Canadian History: Post-Confederation - 2nd Edition

Canadian History: Post-Confederation - 2nd Edition

John Douglas Belshaw

BCCAMPUS
VICTORIA, B.C.

Canadian History: Post-Confederation - 2nd Edition Copyright © 2020 by John Douglas Belshaw is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, except where otherwise noted.

© 2020 John Douglas Belshaw

The CC licence permits you to retain, reuse, copy, redistribute, and revise this book—in whole or in part—for free providing the author is attributed as follows:

Canadian History: Post-Confederation – 2nd Edition by John Douglas Belshaw is used under a CC BY 4.0 Licence.

If you redistribute all or part of this book, it is recommended the following statement be added to the copyright page so readers can access the original book at no cost:

Download for free from the B.C. Open Collection.

This textbook can be referenced. In APA citation style, it should appear as follows:

Belshaw, J. D. (2020). *Canadian History: Post-Confederation* (2nd ed). BCcampus. https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/.

Cover image attribution:

Police sports by Stuart Thomson is in the public domain.

Cover caption:

The winner crosses the finish line at a 1915 “sports day” organized by the Vancouver Police Department. Photo by Stuart Thomson, City of Vancouver Archives 99-1073.

Ebook ISBN: 978-1-77420-065-0

Print ISBN: 978-1-77420-064-3

Visit BCcampus Open Education to learn about open education in British Columbia.

This book was produced with Pressbooks (https://pressbooks.com) and rendered with Prince.

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the open education community and also to the reconciliation generation—on whom so many hopes are pinned.

Contents

Accessibility Statement xv

About the Book xix

Acknowledgments xxi

Preface xxv

Prologue

Introduction to Post-Confederation Canada 3

Chapter 1. Confederation and the Peoples of Canada

1.1 Introduction 11

1.2 Historical Demography of Canada, 1608–1921 15

Lisa Dillon; Département de démographie; and Université de Montréal

1.3 The Age of Federation 21

1.4 Contributory Factors of Confederation 25

1.5 Constitutional Crisis 29

1.6 Summary 35

Chapter 2. Confederation in Conflict

2.1 Introduction 41

2.2 Nova Scotia’s Second Thoughts 45

2.3 British Columbia and the Terms of Union 49

2.4 Prince Edward Island 57

2.5 Canada Captures The West, 1867–70 59

2.6 Canada and the First Nations of the West 67

2.7 Rebellion 1885 75

2.8 Making Sense of 1885 83

2.9 The Railway 89

2.10 The North 97

2.11 The Provincial Rights Movement 105

2.12 The Judicial System of Post-Confederation Canada 109

Jonathan Swainger; Department of History; and University of Northern British Columbia

2.13 The Other Dominion 111
2.14 Summary 119

Chapter 3. Urban, Industrial, and Divided: Socio-Economic Change, 1867-1920

3.1 Introduction 127
3.2 Industrialization, Labour, and Historians 135
Robert Sweeny; Dept. of History; and Memorial University of Newfoundland
3.3 The National Policy 139
3.4 Rise of a Working Class 149
3.5 Urbanization and Industry 167
3.6 Craft and Industrial Unions 181
3.7 Limits of Democracy 193
3.8 Early Women's Movement(s) in Canada 199
Nancy M. Forestell; Department of History; and St. Francis Xavier University
3.9 The Great War and the General Strike 205
3.10 Summary 215

Chapter 4. Politics and Conflict in Victorian and Edwardian Canada

4.1 Introduction 227
4.2 John A. Macdonald's Canada 229
4.3 Succession Planning 237
4.4 The Sunny Ways of Sir Wilfrid Laurier 245
4.5 Imperialism vs. Nationalism 253
4.6 Canada and Africa 259
4.7 Edwardian Crises 267
4.8 Summary 273

Chapter 5. Immigration and the Immigrant Experience

5.1 Introduction 279
5.2 Immigration and the National Policy 281
5.3 Immigrants by the Numbers 283
5.4. The Clifford Sifton Years, 1896–1905 289
5.5 The Promised Land 297
5.6 The Ukrainian Westerners 301
5.7 Culture and Adaptation 303
5.8 Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration 307

5.9 Immigrants and War 321
5.10 Female Immigrants and the Canadian State, 1860s through the 20th century 325
Lisa Chilton; Department of History; and University of Prince Edward Island
5.11 Post-War Immigration 329
5.12 The Chinese in Canada 337
Timothy J. Stanley; Faculty of Education; and University of Ottawa
5.13 Summary 341

Chapter 6. The War Years, 1914–45

6.1 Introduction 349
6.2 Borden vs. Borden 351
6.3 The Great War 353
6.4 Assessing Canada's War 359
6.5 Suffrage and Prohibition 369
6.6 The Interwar Years 375
6.7 The Natural Governing Party: The King Years 381
6.8 Canadian Fascists 387
6.9 The Road to WWII 391
6.10 Canada Goes to War 395
6.11 Newfoundland Goes to War 399
6.12 Status Indians and Military Service in the World Wars 401
R. Scott Sheffield; Department of History; and University of the Fraser Valley
6.13 Canada between the UK and the US 405
6.14 Global War 407
6.15 The Home Front 411
6.16 Enlisted Women, Conscription, and the Zombie Army 419
6.17 Japanese Canadians in the Second World War 423
Jordan Stanger-Ross (University of Victoria) Pamela Sugiman (Ryerson University) & the Landscapes of Injustice Research Collective
6.18 From V-E to V-J 429
6.19 Summary 435

Chapter 7. Reform Movements from the 1870s to the 1980s

7.1 Introduction 443
7.2 Social Reform 445
7.3 Poverty, 1867–1945 447
Eric W. Sager; Department of History; and University of Victoria

7.4 Families and Property Rights in Canada 451
Chris Clarkson; Department of History; and Okanagan College
7.5 Women’s Organizations and Reform 455
Melanie Buddle; Department of History; and Trent University
7.6 Social Gospel 463
7.7 Temperance and Prohibition 473
7.8 Eugenics 489
7.9 Reform Politics: 3rd Parties 499
7.10 The Second Wave of Feminism 513
Robert Rutherdale; Department of Philosophy & History; and Algoma University
7.11 Greenpeace 515
7.12 Summary 519

Chapter 8. The Economy since 1920

8.1 Introduction 529
8.2 The Staples Model 531
8.3 Capital Markets 535
Robert Sweeny; Dept. of History; and Memorial University of Newfoundland
8.4 Economic Cycles 541
8.5 The Great Depression 545
8.6 The New Economy 557
Doug Owram; Department of History; and University of British Columbia - Okanagan
8.7 Three Sectors 561
8.8 The Shipping Industry in Canada, 1867 – 1945 563
Eric W. Sager; Department of History; and University of Victoria
8.9 Canada’s Ocean Fisheries 565
Miriam Wright; Department of History; and University of Windsor
8.10 Oil and Gas and the New West 569
8.11 Fashioning a Post-War Economy 577
8.12 The Postwar Settlement in Canada 581
Peter McInnis; Department of History; and St. Francis Xavier University
8.13 The Atlantic Provinces 585
8.14 Economic Nationalism 595
Doug Owram; Department of History; and University of British Columbia - Okanagan
8.15 The Boom Years, the Bust Years 599
8.16 The New World Economic Order 603
8.17 Post-Industrial Canada 609
8.18 Summary 617

Chapter 9. Cold War Canada, 1945-1991

9.1 Introduction 627
9.2 One Dominion 631
9.3 The North: Economy and Territory 639
Kelly Black; Department of History; and Vancouver Island University
9.4 The Cold War 651
9.5 Post-War Leadership and State-making 665
9.6 Dief is the Chief 677
9.7 The Pearson Interlude 685
9.8 Trudeau I 689
9.9 Cold War Quebec 695
9.10 The October Crisis 707
9.11 Quebec and the ROC 713
9.12 The 1980s 723
9.13 Cold War Society: Cities and Suburbs 735
9.14 Rural Canada in an Urban Century 747
Daniel Samson; Department of History; and Brock University
9.15 Cold War Themes 753
9.16 The 1960s Counterculture 761
9.17 The Sexual Revolution 769
9.18 Summary 777

Chapter 10. This is the Modern World

10.1 Introduction 789
10.2 Defining Modernism 791
10.3 Antimodernism 799
Sharon Wall; Department of History; and University of Winnipeg
10.4 Consumerism 803
Tracy Penny Light and Thompson Rivers University
10.5 Secular Canada 805
10.6 Religion And Irreligion In The Postwar World 811
Tina Block; Department of History; and Thompson Rivers University
10.7 Gendered Roles after the Wars 813
Robert Rutherdale; Department of Philosophy & History; and Algoma University
10.8 Canada Noir 817
10.9 Historicizing Childhood: The Changing Fortunes of Children and Youth in Canada 827
Georgia Sitara; Department of History; and University of Victoria

10.10 Teenage Rampage 833
10.11 Historical Experiences of Adolescence at Mid-century 835
Katharine Rollwagen; Department of History; and Vancouver Island University
10.12 Youth and Moral Panics 841
Katharine Rollwagen; Department of History; and Vancouver Island University
10.13 Modern Culture 845
10.14 A Culture under Siege? 857
10.15 The National Pastime(s) 865
10.16 Sport and Leisure in Post-Confederation Canada 869
Robin Anderson; Department of History; and University of the Fraser Valley
10.17 Commercial Sport and Spectating 881
Russell Field; Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management; and University of Manitoba
10.18 Tourism in 20th Century Canada 887
Michael Dawson; Department of History; and St. Thomas University
10.19 Summary 891

Chapter 11. First Nations from Indian Act to Idle No More

11.1 Introduction 899
11.2 Environment and Colonialism 903
11.3 Natives by the Numbers 907
11.4 Indigenous – Settler Relations before Confederation 913
Jennifer Pettit; Department of Humanities; and Mount Royal University
11.5 Indigenous-Settler Relations since Confederation 917
Jennifer Pettit; Department of Humanities; and Mount Royal University
11.6 Living with Treaties 921
Keith Smith; Departments of History and First Nations Studies; and Vancouver Island University
11.7 From Agricultural Training to Residential School 929
Jennifer Pettit; Department of Humanities; and Mount Royal University
11.8 WWI to 1970 933
Jennifer Pettit; Department of Humanities; and Mount Royal University
11.9 The Aqueduct and Colonialism 935
Adele Perry; Department of History; and University of Manitoba
11.10 Canada and the Colonized, 1970-2002 939
11.11 Residential Schools 949
11.12 Idle No More 955
Mary-Ellen Kelm; Department of History; and Simon Fraser University
11.13 Summary 961

Chapter 12. Canada at the End of History

12.1 Introduction 971
12.2 The End of the Cold War 977
12.3 Postmodern Politics 987
12.4 Political Recalibrations 997
12.5 Identity Politics 1003
12.6 Building a National Identity 1007
12.7 Queer and Other Histories 1023
John Belshaw; Tracy Penny Light; and Thompson Rivers University
12.8 The Art of War 1029
12.9 The Historical Record in the Born-Digital Age 1047
Ian Milligan; Department of History; and University of Waterloo
12.10 Digital Histories 1049
John Bonnett; Department of History; and Brock University
12.11 Oral History: The Stories Our Grandmothers Tell Us and More 1053
Katrina Srigley; Department of History; and Nipissing University
12.12 Monuments and Memory 1057
Alan Gordon; Department of History; and University of Guelph
12.13 Summary 1061

Appendix: Glossary 1067
About the Author and Contributors 1103
Other Books by John Douglas Belshaw 1107
List of Links for Print Users 1109
Versioning History 1115

Accessibility Statement

BCcampus Open Education believes that education must be available to everyone. This means supporting the creation of free, open, and accessible educational resources. We are actively committed to increasing the accessibility and usability of the textbooks we produce.

The web version of this resource has been designed to meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0, level AA. In addition, it follows all guidelines in Appendix A: Checklist for Accessibility of the *Accessibility Toolkit – 2nd Edition*.

Ways to Read This Textbook

This textbook is available in the following formats:

- **Online webbook.** You can read this textbook online on a computer or mobile device in one of the following browsers: Chrome, Firefox, Edge, and Safari.
- **PDF.** You can download this book as a PDF to read on a computer (Digital PDF) or print it out (Print PDF).
- **Mobile.** If you want to read this textbook on your phone or tablet, you can use the EPUB (eReader) or MOBI (Kindle) files.
- **HTML.** An HTML file can be opened in a browser. It has very little style so it doesn't look very nice, but some people might find it useful.

You can access the online webbook and download any of the formats for free here: *Canadian History – Post-Confederation* (https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/). To download the book in a different format, look for the "Download this book" drop-down menu and select the file type you want.

How can I use the different formats?

Format	Internet required?	Device	Required apps	Features	Screen reader compatible
Online webbook	Yes	Computer, tablet, phone	An internet browser (Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari)	WCAG 2.0 AA compliant, option to enlarge text, and compatible with browser text-to-speech tools.	Yes
PDF	No	Computer, print copy	Adobe Reader	Ability to zoom in, highlight, and annotate the text.	Unsure
EPUB and MOBI	No	Computer, tablet, phone	Kindle app (MOBI) or eReader app (EPUB)	Option to enlarge text, change font style, size, and colour.	Unsure
HTML	No	Computer, tablet, phone	An internet browser (Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari)	WCAG 2.0 AA compliant and compatible with browser text-to-speech tools.	Yes

Tips for Using This Textbook

- **Search the textbook.**
    - If using the online webbook, you can use the search bar in the top right corner to search the entire book for a key word or phrase. To search a specific chapter, open that chapter and use your browser's search feature by hitting **[Cntr] + [f]** on your keyboard if using a Windows computer or **[Command] + [f]** if using a Mac computer.
    - The **[Cntr] + [f]** and **[Command] + [f]** keys will also allow you to search a PDF, HTML, EPUB, and MOBI files if you are reading them on a computer.
    - If using an eBook app to read this textbook, the app should have a built-in search tool.
- **Navigate the textbook.**
    - This textbook has a table of contents to help you navigate through the book easier. If using the online webbook, you can find the full table of contents on the book's homepage or by selecting "Contents" from the top menu when you are in a chapter.
- **Annotate the textbook.**
    - If you like to highlight or write on your textbooks, you can do that by getting a print copy, using the Digital PDF in Adobe Reader, or using the highlighting tools in eReader apps.

Known Accessibility Issues and Areas for Improvement

There are no known accessibility issues at this time.

Let Us Know if You are Having Problems Accessing This Book

We are always looking for ways to make our textbooks more accessible. If you have problems accessing this textbook, please contact us to let us know so we can fix the issue.

Please include the following information:

- The name of the textbook
- The location of the problem by providing a web address or page description
- A description of the problem
- The computer, software, browser, and any assistive technology you are using that can help us diagnose and solve your issue (e.g., Windows 10, Google Chrome (Version 65.0.3325.181), NVDA screen reader)

You can contact us one of the following ways:

- Web form: BCcampus OpenEd Help
- Web form: Report an Error

This statement was last updated on August 13, 2020.

About the Book

Canadian History: Post-Confederation – 2nd Edition was written by John Douglas Belshaw. This book is a part of the B.C. Open Textbook Project. This book is the second in a two-part collection by this author; also see *Canadian History: Pre-Confederation – 2nd Edition* (also in its second edition).

Starting in March 2020, various edits were made to the textbook. These stop well short of an overhaul. This is not a revised edition so much as a corrected edition. The changes are recorded throughout the Pressbooks document and can be provided on request. Possibly the most significant and wide-reaching change recognizes that the term "Indigenous" has superseded "Aboriginal." I would like to acknowledge the contributions to this process made by Bonnie Huskins, Alan Gordon, Howard Hisdal, Susan Ladner, Christine Mould, Benjamin Vaughan, and Sébastien Ragache.

If you are an instructor who is using this book for a course, please fill out our Open Textbook Adoption Form.

About BCcampus

BCcampus Open Education began in 2012 as the B.C. Open Textbook Project with the goal of making post-secondary education in British Columbia more accessible by reducing student costs through the use of openly licensed textbooks and other OER. BCcampus supports the post-secondary institutions of British Columbia as they adapt and evolve their teaching and learning practices to enable powerful learning opportunities for the students of B.C. BCcampus Open Education is funded by the British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills & Training, and the Hewlett Foundation.

Open textbooks are open educational resources (OER) created and shared in ways so that more people have access to them. This is a different model than traditionally copyrighted materials. OER are defined as teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and re-purposing by others.[1] Our open textbooks are openly licensed using a Creative Commons licence and are offered in various e-book formats free of charge, or as printed books that are available at cost. For more information about open education in British Columbia, please visit the BCcampus Open Education website.

1. "Open Educational Resources," *Hewlett Foundation*, https://hewlett.org/strategy/open-educational-resources/ (accessed September 27, 2018).

Acknowledgments

For the 1st Edition (2016)

This open textbook follows on the *Canadian History: Pre-Confederation* volume produced under the auspices of BCcampus, and it continues along a nicely oscillating learning curve begun just over two years ago. The original goal was to assemble Open Educational Resources (OER) for Canadianist historians; it became something vastly more ambitious. Along the way there has been much to learn about the nature of copyright law, the extent of resources available online, and who was at the cutting edge of research on Canadian history.

There have been several formal opportunities to reflect on the process of developing an open textbook. OER symposia, BCcampus' Open Textbook conference, and developing presentations to potential user groups have been important developmental moments. Co-writing a study on different ways to build open textbooks with Rajiv Jhangiani (Kwantlen Polytechnic University) and Arthur "Gill" Green (Okanagan College) added new wrinkles to my understanding of process and issues; it was also great fun.

My colleagues at Thompson Rivers University, particularly in the Open Learning division, played an important role in this project. The Instructional Design Group, led by Michelle Harrison, and the Curriculum Services department, led by Naomi Cloutier, provided both resources and editorial support in the form of Danielle Collins, Carolyn Hawes, Wayne Egers, Mona Hall, Dawn-Louise Macleod, and Christopher Ward. Many thanks for keeping me on my game. Open Learning also found resources to build a suite of video interviews with historians in BC and Ontario. These were planned out by Norm Fennema (a talented historian at TRU-OL and the University of Victoria) and executed by the gifted Jon Fulton (TRU-OL). Some of the interviews are incorporated into both the *Pre-* and *Post-Confederation* Open Learning courses, so I would like to acknowledge the more than two dozen historians who participated. I'm pleased, as well, to acknowledge the continued resourcefulness of TRU Librarian, Brenda Smith.

BCcampus continues to contribute leadership to the task of making quality resources available to students for free. More than that, the organization is committed to the ideal of pedagogical assets that enable the transformation of teaching and learning. Using this open textbook as one would a conventional textbook is a bit like employing a smartphone exclusively as, well, as a telephone. This is the message that Mary Burgess (Executive Director), Amanda Coolidge (Senior Manager), Clint Lalonde (Manager, Education Technologies), Lauri Aesoph (Manager, Open Education), and Denise Goudy (Director, Education Projects) are working hard to get out. Looking at adoption rates for the open textbooks in British Columbia and Canada generally, I'd say they are succeeding. My thanks to everyone at BCcampus for their commitment to this project and for their patience as one deadline after another slipped silently by.

And a shout-out to the Ministry of Advanced Education (AVED). The open textbook initiative came from the Ministry a few years ago with significant resources attached. The results have been

remarkable and British Columbia is now, pound-for-pound and ounce-for-ounce, the leading jurisdiction in this field. This is worth bragging about, not least because being the leader in OER means being the most enthusiastic to share, to make freely available, to eschew petty proprietorship for the greatest possible benefit of students and in the interest of energized teaching. That's real leadership, AVED.

Early on in the development of the *Post-Confederation* textbook, it occurred to me that it would be enriched by the direct involvement of the leading lights in our field from across the country. These bright and dedicated folks are listed by name on the "About the Author and Contributors" page. I am privileged to be part of this community of scholars, and I am inspired by their work.

As this project was underway, the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was wrapping up in the form of an enormous multi-volume report. There are times when, if one looks closely, it is possible to see History with a capital-H pressing its thumbprint on our times. The TRC's proceedings and report are just such a moment. It marks a watershed in the national, social, legal, moral, cultural, environmental, and human history of many peoples in the northern half of North America. There will be no turning back. The TRC provides generations to come with testimony that repositions what we have written to date on the post-1867 era. I am glad to have lived in a time when so many voices are set free and allowed to speak. As a Canadian who lives on the unceded territory of three Indigenous communities, I acknowledge the contribution made to this history by Inuit, and First Nations and Métis peoples.

Family and friends have provided encouragement in the course of this enterprise, though none more than Diane Purvey. How often can I thank you? As this project reached its conclusion, we lost our cat and companion of 21 years, Reepicheep, without whose demands for feeding and entertaining, I might never have got out of my chair. I shall not be able to think of the open textbook without remembering her as well.

Finally, although many people have contributed to what is great about *Canadian History: Post-Confederation*, only one individual may lay claim to its faults, and that is me.

For the 2nd Edition (2020)

I'm making revisions to this volume in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis. I usually work from home so, for me, not much has changed, although I badly miss going to movies, getting coffee out, visiting the local micro-breweries. I miss watching soccer, running in crowds, and cycling with my club. I've discovered that my fail-safe Greek salad elicits groans from family members. How long has *that* been going on?

As historic watersheds go, putting the whole nation under something like 'house arrest' for weeks without foreseeable end is a distinctive one. Historians around the world are even now wrestling with what it all means. We can be reasonably sure that there will be permanent changes arising from this episode and that people in the decades to come will think of their lives in terms of pre- and post-COVID. Some comparisons are being made to wartime but the similarities to sharp economic downturns seem to me more apposite. Then there's the October Crisis of 1970, another time when all eyes were on the Prime Minister and many civil rights were shelved. Indigenous peoples can shrug at

all of this excitement and point instead to the long-running tragedy of tuberculosis, containment on-reserve under the Pass System, and shortages (of proper food, clean water, decent and reliable healthcare, and compassion), not to mention actual epidemics that claimed thousands of lives. It won't be the first time, either, that we've had to look hard at our urban ways of living and our dependence on inorganic energy sources—themes that recur throughout the twentieth century. Perhaps it has never been so timely, therefore, to study the history of this country and the many peoples who comprise it.

No fear: I'm not going to add to the acknowledgements a nasty microscopic virus. But I would like to acknowledge the many individuals who contributed to the revised and corrected version you now have before you. Colleagues, professors, students, readers—scholars one and all—have kindly and patiently made a wide variety of suggestions. Have we caught all the errors, typos, etc.? Probably not. So please keep letting us know what you find and what needs improving upon. At some point, however, you're going to have to do more than *adopt* this resource: you're going to have to *adapt* it. Make it work for you and your specific needs. I've done some of this myself, incorporating some of the fine contributions made here by colleagues into a new *Histories of Indigenous Peoples and Canada*. That project involved two co-authors—Chelsea Horton and Sarah Nickel—whose rigorous approach to the field and influence now echoes back into this volume. My relationship with BCcampus continues, and I want to single out the support provided by Josie Gray, Lauri Aesoph, and Amanda Coolidge. They are champions in every sense of the word.

Preface

The interesting times in which I have been fortunate to live include the 1960s – most of which I remember. On reflection, what stands out is how one age seemed to be closing while another opened.

We started school days with *The Lord's Prayer*, until that stopped. At assemblies we sang *God Save the Queen*, until we did so no longer. There was one particularly fearsome Grade 4 teacher who kept a strap in the top drawer of her desk and she wasn't afraid to use it, until she was no longer permitted to do so. There was a class project on the new flag and bitter muttering on the part of the plentiful WWII vets in the neighbourhood about losing the old Red Ensign. We stopped singing *God Save the Queen* in favour of *O Canada*, the lyrics of which changed a few years later. (I remain conflicted as to which version I should sing at sporting events.) We used Imperial measures until, in 7th Grade, Canada annoyingly went metric.

All the children in my class were White, with the possible exception of a small number who might now be comfortable identifying as Métis; I don't remember more than a couple of Chinese Canadians in the whole school. By the end of the 1960s there were Indo-Canadians in our suburban neighbourhood, a pioneer wave of the Asian immigration that would transform Greater Vancouver's demographics in the '70s and '80s. Homosexuality, in those days, was illegal and punishable in brutal ways; consequently no one was "gay", a term that itself would not emerge for nearly a decade. "Normal" was carefully policed. For the most part "diversity" was a couple of Ukrainian families, a very small contingent of Catholics, and an African-Canadian household. Not much diversity, really.

The focus was on belonging, not on differentness. There was a profoundly nationalistic world's fair in Montreal in 1967, and we all learned rather sappy nationalistic songs, which we sang at the top of our little nationalistic lungs. The world was divided neatly into Leafs fans and Habs fans until, in 1970, the Canucks joined the NHL.

Our mothers were all stay-at-home housewives, or at least that's how it seemed. Many of them, my own included, had been Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWACs) or nurses during World War II, a couple were war-brides, some had worked in the Vancouver shipyards. My mother had a piece of shrapnel that nearly claimed her life during the Blitz in London, and she had been involved in the relief of a concentration camp in Germany. She wasn't the only woman whose quiet life in suburbia was in sharp contrast with dramas in the past. By the end of the '60s many of her cohort were shedding domesticity and finding their way back into employment.

Our parents – nearly all of them, it seemed – had false teeth; women talked about the wisdom of getting their chompers pulled in their early 20s because, after all, who had the time or money for dental pain and surgery? Then, rather suddenly, dental hygiene became a suburban cult and people just got caps, but nothing more, for the one or two "Chiclets" they lost playing ball or hockey.

The other thing about teeth was they were almost always stained yellow by tobacco. Black and white television – a technology that persisted until around 1969 in our household – spared us from the worst blemishes and disfigurements of world leaders. Those who had hung around since the 1950s or earlier

all had the same puffy and jowly faces, haggard and creased like old leather shoes. The suits they wore seldom fit well. Their wives always seemed terrifically myopic. Then, overnight, they were all replaced by angular, smooth-featured, telegenic, less Kremlinesque figures who didn't wear trilbies or fedoras. Diefenbaker and Pearson, like Dwight Eisenhower and Harold MacMillan, were all born in the 19th century.

Kennedy and Trudeau were not part of that generation. In fact, the new generation of leaders and journalists were born after the Great War, the war to end all wars, the war that had an even bigger sequel, the war that everyone feared would turn out to be the first in a trilogy with a still bigger atomic finish. One of my earliest memories of watching the TV news – and this is something I recall with uncharacteristic clarity – came during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. I was nearly five years old. They presented a map that showed the probable striking-range of Soviet nuclear missiles launched from Cuba. I was pleased to see – and to have confirmed by my parents – that although Toronto and Montreal would be incinerated (too bad about the Habs, I remember thinking), Vancouver was just beyond the missiles' reach.

Being part of the baby boom generation, even a later part of it, means that most of my memories are in some measure shared with a very large share of the current Canadian population. People my age and older talk about where they were when John Kennedy was shot, Woodstock (c'mon, I was 10 – of course I didn't go), and hearing The Beatles' *Yellow Submarine* played repeatedly – yes, the entire album – on one of a small number of rock radio stations. This was another way in which our lives changed: Media was being transformed. Suburban flocks of birds roosted on ridiculous television antennae on long poles attached and lashed like tallship masts to the rooftops of homes. Ours picked up two local stations, a redundant channel from Victoria, and a slightly exotic CBS station from over the border in Washington State. Occasionally a phantom station – Channel 11 from Tacoma – would come in clear enough to make out a few foggy images. Then cable arrived and we had twelve channels, albeit still in black and white. The rooftop antennae were dismantled and redeployed as badminton net posts. FM radio arrived around the same time, utterly changing our music choices and sources of information. The possibility of another *Yellow Submarine* moment – when everyone in the country listened to the same album on the same day – had passed.

These changes are recalled in one way or another by almost everyone my age who grew up in Canada's cities and suburbs in the 1960s. In some respects they are sharply Canadian memories; in others they are borrowed wholesale from the United States. As a historian, I look over this flotsam and jetsam of baby boom nostalgia and see transitions and continuities, the end of one vision of Canada leading seamlessly into a very different set of expectations.

The country turned 100 years old in 1967. In this respect it was a success. It had endured a whole century, during which time it had grown geographically, matured technologically, and – in the twenty-five years before the Centennial – transformed economically. Ironically, Canada was about to enter into a period of renegotiated federalism, an age of uncertainty in which the dissolution of the Dominion was a real possibility. Bombs were exploding in mailboxes in Montreal; political hostages were murdered; martial law was declared. People – informed and rational people – would talk seriously about the possibility of border wars along the Labrador frontier and in the Eastern Townships. Our current culture places a high value on ironic detachment; in the 1960s and '70s the joys and trials of being a Canadian were enough to reduce folks to genuine tears.

Canada since 1867

This textbook introduces aspects of the history of Canada since Confederation. “Canada” in this context includes Newfoundland and all the other parts that come to be aggregated into the Dominion after 1867.

Where it begins is relatively easy to pinpoint. Where it ends is not. We are now well into the 21st century. Our feet have crossed the threshold and the welcome mat as well. Some of the developments of the new millennium are possible to contextualize in longer histories, while others, of course, are too recent to interpret. History is not tea-leaves waiting to be read: We cannot reasonably predict how events will unfold based on what has occurred in the last 10 or 20 years. What can be shown, however, are the many ways in which the past pursues us into the future, clinging to our heels and ankles, refusing to release us entirely or ever. This is one reason why we study history.

Another benefit of history is to grow analytically. Being able to interpret evidence and to revisit established versions of events is key to being a good historian and an alert human being. There are historical traditions about Canada that arise in the 19th and 20th century that merit revisiting. Demonstrating how that work has been done and suggesting ways in which you might continue that work is part of the purpose of this textbook.

The Challenge of Canada

Canadian history since 1867 involves an over-arching constitutional narrative: the story of a country forged not in fire but at a bargaining table. How it transforms from a mutually convenient administrative arrangement into a country for which individuals have real sentiments and a collectivity that can and occasionally does accomplish something of consequence is, certainly, at the heart of that story. As well, however, it is the story of how “Canada” – initially a consortium of four rather bickersome colonies – came to dominate half of a continent. Inevitably that tale involves the imposition of one group’s rule over others. Canada is an empire in its own right. It has had its own colonies and it continues to engage with certain of its citizens in ways that can only be described as “colonial”. As well, it is an economic machine. The *British North America Act* was designed in part to enshrine the private ownership of property, facilitate commerce, and enable the making of profit. It is an artifact and an instrument of 19th century capitalism and, as such, it has framed relations between social classes. And, at the very heart of Canada there is an implicit assumption about the relationship between humanity and the environment. It was originally called the Dominion of Canada to distinguish it from the Republic to the south and the United Kingdom to the east. The word derives from the biblical story of *Genesis*, in which humanity is given “dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the Earth.” As a nation of “hewers of wood and drawers of water,” Canadians have imposed themselves with force on their landscape and, occasionally, on one another.

This makes the writing and reading and understanding of Canada challenging. An older generation of historians of Canada emphasized the ways in which the country grew politically and as a civic experiment. Alternative identities, such as those described by gender, sexual orientation, race, Indigeneity, and social class (to name only a few), were viewed by older historians as divisive.

Canadian historians since the 1980s have struggled with this task of describing a people and a nation at the same time when the two things are not, clearly, the same thing.

Organization

Much of this text follows thematic lines. Each chapter moves chronologically but with alternative narratives in mind. What Indigenous accounts must we place in the foreground? Which structures (economic or social) determine the range of choices available to human agents of history? What environmental questions need to be raised to gain a more complete understanding of choices made in the past and their ramifications?

Each chapter is comprised of several sections and some of those are further divided. In many instances you will encounter original material that has been contributed by writers other than myself. These sections are the work of university historians from across Canada who are leaders in their respective fields. They provide a diversity of voices on the subject of the nation's history and, thus, an opportunity for you to experience some of the complexities of understanding and approaching the past.

Pedagogical Tools

Canadian History: Post-Confederation includes several learning and teaching assets. The first section (the x.1) of each chapter includes Learning Objectives. These are, I think, consistent with what most introductory Canadian History courses hope to accomplish.

Key Points are provided in most chapter sections. These are intended to help you identify issues of over-arching importance. There are, of course, other "key points" to be found in the chapters, so do read carefully.

Recent interviews with historians from across Canada have been captured in video clips that are embedded throughout this book. These, and links to other videos, are highlighted by placing them in a shaded textbox. If you reading a hard copy or e-reader, refer to the web version of this book to view these videos.

At the end of each chapter, the Summary section includes additional features: Key Terms, Short Answer Exercises, and Suggested Readings. The key terms are bolded in the text, but it is likely that there are additional (or fewer) terms for which you'd like to see definitions. One of the advantages of an open textbook is that you can do something about that. The key terms are collected in a Glossary at the very end of the textbook. The Short Answer Exercises are a means of testing your understanding of the material covered. And, of course, the Suggested Readings are there to help you launch your research and further your voyage of discovery into the history of Canada and its peoples. Everything listed in the Suggested Readings ought to be available through your university or college library.

You will also find Exercises throughout the textbook. No one likes doing exercises but, then, no one likes that cramped feeling you get from sitting too long in front of the computer either. Think of these as a chance to stretch and renew yourself as you work your way through the textbook. They are designed as a chance to get you thinking like a historian. And one of the things that historians do is see

the past around them manifest in buildings, landscapes, faces, music, plants and animals, and even smells. For the mind that is trained to understand history, historical processes, and historical actors, the world is perceptible in many dimensions. It is an incredibly impressive feeling and we want to share it with you.

Nomenclature

What is Canada? Is it what it encloses now or what it was on 1 July 1867? Is it its people or its geography? These sound, probably, like hair-splitting questions but think about it for a moment. Much of the Acadian population in the Maritimes was sent into exile in 1755, where large numbers of their descendants remain today. If Canadian history is about the "Canadian" people, then the Acadians are part of that story, regardless of their zipcode. In the 19th century Euro-North Americans drew brutally straight lines across the continent and, in the process, chopped in half the Niitsitapi Confederacy, sheered off large Anishinaabe communities from one another, and deeply inconvenienced the Stó:lō of the Fraser Valley. So, whose history are we studying and to what extent are we really concerned with the "Canadian peoples"? If we prefer to look at the geography as the determining factor, what if this course stopped in 1948? No Newfoundland! But since we cover the time since the union of the two Dominions, Canada inherits Newfoundland's history as though it were some kind of dowry. What if, just imagine, Canada annexed the Turks and Caicos Islands in the West Indies? Or Belize? This might sound ridiculous but the proposal to do so has been made several times over the last century or so. Would "Canada" thus inherit their history as well? Could Manitobans thereafter intone on their Mayan heritage the way those of us who have never been to Newfoundland have appropriated the story of Guglielmo Marconi's telegraph breakthrough in St. John's in 1902?

The point is that we make some choices about what is to be covered, and those choices are often arbitrary. That should not stop us, however, from remembering that the decision of Newfoundlanders to join Confederation in 1949 was not inevitable; nor does it delete the island colony's own historical identity. What it does, however, is reveal the extent to which "Canadian" history is "national" rather than transnational or even hypernational.[1]

The same is true, if not more so, of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The First Nations have histories that are vastly older than Confederation. The period since 1867 may have presented challenges to Indigenous communities – no one would argue otherwise – but it is, in terms of time and historical encounters, a blip on the radar screen. The depth of First Nations' history is not a topic into which this textbook goes, but it is one that this textbook assumes. To that end, the nomenclature preferred by Indigenous groups is, as often as possible, used here. If the Heiltsuk tell us that they have always been Heiltsuk and that "Bella Bella" was just a convenient term used by Europeans, who am I – a Euro-Canadian – to question that? Heiltsuk it is, then. The question of terminology, however, is complicated by centuries of colonialism. If you're reading a 19th century account of relations between Indigenous peoples and settlers, you're bound to encounter the colonial terms. To help, this textbook provides the current (and usually ancestral) name along with the most well-known alternative where it seems appropriate to do so. For example: Niitsitapi (aka: Blackfoot); Stó:lō (Coast Salish); Innu (Montagnais or Naskapi).

1. On this topic, see Allan Greer, "National, Transnational, and Hypernational Historiographies: New France Meets Early American History," *Canadian Historical Review*, 91, 4 (2010): 695-724.

As is the case with the companion text, *Canadian History: Pre-Confederation*, an exception to this rule has been made of the Cree. In the post-1867 period the various people associated with this term – whose lands stretch from northern Quebec west through Ontario and across the central plains to northern Alberta – have developed a common, if occasionally fragmented, collective identity. The use of "Cree" may be problematic and even artificial, but it has been reinforced by the experience of the Numbered Treaties and Canadian imperialism, and sustained by a shared language and historical heritage. For want of a better metaphor, Cree is used as a flag of convenience here.

Inevitably the word "Indian" comes into play. There was, of course, a Department of Indian Affairs and a slew of Indian Residential Schools. Journalists spilled gallons of ink on various "Indian issues", and Indigenous leaders themselves appropriated the term. I have endeavoured to use these vexed terms with historic accuracy and with sensitivity; I would encourage you to do the same.

Think Like a Historian

There are ways to get history wrong. Clearly, events that come after cannot be used to explain events that came before (not causally, although they may reveal something of intent). The person that a historical figure becomes is not the person that they once were; We might look for evidence of poor ethical choices in the youth of John A. Macdonald to explain how he winds up entangled in the Pacific Scandal, but the Pacific Scandal does not prove that he was always morally lax. As well, the absence of something does not prove that it once existed. (Given the fact that the universe is overwhelmingly an airless and gravity-free blackness, there's clearly no truth to the rumour that nature abhors a vacuum.) An outcome with which we have become comfortable (e.g.: Allied victory in 1945) is by no means pre-determined. And it is very seldom the case that human beings have no choice: Sometimes they have alternatives that are simply very bad alternatives. That doesn't mean they are not historic actors; it just means they are historic actors faced with rotten decisions.

Of all the historic fallacies and bad practices, the one that looms largest in a subject area like modern history is that of **presentism**. This is the representation of the current state of affairs as the pinnacle of historic development. It projects current circumstances into the past in such a way as to suggest a direct connection between earlier events and the here and now. For example, one often reads that it is thanks to the sacrifices made in the Great War that we enjoy the freedoms we have today. This, of course, eclipses generations of struggle to translate the events of 1914-18 into laws that actually provide real "freedoms". It overlooks the many challenges to those "freedoms" in the interim. It pays no heed to the fact that "our freedoms" are not shared by everyone equally and so are demonstrably not "our" freedoms at all. Worse, it has the immodesty to assume that our "freedoms" are greater and/or better than those of past generations. Worst of all, it neglects to consider how one might consider those sacrifices if "freedoms" were to be lost. I write this in the shadow of the passing of Bill C-51, which – palpably – reduces the freedoms of some if not all members of our country with an eye to mitigating a perceived terrorist threat. I do not judge this legislation here but I do say this: We now have fewer freedoms than we did a few months ago. In that light, should one interpret the events of WWI thus? *It is due to the sacrifices made in those terrible years of conflict that many Canadians feel their rights have been compromised.*

The point is to look at the past and people in the decades and centuries gone by as acting and living in

the past. If they hoped for a future, they certainly didn’t have yours in mind. The present is special; so too is the past.

Prologue

Introduction to Post-Confederation Canada



"Benched"—a collector's card in the "Canadian Hockey Girl" series of 1903. Documents like this one remind us that the past may be a foreign country, but it's not necessarily a dull, old place.

Canada is a physically difficult place to govern and a difficult place to adequately conceive of as well. Culturally it presents enormous and largely unique challenges. There are other bilingual countries, such as Belgium, but they are typically small countries. There are other nations that claim vast territories, such as the United States, Russia, and China, but their populations are comparatively gigantic. There are other federations, though most share some definitive historic moment or condition that binds them together (revolutionary America, isolated Australia, and post-Berlin Wall Germany come to mind). Some former colonies threw off the imperial yoke in such a way as to create a common vocabulary of independence, but Canada did not. Internal division between communities in some countries – Northern Ireland, Spain, and South Africa, to cite only three examples from the developed nations – were bloody and lethal in the 20th century; by contrast, Canada's internal fractures seem much less severe. How, then, did the exercise of creating, managing, and living within a country of this scale and complexity play out in the 19th and 20th centuries?

The Long 19th Century

Eric Hobsbawm (1917-2012), a historian of Britain and the world, coined the term "the long 19th century" to describe the period from the French Revolution (1789) to the outbreak of global war in 1914. It is a useful concept because, first, it invites us to think outside of calendar boundaries and look at long-term trends in human experience; and second, it underlines the persistence and continuity of historic relations rather than focusing on less consequential ruptures. In the long 19th century the ideals of democracy spread across Europe and the Atlantic. Indeed, one could argue that this process began a decade sooner in what would become the United States. Regardless, it influences the development of

colonial cultures like those in British North America. The three ideals of the French Revolution – *liberté, égalité, fraternité* – make it possible to question institutions like slavery, and they provide a vocabulary with which to challenge oligarchies and exploitative employers later, in the age of industrialization.

This set of beliefs becomes foundational to the 19th century philosophy of **liberalism**. The individual – understood to be, in practice, an adult male – has rights; such a concept would have been impossible to sustain before the 1780s and yet it was generally embraced around the time of Confederation. When one looks at the history of colonies in the 17th and the 18th centuries, one finds a much more biological language of settlement, population, and sustenance. The village and the commons, the **seigneury** and the Clergy Reserves are all more corporate ways of seeing the world. By the late 19th century the **homestead** emerges as a model of colonization based on the emergent ideal of the **nuclear family**. The **paternalism** of earlier generations does not go away, but it is refashioned so as to emphasize the authority of the senior adult male in a household of dependants rather than the relationship of many males to the *seigneur,* or the lord of the manor, or the slave owner.

This kind of liberalism is difficult to escape when one looks at Canada from 1867-1914. Loyalty to the monarchy is unshaken and there is important continuity there but, in practical terms, Parliament in Ottawa and in Westminster is sovereign. And it becomes sovereign by the will of the electorate. Every addition to the landscape of Canada is conceived within the context of a language of individual rights: voters' rights, land rights, the freedom to believe in whatever creed appeals (providing it is Christian), and a vocabulary of reciprocal obligations to the maintenance and protection of the source of these liberties. It is for this reason that so many conflicts undertaken in the years from 1850-1918 are conceptualized as battles for freedom and the protection of liberties. This is a kind of language almost reflexively associated with the United States but it resonates around the Atlantic rim and across Canada in 1914 every bit as much. Too, the Canadian version incorporates the notion of freedom from the United States. This aspect is invoked in 1869-70 when talk of American annexation of Rupert's Land catalyzes Canadian imperialism in the West; it is invoked again in 1885 when Louis Riel returns from exile in the United States to lead further resistance to Canadian authority. At that juncture we see collective identities – Métis, Indigenous, and others – being invoked by Riel and others (some in Quebec) as concepts equivalent to if not greater than that of the individual. The victory of Canada in the North-West Rebellion is, therefore, interpreted by the Canadians themselves as a triumph of democratic and individual values over something closer to "tribal," an concept that is dismissed as older and less progressive.

Progress and Modernity

Indeed, no word so fully captures the spirit of the 19th and 20th centuries as "progress." It is bound inexorably with the notion of modernity. Clearly, social changes occurred repeatedly in the pre-19th century world but the combination of scientific and philosophical developments led to a widespread belief that the past was largely static and the present – not to mention the future – were domains of positive transformation. Scientific knowledge – progress – was increasingly viewed as key to improving human life and social conditions. As society progressed, so too would the individual. Progress thus became an all-consuming force, a tide of change that led in only one direction: toward continuous improvement.

Among historical writers, this view of onward-and-upward change was embodied by the Whig School. They looked to the past for evidence of human, social, and material progress and understood recent historical events as further proof that the world was improving. Indeed, this has proved to be a powerful and persistent way of viewing past events and peoples. If we are the product of progress, then those who came before us were necessarily less advantaged and we are merely a stage on the path toward something better still. It is a view that does not easily accommodate setbacks and, of course, it privileges what it views as progressively valuable: reason, democracy, rights, equality, greater human numbers, technological innovation, the conquest of nature, and so on. It is no coincidence that the ideals of progress are contemporary with the ideas associated with biological evolution and Charles Darwin.

The whole package came to be understood as "modernity." The modern world is marked by a break with the pre-modern. Science versus superstition; individual merit and upward social mobility versus a life-sentence in a single social class determined by the status of one's parents; cities rather than the countryside. In each respect, modernity constitutes a revolution in its own right, a rejection of the norms of previous centuries wherein authority resided in the landed gentry and the clergy.

Modern Canada was, as one might expect, created in the forges of modernity. The values of that day and age were hard-wired into its constitution, and many were embraced and advanced by advocates of the new nation-state dominion. In this sense, the history of Canada since 1867 is the story of an idea: modernity. Much else happened, to be sure, but this intellectual context – one that is shared and advanced by more than 150 years worth of media and educational institutions – is not to be ignored.

Contrary Winds

There are contradictions bolted onto the framework of late 19th century modernism. The most outstanding and portentous of these are race, class, and gender. While the individual was increasingly viewed as a self-defining and free-acting agent of his (definitely "his") destiny, that doesn't mean that the modern mind is free of the notion of collectivities and categories. Racial categories were widely accepted as commonsensical, scientific, and essentially immutable. These categories extended to what we might now think of as ethnicities or visible minorities in a culture dominated by what were increasingly called "Caucasians": White Europeans descended mostly from the British or French. The emergence of the industrial working class produced a collective response to grim working conditions, poor compensation for labour, and political oppression. That collective response — which sometimes took the form of labour organizations like unions — was viewed by the Canadian middle- and upper-classes (and by many artisans as well) as corrosive of individual values. Finally, the language of individual rights was challenged very directly by the call for women's rights. So long as the definition of individual was inherently male, movements that were led by women (mostly middle-class women at that) and which called for social reform, electoral reform, and general equality for women would be viewed by the male establishment as problematic at several levels.

And here is the twofold contradiction. Generations that called for individual rights denied them to groups that were described as collectivities outside of the paradigm of individualism. That's one contradiction. Individual Indigenous people, individual Asian immigrants, individual women from any quadrant of Canadian society — they were all denied individual rights and equality. What's more, in **racializing** the Chinese and the First Nations, White Canada racialized itself. In classifying working

people as an other, middle-class Canada held up a mirror to itself as a distinct social element with its own collective identity. In essentializing women as a population that lacked a claim on rights, or the intellectual, moral, or physical ability to participate in civic life alongside men, male Canadians were essentializing themselves as a set of values at the same time.

In so many respects the Great War challenged these perspectives and changed the course of modernity. Before conscription there was voluntarism — the individual male choosing to serve king and country. Women's suffrage was repeatedly rejected, as were working-class demands for improved conditions and wages. As the war wore on, however, women gained the vote, the relationship of labour and the state was revisited, and conscription was introduced to override individual choice and (without irony) to force Canadian males to fight for their liberty.

The Short 20th Century

Whether measured from August 1914 or the *Treaty of Versailles* that ended the Great War, the "short 20th century" is said to have concluded in 1991. The collapse of Europe's old dynastic regimes gave way to a century of modern nation-building, the rise of two conflicting ideologies and, after 1945, two superpowers. It ends with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union. In this phase, modernity becomes bound up in the nature of industrial and commercial production, comprehensive liberal democracies at odds with tyrannies on the right and left, a more expansive state that moves into fields associated with energy production, healthcare, and social welfare, and a reconsideration of race and inclusion.

For Canadians the short 20th century starts badly. The economy is in tatters on the eve of the Great War and it barely recovers in the Interwar period. The prosperity of the post-World War II era is all the more important, historically, because of the long period of denial and hardship that preceded it. Racism and xenophobia were commonplace during World War I, and they never fully abated. There were internment camps for the enemy population in WWI whose loyalty to foreign and hostile regimes was assumed to be visceral and not a matter of choice. These would be reopened and expanded in the 1930s to house unemployed men, and then again in 1939-45 when Italian, German, and Japanese Canadians found their liberties severely curtailed. Canadians of Asian descent and Indigenous peoples would have to wait until 1948 and 1960 respectively to get the franchise and access to professions that racist legislation previously closed off. Working-class movements were lively and effective in the years between 1914-1920, but they were so in the face of considerable opposition. Women (that is, White women) got the vote, but their conditions under the law were largely unchanged from Victorian constraints.

Two World Wars and a Cold War later, Canada was a very different place from what it had been in 1867. In the space of little more than a century it passed from industrialization through de-industrialization. Its city centres transformed from commercial centres, to industrial hubs, to hollowed out postwar strips, to revitalized and densely repopulated metropolitan capitals. Gender roles transformed repeatedly with no apparent constant course of direction for many decades. Indigenous peoples, who were systematically contained on small pockets of land with their movements restricted, their choices narrowed, and their culture under continuous assault, found themselves increasingly taking a leading role in redefining and reorienting the country as a whole. These themes of change and

contradiction are at the heart of the history of Canada since Confederation — the theme of continuity is as well.

Media Attributions

- "Benched" from the "Canadian Hockey Girl" Series © William Elisha Maw is licensed under a Public Domain license

Chapter 1. Confederation and the Peoples of Canada

1.1 Introduction

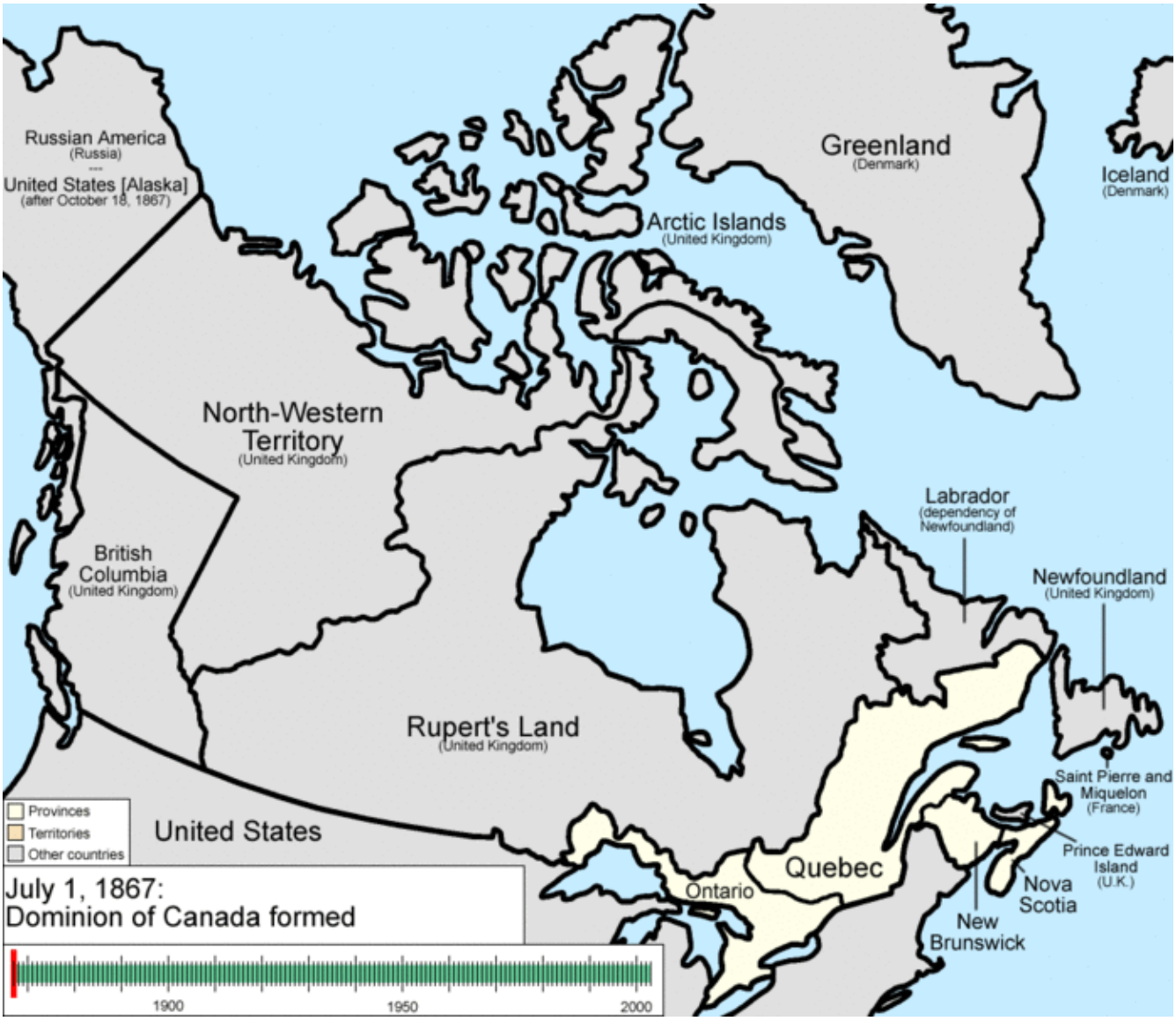


Figure 1.1 Canada's territorial evolution from 1867 to 2003. [Long Description]

Canada in 1867 covered an area roughly equivalent to the original **Thirteen Colonies of Britain**—the core elements of the United States of America (U.S.) in 1783. However, Ontario (formerly Canada West), Quebec (formerly Canada East), New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia were much more sparsely populated, and the new Dominion was a curious mix of highly concentrated and urban populations on the one hand, and overwhelmingly rural and remote on the other. For example, much of southern Ontario was farmland, and the northern coastline of Lake Superior was forestry and mining territory in which only small clusters of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people lived. There was some degree of industrialization underway from which a Canadian working class emerged. Cities like Hamilton, Ontario transformed from leafy commercial towns in the 1850s to smoky industrial engines in the late

1860s. The former colonies — now “provinces” — were not uniformly happy to be part of the new **federation**. Britain’s role in the post-1867 era was still unclear. Indeed, the meaning of the new federal union of colonies (and, to be clear, although they were provinces they were all still colonies as well) was not entirely obvious to the British North Americans themselves.

Historians have debated for many years just what was accomplished in the *British North America Act* (*BNA Act*) of 1867. There is the matter of what the so-called “Fathers of Confederation” believed they were doing and agreeing to. And there was also the question of Britain’s objectives: The new constitution might have signalled greater decision-making autonomy when it came to internal matters, but there was no suggestion of colonial independence. What, too, did the rest of the British North Americans — the people of the Plains and British Columbia, for example — believe was underway? Was the *BNA Act* a pivotal moment for them? And what of the Indigenous peoples whose ancestral and current territories were now captured within the boundaries of the new “Dominion”? This chapter summarizes the steps that led to the new constitution, and identifies the many peoples who both comprised the emergent country and who were soon (or not so soon) going to be entangled in Canadian expansionism. It may be convenient to think of 1 July 1867 as a new beginning but it was, in a great many respects, more about continuity than change.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the political and economic background to Confederation.
- Identify the principal features of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in the northern half of North America.
- Explain the residual uncertainty about, and the hostility toward, the Canadian project.

Long Descriptions

Figure 1.1 long description: A series of historical maps of Canada between 1867 and 2003. In order, the maps are labelled:

- July 1, 1867: Dominion of Canada formed.
- July 15, 1870: Rupert’s Land and North-Western Territory join, become Northwest Territories; Manitoba formed.
- July 20, 1871: British Columbia joins.
- July 1, 1873: Prince Edward Island joins.
- July 26, 1874: Ontario provisionally expanded north and west.
- April 12, 1876: District of Keewatin formed.
- September 1, 1880: British Arctic Islands join as part of North-West Territories.
- July 1, 1881: Manitoba expanded.

- May 7, 1886: Border of District of Keewatin adjusted.
- August 12, 1889: Ontario's expansion finalized.
- October 2, 1895: District of Keewatin enlarged.
- June 13, 1898: Yukon Territory formed, Quebec enlarged.
- May 23, 1901: Yukon Territory adjusted.
- September 1, 1905: Alberta and Saskatchewan formed, District of Keewatin dissolved.
- May 15, 1912: Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec enlarged; North-West Territories renamed Northwest Territories.
- March 11, 1927: Border with Newfoundland adjusted.
- March 31, 1949: Newfoundland joins.
- April 1, 1999: Nunavut formed.
- December 6, 2001: Newfoundland renamed Newfoundland and Labrador.
- April 1, 2003: Yukon Territory renamed Yukon.

[Return to Figure 1.1]

Media Attributions

- The Evolution of the Canadian Provinces © Golbez is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

1.2 Historical Demography of Canada, 1608–1921

Lisa Dillon; Département de démographie; and Université de Montréal

Sustained settlement of Canada by Europeans began in the St. Lawrence Valley, where the colony named "le Canada" stretched over 500 km from Quebec City to present-day Montreal.[1] From its founding in 1608 by Samuel de Champlain, the colony grew modestly until 1663, when the King of France, Louis XIV, and Jean-Baptiste Colbert, his minister of finance, instituted measures for the colony to grow through **natural increase**. Male immigrants dominated the colony in its early years, creating a severe **sex ratio** imbalance. However, between 1663 and 1673, the arrival of 716 *filles du roi* — French women whose immigration was financed by the King — allowed marriages and families to form in more significant numbers.[2] By 1760, the population had risen to 70,000.[3] Considered a **founder population**, a population deriving from a small initial influx of immigrants, present-day Quebecois who trace their origins to the French colonists are descended from just 8,573 men and women who married, had children, and whose children married in turn.[4]

A **family reconstitution** database of the Quebec Catholic population, the *Registre de la Population du Québec Ancien* (RPQA), allows us to trace the growth of this population throughout the French and British colonial period. The Quebec population was long considered exceptional because of its very high fertility: Married women bore on average seven to eight children, while women who lived a complete reproductive period could have 11 children. Since the inception of the RPQA database, scholars have emphasized the exceptionalism of this population in terms of comparatively generous land availability for new farm establishment, concomitantly large proportions of children marrying, and high fertility. More recent research, while confirming these trends, now emphasizes the differentiation of patterns. Such research has shown that while most Quebec youths married, eldest daughters had the highest propensity to marry and married the fastest, and about three-quarters of Quebec children married in birth order.[5] Through high fertility and intermarriage, Quebec families developed dense kinship networks: Nearly a quarter of families married their children in exchange marriages in which brothers and sisters married siblings from the same family.[6] Fertility and mortality were intimately

1. Hubert Charbonneau, Bertrand Desjardins, Jacques Légaré and Hubert Denis, "The Population of the St. Lawrence Valley, 1608-1760," in Michael Haines and Richard Steckel, eds., *A Population History of North America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 99.

2. The *Programme de recherche en démographie historique* (PRDH) list of the «Filles du Roi» (the King's Daughters). Montreal: Université de Montréal, http://www.genealogie.umontreal.ca/en/LesFillesDuRoi

3. Charbonneau et al., "Population of the St. Lawrence Valley," 131.

4. Bertrand Desjardins, "La contribution différentielle des immigrants français à la souche canadienne-française," *Annales de Normandie*, no.3/4 (2008): 74.

5. Lisa Dillon, "Parental and Sibling Influences on the Timing of Marriage, 17th- and 18th-century Quebec," *Annales de Démographie Historique*, no.1 (2010): 139-180.

6. Marianne Caron and Lisa Dillon, "Exchange marriages between sibsets: A sibling connection beyond marriage, Quebec 1660-1760," Paper presented to the IUSSP Conference, Busan, Korea, 2013, p.14.

intertwined in this population. Mothers who bore the largest number of children also experienced the highest infant losses;[7] on the other hand, women gave birth to their last child on average at age 40, and a late age at last birth was associated with an older age at death.[8]

Over the course of the 18th and early 19th centuries, the Quebec population experienced increased pressure and risks. While adult mortality remained stable, the growth of the colony and circulation of its inhabitants resulted in rising infant mortality, which increased from 50 to 100 per thousand before 1700 to 250 to 300 per thousand in the period 1750-1775.[9] The colony passed from control of the French crown to the British in 1760, joining Nova Scotia. Several thousand immigrants to Nova Scotia and the newly-formed colony of New Brunswick arrived from the New England colonies, both before and after the American Revolution, with an African-American community established in Nova Scotia. Meanwhile, the Quebec population continued to grow exponentially. English-speaking immigrants from the United States also began to settle parts of present-day Quebec and Ontario, while Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island's populations were boosted by British immigrants, particularly Scottish Highlanders. The new colony at Red River likewise grew from Scottish sources in these years. Following the War of 1812, the colonies of Upper and Lower Canada began to receive more British immigrants in general.[10]

Despite these important inflows, childbearing was an important source of Canadian population growth during the 19th century. McInnis estimates that between 1811-1861, when Canada grew from 511,000 persons to 3,175,000 persons, 84% of population growth was on account of natural increase — which makes natural growth more important than immigration.[11] Quebec's population itself increased thirteen-fold from 1761-1851; at the same time, the mean size of farms declined by a third.[12] Children who could not launch a farm household instead moved to cities or to the United States. From 1840-1940, Lavoie estimates that one in ten French Canadians emigrated to the U.S., of whom about two-thirds headed to New England.[13]

Sources of growth were countered by significant mortality rates. Infant mortality levels across 19th century Canada differed on the basis of urban-rural residence and francophone and anglophone identity. The infant mortality rate for all of Quebec (190 per thousand) was higher than that for Ontario (115) as well as New Brunswick (132, excluding Saint John), Nova Scotia (120, excluding Halifax) and Prince

7. Marilyn Amorevieta-Gentil. *Les niveaux et les facteurs déterminants de la mortalité infantile en Nouvelle-France et au début du Régime Anglais (1621-1779).* Doctoral thesis. Montreal: Université de Montréal, 2010.

8. Alain Gagnon et al., "Is There a Trade-off between Fertility and Longevity? A Comparative Study of Three Large Historical Demographic Databases Accounting for Mortality Selection." *PSC Discussion Papers Series*, vol. 22, no. 5 (2008).

9. Amorevieta-Gentil, *Les niveaux et les facteurs déterminants*, 131.

10. Marvin McInnis, "The Population of Canada in the Nineteenth Century," in Haines and Steckel, eds., *A Population History of North America*: 374-8.

11. Ibid.: 379.

12. Serge Courville, *Quebec: A Historical Geography* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009).

13. Yolande Lavoie, *L'émigration des Québécois aux États-Unis de 1840 à 1930* (Quebec, 1981): 53; Yves Roby, *Les Franco-Américains de la Nouvelle-Angleterre: Rêves et réalités* (Sillery, Quebec: Les éditions du Septentrion, 2000).

Edward Island (116).[14] Rising population density in Montreal and Quebec City created a sharp urban-rural contrast in death rates within Quebec, with as many as 285 infant deaths per thousand births in Montreal.[15]

Although fertility was relatively high in mid-19th century Canada compared to European countries, it began to fall during the last third of the 19th century. Married couples began to limit their childbearing; in Ontario, declining marital fertility has been linked to urban development and land availability. More recent research on Quebec demonstrates class and ethnic differentials in childbearing behaviour, with French Canadian married women manifesting higher fertility than their Quebec anglophone counterparts. Yet, among French Canadian women alone, those living in medium-sized and large cities had lower fertility than rural French Canadian women.[16] Intensive historical demographic research on Montreal has demonstrated further important cultural differences in demographic behaviour. By 1901 in Montreal, the total fertility rate, or the average number of children a woman would bear, with all married or unmarried women included in the measure, was 5.6 for French Catholics, 3.6 for Irish Catholics and 3.9 for Protestants. The earlier age at marriage of French Catholic women accounted for this ethnic differential: the percentage of women aged 20 to 24 who were married in Montreal during the 1890s was 43% for French Catholics, 32% for Irish Catholics, and 27% for Protestants.[17] These analyses portray a set of distinct ethno-religious demographic regimes within the city which, with further research, could potentially be generalized to the broader Canadian population.

14. McInnis, “The Population of Canada,” 403-4.

15. F.Pelletier, J.Légaré, and R.Bourbeau, “Mortality in Québec during the nineteenth century: from the state to the cities,” *Population Studies*, 51(1) (March 1997): 93-103; McInnis, “The Population of Canada,” 403.

16. Danielle Gauvreau, Diane Gervais and Peter Gossage, *La Fécondité des Québécoises 1870-1970: D’une exception à l’autre* (Quebec: Boréal, 2007): 128-30.

17. Sherry Olson and Patricia Thornton, *Peopling the North American City: Montreal 1840-1900* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 137-9.

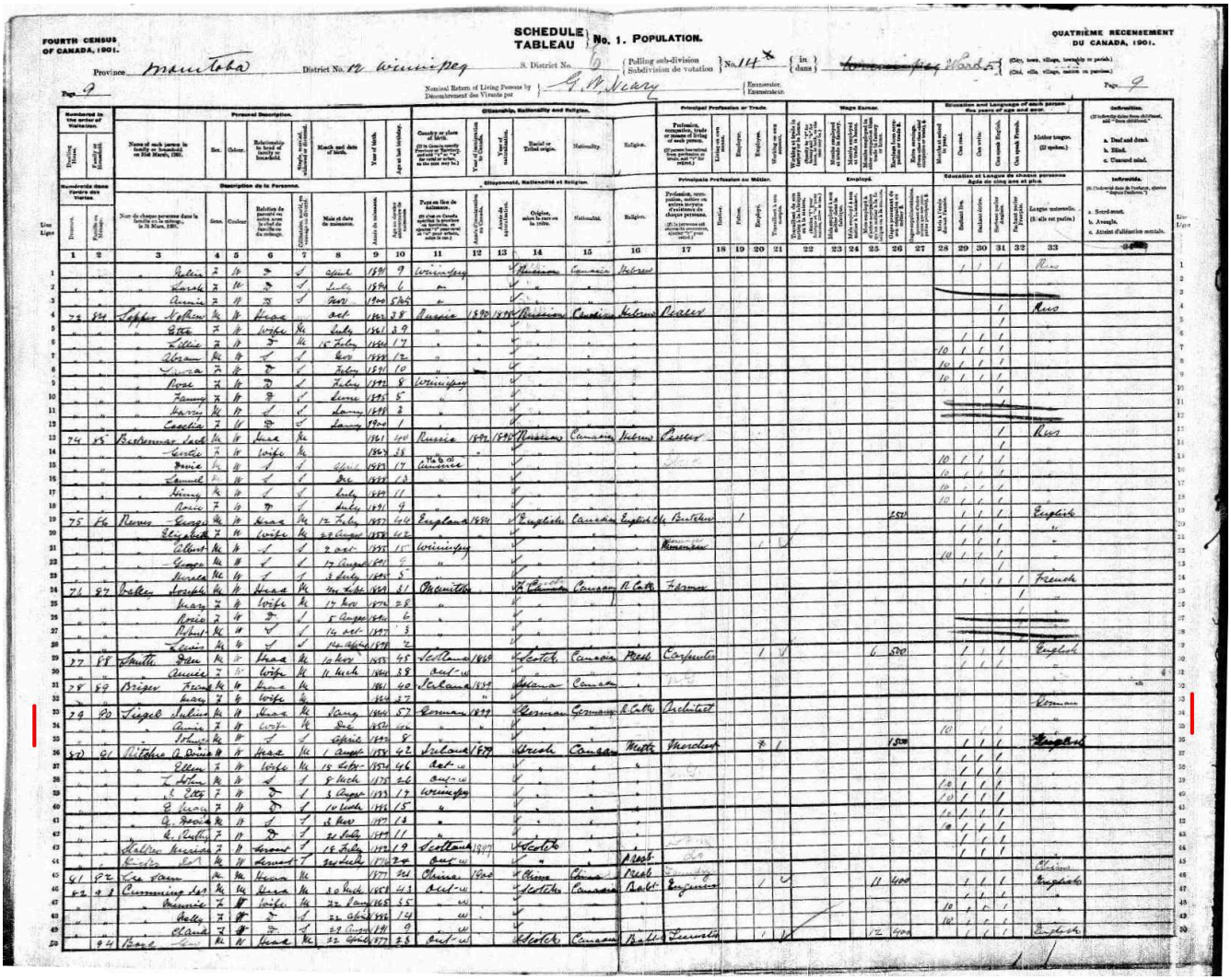


Figure 1.2 The principal instrument of demographic history is the census, particularly the enumerators' ledgers, like this one from Winnipeg in 1901.

Following Confederation, Canada expanded its territory to the Pacific coast; whereas the 1871 Census of Canada enumerated the populations of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec, and Ontario, the 1881 Census of Canada encompassed provinces from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island (PEI). By 1901, the population numbered 5,371,000 and the country had undergone significant urbanization, with rapid growth in Montreal and Toronto and the emergence of new cities to the west including Vancouver and Winnipeg.[18] The first decade of the 20th century was marked by a rate of immigration that was 2.8% of the average population; according to McInnis, immigration in this decade was "one of the most pronounced episodes experienced by any nation in recorded world history."[19] These new immigrants helped to populate the new western provinces, and by 1921, when Canada numbered 8,788,000 persons, more than 25% of Canada's population was living in BC and the Prairie provinces.[20] During

18. McInnis, "The Population of Canada": 419.

19. Marvin McInnis, "Canada's Population in the Twentieth Century," in Haines and Steckel, eds., *A Population History of North America*: 534.

20. Ibid.: 539.

these years, marital fertility in Canada continued to decline, but an increase in the proportion of women marrying offset this trend.[21] Canadians suffered some 50,000 deaths from the Spanish flu epidemic of 1918-19, notably in the age group 20 to 40 years.[22] But more generally, infant mortality in Canada fell after 1910 on account of improved sanitary practices, the creation of pasteurized milk distribution stations, and the promotion of cleanliness in the care of infants.[23] Thus, western development, high immigration, rapid urbanization, and declining fertility and mortality set the stage for "Canada's century."

Exercise: Think Like a Historian

The Manuscript Census

For anyone interested in demographics, family reconstitution, community histories, occupational mobility, and many other population behaviours, the census-takers' manuscript record is invaluable. As well, they provide information on people who generally didn't leave other kinds of records behind; children, prisoners, and immigrant enclaves — like the Chinese — are all covered.

The job of census-taker was a small piece of patronage that was handed off to a party loyalist attached to the local constituency. There were, necessarily, hundreds of census-takers in late 19th century Canada, each one facing particular challenges, applying idiosyncratic methods, and demonstrating varying levels of conscientiousness. In 1891 the census-taker in Kamloops asked his bosses in Ottawa what he should put in the 'occupation' category when it came to sex trade workers (aka: prostitutes, brothel keepers, and a half dozen other euphemisms). The reply he received tells us a lot about late Victorian sensibilities: write them up as "dressmakers." As a result, one can find in many towns of the far west what looks like a substantial textile industry.

The manuscripts were transcribed into aggregate data and published as the decennial *Canada Census*. Century-long — and then 90-year long — restrictions on access to the manuscripts meant that we are only now able to access 1911 census data. (The 1921 records have been farmed out to Ancestry.ca.)

Take a look at these examples from this page from the 1891 census [PDF]. The Vipond household in Nanaimo is a big one and includes Jane and George's son-in-law (although their eldest daughter appears to be missing). What does the record reveal about migration, religion, occupation, fertility, and birth intervals? The second block shows three neighbouring coalmining households headed respectively by Cuthbert, Cornish, and Scales. Tragedy has struck these people. The Elliott children have evidently been adopted by the Cuthberts, as has one of the Cornish children, Mamie, whose mother (born in Mauritius) has apparently died, leaving Thomas a widower and able to manage only three children on his own. One of those children, William Cornish, is 14 and working in the mines – not as a labourer but as a "miner," which indicates he's been doing this for a while. Hannah and David Scales have taken in Mamie's sister Lily. What we're seeing here are survival strategies. What else is visible? Religious affiliation ("C.E." denotes Church of England,

21. Ibid.: 547.

22. A. Gagnon, M. Miller, S. Hallman, R. Bourbeau, D. A. Herring, D.J.D. Earn and J. Madrenas, "Age-Specific Mortality During the 1918 Influenza Pandemic: Unravelling the Mystery of High Young Adult Mortality," *PLOS-One*, August 5, 2013.

23. Neil Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1973), 59-61.

"Meth." is Methodist, "Presb." is Presbyterian, "S.A." = Salvation Army), birthplace, occupation. Make a list of the ways in which identities congeal, intersect, are transmitted from generation to generation.

Key Points

- Population growth under the French regime and between 1763 was principally driven by natural growth (that is, high marital fertility).
- Following a rush of immigration to Nova Scotia and Upper Canada, childbearing resumed its position as the leading source of growth.
- Mortality rates were high in pre-Confederation Canada, especially infants.
- Canada began the process of a demographic transition to lower fertility around the time of Confederation.
- By the early 20th century, immigration, urbanization, and the opening for resettlement of the Prairie West and British Columbia changed the character and distribution of the population.

Media Attributions

- 1901 Winnipeg Census © Government of Canada is licensed under a Public Domain license

1.3 The Age of Federation



Figure 1.3 Most Confederation-era Canadians were engaged in work that had not changed a great deal in hundreds of years.

One month after the creation of the Dominion of Canada, the United States finally acted on its threats to annex territory to the north. Instead of some part or all of British North America (BNA), however, the Americans purchased Alaska. This was an audacious move. The idea of claiming territory that was thousands of kilometres away from the nearest American settlement, cut off by the presence in between of British North American territory, was a far cry from annexing contiguous lands. The same, of course, could be said for the Americans' earlier wresting of California from Mexico. While much more of the American Empire was captured incrementally by squatters, settlers, and cavalry charges, the Alaskan purchase stands out for what it implies. That is, it was possible now for former colonies to administer sovereignty in remote lands. Canada watched and learned.

Fragile Unions

Canada had its own imperial ambitions. George Brown — Toronto newspaperman, **Clear Grit** reformer, coalition government partner, and a **Father of Confederation** — made his support of the coalition and Confederation conditional on the purchase of Rupert's Land from the Hudson Bay Company (HBC). The sale of the vast territory (encompassing the whole of the Prairie West from Hudson's Bay to the Rockies and from the 49th parallel to the Arctic Ocean) went through in 1869, but the process was badly flawed. The Canadians (in Ottawa and on the ground in the Red River Colony) rushed matters and aggravated local sentiment. The Métis community around the confluence of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers wasn't alone in its dissatisfaction with Ottawa, but their resistance and the Provisional Government became understood in the new Dominion as an act of hostility against a legitimate government by an illegitimate junta. The execution of Thomas Scott by the Provisional Government would embitter Canada against the Manitobans and the Métis for years to come (see Sections 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, and 2.8).

All in all, the Dominion of Canada was off to a rather poor start. Provincial leaders in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were able to muster widespread support for taking a second look at Confederation. The possibility of secession might be ruled out by **Westminster**, but as far as Halifax and Fredericton anti-Confederationist politicians were concerned this was a matter of popular consent and/or discontent.

Federations, as the 1860s and ’70s would demonstrate, are difficult creatures. In this respect, the timing of the creation of the Dominion of Canada is important. It took place at a time when similar experiments were being launched or revised around the world. The most obvious case is that of the United States, where a century-old federation came apart along the **Mason-Dixon Line**. Although the South and the North were eventually re-united and re-federated, that change came about after years of a terrible civil war. Similarly, the 1860s saw a bloody campaign across the Italian States that completed the main work of the *Risorgimento* (the unification of Italy) by 1870. Less than a year later, the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1871, produced a unified Germany under Prussian leadership. Federations — including the Canadian one — are generally understood to be consensual partnerships between sovereign or semi-sovereign jurisdictions. What these other federations/unifications and the suppression of the Red River Rebellion in Manitoba point out is that federal membership is occasionally helped along by the point of a bayonet.

Why is that the case? Modern historians have wrestled with the meanings of Canadian confederation just as their Victorian contemporaries did. Was it an Act or a pact? That is, was it a reorganization of colonies stickhandled along and then imposed by Britain, or was it an agreement by (essentially) sovereign parties to share some of their authority with a new entity, the Federal Government? Were the provinces junior partners in the new federation or key stakeholders? This became a pressing matter (as we shall see) when Ottawa invoked its ability to kill any provincial legislation with which the central government did not agree. It persists as a pressing matter when one looks at the rhetoric of *séparatisme* in the late 20th century, a discourse that positions the province of Quebec as a partner with the ability to leave the table if and when it should decide to do so. Nova Scotians clearly held to the same belief in the late 1860s; they were *persuaded* to stay and not *compelled* by Westminster (let alone Ottawa) to stay.

Another lens through which to view Confederation is as a means to colonial independence, an apparent contradiction in terms. Britain in the age of free trade was eager to offload some of its colonial responsibilities and to normalize relations with the United States. Giving the British North Americans greater responsibilities and authority in their own domain was one way of doing that. However, the Americans recognized that Britain was still invested in North America and they were slow to recognize Canada’s own national authority.

Unity, Disunity, and Nationhood

The ongoing fragmentary identity of Canadians is, thus, something that existed at the time of Confederation and has persisted. John A. Macdonald sought *union* but not necessarily *unity*, although it is difficult to speak of one without implying the other. George-Étienne Cartier’s vision was more along the lines of collaboration in a “duality” of French and English cultures. Outlying provinces — Nova Scotia and British Columbia, for example — were principally concerned with the economic advantages promised by Confederation.

Many of the challenges that Canada would face in the century and a half that followed Confederation stem from its timing and a lack of consensus as to what it all meant. At the heart of the problem is the idea of the nation state.

A nation is generally understood to be a culture or peoples, the main features of which include a shared language, ancestry, and perhaps a shared creed. A state is, more plainly, an administrative organization and a geopolitical realm. For Germany in 1871, the challenge was to inflate shared cultural features while downplaying sectarian differences, lingering loyalties felt in some regions to their neighbours (including France, Austria, and Switzerland), and the fact that some of the German states had been at one another's throats for centuries. Old histories of difference had to be superseded by histories of sameness and mutual interest. Italy— a linguistic patchwork that at least shared a common Catholic heritage (however vexed relations might have been between Italy and the Papal States) — seized upon Dante as the father of the Italian language and, like Germany, sought to minimize historic rivalries between regions. A new iconography of the Italian state, with General Giuseppe Garibaldi at its spiritual centre and a new king in a shared capital, were key to creating an "Italian" nation state. Increasingly the United States would invoke the language of "nation" as well, most notably in its *Pledge of Allegiance* in 1892 in which the "nation" and the federal "state" become indistinguishable.

Clearly some nation states in the late 19th century were less unified culturally than others. Canada's odds in this respect were hardly worse than those of many other newly emergent countries. But it is worth noting that there was, at the time of Confederation, confusion about what constituted a nation state, a sense that expansion and territorial unification was a legitimate part of building a country, and that "nation building" involved more than a railway or two.

Key Points

- The last half of the 19th century witnessed the organization and reorganization of several federal nation states.
- Scholars and politicians are divided on whether Confederation constitutes an Act imposed by Britain or an agreement between sovereign colonies.
- The concept of the "nation state" was still emergent and definitions were flexible.

Media Attributions

- Harvesting Hay, Sussex, New Brunswick, ca. 1880 © William G.R. Hind, 1833–1889, Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. 1982-204-9 is licensed under a Public Domain license

1.4 Contributory Factors of Confederation

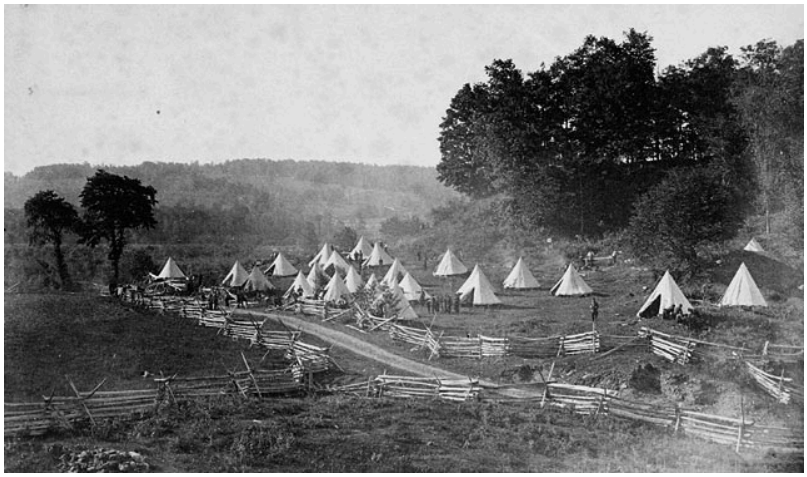


Figure 1.4 The 60th Battalion braces itself for a Fenian Raid in May 1870.

Confederation answered constitutional questions about Canada's organization and governance, but it was also an economic strategy, and it had a military and diplomatic face as well. British North Americans bought into the new federal structure in part because it promised a more certain future. Its success, to some extent, has to be measured against these concerns.

Civil War America

The American Civil War in the 1860s, coming to a close in 1866, consumed the United States. It entailed carnage on a massive scale and national productive capacity was severely damaged. It did, however, leave the United States with the largest standing army on the planet, and it was a battle-hardened army at that. The Indigenous peoples of the western half of North America would see this massive military machinery deployed in their territories. British North Americans had cause to be concerned that they, too, would confront American troops.

British diplomatic missteps during the Civil War hardened American opinion against both Britain and British North America. The **Reciprocity Treaty** of 1854—which enabled freer trade between the colonies and the United States—was cancelled by the Americans at the end of the war. Fear grew of further retributive moves by the Americans. Indeed, a series of largely ineffectual invasions of British North America (BNA) by Irish-Americans, bound together as an anti-British **Fenian** Army, catalyzed colonial will to build a united regime that would offer greater mutual protection. Invasions took place across the borders of the three contiguous BNA colonies (Canada East, Canada West, and New Brunswick), and of those that were spared, Nova Scotia, PEI, and British Columbia shared in the sense of pending attacks. American acquisition of Alaska, in 1867, reminded British Columbians and other Westerners that the Americans held on to their belief in a **manifest destiny** to rule the whole of the continent.

Was a Canadian federation any more able to defend itself against an American invasion than the separate colonies? Probably not. The population discrepancy between BNA and the re-United States as well as the enormity of the experienced American forces, not to mention the superiority of American arms, makes the question absurd. Confederation reduced British military obligations and did little to increase the size and preparedness of Canadian militias. It did, however, create the impression of unity and an emergent nation state, rather than low-hanging colonial fruit that might be picked at the convenience of the United States. The emergence of a Canadian military culture after 1867 was slow in coming, and the almost calamitous performance of militia units in the North West Rebellion in 1885 only underlines the extent to which fear of America did *not* result in any palpable steps to improve Canadian defense.

A Post-Mercantilist World

In the mid-19th century Britain moved inexorably toward freer trade. Laissez-faire capitalism became the order of the day. For the BNA colonies, this meant an end to preferred access to markets in the British Isles. Reciprocity with the United States was a step designed to offset market losses across the Atlantic. The end of Reciprocity raised serious questions about whether the British North American economy could survive. Confederation, in this context, was represented as a commercial as well as a political union. Clearly, the colonies could have achieved commercial union without putting political union on the table as well; the former did not necessitate the latter. After all, the point of reciprocity with the United States was to prevent political annexation, not pave its way. Nevertheless, federal union held out the prospect of improved inter-colonial trade.

There are problems with the inter-colonial trade scenario, the foremost of which is the absence of complementary products. All of the BNA colonies from Canada West (Ontario) to the Atlantic Coast produced lumber, shipping, mostly the same cereal crops, and fish. What was left to trade? Increasingly coal and iron ore were considerations, but these would benefit few Canadians directly. For Canada East (Quebec) and Canada West (Ontario) in particular, the two Maritime provinces were hardly a substitute for the millions of customers south of the border. Nevertheless, the prospect of new infrastructure connecting the colonies, access to ice-free ports in Halifax and Saint John, and accelerated trade was yet another reason presented for pulling the colonies together into some kind of union.

The Railway

Commercial success was predicated on the idea of a railway. The Intercolonial Railway had been touted for years before Confederation, and it was so central to the whole project that it is enshrined in Section 145 of the *BNA Act* (1867). It took another decade to complete, and its round-about route far from the American border — via Chaleur Bay and the Miramichi Valley — reflected the contemporary fears of an attack from the United States, but this was meant nevertheless to be a key element in the economic union. Obviously the colonies might have built a railway regardless of Confederation. Less obviously, the railway itself was an engine for economic growth: Railways require miles of steel rails, thousands upon thousands of wooden ties, and significant rolling stock as well. The Intercolonial and the railways that followed its construction were thus meant to do more than connect economies: they were meant to generate industrial activity.

Key Points

- British North Americans saw in Confederation a solution to several pressing issues.
- The American Civil War and the Fenian Invasions compelled border colonies to consider unification as a step toward improved defence.
- The loss of Reciprocity and the introduction of Free Trade encouraged colonial elites to find ways to increase intercolonial commerce.
- Railway technology held out the promise of greater security, increased intercolonial trade, and an industrialized economy.

Media Attributions

- Pigeon Hill Camp of the 60th Battalion © William Sawyer, 1820–1889, Library and Archives Canada (C-033036) is licensed under a Public Domain license

1.5 Constitutional Crisis

While it is true that the *British North America Act, 1867* marks a point of departure, it is also just another step along a treacherous path of constitutional crises. This was especially true for the two largest parties in the new federation.

On 1 July 1867 it became possible, for the first time, to describe Nova Scotians and New Brunswickers as "Canadians." The coolness with which this change was received in the Maritimes is discussed below. Names changed, as well, in the old "Province of Canada." The changing nomenclature and identities might appear to be cosmetic, but they were much more than that.

The End of Canada

While it is true that delegations from Canada West and Canada East were present at the constitutional discussions in Charlottetown and Quebec City in 1864 and in London in 1866, the fact is they represented one colony, not two. The Province of Canada — created by the ***Act of Union*** in 1840-41 — was a single entity hinged at the middle, along the Ottawa River. The *BNA Act* thus simultaneously divided Canada into two provinces and united what was Ontario and Quebec into a federal system. Unification, that is, was predicated on division.

Why was this the case? The *Act of Union* was the fourth Canadian constitution since the Conquest in 1763. Like its predecessors (the *Royal Proclamation* of 1763, the *Quebec Act* of 1774, and the *Constitutional Act* of 1793), the *Act of Union* contained measures for the management of the French Canadians. The *Act of Union* was less concerned than the earlier efforts with the Catholic Church in Canada, but it was built on the premise outlined by Lord Durham's 1839 *Report on the Affairs of British North America* that assimilation of the French Canadians was essential to the future of the larger colony. Giving an equal number of seats to predominantly French-Catholic Canada East and almost wholly English-Protestant Canada West advantaged the anglophones because Montreal (in Canada East) was an important and politically powerful node of anglophone parliamentary seats. The *Act of Union* effectively reunited anglophone Canada West with anglophone Montreal (and outlying anglophone constituencies as well), creating what Durham imagined would become a majority Anglo-Protestant government. That is not, however, how things turned out.

Ideology stepped in to complicate linguistic and sectarian differences. Reformers and Tories, *Rouges* and *Bleus*, along with an assortment of smaller parties, turned Durham's famous phrase inside out. Instead of "two nations warring within the bosom of a single state," Canada's political culture quickly evolved into factions of two nations who occasionally cooperated within the bosom of a united colony. There were, of course, issues that kept potential allies apart, and by the late 1850s it was virtually impossible to forge a coalition in the **Legislative Assembly** that could muster enough votes to build a government. Non-confidence motions spelled the end of one administration after the next. Some politicians and commentators felt that Canada was effectively ungovernable under these circumstances.

Two critics of the status quo were also two of the most effective participants when it came to exploiting

its weaknesses. George-Étienne Cartier and John A. Macdonald dominated the colony's administration from 1857-1862. Out of power for the next two years, they were nevertheless able to hobble the Clear Grit administration of John Sandfield Macdonald (unrelated to John A.) and wrestle his chief ally, George Brown, into a new **Great Coalition** in 1864. The Cartier-Macdonald-Brown alliance had two primary goals: resolving the impasse that the *Act of Union* created and acquiring new territory for agricultural settlement. Brown, the Grits, and much of southern Canada West (Ontario) were increasingly concerned about the shrinking amount of available farmland in the colony. The Americans were extending their reach deep into the "New Northwest" of Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Rupert's Land, just to the north, was vulnerable to the expansionist Americans and desirable to the Ontarians. A commitment on the part of Cartier and Macdonald to acquire Rupert's Land secured the Grits' agreement to explore the prospect of dividing the Province of Canada once again and forging a federal relationship between the two partners. Happenstance and a bit of vision allowed the Canadians to expand this prospective union to include other British North American colonies.

Responsible Government and Constitution Building

There are distinctive features to this process. For all intents and purposes, colonial politicians were writing their own constitution for the first time. All previous constitutions had been imposed by the British regime. Some, if not all, of those earlier efforts reflected the British experience with the Thirteen Colonies that became the United States. Too much legislative autonomy might create forums for unrest and revolutionary talk. Better to have a handpicked local and loyal **Executive**, at least that was the view until the 1840s. At that time, British enthusiasm for Free Trade in the age of *laissez-faire* capitalism was taking off. It raised the question of whether old-style, mercantilist colonies like the Province of Canada or Nova Scotia were consistent with new economic and market philosophies. On the whole, the British realized there was a contradiction and began cautiously allowing for colonial **responsible government** (that is, making the Executive responsible to the majority of votes in the Assembly). Responsible government came first in Nova Scotia, then in Canada (both in 1848). It was allowed subsequently in Prince Edward Island (1851), New Brunswick (1854), and Newfoundland (1855). By the time of the September 1864 Charlottetown Conference of colonial leaders, each of the colonies had experienced nine to sixteen years of trying to make their constitutions work (as opposed to decades of criticizing their failings).

It is also important to note that no one in the Great Coalition could say for certain how this would turn out. Separating Canada West from Canada East might create competitive units incapable of cooperating on economic goals. Macdonald believed in the ability of the federal level to moderate those tendencies and to override provincial autonomy when it came to the cross-boundary movement of goods. But that had to be tested to destruction in the laboratory of constitutional practice. In short, there were risks.

No colony more desired a federal system than Canada West (Ontario): Its economy was rapidly expanding; its towns were growing into cities; production was industrializing; and the population was increasing at a prodigious rate. The political stalemates of the 1850s and 1860s were holding it back, and the Anglo-Protestants of the inland colony inevitably regarded French Canada as a drag on their progress. Did the soon-to-be-Ontarians seek the elimination of the French language and the Catholic religion? Certainly some regarded the Church as a secondary and competing centre of authority whose influence was governed from Rome. But most folks in Canada West saw far more Irish Catholics than

French Catholics in the course of a lifetime. Cartier and Macdonald, not to mention Baldwin and LaFontaine before them, demonstrated that collaboration was possible, but autonomy would be better. And at the federal level, the Anglo-Protestant interest would be inflated by members from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Best of all, the influence of Montreal would be reduced and Toronto could really spread its wings as the centre of influence west of the Ottawa River.

Canada East approached the question with more equanimity. A French-Catholic dominated provincial Assembly was appealing. No less than Canada West, Canada East had suffered from sluggish administration during the years of political quagmire, and no one among the Franco-Catholic political community could forget that the *Act of Union* had, at its heart, the goal of assimilation into an Anglo-Protestant mould. George Étienne Cartier had worked non-stop since 1840 to manage the constitution that bound the two Canadas together; he achieved much by asserting Canada East's power to control the Assembly and thus the Executive. His pre-eminence in political circles for more than two decades created the very logjam that Brown wanted to dislodge. Cartier's strategy in the 1860s was to forego complete independence as unachievable, and pursue a federal union instead. Cartier's Francophone opponents in Canada East wanted more and less at the same time: If they were going to enter a new era free of Canada West then independence and, possibly, annexation to the United States was preferable to a federal union with the Ontarians; conversely, the status quo was working out rather well for Canada East's interests — there were good reasons to object to change of any kind. Cartier's enemies, moreover, complained that he gave away too much at the Charlottetown and Quebec conferences. Francophones would be outnumbered by anglophones in the federal Assembly, which was a little like handing the English-speakers the **rep-by-pop** they'd been clamouring for since 1851. Cartier's pro-Confederation side won the day, albeit narrowly. This victory was the *sine qua non* of Confederation: If Cartier had failed, then the whole project would have crumbled. Pragmatic Quebec politicians thereafter looked for ways to make the new system work to continue preserving French culture and values, while promoting their economic advantage and while retaining a historically-rooted fear that things might turn out badly in this sea of anglophones.[1]

The Conflicted Atlantic Colonies

First and foremost, the federal solution was the answer to a Canadian question. The Atlantic colonies weren't constitutionally disputatious: They had no *Constitutional Act* to throw off; there was no *Act of Union* that forced them to work together; and no colonial culture was regarded as inferior when compared to any other. Assimilation was simply not an issue for anyone in mainstream society in the four colonies (although Indigenous and Acadian peoples were constantly confronted by assimilationist attitudes). The principal question before the three Maritime colonies, in 1864, was whether it made sense to reunify the region, to restore the shape of 18th century "Nova Scotia" so that it once again included PEI and New Brunswick. It was over this issue — **Maritime Union** — that they assembled at Charlottetown when the Canadians came calling.

A union of the three colonies — PEI, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia — was endorsed by Britain, and the local economic elites for the most part agreed. The Reciprocity Agreement with the United States was still in effect (the Americans would cancel it in 1866) and trade around the whole of the

1. Claude Bélanger, "Quebec and the Confederation project (1864-1867)", *Quebec History* (Marianopolis College, 2004), accessed 27 August 2015, http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/readings/queconf.htm.

Atlantic Rim was generally thriving. But these were three small colonies — small in area and small in population — that had to adjust to Britain's retreat from direct colonial involvement and support.

Each of the four Atlantic colonies had three possible options. First, unite with one or two or three other regional colonies. Second, pursue the Canadians' suggestion of a larger British North American union. Third, carry on with the status quo. Half of the Atlantic colonies chose the Canadian path, and the other half chose the status quo.

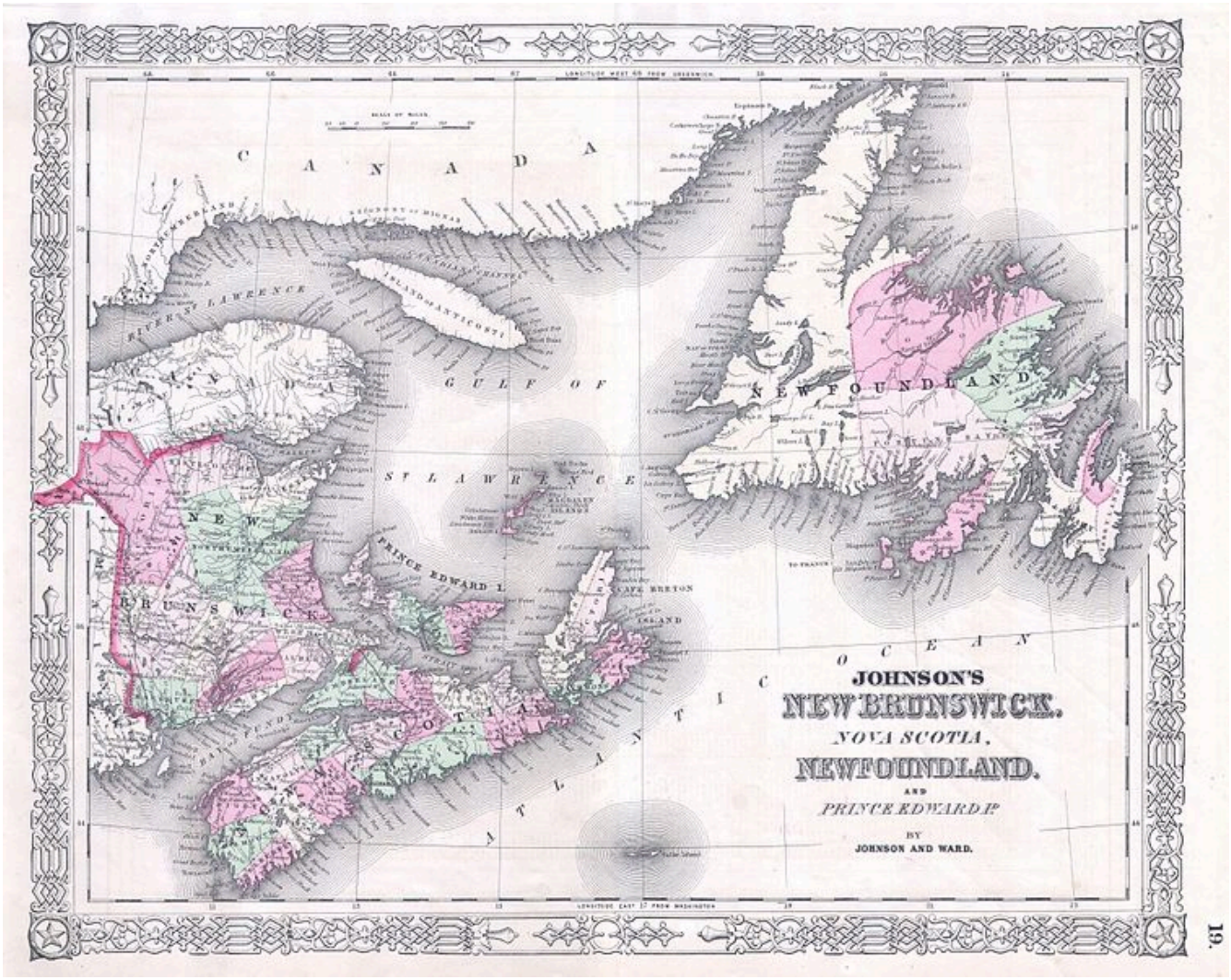


Figure 1.5 An 1864 map of the Atlantic colonies (less Labrador). Geography and seaplanes pulled them in many directions, including into the Gulf of the St. Lawrence.

New Brunswick — the "keystone" colony — had a role to play in bridging the geography and economy between the St. Lawrence colony and Nova Scotia. There was resistance to the idea of union with the other colonies, and in 1865 it took the form of an Anti-Confederation Party. Led by Albert Smith (1822-1883), a Conservative politician, the Party pulled into its ranks a small but vocal cross-section of New Brunswick figures. The resultant alliance of Tories and Reformers won the general election in 1865 but were defeated by the Confederation Party in 1866.[2] With a fresh and massive majority, the

2. This did not, however, spell the end of New Brunswick's concerns: In the first federal election in 1867, five of the province's 15 seats were won by Anti-Confederates.

Confederationists pursued what they viewed as a comprehensively good package: defense against the United States and its Fenian armies, a completed railway, Canadian goods pouring through the ice-free port of Saint John, and a protected Dominion market for New Brunswick products.

The Nova Scotians were also prepared to come on board with Confederation. Like the merchants of Saint John, the Haligonians saw themselves as probable beneficiaries of Canadian plans for an ice-free port. A railway across New Brunswick and the Chignecto Isthmus would connect the industrial heartland of Canada East to the largest Nova Scotian port. Halifax, Sydney, and Yarmouth were already leaders in shipping production; handling more Canadian exports and more foreign imports would be a further boon. By the same token, the Nova Scotian economy was resilient and far reaching. Opposition existed and was narrowly contained in the lead up to 1 July 1867. There existed in the province fear that the Canadian giant would overwhelm the smaller Maritime economies and that the federal government (sure to be located in Ottawa rather than a Maritime centre) would be heavily dominated by Ontarians and Quebeckers. These fears continued after the *BNA Act* was proclaimed, and are considered further in Section 2.2.

Both Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island demurred when the offer arrived to join Confederation. Newfoundland traded little with the other British North American colonies, its cultural and economic orientation was toward Europe (with some West Indian trade as well), and its economic circumstances were on the rise (see Section 2.13). While the Canadians and New Brunswickers might have been motivated to bond together in mutual defence against American or Fenian attacks, those threats did not resonate in St. John's, Newfoundland. What's more, if Newfoundland had to defend itself against an assault on its territory, such an attack would come from the sea — precisely the same place from which the colony would be defended. The Canadians and the Maritimers had no navy, nor were they likely to get one soon. Britain's Royal Navy**,** on the other hand, dominated the Atlantic. Jeopardizing that protection in the hope that some benefits might be forthcoming in the future simply did not appeal to the leaders of Newfoundland.

Key Points

- Creating Confederation meant dissolving the union of Lower and Upper Canada.
- Each colony had its own particular reasons for entertaining or rejecting Confederation.
- The attractions of Confederation were not evenly felt.

Media Attributions

- Johnson's New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island © Alvin Jewett Johnson, 1827–1884 is licensed under a Public Domain license

1.6 Summary



Figure 1.6 What an ice-free port does not look like. Montreal harbour, ca. 1880.

Let's consider one decade: 1863-1873. At the start, there were seven colonies in British North America (one of them a combination of two very large colonies), and a massive commercial district in the West and North. At the end, there were two colonies: Canada and Newfoundland. This represented a very significant administrative reorganization. In roughly the same period, the population of the colonies rose from about 3.17 million to just short of 3.7 million.[1]

The fur trade across BNA was shrinking by the 1860s, but it was in crisis in the 1870s. Indigenous peoples on the Prairies were at war with one another and with the American cavalry in the 1860s, trying to decide who had control over the remnants of the bison herds; by the 1870s they were facing famine. There were false starts in other resource-extraction sectors, such as the gold rush in British Columbia's Cariboo district, which peaked around 1863, and then slipped into an irrevocable decline. The beginnings of a continent-wide environmental transformation were also visible: pristine landscapes and watersheds — in Cape Breton, on Vancouver Island, on the Cariboo Plateau, around Lake Superior, and throughout northeastern New Brunswick — were being denuded of trees and subjected to the leeching of soils and heavy metals.

In the 1870s the Industrial Revolution in British North America got underway in earnest. The people of BNA, for whom Confederation was meant to create a particular kind of polity, were themselves being changed by new economic and social relations. Confederation came along at a time when so many

1. Statistics Canada, "Estimated population of Canada, 1605 to present", accessed 22 April 2015, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/98-187-x/4151287-eng.htm#table1.

other elements of life in the colonies were quickly changing. While it is tempting to think of 1 July 1867 as a turning point, the constitutional changes that took place in the Victorian years (1837-1901) were less consequential than the social and economic changes that began earlier, and were to continue into the post-Confederation years.

Key Terms

Act of Union: The third Canadian constitution since the Conquest in 1763. The Act of Union contained measures for the management of French-Canadians, built on the premise (from Lord Durham's 1839 *Report on the Affairs of British North America*) that assimilation of French-Canadians was essential to the future of the larger colony.

Clear Grits: Reformers in Canada West (Ontario) before Confederation. Anti-Catholic and largely anti-French, the Grits opposed John A. Macdonald's Tories and advocated the annexation of Rupert's Land. In the post-Confederation period they became one section of the Liberal Party.

Executive: Also called the Cabinet. The highest offices — either elected or appointed — in Canadian politics: before the 1840s, a mostly appointed Executive Council led by the Governor General; after 1867, an elected body comprised of members of the current House of Commons and supported by a majority of votes in the House of Commons.

family reconstitution: In demographic studies, the consolidation of population information from censuses, church records, and civic documents to enable a complete history of a family, street, or community in terms of births, marriages, deaths, divorces, movement, and other demographic behaviours.

Father of Confederation: Term used to describe anyone involved in the Charlottetown or Quebec Conferences leading to Confederation; sometimes extended to the first premiers of the new Dominion as well; term sometimes used to describe Newfoundland Premier Joey Smallwood from 1949.

federation: An assemblage of states or provinces with roughly comparable rights in which all the constituent parts relinquish some of their authority to a separate, central government.

Fenian: Irish-Americans, bound together as an anti-British army; mounted and/or threatened invasions of British North America in the 1860s and '70s.

founder population: A population deriving from a small initial influx of immigrants.

Great Coalition: In 1864, an alliance between the *Bleu*-Conservatives and the Clear Grits in the Province of Canada. The Great Coalition launched a renewed effort to revise the Canadian constitution, a campaign that culminated in Confederation.

Legislative Assembly: Until 1968 all Canadian provinces had a Legislative Assembly, either as their only house of elected representatives or as a lower house — in either instance equating to the federal and British House of Commons. In 1968 the Quebec Assembly was renamed the National Assembly of Quebec. Sitting members are described in most provinces as Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and in Ontario as Members of the Provincial Parliament (MPPs). In Quebec they are Members of the National Assembly (MNAs).

manifest destiny: American notion that it could control, and was destined to control, the whole of North America; literally, it was the will of God (destined) and it was apparent (manifest) in the incremental territorial expansions of the United States.

Maritime Union: A proposal to create one colony out of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince

Edward Island; the original impetus for the Charlottetown Conference; abandoned in favour of Confederation.

Mason-Dixon Line: Boundary between the American colonies, then states, of Maryland and Pennsylvania; also used to define the American South from the American North, and slave and non-slave states.

natural increase: The growth of population from more births than deaths; that is, not by immigration and not factoring in emigration.

Reciprocity Treaty (ch 1): 1854 agreement between the British North American colonies and the United States; enabled freer trade; was cancelled by the Americans at the end of the Civil War.

responsible government: Government in which the Executive level (or Cabinet) is responsible to — and can be dismissed from office by — the majority of votes in the Assembly. In contrast to pre-Confederation systems in which the Executive was appointed by and was responsible to the Crown or its representative.

rep-by-pop: Representation by population; the higher the population of a province, the higher the number of seats allocated for that province in the House of Commons.

sex ratio: The ratio of men to women. A sex ratio of 2:1 indicates that there are two men for every one woman.

Thirteen Colonies of Britain: The Atlantic Coast colonies established in the 17th and 18th centuries; rebelled against British rule in 1775-83 and became the core elements of the United States.

Westminster: Refers to the seat of British parliamentary government in Westminster, London.

Short Answer Exercises

1. What were the main engines of population growth in the 19th century?
2. How had the population of Canada (or British North America and Newfoundland) changed between the pre-Confederation period and the early 20th century?
3. What was the context of Canadian nation-building and federation?
4. What external and economic factors catalyzed the conversation about a union of British North American colonies?
5. Why federalism? What questions did such a structure answer?

Suggested Readings

Ajzenstat, Janet. “Human Rights in 1867.” In *Canadian Founding: John Locke and Parliament,* 49-66. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2007.

Dunae, Patrick A. “Sex, Charades, and Census Records: Locating Female Sex Trade Workers in a Victorian City,” *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, 42, no. 84 (Novembre-November 2009): 267-297.

Macdonald, Heidi. “Who Counts?: Nuns, Work, and the Census of Canada,” *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, 43, no. 86, (Novembre-November 2010): 369-391.

Smith, Andrew. “Toryism, Classical Liberalism, and Capitalism: The Politics of Taxation and the Struggle for Canadian Confederation.” *Canadian Historical Review* 89, no. 1 (March 2008): 1-25.

Media Attributions

- Ice shove, Montreal harbour, QC, about 1880 © William Notman, 1826–1891 is licensed under a Public Domain license

Chapter 2. Confederation in Conflict

2.1 Introduction

There are, today, approximately 35 million Canadians. Coincidentally, that is almost exactly the number of people who were living in the United States in 1867. At the time of Confederation, there were 3.4 million people in all of Canada (that is, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia), and today there are more people than that in metro Montreal. In other words, in 1867, Canada contained fewer people than exist today in the country's second largest city and yet the Dominion's original government had the temerity to think they could capture the whole northern half of a continent and thus foil the expansionist interests of an incredibly well-armed country to the south, whose population outnumbered the Canadians 10-to-1. It seems improbable.

It is perhaps even more improbable that the original 1867 version of Canada would eventually claim enough territory to become the second largest country — in terms of area — on Earth. At the time of Confederation, Canada was hardly more than the core elements of New France. Its boundaries did not include much beyond Acadia and the St. Lawrence Valley, along with what had once been Wendake (or Huronia), and the lands of a clutch of other Iroquoian confederacies, most of which were allied to New France in the 17th century.

Exponential Expansion

In 1869-70, Canada's tumultuous annexation of Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory gave the new Dominion access to the whole of the West and the North. What lay beyond the Rockies joined the federation in 1871. Two years later, Prince Edward Island assented as well. In 1880, the British Arctic Territories were transferred to Canada. New administrative territories were carved out of the North: Keewatin in 1876; Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, Athabasca, and Alberta in 1882; Franklin, Mackenzie, and Ungava in 1895; and the Yukon Territory in 1898.

Although Manitoba negotiated its way into the Dominion, both Alberta and Saskatchewan were created (in 1905) by bureaucrats in Ottawa wielding straight-edged rulers with willful disregard for historic and topographic boundaries. In 1912, Manitoba would benefit from this exercise as well, when Ottawa transferred much of the District of Keewatin to the original western province. At the same time, Ontario and Quebec would each engorge enough of the lands of the Lowland/Swampy Cree and Innu as to double in size. The Sverdrup Islands in the Arctic were ceded to Canada by Norway in 1930. In 1949, 82 years after the Charlottetown Conference that first introduced the idea of a colonial union, the Dominion of Newfoundland (with Labrador, the mainland annex assigned to it by Britain in 1927) joined the federation. Since then, the only significant additional adjustment of the map has been to establish the District of Nunavut in 1999 out of portions of the Districts of Franklin, Mackenzie, and all of what remained of Keewatin.

What this litany of administrative and boundary changes indicates is that the question of how to govern lands and peoples that are remote from one another has been at the forefront of the Canadian project from the outset.

Confederation and Cultures

Culture has also played a critical and central role in the history of Canada over the last 150 years. This is a country that began with a duality at centre stage. In 1867, there was rough parity between the anglophone population of Ontario and the francophone peoples of Quebec. That model of dichotomy — the idea that the two provinces are culturally the *yin* to the other's *yang* — has never been true. There were always francophones in what emerged as Ontario. Likewise, an anglophone and Protestant elite, centred in Montreal, dominated Quebec society and economy while the majority — descended from the colonists of New France — inevitably took on many British values and habits.

Indeed, no province — then or since — has been without cultural complexities. Provinces and colonies that present as "mainstream" anglophone contain many different tributaries. The former Acadian lands in the Maritimes have always contained strong Franco-Catholic communities; likewise, Manitoba was erected on a (quickly challenged) principle of duality, one that was led by the Métis. Francophones comprised a considerable portion of the population across the Prairies in the early 20th century. A little over a century ago, the *Port au Port* Shore (or "French Shore") on the west coast of Newfoundland was a slice of French commercial and settlement activity that survived from the 18th century and was populated by Breton and Norman fishing households. Francophone nodes could be found, as well, in pre-1914 British Columbia, although what stood out more were the resilient settlements of Chinese, Japanese, and Indians. Anglophone-Protestant dominance was often challenged by Anglo- and Irish-Catholicism too – not to mention by Canadian Protestantism, which splintered into Baptist, Methodist, Congregationalist, and other sects.

The strength of a Canadian's national identity was thus counterbalanced by their identification with language, creed, and — increasingly — ethnicity. Regional identity was another obstacle to erecting a national sensibility in the years immediately after Confederation. Maritimers may have had common interests but they also had a century of intercolonial competition and rivalry under their belts. British Columbians referred to "Canadians" contemptuously and regarded the BNA colonies on the other side of the continent as at least as foreign as Americans. Regional and provincial accents were strong, even among the English-speaking populations.

This chapter examines the new federal union's growth in the years from 1867 to about 1900. During these years, it became clear that there was no singular vision of "Canada" to which everyone could subscribe. The conflicts that arose between several of these competing views were very often vocal and sometimes lethal. Keeping in mind that the previous Canadian constitution — the *Act of Union* of 1841 — lasted a mere 26 years before being tossed out, one can understand how the three decades after Confederation were understood to be pivotal.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the territorial growth of Canada from 1867 to circa 1914.
- Account for Canada's struggle to attract certain colonies into the fold.

- Explain the rise of secessionist movements in the 19th century.
- Outline the relationship between Canada and First Nations during this period.
- Detail the institutions that were created and utilized for the purpose of expanding the Dominion of Canada.

2.2 Nova Scotia's Second Thoughts

Nova Scotia was, of course, one of the original parties to the federal union. From the outset, however, there were political and economic leaders in the colony who had qualms. Nova Scotia would have been the leading third in the proposed Maritime Union with New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. Halifax was easily the largest city and one of the most industrially advanced. Even if it didn't become the political capital of the "United Maritimes," it would emerge almost certainly as the economic capital of this new configuration. The 1864 Maritime Union plan was put aside to make way for Confederation, and many Nova Scotians continued to think that was a mistake.

Buyer's Remorse

The most prominent and highly appealing opponent of Confederation was Joseph Howe. A journalist and writer, his political speeches and editorials were of an exceptional calibre. His initial opposition to Confederation stemmed from a belief in a broader British imperial federation that might include the West Indian islands with which Nova Scotia had deep and vital links. Unable to stop the union between Nova Scotia and the other British North Americans, he sought to reverse it as early as the autumn of 1867.

In elections that season, Nova Scotia's pro-confederate candidates were routed provincially and federally. The anti-confederates (led by Howe) won 36 of 38 seats in Nova Scotia and 18 of 19 seats in Ottawa. Their winning rhetoric underscored the colony's orientation toward the Atlantic and not toward the heart of North America. Repeatedly, the image was invoked of a once-proud colony being reduced to poverty by avaricious Canadians obsessed with over-ambitious railways and colonization of the West.

Howe led a repeal delegation to London to have the *British North America Act* overturned; the best he could obtain, however, was a commitment to have Ottawa re-examine proposed tariff and fisheries policies. This failure was compounded in 1868 when the new British government confirmed its commitment to the Dominion model. Howe, a strident loyalist, was deeply disappointed by Westminster, and his sentiments were probably shared by many others in the province. Certainly there were elements among the anti-confederates who considered annexation to the United States a preferable option, and still others who preferred outright independence. Howe was speaking for that last position when he said that, were it not for his continued loyalty to Britain, "I would take every son I have and die on the frontier before I would submit to this outrage" – meaning Confederation.[1]

Be that as it may, Howe and his followers acquiesced. He was able to negotiate better terms for Nova Scotia and agreed to give the federation his backing by standing for a federal seat. He won, but it cost him his health and much of his reputation for integrity in Nova Scotia. It is perhaps one of the great ironies of early post-Confederation history that Howe, in his capacity as Secretary of State for the

1. Quoted in J. Murray Beck, "HOWE, JOSEPH", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003), accessed 30 April 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/howe_joseph_10E.html.

Provinces, was instrumental in persuading the Manitobans that federal union was a deal worth pursuing.



Figure 2.1 Many Nova Scotians used to carry a portrait of Joseph Howe in their wallets. It looked like this.

Howe's vision of an imperial federation would find an echo in the last decades before the Great War (World War I). "Imperialists" in English-Canada would articulate an ambition and a model that was first brought to public attention by Howe (see Section 4.5). Before then, the Nova Scotian Repeal Movement would take a last stab at secession.

The Repeal Movement

The Dominion of Canada was not two decades old when Nova Scotians would again reconsider their place in Canada. The Maritime economy had slowed and a structural decline was underway. Ship construction had plummeted from a high point in 1864 of 73,000 tons to 21,000 in 1886, and 14,000 tons in 1887. Population growth slowed severely to only 2% in the 1880s. Natural increases (more births than deaths) were offset by out-migration — mostly to the western reaches of the new Dominion and to New England. Rural Nova Scotia was changing at a particularly rapid rate, as the industrializing centres of Cape Breton's collieries (coal mines), Halifax, Lunenburg, and a half-dozen other port towns attracted young women and men from the countryside. Lobster exports from Halifax to American ports fell by 75% in 1885 alone, and other trade with the United States was similarly affected. In this context, the pre-Confederation era of Reciprocity with the Americans, robust population growth (of around 15%), powerful shipyard industries in the major ports, and thriving rural communities — including their proud churches, energetic civic organizations, and densely networked families — seemed like a golden age in Nova Scotia's recent history.[2] What had changed? Confederation.

Party politics in Nova Scotia increasingly coalesced around Conservative and Liberal parties. If the former was in power federally, the latter stood a better chance of holding power provincially. This was certainly the case in 1886 when William S. Fielding (1848-1929) — a self-described anti-confederate — led the Liberal Party to victory with a simultaneous call for secession and better subsidies from Ottawa. The two options reflected divisions between unionists and secessionists within the Liberal

2. Colin D. Howell, "W.S. Fielding and the Repeal Elections of 1886 and 1887 in Nova Scotia", *Acadiensis* [online], VIII, No.2 (Spring 1979), 28-30, accessed 24 August 2015, https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/Acadiensis/article/view/11499/12249

Party. If the subsidies were not forthcoming, Fielding insisted that Nova Scotia's legislature would vote for a repeal of the *BNA Act*. He was also inclined to take Nova Scotia, with New Brunswick and PEI, out of Confederation and into a revived version of Maritime Union. This was a project in which neither of the other two colonies showed much interest.

In the end it was a combination of internal disagreement within the provincial Liberal Party and the federal election of 1887 that defeated the movement. Insofar as the campaign against Canada could be personalized, it was an attack on the policies and practices of the Conservative Party's John A. Macdonald, effectively the face of federal rule. When Fielding's Liberals took to the polls in 1887's federal election, they found it difficult-to-impossible to campaign *for* the federal Liberal Party and *against* remaining in Confederation. Conservative candidates held 14 of the 21 federal seats and showed special strength in areas where industrialization was speeding ahead. In those areas, the National Policy (see Section 3.3) appeared to be working.[3] As a measure of popular support for secession, the federal election results were the exact opposite of what was suggested in the provincial elections a year earlier. This would not be the last election in which specific issues (like separation) would become confused with voter decisions about who might constitute the better government. Nor would it prove to be the last time the country looked likely to come undone.

Key Points

- The anti-Confederation movement in Nova Scotia was a significant political force from the 1860s-1880s.
- Britain's support for Confederation was critical in undermining the anti-Confederation movement under Joseph Howe.
- Support for repeal and secession reflected substantial and rapid social and economic change in Nova Scotia.

Media Attributions

- 1881 $5 Bill, Bank of Nova Scotia © Bank of Nova Scotia is licensed under a Public Domain license

3. Ibid., 43-4.

2.3 British Columbia and the Terms of Union



Figure 2.2 The HBC bastion overlooking the busy coal harbour at Nanaimo, 1906.

Nowhere was the ambition of the new Dominion more evident than in the recruitment and securing of British Columbia as the sixth province in 1871. Canada had not yet subdued and annexed Manitoba when it turned its attention to the Pacific Slope. As the crow flies, the nearest settlement of any size would have been Kamloops — 2,000 km west of Winnipeg with no road in place. By sea, in the days before the Panama Canal, it would involve a voyage of more than 13,000 nautical miles from Halifax to Victoria via Cape Horn. Annexing islands in the West Indies would make more sense logistically, as would making British Honduras (now called Belize) a province (an idea that was touted from time to time). Canadian interest in the farthest west carried forward themes that can be found in all the other annexations, but it reflects unique interests as well. Why British Columbians decided to join a remote and essentially alien federal state is perhaps less obvious.

A Big Country

British Columbia's boundaries in 1867 were a little uncertain, especially concerning Alaska and the Peace River valley. Nevertheless, even the most constricted view of its geography at the time would make it the largest of the British North American colonies and also the most sparsely populated. This points to one of the paradoxes of BC: It is a big area with few people, but the population is more tightly concentrated than is the case elsewhere in North America.

Topography and resources tell the tale. Narrow mountain valleys, canyons, deep coastal fjords, and one range of towering peaks after the next meant that options for settlement sites (before and after contact)

were limited, and the colony's geology was exposed and invited exploitation. It created conflicts as well, given that the Indigenous population was large in the 1860s (especially before the smallpox epidemic of 1862-1863) and the European tide demanded access to cleared and arable land.

There was a long list of gold rushes in the 1850s-1860s in the mainland colony, and these did much to shape the character of the colonial administration. Gold found in the Queen Charlotte Islands (aka: Haida Gwaii) led to very limited intrusion, but the mainland was far more penetrable. The first discoveries near Kamloops were followed up by the more famous and lucrative placer opportunities along the Fraser and the Thompson rivers in 1858. At around the same time, smaller pockets of activity appeared along the Similkameen River, near what is now Allenby (near Princeton), at Rock Creek (east of Osoyoos), and in the Peace River district. The largest strike was made in the heart of the Cariboo in 1861, centred on Barkerville. There were other, less noteworthy gold rushes along the Stikine River in the same year and in the Shuswap district shortly thereafter. In 1864-1865, mining operations appeared at Leechtown (west of Victoria), Cherryville (east of Vernon), at Fisherville (near Fort Steele), and on the Big Bend of the Columbia River. The Omineca Gold Rush launched in 1869, and there was a small rush into the Burnt Basin near the Kettle Valley. In short, the colonial map was dotted with gold finds and compact and energetic mining centres. In addition, service communities sprang up to feed and fleece the miners, including everything from cattle ranches to dance halls.

The distribution of these new towns presented administrative challenges for the colonial regimes. Civil suits at the local level constituted an important part of a decentralized system of government. Itinerant jurists and local county courts were important features of life in a colony with a very high homicide rate, a sobering track record of public hangings, and predictable conflict over competing claims to mining leases and other property.[1] Until 1866, the mainland was governed from New Westminster; thereafter, the colonies of British Columbia (the mainland) and Vancouver Island were united and governed from Victoria. The distance between the capital and Barkerville is 900 km — a longer and rougher road than that between Fredericton and Montreal. The Big Bend, Cherryville, Fisherville, and the Similkameen were all more easily accessed from the Washington Territory (later Washington State). Indeed, Rupert's Land was easier to reach from the Kootenays than the Kootenays were from the coast. The existing transportation infrastructure was limited. There was a wagon road system between the Fraser Canyon and the Cariboo; paddlewheelers worked the Shuswap and the coastline, but the inland systems were susceptible to freeze-up and to violent seasonal fluctuations in water levels, and the coastal network was exposed to storms. The ability to assert colonial authority under these circumstances was limited, although symbolic efforts were repeatedly made.

A Vulnerable Colony

Building the **Cariboo Wagon Road** had effectively bankrupted the united colony of British Columbia. It was the first of what would be many government subsidies to private enterprise, the hope being that royalties and license revenues would offset the heavy capital investment in infrastructure. Another was the **graving dock** at Esquimalt that made the Vancouver Island port, in the calculations of the Royal Navy, even more critical.

The heavy capital investment at Esquimalt had the added benefit of increasing interest in the coal mines

1. Tina Loo, *Making Law, Order and Authority in British Columbia, 1821-1871,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

at and around Nanaimo. Industrial production in the Victoria area was on the increase as demand grew for chains, saw blades, and nails. Logging was well underway in several locations, including the Burrard Inlet nodes of Port Moody, Moodyville, and Stamp's Mill, that harvested what were reckoned to be some of the largest trees on earth. This steam-powered economy further stimulated the collieries and reinforced connections with markets in California, Hawaii, China, Mexico, and Chile. Virtually nothing, at this time, was exported to Canada. Given the prevailing winds of the Atlantic, Liverpool was regarded as closer to British Columbia than Quebec City; therefore, that's where the sea traffic gravitated.

That is not to say that Canada did not exercise any influence on the colony. It did so in a variety of ways. First, like the rest of British North America, British Columbia had a fraught relationship with the United States. The boundary with the American territories to the south was established in 1846, but the fear remained that American gold-seekers were probing for weaknesses and opportunities to see the BC mainland annexed to the American republic. Likewise, the dispute over the San Juan Islands (known colloquially as the **Pig War**) percolated along from 1859-1873. The American purchase of Alaska in 1867 was an additional reminder to the local colonial regime that the United States was not merely talking about a manifest destiny, it was acting on it. In this light, British Columbians saw the welcoming arms of Canada as a refuge from American imperialism, although they preferred the idea of continuing with the Royal Navy and British power.

Canadians in British Columbia

The gold rushes brought to the West Coast a complex mix of peoples. The multitude of Indigenous peoples and nations were invaded by thousands of Americans (Euro- and Afro-), Chinese, Europeans (including British, of course), as well as Mexicans, South Americans, Hawaiians (aka: **Kanakans**), and fortune-hunters from even further afield. They also attracted Canadians, Nova Scotians, New Brunswickers, and a few Prince Edward Islanders. Two of these — Amor de Cosmos (a Nova Scotian) and John Robson (a migrant from Canada West) — brought their journalistic careers to the Far West. They also undertook political careers that echoed the language of eastern BNA. Together they were founders of the **Confederation League** in 1868, using their newspapers to promote the idea of union with Canada while directly lobbying administrations in Victoria, Ottawa, and London. Meeting at the **Yale Convention** that year, they set out their goals: responsible government in the colony, reciprocity with the United States, and austerity measures to address colonial debt. The British-appointed Governor, Frederick Seymour (1820-69), was cool to these ideas; his successor, Anthony Musgrave (1828-88), less so. Musgrave had served as Governor of Newfoundland when its assembly failed to endorse union with the rest of British North America. He had made mistakes and wasn't about to repeat them on the West Coast.

The Canadians' position was further helped by fears that a Fenian invasion was pending. Beginning in 1866, it was believed that Fenians were mustering in San Francisco with the goal of completing the American coastline from California to Alaska. Pro-annexationist voices in the colony were muted, however, until an Annexationist Petition was sent to Washington, DC in 1869 by a group of Victorian merchants. Their audacity in this regard served to increase support for the Confederation League.

By this time, it was clear to British Columbians that Britain could not be trusted *not* to abandon the colony. "I do not know why," wrote one British emigration officer in London to his superior,

> …we should go out of our way to lead settlers to make an erroneous choice…. I by no means agree that it is good general policy to try to swell the English population in B. Columbia *[sic]*. The fewer Englishmen that are committed to the place, the better it may prove to be in no distant times. As to hoping that we can by Emigrants round Cape Horn outnumber the natural flow of Emigrants from California and the United States, one might as well make the old experiment of keeping out the Ocean with a mop.[2]

Britain's commitment to the Pacific Coast continued to shrink. Pressure grew to consider the Canadian option.



Figure 2.3 In 1871, the newcomer population in BC was still significantly outnumbered by Indigenous people who were, nevertheless, being hustled onto reserves and mostly without treaties. A Stó:lō woman, weaving baskets, n.d.

