signitzer and Coombs note that public diplomacy and public relations share comparable objectives; tourism promotion also seeks to exchange information, reduce misconceptions, create goodwill and build an image.

When considered from a public diplomacy perspective, Québec's tourism promotion best fits with Peisert's self-portrayal model. Tourism promotion is very much predicated a creating a definitive image of a destination in foreign audiences. In the industry parlance, tourism is referred to as 'a dream factory'. To establish the province as a more aspirational destination, a central organization, Tourisme Québec, has to create the dream. Tourism promotion is the face of Québec abroad and supports broader foreign policy objectives, such

as enhancing Québec's international reputation, increasing economic prosperity and attracting skilled immigrants. Furthermore, Québec's Tourism Policy identifies skilled staff and market research as success factors (Gouvernement de Québec, 2005). In sum, an emphasis on presenting a strong national profile and other shared elements that include a centralized coordinating function aligned with foreign policy and institutional expertise correlates tourism promotion with the self-portrayal approach.

Tourism promotion provides further evidence of conceptual convergence. The self-portrayal approach corresponds with the public information model. Both approaches involve the one-way communication of information and employ persuasive tactics to influence target publics. Québec relies on print, radio and television advertising to attract tourists. Events are also organized to encourage travel writers and industry representatives to promote the province as a destination of choice. In this way, tourism promotion parallels the public relations practices of corporations. Another example of the similarities between tourism promotion and public relations is the importance of crisis communications. Governments and corporations similarly engage in information campaigns in response to events that have the potential to negatively impact the perceptions of target publics. In times of crisis, Canadian embassies have been called upon to help support and protect the tourism industry. For example, Canada launched an aggressive media campaign to reassure international travellers and business people in the wake of the S.A.R.S. epidemic in Toronto that Canada was a safe travel destination. These types of activities insulate nation and corporate brands from negative associations and further validate Signitzer and Coombs claim that public diplomacy and public relations are experiencing a process of convergence.

Tourism promotion is multi-faceted and conceptually linked with other concepts from Grunig and Hunt's public relations models. Aspects of two-way asymmetrical communications are also evident in Québec's tourism promotion. Two-way asymmetric public relations couples traditional information dissemination techniques with scientific research methods. Communications are designed to change public perceptions - 'move the needle' - in support of pre-determined objectives that benefit the sponsoring organization. Tourisme Québec and other destination management organizations like the CTC employ public opinion research to evaluate campaigns. Klassen provides an example. The CTC asks focus group participants to: "Name a travel destination that you would consider visiting over the next two years?". If Canada is a destination of choice for thirteen percent of the participants and following a strategic marketing campaign eighteen percent of people name Canada as a destination, "we know that we've managed to move five percent to think more positively about Canada." Tourism promotion relies on research to better understand target audiences in select markets to advance organizational objectives. Thus, tourism promotion is akin to two-way asymmetric public relations.

A more in-depth analysis of tourism promotion demonstrates an added congruency with Grunig and Hunt's two-way symmetric approach. Both tourism promotion and two-way symmetric public relations facilitate dialogue and relationship building. As previously argued, the value of Québec's tourism promotion is more than economic and its impact is far reaching. Tourism fosters mutual understanding among the peoples of the world because it leads to interpersonal communication - a richer, more lasting form of communication - and the exchange of information and ideas. Genuine unfiltered exchanges between citizens contribute to relationship building. Reports about Québec from returning travelers and

stories from travel writers are very important. Personal experience with a destination has a profound and permanent influence on people's perceptions and unmediated messages are associated with more legitimacy in the eyes of foreign audiences and will go a long way towards shaping ideas about Québec, its culture and its people because they are considered more credible. Tourism not only showcases Québec's identity, but it also connects it to the world. The flow of information between societies is two-way and the resulting relationships are mutually beneficial. Through dialogue and interactions with foreign tourists, Quebeckers develop a more nuanced perspective of the world. L'Étang suggests that public relations in tourism, through its focus on relationship building, can "go beyond marketing consumerism to contribute to deeper meanings and understandings of the tourism experience, contributing to reflexivity and improved inter-cultural understanding" (2006b, p.259).