The Terms of Union

Governor Musgrave selected a delegation to send to Ottawa, consisting of: Dr. R. W. Carrall, a physician from Goderich, Ontario, who had practiced in Nanaimo before moving to Barkerville in the

2. Letter from T.W. Murdoch to F.F. Elliot, 26 April 1867, (marginal notes), *Public Records Office*, Colonial Office 60 (30), Kew, UK.

late 1860s; Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, Joseph Trutch, an Englishman with a familial connection to Musgrave; and Dr. John Sebastian Helmcken, a Londoner, another physician, and a holdover from the days of the HBC. The party had significant interests in the outcome of the talks with the Canadians. Helmcken, for his part, played the role of delegation skeptic. He said that British Columbia "had no love for Canada; the bargain for love could not be," and was more inclined to continuing with the status quo.[3] Carrall was an enthusiastic supporter of Confederation and the whole concept of the Dominion. As a Cariboo resident, he had a keen sense of the necessity for improved infrastructure and of its cost. Trutch, for his part, was a career administrator who was concerned that Ottawa would oblige Victoria to make concessions to the Indigenous people — for whom he had a very low regard, even by contemporary standards. Unlike the Confederation League, these men were never enthusiastic supporters of responsible government.[4]

The deal they struck with Ottawa included elimination of the colony's debt, funding for the graving dock at Esquimalt, and the building of a railway from Canada to the West Coast, the construction of which was to be complete within ten years (see Section 2.9 for more details). The Canadians accepted an inflated population figure for the colony (on which financial and electoral issues would be based), but not as inflated as the delegation proposed. Ottawa was careful, as well, not to wade into the murky local debate over responsible government and colonial handling of Indigenous affairs, and so left both to the British Columbian administration to resolve in its own time. On the last point, the language of the *British Columbia Terms of Union, 1871* (the *Terms*) suggests that Trutch very effectively misrepresented his approach to reserve lands:

> [Article] 13. The charge of the Indians, and the trusteeship and management of the lands reserved for their use and benefit, shall be assumed by the Dominion Government and a policy as liberal as that hitherto pursued by the British Columbia Government shall be continued by the Dominion Government after the Union.[5]

Ottawa's hands were now tied; successive administrations in Victoria would monitor Indigenous policies to ensure that they were "as liberal" as Trutch's, but not more so.

3. Quoted in Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia* (Toronto:University of Toronto Press), 346.

4. Jack Little, "Foundations of Government," *The Pacific Province: A History of British Columbia*, gen. ed. Hugh J.M. Johnston (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1996), 88-91.

5. Senate of Canada, Article 13 of Schedule: Address of the Senate of Canada to the Queen, in *British Columbia Terms of Union* (UK: Court at Windsor, 16 May 1871), accessed 13 May 2016, https://www.solon.org/Constitutions/Canada/English/bctu.html.



Figure 2.4 John Helmcken at 93 years in 1917. He had little affection for Canada and his insistence on "The Terms" helped earn BC the nickname "Spoilt Child of Confederation."

With the *Terms* in hand, the British Columbians were inclined to watch their Canadian suitors closely. The delegation had hoped for a wagon road; they were promised a railway. The Canadians were clearly motivated by both their own faith in modern infrastructure and the economic opportunities it presented, on the one hand, and on the demonstrable advantage a railway to the West Coast would lend them in terms of territorial conquest. No one, however, had given sufficient thought to the business of crossing the Rockies and reaching the coast. They had given themselves a decade to get it done and the clock was ticking loudly in British Columbia from the very start.

Nothing but the *Terms*

Resistance to the whole idea of Confederation was perhaps strongest among the old British elite in Victoria and New Westminster. These were people with strong HBC ties and few connections to Canada. They were also staunchly opposed to responsible government. Individuals like the province's Senators, Clement Cornwall (the owner of Ashcroft Manor) and W. J. Macdonald, allied with Edgar Dewdney (MP and colonial road-builder) to warn John A. Macdonald of the problems brewing in BC politics. Even the province's limited male suffrage drew their criticisms and accusations that it had produced a **populist** assembly.

> The present Legislative Assembly is perhaps taken together as inferior a body of the sort as could well be imagined; and if the Province is to be unmistakably [*sic*] given up to their tender mercies without the interposition of experienced guidance and some extent *repression* from Ottawa, no thoughtful mind can view the picture without the gravest apprehension.[6]

6. Draft of a Memorandum from Cornwall, Macdonald, and Dewdney to Sir John A. Macdonald, sent 7 May 1879, quoted in Hamar Foster, "The Struggle for the Supreme Court: Law and Politics in British Columbia, 1871-1885," Louis A. Knafla, ed., *Law and Justice in a New Land: Essays in Western Canadian Legal History* (Calgary: Carswell Legal Publications, 1986), 168. Emphasis in original.

However appalled the senators and the MP may have been, the Assembly looked far more British than Canadian. British North America-born politicians remained a minority in the Legislature until the 20th century. According to mid-20th century historian, Walter Sage, Canadians were regarded contemptuously as tight-fisted spendthrifts who were more likely to send money home to families in the East than leave it in the local stores.[7] Confederation delegate Dr. Helmcken shared some of this anti-Canadian sentiment. He recognized that British Columbia's loyalty to Canada would come only with material benefits and, perhaps, with time. "Love for Canada," he wrote in 1870, "has to be acquired by the prosperity of the country, and from our children."[8]

Prosperity and advantage were key to retaining British Columbia's involvement in the Canadian project; the stage was set for wrangling over the progress of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Key Points

- British Columbia was a sparsely populated, geographically huge colony with concentrated settlements that were mostly devoted to mining.
- Size and the expense of building roads, as well as fear of American expansionism, turned the colony toward the Canadians.
- British Columbia's willingness to join the Dominion depended on the construction of a trans-continental railway, Ottawa's absorption of colonial debt, and funding for a dry dock on Vancouver Island.

Media Attributions

- View of Nanaimo Harbour showing the bastion and shipping © Howard King, British Library is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Stó:lō woman with a cedar basket © Royal British Columbia Museum (PN996) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Hon. John Sebastian Helmcken, 1917 © Walter W. Daer is licensed under a Public Domain license

7. Walter N. Sage, "British Columbia becomes Canadian, 1871-1901," *Historical Essays on British Columbia*, Jean Friesen and Keith Ralston, eds. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976): 58.

8. Quoted in ibid.: 57.

2.4 Prince Edward Island

Islander indifference to Confederation had its roots in a thorny land ownership issue that had irritated local affairs for nearly a century. This question stretched back to the colony's early days under British rule.

Escheat

In 1767, the British government divided up the island into 67 lots of about 20,000 acres apiece and gave title away in a lottery involving wealthy and well-connected British landlords in London. The owners were expected to send settlers to the colony; few did so, most failed to maintain their properties or meet their obligations to settlers and the colonial administration. The Colonial Office consistently backed the absentee proprietors against the colonial tenants. In the mid-19th century, this was the issue that dominated Island politics; the search for a mechanism for gaining ownership of the proprietors' lands and selling them on to the tenants — called **escheat**— was regarded as an economic issue and also one that would help PEI society grow and thrive. In 1864, there was nothing the Canadian government could do to help this process along. Islanders believed they were at last making headway with Westminster and that a resolution was in sight. Staying with Britain — at least until absentee landlordism was addressed — was the most prudent path to follow.

PEI's links to the mainland colonies were important and unlikely to change by staying outside of Confederation. Islanders regularly took seasonal work in the mines and forests of New Brunswick, Cape Breton, and mainland Nova Scotia. Their labour was welcomed and no treaty or constitutional change was necessary to this relationship's continuance. The colony had good trade relations with the United States as well, and produced enough shipping to be active in the West Indies and cross-Atlantic commerce. There was some talk of exploring annexation to the United States and about as much interest in becoming a Dominion in its own right, as Newfoundland would do in 1907. On the whole, the status quo appealed most of all.

This inertia reflected divisions within Island society and the lack of advantages to be gained in joining Confederation. The PEI Liberals and Conservatives were supported, respectively, by comparable populations of Catholics and Protestants. The Tenant League — advocates for an end to the system of absentee landlordism — was more associated with the Liberals and thus with Catholicism. These were fracture lines that preoccupied the colony's leaders. Against that, the PEI delegates at the 1864 Charlottetown Conference articulated a reasonable fear that the colony would be lost within Confederation. Being one-third of a Maritime Union was one thing; being a tiny sliver of a federated Canada was quite another.

The Cradle of Confederation

What changed? The Island's government hoped that it could expand economic prospects by negotiating

freer trade with the United States. Without British support this could not happen. Concern for the colony's economy began to grow – which set the stage for a bout of railway fever. A colonial railway that was meant to be the key that would unlock economic diversification and tourism swallowed up the colonial budget. By 1871, PEI was looking at a desperate financial situation. Stagnant trade, government deficit, incomplete infrastructure, and the lack of funds with which to resolve the absentee landlord issue were the 'pushes' that the colonial elite needed to pursue new terms with Canada. Ottawa provided the necessary 'pulls': it would pay off the railway debt, guarantee a year-round steamship link to the mainland, and buy out the landlords. The Island's Liberal government, under R.P. Haythorne (1815-91), had spent the colony into near-bankruptcy and placed the end to tenancy at the top of PEI's political agenda; the Conservatives, under James Pope in 1873, were able to use their leverage with John A. Macdonald to win better terms. In this case, both parties were eager to see Confederation succeed, and they were able to obtain everything the colony required at the time. On 1 July 1873, PEI entered the federal union; despite having dismissed the idea of Confederation in 1866, the newest and smallest colony began a long tradition of packaging itself as the "Birthplace of Confederation."

Key Points

- Land ownership issues dominated in pre-Confederation Prince Edward Island.
- The Escheat Movement worked to eliminate leasehold tenures and absentee landlordism.
- PEI rejected Confederation in the 1860s, and reconsidered its position in the 1870s — mainly due to colonial debt.

2.5 Canada Captures The West, 1867–70

George Brown entered into a coalition government with John A. Macdonald and George-Etienne Cartier in the 1860s with a grocery-list of conditions. One of the Toronto newspaperman's demands was that Canada — in whatever form it was to take — would annex Rupert's Land. There was no talk in 1867 — no serious talk at least — about adding British Columbia to the mix. After all, as the crow flies, Victoria was as remote from Toronto as British Honduras; a sea voyage to New Westminster from Halifax could take months.

The relationship between the West and the core elements of the Dominion of Canada was complex. They had a history together and it was sometimes invoked to justify the extension of Canadian control into the Northwest. But that history was not straightforward and the Canadians tended toward the simplest understanding imaginable: the West had been British and, as of 1870, it simply belonged to the Dominion.

French traders, explorers, and diplomats had ventured into the southern regions beginning in the 1730s. After the Conquest of New France in 1763, there was a struggle for control of the southern and western fur trade — a struggle that was eventually won by the North West Company (NWC). The Montreal-based fur trading consortium pressed further westward and aggressively extended its commercial reach. By 1812 the NWC had established posts throughout the Interior of what would become British Columbia, and was operating a network that reached the Pacific Ocean. Nine years later, however, the Canadian firm was forced into a merger with the larger, older Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), the commercial monopoly incorporated in London in 1670. The HBC claimed exclusive right to trade across the northern half of the continent, in "all the lands draining into Hudson Bay." This territory, called Rupert's Land, includes what is now northwestern Quebec, northern Ontario, eastern and northern Manitoba, the northern two-thirds of Saskatchewan, the northern half of Alberta, and almost all of Nunavut. The merger gave the British firm effective trading, and nominal administrative control over everything north of the 49th parallel and all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

By the 1860s land in Ontario was becoming scarce, and the same was true in the Dominion's three other founding colonies. Young families were, consequently, migrating out of Canada and into the United States where land was as yet abundant and effectively free. Grafting the West onto Canada — and, in particular, onto Ontario — would mean free land for generations. Obtaining Rupert's Land from the HBC would also reunite this economic hinterland with its old commercial metropolis in the St. Lawrence (in effect, reversing the consequences of the 1821 corporate merger).

The diversity of nationalities and syncretic cultures arising from a fur trade society is a feature of the utmost importance to the history of Western Canada. Most of the people in the Red River Settlement — what would become the core of the new province of Manitoba — were Métis. They were the genetic heirs of Europeans (mostly French-Canadians but also, French, Swiss, and Scots) who traded out of Montreal from the 18th century on. They were, as well, descended from a range of Indigenous cultures, especially Anishinaabe (aka: Saulteaux), Cree, and Assiniboine but also Chipewyan and others. Culturally, they were more than the sum of their ancestral parts: the Métis were a "new nation" with their own dialect, economic practices, organization, and values. Catholicism was an important part of

the mix and many Métis demonstrated an easy ability to move from the bison hunting society to the parlours of Montreal and back again. As the 19th century advanced, however, their awareness of their different-ness (the fact that they were related to, but not identical to, their Indigenous and European neighbours) grew stronger.

Another group, described by historians as the "country born," was also significant in numbers around Red River and to the north. This community was the product of intermarriage between HBC employees (mostly English and Scottish men) and Chipewyan, Cree, and Anishinaabe women. Their journey to a truly syncretic culture was different from that of the Métis. They tended to be Anglican or Presbyterian in their religious beliefs, usually spoke English, and were not part of the Plains culture of the bison hunt. While some were, for all intents and purposes, Indigenous, others were *de facto* Europeans.

Through the 1860s, Anglo-Canadian expansionist ambitions would inform relations between the West and Canada. In 1864 at the Charlottetown Conference and again at the Quebec Conference, the prospect of an expansive and clearly imperialist Canada dominating the West was promoted. The desire of Franco-phobes like Brown to encircle and overwhelm Quebec with Anglo-Protestant populations was no secret. Toronto-based advocates agitated for annexation of the West, many of them with an outspoken assimilationist agenda. Quebec francophones, for their part, weren't opposed to annexation, but they feared that Anglo-Protestants would interfere in what should be a reunion between two branches of the Franco-Catholic family.

In 1867, London was getting ready to divest the HBC of its trade monopoly and administrative role in Rupert's Land. At the same time, the Americans were in an annexing mood. As far as the Canadians were concerned, time was of the essence; the timeline of Canadian expansion into the West would need to be brought forward. As far as the Métis majority at Red River was concerned, they had some important choices to make, and they felt strongly that these choices were theirs alone.

Historical accounts of relations between the Métis and the country born are sometimes contradictory, no doubt because every attempt to draw a composite picture is complicated by the existence of numerous and compelling exceptions. Sectarian boundaries were probably more critical in the mid-19th century than language, and persistent Scottish-French sympathies complicated things further. Broadly speaking, however, Westerners of Anglo-Protestant heritage viewed themselves as politically on the ascendant, mainly because of increased Anglo-Canadian interest in the region. This led to significant divisions among the Métis and Country Born communities of the Red River. Other historical interpretations have the two communities more fully recognizing their shared interests as they were increasingly subject to the rising racism boiling out of Canada West. Certainly, this was the dawn of modern racism: increasingly, what Anglo-Canadians saw when they looked at the country born were inferior "half-breeds" rather than co-religionists or champions of Anglo-Celtic culture. As for the the Métis in these years, the Anglo-Canadians only had *more* contempt for them.

The community would, in 1869, resist Canadian annexation and demand provincial status. Red River was daring in some respects. It had grown dramatically in the 1860s, but only to about 12,000 people (about one-eighth the size of Prince Edward Island). The majority was still Métis, followed by Scots and country born, but many of their neighbours were Ontarian Anglo-Protestants drawn by the promise of cheap land and the prospect of being pioneers in the colonization of the West by English Canada.

The West Resists

The relationship between the people of Red River and the HBC was far from straightforward. The company was an important source of imported goods and a source of revenue. It had acted for years as the local administration. Many of the local residents were former HBC employees, some of them retired from work much further north. In some respects the HBC was exploitative and put its own interests first; in others, it was a benevolent and paternalistic firm that had invested nearly 200 years in the region. Suddenly that continuity was broken.

In the 1860s, Canada began a campaign to win Rupert's Land away from Britain. Westminster was happy to cooperate. The HBC's monopoly (which was, from 1849, more myth than reality) was purchased for £300,000, and administrative control of the region was passed to the Dominion government. Certain conditions applied. The Canadians had to negotiate treaties with the Indigenous populations before the deal would be formalized. Ottawa proved far too hasty in this respect and others. Lieutenant-Governor William McDougall (1822-1905) was appointed even while the HBC Governor of Assiniboia, William Mactavish (1815-1870), was still in charge. The Canadians sent in land survey teams to redraw the map of the Red River settlement using the **section and quarter-section** block system, which ran lines right across existing colonists' farms; all of these older farm lots were arranged along the riverfront in long narrow strips, as was the case under the **seigneurial system** of New France. This upset the Métis and it alerted the country born and Scots that their rights were not secured. The surveyors were duly chased out of the colony. No consultations took place between Ottawa and the Red River colony, which further inflamed local opinion. And, of course, no attempt was made to address the issue of treaty negotiations.

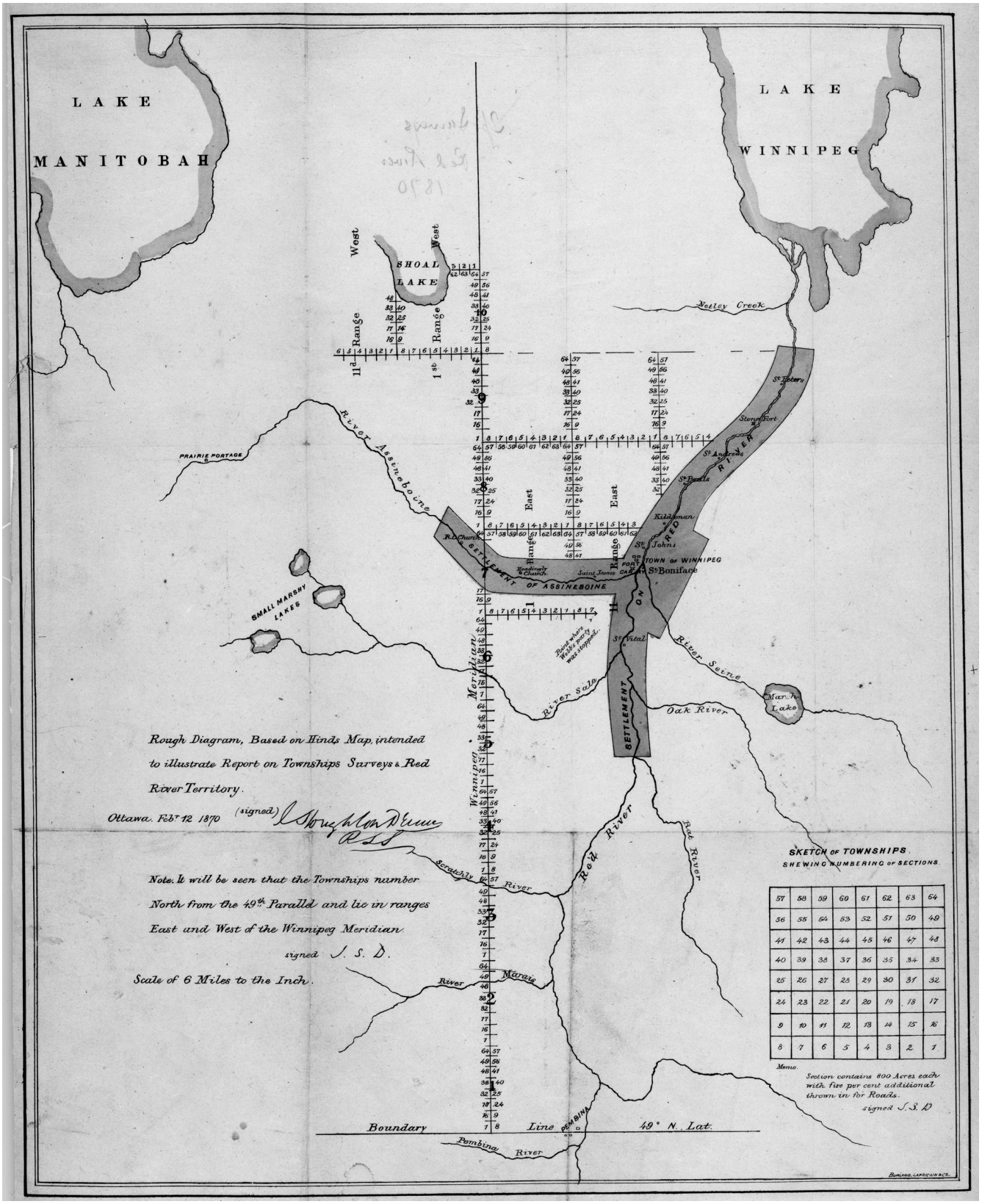


Figure 2.5 The beginning of the Section Land Survey in the Red River Plain (1869). Canadians were imposing their system of geography over top of others.

Events proceeded quickly. Only a month passed between the Rupert's Land deal and the creation of a

Provisional Government in Red River. Days later, at the end of December 1869, Louis Riel (1844-1885) would become its president. Riel's father (Louis senior) was himself a Métis lawyer and leader who played a key role in the 1849 Sayer Trial. Julie Laginmonière, Louis junior's mother, was part of the French-Canadian community at Red River. She provided connections with relations in Montreal to whom Riel would later turn. Young Louis grew up in the French parish of St. Boniface opposite modern-day Winnipeg, and had an interest in joining the priesthood. He travelled to Montreal in the 1860s to study, fell in love, became engaged, and then found himself jilted because the Canadienne woman's parents were intolerant of Riel's mixed-race ancestry. Depressed and perhaps heart-broken, he abandoned his studies and returned to Red River when his father died in 1864. Riel's familiarity with the Canadians, his ability to conduct himself credibly in English, and his apparent intellectual ability made him a good candidate to lead the Métis National Committee. Photographs of Riel in 1870 show a man with broad shoulders and a large head; it is easy to overlook the fact that he was only 25 years old.



Figure 2.6 The Provisional Government with Riel in the centre.

Ottawa regarded the Provisional Government as something akin to treason. The Canadians' tactical errors, however, meant that their takeover of Rupert's Land was to be stalled. In the absence of a legitimate Canadian claim, the sovereignty of the whole of the Northwest was now a grey area. The possibility that Riel's government might take Red River into the United States stoked Canadian fears. At the same time, the Provisional Government's proposals for provincehood for the Northwest were unacceptable to Ottawa. Red River was demanding the same kind of provincial status enjoyed by the four former British colonies that formed the heart of the Dominion. That included control over natural resource revenues. Ottawa's perspective was that Red River had never been a British colony per se, and that the whole point of annexing the West was to enrich the Canadian project with resources, not to hand them over to the Métis in perpetuity.

In Red River, there was an influential and potentially dangerous Canadian faction that plagued the Provisional Government. Riel and the Métis addressed the issue of community solidarity by doubling the size of the government and adding a number of English/Scottish/Country Born members to balance the Franco-Catholic representatives. The local Canadians, however, were unwilling to be brought to the table. Led by Dr. John Schultz, the Red River Canadians included recent arrivals from Ontario, and individuals who would benefit directly from Ottawa's surveying contracts in the region. A brief skirmish led to the arrests of several in the Canadian Party, including a young Orangeman from Northern Ireland, Thomas Scott. By all accounts, Scott was toxic — a hateful, violent man fueled by an

anti-Catholic rage. While all of the other Canadian prisoners were released in an effort to cultivate goodwill, Scott was executed.

The execution of Scott is seen by most historians as the turning point for Red River and Canada. While negotiations between the two governments became more fruitful, a public campaign calling for revenge for the "martyrdom" of Scott took off in Anglo-Protestant Canada. Clearly this would have ramifications for Red River, but it would also fracture the delicate relationship between Ontario and Quebec — only three years after Confederation. The Red River delegation was unable to secure resource revenue, but it did get provincial status for Manitoba and the promise that Métis' and other existing farms in the region would be respected and registered. Amnesty for the leadership of the Provisional Government was not forthcoming.

Riel fled to the United States. Still a young man, he was restless and — as would become clear in later years — deeply disturbed by the events of 1869-70. He was so (rightly) fearful of being captured and murdered by Ontarian Orangemen, that much of his time was spent on the run. The *Manitoba Act* (1870) offered up the possibility of a dualist (French/English, Catholic/Protestant) province created by the federal government. For some Canadians this was a hopeful sign, but that hope would be dashed. The Canadian troops that arrived in Red River, hard on Riel's heels, intimidated and brutalized the Métis population. Land registrations did not take place, and within a couple of years the core Métis population deserted the new province for opportunities further north and west.



Figure 2.7 Canadian troops on the shores of Lake Superior, on their way to Red River, 1870.

Politics and Personality

Dr. John Christian Schultz (1840-1896) would emerge from all of this as one of history's big winners. The creation of Manitoba gave him several stages on which to perform as a political leader. He was elected repeatedly (and always under suspicious circumstances) to Ottawa, was appointed to the Senate by Macdonald in 1882, and then became the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba in 1888. His motives are likely to be called into question, but Schultz's record on Indigenous (especially anglophone Indigenous) affairs as an advocate is noteworthy. He even advocated for the Métis to some extent but remained a vocal opponent of

Riel. Schultz's rising star was entirely due to the displacement of the Métis from Red River and Manitoba's resettlement by English-Canadians. As an out-rider of colonial power, Schultz demonstrated unwavering contempt for the First Nations at the outset, and then demonstrated the imperialist's urge to act as their guardian once institutions were in place.

Key Points

- One of the objectives of the leaders of the confederation movement was the annexation of Rupert's Land — the West — to enable the agricultural expansion of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.
- Annexing Rupert's Land was made urgent by the loss of population to the United States, and American interests in expansion in the region.
- The inhabitants of the West included the Métis, the country born, some Canadian migrants, and First Nations. Of these, only the Canadians were particularly interested in the prospect of annexation.
- The Dominion, in its haste, rushed administrative representatives into place (specifically, land surveyors) and it failed to negotiate treaties with the Indigenous populations. These errors would provoke reactions from the locals.
- Late in 1869 the Métis-dominated community at Red River established a Provisional Government and mounted a resistance to annexation. The local Canadian faction responded with attempts to subvert the authority of the government led by Louis Riel.
- The execution of Thomas Scott by the Provisional Government divided feeling in Ontario and Quebec, hardened Protestant Ontarian resolve to drive out the Catholic Métis, and sent Riel into exile.
- The Provisional Government's negotiations with Ottawa produced the *Manitoba Act* and the colony's willing entry into Confederation as a more-or-less equal partner.

Media Attributions

- Councillors of the Provisional Government of the Métis Nation © Library and Archives Canada (PA-012854) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Red River Expedition, Colonel Wolseley's Camp, Prince Arthur Landing on Lake Superior © William Armstrong, 1822–1914, Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. 1969-3-1 is licensed under a Public Domain license

2.6 Canada and the First Nations of the West

Change swept across the Prairies in the 15 years after the *Manitoba Act*. Commitments made to the Métis of Red River in the Confederation negotiations were, in effect, dismissed if not broken. The possibility of cultural dualism was crushed in the *Manitoba Schools Act*. The **numbered treaties** were signed and reserves established, but famine and dislocation could be found everywhere. Indigenous populations were increasingly concentrated and managed by newcomers as the bison herds collapsed across the continent. Immigrants were coming swiftly to the southern plains along the CPR route, and the railway itself was changing the shape of the local economy. In less than a generation, Winnipeg had emerged as a respectably-sized city of 27,000 while, by 1881, there were approximately 118,000 people on the Canadian Prairies. This was a comprehensive wave of change that took place quickly and relentlessly. For many, it was experienced as nothing less than a crisis of the first order.

The Canadian Northwest

The Canadian administration of the Northwest gradually took form in the 1870s. The District of Keewatin was carved out around Hudson's Bay in 1876. From 1882 the name Assiniboia, formerly associated with the Red River Settlement, applied to the borderlands stretching west from Manitoba to the Cypress Hills. This was the territory most heavily populated by the Cree. In the same year, the District of Alberta was created next door and north along the spine of the Rockies, covering almost all of the Canadian Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) territory. Saskatchewan was the heartland of the Métis, encompassing much of the river drainage, and it was also home to large numbers of Cree. The District of Athabasca, also created in 1882, ran north from Alberta; the District of Franklin extended north of Saskatchewan into what is now the Northwest Territories. There were thus seven administrative units on the Plains, including Manitoba, of which six were governed either directly or indirectly from Ottawa.

The key administration in the context of the 1885 rising was Assiniboia. Its capital was Regina which, but for the southern route of the railway, would have been of very little consequence. The site was chosen by Lieutenant-Governor Edgar Dewdney, the surveyor and politician from British Columbia whose career was, according to his biographer, a continuous quest for a sinecure. "The selection of the site of the new territorial capital adjacent to his personal landholdings in 1882 was the most egregious example of self-serving opportunism."[1] Dewdney's execution of his responsibilities have drawn much criticism from historians. In one well-documented case, we find him turning away cut-rate cattle sales from local ranchers whose stock might have addressed starvation in Indigenous communities, in all likelihood because he had a financial interest in another source of beef. Venal and lacking empathy, Dewdney is outstanding for his singular dedication to Canadian expansion into the region regardless of its impact on the native population.

Canadian trepidation about Indigenous and Métis affairs in the West crossed party lines. The Métis

1. Brian Titley, *The Frontier World of Edgar Dewdney* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1999), 143.

resistance of 1869-70 had, after all, won provincehood for Manitoba — something that Ontario's leadership deeply resented. George Brown and the Clear Grits had been drawn into the Great Coalition and the Confederation plan largely on the strength of their desire to see Ontario settle the Plains. No one could or would say for sure that the Métis might not have further plans or the ability to upset Canadian ambitions again. As for the Cree, Niitsitapi, and Anishinaabe (Ojibwa) of the southwestern Prairies, the Canadians could be only less certain. Wars between the much better armed US Cavalry and the Indigenous peoples of the lands south of the 49th parallel were in full swing. The Sioux and the Niitsitapi moved freely back and forth across the **Medicine Line** and thus posed a threat to both Euro-North American nation states. On 24 October 1870, the Cree and Niitsitapi engaged in a bloody confrontation: the Battle of Belly River, near Fort Whoop-Up in present-day Lethbridge. At the time, there was no way of knowing that this was to be the last major Indigenous war on the Plains. The Niitsitapi's upset victory over the Cree (who lost as many as 300 warriors) would only serve to reinforce a growing sense in the popular mindset of Canadians that the native people of the Plains were warlike and an obstacle to national progress. Somehow that threat would have to be diminished.

The first step to doing so was the numbered treaties. Of the first seven signed, three were drawn up under Macdonald's Conservative regime and four under the Liberal government of Alexander Mackenzie (1822-92). These met, in the barest sense, Ottawa's obligation to get treaties in place, but their principal goal was to pacify the West and make it attractive to non-Indigenous settlers. A large part of that, of course, involved getting individual Indigenous leaders to "take treaty" by selecting and accepting reserve lands. Everything else could be opened to settlement. As for the Métis, Ottawa's approach was once burned, twice shy. There was no love lost between the Métis and the Canadians, and the federal government believed that it had met all its obligations to the former residents of Red River. When the Métis protests began, the Canadians were inclined to dismiss them as evidence of insatiable greed on the part of a population too feckless to get on with successful farming.



Figure 2.8 The Numbered Treaties

Not all Canadians shared the priorities of Ottawa. Settlers in the Northwest, for example, were witness to the desperate plight of the Indigenous peoples. While some were less sympathetic than others, former HBC employees — who had a longer-term perspective on Cree, Assiniboine, and Niitsitapi societies — decried the state of affairs facing First Nations. Canadian settlers, too, shared in some of the grievances registered by the Saskatchewan Métis. The original course of the CPR was to come north through the Saskatchewan River valleys, where the best farmland was to be found. Canadian migrants had rushed into the area as a consequence, and the CPR's decision to use the southern route instead left them hundreds of kilometres from a rail link. Among these farmers was William Henry Jackson (aka: Honore Joseph Jaxon, 1861-1952), a Torontonian whose family relocated to Prince Albert. Offended by Ottawa's apparent arbitrary behaviour and the duplicity of the CPR, Jackson headed to Batoche to join the growing Métis protest. University-educated, Jackson filled the position of secretary to Riel and was the draughtsman of the 1884 grievances. (It is an interesting contrast, one that French-Canadians did not miss, that Jackson was arrested at the end of the uprising and tried for treason, like Riel, but found not guilty by means of insanity. He was thus spared the noose and committed to an asylum at Fort Garry, Manitoba.)[2] Canadian settlers in Assiniboia and Saskatchewan, too, complained that they were being administered like a branch of an Ottawa bureaucracy and they demanded provincial status.

2. Donald B. Smith, "William Henry Jackson", *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, August 2014, accessed 15 May 2015, http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/william-henry-jackson/.

The Indigenous West

One of the conditions of Canada's acquisition of Rupert's Land was that the new Dominion would enter into treaty-making with the Indigenous peoples. This was a necessary prerequisite to confirming Canadian power in the region. Stabilizing the area for settlement was certainly another motivation for doing so. Either way, speed was thought to be of the essence. For these reasons the process of negotiating and signing the numbered treaties was a rushed business. Historians remain uncertain as to what it was the Indigenous signatories thought they were agreeing to. In *Treaties 4*, *5*, *6*, and *7* there were promises of land, medicine chests, farming training, agricultural equipment, and even livestock. From the Canadian perspective this was a package aimed at transitioning Indigenous peoples into Canadian farmers. From an Indigenous perspective it was consistent with the gift-giving diplomacy of past generations, it offered up emergency relief in the face of hardship from famine or disease, and it purchased peace. Some Indigenous leaders refused to sign, mostly because they recognized that the treaties didn't really promise land; instead, the treaties proposed to take all of the land away, except for a small amount that would be marked on maps as reserves. Extinguishing Aboriginal claims to the land was not something likely to succeed quickly. Circumstances, however, would soon work against the hold-outs.

Until the 1980s, historians writing on the topic of the Riel Rebellions typically emphasized the role of the Métis leader and tended to subsume the agenda(s) of the Plains Cree, the Assiniboine, and the Niitsitapi. In fact, this was a three-cornered confrontation and the First Nations situation was very distinct from that of the Métis — not to mention the Canadians.

The crisis that brought the Indigenous peoples of the Plains to the treaty table in the 1870s was rapidly worsening. What was left of the bison herds was now under assault by better-armed hunters (native and non-native). The repeating rifle was only one of several technological innovations that would severely compromise the remaining herds. Pressures from the American side of the 49th parallel — which includes increased access to bison grounds by rail and the rise of the sports hunter — resulted in herds pressing into the southwest corner of Alberta. The process began in the 1860s, and by the late 1870s even the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) Confederacy could no longer count on this resource. What had only decades earlier been a continental population of hundreds of thousands of plains bison was reckoned to have plummeted to a few hundred in the early 1880s.

For the Cree in the 1870s, the inevitable crisis was delayed, thanks to shared access to what was left of the bison herds in Niitsitapi territory. The peace the Cree had negotiated with Canada in *Treaties 1* through *6* (1871-76), however, meant that even a much reduced version of the older Plains lifestyle could continue for less than a decade. Although reserves had been mapped out, they were not immediately enforceable. There was nothing to stop the Cree in particular from heading out to the last vestiges of promising hunting territory: the Cypress Hills. Indeed, the terms of treaties encouraged the Indigenous signatories to stake out their territories, something on which Canada would later renege. By 1879, even the Cypress Hills resource was largely played out.[3] It wasn't so much the case that the clock was ticking; for the Cree and their neighbours, alarm bells were ringing.

Additional pressure was applied on the foodstocks of the Plains by the arrival of refugees in the 1870s and 1880s. This is an often overlooked aspect of the period. We have become accustomed, in the 21st

3. John Milloy, *The Plains Cree: Trade, Diplomacy and War, 1790 to 1870* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988), 120.

century, to seeing images of people fleeing war-torn homelands and setting up rag-tag camps in which disease and starvation stalk the population. In the Victorian era, there was no United Nations to intervene with aid or food, no *Médicins sans Frontières* to stay the progress of epidemics, no international corps of journalists to bring attention to suffering. What occurred on the Great Plains in these years thus went largely unobserved by the rest of the world. The crisis begins in 1877, when the Sioux and their allies combined for one final push against the genocidal attacks of the US Cavalry and, at Little Bighorn, they inflicted the most severe defeat that United States forces would suffer until Pearl Harbor. Theirs was a pyrrhic victory, however, and Ta-tanka I-yotank (aka: Sitting Bull, 1836-1890) and his people were forced to flee to sanctuary across the Medicine Line. Their refugee camps were swollen with newcomers in the years that followed, and by 1880 their plight was desperate.

Beginning in 1879, famine swept across the Prairies. Provisions meant to be delivered under treaty were not supplied. What cattle that did arrive on the Plains to be used as draught-animals were, instead, eaten. The Cree, Assiniboine, and Saulteaux who conformed to Ottawa's expectations and remained on reserve were, as a consequence of their choice, vulnerable to starvation when Canada failed to meet its obligations. Those who rejected treaty and the reserves — including Cree under the leadership of Piapot (1816-1908), Mistahimaskwa (aka: Big Bear, 1825-1888), and Minahikosis (aka: Little Pine, 1830-1885) — faced hardship just the same. What's more, Ottawa exploited these conditions to try to reorient the recalcitrant factions onto reserves and into a European-style regime of agriculture. To be clear, Canadian authorities knew that famine was on the march. They had resources warehoused nearby, and yet withheld supplies in order to achieve a political goal: the submission of the Cree and their neighbours to Canadian authority.

The situation was no better for the Niitsitapi. Reports of twenty-five starvation deaths in the last days of 1879 signalled that the last refuge of the bison was also in peril. Successive hard winters compounded conditions for everyone in the southwest Prairies and along the foothills. Despite fears of American attacks, many of the Niitsitapi relocated to the United States in pursuit of food or, perhaps, rations.

By 1881-83, most of the groups that had resisted taking treaty were on reserves. Minahikosis buckled in 1879 and signed *Treaty 6*, but he worked for the remaining six years of his life to expand and draw together the reserve lands into a contiguous pattern so as to create a Plains Cree homeland. Ottawa, however, feared First Nations' efforts to create contiguous reserves that would constitute an "Indian Territory" and enable the growth of stronger political and military resolve. As a result, the Cree reserves were dissolved into smaller and more distinct parcels. This approach, of course, made the administration of aid still more difficult. What's more, these concentrated populations also created promising conditions for epidemics to emerge. As if disease was not enough, food poisoning appeared. Tainted meat was, in desperation, consumed on many reserves and in many towns, with predictable results.

Still the Canadian government adhered to an austerity-first policy and the notion of the "vanishing Indian" gained ground. Some late 19th century Canadian critics of rationing and relief argued that supporting native peoples was throwing good money after bad: if the Indigenous population was doomed to disappear, what would be the point? In this respect, both the Liberals and the Conservatives in Ottawa were on the same page. Prime Minister John A. Macdonald took the view that relief to anyone who was not actually starving would create dependence rather than self-reliance. And yet even in famine the Plains peoples were not being supported. One of the last big pushes to get bands onto reserves came in the spring of 1882 to clear all the lands south of the CPR route in Assiniboia (now

southern Saskatchewan). As one historian frames this, every move made by Ottawa had cynicism at its heart: “Within a year, 5,000 people were expelled from the Cypress Hills. In doing so the Canadian government accomplished the ethnic cleansing of southwestern Saskatchewan of its indigenous population.”[4]

One strategy for minimizing Indigenous dependency was agricultural education, something which was promised in the treaty-making process. The Cree, in particular, were prepared to transition into a farming economy — ideally on their own terms — and provision was made for farm instructors to be sent out from Ontario. Needless to say some instructors were better than others, and many were used as de facto administrators and Canadian diplomats. Progress on this front, as with rations, was too slow for the Cree and the Niitsitapi. In 1883, several Cree leaders petitioned Ottawa, clearly stating that they felt betrayed by Canada’s lacklustre commitment to the terms of the treaties:

> Nothing but our dire poverty, our utter destitution during this severe winter, when ourselves, our wives and our children are smarting under the pangs of cold and hunger, with little or no help, and apparently less sympathy from those placed to watch over us, could have induced us to make this final attempt to have redress directly from headquarters. We say final because, if no attention is paid to our case we shall conclude that the treaty made with us six years ago was a meaningless matter of form and that the white man has indirectly doomed us to annihilation little by little…. Shall we still be refused, and be compelled to adhere to the conclusion spoken of in the beginning of this letter, that the treaty is a farce enacted to kill us quietly, and if so, let us die at once?[5]

By 1884 the Cree were prepared to respond as a single body under the leadership of Mistahimaskwa. In response, the Canadians — led by Dewdney and embodied in the newly-formed North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) — began detaining native leaders as they attempted to travel to meetings, breaking up gatherings where legal resistance and court challenges were being discussed, and once again using rations to squeeze the Plains peoples into submission. The government also turned to the banning of Indigenous cultural practices. In 1884-85, Indigenous movement was restricted as a “pass system” emerged (see Section 11.6) and arrests were made of native diplomats visiting reserves other than their own. Disagreements between the Niitsitapi under Isapo-muxika (aka: Crowfoot), the Sioux, led by Ta-tank I-yotank, the Cree, and the Métis further weakened the possibility of a united front emerging across the Plains.[6]

As 1885 approached, relations between Indigenous peoples and Canadians in the West were at a low ebb. The worst of famine had passed in some quarters but the trauma and the death toll were hardly going to be expunged overnight. Cree leaders like Piapot and Mistahimaskwa had watched for more than a decade as the Canadians neglected their treaty obligations and communities were purposely shattered and brought to heel.

Ironically, it was the Dakota Sioux who fared the best in these years; they brought their farming skills (honed for more than 50 years) to their existing settlement hubs in Canada. They were not covered by

4. James Daschuk, *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life* (Regina: University of Regina Press, 2013), 123.

5. Bobtail, Ermine Skin, Samson, et al. to John A. Macdonald, 7 January 1883, quoted in Jennifer Reid, *Louis Riel and the Creation of Modern Canada: Mythic Discourse and the Postcolonial State* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), 15.

6. J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*, revised edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 170-5.

numbered treaties and, as a result, fell between the administrative cracks. They were thus able to get on with adjusting to the new paradigm without willful mismanagement by the Canadians. How serious was this distinction? Very. Of the Plains people in the 1880s, only the Sioux escaped the tuberculosis epidemics and they did so likely because they were better fed, more self-sufficient, and not economically destabilized.

Key Points

- The period between 1870-85 in the West saw dramatic and catastrophic changes take place among the Indigenous communities.
- Ottawa's administrative presence in the West was reflected in the creation of new territories, new political offices, and the creation of the NWMP.
- The crisis among First Nations was precipitated by an accelerating decline in bison populations, leading to a final armed conflict over the remaining herds at Belly River, 1870.
- Facing food shortages and the arrival of migrants from Canada, the First Nations of the region agreed to the numbered treaties, which they understood to be an ongoing relationship and not a once-and-for-all submission to Canadian authority.
- Non-Indigenous settlers in the West were often critical of Ottawa's approach to the region.
- Famine years began in 1879 and continued through 1885. These conditions were exploited by Ottawa to win further treaties, resettle signatory nations on reserves, and secure the submission of First Nations to Canadian rule.
- Indigenous support for protest and resistance was growing by 1884, creating conditions that would contribute the the Northwest Rebellion of 1885.

Media Attributions

- Map of Numbered Treaties of Canada is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

2.7 Rebellion 1885

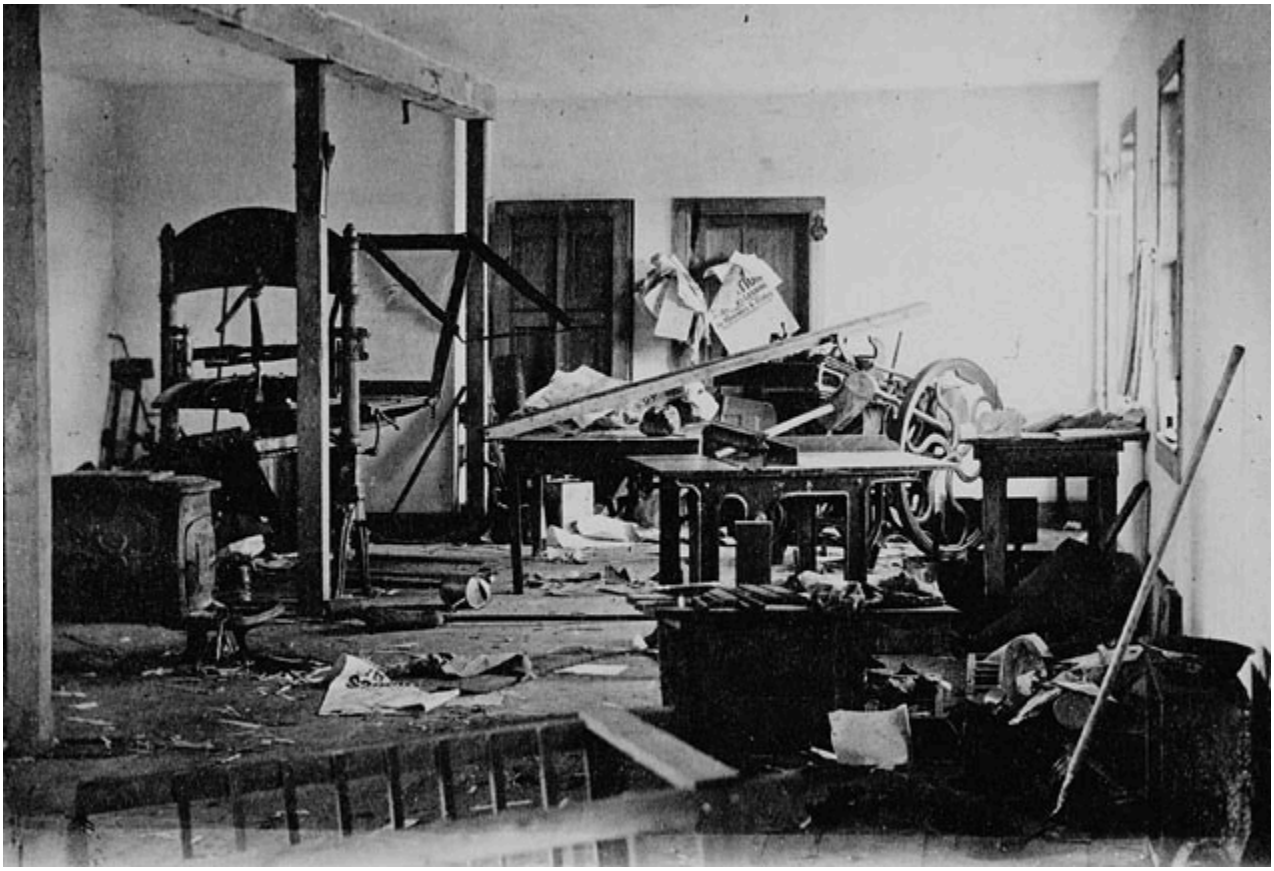


Figure 2.9 Efforts by the Anglo-Ontarian population in Winnipeg to dominate the Francophone community included an election riot in 1872 that targeted newspapers that were critical of John Schultz, including these printing presses at The Manitoban.

After the Canadians arrived in Red River, much of the local Métis population departed. Canadian failure to respect the **scrip** they issued to the Métis for land was one factor, as was the virulent hostility of Orangemen outraged at the "martyrdom" of Thomas Scott. The Métis had options and there were many other communities on the Prairies to which they might turn. The most promising of these were arranged along the Saskatchewan River, particularly the South Branch.

Métis Discontent

By 1875, Canadians had pretty much over-run the old Red River colony and Winnipeg was, for all intents and purposes, a Canadian city. More Métis, disenchanted with the ways in which the Canadian regime neglected to address the issue of land entitlement, drifted toward the Saskatchewan Valleys. There were just enough bison left on the plains in the mid-1870s to create hope among the Métis that at least one aspect of their old livelihood might continue. They established new farms – made up of long

and narrow strips that were a legacy of the seigneurial system in New France – and erected churches and other elements of established communities. The most important settlements were Qu'Appelle, Duck Lake, and Batoche. It wasn't long before Canadian surveyors arrived in the region and began redrawing local maps along the square section plan that had, in 1869, caused unrest to erupt in and around Red River.

In 1884, the dissatisfied and worried Métis of the South Saskatchewan sought out Louis Riel.

Riel after 1870

The life and times of Louis Riel are dominated by his two confrontations with the power of Ottawa and the ambitions of Canada. It is easy to lose sight of the fact that he was very young in 1869, and a persecuted and confused man entering middle age in 1885.[1]

Soon after negotiations with Canada were concluded in 1870, Riel decided to flee to the United States. He was only a few steps ahead of the Ontarian Orangemen who had volunteered for regiments that staggered toward Manitoba with a vendetta — for Riel's execution — in mind. On three occasions he was elected by voters in the West to represent them in the House of Commons in Ottawa; fearing for his life, he never took his seat.

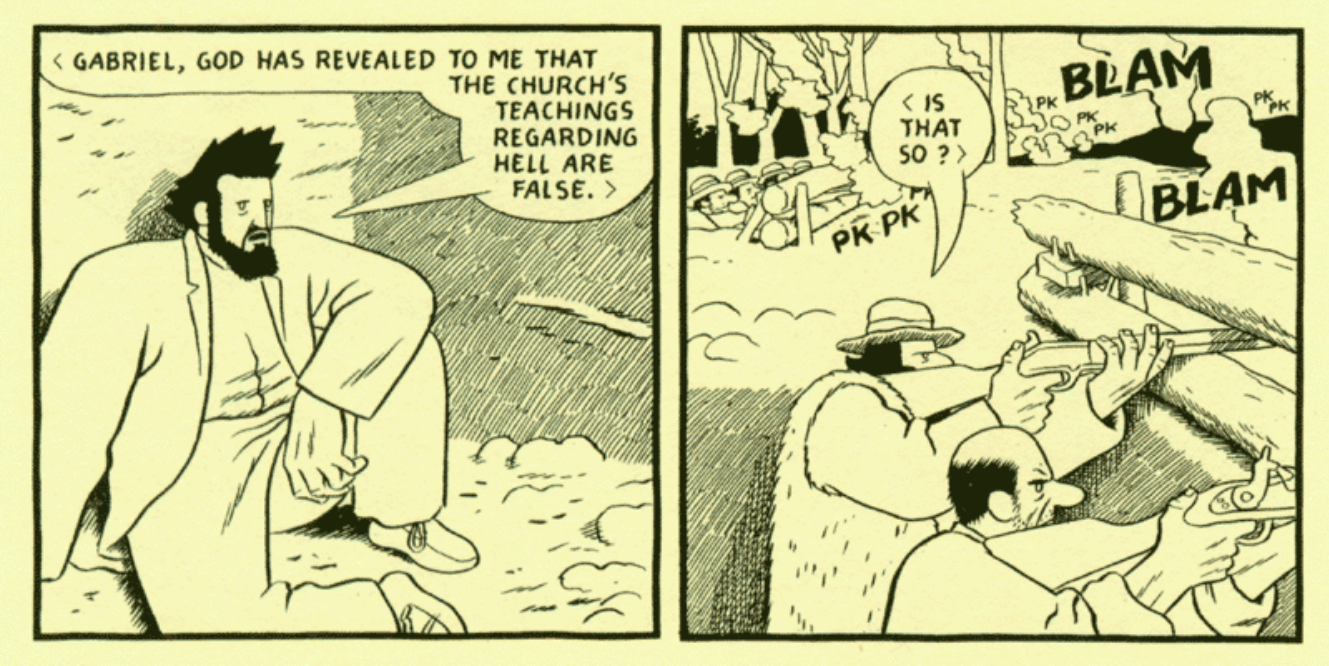


Figure 2.10 Depictions of Riel run the gamut from opera to nude statues. Chester Brown's Louis Riel: A Comic-Strip Biography is an example, and evidence, of the continuing purchase Riel has on the public imagination. [Long Description]

Macdonald, eager to avoid a rupture in Canada, sent Riel money to remain in the United States. He was granted amnesty, provided he stayed out of Canada for five years. But Riel suffered a mental health

1. A very good survey of the many historical representations of Louis Riel is Douglas Owram, "The Myth of Louis Riel," *Louis Riel: Selected Readings*, ed. Hartwell Bowsfield (Mississauga: Copp Clark Pitman, 1988): 11-29.

collapse and travelled to Quebec where he was a patient in two asylums. In one, according to historian Dan Francis, Riel's treatment was brutal:

> He was routinely trussed up in a straitjacket because of his violent behaviour. He was allowed to exercise only under guard in the yard behind the main building and, he complained in a letter, 'I spend the night with chains around my feet and hands.' [2]

2. Daniel Francis, "Sane or Insane? The Case of Rose Lynam", *Reading the National Narrative*, http://www.danielfrancis.ca/content/sane-or-insane-case-rose-lynam, accessed 15 May 2015.



Figure 2.11 The Science of Cheek; or, Riel's Next Move. Riel (loq.) — "Five Toussand Dollares! By gar, I shall arrest ze scoundrel myself!" J.W. Bengough is widely regarded as the pioneer of political cartooning in Canada. This one from April 1874 finds Riel in Ottawa, where it was alleged he stole into the Commons, signed the register, and snuck off again. [*[Long Description]*]

He thereafter joined a Métis community in Montana — the American Northwest and Pacific Northwest was peppered with such enclaves, some of which dated to the 18th century. He married a Métis woman (Marguerite Monet, née Bellehumeur) and they had three offspring, none of whom survived childhood.

Riel's mental health issues may not have been fully resolved, as he announced that he was receiving visions of a sovereign Métis state in the Prairie West. He wrote prolifically, taught at a Montana school, joined the Republican Party and took out American citizenship. In June 1884, Gabriel Dumont (1837-1906) arrived with a delegation of Métis, anglophone country borns, and Canadian settlers. They persuaded Riel to return to Canada (that is, to the Northwest), and initiate a new round of negotiations with Ottawa. Riel agreed, with conditions. It would dawn on Dumont and the rest of the delegation only later that Riel was not the man he had been in 1870.

From Protest to Rising

At the start, Riel demonstrated good organizational skills and made use of key personnel. He set about building a coalition of disaffected peoples on the Prairies. Under Riel's leadership and by the hand of Canadian settler William Henry Jackson, the communities of the area around Prince Albert produced a petition calling for: relief to the Indigenous peoples, land disbursements to the Métis, easier access to additional lands for homesteaders, free elections, and the establishment of new provinces with rights at least as great as those of Manitoba. Riel and his allies would dress this up in the language of "loyal British subjects" so as to douse the idea that this was a document produced by people who rejected Ottawa's rule.[3]

In March 1885, after three months and with no reply from Ottawa, the coalition took its next step. As was the case 15 years earlier at Red River, they established a Provisional Government. Within a week Dumont's troops engaged a body of 53 NWMP, along with more than 40 volunteers in the Prince Albert militia, on a snowy road between Fort Walsh and Duck Lake. The skirmish lasted barely 30 minutes and the NWMP/Volunteer casualties were severe: a dozen dead and another eleven injured. The Métis lost five, including Dumont's brother, Isadore, and the Cree leader Assiwiyin. The small battle set off a panic among the NWMP, who withdrew from the Saskatchewan River Valley in haste. Even if their strategy was badly underdeveloped, at this stage the Métis had established a considerable advantage over Canada. Duck Lake was enough to instigate a Canadian military response but it was soon eclipsed by events at Battleford and Frog Lake.

Indigenous unrest finally spilled over. A farming instructor was murdered on the Mosquito Reserve and the northern Cree leader, Pitikwahanapiwiyin (aka: Poundmaker, 1842-1885), marched his followers and some Nakoda (aka: Stoney) Sioux into Battleford on 30 March. The town was abandoned by alarmed settlers and the **Indian Agent** was unwilling or unable to offer the Cree-Nakoda protest group any food or resources. Looting of empty homes followed. At Frog Lake on 2 April, Mistahimaskwa's Cree broke with their moderate leader and attacked and killed nine settlers, including the Indian Agent. Two weeks later Fort Pitt was captured, although this time without bloodshed.

3. Jennifer Reid, *Louis Riel and the Creation of Modern Canada: Mythic Discourse and the Postcolonial State* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), 18.



Figure 2.12 The Halifax Provisional Battalion fords a stream near Swift Current, part of the "Canadian" expedition into the North West in 1885.

The tide was about to turn violently against the Métis and First Nations forces. Only one day after the battle of Duck Lake, news of the incident reached Ottawa via the new telegraph technology that paralleled the Canadian Pacific Railway line. This was one feature of a technological revolution that had taken place on the Plains since the Red River resistance. Macdonald had barely to request volunteers for militia duty: local newspapers across Canada, from Fort William to Sydney, were calling for and sponsoring local regiments. The troops who showed up to head west were proof of how a "Canadian" sentiment was growing across the former separate (and sometimes rival) colonies; they were also proof of a badly underdeveloped Canadian military. Each regiment wore colours associated in some way with their home communities rather than with a national regiment, let alone an army. Two weeks after call-up, about 8,000 soldiers (almost all of them inexperienced) were boarding trains and speeding west. The ability to do so had not been there in 1870; Riel's failure to cut the rail line or telegraph line suggests that he did not appreciate the extent to which the world had changed since Red River.

Major-General Frederick Middleton and Lieutenant-Colonel William Otter led a two-pronged attack on the Cree-Nakoda forces and the Métis Provisional Government headquarters at Batoche. Over three days, from the 9th through the 12th of May, Middleton's Winnipeg Militia pounded away at the Métis position. Vastly outgunned, the Métis nevertheless held out until their ammunition was exhausted. In a battle that was reminiscent of the Métis-Sioux clash at Grand Couteau in 1851 and foreshadows the Belgian theatre of war in 1916-17, the Métis sharpshooters picked off their enemies from a series of trenches dug in preparation for the assault. As the Métis resistance failed, many of their troops and leaders fled. Three days after the battle, Riel surrendered to Middleton. He would be tried, convicted, and hanged in Regina.

The Cree vs. Canada

The resistance to Canadian ambitions in the West was not over. Otter's troops performed less well against the Cree: at Cut Knife Hill and Eagle Hills, and at Frenchman's Butte and Loon Lake, the Cree scored significant victories. However, the Canadians were wearing them down. The leadership status of

Pitikwahanapiwiyin and Mistahimaskwa was compromised when they surrendered on 26 May and 2 July respectively.

In the 1885 trials that followed in Battleford, the outcomes for the Indigenous leadership were particularly bad. Eight men — among them Kapapamahchakwew (aka: Wandering Spirit), and the two Nakoda leaders, Itka and Man Without Blood – were tried in October and condemned to hang. Some traditional Plains cultures believe that the soul is located in the neck and so the idea of hanging was especially horrific. One of the condemned men unsuccessfully requested death by firing squad instead. A gallows large enough to hang eight men at once was built and the mass execution took place on 27 November. The fate of Pitikwahanapiwiyin and Mistahimaskwa (considered in Section 2.8) was only slightly better.

In the aftermath of the executions, many Cree and Nakoda fled to the United States. While the story of Sitting Bull and the Dakota Sioux's flight into Canada is relatively well known, the fact that a couple of hundred Indigenous people from the Canadian Plains thought themselves safer south of the Medicine Line is not.[4]

Key Points

- Canadian disregard for the Métis, country-born, and Indigenous peoples in the West led to diplomatic and then armed conflict in 1885.
- Louis Riel was recruited by a delegation from Saskatchewan to lead a second protest against Ottawa.
- In March 1885 violence erupted involving several different and not unified groups.
- The Canadians now had the ability to transmit information via telegraphs and to expeditiously move troops to the West, and were thus able to suppress the rebellions.
- The leadership of the Cree and Nakoda Sioux were punished severely for their role in these events, effectively crushing the likelihood of further Indigenous resistance in the region.

Long Descriptions

Figure 2.10 long description: Louis Riel, lounging on the ground, looking solemn: "Gabriel, God has revealed to me that the church's teachings regarding hell are false." Gabriel, shooting at the enemy using a blind, one of several men in trenches, shooting: "Is that so?" Sound effects like BLAM and "pk pk" represent explosions and shooting. [Return to Figure 2.10]

Figure 2.11 long description: Louis Riel in Ottawa, reading a poster that says "Wanted! $5,000 reward will be given to any person who will arrest Louis Riel, (M.P.) the murderer of Thomas Scott." Riel is carrying a carpet bag that says "Louis Riel, Provencher, Fugitive from Justice" while holding a mittened hand out in askance, looking rather put out. [Return to Figure 2.11]

4. Blair Stonechild and Bill Waiser, *Loyal till Death: Indians and the North-West Rebellion* (Calgary: Fifth House Publishers, 1997), 222-5.

Media Attributions

- The press room in The Manitoban printing office after the riot during the election © James Penrose, Library and Archives Canada (PA-165779) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Louis Riel © Chester Brown is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license
- The Science of Cheek, No. 45 © J.W. Bengough is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Men of the Halifax Provisional Battalion crossing a stream © Library and Archives Canada (C-005826) is licensed under a Public Domain license

2.8 Making Sense of 1885

According to one view, there were fewer than 400 insurgents directly involved in the Rebellion.[1] By any account, that makes it a very small civil war indeed. The impact of the events of 1885, however, was widespread and long lasting.

The rising gave Canada an excuse to imprison, punish, and more forcefully dominate members of the Indigenous communities on the Plains. Mistahimaskwa, who had lost credibility as a Cree leader, repeatedly attempted during the protest to rein in the frustrated and angry members of his community (including his own son), counselling peace and negotiation with the Canadians. He mostly failed in those efforts, although at Fort Pitt he was responsible for the safe passage of the Canadian population and the NWMP detachment. What's more, as a leader, he stepped forward at the end of the unrest and surrendered himself to the Canadian authorities. He was charged with treason and felony, found guilty, but spared the noose. He received a three-year jail sentence which, for a 60 year old, was severe in its own right. Broken by the whole experience, he died shortly after his release two and a half years later.[2] A similar fate befell Pitikwahanapiwiyin (aka: Poundmaker), who served one of three years at Manitoba's Stony Mountain Penitentiary before being released due to failing health. He died four months later. These events effectively decapitated Indigenous leadership and resistance for a generation.

1. Jennifer Reid, *Louis Riel and the Creation of Modern Canada: Mythic Discourse and the Postcolonial State* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2008), 1.

2. Rudy Wiebe, "Mistahimaskwa", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 11 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003), accessed 19 May 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mistahimaskwa_11E.html.



Figure 2.13 Pitikwahanapiwiyin (ca.1842–1886) in the year before his death.

Assessing Riel

Notwithstanding his tactical and political errors in 1885, Riel served as a lightning rod for the Métis and their settler neighbours as well. As was the case at Red River, he proved effective at building collaborative and respectful partnerships among the aggrieved. At his trial, however, much hinged on the issue of Riel's sanity.

Two experts (such as they were) declared that Riel was suffering from a personality disorder that took at least two different forms. The court was not convinced. For the Orange Lodge, still baying for blood after the execution of Thomas Scott in 1870, a successful insanity plea would cheat them of their

revenge. For the Métis, it would look as though they had allowed themselves to be misdirected by a lunatic. As far as the government was concerned, a successful insanity plea would spare them the inevitable schism between Ontario and Quebec. Riel's lawyers, too, had only one endgame in mind: keep their client off the gallows. It was to this end that Riel responded when he said, "while the Crown, with the great talents they have at its service, are trying to show that I am guilty — of course it is their duty — my counselors are trying — my good friends and lawyers who have been sent here by friends I respect, are trying to show that I am insane."[3] Riel would have none of it. If he was declared insane, Riel argued, the reasonable demands of the Métis would be dismissed as well. The insanity plea collapsed.

The court found Riel guilty of treason (though many believed he was being tried for the murder of Scott) and, despite a recommendation of mercy from the all Anglo-Protestant jury, the judge assigned the death penalty. Protest in Quebec rose up immediately after sentencing, putting Macdonald in the position of having to consider a second amnesty. In what soon became a famous affront to French Canadians, Macdonald declared himself resigned to the court's decision and to Riel's doom, "though every dog in Quebec bark in his favor."[4] Riel was hanged in Regina on 16 November 1885.

3. Quoted in Douglas Linder, "The Trial of Louis Riel", (University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), School of Law, 2004), accessed 15 May 2015, https://www.famous-trials.com/louisriel/855-home

4. Alan D. McMillan, *Native Peoples and Cultures of Canada* (Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1988), 285.

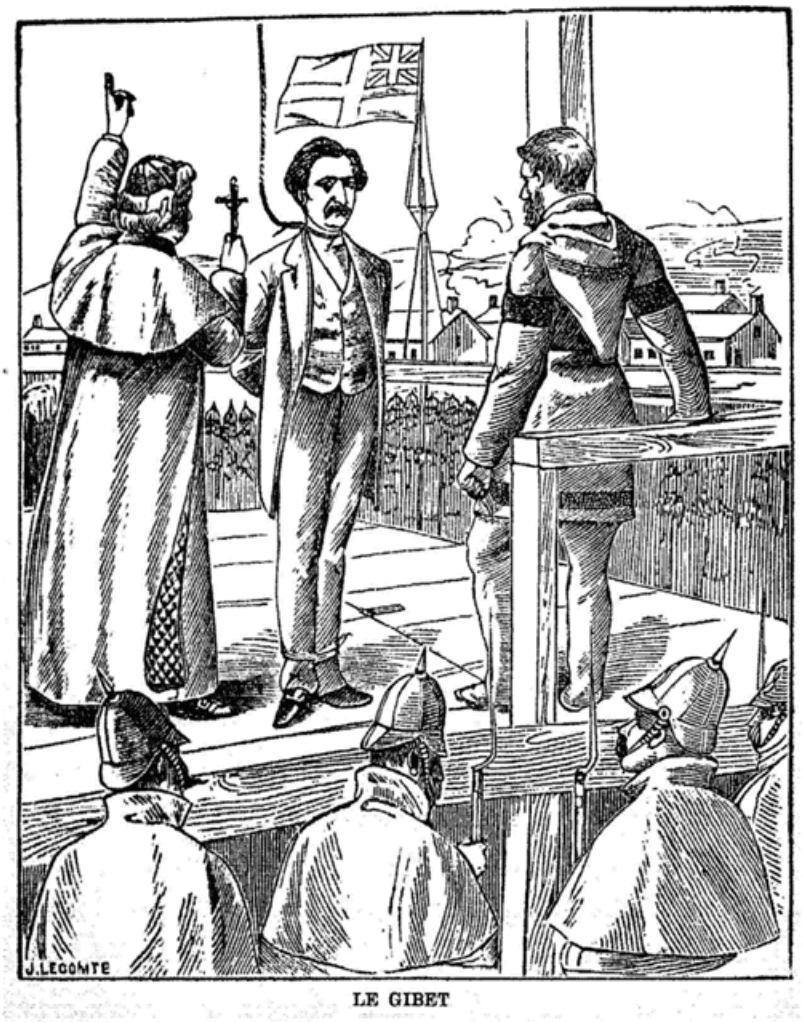


Figure 2.14 Surrounded by NWMP (drawn to look like a regiment of Prussian troops), Riel faces his end on the gallows (le gibet).

It is safe to say that no figure in Canadian history has so divided Canadians and Canadian historians as Louis Riel. The Métis leader has been portrayed variously as a martyr, a murderer, a madman, and a messiah. The circumstances of his trial and execution divided French from English Canada, as the former embraced him as a representative of francophone and Catholic traditions. Insofar as the hardline Protestants of English Canada were concerned, yes, Riel's Catholicism was a significant issue. Those Ontarians leading the charge into the West certainly had no appetite for a dualist society collaboratively built by French and English hands together. The Anglo-Protestants were inclined to unravel agreements that promised to respect cultural diversity. One result of the inhospitable climate created by Anglo-Manitobans and by the execution of Riel was a lack of migration from Quebec into the West.

Catholic Quebec's relationship with Riel was not, however, nearly as straightforward. The Riel who re-emerged from exile in Montana was a changed man. He has been described by one of his many biographers as part of a larger global trend of **nativist millenarians** who represented Indigenous peoples under imperialism. The 1885 rising coincides, roughly, with the Ghost Dance movement in the the West and the Mahdi of the Sudan, both of which envisioned a world swept clean of the outsiders

and newcomers.[5] In the case of Riel, his vision of cultural resurrection and a promised land for the Métis combined **ultramontanist** Catholicism with elements of numerology, as well as Mormon-style polygamy and a Saturday Sabbath. Some of these features of Riel's belief system raised eyebrows among the Catholic clergy, and the most critical of them were prepared to have Riel excommunicated. For this constituency, he was not a hero — although his eleventh-hour reconciliation with the Church helped matters significantly.

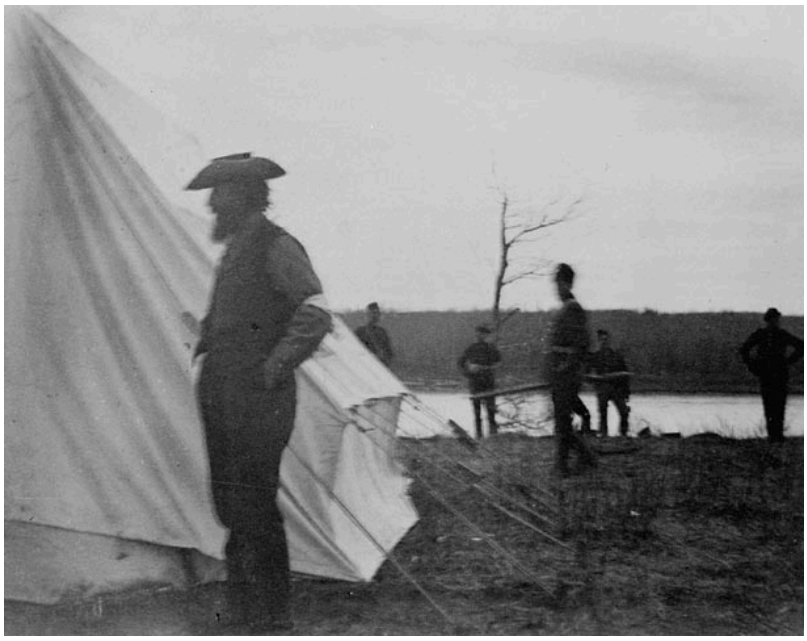


Figure 2.15 Riel as a prisoner in the camp of Major-General Middleton.

For the Métis, of course, Riel's failure of leadership and his apparent retreat into spiritualism raised mixed feelings. His record stands in sharp contrast with representations of Gabriel Dumont as a more hard-nosed and effective general. Riel was meant to be a galvanizing figure but, even among the Métis, he was frequently polarizing. Nevertheless, his execution brought home to the Métis their relative powerlessness in the face of Canadian imperialism in the West.

Anglo-Celtic Protestant Westerners celebrated the failure of the uprising and Riel's execution for a generation or two. There was, however, a persistent undercurrent of concern that conditions that led to the rising were caused or manipulated by Ottawa. By the mid-20th century, anti-Ottawa feeling in Western Canada resulted in an ideological and symbolic resurrection of Riel. He was increasingly celebrated as a kind of founding father of Manitoba, among other things. Monuments appeared across the three Prairie provinces beginning in the late 1960s, and provincial premiers (even Conservatives) invoked the memory of Riel as a powerful symbol for Western alienation as when they engaged Ottawa in debates over resource revenues and constitutional issues. The radical left also embraced Riel in the 1960s and 1970s. His criticisms of Canadian capitalists and his resistance against the armed might of the state resonated in an era of anti-Vietnam War protests. Among the many streets and centres named for Riel in these years was a dormitory at politically stormy Simon Fraser University: Louis Riel House. Decoding the meaning of Riel requires that we engage with intent and see beyond the outcome. Perhaps the last word on this subject belongs to J.R. Miller, a distinguished historian at the University

5. Thomas Flanagan, *Louis 'David' Riel: 'Prophet of the New World'*, revised edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 197-8.

of Saskatchewan. He observed “It is a painful but real fact of life that the only thing that justifies rebellion is success. The successful revolutionary is a statesman, the unsuccessful a criminal.”[6]

First Nations people, for their part, have spent more than a century distancing themselves from Riel, claiming that they had their own very specific agendas (which they did), that they were not followers caught in the slipstream of the Métis nor of their charismatic leader (which they were not), and that no one else paid more dearly for the consequences of Riel’s “guilt.”

Key Points

- Riel’s trial and execution divided opinion in Canada and acted as a wedge between English and French in Ontario and Quebec.
- Riel’s legacy is a complex one in that he was vilified in the English-speaking provinces, lionized in French-Catholic Quebec, regarded with some suspicion by the Catholic establishment, treated with ambivalence by the Métis and First Nations, and subsequently held out as a symbol of Western and popular resistance in the late 20th century.

Media Attributions

- Poundmaker (Pitikwahanapiwiyin) © Oliver Buell, 1844–1910, Library and Archives Canada (C-001875) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Le Gibet © J. Lecomte is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Riel, a Prisoner © James Peters, 1853–1927, Library and Archives Canada (C-003450) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6. J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heaven: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, rev. ed. 1991), 186.

2.9 The Railway

Completing the Intercolonial Railway between the original four provinces was a condition of Confederation. That task could be accomplished without too much difficulty. After all, the colonies had laid some 3,200 km of track by 1865. Finding a company with the wherewithal to build a railway from Montreal to the Pacific was a whole different order of magnitude. The Grand Trunk Railway was the obvious candidate but its directors balked at the prospect of an all-Canadian route. The newly-established Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) was a contender in 1873, but that plan ran off the proverbial rails when it was discovered that Macdonald's Conservative Party had received significant funds from the CPR. The **Pacific Scandal** cost Macdonald his administration, brought the Mackenzie Liberals into office, and a substitute railway company could not be found. The Mackenzie administration was not without accomplishments in this regard: in one term of office it oversaw the construction of several north-south lines that would assist Canadian exports. Returned in 1878, and faced with an almost apoplectic British Columbian body politic that was calling for "The terms [of union], the whole terms, and nothing but the terms," Macdonald resumed the search for a contractor. Again, the CPR stepped forward and the project, started in 1880, was completed in a remarkable six years. Built with heavy government subsidies and other incentives provided to the CPR Company, it represented a genuine engineering achievement. It was also a massive corporate accomplishment.

The CPR as Land Baron

The legal mechanism that made possible the distribution of western lands was the ***Dominion Lands Act*** of 1872, aspects of which were highly problematic. For one, it disregarded Aboriginal title in violation of treaty agreements. Indigenous peoples continue to protest this situation. *The Act* had implications, too, for the provinces of the West. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, and Quebec (and, a little later, PEI) all had exclusive control over their natural resources (with a few exceptions like fisheries), but land and other natural resources across the whole of the Prairie West and the Peace District in northeastern British Columbia were Ottawa's to control, tax, and dispense. Establishing settlers increased traffic on the railway. This increased the movement of supplies and farm equipment from east to west, it stimulated steel production in the original provinces, and as capital and sweat were invested in farms, it created a market for land and further revenues for the state. Ottawa became wealthy on western lands while western territories and provinces did not. Finally, the parceling out of western lands in sections determined a human geography on the plains that was brutally rigid. Roads were driven at one- or two-mile intervals that corresponded with the grid of sections. The effect was to separate neighbours by miles of landscape and to leave settlers' access to fresh water and woodlots up to chance. Community and sustainability, however, were not concerns of the CPR or the *Lands Act.*

One way of speeding along the process of commodification of land involved the CPR very directly. A mammoth swath of territory on either side of the railway right-of-way — 25 million acres (roughly 10 million hectares) — was granted to the CPR as an incentive. Inevitably, this was considered some of the most desirable land on the Prairies because proximity to a railway station was critically important to the financial viability of a wheat farm in the days before gasoline-powered trucks. The CPR quickly

became an integrated corporation, consisting of passenger/freight transportation, communications, and land sales (at $2.50 an acre) combined with a recruitment and marketing arm that aimed to lure Canadians and immigrants into the West. The CPR even purchased a fleet of vessels to ship settlers across the Atlantic, and built another to extend its reach across the Pacific to Asia.

The gallows in Regina were barely cleared off following the events of 1885 when the CPR moved into an entirely unforeseen enterprise: the hotel and tourism business. After he became president of the railway in 1888, William Cornelius Van Horne (1843-1915) sought to capitalize on the growing market for travel by promoting the exploration of the Victorian version of the wilderness in comfort, in a specially designed sleeping car. “If we can’t export the scenery, we’ll import the tourists,” he is reported to have announced.[1] The company erected imposing structures like Glacier House near Rogers Pass, Mount Stephen House at Field (both opening in 1886), Fraser Canyon House at North Bend (1887), and the Banff Springs Hotel (1888), even before turning its attention to the monumental hot springs hotel at Banff. Some of these were modelled on hunting lodges, some on European chateaux, and all of them were an expression of the CPR’s role as an extension of North Atlantic civilization’s values, economy, and systems.

1. E.J. Hart, “See this World Before the Next: Tourism and the CPR,” *The CPR West: The Iron Road and the Making of a Nation*, ed. Hugh A. Dempsey (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1984): 151.



Figure 2.16 As a land vendor, the CPR needed buyers and it looked overseas to find them. Notice how the branding developed by the CPR reduces 'Canada' to something inconsequential: the Railway and Manitoba are the message. [*[Long Description]*]

Routes to the Pacific

The CPR's route across the West, from Ontario to the Pacific Coast, is one of the sharpest points in the history of the early Dominion. As the initial infrastructural, administrative, and economic extension of Canada, it had (and continues to have) a powerful influence on many aspects of life.

The most critical decision in routing was made at the very outset. Chicago had already emerged in the 1870s as the leading transportation hub in the interior of North America. It was possible to ship goods without interruption from western Ontario via Lakes Huron, Superior, and Michigan, directly to the Illinois port. What's more, Chicago had established its primacy in railway transportation as well. One

option open to the Canadians was, therefore, to build a route across southern Michigan to Chicago and then north to Manitoba. The cost would be a fraction of any all-Canadian route, but it exposed an important national link to unpredictable relations with the United States. Canada, after all, had been founded with the threat of American invasion in mind; if defending the West against American expansionism was one reason for (a) annexing Rupert's Land in the first place, and (b) building infrastructure that would enable the quick movement of troops, then it made no sense to stake all of that on a railway that passed through American territory.

That meant shifting the route north across the Canadian Shield. The Shield contained some of the most difficult terrain that surveyors and engineers encountered, and that includes the Rocky Mountain passes. The Shield slowed down construction and ramped up costs exponentially. It also frightened off investors, particularly those in the United States.

Ottawa responded with lucrative incentives to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company of Montreal. The CPR, under the leadership of Sir Hugh Allen (1810-1882), replied with gifts of money to the Conservative Party in 1872. These donations — totalling approximately $350,000 — were exposed in April 1873 in what became known as the Pacific Scandal. John A. Macdonald's government began to topple. By the autumn — coinciding with the Panic of '73 (a financial crisis that gripped the United States and was related directly to overbuilding of railways) — Macdonald's position was irretrievable. An election in January 1874 saw the Liberals, under Alexander Mackenzie, form a government for the first time. The economic situation was poor, however, as was Mackenzie's timing.

The Liberals put their trust in the Department of Public Works and Sandford Fleming (1827-1915), a civil engineer (and the inventor of worldwide standard time) who surveyed and approved a route through the Yellowhead Pass in 1872. The northern route would head off from Winnipeg to the Saskatchewan River Valley, and thence to Fort Edmonton and the north-central Rockies. Beyond there, the most promising option seemed to be through the Cariboo to Bute Inlet, across Seymour Narrows (at what is now Campbell River), and south to Esquimalt.

The northern route presented several advantages, the first of which was the agricultural potential of the territory through which it passed. The Saskatchewan River Valley and the parklands of the central Prairies contain good water and soil resources, and they are well-treed — an asset from a log-house building perspective and with regard to fuel. This was a sharp contrast with the more arid lands of Assiniboia, which included Palliser's Triangle, an area of poorer, brown soils that stretches, roughly speaking, along the 49th parallel from what is now mid-Saskatchewan to Lethbridge in the west and Drumheller in the north. Crossing the Rockies was going to present a challenge whichever direction was chosen, but from a farm economy perspective the northwestern route seemed the logical choice. Certainly the earliest settlers thought so. Métis who were displaced in Manitoba headed into the region, while country born and Canadian migrants formed nodes of their own, drawn by early promises of railway connection with the CPR. These small but well-established settlements were, however, an obstacle when it came to finding sufficiently lucrative land for the CPR's grant.

The company opted in 1881 for the southern route instead, heading more or less straight across the Prairies from Winnipeg to Banff and the Kicking Horse Pass. As historian of Saskatchewan, Bill Waiser, notes:

> This decision, one of the most controversial in western Canadian history, completely changed the axis of development in the region by focusing attention on the southern prairies — the North-West effectively

> became the west. In the process, the future province of Saskatchewan became associated in Canadian minds with the flat, treeless prairie."[2]

As well, the southern route meant that the most intensively farmed lands were located in an arid belt that would generate environmental and economic tragedy in the 20th century (see Section 8.5).

The southern route had repercussions in British Columbia as well. The Bute Inlet to Victoria route was swept away by Macdonald when the Conservatives returned to power. Instead, the CPR terminus would be located in Port Moody, a milltown at the head of Burrard Inlet. As a kind of consolation, and in recognition of the commitment made in 1871 regarding a railway to Victoria, the **Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway** (the E&N) was built by coal magnate Robert Dunsmuir to connect his mining operations at mid-island with the capital. Each of these changes improved the CPR's position as a real estate company. Each of these changes embittered local farmers, investors, speculators, Indigenous peoples, and the Métis, who saw the CPR seize the most profitable land and determine where the biggest cities were going to go — all while abandoning whole communities.



Figure 2.17 Fire trap. hot weather, woodframe buildings, and an obvious abundance of tinder spelled disaster for Gastown/Granville/ Vancouver in 1886.

Gastown to Granville

Nowhere was the city-building ambitions of the CPR clearer than along Burrard Inlet. On both the north and south shore of the fjord there had been logging operations in play since the 1850s. The largest and oldest of these, Moodyville (named for Sewell Moody, an American entrepreneur), was located on the north shore and was a poor candidate for a rail terminus from the east. At the head of the inlet was Port Moody (named for Colonel Richard Clement Moody, a Royal Engineer and Lieutenant-Governor of BC), which enjoyed good access to the mostly level Fraser Valley. This made Port Moody a prime choice for the CPR. The challenge facing the company was that speculators had reached Burrard Inlet first, buying up much of Port Moody in the hope of being bought out by the CPR at a handsome profit. Actual railway construction heading east began here and the town was, officially, the terminus until the line was finally completed. Shortly thereafter, in 1886, a devastating fire destroyed a third of Hastings Mill and its commercial area (known officially as Granville and unofficially as

2. Bill Waiser, *Saskatchewan: A New History* (Calgary: Fifth House, 2005), 27.

Gastown). The largely flat landscape was almost completely denuded of trees and stumps (as well as almost all of its building stock). The CPR announced a change of plans and extended the line from Port Moody another 24 km west, to a vast new land grant in the newly incorporated city of Vancouver. The recently-logged West Side of Vancouver was entirely within the company's grant, while the shattered and recovering parts of Granville now constituted the East End. The move bifurcated the community, an event that is manifest to this day in wealth on the West Side, poverty on the East, and street misalignments in the middle.

Describing the many ways in which the CPR and its later competitors changed the landscape, demographics, resource exploitation, economy, and townsites still merely scrapes the surface. Behind the CPR was not only a political network but also a dense web of interlocked commercial and financial boards. Directors of the CPR also sat on the boards of the Royal Bank, Dominion Bridge, Dominion Iron and Steel, and international oil companies (see Section 8.3). Donald Smith (later styled "Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal") was not only president of the Bank of Montreal but an influential Conservative Member of Parliament for Montreal. The intersection of Hastings and Granville Streets in Vancouver provide a physical manifestation of the extent of this influence. On one corner, there was the Bank of Montreal, opposite it the Bank of Commerce, across Granville there were the offices of the federal government, and just down the hill facing the water was (and is) the CPR station itself.

Key Points

- The Canadian Pacific Railway was both a unifying and divisive instrument of Canadian expansion.
- The decision to change to a southern route created hardships in the north-central plains.
- The CPR operated as a railway and construction company, as well as a land dealer and hotel operator. It was, as well, closely linked to the Bank of Montreal and so was integrated with many other corporations.
- The choice of routes had significant impacts on the West Coast, where Vancouver was eventually selected as the site for the terminus, leaving both Port Moody and Victoria disappointed.

Long Descriptions

Figure 2.16 long description: Advertisement from the Canadian Pacific Railway. The right-hand side contains text. Under the heading "Canadian Pacific Railway: Amended Land Regulations," it says "The Company now offer lands within the Railway Belt along the main line at prices ranging from $2.50 per Acre upwards, with conditions requiring cultivation. A rebate for cultivation of from $1.25 to $3.50 per acre, according to price paid for the land, allowed on certain conditions."

"The Company also offer lands without conditions of settlement or cultivation."

Under the heading "The Reserved Sections," it says "Along the Main Line as far as Moose Jaw, that is, the sections within one mile of the Railway, are now offered for sale on advantageous terms, but only to parties prepared to undertake their cultivation within a specified time."

“The Highly Valuable Lands in Southern Manitoba, allotted to the Company south of the Railway Belt, have been transferred to the Canada North West Land Company, to whom intending purchasers must apply. These include lands along the Southwestern Branch of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which will be completed and in operation this season to Gretna on the International Boundary, and Westward to Pembina Mountain; also lands in the Districts of the Souris, Pelican and Whitewater Lakes, and Moose Mountain.”

Under the heading “Terms of Payment, Canadian Pacific Railway Lands,” it says “Purchasers may pay one-sixth in cash, and the balance in five annual instalments, with interest at six per cent per annum in advance.”

“Parties purchasing without conditions of cultivation will receive a deed of conveyance at time of purchase, if payment is made in full.”

“Payments may be made in Land Grant Bonds, which will be accepted at ten per cent premium on their par value and accrued interest. These Bonds can be obtained on application at the Bank of Montreal, Montreal; or at any of its agencies.”

“For Prices and Conditions of Sale and all information with respect to the purchase of the Railway Company’s Lands, apply to John H. McTavish, Land Commissioner, Winnipeg.”

The notice is signed “By order of the Board, Charles Drinkwater, Secretary,” Montreal, January 22, 1883.

The left-hand side of the notice has two images. The top image says “The Canadian Pacific Railway” and “Manitoba” and depicts an idyllic country landscape as viewed through a circle in a wall. The bottom image has the text “and the North West Territories of Canada” with a fur trapper and a farmer on either side. Beneath this text are the names W.C. Van Horne, General Manager, Montreal; J.H. McTavish, Land Commissioner, Winnipeg, Man.; C. Drinkwater, Secretary, Montreal.

The notice is printed by the American Bank Note Company, New York, U.S.A. [Return to Figure 2.16]

Media Attributions

- Land Ticket © Canadian Pacific Railway is licensed under a Public Domain license

2.10 The North

At the heart of imperial expansion is the need to redraw maps, to impose new patterns of communication, and to reconfigure economic orders to fit the new paradigm. Canada — through more than two centuries of French and then British colonial effort — was not a truly northern entity. It was an inland colony that extended down the throat of the St. Lawrence River and into the gut of the continent along the Great Lakes. It related to the rest of North America through river systems that flowed into the Great Lakes and the Laurentian system. It extended no further north, in political terms, than the Canadian Shield and the height of land. Leaping over that barrier into the Rupert's Land watershed was a significant task, part of which it accomplished through the North West Company's trade network in the West before 1821. However, from 1821 (and including the merger of the NWC with the London-based HBC), Canadian influence in the West was modest. The annexing of Rupert's Land in 1869-70 flagged a movement beyond the old colonial boundaries, but these efforts primarily concentrated on Manitoba and what would become the Prairie provinces. The expansion into the North held out less drama but it was no less portentous.

The North in the Late 19th Century

At the time of Confederation, the North probably contained significantly fewer human beings than it had two (or even just one) hundred years earlier. The boreal forest regions held large populations of larger mammals — deer, moose, and woodland caribou, for example — on which a human population could survive, but the fur trade with Europeans and Canadians reduced mammal numbers to very low levels in the parkland or prairie regions. Fishing remained a reliable economic activity for subsistence communities, but the wherewithal for trade with Euro-Canadian companies was not as great as it once was.

Much of the northern human population west of Hudson Bay fell into two linguistic/cultural groups. Across the middle of the region and into the north and far west (the Yukon), Athapaskan-speakers dominated. The Dunne-za (aka: Beaver), Chipewyan, and Dene (aka: Slavey) held much of the southern part of this zone, while the Tłįchǫ (aka: Tlicho, Dogrib) dominated in the north and west of the Mackenzie River. To the east and hugging the North Saskatchewan River were the Cree, along with the relative newcomers, the Métis. European numbers were small, made up of traders, missionaries, and a handful of others.[1]

To the south and east of Hudson Bay (still very much to the north of Old Canada) were Cree and Innu (aka: Montagnais) communities which had experienced extensive contact with the French and later the British through the fur trades emanating from Montreal and Quebec on the one hand, and HBC forts like Moose Factory on the other.

Still further north, along the Arctic and around both lips of the mouth of Hudson Bay were large Inuit

1. Donald Wetherell and Irene R.A. Kmet, *Alberta's North: A History, 1890-1950* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2000), 4-5.

populations. Limited contact with Europeans, down to the late 19th century, had insulated the Inuit from some of the worst effects of exotic diseases. And while metal imports had found their way into the Inuit toolbox, life as a whole had not (as yet) been overhauled.

Infrastructural Change

The story of the Prairie people's armed resistance in 1885 invariably points to the significance of the CPR in delivering the telling blow of Canadian military power. What is often overlooked is the role played by steamboats on the Saskatchewan River. Although northern rivers iced up annually, they were the principal highways of the region in the spring and summer months and beyond. The potential of steamboat and paddlewheeler technology on these corridors was never fully tested. The rapid expansion of rail systems saw to that. River shipping nevertheless marks an important transition from the old York Express corridor of river and lake transportation, which oriented northern trade across the middle of what is now Western Canada to Hudson Bay and then to Europe, to one that was more southern-looking.



Figure 2.18 Sandbars and freeze-ups were obstacles to river traffic across the northern plains, but steamer traffic persisted. The Pas in 1929.

Perhaps this transition is most evident in Manitoba. In the years before Confederation, the Red River settlement was the metropolis of a trading network that extended from what is now North Dakota to York Factory on Hudson Bay. The chains of rivers and lakes oriented trade from the warmer semi-agricultural highlands of the Selkirk settlement to the entrepôt — and gateway to Europe — in the north. After 1912 and north of the 49th parallel, all of this was contained within the provincial boundaries of Manitoba. The arrival of Canada in 1870 meant that Winnipeg would shift its view from the north to the southeast. Instead of prairie wheat finding an outlet in the Arctic, it was pulled to Canada. Instead of Churchill emerging as a major centre of transshipment, Thunder Bay (aka: Port Arthur and Fort William) did so instead.[2]

2. In the 1870s and '80s there was a ferocious political and physical battle between Manitobans and Ontarians regarding the boundary between the two provinces. The epicentre of the dispute was the town of Rat Portage (aka: Kenora), where both provinces established a jail and a courthouse and sent in their own officials (who then fell to fighting one another). What was at stake was the gold and other mineral reserves of the region. Needless to say, Manitoba lost this battle and thus any hope of direct access to the Great Lakes.

A similar pattern had emerged, before 1900, in what was then the District of Athabaska (called Northern Alberta since 1905). In the 1880s, steam-powered shipping was introduced to Athabasca River and Lake with the effect of shifting trade and population into that corridor. Stretching as far north as Great Slave Lake and the Mackenzie River, this network ensured the emergence of Edmonton as the key economic node in the northwestern prairies. This region, too, was being incorporated into an economic system based in the Laurentian heartland of Canada.

Cultural Changes

The events of 1885 resulted in a substantial re-migration of Métis into the northern-Northwest. Progressively displaced — in many instances systematically so — by the incoming Canadian populations, the Métis found their economic niche was beginning to disappear. The bison hunt was at an end, provisioning forts was no longer a sustainable business for more than a few, and the freighting industry that had made such good use of the Red River cart and the Métis' ox teams was evaporating. The new steam-age transportation technology first cut them out of the southern plains and then, with extensions to the northern plains by branch lines even before 1900, the Métis were driven north of Edmonton and Saskatoon into the boreal forests. This movement, of course, had consequences for the Athapaskan-speakers of the central-north, whose resource base was now doubly strained. At Fort Chipewyan, for example, the Métis and the Chipewyan generally did not mix (nor did the French-speaking and Catholic Métis have much to do with the English-speaking and Anglican merchant class which was, to make matters more complex, a socio-economic barrier as well).[3] Elsewhere in the Northwest there were many instances where the Métis married and/or assimilated into First Nations societies and re-configured their self-identity as Dene or Dunne-za.

The presence of missionaries from the mid-19th century across much of the sub-Arctic suggests cultural change was underway. Certainly cultural or at least spiritual assimilation was the missionaries' goal in these years, not service to communities or some kind of administrative interface. If they were educators, they were educators within a Euro-Canadian Christian tradition. In this respect, at least, the role of missionaries had not changed much since the days of the Jesuits in Wendake (aka: Huronia) in the 17th century. Scholars like Kerry Abel have questioned the extent to which the missionary message in the North was persuasive. Certainly there were different levels of exposure to the Christian doctrine, and Indigenous bands that gathered in trading post communities were more at risk of proselytization than the more remote and nomadic peoples. And there was, to be sure, initial curiosity and even enthusiasm for the missionary message. By 1900, however, that early interest had diminished and Christianity was either peripheral or hybridized into a syncretic belief system among Indigenous converts.

As the representatives of Euro-Canadian society in these communities, the missionaries had a special role to play. They monitored social and economic change and reported to Central Canada as conditions shifted. It has been suggested that there is a fairly consistent trend in Canadian history that sees the arrival of traders followed by missionaries, and then military or police power of some kind: commerce, Christ, and cops. This pattern is certainly evident across the North as the missionaries increasingly called upon the state to provide NWMP/RCMP backup from the 1890s-1930s.

3. Ibid., 6-7.



Figure 2.19 Chipewyan people at Churchill, along with the ruins of the old fort battery, August 1926. *[Long Description]*

Economic and Demographic Change

The fur trade, however, sustained and built an economic bond between the Inuit and Euro-Canadians. As was the case in other fur trade frontiers in North America, pressure to hunt commercial species meant that Inuit attention was drawn away from subsistence hunting. Dependency grew as a result. When demand for luxury products like furs collapsed in the 1930s, many of the Inuit fur-hunting communities were pitched into poverty and hardship.

The 1920s had witnessed a boom in the fur-trade tied to the brief flicker of an international luxury market aimed at the growing middle class in Europe and the Americas. This was good news for Native trappers and traders who were being paid much higher prices for more kinds of animals than was the case even 20 years before. In part this was driven by the arrival in 1901 of the Parisian Revillon Frères fur trading company. Prices went up as Revillon went toe-to-toe with the local HBC traders. This situation, of course, invited growing competition from non-Native trappers and hunters, some of them long-residents in the region by now. The Innu of Labrador, for example, found themselves pushed further and further inland in the 1920s, trying to eke out an existence now based almost entirely on the trade in furs. The possibility of fishing and hunting for food was, by this point, so reduced that they had

no option but to adopt a European diet and factory-produced Euro-Canadian clothing made available through the trade in furs.[4]



Figure 2.20 A supply runner, Komatik, arrives at a Revillon Fréres post on Wakeham Bay, QC, 1928.

European, Canadian, and American intrusions into the North increased as the 19th century was drawing to a close. American whaling fleets began working the Beaufort Sea in the western Arctic and British whalers intensified their efforts in the eastern Arctic. Inuit people found economic opportunities with the fleets but they also found alcohol, sexually transmitted diseases, smallpox, and other exotic illnesses. The Beaufort ports were, according to one source, the scene of "unprecedented debauchery" and the Sadlermuit of Southampton Island were wiped out by smallpox.[5] The difficulty of disease transmission across great distances between relatively small numbers of hosts no doubt limited the impact of any one epidemic like smallpox or measles; the increase in foreign shipping along the coastline mitigated the advantages of isolation. The original Inuvialuit people of the Yukon shore of the Beaufort Sea were effectively extinct by 1920. Even the arrival of the RCMP in 1895 could do little to stabilize, let alone reverse this trend. Changes in women's fashions (which effectively put an end to the whale-bone corset) and the shift from whale oil to mineral oil did, however, cool the heat of change in some parts of the Arctic.[6]

The front on which the colonization of the indigenous economy was being fought in the Yukon shifted south in 1896. At that time gold was discovered at Bonanza Creek. Canadian responses included an increased RCMP presence, but tactics devised to prevent lawlessness were ill-suited to the protection of Indigenous interests. As was the case in the Cariboo 40 years earlier, Indigenous fishing sites were seized and river ecosystems compromised by foreign miners. The RCMP did address Indigenous

4. Lynne D. Fitzhugh, *The Labradorians: Voices from the Land of Cain* (St. John's: Breakwater, 1999), 375.

5. Donald Purich, *The Inuit and Their Land: The Story of Nunavut* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1992), 30.

6. Olive Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times*, 3rd edition (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2002), 361-2.

concerns regarding the newcomers' use of poison on traplines, but they also elected to enforce the regulation of hunting among First Nations.

Being part of Canada meant many things in this context. It meant a shift from localized subsistence economies, which depended on a mobile population able to strike out in a timely way to pursue migratory herds, spawning fish, briefly available plants, and opportunities to trade with neighbours. In its place a new infrastructure of commerce and human intercourse arrived via steam-powered vessels. Its personnel included representatives of alien belief-systems (some of which were locked in competition), law enforcement officers whose laws were themselves exotic and seemingly arbitrary, and a commercial/administrative environment which increasingly encouraged permanent settlement in fixed communities. Ottawa formally took on responsibility for northern populations in 1924 when the *Indian Act* was amended to include the Inuit. The Inuit, however, were not viewed as "Indians" and so fell between the administrative cracks.[7]

The Race to the Pole

The first three decades after Confederation were marked by an international fascination with the polar region. Scientific missions were the order of the day, although Canada did not engage in this particular stampede. The race to the North Pole was one aspect of this enterprise, one that set international teams against one another in highly publicized and popularized adventures. Charting the Northwest Passage was another feature of this phenomenon. All of this activity increased traffic in the region and increased the likelihood of Inuit exposure to disease vectors. In also facilitated the movement of Inuit people themselves, with Greenland Inuit reputedly appearing on both Ellesmere and Baffin Islands.[8]

To substantiate Canadian claims to sovereignty in the region and to counter foreign incursions, Ottawa established several missions whose task it was to make an official claim on the northern islands and seas. American and European opposition to these claims obliged still further investment in expeditions and regular patrols. Every one of these efforts brought Canada more regularly into contact with the Indigenous peoples of the region. At the same time, Canada viewed the Inuit with a curious ambivalence. The Inuit were international — they were to be found in American and Danish territories as well as Canadian — and there were few opportunities to integrate them into the growing southern economy before the mid-20th century.

Key Points

- At the time of Confederation the North was of limited interest to Canada.
- The region's population was diverse but vulnerable. Disease and economic dislocation were the main and ongoing threats.
- The arrival of steam-powered shipping throughout the region increased integration into the

7. Ibid., 36-7.

8. Ibid., 32.

continental and global economy, while exposing populations to new disease vectors.

- Population movements accelerated, as did missionary efforts to effect cultural change.
- The most dramatic short-term impact on the region arrived with the Yukon gold rush and the Beaufort Sea whaling industry. Increased activity in the fur trade in the 1920s also had significant consequences.
- Canadian territorial and sovereignty issues increased in the early 20th century, resulting in a greater state presence.

Long Descriptions

Figure 2.19 long description: Six photos from August 1926. From left to right, top to bottom:

1. An old Chipewyan woman. Captioned “1604-1926-L.L.B. Old Indian woman (Chipewyan). Churchill—12 August 1926”
2. A low wall used for fortification during battle. Captioned “1607-1926-L.L.B. — Old Battery. Churchill Harbour—facing old Fort—Aug. 1926”
3. Young Chipewyan man wearing overalls, a long-sleeved shirt, and a newsy cap, looking away from the camera and smiling. Captioned “1605-1926-L.L.B. Chipewyan Indian—Churchill—Aug. 1926”
4. A low wall used for fortification during battle. Captioned “1608-1926-L.L.B. Old Battery—Churchill Harbour—facing old Fort—Aug. 1926”
5. Young Chipewyan man wearing overalls, a long-sleeved shirt, and a newsy cap, looking at the camera and smiling. Captioned “1606-1926-L.L.B. Chipewyan Indian—Churchill—Aug. 1926”
6. Low wall used for fortification sitting on a hill. Captioned “1609-1926-L.L.B. Old Battery, (Magazine) Churchill Harbour, facing old Fort—Aug. 1926”

[Return to Figure 2.19]

Media Attributions

- Steamer Trip on Saskatchewan River © A. Buisson, Canada Dept. of Mines and Technical Surveys / Library and Archives Canada (PA-014005) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Collage, August 1926 © Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada / Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 4848722) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Komatik with supplies at Revillon Fréres post © Library and Archives Canada (PA-055573) is licensed under a Public Domain license

2.11 The Provincial Rights Movement

The last place one might expect to find dissent within the new federation is Ontario. After all, Ontarian politicians had done the lion's share of crafting the federal constitution: they had successfully annexed the West, the capital was located in Ontario (which is to say, not in Montreal — the largest city in the country — and thus three provinces away from Nova Scotia), and the first two Prime Ministers (Macdonald and Mackenzie) were Ontarians. Of the first three Premiers of Ontario after 1867, two were Macdonald stalwarts and one — Oliver Mowat (1820-1903) — was himself a father of Confederation. Despite all of this, or perhaps because of it, Ontario emerged as the leading force in favour of limiting federal strength and empowering the provinces.

The Genesis of Confederation

In order to understand how Canadian federalism adjusted in these years, it is necessary to understand what was at its heart. Five British North American colonies considered uniting in a federal form, two walked away from the table leaving Canada (one colony that would soon become two), Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. All three signed on and then the largest underwent the constitutional equivalent of cellular fission, creating Ontario and Quebec. Keep in mind that neither Canada West (Ontario) nor Canada East (Quebec) had their own legislatures, let alone their own governments. What they did have was separate votes. Half of the Canadian assembly (the Anglo-Protestant half) then voted overwhelmingly for federation; the other half (the largely Franco-Catholic half) voted for it but with less enthusiasm. What they were implicitly voting for was the creation of the two central Canadian provinces. Ontarians were delighted to be freed of what they called the "millstone" of Canada East; popular opinion regarded the old Province of Canada as a parasitical relationship in which the down-river Canadians "fleeced" the majority who lived up-river.[1] For Quebec, federation meant relief from the threat of interference with culture, language, and religion from the Orangemen of Ontario.

This is clearly complicated: two distinct colonies were united with two others that voted themselves into existence. Soon after, they were joined by another two volunteers (PEI and BC) and one that bargained its way into existence through a federal act of legislation (Manitoba). In other words, the provinces were not created equally. The question that arises here, then, is this: were the provinces signatories to a pact, or were they the product of a legislative act (that is, the *BNA Act*)?

What John A. Macdonald wanted at the outset was a legislative union and unitary state. The federal model was based in no small measure on the American system, in which the states were semi-autonomous bodies with an over-arching central government in Washington, DC. The unitary model to which Macdonald was drawn was, of course, that of the United Kingdom. His logic was, moreover, very sound. In the face of American aggression what was needed was a strong central state to defend the Dominion; in an uncertain economic world a single government would be more efficient and less

1. Robert C. Vipond, "Constitutional Policy an the Legacy of the Provincial Rights Movement in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, vol. 18, issue 2 (1985): 270.

expensive than a crop of provinces. Any hope of expanding across the Northwest would be better realized by one administration with a unified vision than a consortium seeking something like consensus.[2] One of Macdonald's biographers maintains that the Conservative leader aimed for a genuine federal system, warts and all, which is what he got.[3] Nevertheless, there were times when one could argue that Macdonald's behaviour as prime minister suggests that he was carrying on as though he were at the head of a unitary state.

The compromise in 1867 was a federal union with a strong central government. Each province was to have exclusive control over local affairs and Ottawa would deal with issues of national consequence. The remaining question, of course, was this: where to draw the line between the two?

POGG

The *BNA Act* includes a clause regarding "residual" or "residuary powers." That is, it covers everything either not itemized or as yet not imagined in the constitutional division of authority. Sections 91 to 95 deal with the division of powers and they begin with this passage in Section 91:

> It shall be lawful for the Queen, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate and House of Commons, to make Laws for the Peace, Order, and good Government of Canada, in relation to all Matters not coming within the Classes of Subjects by this Act assigned exclusively to the Legislatures of the Provinces….[4]

Everything not allocated to the provinces would be the jurisdiction of Ottawa. And "Peace, Order, and good Government" (referred to by scholars, politicians and commentators as **POGG**) could cover anything and everything. The division of powers, moreover, was not absolutely clear: there were overlaps and things were a bit messy with regard to immigration. In short, there remained questions as to which level of government had a superior claim in grey areas, and the extent of federal residual powers in general. None of this addressed the relative sovereignty of the provinces — the consenting participants in the constitutional relationship. Who would decide and how would they do so?

Disallowance

To the leading figures in the Confederation debates and in the provincial legislatures after 1867, the answer was clear: Confederation was a product of the provinces. Some of their peers, such as Macdonald, could reply: if Ottawa is a level of government generated by the provinces, then surely it should have oversight? The *BNA Act* gave substance to this argument in the form of **disallowance**. This was an effective veto held by Ottawa that could be used to overturn provincial legislation. It was, however, not something to be used recklessly. Macdonald was very deliberate in his efforts to define the boundaries of disallowance.[5] Clearly anything that was outside of the constitutionally-defined

2. Ibid.: 271.

3. Ged Martin, *John A. Macdonald: Canada's First Prime Minister* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2013), 90-100.

4. Section 91 of the *British North America Act, 1867.*

5. Vipond, "Constitutional Policy," 275-6.

powers of the provinces was fair game, but there was far more that remained unanticipated or ambiguous. From 1867-73, Macdonald's approach was to ameliorate differences of opinion by liaising directly with provincial Premiers. Alexander Mackenzie's position was similar. After 1878, upon Macdonald's return, Ottawa was more willing to push back with the veto. Historians attribute this change in direction to a number of factors, including the establishment of several genuinely national institutions. The NWMP (1873) and the National Policy (1878) were two; there was also the Post Office Department (1867), the Supreme Court (1875), the national penitentiary system (effectively in place by 1875), and the emergence of a more stable and permanent national political party system that coalesced around the Conservatives and the Liberals.[6] Commitment to building a national railway was, in this context, another string to Canada's bow — another facet of a growing national infrastructure. The Bank of Canada would not appear until 1935 and, until then, the Treasury commissioned the commercial Bank of Montreal to print currency — an arrangement that gave the Treasury a presence of sorts on every Main Street. As Ottawa's reach extended across provincial boundaries via these institutions and agencies, so too did its interests. The lines between provinces and Ottawa were increasingly blurred.

The mechanism for vetoing provincial legislation arose from an almost identical relationship between Ottawa and Westminster. If legislation proposed in the Canadian House of Commons passed third reading and was approved by the Senate, it was still within the authority of the governor general to refuse to sign it into law and to send it on to England for further discussion by the British Cabinet. In this way, Britain — still the imperial centre — could disallow or veto Canadian federal laws. It made some sense to mirror this relationship with the provinces: just as the governor general was an imperial appointment, the lieutenant-governor was Ottawa's. If provincial legislation offended federal sensibilities, the province's lieutenant-governor would refuse to sign it, and would send it on to Ottawa for consideration. The Cabinet would then decide how to proceed. One option was to simply neglect the proposed legislation for a year and allow it to die from administrative inertia.

From 1867-1873, Macdonald's government exercised their ability to withhold assent on 16 of 24 occasions. Mackenzie's Liberals also vetoed provincial legislation. Provinces had the option of reintroducing and passing the legislation repeatedly — it became the convention that passing a bill three times at the provincial level would force Ottawa to approve it — but that depended often on the durability of a provincial administration or on the existence of all-party support for the initiative at the provincial level. The provinces, however, maintained that the courts were the proper place to settle jurisdictional disputes, not the federal Cabinet (which, clearly, had a stake in the outcome). It was this avenue that the premiers collectively and individually opted to pursue.[7]

The premiers could reach consensus on this subject in part because, at the time, most of them were Liberals. The first 30 years of Confederation rewarded the Conservatives with office in Ottawa for all but five years – the Mackenzie administration of 1873-78. Liberal weakness at the federal level was countered with strength in the provinces (although not in British Columbia, where — until 1903 — politicians took pains to avoid Conservative or Liberal banners so as to be more free to criticize

6. Jonathan Swainger, *The Canadian Department of Justice and the Completion of Confederation, 1867-78* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000), 4-6.

7. Peter Russell, *Constitutional Odyssey: Can Canadians Become a Sovereign People?*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 37-9.

whatever regime was in power nationally). And, of course, they had all experienced the inconvenience (not to say insult) of having their legislation disallowed.

Appealing to the Supreme Court of Canada was something of a non-starter. The provinces therefore appealed to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England. This was an effective way of entrenching in law — though not in the constitution — the notion of provincial rights. By the 1890s, the principle of co-equal levels of government had been established. Under Wilfrid Laurier (an advocate of provincial rights), after 1896, the issue ceased to carry the kind of divisive power it once had.

Key Points

- The ways in which the colonies joined the federation varied, creating uncertainty as to the relative status of Ottawa and the provinces. The question repeatedly arose as to whether there was a senior level of government in Confederation.
- The POGG clause indicates that residual powers belong to Ottawa but, because these could not be clearly defined, it provoked decades of disagreement.
- Ottawa's power of disallowance was challenged by the Provincial Rights movement, championed by Ontario's Conservative government under Oliver Mowat.
- Appeals to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England gradually resolved the issue in favour of provincial rights.

2.12 The Judicial System of Post-Confederation Canada

Jonathan Swainger; Department of History; and University of Northern British Columbia

Canada's judicial system — that is its system of federal, provincial, and territorial courts — is a product of the nation's colonial history, the ideas of those individuals responsible for the *British North America Act, 1867*, and subsequent alterations, additions, and refinements designed to meet the nation's evolving needs. Owing to the division of powers established in 1867, both the federal and provincial governments occupy a direct role in shaping the nation's court system. Section 92 (14) of the *BNA Act* established provincial responsibility for the "constitution, maintenance, and organization of provincial courts, both of civil and criminal jurisdiction, and including procedure in civil matters in those courts."[1] Because of the desire to maintain control over the quality of judges and patronage opportunities for prestigious judicial positions on the nation's most senior courts, Section 96 of the constitution provided the federal government with the authority to appoint judges to the provincial superior courts – that is the superior and appeal courts in each province or territory – that are descendants of colonial era courts and the English common law courts.[2] As a consequence, in each province or territory, there exists a provincially-created court system in which the lower courts — where the vast majority of the nation's legal business occurs — are administered by provincially appointed judges. In that same province the superior courts, which hear trials involving serious criminal offences, divorce petitions, civil suits involving amounts above a specified limit, and appeals from the province's lower courts, are supervised by federally appointed judges.

For most of the nation's first century, complaints about sitting judges were handled either through the provincial attorney generals' offices or through the Department of Justice in Ottawa, depending on which governmental level had been responsible for the initial appointment.[3] At the federal level, concerns about the effectiveness of such methods eventually led to the creation of the Canadian Judicial Council in 1971.[4] Chaired by the chief justice of the Canadian Supreme Court, the Council is composed of the chief justices and associate chief justices of Canada's superior courts, the senior judges of the territorial courts, and the chief justice of the Court Martial Appeal Court of Canada. In these assessments the Council relies upon its *Ethical Principles for Judges* as one measure of whether a judge has acted inappropriately. Historically, judges have been rarely removed from the bench. Nonetheless, the Council may forward a recommendation to the federal minister of justice who, in turn,

1. Canada, *Constitution Act*, 1867, s.92(14).

2. On the culture of judicial patronage, see Jonathan Swainger, "Judicial Scandal and the Culture of Patronage in Early Confederation, 1867-78," in Jim Phillips, R. Roy McMurtry, and John T. Saywell, *Essays in the History of Canadian Law – A Tribute to Peter N. Oliver* (Toronto: Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, 2008): 222-56.

3. See Jonathan Swainger, "A Bench in Disarray: The Quebec Judiciary and the Federal Department of Justice, 1867-1878," *Les Cahier de Droit*, vol.34, no.1 (March 1993): 59-91.

4. On the Canadian Judicial Council, see https://www.cyc-ccm.gc.ca/

requires approval from the House of Commons and Senate before a judge can be removed.[5] At the provincial level, complaints are managed in various ways according to provincial statute but typically a provincial judicial council investigates allegations before forwarding a recommendation to the government of the day. While all federally appointed judges are eligible to hold their positions until the age of 75, some provincially or territorially appointed judges remain on the bench until age 70.

Considerably smaller than the provincial court system, the nation's federal court system includes the Federal Court, the Federal Court of Appeal, and the Supreme Court of Canada and a number of specialized courts dealing with tax issues and appeals from the nation's military court system.[6] While the superior courts in the provinces have jurisdiction over most issues, only those concerns that are specified in legislation as being a federal matter can be heard in federal courts. Specifically, this includes disputes between the provinces and territories, disputes between the provinces or territories and the federal government, cases involving intellectual property, questions concerning citizenship, and cases in which a crown corporation or a federal department of state is involved.

At the time of Confederation and as a legacy of Canada's colonial relationship with Great Britain, it was still possible to pursue a case to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC) in England.[7] Although Canadian legislators attempted to end these appeals when the Supreme Court of Canada was created in 1875, it was not until the passage of the *Statute of Westminster* in 1931 and a series of judicial rulings in Canada and England, that the path was cleared for Canada's Parliament to abolish these appeals in 1949. The final Canadian case to the JCPC was not resolved until 1960.

Key Points

- The Canadian judicial system is an essential part of the structure of government, comprised of many parts.
- Its main features are derived from the pre-Confederation colonial systems and reflect subsequent modifications arising from the original *British North America Act*, along with changes negotiated between the provinces and Ottawa.
- Although provinces are not junior to Ottawa in the *BNA Act*, nor in the *Canada Act*, the provincial courts are junior to the federal courts.
- The complex web of relations between the lower and higher provincial courts, the federal courts, and the federal government is a mechanism for resolving legal disputes and appeals, as well as differences between the various levels of government.

5. See William Kaplan, *Bad Judgment: The Case of Mr. Justice Leo A. Landreville* (Toronto: The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, 1996).

6. See James G. Snell and Frederick Vaughn, *The Supreme Court of Canada: History of the Institution* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985); Ian Bushnell, *The Captive Court: A Study of the Supreme Court of Canada* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992); and Ian Bushnell, *The Federal Court of Canada: A History, 1875-1992* (Toronto: The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, 1997).

7. John T. Saywell, *The Lawmakers: Judicial Power and the Shaping of Canadian Federalism* (Toronto: The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, 2002) and Frederick Vaughn, *Viscount Haldane: The Wicked Step-father of the Canadian Constitution* (Toronto: The Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, 2010).

2.13 The Other Dominion



Figure 2.21 Newfoundland shifted from British sterling to the North American dollars and cents, which linked it more closely to West Indian currencies. Its economy, however, continued to rely heavily on cod.

The decision of Newfoundland to stay out of Confederation in the 1869 election was different in tone from PEI's brief demur. The Islanders were preoccupied with land issues — bound up in what was called the **Escheat Movement —** and Canada offered little in the way of solutions. Four years later, PEI was heavily in debt from a calamitous railway-building exercise and only slightly closer to settling the tenant-landlord issue; Canada now came forward with a solution to both problems, and PEI's disinterest was quickly reversed.

By contrast, Newfoundlanders rebuffed the Canadian project entirely. Canada's political issues – the stalemate in Parliament, the need to expand westward for more farmland, language and religion, and fear of an American or Fenian invasion — were not just uninteresting to Newfoundlanders, these issues appalled them. Canada was not a place you should run to, it was a place you should run from. The depth of Newfoundland feeling on this score was tested repeatedly: the colony had to face down the sort of debt that turned Islanders' heads, international diplomacy and threats to security, and divisive internal debates over imperial-versus-colonial loyalties. Newfoundlanders, however, resisted the temptation to join the colonial alliance on the mainland.

A Divided Colony

By the late 1860s, Newfoundland was made up of several parts. The apparent unity of the economy — based heavily on fisheries (in which every outport, St. John's included, participated) and timber — was not enough to ensure social or political harmony. There were essentially three regions to Newfoundland: Labrador on the mainland, the French (or West) Shore, and the rest. In addition, the English-speaking part of the colony was divided between Protestants (mostly Anglicans and Methodists, but also including Congregationalists and Presbyterians) and Catholics (overwhelmingly Irish). Labrador was sparsely settled by Europeans and was principally home to Inuit and Innu (aka: Naskapi and Montagnais), many of whom were being missionized by the **Moravian Brethren** who had no presence on Newfoundland proper. These various social divisions preoccupied local politicians and clergymen while the fisheries and seagoing trade continued to provide an irregular and unreliable income for much of the population.

Self-sufficiency in the outports was challenged by a volatile marketplace for Newfoundland's exports. Continued colonial status was meant to ensure a position within British Atlantic rim commerce. It did not always do so. Nor would the cod fishery or the whale pods always cooperate. Unemployment stalked the villages of the colony from the mid-19th century to 1914 and promoted emigration. The colony's communities were caught in an economic trap: large numbers of personnel were needed for three to four months every year to work the fisheries effectively. During the remaining eight to nine months, most were surplus to requirements. Seasonally, and notwithstanding pack ice and absent fish, there was work for all. Beyond that, however, there was hardship. Scaling back the population overall would mean depleting the fisheries of its essential labour force. Providing relief of some kind — which the state and the churches did for years — only encouraged too many people to stay and face cyclical underemployment.

It was for these reasons — unreliable cod behaviour, a narrow window for economic activity, and potentially appalling North Atlantic weather — that Newfoundlanders pursued a variety of economic alternatives, and did so aggressively. Mining the sea for codfish was a way of doing more of the same and with greater intensity. This strategy predictably produced gluts on the market and falling prices. Another response was to attack the seal nurseries and build an export economy there as well. Other fish types and lobsters were added as a way to break out of the monoculture staple economy of cod. Improvements in fish product processing were pursued in the 1880s and 1890s, as were a succession of trade treaties with the United States that would allow Newfoundland products freer entry into the American marketplace.

The engagement of the churches with economic and political issues manifested itself in a variety of ways. Unemployment was a parish and congregation matter as well as a state matter. Political parties in the 1860s, with a few exceptions, identified with Protestant or Catholic interests in a manner that was inevitably divisive. Although this feature of Newfoundland politics lost its sharp edge in the 1870s, it did not go away. The **Harbour Grace Affray** of 1883 saw Orange Lodge Protestants and Catholic neighbours come to blows. Guns were fired, and five men (four Protestants and one Catholic) were killed, and more than a dozen wounded. The trials and debates that followed served to deepen sectarian division across the floor of the Legislature and the colony. Fears grew that Harbour Grace would be followed by larger and widespread acts of sectarian violence.

In this context, the accomplishments of Newfoundland's leadership in the field of education is almost

astonishing. Uniquely, Newfoundland committed to a denominational education system beginning in 1876. Isolated ports might have one, two, or even three denominations, each of which demanded recognition and funding for a school. Administering them from St. John's would be highly problematic and expensive, so authority devolved to denominational school boards at the local level. This, too, was unique. Funding was provided on a per capita basis, which set up some local competition between the religious communities. By the 1890s, a secondary school system was emerging that was coordinated from the colonial capital and included a shared curriculum. Common exams ensured that outcomes were comparable (if not always equal) across denominations.

In part, this accommodation of religious interests in education was possible because of Harbour Grace. As one historian observed, "the shock that followed the Harbour Grace encounter was not simply a religion-oriented reaction. It was a recognition that Englishmen had not killed Irishmen; nor was it Catholics and Protestants killing one another. Newfoundlanders were killing fellow Newfoundlanders for no good reason."[1] Newfoundlanders turned away from that precipice, which is why 1883 "must be regarded as a turning point in Newfoundland history."[2]



Figure 2.22 A circa 1883 depiction of the Newfoundland seal hunt. (Source: Joseph Hatton & M. Harvey, Newfoundland, the Oldest British Colony (1883))

Colonial Crises, 1880–1914

Perhaps more than most colonies, Newfoundland was regularly rocked by catastrophes. Many of these arose from a combination of weather and the local economy's dependence on resources drawn from the sea. Storms battered outports, ice packs teeming with seals promised some wealth and invited disaster, and whole fleets could be lost at sea. St. John's — one of the busiest of the Atlantic ports — was always vulnerable to epidemic diseases. 1892 and 1893 witnessed a mix of bad news that included diphtheria, the razing of St. John's by fire which left 12,000 homeless, and the loss of two dozen Trinity Bay sealers on the ice. In 1894, the two commercial banks in Newfoundland collapsed. These

1. Frederick W. Rowe, *A History of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1980), 300.

2. Ibid.

bankruptcies left a vacuum that was subsequently filled by Canadian chartered banks, a change that subordinated Newfoundland to Canadian monetary policies. While the fisheries regularly claimed lives it was the seal hunt that would continue to serve up death on a large scale: 48 more sealers would perish of exposure in 1898, and in 1914, 78 more died of exposure and drowning.

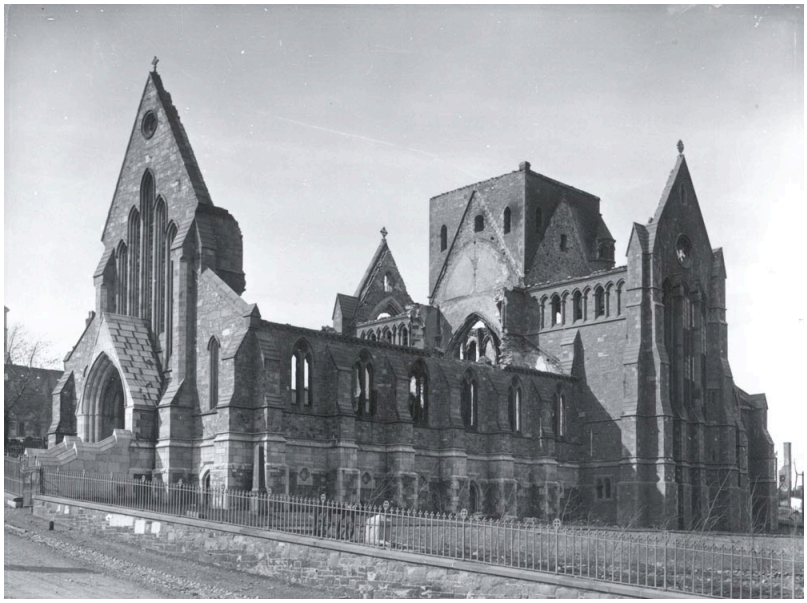


Figure 2.23 The shell of St. John's Anglican Cathedral after the 1892 fire.

Economic and foreign relations crises, too, seemed to roll across the colony on a regular basis. These were addressed in very different ways.

The Newfoundland Railway

Canada mythologizes the construction of a railway as an act of nation-building; Newfoundlanders saw it as an economic policy, plain and simple. By the mid-19th century it was clear that the colony contained large stands of commercially-viable timber, and there was tremendous optimism as regards the mining industry as well. Clearing out forests could be followed up with agricultural settlements inland: Newfoundlanders were looking at their very own farming frontier. It was even suggested in the enthusiasm of the moment that Newfoundland might soon become "an exporter of livestock to England."[3] All of this also implied the establishment of sufficient industrial capacity to produce at least some elements of the infrastructure, even if that was only wooden ties and gravel. Iron ore mining was initiated on Bell Island in Conception Bay in 1895 but steel production took place elsewhere. A survey of the route would provide the means to extend the colonial government's influence over land sales from St. John's to the edge of the French Shore. All of this was cast in a frame much like the Canadian National Policy, called in the case of Newfoundland the "Policy of Progress."[4]

As with the CPR, massive land grants were given to the contractor to subsidize the expense of

3. Patrick O'Flaherty, *Lost Country: The Rise and Fall of Newfoundland, 1843-1933* (St. John's: Long Beach Press, 2005), 139.

4. Margaret R. Conrad and James K. Hiller, *Atlantic Canada: A Concise History* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2006), 133.

construction. Even so, thanks to the railway, by 1896 St. John's was $9 million in debt. The colonial regime teetered on the brink of bankruptcy and was only pulled back by a further and rather desperate deal with the railway contractor and operator, Robert Gillespie Reid (1842-1908). Even the British government felt that Newfoundland was selling off the proverbial silverware to achieve some stability. The end result, however, was a line that curled from the Avalon Peninsula around the north of the colony and down the southwest coast to a terminus that connected to shipping lines to Canada. Trade between the two colonies increased but, rather than draw them closer together, it served to give Newfoundlanders sufficient confidence that they did not need to seek, at this time, economic security in Confederation. In some respects, they already had it. The Canadianization of Newfoundland's monetary system was a significant step towards a loss of sovereignty to another colony.



Figure 2.24 Newfoundland minted unique $2 gold coins until about 1888. The bank crash of 1894 resulted in hoarding of the increasingly rare coin.

Foreign Relations

Newfoundland's government pursued several and successive trade agreements with the United States. As a colony of Britain, it had to do so with the Crown's approval — which it had. In those negotiations, however, the Dominion of Canada often played the role of the spoiler. In the late 19th century there was just enough dissatisfaction with Confederation among the Maritime provinces that Canada could scarcely afford to see independent Newfoundland set a bad example by succeeding too much.[5] Furthermore, Ottawa had few resource responsibilities but fisheries was one of them. A coordinated fishing policy and administration, one that covered the whole of the Gulf of Saint Lawrence, only needed Newfoundland's cooperation to be complete. The smaller colony, however, saw little advantage in that. Canadian reprisals were probably inevitable.

More complex and longstanding were relations with France. Prior to 1713 and the *Treaty of Utrecht*, France had established robust little settlements on Newfoundland. After *Utrecht*, Newfoundland belonged entirely to Britain but the French were allowed exclusive use of the West Shore. Despite being prohibited from settling the French Shore, individual English, Scots, and Irish found their way into the region over the 150 years that followed *Utrecht*. The ***Treaty of Paris***(1763) that ended the Seven Years' War saw Britain make a further concession to the defeated France: exclusive title to two

5. Frederick W. Rowe, *A History of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980), 303.

small islands just south of Newfoundland — St. Pierre and Miquelon. The goal of Britain throughout the 18th and the 19th century was to minimize friction with France by making a generous allowance for continuation of a historic fishing industry. That this was not in the best interest of Newfoundlanders was made increasingly clear. After achieving responsible government in 1855, colonial voices became increasingly shrill in their criticism of the French presence and the constraints it put on Newfoundlanders who worked and settled in the region. An agreement was subsequently struck between Britain and France, with grudging support from St. John's, which allowed French activity to continue on the West Shore. Growing competition over the lobster fishery and canneries tested the *modus vivendi,* but Newfoundlanders gritted their teeth until 1904 when they pressed Britain to find another solution. In that year a diplomatic outcome was arrived at in the *Entente Cordiale*, an agreement struck between the two empires, and Newfoundland was made whole for the first time. Only St. Pierre and Miquelon remained French, as they continue to be today.

In one other area Newfoundland seemed disinterested in formalizing diplomatic relations. Indigenous populations in the colony on both sides of the Strait of Belle Isle were small but increasingly vulnerable from the 1890s on. Typhoid, measles, and influenza made inroads into the formerly isolated Inuit communities of northern Labrador as the size of the transient Newfoundland fishing fleets grew and encounters with Euro-colonists increased. Commercial and sport hunting grew in the interior of Newfoundland and in Labrador, impacting the 200 or so Mi'kmaq and the Innu respectively. There were, however, no treaties in place and nothing like Canada's *Indian Act* to guide policy and behaviour.[6] The anguish expressed earlier in the 19th century at the tragic disappearance of the **Beothuk** peoples was not, it seems, followed up by any measure to protect other Indigenous communities.



Figure 2.25 Preparing cod within sight of the St. John's skyline, ca. 1900.

6. Conrad and Hiller, *Atlantic Canada: A Concise History*, 136-7.

Newfoundland on the Eve of War

In 1907, Newfoundland sent Prime Minister Robert Bond to the Imperial Conference hosted by British Prime Minister Henry Campbell-Bannerman. Representing a poor and struggling colony, Bond did his best to argue for colonial autonomy within an imperial association while avoiding commitments to expensive British military projects. (Newfoundlanders had volunteered for the British campaigns against the Boers in South Africa but the colony had not mustered a regiment, unlike Canada.) Bond carried the day and Newfoundland was recognized as a Dominion, a status that made it diplomatically equivalent to Canada, Australia, the Cape Colony (later called South Africa) and New Zealand (sometimes collectively described as the **White Dominions**).

By this time, the population of Newfoundland was much larger than it had been 50 years earlier. It nearly doubled from 1860 to 1901, rising from 130,000 to 242,000 (of which just 3,949 were found in Labrador).[7] Natural population increase combined with continued immigration from Ireland, Scotland, and England to push up the numbers. These numbers were kept somewhat in check by outmigration to Canada and the United States.

Although Canada's influence in Newfoundland was growing in the period before the Great War, the colony remained oriented in the opposite direction. Even Labrador seemed lost in St. John's rear-view mirror. Were it not for the chain of little hospitals established by the English physician and missionary, Wilfred Grenfell (1865-1940), from 1893, very few services would have reached the impoverished fishing populations (transient and resident) on the mainland. In 1901 the 37-year old Italian physicist, Gugliemo Marconi, sent the first cross-Atlantic wireless message — from Signal Hill in St. John's to Cornwall, England. It is perhaps significant that he did not attempt communication with Montreal.

Key Points

- Newfoundland displayed little interest in joining the rest of British North America in a federation or any other kind of union.
- The colony consisted of three main parts: Labrador, the French Shore, and the rest of Newfoundland. Its population was deeply divided by region, ethnicity, language, and religion.
- The economy was based mostly on fisheries that were seasonal, as were sealing ventures, contributing to underemployment in the off-seasons.
- Social divisions peaked in 1883 with the Harbour Grace Affray.
- The colony developed a distinctive approach to education based on denominationalism.
- Infrastructural change and the expansion of a farming frontier were attempts to diversify the economy which met with limited success.
- Canadian control over the monetary affairs of the colony and Canadian interference in Newfoundland's diplomatic channels drew the colony closer into the other Dominion's sphere of

7. Newfoundland, Colonial Secretary's Office, "Table 1. Population, sex, condition, denomination, profession, etc.", *Census of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1911* (Statistics Canada Collection), accessed 2 June 2015, https://archive.org/details/1911981911fnfldv11914eng

influence.

Media Attributions

- Codfish Stamp © Canada Post is licensed under a Public Domain license
- The Seal Hunt © Percival Skelton adapted by Heritage Newfoundland & Labrador is licensed under a Public Domain license
- St. John's Anglican Cathedral, 1892 © Archives and Special Collections (Coll. 137 05.01.001), Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland is licensed under a Public Domain license
- 1870 Newfoundland 2-Dollar Gold Coin © Heritage Auctions is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Preparing Cod in St. John's, 1900 © McCord Museum (MP-0000.4.14) is licensed under a Public Domain license

2.14 Summary



Figure 2.26 MOTHER BRITANNIA.—"See! Why the dear child can stand alone!"
UNCLE SAM.—"Of course he can! Let go of him Granny; if he falls I'll catch him!" In 1870, Canada annexed the West (almost at bayonet point), but was it strong enough to stand on its own or would it collapse in its infancy?

The first decades after Confederation were not easy. While it is true that the federation expanded quickly to cover almost the whole of the northern half of the continent, it did so in a way that provoked conflict and division. The record of additions is straightforward. In 1870 Manitoba signed on and British Columbia followed in 1871. Prince Edward Island returned to the table and settled its issues with Ottawa in 1873. Elements of the North were added on quietly as Britain shuffled further and further away from being an imperial presence in the Western hemisphere. Against these achievements, one has to recall that from 1867-1869 Nova Scotia wriggled on the hook of Confederation; from 1869 through most of 1870 the fate of the Northwest was uncertain. The Canadian presence at Red River was led by men unafraid of violence and they were met by force as well. Blood was shed and an antipathy grew between Ontarians and Manitobans (especially the Métis). The 1873 Pacific Scandal created serious doubt on the likelihood of an all-Canadian route for a railway to the West — let alone to British Columbia. BC's demands for the *Terms* might have seemed to Ottawa like petulance, but it threw further into doubt the prospect of the Confederation lasting even one generation. The 1880s witnessed the return of Louis Riel and armed conflict across the Prairies. The government would exploit its ability to deliver troops into the thick of the second Northwest uprising to vindicate the railway project, but the mishandling of Métis complaints and the treaties looked bad. The hanging of Riel did nothing, of

course, to reassure Quebec that Canada was anything more than an Anglo-Ontarian and Orange project in which punitive raids were conducted against francophone Catholics. The 1880s also saw the return of the Nova Scotia Repeal Movement. The Bluenose anti-Confederates were tamed but their campaigns brought to the fore compelling evidence that the Maritimes were not at all better off for having become a province of Canada. It is difficult to know whether events further west informed their discontent, but it is equally challenging to imagine that they would have been reassured by separatist talk in BC and expensive wars on the Prairies.

Even Ontario — arguably the most committed to, and the chief beneficiary of, Confederation — bridled under Ottawa's maneuvers. The Provincial Rights movement established the principle that the provinces were partners in Confederation, that they had entered into the agreement under their own free will and could, therefore, leave if need be. The "pact" or "compact" model of Confederation supplanted the "act" interpretation and, in doing so, set a path for federal-provincial relations for the next century.

The rise of Quebec nationalism in the years immediately after Confederation was to have important ramifications in the early 20th century. The abandonment of dualism as a way to build a country based on the credibility and integrity of two European cultures was a significant blow to unity. The treatment of the Métis and the vociferous tone of Orange politicians sent a powerful message to Quebec. The Orange Order's loyalist and royalist creed sought more British-ness, not less. Quebec sought more Canadian-ness instead. This division would vex Macdonald and his successors in the decades before the Great War in 1914.

Key Terms

Beothuk: Indigenous people of Newfoundland; believed to have disappeared — due to exotic diseases, loss of territory, and armed conflict with European colonists — by the second quarter of the 19th century.

Cariboo Wagon Road: A pair of routes to the gold-bearing regions on the Interior Plateau of British Columbia, initiated in 1860. One begins in Fort Douglas, the other at Yale.

Confederation League: Founded by Amor de Cosmos and John Robson in 1868, promoting the idea of union with Canada through newspapers and direct lobbying of administrations in Victoria, Ottawa, and London. Their goals included responsible government in the colony, reciprocity with the United States, and austerity measures to address colonial debt.

disallowance: An effective veto held by Ottawa that could be used to overturn provincial legislation.

***Dominion Lands Act*:** 1872; the legal mechanism that made possible the distribution of western lands.

Escheat Movement: An organized movement in 19th century Prince Edward Island with the objective of ending absent landlordism and the distribution of lands to tenant farmers.

Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway: 1871; the E&N was built to connect the coalfields of the central island with the British Columbia capital, Victoria.

graving dock: Also called a dry dock; repair facility for shipping.

Harbour Grace Affray: 1883 Newfoundland dispute in which Orange Lodge Protestants and Catholic neighbours came to blows; led to five deaths and a dozen casualties.

Indian Agent: An agent of the federal government's Department of Indian Affairs (or, later, DIAND) with responsibility for managing and/or supervising one or more Indigenous communities.

Kanakans: Hawaiians or Pacific Island workers; this term may have been used disparagingly or in a derogatory fashion, however, the word means "human being" in the Hawaiian language.

Medicine Line: The 49th parallel north, so named by the First Nations of the Plains because it worked as an invisible barrier to stop attacks northward by United States soldiers.

Moravian Brethren: An early Protestant sect from central Europe; established missions in Labrador, with the first permanent site established at Nain in 1771.

Nativist millenarians: Movements among mostly Indigenous peoples under imperialism that attempt to throw off their occupiers and return to an idealized past way of living; sometimes imbued with a mystical element that could involve divine intervention.

Pacific Scandal: 1873; Macdonald's Conservative Party was given significant funds from the Canadian Pacific Railway, which caused the CPR to lose the opportunity to complete the Intercolonial Railway, cost Macdonald his administration, and brought the Mackenzie Liberals into office.

Peace, order, and good government (POGG): From Section 91 of the *BNA Act* as regards "residual" or "residuary powers" (granted to the Queen, the Senate, and House of Commons to make laws), and which could cover anything and everything that was either not itemized or as yet not imagined in the constitutional division of authority.

Pig War: Colloquial name for a dispute between the United States and the British Empire over the San Juan Islands, from 1859-1873.

populist: In politics, an appeal to the interests and concerns of the community by political leaders (populists) usually against established elites or minority — or scapegoat — groups. The rhetoric of populists is often characterized as vitriolic, bombastic, and fear-mongering.

scrip: A system introduced by Canada for extinguishing Métis land title, beginning in 1870. Scrip documents indicated individual entitlement to land, although not necessarily to land on which one was already settled. While the numbered treaties dealt with whole First Nations communities collectively, scrip was negotiated on an individual and household basis.

section and quarter-section (block system): The system used by land surveyors to divide land and property. One section is meant to be 1 mile square.

seigneurial system: Used in New France; based on a feudal system in which land was granted under a royalty system, and the tenant was responsible for farming the land to meet their physical needs (food, heat, and shelter). This system was abolished in 1854.

Treaty of Paris: Ended the Seven Years' War. France ceded all of its territory east of the Mississippi to Britain (including all of Canada, Acadia, and Île Royale) and granted Louisiana and lands west of the Mississippi to its ally Spain. Britain returned to France the sugar islands of Guadeloupe. France retained St. Pierre and Miquelon along with fishing rights on the Grand Banks.

ultramontanist: Elements in Catholicism that emphasize papal authority over secular authority and, after 1870, papal infallibility. Seeks a large, extensive role for the church in daily life and objects to the main features of modernity, especially the growth of the secular state. Although ultramontanism faded in Europe after 1870, it remained a powerful force in Canada to the 1960s.

White Dominions: Former British colonies dominated by a European population or elite; includes Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Newfoundland to ca. 1934-1949.

Yale Convention: Meeting between British Columbian delegates to determine the colony's demands as regards joining Confederation.

Short Answer Exercises

1. Why did some politicians in Nova Scotia, British Columbia, and New Brunswick toy with the idea of pulling out of Confederation in the first two decades after 1867?
2. In what ways was British Columbia distinct from the rest of Canada?
3. What forces brought PEI to the table in 1873?
4. Was the establishment of the Red River Provisional Government an act of rebellion?
5. What flaws in Confederation were highlighted by the Provincial Rights movement?
6. What strategies did Canada adopt in annexing the West?
7. Why were First Nations prepared to sign treaties with Canada?
8. What conditions led to the events of 1885 in the Northwest?
9. Why was the question of Riel's sanity so problematic?
10. How did the CPR figure into Canadian expansionism?
11. In what ways were the lives of Northerners changing in the period between 1867-1930?
12. What were the distinguishing features of life, economy, and politics in Newfoundland before the Great War?

Suggested Readings

Keough, Willeen. "Contested Terrains: Ethnic and Gendered Spaces in the Harbour Grace Affray," *Canadian Historical Review,* 90, no. 1 (March 2009): 29-70.

McCoy, Ted. "Legal Ideology in the Aftermath of Rebellion: The Convicted First Nations Participants, 1885," *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, 42, no. 83 (Mai-May 2009): 175-201.

Miller, J.R. "Owen Glendower, Hotspur, and Canadian Indian Policy," *Ethnohistory*, 37:4 (Fall 1990): 386-415.

Milloy, John. "'Our Country': The Significance of the Buffalo Resource for a Plains Cree Sense of Territory," in Kerry Abel and Jean Friesen, eds., *Aboriginal Resource Use in Canada: Historical and Legal Aspects* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1991): 51-70.

Read, Geoff, and Todd Webb. 'The Catholic Mahdi of the North West': Louis Riel and the Metis Resistance in Transatlantic and Imperial Context," *Canadian Historical Review,* 93, no. 2 (June 2012): 171-95.

Waite, P.B. "Canada in 1874: An Overview," in *Arduous Destiny: Canada 1874-1896* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 1971): 1-12.

Media Attributions

- Canada, Britannia, and Uncle Sam © McCord Museum (M993X.5.1039) is licensed under a Public Domain license

Chapter 3. Urban, Industrial, and Divided: Socio-Economic Change, 1867-1920

3.1 Introduction



Figure 3.1 Coal sorters at work at the Atlas Mine in Alberta, n.d.

The Industrial Revolution was well underway in Britain and the northeastern United States by 1867. The systematized production of manufactured goods — woollen or cotton garments or iron tools — was made possible by a reorganization of labour, from independent and cottage-based production to one where the work was produced collectively, and increasingly with the use of machinery. The creation of low-valued manufactured products required the development of new systems of transportation. The early (or "first") Industrial Revolution generated a parallel revolution in infrastructure that included canals, railways, and shipping.

Canada's Industrial Revolution piggybacked on that of its neighbour and Britain. However, the most rapid transition of the Canadian economy came after 1850, and accelerated through the last half of the 19th century. Confederation — and the resulting creation of a common financial system that included a shared currency and mint — was, in fact, an enabling step in industrializing British North America. It created an open colonial marketplace without tariff barriers, facilitated the movement of investment capital, and superimposed a modern freight-handling capacity that realigned trade from north-south to east-west. Victorian Canada was, in every sense, industrializing Canada.



Figure 3.2 Industrialism didn't put an end to homespun, particularly in poorer, rural communities. But it severely reduced the economic viability of the handloom weaver and other artisans.

Industrial British North America

Start by watching this video of historian Craig Heron (York University) describing the industrial revolution.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=105#oembed-1

In the 1860s, industry was breaking out all over. New Brunswick — dominated by forest industries and shipbuilding — was, on a per capita basis up until 1871, only a little less industrialized than Ontario and Quebec. Nova Scotia's industry was distinctively divided between the metal and coal industries of Cape Breton, and the textile mills and sugar refineries in the western part of the province.[1] Vancouver Island, with its coal mines at and around Nanaimo and the vertically-integrated heavy industries that included Royal Navy shipyards in Esquimalt and chain-making in Victoria, was another outpost of industrialization.

These parallel developments were not happenstance. By keeping local land prices high, the colonial and then provincial governments of British Columbia demonstrated a desire for wage-earning workers rather than farm settlers — a striking signal that industry, not agriculture, was central to their vision. The engagement of the state in the building of an industrial order is itself part of the suite of ideas associated with **modernity** — a concept pursued throughout this text. Industrialism, the term used to

1. Margaret R. Conrad and James K. Hiller, *Atlantic Canada: A Concise History* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2006), 131-2.

describe the new economic order emerging in the late 19th century, was thus more than a pattern of like practices and institutions; it was something to which governments, investors, and workers were all striving.

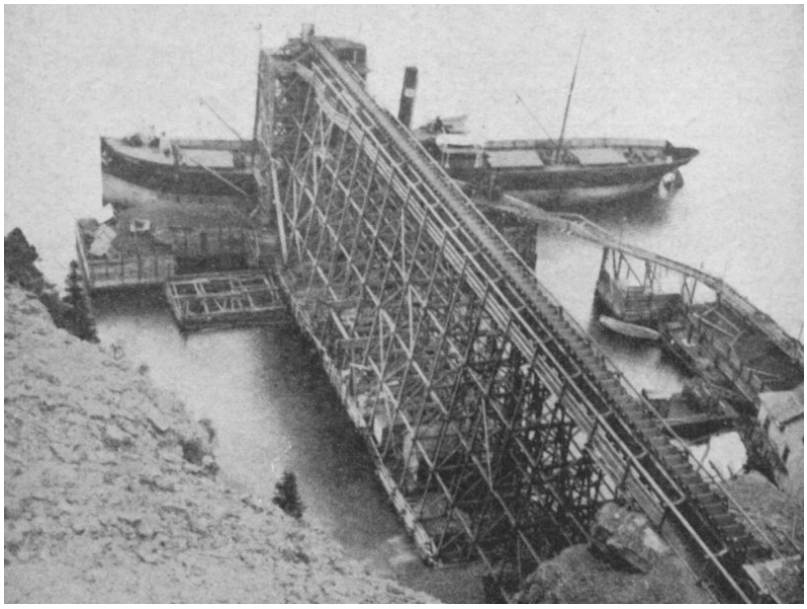


Figure 3.3 Iron ore from Bell Island is loaded onto a metal-hulled ship, ca. 1903.

The economics of industrialization are staggering insofar as they require the movement of capital, raw materials, personnel, and products across huge distances. Industry requires, too, the mobilization, training, housing, and discipline of a workforce with little to no prior exposure to industrial systems. The pre-Conquest iron forges at Saint-Maurice, near Trois-Rivières, depended on fuel and ore — and labour — that could be obtained locally. By 1890, industries in Central and Maritime Canada were using iron ore from Labrador and Newfoundland's Bell Island; coking coal from Cape Breton was finding its way to Ontario; and workers in Canadian industry were migrating from one province to another, from coast to coast. Workers were being recruited from industrializing Lancashire and Yorkshire, Wales, Lowland Scotland, and Germany. Industrial workers were also coming to Canada from rural and non-industrialized corners of Italy, Ireland, Hungary, and China. The intensification of mechanized, and then automated, work ensured that peasant populations whose home countries were still mostly feudal would be thrust directly onto the cutting edge of industrialization. It also meant that untrained Canadian labour — specifically children — would find themselves very literally at the coalface.

In addition to personnel, industry requires energy. In 1867, the dominant sources of energy grew in forests or walked on four legs. Waterpower had made some inroads, particularly in rural areas where waterwheels could take advantage of local rapids. At Lachine, Quebec, the canals provided power as well, driving the Montreal area's earliest industries. Bringing energy sources into city centres, however, where other resources could be assembled, posed a challenge; a challenge that was overcome by following Britain's lead and adapting the new steam-power technologies.Within a very short time period, there was a shift in industrial and urban Canada from organic and water-based power sources to **fossil fuels**.



Figure 3.4 Horse power moved goods and people, was fuelled by oats and hay, and was adapted to work in Canadian conditions. Montreal, ca. 1877.

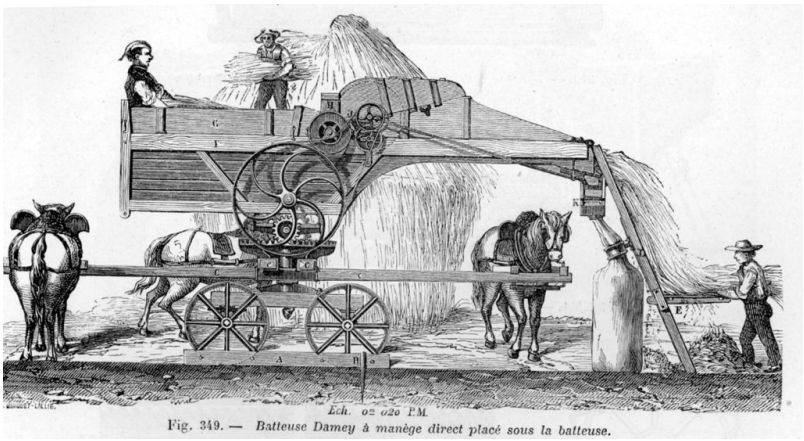


Figure 3.5 Before steam power augmented machines, horses were regularly employed.

This change in the energy economy had the important advantage in Canada of diminishing the impact of seasonality. Waterwheels were powerful innovations and their application to the increased use of machinery in production, was literally revolutionary. Nevertheless, watercourses freeze up in Canada, which meant an interruption in power supply and in the transportation of necessary supplies along rivers. The transition from organic to inorganic energy sources changed all that. Factories could work year-round and steam-powered engines could be used to move larger and larger quantities of raw materials from source to market in shorter time. Applied to land-based transportation along rails, steam and coal could free much of Canadian manufacturing from the dictatorship of winter.

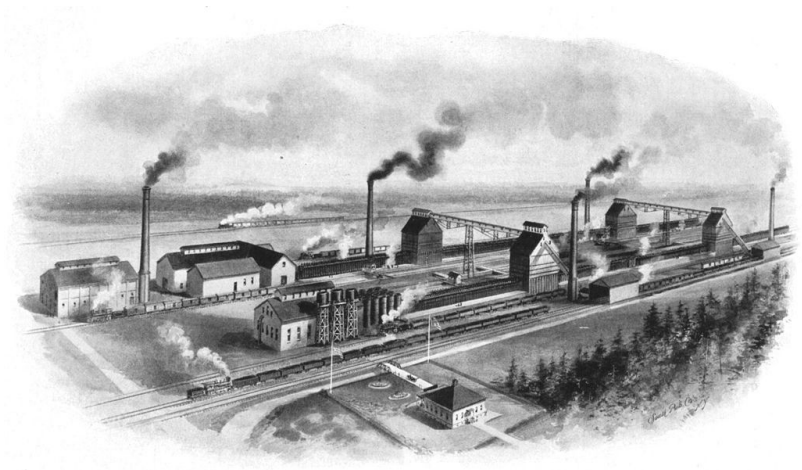


Figure 3.6 Heavy industry comes to Nova Scotia and, with it, plenty of steam and smoke. An artist's rendering of the Cape Breton coking ovens applauds the regimentation of smoky industry at the start of the 20th century.

Once factories began operating throughout the four seasons, the possibility arose for workers to take on wage-labour full time. The increasing use of cash in the Canadian economy was one attraction to doing so. Many agricultural workers went into industrial labour as a temporary measure, a step toward saving enough money to purchase a farm of their own. This was also true of immigrant industrial workers who imagined their future in Canada as independent landowners.[2] That transitional stage never fully ended, as rural populations in the 21st century continue to augment farm income with wage-labour. In the 19th century, however, limits on transportation made such moves increasingly permanent. By the 1870s wage-labour in many regions matched agriculture as a practical strategy for survival. The population of ready workers increased and expanded across Canada. From 1861-71 the labour force grew by about 15% and then, from 1871-81 by 26%. Its growth slowed thereafter to a still-respectable 21% and then 11% in each of the two decades that followed. [3] Labour inputs, however, are only part of the equation.

The introduction of machinery, and especially steam-powered machinery, was transformative. Output could be increased dramatically, quality could aim for (and sometimes achieve) reliable standards, and the skill sets needed to do a particular job changed from that of a master craftsman to those of someone able to keep up with the metal and wood machinery. The cumulative effect was to bring down wages while raising productivity and de-skilling the workforce. New skills emerged — particularly those associated with maintaining machinery — but shoe production, for example, went from being a handicraft associated with years of apprenticeship and journeyman study, to something that was done by children. A good example is Lawson's, a tailoring business in Hamilton, that introduced 10 sewing machines in the 1860s. This led to the departure of 71 of their 100 skilled male tailors, and their

2. British coal miners who moved to Vancouver Island in the late 19th century repeatedly indicated that they saw West Coast mine work as a stepping stone to independence on their own land. See John Douglas Belshaw, *Colonization and Community: The Vancouver Island Coalfield and the Making of the British Columbian Working Class* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 161-3.

3. Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd ed., F. H. Leacy, ed. (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983): D498-511.

replacement with 69 women (who were regarded, rightly or wrongly, as unskilled).[4] **Mechanization —** and, in the 20th century, **automation —** would change the way work is done, but its spread was entirely dependent on the ability of capital to invest in emerging technologies. This process of intensified capital inputs on the shop floor would accelerate 30 years after Confederation.

The Second Industrial Revolution

Despite significant changes in the orientation and character of the economy until the mid-1890s, growth was not outstanding. An important measure of the health of Canada's economy is its population and, rather remarkably, from 1861-1901 Canada was a net exporter of people. The American economy was expanding more rapidly and as land and employment opportunities arose, it served as a magnet for thousands of Canadians. Additionally, many of the immigrants to Canada during this period proved to be just passing through. On balance, then, more people left than arrived. From a historian's perspective, this is a sure sign that industrialization in the new Dominion provided fewer opportunities, or less competitive opportunities, than agriculture in the western plains of North America. This was not yet a consumer-led economy so the net loss of population until 1901 did not mean the simultaneous loss of household markets, at least not in the same way it might in the mid-20th century. It did manifest a shortage of labour resources, however, in some corners of the country. As the Maritime's economy began to seize up in the 1870s and 1880s, for example, out-migration was another factor in driving investment to more populous centres in Ontario and southwest Quebec.

In the 1890s, there were several important advances in technology and technique that gave industrialization a new shape. The foremost of these was the development of the Bessemer system for manufacturing steel. Vastly stronger and cheaper than earlier forged metals, this innovation propelled the steel industry and everything that utilized steel. As well, it contributed to the further growth of coking coal production and iron mining and the building of infrastructure to transport these raw materials to processing points. The establishment of the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company at New Glasgow in 1882 was followed by the Dominion Coal Company at Glace Bay 11 years later. The Dominion Iron And Steel Company opened in Sydney in 1900, and the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company opened at Sydney Mines the same year. All of these developments reflect the accelerating transformation of the industrial order in Canada as a whole and the rise of international markets for output. It also points to a change in industrial capitalism: whereas earlier industrialization depended mostly upon bringing more labour to the task of producing goods, capital inputs were now rewarded. In Ontario alone, the amount of capital invested in the economy leapt from $37 million in 1871 to $175 million in 1891, rising to $595 million in 1911.[5] Machinery, reconceptualized workspaces and architecture, and metal-hulled ships that could move heavy goods at a fraction of the cost of wooden vessels all contributed to the changes associated with what is called the **Second Industrial Revolution**.

The change could be seen in the Canadian labour force. In 1901, the number of operatives and labourers combined (nearly 789,422) surpassed the total number of farmers and farmworkers

4. Bryan D. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 87-8.

5. Gregory S. Kealey, *Workers and Canadian History* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 245.

(715,122).[6] The proportion of Canadians living on the land was still greater than that of urbanites, but, as of 1901, the number of Canadians earning an income from wages pulled ahead of those earning farm incomes. And those wage-earning workers were doing so increasingly in industries and factories that did not much resemble what existed in the 1860s.

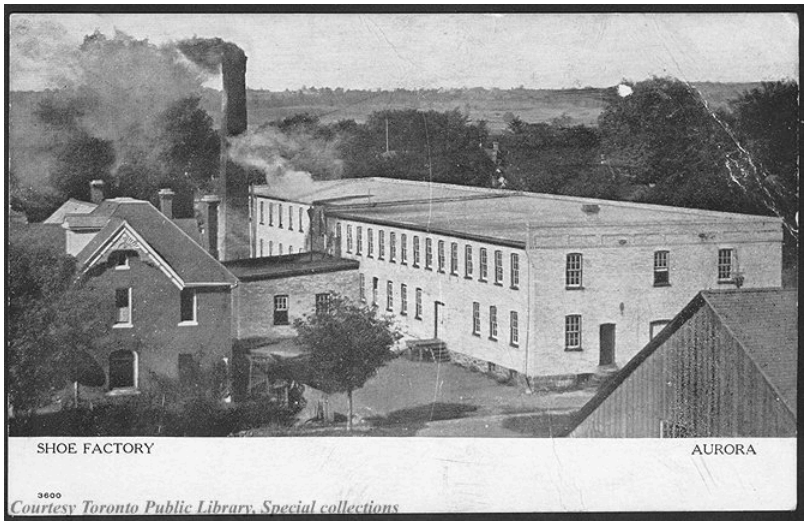


Figure 3.7 As late as 1910, the boundary between rural life and industrial employment was not a great one. The countryside forms a backdrop to a shoe factory in Aurora, Ontario, ca. 1910. Postcards like this one were a way of framing modernization and material progress.

Industrialization marked a significant departure from the pre-Confederation economy, and it brought in its wake social and economic changes that could hardly have been predicted. It was, however, part of a conscious strategy for nation-building and making economic policy. The most obvious expression of that strategic (and, yes, hopeful) thinking was the **National Policy**.

Learning Objectives

- Develop an understanding of the causes and contours of the Second Industrial Revolution.
- Explain the rise of a working class and describe its main features.
- Assess the main features and goals of the National Policy and its individual components.
- Discuss the ways in which age and gender shaped the historic experience of industrialization.
- Connect the phenomena of industrialization with urbanization in the pre-1914 period.
- Describe the strategies explored by working people to improve their conditions.
- Account for the rise of the first-wave of feminism.

6. Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada,* 2nd ed., F. H. Leacy, ed. (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983): D86-106.

Media Attributions

- Coal Mining, Alberta © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3351151) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Weaving Loom (Habitant Series) © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3349488) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- The loading pier at Bell Island, Conception Bay, Newfounland © C.W. Vernon is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Horse-drawn winter tram in Montreal © Montreal Street Railway Company is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Batteuse, 1881 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- SydneyCokeOvenGeneralViewCa1900
- Shoe Factory in Aurora, Ontario © Warwick Bros & Rutter, Toronto Public Library (PC-ON 65) is licensed under a Public Domain license

3.2 Industrialization, Labour, and Historians

Robert Sweeny; Dept. of History; and Memorial University of Newfoundland



Figure 3.8 Postcards like this one were a means to promote the industrial culture emerging in towns like Oshawa in 1910.

Canada was the first colony to industrialize, and it did so in the third quarter of the 19th century. Although well after Great Britain and Belgium, this was only a decade or so behind the United States, more or less contemporaneous with France, and well ahead of Germany, Italy, Japan, Spain, and Russia. Prior to the 1970s, however, Canadian historians did not realize this. Instead, historians debated whether industrialization resulted from Sir John A. Macdonald's National Policy of 1879 or under the Laurier government at the turn of the century. Both sides attributed this late industrialization to an over-reliance on the export of staples: cod, furs, timber, and wheat. As the presumed centrality of political leaders in these narratives suggests, most historians considered industrialization to have been the result of federal government policy, rather than an organic maturation of settler colonialism.[1] Starting in the mid-1970s, two complimentary but distinct new schools of thought changed this historical debate.

In French Canada, influenced by the work of Stanley Ryerson,[2] researchers at the Université du Québec à Montréal pushed back the start date for industrialization in Montreal to the late 1840s when, harnessing the hydraulic power of the locks of the Lachine Canal, the first large-scale factories were built.[3] From the outset, this new research stressed the importance of social history, itself a reflection of the turbulent debates (at that time) over the national question in Quebec. Strikes by journeymen

1. The classic statement, which went through five editions by 1977, is Arthur R. M. Lower's *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada* (Toronto: Longmans, Green, 1946).

2. Stanley B. Ryerson, *Unequal Union: Roots of Crisis in the Canadas, 1815-1873* (Toronto: Progress Books, 1968).

3. This idea formed the cornerstone for the highly influential interpretation of Quebec as a typical part of North America, a position first developed in Paul-André Linteau, René Durocher, and Jean-Claude Robert, *Histoire du Québec Contemporain, Tome 1 De la Conféderation à la Crise (1867-1929)* (Montreal: Boréal Express, 1979).

shoemakers over the introduction of machine tools and by carters opposed to the Grand Trunk railway monopoly were depicted as challenging the new industrial order,[4] while the dire living conditions for the emerging working class became a major focus of historical work.[5] Soon debates on method, particularly over how we should interpret census data, led to a considerably more nuanced view that challenged this early *misèrabiliste* literature;[6] at the same time, careful analysis of work processes demonstrated the significance of gender to understanding working class resistance.[7] More recent work has shown both substantial inter-generational social mobility, most strikingly among Irish Catholics, and a serious deterioration in the status of women.[8] The focus has remained on Montreal, the financial and industrial capital of Canada until the 1930s, but detailed studies of moulders and iron workers in the Saint-Maurice Valley and ship's labourers in Quebec City have shown how integrated 19th century labour markets were in North America.

Meanwhile, in English Canada, a group of graduate students interested in labour history built on the pioneering work of Manitoban H. Claire Pentland (1914-78) to chronicle the industrialization of Toronto and Hamilton in the 1860s and 1870s.[9] In 1975, these young scholars created their own journal, *Labour/Le Travail*. Rejecting traditional, largely institutional, labour history and highly critical of quantitative historical sociology, these scholars focused on working class culture. They argued that skilled male craftsmen drew on a "producer ideology", which was highly critical of lawyers, merchants, middlemen and bankers, to develop their own alternate view of the world. This critical stance was presented by historians as a powerful and potentially revolutionary defence of the working man, one that spoke out strongly against prevailing business values. Workers made their mark in various institutions and movements including the **Knights of Labor** (which may have organized as many as one in five waged workers in Ontario during the 1880s), the struggle for a shorter working day, and print media – edited by "brain workers."[10] The significance of class conflict in Ontario has since been questioned by the suggestion that, there, industrialization was more a case of **craft**

4. Joanne Burgess, "L'industrie de la Chaussure à Montréal 1840-1870: le Passage de l'Artisanat à la Fabrique," *Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française,* vol. 31, no. 2 (1977): 187-210; Margaret Heap, "La Grève des Charretiers à Montréal, 1864," *Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française,* vol. 31, no. 4 (1977): 371-96.

5. Jean De Bonville, *Jean-Baptiste Gagnepetit: Les Travailleurs Montréalais à la Fin du XIXe Siècle* (Montreal: L'Aurore, 1975); Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1993).

6. Gilles Lauzon, "Cohabitation et Déménagements en Milieu Ouvrier Montréalais,"*Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française,* vol. 46, no. 1 (1992): 115-42.

7. Jacques Ferland, "Syndicalisme Parcellaire et Syndicalisme Collectif: Une Interpretation Socio-Techniques des Conflits Ouvriers dans Deux Industries Québécoises (1880-1914)," *Labour/Le Travail,* 19 (1987): 48-88.

8. Sherry Olson and Patricia Thornton, *Peopling the North American City: Montreal 1840-1900* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011); Bettina Bradbury, *Wife to Widow: Lives, Laws, and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Montreal* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011).

9. H. Clare Pentland's 1961 doctoral thesis at the University of Toronto was published 20 years later as *Labour and Capital in Canada, 1650-1860* (Toronto: James Lorimer, 1981). The two most influential works by this group of scholars were Gregory S. Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-1892* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980) and Bryan D. Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1979).

10. Gregory S. Kealey and Bryan D. Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

capitalism.[11] More generally, the idea of a coherent working class culture has been challenged by the work of Ian McKay of Queen's University. Initially he applied to the Maritimes the idea, developed by British historian Raphael Samuel (1934-96), that industrialization was not a simple process of factories with machines replacing older ways of making things. Rather, it was a complex process involving both hand and machine tools in an uneven development characterized by a limited number of factories servicing numerous highly competitive workshops and manufacturers. This complexity meant no single working class experience was ever possible. Indeed, this very diversity of experience contributed to the remarkable social stability of late-Victorian Canada, by impeding the growth of a shared sense of class. A new coherent critique of industrial society did emerge, but only slowly and it never represented all or even most of the working class. Furthermore, it shared rather than challenged the positivist, masculinist and — most importantly as Canada once more became a destination for immigrants — racist ideas then dominant in bourgeois society.[12]

Moving industrialization back a full generation or more changes how we conceive late 19th century Canada. Rather than a "peaceful kingdom" taking a constitutional road to democracy that slowly industrialized under the guidance of wise political leaders, post-Confederation Canada is now seen as a country struggling with the serious social and economic problems of early industrial society. Confederation, the purchase of Rupert's Land, the numbered treaties, the *Indian Act*, the Métis rebellions, and the resettlement of both the Prairies and British Columbia are now seen in quite a different light. These events were all parts of a complex process of remaking the northern half of North America into an industrial capitalist society.

Key Points

- Industrialization began earlier in Canada than in many other jurisdictions, and earlier than was long thought to be the case.
- Workers' experiences of industrialization were diverse, which had consequences for the development of a working class consciousness.
- Industrialization brought in its wake significant social transformations and challenges.

Media Attributions

- Oshawa's Factories, 1910 © Henderson Bros is licensed under a Public Domain license

11. Robert B. Kristofferson, *Craft Capitalism: Craftworkers and Early Industrialization in Hamilton, Ontario, 1840-1872* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

12. Samuel's path-breaking analysis appeared as "Workshop of the World," *History Workshop Journal*, 3 (1973): 3-61. McKay's analysis of work in the Maritimes began in his graduate studies and then appeared in several articles, the most important of which is "Capital and Labour in the Halifax Baking and Confectionery Industry During the Last Half of the 19th Century," *Labour/Le Travail*, 3 (1978): 63-108. His Macdonald Prize-winning analysis of working class politics is *Reasoning Otherwise: Leftists and The People's Enlightenment in Canada, 1890-1920* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2008).

3.3 The National Policy

John A. Macdonald's National Policy remains a touchstone of Canadian economic history. It combined three core elements – infrastructure, tariffs, and population growth — as a strategy to reshape and expand the post-Confederation economy. It was not, however, a single policy; it was a combination of several strategies which had complementary qualities that, once recognized, were shrewdly represented to Canadians as a comprehensive package.

Many of the elements of the National Policy were in place very early in the conversation about Confederation or at least they were implied. Barriers to trade between the BNA colonies were eliminated as they became provinces. Funding for the railway construction that linked all four original provinces was promised at the outset. Expansion into the West to provide a vent for surplus Canadian farm population (magically transforming them into prairie settlers) was a first-level objective. What was added onto this framework by Macdonald's several administrations was something rather more ambitious.

The Railway

The trans-continental railway is the most obvious and arguably the most lasting element of what became known as the National Policy. It both served to deliver manufactured goods to captive markets in the West and acted as a critical element in populating the Prairies with colonists. Moreover, by the end of the century, the railway had demonstrated an ability to crush local industries in the far west by flooding the market with mass-produced central Canadian products.



Figure 3.9 In 1893, the Stoney Creek steel bridge replaced a wooden trestle. It is a testament to the rising influence of engineering and improved materials in the late Victorian era. It is, as well, a graceful structure.

The railway fulfilled several functions at once. It is, obviously, a means of moving goods and people: it is transportation infrastructure. For Canada in the 1880s and 1890s, it also served as an instrument of control, the means by which troops and the NWMP could be sped to trouble spots. This was clearly demonstrated in the Canadian militia's quelling of the 1885 uprising in Saskatchewan. The CPR — both its rail and telegraph service — provided a quick and critical communications system that enabled Canadian state power to extend far beyond southern Ontario or the St. Lawrence Valley. One of the challenges faced by crown colony governors on the West Coast had been the interminable slowness of communications between Victoria or New Westminster and London. After 1886, Canada's imperial representatives in the West or on the Pacific Coast, by contrast, could receive instructions and reinforcements in a matter of days, if not hours.

The CPR, however, was also a major land owner and very much in the settlement business. It was clearly in the best interests of the Railway to get farmers onto the land so that they could buy freight and ship grain. Railways were, as well, a critically important component in Canada's economic transformation. Historians Paul Craven and Tom Traves made this observation over 30 years ago:

> Railways were not just simple transportation companies. […] In some respects they operated almost like states unto themselves; their company rules had the force of law, they employed their own police, and their executives, as the Grand Trunk's goods manager put it, were 'as important as generals in an army or Ministers of State.'[1]

The need for rails, rolling stock, engine parts, and the metal for seats and carriage doors meant everything had to be fabricated according to the individual railway's specification. Universal standards had not come into play yet, even within single companies. (The Great War would play an important role in moving that process forward.) Everything — including machine parts and simple fasteners like nuts and bolts — needed to be made (and repaired) in-house. As early as 1871, the Great Western Railway (GWR) employed 984 people at its Hamilton shops, paying out the then-astronomical sum of $500,000 annually in wages. The GWR was the largest but the Grand Trunk (in Pointe Saint-Charles near Montreal) employed 790 and the four next largest companies (two of them in Toronto, one in Brantford, and the fourth in Montreal) employed more than a 1,000 between them.[2] And this all predates the creation of the Canadian Pacific Railway, not to mention the many streetcar systems that appeared in towns and cities across the country from the 1890s to the 1920s.



Figure 3.10 A sod turning in Thunder Bay in 1912 for a new Canadian Car and Foundry shop. Labour is not represented among the dignitaries.

The railway technology shrank Canada; it made long-distance travel manageable and should be appreciated as a revolutionary achievement. In the 1850s, the Prairie West was still perceived by the

1. Paul Craven and Tom Traves, "Canadian Railways as Manufacturers, 1850-1880," *Historical Papers/Communications Historiques* (1983): 254, reprinted in *Perspectives on Canadian Economic History*, ed. Douglas McCalla (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1987): 118.

2. Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owram, *A History of the Canadian Economy* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Canada, 1991), 237-9.

Canadians and Maritimers as an extension of the Great American Desert; an arid plain with little agricultural potential and fearsome locals with whom to contend. A generation later, that perspective was replaced with a more optimistic view that changed Canadian attitudes toward the interior of North America. This was reflected most clearly in the railway's impact on land use.

Immigration and Land

The second piece of the National Policy was immigration and settlement of the West. By creating a productive agricultural frontier of independent producers, the reasoning went, Canada would also be generating an internal marketplace for clothing, farm machinery, and household goods produced in the original four provinces. And, of course, the railway would be the means of delivering that population and those goods to the West.

Broadly speaking, the CPR was an instrument of change. It delivered settlers to the West, whose goal it was to extend the reach of European-style agriculture. The whole concept of a settler — someone who establishes a permanent and fixed residence where, it is assumed (almost always incorrectly), no one lived before — is bound up in farming and ranching. To see the significance of this, observe how the coal miners of Drumheller or the Crowsnest Pass are seldom described as settlers, despite their long tenure on (and below) the landscape. The CPR thus did not just deliver settlers, it made them.

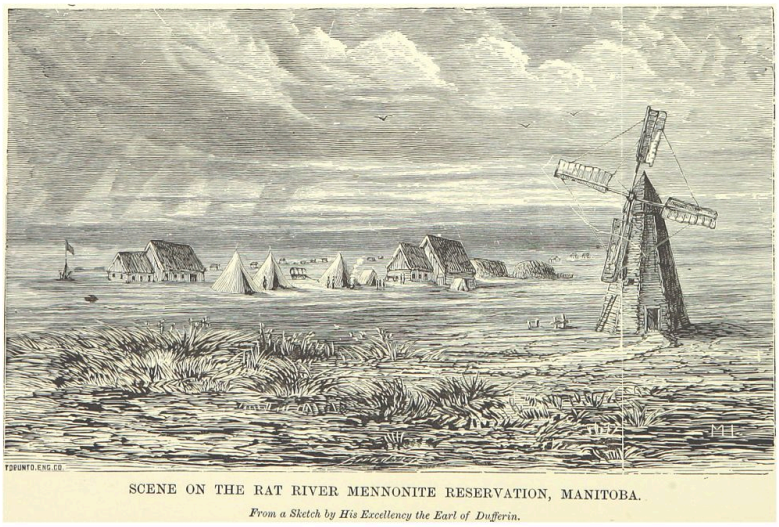


Figure 3.11 A Mennonite block settlement at Rat River, Manitoba, drawn by Lord Dufferin in 1881.

The CPR, as a land agency, was directly involved in recruitment and land sales, but so too was Ottawa's land policy. At the heart of this system was the township survey, made up of 36 sections of 640 acres of land. Of the 36 sections, two were reserved for schools, one (sometimes more) for the HBC as part of the sale price of Rupert's Land, and about half of the remaining sections for the Canadian Pacific Railway. What was left was available as free homestead land and it was all geometrically rigid. Sections of 160 acres (64.7 hectares) were mapped out with a blind disregard for topographical barriers, bodies of water, or variations in environmental conditions like wind, rainfall, or soil quality. This unit of measure was almost sacred: the 1 square-mile section and the quarter-section were the currency of homesteading in the United States where, similarly, the whole of the West had

been overlain with a graph-paper pattern. Bernard DeVoto, a historian of the American West, argued in 1953 that the quarter-section acquired a huge symbolic value as "the buttress of our liberties, and the cornerstone of our economy." What he had to say on this score is as apposite for Canada as for the US:

> It was certainly true … that if you owned 160 acres of flat Iowa farmland or rolling Wisconsin prairie, you had, on the average, a farm which would support your family and would require all its exertions to work. So the quarter-section, thought of as the proper homestead unit, became the mystical one. But in the arid regions 160 acres were not a homestead. They were just a mathematical expression whose meanings in relation to agricultural settlement were disastrous.[3]

As in the United States, Canadian homesteaders were promised a quarter-section of free land (that is, 160 acres or 65 hectares) under the *Dominion Lands Act* of 1872. All the pioneer settler had to do was pay a $10 administration fee, put at least 40 acres (16.9 hectares) under the plough, and build a house on it within three years. Successful homesteaders were, furthermore, entitled to obtain title to a neighbouring section once they had "proved up" their first quarter-section. This practice led to a rapid expansion of staked and claimed farmland across the Plains.

It was with regard to settling the West that the National Policy struggled most. It was wrongly assumed at the outset that Ontarians and Canadians from further east would flood the Prairies. Instead, they continued heading south. Immigrant recruitment was slow to make gains and many newcomers turned into Canadian emigrants, joining the exodus of Dominion citizens leaving for the United States. Through to 1901, Canada continued to be a net loser of population. The Canadian West was growing in population numbers, but nothing like as fast as the American West. Ironically, it was under the Liberal administration of Wilfrid Laurier (Prime Minister from 1896-1911) that things suddenly accelerated. Thereafter, from 1896 to the Great War, the rate of Canadian population growth outstripped that of the United States, and the Dominion experienced net population growth for the first time since Confederation.

The Tariff

Only a fraction of the landscape encountered by pre-War settlers had ever encountered the plough before their arrival. The fact that the CPR — an infrastructure built on steel rails and wheels and carriages with the ability to move very heavy freight easily — coincides with the spread of the **chilled steel plough** in North America, is not a coincidence. Wooden ploughs (sometimes called mouldboards) were far less effective in breaking the soil for the first time, particularly the densely packed stuff of which the Prairies is made. The agricultural machinery industry in Ontario was already well advanced by this stage. The links between steel production, agricultural equipment, and railway development are central to the CPR story. The CPR had a stake in the growth of manufacturing capacity in the East and in the shipment of manufactured goods — and, thus, in the success of the **tariff**.

3. Bernard DeVoto, "Introduction" to Wallace Stegner, *Beyond the Hundredth Meridian* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1954 and 1992): xix.

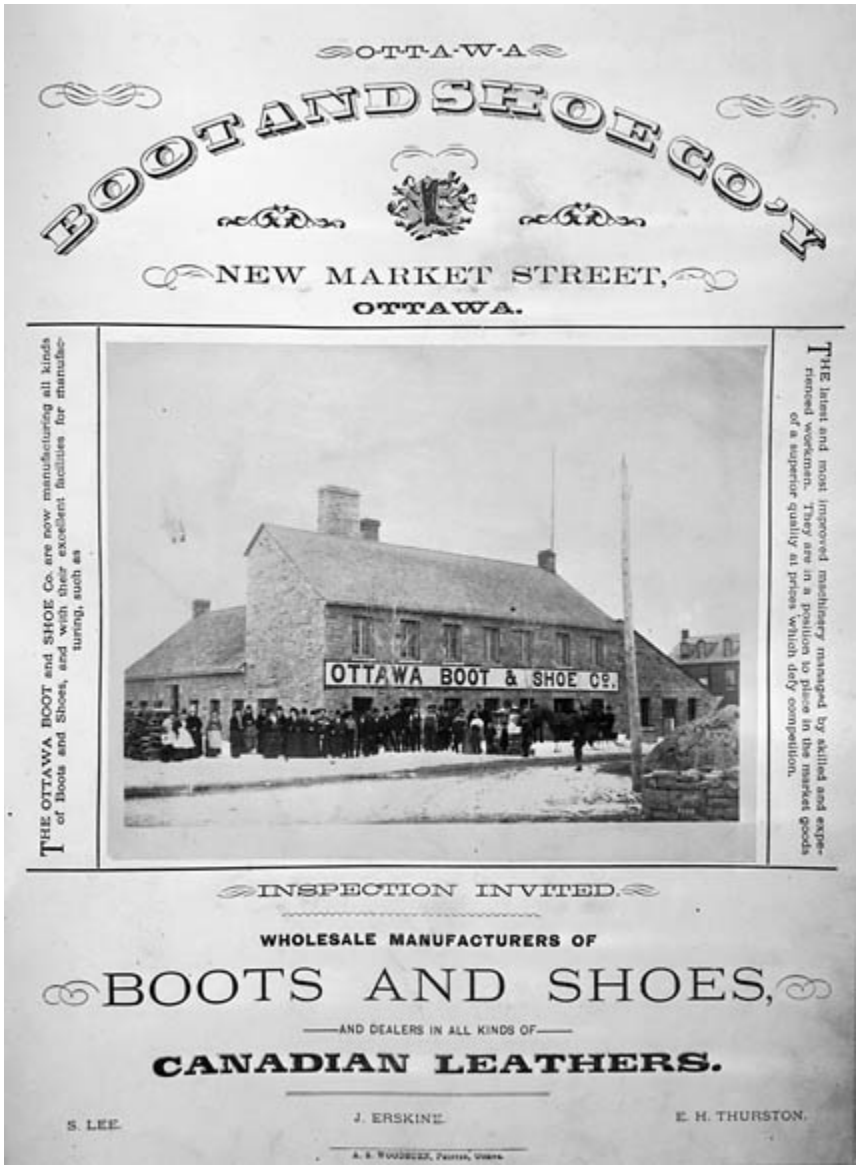


Figure 3.12 Shoe factories replaced the work of individual cobblers from mid-century, leading to large-scale production in a protected Canadian marketplace. Ottawa Boot & Shoe Company, 1875.

The tariff placed cheap imports from the United States at a disadvantage to protect embryonic Canadian industries. This approach was tried and tested in many countries. (The mid-century American termination of reciprocity with British North America was itself based in part on a fear that British goods would be introduced via BNA and then sold cheaply (or "dumped") in the United States, thereby killing New England's manufacturing sector.) Until the mid-1870s, there was sufficient demand in the North American economy that Canadian tariffs could be kept at a moderate level. By the late 1870s, however, competition from American producers was on the upswing. Canadian manufacturers were calling for protection for their products, and there were more of these manufacturers than ever before. The tariff policy was unpopular in the Maritimes and with those Canadians — many of them Liberals — who looked forward to a return to reciprocity. Beginning in 1878, the Macdonald administration

assembled a suite of tariffs that ranged from 17.5% to 20%. These were predominantly assessed on the products of heavy industry and mining.[4]



Figure 3.13 Tethered to a Conservative majority in the likeness of Macdonald, "Miss Canada" resists the attractions of American business interests. Joseph Keppler in Puck Magazine, ca. 1880. [*[Long Description]*]

The tariff may have been necessary, but it was unpopular, even with Conservatives. Every Canadian government from the 1860s-1911 held out the prospect of a return to reciprocity with the United States. Having a good trading relationship with the large economy next door only made sense, but it proved to be unappealing to American and Canadian manufacturers alike. The Liberal Party — with much of its base in rural Canada — was more aggressive in calling for free trade with the United States. Ironically, it was under Laurier that tariffs surged upward to over 30% on certain manufactured goods. After 15 years in office, Laurier went back to the electorate with a free trade agreement in hand, already approved by the US government. The voters turfed him out in 1911 and handed the reins to a staunchly protectionist Conservative leader, Robert Borden, whose campaign slogan was the memorable, "No truck nor trade with the Yankees."[5]

By the end of the pre-War era, however, the National Policy had done its work. There were competing railways, Canada had a healthy manufacturing sector, the economy had diversified in ways that would sustain further industrial growth, prairie settlement was well advanced, and the **wheat boom** was (with a few interruptions) underway. The National Policy had done one other thing that had a sustained

4. Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owram, *A History of the Canadian Economy* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Canada, 1991), 312-4.

5. Ibid., 314-5.

consequence for Canada: it created a wall over which products might not pass, but through which capital investment moved as though a barrier were not there. American investment in Canadian productive capacity accelerated with the National Policy. Peter DeLottinville's study of a town straddling the Maine-New Brunswick border shows how capital from Canada's financial centre, Montreal, was joined by American money that hoped to make a profit from selling protected Canadian cotton products inside the protected Canadian market. [6] British money similarly arrived in Canada, although it tended to come in portfolio investments rather than directly from industry. The irony of the tariff, then, is that it protected industry against competition while opening up the Canadian economy to international influences through investment.



Figure 3.14 The Victrola Talking Machine Co. was a New Jersey–based company (later subsumed into RCA-Victor), famous for its trademark dog, Nipper, listening for "His Master's Voice." Victrola also exemplifies the early generation of American branch plants. Montreal, ca. 1910.

Tariff walls could not, therefore, isolate the Canadian economy. The Canadian-American border was utterly porous with regard to people and money, regardless of how much of a barrier it was to manufactured goods. The Canadian-American border was also wide open with regard to ideas. The southern alignment of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the building of connecting lines to the south ensured that Calgary would be influenced by centres in Montana and Idaho, Winnipeg by Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and Chicago, and in BC, the Kootenays by Spokane, and Vancouver by Seattle and San Francisco. These influences can still be seen in commercial and residential architectural styles from the Victorian and Edwardian eras but, at the time, they were most clearly evident in working-class affairs.

6. Peter DeLottinville, "Trouble in the Hives of Industry: The Cotton Industry comes to Milltown, New Brunswick, 1879-1892," in *Labour and Working-Class History in Canada: A Reader,* eds. David Frank and Gregory S. Kealey (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1995): 134-6.

Cause and Effect

No area of historical research attracts debate quite like economic history. In the case of late 19th century Canada, economic historians are divided on several issues. Providing land for free was universally regarded as necessary to the settlement of the West, but was it? In giving away land, was Ottawa forgoing significant revenues? (Certainly the CPR and other land agents did very well by land sales.) Was the subsidy to the CPR necessary? Was it excessive? Were tariffs — especially those of as much as 30% — essential? At what point did they cease being about protection of embryonic industries and a guarantee of profits for inefficient industries? Or, were they principally a tax on commerce, a means of raising government revenues?

These questions are raised because of the opportunity costs entailed — where might Canada have spent railway subsidies otherwise? The objection raised by Western farmers at the time was that they were paying for Canadian industrialization and were held back from being more productive because they could not purchase goods in a freer market.

In short, historians have not resolved whether the National Policy did the job or not, whether its success rests on one strategic pillar or on all three. What is certain is that the National Policy succeeded as an organizing principle and a way of encapsulating Canada's economic unification and transformation. Macdonald and his peers wanted to see a modernizing Canada. What they got was one which had to make room for new social categories and challenges.

Key Points

- Three policy areas — railway construction, immigration, and protective tariffs on manufactured goods — came to be considered as a package known as the National Policy.
- The Canadian Pacific Railway connected the southern half of the Dominion. It was also an important land dealer, manufacturer, and employer.
- Immigration into the West began very slowly, showing few returns to the National Policy before the late 1890s.
- The resettlement of the West involved imposing a new, systematic, artificial, and highly standardized system of land ownership.
- Tariffs aimed to protect central Canadian industries that were exposed to more cheaply priced American and British manufacturers' products.
- Western farmers complained that they paid too much for tariff-protected Canadian goods.
- The tariff wall encouraged new patterns of investment in Canadian industry.

Long Descriptions

Figure 3.13 long description: Uncle Sam uses a magnet labelled "Common Business Interests" to attract Miss Canada across the border, but she is tethered to a post with the features of Sir John A.

Macdonald, and a strap labelled “Conservative Party.” The caption says “It’s Only a Matter of Time. Old Fogyism may hold her back for a while, but she is bound to come to us.” [Return to Figure 3.13]

Media Attributions

- Eastbound over Stoney Creek Bridge © David R. Spencer is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Turning of the Sod at Canadian Car and Foundry © City of Thunder Bay Archives is licensed under a Public Domain license
- DENT1881_1.378_MANITOBA_RAT_RIVER_MENNONITE_RESERVATION
- Ottawa Boot & Shoe Factory, 1875 © William James Topley (1845–1930), Library and Archives Canada (C-002207) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- “It’s Only a Matter of Time” © Puck Magazine, Library and Archives Canada (C-006440) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- RCA_Victor_factory is licensed under a Public Domain license

3.4 Rise of a Working Class

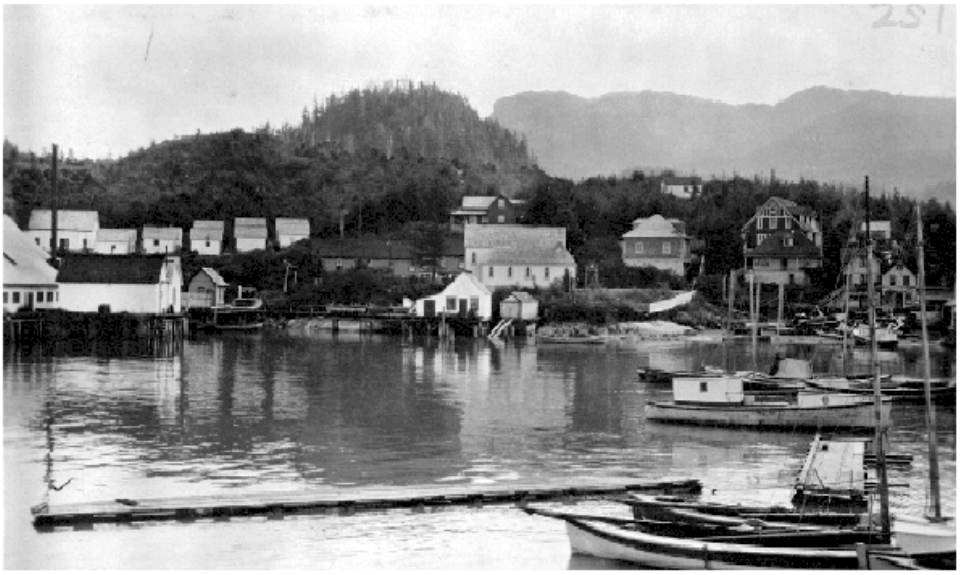


Figure 3.15 A Canadian working class arose in the major urban centres; it was also fashioned in relatively remote resource towns like Port Essington on the northwest coast where Indigenous, Euro-Canadian, and immigrant labour from Asia and Europe met for the first time.

The Canadian working class was emerging well before 1867. By Confederation one could say for the first time that the growth of the working class was now unstoppable. The creation of the Dominion of Canada took place precisely at that moment when widespread industrialization was visibly underway. In 1851, fewer than a quarter of Hamilton, Ontario's workers laboured in workshops of ten or more employees; by 1871 the share was more than 80%.[1] In less than two decades, Hamilton had been transformed from a market town dominated by commerce into a powerful symbol of heavy industry. Significant and startling though this change was at the time, it was dwarfed by developments in the 1890s. In that decade, Canadian economic growth simultaneously intensified in the older cities and found new fields in which to flourish in the West. The population of Canada in 1901 was 5,371,315; ten years later it was 7,206,643 – an increase of 34%. At the same time, however, the labour force grew from 1,899,000 in 1901 to 2,809,000 in 1911, a phenomenal 50% increase.[2] To put this into some perspective, there were only 3,463,000 people in the Dominion in 1867 — by 1911 there were close to that many working, wage-earning Canadians. The working class were motivated and shaped by different factors in the various regions of the country, although common themes were quick to arise.

1. Bryan D. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991,* 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 83.

2. Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada,* 2nd ed., ed. F. H. Leacy (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983): D498-511.

Workplace Conditions

A middle-aged factory worker in 1870 would likely remember very clearly working in settings where having a half-dozen other employees felt crowded. In the 1860s, working spaces were designed for small teams of mostly manual labourers and artisans. That was about to change.

Industrializing employers were finding their way in a new kind of business. Some came into it from their own smaller operations: small producers (some of them artisans) began employing more staff, mechanizing some processes, moving to larger spaces, and becoming manufacturers. This evolutionary model co-existed with instances where factory owners arrived ready-made from other parts of Canada, but more often, from the United States or the United Kingdom. Increased linkages across industries and systems also meant that **capitalists** and factory owners in one line of business regularly sought to close gaps in supply lines by means of **vertical integration**.

These varied circumstances created distinctive conditions of work. For example, the two principal coal mining operations on Vancouver Island in the late 19th century were owned by the London-based and investor-driven Vancouver Coal Mining and Land Company (VCMLC) and the Dunsmuir family. The former sent out managers, sometimes recruiting support staff locally, and generally encouraged their workers to buy their own homes and to build community institutions. The latter was led by Scottish immigrants, Robert and Joan Dunsmuir, their son James, and a son-in-law. Robert had been a miner in Ayrshire, Scotland and James spent some of his youth learning the trade first-hand beneath Vancouver Island. Their involvement in the miners' lives was much more pervasive and included the use of company housing and stores (both as services and as weapons during disputes). The VCMLC operation had to generate dividends for shareholders, while the Dunsmuir mines were run with an eye to making money for the owners and their kin, and as such were far less arms-length operations.



Figure 3.16 Their coalminers lived in shacks, but the Dunsmuirs lived in style. James Dunsmuirs's Hatley Castle near Victoria has, since his death, served as a military college and Royal Roads University, as well as the home of the X-Men in a series of movies.

Coal mines and other resource-extraction industries in these years were a critical part of the pre-Great War economy. Providing fuel for steam power made coal important but it was also key to heating food

and urban homes; cities and forest clearing had outstripped the ability of town people to find their own fuel. Likewise the food production industries of the late 19th century existed only because urbanites — the fastest growing demographic on the planet — could not address their own food supply. The grain economy boom of the turn of the century was part of this and so, too, was the growth of canneries. These appeared in fruit- and vegetable-growing regions but they were most impressive in the fisheries. What these resource-extraction industries had in common, then, was a growing market that was certain to continue growing and, in the years between 1867 and 1914, a need for large numbers of labourers.

Craig Heron (York University) discusses the creation of workers' communities and a working class.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=123#oembed-1

Race and Class

West Coast coal mines and canneries were sites of diversity, where Euro-Canadians worked alongside Chinese, Indigenous, African-American, and Japanese labourers. These environments did not emerge by accident. Industrialization in Europe witnessed mass migrations off the land and into cities and the simultaneous conversion of peasant populations into urban industrial workers. This pattern could be seen in Scotland as farmers flooded into the factories and shipyards of Glasgow, and in Liverpool, which was awash with Irish immigrants performing all manner of labour. In Canada, there wasn't much in the way of a peasantry to convert into industry; it had to be imported from elsewhere. In places like British Columbia, the choices came down to the **proletarianization** of Indigenous people or the import of unskilled and mostly agricultural workers from Asia. If British Columbia had a more pastoral landscape and not a lot of mineral, timber, or fishery resources, then it is likely that the population would have been very differently composed.



Figure 3.17 It would be difficult not to be simultaneously impressed by innovative machinery like this one and concerned about the displacement of labour that it entailed. The "Iron Chink" revolutionized the salmon canning industry on the Pacific Northwest coast. Port Edward, BC

Wages and conditions of work in factories, mines, and mills varied sharply according to race. Age was another factor. If the question was: Where do we find largely unskilled labour that will work under supervision in industrial conditions at rates that will profit employers? one answer was to find labour from a displaced or stressed peasant population. Another answer: from among the child population.



Figure 3.18 Children contributed to the household income in a variety of ways, including coal gathering, which provided fuel to households and could be sold as well. A young girl in Toronto, ca. 1900.

Childhood and Labour

Boys and girls had very different experiences in wage labour. Even in urban environments girls' labour was conceived of within certain gendered boundaries: Domestic work, child-minding, and "fine-work" — textiles and stitchery — were likely destinations. Girls work was, too, comparatively undervalued so the likelihood was always stronger that boys, rather than girls, would be sent out first to find wages for the household.[3] Female income levels were generally capped, too, by expectations that they would become either dependents (in a male breadwinner model) or their income was little more than a supplement to the husband's or father's wage. Boys, on the other hand, were part of a gendered culture of apprenticeships and the expectation that, with age and experience, their income levels would rise. Boys were welcomed into the workplace from the age of eight years until the late 1870s when social pressures and legislation began to push the acceptable starting age upward to approximately 12 years. Child labour practices, in this respect, varied from province to province for two reasons: labour legislation was a provincial responsibility and different industrial activities predominated across the

3. Bettina Bradbury began considering these relationships between household members, gender, and the economy in a series of studies she undertook from the late 1970s to the early 21st century. Her earliest work **(**"The Family Economy and Work in an Industrializing City: Montréal in the 1870s," *Canadian Historical Association, Historical Papers/Communications Historiques* (1979): 71-96) remains a landmark.

country with practices being tailored to meet those local conditions. There was no consensus about a vision for childhood: whether children should be sent into often dangerous workplaces or into schools was one of several points of debate. Child labour legislation might protect working children from some hazards but it also barred them from contributing to the **household wage**. As one study of children in mining observes,

> Efforts to define children's dependence clashed sharply with the working-class family wage economy, whereby boys and girls began to labour for wages at a young age as a key survival strategy. For this reason, working-class parents were among the principal opponents of legislation aimed to restrict children's employment.[4]

Some employers echoed these working-class qualms, principally because they saw child labour laws as a way of reducing profits by forcing the employers to hire more expensive adults. On the West Coast, restrictions on child labour chased the regulation of Asian labour and vice versa. The goal of a sufficient household wage among Euro-Canadian and Indigenous workers could be undercut by adult Chinese and Japanese labourers, who were willing to work for about the same amount as boys. The racist context of debate on the issue of child labour was something of a distraction in that the English-speaking world was moving away from the use of children in industry. On the opposite coast, for example, and in the absence of a competing immigrant population, Nova Scotian collieries boys represented a falling share of an expanding workforce from 1866-1911, during which time their presence shrank from as much as 27% of the workforce underground (at Sydney Mines in 1886 and 1891) to as little as 5.5% in 1911 (at Springhill).[5] The tide was turning against child labour.

This change in attitude is found throughout the 1889 *Report of the Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital*. Established in 1887, this was the eighth investigative enquiry into social, economic, and administrative issues. One study describes it this way: "The Royal Commission … is a testament to not only the turbulent economic relations in late-Victorian Canada, but the emergence of the Canadian state's active role in social relations."[6] The Royal Commission's recommendations – apart from the idea of an annual Labour Day — were mostly ignored by the federal government (which claimed that changes in labour conditions were rightly in the provincial jurisdiction) but its disclosures about child labour were widely covered in newspapers and aroused public concern. In the commissioners' own words:

> In some parts of the Dominion the employment of children of very tender years is still permitted. This injures the health, stunts the growth and prevents the proper education of such children, so that they cannot become healthy men and women or intelligent citizens. It is believed that the regular employment in mills, factories and mines of children less than 14 years of age should be strictly forbidden. Further, [we] think that young persons should not be required to work during the night at any time, nor before seven o'clock in the morning during the months of December, January, February and March.[7]

4. Robert McIntosh, *Boys in the Pits: Child Labour in Coal Mines* (Montréal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 40.

5. Ibid., 71.

6. Stephen J. Cole, "Commissioning Consent: An Investigation of the Royal Commission on the Relations of Labour and Capital, 1886-1889," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, (Kingston, ON, Queen's University, 2007): ii.

7. Canada. *Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital, 1889*, republished and edited with an introduction by Greg Kealey in *Canada Investigates Industrialism: The Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital, 1889* (Abridged) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 13.

Under the ominous heading of "Child-Beating," the commissioners made this recommendation:

> The darkest pages in the testimony … are those recording the beating and imprisonment of children employed in factories. Your Commissioners earnestly hope that these barbarous practices may be removed, and such treatment made a penal offence, so that Canadians may no longer rest under the reproach that the lash and the dungeon are accompaniments of manufacturing industry in the Dominion.[8]

Provincial restrictions on child labour — and on other aspects of workplace safety and laws — were only as good as the inspectors whose business it was to keep employers in line. In the British Columbia Ministry of Mines' *Annual Reports*, for example, one finds one or two inspectors in the pre-1914 era attempting to cover an industry that extended from Vancouver Island to the Kootenays and into the Cariboo. Their arrival was always anticipated, so there was little chance of a surprise inspection. The reports issued by the inspectors, moreover, indicate a willingness on the part of mine owners and supervisors to comply with the law but whenever a disaster occurred — and mine explosions in Nanaimo claimed over 200 lives in 1887-1888 — the roll-call of the dead invariably revealed children well under the legal age.

An Inspector Reports

James R. Brown, a Toronto factory inspector testified to the Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital that his team had been set the task of inspecting Ontario's factories and that the work was largely completed.

> Q. Did you find in many places where women were employed that they were working longer than the [1884 Ontario *Factories Act*] contemplates?
>
> A. Not in a great number of places. I found that principally in woolen [*sic*] mills.
>
> Q. What were the longest hours for which you found women employed?
>
> A. Sixty-six hours a week.
>
> Q. Did you find any opposition to shortening the hours?
>
> A. No; in each case where I found them working that time the employers stated that they were not aware the Act had been in force, and they were waiting for some formal intimation about the matter. Of course, they stated they would comply with the Act and reduce the hours of labour, so as not to exceed 60 hours.
>
> Q. Did you notice […] any large percentage of children?
>
> A. Yes; in some of them — in the cotton mills and some woolen mills, in cigar factories and knitting works, and some others.
>
> Q. Were there many of those children below the age designated by the Act?
>
> A. Well, I found about 40 girls under 14. Girls are not allowed under 14 nor boys under 12. I found six boys altogether nine years of age, and some ten or eleven.

[9]

8. Ibid., 14.

9. Canada. *Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital, 1889*, republished and edited with an introduction by Greg Kealey in *Canada*

Long hours were only one source of complaint among factory workers. Punishments abounded and were often arbitrary. Testimony from a 14 year old journeyman cigar maker in Montreal in 1887-1889 revealed a regime of arbitrary beatings ("a crack across the head with the fist") when a job was done poorly and the possibility of being imprisoned in the factory in a "black hole," a windowless room in the factory cellar for upwards of 7 hours at time.[10] Adults might escape beatings but not fines; dismissals were not uncommon. Moreover, involvement in a labour organization or a strike — particularly in a leadership capacity — could result in a worker's name being added to a **blacklist**. Canada was large enough a country that a blacklisted worker might outrun this sanction, but sometimes the sanction followed them even into the United States. Civil suits were sometimes launched against labour activists and many labour leaders spent some time behind bars. In the 20th century, as the size and distribution of industries and corporations increased, managers came to rely heavily on intelligence gathered by industrial spies. Employers, at times, sympathized with some of the social goals of workers' organizations, or unions, and began experimenting with what has come to be known as **welfare capitalism**. This is an array of services and benefits provided by the employer (but generally outside of a collective agreement). Employers did not, however, sympathize with the unions themselves and were often ruthless in disposing of the organizations and their supporters.

Class and Gender

Women were on the frontlines of industrialization and the creation of a working class. In 1901, 53% of all Canadian females were participating in the labour force, compared to 78.3% of all males.[11] The labour of women was less visible than that of men in these years because of the persistence of cottage labour — or, in urban environments, "outwork." Materials would be taken home by women workers and stitched together or in some other way refined so as to add value. This kind of labour (sometimes referred to as **sweated labour**) could easily be as gruelling as any factory work. Women were employed for both types of work in Toronto in 1868, when the *Globe* newspaper reported that some 4,000 women were either factory workers or they were engaged in outwork.[12] Overall, the mechanization and systematization of work created more and more opportunities for women to engage in wage labour. The growing obsession of the 19th century state (federal and provincial) with surveying populations and businesses means that we have suggestive (if not comprehensive) information on the range of women's experiences in the workforce.

Women's wages were typically a fraction of men's, regardless of sector. The 1889 *Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital* reported that women's wages in Ontario were about one-third those earned by men. The assumption that a patriarchal breadwinner brought home the bulk of the household wage was widespread and difficult to dislodge (and, indeed, persists in some quarters today).

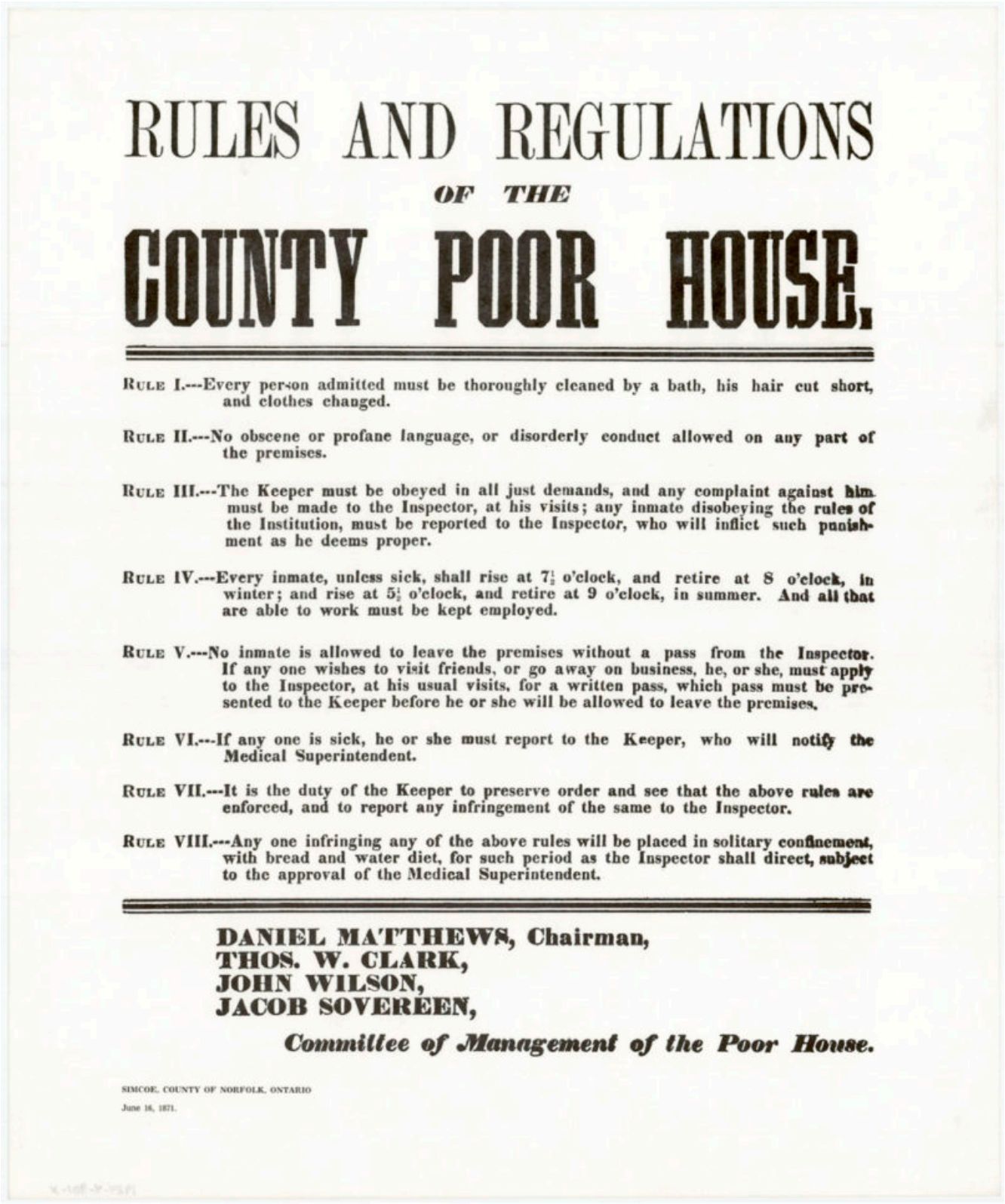
Investigates Industrialism: The Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital, 1889 (Abridged) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 95-7.

10. Canada. *Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital, 1889*, republished and edited with an introduction by Greg Kealey in *Canada Investigates Industrialism: The Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital, 1889* (Abridged) (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 214-16.

11. Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd ed., ed. F. H. Leacy (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983): D107-123.

12. Bryan D. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 83.

Women's wages were thus trivialized as top-ups or "pin money." As men's wages lowered due to mechanization and increased competition for work that required fewer skills, the proportional contribution of women to the household economy became greater and greater. Children, too, were increasingly in demand in the industrial workforce, even sometimes taking jobs that had otherwise been the preserve of adult males.



RULES AND REGULATIONS

OF THE

COUNTY POOR HOUSE,

RULE I.---Every person admitted must be thoroughly cleaned by a bath, his hair cut short, and clothes changed.

RULE II.---No obscene or profane language, or disorderly conduct allowed on any part of the premises.

RULE III.---The Keeper must be obeyed in all just demands, and any complaint against him must be made to the Inspector, at his visits; any inmate disobeying the rules of the Institution, must be reported to the Inspector, who will inflict such punishment as he deems proper.

RULE IV.---Every inmate, unless sick, shall rise at 7½ o'clock, and retire at 8 o'clock, in winter; and rise at 5½ o'clock, and retire at 9 o'clock, in summer. And all that are able to work must be kept employed.

RULE V.---No inmate is allowed to leave the premises without a pass from the Inspector. If any one wishes to visit friends, or go away on business, he, or she, must apply to the Inspector, at his usual visits, for a written pass, which pass must be presented to the Keeper before he or she will be allowed to leave the premises.

RULE VI.---If any one is sick, he or she must report to the Keeper, who will notify the Medical Superintendent.

RULE VII.---It is the duty of the Keeper to preserve order and see that the above rules are enforced, and to report any infringement of the same to the Inspector.

RULE VIII.---Any one infringing any of the above rules will be placed in solitary confinement, with bread and water diet, for such period as the Inspector shall direct, subject to the approval of the Medical Superintendent.

DANIEL MATTHEWS, Chairman,
THOS. W. CLARK,
JOHN WILSON,
JACOB SOVEREEN,

Committee of Management of the Poor House.

SIMCOE, COUNTY OF NORFOLK, ONTARIO
June 16, 1871.

Library and Archives Canada / Bibliothèque et Archives Canada
www.collectionscanada.gc.ca

Figure 3.19 Poorhouses were disappearing but, in 1871, they were still a refuge for desperate Canadians and a source of some dread. [Long Description]

In cities like Montreal, living conditions were particularly bleak in the last 40 years of the century. Housing was of a poor quality and cramped; infant mortality rates were high, as were maternal mortality rates. Historian of the working-class, Brian Palmer, describes these domestic situations as potentially dangerous ones for women:

> The underside of the adaptive families of Victorian Canada is a history of husbands deserting wives, of brutality in which women and children suffered the presence and power of abusive men, and of males (and, occasionally, females) appropriating the paid and unpaid labour of their spouses and offspring as well as availing themselves of sexual access to those who, emotionally and physically, had few resources to resist.[13]

By the end of the century, something like one-in-every-eight wage earners was a woman. The "needle trades" were dominated by women, and textile towns saw industrialism effectively feminized. The systematization of cigar production allowed the penetration of what was once an adult male enclave by large numbers of boys, girls, and women. Women's involvement in the labour force increased dramatically from 1891-1921. In an era when the population overall and the size of the labour force doubled, the number of gainfully employed women expanded even more rapidly. In the professions (which include teaching and nursing), the numbers leapt from fewer than 20,000 to nearly 93,000; clerical and sales workers exploded from 8,530 to just shy of 128,000. The category "operatives," which mostly covers industrial workers, saw women's involvement rise from 150,649 to 240,572. However, the number of women on farms was flat and, as a share of the population, that number was falling. The number of women listed as labourers fell from 1,049 to 441, but rebounded to 11,716 in 1931 — which suggests that the category's definition was an issue.[14]



Figure 3.20 Mechanization and systematic organization of the workplace were defining features of deskilling in industrial settings. Women in war production at Canadian General Electric, Peterboro, ca. 1914–18.

13. Bryan D. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991,* 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 101.

14. Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada,* 2nd ed., ed. F. H. Leacy (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983): 86-106, D123

One distinctive aspect of women's work lives was the influence of reproduction on labour. That is, the raising of families. While boys would rise through a process of apprenticeship through journeyman to adult worker and would continue on that rarely-broken path until they retired or died, girls and women entered and withdrew from the workforce more intermittently. Girls' labour in the late 19th century was more heavily regulated (most provincial legislation kept them out of the workforce for two years longer than boys) and so they were more likely to get some formal education or take hidden work in domestic settings or outwork. If the household's income improved, girls might be withdrawn from paid work in order to contribute more to the rearing of younger siblings — a strategy that would perhaps free up adult women in the household for wage-earning opportunities. Bettina Bradbury's studies of women in industrializing Montreal show wives' participation in the workforce proceeding through life cycle stages. The highest levels of participation are likely to come before the arrival of children, dipping with the arrival of infants and then dropping severely when the household contains children between one and 10 years of age. Participation rates recover and peak once again when at least one of the children passes the age of 11 years.[15]

Historians have struggled to recover what class awareness and experience meant to women at this time. Statements of solidarity and a commitment to political and social reform were often tempered by the social conventions of the Victorian era. While women might have challenged some of those limitations, they perpetuated others. In some women's union locals in Ontario in the 1880s and 1890s, the membership was so reluctant to take on "unfeminine" leadership roles that they requested the appointment of male organizers.[16] Associations like the Knights of Labor gave a high priority to what were considered at the time to be gender issues. It is safe to assume that these positions reflect the feelings of their female membership, as well as at least a considerable proportion of the male Knights. Historian of labour, Brian Palmer, has commented on this phenomenon:

> [The Knights] deplored the capitalist degradation of honest womanhood that resulted from exploiting women at the workplace; many took great offence at the coarse language, shared water closets (toilets) and intimate physical proximities that came with virtually all factory labour in Victorian Canada. Nor did the Order turn a blind eye to domestic violence and the ways in which men could take advantage of women sexually. Local assembly courts could try and convict members of the Knights of Labor for wife-beating, and the Ontario Order was a strong backer of the eventually successful campaign to enact seduction legislation.[17]

What all of these studies reveal is that industrialism brought women and children along with men into the urban cauldron of change in the same era. Moreover, this constituted a perceived change in the long-standing rural and commercial way of doing things. Life courses changed, conditions of work were invented out of nothing, new anxieties replaced old, and there was — in this mesh of experiences — a realization that a new social class was emerging.

15. Bettina Bradbury, "The Family Economy and Work in an Industrializing City: Montreal in the 1870s," in *Cities and Urbanization: Canadian Historical Perspectives*, ed. Gilbert A. Stelter (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1990): 141.

16. Bryan D. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 136.

17. Bryan D. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 146.

Class Consciousness and Resistance

Studies of the birth of working classes identify two aspects in particular: the shared experiences of belonging to a population dependent on wage-labour in an industrializing economy, and awareness of the same. Loyalties cut across societies and cultures in many directions, muting the possibility of working people seeing themselves as members of a common socioeconomic category or class. One measure of that emerging and evolving class consciousness is the incidence of labour disruption in the 19th century.

The pre-Confederation era saw a rapid rise in labour disputes, accelerating in the 1860s. These principally involved small local associations of skilled craftsmen employed in factories. People of this generation could recall being independent craftsmen and transitioning into wage labour; now they were facing the mechanization of processes and a consequent devaluation of their hard-earned skills. These workers were generally literate and aware of political and international events. They recognized that their struggles echoed those occurring in Britain and the United States. Every strike, in this context, was like a flare sent up from a ship in distress. Inevitably, others would respond.

By 1880, it is estimated that there were approximately 165 labour organizations in Canada, some of them local, many of them international. Virtually all of these were craft-based. As such, they perpetuated many of the associational rituals and practices from pre-industrial times. Marches, banners, oaths of loyalty, and the building of assembly halls were the most visible of these. Less obvious was the role that early unions played as social safety nets.[18] Almost all had a “benevolent society” component to their work that involved life insurance for members’ families. The importance of this role could be seen when industrial accidents — most spectacularly in coal mining disasters — snuffed out lives a hundred at a time. Providing for widows and orphans was thus core to their mandate and an important part of building identification between labour and its community.

Table 3.1 Work force by occupational category and sex, 1891–1921[19]

Table 3.1.1 Total, all occupations

Years	Total	M	F
1921	3,173,169	2,683,019	490,150
1911	2,725,148	2,358,519	366,629
1901	1,782,621	1,544,050	238,571
1891	1,607,945	1,411,936	196,009

18. Bryan D. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 94-6.

19. Data source: Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd ed., ed. F. H. Leacy (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983): D86-106.

Table 3.1.2 Owners and managers

Years	Total	M	F
1921	264,245	253,825	10,420
1911	219,008	207,923	11,085
1901	84,040	81,004	3,036
1891	78,639	74,668	3,971

Table 3.1.3 Professional occupations

Years	Total	M	F
1921	173,222	80,249	92,973
1911	84,153	49,817	34,336
1901	85,590	42,389	40,201
1891	58,893	33,184	19,709

Table 3.1.4 Clerical and sales workers

Years	Total	M	F
1921	389,886	262,023	127,863
1911	226,448	175,434	51,014
1901	111,041	91,402	19,639
1891	84,474	75,944	8,530

Table 3.1.5 Operatives

Years	Total	M	F
1921	996,020	755,448	240,572
1911	933,577	689,890	243,687
1901	663,755	498,102	165,653
1891	543,560	392,911	150,649

Table 3.1.6 Farmers and farm workers

Years	Total	M	F
1921	1,040,787	1,022,906	17,881
1911	929,847	913,067	16,780
1901	715,528	706,627	8,901
1891	734,122	722,021	12,101

Table 3.1.7 Labourers

Years	Total	M	F
1921	309,009	308,568	441
1911	332,115	322,388	9,727
1901	125,667	124,526	1,141
1891	114,257	113,208	1,049

Rise of Management

Another development that confirmed the change in workers' status since the mid-19th century was the rise of new management styles. Management generally became more widespread and dignified as a career in its own right. This was apparent in many environments, even underground, where new techniques for extracting (or winning) coal enabled greater supervision.

The workforce as a whole was growing in the three decades before 1920 and in no category more so than in "owners and managers" (as can be seen in the table above). Starting at 78,639 in 1891, the total number grew to 84,040 in 1901, and 219,008 in 1911. The number of women in this category leapt from 3,036 in 1901 to 11,085 in 1911.[20] Early in the 20th century attempts were made to rationalize systems of production that had lurched forward for 50 years without much thought given to systems. The most well-known body of thought on this subject is the scientific management model pioneered by the American Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856-1919). Sometimes referred to as Taylorism, these new approaches considered everything from the coordination of shift work, the positioning of machinery, and the inculcation of new industrial virtues like punctuality.

Taylorism was part of a growing middle class agenda of social reform that included child labour legislation, universal education, and **temperance** or **prohibition**. While Canadians beyond the working-class acknowledged that excesses of exploitation needed to be curbed and that the most vulnerable needed to be protected, an interventionist state was still some decades away. And, of course, Canadian federalism meant that social legislation would arise at the provincial level, so it would be unevenly developed and potentially idiosyncratic. Middle-class engagement in these issues, however, could only go so far and reformism quickly ran up against emerging class-based antipathies. These tensions would explode in the first two decades of the 20th century.

Key Points

- Industrialization produced a class of wage earners whose numbers grew rapidly in the 19th century.

20. Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd ed., ed. F. H. Leacy (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983): D86-106.

- Working conditions in factories and mines were diverse but generally dangerous and unpleasant.
- Racial and gender categories divided and complicated the working-class experience.
- Children contributed to working-class household incomes, but were regularly abused in the workplace and were increasingly subjected to regulation by the state.
- Early labour organizations campaigned for improved working conditions for women and children as well as men.
- More complex systems and larger scales of production helped to produce a growing class of managers and supervisors.

Long Descriptions

Figure 3.19 long description: Bulletin titled “Rules and Regulations of the County Poor House.” Rules are:

1. Every person admitted must be thoroughly cleaned by a bath, his hair cut short, and clothes changed.
2. No obscene or profane language, or disorderly conduct allowed on any part of the premises.
3. The Keeper must be obeyed in all just demands, and any complaint against him must be made to the Inspector, at his visits; any inmate disobeying the rules of the Institution, must be reported to the Inspector, who will inflict such punishment as he deems proper.
4. Every inmate, unless sick, shall rise at 7½ o’clock, and retire at 8 o’clock, in winter; and rise at 5½ o’clock, and retire at 9 o’clock, in summer. And all that are able to work must be kept employed.
5. No inmate is allowed to leave the premises without a pass from the Inspector. If any one wishes to visit friends, or go away on business, he, or she, must apply to the Inspector, at his usual visits, for a written pass, which pass must be presented to the Keeper before he or she will be allowed to leave the premises.
6. If any one is sick, he or she must report to the Keeper, who will notify the Medical Superintendent.
7. It is the duty of the Keeper to preserve order and see that the above rules are enforced, and to report any infringement of the same to the Inspector.
8. Any one infringing any of the above rules will be placed in solitary confinement, with bread and water diet, for such period as the Inspector shall direct, subject to the approval of the Medical Superintendent.

The notice is signed by Daniel Matthews, Chairman; Thos. W. Clark; John Wilson; and Jacob Sovereen, who collectively are the Committee of Management of the Poor House. Dated June 16, 1871, in Simcoe, County of Norfolk, Ontario. [Return to Figure 3.19]

Media Attributions

- Port Essington © Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia, Royal BC Museum (H-07308) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Hatley Castle is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Iron Chink © upyernoz on Flickr is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license
- Young girl with a bag of coal © Library and Archives Canada (PA-118224) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Rules and Regulations of the County Poor House, 1871 © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2988345), Committee of Management of the Poor House is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Women working on primers © Canada. Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (PA-024490) is licensed under a Public Domain license

3.5 Urbanization and Industry



Figure 3.21 The largest city in English-Canada, Toronto covered a relatively small area. Public celebrations—like this one for the Boer War in 1901—brought thousands into the streets. Notice how pedestrians, cyclists, streetcars, and horse-drawn wagons compete for space.

Industrialization took place in existing cities and it called into existence new — industrial — cities. There was, therefore, a changing urban landscape in some cases, but also a kind of urban template was developed for emergent cities, onto which industrial relations were imposed. Cities were sites of class struggle and the negotiation of new social relations, regardless of whether they were Canadian metropolises or small mining towns like Greenwood, BC or Frank, AB. The common denominator was the role that capital played in creating landscapes and cityscapes that gave priority to productive processes, sometimes with a brief horizon in mind.

The Dominion of Cities

Between 1871-1911, the population of Canada nearly doubled, from 3,689,000 to 7,207,000.[1] Most of that growth was in urban areas as the share of the workforce engaged in non-agricultural pursuits rose from 51.9% to over 60% in the same period. [2] Even in Nova Scotia, where the benefits of industrialization were not long lasting nor very deep, the impact on the scale of urban settlements was very dramatic: in the decade after Confederation, Halifax grew by 22%, New Glasgow by 55%, Sydney Mines by 57%, and Truro by 64%. From 1891-1901, a decade of immigration strongly associated with

1. Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd ed., ed. F. H. Leacy (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983): A78-93.

2. ibid., D1-7

the growth of population and farm settlement in the West, Sydney tripled in size, emerging as the second largest city in the province.[3]

These figures, respectable though they were, are totally eclipsed by the growth of Western towns and cities. Calgary held fewer than 4,000 people in 1891, and added only 500 over the next 10 years. Then its population leapt to 43,704 in 1911 and 63,305 in 1921 with an economy built mainly around distribution, food processing (e.g., meat packing), and housing materials.[4] In 1891, Winnipeg became the first western city to join the ranks of the 10 largest centres in Canada, arriving in ninth spot with a population of 25,642. The very next census saw it pull ahead of all the Maritime cities (including Halifax), and in 1911, it was the third largest city in the country, with 136,035 people. Likewise, Vancouver joined the top-10 in 1901, with only 26,133 people, and moved into fourth place in 1911 with 120,847. By 1921, four of the 10 largest cities in Canada were in the West, but the older eastern members of this club of leading cities were not going to be easily overtaken. Ottawa, after all, doubled every 20 years from 21,545 in 1871 to 44,156 in 1891, and 87,082 in 1911; the Dominion capital passed the 100,000 mark by 1921, but by that time its population had dropped from its best ranking of fourth (in 1901) to sixth.

None of these cities was without an important industrial component. Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, and Winnipeg each had important rail yards and repair shops associated with the CPR (as did, to a lesser degree, Kamloops, Medicine Hat, and Brandon). Industrializing the production of food was another shared feature, whether in the form of canning salmon or packing meat or shipping enormous quantities of grain. Housing materials was also important to the regional booming population. Door and sash factories and lumber mills appeared in all of the biggest cities, in addition to other expressions of industrialism such as printers, cigar makers, and newspapers. Each of the western cities, too, had a role to play in goods distribution. This involved the handling of foodstuffs and construction materials needed by an increasing population, but also the manufactured goods produced in central Canada. An example of this is the distribution system developed in the 1890s by Toronto department store owner Timothy Eaton (1834-1907). Warehouses for Eaton’s goods were built in the major centres but actual stores only appeared in the West in 1905. In the meantime, one could order from catalogues and have delivered a huge variety of manufactured products — including houses as buildable kits.

3. Statistics Canada, *Census of Canada, 1931*, vol.1, Table 13 (Ottawa: 1932).

4. Max Foran with Edward Cavell, *Calgary: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1978), 70.



Figure 3.22 The Neils Hogenson House in Stirling, Alberta, was ordered from the Eaton's Catalogue in 1917 as an assemble-it-yourself kit.

What is conspicuous by its absence from the western cities at the turn of the century is heavy industry. Textiles did well for a while in Winnipeg, but steel manufacturing and the production of machinery both remained an effective monopoly of central Canada. When the automobile industry arrived in Canada, it was in Walkerville and Montreal, not Edmonton or New Westminster (let alone Halifax or Charlottetown). Processing primary products with very little value added was the norm in the West. It is partly for this reason that workers in the emergent service industries — streetcar drivers, milk deliverymen, fire fighters — were important players in the trade union landscape of the West.

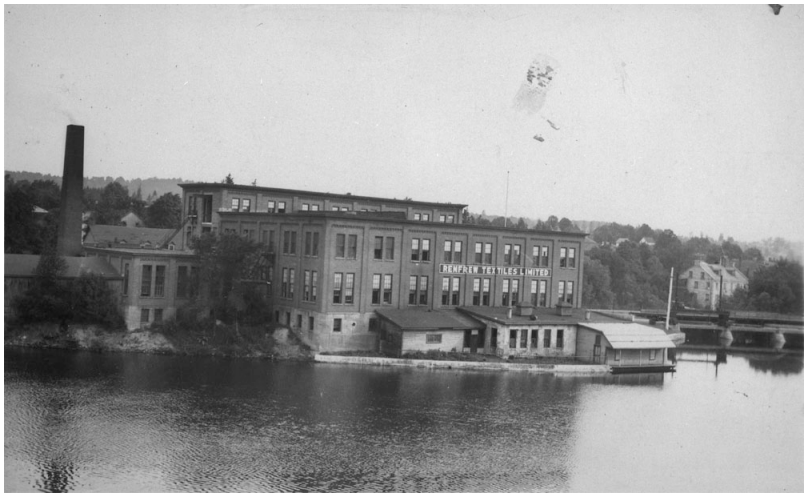


Figure 3.23 The clean lines of brick factories, the bold smokestacks and water towers, and the promotional branding visible on this textile mill were all indicators of industrial progress and capitalist confidence in central Canadian communities like Renfrew, Ontario.

While urbanism was spreading alongside industrialism and capitalism, the power of Montreal and Toronto was growing greater with each passing generation. In 1871, there were slightly more than

100,000 people in Montreal; Toronto — at 56,092 — was slightly smaller than Quebec City. By 1891, Montreal had a population of nearly 220,000 and Toronto was three-times the size of Quebec City at 181,000. These two economic and industrial centres were rapidly emerging as a first-rung category of cities, the country's two metropolises. In 1911, the census found nearly half a million people in Montreal and 380,000 in Toronto. By the end of the Great War, both had passed the half million mark and the next nearest city, Winnipeg, was less than half as large with fewer than 200,000. Toronto's rate of growth and transformation was more sudden and spectacular than Montreal's but both were, even in 1900, nothing like what they had been in 1867. Both cities hosted large manufacturing operations, as did second- and third-tier cities in Ontario and in Quebec's Eastern Townships. In the immediate catchment of each of the two major cities, a metropolitan influence was obvious as the local economies became more closely knit. The foremost example of this is the so-called "golden horseshoe" at the western end of Lake Ontario: Toronto was the unchallenged heart of this conurbation that grew (and became an almost continuous urban sprawl) through the 20th century.

The links between the second industrial revolution and urbanization are described by historian Craig Heron (York University).

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=135#oembed-1

Urban Conditions to 1920



Figure 3.24 A survey of working-class housing in Montreal in 1903 found high density and badly deteriorated conditions.

City growth is a companion process of industrialization and, as we have seen, industrialization was

enabled by Confederation. Maritime historian, Larry McCann, captured this when he wrote, "The transformation of Nova Scotia's economic structure and the growth of its towns and cities in the post-Confederation period occurred simultaneously with the province's integration into the continental economy."[5] Larger factories replaced smaller shops and these factories, of course, were located in towns. Opportunities to earn cash wages attracted young people off the land, especially those who were unlikely to inherit the family farm. Newcomers from abroad, naturally, came ashore in large port cities and those port cities were the outlets for manufactured goods. The ability to consolidate dumps of fuel, whether wood or fossil fuels, was greater in cities that had port and rail, or even canal facilities. The cities, too, were centres of finance, and industrialism was nothing without capital.

Sean Kheraj (York University), a historian of environmental questions, considers the function and meaning of parks – specifically Vancouver's Stanley Park – in the context of modern cities.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: *https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=135#oembed-2*

The effect was a self-reinforcing pattern. Factories moved to towns that had financial credibility (that is, either wealth or the ability to borrow wealth), infrastructure (docks, railyards, etc.) and an established workforce. This was the case in 1879 when Hart Massey closed the last of his agricultural implements business in Newcastle, ON (where it had moved in 1849 from the tiny inland village of Bond Head) and relocated everything to Toronto where it merged with its chief competitor. By 1891, Massey-Harris employed nearly 600 people.[6]

5. L.D. McCann, "The Mercantile-Industrial Transition in the Metals Towns of Pictou Country, 1857-1931," in *Cities and Urbanization: Canadian Historical Perspectives*, ed. Gilbert A. Stelter (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1990): 88-9.

6. Peter G. Goheen, "Currents of Change in Toronto, 1850-1900," in *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban History*, eds. Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F.J. Artibise (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1979): 63.



Figure 3.25 Slaughterhouses, breweries, and markets were an important part of any urban landscape, and were usually found in the very centre of cities. City Market, Saint John, NB in 1910.

While the competition was visibly fierce for investment, giving rise to a generation of civic self-promoters called **boosters**, it was no less pitched when it came to attracting and retaining a population of wage earners. It was the ability of Canadians and immigrants to move from town to town in search of work that made industrialization possible. **Free labour** (untied to the land or to a feudal relationship) was fundamental to the transition to industrialism. This worked well enough when the economy was surging and opportunities beckoned. But when the economy troughed, workers found themselves effectively trapped in the cities where they last hoped to find work. The 1870s, for example, were marked by dramatic protests and hardship in Ottawa, Montreal, and other centres as families complained that they were starving for want of work. In Toronto, the local **House of Industry** received 2,000 applications for refuge between 1879-1882.[7] Cities might create circumstances in which building rental housing for an emergent working class was both necessary and remunerative. In becoming a tenant, however, workers exposed themselves to impermanence and the possibility of eviction. If they lived in **tied housing** and carried debt at the **truck shop** or **company store**, their vulnerabilities could be greater still.

7. Bryan D. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 115.



Figure 3.26 Company towns like Britannia Beach, BC provided rows of identical housing to employees and created small urban-industrial nodes in otherwise rural areas.

Overcrowding was widespread. Health conditions were often poor. Sewage systems were deplorable and only began to improve in the 1890s in most Canadian cities and towns. Water supplies were regularly tainted. Immigrant, Indigenous, and African-Canadian neighbourhoods generally endured worse conditions than those occupied by Anglo- and Franco-Canadians. Housing in some industrial areas was more like dormitories than apartments because of the extensive occupancy of single men and single women. These conditions prevailed at the very time when wealthy and leafy suburbs were being created for the owners of industry. Generally located upwind from the smoke and noise of factories and mills, these wealthy "Nob Hills" paid obeisance to the capitalist hub of Canada — Montreal — and the power of the CPR's elite in their names. A Mount Royal neighbourhood occurs in cities all along the main CPR line. Vancouver's upper-class Shaughnessy neighbourhood was named in 1907 for the then-president of the CPR, and there are Van Horne streets in cities across the country. The hundreds who worked in the switching and freight yards thus lived downwind and often downhill from their economic superiors and employers. Cities had always had elements of spatial segregation based on class and role, but this was being imposed on Canadian cities in a very purposeful way. Awareness of these differences in quality of life and experiences was not unusual.



Figure 3.27 A view of the Montreal docks in 1896 reveals working class housing tucked in among the factories and works yards. Note the laundry on the line in the lower foreground.

Single Industry Towns

Nanaimo, on Vancouver Island, and Sydney, NS are good examples of industrial-era towns with effectively no prior market-town existence.[8] Instant cities of this kind quickly boasted of having the urban amenities found in other 19th century cities: libraries, schools, concert halls, breweries, hotels, restaurants, and newspapers.

The small and new industrial towns generated urban problems as well. The shocking infant mortality rates of industrial Montreal in the last quarter of the 19th century — running to 285 deaths out of every 1,000 births — barely surpassed Nanaimo in 1881 with 250 per 1,000 births. Kamloops, a booming railway and lumber mill town built atop a cattle and fur trade settlement (not to mention ancient Indigenous villages), had an infant mortality rate of 380 of 1,000 births in 1891.[9]

What Nanaimo and most of the Cape Breton mining towns had in common was the fact that they were essentially single industry communities. The same was true of Drumheller (from 1911), the Crowsnest Pass colliery towns, the Kootenay hardrock mining towns, and a great number of lumber mill towns across the Maritimes and much of the rest of the country. In British Columbia, there was a cohort of 25 towns with population of between 500 to about 2,000 people that sprang into existence around 1891. These were primarily mining towns and the largest share of them were in the Kootenays. Only a handful existed a decade earlier and some would become **ghost towns** by 1911.

8. This is not to say that they had no prior history as human settlements. Both were sites of permanent and semi-permanent Indigenous communities before, during, and after industrialization.

9. John Douglas Belshaw, *Becoming British Columbia: A Population History* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 180.

In some instances, these communities were not just limited by a lack of variety of employment opportunities: they were in essence (or formally) **company towns** in which the chief employer was also the landlord, and possibly responsible for civic authority as well. Communities like these were many and they proved to be highly vulnerable to changes in the economic weather. As one historian of a New Brunswick cotton textile town observes, "by 1890 there were over one hundred villages comparable to Milltown. These small towns contained over 4,500 industrial establishments representing over $2.5 million of invested capital and almost 25,000 jobs."[10] The same historian adds that these small industrial nodes constituted "only one-fourteenth of the industrial capacity of the 46 major Canadian cities," and yet the pattern was cast widely and echoed many of the developments witnessed in larger centres. There were representatives of this tier of industrial centres in every province and they were an important part of the Dominion's web of industrial activity.



Figure 3.28 Calgary, ca. 1885. Even small service centres were home to warehouses and processing operations in the industrial age.

10. Peter DeLottinville, "Trouble in the Hives of Industry: The Cotton Industry comes to Milltown, New Brunswick, 1879-1892," in *Labour and Working-Class History in Canada: A Reader*, eds. David Frank and Gregory S. Kealey (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1995): 131.

Exercise: History Around You

Street by Street



Figure 3.29 The imposition of a tramway intersection on an older streetway, like this one in Montreal in 1893, would dramatically change the way the street was used.

The transportation systems of the past leave indelible fingerprints on the dimensions of our cities. Take a look at the oldest part(s) of your city or town. How wide are the streets? If you live in Lillooet, BC, for example, they're extremely wide. That's also the case on the main streets of downtown Winnipeg. In Vancouver's Gastown, Water Street is perhaps a quarter as wide. In the Old Town of Quebec or around Montreal's Ville-Marie they are narrower still, as they are in the heart of St. John's.



Figure 3.30 The appositely named Breakneck Steps in Québec City were clearly not designed for animal traffic nor for trams.

Can one conclude from this that people in the past were much thinner than they are now or that Winnipeggers need wider roads to negotiate a turn?

The answer can be found in the dominant transportation technology of the day. St. John's, Montreal, and Quebec were built with military concerns in mind and some of the topography was (and is) challenging, but what distinguishes them most from later cities is that horses were rare. Most of the carting that was done was powered by human legs. And the turning radius of a handcart is very narrow. Merchants shipping goods into the Cariboo gold towns via Lillooet had something in common with Métis freighters in Winnipeg: they made use of ox teams. The turning radius of a team of oxen pulling a wagon is necessarily very large. In between are the cities where horse traffic dominated. The warehouses of Gastown, in Vancouver, depended on fleets of carters whose moderate-sized horses had to be able to make a U-turn with a small wagon in tow. Multiple horse teams pulling larger wagons required more space — though not as much as a team of oxen — and that transition can be seen in slightly later street layouts.

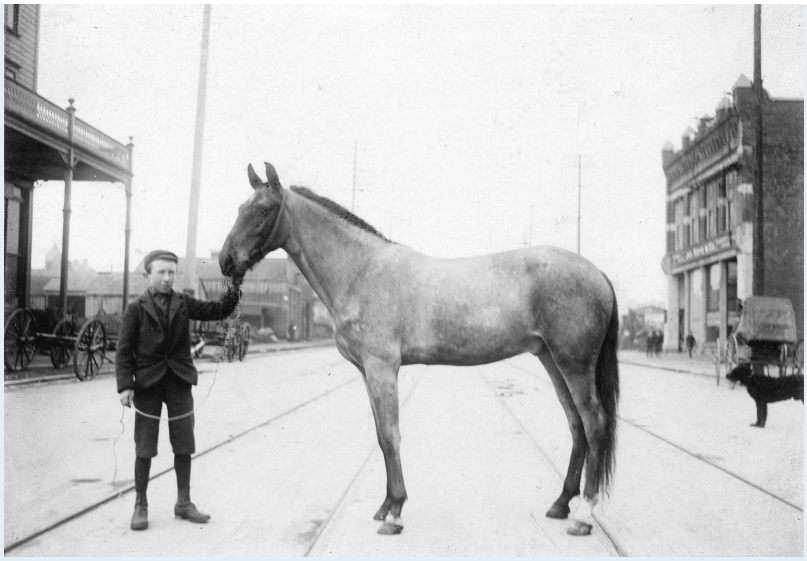


Figure 3.31 A boy and a horse on Hastings Street near Carrall in downtown Vancouver, ca. 1897. Some of the oldest buildings had stables in their basements.

Late 19th and early 20th century cities were typically horse towns. The introduction of streetcars added a new wrinkle, as can be seen across Vancouver where the streetcar system rapidly outstripped the building of neighbourhoods. Streetcar tracks plunged into the forests and through the stumps of South Vancouver and Point Grey, anticipating the arrival of new housing. Before the arrival of the automobile, these various forms of transportation — foot, hoof, electricity-powered streetcar, and bicycles, too — shared the streets in a way that blends the orderly and the chaotic, as can be seen in this 1907 film taken from the front of a streetcar in Vancouver, filmed by United States filmmaker (and victim of the Titanic sinking) William Harbeck.

Where you live and where you work is shaped by the dominant infrastructure of the day. Consider how your town's transportation history can be seen in the size and shape of its streets and how the physical space in which you move is, itself, a historic document.

Key Points

- Urbanization in the period before the 1920s was a diverse and uneven process.
- Two major cities — Montreal and Toronto — emerged that would dwarf all others; the growth and economic health of both was based on industrial economies.
- New cities in the West were challenging the lead held by Central and Eastern Canadian cities.
- Cities increasingly developed sections exclusively occupied by higher or lower social classes, in which conditions were very different.

Media Attributions

- Pretoria Day 1901 Celebrations © James Salmon is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Hogenson_House

- Renfrew Textiles Limited Factory © Harry Hinchley, Library and Archives Canada (PA-100649) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Houses for Mr. Meredith, Montreal, QC, 1903 © William Notman & Son, McCord Museum (II-146359) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- City Market, Saint John, New Brunswick adapted by McCord Museum (X13436) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Britannia Mining and Smelting Co.'s Mine © Dr. A.W. Wilson, Canada Dept. of Mines and Technical Surveys, Library and Archives Canada (PA-013798) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Montreal from Street Railway Power House chimney, QC, 1896 © William Notman & Son, McCord Museum (VIEW-2942) is licensed under a CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution NonCommercial NoDerivatives) license
- Calgary from the Elbow River on the Canadian Pacific Railway © William Notman & Son, Library and Archives Canada (C-017804) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Tramway crossing under construction, Ste. Catherine and St. Lawrence St., Montreal, QC, 1893 © William Notman & Son, McCord Museum (II-102021) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Breakneck Steps, Quebec City, QC, c. 1870 © James George Parks, McCord Museum (MP-0000.307.2) is licensed under a Public Domain license

3.6 Craft and Industrial Unions



Figure 3.32 Labour Day celebrations in Toronto, ca. 1900.

In the 19th century, there was little in the way of what we call **collective bargaining**. Workers regularly entered into contracts directly with employers where the terms may or may not have been standardized. Typically, employers would post a scale of pay as a means of attracting employees but variations could occur. The implications of this situation could be severe. Going on strike constituted a breach of contract between the employer and the individual employee, making the worker liable to dismissal, legal liability (including fines), and even jail time.

The British *Masters and Servants Act* still prevailed in the Dominion in the 1870s. Elements of it would survive for decades due to the divided constitutional responsibility for labour: federal and provincial laws both came into play. As one study demonstrates:

> Fines and imprisonment for simple breaches of employment contracts remained available in several provinces, and in the Dominion employment jurisdiction, well into the 20th century. […] Despite the brave promises of its preamble, the true policy of the [Dominion's labour law] was not to place employers and workers on a footing of legal equality, but to leave the provinces to their own devices while seeming to be doing something to keep the trains on time.[1]

In short, the *Trade Unions Act* of 1872 offered little to organized labour other than to recognize its growing importance on the Canadian political and economic landscape.

Tory and Liberal politicians both recognized a constituency in the making when they looked at the working class, but their first instincts were to support employers and the economic viability of Canada.

1. Paul Craven, "'The Modern Spirit of the Law': Blake, Mowat, and the Breaches of Contract Act, 1877," E*ssays in the History of Canadian Law: In Honour of R.C.B. Risk*, eds. G. Blaine Baker and Jim Phillips (Toronto: Osgood Society for Canadian Legal History/University of Toronto Press, 1999): 159, 162.

That should hardly come as a surprise. Canadian democracy before the 1870s extended only to adult male property owners: the fathers of Confederation were white-collar professionals, merchants, and landowners, not artisans (let alone factory workers). As regards labour relations, the goals of Confederation (at both the federal and provincial level) were to achieve stability and reduce the possibility of workplace and strike violence, and to do that through increased regulation of labour associations. In the face of an obvious alliance between the provincial and federal state and employers, working people took a page from the book of labour elsewhere and began to organize so as to mitigate their weaknesses and amplify their voice.

The Nine Hour Movement

Local unions have their own histories and, therefore, the history of labour in Canada is the tale of a great many organizational processes and struggles. As a whole, however, Canadian labour in the 19th century could turn to a handful of events that were landmarks in the development of a working class.

The first of these was the Nine Hour Movement. Spurred by similar movements in Britain and the United States, agitation for a standardized workday began early in 1872, spreading outward from a hub in Hamilton. The Movement failed at this time, damaged by the decision of George Brown's employees in the Typographical Union to pursue their own agenda separately. The ongoing political rivalry between Brown and John A. Macdonald also played a role. Macdonald saw the strike at Brown's shop as an opportunity to undermine his opponent: he supplied funds to the printers, shoring up their *Ontario Workman* newspaper through the strike. While this intervention cost organized labour their Nine Hours, it presented a separate opportunity of sorts. In the aftermath of the strike, Macdonald cleared away the most repressive of federal anti-union laws and introduced the *Trade Unions Act, 1872*.

Historians have weighed Macdonald's motivations in promoting this legislation. Was he hoping to co-opt the labour movement and to ensure it could be regulated? Was he making a concession to unions which he saw as a necessary evil and an imminent reality? Was he hoping to win the support of the emergent working class by championing their ability to organize? Alternatively, was he merely playing catch-up with Britain? There, the *Trade Union Act* of 1871 legalized unions for the first time. It has been suggested, in this regard, that Macdonald was anxious to ensure that Canada remained appealing to potential British emigrants and worried that an archaic attitude toward labour organizations would deter engineers and other skilled workers from coming to Canada. Whatever Macdonald's motivations, the *Act* opened up enough room that year for the establishment of the first attempt at a national labour centre: the Canadian Labour Union (CLU).

The CLU had the misfortune of arriving just as a severe economic downturn took hold. It collapsed within three years. In the next decade, however, local Trades and Labour Councils would be established in the major cities, and from these would arise the successor institution, the **Trades and Labour Congress of Canada** (TLCC) in 1883. This organization had far greater staying power and survives to this day (though considerably altered) in the form of the **Canadian Labour Congress** (the CLC).

Craft Unions

The older crafts – accessed through long apprenticeships — were the first to organize and did so before

Confederation. Craft unionists had employed several tactics to secure favourable conditions in the workplace. One of their concerns regarding skilled workers — raised repeatedly — was that mechanization, new production systems, and intensification of supervision would cost them their independence and devalue their experience. As **deskilling** progressed, some of these unions advised their members against training new craftsmen so as to control the supply (and thus the price) of their labour. They also opposed competition from prison labour, unapprenticed workers, child labour, and the exploitation of immigrant workers who might accept lower wages.[2] The craft workers are sometimes described as the aristocracy of labour, the best paid and most highly skilled community of workers. **Respectability** was highly valued among craft workers and their ideal in terms of **industrial relations** was a respectful relationship with employers in which they would be treated as equals in an emergent liberal democratic order. This meant that, at times, the craft workers' inclination was to draw a line between themselves and unskilled labour.

The Knights of Labor

Several omnibus labour organizations flourished and then fizzled-out in the period between Confederation and 1920 — three in particular. Of these, the first provides a transition between the old crafts-based organizations and the new trade unions. It recognized the connected agendas and priorities of labour in the broadest sense. This was the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor.[3]

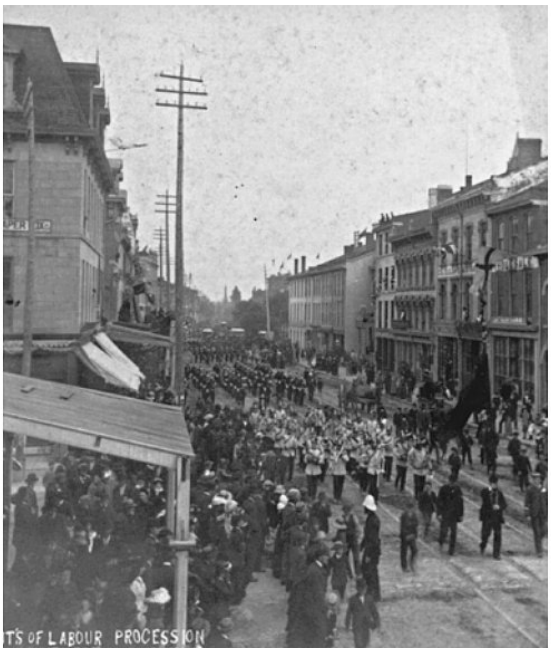


Figure 3.33 A Knights of Labor procession in Hamilton, ca. 1885.

Drawing on the traditions of secret societies, benevolent associations, and religious symbolism, the Knights had at least as much in common with fraternal orders — like the Masonic Lodge — as they did

2. Craig Heron, *The Canadian Labour Movement: A Short History*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1989), 16.

3. Because the Knights began in the United States, the American spelling of "labor" is always applied.

with the trade unions that followed. Founded in Philadelphia in 1869, the Knights crossed the border into Canada in the 1870s.

The Knights were enormously popular for several reasons. They drew all trades and crafts under their umbrella, included men and women, promoted temperance with regard to alcohol, and in the early years, their organization was shrouded in the mystery of secret rituals. The movement — and it was a movement in that it touched many aspects of life and spoke to a whole way of being, and not just industrial relations — was deeply imbued with the idea of a respectable working class. The older, skilled crafts that shared a common tradition of artisanal training and discrete organization in an era when unions were illegal put their stamp on the attitude and approach of the Knights. Its membership, however, was much broader.

In Canada, the Knights were noteworthy for their organizational skills and also for pulling into one body workers from English- and French-Canada. The Knights were also popular in the less industrialized communities of the West and extremely popular among workers in British Columbia. Their vision of a revitalized and reformed society, economy, and democracy had an enormous and general appeal in an era of rapid change and wild fluctuations in employment opportunities:

> Somehow their moral outrage and vision of a more communitarian alternative caught the mood of thousands of anxious workers, who were prepared to take a stand against the dominant social and economic developments of the late 19th century. The sense of a great moral crusade was in the air.[4]

The Knights, of course, had enemies; in Canada the Catholic Church of Quebec was in the forefront. Archbishop Taschereau (1820-98) went so far as to issue an excommunication decree which forbade good Catholics from membership in the Knights.[5] Did the Archbishop's fulminations matter? The Vatican told him to retreat, and in the year that followed nearly two-dozen new local assemblies of the Knights were established in Montreal.[6] (The Knights did, however, drop the "Noble and Holy Order" title in the 1880s because Catholic members and clergymen were troubled by the apparent connection with Freemasonry.) The Knights had less success in Nova Scotia, where workers were reluctant to join this international organization. There, an indigenous working-class body — the Provincial Workmen's Association — filled the space that was elsewhere occupied by the Knights.

Although the Knights were largely inclusive, the door was not open to everyone. Bankers, lawyers, stockbrokers (and speculators in shares), and liquor vendors were not welcome — nor was Asian labour. The Knights were partially colour-blind in that they included African-Americans and African-Canadians. However, Asian immigrants constituted the one visible minority for which the Knights had no tolerance. The Knights backed Asian exclusion laws in the United States and in Canada, and portrayed Chinese labour as an army of potential strike breakers. Race riots in the Pacific Northwest targeting Chinese-Americans resulted in deaths and confirmed the Knights' adamant hostility to Asian workers. This was part of the appeal (and part of the limitation) of the Knights in British Columbia, where anti-Asian workers' groups abounded from the 1860s through the early 20th century.

4. Craig Heron, *The Canadian Labour Movement: A Short History* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1989), 26.

5. Nive Voisine, "TASCHEREAU, ELZÉAR-ALEXANDRE", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 12, University of Toronto/ Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 29 June 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/taschereau_elzear_alexandre_12E.html.

6. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience*, 131.

The rhetoric, it must be said, was complex. What non-Asian workers had to say went well beyond a racist objection to working alongside Chinese labourers or losing their place in the workplace to immigrants. On Vancouver Island in the mid-1880s, the Knights argued that Chinese labour had a deleterious effect on the confidence and ability of young people. "Our boys," complained the Knights at Nanaimo, "grow up to near manhood without an opportunity to earn any part of their living such as they might have were there no Chinese, and such as boys have in other parts of the world." The mine manager went so far as to invoke fear of adolescent delinquency:

> where Chinese labour is easily procured white youths from 15 years of age and upwards do not find such ready employment as elsewhere, and consequently are not so well trained in habits of industry. [There] is growing up amongst us a class of idlers who will not conduce to the well-being of the state.[7]

The impact of Asian workers on non-Asian youth, however, was at the end of the day another arrow in a quiver that overflowed with objections — real and imaginary.

The Knights began to fade in the 1880s, although they survived as active participants in labour negotiations here and there until the eve of the Great War in 1914. Their slide was a manifestation of the very economic uncertainty that the Knights wanted to address. As competition for jobs intensified, the opportunities to wring concessions from employers evaporated. Internal divisions over the Knights' rather tepid position on industrial militance cost them support. Workers increasingly wanted results and, if needs be, confrontations with recalcitrant employers. Dual membership in craft unions and the Knights allowed some workers to enjoy the philosophical and sociological ambitions of the Knights while fighting more concerted battles for better wages and working conditions through their unions. In 1886, the dangers of dual unionism came to the fore when the Knights endorsed cigar makers who were not part of the Cigar Makers' International Union (CMIU). This created competing associations in the same trade. Tobacco processing had a presence in every town of any size in Canada and the CMIU membership was outraged. Thereafter, the cigar makers began an exodus into a different kind of association.

7. Canada, Sessional Papers, *Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration*, no.54a (Ottawa: 1885): xvii, 88, 158.



Figure 3.34 Historic view of the Inland Cigar Factory in Kamloops, 1895. Note the presence of child workers.

The International Craft Unions

The Knights' loss of support fed the growth of a new labour centre. In the United States, this took the form in 1886 of the **American Federation of Labor** (AFL), headed by the cigar makers' leader, Samuel Gompers. The same year, the Canadian equivalent — the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) — was established as a federation of local Labour Councils in the major cities. Canadian unions were the rule, not the exception at this time. Gompers' goal, however, was to unite Canadian and American workers along international craft lines.

While Canadian politicians were engaged in nation-building, skilled workers were simultaneously looking to international organizations for their future. Immigrants to Canada brought with them the labour traditions of their homelands and awareness that there were organizations onto which Canadians might graft their own. Some of the first international unions in Canada were based in Britain, but it was American craft unionism that led the way. Coopers, iron moulders, and shoe makers established cross-border alliances and shared strategies back and forth. Withdrawal of labour (in a strike) was invariably countered by employers with the introduction of new workers who were referred to as **strikebreakers**

or, in the colloquial, scabs. Strikers had to adopt tactics to keep out strikebreakers, whether at the factory door or at the international border. Violent conflict between strikers and strikebreakers was a common occurrence and US-based organizations helped Canadian craft unions by discouraging American workers from playing the strikebreaker role, and by providing financial resources to sustain their Canadian partners.

International unionism of this kind took place in an industrial environment dominated by Great Lakes cities like Toronto, Buffalo, Hamilton, Cleveland, Windsor, and Detroit. Workers moved back and forth over the borders and across the lakes, raising the prospect of American strikebreakers showing up during Canadian disputes, and vice versa. There was also the possibility that, during strikes, factories on one side of the frontier would flood markets on the other side with goods in such a way that the striking union's position would be undermined. Speaking with one voice had distinct advantages and clearly many Canadian craft workers agreed. The AFL-TLC alliance would prove to be a very long-lasting one.

AFL influence over Canadian locals increased through the 1890s, and in 1902 AFL elements took control of the TLC at its annual conference. The AFL's Canadian organizer, John Flett, was elected president; Knights and Canadian unions alike were expelled.

Industrial Unions and the IWW

The 1902 break with non-craft and purely Canadian organizations, however, left a gulf in the state of labour organization.

The process of deskilling was one factor in the rise of industrial labour. Another was the creation of wholly new industries unrelated to the sorts of things done by craft workers 50 years earlier. A good, and often militant, example was the street railway sector in the major cities, most of which were run by private businesses and none of which could be said to displace an older mode of production.

Both new industries and deskilling led to growing numbers of workers with limited skills to defend themselves, and a greater likelihood that they would face instability over their working career. Once work had achieved a degree of mechanization and automation, or where it had been reduced to the simplest of physical labours, it was possible to create a class of workers for whom apprenticeships held no attraction and few advantages. This class of less skilled worker, however, was an interchangeable part, easily dismissed and easily replaced. In addition, the industrial worker lacked the cultural capital of the craft and even the trade worker. There was no associational tradition, no history of organization or mutual support on which to erect a new movement. Industrial workers were often new immigrants with limited abilities in French or English which put them at a further disadvantage. If they were recruited by labour agents they might be obliged to work to repay their immigration costs, so they were financially vulnerable, too, and sometimes fearful of deportation. Nevertheless, no class of workers posed as significant a threat to the ascent of capitalism as the industrial workers, particularly in the form of the Industrial Workers of the World (the IWW).



Figure 3.35 Organizing men and women, Canadians and immigrants alike, the IWW took the novel approach of printing materials in several languages and using songs to transmit their message. The chief songwriter of the IWW, Joe Hill, has an important connection with Canada.