Significant parallels exist between tourism promotion and the practice of public relations in the areas of information exchange, crisis communication, reputation management and relationship building. Examining tourism promotion from a public relations perspective offers a more comprehensive approach for the consideration of destination branding's role in public diplomacy. Public relations is intrinsically and undeniably relevant to tourism promotion and the analysis advances the premise of conceptual convergence.

Sport and public diplomacy

Sport for the purposes of public diplomacy, similar to international public relations, involves the planned and organized effort of a government to establish mutually beneficial relationships with the publics of other nations. Participation in international sporting events and exchanges compliments traditional public diplomacy and facilitates the capacity of

governments to reach foreign audiences. Sport is a universal activity that generates interest, respect and admiration from all levels of society. Athletics symbolizes a set of common 'global' values and success in international competition favourably enhances nation brands. Athletes and teams competing at the highest levels of international sport are a form of people-to-people relations. Sport is unique in its ability to transcend cultural differences and unite audiences in a common experience. International spectators rejoice in the victory of the host nation's athlete and sympathize with the ultimate defeat of an underdog team from a small country. The result is a positive pre-disposition towards the competitors' nations. Hosting elite international competitions, such as Grand Prix races, results in similar effects. Moreover, sports exchanges promote goodwill between governments and generally improve political and economic links. Sharing related objectives with public relations, the purpose of sports diplomacy is image building and fostering mutual understanding.

Athletes represent their cultures and institutions and sport transmits messages about a nation's society and lifestyle to foreign publics. Exposure to international sport helps audiences gain a better understanding of foreign nations. From a public diplomacy perspective, sport is best represented in Peisert's exchange and cooperation model. Founded on agreements between governments, the altruistic goal of international competitions is to substitute national for international loyalties. International events, such as the Games of La Francophonie, provide a forum to celebrate a shared culture and heritage and advance reciprocally advantageous relationships among member states and governments. Sports exchanges are a major field of international activity that also encourage understanding and cooperation. Likewise, institutions such as Montréal's Centre national-multisport, which are autonomous and independent from the vagaries of foreign policy, collect and share

knowledge with domestic and international sports communities that, in turn, teach and train other elite athletes, sport administrators, coaches and sport scientists. The exchange and cooperation approach to public diplomacy is fundamental to the concept of sports diplomacy and, at their most effective, the resulting relationships are genuinely balanced.

Signitzer and Coombs correlate the concept of exchange and cooperation with two-way symmetrical communications, which is considered the most effective approach to public relations. In the context of sports diplomacy, both constructs emphasize the pursuit of mutually beneficial relations. Two-way symmetric public relations involves a relationship between an organization and a target population that brings about a win-win scenario. Neither party's interests are maximized, but rather a sufficiently satisfactory outcome is achieved. Furthermore, long-term relationship building is advanced in favour of short-term strategic advantage. International competitions and sports exchanges, such as Montréal's arrangement with Hiroshima, provide opportunities for interaction between athletes and publics that reduce misconceptions and create goodwill. The balanced information exchanges that result share many similarities with Dozier, Grunig and Grunig's definition of effective public relations. However, the synthesis between the idea of exchange and cooperation in sports diplomacy and the attributes of two-way symmetrical communications are not entirely compatible. Negotiation and dispute resolution are not active features of sports diplomacy, nor is there a focus on research as a tool to better understand audiences. Nonetheless, sport is a high-profile, low-risk public diplomacy activity that builds relationships and contributes over the long-term to solving social and cultural problems.