The qualities that made industrial labour desirable from the perspective of capitalism, also made it dangerous. The very mobility of the unskilled meant that they were difficult to discipline. They were most often found in resource extraction industries like the silver mines and smelters of the Kootenays in BC, where single (or at least wife-less) men dominated. The Western Federation of Miners (WFM) organized many of these workers and preached a radical doctrine that disturbed the AFL-TLC. Their low skill levels meant that they moved from one industry to the next, from road building to dock work to mills and lumber camps. This interchangeability made it possible for the IWW to talk about **one big union**, an organization that took in everybody, including Asian-Canadians. As one West Coast Socialist Party leader said in 1912, "workers must get wise to the fact that what is needed is bigger unions and less unions."[8]

Employers certainly didn't pull their punches in response. A pronounced lack of solidarity from the

8. R.P. Pettipiece, quoted in Mark Leier, "Solidarity on Occasion: The Vancouver Free Speech Fights of 1909 and 1912," *Labour/Le Travail*, 23 (Spring 1989): 56.

crafts unions did not help matters, but employer intrigue, use of private security companies, subversion of the unions, and deployment of local militias both punished and galvanized the industrial unions. A good example of this is the 1903 waterfront strike in Vancouver, led by the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees (UBRE) against the CPR. The local labour leader, Frank Rogers, was elevated to the ranks of "labour martyr" when he was shot to death on the docks. The UBRE's position became increasingly untenable but strike activity spread to the coal mines at Extension on Vancouver Island. There, the WFM was engaged in its own struggle, one that was painted by the CPR (one of the main clients for coal from the Extension mine near Ladysmith) as an illegal **sympathy strike**. John Hinde, describing the reaction of authorities in Victoria, Ottawa, and the boardrooms of the CPR, captures the intersection of class-warfare and nationalist sensibilities of the time:

> Fearful of sympathy strikes, an unambiguous statement of union and working-class power, the authorities subsequently led a frontal assault on the strikers and their unions. […] they viewed the Extension strike as part of a wider conspiracy by illegitimate revolutionary socialist organizations affiliated with American labour interests to disrupt the Canadian economy and to corrupt Canadian workers, and were therefore determined to crush the union.[9]

This confrontation hurt the WFM, which began a downward spiral from which it never recovered. Some of its American leadership — the most noteworthy being William "Big Bill" Haywood (1869-1928) — shifted their energies to a new industrial union, the Industrial Workers of the World.

The IWW (nicknamed the Wobblies on account of the way some immigrant members pronounced the W's), was the antithesis of the parallel layers of craft unions organized along skill lines and working in a particular industry. The Wobblies called for a singular labour organization to which every individual worker could belong. It was mobilized by one idea: the defeat of capitalism.

Not only did the IWW propose to dismantle the **business unions** of the AFL and dilute the skill pool within the craft and trade unions, it proposed to overturn the system entirely and favoured a socialist alternative. The instrument with which the IWW proposed to accomplish this was an all-encompassing labour action, a **general strike**. Building toward this goal involved several sectoral strikes along the way.

The Pre-War Labour Revolt

Labour unrest was increasing from 1896 on, but it spiked in the years leading to the Great War. In 1901, there were 99 strikes and lockouts. This number peaked in 1907 at 188, and then again in 1912 at 181. The number of employees involved leapt from 285 in 1901 to more than a thousand in each of 1903, 1910, 1912, and 1913. What was most dramatic, however, was the aggregate number of working days lost. In 1901, it was 737,808 but by 1911 it had reached 1,821,084.[10] Labour relations were badly unsettled and strikes got both longer and more numerous between 1910 and 1913.[11] This

9. John R. Hinde, *When Coal Was King: Ladysmith and the Coal-Mining Industry on Vancouver Island*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2003), 133.

10. Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd ed., ed. F. H. Leacy (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983): E190-208.

11. Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd ed., ed. F.H. Leacy (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983): E190-197.

pattern includes the dramatic Canadian Northern Railway (CNR) strike of 1912, which involved some 7,000 railway construction workers drawn from more than a dozen different language groups.[12]

Whenever workers in pre-WWI Canada went on strike, they knew that they were stepping into a legal minefield. The right to strike was not enshrined and striking was the equivalent of breaking a contract, which subjected workers to the possibility of federal state intervention. Immigrant workers faced deportation. In some industries, particularly during wartime, labour stoppages were tantamount to treason. Even in peacetime, the militia was not infrequently dispatched to protect strikebreakers and evict strikers from company housing. In these circumstances, the interest of the state and capital were unambiguously aligned.

Of the international trade unions in this period, the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) stands out. It had a powerful influence in the coal- and metal-mining communities in Nova Scotia, Alberta, British Columbia, and elsewhere. The UMWA followed craft union strategies, focusing on working conditions and wages, but it would be an error to understate its militance. In the hardrock mines of the Kootenays and the collieries of the Crowsnest Pass, the UMWA emerged as the dominant international trade union. The union was in Lethbridge, too, and in 1906 there erupted a strike that lasted for nine months. What was significant about this confrontation — one of many in a period marked by intensifying labour-capital conflict — is the role played by the state. A 32 year old bureaucrat in Ottawa, William Lyon Mackenzie King (1874-1950), the Deputy Minister of Labour since 1900, was sent to Alberta to diffuse the situation. (Winter was coming and there were fears of a “coal famine” on the Prairies.) This third-party bargaining was a novel approach and it had the effect of reducing the strikers’ strength even though the employer might have buckled. King followed this up with the *Industrial Disputes Investigations Act* (*IDIA*) of 1907, legislation that inserted the federal government as a third-party in specific kinds of labour disputes. Whenever the *IDIA* was invoked, strikers were required to return to work in a cooling-off period while bargaining proceeded. The effect was to build up stockpiles of goods so that the employer was no longer desperate for a settlement.[13] The unions, naturally, hated this.

It was this context of growing confrontation and frustration at the intransigence of employers, government, and business unions, which radicalized parts of the Canadian workforce and labour movement. The Wobblies’ appeal reflects the limitations of craft unionism, particularly in sectors that would not be organized by the crafts. Faced with some of the worst and most dangerous working conditions, the posture of the IWW and the One Big Union (OBU) movement became more radical. It took on employers but it also took on the law. The Free Speech protests of 1909 and 1912 in Vancouver, are a good example of confrontations in which the Wobblies played a key role, and which were not specifically about working conditions or wages.[14]

12. Craig Heron, *The Canadian Labour Movement: A Short History*, (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1989), 43.

13. H. Blair Neatby, “KING, WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE”, in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 17, University of Toronto/ Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 29 June 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/king_william_lyon_mackenzie_17E.html.

14. Mark Leier, “Solidarity on Occasion: The Vancouver Free Speech Fights of 1909 and 1912,” *Labour/Le Travail*, 23 (Spring 1989): 39-66.



Figure 3.36 Mounted police arrive at Oppenheimer Park to put down a Free Speech demonstration in Vancouver, 1912.

The militance of the pre-Great War years crested in 1912 but threatened to resume in 1914. As far as the anti-labour elements were concerned, in this regard the war arrived just in time. Wartime conditions and the radicalization of the working class globally, however, would present very different conditions in the period from 1914-1920.



Figure 3.37 Southeastern British Columbia was, in the 1890s, a constellation of small-to-middling mining towns. These hardrock miners from the Tariff Mine near Ainsworth were heavily influenced by labour organizations out of the nearest metropolis: Spokane, Washington.

Key Points

- The creation of an industrial working class created new tensions in Canadian society.
- The ability to organize into defensive associations or unions arrived in the 1870s.
- Craft unions represented the most skilled and best paid workers, and presented the respectable face of labour.
- The Knights of Labor originated in the United States and organized workers from across many crafts and industries into one body.
- Individual craft unions pursued a more confrontational approach and built international bodies to advance their interests, with the AFL emerging as the dominant labour organizer.
- Deskilling and new kinds of work produced a population of less skilled industrial workers who, in the absence of support from the international craft unions, established industrial unions.

Media Attributions

- Toronto Labour Day Parade is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Knights of Labour Procession on King Street, 1865 © W. Farmer, Library and Archives Canada (PA-103086) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Historic view of the Inland Cigar Factory, 1895 © City of Kamloops Museum and Archives, #8490 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- "The Rebel Girl" Cover, 1915 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Tariff Mine near Ainsworth, 1897 is licensed under a Public Domain license

3.7 Limits of Democracy

The 1850s and 1860s witnessed the rise of a new class of political leaders and a new style of politics in British North America. The aristocratic airs of the **Family Compact** in Upper Canada and the HBC **squirearchy** on Vancouver Island were trademarks of a leadership caste on whom the sun was setting. In their place were men — and they were all men — of business, the law, and journalism. They were very much unlike their predecessors: wheelers, dealers, and professionals practiced at speaking and arguing a point. They weren't without airs but they were willing to wade into a crowd and take on the mantle of **populism**. They were also men on the make; corruption, graft, and bribery were mainstays of Canadian politics. The Pacific Scandal was only the most consequential of what would be generations of pay-offs associated with the "railway hucksters" whose avarice and ambition, according to one historian, "plunged Canada into an orgy of railway overproduction."[1] These conditions were not exclusive to Ottawa and federal politics: the railway binge in British Columbia that began in the 1890s and accelerated under Premier Richard McBride's Conservatives was no less dubious in its ethics.

The culture of democracy in Victorian and Edwardian Canada was, effectively, an exclusive club. The federal government represented landowning farmers, merchants, and professionals — people who, by dint of their investment in the economy, were seen as stakeholders in the running of the country. And their qualifications were gilded, generally, by a better education. This is what privilege looked like in the late 19th century, and it helps to explain why the thought of overthrowing rather than voting out the government appealed to so many radicals in the labour movement and political activists on the left. It simply wasn't their government.

The Franchise

The ballot box and Canadian-style parliamentary democracy held out the promise of an empowered public. The principle of responsible government was a premise of membership in the Dominion: it was seized upon by British Columbia when the colony became a province in 1871 and would be part of the package that created Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905. What remained at issue was how to define that public. Who was the electorate and how (and when) should they be allowed to express their preferences and cast their votes?

For working people these questions were extremely important. An electorate made up of the wealthy would result in governments that were bound to be unsympathetic to workers' concerns. As workers' populations increased in urban areas, the disconnect between governments (civic, provincial, and federal) that represented economic elites rather than the majority of city-dwellers became more apparent. As well, urban working people sometimes found themselves at odds with rural Canadians.

In large measure these conditions arose because of property qualifications and other limits on the electorate. During the period from 1867-1920 the provinces decided their own electoral rules and, for

1. Bryan D. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience: Rethinking the History of Canadian Labour, 1800-1991*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1992), 82-3.

many of these years, they determined the federal qualifications as well. These were based first and foremost on race and gender. With few exceptions, Indigenous people simply did not have the vote. Nor did Asians. Nor, until the Great War, did women of any ethnicity or social class. What most constrained the size of the (male) electorate, however, were qualifications based on property and income.

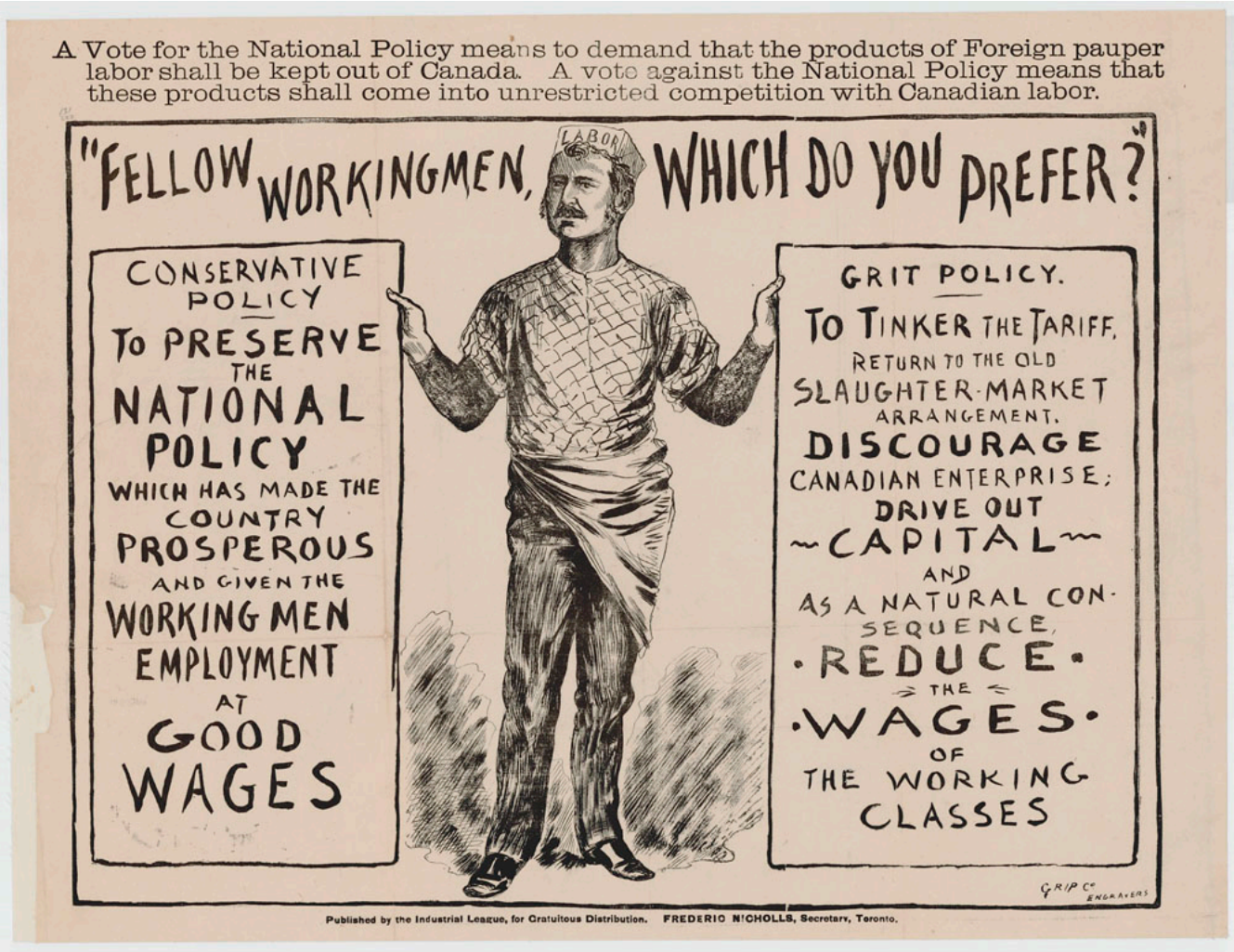
In 1885 the Macdonald government brought control of the federal franchise back to Ottawa. Adulthood was defined as 21 years and an income qualification was added at this time: $150 annually for rural Canadians; $300 for urban Canadians. At this time $2 a day in factory wages was fairly good for men working a six-day week.[2] Keep in mind that stoppages occurred for many reasons, including weather conditions. To take one example, the relatively well-paid coal miners of Vancouver Island appear to have only worked a 222-day work-year on average, which severely cut into their apparent high wages of $3 a day. In short, while some working men might have made the income target, many others did not. Property-ownership requirements were a further, and longer-standing restriction on working people, the majority of whom rented their homes. Technically the 1885 *Electoral Franchise Act* made allowances for tenants but this, too, was deceptive. Federally and provincially, what appears to be **universal male suffrage** was in fact only extended to males who satisfied residence requirements. While this might be an easy bar to reach in rural areas and small towns, it was much more elusive in areas of high labour mobility. Where seasonal labour prevailed, conditions might be worse still. In an environment where winter conditions prohibited work year-round in the forests, on the seas, along canals, and in the fields, the requirement of 12 months residence in the constituency was for many working people the last and highest hurdle.

Whole classes of men were excluded from the franchise for reasons beyond their control. Legal barriers were erected to prevent Indigenous men from voting in several provinces, and in British Columbia it was illegal for Chinese men to vote, regardless of their wealth. Macdonald's *Electoral Franchise Act, 1885* took on these limitations and extended them to Indigenous peoples who had earlier been able to vote. What's more, Macdonald exploited provisions for a federally-managed voters' list that would be assembled by party loyalists. This had predictable results. Voter fraud and impersonation, arbitrary and purposeful sabotage of voters' names on the electoral rolls (which could leave them unqualified to vote), and the buying and selling of votes continued to be part and parcel of Canadian elections well into the 1890s.

The Liberal government under Wilfrid Laurier was more favourably disposed to decentralized management of elections and passed the voters' rolls back to the provinces. This time, however, the ability to discriminate on the basis of local biases was curtailed. Indigenous voting rights remained entangled in a complex of rules but the direct obstacles to Asians voting were lifted and then re-imposed via literacy requirements. Manitoba similarly restricted Slavic voters by requiring literacy in English, German, French, or a Scandinavian language. Putting the provinces in charge meant inevitable national disparities. Property qualifications remained in place in Quebec and the three Maritime provinces. The overall effect was to create and to entrench rules that ostensibly gave the vote to every male, aged 21 or more, who was a British subject (Canadian citizenship having not yet been invented),

2. Information on wages in the 19th century is difficult to come by and few studies extant offer comprehensive data. The *Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital* of 1889 interviewed workers and supervisors who generally placed men's wages between $7 and $15 per week. Women's wages were typically half that of men, and children's wages sometimes half again.

but to perpetuate local quirks that could strip a Canadian of his federal vote the moment he crossed a provincial boundary line.



Library and Archives Canada / Bibliothèque et Archives Canada
www.collectionscanada.gc.ca

Figure 3.38 The Conservatives campaign for the working men's vote, 1891. [Long Description]

Labour's Parties

Internationalism was a tenet of the socialist movement in the 19th century. But forging connections with labour organizations in Britain, let alone France or Germany, was an improbable task for Canadian workers. By default international became continental, as Canadian associations partnered up with larger American organizations. As a threat to the Canadian political elite, this was a kind of double-jeopardy: not only did the unions pose an apparent threat to the profit margin of Canadian businesses, they were aligned with organizations based in what many Canadians regarded as a (commercially and politically) hostile neighbour.

Despite the impediments, popular interest in electoral politics grew and by the 1880s the working class was making forays into electoral politics. One way they did so was through an American organization:

Knights of Labor candidates began to run in Canadian elections. At the same time, middle-class Liberal and Conservative candidates were cutting their own cloth so as to appeal to workers, adopting policies and taking positions that echoed working-class concerns. The Tories and the Grits even endorsed working men in single-industry towns to run for office under their respective banners. The mainstream parties certainly made efforts to attract worker votes, and they embraced a more inclusive political rhetoric to that end.

For a while something similar happened in Britain and the other White Dominions. The Liberal government of Prime Minister William Gladstone won the loyalty of more than a generation of working-class British voters by significantly broadening the franchise to working men. In response, in the 1880s, British trade unionists and social reform-oriented intellectuals made their way into Gladstone's Liberal Party and ran for election (with some success) as **Liberal-Labour (Lib-Lab)** candidates. More definitively, working-class parties also emerged: the Scottish Labour Party was founded in 1888 and the Independent Labour Party in 1893. In 1900, the Trades Union Congress (the British equivalent of the TLC) established the foundation of what later became the **Labour Party** in 1906. Parallel events occurred in Australia (from 1891) and New Zealand (between 1901 and 1916) but not in Canada. Why did turn-of-the-century Canadian labour move in a different direction?

The TLC's close ties with the AFL offers an explanation. In the United States, the AFL favoured a strategy of pitting the Democrats against the Republicans on workers' issues. The AFL's leader, Samuel Gompers, took the view that labour should "reward its friends and punish its enemies" at the ballot box, and did not offer up an independent partisan alternative. As the AFL's influence over the TLC grew, the door closed on a labour-left political alliance in Canada. Gompers regarded the socialists with contempt, describing them as "political healers," akin to faith healers and mystics whose commitment to workers' conditions was secondary to winning power. He was in favour, instead, of getting trade unionists elected to office who would then change the attitudes of the major North American political parties from the inside. The TLC followed this course and in 1902 voted the Knights out of the Congress' membership and kept the SPC at bay. Direct involvement in politics by the TLC would have to wait until the 1960s.

The TLC's strategy in the early 1900s was to run sympathetic candidates in the Liberal Party (generally regarded as more favourably disposed toward unions, at least until about 1906) and this met with some success. Canadian Lib-Lab candidates promoted an agenda of **labourism**, which consisted mostly of democratic reforms, the eight-hour day, a minimum wage, and educational opportunities for all.[3] The TLC in 1906 considered establishing a Labour Party but the British Columbian delegates saw this as too moderate an approach and established the Socialist Party of BC (SPBC). Other provincial labour centres then began generating parties of their own. In Manitoba, Ontario, and Nova Scotia, Independent Labour Parties appeared. Credible candidates ran successfully in urban and mining districts. A Labour Party competed in elections in Quebec, principally in Montreal.

Ideological differences separated these various tactics and parties. As each organization grew stronger and as factionalism continued to grow, the opportunities for forging a national alliance receded. The first two decades of the 20th century would see the emergence of a distinct strain of revolutionary socialism on the West Coast that was profoundly out of sync with the rest of Canada's labour

3. Palmer, *Working-Class Experience*, 177.

movement, particularly those elements most influenced by what was going on in Britain.[4] This left wing of labour's political arm rejected reformism and was stridently uncompromising when it came to capitalism and even more so when it came to labourist **gradualism**— and it was popular. Between 1907-1909 the SPBC's support grew from 10% to 22% of the provincial vote and it elected two members of the legislative assembly. Its career thereafter is considered further in Chapter 8.

One Man, One Vote

If ever there was a golden age of Canadian democracy, it won't be found in the years before the Great War. Middle-class arguments for inclusion in a democratic order revolved around the idea of being invested in a community: having a home, a residence, a business, and being part of that wealth-generating class that at first drove the market towns and was now building the industrial cities. Giving the vote to working men who lacked wealth, education, and property, not to mention a permanent residence in the community in which they proposed to vote, required a significant readjustment of principles. There were, too, those who expected working men to vote as their employer told them to. This was, in fact, how things worked in the days before the secret ballot, which only arrived in most parts of Canada in 1874.

In short, democratic avenues to social and political change were not especially welcoming to working people. Efforts were made to make it otherwise, but it would take the transformative power of a World War to effect real changes. Organizations like the Knights stand out as an early attempt to lay claim to the politics of identity: they articulated a kind of class consciousness — one based on the dignity of labour — but they were not socialists. Where the impact of the Knights was more lasting was in its role as a movement of reform. It offered a critique of the values of late Victorian capitalism that survived in various forms for generations.

Key Points

- Democracy in early post-Confederation Canada was limited by income, property, residence, race, and gender.
- Provincial restrictions on the franchise influenced federal rules as well.
- Political organizations representing labour and/or working people did not develop in Canada the same way they did in other parts of the British Empire.
- Labour's political strategies often involved supporting the Liberal or Conservative parties, although the hard left ran socialist candidates.

Long Descriptions

Figure 3.38 long description: Conservative Party advertisement in favour of the National Policy. The

4. Donald Avery, *Reluctant Host: Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896-1994* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1995), 64-5.

top of the notice reads “A Vote for the National Policy means to demand that the products of Foreign pauper labor shall be kept out of Canada. A vote against the National Policy means that these products shall come into unrestricted competition with Canadian labor.”

Below is a cartoon of a man wearing a hat labelled “Labor” holding two signs. He says, “Fellow workingmen, which do you prefer?” The sign on the left says “Conservative Policy: To preserve the National Policy which has made the country prosperous and given the working men employment at good wages.” The sign on the right says “Grit Policy. To tinker the tariff, return to the old slaughter market arrangement. Discourage Canadian enterprise; drive out capital and as a natural consequence, reduce the wages of the working classes.” The cartoon is signed by Grip Co. Engravers.

The notice is published by the Industrial League, “for Gratuitous Distribution,” and signed by Frederic Nicholls, Secretary, Toronto. [Return to Figure 3.38]

Media Attributions

- A Vote for the National Policy, 1891 © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3939876) is licensed under a Public Domain license

3.8 Early Women's Movement(s) in Canada

Nancy M. Forestell; Department of History; and St. Francis Xavier University



Figure 3.39 Mrs. Willoughby Cummings (née Emily McCausland, 1851–1930) was a key figure in the National Council of Women. As a pioneer female journalist and editor at the Globe newspaper, she exemplifies the activist and professional sides of first wave feminism.

Alongside and sometimes overlapping with the various social reform causes which emerged in the latter part of the part of the 19th century was the **first wave** of the Canadian **feminist** movement. While historians once identified the creation of the Toronto Women's Literary Society in 1876 as marking the official origin of a women's movement, more recent scholarship indicates that a variety of women and organizations were engaged in pursuits related to fair treatment and equal rights at least several decades earlier. The specific context of British North America as a settler society shaped by histories of colonialism and slavery had a significant influence on women's activism from the outset. Belated acknowledgement is now being given to the Indigenous roots of the first wave in North America with

documented cases of Indigenous women demonstrating a critical gender consciousness, acting "in what they perceived to be their own best interests as women as human beings," and most often to combat the deleterious consequences of colonialism.[1] One prominent example involved the Anishinaabe woman, Nahebahwequa (also known as Catherine Sutton), who protested in 1860 against her dispossession from land she considered a birthright, an event that arose because she had married a non-Indigenous man. Another key element in the genesis of feminist activism was the ongoing legacy of slavery and female engagement in international **abolitionist** networks. By the mid-19th century, concerns about the injustices of slavery became increasingly connected with another kind of bondage seen to be experienced by women. It remains unclear the extent to which Black and White female abolitionists were able to easily or consistently overcome the racial divide, but there is a record of mixed race attendance at lectures on anti-slavery and women's rights as well as mutual support for integrated education in the 1850s and 1860s. These initiatives were accompanied by efforts to secure women's property rights, the quest for higher education, and the formation of female-exclusive church organizations. Altogether, they laid the basis for women to pursue the attainment of additional rights and play a more significant role in public campaigns for social reform. As in other national contexts, there was not a singular women's movement in Canada as such; rather, a diverse range of activists who dedicated themselves to a wide array of political, social, economic, and cultural issues.

In the latter part of the 19th century and continuing into the 20th century, two main arguments were put forward by feminists to secure greater civil and political rights, and to achieve greater influence for Canadian women in civil society. One was premised on an **equal rights** ethos that women and men shared a common humanity, and hence, women should be able to attend university, gain access to selection occupations, vote, and etc. as a matter of natural justice. The other emphasized women's differences from men, and in particular that their near universal role as mothers specially equipped them to participate in a wide range of reform and political campaigns. Referred to as **maternal feminism**, this form of argument emphasized that women could apply the knowledge and attributes they acquired as mothers to address various inequities and social ills. While some female activists solely employed one position over the other, many strategically used both. Nonetheless, those who came to predominate among the mainstream women's organizations, namely middle-class Anglo-Celtic Protestant women, most closely identified with maternal feminism. They were especially prevalent in the first national umbrella women's organization, the **National Council of Women of Canada** (NCWC), formed in 1893. They were not the only ones of course, as francophone Catholic women who became part of the provincial group, the **Fédération National Saint-Jean-Baptiste** (FNSB), founded in 1907 also saw themselves as maternal feminists.[2]

1. Jean Barman, "Indigenous Women and Feminism on the Cusp of Contact," in *Indigenous Women, and Feminism: Politics, Activism, Culturei*, eds. Cheryl Zuzack et al. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2010): 93.

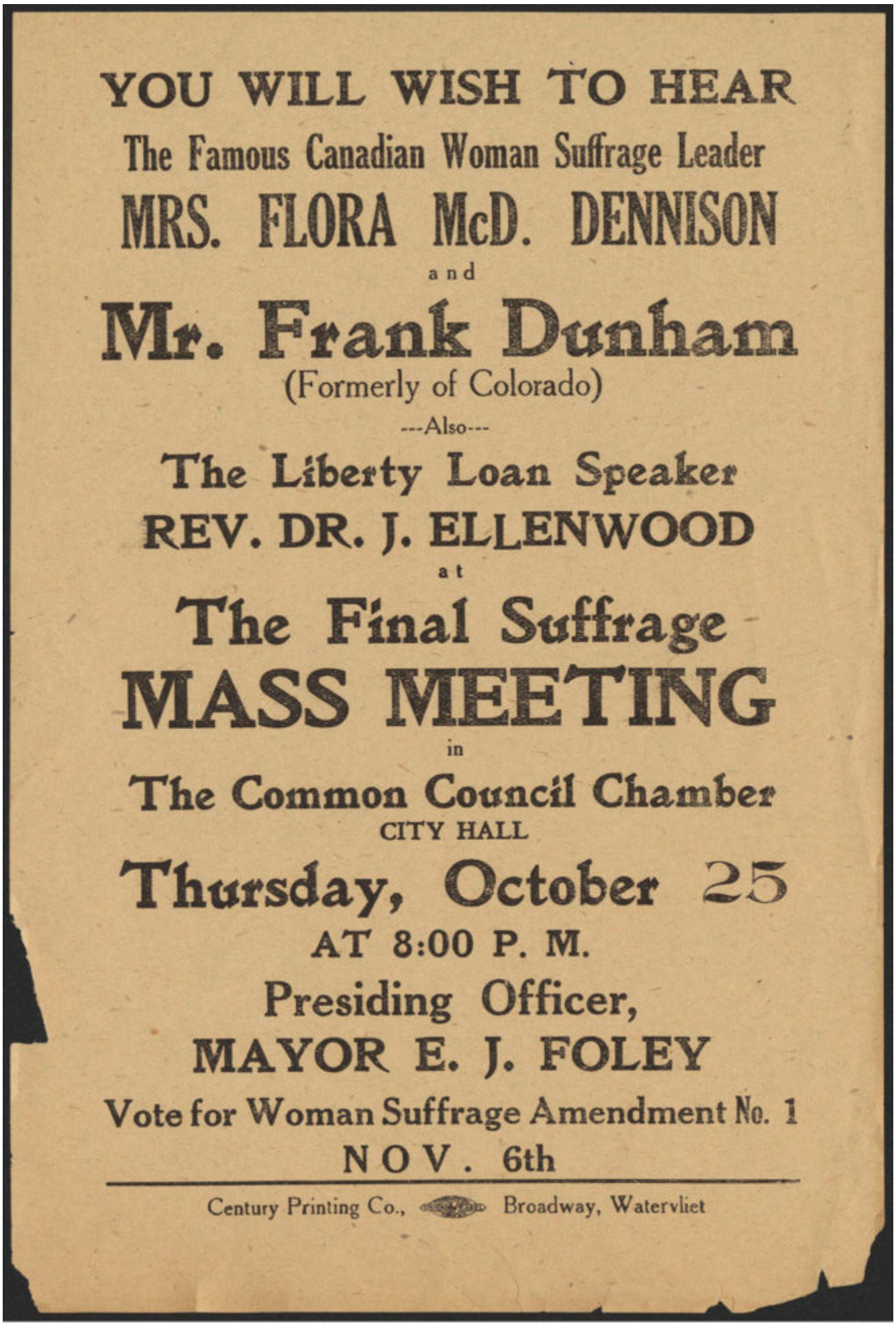
2. Karine Hébert, "A Maternalist Organization in Quebec: The Fédération Nationale Saint-Jean-Baptiste and the Struggle for Women's Suffrage," in *Quebec Since 1800: Selected Readings*, ed. Michael Behiels (Toronto: Irwin, 2002): 461-491.



Figure 3.40 The 1898 NCWC gathered at Rideau Hall in the company of one of its champions, Lady Aberdeen (centre) and her husband, the governor general.

One of the central issues of the first wave was the struggle for **female suffrage** which involved a protracted campaign with feminist activists laying claim to full political citizenship. While single-issue suffrage groups in Canada remained relatively small and mainly confined to urban centres until the turn of the 20th century, the large female prohibition group the **Women's Christian Temperance Union** (WCTU) was a vocal proponent from the 1870s onward. As with a number of other women's reform groups at the time, the WCTU did not view the attainment of female suffrage as the primary goal in and of itself, but rather as a means to achieve greater political influence for social improvement. Although the suffrage campaign was dominated for the most part by Anglo-Celtic bourgeois reformers, other groups of women participated. For example, female immigrants from Iceland were supporters from early on, as were women originally from Finland, especially after their home country granted women in the vote in 1906. In the specific case of Quebec, the staunch opposition of the Catholic church to women's enfranchisement combined with the higher priority female reformers gave to advances in their legal rather than political status, meant that support for women's suffrage was more muted there and the campaign longer.

At the federal level, decades of struggle resulted in the achievement of a **partial franchise** with the passage of the *Wartime Elections Act* in 1917. Against the backdrop of World War I, this legislation granted the vote to the female relatives of Canadian soldiers, a large majority of whom were of British ancestry, and withheld the vote to any immigrant citizen from enemy countries who had been naturalized after 1902. These provisions in the legislation not only meant that significant a proportion of non-British immigrants were left out entirely, but also that French Canadians were greatly under-represented among the women who were enfranchised. Although **universal adult suffrage** was introduced the next year, select populations of women and men were explicitly left disenfranchised: Indigenous people, as well as Chinese, Japanese, and Indian immigrants.



YOU WILL WISH TO HEAR

The Famous Canadian Woman Suffrage Leader

MRS. FLORA McD. DENNISON

and

Mr. Frank Dunham

(Formerly of Colorado)

---Also---

The Liberty Loan Speaker

REV. DR. J. ELLENWOOD

at

The Final Suffrage

MASS MEETING

in

The Common Council Chamber

CITY HALL

Thursday, October 25

AT 8:00 P. M.

Presiding Officer,

MAYOR E. J. FOLEY

Vote for Woman Suffrage Amendment No. 1

NOV. 6th

Century Printing Co., Broadway, Watervliet

Figure 3.41 The final push for women's suffrage in 1917 saw men taking a more enthusiastic role as allies. [Long Description]

Other key issues garnered the time and attention of feminists beyond the vote. Working-class women, on occasion in concert with middle-class allies, attempted to oppose the inequities of industrial capitalism and inequities within the labour movement. They also specifically agitated as wives and mothers protesting high consumer prices. Farm women lobbied for legislative changes which would allow them greater financial independence and power especially as related to **homestead rights** and **dower laws**. There were still other efforts to raise the moral tone of Canadian society primarily by Euro-Canadian middle-class women. These feminists were not alone in this battle, but far more than others, they raised concerns particular to the situation of women and with a view to altering existing gender relations through the attainment of a single moral standard. Social hierarchies of class, race, religion, and colonial status were at times questioned and contested during the first wave but far more they were unquestioned and re-affirmed.[3]

Key Points

- Indigenous women were early campaigners for women's rights as regards property.
- Legal and property rights were a continuing focus for several generations of post-Confederation women, especially in Quebec.
- The movement to abolish slavery provided opportunities for women to develop activist and political skills and for alliances that crossed racial lines.
- First wave feminism engaged ideas like equal rights and maternal feminism: the first emphasizing the similarities between men and women; the latter highlighting differences based on motherhood.

Long Descriptions

Figure 3.41 long description: Flyer for women's suffrage meeting. It reads "You will wish to hear The Famous Canadian Woman Suffrage Leader Mrs. Flora McD. Dennison and Mr. Frank Dunham (Formerly of Colorado)—Also—The Liberty Loan Speaker Rev. Dr. J. Ellenwood at The Final Suffrage Mass Meeting in The Common Council Chamber City Hall. Thursday, October 25 at 8:00 P.M. Presiding Officer, Mayor E. J. Foley. Vote for Woman Suffrage Amendment No. 1. Nov. 6th." The flyer is printed by Century Printing Co., Broadway, Watervliet (in New York State). [Return to Figure 3.41]

Media Attributions

- Mrs. Willoughby Cummings (Emily McCausland Cummings) © Library and Archives

3. Nancy Forestell with Maureen Moynagh, eds., *Documenting First Wave Feminisms: Canada — National and Transnational Contexts*, Volume 2 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).

Canada (PA-057336) is licensed under a Public Domain license

- National Council of Women group at Rideau Hall © William James Topley, 1845–1930, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3366133) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Women's Suffrage Meeting © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2988363) is licensed under a Public Domain license

3.9 The Great War and the General Strike



Figure 3.42 A crowd on the streets of Winnipeg in the spring of 1919.

The history of labour is simultaneously the history of industry and capitalism. No event so announces the triumph of industrial capitalism as does the first industrialized war in 1914-1918. The Boer War of 1899-1902 was a testing ground for new technologies like the Maxim machine gun and some refinements in artillery. It was nevertheless, a conflict marked by an old-style dependency on horses for moving troops and cavalry charges. What erupted in 1914 was very different. The most industrialized nations in Europe were now capable of producing arms, motorized land and air vehicles, armed and mobile artillery (tanks), and chemical weapons, and putting them all into the field of battle. A century of Industrial Revolutions across the northern hemisphere brought the world to this: the possibility of killing human beings on an industrial scale. And it had also produced large numbers of humans to kill.

Earlier European conflicts faced limits based on potential army size. There was always a balance to be struck between professional or mercenary regiments and the national armies. The latter became more the norm in the 19th century as the nation-state emerged. Nowhere was this more obvious than during the American Civil War. The **standing army** was a development that coincided with the rise of the Dominion of Canada (and fear of the American standing army was a factor in Canada's expansion). There was also a trade-off, even during the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815), between recruiting an army and depopulating the countryside. An army, as the saying goes, marches on its stomach. Early industrial nations had no recourse but to recruit from the farming population, but there was always a tipping point where too many soldiers would mean too little food.

Industrialization didn't resolve that conundrum but it certainly changed the shape of the problem. Between 1750-1900 the population of Europe and Russia grew from about 146 million to 422 million;

the population of the United States in 1775 was 2.5 million and in 1914 was nearly 100 million.[1] Canada's population growth was hardly less incredible: from 90,000 in 1775 it grew to nearly 8 million in 1914. Some of this growth — particularly in North America and Russia — took place on agricultural frontiers, but everywhere across the combatant countries there were now millions upon millions of industrial workers who could be pressed into service without compromising food production. At the same time, **essential industries** required essential workers. Shipyards, coal mines, smelters, munitions factories, agricultural toolmakers, and the transport sector all had to be kept humming along. Still, strip away the so-called non-essential industries and there was a huge population of workers that might be transformed into soldiers. Canada alone would find 620,000 of them, only the slenderest fraction of whom were trained to be warriors before the war.

In 1914, no one knew with certainty how long the Great War would last (see Sections 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, and 6.5). It was meant to be "Great" in its importance, not its length or body count. It would prove to be transformative in many ways — globally and in Canada — and this is evident in the history of Canadian working people.

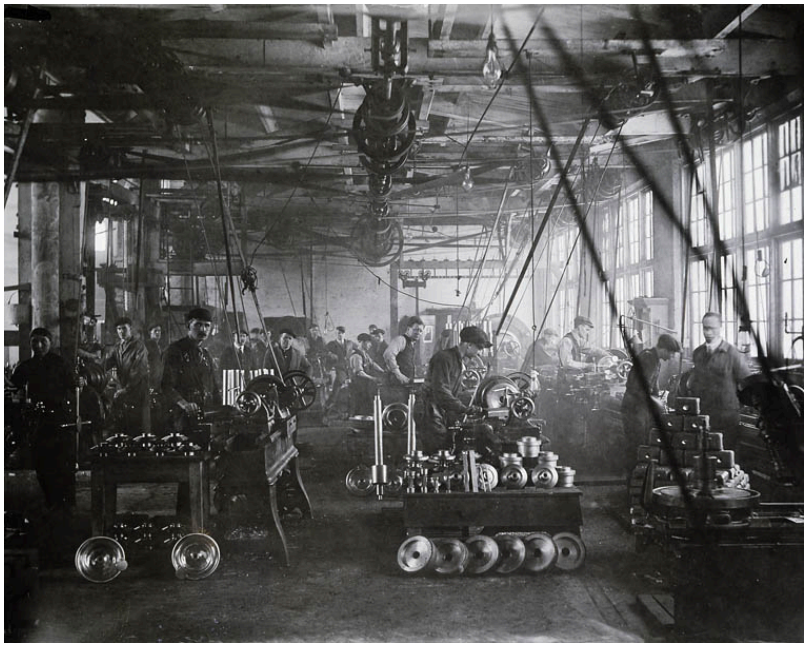


Figure 3.43 War industries increased demand for labour even as large numbers of workers were heading overseas. A scene from a Canadian Linderman Co. plant.

Labour at War

The military and political response of working Canadians — and Canadians in general — to the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, is considered elsewhere in this text. How labour (meaning working people and organized labour) met the experience of living in a country engaged for the first time in **total war** is what matters here. The foremost measure of working Canadians' encounters with these new conditions is strike action.

1. Massimo Livi-Bacci, *A Concise History of World Population*, 2nd ed., trans. Carl Ipsen (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 31.

The war began two years after a high-water mark in labour unrest. The year 1912 saw a spike in the number of disputes and, although this barely changed in the following year, the number of workers involved plummeted from 43,104 to 4,004. In 1914, there were half as many strikes and half as many days lost. The incidence and length of strikes would continue to fall in 1915 although the number of workers involved now began to rise and would continue to do so, doubling annually from 1914-1917. In 1917 — the year of Vimy Ridge and Ypres — there were 222 strikes with 50,327 strikers involved and over a million workdays lost. This marked a return to the levels of 1912.[2]

What lay behind the plunge in labour disputes and then the meteoric rise in job actions as the war progressed? Canada contributed more than half a million soldiers, sailors, and other participants to the cauldron of war, and most of those individuals came out of industry. This created job shortages and, as a consequence, unemployment levels fell sharply. As the war progressed, there were gaps on the shop floors in critical industries like armaments. These gaps were filled by recruiting women into the workforce. As a result of these developments, working class families experienced a rise in wages and living standards. Less than a year into the war and these changes were being observed (unevenly) across the country. Very soon, labour shortages gave unions an opportunity to negotiate better conditions and wages.

Working people faced several issues at once. While improvements were being noted in wages, prices were also rising. Income gains were quickly being eroded. New industries like munitions were being heavily supervised and routinized. Machinists, in particular, found their work more structured and managed — something to which they objected. Skilled workmen also bridled at the idea of women taking on factory positions that had previously been the preserve of craft union members. Women were, to be sure, a highly visible sign of deskilling and, thus, a lightning rod attracting the criticism of organized labour. Untrained men were also contributing to the deskilling process and were no less a source of unease for the trade unions.

Popular perceptions of the war also changed. Within two years of the declaration of war in August 1914, it was no longer a brief and glorious confrontation between the British Empire and its rivals; the Great War had descended into a relentless and inglorious meat grinder of a conflict. Aggressive army and navy recruitment drives and talk of compulsory service were met with calls for the conscription of capital and not just soldiers. It was becoming clear that throwing more men into the trenches was not a winning strategy, and working class critics began pointing to industrialists — **profiteers** — who were growing fat off government wartime contracts.

Finally, the role of the state was changing. The *War Measures Act, 1914* gave the federal government extensive powers of censorship, arrest, and deportation, and control over the transportation sector (on land and in the harbours). It also allowed Ottawa to engage more directly in the manufacturing sector as a participant with a vested interest. As labour historian Craig Heron points out, the censoring of newspaper accounts of industrial disputes was viewed by socialists and labour leaders as an abuse of the *Act*; what's more, the introduction of prohibition in 1917 was deeply resented.[3] As working-class unrest simultaneously spread across Europe and manifested itself in revolutionary socialist movements, the left wing in Canada came under surveillance by the RCMP and under fire from the Dominion government. Radical political organizations were infiltrated by police spies and suppressed; arrests and

2. Gregory S. Kealey, *Workers and Canadian History* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 295.

3. Craig Heron, *The Canadian Labour Movement: A Short History*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1996), 47.

deportations of socialist leaders followed, which only aggravated labour's unease. Labour organizations and left-wing political movements began to turn the official wartime propaganda line back on the government: these attacks on rights were, they said, nothing less than Prussianism or Kaiserism at home.[4]

The labour movement rebounded and union membership shot up. By the end of the War, there were no fewer than 378,000 members in craft and industrial unions, as well as in the emerging civic unions that now included police, civil servants, and white-collar workers. Craig Heron points to the exceptional levels of collaboration and cooperation between craft unions and even between craft and industrial unions; these alliances facilitated community-wide bargaining in smaller industrial towns and sectoral bargaining in larger cities. He also notes a greater spirit of inclusivity that extended to women and ethnic minorities in unions.[5]

Two factors contributing to labour's growth remain to be mentioned. The first is success at the bargaining table. Wartime conditions, labour shortages, and a more muscular movement won concessions during strikes, and nothing succeeds like success when it comes to organizing labour movements. The second echoes the first: the success of revolutionaries in Russia inspired workers' movements around the world. The possibility of wringing significant systemic reforms from the state and employers was in sight; the prospect of overturning capitalism entirely and establishing a socialist political, economic, and social order was also closer than ever before. These developments provide the material and intellectual context of events in 1919.



Figure 3.44 The Canadian government's antipathy toward socialism extended to participation in an attempt to suppress the Russian Revolution. Members of the Canadian Siberian Expeditionary Force (CSEF) in 1919 were few in numbers and saw little combat.

4. Craig Heron and Myer Siemiatycki, "The Great War, the State, and Working-Class Canada," in *The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925*, ed. Craig Heron (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), reprinted in *Readings in Canadian History: Post Confederation*, 7th ed., eds. R. Douglas Francis and Donald B. Smith (Toronto: Thomson Nelson, 2006): 372.

5. Heron, *The Canadian Labour Movement*, 48-9.

The General Strike

No single labour dispute in Canadian history is as well known and as regularly invoked as the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919. Lasting six weeks, from May through June, it constituted an important moment in the workers' revolt of the period that began in the 1890s and concludes (or at least takes a break) in the mid-1920s. The events in Winnipeg are important in many respects, but it is important to note as well that general strikes sprang up elsewhere: in Amherst, Nova Scotia, Calgary, Vancouver, Victoria, and in many other centres from one end of the country to the other. Some of these strikes were motivated by local conditions and others in sympathy with Winnipeg.[6] Indeed, the rolling tide of disputes related to the Winnipeg General Strike would continue to 1925.

The idea of a work stoppage across industries had been touted for decades by the IWW and others on the more radical and industrial side of the labour movement. In the aftermath of the Great War, there were enough common issues and irritations to arouse the Canadian working class. As historian of labour, Greg Kealey, points out, "World War I, while providing specific sparks to light the flame of working-class struggle in 1919, should not be viewed as its cause." [7] If not, then what causes lay behind a wave of unrest that brought out more than 149,000 workers in more than 400 strikes and claimed more than 3.4 million workdays lost in 1919?

Rising unemployment was a factor. The end of war meant the closing of munitions plants. Now, too, there were hundreds of thousands of returning soldiers to inflate demand for work. In addition, ex-servicemen expected to return to their old jobs, which meant displacing women and men who had been brought into those positions during the war. All of this created an atmosphere of uncertainty in the workforce while mobilizing, at least part of, a large female workforce in protest. Politically, too, the returned troops were something of a wildcard. Some were outraged at the anti-war and anti-conscription postures struck by many on the labour-left, to say nothing of their hostility toward the Russian Revolution and its supporters. There were also instances where returned British-Canadian soldiers turned their ire against Central and Eastern European, people they described as enemy aliens, who had taken their jobs. Other veterans felt that the radical critiques of profiteering, incompetent generalship in Europe, and international capitalism were entirely on the mark. Ottawa's disinterest in the fate of returning soldiers pushed many veterans still closer to the labour-left camp.

6. See, for example, David Bright, *The Limits of Labour: Class Formation and the Labour Movement in Calgary, 1883-1929* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1998), 145-61, and Benjamin Isitt, "Searching for Workers' Solidarity: The One Big Union and the Victoria General Strike of 1919," *Labour/Le Travail*, 60 (Fall 2007): 9-42.

7. Gregory S. Kealey, *Workers and Canadian History,* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 294.



Figure 3.45 Some returned soldiers and the Citizens' Committee regarded the strike as a treasonous conspiracy stirred up by Eastern European immigrants in Winnipeg.

Divisions between craft unions and industrial unions also played a role in the growing labour militance after the war. The old tensions resurfaced in 1918-1919, following an attack by the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada on radical (and mostly western) elements within the unions. Regional leadership subsequently met in Calgary in March 1919, to form a **syndicalist** organization with roots in the old IWW: the One Big Union (OBU). International locals in the west were quickly brought into the OBU fold. Workers who were impatient for a confrontation with employers responded favourably to the OBU's radical language and rejected the AFL-TLC business union line. Precise numbers are impossible to obtain, but historians agree that anywhere from a quarter to a third of union membership in Western Canada — and specifically in Winnipeg — was in the OBU.



Figure 3.46 A crowd gathers outside Winnipeg City Hall in 1919 during the General Strike.

Of course, local conditions played a role. Events in Winnipeg arose initially from a bargaining dispute in the building and metal trades. The right to collectively bargain was one of the chips on the table and when employers would not budge, the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council (WTLC) called for a general strike. The response was unprecedented. A few days later, approximately 30,000 Winnipeggers were on strike. Public transit, the factories, the police department, fire stations, retail shops, post offices, and several utilities closed down. The Central Strike Committee — established by the WTLC — bargained with the city and employers while authorizing essential services like milk delivery.



Figure 3.47 Members and supporters of the Citizens' Committee—identifiable by their armbands and clothing—prepare to confront the strikers on Bloody Saturday.

The Winnipeg establishment came out united in its opposition to the strike. A **Citizens' Committee of One Thousand** was their coordinating body and they had deep pockets, a tight network of connections to the Borden government in Ottawa, and the full support of local and national newspapers. Describing the strike as a **Bolshevik** uprising (echoing fears of a Russian-style revolution) led by foreigners and traitors, the Citizens' Committee turned attention away from the issue of collective bargaining and raised the spectre of a revolutionary crisis.

Matters came to a head in mid-June 1919. On the 17th of June, ten OBU leaders were arrested, among them the leading **Social Gospel** Methodist minister in Winnipeg, James S. Woodsworth (see Chapter 7). The mass arrest launched a demonstration of solidarity and a final buildup of state resources that collided on **Bloody Saturday**, the 21st of June 1919. The deployment of troops, Mounties, and **Specials —** volunteer police drawn from the Citizens' Committee **—** in the words of one historian, turned Winnipeg into "virtually an occupied city."[8] The Royal North-West Mounted Police (as the RCMP were called at the time) appeared and charged on horseback into the crowd three times before opening fire: 30 were injured and two killed. The federal government's clear commitment to defeating the strike was manifest in cavalry charges against protesters, whose numbers included large numbers of Great War veterans. It was also evident in amendments to the *Immigration Act* and the *Criminal Code* that allowed Ottawa to deport British citizens and to charge strikers with sedition.



Figure 3.48 The RNWMP ride into the crowd on Bloody Saturday.

The Legacy of Winnipeg

The Panama Canal was an invisible participant in the General Strike. Opened in 1914, it cut deeply into the cost of shipping grain and lumber from Vancouver to the east coast of North America. The movement of Western products along the CPR through Winnipeg suffered badly. The effect was delayed by the War, but by 1919, it was being felt in falling wage rates and a rising cost of living in

8. David Jay Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations, and the General Strike*, revised ed. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 187.

Manitoba. Winnipeg's economy never fully recovered. A decade after the strike, the city slipped out of 3rd place among Canada's largest centres and continued to become less and less consequential in the 20th century. One study has argued that the local labour unions were so demoralized by the events of 1919 and under such heavy state scrutiny, that they were thereafter incapable of fighting for competitive wages and working conditions.[9]

The strike produced other consequences, at least one of them very long-term. Six of the strike leaders were sentenced to a spell behind bars, some getting terms of two years. Woodsworth was released and almost immediately elected as an MP from the Independent Labour Party (ILP). He would go on to found the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), the precursor of the New Democratic Party (see Section 7.9). Other figures, drawn from the leadership ranks of the strikers, picked up the thread of revolutionism and established a communist political party.

Among historians, Winnipeg occupies a place of contention. Was it an expression of a peculiar kind of Western radicalism or part of a larger Canadian workers' revolt? Does it constitute — as the Citizens Committee of One Thousand feared — a nascent Bolshevik revolution, or was it a local labour dispute with very limited goals: better wages and collective bargaining rights? These issues have divided labour historians for more than a generation. Recently it has been argued, perhaps unsurprisingly, that it was both a matter of local bargaining and a combination of radical rhetoric coupled to a comprehensive reaction by the authorities and the establishment.[10]

It has also been argued that the chief beneficiary of the Winnipeg Strike was the RNWMP. On the brink of being disbanded because its frontier mandate was no longer relevant, the Mounties found renewed purpose as an agency of state surveillance and subversion of leftist organizations.[11] What can be said with some certainty is that the events of 1919 hardened the federal and provincial state's attitudes toward labour; collective bargaining rights, welfare, veterans' support, and many other labour and social initiatives may have been postponed as a reaction to 1919. More pointedly, as one study reveals:

> After crushing the Winnipeg strike, the federal government collaborated in the anti-radical **Red Scare** that businessmen and conservative journalists were promoting across the country. The workers' revolt had thus pushed the state to create more powerful, centralized mechanisms for combating radicalism than had existed in pre-war Canada.[12]

At the very least, the events of 1919 determined the size of a labour union. The state was to restrict them in such a way that one big union would become an impossibility in the future.

9. Kenneth McNaught and David J. Bercuson, *The Winnipeg Strike: 1919* (Don Mills: Longman Canada, 1974), 118-20.

10. See Reinhold Kramer and Tom Mitchell, *When the State Trembled: How A. J. Andrews and the Citizens' Committee Broke the Winnipeg General Strike* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010).

11. See Lorne Browne, "Depression and Repression: Canada Between the Wars," *Canadian Dimension*, vol. 49, issue 2 (March/April 2015): 27-37.

12. Heron and Siemiatycki, "The Great War": 386.

Key Points

- The Great War created conditions that facilitated the growth of militant labour.
- The end of the war saw a sudden reversal for working people, the emergence of divisions between returned soldiers and workers, and a state crackdown on leftist labour organizations.
- The Winnipeg General Strike was the foremost of several similar disputes across Canada that pitted a broad-based alliance of working people against an economic elite combined with imperialist factions and the armed representatives of the government.

Media Attributions

- Street scene during the Winnipeg Strike of 1919 © Library and Archives Canada (PA-202201) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- War production, Canadian Linderman Co. Ltd. © Canada Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3371011) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Personnel of the Canadian Siberian Expeditionary Force with truck © Raymond Gibson, Library and Archives Canada (C-091749) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Street scene during the Winnipeg strike of 1919 © Library and Archives Canada (PA-202200) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Winnipeg General Strike © Library and Archives Canada (PA-163001) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Winnipeg riot © Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3615116) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Royal Northwest Mounted Police on Bloody Saturday © Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3615118) is licensed under a Public Domain license

3.10 Summary



Figure 3.49 Civic pride and the expectation of continued city growth is embodied in the great city halls of the late 19th century, including Winnipeg's, ca. 1887.

Imagine a skilled craftsman around the time of Confederation. Born in the mid-1840s, his talents were honed through a process of apprenticeship and work in a small shop alongside a master and perhaps two or three other workers. The community was small — a large city might contain fewer than 30,000 people and even the largest covered a small, walkable space. The work setting was probably familial: the master — his employer — was also the head of the household in which the apprentice lived from childhood. Other family members — old and young — worked alongside him as he grew.

By 1870, competition is increasing as others working in the same trade combine their efforts under one roof, selling their skills for wages. Soon there are a couple of dozen workers per factory. Then a hundred. By the time our craftsman has reached his 30s he will have seen his area of expertise and skill

increasingly challenged by machinery and the employment of less skilled workers, including women, children, and perhaps immigrants.

In the late 1880s, at the age of about 45, he looks about himself and sees an urban environment that is utterly different from the commercial market-towns of his childhood. He is working in a shop that is becoming more and more mechanized, the work broken down into component parts. Respect for his skills is diminishing and he's coming under increasing pressure to be efficient.

He is married and his wife easily recalls the rhythms of rural Canada. There were long working days and not much about it that was very charming or romantic, apart from (possibly) better housing conditions and a degree of independence that is being eroded in factory work. Her own skills as a tailor are being undermined by machinery and her wages are barely half those of the men in the factory. Their children work the same long hours and are at the mercy of supervisors who will discourage talking or playing or daydreaming with physical punishment of their small and tired bodies and minds.

The industrial, urban world presents new social opportunities. Joining lodges and churches are an option. So are new organizations like the Knights of Labor and the Provincial Workmen's Association. For Ontarian and Québecois working people, the prospect of crossing the border for work is nothing new; the idea of joining an American labour organization that promises to protect the dignity of labour is an easy choice to make.

This is the new normal for a generation of Canadians who can remember that pre-industrial past and, in the 1870s and 1880s, are looking at a future that offers little certainty. Their children — 10 to 20 years old in 1887 — will take those years of lightless childhood with them into the trade unions sponsored by the AFL and the TLC, or into the IWW. It is also very likely they will take those experiences (remember that this generation has far less claim on a pre-industrial standard) into the militant years from 1907-1925. They will take all this with them into the far west, as well, where they will find company towns and new systems of discipline in labour disputes that include the police, local militias, national troops, specials, and private security companies.

The grandchildren of our original craftsman — born in the early 1880s-1890s — will grow up watching a world of conflict in their factory, mine, mill towns, and their distinctly working-class neighbourhoods. Most will experience orphanhood — the death of at least one parent before they turn 15 — and they will likely spend some time moving around their province or across the country as part of a transient workforce. This railway generation is the first for which a trans-continental conception of Canada is easily arrived at. They also have a greater likelihood of receiving a substantial educational experience and they will be the subject of far greater middle-class reform-mindedness than their predecessors. They will object to militarism, but they will die in their thousands in Belgium and France.

Reading the Working Class

If we approach the history of working-class Canada institutionally, from the history of trade unions or the growth of factories, we can easily miss the way it might have appeared to participants on the ground. No one involved in the 1919 General Strike would be much younger than 16 nor much older than 50. If that is all we know about the people involved, then we know they had probably come some

distance — perhaps generations — from the farming, fishing, and market town peoples of the first four provinces. We know that many of them would necessarily be immigrants whose experience of work was influenced by local prejudices. We also know that industrial capitalism was a widespread way of life and not something new. It had been around long enough, and the exploitative qualities were sufficiently and frustratingly familiar that a working-class response was timely.

If it seems as though changes in the experiences of working people and their organizations came quickly and repeatedly, it is partly due to the fact that change in the economy and in the way workers lived, was also occurring at a breakneck speed — sometimes erratically. New technologies and resource industries produced significant and very new problems in short order. Some of the organizational shifts were, however, particularly decisive.

Take the differences between the Knights of Labor with their largely autonomous Local Assemblies and the AFL-TLC led craft unions. Distinct constitutions and memberships, and a centralized and bureaucratic leadership marked the latter. A craft union in the late 1880s might discourage one of its locals from mounting what the leadership regarded as an imprudent strike simply by withholding strike funds. The Knights allowed more local freedom while depending simultaneously on the strength of deference to the senior ranks. The craft unions had a local and sectional view of the world while the Knights — and the Wobblies — had a sector-wide perspective.

The growth of these institutions was important to Canadian history in that they reframed the language of citizenship and rights. They posed a challenge, in some instances, to the emergence of capitalism. They had something to say about culture and respectability, and they certainly had something to say about class. Greg Kealey compared working-class testimony from two Royal Commissions — the 1886-89 investigation into Relations between Capital and Labour and the 1919 study of Industrial Relations — and concluded that respectability had been supplanted by radicalism. In the space of 30 years, the working class had changed at a foundational level and at a cultural level as well — it was a much bigger phenomenon and it included far more than the original craft union elements. Along the way, its instincts had changed from a desire to fit into a bourgeois vision of Canadian society to one that had grown increasingly cynical of the state and employers.[1]

Historians continue to debate whether Canada was on the brink of a revolutionary uprising of working people in the first two decades of the 20th century. Without a doubt, it is the direction some outspoken and influential leaders wished to head. Others sought to test the limits of democratic reform. Together, the excitement of events in Russia and the rise of the British Labour Party created a sense that change could be achieved with or without the ballot box. It is also clear that Canadian workers exhibited less unity than they might have precisely because of their federal system and because of cultural differences. This period saw the rise of labour organizations, but we must keep in mind, their immediate reach was never great. On the eve of the Great War, barely one-in-ten of Canadian workers belonged to a union. Their concentration in certain key industries, however, gave these early organizations far greater potential than their numbers indicate.

Just as industrialism built a new economy, it was midwife to a new kind of modern Canadian who was very typically a town or city dweller, a wage earner (or someone dependent on a wage earner), probably a renter, and someone who worked and lived alongside many other people — most of whom

1. Gregory S. Kealey, *Workers and Canadian History* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), 289-328.

were unrelated. This is a far cry from the Canada of 1867 and it was one in which new bonds were being forged.

Key Terms

abolitionists: Individuals and groups associated with the movement to end slavery in the United States. In Canada, abolitionists assisted African-Americans fleeing the United States, whether they were slaves or otherwise. The abolitionist movement built the foundation for subsequent social movements in Canada.

Aboriginal title: The inherent Aboriginal right to land or territory. It is title that exists before and after contact. It is not a right granted by the government but one that is recognized in 1763 in the Royal Proclamation.

American Federation of Labor (AFL): Established in 1886 as an umbrella organization of craft unions in the United States.

automation: A manufacturing process in which assembly or some other part of the production system is performed by machines that are subject to control systems.

blacklist: Sanctions taken by employers against workers whom they associate with labour organization, strikes, certain ideological movements, or other actions contrary to the employers' interests. Technically, a list of individuals who were denied work on the basis of their involvement in pro-labour activities.

Bloody Saturday: 21 June 1919; during a mass demonstration of solidarity (after ten OBU leaders were arrested, including J. S. Woodsworth) in which a buildup of state resources (troops, Mounties and Specials) were brought in. 30 protesters were injured and two killed.

Bolshevik: A workers' party that led the Russian Revolution in October 1917 under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin.

boosters: Civic promoters.

business unions: Trade or craft unions that approach activism from a non-revolutionary position; associated with the unions of the AFL, the TLC, and — later — the CLC.

Canadian Labour Congress (CLC): Founded in 1956 in a merger of the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) and the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL). Subsequently joined with the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) to create the New Democratic Party (NDP).

capitalism, capitalists: An economic system (and its practitioners) that is based on the ability of private individuals to accumulate and invest money (capital) in profit-making enterprises. Also, a system that is dominated by the private ownership of the means of production.

chilled steel plough: A significant late 19th century advance in plough manufacturing. Stronger steel enabled the cutting of faster and deeper furrows and the breaking of densely packed prairie soil.

Citizens' Committee of One Thousand: During the Winnipeg General Strike, 1919, an organization established by the city's business and political elites to break the strike and challenge the authority of the Strike Committee.

collective bargaining: Negotiation of working conditions, pay, and other issues or benefits by an association — a "union" — of employees. Replaced the many individual arrangements made in one-on-one agreements.

company store: An outlet owned by an employer, one that sells goods to employees of the same firm. Commonplace in company towns. See also company towns.

company towns: A community with one major employer and few other employers; one in which most or all services — in some instances including housing and the supply of food — are controlled by the employer. Associated with remote resource extraction communities.

craft capitalism: Refers to a transition to capitalism led by craftworkers.

deskilling: Mechanization and automation of work, as well as assembly lines permits the systematization of work and a commensurate reduction in the skills and training needed to perform key functions. The work is said to be deskilled and, thus, the workforce too is deskilled.

dower laws: Formal recognition of a widow's lifetime interest in matrimonial property on the death of her husband. See also homestead rights.

equal rights: In the context of feminism, the belief that rights accorded to men and women ought to be the same. Diverges somewhat from maternal feminism which claims rights based on gendered differences.

essential industries: Sectors identified in a crisis (such as wartime) as fundamental to the survival of the economy or society or war effort. Workers in those sectors are typically protected against conscription and may also be restricted in their ability to move to other jobs. In some instances, the state takes direct control of the industries for the duration of the crisis or longer.

Family Compact: The elite network in pre-Confederation Canada that dominated colonial politics; in Quebec (aka: Canada East, Lower Canada) it was referred to as the Chateau Clique.

Fédération National Saint-Jean-Baptiste (FNSB): Founded in 1907, francophone Catholic women activists who also saw themselves as maternal feminists.

female suffrage: One of the central issues of the first wave feminists, involving a protracted campaign with feminist activists laying claim to full political citizenship.

feminism: An ideological position that advances the ideal of equality of women and men.

first wave: More fully: first wave feminists. Advocates for women's rights in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; also sometimes called maternal feminists.

fossil fuels: Includes coal, oil, natural gas, and petroleum; any fuel based on the compression of carbon matter over geological time.

free labour: Workers who are not tied to a feudal relationship, slavery, or indentured servitude and are able to move from one employer (or location) to another based on the size of pay and the character of the work.

general strike: A labour stoppage involving most or all unions or workplaces. General strikes have been held that call on all workers in a particular city or a particular sector or across an entire country.

ghost towns: Abandoned communities; associated principally with resource extraction — often mining — towns that have a very short lifespan and which close up once the resource is removed or the market disappears.

gradualism: The idea that great change can occur incrementally in slow, small, and subtle steps, rather than by large uprisings or revolutions. Among left-wing activists, a belief that reforms to capitalism can produce a social and economic order of fairness for working people; sometimes called Fabianism; derided by revolutionaries as delusional. In the context of Quebec's independence movements the equivalent term is *étapisme*. See also reformist and impossibilist.

homestead rights: The *Dominion Lands Act* protected women's interest in homesteads by forbidding the sale of the homestead by a husband without the wife's written consent.

household wage: A way of measuring income that extends beyond the breadwinner model and incorporates incomes earned by every member of the household/family.

House of Industry: A facility typically funded out of philanthropic/charitable donations that provides housing and food for impoverished citizens with the expectation that they will do work in return. In the 19th century, associated with workhouses for the poor.

industrial relations: The diplomatic business of negotiating contracts and conditions between employers and employees; typically between employers and labour organizations (unions).

Knights of Labor: Fully, the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor. Established in the United States in 1869-70; expanded into Canada in the next decade; organized workers regardless of race (apart from Asians), sex, or skill levels. Competition with the new craft unions resulted in the Knights' expulsion from the Trades and Labour Congress in 1902, and its gradual disintegration thereafter.

labourism: Canadian Liberal-Labour (Lib-Lab) candidates promoted an agenda that consisted mostly of democratic reforms, the 8-hour work day, a minimum wage, and educational opportunities for all.

Labour Party: In Britain, the political face of the Trades Union Congress; established in 1906. While Labour Parties also appeared in Australia and New Zealand, one never fully materialized in Canada.

Liberal-Labour (also Lib-Lab): Typically a pro-labour candidate, sometime running under a Labour or Independent Labour banner, who joined the Liberal caucus on being elected.

maternal feminism: Also called first wave feminism; a movement to achieve greater civic rights for women; based its appeal on the biological differences between women and men, arguing that women have a natural nurturing instinct and ability which ought to be welcomed in a democratic system; women could apply the knowledge and attributes acquired from their universal role as mothers to address various inequities and social ills.

mechanization: The process of replacing manual labour with machinery; distinct from automation, which is a later phase in the deskilling process.

modernity: Also modern and modernism; term given to a constellation of behaviours and beliefs associated with the industrial, urban era. It is associated with challenges to traditional values and ways of looking at the world, and is often used in connection with 20th century artworks, literature, and architecture.

National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC): A feminist activist group formed in 1893; predominantly Anglo-Celtic Protestant women who mostly identified themselves as maternal feminists.

National Policy: John A. Macdonald's linkage of three policies into one: a tariff wall to exclude American manufactures; a transcontinental railway (the CPR) to link the Maritimes with British Columbia; and the settlement of the West. Although most of the components were in place by 1876, it was only touted as a single National Policy in 1879.

one big union, One Big Union (OBU): In the first instance, the idea (pioneered by the Knights of Labor) that working people should belong to a single organization that can fight for their rights collectively; secondly, an actual organization — the OBU — formed after 1919, as a revolutionary industrial union (which included workers in support of the Bolshevik and other left-wing revolutions).

partial franchise: With the passage of the *Wartime Elections Act* in 1917, female relatives of Canadian soldiers were granted the vote.

populism: In politics, an appeal to the interests and concerns of the community by political leaders (populists) usually against established elites or minority — or scapegoat — groups. The rhetoric of populists is often characterized as vitriolic, bombastic, and fear-mongering.

profiteers: Industrialists and others who were able to profit from government contracts in wartime.

prohibition: A total ban on the production, sale, and consumption of alcohol products.

proletarianization: The transformation of non-industrial workers or skilled workers and small employers into wage labourers.

proportional representation: Distinct from the first-past-the-post system; can take several forms but common aspect is that political parties will be elect a number of seats that reflect in some measure the percentage of votes the parties receive. For example, in a first-past-the-post system a party might win 49% of the votes in every constituency but not elect a single candidate if the only other party running wins 51% of the votes; proportional representation (sometimes called PR) would ensure that the second-place party received something closer to 49% of the seats.

Red Scare: A complex of political, social, economic, and cultural responses to the rise of pro-communist feeling in Canada and internationally; fear of communist revolution at home or abroad and particularly of pro-communist spies and supporters working clandestinely to advance a communist agenda; manifest in security campaigns against perceived enemies of the state, the creation of blacklists, and other acts of intimidation.

respectability: A term used and an ideal pursued by mid-19th century organized labour — particularly skilled craft workers — and some of their successors; embraced the ideals of fair treatment, law-abiding behaviour, equality, and a commitment to the nation's stability and growth. Manifest in many ways including working class campaigns for literacy, temperance, and rational recreation.

Second Industrial Revolution: Usually placed between ca. 1870 and 1914, renewed technological innovation which saw a significant expansion in iron and steel production, railway construction, and communications technologies like the telegraph and telephone.

Social Gospel: A social reform movement stimulated by Christian beliefs that linked personal engagement with social salvation.

Specials: Volunteer police drawn from a local population; in the case of the Winnipeg General Strike, the Specials were recruited from the Citizen's Committee.

squirearchy: Colloquial term used to describe the elite in colonial British Columbia.

standing army: A full-time, permanent, usually salaried army, as opposed to a volunteer militia.

strikebreakers: Colloquial term for a worker who continues working, or who takes a job, while a strike is ongoing. Also called a scab.

sweated labour: Work that takes place over long hours; exhausting and generally poorly paid; very often involves "outwork", the taking home of materials that are assembled there, usually by female employees, who are paid on the basis of output.

sympathy strike: A labour stoppage by supportive workers who are not directly involved in a dispute.

syndicalist: Advocate of syndicalism, the belief that industry would be best run by syndicates made up of industrial workers who would own and operate the factories themselves.

tariff: Charges (a tax) added to imported goods so as to make their sale price higher than domestic goods and, thus, make domestic goods more competitive.

temperance: One strand of the anti-liquor campaign in the 19th and 20th centuries, focussed on the personal impact of alcohol and personal resolve in limiting or giving up drink. Contrast with prohibition, which called for an all-out ban on the production, sale, and consumption of liquor.

tied housing: In company towns, housing that is owned by the employer and provided to employees. In some cases, residence in tied housing is a condition of employment, which enables the employer to evict strikers during labour disputes.

total war: Describes the engagement of the whole nation in conflict, and not just the military. In the 20th century, applies only to the two World Wars.

Trades and Labour Congress of Canada: A national association of craft unions modelled on the American Federation of Labor; established in 1883 and merged with the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL) in 1956 to create the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC).

truck shop: An outlet owned by an employer, one that sells goods to employees of the same firm. Commonplace in company towns. See also company store.

universal adult suffrage: Introduced a year after the partial franchise, to grant adults the right to vote; however, select populations of women and men were explicitly left disenfranchised: Indigenous people, as well as Chinese, Japanese, and Indian immigrants.

universal male suffrage: Extension of the franchise — the right to vote — to all adult males. In practice in Canada, it excluded non-Euro-Canadians (i.e. Indigenous and Asian) adult males until the mid-20th century. Also constrained by residency requirements until the mid-20th century.

vertical integration: In economics and business, a system in which the whole or most of the supply chain is owned by the same individual(s) or firm. Early examples come from the steel industry which in some cases controlled the production of coking coal, the supply of iron ore, foundries, and railways that consumed the final product.

welfare capitalism: Also industrial paternalism and widely associated with ‘company towns’.

wheat boom: An expanding demand for wheat leading to a rapid expansion of farmland dedicated to wheat production; in Canada from ca. 1880-1914.

Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU): One of the largest and most effective anti-drink lobbies in Canada. Established in 1874, months after its first branch was announced in the United States, the WCTU emerged as a vehicle for contiguous reforms in public behaviour, the political environment, and social conditions.

Short Answer Exercises

1. Define the Industrial Revolution. What were its main features in the late 19th century?
2. How did infrastructure and the energy economy change in the post-Confederation era?
3. What were some of the main features of working-class life?
4. Was the Industrial Revolution a social revolution as well as an economic transformation?
5. What were the main features of the National Policy?
6. What sort of roles did children play in urban and industrial society? To what extent were the experiences of boys and girls distinct?
7. How did urban life change the experiences of women?
8. In what ways was urbanization connected to industrialization? In what ways were Canadian cities distinct from one another?
9. How did craft unions differ from industrial unions?

10. What were the goals of the early labour centres, such as the Knights of Labor?
11. What were the key features of Canadian democracy in the late 19th century?
12. Explain the rise of first wave feminism, and what is meant by maternal feminism?
13. How did the Great War change Canadian labour and its political ambitions?

Suggested Readings

Bullen, John. "Hidden Workers: Child Labour and the Family Economy in Late Nineteenth-Century Urban Ontario," *Labour/Le Travail*, 18 (Fall 1986): 163-87.

Dunae, Patrick A., Donald J. Lafreniere, Jason A. Gilliland, and John S. Lutz, "Dwelling Places and Social Spaces: Revealing the Environments of Urban Workers in Victoria Using Historical GIS," *Labour/Le Travail*, 72 (Fall 2013): 37-73.

Kealey, Gregory S. "State Repression of Labour and the Left in Canada, 1914-1920: The Impact of the First World War," *Canadian Historical Review*, 73, 3 (1992): 281-314.

McCann, Larry. "Seasons of Labor: Family, Work, and Land in a Nineteenth-Century Nova Scotia Shipbuilding Community," *The History of the Family*, 4, Issue 4 (1999): 485-527.

Radforth, Ian. "Playful Crowds and the 1886 Toronto Street Railway Strikes," *Labour/Le Travail*, 76 (Fall 2015): 133-64.

Strong-Boag, Veronica. "'The Citizenship Debates': The 1885 *Franchise Act*," *Contesting Canadian Citizenship: Historical Readings*, eds. Robert Adamoski, Dorothy E. Chunn, and Robert Menzies (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2002): 69-94.

Media Attributions

- City Hall and Volunteer Monument, Winnipeg, MB, 1887 © William McFarlane Notman, McCord Museum (VIEW-1615) is licensed under a Public Domain license

Chapter 4. Politics and Conflict in Victorian and Edwardian Canada

4.1 Introduction



Figure 4.1 The role of the Canadian state included the punishment of crimes and deviance. The ability to assign the death penalty was reserved to the federal government until it was abolished in 1976. In this 1901 photograph from inside the jail at Hull, Stanislaus Lacroix (hooded) prepares to be hanged while observers watch from neighbouring rooftops. [Long Description]

Governing Canada presents rather distinctive, if not unique, challenges. Even when the Dominion consisted of just four provinces, there were substantial issues of distance and scale. The core of English-Canada's population and its economic engine was in southwestern Ontario, a long way from Halifax. Railways and telegraphs closed that gap somewhat, but annexing the West and pulling BC into the Dominion just worsened matters exponentially. Distance might be compromised again with more rails and more roads but cultural issues are far less amenable to a technological fix. The idea of a federation — as opposed to a unitary state — stemmed principally from French-Canada's long-standing, and entirely justified, fear of assimilationist anglophones and anti-Catholic Protestants. One very large part of the new nation, then, had signed on to a political unit that it inherently mistrusted. Could that mistrust be tempered by adopting a national policy of **dualism**? Would that just prove offensive to the English-Protestant majority? These issues could not be ignored: While the provinces might enjoy primacy in the area of culture and education, the federal government must somehow hold together the whole. These were issues that the countries against which Canadians were likely to measure themselves — the United States, Britain, Australia, and France — never had to deal. Twenty years after Confederation, its architect, John A. Macdonald, was not convinced that it was possible to sustain the federal union: "[I] have watched the cradle of Confederation & shouldn't like to follow the hearse."[1]

1. Quoted in Ged Martin, *John A. Macdonald: Canada's First Prime Minster* (Toronto, ON: Dundurn, 2013), p.176.

Which raises the question: What is the role of the federal regime? Constitutionally, its powers are limited but it does, from time to time, play a considerable and active role in many facets of Canadian life. Political history is about much more than constitutional history, but the constitution and the division of powers found therein are the ground rules for the Dominion's governmental processes. As well, the *British North America Act* functioned in the first three decades of Confederation as a kind of strategic plan. It is highly unusual for a constitution to include provision for a railway; in the *BNA Act* it stands out like a contractual obligation, and this was a facet that was reinforced in BC's *Terms of Union* in 1871. Likewise the *BNA Act*, and the debates that brought it together, made it clear that Canada was to be a mutual defence pact between a small group of colonies that were highly anxious about American appetites.

Measuring the performance of 19th century governments in particular thus means that we have to look at the tasks they were given and how they interpreted their responsibilities.

Learning Objectives

- Describe dualism and account for its fluctuating support.
- Explain the political successes of the Conservative Party from 1867 to the 1890s.
- Interpret the role played by the Catholic Church, and religion generally, in Canadian politics.
- Account for the rise to power of Wilfrid Laurier and the Liberal Party.
- Describe the crises faced by Laurier and how they illuminate Canadian political culture and society.
- Outline the principles of Canadian imperialism and nationalism, ca. 1900.

Long Descriptions

Figure 4.1 long description: A man has a rope around his neck and stands at the gallows, waiting to be hanged. He speaks to a priest. Another man looks over the railing around the gallows, speaking to an unseen audience. A few other men stand around the platform, and three stand on the set of stairs leading to the gallows. Text at the top of the photograph reads, "Enregistrée conformément à l'acte du parlement du Canada, l'an mil neuf cent deux, par Napoléon Bélanger, au ministère de l'agriculture." Translated into English, this is "Registered in accordance with the Act of the Parliament of Canada, in the year one thousand nine hundred and two, by Napoléon Bélanger, to the Ministry of Agriculture." [Return to Figure 4.1]

Media Attributions

- L'execution de Lacroix © Napoléon Bélanger is licensed under a Public Domain license

4.2 John A. Macdonald's Canada

The issue that faced John A. Macdonald and his contemporaries at the federal level was the extent to which Ottawa could build a nation on the basis of two founding cultures. (This, of course, was an exercise that completely ignored the presence of Indigenous cultures except insofar as it endeavoured to subjugate and/or alter them.) For the most part Macdonald's generation opted to focus on economic bonds rather than cultural bridges. Macdonald's National Policy may be understood in this context as an articulation of a vision of Canada. The tariff protected Canadian manufacturers and therefore shielded Canada against American economic aggression. The Intercolonial Railway was quickly overshadowed by a railway to the Pacific, which had the same goals. The deployment of a national constabulary and temporary military units in the West affirmed Canadian determination to execute its territorial strategy against American possibilities. In these ways, and in others, the National Policy has been interpreted as an instrument of nationalism as well as economic development. The mixture of technology, science, engineering, and notions of progress on which the railways depended was something that informed public life and became a premise of the new Dominion. As one historian has argued, this was a "philosophy of railways," a commitment to an instrument of Canadian ambitions that was simultaneously economic, political, nationalistic, and cultural.[1] And it was on this project that Macdonald pinned his career and the success of his party.

As a politician, Macdonald was regarded as "crafty," a term that was not always offered as praise. Macdonald was unafraid of hard work (he is reckoned to have almost single-handedly drafted the Quebec Resolutions that led to the *BNA Act*) and his earlier position as an outsider within the Tory Party may have driven him to labour twice as hard to be half as good. He drank heavily and was beset by some of the ill-health that comes with too much alcohol. His wit was sharp and he was often self-effacing. Macdonald's ability to delay and postpone, and wear out his opponents, earned him the nickname Old Tomorrow. His biographers paint a picture of a man who simultaneously led from the front while demonstrating a preference for serving his caucus rather than having his caucus serve him.

This last point is important because of the extent to which Canadian politics have become characterized by what is sometimes called "presidential prime ministers." The Canadian system does not provide for the election of a prime minister, only two or more caucuses, one of which (ideally) is large enough to form government. It is implicit in responsible government that the executive (or cabinet) serves at the sufferance of the largest caucus (from which it is drawn), and that the caucus may, if needs be, direct the government to change direction. Macdonald's career was profoundly shaped by debates about responsible government; building a majority in the House was his specialty and he had been doing so since the 1850s. Dividing Canadian history along the benchmark of 1867 means we sometimes lose sight of the fact that Macdonald spent decades fighting and winning in politics.

Macdonald was effective as a leader in large part because he had strong co-leaders in Quebec whom he treated as partners and confidantes. The first of these, of course, was George-Étienne Cartier (1814-73), without whom it is unlikely that Quebec would have agreed to Confederation. Cartier, too, played the

1. A. A. den Otter, *The Philosophy of Railways: The Transcontinental Railway Idea in British North America* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

pivotal role in negotiations with Britain regarding the annexation of Rupert's Land, and he pressed vigorously for the addition of British Columbia. It was Cartier who put the idea of a Pacific railway on the table. Cartier's death in 1873 produced a great public outpouring of grief, much of it stage-managed but not all: 50,000 to 100,000 spectators lined the route of his funeral procession. Macdonald was stricken and, when he announced Cartier's passing to the House of Commons he was silenced by his own sobbing.[2]

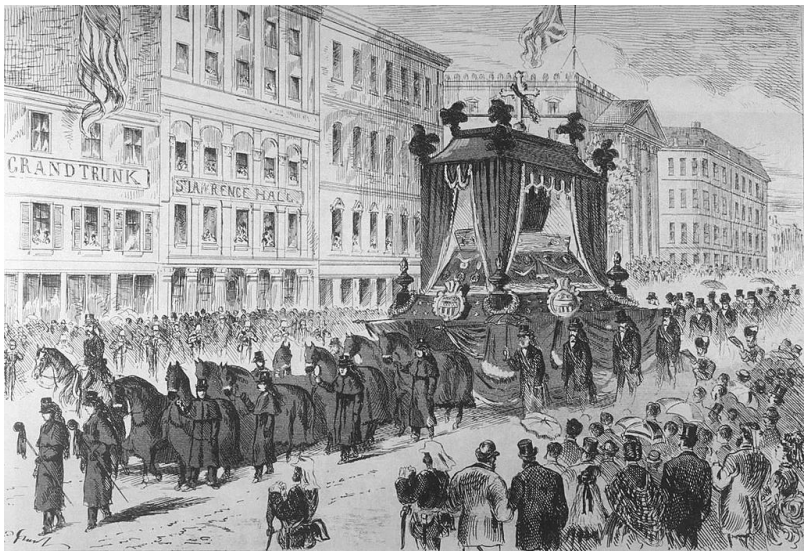


Figure 4.2 An enormous and extravagant state funeral was held for George-Étienne Cartier in Montreal, 1873.

Hector-Louis Langevin (1826-1906) subsequently took up the task of leading Quebec within the Conservative government, but he had a difficult time of it. The execution of Riel poisoned relations between French-Catholics and the Tory Party. Langevin won re-election in 1887 (despite being called a "hangman") but few of his Conservative colleagues were so lucky. Macdonald appreciated Langevin's efforts and skills and made him Minister of Public Works — a fateful decision. Public works played an important role in the building and maintenance of, among other things, bridges and docks, which made it an effective instrument of patronage to loyal supporters of the government. It also placed the minister in the path of temptation. Allegations of corruption with respect to railways in Quebec and British Columbia circled around Langevin. Another potential scandal in Ontario had the potential to end the career of the prime minister as well as Langevin: a dry-dock construction project in Macdonald's own constituency of Kingston involved public contracts assigned to a man who did not exist. Despite this, Macdonald held on to the bitter end to the ideal of a French-Canadian successor, and it was Langevin he had in mind. This was an indication of the depth of Macdonald's conviction that the two "founding nations" ought to rule the country together.

Macdonald's commitment to this perspective was older than the Dominion itself. His close alliance and friendship with Cartier – a rebel of 1837, a *Bleu* leader 30 years later, and the government's man in Quebec — was pivotal to the successful inclusion of Quebec in Confederation. Macdonald knew through his work with Cartier that culture mattered. At the same time, Macdonald and his supporters were committed to the view that the northwest would be Canadianized, which for all intents and

2. J.-C. Bonenfant, "CARTIER, Sir GEORGE-ÉTIENNE", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 5 August 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/cartier_george_etienne_10E.html.

purposes meant cleared of First Nations and Métis, and remade in the shape of Ontarian, Anglo-Protestant society. The diffusion of Anglo-Canadian values took place in a variety of settings, including the courts and the legal system, the legislatures, and the schools.

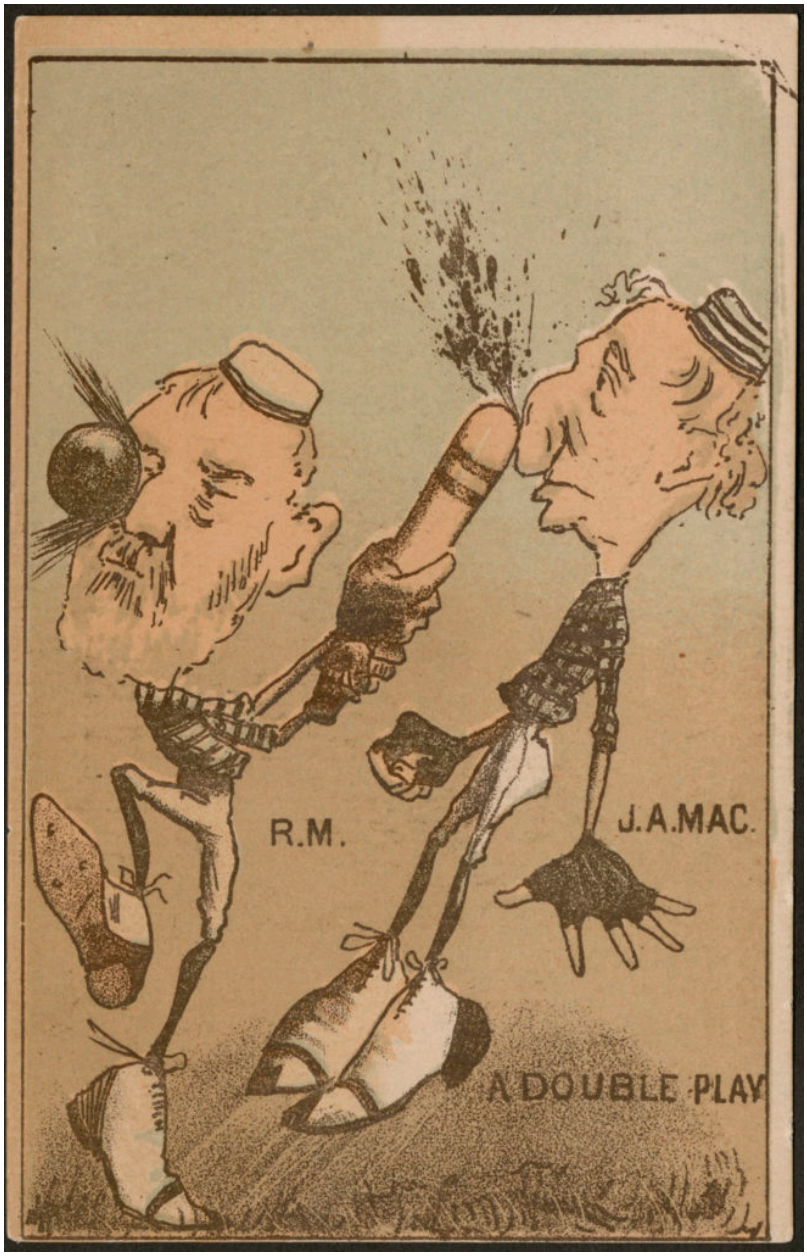


Figure 4.3 An unusual—and unequivocally hostile—depiction of Macdonald (along with New Brunswick Conservative MP Robert Moffatt) on an early "baseball card," ca. 1885. [Long Description]

No event in his long political career so defined Macdonald's legacy as the hanging of Riel (see Sections 2.7 and 2.8). As one French-Canadian Tory MP from Montreal said, "Sir John saw the dawn of his political career lit by the glow from the burning parliament buildings in Montreal; its sunset will fade behind the gallows in Regina."[3] While Ontario's Orange Lodges were baying for blood — they wanted

3. Andrée Désilets, "LANGEVIN, Sir HECTOR-LOUIS", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 13, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 25 February 2016, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/langevin_hector_louis_13E.html.

Riel to hang for the murder of Thomas Scott in 1870 and not necessarily for treason in 1885 — Quebec was incensed by Ottawa's treatment of the Catholic-French Métis community since the Red River uprising. The failure to create a French/English society in the West, the subsequent marginalization of the Métis population, the heavy-handed performance of centralist federal politicians, and Ottawa's apparent disregard for the Quebec economy was all read as a long trail of broken promises. The hard-line ultramontanist movement became increasingly active in criticizing francophone Conservatives as serving Ottawa and Macdonald rather than Quebec and the French-Catholic culture. This was paralleled by the growth of nationalist sentiment among the Canadiens.

There was, too, a growing sense in Quebec that industrialization and modernization threatened the rural stability of francophone society. There was a great deal of truth in the fact that industrialism was being imposed on French-Canadians and on the countryside because all but a handful of the industrial elite was anglophone and urban. While the CPR might function in English Canada in the 1880s as a symbol of technological and economic progress, in Quebec it represented for many a diversion of wealth to a francophone-hostile Western periphery and the resultant high unemployment. A consequence of this economic impact was the emigration of Québecois youth to the United States. All of these ingredients were simmering when the Northwest Rebellion of 1885 occurred. Sympathy for the Métis was easy to evoke, but Riel was more complicated: The Catholic clergy recognized their flock in the West but had to be firm in their opposition to Riel's heretical pronouncements. Once Riel recanted his more idiosyncratic beliefs, the whole of Québecois society seemed on his side. His hanging provoked a mass demonstration in Montreal's Champ-de-Mars at which Macdonald was burned in effigy.

Thereafter, the fortunes of the Conservative Party in Quebec crashed. With the exception of some seats in Montreal and a few scattered over the countryside, there was by 1887 little left of Cartier's *Bleu*-Conservative machine. Indeed, the Conservative Party in Quebec would never fully recover, although it might have were it not for the compounding effects of Borden's conscription legislation in the Great War.

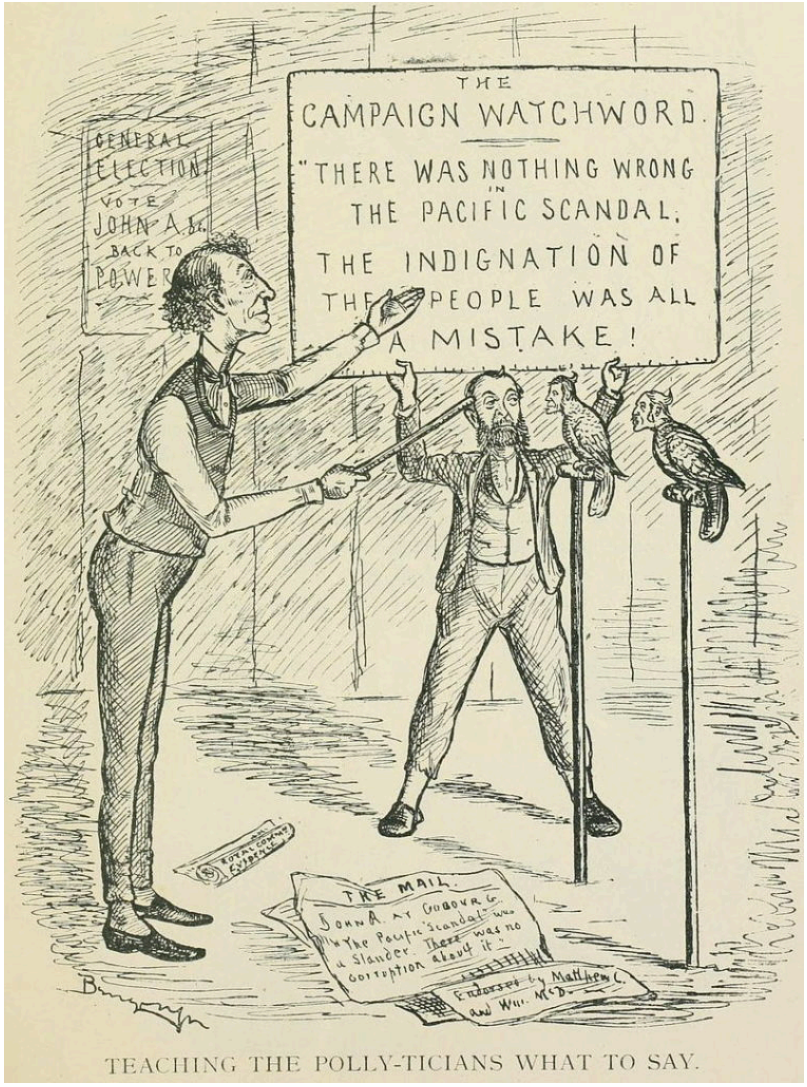
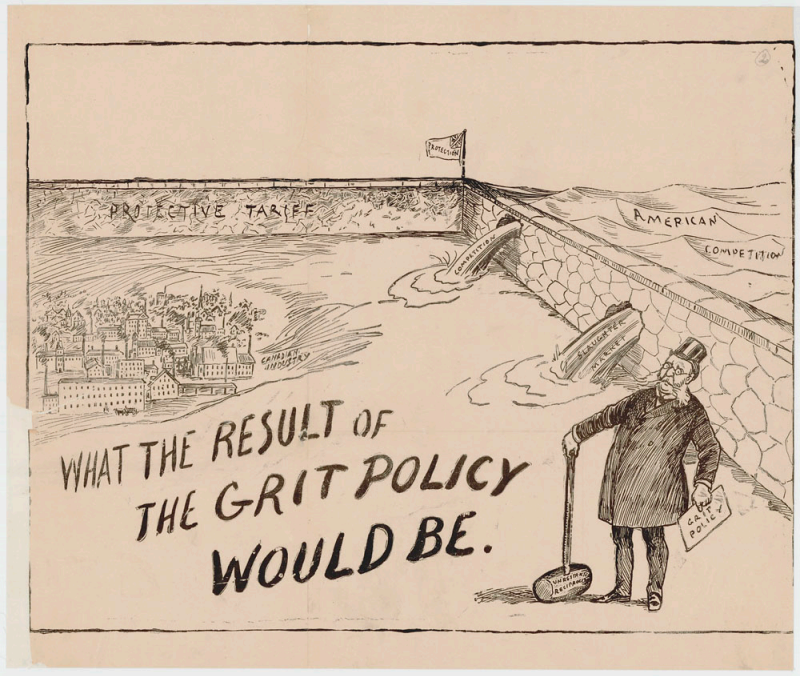


Figure 4.4 Toeing the party line, according to the Canadian political cartoonist John Wilson Bengough, was common practice under Macdonald. This cartoon appeared in Grip in 1877 and refers to damage-limitation efforts on the part of the Conservative Party as it prepared for an election. *[Long Description]*

Macdonald led the government through two parliaments in 1867-73, was pushed out of office on a tide of corruption allegations known as the Pacific Scandal, and returned for four more parliaments from 1878 to his death in 1891. The Macdonald administrations are mostly remembered for the National Policy (see Section 3.3), and it has been argued that the Conservatives — and Alexander Mackenzie's Liberals from 1873-1878 — could not build a nation based on a culture and so opted for economic unity, but this was a unity that was far from equal. It did, however, create a separate economic order north of the United States. Historians have both praised the tariff policy as the source of Canada's industrial take-off, and criticized it for suffocating industry in the West and the Maritimes while encouraging Americans to set up their own factories in Canada. These early **branch plants** were a harbinger of 20th century developments that would see a closer integration of the two nations' economies, regardless of the tariff. The weight of votes was in the manufacturing hubs of central Canada, something even the Liberals could not ignore forever. By 1896 the Grits abandoned their pro-reciprocity position (at least temporarily) and joined the tariff camp.



Library and Archives Canada / Bibliothèque et Archives Canada
www.collectionscanada.gc.ca

Figure 4.5 The Conservative Party message in the 1891 election: American goods will flood Canada without the tariff. [Long Description]

Macdonald maintained to the bitter end that the tariff was essential to protecting more than Canadian industry. It protected Canada as a whole. In part this was rhetoric, displayed most clearly in his 1891 campaign which was explicitly nationalistic and pro-tariff, but it was also sincerely believed. There were enough continentalists in the Liberal Party — including its 1880s leader Edward Blake (1833-1912) and his outspoken colleague Goldwin Smith (1823-1910) — to demonstrate that a return to reciprocity or, worse, a common tariff policy with the United States was likely to be the first step toward the end of Canada.

Key Points

- John A. Macdonald enjoyed success in federal politics by dint of forging important alliances with francophone political leaders in Quebec.
- The strengths of Conservative political partnerships in Quebec were tested to destruction by the execution of Riel.

Long Descriptions

Figure 4.3 long description: The image depicts Sir John A. Macdonald being hit on the nose with a baseball bat that his partner “R.M.” [Robert Moffat] swings. Moffat gets hit in the eye by the ball he

swung at and failed to hit. Blood spurts from Macdonald's nose. The cartoon is labelled "A Double Play." [Return to Figure 4.3]

Figure 4.4 long description: Political cartoon. Sir John A. Macdonald teaches parrots with human faces (presumably members of his Conservative Party) what to say. He points to a sign held up by another man that says "The campaign watchword. There was nothing wrong in the Pacific Scandal. The indignation of the people was all a mistake!"

In the background is a poster that says "General Election: Vote John A. back to power." On the floor are newspapers, one of which is called The Mail and proclaims "John A. ay Gobovr G. The Pacific 'Scandal' was a Slander. There was no corruption about it." This is endorsed by Matthew L. and Will. McD.

The caption at the bottom of the cartoon is "Teaching the Polly-ticians what to say." [Return to Figure 4.4]

Figure 4.5 long description: Political cartoon captioned "What the result of the Grit policy would be." A wall labelled "protective tariff" surrounds a town labelled "Canadian industry." On the wall flies a Canadian (or British?) flag labelled "Protection." Two walls have been made in the stone wall by a politician wearing an overcoat and holding a large hammer. The hammer is labelled "unrestricted reciprocity"; the man holds a small sign that says "Grit policy." Through the wall pours water, which is flooding the town. Through one hole flows "competition"; through the other comes the "slaughter market." An ocean labelled "American competition" lurks outside the wall, about to pour in. [Return to Figure 4.5]

Media Attributions

- Funeral_procession_of_George-Étienne_Cartier-1
- A Double Play © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3805663) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Sir John revises history © John Wilson Bengough, 1851–1923 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- What the Result of the Grit Policy Would Be © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2989918) is licensed under a Public Domain license

4.3 Succession Planning



Figure 4.6 Charles Tupper and Hugh John Macdonald were both contenders for the leadership of the Conservative Party in the early 1890s. [Long Description]

Finding a successor was Macdonald's last great challenge, and it was to prove his greatest failure. The 1891 election saw a 76-year-old Macdonald out-campaign the 50-year-old Wilfrid Laurier, but the Conservative victory was narrow and the Tories were thoroughly beaten in Quebec. Macdonald's health, already taxed, began to fade and yet at that moment his political heirs proved to have feet of clay.

Langevin's reputation for corruption sabotaged his own chances; Ontario's D'Alton McCarthy (1836-1898) was, at one time, a likely successor but he was emerging as the nation's most passionate and vitriolic opponent of everything French and Catholic; Charles Tupper (1821-1915) — a Nova Scotian father of Confederation — might have done the job five years earlier but he, too, was in his 70s and also felt strongly that the mantle should go to a francophone; another capable Nova Scotian, John Thompson (1845-1894), was hated in much of English Canada because he had converted to Catholicism. John Abbott (1821-1893), the Conservative leader in the Senate, eventually took the job, even though Macdonald thought him unqualified. Worse, he was old. Abbott was 70 when he became prime minister, was forced from office by brain cancer less than two years into his term, and died months later. Bad luck continued to dog the Conservatives when Thompson reluctantly took the job, and then followed his predecessors to the grave when he died in office, suddenly, at 49 years. Another septuagenarian, Senator Mackenzie Bowell (1823-1917), became prime minister from 1894-1896; however, his cabinet turned against him and brought in Charles Tupper. Before Tupper could be sworn into office, his government was thrust into an election that he was destined to lose. Tupper would serve for 69 days – still the briefest tenure of any Canadian prime minister.

From 1867-1893 there had been only two prime ministers: Macdonald and Mackenzie. From 1893-1896 there were five, including Laurier. Failure to plan for life after "Old Tomorrow" badly damaged the Conservatives. They would rebound under the leadership of Robert Borden (1854-1937) in 1911, but the structural damage they had sustained would endure for another century.

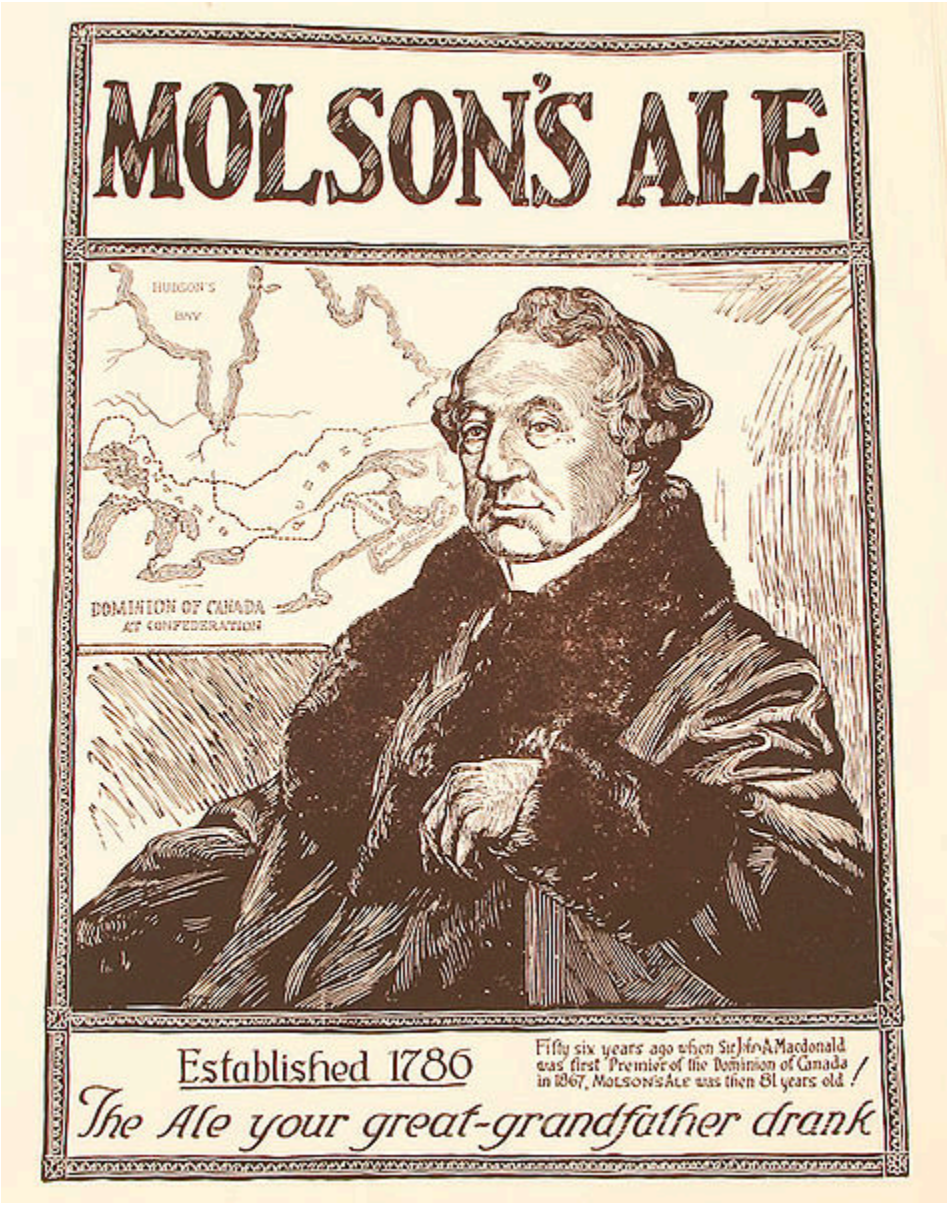


Figure 4.7 The Molson Brewing Company was probably banking on Macdonald's reputation as a dignified Victorian politician, and not as a heavy drinker, when they conceived this 1924 advertising campaign. [*[Long Description]*]

Macdonald's Legacy

Macdonald is something of an enigma in Canadian history. His impact is undeniable and, as the founding father, he is sometimes treated as something like a national hero. But he was ruthless in his politics and unsparing when it came to winning. His decision to starve western Indigenous peoples after they had signed treaties, so as to bring them into what he saw as a position consistent with the letter of the treaties, was simply brutal. While one may find quotes from this long-serving politician that display admiration for First Nations, his actions speak louder still. It is difficult to judge the extent of his corruptness in politics because the standards of the time were so slippery. Patronage was expected and even the buying of votes was winked at. However, the Pacific Scandal was not, and nor would the

public have appreciated the Kingston dry-dock deal, had Macdonald lived long enough to see it exposed fully. And yet he was skilled at achieving a kind of political stability that was, arguably, necessary for a young country.

His relationship with Britain was not straightforward either. Macdonald saw Britain and the imperial connection as a necessary counterweight to what he regarded as a genuine American threat. Keeping in mind that Macdonald was the Province of Canada's Minister of the Militia during the Fenian War, and that he carried a gun against the Upper Canadian rebels of 1837 (who he regarded as American-inspired republicans), when he said that "The Yankees are very bad neighbours," he meant it. At the same time, Macdonald wanted greater independence for Canada and was mistrustful of British motives when it came to North American diplomacy and treaties.

Macdonald did much that our generation regards as bad, some of which we can contextualize and mitigate by saying that most of his peers at the time likely felt much the same way or would have acted the same way. He was a racist (privately and publicly) and that was quite common at the time. But in other instances he was found lacking in some ethical or personal spirit by his contemporaries, and that is something to which we must pay some heed. The situation in the Northwest in 1885 was one such situation where Macdonald's approach to the First Nations' complaints and the fate of the Métis was sharply criticized. Macdonald clearly had a compromised moral compass. One of his biographies states, "if Macdonald thought of the ends, he was insufficiently concerned with the means."[1]

And, famously, he had a fraught relationship with alcohol and sometimes he was a reckless (though seldom, if ever, an ugly) drunk.

In 1886 John, his wife Agnes, and their daughter Mary decided to tour the West. Macdonald had served as the Member of Parliament for Victoria in the early 1870s — a safe seat that he needed when he lost his own Kingston riding, one that he could pick up because of the two-week-long elections of the era. But he had never been west of Ontario, and he wanted to catch a glimpse of the country he had annexed. Macdonald did what generations of 70-somethings would do from the 1880s to the present: he booked a railway tour. The family stayed in railway hotels, measured up towns like Calgary (promising), New Westminster (wouldn't give it a second night), and Vancouver (burnt to the ground six weeks before their arrival), and they admired Mount Baker at sunset. As their train passed through the Rockies, Agnes came up with the idea that they ride on the very front of the engine, on the cow catcher. They did so and the story goes that they covered 200 km in that position.[2] It is a trivial thing and of no real matter to the political history of Canada, but it has to be said: It is difficult to imagine very many of Macdonald's successors doing the same.

1. J. K. Johnson and P. B. Waite, "MACDONALD, Sir JOHN ALEXANDER", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 12, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 25 August 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/macdonald_john_alexander_12E.html.

2. Ged Martin, *John A. Macdonald: Canada's First Prime Minister* (Toronto, ON: Dundurn, 2013), 173-4.



Figure 4.8 Lady Susan Agnes Macdonald (née Bernard) in 1886, only months before she demonstrated that Victorian ladies were not above riding a cowcatcher.

Exercise: Documents

Fire Insurance Maps

Long before there was Google Earth, there was the fire insurance map. It's one of the most useful documents for anyone interested in the shape of neighbourhoods of the past. Every structure, no matter how small, is identified, along with details like height, use, building materials, and — in the case of industrial buildings — the number of employees. Out-buildings like stables and even outhouses — toilets — are included, too. Fire insurance maps also tell us, right off the top, that fire insurance was now a thing, and that selling fire insurance had emerged as a job. The City of Vancouver Open Data Catalogue will provide guidance on how to read them.

Consider the three examples here. What kinds of historical questions can be answered by closely analyzing this type of primary document?



Figure 4.E1 Calgary, 1911.



Figure 4.E2 Vancouver's Chinatown along Princess (now Pender) Street, Insurance plan of the city of Vancouver, British Columbia, July 1897, revised June 1901.



Figure 4.E3 Downtown Montreal, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, Volume 1, Apr. 1909, revised June 1914.

Key Points

- Macdonald's legacy as a politician and a long-serving prime minister includes his failure to plan effectively for the long-term success of the Conservative Party.
- His politics were highly flexible, morally slippery, and mostly effective.

Long Descriptions

Figure 4.6 long description: Poster titled "The old flag! The old guard and the old principle!" It depicts two photos of men in golden oval frames surrounded by a laurel wreath. The man on the left, Hugh John Macdonald, has a wiry moustache. The man on the right, Sir Charles Tupper, has muttonchops. Behind Macdonald is the Union Flag, and behind Tupper is a version of the Canadian Red Ensign. Beneath the men is a ribbon that says "United Canada."

Sir Charles Tupper is quoted as saying, "I stand by the principle of ample Protection to Canadian Manufacturing Industries, and the extension of Protection to Canada's greatest Industry, Agriculture, by obtaining for the Canadian farmer a preference in the markets of the United Kingdom."

Hugh John Macdonald is quoted as saying, "I believe the first duty of a statesman is to respect his pledges to the people even to his own hurt." [Return to Figure 4.6]

Figure 4.7 long description: Sketch portrait of Sir John A. Macdonald in an advertisement for

Molson's Ale. He is seated, looking dignified and pensive. Behind him is a map labelled "Dominion of Canada at Confederation," depicting Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, PEI, and Hudson's Bay. The caption says "Established 1786: The Ale your great-grandfather drank. Fifty six years ago when Sir John A. Macdonald was first Premier of the Dominion of Canada in 1867, Molson's Ale was then 81 years old!" [Return to Figure 4.7]

Media Attributions

- The Old Flag! The Old Guard and the Old Principle! © McCord Museum (M967.128.1) is licensed under a CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution NonCommercial NoDerivatives) license
- Molson's Ale, 1924 © Molson Companies Limited, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3000462) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Lady Susan Agnes MacDonald (née Bernard) © William James Topley, 1845–1930, Library and Archives Canada (PA-025530) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Insurance plan of Calgary, Alberta, October 1911 © Chas. E. Goad is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Insurance plan of the city of Vancouver, British Columbia, July 1897 © Chas. E. Goad is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Insurance plan of city of Montreal, Apr. 1909 © Chas. E. Goad is licensed under a Public Domain license

4.4 The Sunny Ways of Sir Wilfrid Laurier

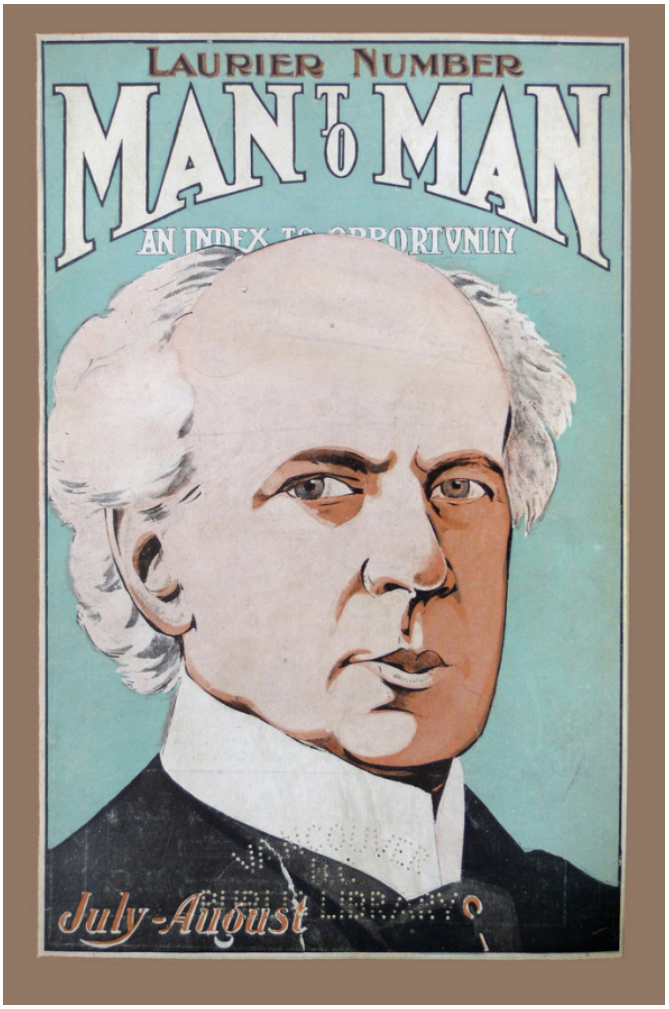


Figure 4.9 Laurier throws the reader a sidelong glance on the cover of Man-to-Man magazine (later rebranded as Westward Ho! and then British Columbia Magazine) published in Vancouver, ca. 1910.

The years between Confederation and the Great War were dominated by two national politicians: Macdonald and Laurier. Between the two of them, they headed governments for 34 out of 47 years. Macdonald was prime minister for a longer amount of time, but Laurier won more consecutive elections. Both were devoted in very different ways to nation-building. Laurier's contribution to Canadian political history is every bit as profound as Macdonald's, as is his reinterpretation of the national culture.

Laurier in Quebec

As described previously, the Liberal Party distinguished itself from the Conservatives on the issue of the tariff. The 1850s Reciprocity Treaty was regarded by many as the key to prosperity. It gave Canadian farmers access to growing American urban markets and made the less expensive American manufactured products available in Canada; although the Liberal Party was strong in the cities, its anti-tariff position ensured that it would be more popular in the country's farming districts. This explains some of the Party's strength in Quebec, where rural cultural values were especially strong and important.

Laurier's own background was not in farming. His father was a teacher and mayor in a small town north of Montreal. The young Laurier spent much of his childhood and youth studying in New Glasgow, where he was immersed in the culture and language of recent British immigrants to Quebec. He then trained in law at McGill, an uncommon accomplishment for a francophone at the time. His professional years were marked by struggle and intermittent poor health. Politically, he was a ***Rouge***, and in 1866-67 he was entirely opposed to the concept of Confederation which, he wrote, constituted "the second stage on the road to 'anglification' mapped out by Lord Durham."[1] He entered provincial politics first in 1871 at the age of 30, and quickly switched to federal affairs (and, at about the same time, had an extra-marital affair as well). A young French-Canadian lawyer with excellent ability in English, Laurier was too good to pass up when it came time for Mackenzie to form a cabinet in 1874: Laurier was appointed the Minister of Inland Revenue (which is roughly comparable to the current Canadian Revenue Agency).

1. Réal Bélanger, "LAURIER, Sir WILFRID", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 14, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 25 August 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/laurier_wilfrid_14E.html.

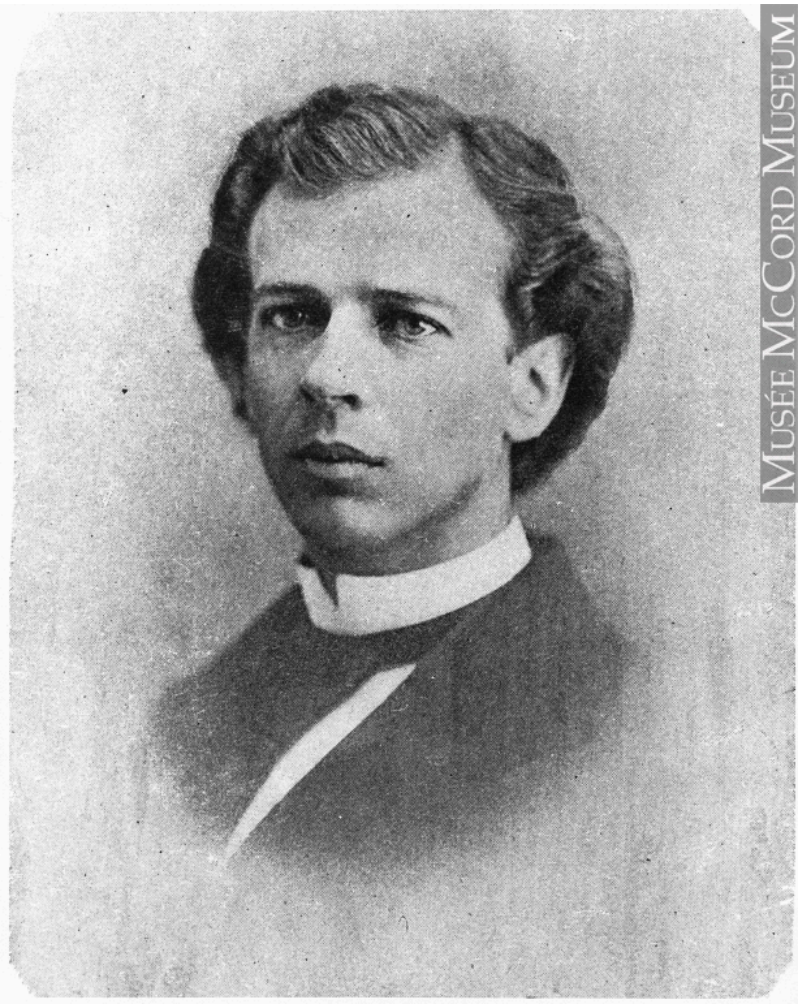


Figure 4.10 Seen here in his early 30s in 1874, wearing the upright collar that would be his trademark, Laurier in that year would become a cabinet minister.

Laurier's relationship with the Catholic Church exemplifies some of the challenges of politics in late Victorian Quebec. Laurier was **anticlerical**, an advocate for the separation of church and state. This did not make him popular with the clergy, even though he saw himself as a champion for Catholics in Canada. He was, however, a powerful orator and, in 1877, was able to convince Bishop George Conroy (1832-1878) and an audience of 2,000 that the Liberal Party posed no threat to the rights of the Church — providing the Church did not use intimidation to chase votes toward the Conservative Party.

Despite a promising start, Laurier almost lost his way in the mid-1880s. He was influential in Quebec Liberal circles, but was not viewed so much as a leader anymore. Then Riel happened. Genuinely offended by the death sentence handed down to the Métis leader, Laurier also recognized an opportunity to forge links between Canadien nationalists of all stripes in Quebec. Riel was the wedge that could be driven between the Conservative Party on the one hand, and the Québecois electorate and the Catholic clergy on the other. Rising in the House of Commons, Laurier pointed a finger at Macdonald, accusing him of stirring up events in the West and persecuting a branch of the francophone and Catholic family. In one of his famous statements, while speaking before 50,000 people at the Champ-de-Mars rally days after Riel's execution, Laurier suggested that had he been in Saskatchewan at the time, he would have taken up arms against the Ottawa government.

The Great Conciliator

An opponent of Confederation as a young man, Laurier appears to have returned to that position in his mid-40s. However, his kind of nationalism was one that accepted the federal system as an environment in which Quebec could, with the right guardians, thrive. This was a precisely dualist vision of the country: A vision in which both French and English coexist respectfully, and compromise is sought at all costs. When the Liberal Party failed once more at the polls in 1887, its leader Edward Blake (1833-1912) handpicked Laurier as his successor. (There were no leadership conventions at this time, just the discretion of the party leader.) It was a potentially disastrous choice, but possibly the shrewdest move in Blake's otherwise unimpressive run.

Laurier failed to win government for the Liberals in 1891. Macdonald used the Liberals' promise of "Universal Reciprocity" to whip up fear of an American takeover of Canada. In Quebec the Tories were able to mobilize an ultramontane fear of Laurier's *Rouge* background to drive voters away from the Liberals. (The old saying in Quebec, alleged to have been coined by priests offering advice at election time, was "*le ciel est bleu, l'enfer est rouge.*" You can't get much clearer direction than that!) It was a bitter reward for Laurier's support of Macdonald during a dispute over a piece of Quebec legislation, *The Jesuit Estates Act*, 1888. In that instance both leaders called for tolerance of Papal intervention in a Quebec dispute over property claimed by several religious orders, a move that outraged **Orange** anti-Catholic feeling in Ontario. On the cultural and economic front, then, Laurier was measured and found wanting.

Five years later, the situation would be much changed. Macdonald was gone, the Conservative Party was careening from one endangered leader to the next, and — most importantly — the Liberals had come to terms with the tariff. The economy in the mid-1890s was desperately poor and the American response involved erecting a tariff wall of their own. Protectionism was the order of the day. What Laurier could promise, in good conscience, was no free trade for now but later, when the time became right. In embracing Macdonald's National Policy, however gingerly, Laurier became electable. Once he abandoned the tariff (and he would do so in 1911), he would again become exposed.

One irony of Laurier's rise to power is the role played by the Provincial Rights Movement (see Section 2.11). Oliver Mowat (1820-1903), the Premier of Ontario and the most effective and unrelenting advocate of decentralized confederation, was joined by Nova Scotian Premier William Fielding in an endorsement of Laurier. The ongoing acrimony between the provinces and Ottawa over federal powers had the effect of boosting the cause of the Liberals provincially: Both Mowat and Fielding were Liberals and thus motivated to see a change in Ottawa. What this meant, of course, is that Laurier wanted federal power but not so much of it that he would alienate his own base of support. He promised to build consensus rather than punish his foes: This was the crux of his commitment to "sunny ways." History tends to view Laurier as a master of compromise, the Great Conciliator, and this (honouring provincial rights and holding federal power) was possibly his neatest trick. In 1896 he became prime minister.

Culture Wars

The first Laurier government faced several issues immediately. The foremost of these was the

Manitoba Schools Act, 1870. Separate, publicly-funded schools for Catholics was an issue in all provinces. Prior to Confederation there was a consensus across British North America that religion and education could not only co-exist in the schools, but they were both essential parts of the moral and intellectual development of children. Where a church and community established a school, public funding generally followed. Confederation gave to the provinces exclusive authority over education so that a majority of MPs in Ottawa could not impose their denominational biases on the nation's schools. Read simply, it was intended to stop Orangemen (from English Canada) attacking Catholic schools in Quebec. Although, the expectation was that Catholic and French language education elsewhere would be preserved and nurtured as well. The *BNA Act, 1867,* also guaranteed the continued funding of existing denominational schools in each of the provinces.

It was this second protection that was first to erode. As early as 1871 New Brunswick legislators were keen to move from denominational to secular education with a single, uniform curriculum, and with provincial government (rather than church) oversight. Welcomed by the Protestant denominations, this move was resisted strenuously by the Catholic (mostly Acadian) communities. The official Catholic position was that education was a matter for the clergy, and the state could not and should not interfere. Fredericton's response was consistent with the **anticlericalism** that marked Victorian liberalism and modernism: The separation of church and state in civic life was necessary for the well-being of a successful democratic society. The *Common Schools Act, 1871* became a flashpoint as Protestant legislators argued that there had been no pre-1867 formal arrangement with the denominational schools — so the Catholics had no rights to lose. The Catholic church, including Quebec's Bishop Ignace Bourget (who would later be a nemesis of Laurier), encouraged their adherents to withhold school taxes and persuaded at least two Catholic members of the New Brunswick government to resign. Clergymen were arrested and property was seized in lieu of taxes. This increasingly rancorous disagreement culminated in tragedy in the Acadian community of Caraquet in 1875; a confrontation between a volunteer Protestant constabulary and Catholic opponents of the *Common Schools Act* came to blows, gunfire was exchanged, and both sides claimed one dead.

The New Brunswick case began under Macdonald's watch and ended under Mackenzie's. Neither federal administration was inclined to interfere, and each successive administration feared a replay in a different province. New Brunswickers found a route to compromise, but they'd paid a terrible price to get there. This was not a pattern anyone wished to reproduce, although the conflicting pressures — a modernist need for secular and consistent education versus a conservative clerical desire to control curriculum on faith and language — were not dissipating.

In the early 1890s this issue was coming to a head in Manitoba, and it became the most prominent matter during the 1896 federal election. One of the promises made in negotiations with the Red River Métis (in 1870) covered the provision of publicly-funded separate schools in which the Catholic faith and French language could be part of the curriculum. Declining numbers of Métis in Manitoba (and an increase of anti-Métis feeling after the 1885 Northwest Rebellion) constructed an argument for dispensing with separate schools. Premier Thomas Greenway (1838-1908), a notable advocate of provincial rights as early as 1883 and a Liberal by necessity as much as by inclination, saw in educational reform a chance to forge a common, **pragmatic** front among Liberals and Conservatives in Manitoba. His government put an end to the bilingual production of legislation and government records (a move that was overturned by the courts nearly a century later), effectively ended French as an official language in the province, and removed public funding from **confessional schools**. Parents who wished to send their children to a Catholic school could still do so, but they would have to pay the full

costs directly and, in addition to that, they were expected to pay school taxes to support the secular, provincially-run system. There was widespread hope among federal politicians that this thorny issue might be resolved by the courts, but the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council responded that it was up to Ottawa. The Conservatives in Ottawa threatened to disallow the legislation but failed to do so before losing the 1896 election — in part, rather bizarrely, because Laurier blocked the passage of their disallowance bill. The **Manitoba Schools Question** now fell to Laurier to resolve.

The new Prime Minister's response was one that would characterize his strategy of seeking compromise, one that he would follow for a generation. Laurier — through his delegate, Oliver Mowat — convinced Greenway to provide some very small degree of funding and support for French-language instruction and Catholic schools, although the official language issue stayed off the table. The compromise was based on numbers: 10 francophone pupils in rural areas or 25 in urban areas could trigger after-class instruction. The deal had the enormous political benefit of getting the issue off the federal agenda, which was a great relief to Laurier. Historians have pointed to the outcome as the inevitable result of a changing demographic and, in that context, Laurier is seen to have secured some reasonable if small concessions. Others have argued that this was a critical moment in Canadian history when Laurier sacrificed the principle of minority rights — and the federal government's constitutional obligation to protect them — in order to entrench Anglo-Protestantism as the norm across the West. The consensus is that this example of compromise brought peace and that it was staged expertly, but that the concessions made by Manitoba were pitifully small and ungenerous.