The practices of sports diplomacy and public relations share similar functions, including promotion, events management and crisis communications. However, the most

significant parallel between the two domains is a mutual commitment to the principle of relationship building. Evidence from Québec's sports diplomacy suggests that the concept of exchange and cooperation from public diplomacy is conceptually linked with two-way symmetric public relations. The theoretical analysis of Québec's sports diplomacy confirms that synergies exist between Peisert's public diplomacy models and the approaches to public relations outlined in Grunig and Hunt's research.

Conclusion

The case study on Québec's medium- to long-term public diplomacy instruments reinforces Signitzer and Coombs' observations on conceptual convergence. Québec's cultural relations emphasize the strategic promotion of networks and are comparable in approach and share objectives and other similarities with two-way asymmetric public relations. Likewise, the province's academic relations, designed to build lasting relationships with rising generations abroad in support national interests, show synergies with two-way asymmetric public relations. Québec's investment promotion, a key foreign policy initiative, also closely resembles public relations. Similar to the public information approach, investment promotion involves the one-way dissemination of information to influence target audiences, but it relies on the hallmarks of two-way symmetrical communication, dialogue and mutually beneficial relationships, for success. The province's tourism promotion is even more intimately linked with concepts from public relations. Tourism promotion couples more traditional information dissemination techniques, akin to the public information approach, with two-way asymmetrical communication that employs research and evaluation to shape the attitudes and behaviours of target publics for competitive advantage.

Furthermore, the analysis reveals parallels with two-way symmetric public relations because tourism promotion facilitates dialogue between foreign travelers and Quebecers that fosters mutual understanding and connects the province to the world. Finally, Québec's participation in international sporting events and exchanges and two-way symmetric public relations share fewer characteristics, but both promote balanced relationships. The research findings therefore validate the Signitzer and Coombs comparative model.

A relationship exists between public diplomacy and public relations and the findings suggest that the two domains are experiencing a process of natural convergence. In particular, the analysis illustrates a trend towards symmetrical communications in public diplomacy and public relations. Peisert's exchange and cooperation model and Grunig and Hunt's two-way symmetric public relations model emphasize dialogue and relationship building. Mutually beneficial relationships are promoted as a desirable end-goal in both domains. Public diplomacy's move towards symmetry is highlighted in the emphasis on mutuality in academic and cultural relations and featured in sports diplomacy. In turn, Dozier, Grunig and Grunig's Excellence Study advocates the effectiveness of symmetrical communications and firmly establishes an ethical agenda for public relations. The conclusion can be drawn that the intersection of public diplomacy and public relations is most apparent in the concept of symmetry. A shared commitment to two-way symmetrical communications may provide the strongest argument for a conceptual convergence of public diplomacy and public relations.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The thesis set out to determine whether there exists a strong enough similarity between the two domains to actively theorize public diplomacy from a communications (public relations) perspective. Québec's public diplomacy demonstrates congruencies with the Signitzer and Coombs (1992) comparative model. Evidence of conceptual convergence is found in each of the five areas of the province's public diplomacy investigated in the case study. Therefore, the thesis confirms that concepts from public relations are readily transferable to the analysis of public diplomacy. The Signitzer and Coombs comparative model provides a useful basis for further theoretical inquiries on the relationship between public diplomacy and public relations, and serves as a valuable framework to identify patterns in the practice of public diplomacy. However, comparative case studies of other international actors (e.g., nations, regions, cities and supranational organizations), using the same methodology, are necessary because the ability of a single case study to generalize with accuracy is limited and comparative analysis "avoids the danger of overemphasizing the unique features of each case"(Gilboa, 2008, p.72). Similar empirical research that explores short-term public diplomacy is also required to supplement the discussion on conceptual convergence and substantiate the findings.