The issue of education thereafter moved entirely to the provincial level. When Laurier's ally, Premier Félix Marchand (1832-1900), attempted in 1890 to reform the education system in Quebec with an eye to taking it away from the clergy and into the hands of the state, he was defeated by an alliance of Anglican and Catholic elements in the province's Legislative Council.[2] Laurier did not intervene.

Key Points

- Wilfrid Laurier was intermittently an opponent of Confederation.
- The execution of Riel was a turning point in Quebec politics and in Laurier's career.
- The Liberal Party's victory in 1896 was helped by Laurier's willingness to mute the party's commitment to free trade.
- Laurier was first tested as prime minister on the issue of separate schools. His compromising approach hints at what would become his *modus operandi* in successive crises.

Media Attributions

- Wilfrid Laurier on Man-to-Man Magazine © Man-to-Man Magazine is licensed under a

2. Nova Scotia and Quebec retained their Legislative Councils into the 20th century. The Council in Halifax was dissolved in 1928, but the Quebec Council endured until 1968. The Legislative Councils acted as appointed provincial-level senates. Ontario never wrote one into its provincial constitution, BC never implemented plans to have one, and Manitoba, PEI, and New Brunswick were quick to dispose of theirs. The term used to describe a legislature with two tiers (in the Canadian case, typically called an Assembly and a Council) is "bicameral."

Public Domain license

- Wilfrid Laurier, 1874 © McCord Museum (MP-0000.1093.8) is licensed under a CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution NonCommercial NoDerivatives) license

4.5 Imperialism vs. Nationalism

> So long as the majority of Canadians have two countries, one here and one in Europe, national unity will remain a myth and a constant source of internecine quarrels.
>
> – Henri Bourassa, ca. 1907[1]

> I … am an Imperialist because I will not be a Colonial.
>
> – Stephen B. Leacock, 1907.[2]

It was on Laurier's watch that there arose a vocal debate among Canadians about empire and nation. Briefly, there were those who believed Canada's destiny was in the arms of the British Empire, where it would mature and inevitably wield greater and greater authority, perhaps someday challenging Britain's leadership of the whole. There were others who contended that Canada was a North American nation, one that need not be drawn into imperial adventures, a nation that had conquered half a continent and which would be better off autonomous and self-confident. Inevitably, elements of the two sides bled into one another: The imperialists were nationalists and the nationalists' rhetoric was littered with imperialist language. One was outward looking; the other inward. The imperialist view called on strong pro-British sentiments that echoed the ordeals of the Loyalists of 1783, and the defence of British North America against the United States in 1812 and 1866; the nationalists invoked the accomplishments of the *voyageurs* and the Hudson's Bay Company, the native political traditions embodied in the rebellions of 1837-38, and the peculiar, dual cultural qualities of Canada.

There were many who embodied these contradictions. One was Madge Robertson Watt (1868-1948), a youthful activist in women's organizations. As her biographer writes, Watt

> …represented a number of emerging trends in the early 20th century: While she embraced the ideal of the New Woman, she firmly maintained a great emphasis on respectability and conventionality. She was a proud Canadian with unabashed loyalty to the Empire. She is known for exporting a Canadian idea to the mother country – Women's Institutes, an organization for rural women, which she succeeded in transplanting to England and Wales.[3]

An appetite for change and a tireless devotion to improving the condition of women internationally, as the case of Watt demonstrates, could be very closely aligned to a socially conservative way of being; nationalism and imperialism could be found in the same heart.

Laurier's nationalism was, rather typically, one that sought to find a compromise; which is not to say it was disingenuous. He had a long career of lauding British institutions and especially British liberalism. Was he that fervently loyal? It's possible, but it is also certain that, as a French-Canadian and a Catholic

1. Quoted in Jean-Charles Bonenfant and Jean-Charles Falardeau, "Culture and Political Implications of French-Canadian Nationalism," *Canadian Historical Association Report* (1946): 56-73.

2. Stephen B. Leacock, "An Address before the Empire Club and Toronto Educationists," *The Empire Club Addresses* (Toronto), 19 March 1907: 276-305.

3. Linda M. Ambrose, *A Great Rural Sisterhood: Madge Robertson Watt & the ACWW* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 4.

he felt — rightly — that Anglo-Protestants needed regular reassurance on this score. And while he was espousing a deep personal loyalty to the Crown, he believed that Canada was a North American country with a powerful North American neighbour whose economy was increasingly important to the success of Canada.

Two of the most prominent voices in the debate over Canada's future were a pair of contemporaries, both born in the first two years of Confederation: the Quebec *Nationaliste*, Henri Bourassa (1868-1952), and the English-Canadian Imperialist, Stephen Leacock (1869-1944). Their disagreement played itself out in the two decades before the Great War, although it had begun before them in the mid-19th century. It would continue in different forms throughout the 20th century. In a society in which the individual was more important than the whole society, scholars and politicians and journalists at the turn of the century struggled to describe the society or nation to which the individual should belong. What's more, these ideas about Canadian-ness were deadly serious insofar as they were freighted with disagreement over what constituted Canada and when, and under what conditions, Canada should send its people to war. A Canada-wide ambivalence on this topic marked the administration of Wilfrid Laurier in particular, but it has never fully gone away.

The Canada Firsters

The **Canada First** movement was established in 1868. It drew in some of the most articulate English-Canadian politicians and writers of the day, including Edward Blake, Charles Mair, Robert Grant Haliburton, and John Schultz. This was a very mixed bag, held somewhat more firmly together by the influence of British historian Goldwin Smith (who arrived in Toronto in 1871 from Oxford via Cornell University). What united the group was a suspicion of American ambitions and a belief that Canada represented the best hope for a northern, Protestant, and Aryan race. In this regard they were starkly anti-Irish, anti-French, and anti-Catholic, as Schultz and Mair both demonstrated at Red River in 1869-70. Their shared Aryanism was typical of the racist and imperialist views of the day. Efforts to produce a competitive Canada Party in federal politics failed, but much of the spirit of this movement was to survive in a variety of forms and its ideas would help to formulate, eventually, a restructuring of the British Empire.

Imperialism in Canada points in two directions. Firstly, it is oriented outward and inward from the St. Lawrence, looking toward Britain while taking in — as Canada's own empire — the West and the North. While the Maritimes also came under its sway, that region's population also and independently felt the tug of the North Atlantic economy and had done so for centuries. Secondly, Canadian imperialism is enmeshed in the larger British imperial enterprise: Canadians like John A. Macdonald applauded British territorial and commercial gains and were pleased to bask in the reflected glory of Britain's military and economic might. The question for Canadian imperialists of this kind, however, was whether Canada was as junior a colony as the many African and Asian territories claimed by Britain, or was it a senior and largely autonomous member of the British imperial family? Conveniently, an influential group in the very heart of London provided an answer.

The Imperial Federation

The Imperial Federation movement began in England in the 1880s and quickly gained momentum in

Canada. Among its leaders on this side of the Atlantic were the enormously popular writer and satirist Stephen Leacock, the cleric George Monro Grant, and the educator and writer George Robert Parkin. The Canadian Imperialists, as historians describe them, ranged in age from the youthful Leacock through the very middle-aged Grant, but they were solidly Upper Canadian Ontarians. From 1868 to the Great War and beyond they presented a vision of a Canada that was not only embedded in the Empire but a likely heir to its leadership. Canada was draped in the Union Jack but with rippling muscles and vitality bursting from every pore, unlike the tired old British lion, care-worn by years of managing an empire and physically degraded by decades of industrial labour, crowded cities, and bad food. The Canadian Imperialists drew on Canada's northern-ness as a source of collective and mythic cultural strength. As imperialists they expected that Canada would join in British wars abroad because those were, effectively, Canadian wars. And (as Leacock indicated at the outset) they rejected being subservient and pathetic colonials looking to Britain to protect their interests and sovereignty. They would be imperialists — active, contributing, committed — because being colonials was narrow and emasculating. They were, in this regard, outward-looking and internationally-minded, even if they perpetuated the Anglo-philic and Franco-phobic tendencies of the Canada Firsters.

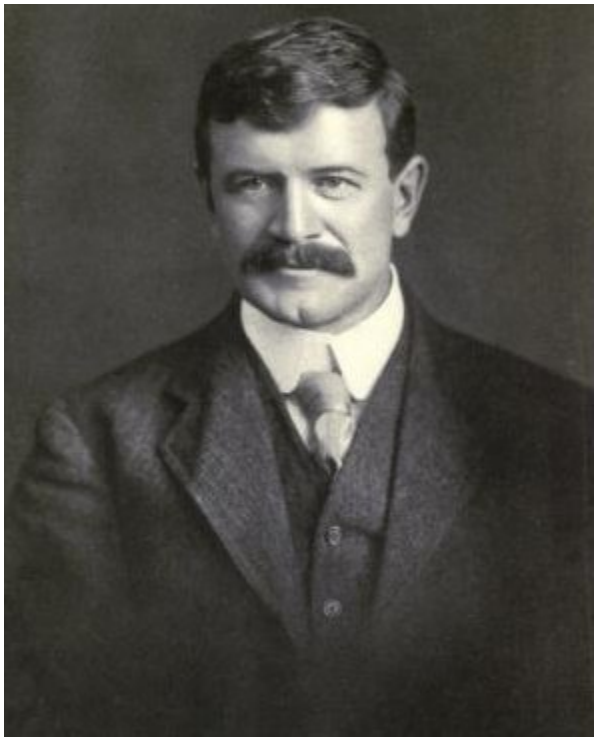


Figure 4.11 Stephen Leacock in 1913, on the brink of the war between the empires.

Imperialist anger simmered when Prime Minister Laurier tried to moderate imperialist and nationalist antipathies at the outset of the Boer War (see Sections 4.6 and 4.7). While many Québecois remained hostile to the war, imperialists were enthusiastic and celebrated what were viewed as landmarks in an emerging Canadian military tradition. Huge parades welcomed troops home, the dead were mourned with honours and ceremony, and regiments added South African names to their banners and crests. It was, however, at this very peak that imperialist sentiment cracked a little. In 1903 a specially-struck international commission ruled on the Alaska-Canada border dispute in favour of the United States. Anti-Americanism was ramped up a few steps, but so too was anti-British feeling, even among some imperialists. The commission's decision was transparently an effort on the part of Britain to improve

relations with the United States, regardless of Canadian interests. This would feed the current within Canadian imperialism that sought greater autonomy and authority within the Empire, as opposed to the cohort that was more likely to be uncritically loyal to Britain.

Les Nationalistes

This understanding of Canada was very much at odds with the nationalism articulated by Henri Bourassa. The grandson of Louis-Joseph Papineau — the leader of the Lower Canadian Rebellion and a long-time politician, both before and after 1837 — Bourassa was a youthful powerhouse. He was first elected to office at 22 years of age as the mayor of Montebello (the town created by his grandfather on the ancestral seigneury). He was subsequently elected as a Liberal MP in the 1896 campaign that saw Laurier become prime minister. The still very young Bourassa was to be a gadfly to Laurier, constantly denouncing concessions made to the imperialist element while developing a cogent nationalist position.



Figure 4.12 Henri Bourassa in 1917, around the time of the conscription crisis.

In 1899 Bourassa resigned his seat in protest (though he quickly won it back) over Canada's participation in the Second Boer War. He likened the Boers — Dutch-speaking settlers in South Africa — to the French-Canadians: a linguistic minority whose demands for independence were being suppressed. Like many of his contemporaries, Bourassa envisioned a Canada that could be dualistic in language and beliefs. He maintained that this cultural complexity sufficiently defined the country and that embracing it would be enough to protect the Dominion from American influences. He said on one occasion that the Québecois should be as "French as the Americans are English," which is to say, only in language. Like many nationalist visions, Bourassa's was ultimately inward looking and suspicious of the outside world.

Two events in the early 20th century impacted the fortunes of both groups. The Alaska Boundary

Dispute produced a result that outraged many Canadians and disappointed imperialists in particular. Subsequent British requests for Canadian financial contributions to the Royal Navy were divisive, not only between French-Canadian nationalists and English-Canadian imperialists but among English-Canadians, who were now articulating something like an English-language version of Canadian nationalism themselves. The Great War reinvigorated imperialism in some measure, but what was hoped in some quarters would be a military romp lasting a few months turned into something much more tragic. British commanders' competence was drawn into question, and the effect of the Canadian victory at Vimy Ridge (followed by the disaster at Passchendaele) in 1917 was to feed nationalist sentiment and leech away imperialist support. Gradually elements of the two perspectives were moving closer together, even if animosity between French- and English-Canadians persisted.

Bourassa's long career in public affairs, the volume of writing he produced, and his prominent role in many of the key debates in national affairs made Bourassa an enormous influence on thinking about Canada — and not just in Quebec. The cross-cultural nationalism that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s owed a lot to Bourassa. Likewise, Leacock — a brilliant humourist — was one of the most widely read writers in the English language in the first quarter of the century, and his call for a self-assured, morally-centred, and globally invested Canada echoes in the country's mid-century role as a middle power and peacekeeper.

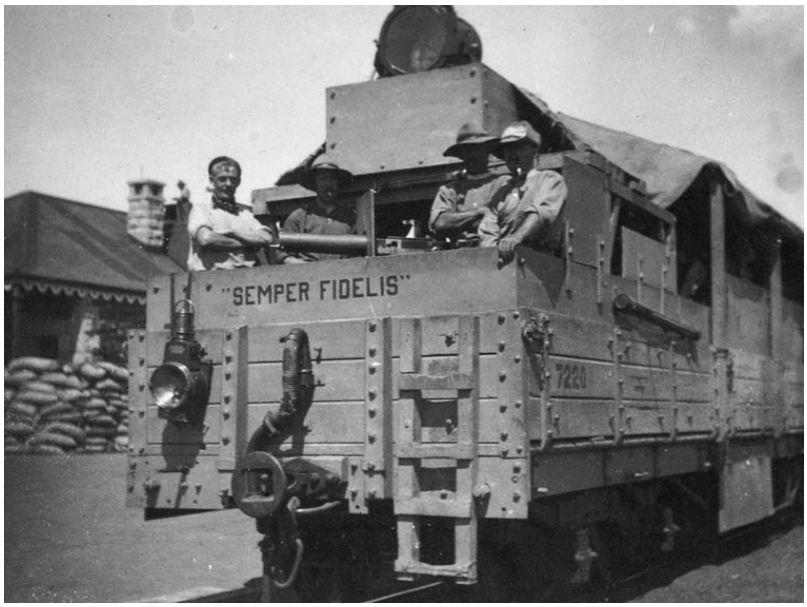


Figure 4.13 Canadian involvement in the Boer War divided nationalistes from imperialists, and set the tone for disagreement on Canada's international role.

Key Points

- English-Canadians with strong loyalties to the British Empire and aspirations for a larger Canadian role in world affairs became known as imperialists.
- French-Canadians whose suspicion of Britain's international agenda combined with a North America-centric view of Canada articulated a *nationaliste* perspective.

- The leading figures in these two movements were men of letters, respectively: the humourist Stephen Leacock and the journalist Henri Bourassa.
- Satisfying the polarized interests of these two groups became one of the great challenges of Laurier's administrations.
- Both movements contributed ideas that would gird greater claims for autonomy within the Empire.

Media Attributions

- Stephen Leacock, 1913 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Henri Bourassa © Library and Archives Canada (C-009092) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Canadian troops in the Boer War, 1902 © George F. Ramsey, Library and Archives Canada (C-003475) is licensed under a Public Domain license

4.6 Canada and Africa

The debate between imperialists and nationalists (surveyed in Section 4.5) came to a head in the late 1890s as Britain lurched into a colonial war in South Africa. This was not Britain's first conflict in Africa, nor was it Canada's. The failed Nile Expedition of 1884-85 — often overlooked — set the stage for Canada's involvement in the turn of the century war, and was one of several crises in Laurier's tenure.

Sudan 1884–85

A botched attempt to evacuate British troops and civilians from the Sudanese city of Khartoum in the winter of 1884 resulted in a year-long siege. Lieutenant-General Garnet Wolseley (1833-1913), an Irish-British career soldier and colonial administrator, was given charge of an expedition to relieve the Britons trapped in Sudan. Wolseley's connection to Canada was this: He had charge of the Canadian expedition sent to Red River in 1870. In subsequent engagements in West Africa, Wolseley recruited Canadians and other veterans of the Red River invasion to support his efforts. In 1884 — coincidentally, on the eve of the Northwest Rebellion — Wolseley put in another call for Canadian troops, obtaining 390 *voyageurs* — in actuality, a mix of former fur trade workers, Mohawk from Kahnawà:ke, and loggers from the Ottawa Valley — to assist the movement of more than 5,000 British troops up the Nile. The whole episode was a failure, and Khartoum fell two days before Wolseley's troops were anywhere near. Moreover, about 200 of the Canadians abandoned their African adventure and hurried home when their six-month contracts expired.[1] Sixteen of their number died on the Nile.

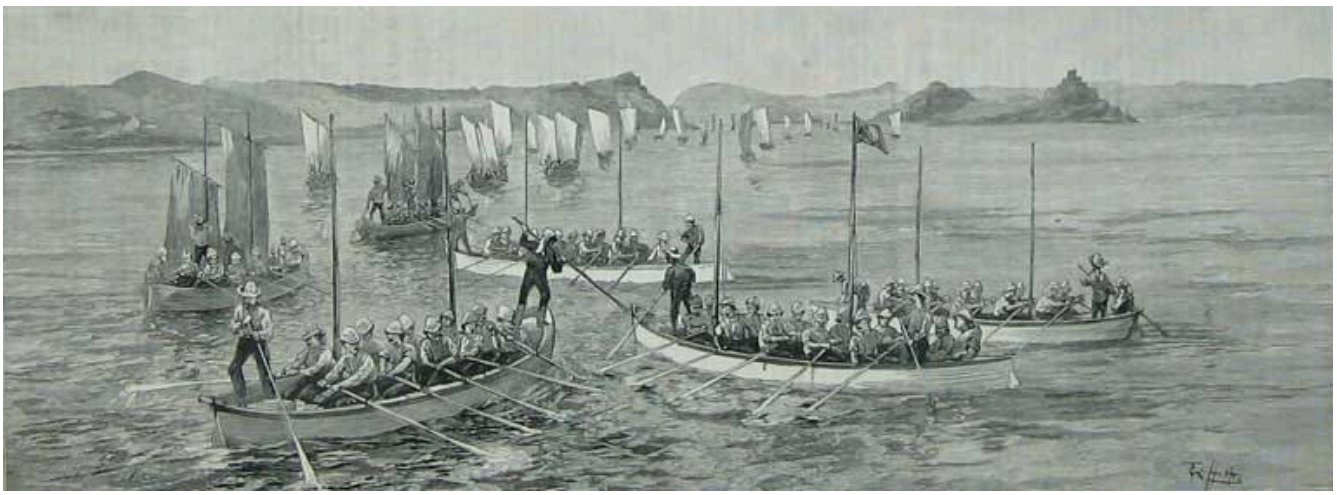


Figure 4.14 A few hundred French, English, and Mohawk Canadians volunteered to lend their river-navigating skills to an ill-fated British mission in 1884.

Although this was not a conflict in which Canada declared a direct interest, the Nile Expedition

1. O. A. Cooke, "WOLSELEY, GARNET JOSEPH, 1st Viscount WOLSELEY", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 14, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 21 August 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/wolseley_garnet_joseph_14E.html.

established a post-Confederation precedent: the Dominion's human resources were available to Britain in wartime. Canada would not be called on again to contribute men to war for another 15 years, but the principle of defending the Empire was in place.

Boer War, 1899–1902

The Second Boer War began in 1899 as the South African Republic and the Orange Free State (colonized by Dutch settlers) resisted British attempts to annex their territories into a larger Cape Colony. Mineral wealth and the goal of a Cape-to-Cairo chain of colonies was what motivated Britain and its agents in South Africa. The origins of the Second Boer War can be traced, also, to the overlap between imperial and capitalist agendas in South Africa. Britain had what it regarded as strategic objectives, and these were funded and driven forward by private plans to exploit mineral, human, and other resources, but specifically diamonds and gold. Two colonies — the South African Republic (aka: Transvaal) and the Orange Free State — stood in the way. These were colonies left over from the days of the Dutch East India Company's activities at the southern tip of the continent, and they had long been in conflict with British forces. They were, moreover, hardened by their experience of persecution by neighbours and their conflict with the region's Indigenous peoples in the so-called Zulu Wars. These trials, along with their migration into the interior of South Africa, contributed to a strong sense of Boer Trekker (or Voortrekker) community identity and a sharpened and highly conservative religious culture.[2] The Boers were not wealthy, nor were they particularly close — physically or diplomatically — to the coastal Afrikaners (other descendants of the Dutch colonial experiment). To private British interests in the region they seemed ripe for the picking and efforts were made to stir up a Boer rebellion that would necessitate an official and armed British relief effort and then a conquest. This failed, so the British opted for less subtle means and war was declared in October 1899.

Canadian involvement began with 1,000 volunteers under the command of Lieutenant Colonel William Otter, who had (poorly) led the Canadian Permanent Force against the Métis and the Cree in 1885. Enthusiasm among English-Canadians, however, was so great that a further 6,000 recruits were easily obtained. This was (with the exception of a regiment of Constabulary) a one-year commitment for recruits — time enough to sail across the Atlantic and spend a Canadian winter in sunnier climates while fighting for the honour of the Empire. Recruits were paid, public donations poured in to insure their lives and protect their wives and children from penniless widowhood and orphanhood, and a whole contingent — the Strathcona Horse — was assembled and paid for by Donald Smith (now Lord Strathcona), the former CEO of the Hudson's Bay Company, Conservative MP, and driving force behind the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The course of the war was nothing glorious, despite initial excitement among imperialists. Britain's

2. The terminology used to describe the Dutch settlers of South Africa is complicated and often misleading. Some of them were French Huguenots and not Dutch at all. The settlers most closely connected with the Dutch Company's forts and harbours are historically more likely to be described as Afrikaners, and the rural populations as Boers (Dutch for farmers). The whole of this population is linked by the use of Afrikaans, a dialect comprised largely of Dutch but also Indonesian and African elements. The Boer resistance to the British stemmed in part from their decades-long effort to avoid British rule by migrating north and inland. The Voortrekkers' self-imposed exile hardened their attitude towards both the British and the coastal Afrikaners, some of whom joined in the War on the side of the British. One can easily find in this story elements of the Métis situation 15 years earlier, insofar as the former Red River Colony was largely abandoned to the Canadians and the Métis forced off into the interior where they were significantly less well off and running out of places to hide from imperial forces.

military strategies were transparently ineffective, the Boers were better armed, better prepared, and better motivated than expected and much more so than they had been in the First Boer War. 1899 ended on a low note as the tempo changed to a grinding guerrilla defence running up against a steady, if plodding, march on the capitals, Pretoria and Bloemfontein. It was in this phase that the British began to deploy concentration camps and engaged in a scorched-earth policy that targeted Boer farms. At Paardeberg Drift in February 1900, two Canadian units from the Maritimes wore down a much larger Boer force and secured a badly needed victory for the Empire. The Canadians distinguished themselves individually, but Paardeberg was otherwise their high-water mark in the war. And while medals were handed out (including four Victoria Crosses) and the troops were feted on their return, there was also a crack opening in the Canadian imperialist armour.[3]

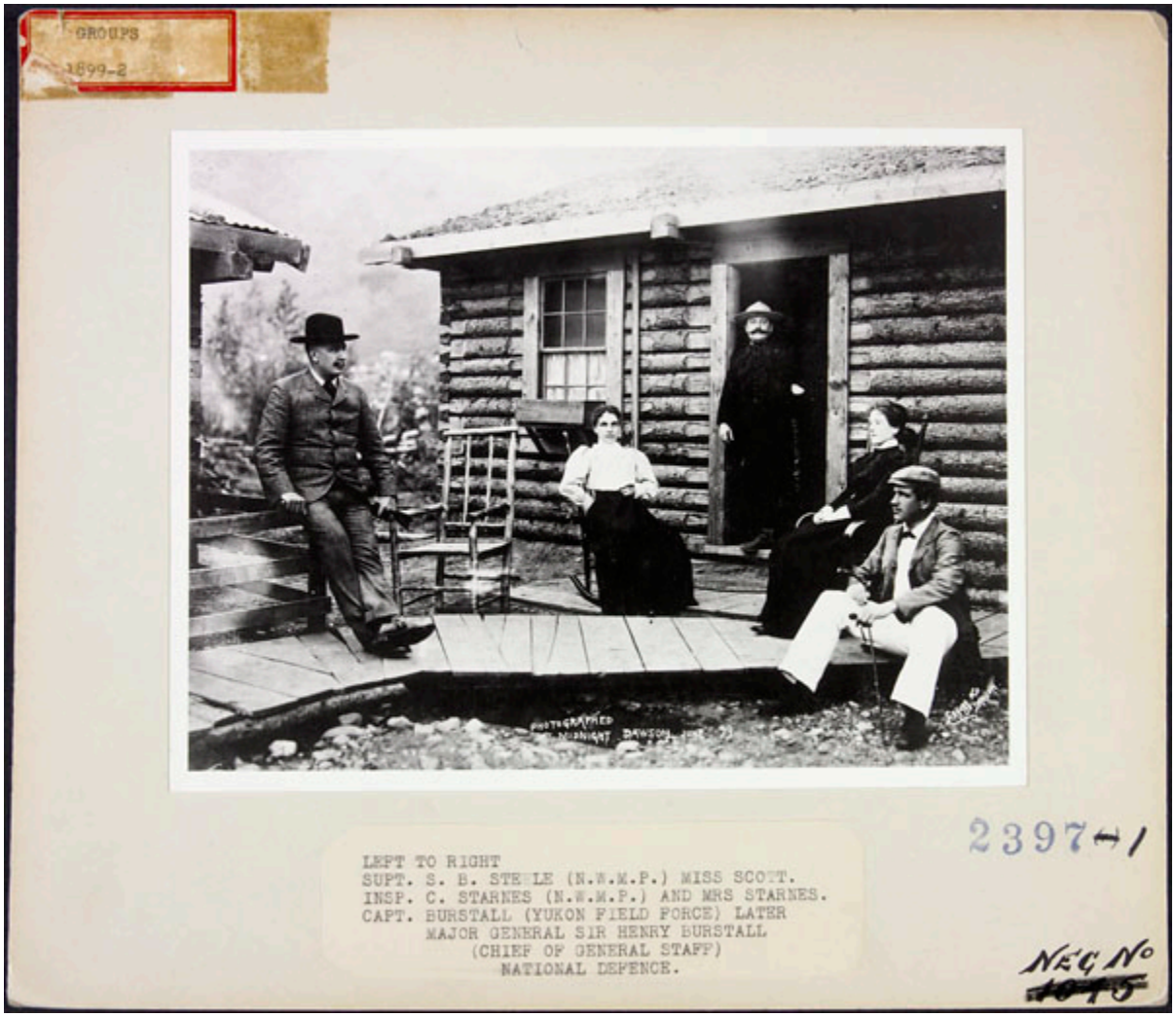


Figure 4.15 Becoming more legendary by the minute, NWMP Superintendent Sam Steele (sitting, left) at midnight in the Yukon with friends. At the right is Henry Burstall, later a Major General, who was knighted as well. [Long Description]

This was the Dominion's first international (as opposed to cross-border) conflict and it was transformative. Imperialist sentiment was such that Canadian troops and officers initially deferred to

3. The most comprehensive source on this topic is Carman Miller, *Painting the Map Red: Canada and the South African War, 1899-1902* (Montreal & Kingston: Canadian War Museum & McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993).

British commanders, whose performance subsequently proved to be worthy of reproach. Returning soldiers complained about British class snobbery and incompetence in the field. Now, complaining is something that soldiers are wont to do, but in the particular context of Edwardian Canada, this did less to subtract from loyalty to Britain than it did to add to an embryonic English-Canadian national sensibility. It reinforced a growing sense that, as a part of the Empire, Canada ought to be treated less as a subordinate and more as an equal. (In this there are echoes of the contemporaneous Provincial Rights Movement that sought to erase the belief that Ottawa was superior to the provinces.)

The Boer War left several other legacies. It cemented the already near-mythical reputation of Sam Steele (1848-1919). A militiaman who fought Fenians in 1866, a member of Canada's first regular army unit, one of the earliest members of the NWMP, a veteran of 1885 (he fought the Cree at Frenchman's Butte and Loon Lake), a Mountie in the East Kootenays and also in the Yukon during the Klondike gold rush, Steele was placed in charge of the Strathcona's Horse Regiment at the ripe age of 50. Steele served as a model of masculinity for a generation of Canadians, and as a symbol of Canada's maturing strength as a nation.



Figure 4.16 A regiment of Canadian soldiers returns from South Africa and is met by a huge public reception on King Street in Toronto on May 31, 1900.

The South African conflict also led Canadians to think that international wars might be relatively short with tolerable casualties. In two and a half years of combat there were only about 250 Canadian casualties from 7,000 troops, and it is reckoned that more than half of these died from disease, not battle wounds. (At worst this mortality rate was a third of what would be recorded in the Great War.) When August 1914 rolled around, then, it was South Africa that Canadians remembered, and not the much more comparable (and vastly more damaging) Napoleonic Wars a century earlier.

Canada's Century

In the midst of the Boer War, Laurier realized that he needed to be able to galvanize nationalists and

imperialists alike and not just keep them from one another's throats. In 1905 he told the House that "as the 19th century had been the century of the United States, so the 20th century would be the century of Canada."[4] This was a sentiment both sides could embrace, but only, of course, if Laurier could stop the country from imploding.

South Africa drove deeper the wedge that existed between English-Canadians and French-Canadians. It also served to alienate from the Anglo-Canadian vision of Canada many of the immigrant communities that identified more with the Boers than with the British forces.

Nationalistes were opposed for two main reasons: they argued that Canada ought not to be sucked into Britain's imperial vortex and that the situation of the Boers was not entirely unlike that of the French-Canadians. Indeed, there were echoes of the Northwest Rebellion: Not only was an agrarian, non-anglophone population caught squarely in the gun sights, but the very same personnel were holding the rifles. The Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry sent to South Africa was under the command once again of William Otter and the mounted regiment was led by the ubiquitous Colonel Steele. By contrast, imperialists viewed Canadian involvement in the Boer War as a matter of duty and also as an opportunity to demonstrate the growing maturity and capacity of the Dominion.

Laurier's instincts were always to find a compromise, and they were never better illustrated than in 1899. Refusing to support a deployment of regulars, which would have sent French-Canadians into battle against the Boers, he opted to muster a corps of volunteers. At first this was only a force of 1,000, but it grew eventually to 7,000. Anglophone imperialists were offended by the smallness of Canada's engagement, especially at the start; francophones opposed to the war rioted for three days. Laurier faced several poor options, and his compromise was less divisive than any of the other choices open to him. If elections are the final litmus test, the opportunity for voters to turn on him came in 1904 and he survived.

4. Canada. House of Commons, *Debates*, 21 February 1905.



Figure 4.17 Criss-crossing the country at election time (in this case, 1904) was made possible by the extensive railway network. Politicians like Laurier could hit one community after the next, meeting briefly with locals and then moving on to the next whistlestop.

Key Points

- By 1900 Canada had been involved in two military expeditions at home and two abroad.
- The two campaigns in Africa — Sudan in 1884-85 and the Second Boer War — were in support of British imperial goals.
- Both conflicts were small adventures with few casualties, which may have led to Canadians underestimating the seriousness of the Great War when it began in 1914.
- The Boer War was profoundly divisive in domestic politics.

Long Descriptions

Figure 4.15 long description: Three men and two women sit outside of a log cabin. The caption says "Left to right: Superintendent S. B. Steele (N.W.M.P.); Miss Scott; Inspector C. Starnes (N.W.M.P.); and Mrs. Starnes. Captain Burstall (Yukon Field Force), later Major General Sir Henry Burstall (Chief of General Staff) National Defence." [Return to Figure 4.15]

Media Attributions

- The Nile Expedition for the Relief of General Gordon © The Graphic magazine is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Midnight in the Yukon, June 1899 © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3710400) is

licensed under a Public Domain license

- Pretoria Day, June 5, 1901 © Archives of Ontario, I0006399 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Sir Wilfrid Laurier speaking from the platform of a railway observation car during the federal election campaign © Library and Archives Canada (C-002616) is licensed under a Public Domain license

4.7 Edwardian Crises



Figure 4.18 A failed attempt to escape the 19th century.
[Long Description]

Transforming Canada

The Boer War crisis was acute and relatively brief. Other issues offered more ongoing and chronic discomfort, and the need for quite a lot of adjustment. The most dramatic of these is the accelerated rate of immigration under the Laurier regime and, specifically, under the guidance of his Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton (see Section 5.4). Between 1896-1911 the demographics of Canada changed spectacularly. There is irony in the fact that Laurier's first days in office were spent addressing the demographic marginalization of Franco-Catholics in Manitoba: by 1911 the hundreds of thousands of Mennonites, Germans, Doukhobors, Americans, and others who poured into the Prairies would transform the region to such a point that some aspects of the Manitoba schools crisis would seem already remote.

The issue of how best to manage international commerce was another of Laurier's ongoing concerns. It was largely resolved by introducing a **preferential tariff** that was meant to encourage other nations to bring down their own barriers. Insofar as it didn't remove tariffs altogether the policy pleased manufacturers. Because it showed preference to Britain as a trade partner, it pleased imperialists. Without substantially addressing any of the agricultural community's complaints, it left homesteaders and farmers feeling neglected and wondering if either of the two national parties would ever come around to their way of seeing things.

Timing, however, is everything. The world economy was, in 1896, entering into a recovery phase. As settlers poured into the West, demand for wheat and mineral products grew. Historians disagree as to whether the preferential tariff had a direct effect on the Canadian economy because it was introduced on a rising tide. As grain production and exports climbed rapidly, so too did manufacturing sales. There now emerged for the first time significant bottlenecks in the movement of goods. Perhaps carried away by the booming economy, Laurier in 1903 launched a campaign to build a new transcontinental railway that would serve neglected parts of the Maritimes, northern Ontario, the northern Prairies, and a Pacific outlet in the new port-city of Prince Rupert. This was taking a page from Macdonald's playbook. The Canadian Northern (later called the Canadian National) Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway increased capacity and penetrated the northern West while a dense network of smaller lines and branch lines cross-hatched the face of the Prairies before 1914. There were at least 15,000 km of track running east and west and north and south in Canada. One government after the next subscribed to the view that railways were good politics: They created jobs and markets, stimulated industrial growth, and tied the whole together tighter and tighter.



Figure 4.19 The Toronto-born surveyor and photographer Frank Swannell in 1912, surveying for the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway at (and in) Takla Lake.

Improved conditions after 1896 led to increased Canadian self-confidence. Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee was marked in London by an unprecedented meeting between colonial leaders and the British Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914), whose goal it was to build an Imperial Federation. As was his tendency in the past, Laurier publicly espoused an intense loyalty to and

affection for Britain, but at the meeting table he was unwilling to relinquish any Canadian sovereignty to a proposed British-led global federal system. Laurier knew, as no other leader around that table could have, the challenges of co-existence within a federal structure and, whatever his disagreements with Henri Bourassa, he was looking toward a day when Canada would be more and not less independent. After winning a second mandate in 1900, Laurier would similarly turn down British offers of an Imperial Council, an Imperial Navy, and an Imperial Commercial Union. As he explained to the House of Commons, the first loyalty of the Canadian government was to the Canadian peoples (however that might be defined), not to London.

The economy that had once been Laurier's ally began to outrun him at the turn of the century. Urban growth created cities that the small-town lawyer did not understand, and an industrial working class that was still more alien to Laurier's experiences. He kept one eye on an ultramontane clergy and the other shut tight against the new issues inherent in 20th century modernization. The creation of a new position – Deputy Minister of Labour – was a nod toward industrial issues, but the legislation that arose from it mostly kept the state on the margins of disputes and out of the way of expanding and monopolistic enterprises. These conditions, coupled to immigration and growth in the West, all conspired to change the electorate and to move the goalposts of Canadian politics. A compromise made in 1896 on behalf of 5 million Canadians might not have the same resonance in 1911 when there were 2 million more.

By 1909 Laurier's health – never good – was increasingly a problem. The Liberals had now been in office for 13 years and had won four consecutive elections. Canada was vastly changed from what it had been when Laurier first came to office and the energy that Laurier and his original cabinet brought to the job was largely spent. One final major issue would finish off the government.

The Naval Crisis

The second great challenge of Laurier's administrations echoed the first and picked up on a theme that dogged him from the start of his time as prime minister. After 40 years of relative autonomy from Britain, Canada's military capacity was still seriously underdeveloped. Dependence on Britain to provide the necessary muscle now had to be reassessed. The British would have preferred a cheque from Canada to cover the cost of building additional Royal Navy vessels, but nationalist voices in the Dominion (including Laurier's own) were more comfortable with the prospect of a Canadian Navy.

There was a need for some urgency on this issue: Germany was building up its navy (as was France and the United States) and Britain was anxious not to lose its advantage at sea. The Conservatives, under Robert Borden's leadership, called for Ottawa to purchase a pair of Dreadnought-class battleships for the Royal Navy and to defer the issue of a Canadian Navy until the next election. How that scenario might have turned out would be difficult to guess because the naval issue had the potential to split the imperialists down the middle: some were Canadian nationalists in imperialist clothing while others were British imperialists first, last, and always. Laurier decided to press on and introduced the *Naval Service Bill* early in 1909, proposing to assemble a Canadian Navy that could be available on loan to Britain at the discretion of the Dominion Parliament. Consisting of six destroyers and five cruisers, it was instantly ridiculed as a "tinpot navy." Caught once again between Anglo-Protestant imperialists on one side, who moaned it was not enough, and Franco-Catholics on the other side, who

cried that it was too much, Laurier found there was little appetite in Canadian politics for his variety of compromise.

The last nail in Laurier's political coffin was that old chestnut, reciprocity. A delegation to Washington, DC had finally managed to get American agreement on a deal that would provide free access to American markets for natural resources and agricultural products along with limited trade in manufactured goods. This should have satisfied farmers in the West and industrialists in the central and eastern provinces. It did not. Manufacturers and investors who had hitherto supported the Liberal Party turned on it, as did Clifford Sifton. Wounded on two fronts, Laurier was exhausted and called an election, which he lost.

Laurier's Legacy

It is difficult to assess Laurier's long record of compromise objectively. He kept the worst Canadian divisions under control, it is true, but many of his compromises either irritated underlying fault lines or they proved to be very poor deals indeed. The creation of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta in 1905 offers a case in point. The territorial administration under Premier Frederick Haultain had limited, sub-provincial powers, despite an elected assembly at Regina. Local politicians favoured the creation of a single new province that would stretch from (still undersized) Manitoba to the Rockies. Laurier preferred two provinces and sought to restore minority rights in the West in the form of publicly-funded separate schools. He would win on the provinces and their boundaries, but he lost badly on the schools issue. It cost him the support of Sifton, who was an unflinching supporter of the anglicization of the West, and Henri Bourassa, who resigned from the government years beforehand but had hitherto maintained a lukewarm relationship with Laurier. Now the prime minister found two of his nation's most effective leaders attacking him at the same time for being simultaneously an ally and an enemy of French-Catholicism.

Many of Laurier's tests ended the same way. Of course it is the business of opposition politicians to puncture the support of the government, so one can hardly blame figures like Charles Tupper and Robert Borden for finding fault with Laurier's deals. Henri Bourassa's role and Clifford Sifton's: those are more complex. When Bourassa left Laurier's cabinet over the matter of the Boer War, Laurier said to him, "I regret your going. We need a man like you at Ottawa, although I should not want two."[1] Bourassa was uncompromising and tapped into Québecois fears of liberalism, modernity, and imperialism as he sniped at Laurier. At the same time, his articulation of a nationalist position was as erudite and gifted as anything coming out of the imperialist camp. Sifton's role is harder to measure. There was none more entrepreneurial in the Laurier cabinet, nor was there anyone whose job (as Minister responsible for immigration) required that he think long and hard about the mixing of cultures. Sifton simply concluded early on that a Canada built on dualist principles was unsustainable and that the future belonged to English-Canadian virtues and habits.

1. Quoted in J. Schull, *Laurier: The First Canadian* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1965) 459.



Figure 4.20 Laurier on the campaign trail in 1910 in New Westminster.

It was "an unholy alliance" of imperialists and nationalists that laid Laurier low in 1911. His career was marked by conflict with the conservative, ultramontane Catholic clergy in Quebec, and he spoke so often about his fear of religious strife in Canada that one cannot but conclude that he genuinely believed it was possible. More than that, he believed that being in office meant doing good. "When I am premier," he said in 1890, "you won't have to look up figures [statistics] to find out whether you are prosperous: you will know by feeling in your pockets."[2] He attacked Macdonald in 1886 for his actions with regard to the Northwest, saying "What is hateful…is not rebellion but the despotism which induces the rebellion; what is hateful are not rebels but the men, who, having the enjoyment of power, do not discharge the duties of power; they are the men who, having the power to redress wrongs, refuse to listen to the petitioners that are sent to them; they are the men who, when asked for a loaf, give a stone."[3] This was a leader who listened to all sides, perhaps too much.

Key Points

- The 20th century opened with a suite of political and social crises in Canada.
- Continuing immigration from east and central Europe was transforming the population.
- Massive new railway construction projects stimulated the economy and tightened Canada's grip over the West and BC.
- The *Naval Service Bill* divided Canadians between those who sought to serve Britain and the Empire first, and those who saw a Dominion fleet as an important step toward independence.

2. Quoted in O.D. Skelton, *The Day of Sir Wilfrid Laurier: A Chronicle of Our Own Time* (Toronto: Glasgow, Brook & Company, 1916): 327.

3. Canada, Official Report of the Debates of the House of Commons of the Dominion of Canada, 1886, vol. XXI (Ottawa: Queen's Printer 1886): 179.

Long Descriptions

Figure 4.18 long description: A set of two photographs from the year 1900, marking the commencement of the 20th century. The first, entitled “A century run or bust”, shows a man riding a child’s tricyle, being pushed with a stick by another man, towards the direction marked as the “20th Century” by a sign on a nearby tree. The second photograph, entitled “Busted”, shows the man falling off, and destroying, the tricycle, and being mocked by the second man. [Return to Figure 4.18]

Media Attributions

- Frank Swannell at Takla Lake © Frank Swannell is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Sir Wilfrid Laurier at New Westminster, B.C. © William T. Cooksley is licensed under a Public Domain license

4.8 Summary



Figure 4.21 Canada's ambivalent relationship with an expanding United States and a seemingly disinterested Britain was a theme that lasted well beyond the Victorian years. (Artist: Tom Merry, ca. 1885–90). [*[Long Description]*]

Macdonald and Laurier were 19th century, Victorian-era men. They witnessed industrialization, imperialism, and urbanization first-hand. Most of Laurier's time in office occurred during the Edwardian years; a period that was marked by a rising middle class, and renewed optimism in social progress and equality, the arts, and technological transformation. Macdonald died too soon to see motion pictures and automobiles; he missed, too, the bicycle craze and the Suffragettes. He also missed the most compelling signs of Britain's economic slide against its competitors, including the United States and, significantly, Germany. Laurier wasn't too late into politics to see the old western frontier, but by the time he was prime minister the days of the Red River cart and the bison were fading or gone. The importance of the Edwardian era is that, after 64 years of one monarch and the *Pax Britannica* — the era of relative peace associated with British global power — its start in 1901 signalled the beginning of a new century and renewed possibilities. In the midst of the prosperity and self-confidence that Canada enjoyed in the years up to 1912, one can see the consolidation of many of the ideas and practices that defined the country for the century to come. The aspiration to be something more than a colonial appendage was one theme that would come out of these years and would strongly influence politicians and writers in the generations ahead.

Edward VII died in 1910 and Laurier was toppled the very next year. The economic boom times would come to a grinding halt beginning in 1912. What lay ahead was much worse.

Key Terms

anticlerical, anticlericalism: Someone who believes that the separation of church and state in civic life is essential for the well-being of a successful democratic society.

branch plants: Typically American-owned companies that avoided tariff barriers by establishing plants on the Canadian side of the border.

Canada First: Established in 1868, an English-Canadian nationalist movement.

confessional schools: Religious schools run by Catholic or Protestant denominations.

dualism: The idea that Canada could or should construct its culture and institutions around two cultures, French and English. In contrast with unification (which favours one culture) and pluralism or multiculturalism in which French in particular is at risk of becoming a minority culture.

Manitoba schools question: In 1890 the provincial government turned its back on commitments in the *Manitoba Act* (1870) to provide a dual — French and English — system of education, a move that was stimulated by declining French and Catholic populations. The Privy Council determined (twice) that the federal government had the power to reverse this decision. In opposition, Wilfrid Laurier blocked Ottawa's attempt at disallowance; in government he negotiated a compromise with Manitoba.

Orange: Refers to the Orange Order, its members, and its values; a Protestant fraternal association with roots in Ireland; marked by a strong antipathy for Catholics and Catholicism, as well as a fierce loyalty to the Crown. Supported Protestant immigrants and made use of violence and political networks to achieve its ends.

pragmatic: In politics, the focus on existing conditions rather than ideological considerations or objectives. Also called realpolitik.

preferential tariff: Charges (a tax) added to imported goods so as to make their sale price higher than domestic goods and, thus, make domestic goods more competitive; some trade partners are less discriminated (they are "preferred") over others.

Rouge: Also *Parti rouge*. Political party and tradition in Quebec; established in the 1840s, it became increasing more pro-secular, anticlerical, and opposed to hereditary privilege; opposed to Confederation, embraced provincial rights; after 1867, merged with the Clear Grits to form the Liberal Party.

Short Answer Exercises

1. What was dualism? Where were its weaknesses most exposed?
2. Account for the success of Macdonald's Conservatives to 1896.
3. What role was played by the Catholic Church in the politics of Quebec and Canada?
4. What was the relationship between the Liberal Party and the tariff issue?
5. What were the most divisive issues faced by Laurier's administration?

6. What were the respective positions of imperialists and nationalists in pre-WWI Canada?
7. In what ways did these two visions of Canada make the country almost ungovernable?
8. In what ways had Canada changed politically between 1867 and 1914?

Suggested Readings

Backhouse, Constance. "'Don't You Bully Me … Justice I Want If There is Justice to Be Had': The Rape of Mary Ann Burton, London, Ontario, 1907," *People and Place: Historical Influences on Legal Culture*, eds. Jon Swainger and Constance Backhouse (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2003): 60-94.

Beaulieu, Eugene and J. C. Herbert Emery, "Pork Packers, Reciprocity, and Laurier's Defeat in the 1911 Canadian General Election," *The Journal of Economic History*, 61, no. 4 (Dec 2001): 1083-1101.

Lord, Kathleen. "Representing Crime in Words, Images, and Song: Exploring Primary Sources in the Murder of Mélina Massé, Montreal, 1895," *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, 43, no. 86 (Novembre-November 2010): 249-55.

Martin, Ged. "John A. Macdonald and the Bottle," *Journal of Canadian Studies, 40, no. 3* (Fall 2006): 162-85.

Miller, Carman. "Framing Canada's Great War: a case for including the Boer War," *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 6, no. 1 (April 2008): 3-21.

Long Descriptions

Figure 4.21 long description: Cartoon of the personifications of America, Canada, and Britain sitting on a bench in a wooded area. Canada is portrayed as a woman wearing a black coat and a skirt with symbols of her industries and wildlife, including wheat, lumber, and a bear. America is portrayed as a man wearing a blue jacket with white stars, red-and-white-striped pants, and a fedora. He holds Canada's hand and leans close to her, his smile portraying something possibly sinister. Canada looks uncertain about how she feels about his attentions. On the other end of the bench is Britain, a man with muttonchops, a black felt hat, and a suit jacket. Britain is asleep, his head propped up by his hand, unaware of what is happening with Canada and America. The cartoon is captioned "Trying Her Constancy, or A dangerous flirtation." [Return to Figure 4.21]

Media Attributions

- Trying Her Constancy © Tom Merry, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2838080) is licensed under a Public Domain license

Chapter 5. Immigration and the Immigrant Experience

5.1 Introduction



Figure 5.1 Prairie immigrants typically lived in sod huts or other simple shelters until they had the resources and time to build a house. Stefan Waskiewicz's family, LaCorey, AB, ca. 1930.

The history of immigration is, simultaneously, the history of emigration. It is very much about the motivations of people who choose to leave behind what they and generations of their forebears knew and built. The rather inelegant dichotomy of "pushes" and "pulls" fails to take into consideration other countervailing forces but it does serve to remind us that people here were once people there. A recent and beautifully succinct answer to the question "What made them leave?" tells us about the motivations for Swedes who left their homeland between the 1880s and the 1940s, but it might easily be applied to a great many other nationalities as well:

> At the beginning of emigration, the main reason was the lack of hope for breaking the cycle of poverty that affected many families. Later came labour unrest, when participants were blacklisted and unable to find work. Other push factors included … compulsory military duty for young men, degrading class distinctions, restrictions on the right to vote, the lack of a democratic spirit, the dominant position of the church, and personal reasons, such as escaping from a debt or an unhappy marriage.[1]

To use the language of 21st century marketeers, what Canada had to offer was a brand – democratic (socially and politically), free (in terms of movement and land availability), secular (insofar as it lacked a state church), tolerant of pacifist views (for a while), underpopulated, and capable of experiencing sustained economic growth — that was preferable to the comfortable familiarities of home. As any

1. Elinor Barr, *Swedes in Canada: Invisible Immigrants* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015), 14.

study of Canadian history will show, however, there were times when Canada had little to offer other than grief and maybe some money.

The first step to understanding the history of immigration to Canada is demographic. The magnitude of the flow of humans into the Dominion after 1867 has to be appreciated, as does their distribution across the cities and farms and resource-extraction towns. Who the immigrants were in terms of ethnicity and places of origin matters. The second facet is the political and economic context of immigration: that is, the policies and opportunities that framed the immigrant waves.

The social context of immigration is of immense importance as well. Canada's relationship with immigrants has been uneven, to say the least. At times it was nothing short of exploitive; at other times it was xenophobic and hostile; and at others still, generous and welcoming. Recent events in Canada, including mixed messages from governments about the kind of reception Syrian refugees might expect, serves to remind us that these attitudes have a long pedigree in Canada. A historical study of immigration and immigration policy thus informs us of the ways in which past generations understood questions about recruitment, assimilation, inclusion, citizenship, and rights.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the main historic features of post-Confederation immigration.
- Account for the timing of immigrant waves.
- Explain the preferential or inhospitable treatment shown to select groups at different times.
- Identify the goals of immigration policy and the forces that led to changes.
- Assess the strategies employed by immigrant groups and communities to achieve success in Canada.
- Describe the role played by racism and nativism in the history of immigration.

Media Attributions

- Shelter Stefan Waskiewicz's family lived in until they built their house © Library and Archives Canada (PA-178587) is licensed under a Public Domain license

5.2 Immigration and the National Policy

What came to be known as Prime Minister John A. Macdonald's National Policy was, as shown in Section 3.3, a three-cornered set of initiatives. All of these, in the words of historian Reg Whitaker, were designed:

> …to attach the interests of the wealthy and influential elements of Canadian society to continent-wide development. The encouragement of immigration thus became identified with the private interest of the large companies making profits out of national development.[1]

First, there was the railway. Linking the Atlantic to the Pacific meant more than running steam engines across the country. It also meant providing a powerful stimulus for heavy industry. The steel mills of Ontario and Quebec would be the principle beneficiaries and another was the engineering sector. Building and adapting railways, steelworks, and engineering operations might begin with native-born labour, but that would soon run out.

The answer to that problem was, of course, managing the movement of people. In the first instance, that meant retaining Canadians who were migrating to the United States. Insofar as that strategy failed or was simply not enough, the logical next step was to encourage immigration. The Intercolonial Railway would move Canadians and immigrants around the old provinces, but it was the West that held out the prospect of real growth. The CPR was essential to settling migrants from old BNA across the former Rupert's Land; it would also be the means by which immigrants would be deposited deep into the new Canadian hinterland. The CPR owned much of the arable right-of-way between Lake Superior and the Rockies, so settlers enriched the Railway as customers and as tenants or purchasers of land. The CPR made it possible to accelerate the process of Prairie settlement and thus to advance the business of producing food for the industrial working people of the older provinces in a tidy symbiosis. Settlement and railways also combined as a strategy for asserting sovereignty across the West against American and Indigenous ambitions and counter claims.

Third, there were tariffs. Obviously the new farming population would need supplies and equipment. Ideally, this material would be shipped west to them on the same railway that carried their grain output eastward. Tariff barriers would ensure that Western farmers, home builders, and businesses would purchase their supplies from central Canadians — at a higher price than they would pay to get the same goods from the United States. This complicates the immigration strategy. Having assigned to immigrants and Canadian migrants the task of opening up an agricultural frontier — not a small task by any measure — the National Policy then taxes them for the privilege of doing so. These tariffs would sustain central Canadian industries, yes, and that would benefit other immigrants in terms of jobs, but it was in the West that the project of building a new economy based on the labour of immigrants was most apparent and the rise of a new, more diverse Canada was taking place. Of course, and as we shall see, these new Canadians were not always welcomed by nativists in Ontario and Quebec who regarded with some suspicion the value of "foreigners" and questioned the assimilability of Russians and Poles,

1. Reg Whitaker, *Canadian Immigration Policy Since Confederation* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association , Booklet no. 15, 1991), 5.

Mennonites and **Hutterites**, whose ethnic, linguistic, and religious traditions were highly distinct from those of the **founding nations**.

How, then, did the immigration aspects of the National Policy fare? Not especially well.

Key Points

- Immigration was a key piece of the National Policy.
- It was first used to beef up the supply of wage labour in expanding industries in the central and eastern provinces.
- The main part of pre-Great War immigration was directed toward farms in the West.
- The relationship between these newcomers and established Canadian populations was regularly negative.

5.3 Immigrants by the Numbers



Figure 5.2 Immigrants from Arab countries faced a cool welcome in Canada. Tagged by the Immigration officers, three hopeful candidates in Quebec, 1908.

We have already observed that Canada was a net exporter of people from 1867-1896. Newcomers arrived, but they were very often just passing through. The end to free land in the American West in the 1890s was one factor in redirecting the tide of emigrants from Europe toward the north. Another, from 1896, were the new approaches taken by the Laurier administration under the leadership of Clifford Sifton (see Sections 4.4 and 5.4).

This is not to say that the immigration that was recorded from 1867-1896 did not matter. Hundreds of thousands were added to the mix and the composition of Canadian settler society changed significantly. British immigrants were the most numerous, but people who described themselves as German in origin increased by half from 203,000 in 1871 to 310,000 in 1901. Three immigrant groups stand out in particular in 1901: Chinese numbers reached 17,312 (increasing from 4,400 in 1881); Russians at 19,825; and Scandinavians (Norwegians, Swedes, Icelanders, and Finns grouped together) totalled about 31,000. None of these groups had much of a presence in Canada prior to Confederation (although there were Chinese in British Columbia in significant numbers before 1871).

Tables 5.1 and 5.2, respectively, show the growth in population generally and the numbers of immigrants arriving yearly between 1867-1920. What may be seen immediately is: 1) the slowness of immigration's growth before the 1890s (notwithstanding a couple of spurts); 2) the fact that it was actually in retreat through most of the 1880s and into the 1890s; and 3) the great take-off of immigration as Canada moves into the 20th century. The peak on the eve of the Great War is also unmistakable, in that it is followed by a near-collapse as the conflict rages. In the years 1911, 1912, and

1913 between 300,000 and 400,000 immigrants arrived each year, most of them from Britain and continental Europe.[1]

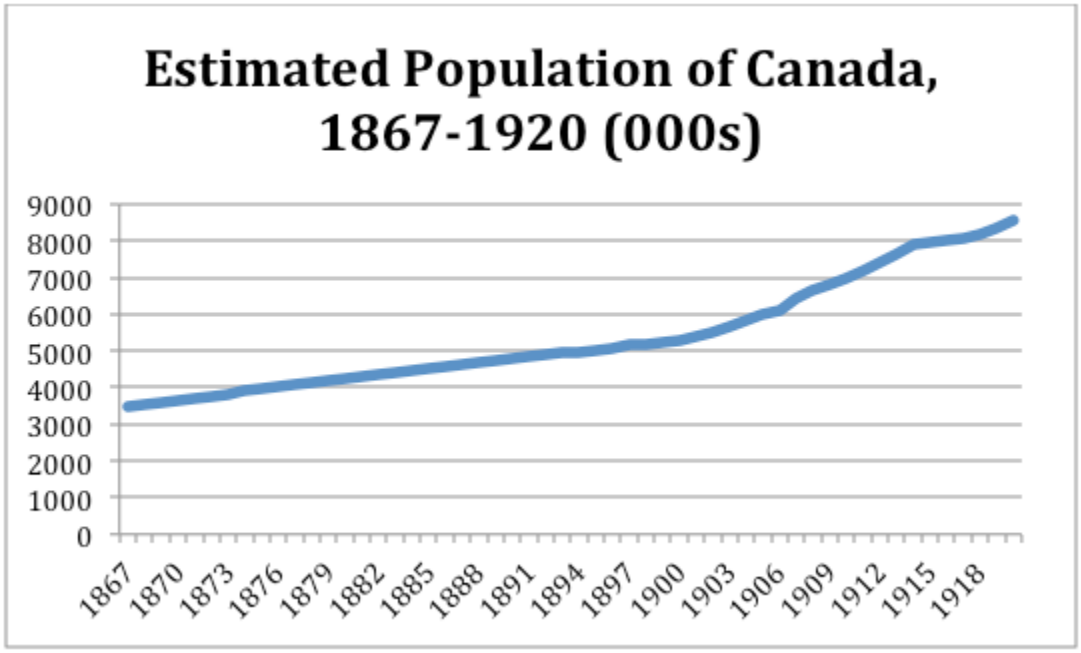


Table 5.1 Estimated Population of Canada 1867–1920 (000s)

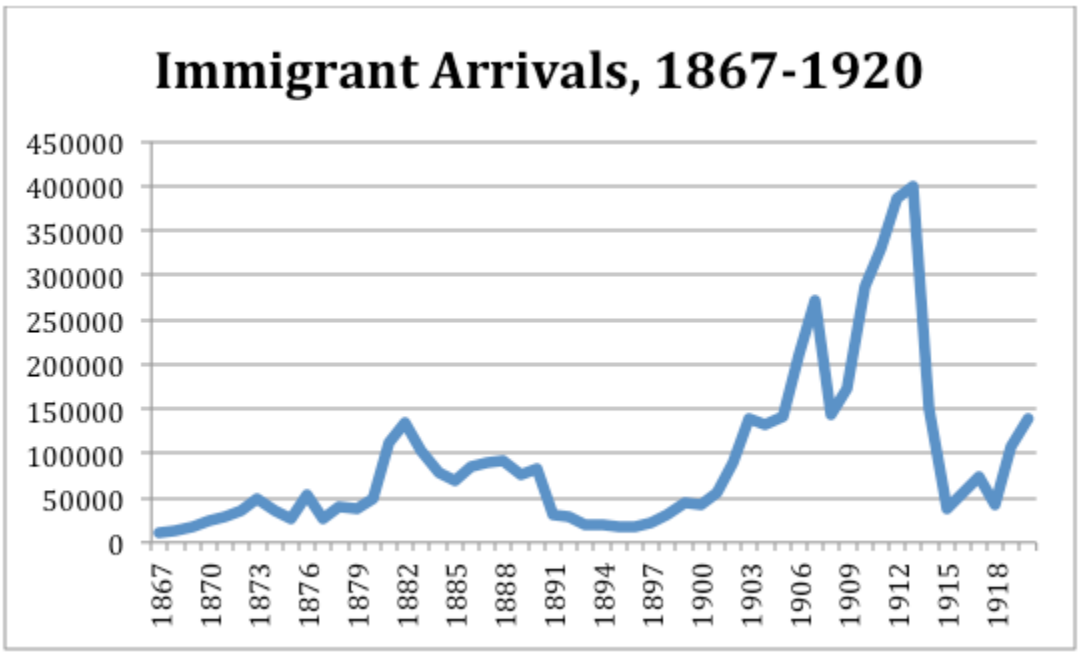


Table 5.2. Immigrant Arrivals, 1867-1920. [Long description]

The complexion of the population overall changed dramatically from the mid-1860s to the interwar years. On the eve of Confederation, fewer than one-in-five Canadians came from somewhere else, principally the British Isles or the United States. Thereafter, the share of immigrants actually *fell.* The share of Canadians born elsewhere continued to drop until the first decade of the new century. Then,

1. Roderic Beaujot, *Population Change in Canada: The Challenges of Policy Adaptation* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 105.

the great waves of pre-WWI immigration reversed that 'Canadianizing' trend and once again the population was more than one-fifth foreign-born. Demographically, this meant Canada as a whole — and the West in particular — was now a different place. In 1871 French and English were the norms, although there was a significant German community. By 1911, a quarter of the immigrant tide was coming from continental Europe and most of that from central, eastern, and southern Europe. There was much continuity as well as change: the majority (just over half) of the foreign-born as late as 1931 came from Britain and Ireland; another 20% or more were born in the United States. Even in 1921, however, the main "ethnic" immigrant groups constituted more than one-in-eight of the population. Regardless of point of origin, as of 1921 the immigrant population in Canada was proportionally larger than in the United States.[2]

We know as well that immigrants in the pre-Great War period were overwhelmingly male. Men are over-represented in every age category from 10 to 14 years and up (after 65 years, the ratio of men to women nearly balanced out). This suggests that either boys were demonstrating a particular determination to emigrate from Europe and Asia or that they were preferred to daughters when it came time to move (principally because their prospective job prospects were better). In other words, families with more sons than daughters might be more inclined to emigrate than those with more daughters. As to young adults, these sex ratio imbalances had serious ramifications. In the 20 to 34 age cohorts, there were more than twice as many men as women in 1911. Women and daughters might be sent for later, but this pattern of maleness persists throughout much of the 20th century. The sex ratio among the foreign-born reaches a peak of 1.68 men to every woman in 1911 and among certain immigrant groups it could be much higher. Among the Chinese it hovered around 200:1 for decades, and among the Scandinavians in 1931 it was 268:1. These last examples are very definitely outliers, but the implications of a distorted sex ratio for marital fertility ought to be obvious.

What is more, we know that the immigrant population was young but adult. The foreign-born on the eve of the Great War were mostly under 40 years of age and 20-somethings was the largest cohort. Despite photogenic images of immigrant families, surprisingly few foreign-born children appear in these statistics.[3] Having said that, the arrival of immigrants brought higher fertility rates, so much so that they slowed and, in places, reversed a significant downward trend in Canadian fertility rates. The estimated annual average number of births per 1,000 population in Canada in 1851-61 was 45; in 1901-11 it fell to 31 and slid to 29 between 1911-1921.[4] Without the high fertility of immigrant communities these numbers would have been more depressed.

Distribution of immigrants provides a different sense of this change. The Maritime provinces and Quebec experienced little demographic change arising from immigration. Lebanese Christians were an important addition to Prince Edward Island, but there were few other ethnic enclaves in the region by the Great War. The share of population that was foreign born in the Maritimes was only 5.2% in 1901, rising to a little more than 6% in 1911 — a level that held nearly steady for 30 years. Quebec was similarly mostly native-born in 1901 — a comparable 5.4% of the population was foreign — but from there the share increased more markedly to 7.3% in 1911 and more than 8% in the Interwar years. West of the Ottawa River, however, 15% of Ontarians were foreign-born in 1901 and that passed the 20%

2. Donald H. Avery, *Reluctant Hosts: Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896-1994* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1995), 22.

3. Warren E. Kalbach, *The Impact of Immigration on Canada's Population* (Ottawa: Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1970), 54.

4. Warren E. Kalbach and Wayne W. McVey, *The Demographic Bases of Canadian Society* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1971), 56-7, 134-5.

mark before the Great War and continued to rise to nearly 25% in 1931. The Prairie provinces taken as a region began the century with a quarter of the population born abroad, rising to 49% in 1911. The share dropped to 21% in 1921 but that reflected the impact of immigrant fertility — the newcomers were adding significant native-born children to the population and thus shrinking their own share of the total. Still, the renewal of immigration in the 1920s created a second surge and by 1931 nearly 37% of Prairie Canadians were born elsewhere. British Columbia behaved differently from the rest of Canada in this respect, being the least native-born population of the lot. Foreigners constituted 44% of the population in 1901, rising to 57% in 1911 and only tapering slightly to 50% in 1921. From 1901 to 1961, British Columbia's population was, proportionately, the most foreign-born of all regions. Of all the regions, only the North-West Territories reversed the trend. Starting at 37% in 1901, the share of Northerners born abroad fell to 20% 10 years later and then 15% in 1921, where it stayed for the next two decades.[5]

Studies of immigrants in Canada tend to focus on their experiences as newcomers adjusting to new circumstances, or as outsiders to which the established population reacts, or as ethnic enclaves whose cultural resilience and change is subject to examination. As a demographic phenomenon, however, their profound impact is often too quickly forgotten. Within little more than a generation, post-Confederation immigrants had fundamentally transformed the population's main features while changing in significant ways its fertility, family size, and nuptial patterns. In each of these regards, they had a lasting impact.

Key Points

- Immigrants in the post-Confederation period rapidly changed the ethnic and age composition of the population, as well as the gender ratio in many regions.
- Immigration was slow to take off but it did so between 1896-1914, and again in the 1920s, making Canada more foreign-born than the United States.
- The distribution of immigrants was wildly uneven, barely impacting the Maritimes and Quebec.

Long Descriptions

Table 5.2 long description: A line graph showing the number of immigrants arriving each year in Canada from 1867 to 1920. The following description provide estimated values based on a best reading of the graph, but the years and immigration numbers may not be exact. From 1867 to 1880, annual immigration numbers were close to or less than 50,000 each year. They spiked to 140,000 in 1882 and fell gradually to less than 40,000, where they remained until 1899. From there, annual immigration numbers rose steadily until a peak at 270,000 in 1907, fell to 150,000 in 1908, and then rose rapidly again to the highest peak in 1913 with 400,000 immigrants arriving that year. There is a sharp drop to 50,000 in 1914 and the numbers begin to rise again after 1918. [Return to Table 5.2]

5. Warren E. Kalbach and Wayne W. McVey, *The Demographic Bases of Canadian Society* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1971), 143.

Media Attributions

- Arab Immigrants © John Woodruff, 1859–1914 is licensed under a Public Domain license

5.4. The Clifford Sifton Years, 1896–1905



Figure 5.3 Doukhobor women pull a plough, breaking the prairie soil for the first time at Thunder Hill Colony, MB, ca. 1899.

Among the most able and imaginative of Laurier's cabinet ministers was Clifford Sifton (1861-1929). Born in southern Ontario, Sifton entered adulthood in Manitoba where he established himself as a lawyer, entrepreneur, and politician. Under Laurier he was Minister of the Interior, which put him at the helm of Canada's evolving immigration policy.

In the 30 years after the *BNA Act* was proclaimed the population of the West increased at a rate that was unmatched in the history of British North America. From a few thousand around Red River and similar numbers across what would become Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905, the North-West Territories (that is, the Prairies beyond little Manitoba) surpassed 56,000 by 1881. Ten years later, this had nearly doubled to 99,000. In 1896, therefore, Sifton inherited a portfolio that was already doing well, though not as well as it might.

The Victorian Food Revolution

Mechanized farming, new crops, new transportation technologies that cut the time and distance between harvest and market, and the need to feed burgeoning urban populations were together revolutionizing farming on a global level. Over the course of the 18th and 19th centuries central Europe had become a complex patchwork quilt of ethnic, farming enclaves. Germanic settlers moved into Ukraine, and minority religious sects — often associated with pacifism — established farming communities with strong cooperative sensibilities. Some had reasonably deep roots but much of the lands between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea were farming frontiers in their own right. Similarly,

agricultural lands were opening in Argentina on the Pampas, in Australia, and across southern Africa. In the United States three million families were drawn into the American West by the promise of homesteads. This was a global phenomenon and — as the Indigenous populations were being removed by the colonial regimes — settlers were being recruited into various farming colonies with an assortment of promises and assurances. In short, the business of finding farmers was competitive.

Sifton's timing was good. The American frontier — as the United States historian Frederick Jackson Turner announced in the 1890s — was "closed": free land in the United States was all but gone. Sifton replied with a campaign to bill the Canadian Prairies, famously, as "The Last Best West." Employing a variety of sales and advertising strategies and gimmicks that were startlingly innovative, Sifton and his department changed the face of Canada in the space of one decade.

Selecting Prairie Society

Sifton established a list of preferred sources for immigrants. This is interesting for a few reasons, which are worth enumerating. First, the outcome of his preferential list can be seen even now in the ethno-linguistic and cultural make-up of the Prairie West. Second, it reveals contemporary thinking about the nature of race and ethnicity. Sifton, like most of his peers, believed that ethnicity signalled essentialized qualities: that is, all Italians were, in their essence or fabric, the same. Stereotyping, then, was something he regarded as part of informed decision-making, not a case of narrow-mindedness or bigotry. Third, the composition of the immigrant pool included people whose ethnic differentness from Anglo-Protestants and Franco-Catholics (not to mention Indigenous peoples) were in some instances profound, and that very differentness created a perceived need to build institutions and policies that would foster their assimilation. As Prairie settlers they might reasonably have been assimilated into the bilingual and bi- or multicultural heritage of the Métis; they might have been assimilated into a new, bicultural French and English Canada. Steps were taken, however, to transform these new arrivals into anglophones. And this would prove profoundly divisive among Central Canadians who were, predictably, not in agreement on the privileging of Anglo-Protestantism over Franco-Catholicism.

So who did Sifton prefer? White Americans, mostly. People who had had experience homesteading and who spoke English (and who were likely Protestants) were the principal group he hoped to recruit. Of course, Americans brought with them the possibility of disloyalty, something which made Canadian politicians generally wary. But even the Macdonald regime (more than a little America-phobic) had circulated recruitment materials in the United States, mostly in the hope of finding Canadian emigrants who could be lured back "home" to the West. Almost one million people arrived in Canada from the United States in the 14 years leading to the Great War, and many of those immigrants were, in fact, returning Canadians. Many more were German and Scandinavian immigrants to the United States who simply kept moving until they landed in the Canadian West.

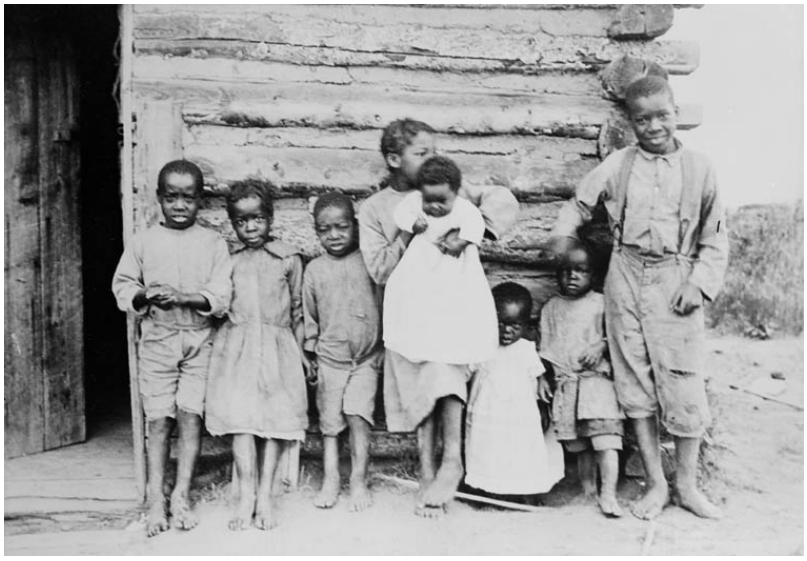


Figure 5.4 African-Americans made their way to north-central Alberta, like this group at Athabasca Landing.

African-Americans, among whose numbers there were many with homesteading experience, were desirous of coming to Canada but Sifton regarded Africans and people of African descent dimly. He was inclined at first to recruit from the British Isles but recognized quickly that mixed-farming on small-holdings in the United Kingdom was a far cry from producing wheat on a quarter-section of land on the Prairies, and Sifton knew, too, that British recruiters would trawl the under-employed urban populations first. He turned his attention to continental options.

German farmers had proven their skill in various settlement projects that had occurred since the 18th century. For 100 years and more, the German states had been sending out farmers to populate borderlands in places across the Austro-Hungarian Empire and as far east as Imperial Russia. Sifton thought highly of the Germans and the Scandinavians. But the further south in Europe he turned, the less impressed he became. Italians and Greeks, in particular, he thought of as worthless to the settlement process. Jews were also to be avoided, as were Arabs.

Eastern Europeans — Ukrainians, Poles, and Russians fared better in Sifton's eyes. In an oft-quoted statement, the western booster described what he saw as the ideal immigrant:

> When I speak of quality I have in mind something that is quite different from what is in the mind of the average writer or speaker upon the question of immigration. I think that a stalwart peasant in a sheepskin coat, born to the soil, whose forefathers have been farmers for ten generations, with a stout wife and a half-dozen children, is good quality.[1]

Sifton made this statement in 1922, 17 years after resigning his cabinet post and looking back on his works in retrospect. From 1896-1905, however, immigrants from Eastern Europe were something of an unknown commodity. And, for a cabinet minister in a narrow-minded Protestant community, they were a bit of a gamble. The Eastern Europeans' arrival in bulk numbers, their enthusiasm for mutually-supportive **block settlements**, and their overall record of success, however, converted Sifton to their value.

1. "Only Farmers Need Apply: Clifford Sifton, 'The Immigrants Canada Wants'," *Maclean's Magazine*, 1 April 1922: 16, 32-34.



Figure 5.5 Sifton's ideal immigrants. A family newly arrived from Galicia, ca. 1911.

Sifton was likewise convinced that religious sects that had strong internal cohesion and familiarity with the kind of farming that would be conducted in the West were highly desirable. These included Mormons from the United States, Mennonites from Central and Eastern Europe, and pacifist Hutterites and **Doukhobors** from Russia. Ethnicity, experience, and the likelihood of community success thus became key principles of the recruitment process.

Against this list of preferences, Sifton was highly suspicious of urban and industrial workers. In an era where "modern" was acquiring a cachet all its own and in which civic growth — even that of Sifton's beloved Winnipeg — was a principal measure of success, there is something very 18th century about Sifton's 20th century vision.

Sifton the Salesman

Sifton recognized early on that simply putting up posters at shipping offices in Hamburg and Liverpool would not draw the numbers he required. So in 1899 he established a network of recruiting agents in Europe under the auspices of a shadow corporation called the North Atlantic Trading Company. Shipping agents in European ports were paid to direct farm emigrants toward Canadian ports. This was a clandestine operation in part because the European countries targeted were all trying to stop the bleeding off of their population to new settlement societies like Canada, the United States, Argentina, and Australia. Sifton's strategy paid off: in the space of a decade, the Prairie population more than doubled to 211,649 by 1901 — the greatest part of that growth taking place after the Laurier government arrived in Ottawa in 1896.

Diversity was, as a consequence of these recruitment efforts, growing rapidly in the West and in some Atlantic port towns. It was politically imperative that English Canadians be reassured that their culture was not at risk. To that end, Sifton stepped up efforts to recruit from Britain in 1903. The results were significant: 1,200 arrived in Canada in 1900 and 65,000 in 1905. This was not, however, a typically agrarian population. This Edwardian-era wave was made up of professionals, merchants, urban labourers, mineworkers, and others whose conditions in a rapidly growing and changing country were

in some jeopardy. Canada was presented to them as Brit-friendly, "just like home," and an opportunity to enjoy real social mobility — something that the entrenched class system in Britain stifled at best and prevented at worst. It was this generation that repopulated the Okanagan Valley and southwestern Alberta, with visions of becoming "gentleman orchardists" and ranchers. It was also this generation that supplied many of the early trade union leaders and members whose experience with Britain's newborn Labour Party would produce echoes across Canada and especially in British Columbia. On Vancouver Island, British immigrants would cultivate two contrary myths of British-ness characterized by both an ersatz upper-class Britophilia in Victoria and British-style labour militance in the coal mining towns of Nanaimo, Wellington, Ladysmith, and Cumberland. Both of these movements overlay existing Island political and social traditions so deeply that they effectively eclipsed them to the point that Britishness became part of the Vancouver Island brand.



Figure 5.6 Imperialism, steam-powered paddlewheelers, railways, and telegram systems made it possible to transplant British and Anglo-Celtic Canadian culture to the "gentlemanly" business of orcharding in the Okanagan. Kelowna, 1909.

However much the British immigrants of the pre-Great War years played a role in reaffirming imperial connections and the primacy of Anglo-Protestantism, they were not always welcomed by the locals. Canadians were often irritated by British sensibilities and signs appeared in shop windows across the country, "No English Need Apply." There was a sense, too, that many of the British immigrants were simply impoverished social detritus, incapable of functioning in their own society let alone in Canada. Tens of thousands of children — part of a migration referred to as the **Home Children** — were plucked from British slums and orphanages and placed into apprentice-like situations on Canadian farms. Scandals and outrages plagued the Home Children project as news leaked out from time to time of horrible physical abuse and neglect of the 8 to 10 year old immigrants. It was, however, the failure of the **Barr Colony** project, an attempt to settle British farmers in a Prairie block, that drew the greatest

criticism of Sifton's office and further confirmed the Canadian belief that British immigrants made for poor farmers.[2]



Figure 5.7 Some 8,000 boys passed through the St. George's Home in Ottawa as part of the Home Children migration.

Post-1905

Sifton resigned from the Laurier government early in 1905, seemingly at the top of his game. The recurrent issue of sectarian, French-language schooling and the cultural agenda in the West was his last round-up. The North-West Territories had enjoyed non-denominational schools under the territorial regulations of 1901. This was slated to come to an end with the arrival of provincial status for Alberta and Saskatchewan and the extension of guarantees of separate and state-funded schools for Catholics. Laurier, who cautiously promoted the ideal of dualism in the West, would not give way and Sifton — who preferred the vision of an Anglo-Protestant West — resigned. Later, Laurier found himself obliged to change course, but Sifton did not re-enter the cabinet.

In many respects, Sifton was not only an architect of Western Canada: he was an example of what it was becoming. A relentless booster of Winnipeg and Brandon, he was an advocate of social reforms (his wife, Elizabeth Burrows, led the Brandon Women's Christian Temperance Union), and a champion of non-denominational schools in the West (often used as coded-language for anti-French or anti-Catholic education). The society he envisioned in 1896 was not one that all Canadians at the time embraced: drawn from different and diverse locales, peoples of many languages and cultures would open the economic potential of the West and, thus, Canada. In return, they would be Anglo-Canadianized and offered what Dominion officials immodestly regarded as a superior and more humane cultural alternative to that of the United States. Although many factors independent of Sifton contributed to what was to follow, the fact remains that many aspects of his vision were realized.

2. Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-1997*, revised ed. (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1997), 70-6.

Key Points

- The late 19th century saw a rapid expansion in global food production to feed industrializing communities and nations. Canada's expansion into the West was part of this process.
- Canada had to compete for immigrants and did so through strategies that targeted specific groups and whole communities.
- Clifford Sifton's term as Minister of the Interior coincides with the largest waves of immigrants to the West and thus gave shape to the population that arrived around the turn of the century.
- Sifton's preferences as regards immigrant groups were explicitly in favour of northern Europeans over southern Europeans, Whites over non-Whites, and people with experience farming in prairie-like conditions.
- Concerns among British-Canadians that their culture might be under threat was met by new recruitment of British immigrants in the early 20th century.

Media Attributions

- Doukhobor women are shown breaking the prairie sod by pulling a plough themselves © Library and Archives Canada (C-000681) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Black Colony, Athabasca Landing, Alberta © Canada Dept. of Interior, Library and Archives Canada (PA-040745) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Galician immigrants © William James Topley, Library and Archives Canada (PA-010401) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Immigrant Boys for the St. George's Home, Hintonburg © Library and Archives Canada (PA-020907) is licensed under a Public Domain license

5.5 The Promised Land



Figure 5.8 A photo of John Lanquist, Gino Pakkala, and Harold Malm Sr. in Sointula, B.C.

Before the Industrial Revolution, working the land was what most people did, in one way or another. And, since it was the norm, it was nothing special.

Then cities took off in earnest, and the cities became not merely bigger versions of their former selves but industrial hives: crowded, dirty, dangerous, unhealthy, and exploitative, and subject to violent economic and political upheavals. Under these circumstances, the land acquired a connotation of relative purity; held up against the cities, the countryside positively glowed with wholesome and godly virtues. Avoiding city life and the prospect of working for someone else became the objective of many Canadians and immigrants. Owning one's own land and being one's own boss was highly desirable and it was seen, too, as having a special virtue.

God Made the Country, Man Made the Town

In a 2007 collection of essays on the settlement of the West, several scholars pursue the theme of the promised land. The suffragette, writer, and moralist Nellie McClung saw the West as a place where conditions were good for the raising of Christian-spirited, temperate (that is, free of liquor), and empowered generations — although she experienced disillusion in every regard by the 1920s and 1930s.[1] The leading Social Gospeller of his day (and eventually the founding leader of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation), J. S. Woodsworth, believed that the kingdom of God could be established on Earth and specifically "that the fertile soil of the Canadian prairies nurtured the right conditions for

1. Randi Warne, "Land of the Second Chance: Nellie McClung's Vision of the Prairie West as Promised Land," *The Prairie West as Promised Land*, eds. R. Douglas Francis and Chris Kitzan (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007): 217-219.

the growth of God's heavenly kingdom on earth – the Promised Land.…"[2] In this regard, Woodsworth wasn't too far out of step with Louis Riel's 1885 millenarian vision of the West as a nurturing refuge for an assortment of religious creeds.[3] This became something of a reality for the Mennonite and Hutterite colonies that erupted on the Prairies and in pockets in southern Ontario and in the Fraser Valley. A similar, though more checkered, experience was shared by the Doukhobors.

Parallels could be drawn, too, with West Coast utopian communities. These appeared in several locations, notably at Ruskin and, somewhat more successfully, at Sointula on Malcolm Island. While these two experiments had ethnic and working-class roots, there were others that tapped into upper-class aspirations, the best example of which is Walhachin, west of Kamloops, where well-to-do English immigrants attempted to rebuild a throwback village lifestyle in 1909, one that included a cricket oval, fox hunts, and a smart hotel which boasted a dress code. Historian Patrick Dunae has written on the widespread cultural, economic, and political impact of this cohort of "gentlemen emigrants" and "remittance men" — second or third sons of money who were unlikely to inherit much if they stayed at home in Britain.[4] There were strong anti-materialist threads in all of these enterprises, as there was in individual homesteading. These were themes that would reappear sporadically in the 20th century in the context of **back-to-the-land** movements, especially in the 1960s and early 1970s.



Figure 5.9 The hotel in Walhachin, BC, an upper-class settlement surrounded by sagebrush, rattlesnakes, and desert.

2. R. Douglas Francis, "The Kingdom of God on the Prairies: J. S. Woodsworth's Vision of the Prairie West as Promised Land," *The Prairie West as Promised Land*, eds. R. Douglas Francis and Chris Kitzan (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2007): 225.

3. Thomas Flanagan, *Louis "David" Riel: Prophet of the New World*, revised ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 101.

4. Patrick Dunae, *Gentlemen Emigrants: From the British Public Schools to the Canadian Frontier* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1981).

Key Points

- Agricultural settlements at the beginning of the 20th century were often associated with virtues and values that were regarded by some as superior to life in the cities.

Media Attributions

- View of John Lanquist, Gino Pakkala and Harold Malm Sr. in Sointula, B.C. © University of British Columbia Library (BC_1532_1373_9) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Walhachin Hotel, 1910 is licensed under a Public Domain license

5.6 The Ukrainian Westerners

Of the Prairie immigrants, few were so visible numerically as the Ukrainians. Outwardly a homogeneous group, the Ukrainian experience as immigrants was defined far more by their internal divisions. As part of the Empire of Austria-Hungary, they came from one of the most ethnically and denominationally diverse nations on Earth. The Catholicism of Polish-Ukrainians contrasted sharply with the Orthodox Christianity of Ukrainians, who had stronger connections to Russia. Differences of dialect were important too, but the centrality of religion to the peasant life in **Galicia** produced deep rifts between the immigrant communities when they arrived in Canada.

Canadian administrators were frustrated by these divisions. They were obliged to keep immigrants who came from Bukovyna (now in northern Romania and southwestern Ukraine) separate from those originating in Halychnya (stretching west from Bukovyna to southeastern Poland), both on the land and even in the immigration sheds. The immigrants' desire was to settle in blocks, which Ottawa preferred. As was the case with Mennonites and Doukhobors, Ukrainian block settlement improved the chances of economic and agricultural success, and the block settlements tended to fill up with chain migration. Among the Ukrainians, however, there was a definite preference to settle in either Bukovynan or Halychnyi blocks, regardless of the quality of the land. In 1898 one land commissioner despaired to the deputy minister,

> They are apparently an obstreperous, obstinate, rebellious lot. I am just sick of these people. They are worse than cattle to handle. You cannot get them, by persuasion or argument, to go to a new colony except by force. They all want to go where the others have gone.[1]

What the land commissioner disliked were the very things that leant strength to the newcomer population: cultural integrity, mutual support, and the ability to fabricate an expatriate community based around familiar institutions and practices. Distinctive dialects survived; churches were sustained; and agricultural techniques refined in the Steppe and forests of Eastern Europe were honed further to suit conditions on the Prairies. Their ability to succeed in these respects helps to explain the scale of Ukrainian settlement; by 1914 there were 170,000 immigrants from Galicia in the West.[2] The strategies that made Ukrainian and other block settlements viable were antithetical to the Anglo-Celtic Canadian ideals of individualism and the family as the principal independent productive unit; they were also at odds with various legal practices associated with property ownership and liability, as well as representing a serious challenge to cultural assimilation. One study has argued that:

> The emergence of ethnic communities played a useful role in helping their members to adjust from one linguistic environment to another, and sometimes from a rural way of living to an urban one. However, in

1. W. F. McCreary, Commissioner of Immigration, Winnipeg, to J. A. Smart, Deputy Minister of the Interior, Ottawa, 14 May 1897, RG 76, vol. 144, file 34215, pt.1, Public Archives of Canada, quoted in John C. Lehr, "Kinship and Society in the Ukrainian Pioneer Settlement of the Canadian West," *People, Places, Patterns, Processes: Geographical Perspectives on the Canadian Past*, ed. Graeme Wynn (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1990): 141-2.

2. See John C. Lehr, "Kinship and Society in the Ukrainian Pioneer Settlement of the Canadian West," *People, Places, Patterns, Processes: Geographical Perspectives on the Canadian Past*, ed. Graeme Wynn (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1990): 139-60.

some cases, the ethnic community acted as a brake on the individual achievement and social mobility of its members.[3]

Although Canadian officials might have considered a variety of schemes for achieving immigrant assimilation, contexts varied sharply across the West and in urban centres. The question of adaptation was, more often than not, one of immigrant strategy rather than host-nation policy.

Key Points

- Immigrants from Ukraine included people with very different and sometimes mutually hostile backgrounds.
- Established Canadians of British or French ancestry tended to view the Ukrainians as a homogeneous group.
- Building communities around block settlements enabled the survival of pre-emigration values and cultural features while sometimes dampening the need or ability to adapt to the Canadian host culture.

3. Donald H. Avery, *Reluctant Hosts: Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896-1994* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1995), 12.

5.7 Culture and Adaptation

"There is," writes the historical sociologist Gillian Crease, "no common standard immigrant experience in Canada."[1] The gradations of adaptability, acceptance, material success, biological well-being, and cultural fulfillment are severe. Male immigrants who arrived in cities intent on working in the expanding industrial economy of the post-1945 period generally found far more opportunities to become integrated, to be immersed in the language of the locals, and to develop networks of friends and colleagues who might — in some measure — substitute for the loss of community from abroad, than did female immigrants. It was not unusual in these years to find immigrant households (particularly in suburban Canada) in which the father/patriarch spoke at least passable — sometimes heavily inflected — English, the children spoke with the flattest Canadian accents and were functional in one or more ancestral language, while the stay-at-home mother/matriarch remained effectively unilingual. The immigrant experience was thus gendered and also impacted by age. Some immigrant groups struggled more than others to adapt.

Take, for example, immigrants from the British Isles. Like all other newcomers they gravitated toward neighbourhoods in which recognizable institutions and languages could be found. That these were not considered "ethnic enclaves" speaks to the position of British culture in English-Canada as the reference or cultural **context group**. To be sure, there were class lines that structured the experience of British immigrants: In Vancouver the working-class newcomers planted themselves in East and South Vancouver where housing was affordable and where they had close access to the docks and industries where so many of them found employment; middle-class British immigrants settled in Kerrisdale and Dunbar, effectively ghettos of more plummy English and Scots accents. The landscape of denominationalism was often the clearest sign of these divisions and concentrations: well-to-do High Anglican and Presbyterian congregations to the west, Methodist, Baptist, and — after 1925 — United Church chapels to the east. Distinctions could be seen, too, in the use of recreational space: cricket ovals and rugby grounds to the west; soccer pitches (and baseball diamonds, too) to the east. In the struggle to determine how best to use the newly-created Stanley Park at the turn of the century, as historian Robert A. J. McDonald has shown, English working-class requests for a large stadium and an amusement park (all accessed by transit of some kind) were pushed aside in favour of a cricket oval, a yacht club, and contemplative gardens.[2]

For White, English-speaking immigrants from Britain or the United States, the acculturation process involved some challenges but comparatively few. In the West, as historical geographer John Lehr has argued, Anglophones were,

> …settling a territory that, in many important respects, maintained the basic societal framework of their points

1. Gillian Crease, *The New African Diaspora in Vancouver: Immigration, Exclusion, and Belonging* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 3.

2. Robert A. J. McDonald, "'Holy Retreat' or 'Practical Breathing Spot'? Class Perceptions of Vancouver's Stanley Park," *Canadian Historical Review* 45, 2 (1984): 17-53.

> of origin. They encountered familiar elements of law and administration; the creed of the ruling majority was Protestant; and English was the *de jure*, if not the *de facto*, language of all in the newly settled west.[3]

This was true of all parts of Canada outside of Quebec (less Montreal and the Eastern Townships), not just the settler West. Anglophone settlers constituted a replenishing of the context group, the mainstream civilization whose values and expectations were so dominant as to be invisible. Newcomers from England might complain that they had trouble overcoming the barrier of accents — Canadians strained to pierce their regional tones and the English struggled to understand Canadians — but as one English immigrant in the post-1945 period described the process,

> For the first week I found people incomprehensible. We were talking the same language, and I couldn't understand what they were saying. It took about a week to get into the rhythm of the language…. So that was a bit of a shock.[4]

A whole week to break the codes of language, idiom, and tone. For non-English speaking immigrants these could take years to crack. For them, the challenges of adaptation were much greater.

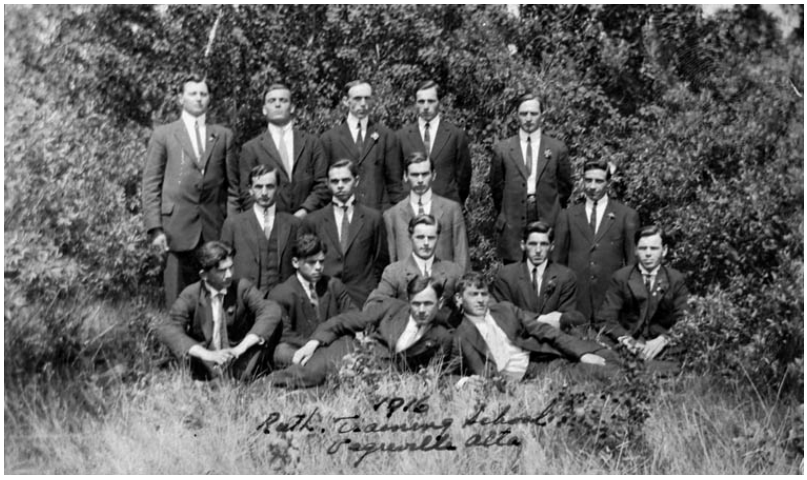


Figure 5.10 Ukrainian students of English at the School for Immigrants, Vegreville, AB, 1916.

Some had a greater incentive to adapt than others. Germans, for example, constituted significant numbers in the Canadian population from the 1890s on, but the two World Wars obliged the German Canadians to develop strategies to reduce their differentness. One approach was to simply keep a low profile. In 1971 the census showed that Vancouver — better known for the large size of its Asian community than for its German diaspora — was 7% Chinese but 8% German. The German language was spoken in more Canadian homes in 1961 and 1971 than any language other than English and French. Finding a German enclave, however, was next to impossible and the institutions that signalled an ethnic presence — church, community hall, specialty stores — were often very discrete.

In sharp contrast, Eastern Europeans and South Asians who arrived in large groups were often able to establish whole communities that sustained older cultural practices and strategies of mutual support (like language, shared parenting, and religion). Indeed, the church, temple, synagogue, or gurdwara

3. John C. Lehr, "Kinship and Society in the Ukrainian Pioneer Settlement of the Canadian West," *People, Places, Patterns, Processes: Geographical Perspectives on the Canadian Past*, ed. Graeme Wynn (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1990): 140.

4. Marilyn Barber and Murray Watson, *Invisible Immigrants: The English in Canada since 1945* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 103.

often did much more than offer a spiritual anchor to newcomers in urban and rural areas: in the case of the gurdwara, it served as a political forum and a site of strategizing to influence policy-makers. A foreign-language press sprang up in many centres which both served the immigrant community and mitigated the need to assimilate into the mainstream. In particularly stark cases, like that of the Chinese community in British Columbia, ghettoization ensured that all the services needed by the community could be found within a few city blocks, the ancestral language was preserved, educational institutions arose that passed the culture on to new generations, churches and temples could be built and filled, and the need to venture out into the non-ethnic world was reduced. These institutions were social and economic hubs, capable of facilitating individual and/or group entry into the mainstream society and economy or preserving — in the face of assaults — the values and relationships that the immigrant group most treasured.

This remarkable and rich accomplishment, of course, invited further resentment of outsiders who used the term “clannish” to describe any ethnic enclave. Indeed, assaults from the Canadian host community would come in many forms.

Key Points

- Adapting to the host society and its expectations was a contextual, community, and personal experience and not a singular process.
- Even British immigrants developed strategies and institutions to enable their acceptance into the mainstream society.

Media Attributions

- Students of English, School for immigrants, Vegreville, Alberta, 1916 © George E. Dragan, Library and Archives Canada (PA-088507) is licensed under a Public Domain license

5.8 Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration

Canada's immigration boom was made possible and made necessary, simultaneously, by the spread of the industrial economy and mechanized transportation. The late 19th century delivered the wherewithal to move large numbers of people faster, further, and in far greater safety than ever before; there was also a rising demand for grain to feed factory towns and coal to feed industry's furnaces. These economic and technological developments happened to come along at the very moment that **racism** became a much more powerful way of looking at the world. To say that the Canadian experience included elements of racism is a little like saying that the Canadian Pacific Railway involved a little steel.

Racism is not merely a suite of regrettable or embarrassing attitudes expressed by a reliably odious share of the population at large. Racism constitutes a force in the modern world, a near- or crypto-ideological position that was broadly accepted in mainstream society as commonsensical. If one believed — as a great many did — that different races were inherently and unchangeably different from one another in terms of intelligence, morality, work ethic, personality, and health (among other qualities), and if one also believed that the mixing of races in a society or in a marriage would inevitably have the effect of diluting the strength of superior races and weakening the community overall, then policies to control for these factors were a logical consequence. The belief that race was more than a social construct obliged 19th and 20th century policy makers to erect barriers to the arrival and/or successful establishment of people belonging to "inferior" races. Racial stereotyping advanced from caricatures of 19th century Irish and Chinese immigrants to enclose Japanese and Indian arrivals, Eastern and Mediterranean Europeans, Arabs, Jews, and African-Americans. Indigenous peoples were subject to similar discrimination and that is considered in Section 11.1. Racist policies also evolved.

Cultural Demography

Through to 1914 the ethnic shape of the older parts of the country was, with a few pockets of exceptions, much as it had been 50 years earlier. White Anglo-Celtic Protestants dominated Ontario and the Eastern Townships of Quebec; while they were the clear majority, a significant Franco-Catholic population and concentrations of African-Canadians lived in the Maritimes. Quebec, of course, was overwhelmingly French and Catholic, and Quebec City especially so.

Montreal, however, was a major port of entry, and many who stepped off the ships did not proceed much further inland. Italian, Jewish, and Polish immigrants could be found in significant numbers and concentrated in specific neighbourhoods in Montreal, which was principally an English-speaking city with a large French minority. Halifax was another entry point, and it acquired diversity in much the same way. The same immigrant groups had significant impacts on the largest industrial towns of Ontario (specifically Toronto and Hamilton) not least because those cities were magnets of employment and opportunity.

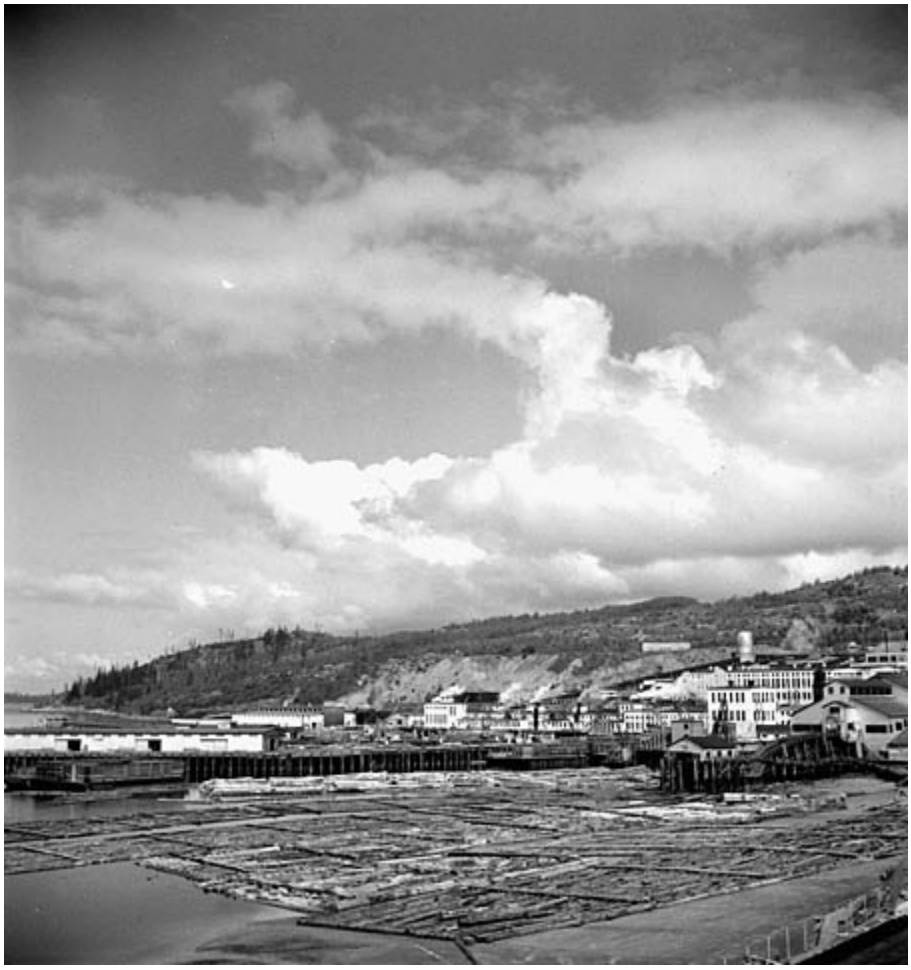


Figure 5.11 The company town of Powell River contained greater diversity among its immigrant community than most older central Canadian and Maritime communities.

The pattern from the Maritimes through Central Canada is, however, uneven. Some smaller centres — Sydney, NS, Sault Ste. Marie, and Fort William (aka: Thunder Bay) for example — attracted and retained ethnic communities while much larger cities contained remarkably little diversity. Sydney became a hub of ethnic variety for the same reason some small towns in the West — like Cumberland, Powell River, and Trail in BC and Drumheller in AB — were diverse. That is, they were all part of the emergent industrial world that globalized a particular kind of labour market. People who could work in foundries, mines, mills, and on roads and rails were circulating around the planet through increasingly sophisticated systems of recruitment, transportation, settlement, and resettlement.[1]

The West as a whole was a mosaic of immigrants from Eastern and Northern Europe. Before the War, this was instantly visible in the city, town, and Prairie skylines as onion-shaped domes and Eastern Orthodox crosses topped centres of worship from the Ontario-Manitoba border to the Rockies. While cities like Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, and Edmonton announced their British loyalty as loudly as any other centre, they were also sites of acculturation and assimilation of non-British newcomers and the newcomers' parallel struggle to retain pre-emigration cultural elements.

1. John Zucchi, *A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 2007), 4-5.

Further west, in British Columbia, diversity was visible in communities that mixed Euro-Canadians with immigrants from both Europe and Asia. The British Columbian population before the Great War was increasingly Canadian-born (even BC-born) and the share of Chinese residents was actually falling — from one-in-five to one-in-twenty between 1881-1921. Immigrants from Japan and the Punjab lifted the Asian numbers a little prior to the War. Each of these Asian communities employed different economic and social strategies in the face of systematized discrimination. Unlike virtually all other immigrant groups, Asians were repeatedly described as unassimilable; barriers to their integration thus created a self-fulfilling prophecy of Asian separateness.

The Welcome Mat

Canadians often did little to smooth the path of newcomers. Organized labour and even native farm labourers regarded most immigrants as part of a plot to reduce workers' living standards by creating a **split labour market**. Anglo-Canadian homesteaders, too, demonstrated their own biases in the hiring of seasonal workers and tended to favour Canadian, British, American, and even German labour over Eastern Europeans. Some Prairie newcomers were thus frustrated in their efforts to earn enough money to meet the costs of setting up a homestead. Many turned, instead, to public works like road building and railway construction. Some — and this was true particularly of Slavic and Scandinavian immigrants — acquired a poor reputation with the railway companies precisely because they had achieved some success in farming. They made their farms a priority and framed their wage labour around the rhythms of planting and harvesting. [2] This is worth underlining: A great many rural immigrants were, nonetheless, industrial immigrants.

Nowhere was this more visible than in the mining towns of the West. In Alberta, coal mining workforces typically ran to more than 14% and as high as 25.5% Italian. Slavics (an all-purpose category that captures Russians and immigrants from the Baltic and Balkan nations) were even more numerous, constituting as much as 36% of the mining workforce in some districts. The same was true in British Columbia, where British miners were a significant factor, as were Finns, Chinese, Italians, and Americans. Employers were happy to have minority immigrants, who would work for less than the Anglo-Canadian and British miners, sometimes for a fraction of their pay. The Western Federation of Miners complained in the Sandon *Paystreak* newspaper that they were being pushed to the brink in the Kootenays by employers who were,

> …importing cheap foreigners from the Minnesota iron ranges to displace union miners… [some employers] have it figured out that if they can run in Dagoes [Italians] at the rate of about two a day they will soon have the union locoed … if [they] can get enuf [*sic*] of them in, wages can be cut to a whisper and Rossland mapped as a colony of Italy. Already about 35% of the Rossland pay-roll is [Italian]….[3]

The *Paystreak's* screed is not exceptional. The principal instrument for transmitting ideas of racially-inherent physical, character, and moral flaws was the newspaper press. Reporting on a devastating local fire in 1908, the Fernie *Free Press* assigned to the diverse community that was battling the blaze the usual (and purportedly immutable) stereotypes: measured against "the serene indifference to danger of

2. Donald H. Avery, *Reluctant Hosts: Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896-1994* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1995), 29-30.

3. Quoted in Jeremy Mouat, *Roaring Days: Rossland's Mines and the History of British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British C0lumbia Press, 1995), 96-7.

the Anglo-Saxons" there was the Italian, "with his excitable nature and glib tongue, the Oriental, with his inherent dread of danger, and his equally great regard for personal safety, [and] the stoic Slavonian [*sic*]…."[4] The pulpit also played a role in this as was seen very clearly in the rise of eugenics (see Section 7.8). There were, too, **nativist** responses from immigrants (largely British or American) and the grown children of immigrants (providing they were White) that worked to (a) denigrate the outsider, and (b) advance the claims of the nativist to inclusion in the mainstream. This can be seen in the hostility shown toward African-Americans on the Prairies in the 1920s and 1930s by Central Europeans, whose families had themselves arrived hardly a generation earlier.

Racism thus became a bar over which some populations would attempt — with mixed results — to hurdle. Others, usually by dint of skin colour or religion, could not.

African-Americans

There are many immigrant populations in Canada who faced on arrival a dense thicket of racist attitudes. The experience of African-Americans is illuminating in this respect. Their numbers were not significant until about 1907, at which time conditions in the southern and central states deteriorated and word of opportunities on the Canadian prairies reached African-Americans struggling under **Jim Crow Laws**. Thirteen hundred reached Saskatchewan and Alberta in the years that followed. The government's response was necessarily crafty because Ottawa feared stirring up diplomatic anger in Washington. As one study describes the tactics deployed,

> Agents were sent into the South to discourage black migrants; medical, character, and financial examinations were rigorously applied at border points, with rewards for officials who disqualified blacks; American railways were influenced to deny blacks passage to Canada.[5]

Liberals and Conservatives alike pursued these strategies to stem the flow of African-American immigration. It was largely successful.

4. Quoted in Leslie A. Robertson, *Imagining Difference: Legend, Curse, and Spectacle in a Canadian Mining Town* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2005), 57.

5. James W. St. G. Walker, *Racial Discrimination In Canada: The Black Experience* (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association, Historical Booklet No. 41, 1985), 14-15.

Chinese Communities



Figure 5.12 A Chinese workcamp along the CPR line, Kamloops, 1886.

The post-Confederation Chinese — unlike their Cariboo gold rush predecessors — were largely drafted in to build the CPR between tidewater and the Rocky Mountains. Thereafter, some found work in the Vancouver Island coal mines but principally they settled in the cities and towns, especially along the CPR mainline. These enclaves varied tremendously in size but they hosted a familiar variety of services and institutions. Populated overwhelmingly by males (single or, if married, living there without their wives who were still in China), **Chinatowns** provided immigrants with employment in restaurants, laundries, and grocery outlets that served both the Chinese and the non-Chinese populations. Buddhist temples and clan halls (or *tongs*) provided cultural anchors while the **Chinese Benevolent Association** provided some degree of political coordination in what was a largely hostile, anti-Chinese environment. Chinese emigration — like most Asian out-migration in these years — was stimulated by agricultural crises at home (connected, in China, to drought) and political instability. Those pushes were paired with the prospect of making enough money in British Columbia (aka: *Gum Shan*) to rescue or advance family-owned farming operations in, mainly, Guangdong. A strong entrepreneurial culture was thus emblematic of the community and instruments for making capital available to members of the Chinese enclave — including the *hui* — were well developed.[6] Living conditions, however, were often very poor: The elements that defined the Chinese experience across Canada and distinguished it from that of European settlers included wages that were a fraction of what was earned by adult White males, overcrowded living conditions in Chinatowns, and the almost total absence of family comforts. Although Chinese market farms in suburban areas became an early and important source of food in West Coast Canadian cities, few Chinese were able to become farmers nor were they able to escape the urban neighbourhoods into which they were cast. In large urban areas and even in smaller resource-extraction towns, Chinese immigrants could be found working in the homes of others as cooks and houseboys.

6. Paul Yee, “Business Devices from Two Worlds: The Chinese in Early Vancouver,” *BC Studies*, 62 (Summer 1984): 44-67.

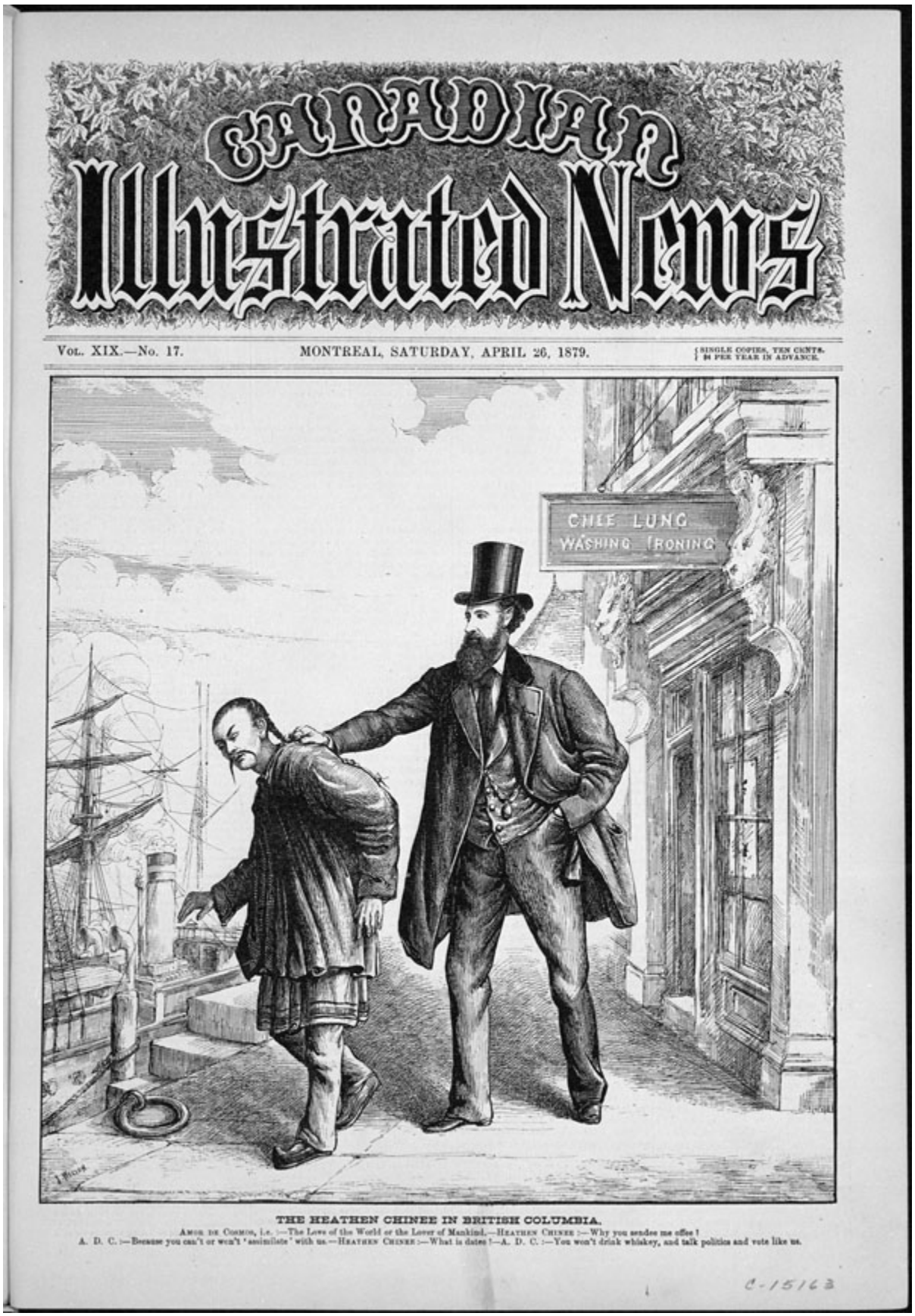


Figure 5.13 BC Premier Amor de Cosmos pictured evicting a Chinese immigrant, 1879. The cartoonist, J.

Weston, uses caricatures but his blade has two edges: The Chinese immigrant's refusal to "assimilate" means, to de Cosmos, an unwillingness to "drink whiskey, and talk politics and vote like us." [Long Description]

Anti-Chinese Policies

Probably no immigrant group has been as heavily managed as the Chinese. Sought out as cheap contract labour, they were recruited to meet finite economic and infrastructural goals. While some Chinese arrivals saw themselves as **sojourners** — temporary immigrants who would return to their country of origin once they'd amassed some money — many more were in for the long haul. This was not part of Ottawa's plan and so steps were taken to limit immigration and thus encourage return migration.

The **Head Tax** was the main instrument used by Ottawa to regulate Chinese arrivals down to 1923. Some 81,000 people found the wherewithal to pay this fee before it was abolished, even though it rose from $50 in 1885 to $500 in 1903. In this respect, the Head Tax initiative was a failed attempt to stop Chinese immigration. It was, however, a money-maker: It is reckoned that the Head Tax pulled in $22 million for Ottawa, which equates to more than $300 million in 2015 dollars. Not everyone in the Euro-Canadian community supported the Head Tax, though for reasons that we might now consider discomfiting. A group of Euro-Canadian women argued that reducing the Head Tax would attract more immigrants, some of whom could be employed as houseboys and cooks. The Lib-Lab Member of the BC legislature, Ralph Smith, supported this idea and one local newspaper chided him that he was worried that "his gallant wife should have to roast her comely face over the kitchen fire every day because the Chinese Head Tax makes it impossible for him to get a Chinese cook."[7] The rate of Chinese immigration varied because of the tax and global events and, like much human movement during World War I, numbers fell. After the war, immigration resumed. By this time, however, there was growing fear among the White community of the opium trade and allegations that young Euro-Canadian women were being lured into the sex trade, what was called at the time "White slavery." Emily Murphy — a leading figure in first wave feminism, the suffrage movement, and counted among the Famous Five — wrote a series of highly popular pieces on the drug trade and its connections with Chinatown. *The Black Candle* (as it appeared in book form) was one of several diatribes against the Chinese community, one that catalyzed a revision of immigration legislation.

The 1923 *Chinese Immigration Act* terminated legal Chinese immigration and remained on the books until 1947. This complete ban on arrivals from a specified country was uniquely and exclusively applied to the Chinese. Prejudice might stand in the way of other groups but no others were treated this way in law. What immigration occurred between 1923-1947 was illegal and much of it involved reuniting spouses and family members. The 1923 *Act*, introduced on the 1st of July and thus coinciding with Dominion Day, was commemorated in the Chinese community as Humiliation Day in the years that followed. (For more on this topic, see Section 5.12.)

Limits on immigration is one thing; limits on immigrants is another. Chinese populations were contained (sometimes by choice but usually by civic regulations) to small urban areas — Chinatowns.

7. Quoted in Lisa Pasolli, *Working Mothers and the Child Care Dilemma: A History of British Columbia's Social Policy* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2015), 30.

They were forbidden, in Vancouver, from purchasing homes and opening stores outside of a few blocks of the city core. Like members of some other ethnic/racial/visible groups, they were also forbidden for years from attending post-secondary institutions and specifically from pursuing degrees through the University of British Columbia School of Pharmacy, a restriction that echoed **Sinophobic** associations between the Chinese community and drug trafficking. Many of these constraints would survive into the 1970s and early 1980s.

Anti-Semitism

Parallels can be drawn with the Jewish community. By 1914 there were reckoned to be 100,000 Jewish-Canadians, roughly 75,000 of whom could be found in Montreal and Toronto. Not all Jewish immigrants went to cities and towns, and there were Jewish farm colonies to be found in Saskatchewan. Enclaves — ghettos without walls — could be found in Montreal and Winnipeg's North End in particular, although they were less visible in the other major cities. Vancouver's second mayor, David Oppenheimer, was Jewish and instrumental in founding the city's first synagogue in the heart of the East End. The population that gravitated to that neighbourhood dispersed, however, as newer and poorer immigrants intruded and as the Jewish community became more prosperous. A new spiritual and educational hub appeared on the south side, but it was never an enclave in the truest sense. In those cities where the Jewish population was more concentrated, there was inevitably a higher degree of visibility. In largely Catholic Montreal this drew anti-Semitic attacks, especially in the 1930s with the rise internationally of rabidly anti-Semitic political movements.

The Jewish diaspora had more experience of minority status than any other immigrant group in Canada. Centuries of ghettoization in Europe along with religious and legislative oppression had strengthened the community's instinct to erect institutions of mutual support, social welfare, and education. In Canada this meant that a designated burial ground was the first objective, followed by a synagogue, and related institutions for women, men, and children. The Zionist movement also spilled out of Europe and into Canadian enclaves. In 1919 the pro-Zion Canadian Jewish Congress was established and acted as a voice for the community as a whole. This did nothing, however, to dampen Ottawa's hostility toward Jewish immigration in the 1930s. Fearful of anti-Semitic violence in Germany, Austria, and, indeed, throughout Central and Western Europe, many Jewish families hoped to find sanctuary in Canada. Ottawa responded by holding the door firmly shut. Through to 1939 Canada accepted fewer Jewish refugees as a proportion of total population than any other nation in the West. [8]

Early Japanese Immigration

The Japanese community began arriving in Canada in the 1890s. Like the Chinese, they participated in the coal mining frontier on Vancouver Island and were drawn to the cities. In Vancouver, Chinatown and the Japanese enclave were only two city blocks apart. One important distinction, however, was the important role that Japanese immigrants played in the fishing industry, principally as owners and operators of fishing vessels. While Chinese men and Indigenous women laboured in the late 19th and early 20th century canneries, much of the fishing fleet depended on Japanese captains and crews.

8. Still the definitive work on this question is Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe, 1933-1948* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1983).



Figure 5.14 Vancouver's anti-Asian riot of 1907 resulted in extensive damage in the Chinese and Japanese quarters. W. L. Mackenzie King (to whom this photo is credited) was sent by Laurier to investigate; 34 years later King would oversee Japantown's depopulation.

Like the Chinese, Japanese immigrants faced discrimination when it came to immigrant recruitment and host community hospitality. Public opinion among the non-Asian population was against them, as was demonstrated in a 1907 window-smashing and head-bashing riot led by the Asiatic Exclusion League (in which organized labour played a key role) that swept through the Chinese and Japanese quarters. This followed on the arrival of more than 8,000 Japanese newcomers earlier in the same year and the prospect of an Indian/Sikh migration north from Washington State. Heightened pressure from the non-Asian community caused the Canadian government to negotiate with Japan a **Gentlemen's Agreement** (aka: the *Lemieux-Hayashi Agreement*) in 1908. This pact restricted the number of people leaving Japan for Canada. It capped the number of men who could travel to Canada, but it left open the possibility of female migration across the Pacific by not restricting the emigration of wives. The phenomenon of "picture brides" developed from there and in the decades that followed, significant numbers of women relocated from Meiji Japan to Canada where they met, for the first time, their husbands. The picture brides endured lives with men who were hitherto strangers, many of them living in small fishing or other resource-extraction communities on the northwest coast; despite powerful Meiji traditions of female submissiveness, some women sought their own path and abandoned

prescribed gender roles.[9] As for the host community, Euro-Canadians were mostly hostile to the prospect of Japanese-Canadian family formation and the likelihood of growth from natural increase. What is more, Japanese success in the fisheries was so remarkable that new anti-Japanese restrictions on commercial fishing licenses were introduced in the 1920s. The 1923 *Immigration Act* extended new constraints to human movement between Japan and Canada to such an extent that Japanese migration was effectively as limited as that of the Chinese. The wartime and post-War experience of the Japanese-Canadian community is explored in Sections 5.11 and 6.17.

Immigration from the Indian Subcontinent

The third group to arrive from Asia came mainly from the Punjab. The Sikh migration is another in which males vastly outnumbered females. In each of these cases — China, Japan, India — Britain's relationship with the source country is important. Of the three, only India was a British colony and that factored into the treatment meted out to potential and eventual immigrants. It also informed the Indian community's strategies and tactics when it came time to fight for rights or survival.

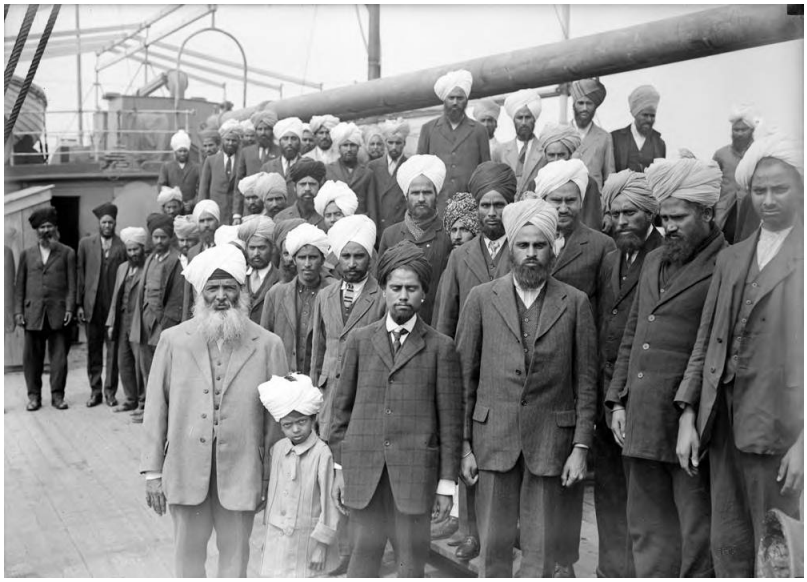


Figure 5.15 Immigrants from India on board the Komagata Maru. The group's leader, Gurdit Singh, wears a light-coloured suit.

Neither a Head Tax nor a Gentlemen's Agreement were possible in the case of India, so the method used to block migration was the **continuous voyage requirement** of the amended *Immigration Act* of 1908. Immigrants would be allowed from India (or Japan) into Canada if they could demonstrate that their vessel had travelled directly to a Canadian port without putting into another foreign harbour along the way. Given the distances involved and the ships of the time, this was effectively a barrier to Indian immigration. Sikh nationalists like Gurdit Singh (a merchant based in Singapore) accepted this challenge, chartered a vessel — the Japanese *Komagata Maru* — and, in 1914, attempted to bring nearly 400 potential immigrants to Vancouver. The ship was kept in harbour for two months. The passengers seized control of the ship from its Japanese crew and waited as lawyers for the Crown

9. Midge Ayukawa, "Good Wives and Wise Mothers: Japanese Picture Brides in Early Twentieth Century British Columbia," *BC Studies*, nos.105-106 (Spring/Summer 1995): 103-118.

argued that the immigrants had departed from Hong Kong, not India, and so were in breach of the continuous voyage requirement.

The *Komagata Maru* incident is complex in that it draws together many different threads. Some of the parties involved were anti-British and sought Indian independence; the British, for their part, were anxious about divisive Indian politics just as tensions with Germany were becoming greater; Singh — in concert with Indo-Canadians — wanted to challenge the continuous voyage requirement just as much as he wanted the immigrants to succeed in reaching Canada; the British were as interested in putting down anti-colonial upstarts as they were in blocking immigration to Canada. Euro-Canadians, for their part, demonstrated little sympathy for the passenger/migrants and seemingly held fast to their desire for a "White Canada Forever."[10] The *Komagata Maru* was driven from Vancouver harbour by the courts. Its passengers returned to India only to face jail and death at the hands of the British authorities.



Figure 5.16 Cyclone Taylor, former hockey player and no. 3 immigration officer in Vancouver in the Komagata Maru incident.

10. See W. Peter Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy Toward Orientals in British Columbia,* 3rd ed. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002) and Hugh J. M. Johnston, *The Voyage of the Komagata Maru: The Sikh Challenge to Canada's Colour Bar,* revised ed. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014).

Anxieties about the Indian population before the war were rooted in the White community's racist and xenophobic perspective on the world. Even so, it is in some respects a challenge to understand. There were, in 1911, fewer than 3,000 Indians in Canada and that number was roughly half of what it had been only five years earlier. Rather than posing a demographic threat, the community was in something like free fall. It was a fear of being overrun and outnumbered that motivated many racists at the time. H. H. Stevens, the Conservative Member of Parliament who played a key role in the *Komagata Maru* affair, for example, was terrified that Asian populations had a much higher fertility rate and an almost endless stockpile of potential emigrants on which to draw. Stevens would prove to be a lifelong opponent of any kind of Asian immigration. He and his peers saw Canada as "a White man's country," and regarded any arrival by visible minorities to be the thin edge of the wedge and a disaster in the making.

Racism, Health, Deviance

As historian Esyllt Jones observes, the state and medical officials gave physical health an ethnic face. Crowded housing and poor water and sewage — widely recognized as causal factors when it came to infectious diseases — were disregarded when dealing with the immigrant, working poor, and non-White races. It was race and ethnicity (and social class) that Canadian authorities believed made newcomers sickly and, as well, a fertile ground for epidemics.[11] Local police authorities extended this way of thinking to social behaviour. Prostitution became associated with ethnic and visible minorities, particularly Chinese, Slavic, and Italian communities. **Bootlegging** — the production and sale of alcohol — is an example of an ancient rural practice that became criminalized in the early 20th century and used as an excuse to police the ethnic "other". Organized gambling was another thread of moral corruption that was traced back to ethnic enclaves. Finally, the import and/or production and sale of restricted drugs — from opium to heroin — was transformed from a criminal practice into an ethnic and racial crisis. Described as morally, physically, and socially "diseased," Canada's ethnic and racial "others" were wrapped in a language that took on scientific and epidemiological tones. Once these notions were affixed to immigrant groups, the logic of barring them from medical schools and positions of responsibility became all but unassailable.

While it is true that official anti-Asian sentiment began to decline around 1947, prejudices remained. Anti-Semitic positions proved especially resilient, as did xenophobia regarding Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus, and members of other minority, non-Christian faiths. Twenty years ago, the distinguished Canadian historian Desmond Morton, wrote that pre-WWII Canada was "a poor country, full of people who were generous to those they knew, mean-spirited to those they didn't, and harsh about the distinctions."[12] This tension between a country that needed and wanted immigration but didn't necessarily want immigrants took new forms in the years after the Great War.

11. Esyllt W. Jones, "Disease as Embodied Praxis: Epidemics, Public Health, and Working-Class Resistance in Winnipeg, 1906-19," *The West and Beyond: New Perspectives on an Imagined Region*, eds. Alvin Finkel, Sarah Carter, Peter Fortna (Edmonton: Athabasca University Press, 2010): 207-9.

12. Desmond Morton, *1945 – When Canada Won the War*, Historical Booklet No. 54 (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1995), 3.