The thesis broadens the definition of public diplomacy to encompass a range of government-supported activities - international academic and cultural relations, destination branding and sports diplomacy - that inform, influence and create understanding in foreign audiences for the purpose of national advantage. A more diverse conception enhances the prospects for conceptual convergence because promotion-based forms of public diplomacy are essentially public relations. Despite the similarities between the two domains, public

diplomacy is equated with nobler ambitions, while public relations is often considered unethical because it employs asymmetrical practices. This underlying tension limits the potential value of conceptual convergence. However, public diplomacy *is* inherently asymmetrical; it is a political function that implies power and serves national interests. While public diplomacy's symmetrical outcomes are idealized, the reality of international relations means that foreign policy priorities are regularly promoted over more altruistic aims. Particularly in times of crisis, governments will revert to forms of communications that have been historically linked with public relations.

In conclusion, the parallels between the two domains should be recognized and not underestimated. The research findings affirm that public diplomacy and public relations are both premised on the concept of symmetry, but also uncover shared asymmetrical tendencies. Two-way symmetrical communications is commonly advocated in both fields as an ethical and effective approach to engaging with audiences. However, asymmetrical communication is undeniably useful in both disciplines for the purposes of transmitting information, raising awareness, promotion and image building. A public relations perspective contributes to the understanding of the relationship between governments and foreign publics. It actually encourages public diplomacy's nobler ambitions, while at the same time enabling the ability of governments to better affect change for national advantage through the use of public relations tactics and techniques. Public diplomacy and public relations are experiencing a process of conceptual convergence and it is the view of this thesis that public diplomacy can profit, in theory and practice, from a union with public relations.

Implications of the findings

In establishing conceptual convergence, the findings demonstrate the merit of public relations to the theoretical analysis of public diplomacy and enable future research that explores public diplomacy with public relations-based models. However, before the promise of an interdisciplinary approach is realized, public diplomacy practitioners must first be ready to accept that public diplomacy is, at its core, the public relations of nation states. This is the challenge.

The implications of the findings for the contemporary practice of public diplomacy are debatable because there is limited cooperation between public diplomacy practitioners and public relations scholars. Public diplomacy practitioners are generally unwilling to cede to an interpretation of their function from a public relations perspective. The case of Québec is again representative. Speaking anonymously, a senior official from the Ministère des Relations internationales acknowledges that “some parts [of Québec’s public diplomacy] really follow the [research’s] model”, but professes that while the government structure situates public diplomacy in public affairs, the public diplomacy division is “trying to steer as far away as possible from communications” (personal communication, Summer 2008). Public diplomacy is considered more a political than communications role and there are also pragmatic concerns. The provincial official explains that:

In a government, in a department ... to identify the public diplomacy division with something less political is not strategic. If it is classified too much public relations and communications, it will be at the end of the line and it will be the last to learn. It will be on landing rather than on take-off, as communications has been all along.

The suggestion is that the communications function has limited influence in foreign ministries. Communications is often not accorded an active role in the planning and priority setting process (take-off); it is considered responsible for implementation (landing). While some foreign ministries, notably the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, recognize the importance of the communications function to diplomacy, communication is all too often linked to publicity - the creation of images and slogans in support of public diplomacy campaigns.

The provincial official also highlights cultural cleavages:

[Public diplomacy practitioners] don't like very much to be identified with the communications world because the people who work [in the public diplomacy division] have Master's degrees in international relations and the people in the communications sector have communications backgrounds. You need a political mind to be doing public diplomacy.

In fact, public diplomacy practitioners have always been wary of identifying themselves with communications in general and public relations specifically. Public relations suffers from associations with propaganda. Arndt (2005), in his historical account of the U.S.I.A., unflatteringly describes public relations as "propaganda's less noxious offspring" (p.533). Public relations is related to press agentry, the one way transmission of untruthful and inaccurate information, whereas public diplomacy is connected with creating mutual understanding and relationship building. Cowan and Cull (2008) note that, generations ago, U.S.I.A. staffers, echoing the provincial official's observations, welcomed the idea of 'public diplomacy' - "a phrase that spoke to their role as diplomats rather than as advertising or public relations agents" (p.6). Practitioners also stress that public diplomacy encompasses a

wider sphere of activity than public relations and argue that public diplomacy implies, inter alia, political communication, branding, cultural diplomacy, academic exchanges and open military information operations. However public diplomacy is nothing without communications; if there is no communication, there is no *public* in the public diplomacy.