Key Points

- Racism constituted a set of beliefs about racial hierarchies and policy alternatives.
- Some regions acquired greater diversity than others, including the largest cities and the Prairie West.
- These were the areas where acts of racial and ethnic discrimination were most widespread.
- Anti-African and anti-Asian racism was expressed in policies and practices aimed to reduce or at least limit the size of the communities in question.
- The only European community that faced comparable discrimination was the Jewish diaspora.
- Immigrant communities developed their own respective strategies to secure survival at least and prosperity at best.

Long Descriptions

Figure 5.13 long description: Cover of the *Canadian Illustrated News,* Vol. XIX, No. 17. Published in Montreal on Saturday, April 26, 1879. The cover has a sketch of B.C. Premier Amor de Cosmos wearing an overcoat and top hat, one hand casually in his pocket, the other pushing a Chinese immigrant down the street. The Chinese man has his hair in a braid, a Fu Manchu moustache, and is wearing a tunic of sorts. The two men stand outside of a shop with the sign "Chee Lung Washing Ironing." The shop appears to be on the waterfront, with ship masts in the background.

The caption says "The Heathen Chinee in British Columbia." Amor De Cosmos says, "The Love of the World or the Lover of Mankind." The "Heathen Chinee" says, "Why you sendee me offee?" A.D.C. says, "Because you can't or won't 'assimilate' with us." The Heathen Chinee says "What is [that]?" A.D.C. says, "You won't drink whiskey, and talk politics and vote like us." [Return to Figure 5.13]

Media Attributions

- Powell River, British Columbia, 1944 © Harry Rowed, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3197254) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Chinese camp (Canadian Pacific Railway), Kamloops, British Columbia, 1886 © Edouard Deville, Library and Archives Canada (C-021990) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- The Heathen Chinese In British Columbia, 1879 © J. Weston, Canadian Illustrated News, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2914880) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Damage to property of Japanese residents, 1907 © William Lyon Mackenzie King, Library and Archives Canada (C-014118) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Sikhs aboard Komagata Maru, 1914 © Leonard Juda Frank is licensed under a Public Domain license

- Fred “Cyclone” Taylor, ca. 1906 is licensed under a Public Domain license

5.9 Immigrants and War

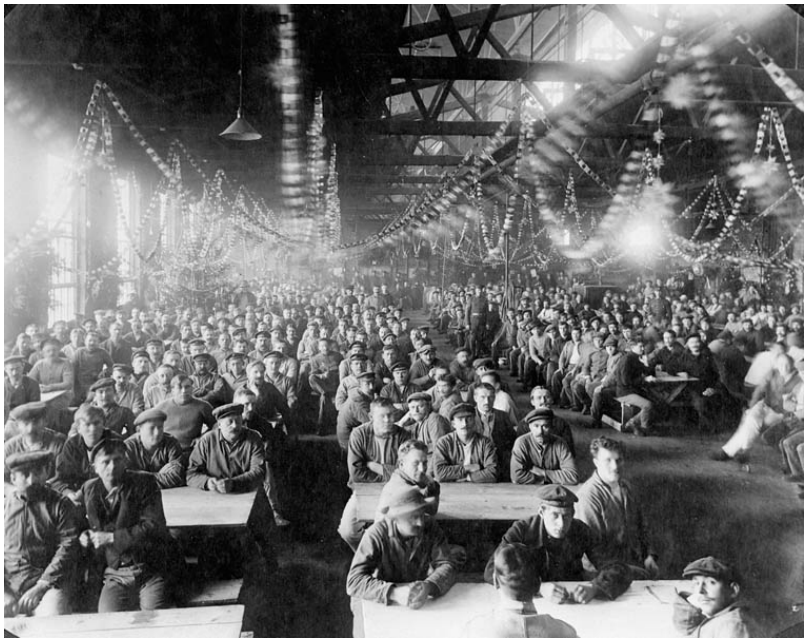


Figure 5.17 Christmas 1916 at an internment camp.

Perhaps the single greatest irony of Canadians' relationship with immigrants and visible minorities (including Indigenous people) rose to the surface in the course of two World Wars. Keen to welcome nation-building immigrants but critical of their cultures and suspicious of the kind of nation they might build, Canadians tied themselves in knots when it came time to engage in military adventures.

The diversity introduced to Canada from the 19th century complicated ideas of loyalty. Recall that Anglo-Canadians were extremely suspicious of Franco-Catholic loyalties to the Vatican as articulated by the ultramontanists. The loyalty of the French at the secular level was regularly drawn into question — so often so that the apparent disinterest of Québecois in volunteering for service in 1914-17 (see Section 6.4) was both expected and viewed as demonstrable proof of disloyalty to the Crown — regardless of the fact that Anglo-Canadian numbers in the ranks were shored up mightily by recent British immigrants. French Canadians, for their part, characterized Anglo-Canadians as absurdly loyal to an absent monarch in a foreign country, rather than to the country of their birth: Canada. What, then, were they to make of the hundreds of thousands of Europeans and Asians drawn from beyond the borders of France and Britain?

Local xenophobia was, thus, amplified by the arrival of war in 1914. Germans were instantly persecuted, their property attacked, and calls raised for sweeping arrests. Germanic names were part of the landscape of British North America for centuries and now they were Anglicized to demonstrate loyalty and to reduce visibility. Even the Ontario city of Berlin took the name of the British general in the Boer War, Kitchener. Austro-Hungarians — that is, Austrians, Hungarians, many Ukrainians, and almost everyone from the Balkans — were also targeted. The Hapsburg Empire's vilification in wartime propaganda gave license to indulge prejudice and hostility toward those Central and Southern

European immigrants who had been recruited — at no small expense — to build the Canadian West's economy. What's more, eugenicists already regarded the Austro-Hungarians as a liability in the building of a forthright, strong, British nation; Austro-Hungarians were perceived by government and civic officials as inherently impoverished and therefore feckless and unhealthy as well. And now, in wartime, they were subject to arrest and incarceration in internment camps.

Anglo- and Franco-Canadians, however, proved flexible in their distaste for foreigners. At the end of WWI, when the map of Europe was redrawn at Versailles, much of Ukraine now fell within the borders of Poland, a beleaguered nation-state towards which the public had some sympathies. To be an Austro-Hungarian was to be an enemy; to be a Pole was to be reinvented as a brave ally.

The Pacificists

Pacificism was another barrier to inclusion during wartime. Several immigrant communities were recruited under Sifton's watch with the promise that their pacifist beliefs would be honoured in Canada. For the Mennonites in particular, this was a critical assurance. In Russia, they were the target of violent repression by the Czarist regime precisely because of their anti-war stance; Canada's offer to respect their pacificism was a deal-maker.

The Doukhobor experience in this regard offers an example. A dissenting sect established in Russia and Georgia during the 17th century (if not earlier), the Doukhobors' critique of established church authority and the secular state in Russia attracted repression. This peaked in 1895 when the regime of Nicholas II sent in storm troops — in this case, Cossacks — to force Doukhobor compliance with state laws and universal conscription. These events produced an international outcry and the search for a new home for the Doukhobors (something which the frustrated Czar was only too happy to permit). Sifton's ministry stepped forward and offered block settlements in Saskatchewan and Alberta totalling more than three-quarters of a million acres. The communal-ownership model preferred by the Doukhobors was to be respected, as was their **anarchist** reluctance to engage with the bureaucratic machinery of the state. As well, the Doukhobors were reassured by revisions to the *Dominion Military Act* that exempted them from military service.



Figure 5.18 The village of Vosnesenya, Thunder Hill Colony. Its architecture and village layout were copied from the Doukhobor villages in Caucasia.

Three factors caused the Canadians to change their position on the Doukhobor agreements. The bureaucracy of the modern state became more rigorous: Sifton's replacement, Frank Oliver, began insisting on individual land registrations and pressures grew to send Doukhobor children to public schools. As tensions grew in Europe, an oath of allegiance to the Crown was required. Provincial governments were established in Alberta and Saskatchewan; now the Doukhobors had several levels of government with which to deal.

The communities fractured and the largest part, calling itself the **Sons of Freedom**, migrated to the southeast of British Columbia. There, their anti-materialist protests (which involved nude demonstrations and the burning of buildings) and their opposition to public schooling peaked in the 1920s and then in the mid-20th century. The growing state formation under W. A. C. Bennett moved to capture Doukhobor children and to educate them in facilities secure from parental influence. Arrests of the Freedomites followed. While all of these steps were taken within the letter of the law, the Doukhobor community experienced their incarceration and the abduction of their children as nothing short of state terrorism. Within only a few decades, the Doukhobor experience in Canada looked very much like what it had been under the Czars.

What this history demonstrates is, in part, the conflicting currents of modernism – which involves the growth of the state, record-keeping, militarism, and the primacy of the individual **—** and the survival of pre- or **antimodernist** belief systems and inclinations **—** including the idealization of rural and communal life, spiritual versus materialist priorities, and anarchistic resistance to the very idea of the nation-state.

Key Points

- Canadian policy, and much of the public, turned against Central and Eastern European immigrants during wartime.

- Certain groups were characterized as “enemy aliens” and faced internment during the Great War.
- Pacifist colonies in the West and elsewhere in Canada were increasingly confronted by public opinion and governments that reneged on earlier assurances of tolerance.

Media Attributions

- Christmas celebration at Internment Camp in Canada, WWI, 1916 © Internment Camps, Library and Archives Canada (C-014104) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Village of Vosnesenya, Thunder Hill Colony © Library and Archives Canada (C-000683) is licensed under a Public Domain license

5.10 Female Immigrants and the Canadian State, 1860s through the 20th century

Lisa Chilton; Department of History; and University of Prince Edward Island



Figure 5.19 Four women outside the Finnish Immigrant Home in Montreal, ca. 1929.

In the middle of the 19th century, women who immigrated to Canada became the focus of special attention. Philanthropists and social reformers began to lobby officials of the Canadian state to help support their efforts to manage and protect this special class of newcomers. In part, the impetus behind treating female immigrants differently to men was a growing sense that the Canadian nation would be defined by the quality of the people who were settling it. As mothers – symbolically and literally – of future generations of Canadians, female immigrants were considered by architects of the new nation to be particularly significant additions to the population.

The Canadian government (like its counterparts in the United States, Britain, Australia, and other parts

of the British Empire) initially resisted pressure to invest in special programmes and facilities for female migrants. The earliest initiatives were all privately funded. But by the turn of the 20th century various government bodies were supporting programmes designed by organisations such as the British Women's Emigration Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, and the Travellers' Aid Society to treat women as both a particularly vulnerable and a potentially problematic class of immigrants. For example, the earliest women-only hostels and transatlantic chaperone programmes were all fully funded by charitable and philanthropic organisations. By the beginning of World War I women-only immigrant reception homes, established and run by women associated with the British Women's Emigration Association but financially underwritten by Canada's federal government, were in place in major urban centres across Canada.[1]

The Canadian government's consideration of female immigrants as a group requiring particular care came to a head after World War I. In 1920, after much lobbying by Canadian women's associations, the Canadian federal government established a special branch of the Canadian Department of Immigration and Colonization to recruit women for domestic service and other female-gendered forms of paid employment that Canadian women were unlikely or unavailable to perform, and to manage the movements of all "unaccompanied" women coming into the country. The Women's Division functioned as a separate unit for just over a decade before the government imposed restrictions to immigration during the Great Depression and the flow of immigrants dried up, making their work essentially unnecessary.[2]

While the Women's Division disappeared, the gendered assumptions and attitudes behind its establishment continued to play major roles in state programmes associated with newcomers after World War II. Women's sexual histories were interrogated as a part of the selection process to a far greater extent than were those of men. Local government bodies funded immigrant reception programmes that encouraged female immigrants to embrace mainstream Canadian parenting and homemaking practices. And, as had been the case since at least the beginning of the 20th century, the government barred entry to women and even deported female immigrants for past experiences and behaviours that might have been overlooked in their male counterparts. Thus, for example, in the early 20th century, unmarried women who became pregnant were vulnerable to deportation proceedings on the grounds of their immorality and the likelihood that they would require some sort of charitable assistance if they were allowed to stay in Canada.[3]

1. Lisa Chilton, *Agents of Empire: British Female Migration to Canada and Australia, 1860s-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007); Marilyn Barber, *Immigrant Domestic Servants in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991).

2. Rebecca Mancuso, "Work 'Only a Woman Can Do': The Women's Division of the Canadian Department of Immigration and Colonization," *The American Review of Canadian Studies* (Winter 2005): 593-620.

3. For the late 19th and early 20th centuries, see Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991). For the post-World War Two period, see Franca Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2006).



Figure 5.20 Awaiting deportation, Quebec, 1912.

The most consistent area of investment relating to female immigrants by the Canadian government concerns recruitment. Because household work and care for the young, the ill, and the elderly typically have been low-paid, exploitative areas of female-gendered employment, Canadian citizens in a position to be more selective have shunned this work. At the same time, prospective employers were quick to assign stereotypes to immigrant women seeking work in these fields: The newly arrived female worker was caricatured as morally suspect because of her race or ethnicity. Public fears and xenophobia in this respect produced extensive scrutiny and regular criticism of government programmes, even as the number of recruitment exercises grew. Perhaps more than any other aspect of the Canadian government's immigration work, the government's recruitment programmes associated with domestic and caregiver work represent Canada's most conservative social politics.

Through domestic servant, caregiver and nurse recruitment schemes, many thousands of women have immigrated to Canada since Confederation. Before World War I, the majority of domestic servants in major urban centres and in the Canadian West were immigrants from the British Isles. They had been recruited by philanthropic organizations heavily subsidized by the Canadian federal government. Throughout the 1920s, the Canadian government continued to invest heavily in the recruitment of British women for this work, though it also struck deals with transportation companies and community groups that wished to support the immigration of European women for domestic employment. In the period after World War II, the government began to openly recruit women for domestic work from a list of preferred European origins. For example, in little over a decade (1951-1963) over 10,000 Greek women became Canadian immigrants through such a scheme.[4] Since the 1970s, the government has moved to a system whereby women recruited to perform domestic or caregiver work in Canada will not necessarily receive immigrant status. Rather, recruitment schemes targeting women in the Philippines

4. Noula Mina, "Taming and Training Greek 'Peasant Girls' and the Gendered Politics of Whiteness in Postwar Canada: Canadian Bureaucrats and Immigrant Domestics, 1950s-1960s," *Canadian Historical Review,* 94:4 (Dec. 2013): 514-39.

or certain Caribbean countries, for example, have been structured around term employment contracts that provide the migrants with limited support and no certain future in Canada.[5]

Key Points

- Female immigrants have been treated by many administrations as a separate category of recruit and applicant.
- The ways in which prospective immigrants were interrogated for eligibility was gendered.
- Class prejudices and ethnic biases combined to create particular niches for immigrant females, specifically in areas of work that did not appeal to Canadian women because of low pay or poor working conditions.

Media Attributions

- Four women on steps of Finnish immigrant home, ca. 1929 © Victor Kangas, Library and Archives Canada (PA-127086) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Immigrants to be deported, 1912 © William James Topley, Library and Archives Canada (PA-020910) is licensed under a Public Domain license

5. Abigail Bakan and Daiva Stasiulis, *Negotiating Citizenship: Migrant Women in Canada and the Global System* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005).

5.11 Post-War Immigration

When it comes to immigration, the century can be divided in two along the fulcrum of WWII. Prior to the war, immigration was principally understood within the context of building an agricultural colossus and assembling an army of workers to tear down forests and wrest ore from the belly of the Earth. And it took place within the context of a kind of cultural sensitivity that was mostly alert to anything that would challenge the dominance of Anglo-Celtic Protestant and Franco-Catholic "founding nations." It was for this reason that Buddhist, Shinto, Sikh, Muslim, and Jewish immigrants in particular – alike in that none were Christian – were especially marginalized. The cataclysms of 1939-45 changed both circumstances and minds.

Post-War Refugees

After 1945 Europe opened its floodgates as hundreds of thousands sought refuge from a devastated continent. British emigrants were fleeing cities destroyed by the Blitz and diets stunted by rationing; there were, too, 41,000 **war brides** and nearly 20,000 children fathered by Canadian soldiers stationed in the UK during the war. Refugees poured out of Germany, especially in the wake of the quartering of the nation (and Berlin) into Soviet and Western zones (see Section 9.4). The same was true of Czecho-Slovaks uncertain of their country's future and disconsolate about its immediate past. In Italy, Austria, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium refugee camps were established in the late 1940s. Called DP Camps — for **Displaced Persons** — these were the focal point of efforts to sort the human chaos into emigrant streams. (Immigrants in this wave were casually, sometimes derisively, referred to as DPs regardless of whether they had endured the camps.)

Canadians played an important role in both the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and the International Refugee Organization that succeeded it in 1947. Ottawa was committed to accepting significant numbers of able-bodied refugees, although Canadian anti-Semitism continued to throw up obstacles to Jewish refugees and survivors of death camps. As the Cold War got underway, anti-Communist applicants were favoured over others: Poles and Ukrainians together represented 39% of the 165,000 in this refugee wave, followed by Germans and Austrians (11%), Jews (10%), and smaller measures of Baltic and Central European emigrants. One historical study of this migration by Franca Iacovetta points to the role of Canadian "gatekeepers" who processed applicants in what she describes as "a worldwide labour relocation program."[1] There were many ironies and tragedies in this process, possibly the most outstanding being that anti-fascist resistance fighters were often viewed by Canadian authorities as insufficiently anti-Soviet and they were, for that reason, less likely to be allowed into the country. This was notably the case among Jewish refugees whose animosity toward the fascists was understandably greater than their hostility toward communism.

Barely had the immediate post-war exodus tapered off in 1953 when new Cold War migrations got underway. In November 1956, as Soviet tanks rolled across a rebellious Hungary, 30,000 of some

1. Franca Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2006), 3-5.

200,000 exiles fled to Canada. There was a humanitarian agenda here, to be sure, but it is also important to note that providing sanctuary and opportunity to Soviet-bloc Europeans during the Cold War had propaganda value as well. And it cut two ways: their successful integration into a prosperous postwar Canadian democratic order taunted those who remained behind and, at the same time, anti-communist refugees spread a message among Canadians of Soviet oppression and terror.



Figure 5.21 Refugee crisis, 1956. An immigration interpreter assists with the interview of a Hungarian applicant.

The first waves of Cold War–era immigration from Europe were followed in the 1950s and 1960s by family reunification arrivals. As siblings and other relatives found their way to Canada, the majority made their way to urban Ontario. Diversity existed there before WWII but in the 1960s it became transformative. The established British-Canadianism of Toronto and Hamilton was itself being reduced to enclaves of what former Prime Minister Stephen Harper once described approvingly as “old stock” Canadians.

Ideological turmoil had consequences for Asian immigrants as well. Liberalization of attitudes toward Chinese immigration began in 1947, in large measure because China had been a target of Japan (an enemy of the Allied forces during World War II). Chinese Canadians were quick to volunteer for service in the Canadian Army in wartime and, after official barriers were dropped, they joined the Navy and Air Force as well, all of which contributed to a change in attitude in White society. In 1947, then, the 1923 *Immigration Act* was repealed and it became possible for Chinese immigrants and their descendants to obtain Canadian citizenship. Four hundred did so that year in a mass ceremony in Vancouver.[2]

The timing of the policy change, however, was poor. In 1949 the Chinese Revolution brought Mao Zedong (aka: Mao Tse-tung, 毛泽东, 1893-1976) and his Communist Party to power in Beijing.

2. Timothy J. Stanley, *Contesting White Supremacy: School Segregation, Anti-Racism, and the Making of Chinese Canadians* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011).

Almost immediately barriers to emigration were erected and once again Chinese (outside of Hong Kong and Taiwan) were unable to join members of the diaspora.[3] Emigration from Hong Kong would continue, however, and it accelerated in the 1980s as Britain reluctantly prepared to hand over control of the colony to the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1997. Large numbers of (mostly wealthy) Chinese made their way to Canada at this time, establishing a significant enclave in Richmond, BC, and appearing in most major cities. Changes within the PRC and a growing economy enabled "mainlanders" to emigrate as well, and by the first decade of the new century the Chinese community in Canada had become vastly more complex, consisting of old families – some of which had roots in Canada going back to the 1850s, most of whom had originated in Guangdong, and the majority enjoying modest incomes while still strongly oriented toward community institutions in Chinatowns – contrasting with wealthy and super-wealthy recent arrivals from Hong Kong and the PRC, a great many of whom spoke Mandarin (Putonghua) rather than Cantonese (Guangdong speech) and almost none of whom regarded Chinatown as representative of their history, experience, and aspirations. (For more on this topic, see Section 5.12.)

Post-Centennial Immigration

The centennial year marked a further change in immigration policy. Up to this time, Ottawa preferred settlers from the British Isles, the United States, and Western Europe. In 1967 the government introduced a points system. Under this regime applicants were given preference if they knew either (or both) French or English, were non-dependent adults (that is, not too old to work), had jobs lined up already in Canada, had relatives in the country (to whom they might turn for support), were interested in settling in parts of the country with the greatest need for workers, and were trained or educated in fields that were in demand. The economy was still expanding and in some regions it would continue to do so for many years. Canadians have not always demonstrated sufficient mobility to fill the hiring needs of some regions, nor to fill some economic niches (especially what are often called "entry-level jobs"). Under these circumstances the new legislation was to prove key in attracting large numbers of new Canadians from sources that were considered "non-traditional".

In the 1970s, Montreal was no longer Canada's largest metropolis, the increasingly multicultural Toronto having shot past its downriver rival. This was only the most easily observed demographic change. Proportionally greater transformations were seen in cities like Vaughan, ON. Located north of Toronto, Vaughan was a small town until the late 20th century, when it leapt from fewer than 16,000 in 1961 to 182,000 in 2001 (and it has nearly doubled since then). Most of that growth came from Italian and Jewish post-WWII immigration which, combined with immigrants from other sources, made it one of the fastest growing centres in Canada: the English Canadian population in Vaughan is, as a consequence, almost insignificantly small. Similar patterns can be seen in suburban settings like Vancouver's Richmond and Surrey, where growth rates have outstripped all other centres in Canada in the last decade or more.

Some rural areas enjoyed growth spurts in the post-WWII period. In the 1960s young American men and women fled to Canada to avoid being drafted into the United States Army for duty in the Vietnam War. Especially large nodes were established in British Columbia's Kootenays, in the Gulf Islands, and

3. Wing Chung Ng, *The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-80: The Pursuit of Identity and Power* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1999).

along the Sunshine Coast. Others followed, including **counter culture**, back-to-the-land advocates who were more pulled than pushed into Canada (see Section 9.16). At around the same time, Indo-Canadians coupled suburban living with **exurban** and rural agriculture, becoming a dominant feature in British Columbia's farming sector. Hispanic immigrants followed a similar trajectory, particularly in regions that were linked with strong farming settlements immediately south of the border.

African Immigrants

The numbers of Canadians from Africa has been growing rapidly since the 1990s. Urban areas see considerable concentrations drawn from many parts of Africa. One study on the African diaspora in Vancouver indicates that these immigrants consistently experience downward social mobility because their education and skills are often not recognized or valued in Canada. Many are drawn from professional and semi-professional careers in Africa only to find that they must pursue very low status and vulnerable jobs. Access to free farmland is not an option available to this generation of new arrivals nor, because of the diverse sources of African immigration, are social agencies comparable to the Chinese Benevolent Association. Somalians and Nigerians, Sudanese and Mozambicans lack the common set of cultural, political, and economic interests and inclinations to establish what was possible among the more cohesive Guangdonese and Punjabi immigrant communities 100 years ago.[4]

Toward a Cultural Mosaic

Although Canadian society has long been composed of diverse elements, the "two founding nations" narrative prescribed absorption, assimilation, and exclusion as strategies for managing newcomers. The idea of a **cultural mosaic** – as opposed to the American melting pot – would have been anathema to most English and French Canadians before the 1960s. Several developments produced a more inclusive society.

The first of these was purely demographic. Large numbers of Laurier-era immigrants had large numbers of children; immigrant fertility – especially in rural areas – was high. That meant that by 1960 there were at least two generations of growing numbers of what Conservative Prime Minister John Diefenbaker called "hyphenated Canadians." Some were finding their way into post-secondary education – pioneers in their families in this respect – and were critical of narratives they encountered that privileged French and English Canadians. Additionally, incompletely assimilated urban and rural communities now represented significant voting blocks and they could not be treated with condescension by hopeful politicians. The Liberal Party, in particular, was well positioned to take advantage of these changes and did so. Diefenbaker (whose career is surveyed in Section 9.6) occupies an ironic position in this story: a German Canadian, he was critical of "hyphenation", seeing it as a kind of second-class status. So, while he might decry special privileges to any minorities because it served to perpetuate that minority status, a growing chorus of Liberal Party voices called for more **pluralism**. As the party that was most likely in office when post-WWII immigrant families first arrived, the Liberals reaped some benefits at the polls in gratitude. The first Chinese Canadian candidates were Liberals and the party prominently ran Italian and Portuguese Canadian candidates as well.

4. Gillian Crease, *The New African Diaspora in Vancouver: Immigration, Exclusion, and Belonging* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 17.

The changes to the *Immigration Act* in 1967 produced waves of arrivals from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. The vast majority of these **New Canadians** headed to the urban centres, especially the largest five or six cities. After 1971, despite much higher fertility rates in rural Canada, cities continued to grow at a more rapid rate, mostly from new immigration. Typically, newcomers gravitated towards lower-income neighbourhoods where rents were cheap and familiar foods might be obtained. A recent study calls these immigrant nodes within metropolitan areas "arrival cities," landing pads for migrants who, since the 1960s, have been coming by air and not by sea or rail.[5] These immigrants further reinforced the advantages enjoyed by the Liberal Party.

By the 1960s there had occurred, too, a change in popular attitudes. The Nazi **war crime trials** in the late 1940 that revealed the extent of the **Jewish holocaust** under the Hitler regime proved to be a turning point and spurred efforts to develop language around **human rights**. Full citizenship for many groups, however, only came into reach slowly: Canadians of Asian descent got the vote in 1948, the Doukhobors in 1955, and Indigenous men and women in 1960. At about the same time – in the early- to mid-1960s – we see the beginnings of official multiculturalism and inclusivity. The 1963 Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism didn't issue a report until 1969 but its mandate and early claims for the precedence of English and French in Canada catalyzed a reaction among "Third Force" Canadians – Canadians whose ancestry was neither French nor English.

Espousing a new inclusivity was both a political strategy for election day and a way of breaking with the old "duality" of Confederation. The Liberals under Pierre Trudeau were simultaneously building a bilingual and bicultural society while rolling back assimilative requirements for immigrants. Rather than divide the growing immigrant demographic along ideological lines, they reasoned, it might be held together as a Liberal block if its own (various) values were respected. As early as 1969, Trudeau was quoted saying, "For the past 150 years nationalism has been a retrograde idea. By an historic accident Canada has found itself approximately 75 years ahead of the rest of the world in the formation of a multinational state." Practices and rhetoric in the 1970s increasingly reflected these values, and was manifest in the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* of 1982. This movement culminated in the *Multiculturalism Act* of 1988.

None of these changes erased the reality of bias and prejudices that confronts immigrants, but they did create a legal framework in which discrimination might be challenged. Two such challenges came from the Asian community in British Columbia in the 1980s. While Eastern European immigrants to the Prairie West experienced xenophobia and disadvantage in the 20th century, they were not taxed on entry in an attempt to both control their numbers and to generate government revenue. This, of course, was the experience of Chinese immigrants under the Head Tax regime.[6] Nor were any European, American, or African immigrants confronted with special legislation to stop the arrival of their family members and to deter further immigration from their ancestral homeland. This, too, was the experience of the Chinese community under the federal *Chinese Immigration Act* (also called the *Chinese Exclusion Act*) of 1923. And although it is true that some German, Ukrainian, Bulgarian, Turkish, and Italian Canadians were interned as enemies of the state during the two World Wars, these were predominantly select individuals who were outspoken supporters of enemy regimes and very few of them suffered extensive or permanent loss of personal property; nor did these internments constitute a community-wide, round-up based on ethnicity alone. For the Japanese Canadians in World War II, the

5. Doug Saunders, *Arrival City: The Final Migration and Our Next World* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2011).

6. Lisa Rose Mar, *Brokering Belonging: Chinese in Canada's Exclusion Era, 1885-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

situation was starkly different: property was confiscated, auctioned off, and never returned. The entire community, including infants and the elderly, was captured and incarcerated in camps for the duration of the war with Japan; the end of internment brought further barriers to reintegration and the prospect of deportation to Japan (see Section 6.17). Because of these significant, not to say monumental, differences in the experiences of the Japanese and Chinese communities, apologies and compensation were sought from various levels of government from the 1980s on.

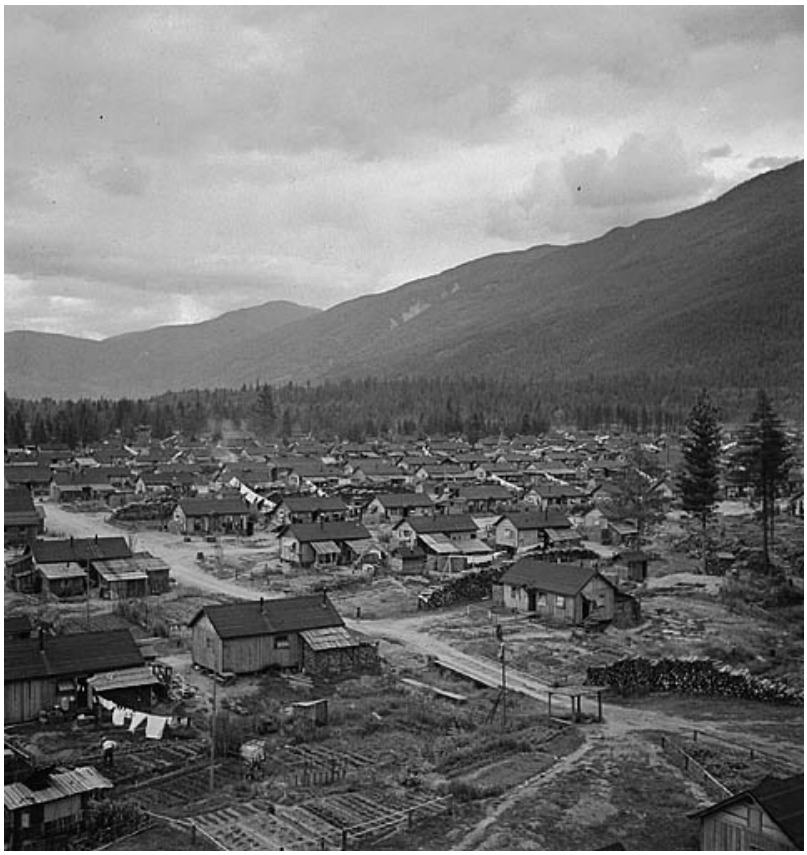


Figure 5.22 Internment camp for Japanese Canadians in British Columbia.

Successive Quebec governments dealt with the issue of multiculturalism differently. Fearing that the majority of immigrants would gravitate towards or even demand schooling in English for their children, the provincial government took steps in the 1960s-1980s to close off that avenue. While a disproportionate share of immigrants to Canada from former French colonies chose to settle in Quebec (especially Montreal), there were also large numbers of immigrants who spoke neither English nor French. These newcomers – described as **allophones** – were a significant demographic and were courted by both the Liberals and the Parti Québécois, especially during the referendums on Quebec sovereignty. (See Sections 9.11 and 12.3 for more on this topic.)

Key Points

- Post-WWII immigration included refugees from war-ravaged Europe and from communist

regimes in Eastern Europe.

- New sources of immigrants were being increasingly tapped, and greater numbers were heading to cities than to the countryside.
- After 1967 much of the focus of new immigration was in suburban centres.
- The increased diversity of the Canadian population created political opportunities; politicians seized on ideals like multiculturalism and recognized long-standing ethnic community grievances.

Media Attributions

- Immigration interpreter aids Hungarian refugee © Canada Dept. of Manpower and Immigration, Library and Archives Canada (PA-181009) No restrictions on use.
- Internment camp for Japanese Canadians © Jack Long, National Film Board of Canada. Photothèque, Library and Archives Canada (PA-142853) is licensed under a Public Domain license

5.12 The Chinese in Canada

Timothy J. Stanley; Faculty of Education; and University of Ottawa

People from China have been in what is today called Canada since before the country existed. Indeed, 50 carpenters and shipwrights from Canton became the first permanent resettlers on Canada's West Coast when the English sea captain John Meares abandoned them at **Nootka Sound** in 1789. Ironically, their efforts at building a fur trading fort and ship consolidated the British claim to the Pacific Coast.



Figure 5.23 Washing gold on the Fraser River, ca. 1875.

Those of Chinese origin have been continuously present in British Columbia since the 1858 Fraser River gold rush, arriving at a time when the territory was a First Nations one and the non-First Nations population was a few hundred. By the 1880s, Chinese (mainly made up of people from Guangdong province in south China) were likely the second largest group in BC after First Nations. However, after Confederation in 1871, the first legislature of the Province of British Columbia ensured that people of European origins would dominate the new Dominion by taking the right to vote away from Chinese and First Nations peoples. At the time, the racialized White minority was less than 20% of the population.

By World War I, at virtually every turn, legislated discrimination surrounded people of Chinese origins living in British Columbia. In addition to being barred from voting, they could not work for provincially incorporated companies, for the government itself, underground in coal mines, or on crown licenses. Indeed, by 1914 the province had enacted 112 pieces of discriminatory legislation against them and other Asians. In the face of this discrimination, many Chinese moved to other provinces, where discrimination was common but not as systemic. They often worked with other Chinese immigrants in labour-intensive settings that required little initial capital. By the 1940s, virtually every town of any size in Canada had a Chinese restaurant or hand laundry.



Figure 5.24 Head Tax receipt issued to Lee Don in 1918. The Chinese Immigration Act of 1923, which largely restricted the immigration of Chinese into Canada, was passed on the same day as Dominion Day, causing Chinese Canadians to close their businesses and boycott Dominion Day celebrations every July 1, referring to the event as "Humiliation Day." [Long Description]

In 1885, John A. Macdonald extended disenfranchisement to the federal level and introduced a discriminatory immigration Head Tax on Chinese workers and their families. By 1904, the Head Tax reached $500, more than an average worker's yearly wage. In 1923, the federal government banned Chinese immigration to Canada outright. Between 1923-1947, when the legislation was repealed, Chinese immigration to Canada effectively ended. The future Governor General Adrienne Clarkson and her family were among the handful of exceptions allowed. This discriminatory legislation prevented Chinese families from being reunited in Canada. In 1941, 95% of the married Chinese men in Canada were still separated from their families. Supposed bachelors in Canada endured years of loneliness while their wives and kin in China were caught in poverty, civil war, and the Japanese invasions of the 1930s and World War II. It was not until the 1980s that the family structure of Chinese-Canadian communities came to resemble that of other Canadian communities. In the 1980s-1990s, China became the most important source country for immigrants to Canada, moving away from the community's historic roots in Guangdong province in south China, to northern China. Today, the Chinese community in Canada includes a majority of people who are immigrants and who speak Mandarin as their ancestral language and who come from professional and entrepreneurial backgrounds in China. At the same time, there are others who are seventh or even eighth generation Canadian whose ancestral languages are various dialects of Cantonese, Taishanese, and Hakka, but whose primary languages are English or French. As such, there are many different Chinese communities in Canada.

Throughout their history in Canada, people of Chinese origins and their Canadian-born children, have fought for full political and democratic rights, and for full participation in Canadian life. They have helped to make Canada the democratic and inclusive society that it is today. They organized

associations and governing institutions to protect their interests and for mutual support. They formed political organizations designed to make China strong so that it could protect their rights in Canada. They fought for inclusion in people's idea of Canada, moving it from one that was originally envisioned as a White, European nation to one that includes all of its peoples equally.

Key Points

- The Chinese presence in British Columbia predates the Fraser River and Cariboo gold rush, but the numbers grew rapidly during that time and increased again in the 1880s.
- Chinese immigration was managed through the imposition of a Head Tax in 1885 and restrictive legislation in 1923.
- The diversity of emigrants from China has produced a complex pattern of distinct immigrant communities in Canada.

Long Descriptions

Figure 5.24 long description: Document issued by the Dominion of Canada's Immigration Branch, Department of the Interior. It is a receipt for payment of the Chinese head tax. The document reads, "Received from Lee Don whose photograph is attached hereto, on the date and at the place hereunder mentioned, the sum of Five Hundred Dollars being the head tax due under the provisions of the Chinese Immigration Act. The above mentioned party who claims to be a native of Lai Kok in the District of [illegible, but possibly] Hoy Ping of the age of 22 years arrived or landed at Victoria, B.C. on the 23rd day of July 1918 [illegible]. The declaration in this case is C.I.4. No. 38726. Dated at Vancouver on 2nd August, 1918."

In the bottom-right corner is a photo of a young Chinese man wearing a suit, a bow tie, and a neutral expression. [Return to Figure 5.24]

Media Attributions

- Chinese man washing gold, ca. 1875 © Library and Archives Canada (PA-125990) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Head Tax Receipt © Wikipedia user Bourquie is licensed under a Public Domain license

5.13 Summary



Figure 5.25 Immigrants in the years between the 1890s and the 1920s often lacked the capital to buy the kind of machinery that would make their work lives easier and some, indeed, rejected the new technologies. Men and women alike worked the fields, ca. 1890.

Across the century that began with the Great War in August 1914, the complexion of Canada changed significantly. And while the transition from a mostly rural to a mostly urban society continued on course, much of that work had been accomplished by 1921. The leading cities continued to lead while a second tier struggled to catch up but urbanism was increasingly the norm. That existing urban settlement, however, added new ethnic complexities. In 1921 the largest concentrations of peoples with roots in eastern and central Europe were in farming communities on the Prairies; in the second half of the twentieth century cities were more likely to be ethnically diverse and complex. People of colour were also on the rise as a distinct and numerically significant demographic. In 2006, nearly half of Toronto's population described themselves as belonging to a "visible minority"; about the same proportion now make that claim in Vancouver's population.[1] It is not true, however, of the rest of Canada. The share of Atlantic Canada's population that is comprised of non-northern European stock is tiny. In Newfoundland and Labrador, for example, the foreign-born constitute fewer than 2% and half that share are people of colour. [2]

The effects of these patterns have been significant. Earlier in this chapter it was pointed out that the immigration waves of the 20th century did not reframe Canada in the same way as the Edwardian

1. Statistics Canada, Visible minority population, by census metropolitan areas (2006 Census), accessed 16 October 2015, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/demo53c-eng.htm.

2. Gillian Crease, *The New African Diaspora in Vancouver: Immigration, Exclusion, and Belonging* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 5.

waves. This is true. But they did recalibrate the country from a dualistic to a pluralistic society. Setting aside for the moment the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada Canada, the non-Native demographic has been transformed. While that non-Indigenous pluralism may not be experienced to the same extent in rural Manitoba or small-town Ontario, and while it might not be highly visible in Prince Rupert or Medicine Hat, its influence is widespread. That is partly because of the enormous ability of our metropolises to control the national conversation; it is in these major cities that the proverbial rubber hits the road.

Canadian attitudes toward immigration have blown hot and cold, often at the same time. Settlers in the West were necessary to laying claim to that territory; at the same time, these settlers proved to be overwhelmingly foreigners, not locally-raised farm men and women from the original provinces. Immigrants of many different cultures were thus essential tools in the building of the nation and yet, at the same time, their foreignness was regarded as problematic. The newest newcomers promoted economic growth and, simultaneously, competed with native-born Canadians for jobs in an industrializing society. Immigrants thus played a critical role in steadying and expanding the Canadian economy while, usually without knowing it, competing against and undermining the power of labour.[3] Even as they offered to lay down their lives for Canada in wartime, the immigrants were treated as not-quite-belonging.

Accounts of immigrants' experiences tend to focus on host community responses. It is for this reason that immigration policies and narratives of prejudice prevail. This is, however, an approach that many historians of immigration have rejected. Their preference is to place greater emphasis on the role played by the immigrant instead. Ethnic community groups, the orchestration of emigration, the development of employment strategies in response to an often prejudicial environment, the extent to which they embraced, rejected, or found unpredicted advantages in programs of assimilation — all of these aspects point to agency.[4] The very language of rights in Canada has been strongly influenced by immigrants and their descendants, and the anti-racist movements of the late 20th century owe much to acts of resistance and survival that were launched by visible minorities from the 1890s on. This is worth underlining because the history of immigration is a complex interplay of the personal, the political, the global, and the local.

Key Terms

allophone: A person whose first language is neither French nor English.

anarchist: An individual who advocates the dismantling of the state and the creation of a structure based on voluntary association and participation.

antimodernism: A retreat from modernization and modernity, often associated with rural and traditional values, spirituality, and social hierarchies.

3. Roderic Beaujot, *Population Change in Canada: The Challenges of Policy Adaptation* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 103.

4. Franca Iacovetta, *The Writing of English Canadian Immigrant History* (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association, Canada's Ethnic Group Series Booklet No.22, 1997), 6.

back-to-the-land: Refers to any of several anti-urban agrarian movements in which city dwellers are encouraged to return to simpler, pre-modern ways of living.

Barr Colony: Located west of Saskatoon covering a massive area that extended to and across what would become the Saskatchewan-Alberta border, the colony was populated by some 2,000 immigrants recruited directly from Britain.

block settlements: An initiative in settling the West with groups drawn from the same ethnicity or creed allocated contiguous lands so as to take advantage of cultures of mutual support.

bootlegging: Unlicensed, typically illegal production of alcohol. Also, in some instances, the sale of the same or of other illicit goods.

Chinatowns: Colloquial term for enclaves of Chinese immigrants. In Canada and primarily in British Columbia, these appeared from 1858 on, with the greatest increase occurring during the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Created by external forces (Euro-Canadian civic authority limiting Chinese property ownership and business licenses to a small area) and internal needs (the concentration of Chinese financial and social institutions).

Chinese Benevolent Association: An organization that coordinated the interests and politics of the various community organizations in Chinatowns, and provided different levels of social support for its members.

context group: In a society comprised of some diversity, refers to the most influential group whose culture other groups seek to adopt or are obliged to assimilate into. See also, reference group.

continuous voyage requirement: Regulation passed by the federal government in 1908 to restrict immigration from India and Japan; required immigrants to reach Canada by means of a single, continuous, unbroken voyage. Would affect long journeys that necessitated a stop in either Japan or Hawaii. Tightened in 1914, leading to the challenge posed by the *Komagata Maru*.

counter culture: A challenge to mainstream culture posed by a group's rejection of dominant values. In the 1960s youth movements and specifically the hippy movement constituted a counter cultural moment.

cultural mosaic: In contrast to the concept of a "melting pot," refers to a multi-ethnic and multicultural society in which differences are permitted to continue, rather than face assimilation into a single typology.

Displaced Persons: Peoples (principally in Europe) dislocated by World War II; refugees.

Doukhobors: An immigrant group comprised of pacifists belonging to a Russian dissident religious movement. Settled first on the Prairies then mostly relocated to British Columbia. Persecuted in the 20th century for their pacifism and their rejection of material culture.

exurban: Refers to residential lands that lay beyond the suburban fringe.

founding nations: In Canada, typically refers to French and British Canadians.

Galicia: Term formerly used to describe an area of what is now part of Ukraine and Poland, which produced many immigrants to Western Canada. Also the name of a part of Spain, which did not.

Gentlemen's Agreement: 1908; also known as the *Lemieux-Hayashi Agreement*; the Japanese government agreed to restrict the number of people leaving Japan for Canada. A loophole allowing wives to join their husbands led to significant use of the "picture bride" system thereafter.

Head Tax: A fee levied by the British Columbian and then the federal government on Chinese immigrants, beginning in 1885 and continuing to 1923.

Home Children: Over 100,000 children who were exported from Britain to Canada between 1869 and the late 1930s. Organized by charitable church organizations to alleviate overcrowding and to provide improved and more healthy alternatives. Stories of abuse abound, although many of the children who were distributed to farms across Canada did enjoy improved circumstances.

human rights: Any rights thought to belong to every person. Enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1947.

Hutterites: Along with the Mennonites and Amish, the Hutterites are an Anabaptist sectarian group; emigrated from Europe in the late 19th and early 20th century, where they faced oppression for their pacifist beliefs and the practice of adult baptism; many arrived in Canada after attempts to settle in the United States. A communal farming community that resists modernization.

Jewish holocaust: The campaign launched in the 1930s and early 1940s by the German National Socialist government aimed at the eradication of the Jewish population in Europe. Estimates of the number killed run to 6 million or more.

Jim Crow Laws: In the United States, post-Civil War racial segregation laws that discriminated against African-Americans; most formal elements dissolved in the 1950s and ’60s in the Civil Rights Movement; was one cause of African-Americans emigrating to Canada in the Laurier and Borden eras.

Mennonites: Along with the Hutterites and Amish, the Mennonites are an Anabaptist sectarian group; emigrated from Europe in the late 19th and early 20th century, where they faced oppression for their pacifist beliefs and the practice of adult baptism; settled in communities in Ontario, in Manitoba and across the Prairies, and in parts of British Columbia. A communal farming community that has resisted modernization, though with less intensity than the Hutterites.

nativist: A movement or individual committed to preserving privileges to established members of a community over newcomers; often translates into anti-immigration attitudes; many nativists are themselves merely earlier immigrants; has nothing to do with Native peoples.

New Canadians: Term used since the late 1960s to describe recent immigrants, particularly those arriving from non-traditional sources like South Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

Nootka Sound: On the west coast of Vancouver Island; traditional territory of the Nootka (Nuu-chah-nulth) First Nation; site of sustained contact between European, Mexican, and American traders and Indigenous peoples, along with a significant population of imported Chinese labourers in the late 18th century.

pacifism: An anti-war position; pacifists typically will not volunteer for and refuse to be conscripted into conflict. Many eastern European religious groups brought pacifist beliefs with them to Western Canada before 1914.

pluralism: In contrast to dualism, supports the concept of a community or state made of diverse parts, particularly as regards aspects like ethnicity, creed, and/or language.

racism: A set of beliefs and practices that involve the creation of largely arbitrary categories of human peoples and assigning to them behaviours, traits, and tendencies that are essentialized — that is, thought to be an inherent and immutable part of who they are. For example, laziness, alcoholism, unbridled libido, personal restraint and self discipline, deceitfulness, superior or inferior intelligence, greed, corruptibility, cowardice, and courage have, at various times, been regarded as unchangeable qualities of one race or another. As an ideology, argues that the assumed existence of these differences justifies — and necessitates — the development of social policies that reduce the impact that might be had by the less desirable races.

reference group: In a society comprised of some diversity, refers to the most influential group whose culture other groups seek to adopt or are obliged to assimilate into. See also context group.

Sinophobic: Fear of China or Chinese.

sojourners: Immigrants whose intent is to work for a period of time, accumulate savings, and return to their home country (or province). Historically associated mostly with Chinese labourers who were brought to Canada under contract to the Canadian Pacific Railway, for example.

Sons of Freedom: Or Freedomites; a radical anarchist faction within the Doukhobor diaspora in Canada;

broke away from the main settlements in Saskatchewan and resettled in southeastern British Columbia; anti-materialist protests and anti-statism led to confrontations with the provincial government in the 1920s, and 1950s-1960s.

split labour market: A labour market in which employers have the option of hiring cheaper labour that is differentiated by race, ethnicity or, possibly, creed. Doing so improves profits and it will embitter relations between the two labour supplies. Used as a theory (split labour market theory) to explain racial divisions between workers.

war brides: At the end of both World Wars, European women — principally British — who married Canadian servicemen and relocated to Canada when their husbands returned home.

war crime trials: Internationally-convened trials to address allegations of crimes against humanity including (but not limited to) murder of civilian populations and enslavement.

Short Answer Exercises

1. Where did most of Canada's immigrants come from? Why?
2. Describe the main features of immigrant waves from the 1880s-1920s.
3. How was agricultural change reflected in the timing of immigrant waves?
4. What preferential standards did individuals like Clifford Sifton apply to immigrant recruitment, and why?
5. What were the main goals of Canada's pro-immigration policy in the period before WWI?
6. What were the principal goals of immigrants to Canada in these years?
7. What was the response of Canadian society to these first waves of immigration?
8. In what ways were racist and nativist reactions to immigration expressed?
9. How did immigrant communities respond to Canadian ambivalence toward immigrants?
10. How did the recruitment of women differ from the recruitment of farming families?
11. What features of immigration changed between the World Wars and after 1945?

Suggested Readings

Chilton, Lisa. "Preventing the Loss of Imported Labour: Trains, Migrants, and the Development of the Canadian West, 1896-1932," in *Place and Replace: Essays on Western Canada,* eds. Adele Perry and Esyllt W. Jones (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2013): 93-106.

Iacovetta, Franca. "From *Contadina* to Woman Worker," in *Such Hardworking People: Italian Immigrants in Postwar Toronto* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992): 77-102.

Lehr, John C. "Settlement: Farm Families and a New Environment," *Community and Frontier: A*

Ukrainian Settlement in the Canadian Parkland (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011): 25-53.

Menzies, Robert. “Race, Reason, and Regulation: British Columbia’s Mass Exile of Chinese ‘Lunatics’ aboard the *Empress of Russia*, 9 February 1935,” *Regulating Lives: Historical Essays on the State, Society, the Individual, and the Law* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press): 196-230.

Chapter 6. The War Years, 1914–45

6.1 Introduction

The years from 1914-1945 are marked by turmoil, what one historical text calls “decades of discord.”[1] Not only was there conflict abroad, there was also tension at home. The workings of parliament and the democratic order in Canada underwent change, some degree of transformation, abuse, and challenge. The culture of Canada — like many western democracies — changed dramatically because of the war. The increasingly interventionist state might be ascribed to many causes but there was certainly a sense that the sacrifices of the Great War entitled all Canadians to greater security and care. There was an interesting bridge to cross here, one that took Canadians from a society of families, through the atomistic society of individuals, to a vision of Canada as a social state. Not *socialist* as yet, but the cost of two World Wars and one enormous economic Depression changed people’s expectations.

Imagine someone just old enough in 1914 to enlist or to replace a militia volunteer at their position in a factory or shipyard. Boys and girls of 15 — born just before the turn of the century — were part of that particular cohort. Some of them saw war; Canada’s substantial mortalities in Europe would ensure that many would never return home. Those who did, however, and assuming they survived the 1918 influenza pandemic as well, would reach their 20th birthday in the year of the Winnipeg General Strike — perhaps while the Canadian Siberian Expeditionary Force was providing a small backstop for the anti-Bolshevik forces in eastern Russia. They’d live through a brief economic depression before the economy began to recover in earnest. Prohibition would come and go, women would enjoy unprecedented and expanding legal rights, and then, just as their work lives were getting well underway, the worst economic downturn in the history of capitalism would hit them. The whole of the 1930s — this cohort’s own 30s — would see the economic advances of the pre-war years and what recovery there was in the 1920s blow away in dust. If they weren’t married before 1929, they were less likely to marry in the next decade than any generation of 30-somethings in Canadian history. If they were too young to fight in the Great War they might well prove too old to fight in the Second World War. From adolescents to middle-aged adults, the Canada they knew was almost constantly in a state of crisis.

Does this generation matter? Given the number of young immigrant couples who arrived between 1891 and 1911, they certainly do. The birth rate — a pre-WWI baby boom — created a generation of Canadians that was too young to know the certainties of the Victorian era, too young to know a Canada that wasn’t already ethnically diverse, and old enough to grow both cautious of and eager for, change.

Learning Objectives

- Explain and describe Canada’s involvement in the two World Wars.

1. John Herd Thompson with Allen Seager, *Canada, 1922-1939: Decades of Discord* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986).

- Assess the impact of both wars on Canadian society and economy.
- Describe the domestic social, economic, and political changes that took place between 1914 and 1945.
- Account for and list the significant changes in the status of women in this period.
- Outline the experience of Japanese-Canadians and Indigenous people in wartime.

6.2 Borden vs. Borden



Figure 6.1 The Bordens at sea, 1912.

While Macdonald took Canada to war in its own territory and allowed a party of adventurers to join the Nile Campaign, and while Laurier was Canada's first PM in global wartime, the commitment involved and the investment of resources in Red River, Saskatchewan, or in Africa, was insignificant compared to what followed in 1914-18. The toll on lives was much greater as well.

So, too, was its impact on Canadian political culture. When Robert Borden took on the role of Prime Minister after the 1911 election, he was a sharp contrast with his predecessor in at least one regard: he was not a compromiser. Speaking to an election gathering in Winnipeg in September 1911, he articulated his position on freer trade with the United States: "I am absolutely opposed to reciprocity and if the West were prepared to make me Prime Minister tomorrow, if I would support that policy, I would not do it." Reciprocity, he claimed, would not only weaken Canadian industry and the Dominion's economy as a whole; it would lead to American annexation and the loss of a whole way of life. It wasn't just a trade deal, as far as Borden was concerned it was a catastrophe.

Many of the other things Borden believed in were comparably solid and unflinching. Before 1916, there was little to suggest that he supported women's suffrage, even though his wife, Laura Bond (1861-1940), was the President of the Local Council of Women of Halifax, a pro-suffrage organization. There's even less to indicate that he sought prohibition of liquor, despite — or perhaps because of — the strident teetotalism of Minister of Militia Sam Hughes. Borden was an imperialist throughout his career and his party's position on the *Naval Service Bill* was very clear: he would rather build up the British Navy than sponsor a Canadian "tinpot navy." And, significantly, when the war started he was staunchly opposed to conscription.

But, and this is where he gets interesting, it was Borden who challenged Canada's subordinate role in the Empire and paved the way to full-blown autonomy in the 1920s and '30s. It was also Borden who gave women the vote (albeit under peculiar circumstances and in a tremendously cynical way). It was Borden who forged links with Liberals to create a Union Government in wartime. It was Borden who brought in prohibition and it was Borden who introduced conscription. The ways in which he achieved his goals have been routinely condemned by historians but the fact remains that Borden — unlike some politicians of the era — demonstrated a profound willingness to change direction.

Key Points

- Robert Borden's term as prime minister witnessed extensive challenges to deeply entrenched policy positions and social attitudes.

Media Attributions

- Rt. Hon. and Mrs. Robert L. Borden aboard S.S. ROYAL GEORGE en route to England © Library and Archives Canada (C-017778) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.3 The Great War



Figure 6.2 "Are we Afraid? NO!" A 1915 cartoon captures the spirit of the Imperial war and the Canadian Imperialists' view of the larger world. [Long Description]

Insofar as there is any truth to the old line that generals are always ready to fight the last war, the Boer War had a disastrous influence on Canada — as well as on Britain. The idea that a 20th century campaign in Europe could be conducted with cavalry, with glory, and with few casualties was to prove a nonsense. The martial spirit that was inspired by the adventures of Sam Steele and his peers in 1899-1900 paired up with 19th century enthusiasms for **muscular Christianity** to produce a decade of **jingoism**.

These passions had social consequences. Fears of racial degeneration and the weakening of industrial workers by poor conditions and suboptimal diets created room for a perceived crisis in national readiness. It is no coincidence that this was the era that produced the Boy Scout (or Scouting) movement under the leadership of a British officer and veteran of the South Africa campaigns, Robert Baden-Powell. Self-discipline, child discipline, and military-like organization became more widely valued and promoted across Canadian society, even in Quebec, where cadet training enjoyed particular popularity.[1] There was resistance to these attitudes — the Industrial Workers of the World (see Section 3.6) declared paramilitary organizations, including the Boy Scouts, anathema. And the persistent division between francophones and anglophones over the issues of imperialism and nationalism (see Section 4.5) had the potential to turn further international conflicts into a national disaster. Beginning in 1870 at Red River, through the North-West Rebellion and the Boer War, taking up arms meant straining the very fabric of the Canadian project. What was to come in 1914 would test it further still.

1. Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 5th edition (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2007), 123.

The Imperial War Effort

Economic and imperial tensions between Germany and its chief competitors — France and Britain — produced a spider's web of alliances and promises that entwined almost every nation in Europe and a few in Asia as well. The Triple Alliance (Germany, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Italy) was balanced off by the Triple Entente (France, Britain, and Russia). An attack against one member would result in the other partners defending its interests. There were also secondary alliances, such as Britain's with Belgium. So long as fear of the **balance of power** was greater than enthusiasm for war, peace would hold. In the meantime, it was easy to imagine someone making a misstep.

This happened on 28 June 1914 when the Austrian Archduke, Franz Ferdinand, was assassinated by a Serbian nationalist, Gavrilo Princip. A bubbling crisis in the Balkans (coveted by Austria, protected by Russia) erupted, and by 4 August all the major powers in Europe were at war. The bullet that Princip put into the Archduke, however, was only a proximate cause. There were many others involved and historians continue to debate which were most important. For Canada in the summer of 1914, only one catalyst existed: Britain was at war, so Canada was as well.

A great many Canadians were thrilled. The build up to the war had been ongoing for nearly two decades and marginal wars had been fought around the colonial edges of Africa and Asia. A continental war would settle the issue of imperial dominance once and for all and would put paid to further colonial sideshows. What is more, the economy in Canada had started to sour in 1912 and war was reckoned to be good for business. While Nationalists in Quebec might decry Canada's involvement, constitutionally there was no question that Britain's decision to go to war made the choice for the Dominion as well.



Figure 6.3 It's all a great adventure until you get to the trenches. Enthusiastic crowds turn out to see troops depart Hamilton in 1914. Few likely suspected that this was going to be a war of attrition and not glory.

Was Canada ready? The *Naval Services Act* that brought Laurier's defeat in 1911 was scrapped after the election, and any plans for a Canadian Navy went with it. Worse, Borden's effort to secure $35 million to pay for the construction of three dreadnought-class warships was blocked in the Senate. Now Canada had neither a Navy nor could it reasonably claim to have contributed to building up Britain's. The militia was in better shape. In 1898 it had a budget of only $1.6 million, a budget that, under

Laurier, increased to $7 million. Then, on the eve of war, Borden raised it to $11 million.[2] There were slightly more than 74,000 men in the various regiments but only 3,110 in the permanent force. This was still an amateur's army, not a professional standing army, but the Canadian offer to Britain of 25,000 men under arms was regarded as a bold demonstration of imperial loyalty. Borden's administration took the exceptional step of introducing the *War Measures Act, 1914*, which extended wide-reaching powers to the federal government for the duration of the war. These included the ability to suspend civil rights and thus enabled the arbitrary internment of "enemy aliens." It was not, however, meant to extend the life of the government, although Borden would use the circumstances of war to avoid going back to the polls in 1916.

The war, of course, did not play out according to the bombastic script provided by Imperialists. A few quick advances in 1914 were followed by stalemates along Germany's western and eastern frontiers. The German attempt to outflank French troops by marching through Belgium brought British forces into play in northwestern Europe. By the spring of 1915, German forces were quite literally entrenched. The **Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF)** arrived just in time — in March 1915 — to see the beginnings of an unprecedented war of attrition. A month later, the Germans deployed chemical weapons for the first time and Canadians were among the regiments hit hardest at Ypres. From that moment until the end of the war, the Western Front moved one way and then the other, but without any real result other than massive mortalities.

The conditions that led to the bloodbath that was the Western Front, were many. The terrain was impenetrable: irrigation and drainage dykes in the Low Countries gave away under shelling, burst their banks, and turned the farm fields to gumbo. Canadian equipment — particularly the Ross Rifle — was inadequate and came in for a great deal of criticism. An innovation that made ranching possible across the Canadian Prairies — barbed wire — was now deployed against Canadian farm boys (and they used it as well against the enemy). Cavalry charges were, of course, out of the question but aerial bombardment wasn't. The American Wright Brothers were quick to weaponize and market their flying invention to each European state and both sides of the war now had to face machine guns on the ground and in the air. The Germans, stretched to their limit on two fronts, relied on technology to make up the difference: hence their decision to use banned chemical gasses as early as 1915.

Chance made matters worse. The weather didn't cooperate: it was an outstandingly wet, cold, and miserable couple of years. The trenches in which the Entente forces found themselves pinned were saturated with rain and field water; muddy collapses and horrible deaths were inevitable. Although ceasefires allowed for some casualties and mortalities to be recovered, shelling reduced many soldiers to ground meat. Latrine facilities were severely wanting; hygiene was dreadful and infection was rampant. "Trenchfoot" plagued soldiers whose boots were far from waterproof. Well-fed rats of legendary size terrorized the troops. Mental health was not a consideration at the time and attempts to run away — to desert — were typically met with a firing squad. This was grisly stuff and it would produce a great many physically and psychologically maimed veterans.

2. Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 5th edition (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2007), 127.



Figure 6.4 "The Battle of Vimy Ridge" was painted by the Canadian war artist, Richard Jack (1866–1952). Although, for the first time, motion pictures brought combat to screens, oils on large canvases were still a compelling vision of the first total war.

Canadian regiments accomplished a great deal against tremendous odds. The Ypres campaign hardened troops and tested officers. Canadian leaders resisted British attempts to take over their regiments and developed an effective strategy of practice and rehearsal that led to unexpected victories. The most noteworthy was at Vimy Ridge in the northeast of France. The hilltop offered the German artillery an ideal cover for shelling Entente positions and, of course, the best view of their enemies in this lowland terrain. The French Army had sustained astronomical casualties in their attempts to capture Vimy; it is reckoned that in excess of 150,000 French troops died on this one battleground. The British tried their hand at it from February to May 1916 under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir Julian Byng (1862-1935), with little success. At the end of the British assault, Byng took command of the Canadian Corps. (His connection with the CEF was one reason why Byng was subsequently made Canada's governor general.)

Byng's earlier experiences were valuable here and his tactics did much to shape this important chapter in Canadian military history.



Figure 6.5 The Canadians sharpened their pre-assault plans using scale models of the battlefields like this one of the trenches northwest of Lens, autumn 1918. The small sign in the middle indicates "No Man's Land."

Byng brought together — for the first time — the four Canadian divisions. Nearly 100,000 Canadians were involved in the campaign, aided by British artillery units. A year of planning, punctuated with vicious trench-raids, produced an assault that began on the 9th of April 1917 and was complete on the 12th. The Canadians had accomplished what the French and the British could not. To be fair, the Canadians would not have overcome the German obstacles without the hard-won intelligence gathered by the earlier assaults. But the battle resonated at the time as a Canadian victory and the adage began to circulate soon thereafter that Canada went up the ridge a colony and came down a nation.

In August 1918, Canadian troops were once again involved in a major push, but the course of the war was already decided. The Americans entered the fray as the Canadians were taking Vimy; by the time the Entente turned its guns on German positions east of Amiens, there were half a million fresh American troops in the field. Demoralized, exhausted, and fooled into thinking an attack was not coming, the German troops were overrun by a tightly organized Canadian attack that was part of another, larger venture involving at least four nations. The effect was to crack German resolve, which ultimately led to the Armistice of 11 November 1918, after which treaty negotiations got underway. The impact of peace and the Treaty of Versailles on Germany goes beyond the purview of this narrative but it is important to note that it embittered a great many and set the stage for political and social unrest that sharpened an appetite for further war a generation later.

Key Points

- The expectation on the eve of the Great War was that it would be brief and that Canada would enter on the side of Britain without debate.

- Some Canadians welcomed the outbreak of war insofar as it might stimulate the economy and reduce the likelihood of further colonial wars.
- Most politicians and many military leaders badly misunderstood the kind of war with which they were faced. As a result, mortality rates were shockingly high.
- Canadian victories at Vimy Ridge and Amiens contributed to the growth of national self-confidence and a post-Imperial identity.

Long Descriptions

Figure 6.2 long description: Cartoon from 1915. Depicts the Union Jack with Britain and different British territories personified as bulldogs. Britain, the largest bulldog, stands in the centre of the Union Jack, wearing a spiked collar and standing at alert. Five smaller bulldogs, labelled Australia, Canada, India, South Africa, and New Zealand, stand at the edges of the flag, looking out, on the alert. The cartoon is captioned “Are we afraid? NO!” [Return to Figure 6.2]

Media Attributions

- Are we Afraid? NO! (cartoon) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Off to the front, World War I (WWI) soldiers leaving Hamilton, Ont. from Grand Trunk Railway (G.T.R.). Stuart St. Station © Andrew Merrilees, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3277194) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Model reproduction of German lines © Canada Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3397952) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.4 Assessing Canada's War



Figure 6.6 Beginning in the 1920s, "cenotaphs" began to crop up across Canada to memorialize the fallen of the Great War. Vancouver, ca. 1924.

The British historian, Arthur Marwick, contributed to the study of 20th century war a model for assessing its impact. "Total war," in military terms meant targeting factories and food production, and not just enemy armies. It meant, in that regard, that civilians who were supporting the enemy were legitimate targets as well. This was a change in military practice, especially in terms of the scale of casualties and damage that industrialized forces could inflict. Marwick took this understanding of war and modified it so that "total" described the engagement of the whole nation in the conflict.[1] Whether manifest in rationing, industrial employment, limitations on civil freedoms, or its impact on culture, 20th century wars have swept along far more than armies and munitions plants, even in Canada.

Marwick's Principle looked at the changes wrought by war and measured them in four ways. First, there is what he called the extent of destruction involved**,** which can include the burning out of factory machines, the loss of productive capacity, and very definitely the loss of human life and ability. Second, there is the level of "participation" in a wartime society; Marwick pointed to instances where participation increases (women working in factories, getting the vote) and where it decreases (foreign-born Canadians thrown into internment camps), although he mainly shows how going through that change in participation levels can result in post-war changes in engagement, too. Third, and this pertains very definitely to the enormity of the human waste involved in industrialized warfare, there is the psychological impact, including the ways in which it challenges pre-war ways of thinking. Finally, there is war as a "test." Total war is a crucible through which armies and ideas, systems, and values pass. Some survive intact, others prove wanting and are either reformed or they are allowed to die away. How did Canada fare in its first Total War?

1. Arthur Marwick, *Britain in the Century of Total War* (London: Little, Brown, 1968).

Destruction and Loss

61,000 Canadians dead. Over 170,000 wounded. Newfoundland contributed an additional 1,305 dead and still more casualties. Twenty Canadians were shot by firing squads for the crime of desertion and another 180 condemned men were spared execution. There wasn't much glory in this conflict, although Canadians seized upon the victories at Vimy and Passchendaele as symbols of national maturation, a culture of toughness, and indefatigable resolve. Certainly, the armed forces were forced to grow up. The militia-based model that Sam Hughes championed from 1911 to 1916 gave way to a more professional version. Borden promised grateful Britain 25,000 troops in the summer of 1914; by Armistice there were more than 600,000 men and women enlisted.

The fact that this took place under the auspices of the *War Measures Act* is significant. Canada went to war to defend liberal democratic values against what was characterized as a dictatorial Prussian militarism and, along the way, Ottawa stripped civil liberties from many, directed the militarizing of much of the economy, and introduced compulsory service. Also, income tax was introduced as a "temporary measure." Elements of the growing role of the state could be seen, as well, in the economy as Canada's modest demand-led economy gave way to a command-led model, in which the state became the principal client of manufacturing. Able to influence the flow of raw materials and to specify the character of output, Ottawa built up what it regarded as the essential sectors while implicitly starving others.

There was, by war's end, a Royal Canadian Navy (albeit a very small one). Canadian fighter pilots distinguished themselves in the air — most notably William "Billy" Bishop (with 72 victories) and Raymond Collishaw (with 60) — and thereby established the foundations of a Canadian Air Force. By 1918, errors made by British leaders in London and in the field also contributed to a stronger sense of a Canadian identity.

Participation

The trade depression that began in 1912 showed no sign of recovery by the end of 1914. Had the war been as brief as touted in the press and by politicians, the economy would have hardly felt its impact. Through 1915, however, demand for production increased, soldiers in the CEF created job opportunities as they departed for the Western Front. By 1916 the search for workers meant that women, in particular, were finding employment in factories and offices.

Internment camps for "enemy aliens" were used to contain recent immigrants whose loyalties were questioned by xenophobic Canadians. Some were opened in the Rocky Mountains, where internees spent the war building much of the campsite infrastructure of the national parks.[2] Given that most of the internees were drawn from a population that had been in Canada less than twenty years, their detention can be seen as an expression of nativism and an indication of just how thin the Canadian welcome mat really was.

Indigenous people's participation in the war has also attracted comment. As Scott Sheffield writes, "First Nations that historically honoured warriors viewed the conflict as an opportunity to reinvigorate

2. Bill Waiser, *Park Prisoners: The Untold Story of Western Canada's National Parks, 1915-1946* (Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1995).

such traditions." (See Section 6.12 below.) Indigenous Canadians were welcomed into the ranks and some 200 Chinese Canadians volunteered and were accepted for service. In sharp contrast, African Canadians were not at first permitted to serve (although later they would form the No. 2 Construction Battalion).

Test

Voluntarism was possibly the most profoundly polarizing issue for Canada from 1914-1918. Initial enthusiasm saw Borden's request for 25,000 troops surpassed by another 10,000 volunteers. As a proportion, English Canada was over represented. Given the long-standing, inward-looking nationalism of Quebec's most prominent statesmen, English-Canadians assumed that French-Canadians generally were cool on the war. There was some measure of truth to this. While many English-Canadians could be rallied, from time to time, with calls for loyal support of the Imperial homeland, French-Canadians were typically less enthusiastic (Laurier's "ready, aye ready" notwithstanding). Nor did French-Canadians have a profound affection for France. One hundred and fifty years had passed since the Conquest and more than a century since the French Revolution. The status of the Catholic Church and clergy in France was very different from its position in Quebec, something that Canadien priests had been pointing out for the whole of the 19th century. The whole ultramontanist movement in Quebec was a rebuke to French secularism. German attacks on France, therefore, did not automatically strike a deep chord of sympathy in Quebec.

The strong *nationaliste* strain in Quebec was opposed to supporting Britain's war. What's more, it could point to intolerance in Ontario as something worth fighting that didn't entail going overseas. Ontario introduced severe limits on French-language instruction in 1912-1913 with **Regulation 17**. Borden managed to deflect responsibility to the provincial level where even the Irish Catholic bishop was siding with the Anglo-Protestants to end French instruction. French-Canadians were outraged and the Quebec MPs in Borden's caucus pleaded with him to intervene. Huge delegations descended on Ottawa to the same end. Borden could reasonably (and probably correctly) claim that the constitution was clear that education was a provincial matter. What's more, Laurier's experience with Manitoba could be invoked: attempting disallowance was likely to be fruitless. But Laurier's actions suggested, too, that there was room to pursue negotiation and to plead for some symbolic act of generosity from the provincial legislature in Queen's Park. The Franco-Ontarian minority was alienated from the Tories as a result of Borden's inaction but their votes counted for little.

Regulation 17 had wider consequences, though. Had the issue been resolved by August 1914, Regulation 17 might have been of little consequence, but it festered well into 1915 and kept crawling out of its grave in the 1920s. It turned feeling in Quebec very sharply against Ontario. Québecois disinterest in military voluntarism and hostility to conscription may not have been shaped by Regulation 17 but it was certainly scented with it. When, in the course of the Great War, attempts to amend the law met with unyielding resistance from Anglo-Canadians, Henri Bourassa decried the "Prussians of Ontario," a reference to the German enemy. What values, then, would a Québecois volunteer be defending in the CEF? This question was asked by French-Canadians who saw Anglo-Canadian aspirations for autonomy and true national status as bound up in intolerance and assimilationism.

Recruitment efforts in Quebec were a further contributing factor. The province was home to many of

the nation's war industries so there was work to be had and wages to be earned. Recruitment into a volunteer army failed to address that fact. What's more, Hughes' efforts in Quebec were notoriously clumsy. There was only one French-speaking battalion — the 22nd (aka: the *Vingt-Deux* or "Van Doos") — and precious few Francophone commanding officers. Hughes would trot out the usual paraphernalia of imperial patriotism but "Red tunics and the Union Jack worked in Orillia, not Victoriaville."[3]

Setting all that aside, English-Canadian voluntarism deserves a second look. The two decades before the war witnessed huge migrations of British men and women to all parts of Canada. They were vastly over-represented in the ranks of volunteers in 1914-16, just as they are in the list of "Canadian" Victoria Crosses. It goes some distance to explain why British Columbia – with only 5% of Canada's population – contributed 10% of its war dead.[4] Once the excitement of August 1914 had dissipated and once it was clear that the "boys" would not be "home by Christmas," Canadian-born English-Canadians coast-to-coast demonstrated a level of voluntarism that was roughly comparable to that of French-Canadians. Some could legitimately claim to be part of the essential industries that fed a total war campaign: farming, factories, and transport. Maritimers — who had few factories on which the war effort depended — were particularly unwilling to join up, which may suggest that deeper Canadian roots were hardest to pull up. English-Canadians who resolved not to be drawn into the war were often targeted as cowards. Shaming campaigns were part of the recruiters' arsenal and there were instances where white feathers — symbols of cowardice — were handed out by young women to men of service age who were reluctant to join up. None of this — not the statistics nor the campaigns of shame — served to diminish attacks in the press on French-Canadian "disloyalty." With an army of half a million, and no more than 13,000 of them francophones, the issue was bound to attract attention and it poisoned relations between Anglo- and Franco-Canadians for decades.

3. Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 5th edition (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2007), 123.

4. John Douglas Belshaw, *Becoming British Columbia: A Population History* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 172.



Figure 6.7A Women from Africville walk towards Halifax on Campbell Road, days after the explosion of the SS Mont Blanc in Halifax harbour on 6 December 1917.



Figure 6.7B The explosion of the SS Mont Blanc in Halifax Harbour on 6 December 1917, cost 2,000 lives and 10,000 injuries. The ship was carrying munitions when struck at low speed by another vessel, caught fire, and produced the largest pre-nuclear explosion on record. Windows throughout the city were blown out and much of the centre of Halifax was levelled.

War profiteering was another divisive feature of the war years. Corruption was rife. It dogged the career of Sam Hughes, whose teetotal morality was in sharp contrast to a caustic and bullying approach to colleagues and staff. His defense of the Ross Rifle — fine for target shooting but useless if fired repeatedly — was more about Hughes' preference for Canadian manufacturers than it was for military utility. Hughes followed a well-documented practice of securing posts and contracts for friends and families. His son-in-law was one beneficiary but the worst revelations came in the munitions scandals of 1916. These were errors on which the opposition and the labour movement both pounced. In November 1916 Borden obtained Hughes' resignation.

Psychology

Comparing levels of deference from one generation to the next is always fraught with problems. The environments in which one group defers to another change and so the sentiment may no longer be relevant. Having said that, several changes in the mindset of Canadians took place between the Edwardian years of Laurier and the roaring twenties.

Canadians' understanding of the state was profoundly changed by the war. The *War Measures Act* enabled far more direct and widespread intervention by Ottawa than had been the case before.

Some of this was decidedly temporary but it exposed the possibility of state participation in the economy and in social welfare. At the end of the war Ottawa owed $2 billion — almost all of it to Canadians who had purchased **Victory Bonds**. The beginnings of the welfare state could be seen in 1918; in the 1920s veterans' widows and veterans themselves would receive some state monies while, at the same time, mothers' allowances made an appearance.



Figure 6.8 John McCrae's poem was first published in December 1915 and, to use a 21st century phrase anachronistically, it went viral almost immediately thereafter. Here, two lines are deployed in the service of Victory Bonds. [Long Description]

Canadian anticlericalism — the belief that the church and state should be kept at arm's length — was always tempered by a loyalty to the congregation, sect, denomination, and chapel. Religious affiliation was, to Victorians and Edwardians, as powerful a representational quality as team sports would be in the late 20th century (see Sections 10.6, 10.16, 10.17). Religion provided a sense of belonging and community, and a common language of hymns and rituals. The Great War tested to destruction the faith of a great many Canadians (and others) and opened the possibility of seeking spiritual succour through newer and more dynamic evangelical creeds. The rising popularity of spiritualism before the war picked up momentum and delivered into the 1920s a generation that was prepared to explore eastern religions, other faiths, and the possibility of communication with spirits.[5] William Lyon Mackenzie King, Canadians learned long after his death, was but one of many highly-placed Canadians who hoped that spiritual **mediums** could do for the dead what the telephone did for terrestrial voices (see "Mackenzie King's Secret Life" in Section 9.5).

Patriarchal values did not collapse but they were sorely challenged. Women's increased economic independence, their experience of employed work in factories (and in the public sphere generally during the war) all contribute to the creation of what historian Veronica Strong-Boag describes as girls and women of the "new day."[6] The war inflated the incidence of widowhood in the **interwar** years;

5. For one account of the European response, see Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

6. Veronica Strong-Boag, *The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1988).

single mothers were commonplace in a way that they had not been in Laurier's day. This meant, of course, that orphanhood — the loss of at least one parent — was more widely experienced by Canadians whose fathers perished in combat or at sea. It is true that the business world was effectively closed to women and that the doors of politics were open only a crack, but the need to find work and the need to find workers in the growing economy of the 1920s was bound to change women's experiences and challenge the pre-war beliefs about the *pater familias.*

The war changed labour's relationship with elites in several countries. In Russia, this produced revolutionary communism. Western nations had good reason to fear that it would not end there. In the Victorian era, Canadian militia units were dominated by affluent young men who could afford the time to play soldier. The trenches of France and Belgium, however, were filled with farm boys and wage-labourers whose lives were sacrificed wholesale. The commander of the Canadian corps at Passchendaele, Sir Arthur Currie, demonstrated a chillingly accurate assessment of what victory would cost when he estimated that it would require 16,000 Canadian lives; he overestimated by 346. The scale of sacrifice demanded of this new kind of conflict threw into question class assumptions that had evolved through the industrial revolution. For some, a more democratic society — in the sense of one that was less hierarchical and automatically deferential — was what was called for. For others, nothing short of a social and political revolution was in order. Farmers, long the bedrock of Canadian political parties, broke with the Liberals and Conservatives and formed their own parties (see Section 7.9).

If the institutions of state, church, household, and industrial capitalism were challenged in ways that are sometimes difficult to measure, the tone of Canada's relationship with Britain was much more visible. From Borden's demand for greater input in war planning, through the Imperial War Cabinet, the *Balfour Declaration* of 1926, and the *Statute of Westminster, 1931*, the trend toward greater national autonomy and independence was clear. It is difficult to imagine Laurier in 1906 insisting, as Mackenzie King could in 1926, that Canada was equal in status with Britain. Nor would Mackenzie King declare in 1922, as Laurier did a mere decade earlier, that the call to support Britain in the Chanak Crisis found Canada "ready, aye, ready." Canadian affection for Britain — strong, weak, and mixed — may not have changed but deference to Mother England was no longer an easy pill for any but the most ardent Imperialist to swallow.

The Peace Dividend

The writer Lucy Maud Montgomery was troubled by the changes she saw taking place in Canadian society as the war marched on. On 17 June 1916 she wrote, "Our old world is passed away forever — and I fear that those of us who have lived half our span therein will never feel wholly at home in the new."[7] Canada was in many ways changed by the war. Rank British imperialism gave way to a distinctive Canadian nationalism; women's roles changed as they moved into the public sphere and into the polling stations; technology advanced dramatically and, with it, war became something in which there was little glory, only gore.

Borden's experience charts some of the nation's changes. An imperialist at the start of the war, he emerged a nationalist. His quiet frustration with British commanders and the condescension they displayed toward the Canadian troops was certainly a factor. Westminster's implicit belief that the

7. Quoted in Mary Henley Rubio, *Lucy Maud Montgomery: The Gift of Wings* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 2011), 204.

colonies should contribute resources and men without strings attached was bearable when Britain looked effective and honourable. Thereafter — from 1916, at any rate — Borden became an increasingly vocal advocate for Canada's place at the table of nations. In the spring of 1917, British Prime Minister David Lloyd George responded to Canadian complaints by including the Dominions (Newfoundland, Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand) in the Imperial War Cabinet. Canada joined in the peace negotiations in Paris, although its presence was largely for show. Nevertheless, it was an important step along a road to greater autonomy, as was Borden's successful plea to have Canada eligible for election to the council of the **League of Nations**.[8] While this was unfolding, Borden embraced women's suffrage, deficit spending, an interventionist role for government, and prohibition. These were extraordinary moves taken by a Conservative PM from whom one might not have imagined possible a decade earlier.

Borden retired from office undefeated in 1920. Laurier died in office the year before. Both the Liberal and Conservative parties were thereafter headed by men who were much younger and whose feet were planted firmly in the 20th century. For two decades, however, Laurier and Borden had wrestled, in their own ways, with issues of nationalism and imperialism. The former was inclined to a *nationaliste* perspective but pronounced strongly (sometimes strategically) on the side of imperialism. The latter was a dyed-in-the-wool imperialist who became a champion of Canada as an autonomous nation. As the "short 20th century" opened and the modern era got more fully underway, the goalposts of Victorian and Edwardian Canada were not merely moved — they disappeared from view.

Key Points

- The concept of "total war" encourages us to examine the various levels at which Canada experienced and was changed by the Great War.
- Mortality rates ran to more than 61,000 Canadians and Newfoundlanders.
- The federal state became more interventionist and directly involved in the economy.
- The war divided Canadian society in many ways but especially on the issue of conscription.
- Many values and relationships that were seemingly permanent before 1914 turned out to be changeable and, in some cases, disposable.

Long Descriptions

Figure 6.8 long description: Poster of a soldier standing in a poppy field, holding his helmet and looking at a white cross poking out of the flowers. He wears a tan uniform and has a rifle strapped to his back. In the sky, it says "If ye break faith—we shall not sleep." The bottom of the poster says "Buy Victory Bonds." [Return to Figure 6.8]

8. The United States was prevailed upon by Britain to recognize the Dominions as separate entities from the Imperial centre, possibly the most significant symbolic gesture of all.

Media Attributions

- Halifax Explosion Aftermath © Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, LC-B2- 4444-4 [P&P] is licensed under a Public Domain license
- If Ye Break Faith—Victory bonds poster © Frank Lucien Nicolet, Department of National Defence is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.5 Suffrage and Prohibition

Women's Suffrage

Objections to women having the vote — federally, provincially, and municipally — were many. Keeping in mind that the right to vote was closely tied in the 19th century to property ownership and that women's legal right to own property was significantly circumscribed, one of two changes needed to take place in Canadian society. Women had to have improved access to property ownership and/or that requirement had to be mitigated, if not eliminated. In the 1870s, working men's campaigns for the vote did much to reduce the strength of the property issue but it was not eliminated entirely. At the municipal level, female property owners (who were, thus, civic taxpayers) started gaining the vote in the mid-19th century. Although the laws permitted these women to vote, the culture — which viewed landownership through a patriarchal lens — didn't help.[1] The women's franchise stalled at this point, needing another issue to activate it as a movement.

Enthusiasm for women's suffrage in the post-Confederation era was catalyzed by experiences of women in pro-temperance organizations (see Section 7.5). By 1900, the early feminists were campaigning on two fronts: the end of alcohol sales and the start of female enfranchisement. Increasingly at the turn of the century, the movement was influenced by what many middle- and upper-class women regarded as the pernicious effect on Canadian society of new immigrants. Many newcomers were raised in cultures where consuming alcohol did not carry the moral stigma that was often found in Anglo-Celtic societies. What is more, many of the newcomers were quickly made into property-owners and that meant that the men among them enjoyed electoral rights that were not available to French- and English-Canadian women whose family roots perhaps ran very deep in Canada. Increasingly, maternal feminists (including Nellie McClung) framed the suffrage issue in nativist terms: Canadian society faced degeneration by foreign arrivals and only Canadian-born women, they argued, could offset that influence.

1. Veronica Strong-Boag, "'The Citizenship Debates': The 1885 Franchise Act," in *Contesting Canadian Citizenship: Historical Readings*, eds. Robert Adamoski, Dorothy E. Chunn and Robert Menzies (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2002): 72-3.



Figure 6.9 Nellie McClung, early 20th century feminist.

There were powerful cultural themes that stood in the way of women getting the vote, too, and these should not be ignored. It was seen as unfeminine by some, immoral by others, and unnecessary by many. In a patriarchal culture with a pronounced division between the private and public sphere, an invitation to women to leave the safety of the former for the (oft-claimed) rough-and-tumble of the latter was to put their very womanhood at risk. Politics, it was claimed, was about moral compromises and if, as the maternal feminists declared, women were the uncompromising moral bedrock of the community, then the two should not mix. Finally, so long as fathers, husbands, brothers, and sons executed their electoral rights responsibly, the democratic interests of women were looked after. To some commentators it seemed unthinkable that a woman would vote differently from her husband and, therefore, her vote would simply duplicate his without changing electoral outcomes. It was, therefore, redundant.

This is where the battle against liquor comes back in. Getting the vote was increasingly seen as the way to achieve prohibition. Husbands and other male relations might not support prohibition and so this was clearly an area where household voting patterns might prove to be starkly different.

The western provinces took the lead in the debate about enfranchising women. Manitoba gave women the right to vote provincially in January 1916; Saskatchewan followed in March, and British Columbia and Alberta in April, as did Ontario. Electoral law at the time meant that the provinces' standards were

imposed on Ottawa too. Borden sought to retrieve control of this situation and to use it to his advantage under the *Wartime Elections Act, 1917*.

The circumstances for and conditions behind this extension of the franchise were both a departure from the tone of the suffrage movement to that point in time and consistent with some of its premises. By 1917 it was clear that voluntarism was not going to be enough to meet Canada's military commitment in Europe. Conscription was the logical next step but Borden's government was loath to impose it on a divided country. Opposition to conscription in Quebec was vocal and there was less and less enthusiasm for it nationwide. As Borden's biographer writes,

> Potential recruits [in 1916] had a choice not open to many in 1914 and early 1915 when unemployment had reached serious levels: there was a very dangerous job available at $1.10 a day in France and another at unprecedented wages in the home-front war economy.[2]

Borden had to act and he had three goals: get a fresh mandate, win on the conscription issue, and manage women's suffrage. Elected in 1911, he should have returned to the polls by 1916. Making the argument that Canada was too busy facing a national emergency to pause for a divisive election, Borden sailed through 1916 and into 1917. He could not, however, unilaterally and without the legitimacy of a new mandate force compulsory enlistment on Canadians. The conscription issue thus forced his hand: he would have to go to the polls.

2. Robert Craig Brown, "BORDEN, Sir ROBERT LAIRD", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 16, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 6 November 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/borden_robert_laird_16E.html



Figure 6.10 The conscription election of 1917 at the front. "A vote against the Government means You are here for life…"

The forces arrayed against conscription — and thus against the Borden government — were extensive. French-Canadians were strongly opposed, most of the Liberal Party saw conscription as Borden's soft underbelly, and immigrants who had achieved citizenship (as British subjects) included many from Germany and Austro-Hungary. Borden (and many feminists) reasoned that immigrants had a vested interest in ensuring that Canada did not send reinforcements to the front. The *Wartime Elections Act* gave the vote not to all women but to some: to women who were related to men serving in the CEF. Borden was calculating that this select group of women would support conscription to provide support for their men abroad. Simultaneously, the *Act* disenfranchised naturalized immigrant Canadians as though they were all enemy aliens. It also allowed soldiers' votes to be assigned to constituencies where they would most help the pro-conscription Conservative cause. This was, without a doubt, the most cynical feature of the new *Elections Act*, and it was used to topple Liberal candidates where anti-conscription sentiment was strong but beatable.

Borden's government, now augmented by a handful of Liberals and recast as a "Union" government, was returned easily. However, the 1917 election soured Québecois voters against the Conservatives for

nearly 70 years; there was nothing left now of the old Cartier-Macdonald pact. Conversely, it solidified Liberal support in Quebec and created a political bedrock for much of the 20th century.

Prohibition

The rhetoric of total war included calls to reduce needless spending on goods like alcohol. Drink, its opponents argued, sapped the ability of workers on the homefront to produce the munitions and battleships needed in the struggle against the Triple Alliance. Opposition to prohibition, moreover, was painted as unpatriotic. "Anyone who will vote in favor of liquor might as well enlist under the Kaiser," claimed one newspaper.[3] Hard liquor was particularly targeted and, despite opposition from organized labour and brewers alike, beer also came under attack. In 1915 Saskatchewan was first to be dry, and plebiscites followed in Alberta and Manitoba the same year. British Columbia held a controversial vote in 1916 and declared itself dry shortly thereafter. In the rest of English-Canada, governments eschewed referenda and simply acted directly on the matter. Quebec brought up the rear of the prohibition wave with legislation that compromised on lighter drinks.

The question of prohibition during wartime was complex. While Canadians at home struggled to obtain hard liquor, soldiers abroad were provided with a daily tot of rum. While women in Canada who had male relatives serving in the trenches could vote on conscription, men in the CEF were barely consulted about provincial prohibition proposals. The move toward prohibition at the provincial level prompted the Union government to respond with prohibition legislation that tackled the movement of liquor between provinces and from out of country. Wine and beer were still available but in the weakest strengths: 2.5% was the maximum amount of alcohol permitted. Stronger drink could be obtained for "medicinal purposes" and for scientific and sacramental uses. Saloons and bars were closed, breweries shut down, and a whole sector of the Canadian economy that had made fortunes since the original wheat boom of the early 19th century, was mothballed. One cannot say that this could only have happened in the context of the Great War — prohibition arrived in the United States in peacetime, after all — but the war effort and the rhetoric and logic of total war certainly contributed to making prohibition a reality. (For more on temperance and prohibition, see Section 7.7.)

Key Points

- Opposition to women's suffrage softened during the Great War.
- Borden's administration saw a way to use women's suffrage to gain a second (delayed) mandate and, simultaneously, a victory on the issue of conscription.
- Women's suffrage led to prohibition during wartime.
- In the case of both suffrage and prohibition, it was provinces in the West that led the way.

3. Quoted in Craig Heron, *Booze: A Distilled History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2003), 178.

Media Attributions

- Nellie McClung, ca. 1914 © Cyril Jessop, Library and Archives Canada (PA-030212) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Propaganda for the Dominion Elections of Canada in France, 1917 © Canada. Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (PA-008158) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.6 The Interwar Years



Figure 6.11 Architectural and clothing fashions changed dramatically in the Interwar Years, reflecting changes in social values and influences arising from ancient civilizations like Babylon and Azteca. This detail is from the ceiling of the Snowdon Theatre in Montreal, 1937.

No one knew, of course, that there would be a second World War. Not in 1918, not even in the mid-1930s. Such a thing was barely conceivable to most people and many nations' leaders did their utmost to avoid another conflict or to ignore the signs of its coming. Three themes dominated public discourse in these years and all had their roots in uncertainty.

To The Finland Station

Revolution in Russia in 1917 was a historic game-changer. In much of the western world in 1912-14, Marxist revolutionary movements were on the rise, their ascent cut off by the outbreak of war. Several factors brought matters to a head in St. Petersburg, the capital of one of Europe's least industrialized nations. The foremost of these was the conduct of the war as a battle between imperial houses, many of which were headed by blood cousins. The inability of the Russian monarchy under the Czar to alleviate famine or entertain gradual political reforms allowed its opponents — led by Vladimir Lenin and the Bolshevik Party — to sweep the Imperial regime from power and then to withdraw Russia from the war altogether.

Western members of the Triple Entente regarded this as a kind of double-jeopardy. Not only had an important ally left the battlefield (allowing Imperial Germany to focus its efforts fully on the Western Front) but a revolutionary communist government had arisen in a country where there was hardly an

industrial proletariat to speak of. What might happen in states such as Britain or France where industrialization was much further progressed and an organized proletariat existed? The answer to that question came first from Germany, where social and political unrest increased as the war concluded, culminating in the November Revolution of 1918-19. The German rising was suppressed but its bloody demise inspired leftist movements across the West while terrifying conservative regimes in the aftermath of the war.

Lenin's regime in Moscow called on working-class organizations in other countries to rise up in support of the new Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the cause of world revolution. In part, this was a response to the international campaign to overturn the Russian revolution; even Canada sent troops to Russia to (unsuccessfully) put down the Bolshevik regime. Mostly, however, it grew out of the belief that countries undergoing their own revolution would be too busy to intervene in the USSR.

In Canada the sense of pending social and political crisis was fed by a series of general strikes and violent confrontations between workers, employers, and authorities in 1919-20. The most noteworthy of these was the Winnipeg General Strike (examined in Section 3.9). Working people were themselves fearful that the economic boom of wartime would give way to an economic depression. They were also concerned that returning soldiers would displace workers in the industries to which they were returning and/or veterans' needs would be disregarded and they would be thrust into poverty themselves. The Spanish Flu outbreak of 1918-19 was part of the background to this discontent: very nearly as many Canadians died in the pandemic over the course of one year as died in the War over the course of four.

The Influenza Pandemic, 1918-1919

Esyllt Jones, Department of History, University of Manitoba

During recent periods of anxiety about the emergence of a new deadly strain of the influenza virus, attention has returned to the end of World War I, when pandemic influenza took the lives of 50 million people across the globe, and impacted the lives and futures of millions of others. Known as "Spanish" influenza only because the uncensored Spanish press was the first in the West to report the pandemic, approximately 55,000 Canadians died from the virus and its complications (bronchitis or pneumonia), compounding the human losses of the war. The most deadly of influenza's three "waves" in the years 1918 and 1919 began in September 1918. Influenza was carried west across the country by the mobilization of Canada's Siberian Expeditionary Force, sent to oppose the Red Army during a period of civil war following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The expansion of the war effort took precedence over public health.[1]

1. Mark Osborne Humphries, "The Horror At Home: The Canadian Military and the 'Great' Influenza Pandemic of 1918," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 16, 1 (2005): 235-260.



Figure 6.12 Albertan men wearing masks during the influenza epidemic, 1918.

Influenza, though it infected men and women from all races and classes, was not a democratic disease. The death rate among the non-Native population in British Columbia was 6.21 per 1,000 people; for the First Nations it was 46 per 1,000 people.[2] In cities such as Hamilton, working class families were at greater risk of death than the well-off.[3] Influenza, like other infectious diseases, was shaped by social inequality. It was also unimpeded by significant state preparedness.

In 1918 there was no federal health department to coordinate an effective response to the disease. Many local governments and provincial boards of health, however, attempted to implement containment measures such as public school and church closures, the wearing of masks, and providing temporary emergency hospital beds where possible. Staffing these facilities was extremely difficult because of wartime shortages of medical and nursing personnel, even in major urban centres. The volunteer efforts of women were crucial to emergency health care, and to relief for the afflicted. Women provided food, clothing, and bedding for the sick and their families.

Medical science had little to contribute to these efforts. Viruses were as yet unknown as disease agents, and influenza was not isolated until the early 1930s. Although there were attempts to create a "vaccine," without the necessary medical knowledge, these were of little use.

Although for much of the 20th century, historical memory of the pandemic was overridden by the public commemoration of the 'Great' War, influenza changed the circumstances of thousands of families with the loss of siblings, parents, and kin. It was woven into their family stories. Some were scattered as children went to orphanages or lived with extended family. Widows struggled to support their children without a male breadwinner; single fathers attempted to provide care for children without their wives.[4] Other influenza sufferers never fully recovered their health.

2. Mary Ellen Kelm, "British Columbia First Nations and the Influenza Pandemic of 1918-1919," *BC Studies* 122 (Summer 1999): 25.

3. D. Ann Herring and Ellen Korol, "The North-South Divide: Social Inequality and Mortality from the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Hamilton, Ontario," in Magda Fahrni and Esyllt W. Jones, eds., *Epidemic Encounters: Influenza, Society and Culture in Canada 1918-1920* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2012), 97-112.

4. Esyllt W. Jones, *Influenza 1918: Disease, Death and Struggle in Winnipeg* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

This dangerous variant of influenza lingered in Canada into the 1920s, and then faded from view. It had some impact on our health care system, contributing to the creation of a federal department of health in 1920. But as a blow to the aspirations of modern medicine, influenza confounded the narrative of medical progress. As a result, we still have much to learn about its history.

Economic uncertainty (grounded in clear signs of a downturn), the challenges posed by the return of nearly half a million troops, unprecedented mortalities from influenza, labour unrest, and the example of a successful workers' revolution abroad thus created an environment of anxiety. Systematic planning for a post-war recovery was not possible in these circumstances and the sense that things could go badly wrong in a hurry was slow to evaporate. This sense of catastrophic possibilities — forged in the fires of the Great War and sharpened in the months after the Armistice — is the first theme of the **interwar** years.

The 1920s Boom

The economy staggered for nearly four years after the war. By 1922, however, there were signs of a recovery. The possibility existed, for the first time since about 1912, that immigration to Canada would resume in earnest. There was a sense of peacetime prosperity that echoed the Edwardian years. How long would it last? How to make it run for as long as possible? While Canadians were looking hopefully to a future of peace and jobs, they were also looking backward to the pre-War years as their reference point. There was no small amount of nostalgia for an age before the immolation of war. The "Roaring '20s" took their cue from the "Gay '90s."

At the same time, the 1920s were distinctive socially and culturally. Historians have commented on their frenetic qualities, the enthusiasm for change and new ideas, new things. The rise of **art deco** — expressed in sculpture, household decoration, and most spectacularly in architecture — was one lasting element; the spread of radio and motion pictures was another; so, too, was the popularity of pulp novels, jazz music, suburban bungalows, and automobiles. Even the **flapper**, that trademark female style of the 1920s, can be invoked as a landmark of change. Skirt lengths went up, bustles — a system of cushions or a framework of wire meant to exaggerate the dimensions of the female rump — disappeared, as did padding on the bosom. Boyishly thin bodies defined by straight lines aroused fears of gender-bending and "rumours swirled about sexual perversion, or at least confusion." The amount of cloth that went into a typical pre-war dress ensemble ran to about 17 yards; by the late 1920s it had plummeted to less than 9 yards.[5]

5. Sharon Carstairs and Tim Higgins, *Dancing Backwards: A Social History of Canadian Women in Politics* (Winnipeg: Heartland Associates, 2004), 63-5.



Figure 6.13 By 1930, dress lengths were back over the knees, but the material was still a fraction of what it was before the war.

Some of these changes might seem superficial or trivial, but together they represent a reaction to the dislocation of the Great War, the loss of over 100,000 lives in combat and to disease, and a will to move on quickly from the past. In this, the 1920s were categorically "modern" in that they mark a break with the first 50 years of Confederation. Deeper needs were signalled by women who could vote and dress as they liked (and in defiance of the old arbiters of behaviour), and by radically changed aesthetics, radical politics, and contempt for the old order. One other expression of this change was the fall in fertility rates in the 1920s. Women may have been displaced from war industries but they didn't retreat *en masse* to the home and hearth. Many continued to work, postponed marriage, and experimented with (illegal) contraceptives. Canadian family size began a sharp downward turn that even the 1940s-'60s baby boom could not completely reverse. All of this can be lumped together as a second theme: a sense that enough had been sacrificed by the people and the nation as a whole and a conviction that now Canadians might pursue the new and, ideally, prosperity.

The 1930s Depression

The economic landscape of the interwar years is examined more fully in Chapter 8 but here its roughest

outlines must be drawn. The collapse of stock markets and the commodity markets in late 1929 ushered in a decade of economic hardship. For those who had money, these were great years: buyers were few and far between, sellers were many, prices were low. For wage-earning Canadians, however, this was an economic disaster that, at the time, was often compared to the Great War. What the war had been in human conflict, the Depression was in terms of economic suffering. What little welfare state existed at the end of the war was insufficient to address the kind of dislocation experienced across the country. In British Columbia, for example, there was a new workmen's compensation program in 1916, a women's minimum wage introduced in 1918, and mother's pensions in 1920; some of these were subject to wrangling over the "moral fitness" of applicants and most were weakened by the mid-'30s, if not earlier.[6] The economic issue for politicians was as much a philosophical as a tactical one: should one interfere in the workings of the economy and run the risk of worsening matters or stand back and allow suffering to continue? Past experience taught Canadians and their leaders that trade depressions never lasted more than a few years at a time. By 1935 few believed that to be the case anymore. As a generalization, one can say that every government that was in office — federally or provincially — in 1929-30 was kicked out of office the very first chance the voters got. The economic depression thus brought with it unprecedented political discontent and a sense, too, that capitalism was taking its last laboured breaths.

This is the third of the three interwar themes: defining the role of the state in the face of economic disaster. Ottawa wrestled with this for a decade and, in that regard, the 1930s are a crucible for economic thinking and policy for the rest of the 20th century.

Key Points

- The interwar years were marked with fear of a global proletarian uprising, triggered by events in Russia.
- The 1918-19 influenza pandemic claimed nearly as many Canadian lives as the Great War and over a much shorter period of time, taking a tremendous toll on social and public health.
- Economic recovery in the "Roaring '20s" was capped by economic collapse in the Depression of the 1930s.
- Canadians' expectations of the state underwent profound changes from the Great War, through the 1920s, and the 1930s.

Media Attributions

- Men wearing masks during the Spanish Influenza epidemic © Library and Archives Canada (PA-025025) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Model wearing dress for Northway Co. advertisement © Library and Archives Canada (PA-053423) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6. Lisa Pasolli, *Working Mothers and the Child Care Dilemma: A History of British Columbia's Social Policy* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2015), 26.

6.7 The Natural Governing Party: The King Years

Borden departed the prime minister's office in July 1920, having governed Canada through what is arguably the most dramatic decade in its history. Borden was the author of some of that drama, to be sure, but he never had to defend his record at the polls outside of wartime. He resigned and handed the prime ministership off to Arthur Meighen (1874-1960). Unelected, Meighen held on for 15 months until an election was unavoidable. He lost convincingly to William Lyon Mackenzie King in the dying days of 1921.



Figure 6.14 Arthur Meighen (centre) during his brief stint in the PMO in 1920.

Arthur Meighen

Meighen is one of those politicians caught in the cat's paw of history. He failed in 1921 because Canadians were tired of Borden and the Tory/Union government and its cynical manipulation of the 1917 election, angered by the *Military Service Bill* (of which Meighen was the author), upset about the mess made at Winnipeg in 1919 (in which Meighen played a prominent role as minister of justice and the man behind the anti-sedition amendment to the Criminal Code, **Section 98**), and peeved about prohibition. Meighen himself was barely considered by an electorate eager for change. In 1926 he was thrown into the job in the least defensible way and was thereafter (unfairly) associated in the public mind with an attempt to subvert the democratic process. He is, however, worth pondering for a moment.

Meighen was the first Canadian prime minister born in the post-Confederation period. He is the only one, as well, to have come from a farming background, a remarkable fact for what was until 1921 a mostly rural country. Meighen was raised and educated in Ontario and was part of that great westward

migration to Manitoba. He was as representative as anyone of the extent to which Ontarian legal, professional, educational, and gendered certainties were being transplanted onto the plains. He is the only PM elected from Manitoba (his riding was Portage la Prairie) and the first westerner to hold the job. He was bright, articulate, a sharp and witty debater, and absolutely loathed by Mackenzie King — a feeling that was returned with interest. The two men, when young and both attending the University of Toronto, knew and disliked each other. This did not change. As Meighen's biographer writes, "Meighen was a dogged logician and orator who believed in straight talk. [King] was given to wordy platitudes and endless consultations. Their temperaments clashed, and so did their ambitions."[1]

King and Meighen, side by side, offer an insight into how much and how little had changed in Canadian politics. Meighen came from modest roots and was a farm boy. King's grandfather on his mother's side was William Lyon Mackenzie, one-time mayor of Toronto, a radical-reform politician and newspaperman, a full-time thorn in the side of the Upper Canadian establishment (aka: the Family Compact), a sometime rabble-rouser, and a prominent leader of the 1837-38 Rebellion. In this sense, and perhaps ironically, it was King who had the political pedigree. Meighen, however, carried the banner of the old political elites: he was a small-c conservative, an advocate for pre-War values and social relations, and a man who kept wearing starched high collars long after modernists like King disavowed them outside of formal occasions. Meighen was often decisive, sometimes to his disadvantage. During the Chanak (or Çanak) Crisis of 1922, he urged the King government to recall parliament and ready the troops in aid of Britain; King was in no rush to do so and the conflict was over before it had a chance to divide French and English Canadians.

The careers of King and Meighen, however, seem almost intertwined. In fact, were it not for Meighen, King — never a particularly sympathetic character — might not have gained, let alone held on to power. Meighen was the ninth prime minister, all but two of whom were Conservatives. Over 54 years, the Liberals had formed the government for only 20. Laurier said that the 20th century would belong to Canada; in point of fact, it mostly belonged to the Liberal Party. But only after the Conservatives made a gift of it to King.

Meighen campaigned in 1921 at the head of what was called the National Liberal and Conservative Party, essentially the remnants of Borden's coalition Union Government. Rather than make a break with the divisive past — that is, a scandalous 1917 election rigged to ensure the success of conscription and thus opening a chasm between Quebec and the Conservative Party — Meighen held on to the old symbols of the Union regime. He worsened his chances by confirming his commitment to a return of the National Policy, including the tariffs. Canadian farmers were almost universally opposed and many of them broke with the Tory Party to form the **Progressive Party** (see Section 7.9). Frozen out in Quebec, the Conservatives lost much of rural Ontario as well and the Prairies. The Liberals under King, however, did not romp to power. The Conservatives took 49 seats, the Progressives won 58 (one of which was claimed by Agnes Macphail, the first woman in Parliament), and the Progressives' less well-organized allies took another 10, leaving the Liberals with 118 seats — the barest of majorities. With one Liberal Member of Parliament in the Speaker's Chair, the two sides of the House were balanced.

By all rights, the Progressives should have formed the Official Opposition. Their philosophy, however,

1. Larry A. Glassford, "MEIGHEN, ARTHUR", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 18, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 10 November 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/meighen_arthur_18E.html.

included a critique of the binaries of parliament. They sought to work with, rather than against. This provided the third party leader, Meighen, with a chance to lead Her Majesty's Official Opposition.



Figure 6.15 Mackenzie King (seated, fourth from the right) at the 1923 Imperial Conference faces an early moving picture camera.

King and Commons

Putting the war behind the nation, binding up its wounds, and reducing the levels of animosity between the English and French, nativist Canadians and ethnic immigrants, labour and capital were King's priorities. Like Laurier, under whom he had served as Minister of Labour, King sought a path of compromise. This was especially challenging when it came to the issue of the tariff. Opposed by farmers, it was still embraced by manufacturers and urbanites in industrial cities. King lowered it, but not too much. Indeed, his first administration was marked by a lack of drama at home and abroad. The 1923 Imperial Conference gave King a chance to reiterate the case for autonomous Dominions within what was now called the **British Commonwealth of Nations**. The economy was recovering; grain was once again flowing off the Prairies and for this King could claim little credit. His skills at building political bridges across the country were noteworthy but the electorate of 1925 evidently did not care. The Conservatives under Meighen, rather remarkably, won 115 seats and the Liberals only 100. Just as Meighen had lost his own Portage La Prairie seat in 1921, King lost his in 1925 and had to scramble to find a safe constituency and a compliant Liberal MP who would make way for him. It was very nearly a disaster for the Liberals. The Progressives were once again the wildcard; they were not yet a spent force but they held on to 22 seats. Meighen expected to form a government but King moved quickly to confirm Progressive support of a Liberal minority.

Predictably, Meighen and the Tories were outraged. When a bribery scandal suddenly threatened the Liberal government, King acted with uncharacteristic decisiveness. Rather than wait for a vote of censure over the issue of bribery and smuggling, he consulted with the **Governor-General** — the former Lieutenant-General Sir Julian Byng (the leader of the victory at Vimy) — and asked for dissolution of the House of Commons and a new election. Byng declined the request and King resigned as PM, allowing Meighen to step into the vacuum. This led to a constitutional crisis in which King

characterized Byng's constitutional ruling as the meddling of a non-elected official appointed by a foreign power. Three days into Meighen's administration a vote of non-confidence was called and the combined force of Liberals and Progressives defeated the government. Byng promptly called an election. This unusual interlude has been known ever since as the **King–Byng Affair** or, better still, the King–Byng Thing and has been a reference point for every Governor-General on election night when the possibility of a minority government looms at the polls.

King's Liberals were returned and, with the support of ten Progressives, formed a majority government. The four years that followed would see an extension of Canada's sovereignty at the 1926 Imperial Conference, recognized formally in the **Balfour Declaration**. A rising economy improved the government's fiscal position so much so that the **Canadian National Railway** — a unified system of smaller railways brought together and nationalized under the Borden government — was at last showing a profit. King's long-term interest in social welfare measures was manifest in the first old age pension, introduced shortly after the election. But King's administration was less about "big government" than government as an arbitrator, a third-party, or fair broker. It was how King ran cabinet meetings and how he ran the country. He even reduced taxes, thus spending down the surplus that Ottawa had accumulated.

His timing and his reading of the economic situation could hardly have been worse. In 1928 grain prices began a long-term fall and the next year the stock market crashed. Going into 1930 — and due for an election — King maintained that the economy was merely adjusting a bit and he advocated inaction (see Section 8.5). Canadians disagreed and voted the Liberals out of office.

A Pyrrhic Victory

King's defeat was comprehensive. Only Saskatchewan and Quebec returned more Liberals than Tories but even in Quebec the Conservatives won 24 seats. Looking at the political history of Canada from 1867-1930 one could argue that the Conservatives were the more successful party; the party of Macdonald and Cartier was still the natural governing party of Canada. The Depression, however, would destroy the Tories for more than a generation.

Richard Bedford Bennett (1870-1947) served in Borden's government, was briefly Meighen's minister of justice, and then failed to win a seat in 1921. In the brief Tory interlude of 1926, Bennett was the minister of finance. In 1927 he was party leader. Like Meighen, he represented a prairie constituency: Calgary West. Bennett's personal wealth was substantial and he was believed to be financially independent by 1909. Like Meighen, he was a tough debater but his appeal to Canadian voters was his own prosperity. Playing the role of the hard-nosed master of high finance and industry, it meant something when Bennett promised to "blast a way into the markets" that were closed to Canadian goods by tariffs. In the midst of a global depression, however, there were few markets into which one might blast.

Like King, Bennett was inclined to think that the Depression might just go away on its own. By 1933, when things were at an all-time low, he began to build a response. This included relief camps for the unemployed (highly unpopular and condemned by the public as "slave camps") and the promise of some major social reforms that included unemployment insurance, health insurance, and income-based personal taxes. Like most politicians who were in power in 1933, however, Bennett's time in office was

to be cut short. He lacked imagination and the political will to make changes in what was, to be fair, the worst economic crisis in the country's history. Bennett was reviled, a lightning rod for the nation's discontent. Disgusted, he soldiered on as Opposition Leader until 1938 when he returned to his native England and retired with a viscountcy. Bennett's unpopularity was such that no subsequent Canadian leader would accept a knighthood.

In 1935 the Conservatives were once again swept from power, still stigmatized in Quebec as the party of conscription and Riel's gallows. Now they were damned in western Canada, as well, as the party of the dust bowl.

King and Chaos

King's economic and social policies were hardly better than Bennett's when it came to spending the country's way out of crisis. A slight up-tick in the economy after 1935 reversed in 1937 so there was little confidence that the corner had truly been turned. Elected on the slogan "King or Chaos," the Liberals offered only a few new ideas that were meant to cushion the effects of the Depression. A *National Housing Act* was introduced but social policies were otherwise missing. The principal legacy of this administration was the creation of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) in 1936 and the National Film Board (NFB) in 1939 (see Section 10.14). The beginnings of a national airline were laid out in Trans-Canada Airlines in 1937, which would eventually become Air Canada.

As war in Europe approached, King's inclination was to refuse to make commitments to Britain. An attack on Britain would be defended, but British engagement in a continental war would be not be enjoined by Canadians. Like many of his contemporaries, King underestimated the ambitions of *Führer und Reichskanzler* Adolf Hitler and his National Socialist government. What is more, King was inclined to see Hitler as a kind of romantic and messianic figure with a spiritual mission. This reflected King's own rather unusual spiritual outlook (see Section 9.5). King had missed the Great War by dint of working as a consultant to the Rockefeller family in New York and as director of the Rockefeller Foundation from 1914-1918. During that time, he polished and formalized his conception of the state as a third party in disputes between labour and capital, ideas that he would take into inter-provincial diplomacy and, on the eve of the Second World War, into talks between Britain and the United States. His revulsion for conflict would not, however, protect him from the struggle that was unfolding globally.

Key Points

- The Meighen and King years demonstrate some of the constitutional liabilities of the Canadian parliamentary system.
- Despite pronounced differences during election campaigns, the Liberal and Conservative governments of the interwar years had similar records when it came to social policy.
- Canada's increased autonomy within the British Empire was welcomed by King.
- Meighen's failures in the 1920s, coupled with Bennett's in the 1930s, led to a long run of Liberal

governments.

Media Attributions

- Premier Arthur Meighen's inspection Toronto, Ont. Aug. 13, 1920 © Toronto Harbour Commissioners, Library and Archives Canada (PA-097014) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Group photo of delegates attending the Imperial Conference, 10 Downing Street © Library and Archives Canada (PA-138871) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.8 Canadian Fascists

Efforts to transform local movements into national political organizations have generally failed. Ideology provides much stronger glue than localized hostility toward some practice or group. Perhaps one of the hidden benefits of a fractious Canadian dualism and pluralism is that it is difficult to muster a nationwide response to a putative scapegoat group. In times of crisis — like the Great Depression — it becomes possible, however, to mobilize anger and xenophobia as a political movement.

One cannot, therefore, take too lightly the appearance of fascist movements and parties in Canada in the 1930s. Of these, there were three main examples: the Canadian Nationalist Party led by William Whittaker and based in Winnipeg, the Canadian Union of Fascists (a pro-Mosleyite, British fascist organization), and the *Parti National Social Chrétien* (PNSC). The PNSC was the largest and most successful of the three, the political wing of a Quebec-based fascist movement under the leadership of Adrien Arcand (1899-1967). Heavily influenced by the rise of anti-Semitic movements in Europe and especially by Adolf Hitler's German National Socialist (Nazi) Party, Arcand was an enthusiastic promoter of an all-white, all-Christian vision of Canada. The PNSC looked beyond the borders of Quebec, seeking sympathizers among Anglo-Canadians under the umbrella of the National Unity Party of Canada (NUPC). The emergence of **Ku Klux Klan** chapters in Ontario and on the Prairies, as well as the deeply entrenched anti-Asian sentiment among Euro-British Columbians made fertile ground for Arcand's message. Following on the example set by European fascists, Arcand's group took to wearing distinctive uniforms festooned with swastikas. While Hitler had his "brown shirts," Benito Mussolini in Italy his "black shirts," and Oswald Mosley in Britain his "green shirts," in Canada the fascists were "blue shirts."

There is no doubt that Arcand and the NUPC enjoyed some support in Quebec. Even if he was not a member of the NUPC, Montreal's mayor, Camillien Houde was an outspoken supporter of European fascist powers and hostile to Britain. But the extent of their appeal in the rest of Canada does not seem to have been great. Even the 1938 alliance with Whittaker's CNP and the creation of the optimistically named National Unity Party could not address the obvious contradiction of a ferociously nationalistic and racist movement that was divided along national and, by their own terms, race lines.[1] Elsewhere in Canada, the half-million ethnic Germans in Canada were divided in their feelings about Hitler's regime but members of the *Deutscher Bund Kanada* were vocal, swastika-armband-wearing advocates, particularly of the claims of cultural superiority.

1. Jonathan F. Wagner, *Brothers Beyond the Sea: National Socialism in Canada* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1981), 76-79.



Figure 6.16 A promotional postcard from Arcand's PNSC, 1930s.

As Europe marched toward a second world war, the Canadian fascists were more closely watched by the state. Having said that, when war was declared and the authorities set about corralling the Whittaker and Arcand parties, their enthusiasm for doing so seems to have been lukewarm. Several facts may explain the tempered response to fascists that contrasts so sharply with police and state commitment to putting down communist movements. First, the authorities and the fascists shared a dislike of the socialists and communists. Second, German settlers enjoyed a largely favourable reputation in Canada, despite the xenophobia stirred up by the Great War, so even ethnic pro-Hitler groups like the *Deutscher Bund Kanada* might be treated with kid gloves. Third, anti-Semitic sentiments were almost ubiquitous among Catholic and Protestant Canadians so this aspect of fascism did not set off alarm bells.[2] Arcand's biographer suggests, furthermore, that powerful connections in government kept the party leadership out of jail (at least for a while) and tipped off senior fascists of coming police raids.[3] Arcand, however, spent the war years under guard at Petawawa, a military camp in northern Ontario that served as an internment site for Canadians involved in enemy organizations, including the former mayor of Montreal. Many of the *Deutscher Bund* similarly wound up interned in New Brunswick for the duration of the war.

Remarkably, the Canadian fascists survived WWII. Arcand ran in elections in 1949 and 1953, finishing second both times with 29% and 39% of the vote respectively. As late as 1965, he could still draw a crowd of 850 to a rally in Montreal's Paul Sauvé Arena.

Key Points

- As was the case in Britain and across Europe, extremists on the right found support in Canada for fascist movements in the 1930s.

2. Lita-Rose Betcherman, *The Swastika and the Maple Leaf: Fascist Movements in Canada in the Thirties* (Don Mills: Fitzhenry & Whiteside: 1975), 138-43.

3. Jean-François Nadeau, *The Canadian Fuhrer: The Life of Adrien Arcand*, trans. Bob Chodos, Eric Hamovitch, and Susan Joanis (Toronto: James Lorimer, 2011), 232-3.

- Support for the fascists was limited but not strongly opposed by the state.

Media Attributions

- La clef du nouveau Canada © Parti National Social Chrétien is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.9 The Road to WWII

Sixty-five years after the end of the Second World War, it is easy to misunderstand how it looked at the time.

In 1914 there were a handful of liberal democracies around the globe and there were many states in which hereditary monarchs and oligarchical systems of government dominated. In the aftermath of the Treaty of Versailles a whole cadre of new democracies appeared, including the Weimar Republic in Germany. Sun Yat-sen's revolution had toppled the Emperor in China. There was a brand new League of Nations, created with the intent of institutionalizing global communication and the perpetuation of peace. What's more, modernity was becoming more widespread as a social and cultural movement, as well as an art movement. Consumerism was on the rise, suburbs were appearing on the edges of cities across the western world, and "planning" was becoming something of a phenomenon, extending from new urban areas through whole economies. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that took the place of the Czarist regime in Russia held out the possibility of a post-capitalist society. Technological change, much of it stimulated by the Great War itself, seemed to be accelerating. Styles of dress changed dramatically. Deference to religious authority was in sharp decline across Western Europe and the Americas as secularism was more widely and more deeply spread. In short, the interwar era seemed to have potential.

That was the situation in the mid- to late-1920s. By the mid-1930s the promise of a world of peaceable democracies was receding. Indeed, democracy was in trouble. Nations were rearming. Organized religion was terrified by anticlericalism and was backing counter-revolutions across Latin America. Monarchists were digging in their heels and throwing in their lot with anti-democratic fascists. The Soviet Union under Stalin and the Nazis under Hitler were both calling for global domination — and if two objects cannot occupy the same space at the same time, then one of these two movements was going to have to yield. Modernism generally, was under attack in Germany, Italy, Spain, and even in North America as "degenerate." Racism was on the rise. The Spanish Civil War was a kind of dress rehearsal for the conflict to come but it signalled something else: the fall of democracy. As the British historian Eric Hobsbawm wrote,

> Political liberalism was in full retreat in the Age of Catastrophe…. Taking the world as a whole, there had been perhaps 35 or more constitutional and elected governments in 1920. Until 1938 there were perhaps 17 such states, in 1944 perhaps 12 out of the global total of 64.[1]

One of those democracies, one of those increasingly rare holdouts against the tide of absolutism and despotism, was Canada.

Canada between the Wars

All was not freedoms and liberties. Canadians were largely fearful of the outside world and inclined to

1. Eric Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (London: Abacus, 1996), 112.

restrict the rights of anyone outside the charmed circle of white, Christian, male adulthood. Women's rights were expanding, it's true, but they were still something of an untested novelty in the 1930s. And they were rising from a very low baseline. Voting rights might have been won but property, welfare, and workplace rights continued to reflect the patriarchal values at the heart of Canadian society.

The situation of Canadians of colour was considerably worse and to be a woman of colour in Canada was, quite simply, double jeopardy. Asian Canadians faced restrictions in terms of their place of residence, the schools they could attend, and the professions they could join, not to mention the day-to-day humiliations of both pointed and casual racism. African-Canadians had greater access to democratic privileges but their educational opportunities were severely circumscribed, and the overall quality of life and public services in neighbourhoods like Africville on the edge of Halifax was poor. Indigenous Canadians, too, faced impoverished conditions both on and off the reserve. Some could vote but their collective numbers were so small as to make them powerless as a constituency. The remoteness of many First Nations communities meant that they were effectively invisible to the larger Canadian polity. The Jewish community — found across the country but heavily concentrated in the largest centres and especially Montreal — faced anti-Semitic discrimination in many forms. Racism — coupled with a strong eugenics movement — was, for all intents and purposes, part of Canada's mainstream culture.

The limits on freedom of speech and freedom to meet had been tested repeatedly in the Depression. Unions were being smashed; civic, provincial, and national police forces showed little compunction when it came to riding horses into a crowd and swinging billy clubs and whips. The communist movement had been outlawed and mostly driven underground while fascist parties were generally winked at; police surveillance of unions was commonplace. A decade of high unemployment and economic disaster had been largely unalleviated by the Liberals and the Conservatives, and neither party appeared to care very much.

Having said that, the three levels of democracy in Canada — civic, provincial, and federal — meant that elections were relatively common tests of the public will. The Canadian press remained free (notwithstanding state attacks on the newspapers of the hard left). British parliamentary traditions remained strong and loyalty to Britain (complemented by continued post-Great War enmity for the Germans) ensured that Canada's position on the eve of war would be less complicated than that of the United States.

On the Brink

As relations worsened between Nazi Germany and Britain, France, and the USSR in the late 1930s, Canadians became increasingly alert to the possibility of war. The Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931 marked the beginning of turmoil along the Pacific Rim and stimulated tensions within the Asian-Canadian community that would last until China's liberation in 1945. Italy's attack on Ethiopia (aka: Abyssinia) followed in 1935 and the Spanish Civil War broke out in 1936 between the Republic (supported by the Soviet Union) and the Nationalists under General Francisco Franco (backed by fascist regimes in Italy and Germany). All of these conflicts were testing grounds for expansionist countries building martial cultures around charismatic leaders and intense nationalistic feeling.

Moreover, these invasions and contests introduced elements of total war that had not been as apparent

in the Great War. Civilian casualties, for example, were not a by-product of war but an intentional objective. This was seen in every instance of the pre-WWII conflicts, including gas attacks on Abyssinian villages, the destruction of the town of Guernica by the *Luftwaffe* (German Airforce), and most spectacularly, the Japanese "Rape of Nanking" and the Empire's application of a scorched earth policy across northern China.

Diplomatic efforts to reverse this tide failed repeatedly and embarrassingly. British and French politicians blundered through attempts at **appeasement** of, first, Italy then Germany. The Soviet Union, for its part, used the Nazi obsession with Russian power to their advantage in the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of March 1939, which effectively carved up Eastern Europe and the Baltic countries between the USSR and Germany. As a non-aggression pact, it bought the USSR two years to prepare for conflict with Germany and allowed the Nazi *Wehrmacht* to focus its energies on Western Europe.

Key Points

- By 1939 the number of liberal democracies was in steep decline. Canada was one of few remaining.
- Despite Canada's record as a liberal democracy, the rights of as much as half its adult population were limited.
- Two of the authoritarian regimes of the interwar years explicitly and openly made plans to spread their systems across the globe.
- International conflicts in the 1930s paved the way for a world war conducted against civilian targets as often as military adversaries.

6.10 Canada Goes to War



Figure 6.17 A British Columbian regiment prepares to depart from New Westminster, 1940. ("Wait for me daddy" by Claude Dettloff) *[Long Description]*

On 1 September 1939, Germany invaded Poland, which triggered a declaration of war on the part of France and Britain on 3 September. Both New Zealand and Australia declared war on the same day. William Lyon Mackenzie King's government, however, held back until the 10th of September.

This delay was entirely about optics. The government wished to demonstrate to Britain and, more significantly, to Canadians that the decision to go to war was one that was made by Parliament in Ottawa and it was one that was endorsed by French and English Canadian politicians alike. King feared a repeat of the divisive experience of the Great War and that fear guided his actions throughout the Second World War. The delay of seven days had nothing to do with a lack of preparedness — in fact, the government was vastly more prepared for war (at least organizationally, if not materially) than was

the case in 1914 — nor did it reflect concern about what the Americans might do. King was committed to supporting Britain against Germany regardless of Washington's position. The point was to exercise the autonomy that had been won in the Statute of Westminster (1931) and enter the war as a free democracy.

This was not cause for celebration. Unlike August 1914, there were no raucous and patriotic parades in the autumn of 1939. Anyone over the age of 24 would have some recollection of the Great War. The parents of those men and women most likely to serve in uniform would keenly recall the costs of that war that was meant to end all wars. There was, too, the recollection of profiteering and corruption from the previous war. Of course, there was also the memory of economic good times, rising wages, and a return to prosperity. It was on this prospect that many Canadians hinged their hopes.

As in 1914, of course, optimists in 1939 predicted a short war that might be resolved at the bargaining table sooner rather than later. From September 1939 to May 1940, Canada — along with the rest of the British Commonwealth, France, and the other Allied Nations — was on the sidelines of what became known in French as the *Drôle de guerre*, in German as *Sitzkrieg*, and in English as the **Phoney War**. There was so little in the way of actual warfare going on that King was able to call an election for March 1940, which he won easily. Events in the winter and spring of 1940 were to dispel any possibility of a negotiated peace.

While the Allies built up their resources, Germany attacked and annexed Denmark and Norway. On 10 May 1940, the *Wehrmacht* finally turned its attention to the French Republic, which it invaded after storming through the Netherlands and Belgium. The *blitzkrieg* assault allowed the Germans to capture the majority of Allied troops stationed in France, although some 300,000 escaped via Dunkirk from 26 May to 4 June. The 1st Canadian Infantry Brigade was part of a doomed Second British Expeditionary Force subsequently sent to Brittany (in mid-June 1940) and was similarly evacuated in haste.

This was a disaster of the first order for the Allies. Paris was in enemy hands, France bisected into the occupied north and a puppet state in the south, centred on Vichy. The Alliance at this stage consisted principally of the British Commonwealth and whatever **resistance armies** were able to either escape occupied Europe or disappear into underground movements. Comfortably spread across northern and central Europe, the Germans turned their guns on the USSR, launching an attack in June 1941.