Future research directions

Public relations offers a “store of theories and experienced instruments” to help understand how nations communicate and interact with foreign publics (Signitzer & Wamser, 2006, p.441). The research findings infer that there is value in applying more advanced theories of public relations to the study of public diplomacy. One potential research direction is Flynn’s (2006) balance zone model. This model of public relations management recognizes that there are pressures on organizations and public relations practitioners to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships. However, Flynn suggests that the scholarship should move beyond the debate on whether two-way symmetrical communication is an achievable goal and “reconceptualize public relations in a multidimensional perspective where dialogue, collaboration and negotiation with multiple stakeholders and stakeseekers occurs simultaneously” (p.193). Flynn developed the balance zone theory as an alternative to the linear models that predominate traditional public relations thinking and to account for the competing stakeholder interests that simultaneously confront contemporary organizations. Flynn’s model incorporates the necessary fluidity to account for the abundant and variable interests that result from ongoing organizational and stakeholder interaction. Flynn argues that for organizations to achieve their goals they have to maintain a balance between competing internal and external interests.

Like public relations, public diplomacy is practiced in an environment that is increasingly characterized by high-levels of interconnectedness and competition. Governments today engage foreign publics (stakeholders) more than ever before and recognize that two-way communications is required to enhance their images in support of national (organizational) interests. As the number and variety of actors on the international scene increases in a highly interdependent system, communications become more complex and symmetrical communication challenges traditional one-way flows of information for effectiveness. Given the trend towards networks, collaboration and partnerships in international relations, Flynn's model provides a method for evaluating how governments address competing interests in their practice of public diplomacy. Reputation management, one of the factors²⁸ in the balance zone model, is particularly relevant. The degree to which a nation (organization) is able to nurture a positive image (reputation) among key foreign publics (stakeholder groups) through public diplomacy (public relations) determines to a great extent the success of its foreign policy. The balance zone model provides a method for examining the parallel reputation management and relationship building functions, and other common factors, found in public diplomacy and public relations and is an approach that deserves the attention of the public diplomacy scholarship.

So what next for public diplomacy research founded in public relations? How can the perceptual gaps between public diplomacy and public relations be overcome? More case studies on public diplomacy from a public relations perspective would be a good starting point. However, this researcher suggests that a new set of functional definitions is needed that do not prejudice concepts from public relations and reflect the political and economic

²⁸ The factors of the balance zone model are: relational mindset, reputation management, civic / social responsibility, ethical foundation, regulatory regime, economic / market pressures, risk management, level of internal and external activism, and media visibility.

interests of the international relations community. Perhaps a common language that accents symmetry could enable a pathway for communications scholars to talk about public diplomacy in a way that practitioners accept and understand. The practice of public diplomacy could then benefit, not only from public relations research, but other communications theories and models. As public diplomacy moves to the centre of international relations, it is in the interests of both practitioners and researchers to develop a shared vocabulary that facilitates close collaboration and learning. Annual public diplomacy conferences and public diplomacy graduate programs would provide forums to pursue this approach. When asked if the proposal was a reasonable way forward, the provincial official responded: “Yes, absolutely. I think the conclusion is very good because ... than the political undertones of [public diplomacy practitioners’] actions would be expressed. This would bridge communications and political science.” If public diplomacy practitioners and public relations scholars could agree on a common language, it would open up avenues for increased curiosity, tolerance and understanding of each other’s potential contributions to interdisciplinary discourse and “conceptual debates would gradually be substituted by debates over content and cooperation” (Signitzer, 2008, p.215) - only then will a comprehensive theory of public diplomacy be possible.

Based on the research findings, the thesis concludes that there is a strong enough similarity between the two domains to theoretically interpret public diplomacy from a communications (public relations) perspective. The thesis verifies the existence of conceptual convergence and positions the communications research to begin progressively applying more advanced public relations concepts to public diplomacy, beginning with comparative studies that address public diplomacy’s three temporal dimensions. However,

for the research findings to not only be valuable for reasons of scientific curiosity, but also provide insight into the role that public relations plays in the world of international relations, public diplomacy practitioners must embrace interdisciplinary cooperation. The thesis deepens the intellectual currents between public diplomacy and public relations and offers a bridge for meaningful dialogue about the value of a collaborative approach, and, in so doing, makes a modest contribution to the discipline of public diplomacy.

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Appendix I: Academic relations interview guide

Academic relations interview guide for Annie Le, Attaché, Government Relations and Academic Affairs, Québec Government Office, New York

1. How many foreign students attend Québec's schools, colleges and universities every year?
2. How does Québec address the "paradox of public diplomacy"?
3. How does Québec measure the success of its academic relations programs?
4. How do Québec's academic relations contribute to foreign understanding and acceptance for province's foreign policies priorities?
5. Do Québec's academic relations produce positive attitudes towards the province that benefits the overall diplomatic relationship with the United States?

Appendix II: Public diplomacy interview guide

Public diplomacy interview guide for Nicole McKinnon, Directrice, Information et diplomatie publique, Ministère des relations internationales and Etienne Baillargeon, Conseiller en affaires internationales, Information et diplomatie publique, Ministère des relations internationales

1. Explain your position(s) with le Ministère des relations internationales.
2. How does the Government of Québec define public diplomacy?
3. How does public diplomacy support Québec's foreign policy?
4. How does Québec balance the practical objectives of public diplomacy (i.e., influencing foreign audiences for political and economic advantage) with nobler ambitions (i.e., creating mutual understanding)?
5. Québec's public diplomacy mainly focuses on transmitting information, promotion and influence building. How can the province incorporate more two-way symmetrical communications (dialogue) to advance mutual understanding in its relationships?
6. Based on your evaluation of the researcher's theoretical analysis, does Québec's public diplomacy merit interpretation from a public relations perspective? Why or why not?

Appendix III: Tourism promotion interview guide

Tourism promotion interview guide for Greg Klassen, Vice-President, Marketing, Canadian Tourism Commission

1. What is the role and mandate of the Canadian Tourism Commission?
2. Explain your role as Vice-President of Marketing with the Canadian Tourism Commission.
3. How does Canadian Tourism Commission support Canada?
4. What are the Canadian Tourism Commission's target audiences?
5. What have been some of Canada's most and least successful tourism promotion campaigns and why?
6. Given that some of the benefits of tourism are less tangible and therefore more difficult to measure, how does the Canadian Tourism Commission evaluate the success of its tourism promotion efforts (e.g., use of public opinion research)?
7. The Government has recently placed greater emphasis on projecting a more coherent and persuasive image abroad. What contribution can the Canadian Tourism Commission make towards the attainment of this goal?
8. What role, if any, did the Canadian Tourism Commission play in marketing Canada to the world at Expo 2005 in Aichi, Japan (March 25 to September 2005)?
9. What is the role of the Canadian Tourism Commission in relation to other government departments?
10. A few years ago, the President of the Canadian Tourism Commission mentioned in a speech that your corporation spent \$800 million a year to make Canada attractive to foreign travelers. Considering that this amount far exceeds the sums spent by all other government department's combined on promoting Canada abroad, do you feel that (more) consideration should be given to the influence of tourism promotion on foreign perceptions over the long-term (including its influence on those who never take action and visit)?
11. According to Simon Anholt's research and studies on nation branding, tourism is considered one of six defining characteristics of a national brand, along with exports, governance, investment and immigration, culture and heritage, and people. Should Canada's tourism promotion strategy be integrated into its broader foreign policy framework?