The role of Canada and Newfoundland in the war at this point was principally to supply Britain with resources necessary for survival during a long siege and to prepare for a German invasion of the British Isles. Supply vessels, escorted by battleships, poured out of Montreal, Halifax, and St. John's. The **Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF)** played a key role training British pilots and engaged in the defence of the UK during the **Battle of Britain**. Apart from occupying Iceland on behalf of Britain in 1941, however, Canadian troops saw little action. Many were stationed in Britain, anticipating a German sea invasion that never came. Others were deployed to Newfoundland (recently put back under British administration) and to the West Indies.

The administrative structures necessary to success in total war were more rapidly and more fully deployed than in 1914-15. The *War Measures Act* was again invoked and the policing of potential (that is, perceived or misperceived) internal threats got quickly underway. Authority over much of the nation's productive capacity was centralized in one ministry under the leadership of C.D. Howe (1886-1960), a Port Arthur (now Thunder Bay) engineer and businessman who took charge of the newly created Ministry of Munitions and Supply. Howe recruited experienced production managers in

a quest for the kind of expertise that was sorely lacking under Sam Hughes in WWI. These **dollar-a-year men** were exemplars of the cult of the expert and their salaries were covered by their peacetime employers. Described as the "Minister for Everything," Howe nationalized industries, rapidly expanded industrial production, and got the government involved in the **Manhattan Project**. Just as industrial production became more controlled and influenced by Ottawa, the state itself also changed. A commentator in 1945 observed:

> The *War Measures Act* converted Canada overnight from a confederation into a unitary state; the government overrode or supplanted most of the normal procedures of peace; it became the largest and most important employer of labour; it used its fiscal capacity and monetary powers to effect maximum war production, borrowing billions, raising billions by taxation, and then bringing into play a reserve power by borrowing many millions from the banking system to inflate the economy to full war capacity.[1]

From a nation burdened with crushing rates of unemployment, Canada was transformed into one of the world's leading industrial economies, a major producer of food and ships, a leader in aircraft and munitions production, and a state with a finger in many pies.



Figure 6.18 Minister of Munitions and Supply, C.D. Howe, tours an aircraft plant in 1941.

Key Points

- Unlike in 1914, when Britain's declaration of war meant that Canada was automatically at war as well, in 1939 Ottawa delayed declaring its involvement for seven days.
- Prime Minister King's primary concerns were to avoid reopening the wounds that fractured Canada in 1914-18.

1. Quoted in Ian Mosby, *Food Will Win the War: The Politics, Culture, and Science of Food on Canada's Home Front* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014), 14.

- Canadian involvement at the outset was small, although Canadian troops were part of the evacuation of France via Dunkirk.
- Creating an administrative structure that would mobilize the economy for an effective total war effort was a first priority.

Long Descriptions

Figure 6.17 long description: A regiment marches down a hill in a city. The soldiers march three abreast and are visible far into the distance. On either side of the soldiers, a handful of women and children march alongside, likely keeping pace with their sons, husbands, brothers, and fathers. In the foreground, a young boy reaches for his marching father's hand. The father reaches for his son, smiling. The boy's mother, holding a handbag, reaches to grab her son. [Return to Figure 6.17]

Media Attributions

- British Columbia Regiment 1940 © Claude Dettloff is licensed under a Public Domain license
- The Hon. C.D. Howe speaks to a woman worker at an aircraft factory © National Film Board of Canada. Photothèque, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3195719) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.11 Newfoundland Goes to War

The situation in Newfoundland was different. The Dominion had lost its autonomy and democratic legislature in the economic trenches of 1934; thereafter it was administered by a Commission of Government comprised of four British appointees and three Newfoundland representatives. In effect, the ex-Dominion was a colony once more. That meant that when Britain declared war, Newfoundland was instantly at war as well. It also meant that, although there was a Newfoundland Regiment to provide home-defence, there was no separate Dominion regiment sent abroad: the colony's volunteers were absorbed directly into British regiments.

The war had a revivifying effect on the North American economy as a whole but especially in Newfoundland. Gander and Goose Bay became pivotal to the Royal Airforce's mustering of aircraft being shepherded from factories in Canada to the UK; St. John's was a naval centre and watchtower for the western Atlantic. Thousands of Canadian troops were deployed across the island and Canadian oversight of Britain's military interests in the region was general. The American presence was even larger, running to 10,000 personnel. Newfoundland was of enormous strategic importance, a fact that led to a welcome economic surge and a sudden modernization of infrastructure.

Newfoundland was also at risk in a way that no part of Canada was, with the exception of Halifax. Naval convoys providing food, arms, and other resources to a besieged Britain poured out of the St. Lawrence and Nova Scotia, drawing the unwanted attention of German submarines. **U-boat** attacks multiplied quickly and disasters occurred with fearsome regularity. The Newfoundland ferry *Caribou* was one such casualty in 1942 when a torpedo attack took the lives of 137 crew and passengers.[1] Ships carrying iron ore sailing from Bell Island were sunk; indeed, any vessel sailing from the outports might be considered target practice for the U-boats. The submarines could be used, as well, to shell land targets: in March 1942, three torpedoes were launched against ships and facilities in St. John's harbour. Rumours circulated (and continue to do so) of U-boat bases nestled in the many inlets of Labrador and there is hard evidence of a German automated weather station along the mainland coast. Given the catastrophic magnitude of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, it is easy to imagine the anxiety felt by Newfoundlanders in these circumstances. The war was not in Europe; it was at their door, peaking inside.

Key Points

- Newfoundland was restored to British administration in 1934.
- As a consequence, Newfoundland automatically followed Britain into the Second World War.
- Because of its geopolitical value, Newfoundland experienced a sudden rush of investment in logistics and the arrival of thousands of troops from Canada and, later, the United States.

1. Margaret R. Conrad and James K. Hiller, *Atlantic Canada: A Concise History* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2006), 179-80.

- WWII provided the Newfoundland economy with a boost and it simultaneously put its shipping and people at greater risk than was the case in Canada.

6.12 Status Indians and Military Service in the World Wars

R. Scott Sheffield; Department of History; and University of the Fraser Valley



Figure 6.19 Indigenous soldiers of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) along with elders, ca. 1916–17.

In the first half of the 20th century, Canada's **Status Indians** faced many challenges. The *Indian Act* restricted their freedoms and rights, and Canadian society, which viewed Indians as an inferior and dying race, marginalised them economically and socially. Despite this reality, when Canada marched to war in 1914 and 1939, First Nations people joined the national efforts and volunteered for the military. In fact, more than 4,000 Status Indian men enlisted in each World War, the majority as volunteers. Most First Nations were supportive but it is difficult to generalise because the degree of engagement varied greatly, with some communities giving almost every able-bodied man and others almost none. While the Army experimented with segregated all-Indian units in WWI, overwhelmingly First Nations youth enlisted and served as individuals integrated into regular military units. During WWII, racial barriers combined with stringent health and education requirements to bar First Nations from the Navy or Air Force, funneling most into the Army. In both wars, when conscription was enacted it applied to Status Indians, despite their ineligibility to vote and their status as wards of the state. First Nations leaders across the country protested the application of the *Military Service Act* of 1917 to their people. The government responded in early 1918 by exempting Status Indians from overseas combative service. In WWII, Status Indians were deemed liable for conscription for home defence from 1940-45, despite nationwide protest and passive resistance amongst Indigenous communities. When Ottawa sent conscripts overseas in late 1944-45, only a few First Nations who, during treaty negotiations, were explicitly promised that the "Queen … would not ask her Indian children to fight for her unless they wished," were exempted. After both wars, Status Indian veterans faced unequal access to benefits and programs provided to help veterans re-establish themselves in civilian life.

The extent of First Nations military participation and the meagre reward received for their sacrifices in

peacetime raises the question of why Status Indians would volunteer and fight for the state that oppressed and marginalised them. This is challenging to answer as the decision to volunteer differed slightly between the wars and between cultural communities and individuals. During the Great War, First Nations that historically honoured warriors viewed the conflict as an opportunity to reinvigorate such traditions. Although not prevalent everywhere, warrior cultures were important amongst Plains First Nations as well as Iroquoian-speaking communities in central Canada. Perhaps surprisingly, a heartfelt connection to the British Crown motivated many First Nations enlistments; this was a legacy of historical traditions of military alliance with British since the 1600s and/or commitment to treaties negotiated with Crown representatives. Moreover, for almost all, a desire to defend their people's ancestral territory, and by extension Canada and the British Empire, also spurred enlistment. And of course, many young men's decisions came down to impulsiveness, a social need to join their buddies, a youthful hunger for adventure, or an escape from restrictive reserve life.



Figure 6.20 Michel Ackbee, a sniper from the Thunder Bay Band, during WWI.

In WWII, earlier motivations were still evident, but the nature of the conflict was different: this was less an imperial contest and more explicitly a war for democracy and freedom against fascism, oppression, and state racism. This meant Indigenous military service added meaning for both those enlisting and for Canadians who were pleasantly surprised by Status Indians' patriotism. Volunteering for the military could now be a political act, calculated to win greater respect, to prove one's worth, or claim enhanced rights. Highly decorated First Nations soldier, Sergeant Thomas Prince, stated that he "wanted to show they [Indians] were as good as any white man." At home, Status Indian leaders argued that "if our young men are good enough to wear the King's uniform," they should have the "same civil rights and privileges as our white brothers have." The connection of military service to democracy made such arguments difficult for Canadians to ignore. First Nations people were deeply moved and motivated by the fight against fascism and wanted to participate in what became a national crusade. Canadians, and their government, typically misinterpreted the First Nations' wartime support and contributions as evidence of their willingness to assimilate into mainstream society after the war. While they wished to take part and be accepted, First Nations people were also declaring their right to be, and to remain, distinct cultural communities.



Figure 6.21 Brothers Tommy and Morris Prince—a sergeant and a private, respectively—at an event at Buckingham Palace, 1945.

After 1945, First Nations delegates took part in the post-war Parliamentary review that led to a new

Indian Act in 1951. While far from revolutionary, the revised Act eased some restrictions on Status Indians and extended some powers to Indian Band Councils. Overall, however, Status Indians remained on the margins of society, subject to assimilation, and denied a federal vote until 1960. Was their contribution to Canada's war effort worth it?

Key Points

- Indigenous people were marginalized, oppressed, and neglected by the Canadian state and yet many took up arms in support of Canada's effort in the two World Wars.
- Conscription applied to Status Indians, a fact to which many First Nations people objected.
- Resources made available to non-Indigenous soldiers after demobilization were not extended to Status Indian recruits.
- Indigenous people took advantage of the Second World War's pro-democracy rhetoric to advance their own agenda for greater liberties and recognition in Canada.
- Despite the contribution made in wartime, fifteen years would pass between the end of WWII and the enfranchisement of Status Indians.

Media Attributions

- Elders and Indian soldiers in the uniform of the Canadian Expeditionary Force © Library and Archives Canada (PA-041366) adapted by Two rows of Indigenous soldiers and two of elders in traditional regalia. is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Michael Ackbee, ca. 1918 © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2095973) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Sergeant Tommy Prince (R), M.M., 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion, with his brother, Private Morris Prince, at an investiture at Buckingham Palace © Christopher J. Woods, Canada Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (PA-142289) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.13 Canada between the UK and the US



Figure 6.22 Meeting in Quebec City in 1943 (clockwise from the rear): Mackenzie King, Winston Churchill, Governor-General the Earl of Althone, and Franklin Roosevelt.

The fall of France in 1940 sent ripples across the Atlantic. It was clear that a German attack on North America was not unthinkable. Americans were increasingly concerned, although their government officially held fast to a policy of **isolationism**. If Britain fell — and it might — plans were afoot to transfer to Canada the Royal Family and the British government, along with whatever war material and resources could be saved. The Germans would never tolerate a government in exile so it was believed almost certainly that Canada would then be attacked.

Under these circumstances, King recognized the need to secure American support and on 16 August 1940, he met secretly with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945) in a railcar at Ogdensburg, New York. Out of that meeting came the **Permanent Joint Board of Defense**, a collaborative military body with oversight – though not control — over the armed forces of both countries. The **Ogdensburg Agreement**, as it came to be known, was an undeniable compromising of Canadian sovereignty but clearly one that King felt was essential under the circumstances. King's own long experience of working with the Americans — he spent the Great War in the United States and was familiar with elite circles south of the border — made him more comfortable with this arrangement than would have been the case if the stridently pro-British leader of the Conservative party, Arthur Meighen, had been in office.

Canada's economy was still reeling from the Depression and it lacked the financial wherewithal to put its industries on a wartime footing. Britain's financial resources were also limited, so American involvement was required to underwrite British contracts. This **Lend-Lease Agreement** extended the

life of Canadian sales to Britain and stimulated the Dominion's industrial resurrection. Although the United States was not yet at war, it was building up its own arms and could turn to Canada for additional capacity. An arrangement to do so and integrate the two economies during the term of the war — the **Hyde Park Agreement**— was signed on 20 April 1941. Canada's economic situation had suddenly and dramatically changed.

Goods could now be made but they had to be delivered as well. Following on Ogdensburg, arrangements were made to ship American supplies to Britain and Russia through Canadian ports. Doing so meant expanding the size of a pitiably small pre-War navy (seven warships) into a force that could contribute to the **Battle of the Atlantic**. Naval personnel tripled to 10,000 men and women by the end of 1940 while the Canadian fleet expanded rapidly as well.

In 1943 Canada would host a meeting between Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. The **First Quebec Conference** allowed the two leading Allied powers — and to a lesser degree, Canada — to begin planning for the invasion and liberation of France. Throughout these meetings and in other negotiations involving the three nations, King played the role of the broker and the bridge; historians have tended to conclude, however, that King's role was peripheral.

Key Points

- Britain's vulnerability in 1940 persuaded King to look to the United States for financial and materiel support in the war effort.
- The Permanent Joint Board of Defense and the Ogdensburg Agreement mark the beginning of Canada's new military relationship with the United States.
- The Lend-Lease Agreement was key in supplying wartime Britain and rebuilding Canadian manufacturing after the Depression.
- The Hyde Park Agreement involved a further integration of the North American economies.
- King's objective was to position Canada as a middle power between Britain and the United States.

Media Attributions

- Québec Conference, August 1943 is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.14 Global War

The War in the Pacific

American reluctance to enter the war was abandoned on 6 December 1941 when the Japanese Navy bombed the Hawaiian port of Pearl Harbor. The American Pacific Fleet was destroyed in a matter of hours and America was at war. Canada declared war on Japan the very next day, despite the fact that it had already taken steps to counter Japanese advances in East Asia. In November 1941, more than a thousand Canadian troops arrived in Hong Kong to shore up British, Indian, and Chinese troops in the event of a Japanese attack. On 8 December, the Empire turned its attention to the British colony, confronting Canadian troops for the first time on 11 December. Two weeks and 290 casualties later, the Canadian troops surrendered, along with the rest of the Allied forces in the area. The Canadian soldiers would spend the remainder of the war in notoriously brutal **prisoner of war (POW)** camps where another 267 died. Canadians would play only a marginal role in the Pacific War thereafter, even though Japanese submarines were found patrolling the waters off Nootka Sound where they shelled the lighthouse at Estevan Point.



Figure 6.23 A stunning failure: the Dieppe Raid tested German coastal defences at the expense of Canadian troops. Canadian prisoners of war (POWs) in the aftermath.

War in Europe

After the hopeless task of defending Hong Kong, Canadian troops wouldn't see action until 19 August 1942. The **Dieppe Raid** was meant to test resources, probe German coastal defences, and gather intelligence. Five thousand Canadians — many of them desperately bored after two years of being

stationed in Britain — were sent ashore along with 1,000 British troops and a handful of American Army Rangers. They had inadequate air cover and their understanding of the terrain and its obstacles was entirely inadequate. They were instantly pinned down by sniper fire and unable to advance or retreat. More than 900 of the Canadian contingent were killed and nearly 2,000 captured; among those who made it back to the ships, a significant share was wounded. Losses totaling nearly 3,000 came as a terrible blow to Canadian morale and, although the British justified Dieppe as the practice-run that made the subsequent Normandy invasion a success, for Canadians it was difficult to reconcile.

Nearly a year later, Canadian forces got a third crack at the Axis nations, this time in Italy. The Canadian First Division joined with the British Eighth Army in December 1943 and took Sicily in a week, despite strong resistance from German troops. Moving onto the coast of Italy, the Canadians pressed northward, their progress impeded mainly by surrendering Italians. The Italian government capitulated on 8 September 1943 and, in a panic, German dispatched large numbers of their own troops to disarm the remaining Italian forces, seize control of Italy, and block the invading forces.

Difficult terrain gave the Germans the advantage. Forward movement for the Allied troops was very slow and bloody. The Germans established a series of defensive barriers south of Rome, and were able to use relatively small numbers to pin down the much larger invading armies then retreat to newly erected barriers from which they would continue their effective harassment.

The Allied invasion of Italy, in which Canadians played an important role, became bogged down. The Mussolini government had fallen and the Italian Army was effectively no more; its replacement with an occupying German army transformed the campaign almost immediately from one of conquest to one of liberation. Some 700,000 recalcitrant Italian troops were captured by the *Wehrmacht* and forced north to work in German labour camps. There was only a small residue of pro-Hitler Italian troops left on the ground. The remaining Axis forces, however, were enough to stall Allied progress up the Italian boot. Victories were scored at Naples and, for the Canadians in particular, at Ortona, but the gains came slowly and painfully. More than 1,300 Canadians from the 1st Division were dead. Building-to-building fighting characterized much of the combat at Ortona and across the German “Gustav Line” that guarded the southern access to Rome. The siege of Monte Cassino — in which Canadians played a significant role — saw a 5th century Benedictine monastery bombed out of existence in an attempt to dislodge German snipers; the rubble provided even better cover for the German troops and the Allied victory, when it came, was purchased at a high price. The Gustav Line was breached and the Germans fell back to the “Hitler Line”; fighting there was quick — the Line fell in four days — but it cost another 900 Canadian lives. It took nearly two years to completely route the German forces and overcome the final barrier in the north of Italy: the “Gothic Line.” This protracted battle saw the heaviest engagement of Canadian Armoured Divisions in the whole of the war; 4,000 more Canadians died in a month of pitched fighting.

Oversight of Canadian troops continued to be a point of contention. The British Eighth Army subsumed a Canadian Corps consisting most importantly of heavy armour, which alarmed some Canadian officials. Canadian politicians, diplomats, and field officers were constantly alert to further British and American attempts to bring Canadians under their command. This serves to remind us that the Allied field was dominated, not by the Canadians, but by the Americans (who, in Italy, rolled into Rome with the support of the Free French) and the British (whose battalions were a cosmopolitan mix of colonials, refugees from Poland and other countries conquered by the Axis powers, and members of the local anti-fascist resistance). Canadians moved forward in the field when the larger partners in the Alliance

were ready and often had to wait patiently while the Americans and the British sorted out their different goals and strategies.

D-Day

Rome fell on 4 June and two days later the Allies created a second western front. The Normandy invasions ("Operation Neptune") constitute one of the most complex and largest military operations ever. Air, sea, and land forces were deployed to soften up German positions, neutralize U-boat and naval countermeasures, and to secure the French shoreline. Five beaches were targeted and the Canadian forces focused on a 10 km stretch between the towns of Saint-Aubin and La Rivière, code-named **Juno**.

As Second World War battles go, this was Canada's finest hour. The German defences at Juno survived the preparatory air assaults and the beach was bristling with obstacles. In a matter of hours, however, Canadian troops had overrun Juno and were pressing further and faster inland than either the British or the Americans. More than 1,000 Canadian casualties and missing troops constituted a significant loss but expectations were much worse. And, indeed, there was worse to come. Largely inexperienced Canadian infantry fought battle-hardened German troops and armoured divisions and they did so with inferior weaponry and inadequate relief regiments. Exhausted, they nevertheless pressed on along the French coast, liberating ports — including Dieppe, the scene of the disastrous assault in 1942, and Dunkirk.

As the battle across Normandy — "Operation Overlord" — made its way south and eastward, Canadian troops were to prove their worth and to take severe losses in several confrontations with an increasingly desperate Wehrmacht. The liberation of the Netherlands was principally a Canadian task, as was dislodging the German positions in the Scheldt Estuary (the Battle of the Scheldt), which opened badly needed Allied supply lines through Antwerp. At the Falaise Gap in the second week of August 1944 the First Canadian Army launched "Operation Totalize," which involved unusual and high risk nighttime tactics that won the goal but cost much in lives. None of the German positions were easily cleared and matters worsened in the cold and wet winter of 1945 as Allied troops pressed into the Rhineland. A German counterattack caught the British and American leadership napping, leading to the "Battle of the Bulge." In response, the largest force under Canadian command launched "Operation Veritable" into the Reichswald and Hochwald Forests, followed in late February by "Operation Blockbuster" that routed the German defences. Canadian and other Allied forces now had a clear route on German territory. Two months later the "Thousand Year Reich" was finished.

Key Points

- Canada followed the United States into the war against Japan, although its commitments in Hong Kong already put it in the crosshairs of the Empire.
- Losses in Hong Kong marked the effective end of Canada's role in the Pacific. Thereafter efforts focused on the European theatre.
- Major Canadian operations include the failed invasion at Dieppe, the Allied invasion of Italy, and

the D-Day attacks on the Normandy coastline.

Media Attributions

- Canadian prisoners of war being lead through Dieppe by German soldiers, August 19, 1942 © Library and Archives Canada (C-014171) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.15 The Home Front



Figure 6.24 By 1943, the war was being fought on several fronts, including the front yard (though mostly the back). "Victory Gardens" – symbolized here by the woman with the hoe – were a way in which Canadians could contribute to the war effort and a way in which they came to feel engaged in what was otherwise a remote event.

As was the case in what was now described as the "First World War" or "World War I," the Second World War called for sweeping civilian resources and involvement. The lessons of 1914-1918 were near enough in people's memories that the idea of Victory Bonds or women working in munitions factories needed little introduction. It is unlikely that "Rosie the Riveter" did the same job in both wars,

but entirely feasible that she was doing the sort of work in the 1940s that her mother, or at least women of her mother's generation, performed two decades earlier.

The extent of Canadians' engagement in the war was largely a function of numbers. Out of a population of 11 million, only 8 million were over the age of 18 years. This was not enough to meet both the need for a million-man army and the rapid increase in demand for food exports and munitions headed for Britain. Able-bodied men were forced out of what were now regarded as non-essential jobs (like taxi driving, the production of sporting goods, and the sale of real estate) so that they could tackle war industries or service in the forces.[1] Conscription might be an issue that the government wished to avoid but enlisting workers from non-traditional sources was a task they hurried to manage.

Women in Industry

In March 1942, Ottawa took the unprecedented step of registering every woman born between 1918 and 1922 under an order-in-council called the National Selective Service Regulations. (Similar orders were passed that identified and regulated men from 17 to 70 years of age, and ensured that key industries — including school teaching — would not be abandoned by workers too eager to join up or find better paying work as it came along.) Within a year there were 373,000 women in manufacturing jobs (of which 261,000 worked in munitions) and another 439,000 in the service sector. Nearly one-in-three workers in Canada's aviation industry — mostly dedicated at this time, of course, to fighter and transport aircraft — were women.[2] Overall it has been reckoned that there were more than a million women in the full-time workforce, and that figure does not include women in the agricultural sector, nor does it include women in part-time paid labour.[3]

One area of spectacular expansion was shipbuilding. The collapsed economy of the 1930s witnessed a running down of capacity along the nation's waterfronts. It was thought that there were, on the eve of the war, three active shipyards in the whole country and these employed fewer than 4,000 men. This expanded to 90 yards employing over 126,000 women and men.[4] Shipyards in wartime Vancouver alone employed some 17,000 workers — perhaps half of them women — and the several slipways were launching a Victory Ship a week between them. The Canadian fleet was, by the end of the war, probably the 5th largest on earth, a position onto which it would not hold.

1. Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 5th edition (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2007), 184-5.

2. Canadian War Museum, "Democracy at War", accessed 15 November 2015, http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/newspapers/canadawar/women_e.shtml.

3. Ruth Roach Pierson, "They're Still Women After All," *The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986): 9.

4. Canadian War Museum, "Democracy at War", accessed 16 November 2015, http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/newspapers/canadawar/shipping_e.shtml.



Figure 6.25 Starting in 1942, Vancouver's Burrard Drydock hired more than 1,000 women. Here we see the union's shop stewards eating in the shipyard canteen, ca. 1942.

The war opened opportunities, too, for women at levels above the shop floor. Probably the best known and most honoured example is Elsie "Queen of the Hurricanes" MacGill (1905-80), the world's first female aeronautical engineer. She was the daughter of a prominent lawyer father and a feminist/ suffragette mother — Helen Gregory MacGill — who was a pioneer woman on the British Columbian bench. Elsie MacGill's transition into management of the Canadian Car and Foundry company put her in charge of a mainly female workforce that churned out more than 1,400 fighter aircraft (Hawker Hurricanes) before the end of the war.



Figure 6.26 Elsie MacGill claimed early in her career, "Although I never learned to fly myself, I accompanied the pilots on all test flights – even the dangerous first flight – of any aircraft I worked on."

Sea blockades meant that raw materials necessary to war industries were feared to be in jeopardy from 1939 on. Women were tasked with organizing scrap drives, salvaging metals and rubber in particular but also kitchen scraps. Bones and fat — used in the production of ammunition — were a special target; scavenging families in Winnipeg accumulated more than a million pounds of fat and bones over the course of the war.[5] In practice, it was the children of urban areas who took the lead on salvage crusades, rather naturally lending it a competitive flavour.

5. Ian Mosby, "Food on the Home Front during the Second World War", *Wartime Canada*, accessed 15 November 2015, http://wartimecanada.ca/essay/eating/food-home-front-during-second-world-war.



Figure 6.27 Recycling never looked so stylish. Canadian women were called upon to reduce waste and serve the war effort through salvage. *[Long Description]*

The careful management of resources extended to the food supply. Britain's trade corridors were cut off so Canadian food production had to increase (difficult to do in times of labour shortages) and more had to be diverted to exports. As early as 1941, Canada was providing 77% of Britain's flour and wheat. By the end of the war a quarter of the cheese, two-fifths of the bacon, and 15% of the eggs consumed in Britain came from Canadian farms.[6] While the Wartime Prices and Trade Board (WPTB) established limits on consumption and price-gouging, Ottawa's various agencies encouraged Canadians to turn their gardens into small farms.

Canadians could feel the war in their stomachs and see it on their plates. They could also wear the war effort because of restrictions on fabric for clothing. Excessive trim was pared back, leading to narrower

6. Ian Mosby, *Food Will Win the War: The Politics, Culture, and Science of Food on Canada's Home Front* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014), 4.

lapels on men's suits and a narrower cut on women's clothes along with shorter hems. One explanation for the so-called zoot suit riots of the closing years of the war was the apparent — and unpatriotic — use of too much cloth on the exaggerated shoulders and thighs of the zoot suiters' eponymous jackets and trousers. (The fact that Vancouver's zoot suiters were mainly drawn from the Italian community in the East End may have been another local factor.)[7]

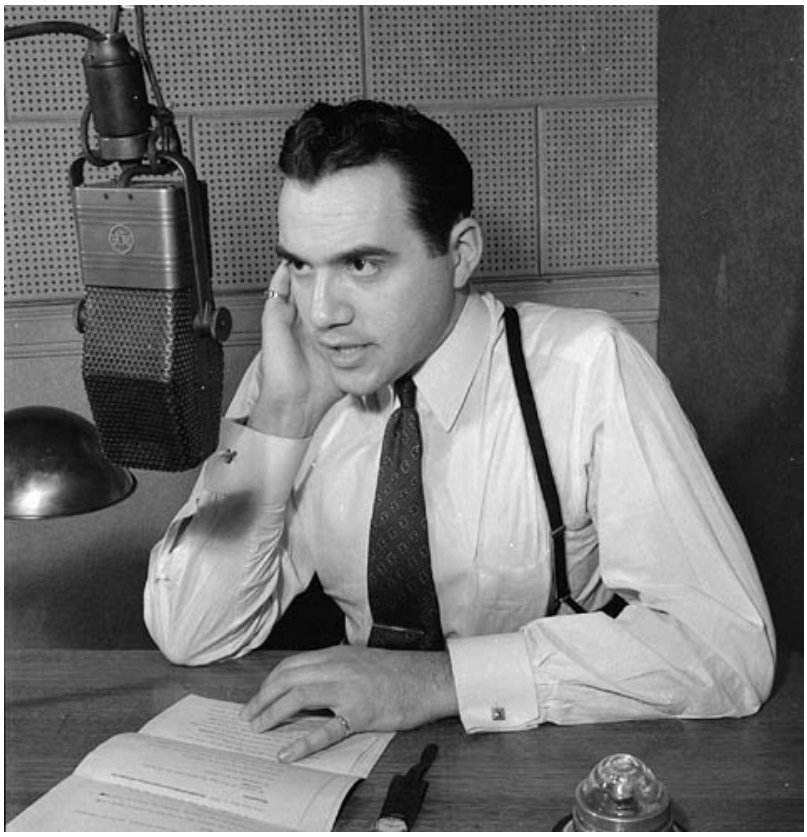


Figure 6.28 Lorne Greene (1915-87) would achieve notoriety on the CBC as "The Voice of Canada." Assigned the task of reading out the names of soldiers and other Canadians killed in combat or at sea – and because of his deep resonant voice – he was more widely known as "The Voice of Doom."

Wartime Cultures

While escapism defined much of the entertainment produced in the 1930s, the war provided subject matter galore. Canadian comic books enjoyed a brief period of popularity as competitive American publications were frozen out of the market. The most successful of these, *Johnny Canuck*, appeared in 1941 but did not survive the war years. Hollywood movies had all but completely superseded vaudeville by 1939; feature films and short (generally cheaply made) serials were an important means of transmitting anti-German and anti-Japanese sentiment. They sometimes featured Canadian characters (usually played by Americans) so as to give American audiences a sense of the role played by allies. The 1943 war-thriller, *Northern Pursuit*, featured the great matinee idol and action actor,

7. "Zoot Suit Riots," Past Tense: Vancouver History, Lani Russwurm, accessed 17 November 2015, https://pasttensevancouver.wordpress.com/2008/03/03/zoot-suit-riots-2/.

Errol Flynn, portraying a Mountie who captures German saboteurs determined to disrupt Canadian-American supply lines. What is noteworthy about this film is that Flynn plays a German-Canadian whose ethnicity draws the suspicion of his RCMP colleagues until his loyalty to Canada is made clear. The Canadian film industry, small though it was, produced propaganda-inflected films, including the National Film Board's *Canada Carries On* series (many of which were narrated by Lorne Greene). *Warclouds over the Pacific*, for example, was released on 1 December 1941, days before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, but it made clear Canada's official perspective on the dangers coming from that direction.

Radio was, in the 1930s and 1940s, at its peak as an electronic media. The presence of the CBC at this time provided another — government-controlled — means of being bombarded with news about the war and further demands for personal sacrifice. Radio waves were not as respectful of borders as print media, so American programming and propaganda was part and parcel of most urban Canadians' listening diet.

Many of these media traded in fear as a means of whipping up support for the war. Routine precautions — training children on the east and west coast on what to expect in the event of a surprise German or Japanese attack, or the mandatory use of black-out blinds and headlamp covers so as to confuse aerial scouts from Japan — added to the sense that there was real danger nearby and not only on the war front.

In a multitude of ways, then, the Second World War certainly felt more like a total war. It was impossible to avoid news, film, rationing, restrictions, admonitions, salvage drives, calls for volunteers, and requests for more Victory Bonds. Canadians experienced it with a mixture of emotions, though, including grateful relief that the Depression years were finally over (although fearful they might return). Full employment — even at a time of rationing and very little in the way of consumer goods to purchase — was a good thing.

Key Points

- As a total war, WWII made greater demands on Canadians on the home front than was the case in 1914-18.
- Ottawa introduced regulations to manage the supply of labour and to ensure the continuation of essential industries.
- Women entered waged labour in war industries in large numbers, taking jobs that were vacated by servicemen and newly created positions as well.
- Scrap drives were a means of obtaining scarce materials and directly involving women and children in the war effort.
- Film and radio — both mostly interwar innovations — contributed significantly to the propaganda campaign.

Long Descriptions

Figure 6.27 long description: Poster from World War II. It depicts three women in skirts and blouses marching down the street with broad smiles. One holds newspapers; another holds a skillet and a kettle; the third holds a bag on her arm and a broom in her hands instead. A Scottish terrier trots alongside the women with a bone in its mouth.

At the top, the poster says “We’re in the army now,” surrounded by musical notes to indicate that the women are singing these words. At the bottom, it says “Your aid is vital! Save metals, rags, paper, bones, rubber, glass. They are used in war supplies. Get in touch with your local committee. Issued by Public Information, for National Salvage Office, Ottawa; under authority of Hon. J. G. Gardiner, Minister of National War Services.” [Return to Figure 6.27]

Media Attributions

- Attack on all Fronts: war propaganda campaign — World War II © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2860024) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Shop Stewards at Burrard Drydock, ca. 1942 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Elsie MacGill, April 1938 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- We’re in the Army Now © Toronto Public Library (1939-45. Salvage. Item 12. L) is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Commentator Lorne Greene broadcasting over the C.B.C. national network, Dec. 1942 © Ronny Jaques, National Film Board of Canada, Library and Archives Canada (PA-116178) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.16 Enlisted Women, Conscription, and the Zombie Army



Figure 6.29 Personnel of the Canadian Women's Army Corps at No. 3 CWAC (Basic) Training Centre, Kitchener, ON, 1944.

Mandatory military service was, for King and his contemporaries, the great bogeyman of Canadian affairs. It drove a wedge between French and English Canadians in the First World War and there was no appetite for a repeat of that experience. When asked whether he would introduce conscription, King famously replied "not necessarily conscription but conscription if necessary." Even the Conservative Leader of the Official Opposition, Robert Manion (1881-1943) was hostile to the idea of conscription. Like Borden in 1914-17, King hoped for a volunteer army. He had luck on his side.

The Depression had two consequences that supported early enlistments. First, people were poor and desperate for a regular paycheque. "Joining up" meant an income and the government paid one's living costs as well. It also, for a great many, meant dignity, something that was in short supply in the 1930s. In addition, many of the unemployed and working Canadians sympathized and identified with the communists (both those crushed in the Spanish Civil War and the regime in the Kremlin) and/or with the victims of German and Italian invasions in Europe and elsewhere (see Section 7.9). An anti-fascist **popular front** had formed across communist and social-democratic lines that replaced the pro-Empire sensibilities of August 1914 with something more ideological.

Demand for conscription was strong, however, in English Canadian circles, right from 1939. Its

advocates argued that this was a total war and that playing catch-up with troop numbers — as Borden had — was unacceptable. The *National Resources Mobilization Act, 1940* (NRMA) passed in June, when the war was not yet a year old and Canadian troops had not yet seen combat, other than those who retreated via Dunkirk a month earlier. The *Act* allowed Ottawa to register all men eligible for service and to call them up for home defence if needed. There was plenty of home defence work to be done and these conscripts — contemptuously described by their peers as "zombies" — could attend to that. Support among King's Quebec MPs was muted but it was a good compromise in that it satisfied some on both sides of the question while not angering any single constituency.

By 1942, however, casualties abroad and in the Battle of the Atlantic meant that numbers needed to be replenished. Arthur Meighen was once again leader of the Conservatives and, unlike his predecessor, Manion, was enthusiastically in support of conscription. King's strategy was to hold a plebiscite in April asking the electorate to release him from his earlier promise to spare conscripts from service abroad. Although the aggregate returns were 64% in favour of sending zombies abroad, the Quebec numbers were a very decisive 72% against. King now had the instrument in his hands to recruit and mobilize more soldiers but felt powerless to use it.



Figure 6.30 Nursing Sisters Atala Coulombe, Elizabeth Gordon, Nan Prescott, and Frances Tetlaw of the No.15 Canadian General Hospital, RCA Medical Corps, at El Arrouch.

By 1944, the Canadian armed forces incorporated more than 500,000 fighting men; 21,600 women signed on for the **Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWACs)**, another 23,000 joined the **RCAF (Women's Division)** and the **Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service** (WRCNS or, simply and elegantly, the "Wrens"), and nearly 5,000 more served as nursing sisters in the armed forces. King's insistence that Canadian troops participate in the Italian campaign split the armed services' command

and reduced the likelihood of reinforcements to either the Mediterranean front or Normandy. Both Canadian armies were in some difficulty as a result. By mid-summer in 1944 the question of conscription was back on the table. Reluctantly, in November 1944, King agreed to deploy some of the zombies. Riots broke out in Montreal and Quebec and protests among zombies in camps across British Columbia. The mutiny in Terrace in northwestern BC was the largest military rising, with French-Canadian conscripts joined by English-Canadian zombies.

What saved King's political career in this instance was the rapidly closing window of war. By the time the conscripts reached Europe the war was all but over.

Key Points

- Voluntarism was made easy by the poor economic conditions in the 1930s and widespread working-class opposition to European fascism.
- Conscription was introduced to beef up the home defence campaign and King's government promised not to send unwilling conscripts abroad.
- In the midst of the 1944 Italian and Normandy campaigns, King broke his earlier commitment and ordered home defence conscripts — or "zombies" — into active service, producing a rash of protests.

Media Attributions

- Personnel of the Canadian Women's Army Corps at No. 3 CWAC (Basic) Training Centre © Canada Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada, (PA-145516) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Nursing sisters of No. 15 Canadian General Hospital, Royal Canadian Army Medical Corps (R.C.A.M.C.), El Arrouch, Algeria, 15 July 1943 © Lieut. Terry F. Rowe, Canada. Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada, (PA-213771) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.17 Japanese Canadians in the Second World War

Jordan Stanger-Ross (University of Victoria) Pamela Sugiman (Ryerson University) & the Landscapes of Injustice Research Collective

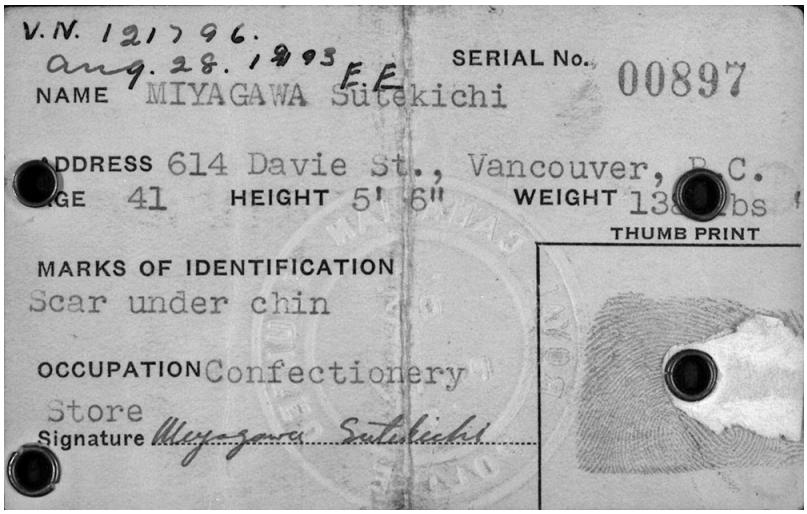


Figure 6.31 Sutekichi Miyagawa's internment identification card.
[Long Description]

The Second World War internment of all "persons of the Japanese race" serves as a powerful reminder to all Canadians that the rights of citizenship can be legally revoked and that the history of our country is not one of racial harmony.

In September 1946, a Japanese Canadian woman named Tsurukichi Takemoto wrote officials to protest what she had experienced since Canada's entry into the war in the Pacific (7 December 1941). Alongside many others in her community, Tsurukichi had been interned in Greenwood, a former "ghost town" in the interior of British Columbia and one of several similarly isolated sites used by the federal government.

For roughly 22,000 Canadians of Japanese descent, regardless of social class, sex, age, and generation, it turned out that race superseded citizenship. Angered by the violation of her rights, in two letters dated 5 September 1946, Tsurukichi forcefully reminded government officials, "[w]e are not Japanese Nationals." With outrage, she explained:

> I did not answer until now because your letter just made me mad enough not to answer . . . Isn't the method you're using like the Nazis? Do you think it is democratic? No! I certainly think you're just like the Fascists confiscating people's property, chasing them out of their homes, sending them out to a kind of a concentration camp, special registration cards, permits for traveling [*sic*]. Don't you think this is the method used in dictatorship countries[?] Democracy means no racial discrimination, or is it the very opposite[?][1]

1. Mrs. Tsurukichi Takemoto to H.F. Green [Image 1634], and to G.B. Spain [1635], 5 September 1946, Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property Records, Vancouver Office Files, Reel C9476, *Héritage Project*, Canadiana.org.

What historical conditions precipitated Tsurukichi's anger? Did her charges hit their mark? What prompted some Japanese Canadians to liken their treatment at the hands of the Canadian government to those enacted by the most brutally racist regimes of the era? These questions remain troubling today.

The Government's wartime treatment of Japanese Canadians was supported by hundreds of legal enactments, most of them made possible by the *War Measures Act*. The *War Measures Act* gave the cabinet of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King the power to regulate all persons "of the Japanese race" through Orders-in-Council: that is, declarations of law that bypassed debate in the legislature and proved resistant to judicial challenge.

Such policies had dramatic consequences for all Japanese Canadians. Property owned by Japanese Canadians was stolen, looted, destroyed, and neglected. What survived was sold without the consent of its owners. While they received some compensation for these sales, owners had no opportunity to challenge the (often highly unfavourable) terms of exchange and they lost the right not to sell. Further, the proceeds of these sales were doled out as allowances to Japanese Canadians who were struggling to support themselves while interned. Tsurukichi's letter highlights one woman's resistance to the forced sale of her family's property. Informed that government agents had sold her family's belongings for a fraction of their value, Tsurukichi became "mad enough not to answer." Family heirlooms, including fine Japanese pottery, she informed officials, "are not what you think they are": such belongings left in trust to Canadian officials had monetary value and emotional meaning that was all but discarded as they were auctioned to eager buyers while their legitimate owners remained interned. Another Japanese Canadian, whose home, 17.5 acres of land, and his personal belongings had been sold without his consent, wrote, "It does not seem just that as Canadians my family should be deprived of a home which to us meant more than just a home. It was, to us, the foundation of security and freedom as Canadian citizens."[2]



Figure 6.32 The roundup of fishing boats belonging to Japanese-Canadian internees, prior to sale.

2. Mr. Rikizo Yoneyama to Minister of Justice [Image 1448], 31 July 1944, Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property Records, Vancouver Office Files, Reel C9476, *Héritage Project*, Canadiana.org.

Internment meant different things for different groups of people. In addition to the wartime dispossession of property, government policies required that Japanese Canadians carry special registration cards and obey curfews, face restricted mobility and communications, and live with the constant threat of arbitrary searches of their homes. As well, the internment resulted in the separation of families, forced labour for men, and for some, incarceration in prisoner of war camps in northern Ontario. When the government declared Canada's west coast a "protected area," the entire Japanese Canadian population was uprooted. Some 12,000 Japanese Canadians were sent by train to live in hastily constructed shacks and abandoned buildings in various parts of the BC interior: Greenwood, Sandon, Kaslo, New Denver, Rosebery, Slocan City, Bay Farm, Popoff, Lemon Creek, and Tashme. Approximately 4,000 were sent to labour on sugar beet farms in Alberta and Manitoba. And slightly over 1,000 who had sufficient funds established so-called self-supporting camps where they essentially paid for the costs of their own internment.

Toward the war's end, Japanese Canadians were forced to "choose" between a further uprooting to the unknown territory of Eastern Canada and exile to Japan, a country that many had never before visited. Almost 4,000 Japanese Canadians were eventually deported to Japan. All Japanese Canadians were prohibited from returning to British Columbia until 1949.

In the decades following these events, defenders of the policies have argued that they resulted from the pressures of war. In the first year of Canada's war with Japan, many politicians and social commentators expressed genuine, though ill-informed, concerns that Japanese Canadians could threaten the security of Canada's West Coast. However, the enforcement of policies that violated the rights and freedoms of all "persons of the Japanese race," rather than more targeted measures to regulate the lives of individuals specifically suspected of collusion with Japan, reflected the racist ideologies that buttressed the wartime treatment of the Japanese Canadian community. Prime Minister King expressed such ideologies in 1942 when he privately stated that "no matter how honourable they might appear to be, or how long they may have been away from Japan, naturalized, or even those who were born in [Canada]. Everyone of them . . . would be saboteurs and would help Japan when the moment came."[3] Cabinet Minister Ian Mackenzie, the federal politician most closely connected with these policies similarly argued to a constituent:

> I do not think that any question of nationality [that is, Canadian citizenship] should prevent our having the right to advocate . . . their complete removal to their own country. Their country should never have been Canada . . . I do not believe the Japanese are an assimilable race.[4]

Such positions, as critics such as Tsurukichi Takemoto realized, were not merely the regrettable isolated actions of some Canadians who panicked at a time of war. Rather, they were part of the systemic racism that pervades Canada's history.[5]

3. *The Diaries of William Lyon Mackenzie King*, February 28, 1942, available online at Library and Archives Canada.

4. Letter to Godwin, 7 December 1942, File 70-25, MG 27 III-B5, Library and Archives Canada.

5. Look onlin for more information on the Landscapes of Injustice Research Collective and its publishing conventions.



Figure 6.33 A very young David Suzuki with his two sisters in an internment camp during WWII.

Key Points

- Following Pearl Harbor, some 22,000 Canadians of Japanese descent or nationality were stripped of their property and interned under the *War Measures Act.*
- Internees' property was often auctioned off or otherwise sold with no compensation to the owners.
- Japanese Canadians' rights were severely curtailed and, at war's end, they were encouraged to either migrate to Eastern Canada or choose exile to Japan.
- White Canadians' fears of the Japanese community were entangled in a racist notion that essentialized loyalty to the Japanese Empire.

Long Descriptions

Figure 6.31 long description: An internment identification card. The number V.N. 12796 is at the top above the date August 28 (unreadable year). The name is Miyagawa Sutekichi, and the serial number is 00897. His address is 614 Davie St., Vancouver, B.C. Age is 41, height is 5'6″, weight is 138 pounds. Marks of identification: scar under chin. Occupation: confectionery store. The man has filled in his signature and his thumb print. [Return to Figure 6.31]

Media Attributions

- Back of Sutekichi Miyagawa's internment identification card issued by the Canadian Government in compliance with Order-in-Council P.C. 117 © Library and Archives Canada (PA-103543) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Fishermen's Reserve rounding up Japanese-Canadian fishing vessels © Canada Dept. of

National Defence, Library and Archives Canada, (PA-037467) is licensed under a Public Domain license

- David Suzuki and his two sisters in an internment camp © Margaret C. Foster, Library and Archives Canada (PA-187835) is licensed under a Public Domain license

6.18 From V-E to V-J



Figure 6.34 As the German army collapsed, Canadian troops liberated one town after the next in the Netherlands. The 7th Canadian Infantry Brigade at Zwolle, 14 April 1945.

Victory in Europe, Victory in Japan

As winter settled in across western and southern Europe, the Canadian units in Italy had an opportunity to join up with those in France and the Low Countries. The crisis of insufficient troop reinforcements that necessitated calling up additional troops passed. Fighting resumed in March 1945 and did not let up until the collapse of Germany on 6 May. Victory in Europe (V-E) was celebrated across Canada and with drunken rioting in Halifax. What Canadians at home did not see and could barely be expected to imagine was the relief of slave labour camps across the Reich, and especially the liberation of **concentration camps**.



Figure 6.35 A Canadian nurse at the site of Bergen-Belsen shortly after it was relieved (and demolished) by Canadian and British forces. [Long Description]

The war as a whole, however, was still not over. Russian troops had met with Allied forces at the Elbe River, a symbol of the military success of the Alliance in Europe. There was, however, no immediate likelihood of a Japanese surrender. Stalin agreed to Roosevelt's request to turn the Red Army to the east to liberate China. Although Japan was struggling to maintain its shipping lanes and the flow of fuel to its navies, the Empire's ground troops put up enormous resistance on every island the Americans besieged. The back of Japanese resolve was finally broken when the Red Army took Manchuria and the Americans dropped atomic bombs on two major cities: Nagasaki and Hiroshima. Canadians participated in the development of the atomic bomb and in the supply of uranium but otherwise they played no significant or direct role in the Asia-Pacific War. This did not stop them from celebrating **V-J Day** (Victory over Japan Day), especially in Vancouver.



Figure 6.36 Japan's war against China raged from 1931 to 1945, so V-J Day was celebrated with enormous festivities and parades in Vancouver's Chinatown.

Taking the Toll

The number of troops lost in the war overall represented another blow to the Canadian population, and it came only a generation after the mortality of the First World War. Some 45,000 Canadians were killed in battle or at sea and thousands more were maimed. As was the case at the end of the First War, the extent of psychological trauma was unmeasured, although the stigma of "shell shock" had been replaced in the Canadian forces by a greater respect for "battle exhaustion."[1] (The term "post-traumatic stress disorder" would not appear until the 1970s.) The fall of Japan was followed by the liberation of POW camps containing Canadian prisoners. Their captivity began in December 1941 with the capture of Hong Kong and their numbers were increased with other Canadians captured at Singapore. Their treatment was appalling, mortality rates were very high, and psychological damage was severe. Reintegration of service men and women into Canada in peacetime would present challenges.

Against this toll, Canada's cities were not in ruins. Infrastructure was in some respects badly neglected and factory machinery was worn out or in sore need of reorientation to peacetime production; in some respects, rebuilding from scratch would have been easier than repurposing exhausted equipment and assembly lines. The ability and will of the state to intervene in the economic and social well-being of Canadians was far advanced on what it had been in the 1930s. Some of these social and economic themes are explored in the chapters that follow. What is worth underlining here is that the wars were unprecedented events globally and for Canada in particular. Canada had long been a country that looked upriver from the Gulf of St. Lawrence; on account of two world wars, Canada was now a nation that had a growing sense of having a place in the wider world.

1. Terry Copp and William McAndrew, *Battle Exhaustion: Soldiers and Psychiatrists in the Canadian Army, 1939-1945* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990).

The Kamloops Kid

Kanao Inouye was born in Kamloops, BC to Japanese immigrants. He attended the local elementary school and then the family moved to the coast where he attended Vancouver Technical School. In 1938 he travelled to Japan to complete his education, and in 1942 he was an enlisted man serving as an interpreter in the Imperial Army and on hand for the mopping up after the fall of Hong Kong.

Inouye's principal role was that of interpreter but he was given a long leash when it came to abusing and even torturing prisoners and suspected spies. He lashed out at Canadian POWs in particular, claiming that he was getting even for years of ill-treatment by whites in BC. Known to the Canadian prisoners as the "Kamloops Kid," Inouye's brutality led to deaths and, subsequently, to his arrest after Japan's capitulation.

While several Japanese officers stood trial at war's end for war crimes, Sargeant Inouye could not. Born in Canada, he was viewed by the international tribunal as a "Canadian citizen." This was technically impossible as Canadian citizenship – as opposed to British subjecthood – was only introduced in 1946. What's more, as a Japanese Canadian his citizenship rights in Canada were poor before 1941 and they became even more limited with the Internment. So, immediately after the war, it seemed that he was going to be spared execution because of a citizenship that he could never have claimed at home in Canada.

The irony deepens. As a "Canadian citizen" Inouye was subject to Canadian laws, specifically those regarding treason. In 1947 he was retried, found guilty, and hanged.

Key Points

- The fall of Germany in 1945 was followed by the collapse of Japan after two atomic bombs were dropped on populated centres.
- The death toll among Canadian troops and other service men and women was not as great as in the First World War, but it surpassed 45,000.
- One effect of the war was to shift Canada toward a more global orientation, economically and politically.

Long Descriptions

Figure 6.35 long description: A woman in a military uniform stands straight beside a monument. The monument is a plain stone block with a Star of David near the top. Etched into the stone are the words "Israel and the world shall remember thirty thousand Jews [unreadable] in the concentration camp of Bergen-Belsen at the hands of the murderous Nazis. Earth conceal rot the blood shed on thee! First anniversary of liberation, 15th April 1946. [unreadable line] Central Jewish Committee, British Zone." [Return to Figure 6.35]

Media Attributions

- Liberation of Zwolle by personnel of the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division © Lieut. Donald I. Grant, Canada Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (PA-145972) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Canadian nurse at Bergen-Belsen © John Douglas Belshaw is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

6.19 Summary



Figure 6.37 Radio comedians Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster (aka: Wayne & Shuster) take on Hitler, ca. 1944.

Thirty-one years passed between the start of the Great War and the end of the Second World War, between an assassination in Sarajevo and an atomic explosion over Hiroshima. Canada was at war for nearly a third of that period. For another third, it was mired in an economic depression with terrible social consequences. The years left over include peace and economic prosperity (albeit unevenly shared), along with a catastrophic influenza pandemic, a small but deep depression from 1918-21, and massive labour unrest. Looked at this way, the “short 20th century” got off to a terrible start.

The wars provide a reliable theme in the writing and reading of Canadian history. They are invoked to show us times when the nation pulled together toward a common goal against a common foe. These were nation-making episodes. Vimy Ridge, in this account, is much more than a battle — and an unspeakably bloody battle at that. Vimy, Ypres, Passchendaele, Dieppe, Juno Beach: these are all hills that Canada went up as one thing and came down another.

As soldiers know all too well, war is mostly waiting. And while Canadian troops — and CWACs and Wrens and others — were waiting, the nation was not standing still. It found other ways in which to express itself. These include the general suspension of civil rights and the arrest and dispossession specifically of “enemy aliens” in both wars. The imposition of mandatory service — conscription — in both wars ran headlong into the old polarities of imperialism versus nationalism, although even imperialism was being recalibrated somewhat. The state conceded much to women during the Great War: from the position that temperance was a matter of individual choice and morality, the nation’s leaders moved to outright prohibition of liquor. Likewise federal and provincial politicians (all men at this time) abandoned the perspective that voting and life in the public sphere would place the moral and

physical fibre of Canadian womanhood at risk, extending the franchise and pressing women and girls to serve the national interest by assuming roles in factories and civic life generally. It was also in wartime that Ottawa submitted much of its economic and military autonomy to the country with which it had been at loggerheads for the better part of a century and a half.

Certainties do not do well in times of war, although contradictions seem to thrive. While the first total war entailed a dramatic extension of democratic rights (while reeling them back in from some groups of immigrants), the aftermath saw a crackdown on workers' organizations. The interwar years continued the theme of suspicion between the Canadian establishment and the working class, with one side claiming a monopoly on patriotic loyalty and the interests of Canada and the other increasingly characterized as a foreign movement to be extirpated. The inability of Depression-era governments to find and forge policies to fight crippling unemployment served to reinforce the walls between labour and capital. R.B. Bennett's particular kind of anti-labourism cued up in the 1930s new certainties regarding the limits of democracy. This sent activist workers running to socialist, communist, agrarian, populist, and even fascist options — many of which articulated a goal of toppling the system rather than modifying it. These were new certainties going into the Second World War and it is one of the remarkable outcomes of that conflict that it produced a "post-war settlement" between labour, government, and capital that would frame prosperity for another 30 years.

At the end of the War of 1812, Indigenous allies of the British colonies hoped for respect in return for their involvement in the struggle against the United States. At the end of both World Wars, Indigenous communities again hoped that their warriors' sacrifice and involvement would be repaid with respect. Another generation would pass before democratic reforms would include Indigenous voters. It would be another two decades before some of the worst aspects of state- and church-management of First Nations would see the light of day.

It isn't that there was no appetite for reform, however. The next chapter demonstrates the extent to which Canada as a nation wished to see extensive changes in social, moral, biological, and political relations in the post-Confederation period. Viewed from that angle, one can see the war and Depression years as background to a prolonged dialogue on the sort of people Canadians might become.

Key Terms

appeasement: Refers to Britain's policy of avoiding war with Germany by making concessions.

art deco: A visual and decorative style associated with the first three decades of the 20th century and, in its emphasis on symmetry and its association with technological advancement, is often regarded as the foremost modernist style.

balance of power: In international relations, refers to a complex of evenly weighted alliances that theoretically prohibit any one participant or side from going to war.

Balfour Declaration: In 1926, a statement released at the Imperial Conference and named for the conference chair, Lord Balfour. Formally recognizes the Dominions of the British Empire as autonomous nations capable of independent action internationally and in the workings of the new British Commonwealth of Nations.

Battle of Britain: A series of aerial attacks launched by Germany against Britain beginning in July 1940 and countered by an aerial defence. Along with the strategic night bombing campaign that followed (the Blitz), it can be said to have lasted for nearly one year.

Battle of the Atlantic: A nearly continuous series of naval confrontations that began in 1939 and ended only with the fall of Germany in 1945.

British Commonwealth of Nations: A voluntary association of Britain and its former colonies. Established incrementally after 1919 and especially in the Balfour Declaration (1926).

Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF): The name given to the troops sent overseas during the Great War (World War I).

Canadian National Railway: Created in 1919 out of several financially troubled railway companies that had been inherited by Ottawa, including the Canadian Northern Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway; constituted a trans-continental operation in competition with the CPR.

Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWACs): Established in 1941 as a separate non-combatant unit of the Canadian Army; provided support mainly as office staff, drivers/mechanics, and canteen workers; some served overseas.

concentration camps: A prison camp established to contain and punish captured populations. The British ran concentration camps for Boer prisoners in the Second Boer War; Canada placed suspected enemy aliens — Ukrainians and Germans in the Great War, Germans, Italians, and Japanese in the Second — in camps that were not punitive but nor were they appropriately provisioned; and the Germans infamously used concentration camps as the means of executing large numbers of Jewish prisoners (along with other "enemies" of the Reich). Concentration camps continue to be used.

Dieppe Raid: 19 August 1942; also known as "Operation Jubilee;" an attack on the north coast of France that was meant to gather intelligence for a larger subsequent invasion; of the 6,000 Allied troops involved, 5,000 were Canadian. The mission was badly planned, atrociously researched, and tragic in its execution. Nevertheless, it contributed intelligence that helped at Normandy three years later.

dollar-a-year men: Leading entrepreneurs, financiers, and manufacturers on loan from their companies to the federal government for the duration of the Second World War for a nominal fee of one dollar.

Dunkirk: Refers to the hurried evacuation of Canadian, British, and other troops from the port of the same name following their retreat in the face of Germany's invasion of northern France in 1940.

First Quebec Conference: Held in August 1943; a top-secret high level meeting between leaders and representatives of the Canadian, British, and American governments. Canada's actual involvement did not extend far beyond hosting the event.

flapper: Term used to describe fashionable young women in the interwar years; associated with hedonism, social rebellion, and style.

Governor-General: The Crown's representative in Canada; appointed by the King or Queen.

Hyde Park Agreement, Hyde Park Declaration (1941): A wartime pact between Canada and the United States; allowed Canadian-made goods manufactured for export to Britain to be covered under the Britain-USA Lend-Lease Agreement.

interwar: The period between 1918 and 1939.

isolationism: The policy of isolating one's nation-state from international turmoil and alliances.

jingoism: Term coined in the 1870s; denotes patriotism applied in an aggressive foreign policy. Canada's involvement in the Second Boer War contained elements of jingoism.

Juno: The invasion of France in 1944 – code-named Operation Overlord – targeted a series of beaches,

each of which was assigned its own operational name associated with alphabet call-letters. The American forces struck at Utah and Omaha; the British attacked Sword and Gold; the Canadian assault came at Juno. Originally the British and Canadian beaches were named for fish (i.e.: Swordfish, Goldfish) and Juno was called Jellyfish, but British Prime Minister Winston Churchill objected to the idea that soldiers were bound to die on a beach code-named "Jelly" and insisted on the change to "Juno."

King-Byng Affair: Also known as the King-Byng Thing, a constitutional crisis arising from Mackenzie King's test of Governor-General Byng's authority to call an election when requested by a Prime Minister.

Ku Klux Klan (KKK): An explicitly racist, anti-Catholic illegal organization with roots in the American South; established a presence and substantial following in Saskatchewan in the 1920s, where it played a role in the outcome of the 1929 provincial election. Largely dissipated thereafter, the Klan briefly reappeared in the 1970s in British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario.

League of Nations: A post-Great War international assembly established in 1919, of which Canada was a founding member. Its principal objective was to create conditions of collective security through a mutual defence pact and the application of economic sanctions; failed largely because of the United States' refusal to join and member states' (incuding Canada's) fear of being embroiled in conflicts (military or economic) abroad.

Lend-Lease Agreement: Prior to declaring war against the Axis Powers in 1941, the United States agreed to support the Allied war effort by selling materiel to Britain on a deferred-payment program. Canada was able to take advantage of this arrangement, which led to rapid industrial recovery and expansion. See also Hyde Park Declaration.

Manhattan Project: 1942-46; a secretive and international Second World War research and development project conceived to develop the first atomic bomb. Canada contributed the uranium and, at what was still a prototype reactor on the Chalk River in Ontario, developed the processes for extracting weapons-grade plutonium.

mediums: Individuals thought to possess the ability to act as a bridge between the living and the dead; they were the "media" through which messages could be transmitted; part of an early 20th century trend toward spiritualism that was fed, in part, by the enormous mortality of WWI.

muscular Christianity: A late 19th century combination of Christian piety and athleticism, especially as regards masculinity.

Ogdensburg Agreement: 1940, a wartime accord signed between United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King; produced the Permanent Joint Board of Defence.

Permanent Joint Board of Defense: Established in 1940. See Ogdensburg Agreement.

Phoney War: Having declared war against Germany on 3 September 1939, France and Britain made no effort to engage the enemy in combat for the next eight months. Note that in Canadian and British English it is always spelled "Phoney," with an "e", whereas in American English it is spelled "Phony."

popular front: A political alliance of left-wing, progressive parties and organizations to counter fascism in the 1920s, '30s, and '40s.

prisoner of war (POW): In modern warfare there are conventions regarding the appropriate treatment of captured soldiers or POWs. Most POWs are held for the duration of the war in guarded "POW camps." Camps were established in Canada to handle POWs from the European theatre of war in the Second World War.

Progressive Party: Formed in 1920 as an alliance of the various United Farmer MPs elected to Ottawa; initially a rural protest party with strong roots in Ontario.

Regulation 17: In Ontario, a provincial program to reduce the availability of French language education;

introduced shortly before the Great War; contributed to tensions between Francophone Quebec and Anglophone Ontario and the federal government.

resistance armies: Also resistance forces, resistance movements; forces aligned against either a legitimate regime or an occupying regime; an unofficial army typically comprised of soldiers who have deserted the national armed forces, as well as civilians who offer services and support to actual fighters and sometimes fight themselves.

RCAF (Women's Division): Formed in 1941 when women from the British Royal Air Force (RAF) arrived in Canada to assist training. Embarrassed, the RCAF agreed to accept women and became the first branch of the armed forces to actively recruit women.

Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF): Established in 1924 on the remains of several Great War flying corps with Canadian personnel.

Section 98: Refers to Section 98 of the Criminal Code, which bans "unlawful associations;" introduced following the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919; targeted organizations which advocate political change through violent means; used to target the Communist Party in the 1920s and 1930s.

Status Indians: A legal identity created in the *Indian Act, 1876*. The *Act* determines who is, in law, an "Indian" and who is not for the purposes of government services, annuities, suffrage, etc.

Statute of Westminster (1931): An act of the British Parliament, it codified in law the principles of the Balfour Declaration of 1926, which included legislative autonomy of Canadian (and some other colonial) parliaments. Widely regarded as the moment when Canada gained independence.

U-boat: German term for a submarine.

V-J Day: Victory in Japan Day, 15 August 1945; marked the end of the war against Japan and thus the end of the Second World War.

Victory Bonds: Voluntary savings scheme originating in the Great War; purchasing 5 to 15 year bonds was a means of lending funds to the federal government with which to conduct the war; paid back with interest on their maturation.

Women's Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS): Last of the women's corps to be established; founded in 1942, it was disbanded in 1946 and reformed as a reserve force during the Korean War.

Short Answer Exercises

1. Why did Canada enter the First World War at the same time Britain did, but not the Second World War?
2. Why did Borden — opposed to women's suffrage — agree to give women the vote during WWI?
3. In what ways and why did so many political leaders and military figures fail to anticipate the character of early 20th century warfare?
4. What does the term "total war" refer to and how is it useful in historical studies?
5. In what ways was Canada changed by the Great War?
6. What were the main features of the early feminist movement and what were its goals?
7. How did the Liberals emerge as the leading federal party in the interwar years?

8. What was the immediate economic and social impact of WWII?
9. In what ways was Newfoundland's experience of the Second World War distinct from that of Canada?
10. How were women's lives changed by the war? What was different about women's experiences in 1939-45 compared to 1914-18?
11. What factors led to the internment of Japanese Canadians?

Suggested Readings

Cook, Tim. "'He was determined to go': Underage Soldiers in the Canadian Expeditionary Force," *Histoire sociale/Social history*, 41, Number 81 (Mai-May 2008): 41-74.

Dick, Lyle. "Sergeant Masumi Mitsui and the Japanese Canadian War Memorial," *Canadian Historical Review*, 91, Number 3 (September 2010): 435-63.

Humphries, Mark. "Wilfully and With Intent: Self-Inflicted Wounds and the Negotiation of Power in the Trenches," *Histoire sociale/Social history*, 47, Number 94 (Juin/June 2014): 369-97.

Mawani, Renisa. "Regulating the 'Respectable' Classes: Venereal Disease, Gender, and Public Health Initiatives in Canada, 1914-35," *Regulating Lives: Historical Essays on the State, Society, the Individual, and the Law* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press): 170-95.

Shaw, Amy. "Expanding the Narrative: A First World War with Women, Children, and Grief," *Canadian Historical Review*, 95, Number 3 (September 2014): 398-406.

Media Attributions

- Johnny Wayne and Frank Shuster performing in a CBC radio broadcast of The Army Show © Canada Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (PA-152119) is licensed under a Public Domain license

Chapter 7. Reform Movements from the 1870s to the 1980s

7.1 Introduction



Figure 7.1 The Salvation Army (aka: Sally Ann) was one of many social reform movements that included a strong religious element. Organized in ranks, the Salvation Army exemplifies the crusading zeal of some of these movements. The Rat River Salvation Army band, 1898.

There are many ways in which to contextualize reform historically. There are important economic and demographic contexts — such as booms and busts, or a surfeit or dearth of children or workers — and so one might be inclined to study reform as a response to those particular circumstances. While it is true that there are often identifiable catalysts to reform movements, it is also the case that most reform movements outlive their initial context and become much more: they become ways of viewing the world.

If this sounds vaguely religious, it should. Most movement cultures in Canada, over the last century or so, either had roots in denominational Christianity or were a reaction to the influence of organized religion. It seems safe to say that all were sustained over the longer term by a commitment to goals that were redemptive, a little millenarian, and sometimes purifying. All of the great reform movements of the post-Confederation era shared a few common catalysts and structural elements as well, not the least of which were a sense of pending disaster and a support base that was multi-provincial, if not national in its reach. There are exceptions but they are fewer than the commonalities.

These shared characteristics make it both possible and necessary to consider many of the reform movements side-by-side, regardless of their place on the nation's timeline. There is spillover between them and the same faces show up in a variety of movements; there are also deep schisms between a few and, from time to time, unflinching hostility felt by participants in one movement to the champions of another. Social reform themes arise, in large measure, from a kind of deductive logic. There is poverty and therefore there must be causes of poverty; there is crime and fear and therefore there must be causes of disorder; there is inequity and unhappiness, danger and ugliness and all of these

things must arise from some cause. The answers that social reformers offered up became banners — the other kind of cause —and thus rallying points for citizens from many backgrounds. This chapter begins with the 19th century's great social movements, and concludes with the environmental movements of the 20th century.

Learning Objectives

- Identify the major reform movements of the post-Confederation era.
- Describe the common features, tactics, goals, and beliefs of the reform movements.
- Account for the popularity and longevity of specific reform movements.
- Detail the influence of the social gospel, temperance, and maternal feminist movements.
- Explain the rise of third parties as aspects of the reform movement.
- Assess the apparent distinctions between the first and second waves of feminism.
- Evaluate the extent to which late 20th-century movements like Greenpeace are part of a longer reform tradition.

Media Attributions

- Rat Portage Salvation Army Band, Ontario, 1898 is licensed under a Public Domain license

7.2 Social Reform

Victorian-era industrialization created conditions that called out for reform. Child-labour, sexual abuse, poverty-level pay, filthy workplaces, and slum neighbourhoods were made visible by two things: urbanization from the 1860s through to the 1920s (which brought more observers and commentators within reach of factory life) and the new investigative role of the state (in the form of Royal Commissions of Enquiry, for example). Certainly there was poverty and abuse in rural Canada, but fewer observers there to catch it and comment on it, let alone act against it. Factory-life problems became public problems.

The combination of science and urbanization — elements that were at the heart of industrialization — was key to the identification and relief of social and political liabilities. The rise of Darwinian thought and the relatively new concept of evolution transformed the public's understanding of biology and the engines of change. The **germ theory** of infection was just gaining ground as the Dominion of Canada took its first steps, so the possibility of employing strategies to avoid epidemics was increasingly well-understood. The cities were, in this context, laboratories in which social and health experiments were going to occur.

What is more, the idea of "society" was undergoing profound change. The mid- and late-19th century witnessed the rise of the scientific study of society. Sociology, political theory, and psychology are young and dynamic fields in this era, led by powerhouse thinkers like Auguste Comte (1798-1857), Karl Marx (1818-1893), Frederick Engels (1820-1895), Émile Durkheim (1858-1917), and Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). This phenomenon — increased curiosity about how society works and how it might be changed systematically — was itself made possible by the rise of the secular state. That is, by the arrival of forms of government in which the Church stood well to one side, while government (Christian, but not subservient to the clergy) was both appropriating and being handed responsibility for more and more of the social environment.

Into this mix stepped the new middle-classes. Professionals and merchants, they were — almost by definition — urban. Their ranks included the well-educated, the literate, and the people who would be tasked with dealing with outbreaks of illness (physicians), ignorance (teachers), political scandal (journalists), infrastructural disaster (engineers), and moral turpitude (the clergy). As a new spokes-class, the bourgeoisie — men and women alike — were increasingly connected to international movements and ideas. They were able to exploit their own rising importance in Canadian cities to launch programs aimed at eradicating, or at least mitigating, the worst effects of modernity.

What distinguishes this generation of reformers from the religious reformers of earlier generations is their shared concentration on social change. The **social reformers** of the post-Confederation era were less concerned with individual improvement and redemption than they were with achieving urgent, collective, society-wide change. Meeting this goal would, they believed, create an environment in which individual betterment was more likely to occur. Save society and then save the individual; ignore society and watch it crumble and take the individual with it.

Among the most vulnerable populations in the 19th and early 20th century were the elderly. Historian of institutionalization Megan Davies (York University) describes eldercare in the far west.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=340#oembed-1

Key Points

- The social reform movement was a product of urbanization and industrialization.
- It was built on a bedrock of evolutionary science that taught that change was possible and desirable, and with advances in medical science that created an awareness of public health.
- It was informed by a growing body of social sciences thinking about the nature of society.
- It was led by a growing middle class — an industrial-era bourgeoisie — with the cultural capital and position to develop a common understanding of the need for social change, and the ability to attempt it.

7.3 Poverty, 1867–1945

Eric W. Sager; Department of History; and University of Victoria

When the Dominion of Canada was created in 1867, governments did not assume direct responsibility for the poor. Before 1867, only the Maritime colonies had adopted English **Poor Laws**; there were no workhouses, in which the poor were given accommodation and food in return for work. Responsibility for the poor usually fell to churches and charities, and very poor people often ended up in houses of refuge, mental institutions, or prisons. Official and elite attitudes toward the poor were often negative or condescending. It was assumed that poverty resulted from a moral failing on the part of the poor. Idealistic visions contributed to such attitudes: Canada was a place with abundant land and resources where anybody willing to work was bound to prosper. This utopian vision of Canada ignored the reality that farms were very difficult to establish, that resources were highly seasonal, and that winter was a time of shortage and hardship for a large number of people.

In the last half of the 19th century, urbanization and early industrialization increased the number of urban poor. A new type of poverty appeared: poverty that resulted from unemployment — not merely seasonal job shortages, but the shortage of wage-paid jobs due to economic cycles, the closing of businesses, short-term layoffs, and trade depressions. Historians have shown that in major Canadian cities in 1901, one of every seven families could not survive on the pooled wage earnings of family members. If the poor survived at all, they did so by participating in an informal economy — scrounging, bartering, growing vegetables, or keeping animals, or taking in lodgers, if they had space. Many did not survive. Montreal, for instance, was one of the most dangerous cities in the Western World for newborn babies. At the end of the 1890s, 26% of babies died before they reached their first birthday of illnesses associated with poverty and malnutrition.

Studies of average wages in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver show that there was modest growth in real wages (which means wages after adjusting for price inflation) in the early 1900s. During World War I, rapid inflation halted the rise in real wages, and gains did not appear again until the 1920s. Then the Depression of the 1930s caused an increase in poverty due to unemployment. It has been estimated that in the winter of 1933, at the depths of the Depression, over 32% of all wage-paid workers were unemployed. In these circumstances, government began, although very slowly and at first without success, to develop policies that would help to alleviate the problem of poverty. The first universal social welfare program in Canada was the Family Allowance program, introduced by the federal government in 1944. The small unemployment insurance program, introduced during World War II, was expanded after the war. These were the foundations of Canada’s social security system or welfare state. The problem of poverty was not solved, however, and relative poverty (meaning wide gaps between low-income earners and others) persisted. Nevertheless, the social security system succeeded in reducing the impact of poverty for many families.


City of Toronto Archives, Series 372, s0372_ss0032_it0246

Figure 7.2 A poor family in The Ward, Toronto, 1913.

Additional Readings

Copp, Terry. *The Anatomy of Poverty: The Condition of the Working Class in Montreal 1897-1929.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974.

Piva, Michael J. *The Condition of the Working Class in Toronto – 1900-1921*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1979.

Bartlett, Eleanor A. "Real Wages and the Standard of Living in Vancouver, 1901 – 1929." *BC Studies*, no. 51 (Autumn 1981): 3-62.

Baskerville, Peter and Eric W. Sager. *Unwilling Idlers: The Urban Unemployed and their Families in Late Victorian Canada.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

Struthers, James. *No Fault of their Own: Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State, 1914-1941*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983.

Key Points

- Industrial and wage-labour changed the character and incidence of poverty in the post-Confederation era.
- Poverty has been linked in the pre-World War II era with inflation rates that outstripped wage increases.
- Seasonal, sectoral, and catastrophic unemployment levels contributed to different understandings of poverty. A state response was, consequently, slow in coming.

Media Attributions

- Slum interior, occupied, October 30, 1913 © City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 200, Series 372 Dept of Public Works photographs, Subseries 32, Item 246 is licensed under a Public Domain license

7.4 Families and Property Rights in Canada

Chris Clarkson; Department of History; and Okanagan College

In the summer of 1872, Maria Cheffrey, a Spanish resident of Lytton, British Columbia, arrived in Judge Matthew Baillie Begbie's courtroom. Cheffrey and her husband had separated six years earlier. After their separation, she worked in Lytton and maintained herself. But that July, he returned. Maria Cheffrey applied to Judge Begbie for a protection order because she feared that her husband might seize her earnings and property. She had good reason to be worried.[1]

Until the middle of the 19th century, married men held what amounted to a monopoly over property rights within Canadian families. Under the common law inherited by the English-speaking colonies, a married woman could not enter into contracts, sue, or be sued. Upon marriage, her wages and personal property passed into her husband's possession. He also gained the right to manage her real estate, and to control any rents or profits it might produce. Minor children likewise lacked the right to contract, sue, or control property. In matters of inheritance, a widow held the right to dower in most colonies, a provision that entitled her to the lifetime use of one-third of her husband's real estate after his death. A husband could distribute all of his property by will (including his widow's life estate after her death) as he deemed fit. If he did not write a will, his property ultimately passed to his eldest son. These laws were the cornerstones of a patriarchal social order, facilitating male headship of households and the concentration of property among a small number of men. The law was structured so that married women and minor children would be financially dependent. There were very few exceptions and those could be found in the **Court of Chancery**, where married women with wealthy families or benevolent husbands could have property set aside for their independent use through special settlements. The Court of Chancery was also charged with protecting minors from irresponsible parents. Yet for various reasons, including the high costs involved, very few individuals were able to avail themselves of the protections offered by this court.[2]

1. Chris Clarkson, *Domestic Reforms: Political Visions and Family Regulation in British Columbia, 1862-1940* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007), 47-8.

2. Ibid., 1-3, 38.



Figure 7.3 A widow (like this one in Ethelbert, MB, ca. 1924) would have control over the estate of her deceased husband only until the eldest son reached adulthood.

This situation changed slowly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as colonial, and then provincial, legislatures passed statutes changing the laws respecting family property in English Canada. The changes varied by province, but the general trend over time was toward granting married women and children greater legal rights. The first wave of legislation, passed during the 1850s and 1860s, granted limited property rights to wives in emergency situations, at the discretion of the courts.[3] Maria Cheffrey was fortunate enough to be the beneficiary of one of these new laws, and Judge Begbie granted her a court order to protect her property from her husband. Over the latter part of the 19th century, politicians in the English-speaking provinces granted married women substantial new rights over earnings and property, as well as the capacity to contract, sue, and be sued — all without the need for a protection order. [4] Then, in the early 20th century, some provinces imposed new obligations upon married men. These new maintenance laws required men to support their legal families and children born out of wedlock. In matters of inheritance, provincial legislators wrote new laws in the 19th century providing for a more equitable distribution of property among spouses and children, in cases where husbands and wives failed to write wills.[5] In the early 20th century, legislators in every province took an even more activist approach to inheritance law reform, adopting dependants' relief statutes, which permitted family members to apply for a larger share of an estate under certain circumstances.[6]

Why were the laws changed? Lawmakers' motives varied from province to province and from one decade to the next. Frequently they were responding to the urging of feminist activists and legislators, but this was not always the case. In passing the various laws, some proponents and legislators hoped to protect wives and children from financial hardship and foster gender equality. Others intended to

3. Constance Backhouse, "Married Women's Property Law in Nineteenth-Century Canada," *Law and History Review* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1988): 217-219.

4. Ibid.: 221-4, 230-1.

5. Peter Baskerville, *A Silent Revolution? Gender and Wealth in English Canada, 1860-1930* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008), 7.

6. See Manitoba. Law Reform Commission, "Report on 'The Testators Family Maintenance Act'," *Report #63* (December 16, 1985): 3-4.

stimulate commercial activity and limit government expenditures on emerging social welfare programs by holding family members legally responsible for maintenance.[7]

The results of the laws were not easy to predict. For example, in several provinces, conservative judges attempted to limit the impact of married women's new property rights. Even so, historian Peter Baskerville's research on British Columbia and Ontario shows increased property ownership, borrowing activity, and entrepreneurship among married women.[8] Other evidence indicates that new rights produced new expectations among women, in both their personal and political lives.

The rights of family members under Quebec's civil law were different. As Bettina Bradbury et al., have written, "Marriage automatically created a community of property, legally shared equally by both spouses, but administered by the husband."[9] Those final words are important. While the phrase "community property" sounds egalitarian, the husband's administrative rights meant that, in practice, he could generally dispose of the couple's property as he wished. Property inherited by either spouse was an exception to this arrangement: each retained separate ownership of inherited property, yet neither had the right to dispose of that inherited property without their spouse's consent. In addition, a small number of wealthy couples signed marriage contracts specifying a "separation of goods," which permitted each spouse to maintain separate property.[10] Even in these cases, however, the law stated that wives needed their husbands' authorization to manage their separate property, and the courts interpreted this requirement quite strictly. With respect to inheritance, Quebec, unlike English Canada, operated according to a system of a partible inheritance, in which the deceased's property was divided amongst his or her heirs. A widow or widower was entitled to a half-share of any community property. If the deceased left no will, the remainder would be divided equally among descendants, or according to more complicated formulae among other heirs. The situation with respect to spouses' separate property was less favourable. Legislation passed over the second half of the 19th century that gradually eliminated the widow's customary right to dower in her husband's separate lands, since traditional dower rights were a hindrance to land transfers.[11] Children's right to a fixed share of their parents' separate estates was likewise abolished.[12] After these changes, separate property could be distributed freely according to the terms of a will; in the absence of a will, it would be distributed to the children or other heirs, with the spouse ranking 13th in the hierarchy of potential claimants.

7. For discussions of political motives, see Backhouse, "Married Women's Property Law"; Lori Chambers, *Married Women and Property Law in Victorian Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Clarkson, *Domestic Reforms.*

8. Peter Baskerville, "Women and Investment in Late-Nineteenth-Century Urban Canada: Victoria and Hamilton, 1880-1901," *Canadian Historical Review*, vol. 80, no. 2 (June 1999): 191-218; and "'She Has Already Hinted at "Board"': Enterprising Urban Women in British Columbia, 1863-1896," *Histoire Sociale – Social History* 26, no. 52 (November 1993): 205-27.

9. Bettina Bradbury, Peter Gossage, Evelyn Kolish, and Alan Stewart, "Property and Marriage: the Law and Practice in Early Nineteenth-Century Montreal," *Histoire Sociale – Social History*, 26, no. 51 (May 1993): 16. On the continuities between the pre-Conquest Custom of Paris/*Coutume de Paris*, and the Civil Code of 1866 regarding women's legal status, see Micheline Dumont, Michèle Jean, Marie Lavigne, and Jennifer Stoddart [The Clio Collective], *Quebec Women: A History*, trans. Roger Gannon and Rosalind Gill (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1987), 124.

10. Bradbury et al, "Property and Marriage", 16-17, 22-3, 35.

11. Bettina Bradbury, *Wife to Widow: Lives, Laws, and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Montreal* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2011), 121, 137-8; Dumont et al., *Quebec Women*, 125.

12. H.R. Hahlo, "The Case for Family Maintenance in Quebec," *McGill Law Journal* 16, no. 3 (1970): 536-537.

The liberalization of family property rights came more slowly in Quebec than in the other provinces. This was not due to the absence of feminist agitation. Feminists in Quebec campaigned for a better claim to family property and greater legal independence throughout the early 20th century. While they gained improved inheritance rights respecting the spouse's separate property in 1915, other markers of improved status under the law were slow to come. Women in Quebec gained the vote last, in 1940. Political and clerical opposition hindered their efforts to achieve the franchise and to more radical changes to married women's property rights, and to gain them the legal capacity to act for and represent themselves. Such change would have to wait for a resurgence of feminist activity in the 1960s, accompanied by the social, religious, and governmental shifts engendered by the Quiet Revolution (see Section 9.9).[13]

Key Points

- Property rights historically favoured males over females, including sons over wives.
- Women's rights regarding marital property increased slowly and unevenly in the post-Confederation era.
- Inheritance laws in Quebec were distinct from those in the rest of Canada and were the focus of feminist reform efforts in the early 20th century.

Media Attributions

- Widow and children on farm in Ethelbert, Manitoba, ca. 1924 © George E. Dragan, Library and Archives Canada, (PA-088495) is licensed under a Public Domain license

13. Dumont et al., *Quebec Women*, 252-65, 314, 321-324, 336-339.

7.5 Women's Organizations and Reform

Melanie Buddle; Department of History; and Trent University



Figure 7.4 At 26 years of age in 1889, Bertha Wright (later Mrs. Carr-Harris) was founder and first president of the Canadian YWCA.

Beginning in the 1870s, a number of women's organizations and clubs formed locally, nationally, and internationally. Some, such as the **Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)**, which opened a Canadian branch in 1870, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), which opened its first Canadian branch in 1874, and the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC), which formed in 1893, were Canadian affiliates of international women's organizations. These and other women's groups formed during a period of huge social upheaval. At the end of the 19th century, industrialization, urbanization, and increased immigration led some women to take public action against social ills that seemed to threaten traditional family life. They felt that the way to protect women and children was to protest the evils of alcohol and attendant evils, such as prostitution, poverty, and poor working conditions amongst the lower classes. The WCTU campaigned first and

foremost for temperance (limiting the use of alcohol and encouraging sobriety) and prohibition (laws to ban alcohol entirely) because they blamed alcohol for social problems, such as poverty, immorality, and prostitution. Other groups had different mandates (education, working conditions for women, and philanthropy), but addressed the same social ills.

Inside meetings of literary clubs, temperance societies, and Christian associations, women critiqued the political and educational limitations of womanhood but were careful to maintain the conventions of their time. Many maintained a mandate to support families, children, and womanly arts, and praised the conventional roles of women. This was an effective strategy, as it was not particularly threatening to Canadian society at the time: men voted and worked, and women were responsible for children and domestic labour — although this was changing as more women were joining the paid labour force.

The WCTU shared features with other women's groups that formed during this period: a focus on Christian values and on protecting women, children, and the less fortunate. These ideals formed what historians call the "Social Gospel": a Christian-influenced approach that brought an evangelical fervour to public reform (see Section 7.6).[1] Emerging women's clubs shared another feature: a growing commitment to a larger public and political role for women, including steps toward women's voting rights. Some were more tentative than others in moving toward women's rights to the vote (**suffrage**) but by the early 1900s many discussed it. These groups provided a discursive space for women to talk about issues ranging from education, temperance, domestic arts and social reform, to arts and crafts and literature — and sometimes, female suffrage.

The NCWC, a national umbrella organization for women's groups, formed 20 years after the WCTU arrived in Canada, and became an affiliate of the International Council of Women. Led by Lady Aberdeen (1857-1939), wife of the Governor General, its first member was the Women's Art Association of Canada. Adelaide Hoodless (1857-1910), a prominent social reformer who would be influential in the Canadian YWCA, co-founded the NCWC. The NCWC had a mandate to improve the status of women, and social conditions for women and children, but initially stopped short of supporting female suffrage. Interestingly, the WCTU influenced its formation but refused to join because the NCWC was not religious enough. Yet in 1888, the WCTU was the first large women's group to specifically support suffrage. The NCWC did not specifically endorse women's rights to vote until 1910, and many of their member organizations, including some of the local Councils of Women across the country, did not endorse, and even opposed, women's suffrage.[2] Thus we see a mix of radicalism and conservatism in many early women's groups.

Other women's organizations appeared in this fertile period. On the surface, national and local women's groups such as the Canadian Women's Press Club (1904), the Women's Art Association of Canada (1892), the YWCA (1870; Canada-wide in 1893), the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE, 1900), and the Toronto Women's Literary Club (1876) appeared devoted to artistic, educational, and professional or business pursuits. Many promoted service to girls and women, such as

1. See Mariana Valverde, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991).

2. Katja Thieme, "Language and Social Change: The Canadian Movement for Women's Suffrage, 1880-1918" (PhD Thesis, University of British Columbia, 2007), 31.

the YWCA, which emphasized the temporal, religious, and moral welfare of young women.[3] But even outwardly more conservative groups such as the IODE (which resisted suffrage and focused on patriotism, education and philanthropy) could become vehicles of social and political change. The Toronto Literary Club was the first to publicly move in this direction, changing its name to the Canadian Women's Suffrage Association, and becoming the first Canadian group with suffrage as its main aim.[4] Clubs could be screens for political action, and supporters of female suffrage were inevitably involved in one or more of the other women's organizations, even those that did not focus on suffrage. The Canadian Women's Press Club included female novelists, newspaper editors, and reporters and its early members included Nellie McClung (1873-1951) and Emily Murphy (1868-1933), who were prominent social reformers and suffragists. And the very fact that women were organizing and reaching out in a public way, regardless of the professed mandate or cause, was in itself a radical move for women.

While working-class women also organized and protested the inequity of society, the most prominent female reformers in the late 1800s and early 1900s were white middle- and upper-class women. Their approach to social issues seemed to blame the "fallen women" and less fortunate: reformers attempted to preserve a fading Victorian middle-class family life and their identification of the problem was sometimes the fallen themselves, rather than industrial, economic, and related societal upheavals. Some of the same women supporting female suffrage and social reform also supported eugenics (see Section 7.8), limiting immigration of non-whites, and extending the vote only to white women, due to a fear of "racial degeneration."[5] Others, like Hoodless, opposed female suffrage; she argued that women should exercise their influence through their sons and husbands.[6]

By association, by marriage, by family status, and by community prominence, these women had time and energy for art associations, moral reform campaigns, temperance groups, and art clubs. We can acknowledge their efforts to provide aid and to give women more power through public life, and we can acknowledge that compared to men, they were treated unequally and were subject to discrimination. But these same women had a degree of privilege not afforded to non-white and lower-class women in Canada. They were also divided in their support for a more political role. Some women, and some groups, opposed suffrage or focused only on moral or spiritual issues. Some focused on domestic science and handicrafts but moved toward suffrage, and others specifically supported suffrage as the key to relieving other social ills.

Early supporters of female suffrage have been called **maternal feminists** because they argued that their role as mothers and homemakers, as "angels of the house," was the reason they needed more influence in society — and not, as later feminists would argue, because they ought to be treated as equal to men.[7]

3. Toronto YWCA, Constitution of the Toronto YWCA, 1873, Article II, cited in Mary Quayle Innis, *Unfold the Years: A History of the YWCA in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1949), 13.

4. Alison Prentice et. al., *Canadian Women: A History, 2nd Edition* (Scarborough: Thomson Nelson, 2004), 195-196.

5. See Anne-Maria Kinahan, "Transcendent Citizenship: Suffrage, the National Council of Women of Canada, and the Politics of Organized Womanhood," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 42, 3 (2008): 5-27.

6. Terry Crowley, "HUNTER, ADELAIDE SOPHIA [HOODLESS]", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 13, University of Toronto/ Université Laval, 2003–, accessed 22 September 2015, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/hunter_adelaide_sophia_13E.html.

7. Thieme, "Language and Social Change", 15-16.

Women's clubs were pivotal in that they were early opportunities for women to discuss the increasingly public roles they could play in society. We cannot dismiss them only as social gatherings for ladies of privilege, because they also led to important conversations about women's rights in society and in the political and professional realms. These groups were more radical in their context than they might appear to us, looking backward. Despite the grounding of many clubs in a narrow ideology of white women's rights, mother's rights, and Social Gospel "purity" arguments, they paved the way for women like Agnes Macphail (1890-1954), Canada's first female member of parliament. Macphail, in 1925 said: "I do not want to be the angel of any home, I want for myself what I want for other women, absolute equality. After that is secured then men and women can take turns at being angels."[8]

8. Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 26 February 1925.

Have You Any Boys?

At a meeting of the Ohio Liquor League a short time since one of the officers gave the following bit of advice to the members. It is quite in keeping with the diabolical nature of the business:

> "It will appear from these facts, gentlemen, that the success of our business is dependent largely upon the creation of appetite for drink. Men who drink liquor, like others, will die, and if there is no new appetite created, our counters will be empty as will be our coffers. Our children will go hungry or we must change our business to that of some other more remunerative. The open field for the creation of this appetite is among the boys. After men have grown and their habits are formed, they rarely ever change in this regard. It will be needful therefore that this missionary work be done among the boys, and I make the suggestion, gentlemen, that nickles expended in treats now, will return in dollars to your tills after the appetite has been formed. Above all things create appetite."

HOW DOES THAT STRIKE YOU?

5000 PERSONS die off in Canada every year as the result of the Liquor Traffic. 5000 Boys are needed to keep up the supply. Have you any boys to spare for the purpose? As long as the traffic exists, they must be furnished. If you do not contribute, some other family must give more than its share. Is that fair?

If you think it is about time for this sort of thing to stop, mark your ballot thus:

Are you in favor of passing an act prohibiting the importation, manufacture or sale of spirits, wine, ale, beer, cider and all other alcoholic liquors for use as beverages?	YES.	NO.
	X	

Remember September 29.

Down with the Liquor Traffic!

Figure 7.5 A good example of the rhetoric used by maternal feminists: an appeal to motherly feeling in the fight against the "Liquor Traffic." [Long Description]

Key Points

- The 1870s witnessed the creation of important and influential women's organizations; more followed before 1914.
- Many of these organizations shared a strong Christian orientation and concern regarding social ills, including the social and domestic consequences of alcohol abuse.
- These organizations provided a springboard for female activism, early feminism, and demand for greater female rights (including the right to vote).
- Opposition to the franchise remained an important force in women's organizations.
- Overwhelmingly, these were middle- and upper-class organizations representing white women with extensive privilege and social and cultural capital. Many were, as well, highly radical in their context.

Long Descriptions

Figure 7.5 long description: A flyer titled "Have You Any Boys?" It reads "At a meeting of the Ohio Liquor League a short time since one of the officers gave the following bit of advice to the members. It is quite in keeping with the diabolical nature of the business:"

"'It will appear from these facts, gentlemen, that the success of our business is dependent largely upon the creation of appetite for drink. Men who drink liquor, like others, will die, and if there is no new appetite created, our counters will be empty as will be our coffers. Our children will go hungry or we must change our business to that of some other more remunerative. The open field for the creation of this appetite is among the boys. After men have grown and their habits are formed, they rarely ever change is this regard. It will be needful therefore that this missionary work be done among the boys, and I make the suggestion, gentlemen, that nickles expended in treats now, will return in dollars to your tills after the appetite has been formed. Above all things create appetite.'"

"How does that strike you?"

"5000 persons die off in Canada every year as the result of the Liquor Traffic. 5000 Boys are needed to keep up the supply. Have you any boys to spare for the purpose? As long as the traffic exists, they must be furnished. If you do not contribute, some other family must give more than its share. Is that fair?"

"If you think it is about time for this sort of thing to stop, mark your ballot thus:"

Below is a box that looks like a voting ballot. In the first slot is the question "Are you in favor of passing an act prohibiting the importation, manufacture or sale of spirits, wine, ale, beer, cider and all other alcoholic liquors for use as beverages?" Beside are two boxes labelled yes and no. There is an X in the yes box.

At the bottom of the flyer, it says "Remember September 29. Down with the Liquor Traffic!" [Return to Figure 7.5]

Media Attributions

- Miss Bertha Wright (later Mrs. Carr-Harris, first President of the Canadian Young Women's Christian Association) © William James Topley, Library and Archives Canada, (PA-167608) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Have You Any Boys? : Remember September 29, Down with the Liquor Traffic! © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2988523) is licensed under a Public Domain license

7.6 Social Gospel

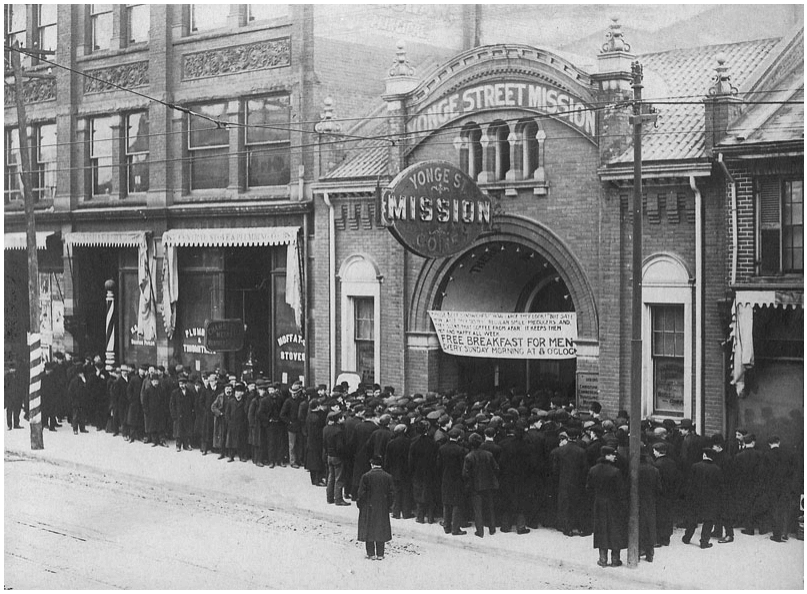


Figure 7.6 Urban missions began appearing in the late 19th century. The Toronto Mission opened in 1896 and became a centre for Social Gospel activism.

Of all the reform movements arising out of the 19th century, arguably none had as extensive a reach as the Social Gospel. Faced with the new realities of urban overcrowding, grueling factory work, and grinding poverty, Christians in North America questioned whether their focus should be on the salvation of the individual or of society as a whole. Conventional wisdom in the mainstream churches had always been that the issue of salvation was entirely a personal matter. Urbanization and industrialization challenged that perspective. Increasingly, clergymen and religious writers were of a mind that the physical environment in which the battle against sin took place was so changed by industrialism that new approaches were necessary. They found a receptive audience in the middle- and working-classes, and produced several generations of political, social, and cultural leaders as a result. The values of the Social Gospel became the fuel behind many political and socio-economic movements in the first century after Confederation, some of which were inevitably contradictory.

From the Pulpit to the Public

Two of the largest and most influential institutions in British North America at the start of the 19th century were the Anglican (or Church of England) and Catholic Churches. Wherever there were Scots, there were Presbyterian churches as well, although this was in fact a number of fractious denominations that only converged around the time of Confederation. Methodists constituted the next most populous sect, and there were significant numbers of Congregationalists in the colonies, particularly in New Brunswick. But the two principal Christian churches — Catholic and Anglican — were head and shoulders above the competition in terms of adherents and political influence. The authority of the

Anglicans was part of the very fibre of the Family Compacts in the English-speaking colonies and in anglophone Montreal; Catholicism enjoyed a near monopoly in French-Canada. Both churches were broadly engaged with civil society, providing much of pre-Confederation Canada's educational, welfare, and healthcare infrastructure. Bishops and Archbishops endeavoured to set much of the moral tone and brokered power between the colonial governors and the secular leadership. Their values were simultaneously very conservative (in the case of Quebec's Catholic clergy, they were defensively so in the face of Anglo-Protestant hostility) and community-minded.

Much of the history of political struggle in Canada overlaps with the history of sectarian conflict. The Presbyterian and Methodist elements objected to the authority exerted by the Anglicans in what became Ontario; the mid-19th century Reform Party was overwhelmingly drawn from the **non-conformist churches**, while the Tories were essentially the political wing of the Anglican Church. The situation was similar in most parts of pre-Confederation Canada, although clearly different in Quebec where Anglicans and Presbyterians were allied against Catholics. Sectarian turmoil was not uncommon, and it is important to recall the vigour with which Orange elements attacked the rights — and the bodies — of Catholics in Saint John, Toronto, Red River, and elsewhere in Victorian Canada. This background underlines the extent to which divisions between denominations mattered, emotionally and practically, to Confederation-era Canadians.

As the Dominion of Canada project got underway these relationships evolved and became important in new ways. The Victorian years witnessed the rise of new Christian denominations while some older sects changed their course. It is impossible to imagine these new elements occurring outside of the context of industrialism and other socio-economic disruptions in the Victorian era. The Presbyterians, Methodists, and Congregationalists — along with "Low" Anglicans — were already critical of the liturgical and hierarchical qualities (sometimes called "Churchianity" as opposed to Christianity) of the "High" Anglican and Catholic Churches, and the instances where it seemed political leaders were following the Archbishop or even the Pope rather than the electorate. But the influence of **evangelicalism** was embodied in smaller denominations like the Lutherans and Baptists, in elements within Methodism and Congregationalism (both of which were growing in popularity), and in entirely new churches like the **Salvation Army** — posed a challenge to the **established churches'** view of spiritual redemption and, implicitly, to social relations.

The 19th century evangelicals include profoundly different and distinctive voices and theological viewpoints. Many — the Salvation Army in particular — were very urban in their outlook, and all took the perspective that personal and direct salvation was a possibility. This was a critique of the older churches' mediation of the relationship between the individual and God. While this brought the individual into sharp focus, it had the almost perverse effect of making the social more obvious. The evangelicals' view, however, was one of a society made up of individuals (a view that was consistent with the rising tide of democracy), as opposed to one made up of categories and castes. "Evangelical" itself derives etymologically from "good news" — and the good news was that everyone (and thus the whole of society) could be saved.

The infrastructure of the Social Gospel included bricks and mortar as well as personnel. The centre for much of the movement's development was Wesley College in Winnipeg, a Methodist post-secondary institution established in 1888. The intersection of late-Victorian Methodism — with its redemptive message, culture of outreach, and largely working-class constituency — and the city of Winnipeg — growing at an explosive rate into the capital city of the whole West — was critical to the development

of the ideals of the Social Gospel at Wesley College. Salem Bland (1859-1950) moved from central Canada to a professorship at Wesley in 1903, where he nurtured a generation of Social Gospel leaders. These include two founders of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF): James Shaver (J.S.) Woodsworth (1874-1942) and William "Bill" Irvine (1885-1962) (see Section 7.9). Wesley College students, faculty, and graduates played an increasingly vocal role in criticizing the conduct of the Great War, some of them (like Woodsworth) embracing **pacificism**, others attacking wartime profiteering. They were also active in the events around the Winnipeg General Strike (Section 3.9) and together believed that if revolution was coming, it would be a revolution of religion and the establishment of a new order, with Social Gospel evangelism at its centre.[1]



Figure 7.7 The elegant, gothic sandstone facade of Wesley Hall (opened in 1895). In 1938 it became United College, and in 1967 the University of Winnipeg.

What this new — and extremely popular, entertaining, and challenging — religious movement discovered, of course, was that salvation was hard work particularly when the sinners in the crosshairs are living their lives in squalor, poverty, addiction, and ignorance. Saving souls was one thing; saving society was another.

Building a Heaven on Earth

The range of projects in which the Social Gospellers engaged was broad but they shared some core elements. Temperance was one, fighting the causes of poverty was another (although methods might differ drastically), and a representative cross-section took an interest in eugenics. In Central and Eastern Canada the focus was heavily on urban squalor and sin, while in the West there was a stronger emphasis on the project of building a new and ideal society from the ground up.

Their approaches combined elements of faith and science, a feature that further distinguished them

1. Ramsay Cook, "Ambiguous Heritage: Wesley College and the Social Gospel Re-considered," *Manitoba History*, 19 (Spring 1990).

from the Anglicans and Catholics (although both of the big churches would change in this regard in the 20th century). Sometimes these combinations produced contradictions. The Social Gospel interest in eugenics, for example, arose from an awareness of advances in biological sciences. It might be argued that their commitment to the view that genes (nature) trumped environment (nurture) was inconsistent with their view that the physical world mired the individual in sin. They criticized, as well, the role of the non-evangelical faiths in matters of government, while simultaneously seeking to create a more activist and interventionist state. Regardless of these contradictions, the Social Gospellers constitute the first generation of Christian thinkers to understand sin and redemption through a science lens, and to attempt to resolve it through the further application of science and social innovation.

Social Gospellers were prepared to make full use of the arsenal of modern technology, engineering, and planning. Clean water and well-lit streets were as critical to this project as any Sunday sermon. At the same time, they recast the issues of moral failings from the individual (e.g., drinking or ignorance) to the social (e.g., alcoholism or lack of educational opportunity). As the century closed and a new one began, some of the concerns of the Social Gospellers shifted to questions associated with immigrant communities. Many of the newcomers were neither Protestant nor Catholic and were regarded by some Social Gospellers as a threat in their own right. Education might play a role in assimilating immigrants, but reformers' suspicion of the Eastern European or Asian Canadian proved hard to shake, and it would provide part of the context for the spread of eugenics across the Social Gospel movement.

Targeting Reform

The array of crusades launched by the various branches of the Social Gospel movement included high-level politics and street-level service. Missions and "settlement houses" were established among the urban poor and in Indigenous communities. The Salvation Army became active in city centres, on reserves, and in the North. Wilfred Grenfell opened his own mission in Labrador, in 1893. Methodists in the 1880s joined with other denominations in establishing residential schools for Indigenous students (see Sections 11.7, 11.8, 11.9, 11.10, and 11.11); support for these projects came from Social Gospellers who saw them as an instrument of assimilation into an advanced Christian- and Anglo-Canadian culture and also as "schools that met the practical and physical needs of Aboriginal peoples."[2] The settlement houses were, similarly, located on the boundary between social change and **social control**: they offered daycare, some schooling, help finding employment, language classes for immigrants, and so on, but they were also centres for transferring and imposing the dominant societies' moral values to newcomers. It was this combination of targeted Christian good deeds among the poor, the voiceless, and the colonized, the moral regulation of deviant (including alien) behaviour, and efforts to counter the ill effects of capitalism and urban life that characterized most Social Gospel activities.

The Social Gospel Style

Aimee Semple McPherson (1890-1944) was arguably the most famous Canadian of her time. Born Amie Elizabeth Kennedy in Salford, Ontario, she was influenced by the Salvation Army (still very

2. Eleanor J. Stebner, "More than Maternal Feminists and Good Samaritans: Women and the Social Gospel in Canada," in *Gender and the Social Gospel*, eds. Wendy J. Deichmann Edwards and Carolyn De Swarte Gifford (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 57.

much a new thing in late Victorian Canada), married at 18, widowed at 19 (while pregnant with her first child), remarried at 22, divorced at 29, married for a third time at 41 years, and divorced again three years later. Her travels across North America matched her tumultuous personal life: she relocated to the United States in her 20s and dedicated her life to evangelizing.

Semple McPherson was a barnstorming preacher who was increasingly associated with the emergent Pentacostal faith. Moving to Los Angeles in 1918 put Semple McPherson at the centre of what was just emerging as America's West Coast metropolis and film industry capital. Huge and elaborate stage sets were produced for her revivalist meetings, and the level of theatricality in Semple McPherson's sermons was both astonishing and of the highest quality. Her meetings were attended by as many as 40,000 at their peak, and were often chaotic and fevered; their unpredictable and inventive features influenced other evangelicals and event producers for generations. The most elaborate of her performances were not entirely unlike 1970s and 1980s stadium-venue rock concerts, and the temple she built in Los Angeles owed more to music halls than to cathedrals. Moreover, Semple McPherson crossed media by combining live performances with film and radio broadcasts. She was a superstar before the term was invented.



Figure 7.8 Small town Canadian girl makes good. Aimee Semple McPherson was already a force with which to reckon at 33 years of age when she raised the Angelus Temple on the strength of donations in cash and kind. *[Long Description]*

There was room for only one Aimee Semple McPherson, but the Social Gospel and the evangelical trend both produced her, and was influenced by her. Some of the leading figures in the movement in Canada came from the pulpits, and many learned how to be political and rally speakers from watching and hearing the evangelicals in action. On the Left, J.S. Woodsworth was a Methodist minister and

Tommy Douglas (1904-1986) was a Baptist preacher. Both men went on to lead the early CCF as champions for social change. Nellie McClung (1873-1951) was defined by her Social Gospel credo as much as her father's Methodism; she sat in the Alberta legislature as a Liberal member. Further to the Right, William ("Bible Bill") Aberhart (1878-1943) was an ardent Baptist who established his own evangelical organization — the Calgary Prophetic Bible Institute — and created the Social Credit Party as a means to achieve greater social equity through financial reforms (see Section 7.9). His successor at both the evangelical and secular level was Ernest Manning (1908-1996), who was raised in a generation that could identify its creed as simply "evangelical." Manning went on to become one of the most successful politicians (in terms of longevity) in Canadian history, and he was the father of the late 20th century Reform Party leader, Preston Manning (b. 1942). Both Ernest Manning and Aberhart followed Semple McPherson's pioneering work in radio as a means to reach into rural and urban households alike with social, economic, and political messages. All of these individuals shared in that evangelical, crusading, and urgent approach to modernity that demanded change based on the goal of a Christian moral civilization.



Figure 7.9 Tommy Douglas.

Watch this undated recording by Tommy Douglas on *The Cream Separator*. Tommy Douglas uses a familiar clergyman's rhetorical technique, the parable, to deliver a moral lesson that crosses into the political. Many Canadian politicians still attempt to approximate this style, which is rooted in the Social Gospel experience of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The Opposition

Mainstream resistance to the Social Gospel message was powerful and persistent. The Anglican and Catholic Churches had their own agendas of social change, but these involved the preservation of social hierarchies, which, the left-wing of the Social Gospel would say, were at the foundation of social injustice. The further to the left some of the Social Gospellers moved, the more likely they were to be associated by their opponents with socialism and communism. In truth, while some of the Social Gospellers found their way toward social democracy, the Christian heart of the movement was a rampart against the secularism of communist movements. Right-wingers, too, fell afoul of the mainstream. When Aberhart attacked the banking system and attempted to dilute the national currency (with what was derided as "funny money"), he was twisting the tail of old money in Montreal and Toronto. (His conservative evangelicalism and suspicion of international money interests also drew a charge of anti-Semitism.)

The very populism of the Social Gospel — its mass appeal and its folksy, inclusive style — was dismissed by Liberals and Conservatives as the work of "teachers and preachers." Calls for fair treatment of labour organizations, relief to farmers caught by rising costs and falling farm produce prices at the end of the Great War, and money support for the unemployed in the 1930s were ignored by the old parties. Their intransigence across the first four decades of the 20th century cost them significant support and resulted in the creation of the United Farmers parties across English-speaking Canada, several of which formed governments at the provincial level. The Progressive Party followed, as did the CCF and Social Credit (see Section 7.9).

These Social Gospel experiments in politics also drew fire from the Left. Socialist and communist organizations were suspicious and critical of the Christian agenda of the Social Gospel, regarding it as a fruitless and delusional attempt to manage the worst excesses of capitalism. Achieving "a society of justice, equality and freedom from economic oppression," the socialists and communists argued, would require more than "good Samaritanism."[3] Many of the country's early 20th century hard-leftists were drawn from the new immigrant community; the Social Gospel's record of xenophobia (perhaps articulated best by Woodsworth in his 1909 book, *Strangers Within Our Gates*) further alienated Eastern Europeans and Scandinavians who were comfortable with the politics of communism.

For Social Gospel women, the track record of the old political parties as regards temperance and suffrage spoke for itself. Women who wanted to achieve social reform through electoral politics were more likely to find a home in the newer, smaller parties than they were among the Grits and Tories. Agnes Macphail (Progressive), Dorise Nielsen (CCF), and Gladys Strum (CCF) were three of the first five women elected to Ottawa. In 1944, Strum became the first woman to head up a provincial or federal political party when she took the presidency of the Saskatchewan CCF. At the provincial level, Louise McKinney (Nonpartisan League and United Farmers of Alberta) and Roberta MacAdams (nonpartisan) were both elected in 1917. Although women would also enjoy electoral success in the Liberal and Conservative parties, the progressive agendas of early feminists both contributed to, and would be better received, in the **third parties**.

3. Eleanor J. Stebner "More than Maternal Feminists and Good Samaritans: Women and the Social Gospel in Canada," *Gender and the Social Gospel*, eds. Wendy J. Deichmann Edwards and Carolyn De Swarte Gifford (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003): 62.

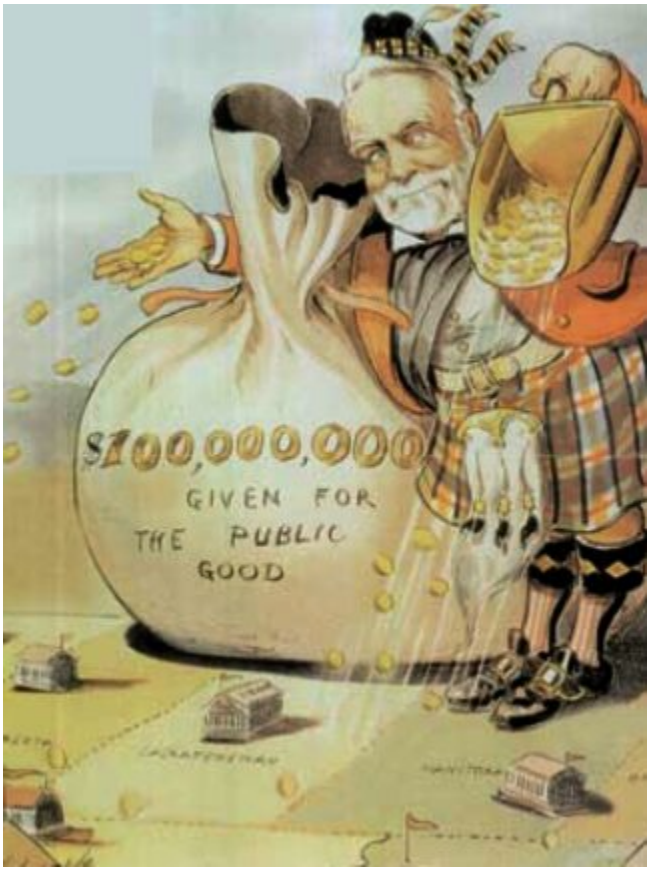


Figure 7.10 Andrew Carnegie's unparalleled campaign of personal philanthropy left a mark on Canadian cities from coast to coast. This image comes from the British Punch magazine in 1903.

Measuring the intellectual consequence of a movement like the Social Gospel is difficult. It was so diffuse and appeared in so many guises that it inevitably overlapped with other engines of change. For example, the Scottish-American industrialist Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) was considered by his contemporary critics as the embodiment of the rapacious industrialist, whose enormous wealth was won at the expense of terrible working and living conditions for his employees; he wrote, however, on *The Gospel of Wealth* in 1889, calling for applied philanthropy on the part of his peers. In the last two decades of his life, he belonged to a Social Gospel church in New York and contributed millions of dollars to the improvement of civic and social infrastructure, a good deal of it in Canada. Philanthropy and charity were among the evangelical values promoted by the Social Gospel, and they remain important qualities in Canadian society, but they do not necessarily speak to the goal of social redemption. Nor, on the face of it, does social legislation like the *Ontario Workmen's Compensation Act of 1914*, which was nonetheless the product of Social Gospel lobbying. What can be said with some confidence is that the influence of the social gospel outlasted its earliest spokeswomen and men, and can yet be seen in the fabric of social welfare laws and in the language of debates about urban conditions and inequality.

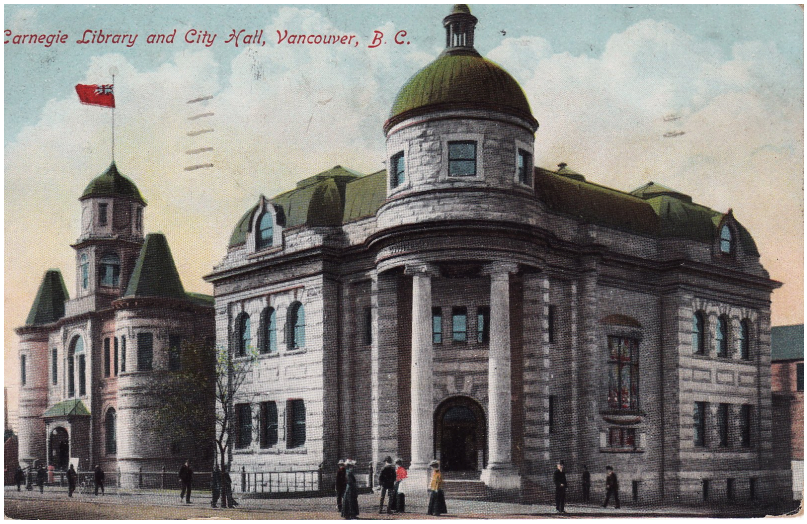


Figure 7.11 Vancouver was one of many Canadian cities to receive a Carnegie Library, which opened in 1903 next door to the City Hall.

Key Points

- The Social Gospel movement grew out of changes in Protestant denominations and the rise of new churches in the 19th century.
- It was informed by deteriorating social and economic conditions in cities, and approached reform in urban areas and in remote and Indigenous communities with missionary tactics.
- Elements within the Social Gospel movement were centred on Wesleyan College in Winnipeg, where a strongly social democratic wing developed.
- Social Gospellers targeted urban and social reform and some adopted new media and performance opportunities to produce a highly theatrical style outside of the traditional pulpit.
- The influence of the Social Gospel on Canadian politics and urban landscapes remains significant.

Long Descriptions

Figure 7.8 long description: A woman holding a book and wearing a satisfied smile rests a hand on a large plaque. The plaque reads “Dedicated unto the cause of inter-denominational and world wide evangelism. January first in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and twenty three.” [Return to Figure 7.8]

Media Attributions

- Yonge Street Mission is licensed under a Public Domain license
- University of Winnipeg © Wikipedia user KrazyTea is licensed under a CC BY-SA

(Attribution ShareAlike) license

- Aimee Semple McPherson, Angelus Temple, 1923 © Foursquare Church Heritage Center is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Tommy Douglas, 1945 © Lieut. G. Barry Gilroy, Canada Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (PA-138035) adapted by Wikipedia user Samuell is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Andrew Carnegie's philanthropy as golden shower © Louis Dalrymple, Puck Magazine June 1, 1903 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Carnegie Library and City Hall, c. 1905 © Stedman Bros. Ltd. is licensed under a Public Domain license

7.7 Temperance and Prohibition

Alcohol consumption in Canada was prodigious in the early 19th century, and it hardly changed over the rest of the century. Any economy so heavily dependent on the production of wheat, rye, and other grains is going to quickly find a vent for surplus that involves fermentation. Some of the earliest and largest fortunes in both Upper and Lower Canada (Ontario and Quebec) were made in the brewing and distilling industries. Home manufacture was, of course, unregulated and widespread. The 19th century saw the growth of a movement culture around managing liquor production, sale, and consumption. It had many facets, and it was to prove the core movement around which many others revolved, and from which almost all 19th and 20th century reform movements would recruit their campaigners.

Drink Canada Dry

Rural drinking did not go unnoticed, nor was it without its critics. But it was different from what came after Confederation. Early attempts to "temper" or manage the consumption of liquor in British North America appear in the Canadas and the Maritime colonies in the 1830s and 1840s. These were "collective acts of individualism; each drinker who renounced the bottle was affirming the triumph of his or her will and the intent to meet the social and economic challenges that lay ahead."[1] Viewed this way, pre-Confederation temperance was not a mass movement in that it was scaled down to the personal and the communal.

The late Victorian boom in city populations, however, propelled concern about liquor consumption to the forefront of public debate, and called for a mass and collective, rather than individualistic, response. As the economy came to value armies of men who could work in the resource-extraction sector or construction, the popularity of drink only increased. It is no coincidence that British Columbia, in 1893, boasted a resource-extraction economy with a severely distorted male:female ratio, and the highest per capita consumption of alcohol.[2] Nor should it be surprising to find that women's consumption of alcohol increased in the Victorian era in step with the demand for single women in wage-labour. Wage earning, generally, was a critical element in the construction of a "wet" Canada.

So, too, was the environment. Urban reformers focused much of their energy on water quality issues for good reason. With horse manure carpeting town and city streets, pigs fouling the roads and streams, and human waste disposed of in haphazard ways, there was no way that urban water supplies would remain reliable for long. The situation in Nanaimo was probably not unusual. There, as early as 1864, locals were signing petitions about water quality issues. Household sewage was being dumped by the bucket-load on the streets. Two decades later, it was finding its way into a ravine or the harbour, where it was revealed on the shoreline with every low tide. Some went into an abandoned coal mine underneath the downtown. As was the case with most Victorian towns before the construction of

1. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, "'John Barleycorn Must Die': An Introduction to the Social History of Alcohol," *Drink in Canada: Historical Essays*, Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, ed. (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993): 12.

2. Warsh, "'John Barleycorn Must Die'": 13-15.

sewers, a “night soil” scavenger collected human waste and removed it to a dump on the edge of town. And, of course, it wasn’t unusual for people to use human manure in their gardens.[3] In short, there were plenty of reasons to be concerned about the quality of drinking water; for many, the solution was tea or coffee (made of boiled water) or alcohol (germ free, available in a multitude of flavours, and often served in sociable surroundings).

Class and the Glass

The earliest and most constant critics of liquor consumption were the emergent Canadian bourgeoisie. Their liberal ideal of democratic progress and their dependence on effective employees made it inevitable that they would see liquor consumption and drunkenness as a threat to polity and productivity. One historian has argued that this economic and political agenda was complimented by the rise of evangelical Christianity across Canada in the mid-19th century. It wasn’t just that the Baptists and Methodists disapproved of liquor: their creed emphasized personal responsibility for redemption in a way that the **established churches** did not. It was, Craig Heron maintains, this constellation of forces that gave the Temperance Movement an appeal in Canada beyond what it enjoyed in Britain and the other Dominions; the movement was comparably strong in the United States as well, making this one of those cultural moments that has a continental complexion.[4]

If temperance had remained the exclusive preserve of the Canadian bourgeoisie, it would have gathered little momentum. But working people themselves were among the most vocal enemies of liquor. As a part of the community that sought greater inclusion in the political life of Canada and a better deal in the unfolding industrial era, artisans and craft workers articulated a view of respectability that denied alcohol a place in working-class culture. What is more, drink and a disciplined labour movement were incompatible. This was the position taken up by the Knights of Labor across North America (see Sections 3.4 and 3.6) and it was one that would echo through Canadian labour organizations into the 1920s.

The regulation of womanhood in the 19th century was also driving the emergent temperance movement. Maternal feminists based their claim for improved women’s rights and privileges on the strength of women’s reproductive power. In this context, women who drank to excess were jeopardizing themselves, their embryos, and the health of the nation. They were also undermining the claim made by the feminists of superior female morality. Historian Cheryl Krasnick Warsh has shown how the courts in late 19th century Ontario sentenced as many as 803 women in one year under drunk and disorderly charges; women’s share of convictions between 1881 and 1899 averaged 16% but ran as high as 24% in 1895.[5] Women’s relationship with liquor was thus complex: increasingly dangerous, but at the very heart of an emergent feminist movement.

Another motivating factor at the turn of the century was the arrival of immigrants from eastern and

3. John Douglas Belshaw, *Becoming British Columbia: A Population History* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009), 162-3.

4. Craig Heron, *Booze: A Distilled History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2003), 372-3.

5. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, “’Oh, Lord, pour a cordial in her wounded heart’: The Drinking Woman in Victorian and Edwardian Canada,” *Drink in Canada: Historical Essays*, ed. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993): 76-7.

southern Europe. Here we see the collision of different cultures of drinking and the (largely Anglo-Protestant) Canadian fear of degenerate foreigners. Xenophobia, and prairie evangelism in particular, responded to the "threat" of foreign newcomers and their use of liquor, which simultaneously "eliminated the possibility of support from immigrants."[6]

Exercise: Documents

Temperance Posters

Consider the two pre-First World War posters promoting temperance (click on them to see larger versions). The first makes a subtle eugenicist case for temperance — can you see it? The other provides evidence that smokers don't fare well when they try out for college teams. What's wrong with those statistics?

6. Warsh,"'John Barleycorn Must Die'": 16-17.

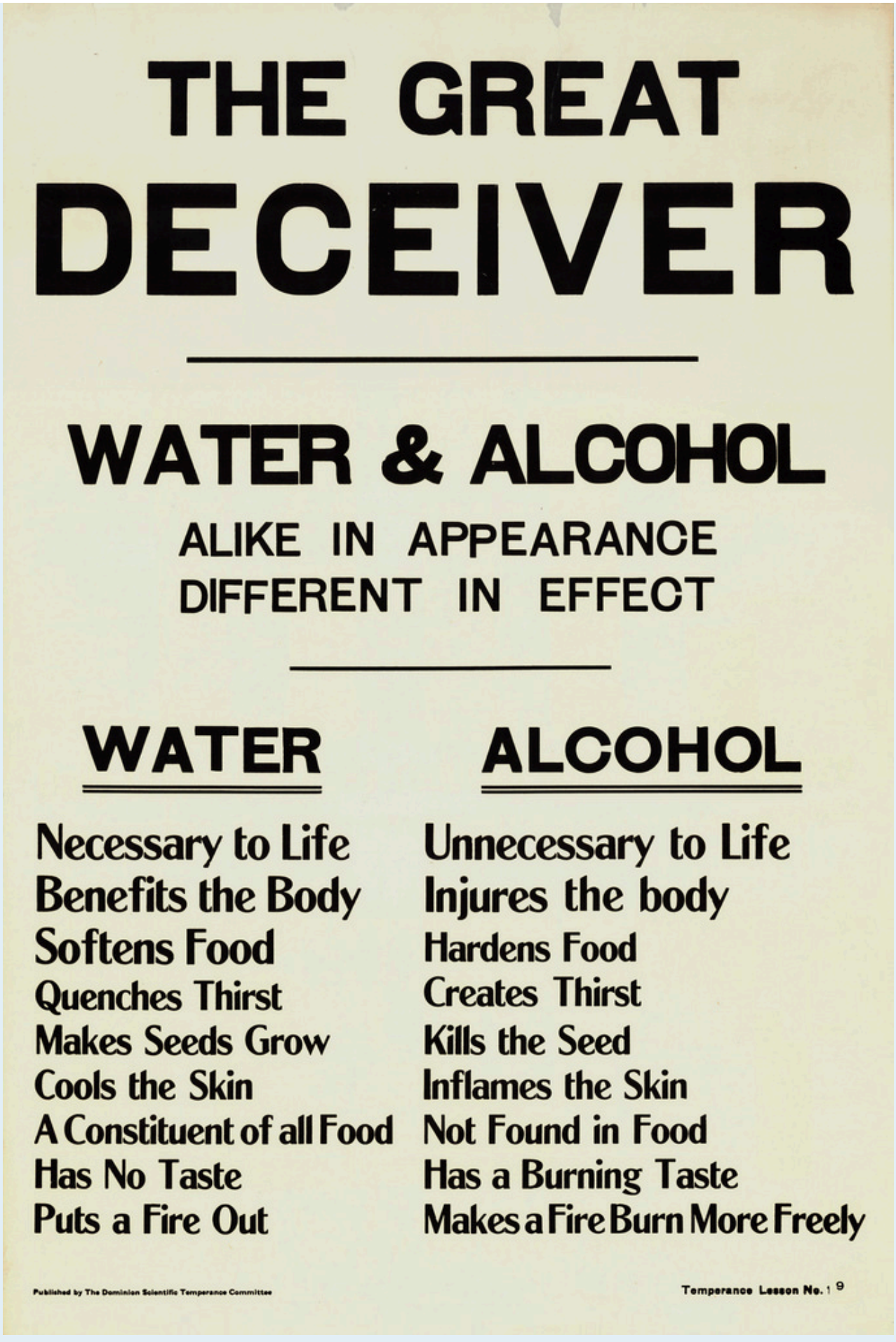

THE GREAT
DECEIVER
WATER & ALCOHOL
ALIKE IN APPEARANCE
DIFFERENT IN EFFECT
WATER
ALCOHOL
Necessary to Life
Unnecessary to Life
Benefits the Body
Injures the body
Softens Food
Hardens Food
Quenches Thirst
Creates Thirst
Makes Seeds Grow
Kills the Seed
Cools the Skin
Inflames the Skin
A Constituent of all Food
Not Found in Food
Has No Taste
Has a Burning Taste
Puts a Fire Out
Makes a Fire Burn More Freely
Published by The Dominion Scientific Temperance Committee
Temperance Lesson No. 19

Figure 7.E1 Dominion Scientific Temperance Committee, ca. 1912. [Long Description]

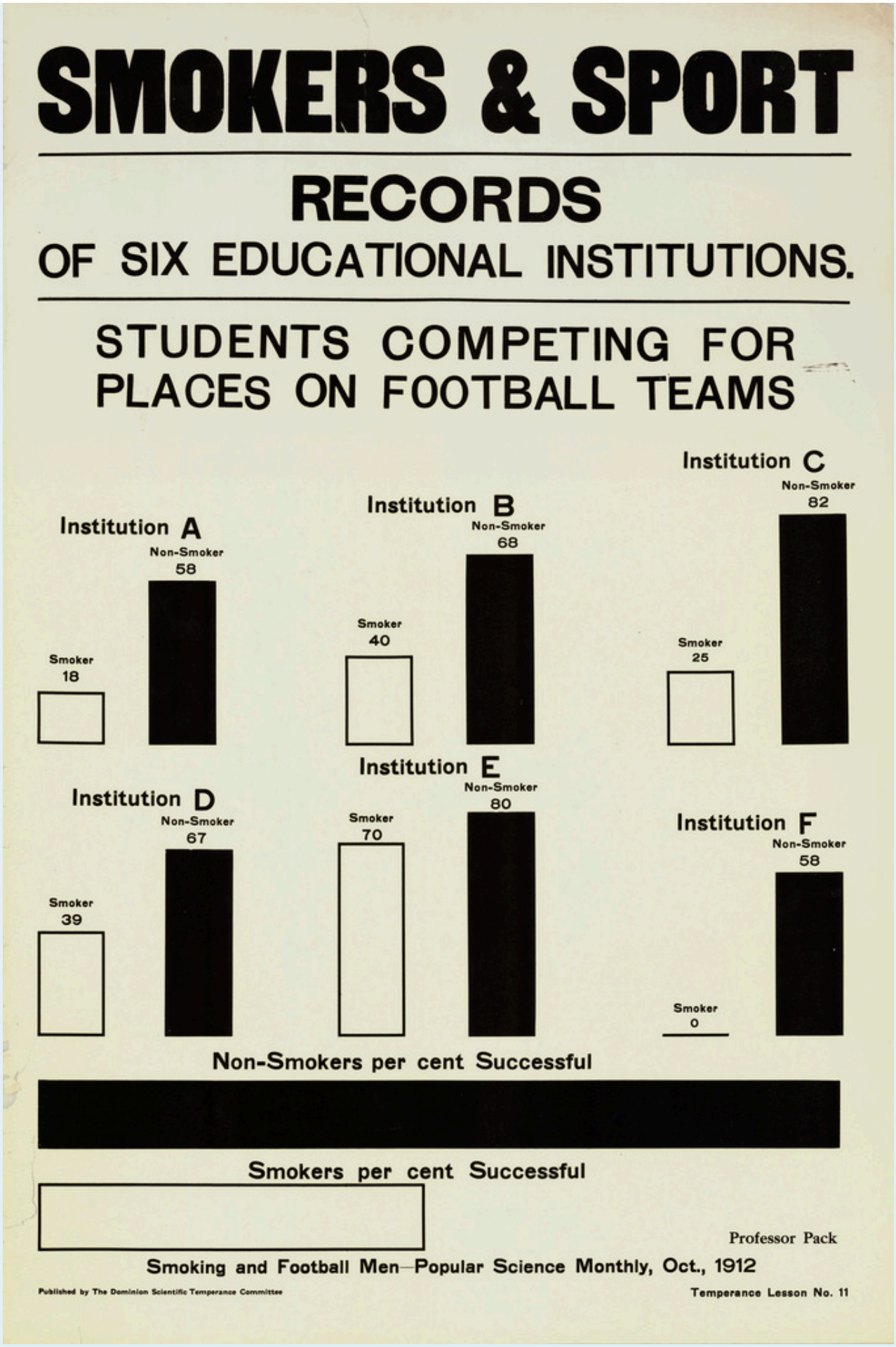

SMOKERS & SPORT
RECORDS
OF SIX EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.
STUDENTS COMPETING FOR PLACES ON FOOTBALL TEAMS
Institution A
Non-Smoker 58
Smoker 18
Institution B
Non-Smoker 68
Smoker 40
Institution C
Non-Smoker 82
Smoker 25
Institution D
Non-Smoker 67
Smoker 39
Institution E
Non-Smoker 80
Smoker 70
Institution F
Non-Smoker 58
Smoker 0
Non-Smokers per cent Successful
Smokers per cent Successful
Professor Pack
Smoking and Football Men—Popular Science Monthly, Oct., 1912
Published by The Dominion Scientific Temperance Committee
Temperance Lesson No. 11

Figure 7.E2 Dominion Scientific Temperance Committee, ca. 1912. [Long Description]

Historian of the liquor economy, drinking, and the drys Craig Heron (York University) discusses temperance.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=366#oembed-1

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=366#oembed-2

Temperance

Before the Great War, the focus of the temperance crusade was the local and not the federal level. The possibility of regulating the sale and consumption of liquor seemed reasonable to some, and in 1878, the federal government passed enabling legislation, the *Canada Temperance Act*, which enabled the local option of prohibition through referenda. Like all referenda, the local option effectively lifts from the shoulders of legislators the burden of making a choice on behalf of their constituents. It necessitates the involvement of the local electorate in direct decision-making around an ideal that has not been expressed in the form of a policy. (Members of Parliament debate actual bills that they can see and hold and on which they may offer editorial suggestions; referenda typically ask for general agreement on a broad principal without providing any of the details.) The likelihood of winning a national referendum on prohibition was slim but at the municipal level, it might succeed.

New Brunswickers seized upon the possibility of prohibiting public consumption of alcohol in the 1880s. Ten counties out of fifteen voted in favour of prohibition, and yet the sale of alcohol continued unabated. One study observes that “Moncton was, paradoxically, a prohibitionist town in which the liquor trade continued to flourish” from 1881 through the 1890s.[7] Enforcement issues plagued this experiment (as it would in many others); local police knew who was selling alcohol but were divided in their loyalties. One historian captures the situation perfectly: “relations between members of the police force and the liquor community were fluid.”[8]

7. Jacques Paul Couturier, “Prohibition or Regulation? The Enforcement of the Canada Temperance Act in Moncton, 1881-1896,” *Drink in Canada: Historical Essays*, ed. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993): 146-7.

8. ibid.: 156.



Figure 7.12 Fearing for their livelihood, Toronto barmen take to the street in 1916.

No other province would advance the temperance campaign as far as New Brunswick until the 20th century. One reason for the failure of the "drys" to gain ground was the presence and power of the "wets." Commercial distillers in Canada could be found among the wealthiest member-families of the elite. Seagram, Labatt, Molson, Keith, Wiser, Carling, O'Keefe, and — in the early 20th century — Bronfman are names associated even now with the alcohol industry, and with families who held powerful directorships in other industries (including banks and railroads) and had significant political influence as well.[9] They employed huge numbers of Canadians and, despite the reach of the CPR, local breweries and distilleries were also competitive and important economically until the 1920s.

Of course, not everyone in the middle or working classes wanted to go dry. Working men, returning soldiers, and members of the non-evangelical churches were highly unlikely to favour diminished access to booze. Young middle class women who entered the workforce in large numbers in the Edwardian years, and during the war, were a catalyst in the development of relatively respectable drinking "lounges" and, thus, became another population opposed to temperance. But this was the face of public drinking; the consumption of alcohol in private spaces was also a target of temperance agitators, and that aligned the elites and many middle class households against temperance. Insofar as the ranks of prohibitionists overlapped with anti-Catholic forces, they drove the Catholic Church into the arms of the wets (although where they were unbothered by assimilationist Protestants, the Catholic leadership was as likely to be dry).[10] There were, too, voices raised against the state regulation of liquor as a worrying example of growing governmental power.

Prohibition

The efforts of the temperance movement peaked in 1914 and were stayed by the outbreak of war.

9. Derrek Eberts, "To Brew or Not to Brew: A Brief History of Beer in Canada", *Manitoba History*, 54 (February 2007), accessed 26 July 2015, http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/54/beerincanada.shtml.

10. Heron, *Booze*, 191-6.

Unwilling to fight on two fronts, the issue was put to one side until it became clear that the Great War was not going to be brief. Increasingly, the consumption of liquor at home seemed an offence to the sacrifice being made abroad. Concerns were raised about productivity as well (a familiar theme in temperance circles in the industrial age). Province-wide referenda were organized, and by 1917, prohibition had arrived or was on its way in every province but Quebec, where one could buy wine or light beers, but not hard alcohol (see Section 6.5). It didn't last. Returned soldiers were upset that the country had gone "dry" in their absence and felt that they had earned the right to drink after months and years in the trenches of Belgium and France. Quebec and British Columbia were the first to abandon prohibition in favour of regulation and government-controlled liquor sales in 1921. Prohibition was lifted in three provinces and the Yukon Territory by 1921; it didn't last much longer in Alberta and Saskatchewan, but it held on longest in the Maritimes. The Dominion of Newfoundland prohibited possession or drinking of liquor from 1917 to 1924.

Thereafter, the legal and illegal production of liquor in both Dominions exploded in an attempt to meet demand for the banned substance south of the border.[11] American prohibition continued until 1933, creating a smuggling industry in every West Coast, East Coast, and Great Lakes Canadian town within range of an American market. While the heaviest traffic passed between the vicinity of Windsor, Ontario and Detroit, Michigan there was also extensive illicit trade between the nominally-dry Maritimes and the whole American East Coast.

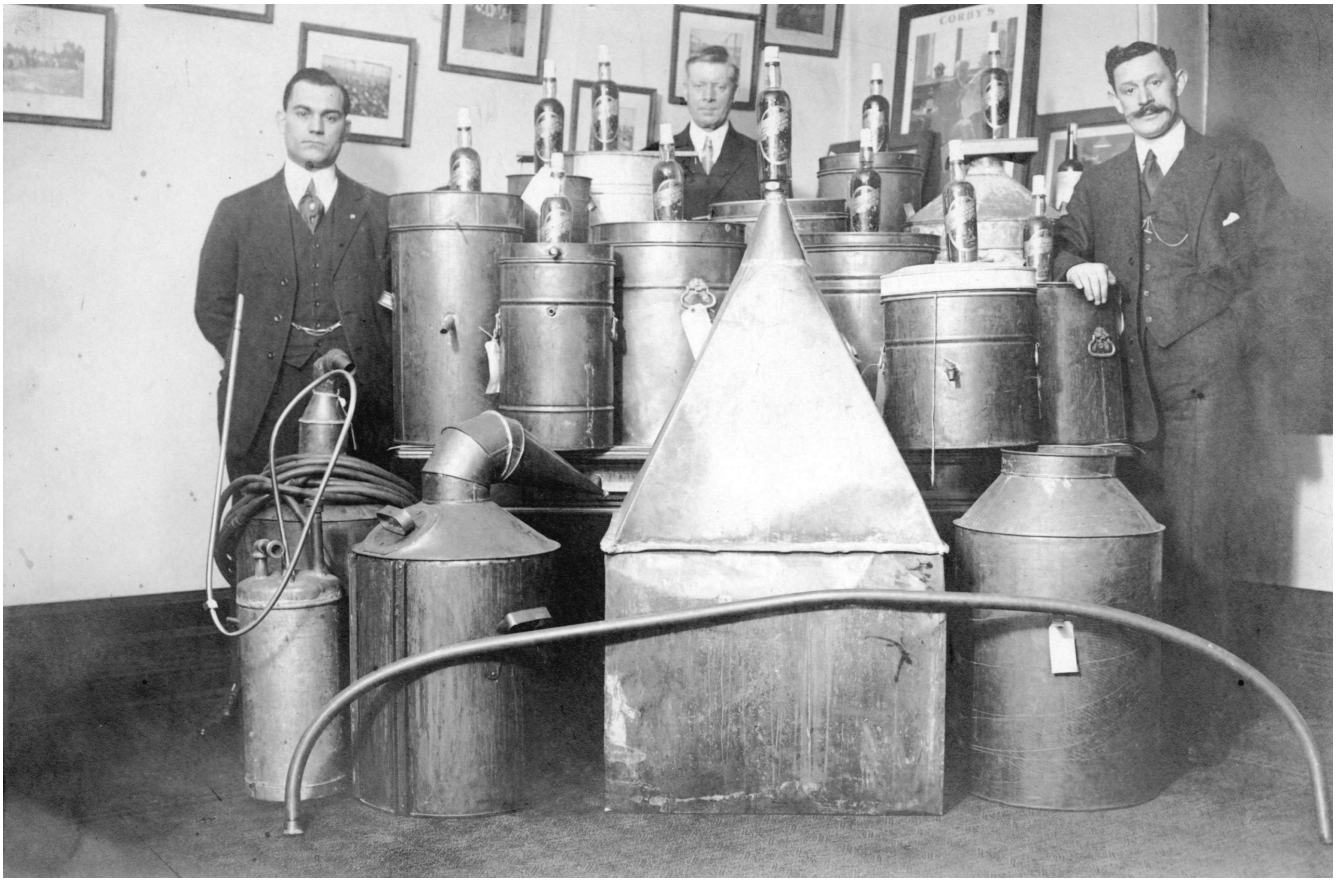


Figure 7.13 Liquor stills captured during prohibition in Vancouver, 1917.

11. Mark C. Hunter, "Changing the Flag: The Cloak of Newfoundland Registry for American Rum-Running, 1924-34," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies*, 21/1 (2005).

Rum-running was a feature of Vancouver's black economy as well. The chain of Gulf and San Juan Islands provided some cover, as did the multitude of tiny bays and inlets around Puget Sound. Fortunes were made on the strength of boats that could outrun Coast Guard patrols and the RCMP.[12] East Coast smugglers eluded local officials by claiming they were shipping out consignments to the Caribbean islands when, in fact, they were headed to Boston or New York. There were accusations that the Newfoundland government, under Premier Sir Richard Squires (1880-1940), "had turned the Board of Liquor Control into a covert bootlegging operation, the profits from 'private' sales going into his political account."[13] Inland smugglers thrived as well, including those in Madawaska County (aka: the New Brunswick Panhandle) and the Kootenays in southern BC; both were remote and lightly-policed areas with porous borders. On the West Coast, this was what one study calls "the respectable crime" and the ranks of rum-runners in BC included members of very well-placed families.[14]

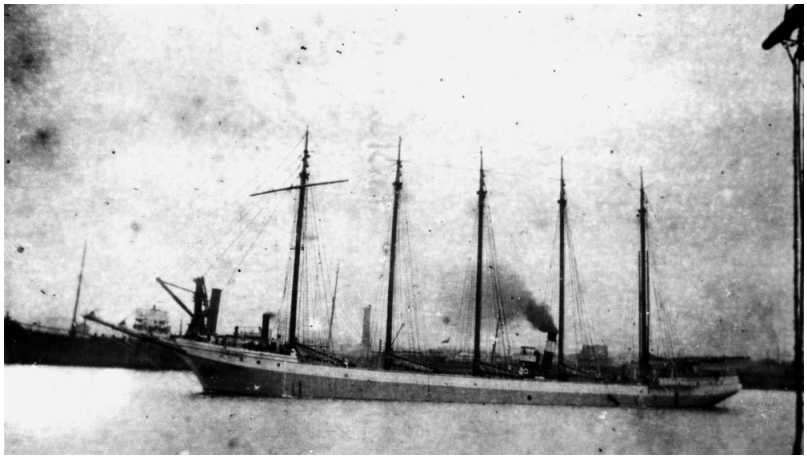


Figure 7.14 The sail/steam combination ship, the Malahat (described as a "Mabel Brown class" vessel) was known as the "Queen of Rum Row" on the West Coast. It served as a floating liquor warehouse to smaller, faster craft and was the source of much of the wealth earned by Vancouver's Reifel family.

Historical studies of rum-running mention women too often to suggest that their involvement was exceptional. The production of small quantities of home-brew liquor was almost certainly work that women did, but they also played frontline roles in the sale and delivery of banned cargo. One study explains that high unemployment rates in the Maritimes in the 1920s were more crippling for women than for men, a fact that propelled many single mothers — some of them, of course, war widows — into smuggling. A Mrs. Donnie Hart of Saint John stands as a good example: arrested no less than once every year between 1916 and 1924, she worked as a bootlegger in order to provide for her family.[15]

12. Daniel Francis, *Closing Time: Prohibition, Rum-Runners, and Border Wars* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2014), 128.

13. Margaret R. Conrad and James K. Hiller, *Atlantic Canada: A Concise History* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2006), 170.

14. Stephen J. Moore, *Bootleggers and Borders: The Paradox of Prohibition on a Canada-U.S. Borderland* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014), 56.

15. Ernest R. Forbes, "The East-Coast Rum-Running Economy," *Drink in Canada: Historical Essays*, ed. Cheryl Krasnick Warsh (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993): 168.



Figure 7.15 A liquor raid at Elk Lake, Ontario, 1925. Illegal production of liquor wasn't a problem before regulation.

Prohibition combined several contradictory forces. It was a manifestation of democratic will, a case of state intervention in the economy, and it was instrumental in building up urban police forces as well. Simultaneously, it diminished the rights of the individual, curtailed urban enterprise, and made public policy of private morality. It was both a modern and anti-modern force (see Chapter 10). Both sides in this debate advanced the use and sophistication of modern advertising as they campaigned for, on the one side, hearts and minds, and on the other, dry throats and vulnerable livers. The campaign against liquor, then, introduces a panoply of historical themes. It also introduces many of the key players in other crusades.

The Language of Liquor

Given the central place of liquor in the social lives of Canadians (past and present), it is no surprise to find that the vocabulary around drinking is both extensive and potentially confusing. What follows is not an exhaustive list of terms. It is weighted towards west coast usages and, worse still, none of these words are used in the past or present with razor-sharp precision, but nonetheless it may be helpful.

Where:

Saloon – Generally a drinking establishment not attached to a hotel or restaurant, usually urban. There are few restrictions on standing or moving about, and probably not much in the way of food.

Pub or Public House – These were often attached to roadside inns and "milehouses" in the mid- to late-19th century. They provided drink by the glass, and in larger take-away quantities, and often served food as well. A few survivors from that era kept the term in use and then it was revived in the 1970s with the spread of faux pubs (essentially saloons with somewhat better food and design that mimics an ideal of English or Irish drinking establishments).

Beer parlours/taverns – 20th century; a regulated and licensed private establishment in which the public can drink beer by the glass; standing at the bar is prohibited in most provinces; there is usually not much in the

way of food to soak up that beer. In British Columbia, there were for many years restrictions on women's entry (they had to use the "Ladies & Escorts" door) to restrict heterosexual mingling and, ostensibly, the sex trade. In beer parlours until the late-20th century, moreover, patrons were not allowed to carry their drinks from one table to another. Attempts to do so prompted the command to "sit down and drink your beer."[16]

Boozecan, Blind pig, Speakeasy – Colloquial terms for illegal drinking establishments. These were called into existence by the increasing regulation of drink from the late Victorian-era, and especially so during Prohibition. Even after Prohibition ended in Canada, there were illegal establishments that sought to evade repressive regulation.

Who:

Drys – Advocates for the limitation, if not outright prohibition, of alcohol production, sale, and consumption.

Wets – Opponents to the above. This camp includes people who wanted to drink and also the powerful brewers, distillers, and other representatives of the liquor interests.

Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) – One of the largest and most effective anti-drink lobbies in Canada. Established in 1874, months after its first branch was announced in the United States, the WCTU emerged as a vehicle for contiguous reforms in public behaviour, the political environment, and social conditions.

Rum-runners – Vendors of alcohol (not just rum) who ship it illegally across provincial or national boundaries into territories where there are sanctions — like Prohibition — against the sale of liquor.

Bootleggers – Anyone who sells liquor illegally. This term is used in the past to cover the rum-runners but its domestic face, historically, was the couple who sold cheap homebrew off their back porch, and the taxi driver who augmented his income with deliveries of bottles to homes and hotel rooms.

Liquor Control Boards – Provincial agencies created in the 1920s to regulate post-prohibition drinking and alcohol sales. These all became a major source of revenue for provincial governments.

When:

Sundays – Highly unlikely. During the era of the six-day work-week, Sunday was the only opportunity working people had to enjoy rest and leisure. That meant, too, that drinking was most likely to be heaviest on Sundays. But this was a red rag to the Temperance Movement bull — doubly bad because it combined sin with the Sabbath. Sunday closing rules were subsequently introduced in the early 20th century, and survived in most parts of Canada until the 1970s and 1980s.

When it's quiet – Music and performances of all kinds used to go nicely with a drink in the 19th century. Joe Beef's Tavern in Montreal — like many others in the Victorian era — brought together music, dancing bears, gambling, boisterous debate, and drink; low-brow entertainments became so closely associated with public drinking that reformers targeted both simultaneously.[17] As Craig Heron puts it, "In English Canada, both before and after prohibition, the isolation of public drinking from music and other forms of entertainment undoubtedly stifled the growth of popular music and popular theatre in Canada, compared to what was seen in Britain and Ireland. Montreal's nightclubs were a special case, where drink and music were allowed to co-exist and, coincidentally, where Canada's most vigorous jazz scene developed. Canada's booze legislation, then, contributed to the country's international reputation as a coldly austere, culturally repressed country whose public cultural life matched its often forbidding climate."[18]

16. Robert A. Campbell, *Sit Down and Drink Your Beer: Regulating Vancouver's Beer Parlours, 1925-1954* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001).

17. Peter DeLottinville, "Joe Beef of Montreal: Working-Class Culture and Tavern, 1869-1889," *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 8/9 (Autumn/Spring 1981/82): 9-40.

18. Heron, *Booze*, 378-9.

What to Do:

Abstinence – The anti-drink advocates began their crusade with a call to abstain from drinking. It threw the responsibility onto the individual and, in the rhetoric of reform-minded Christianity, there were moral and eternal consequences for not abstaining. The parallel moment in the anti-drug movement of the last 30 years would be the "This is your brain on drugs" campaign, launched in 1987.

Temperance – If you can't completely give up the booze then at least drink in moderation. This approach was adopted by many drinkers but by the 1870s, by fewer and fewer within the temperance movement itself. By that time, the movement had become more intolerant of drink and organizations like the WCTU called for all-out prohibition. Mid- to late-19th century temperance agitators moved the discourse around drink from a personal and individual level to a social level, and from moral consequences to social consequences; they argued that the impact of liquor extended far beyond the drinker.

Prohibition – Taking the social agenda a step further, the prohibition movement called for state intervention and the total eradication of liquor. Implicitly, this meant that the question of individual choice was resolved in favour of state and police authority. Prohibition meant that individual effort was insufficient and that moral consequences weren't driving change fast enough: legal and financial consequences had to be brought to bear, and these could (and did) include jail time.

Teetotalism – Often misunderstood as "tea"-totalism, the teetotal movement was an expression of the abstinence movement in that it promoted personal resolve and self-restraint on the liquor issue rather than legal sanctions.

Seek the help of a professional – Fortunes were made during prohibition by the producers and vendors of so-called "medicinal" alcohol. Products containing small quantities of alcohol were marketed as bitters, cocktails, and energy drinks.[19] A cooperative physician or pharmacist might be able to supply what you need.

Key Points

- Alcohol consumption in Canada increased and became more obvious with late 19th century urbanization.
- The temperance movement gained extra force in Canada because of the parallel rise of the evangelical denominations, the support of working class organizations, the role of maternal feminists, and fears associated with immigrants from non-traditional sources.
- Temperance was initially implemented on a municipality-by-municipality basis. Provincial referenda followed in the Great War, at which time both Canada and Newfoundland mostly went dry.
- The end of Prohibition in Canada and its continuance in the United States created opportunities for rum-runners on every shoreline.

19. Jason Vanderhill, "The Daniel Joseph Kennedy Story," *Vancouver Confidential*, ed. John Belshaw (Vancouver: Anvil, 2014): 39-58

Long Descriptions

Figure 7.E1 long description: Poster titled “The Great Deceiver.” It reads “Water & Alcohol: Alike in appearance; different in effect.” Under Water, it says:

- Necessary to Life
- Benefits the Body
- Softens Food
- Quenches Thirst
- Makes Seeds Grow
- Cools the Skin
- A Constituent of all Food
- Has No Taste
- Puts a Fire Out

Under Alcohol, it says:

- Unnecessary to Life
- Injures the body
- Hardens Good
- Creates Thirst
- Kills the Seed
- Inflames the Skin
- Not Found in Food
- Has a Burning Taste
- Makes a Fire Burn More Freely

[Return to Figure 7.E1]

Figure 7.E2 long description: Poster titled “Smokers & Sport: Records of Six Educational Institutions.” Below the title is a collection of graphs titled “Students Competing for Places on Football Teams.” There is a graph for each one of six institutions:

- At Institution A, 58 per cent of non-smokers made the team, whereas 18 per cent of smokers made it.
- At Institution B, 68 per cent of non-smokers made the team, whereas 40 per cent of smokers made it.
- At Institution C, 82 per cent of non-smokers made the team, whereas 25 per cent of smokers made it.

- At Institution D, 67 per cent of non-smokers made the team, whereas 39 per cent of smokers made it.
- At Institution E, 80 per cent of non-smokers made the team, whereas 70 per cent of smokers made it.
- At Institution F, 58 per cent of non-smokers made the team, whereas 0 per cent of smokers made it.

After these graphs is another graph without numbers. It shows a long black rectangle that represents the per cent of non-smokers who successfully secured places on football teams, and a rectangle half as long representing the per cent of smokers who were successful.

The data is from Smoking and Football Men—Popular Science Monthly, Oct. 1912. [Return to Figure 7.E2]

Media Attributions

- Temperance poster promoting the prohibition of alcohol © Provincial Archives of Alberta (PR1974.0001.0400a.0009) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Temperance poster promoting the prohibition of alcohol © Provincial Archives of Alberta (PR1974.0001.0400a.0011) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- One half mile of barmen along Yonge Street during the Prohibition parade © John Boyd, Library and Archives Canada (PA-072524) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- The Malahat is licensed under a Public Domain license
- A police raid at Elk Lake, Ontario, 1925 © Archives of Ontario, C.H.J. Snider fonds, Reference Code F 1194 S 15000, I0015265 is licensed under a Public Domain license

7.8 Eugenics

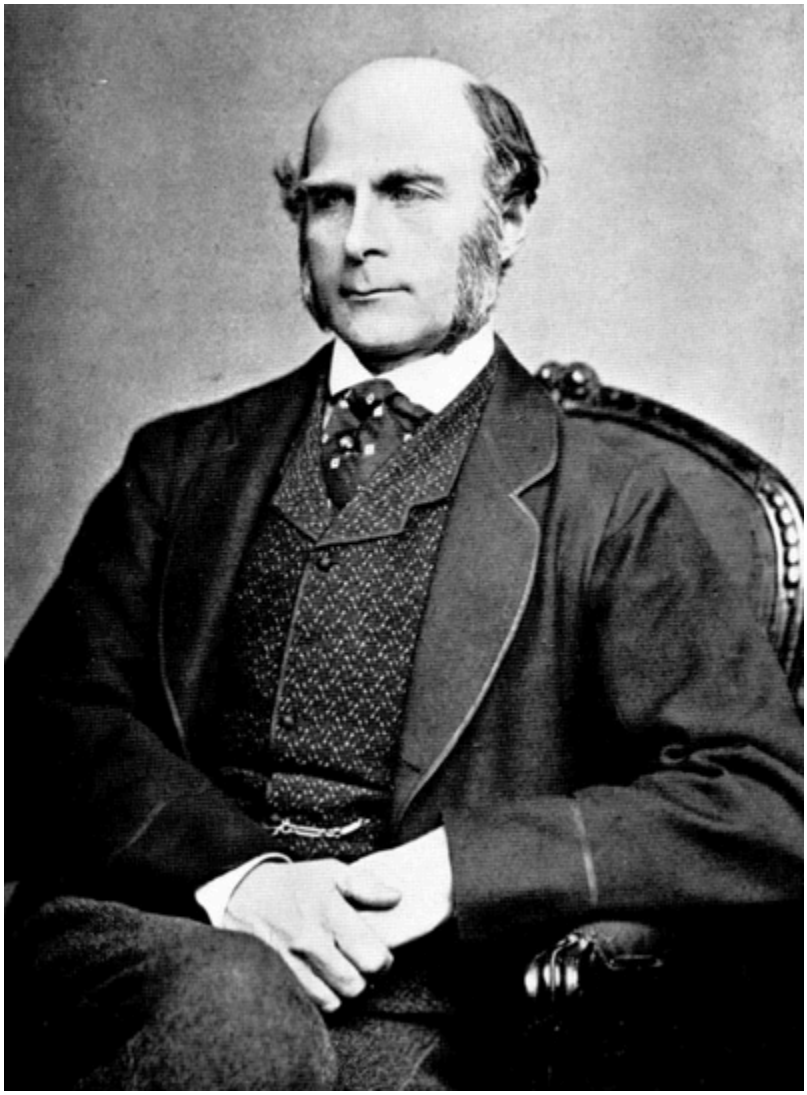


Figure 7.16 Sir Francis Galton (1822-1911) was a largely self-trained British social scientist, a half-cousin of Charles Darwin, and the figure most readily associated with Eugenics. It is Galton who is credited with coining the dichotomy: nurture vs. nature.

One of the earliest and longest lasting of the reform movements was associated with the ideals of **eugenics**. Formulated in its modern context in 1883 by the English intellectual, Sir Francis Galton, eugenics took its lead from evolutionary and genetic theory, and was at the heart of what came to be known as **scientific racism**.

Gene Theory

The core idea of the eugenic theory is that genetic inheritance is a factor in the success or failure of a society. Along with Galton, the proponents of eugenics "believed that criminality, alcoholism, and feeble-mindedness were…inherited."[1] Individuals who are mentally or physically (and, sometimes, morally) challenged are doomed, the eugenicists argue, to pass along those traits to their heirs (which, it is now widely understood, was never the case). A person with a severe mental challenge like Down syndrome, for example, was reckoned incapable of conceiving a child without Down syndrome. Poverty and laziness (often paired as personal qualities) were sometimes viewed as heritable as well. According to eugenic theory, poverty (a condition of life that can be instantly changed with money) was not caused by changes in the economy or social circumstances: it was the consequence of bad genes. Moral weakness was also aligned with "feeble-mindedness." This was especially true as regards eugenicists' views of sexually active women (who were responsible, it was argued, for a rising tide of illegitimate births) and sex trade workers.

The eugenicist strategy has been described as "selective breeding," but that term does not do it justice.[2] "Selective breeding" invariably involves *selecting in*: that is, encouraging fit people (however defined) to have a significant number of children. But the eugenics message in Canada was more about *selecting out*: to find ways to deter the reproduction of what they regarded as fated populations who were doomed by their genes to imperil themselves, successive generations, and the nation as a whole. In this campaign, they were not alone.

Part of the late 19th century context of eugenics in English-Canada was the falling fertility rate, particularly when measured against that of French-Canada and immigrant communities (see Section 1.2). Eugenicists internationally claimed that healthy societies were at risk from this **fertility transition**. Most of these cultures were hostile to the idea of birth control because it would limit the reproduction of their own people, but the idea of sterilizing the least healthy and least valued citizens had considerable appeal.

Nazi Germany, of course, ran headlong down this path and became notorious for the forced sterilization of roughly 360,000 individuals who failed to meet one test or another of "normalcy." The fascists did not have a monopoly on eugenics: it is reckoned that, in the United States from 1910 to the 1970s, no fewer than 60,000 "feebleminded" citizens were forcibly sterilized. Canada sterilized proportionately fewer — the total number is believed to be slightly in excess of 3,000 – but record keeping was inconsistent and there is little doubt that a true total is unknowable.[3]

What is distinctive about this particular branch of social reform in Canada is that its advocates sought to change the human raw materials rather than the laws or conditions under which those humans lived. To quote the authority on this subject, historian Angus McLaren, "The eugenicists differed from most of their contemporaries not so much in envisaging a radically different future, but in supporting the

1. Angus McLaren, *Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1885-1945* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990), 16.
2. R. Douglas Francis, Richard Jones, and Donald Smith, *Destinies: Canadian History Since Confederation*, 6th edition (Toronto: Thomson Nelson, 2008), 173.
3. Randall Hansen and Desmond King, *Sterilized by the State: Eugenics, Race, and the Population Scare in Twentieth-Century North America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 3.

intrusive social policies they felt were needed to bring it into being." [4] While other social reformers were encouraging redemption through personal choice and institutional supports, the eugenicists were advocating change at the sharp end of a scalpel.

A Nation of Thoroughbreds

Eugenics in Canada had two principal roots. These were the deteriorating health of urban working people and a visible increase in the numbers (though not necessarily the incidence) of mental health cases. There was no shortage of evidence that urban work made people less well and the eugenicists feared that those weaknesses would be transmitted to successive generations. As for the mentally ill, their institutionalization and observation got underway in the mid-19th century with the construction of redoubtable asylums in the major cities. It was not until the early 20th century, however, that eugenic thinking produced eugenic action. This took place at the provincial level because of the allocation of powers under the *BNA Act*, but it was only Alberta and British Columbia that moved forward with forced sterilization policies and campaigns.



Figure 7.17 The Provincial Training School for Mental Defectives, Red Deer, AB, n.d.

Originally the Albertan legislation of 1928 did not permit involuntary sterilization but it was nevertheless coercive. Patients were more likely to be discharged from an asylum or hospital if they elected to be sterilized; there was an incentive, then, to go under the knife. This was evidently insufficient as far as Edmonton was concerned, and under the Social Credit government of William Aberhart, the Board of Eugenics was given the power in 1938 to make sterilization compulsory. The Board's record of recommendations is astonishing: only 1% of cases considered were not recommended for immediate sterilization, and that tiny fraction was, in actuality, postponements. As one study of the Alberta Board of Eugenics states succinctly, "not once did it vote "no"."[5]

Scholars working in this field think that British Columbia's experiment with eugenic policies was less

4. McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, 165.

5. Hansen and King, *Sterilized by the State*, 97.

dramatic in its numbers. The problem is that record keeping on this score was remarkably incomplete, and what records were kept were subsequently destroyed or lost. We do know, however, that sterilizations were performed on inmates in mental health and prison facilities beginning in 1933; perhaps a few hundred were affected.

The eugenics movement in Western Canada and the application of sterilization is discussed by historian of institutionalization, Megan Davies (York University).



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: *https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=373#oembed-1*

Fear of the Other

What these initiatives and the appeal of eugenics generally had in common was a fear of immigrants. One study points to the "convergence" of the study and management of public health, reform of educational systems, and concerns for immigrant selection in the 19-teens as a flashpoint in the development of eugenic sentiment. According to one historian of immigration, this was made

> … evident in a 1920 editorial of the *Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene,* which observed that the feeble-minded, insane, and psychopathic found in the province of Manitoba came out of all reasonable proportions from the immigrant class, and it was found that these individuals were playing a major role in such conditions as crime, juvenile delinquency, prostitution, pauperism, certain phases of industrial unrest, and primary school inefficiency.[6]

If the project of nation building had as its goal a law-abiding, physically and mentally healthy population, these weren't just indicators of individual deviance: they were milestones of social decay and a call to action. In British Columbia, where Asian immigration was part of the landscape in a way that it wasn't east of the Rockies, the eugenics movement took on a particularly racist tone. J.S. Woodsworth — an influential figure in the Social Gospel movement — described the Chinese as a "nonassimilable element" and advocated exclusion while one asylum director in the Vancouver area, Charles Doherty, conspired to illegally deport "feeble-minded" Chinese to Shanghai. His actions were consistent with the white majority's fear that the Chinese constituted "a virulent racial plague that had invaded the unsuspecting western colonies and threatened to decimate the good works and dilute the blood of its British forebears."[7] With fewer rights to be stripped away than just about any other group, the Chinese-Canadians who found themselves in BC's psychiatric and mental health facilities were exiled rather than sterilized.

There was a kind of inexorable logic to it all. If the first principle of racism was correct and there was,

6. Donald H. Avery, *Reluctant Host: Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896-1994* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1995), 84-5.

7. Robert Menzies, "Race, Reason, and Regulation: British Columbia's Mass Exile of Chinese 'Lunatics' aboard the Empress of Russia, 9 February 1935," in *Regulating Lives: Historical Essays on the State, Society, the Individual, and the Law*, John McLaren, Robert Menzies, and Dorothy E. Chunn, eds.(Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2002): 199-203.

in fact, a hierarchy of races in which northwestern Europeans stood at the top, and if genetics was a predictable business, then the intermingling of races might strengthen weaker peoples but it could only harm stronger nations. And if strong nations had their share of "feebleminded" individuals, then weak races would have far more. It was also widely believed that the poor, the racially inferior, and the mentally inferior had higher fertility rates than Anglo-Canadians. By encouraging the immigration of lower-tiered races, Canada had thus invited into its midst people whose mental, moral, and physical fabric posed a risk to the whole of this striving, ambitious Canadian project. Doing so was described by the eugenicists as **race suicide**.

A couple of things are striking about this reform movement. First, it was championed principally by nominally **progressive** elements. In Alberta, the United Farmers (UFA) party brought in sterilization legislation and it was, in particular, the United Farm Women of Alberta who led the way in 1924, achieving legislation in 1928. J.S. Woodsworth espoused eugenicist ideas in his anti-immigrant book *Strangers At Our Gates* (1909). Tommy Douglas, the CCF leader and Premier of Saskatchewan, wrote his 1933 Master's thesis on "The problem of the subnormal family" and advocated sterilization of the mentally subnormal. As the Social Gospel moved further from theological to sociological grounds and as that sociology became more allegedly scientific, the responses to mental health became less redemptive and more clinical.

We also find maternal feminists in the frontlines of the eugenics movement. Having elevated motherhood to "woman's highest calling," the quality of motherhood would inevitably come into question, especially if the fertility of the "defective" population was left unchecked.[8] Both Mary Ellen Smith (ca.1861-1933) and Emily Murphy (1868-1933) were outspoken advocates of sterilization in BC and Alberta. Smith — the first woman elected to the BC legislature in 1918 (with the slogan, "Women and children first!") and the first woman in the British Empire to hold a Cabinet seat in government — brought the issue to the provincial Assembly in 1925. Murphy — one of the "Famous Five" who were key to the 1929 "Persons Case" — was brutally frank in her opinions on the subject. In 1932, she wrote that if the state could protect the public "against diseased and distempered cattle," then it should also "protect [the public] against the offal of humanity." She called on the government of BC to do whatever it could to produce "human thoroughbreds."[9] Murphy's position on Chinese immigration was made clear in her attacks on the "yellow peril" in the pages of *The Black Candle* (1922) under the pseudonym of "Janey Canuck": she took the view that inferior peoples begat more inferior peoples and they were all inclined toward criminality.

8. Angus McLaren and Arlene Tigar McLaren, *The Bedroom and the State: The Changing Practices and Politics of Contraception and Abortion in Canada, 1880-1997*, 2nd edition (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997), 68.

9. Hansen and King, *Sterilized by the State*, 99.



Figure 7.18 The Asylum for Idiots and Feeble-Minded at Orillia, ON, ca. 1910.

There were parallel movements in central and eastern Canada, though they failed to achieve legislation in support of sterilization. The Eugenics Society of Canada was established in 1925 but really only began meeting in earnest in the 1930s. More influential was the work of individuals in newly created professional fields. Dr. Helen MacMurchy held the position of Inspector of the Feeble-Minded for Ontario, from 1906 to 1919, and was another advocate of both institutionalization of the mentally "sub-normal" and sterilization.[10] Like many conservative first-wave feminists she was opposed to birth control. She felt the use of birth control by the dominant Anglo-Celtic society would only cause the fertility rates of what she regarded as the better sort of Canadians to fall against the unbridled fertility of inferior peoples (whose fecundity she sought to control through sterilization).[11]

Immigrants and members of ethnic minorities were heavily targeted by the eugenicists, as were Indigenous peoples. "Half-breed" — a term that carried with it a certain amount of pride and distinction in the previous century — was used by the eugenicists in the 20th century in rhetoric designed to show the debilitating effects of intermarriage between races. With that in mind, it is not surprising to find that Indigenous individuals (including Métis) were vastly over-represented in the Albertan sterilization cases. Children, who enjoyed fewer legal protections than adults in institutional settings, were also over-represented. So, too, were women. Overwhelmingly, eugenics in practice was about sterilizing girls and women whose sexuality, morality, poverty, ethnicity, and intelligence combined to constitute a perceived threat to the health and safety of the larger community.

10. McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, 30-6.

11. Erin L. Moss, Henderikus J. Stam, and Diane Kattevilder, "From Suffrage to Sterilization: Eugenics and the Women's Movement in 20th Century Alberta," *Canadian Psychology*, vol. 54, no.2 (2013): 105-107.



Figure 7.19 The Provincial Lunatic Asylum in New Westminster, shortly after it was opened in 1878. It would subsequently become known as the Provincial Hospital for the Insane and, from 1950, as Woodlands School.

Hard Language

In the 21st century, we are accustomed to using vocabulary that is sensitive and respectful as regards physical and mental illnesses and challenges. The language used in the 19th century and through most of the 20th, however, was far more direct and judgmental. It is difficult to convey the level of conviction held by eugenicists if we use 21st century language. They didn't consider mental illness a "disability"; instead, they made use of a rhetoric of "retardation," "insanity," "immorality," and "idiocy." Individuals with physical challenges were regarded as "handicapped" at best, but "crippled" most of the time. People, moreover, became their affliction: individuals with what is sometimes called "sub-normal intelligence" were both "retarded" and "retards," perhaps "morons" or "imbeciles." John Langdon Down (1828-1896), for whom "Down dyndrome" is named, came up with the term "mongoloids" — a disturbing reference to the physical appearance of his patients that, moreover, suggests a racist outlook as well. Individuals with physical disabilities were, of course, "cripples." Women working in the sex trade were simply and inescapably "prostitutes."

These terms enabled 19th and 20th century reformers to objectify the individuals to whom they were referring. Understanding that (for us, discomfiting) relationship between language and reform is critical if we are to understand the attraction and authority of movements like eugenics. A mental disability wasn't a challenge to be overcome: it was a permanent state that defined the individual in question and from which there was little likelihood of escape.

Whatever happened to Eugenics?

The eugenics movement survived in the post-war era to the 1970s. Involuntary sterilizations in Alberta

and British Columbia actually increased between 1945 and the late 1960s. Across the country, however, the tide started to turn much earlier.

A visit to Nazi Germany in 1936 was enough to flush eugenicism out of Tommy Douglas' portfolio of social reforms. Physicians, theologians, and scientists in Quebec — those who did not share in the Anglo-Canadian terror of being over-run by Catholics and foreigners — focused their fire on the faulty science in hereditarian theory. By 1945 they had made much headway in discrediting the movement. It is worth noting that the Catholic Church came out as a consistent critic of eugenicist views, and it was particularly hostile to involuntary sterilization. This opposition derived from several concerns. One that especially mattered in Canada was the xenophobic and Protestant tone of eugenics: both the French and Irish Canadians were tarred with this hostile brush. In the years after 1945 increasing public awareness of the role played by eugenics in Hitler's program of "racial purification" and **genocide** tempered Canadian attitudes.

Nonetheless, BC and Alberta held on to their policies and practices for another generation. Facilities like the BC Provincial Hospital for the Mind (aka: Essondale, Riverview), Woodlands in New Westminster, and Red Deer's Provincial Training School for Mental Defectives (after 1977 known as the Michener Centre), saw the majority of the provinces' sterilizations in the 1950s. The westernmost provinces had something else in common: Social Credit governments, both of which fell in 1972. The Alberta sterilization laws were repealed almost immediately after the new Conservative administration led by Peter Lougheed came to office; the BC legislation was repealed without fanfare in 1973 under the New Democratic Party government of Dave Barrett (b. 1930). In both cases, the context of change was the rise of a stronger culture of individual and human rights. In the mid-1990s, the Alberta government began the process of apologizing and offering compensation to victims of involuntary sterilization. The British Columbia government did the same, but only when ordered to do so by the Supreme Court in 2006.

This is not to say that the eugenicist perspective disappeared entirely. Even in the absence of sterilization legislation, it was revealed in 1978 that Ontarian physicians were performing parent-approved sterilization on children with developmental disabilities.[12] But the social panics about high rates of unemployment, the rise of an urban criminal class, a tidal wave of illegitimate births, and the "degenerate" qualities of the immigrant population — all of which contributed to the original calls for eugenicism described above — had passed. By the 1960s, modernity was entering into middle-age, and the social transformations that were being wrought by urbanization and industrial labour were no longer news. This normalizing of modernity affected movement cultures as a whole and gave way to newer, different tensions.

12. McLaren, *Our Own Master Race*, 169.

Disability



Figure 7.20 Mary Macdonald, photographed in 1893 by William James Topley.

The word "eugenics" means "well born." Mary Macdonald (1869-1933), hydrocephalic and a wheelchair user, would have been fourteen years old when Sir Francis Galton coined the term. She was not "well born."

Her mother, Agnes Bernard, experienced "an excruciating labour," and the infant Mary immediately displayed signs of the enlarged head that would guarantee, in the late 19th century, a lifetime of impairments. Her parents were at first devastated although, as the years passed, they would demonstrate a commitment to Mary's welfare. Mary's father was notoriously terrible with his finances and he struggled with alcohol, but somehow he and Agnes found the resources to hire a pair of caregivers and to pursue what proved to be fruitless medical treatments. They constructed a wheelchair-accessible gallery in their home that enabled Mary to meet her father's visitors. Not all Victorians, it seems, were fearfully ashamed of their child's mental and physical disabilities. Not Agnes and Sir John A. Macdonald at any rate.[13]

13. Ged Martin, *John A. Macdonald: Canada's First Prime Minister* (Toronto: Dundurn, 2013), 116-17, 180.

Key Points

- Eugenics was based on a scientific theory that posited the inheritability of intelligence and defects in intelligence, as well as morality, work ethic, and poverty.
- Eugenicists sought to reduce the impact of "inferior" peoples by means of institutionalization and sterilization, while fighting against campaigns for accessible birth control.
- No fewer than 3,000 Canadians were sterilized, principally in Alberta and British Columbia.
- Mostly, the subjects of sterilization were women, children, immigrants, and Indigenous people.
- Support for the eugenicist cause came from within the Social Gospel movement and early feminist organizations.
- Official sterilization campaigns ended in the 1970s.

Media Attributions

- Francis Galton, 1850s is licensed under a Public Domain license
- The Provincial Training School in Red Deer, Alberta © Alberta Public Archives is licensed under a Public Domain license
- The Asylum, Orillia, ON, about 1910 © McCord Museum (MP-0000.724.13) is licensed under a CC BY-ND (Attribution NoDerivatives) license
- Provincial Asylum for the Insane, c. 1878 © S.J. Thompson is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Mary Macdonald, daughter of Sir John A. Macdonald © William James Topley, Library and Archives Canada (PA-025746) is licensed under a Public Domain license

7.9 Reform Politics: 3rd Parties

The American political system has been demonstrably inhospitable toward third parties for nearly two and a half centuries. The British parliamentary system, however, allows for third parties and more. Admittedly, the **first-past-the-post** arrangement eats into the likelihood of small party success. (While a party might secure 25% nationally, they might not win enough votes in any one constituency to elect even a single MP.) But the possibility of a breakthrough exists and this has encouraged the rise of several parties with limited prospects. Some of these parties have punched well above their weight in terms of their political importance and/or influence on the political forefront. Although some third parties never even achieve federal **Official Opposition** status, a few have exercised power and influence in minority governments. Some have held office provincially, and thus won a high profile there, even if nowhere else. All are expressions of Canadian political culture and values; none are unworthy of study.

Since the early 19th century, political organizations that offer a critique of the constitution, the establishment, or government practices have seized the "reform" banner. Some made use of the name while others described their mission as one that had a reforming agenda. This distinguishes them from the mainstream parties (since 1867, the Liberals and the Conservatives) in that they sought more than a crack at power. Beginning in the late 19th century, social reform and financial reform movements generated political expressions. Perhaps because they had the sensibilities of a movement, some of these political parties were able to survive years of disappointment.

First and Second Parties

In order for the Grits and the Tories to become the Liberals and the Conservatives, respectively, they had to create the political machinery necessary to succeed at the polls across the country. This was no small task. In 1867, the Grits were heavily concentrated in southern Ontario and the Tories were part of an urban and landed elite in both Ontario and Quebec: neither showed much natural ability at expanding their reach. Within 30 years, however, the Liberals and the Conservatives held a duopoly on the federal and provincial stages alike. There were a few exceptions. In British Columbia, for example, party lines were not introduced until 1903. Otherwise, the 19th century closed with a political ecology in Canada that was all but identical to that of Britain, consisting almost exclusively of Liberals and Conservatives.

What happened in the 20th century was, in some respects, a return to the politically fractious pre-Confederation days of Grits, *Rouges,* Tories, *Patriotes,* Reformers, and *Bleus*. And while Canada did not follow Britain's (and Australia's) lead in forming a Labour Party, neither did it conform to the rather limited vision of political options available to Britons, Antipodeans, and Americans. Canada experimented. Having said that, the multi-party system that emerged by the 1920s did not produce a rash of minority governments comparable to what happened in 20th century France and Italy. At the provincial level, the Maritimes would remain loyal to the binary options of Liberals and Conservatives in federal and provincial politics; the same could not be said of the rest of Canada, not even Ontario.

Factionalists

Within the established parties there have always been small break-away movements. Most instances see a disaffected elected representative or two leave their party caucus and sit as "Independents." Sometimes Independent candidates will successfully seek election, although to do so they have to overcome the party machinery on which their opponents might call. More commonly in the 19th century, a hyphenated allegiance would be used in order to make the best of two partisan brands. Macdonald tried this himself when he promoted his party as the "Liberal-Conservatives" in the earliest days of Confederation. By 1873, the label had been dehyphenated and the "Liberal" part appropriated by the Grit-Rouge alliance. At about the same time, a "Conservative-Labour" candidate was elected to Parliament from Hamilton — the first working-class MP. Seeking to distance themselves from imperialists within their party, from 1878-1911, several Quebec Conservatives ran as "Nationalist-Conservatives." By way of contrast, the hard-line, anti-Catholic, anti-French politician Dalton McCarthy (1836-98) eschewed any part of the established parties' brand when he broke with the Conservatives and established his own slate of candidates in the 1896 election. They were known (modestly) as "McCarthyites." Only McCarthy himself was ever elected and he died two years later in a traffic accident.

The 20th century saw still more schisms in the main parties, but most remarkable was the ability of the Conservatives and Liberals to reel in their factional elements.

The United Farmers

It is perhaps ironic that farmers' parties arrived on the scene when they did. After all, the 1921 census showed that Canada had crossed a threshold and was now more urban than rural.

The first third party movement to win a majority of seats in any jurisdiction was the United Farmers of Ontario (UFO) in 1919. Despite its urban centres, Ontario south of the Canadian Shield was still heavily rural. Every constituency had enough farmers' (and farmers' allies') votes to leave the old parties behind. Although the UFO administration was brief — it lasted only one term, from 1919 to 1923 — it was a breakthrough in that it showed the possibility of sectoral appeals across a whole province. The 1919 campaign involved a tactical alliance with the moderate Independent Labour Party of Ontario: the ILP didn't run candidates in rural areas and the UFO stayed out of urban constituencies. The result was a coalition partnership that accomplished quite a lot in terms of early welfare legislation, prohibition, and the establishment of co-operatives, but failed to deliver one of its more innovative reforms: **proportional representation**.

The UFO election was followed quickly by similar triumphs in the West. The United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) were elected to govern in 1921 and the United Farmers of Manitoba (UFM) won a significant number of seats in 1920. Ottawa's wartime refusal to lift tariffs was an important source of UF popularity. Indeed, a common thread in the rise of the United Farmers was their anti-Ottawa posture. Criticism of the tariff component of the National Policy had failed to shift the Conservatives. The Liberals, for their part, blew hot and cold on free trade with the United States, despite farmers' demands for reciprocity. What's more, a succession of Liberal and Conservative provincial governments had failed to win concessions from federal governments. Local voters felt there was nothing to lose in voting United Farmer.

The Progressives

In 1919, the federal Union Government's Minister of Agriculture, Thomas Crerar (1876-1975), split with the Borden administration over its apparent disregard for farmers' issues. The United Farmers ran candidates successfully in a handful of federal by-elections in 1919 and 1920, which led Crerar to form a national pro-agriculturalist party. The result was the Progressive Party, which ran its first campaign in 1921, stealing 58 seats nationally and forming the second largest caucus in Ottawa. By rights, this should have made Crerar the head of the Official Opposition. The Progressives, however, were heavily influenced by populist and agrarian movements, particularly in the United States. They didn't like caucus accountability and discipline and they preferred to vote their (individual) conscience. The Progressives turned down the opportunity to enter into a coalition with the Liberals under King and they passed the title of Official Opposition off to the third-place Conservatives under Arthur Meighen (see Section 6.7). While these decisions and tactics arose from the **anti-party** philosophy of the Progressives, they doomed the organization to insignificance in the House of Commons. It has been suggested by some analysts that the Progressives' atomistic approach means that they weren't a party at all, just an expression of the United Farmers movement. This may be true, but it is all too easy to understate their appeal in the Canadian heartland: half of their MPs came from Ontario, where the Progressives won a quarter of the province's federal seats. (They were unable to make much headway in the Maritimes.)

By 1926, the independently minded Progressives had unraveled. Crerar resigned and the House Leader was now Robert Forke (1860-1934), a veteran of the Liberal Party from Manitoba. When the Conservatives briefly formed a government in 1926, Forke took the Manitoban Progressives into the Liberal Party where they were quickly subsumed into the older organization. Ontarian support dissolved and the more hard-line Albertan members washed their hands of the Progressive label and sat as "UFA" representatives in Parliament. Although "Progressives" were still winning seats in the 1930 election, their numbers were down to single digits. Some of the Albertans were part of a more radical labour-farmer alliance with a strong social gospel pedigree. This group would go on to found the core parliamentary element of the CCF (see below).

What remained of the Progressive Party disintegrated during the 1930s and Crerar was welcomed formally into the Liberal fold. He was rewarded with a cabinet post and a seat in the Senate. The "Progressive" name, however, was appropriated by the Conservative Party, thus the "Progressive Conservatives" from 1942 to 2003.

The Reconstruction Party

H.H. Stevens, a high ranking cabinet minister in the Tory governments of Meighen and Bennett, bailed on the latter on the eve of the 1935 election and formed the Reconstruction Party. Isolationist and inclined towards appeasement of the fascist powers in Europe, the Reconstruction Party finished third in the election with nearly 10% of the popular vote but won only one seat: Stevens' own in the Kootenays. The party folded and Stevens rejoined the Conservatives, despite the fact that Reconstruction's campaign split the vote in dozens of constituencies and ended up costing the Tories dearly.

The Left

Among the first political movements to achieve some measure of success were the Socialists. The Canadian **Left** took many forms, however, and there were more splinters and fragments on this side of the ideological spectrum than on the **Right**.

The Socialist Party

The Socialist Party of British Columbia (SPBC) was the first of several like-minded organizations to elect a candidate to a provincial legislature. They elected two in 1903: Parker Williams and James Hawthornthwaite. Late in 1904, the SPBC fused with socialist parties from across the Prairies and Ontario to create the Socialist Party of Canada (SPC). The whole array was, from the 1890s through the 1920s, deeply divided over the issue of reform versus revolution. An important and influential faction — dubbed **impossibilists** — argued against any **gradualist** or **reformist** approach to capitalism, maintaining that ameliorating the worst effects of the existing system would only enable it to last longer. This made the business of holding elected office exceedingly difficult for representatives of the SPBC and SPC: if they were able to secure better conditions for workers, they would lose the support of the impossibilist faction — if they didn't, they would likely lose the support of the electorate. Even as the SPC's membership and support level was growing during the first decade of the century — by 1910 it was the third largest party in Canada — moderate elements were leaving to form more reform-oriented **social democratic** parties.

The SPC continued to enjoy success in British Columbia until the Great War. In the 1912 provincial election, the SPC won 11% of the vote, a high water mark for third parties in the furthest West before the end of the war. Nationally, however, the party entered into a difficult phase. Its anti-war stance**,** which grew out of an **internationalist** view of the working-class**,** brought it under the lens of national security monitors. Its members were harassed, its mail was tampered with and seized, and its newspaper (*The Western Clarion*) closed down. The revolution in Russia in 1917 led to the formation of a Canadian communist movement that was increasingly critical of the SPC. Attacked from the right and the left, the SPC staggered into the 1920s and collapsed in 1925, most of its members having left to join the communists.

Communist Parties

The Russian Revolution of 1917 inspired some Leftists to pursue a new organizational approach. The *War Measures Act* was still in effect in 1921 when the founding meetings took place and the ban on any "communist party" obliged the use of a different banner: the Workers' Party of Canada. The ban was lifted in 1926 and the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) appeared. The Party struggled with the principal issue that divided communist parties internationally: whether to pursue a worldwide revolution or to support the goal of a successful revolution in Russia. Factions supporting international revolution (Trotskyites) were expelled from the party by the dominant Stalinist elements representing the will of the Communist International (aka the Third International, the **Comintern**).

When the 1930s began and the western world entered into a deep and (as it turned out) protracted crisis in capitalism, support for the CPC and similar movements grew. This resulted in an escalation of state

surveillance and harassment. The 1931 arrest and imprisonment of Tim Buck (1891-1973), the leader of the CPC from 1929 to 1962, drove much of the CPC machinery underground. When Buck was released in 1934, he was met by a 17,000-person rally at Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens, a further sign that support for the CPC was growing while the economy was sinking. CPC efforts to organize the single transient unemployed were particularly effective and resulted in the establishment of the Relief Camp Workers' Union and the Workers' Unity League. The CPC was also able to forge anti-fascist partnerships with more moderate left-wing movements and it played a leading role in founding the 1500-member **Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion** that was sent to Spain to fight the fascists in the Civil War in 1837-38. Not that this initiative improved their relationship with an increasingly anti-fascist government in Ottawa: when war against Germany and Italy erupted in 1939, the "Mac-Pap" veterans were categorized by the federal government as "premature antifascists" and potential subversives.

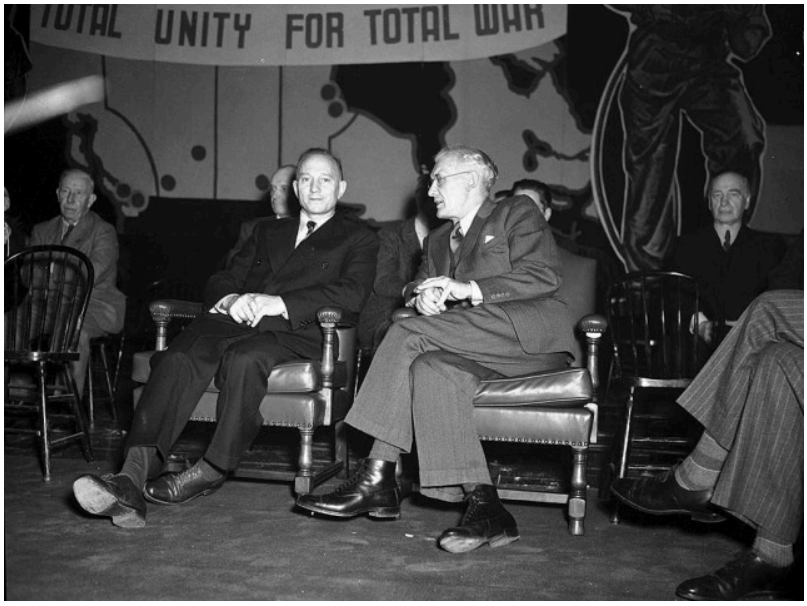


Figure 7.21 Tim Buck (left, seated) returns to Maple Leaf Gardens in 1942.

At the provincial level the Communists were hounded particularly hard by the government of Quebec. The so-called "Padlock Law" of 1937 (officially, in English, an *Act to Protect the Province Against Communistic Propaganda*) was used to close down communist presses and to imprison anyone involved in production or distribution of printed materials for up to three years. It would be another 20 years before the law was struck down as unconstitutional.



Figure 7.22 Annie Buller (1895-1973) was a dynamic activist in the CPC, leading a general strike of dressmakers in Toronto and allegedly inciting a riot at Estevan, SK, during a coal miners' strike, both in 1931. She ran for office on at least three occasions and was jailed repeatedly, mainly for belonging to the CPC.

The Party itself walked a difficult tightrope on international issues. Anti-fascist in 1938, they adhered to the Comintern's anti-war strictures until 1941. The **Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact** of 1939 — a mutual non-aggression agreement between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia — was meant to produce a war between capitalist nations. In that context the CPC was viewed by Ottawa as an organization intent on subverting the war effort of the western Allies, not least of which because the Soviet Union was busily annexing the Baltic nations and badgering Finland. When Germany invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941 and the USSR joined in the battle against the Axis Powers, the status of the CPC and its members improved dramatically.

The party reached a zenith of popularity in 1945, when Joseph Stalin's Soviet Union was Canada's indispensable ally. In the general election of that year, the CPC's Labor-Progressive Party (LPP) pulled in over 2% of the national vote and won one seat. The LPP ran candidates until 1959 and the CPC after that. It failed to win a single seat after 1945.

Support for the Communists was progressively gutted from the mid-1950s onward. Soviet President Nikita Khruschev's damning 1956 speech on Stalin-era purges and atrocities caused some members to leave the party, as did the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian Revolution that same year. Disclosures of anti-Semitism at the highest levels of the Soviet Union further alienated members of the CPC, many of whom were Jewish. The Soviet assault on Czechoslovakia's 1968 rising was cause for further desertions in the decade that followed.

There was a surge in electoral support for the CPC in 1974 when it secured 12,100 votes in the federal election. But by any standard, this was an abject failure as a partisan endeavour. Things worsened for the party at the polls as the Cold War ground to a close. The collapse of the Soviet Union flushed out divisions within the CPC and its assets became, in 1991, the subject of an acrimonious and very public separation battle. The party re-established itself thereafter as an organization dedicated to **Marxist-Leninist** ideals and it continues to operate in provincial, civic, and federal elections.

Social Democrats

The branch of the political tree that produced the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) and the New Democratic Party (NDP) had roots in the social reform movements of the 19th and early 20th century: the United Farmers movements, the Progressives (discussed below), labour organizations like the Knights of Labor, trade unionism, the cooperative movement, and a wide range of socialist philosophies. Established as a national political party in 1932, the CCF ran in its first election in 1933 in British Columbia, where it became the Official Opposition. Thereafter, the party enjoyed success principally at the provincial level, particularly in three of the four western provinces, but it also played a key role in federal politics both in its original form and, later, as the NDP.

The core elements of the moderate socialist movement came together in 1924 in Ottawa. The Progressive Party was nursing closer relations with the Liberal Party and were, some of its members believed, abandoning several key values. Five United Farmers MPs from Alberta and one from Ontario formed a faction within the Progressive Party — a party within a party — and they were joined soon after by five other Progressives, along with four Labour MPs, and four Independent Labour Party MPs. Together this was the **Ginger Group**, a coalition of like-minded men and one woman. What they brought together was a shared belief in the need for greater equality of opportunity and living standards across the social classes, elimination of the worst effects of competitive capitalism, and political reform that included an extension of greater rights to women. In the midst of an economic boom, their voices were largely drowned out. Eight years later, in the midst of the Great Depression, what they had to say appealed to a far greater number of Canadians.

This wasn't the first attempt to forge a common front on the left of the Canadian political spectrum but it had certain qualities that gave it the possibility of greater longevity. For starters, it was a group made up mostly of men who were in their mid- to late-forties; that is, they were all (but one) born in the late 1870s or early/mid-1880s and were thus mostly too old to have served in the Great War. They constituted a peer group that was neither too young to be dismissed as immature radical cranks, nor so old that they seemed out of touch with any particular demographic. Farming backgrounds were a common denominator, as was Methodism, Presbyterianism, and a commitment to the goals of the **cooperative movement**. They had some occupational range: their number included a lawyer and an upholsterer. The two outliers in the group were to have, arguably, the greatest impact on the Ginger – CCF project. J.S. Woodsworth (1874-1942) was the oldest and came into the Group with a reputation as a writer, a Methodist minister and teacher, a pacifist, a labour activist, and a leading light in the social gospel movement. He was also an architect of Canada's first old age pension legislation in 1926 and so demonstrated how the state could play a direct role in alleviating hardship. This was a significant reversal from the old "Poor Law" mentality of the 19th century and opened the door to social welfare legislation across Canada. Woodsworth would become the de facto leader of the Ginger Group and officially, in 1932, of the CCF. The other peerless member of the Group was Agnes Macphail (1890-1954), the youngest of the founders by three years, the only woman, and the only representative of the United Farmers of Ontario. Macphail was a "firster," first woman elected to Parliament, one of the first women elected to the Ontario legislature, the first woman to represent Canada at the League of Nations (the precursor to the United Nations), and the first president of the Ontario CCF. A Methodist in her youth, she was swept up in the evangelical movement in the early 20th century. Macphail worked as a school teacher before pursuing a career in politics, and the very act of being a female "career politician" constituted another first. She wasn't directly involved in the Persons Case of 1929 but was almost a beneficiary; she was about to be offered a seat in the Senate

when she died in 1954. Macphail's significant contribution was both symbolic and practical. She demonstrated by her presence that the social democratic movement was a welcoming place for women in politics and, as a pioneer woman in Canadian politics, she set the bar high for accomplishments.

By the 1930s the Ginger Group itself had fractured; some of its members had retired from politics or had been voted out of office. The economic crisis, however, pulled others into the conversation about a political mechanism for achieving social change. These included the **League for Social Reconstruction (LSR)**, a socialist think-tank (before the words "think" and "tank" were ever combined) led by two outstanding Canadian intellectuals. Frank Underhill, a historian at the University of Toronto, and F.R. Scott, a Law professor at McGill University, very informally founded the LSR with an eye to building a national network of intellectuals who could shift the conversation about the causes of and solutions to the Depression along a constructive, socialist path. Both Underhill and Scott were convinced that capitalism was at the root of the Depression, not moral or social issues; that only systemic changes that delivered socialist policies could change things for the better. The LSR lasted barely a decade and was responsible for building support for the idea of social, economic, and political planning across the party spectrum. It was joined early on by two figures who would play important roles in Canadian politics: Eugene Forsey (1904-91), a young political economist from Newfoundland via Oxford University and elite circles in Toronto, and David Lewis (1909-81), a brilliant Rhodes Scholar and political animal, freshly returned from England. Lewis, like A. A. Heaps (1885-1954) — one of the original Gingers — was a Jew and a consistent and strident opponent of the Communist movement.

In 1932, Underhill and Scott met with the Ginger Group in Ottawa and began the process of founding what they initially called the "Commonwealth Party." A convention was held in 1932 and, influenced by the agrarian socialism of the UFA, "Cooperative" was added to the party's name, and its many threads recognized in the word "Federation." For a while the party banner also carried the words "Farmer-Labour-Socialist". In 1933, at the second convention, the main tenets of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation were codified into the **Regina Manifesto**; these included an ambitious program of social welfare legislation, national ownership of key industries, and a program of universal healthcare. The Manifesto also called for an end to capitalism, a resolution that would be a red rag to anti-communists for the next two decades.

Almost immediately the CCF scored important victories that dwarfed the achievements of any other socialist party in Canadian history. Official Opposition status came first in BC, then in Ontario, but it was in Saskatchewan where the party first formed a government, in 1944. The first socialist government in North America, it would serve as an example of social democratic programming for the rest of the country, piloting the universal healthcare program that was embraced by Ottawa in the 1960s.

Outside of Saskatchewan and British Columbia (where it continued as the Opposition), the post-War years were grim for the CCF. The CCF found itself undermined by the Communists and targeted by an increasingly paranoid Cold War media. To be sure, there were CCFers who came to the party via more ideologically Marxist organizations and some espoused a radical position regarding property and capitalism. David Lewis spent years trying to minimize their impact on the party's policies and profile. In 1956 he finally succeeded, replacing the Regina Manifesto with the much milder **Winnipeg Declaration**. He was aided in this campaign by another CCF veteran of the 1930s, M. J. Coldwell (1888-1974), who undertook a purge of the party's red elements and repositioned the CCF as an

opponent of the Soviet Union. By the late 1950s, however, campaigns against the Left had reached such a pitch that the CCF was all but irrelevant in most jurisdictions.

At that point, the newly restructured national labour centre — the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) — negotiated a partnership with the CCF. This produced, in the course of nearly seven years, the "New Party," a CCF-CLC collaboration that changed its name in 1963 to the **New Democratic Party (NDP)**. Tommy Douglas, the former CCF premier of Saskatchewan, took over the leadership and the social democratic party's fortunes began to improve instantly. There was steady growth through the 1960s and in 1972, the NDP secured enough seats to hold the **balance of power** in Pierre Trudeau's minority government. This was an opportunity to push through social democratic legislation in exchange for propping up the Liberals. The next election, in 1974, cost the NDP dearly; its share of the popular vote hardly changed but it lost half its seats in Parliament nevertheless and was reduced to the third party once more.

There were, however, some victories at the provincial level. The first Manitoban NDP government was elected in 1969 under Edward "Ed" Schreyer (b.1935); Allan Blakeney (1925-2011) revived the Saskatchewan NDP in 1971, forming a government that would last until 1982; in BC in 1972, David Barrett ended 20 years of Social Credit government under W.A.C. Bennett but his NDP government would endure a mere three years; the Yukon NDP formed its first government in 1985 under Tony Penikett (b.1945) and held on to power until 1992. In Ontario, the provincial NDP would go from a position of strength in the 1970s to even greater strength in the 1980s. Beginning with David Lewis' son Stephen (b.1937), then Bob Rae (b.1948), the NDP headed up the Official Opposition in the legislature (Lewis, 1975-77) and held the balance of power (Rae, 1985-87), until forming the government (Rae, 1990-95).

NDP claims of being a national party remained more wishful thinking than empirically verifiable through the late 20th century. The party continued to be marginal in Alberta, Quebec, and the Maritimes. In the rest of the country, however, and especially under the leadership of Edward "Ed" Broadbent (b.1936) from 1975 to 1989, the NDP's central role in federal politics became increasingly confirmed. By the end of the 1980s, it was clear that Liberal and NDP candidates were fighting over Left-centrist votes, a fact that split their possible combined support and thus contributed to two Conservative governments under Brian Mulroney. The last decade of the century would see the NDP's fortunes slide. Audrey McLaughlin (b.1936), the first woman (and first Yukoner) to lead a national party, took the NDP through the economic turmoil of the early 1990s and some of their weakest results nationally (and worst years provincially) before handing the mantle on to Alexa McDonough (b.1944). McDonough, a Nova Scotian, kept the party afloat to the end of the century when, in 2000, it narrowly avoided losing **official party status**.

The CCF-NDP drew on several progressive threads in Canadian society and culture, some of which became severely entangled. The agrarian radicalism of the Progressives and United Farmers, the militant unionism and revolutionism of the Socialist Party of BC, the **Fabian** democratic socialism of the LSR, and the powerful and persistent influence of the Social Gospel gave it both a broad foundation to build on and the raw materials for continuous infighting. With the addition of the CLC it became a kind of Labour Party, but it did so in a way that would guarantee tensions between the CLC elements and those more associated with CCF values. When, in 1969-71, a faction within the NDP emerged that embraced left-wing nationalism, feminism, social activism and called for an independent socialist Canada, many of the fracture lines within the Party were laid bare. The **Waffle**, as the splinter group

was known, failed to take over the leadership of the national party but the question remained as to whether the NDP was the party of organized labour or the party of social justice and socialism. These debates continue within the party and are unlikely to end anytime soon.

Social Credit and the *Ralliement Créditistes*

In 1924, a British engineer and former soldier, Major C.H. Douglas (1879-1952), published a densely argued treatise on a flaw within capitalism. The costs of goods produced across a spectrum of industries, he pointed out, were invariably greater than the wages paid out to the people producing them. This meant that there was not enough money in circulation to purchase what was being manufactured. Consumers, he argued, were invariably at a disadvantage and the whole of the economy continually headed toward bottlenecks. To solve this conundrum, he proposed a system of credits that would be applied across society and a radically changed democratic system that, together, would empower the populace as consumers and political actors.

Douglas was one of a great many economic theorists in the Interwar years — offering up ways to overhaul or replace conventional capitalism and address the shortcomings of liberal democracy. His ideas and analyses were complex and roundly criticized by economists. His suggestions, however, found purchase in two places in particular: New Zealand and Canada.

The concept of **social credit** landed in Alberta in the late 1920s and might have disappeared if not for the conjunction of several elements. Politics in Alberta had taken on a strong evangelical tone thanks, in part, to the social gospel themes and rhetoric employed by the ruling United Farmers party. The idea of preachers in politics was widely accepted and a certain amount of trust and even deference was enjoyed by evangelical clergymen. Not surprisingly, the high-energy, “tub-thumping,” “fire-and-brimstone” preachers were among the most compelling.

The most widely recognized voice of religion in the early 1930s in Alberta was that of “Bible Bill” Aberhart (1878-1943). A school principal and Baptist minister, Aberhart established the Calgary Prophetic Bible Institute and took to the airwaves with a weekly radio evangelical program. He was a pioneer in this respect, what today we would call an “early adopter” of communications technologies. Moreover, Aberhart’s own deep rolling voice was joined behind the microphone by a team of actors who played out moral parables on live radio. His audience was huge, and radio at this time — played in the home on a wireless set that was often the beautifully designed centerpiece of the parlour or front room — was listened to in a manner that involved a kind of quiet engagement by everyone in the household. Aberhart would invite his listeners to consider what they heard and to discuss it, as though they were holding a seminar or a bible-reading group in their own home. Why does this matter? A member of the Prophetic Bible Institute introduced Aberhart to social credit theory and the latter quickly saw it as a solution to the crisis of the Depression. He became so convinced of its potential that he promoted his understanding of Douglas’ theories from the pulpit and, more importantly, through his radio program. (One particularly effective episode involved a recurring character, the “Man from Mars,” who commented on the inexplicably strange things Earthlings do, offering Martian solutions to crime, immorality, and unemployment and the use of social credits.)[1]

The failure of the United Farmers to take up the social credit idea launched Aberhart into politics. In

1. David R. Elliott and Iris Miller, *Bible Bill: A Biography of William Aberhart* (Edmonton: Reidmore Books, 1987), 151.

1935, the Social Credit Party — helped by scandal in the UFA — won a landslide victory. Success at the polls was not matched by fiscal victories: issuing social credits meant, in essence, producing a currency, something that was exclusively reserved to the federal government. The coupons or "scrip" were fiscally, operationally, and constitutionally problematic, so much so that the lieutenant-governor of Alberta refused to pass into law Aberhart's experiment, which became derided as "funny money." This didn't stop Social Credit from holding onto power in Alberta for the next 36 years, nor did it stop its spread across Canada.[2]

Outside of Alberta, the ideas behind social credit produced three different partisan typologies. Douglas' beliefs regarding democracy were complex and in some ways idiosyncratic while simultaneously typical of the imaginative hothouse that was the 1920s. He advocated government by experts (he was, after all, an engineer) and believed politicians should act as middlemen between the voters and the planners. Aberhart echoed this perspective, especially if he was cornered on a difficult aspect of economic theory. In a statement that acquired some fame, he said:

> You don't have to know all about Social Credit before you vote for it. You don't have to understand electricity to make use of it, for you know that experts have put the system in and all you have to do about Social Credit is to cast your ballot for it, and we'll get experts to put the system in.[3]

But Aberhart was a partisan and Douglas didn't like parties. This thread of his thought took shape in Quebec in the 1940s with the *Union des électeurs* and briefly in Ontario by the similarly named Union of Electors.

The second typology was the more conventional party format, like that in Alberta and the Social Credit Party of Canada (SCPC). The national party struggled from 1953 to 1958 when they were wiped out by the Diefenbaker landslide in the West. But the party had a base of support in Quebec as well and it rebounded in 1962, winning 29 seats, all but four of them in Quebec. This gave Social Credit the balance of power in Parliament, which they used a year later to oust the Diefenbaker minority. Shortly thereafter, the national party split and the larger part of the caucus formed the *Ralliement des créditistes* under the leadership of Réal Caouette (1917-76), the remainder keeping the SCPC brand. As a "third" party they typically finished fourth in Parliamentary seats, behind the NDP. In 1972, Caouette's *Ralliement* won 15 seats but began an unbroken slide into the 1980s, after which it was frozen out. Never at risk of forming a national government (nor a provincial one in Ontario or Quebec), the eastern and national parties continued to support the economic theories of Douglas, and to espouse anti-Semitic and occasionally pro-fascist sentiments. Caouette was, too, a Quebec nationalist but also a rabid enemy of radical separatists like the *Front de libération du Québec* (FLQ).

The third type of Social Credit Party was that of W.A.C. Bennett (1900-79), the charismatic premier of British Columbia from 1952 to 1972. Bennett, a former Conservative Member of the Legislative Assembly, split with his old party and was able to take the reins of a slow-moving Social Credit Party that was largely populated by former Albertans. Once he formed government he never spoke again of

2. Two studies addressing the theoretical elements of Douglas' social credit and the practicality of some of his aims in Alberta are Alvin Finkel, *The Social Credit Phenomenon in Alberta* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989) and Bob Hesketh, *Major Douglas and Alberta Social Credit* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997).

3. Aberhart to John Hargrave, and Albertans, during a 1935 election campaign. Originally from the *Edmonton Journal*, (14 August 1935), and cited in Harry Hiller, *Religion, Populism, and Social Credit in Alberta* [PDF], p. 375, (PhD Thesis, November 1972), accessed 13 May 2016, https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/bitstream/11375/13785/1/fulltext.pdf.

"funny money" and the party, for all intents and purposes, pursued the (right-of-centre) politics of populism and pragmatism. After he won a majority in 1953, Bennett disposed of BC's peculiar preferential-ballot system and restored the conventional first-past-the-post model. Informed by small-town piety, devotion to private (especially small) enterprise, and a Cold War-era loathing for unions and the Left, the party took a breather during the Barrett/NDP administration of 1972-75 and then governed for another 16 years before falling apart in the 1991 general election.



Figure 7.23 Alberta's "Prosperity Certificates" circulated briefly under Social Credit. The bearer had to purchase a penny stamp for the reverse side at the end of each week, which meant that there was a frenzy to get rid of them every seven days.

The conservative Christian values of Social Credit's various incarnations has meant that its support has mostly migrated to parties on the Right. Preston Manning's Reform Party attracted some based in part on the leader's long connection with Social Credit (Manning's father succeeded Aberhart as Premier from 1943-68) as did the electorally insignificant Christian Heritage Party. The pragmatism of the leadership — exemplified by W.A.C. Bennett and his son and successor, William "Bill" Bennett, also enabled its constituency to find a home in the BC Liberal Party. The *Ralliement* articulated a conservative nationalism consistent with Duplessis' *Union Nationale* along with some aspects of both the *Parti Québecois* and the *Bloc Québecois* (see Section 9.9 and Section 10).

Key Points

- The Canadian parliamentary system enables the establishment of alternative political parties.
- Historically, some reform movements have taken the form of political parties. These have included agrarian parties like the United Farmers and the Progressive Party, socialist parties like the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation/New Democratic Party and the Communist Party of Canada, and the various parties associated with social credit.

Media Attributions

- Tim Buck at Maple Leaf Gardens © City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1257, Series 1057, Item 7099 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Annie Buller addressing a crowd before the Estevan Riot © RCMP is licensed under a Public Domain license

7.10 The Second Wave of Feminism

Robert Rutherdale; Department of Philosophy & History; and Algoma University

In 1963 feminist author and activist, Betty Friedan, captured extraordinary attention with her book, *The Feminine Mystique*. She struck a chord for many readers and a nerve among her critics. She wrote about "the problem that has no name," the unhappiness and dissatisfaction experienced by many women in their roles as homemaker, mother, and feminine wife. At its source, she argued, was **patriarchy**. Notions of privileged males resonated with the daily experience of many women in Canada, especially in the middle-class.

Inspired by *The Feminine Mystique,* and by Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1948, translated into English in 1953), as well as by Germaine Greer's *The Female Eunuch (1970)* a growing number of women across the western world, including women in Canada, launched a significant activist movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The **Women's Liberation Movement** aimed to empower women in both their private and public lives. This **second wave feminist** challenge staged public protests, producing iconic images that were easily consumed on television screens and often sensationalized. They challenged assumptions about conventional roles for women and the "normalcy" of patriarchy, leading in Canada's centennial year to the establishment of the **Royal Commission on the Status of Women**, which produced its report in 1970 and established the **National Action Committee on the Status of Women**. Progressive changes in gender roles, with respect to enhancing women's power, were attempted by establishing a portfolio on the status of women in the federal cabinet and in creating an Office of Equal Opportunities in the Public Service Commission. A new *Citizenship Act* was passed in 1975 and legislation to amend the Labour Code was adopted in 1978. That same year, the *Canadian Human Rights Act* came into effect, ensuring that "equal pay for equal work" be reflected in the workforce.

These shifts in public policy and public opinion provided space for a discussion of the brutal side of patriarchy. Women's Liberation in the 1960s — which was sometimes exuberant and even fun — was followed in the 1970s by a grim and growing recognition of gendered violence in the form of wife abuse. Friedan's critique of a patriarchal society made possible the revelation of life stories of battered women. She offered a challenge, taken up by many readers in Canada beginning in the early 1960s, which had been largely absent in the popular discourse. Even now, out-of-sight struggles from this generation (and others) are gradually being revealed by oral histories and life writing. With renewed local community support throughout the 1970s, the rising number of women's and family shelters provided a necessary, if distressing, measure of the problem of spousal abuse.

At this point, two generations of Canadian women — mothers who remembered the 1930s and beyond, and their daughters — could step past the so-called **generation gap** between parents and the young, to confront long histories of becoming a woman, altogether. In the 1970s Women's Studies courses and, later, programs were appearing for the first time on Canadian university campuses; daughters enrolled in these newly instituted disciplines started bringing home copies of the much reprinted *Our Bodies, Ourselves* (a key, and evolving, textbook, launched by a Boston-based feminist movement established in 1969) for mom to have look at. Old assumptions about property rights, income-earning potential for

women (who often earned less than two-thirds pay for work of equal value at this time), taxation laws, and child-care responsibilities spoke to the larger picture of patriarchy's persistence during and beyond the so-called "good life" of the 1950s. That the Dominion Bureau of Statistics (replaced by Statistics "Stats" Canada in 1972) routinely recorded fathers and husbands in the conjugal family as household "heads," even in the early 1970s, is understandable: adult males earned much more as paid workers and their gendered role conformed to Western cultural practice and expectations.

Despite these feminist challenges, most barriers to gender equality held fast beyond the 1960s. The second wave had momentum, but it crashed again and again against opposition from both men and women, opposition that was as much conditioned by past assumptions, as it was just plain reactionary. The "trouble with normal," as Mary Louise Adams put it, was that the great postwar experiment in restoring a heterosexual, gendered family regime — rooted in a mythical past — had failed to live up to its billing.[1] Dismantling its structures through new laws and public policy in employment equity, day care provision, and family law reform continue to present day.

Probing these broad patterns can take us to unexpected places, as historians move from an era when "mixed marriages" described a union across Christian denominations to one in which same-sex nuptials are protected by Canada's *Charter of Freedoms and Rights*. In hindsight, from the end of the Second World War to the early 1980s, gender roles did not obliterate old boundaries, but they shifted considerably in pushing them toward more equality. Nonetheless, the ongoing task of translating legal gender equality into everyday realities in the continual making of gender roles leaves work yet to be done — throughout Canadian society, and by historians at work mapping their historical contexts in the years ahead. Present-day trends have deep historical roots. Gender roles remain defined more by patriarchy than equal partnership. It is also evident that they have been significantly challenged in histories of the struggle for women's rights.

Key Points

- The movement to improve the condition of women changed in the 1960s and 1970s, becoming variously known as the Women's Liberation Movement and second wave feminism.
- A result of this activism and a stimulus to further action was the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in 1970.
- Legislation aimed at achieving gender equality was introduced incrementally, although barriers proved resistant and continue to be so.

1. Mary Louise Adams, *The Trouble with Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1997).

7.11 Greenpeace

The 1960s ended with the apparent disappearance of an array of social movements. Some were exhausted, others lost personnel, a few accomplished their limited goals and ceased to have a purpose. Mostly, however, they were redeployed into other projects. **Greenpeace** is an example of a movement organization that combined a critique of capitalism and Cold War politics with a strong environmentalist sensibility.

Established in Vancouver in 1971, Greenpeace opened its first office in Kitsilano, a neighbourhood deeply associated with the hippy movement of the previous decade. Starting out as the "Don't Make a Wave Committee," the organization took the name of its first ship, the *Greenpeace*, for the organization as a whole. The catalyst was American nuclear weapon testing on a remote Aleutian island in Alaska. The Americans, British, and French had been testing atomic explosives in isolated island locations since the 1940s. With an arms race against the Soviet Union well underway, the Americans were eager to both maintain their apparent technological lead, and to do so as close to the Soviet hinterland of Siberia as possible. Environmentalists and anti-Cold War activists saw the proposal to detonate a warhead beneath Amchitka Island (the third test on the island in ten years) as offensive and dangerous. There were fears, too, that the test would cause a tsunami, and that radiation would inevitably seep into the sea.

The organization cannily incorporated journalists and media figures into its numbers. Its leaders were principally middle-class professionals who presented Greenpeace as inclusive and open; the opposite of the corporate forces it was fighting. Within a couple of years, the focus of Greenpeace's activity had shifted to the international whale hunt and, in the late 1970s, the Newfoundland-Labrador seal hunt. This latter campaign pitted the still-mostly British Columbian organization against Newfoundland workers, and was (at least temporarily) highly divisive.

Thanks in part to the anti-sealing campaign launched in Europe, Greenpeace quickly became a global brand. Its flag and emblems could be found across the western world and in ports across Oceania. However, it retained a powerful presence in Canada. This would be seen again in British Columbia, from 1992-1996, in the **War in the Woods** — a mass protest and occupation of old growth forests that culminated in the arrest of 300 protesters in one day.



Figure 7.24 The fur trade between Canada and Europe was fundamental to the growth of colonial commerce and population but by the 1980s it had become an economic and moral battleground internationally.

Critics of Greenpeace have pointed to their record as enemies of working class people. Seal hunters and loggers — not to mention whalers as well as farmers working with genetically modified foods — have been impacted when the corporations for which they work have been targeted. Greenpeace also has a spotty record when it comes to consulting with First Nations, an accusation that was levelled against it by the seal hunting Inuit of Labrador and the Nuu-chah-nulth First Nation in whose ancestral territory the War in the Woods took place.[1] Internal divisions have wracked the organization since the 1970s, and it principally survives now as "Greenpeace International."

1. John-Henry Harter, "Environmental Justice for Whom? Class, New Social Movements and the Environment: A Case Study of Greenpeace Canada, 1971-2000," *Labour/Le Travail*, 54 (Fall 2004): 83-119.

From the perspective of Canada, Greenpeace did many incontrovertibly important things in the first 30 years of its existence. It raised awareness of environmental issues as they pertained to the Cold War, global capitalism and consumerism, and the difficulties inherent in policing a mobile operation like the whale hunt. As a movement, it had greater international reach than any other has that originated in Canada. In mobilizing hundreds, if not thousands, of people to put themselves in the way of corporate foes — and at the risk of being arrested and jailed — Greenpeace created a generational cadre of environmental activists and shifted the political agenda (at least in some quarters). Finally, Greenpeace carried forward many of the traditions of the social reform movements we have been studying: largely middle-class, morally forthright, redemptive, and as inclined toward prohibition of offending behaviours as it was to tempering practices. Greenpeace may be contentious in some quarters but it is in many respects an illustration of Canadian historical traditions.

Key Points

- Greenpeace originated in the anti-nuclear movement of the 1960s and 1970s, turning its attention to animal rights issues in the late 1970s.
- Increasingly associated with protests against whaling and sealing, Greenpeace became an international movement in the 1980s, at which time it refocused again on the logging of old growth forests.
- Founded in Vancouver, Greenpeace was an important late-20th century organization in Canada that drew on the traditions of older reform movements.

7.12 Summary



Figure 7.25 Temperance and prohibition were causes around which 19th and 20th century reformers could unite, and it attracted a crusading Christian ethos. (Published by Dominion Scientific Temperance Committee, ca. 1912.) *[Long Description]*

Urban living and industrial working conditions, the prevalence of alcohol abuse, the vulnerability of families (more visible now in urban conditions), and a nativist response to immigration, all contributed to the growth of reform movements in the post-Confederation period. These were like crusades, their

knights tilting at issues that were, one after the other, guaranteed to cause the moral, economic, and even genetic destruction of whatever constituted “Canadian” society.

Some reform movements sought to accomplish, on a society-wide scale, what the emergent labour movement hoped to achieve at the factory level. Better conditions, more time for leisure and reflection, and supports for the most vulnerable member of society were common goals. The things that animated reform movements varied tremendously. Political reform movements in the West, for example, were united in their criticism of Central Canadian imperialism.

After the Second World War, reform movements ceased to be a mass phenomenon. That is not to say they went away. Many of the strategies and goals of pre-WWII reform movements were carried forward by the social democratic parties and some, too, were transmitted to the populist right-wing parties. In Quebec the Catholic Church continued to play a role and there was, as well, the powerful secularization of the reform agenda in the Quiet Revolution. In some respects the environmentalism of the late 20th century — descended from conservationism — continues the reform movement tradition, as do prohibitionist movements like the “war on drugs.” These are, however, movements that are either limited in their membership or so generalized as not to constitute a coherent agenda of social change with clear objectives and outcomes. And, for the most part, they lack the cure-all quality to many of the earlier reform programs. The rise of mass education, the professionalization of teaching, and the development of a social work sector all became extensions of the reform movement tradition, but in ways that closed off access and engagement to everyone but the experts.



Figure 7.26 Now known predominately as a source of inexpensive recycled clothes, used books, and well-used furniture, the Salvation Army today presents itself very differently from its Victorian incarnation. While it is still engaged in work among vulnerable populations, Sally Ann’s efforts to save society as a whole have effectively ended.

Key Terms

anti-party: The position that political parties constitute an unwelcome constraint on democratic politics.

balance of power: In parliamentary politics, describes a minority government that is dependent on another party to provide enough votes to prohibit defeat through a vote of non-confidence.

Comintern: Also the Communist International, the Third International; 1919-1943; called for world revolution and the establishment of communist regimes.

cooperative movement: Also spelled co-operative. Established in growing numbers in Britain in the mid-19th century and is associated with the "Rochdale Pioneers"; several typologies; goals include making available goods and/or supplies to members at low costs by taking advantage of economies of scale as a group, also obtaining optimal prices for community products by pooling output for sale. Surpluses and profits are redistributed to members of the cooperative; some have an educational mandate as well. Examples include grocery stores, housing co-ops, and the dairy industry. See also wheat pools.

Court of Chancery: In England, the Court dealt primarily with trusts; dissolved in 1875.

established churches: Organized religion recognized by the state. In Canada there are no officially recognized sects but the Anglican Church is the "established church" of England and the Queen is its head. Similarly, the Catholic Church was historically the official church of French Canada and it retains in the post-Confederation period a de facto official status.

eugenics: An early theory respecting genetic transmission of physical, social, intellectual, and moral qualities which sought to advantage "races" that it considered superior stock against those that it regarded as inferior.

evangelicalism: In Christianity, a belief that salvation is achieved through faith in Jesus; individualistic in that redemption occurs at a personal, not a social level; evangelical denominations are often associated with fundamentalism as well.

Fabian: A belief that reforms to capitalism can produce a social and economic order of fairness for working people; sometimes called "gradualism."

fertility transition: Demographic trend in which populations move from a level of high fertility to a much lower level; associated with urbanization and modernization.

first-past-the-post: Electoral system in which the candidate receiving the greatest number (though not necessarily a majority) of ballots wins; considered problematic by some when a party wins a majority of seats while winning much less than a majority of votes.

generation gap: Notable differences in values, tastes, interests, and practices between individuals and whole cohorts from different generations. In the 1960s, used extensively to describe the conflict in values between people born before WWII and the baby boom generation.

genocide: The premeditated extermination of an identifiable group of humans, often defined by race or ethnicity. See also cultural genocide.

germ theory: The identification of microorganisms as the cause of some illnesses, particularly infectious diseases.

Ginger Group: An alliance of progressive MPs in Ottawa that led to the founding of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF).

gradualist: The idea that great change can occur incrementally, in slow, small, and subtle steps, rather than

by large uprisings or revolutions. Among left-wing activists, a belief that reforms to capitalism can produce a social and economic order of fairness for working people; sometimes called "Fabianism;" derided by revolutionaries as delusional. In the context of Quebec's independence movements the equivalent term is *étapisme*. See also reformist and impossibilist.

Greenpeace: An environmental movement founded in Vancouver in the early 1970s as part of an international anti-nuclear arms movement; became more directly associated with environmental issues like sealing and whaling.

impossibilists: Among left-wing activists, a belief that it is impossible to reform capitalism and that it must be overthrown rather than overhauled. See also gradualist and reformist.

internationalist: In the history of organized labour, the belief that workers of all countries had more in common than they did with co-nationals who belong to other social classes. Views nationalist movements as antithetical to the interests of working people.

League for Social Reconstruction (LSR): A socialist think-tank established by Frank Underhill and F.R. Scott in 1932.

Left: Coined during the French Revolution to describe opponents of the monarchy; since then, used to describe a spectrum of reform and radical positions and political organizations that includes some Liberals, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, the New Democratic Party, the Socialist Party of Canada, and — at the far end of the Left — the Communist Party and, in some instances, anarchists. See also Right.

Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion: A 1,500-strong contingent of Canadian volunteers in the war against the Fascists in Spain during the Civil War, 1937-38; took their name from the two leaders of the Rebellions of 1837-38, Louis-Joseph Papineau and William Lyon Mackenzie (the grandfather of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King).

Marxist-Leninist: Building on the scientific socialism of Karl Marx, which argued that socialist, worker-led governments would supersede bourgeois capitalism, the Leninist thread — arising in revolutionary and post-revolutionary Russia — introduced the idea of a vanguard of the proletariat, single-party rule, internationalism, and a state-run economy. In Canadian communism, one of several variants on Marxist doctrine.

maternal feminists: Adherents to the ideals of maternal feminism.

Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (1939): A mutual non-aggression treaty signed between Germany and the USSR; allowed Germany to move forward with its attacks on France and the Low Countries while the Soviet Union annexed territories in the Baltic region.

National Action Committee on the Status of Women: Established in 1971 to agitate for implementation of the recommendations of the Bird Commission. See also Royal Commission on the Status of Women.

New Democratic Party (NDP): Successor to the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation; created out of the union of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and the CCF in 1961.

non-conformist churches: A descriptive term attached to dissenting Protestant sects that broke with the Anglican Church as early as 1660; associated specifically with Methodism, Congregationalism, and the Baptist Church.

Official Opposition: In parliamentary systems, the party with the second largest number of seats in the House of Commons. On occasion, the second largest caucus has refused the title of Official Opposition.

official party status: The recognition of a political party's representatives in an assembly as sufficient to merit certain parliamentary privileges, including the right to ask questions during question period. In Ottawa, the federal House of Commons requires that a party have no fewer than 12 MPs in order to qualify for official status.

patriarchy: A socio-economic system in which males have legal, political, social, and economic primacy and privilege, sometimes to the complete exclusion of women. Under a patriarchy, control over children is also a male (fatherly) prerogative.

Poor Laws: A series of laws enacted in Britain, including several amendments in the 19th century; aimed at providing support for the unemployed and impoverished; characterized by the use of "poor houses" and "workhouses" in which conditions were sufficiently appalling to keep all but the least able-bodied and most desperate off of the public dole.

progressive: In politics and social policy, the belief in the improvability of human society. In partisan politics, associated with the Progressive Party (below) and the Progressive Conservative Party. In music, indicates a sub-genre of rock and roll which tends to be more symphonic and influenced by electronic jazz.

proportional representation Distinct from the first-past-the-post system; can take several forms but common aspect is that political parties will be elect a number of seats that reflects in some measure the percentage of votes they receive. For example, a party might win 49% of the votes in every constituency but not elect a single candidate if the only other party running wins 51% of the votes; proportional representation (sometimes called "PR") would ensure that the second-place party received something closer to 49% of the seats.

race suicide: An idea common to the eugenics movement; the idea that "inferior races" will inevitably squeeze out "superior races" by dint of having higher reproductive rates; especially popular at times when fertility in the anxious community is falling.

referenda: A public opinion poll for registered voters, the results of which may or may not be binding. Members of Parliament debate actual bills that they can see and hold, and on which they may offer suggestions and amendments; referenda typically ask for general agreement on a broad principal without providing any of the details.

reformist: Among left-wing activists, a belief that incremental changes to capitalism can produce a social and economic order of fairness for working people; derided by revolutionaries as delusional. See also gradualist and impossibilist.

Regina Manifesto: 1933; the original statement of purpose and beliefs of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation.

Right: Individuals, groups, and parties espousing a conservative perspective; a broad continuum that includes Red Tories, Blue Tories, neo-liberals/conservatives, the late 20th century Reform Party, and — far to the Right — fascists.

Royal Commission on the Status of Women: Created in 1967 and reported out in 1970; chaired by Florence Bird; produced 167 recommendations that focussed on issues of equality of opportunity and identifying the many institutional, legal, and systemic barriers to the same. While most of the recommendations have been adopted, provision of day care remains an outstanding exception. The RCSW did not address issues associated with sexual identity or sexual orientation and its failure to discuss violence against women was a major oversight. The Office for the Status of Women was established as a consequence of the Commission's report.

Salvation Army: Founded in England in 1865; a Christian denomination identified with charitable works in urban industrial areas; adopted a military model with uniforms, marching bands, and ranks. Introduced to Canada in 1882, where it is also known as the "Sally Ann," sometimes as the "Starvation Army." Keenly interested in social justice issues, the Salvation Army was instrumental in the social gospel movement.

scientific racism: The use of scientific technique or pseudo-scientific technique to provide a rational and empirically verifiable basis of racial discrimination. Utterly demolished as a theory in the postwar period, it nevertheless contributed not only to the spread of racism in Euro-Canadian communities but to its legitimation and respectability.

second wave feminist: A renewal of movement feminism in the postwar era; focussed on rights in the workplace, equality of opportunity and pay, reproductive rights, and violence against women. See also Women's Liberation

social control: The regulation of social behaviour through direct (laws, policing) and indirect (social pressure, moral suasion) means.

social credit: Primarily an economic theory and monetary policy, developed in the 1920s and touted as a solution to the Depression in Canada by Social Credit political parties.

social democratic: A political movement that advocates reform that will achieve greater social equality, a degree of socialist governance, and the preservation of democratic institutions. Associated with the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and New Democratic Party.

social reformers: Advocates of change at the social — rather than individual — level; associated with 19th century social movements like the suffragettes, maternal feminism, and temperance agitation.

suffrage: The right to vote in elections; associated strongly with women's suffrage.

third parties: Political parties other than the Liberals and Conservatives; distinguished from "fourth" or "fringe parties" by their more respectable showing at the polls. Principally, the CCF-NDP, Social Credit, and Reform Party of Canada. The Bloc Québécois occupies a special place in this respect because it has enjoyed a large following and has formed the official opposition in Ottawa, but is not a national party.

Waffle: A faction within the NDP in 1969-1971 that embraced left-wing nationalism, feminism, and social activism, and called for an independent socialist Canada.

War in the Woods: 1992-1996; a series of mass protests against logging in old growth forests in British Columbia.

Winnipeg Declaration: Fully, the 1956 Winnipeg Declaration of Principles of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation; replaced the Regina Manifesto; significant in that it moved the party away from socialism and closer to democratic socialism and a pro-union position; made possible the alignment of the CCF with the CLC very soon after.

Women's Liberation Movement: Both an informal and loose organization of various women's advocacy and political groups, and an alternative term for second wave feminism; first appeared in 1968.

Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA): Originated in Britain in 1855 as a faith-based organization in support of the first generations of women in urban industrial settings; first Canadian chapter established in Saint John in 1870.

Short Answer Exercises

1. What were the main features of social reform movements in the late 19th and early 20th centuries?
2. In what ways were they distinctive historic phenomena?
3. How was social reform connected to feminism and women's issues?
4. What was the Social Gospel and how did it understand the need for social change?
5. What role did alcohol production, consumption, and sales play in the social reform agenda?

6. In what ways did political parties take the social gospel and other social reform urges into the ballot box?
7. What influence did eugenics have on social reform movements?

Suggested Readings

Baskerville, Peter. "'She Has Already Hinted at "Board"': Enterprising Urban Women in British Columbia, 1863-1896," *Histoire sociale/Social History,* 26, no. 52 (November 1993): 205-27.

Belisle, Donica. "Crazy for Bargains: Inventing the Irrational Female Shopper in Modernizing English Canada," *Canadian Historical Review*, 92, Number 4 (December 2011): 581-606.

Boschma, Geertje. "Deinstitutionalization Reconsidered: Geographic and Demographic Changes in Mental Health Care in British Columbia and Alberta, 1950-1980," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, 44, Number 88 (Novembre-November 2011): 223-56.

Clément, Dominique. "Generations and the Transformation of Social Movements in Postwar Canada," *Histoire sociale/Social history*, 42, Number 84 (Novembre-November 2009): 361-87.

Girard, Philip. "'If two ride a horse, one must ride in front': Married Women's Nationality and the Law in Canada 1880–1950," *Canadian Historical Review*, 94, Number 1 (March 2013): 28-54.

Kelm, Mary-Ellen. "Manly Contests: Rodeo Masculinities at the Calgary Stampede," *Canadian Historical Review*, 90, Number 4 (December 2009): 711-51.

McDonald, Robert A.J. "'Telford Time' and the Populist Origins of the CCF in British Columbia," *Labour/Le Travail*, 71 (Spring 2013): 87-100.

Naylor, James. "The British Columbia CCF's Working-Class Moment: Socialism Not Populism," *Labour/Le Travail*, 71 (Spring 2013): 101-21.

Long Descriptions

Figure 7.25 long description: Poster that says "Character" at the top. It depicts a lighthouse, on whose light rays the words "Where there's drink" and "there's always danger" are written. Beneath the lighthouse, it says "Prevention is better than cure. It is more glorious to build a Lighthouse than man a Life-Boat." [Return to Figure 7.25]

Media Attributions

- Temperance poster promoting the prohibition of alcohol © Provincial Archives of Alberta (PR1974.0001.0400a.0012) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Take Off Your Clothes Flyer © Neelan Rach is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution

ShareAlike) license

Chapter 8. The Economy since 1920

8.1 Introduction

The political transformations that ushered in the Confederation era were both a product and a reflection of the economic changes that were underway. Chapter 3 considered the industrialization of the economy and how that led to the emergence of new social classes and political agendas. However, there were also important continuities in the Canadian economy.

This chapter explores the outlines of the Dominion economy from the 19th through the 20th century. It examines the most commonly used theoretical model of the Canadian economy (the staples model) because of its implications for the economy in the past and the present. Some of the principal features of capitalism are reviewed as well, including capital markets and business cycles. The enormous impact crater that was the 1930s Depression is also considered, as is the emergence of what historians describe as the "new economy" in the 20th century. Three persistent sectors — shipping, fishing, and oil and gas — offer insights into the rhythms of the national economy. The post-war economic order is reviewed, as is the regional economy of the Maritimes. The chapter concludes with an essay on economic nationalism, an idea that informed Macdonald and that continues to influence economic policy-making.

Learning Objectives

- Explain the concept of — and the survival of — the staples model.
- Identify the roles played by capital markets, foreign investment, and branch plants.
- Describe the economic cycles since 1867.
- Account for the rise of the "new economy."
- Assess the extent to which old staples sectors have been industrialized.
- Outline the differences between the economy before 1939, after WWII, and after the post-war boom.

8.2 The Staples Model

Historians point to common and long-running themes in the history of the Canadian economy, the most venerable of which is the staples model. This interpretation sees Canada as a producer mainly of unprocessed goods that are shipped out to international markets. The staples theory is not merely descriptive, it is explanatory, and part of what it explains is the precariousness of the Canadian economy from one decade to the next and its struggles to evolve into something more complex. The staples theory can also be used to gain an understanding of Canadian society.

Fisheries to Fur Trade to Wheat Economy

From the 1600s to the 1800s, an important part of the economy of New France and then British North America (BNA) was the fur trade. In the case of New France and the European enterprise in Rupert's Land, the fur trade was pivotal. It operated on principles associated with **mercantilism**. That is, merchants in French or British ports extended the capital needed to purchase a fleet and to buy trade goods that were transported to the St. Lawrence Valley or to Hudson's Bay. These goods then were warehoused and/or transported further along inland waterways and traded to Indigenous merchants for a variety of pelts. Those furs were shipped directly to Europe because there was no market to speak of in New France or British North America. Similarly, the very first economic link between what is now Canada and Europe — the fisheries — was structured simply: send the ships, harvest the fish, and sail the ships back to Europe or to Europe's slave colonies in the Caribbean. Again, the fisheries themselves had little in the way of a market in the colonies.

After 1783, and with the development of settlements in New Brunswick and Upper Canada (Ontario) as well as PEI and Nova Scotia, farming became more important. In the 1820s and 1830s, we see the emergence of a wheat economy in and around the Great Lakes. This, too, was geared for export (mostly to Britain), as was the forest industry that was found in almost every British North American colony between Lake Superior and St. John's. A growing population in BNA, of course, consumed a growing share of output, but these economies could not sustain larger numbers, particularly since almost all of the staple industries were seasonal. Industrialization and urbanization created greater demands for food production and, increasingly, lumber, steel, and brick were diverted to domestic use. This was the era, of course, when Britain was the workshop of the world, so British North Americans never had to worry about the availability of manufactured goods. Instead, they had to be concerned that their own infant industries would be strangled in the cradle by cheap imports from both Britain and the United States. Unlike Canada, the United States could use tariff barriers to keep out British wares, and with its rapidly growing urban and slave population in the 19th century, the United States could absorb far more manufactured goods.

Confederation came along at a pivotal time for the Canadian economy as it industrialized and shifted from the countryside to the cities and towns. More Canadians were earning wages, and those wages could be spent on manufactured products, including clothing, hardware, furniture, books, and such middle-class accoutrements as pianos and early phonographs. Nevertheless, unlike Britain or the

United States, Canada was not exporting much steel, farm tools, or cloth to a fully industrialized economy. The balance of trade continued to be achieved by exporting grain, timber, and fish.

The settlement of the West extended the staples economy and vastly increased it. The Wheat Boom of the late 19th century was driven by accelerated urbanization in Europe that led to a monoculture economy in the West. In this economy, the growing of wheat (and a few other grains) was worth pursuing to the exclusion of other options, which prevented a regional industrial revolution. Wheat was joined by some minerals in the menu of Canadian export commodities, but overwhelmingly this one staple remained dominant.

What did that mean for the Canadian economy and society? Wheat has a spatial component: large acreages, as we have seen, produce a particular pattern of residence and social interaction. It also has an annual life cycle that places heavy demands on the timing of ploughing, planting, harvest, transfer, movement, sale, and export. Grain elevators were built to contain huge quantities of grain, and railways were conscripted to the cause of decanting these prairie towers into boxcars that would take the year's harvest to ports on the Pacific, Great Lakes, St. Lawrence, or Atlantic. Sometimes economists call grain elevators, transportation, and port facilities **forward linkages**. One of the challenges with this forward linkage arrangement is that grain elevators can only be used for grain and the same is true for the sort of ships that carry grain. Neither can be viewed as an underutilized capacity that might be redeployed for, say, machinery production.

Also, throughout Canadian history, all of these forward linkages have been in the service of goods that are, for the most part, high bulk and low value. Furs are a little different, but only by degree. Logs and lumber, fish and whale oil, wheat and coal all are goods that are relatively cheap to buy but heavy and hard to move. (To suggest one radical contrast, a briefcase might contain enough diamonds to match the value of a whole freighter full of wheat.) The effect of the staples focus, then, is to specialize in economic flows and, through years of practice, in investments and projects that reinforce the production and shipment of those commodities.

The legacy of structural features associated with staples is seen in a variety of areas in the 20th century. Some of the following sections in this chapter explore the persistence of Canada's staples economy from wheat and fish through oil and gas. Political leaders across the 20th century called for greater diversification of regional economies, some of which are more geared than others to staples production. In some quarters — the Atlantic provinces in particular — the limited impact of industrialization has led to less of a roller-coaster ride in the marketplace, but a lower level of prosperity overall.

Key Points

- The Canadian economy has long been associated with the production and export of staples — largely unprocessed goods of relatively high bulk and low value.
- The intensified emphasis on the wheat economy in the late 19th century derived from a growing market size and demand.
- The demand for wheat and other staple commodities undermined attempts at diversification.
- The staples economy in Canada produced forward linkages that are difficult and expensive to

redeploy to other purposes.

8.3 Capital Markets

Robert Sweeny; Dept. of History; and Memorial University of Newfoundland



Figure 8.1 Driving home the last spike of the CPR, 7 November 1885.

This 1885 photograph (Figure 8.1) of a bearded gentleman in a top hat driving home the last spike of the Canadian Pacific Railway — completing the "National Dream" — ranks among the best-known photographs in Canada. Unlike the men crowded around, the man wielding the sledge hammer — Donald Alexander Smith, vice-president of the Bank of Montreal — had no part in actually building the railway, but helped to finance it, which is why this photograph is historically significant. It celebrates the first time a major piece of national infrastructure was financed in Canada. More than driving home a spike, Smith is laying the cornerstone for the country's capital market.

Capital markets are relatively recent creations — most capital markets have been created during and after the late 19th century. They may be recent, but they are important because controlling the country's savings is an essential characteristic for any advanced capitalist economy. We call it capitalism for a reason.

Capital markets generally have four functions and, in North America and Western Europe, each function historically has been carried out by different types of companies: brokerage houses, banks, life insurance firms, and trust companies. The mere presence of such companies does not, however, mean that a capital market exists. A functioning capital market requires a stock market where brokerage houses buy and sell stocks and bonds, lending facilities for both the medium and the longer-term functions generally offered by banks and life insurance companies respectively, and a disinterested institution that can be trusted to distribute dividends and interest payments. In Canada and elsewhere, such trust companies also manage the estates of wealthy families.

These differing types of financial intermediaries only develop when a capitalist economy reaches a

certain level of maturity. Take, for example, life insurance, which if you stop to think about it, is rather an odd idea. It is not life insurance, but death insurance; since we are all going to die, how can a firm profitably sell insurance against something that inevitably will happen? Well, the short answer is reliable statistics on life expectancy, called *actuarial tables*, which allow the firm to reasonably assess the risk of issuing a policy to a particular person. The statistical basis for such realistic evaluations of risk did not exist until governments started capturing demographic data through censuses, which was not achieved in Canada until the mid-19th century.

Who would want to or need to pay the high costs of an insurance policy? If a family owned its farm or business, the death of the male head of household would likely be an emotional, but not necessarily a financial, loss, as the productive assets would remain with the family. If, however, a family's income and social position was dependent on the salary earned by the male head of household as a professional or a manager, his death could spell financial ruin. Significant numbers of salaried men only emerged in Canada in the last quarter of the 19th century, in the wake of the industrial revolution. This salaried and gendered middle class would remain the main focus of life insurance companies in Canada until the standard of living for working class families began to improve with unionization after World War II.

Insurance companies sell policies to young people and hope to benefit from decades of premium income before they have to pay the death benefits. This means life insurance companies have an income stream that they can invest for the long term. Banks, on the other hand, once they start to develop their deposit-taking business, have more pressing concerns. After all, their clients are saving for something they hope to purchase long before they die, so banks tend to specialize in short- and medium-term loans.

For most of the 19th century, banks in Canada were not particularly interested in deposits, and not at all interested in consumer loans. Instead they financed merchants' inventories and facilitated the international payments required by imports and exports. The wages paid to most workers during the industrial revolution were not sufficient to allow for much in the way of savings. The shift happened gradually, and by the outbreak of the Great War, savings deposits accounted for half of all bank liabilities. This, of course, required a completely different type of banking system. At the time of Confederation, there was one bank branch for every 28,900 Canadians; by 1920, there was a bank branch for every 1,900 people.[1] The savings of both working-class and middle-class families were being mobilized to finance Canadian industry.

Most firms in the 19th century financed their operations through retained earnings (that is, the profits they hold on to). Utilities, railways, and financial intermediaries accounted for the overwhelming majority of shares available for purchase on the embryonic stock markets of Montreal and Toronto. In 1880 (the year construction started on what would be the CPR), $11.5 million dollars in new shares were issued in Canada; by 1900, that figure had risen ninefold to $101 million; by 1910, it had ballooned to $712 million.[2] Brokerage firms engineered these new stock issues. These brokerage firms bought out regional industrial producers and merged them into pan-Canadian corporate entities that were large enough to set prices in their respective industries. Exceptionally large fortunes were made in these stock floatations, and the most successful brokers, such as Max Aitken (aka: Lord Beaverbrook) of Royal Securities, were among the wealthiest financiers in the British Empire.

1. E.P. Neufeld, *The Financial System of Canada: Its Growth and Development* (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1972), 102.

2. Ibid., 475.

The changes wrought by corporate concentration profoundly affected the banking system and shaped the developing national capital market. In 1900, only a handful of businessmen — and they were all men — sat simultaneously on the boards of four or more leading companies. By 1930, a fifth of all directorships in the country's leading firms were occupied by men — and they were still all men — who sat on five or more boards.[3] The networks that tied these men and their firms to one of three financial groups, each centred on a chartered bank, are clearly visible on the graph in Figure 8.2.

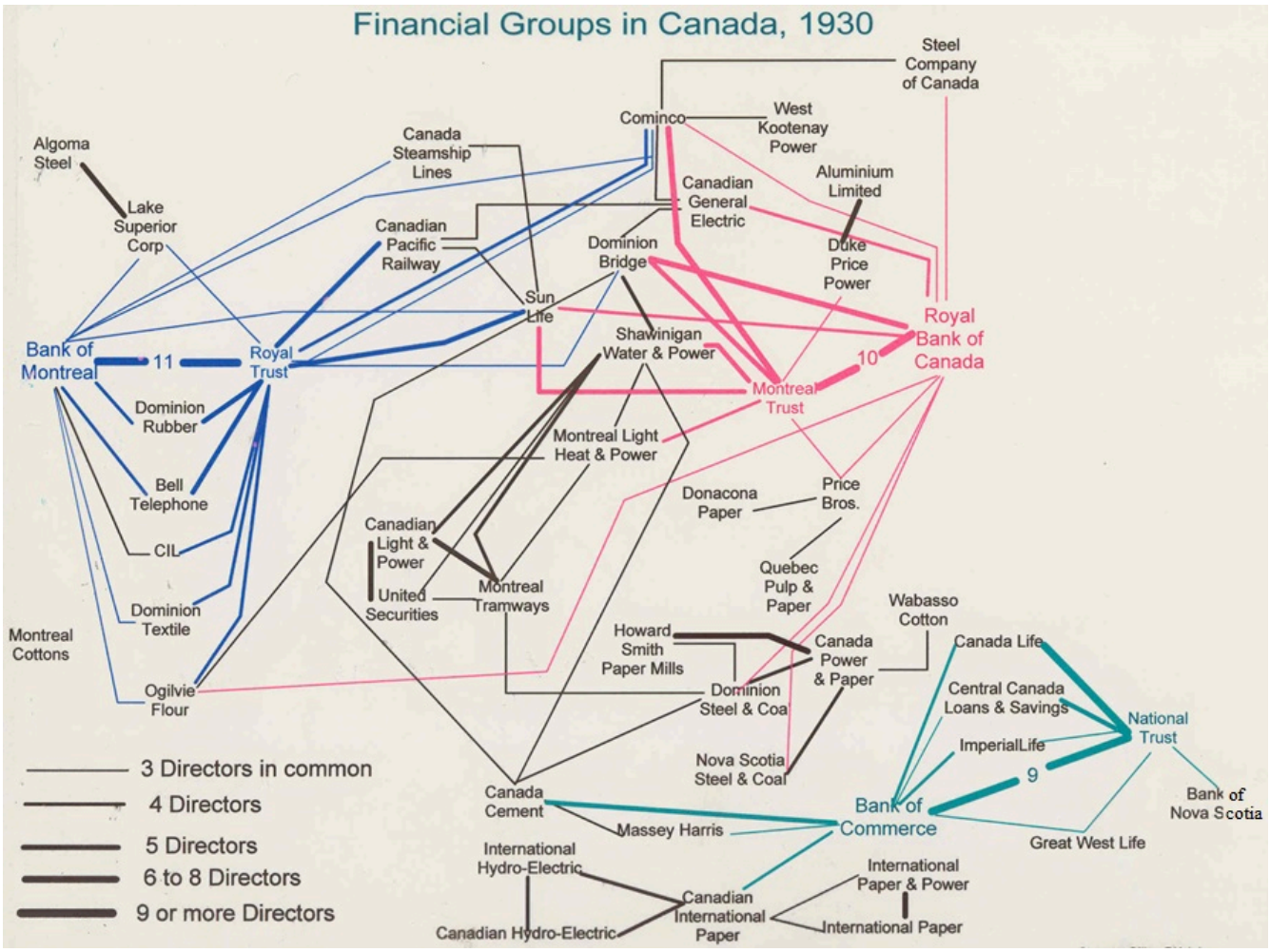


Figure 8.2 Directorships in common among the leading firms in Canada, 1930. Research by Gilles Piédalue, graphic by Robert C.H. Sweeny.

Michael Bliss, the leading conservative historian of Canadian capitalism, has characterized the emergence of a group of companies linked to the Bank of Commerce as being "All in the family," and there is an element of truth to this.[4] But unlike the situation in the United States, where families such as the Rockefellers, Morgans, and Mellons effectively owned their own banks, none of the leading Canadian chartered banks were controlled by a single family. Rather, families who controlled important industrials sat on the boards of the financial intermediaries that financed their firm's expansion. This

3. Gilles Piédalue, "Les groupes financiers au Canada 1900-1930 – étude préliminaire," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 30, no. 1 (1976): 3-34.

4. Michael Bliss, *A Canadian Millionaire: The Life and Business Times of Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart., 1858-1939* (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1978).

familial control continued to characterize the English-Canadian capital market until at least the 1970s, when no fewer than 88 men and 2 women sitting on the boards of leading financial intermediaries had inherited their position from another family member.[5]

The close connection between industry and finance did not characterize all the chartered banks. Smaller regionally-controlled pools of banking capital represented by the Imperial, Toronto, Dominion, and Nova Scotia banks continued to be active in both national and international money and commodity markets. In Quebec, a slightly different situation arose. In the heartland of the St. Lawrence River valley an integrated market linking small insurance, trust, and banking operations emerged, but in the out-lying regions financial services consisted primarily of mutuals, co-operatives, and credit-unions. It was only with the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, and the greatly enhanced economic role of the provincial government that one could reasonably speak of a single and distinct national capital market serving French Canada. This achievement did, however, build on the success of firms largely created in the early 20th century, a period when — in terms of political and educational rights — French Canada was in retreat.[6]

Building a trans-continental railroad has long been understood as central to Sir John A. Macdonald's National Policy. The resettlement of the Prairies and the resulting wheat boom were key to historians' understanding of economic growth in Canada until the collapse of the wheat economy in 1928. The lesser known creation of a two-tiered capital market in English Canada and the simultaneous laying of the foundations of a separate capital market in French Canada was, however, arguably the most enduring economic legacy of Macdonald's policy. The remarkable longevity and solidity of the Canadian financial system formed in those years continues to shape the contours of our economic life.

Key Points

- Financial institutions appeared in Canada in greater numbers and variety in the late 19th century.
- Their existence was a measure of the growing complexity of the local capitalist economy and the rise of managerial middle class.
- Banks, life insurance companies, trust companies, and brokerage houses took invested money and made it available for loans. One result was a consolidation of smaller Canadian firms into larger ones.
- This also led to interlocking directorships centred on a chartered bank.
- The financial systems that arose in the late 19th century continue to be influential in the 21st century.

5. Robert C.H. Sweeny, "Banking as Class Action: Social and National Struggles in the History of Canadian Banking," *Banking, Trade and Industry: Europe, America and Asia from the Thirteenth to the Twentieth Centuries*, eds. Alice Teichova, Ginette Kurgan van Henteryk, and Dieter Ziegler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 315-338.

6. Robert C. H. Sweeny, "Aperçu d'un effort collectif québécois: La création, au début du XXe siècle, d'un marché privé et institutionnalisé de capitaux," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 49, no. 1 (1995), 35-72.

Media Attributions

- Hon. Donald A. Smith driving the last spike to complete the Canadian Pacific Railway © Library and Archives Canada (C-003693) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Financial Groups in Canada, 1930 © Robert C.H. Sweeny is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license

8.4 Economic Cycles

Economic downturns are thought by many to be part of a cyclical readjustment. They have occurred throughout history as debt mounts and trade falls. The South Sea Bubble of 1720 is generally regarded as the first stock market led crisis, which involved widespread losses among a public that was encouraged to purchase shares in this early joint-stock scheme. A similar crisis befell the Mississippi Company in New Orleans, in the same year, in what was then New France. The Panic of 1796-1797 in the United States and Britain led to the creation of the first American bankruptcy laws. It was, however, the depression at the end of the Napoleonic Wars that most affected Canada in the modern era, not least because it provoked the British **Corn Laws** as a response, leading to three decades of commercial uncertainty and then opportunity in the British North American grain sector.

Depression and Its Causes

From 1815 through the 1830s, the British, British North American, and American economies stuttered along from one boom to the next bust. There were "panics" in 1825, 1837, 1847, 1857, and 1866. This instability in the North Atlantic marketplace helps to explain the rapid development of financial institutions as moderating influences, and the seeming obsession with tariffs (or, alternatively, free trade) as a mechanism for insulating the economy from disaster.

The pre- and early-Victorian panics thus framed a lot of economic thinking, but it was the period from 1876 to 1896 that was to shape 20th century ideas about crisis management. In the course of a single generation, there were four important downturns: the first produced a depression across the North Atlantic in 1873; the second, a run on New York's Wall Street Stock Exchange, led to a North American economic crash in 1884; third, the collapse of London's Barings Bank followed in 1890; and fourth, in 1893 farm product prices collapsed and there was a run on banks in North America, Europe, and Australia. This sequence of economic crises is sometimes referred to collectively as the *Long Depression*, but it was 1893-1896 that became known at the time as the *Great Depression*. In every instance, downturns were followed quickly by upticks in the commodities markets and in trade. Depressions — even that of 1893-1896 — were relieved after only a few years. While there was inevitably a scramble to address what appeared to be the proximate causes, the consensus that emerged was that government involvement in the economy was unwelcome and unlikely to produce much positive change.

The recurrent financial crises from the 1700s on are evidence of the growing influence of capitalism, and its emergence as the principal economic system in the Western world. The freedom to move money from one bank or investment to another — and to make a profit by doing so — inevitably led to panics. Efforts to determine the safest kind of currency preoccupied policy-makers through the late 19th century, and the alternatives of the **gold standard**, silver, and paper were the focus of front-page debates for decades. This, too, reflects the extent to which the economy had shifted to the exchange of cash rather than "kind," which put more people in jeopardy. If the currency collapsed, then so would the wages of every wage earner.



Figure 8.3 The American writer, Frank L. Baum, stuffed his most famous work, The Wizard of Oz, with references to current fiscal debates, including the Yellow Brick Road (made of gold bricks) and the Land of Oz (oz. = ounces, the standard measure for gold). Baum was also an advocate of genocidal campaigns against indigenous peoples in the West. (Artist: W.W. Denslow.)

The economic downturns also point to an increasingly integrated international economy. So long as British North American grain was being produced mainly for British markets, the impact of a collapse in American grain prices might be minimized. Rising industrialization, however, meant that capital was being invested in machinery and factories with an eye to reaping dividends. In addition, all those industrial workers labouring away in the new factories of Ontario and Quebec now needed to be fed, ideally by farmers in Western Canada. In short, the economic structures that produced the Long Depression would only become more acute in the early 20th century.

If you look at the pattern of booms and busts through the 19th century, what you'll see is regularity. Each decade had a peak and a trough of its own. The overall trend of the economy was, however, in an upward direction. So each depression was followed by a recovery that moved upward fast enough to match previous levels of production and growth in **Gross Domestic Product (GDP)** before falling again. After the 1893-1896 Great Depression, the North American economy boomed and, despite a

panic in 1907 in the United States, Canada's economy went from strength to strength. This period has been referred to in Britain as "the Indian summer of Edwardian England" because — at the time and in retrospect after the Great War — it seemed to be an uncharacteristically prolonged stretch of prosperity. Edwardian Canada's own "Indian summer," the **Laurier boom**, arose because of consumer demand across the newly-settled Prairies. This, in turn, expanded manufacturing output in Central Canada and primary resource extraction industries across the whole of the country. The reckoning came in 1912, but that severe social — almost cataclysmic — downturn was shortened by the arrival of a wartime economy in 1914. What followed the war is critical for understanding the 1930s crisis.

The Roaring Twenties

The Great War was the first of Canada's "total wars" (see Section 6.4). Materiel, labour, and soldiers were conscripted, as was capital to some extent. Every quarter of the economy experienced some readjustment from 1914-1918, and many marginal regions — including the Maritimes and the Dominion of Newfoundland — did very well as a consequence. When the war ended, the economy had to shift again to a peacetime footing that was demand-led, rather than command-led. Returning soldiers drove up unemployment rates in a cooling peacetime economy. The Influenza Epidemic of 1918-1919 pounded the economy even further (see Section 6.6). In 1920-1921 there was a brief but sharp economic collapse. Having interfered extensively in the wartime economy, the state pulled back at this time, trying to allow the capitalist market economy to take the lead. In other words, the state very consciously retreated from all but a handful of welfare initiatives and from regulating the economy. The substantial improvement of the economy after 1921 vindicated this approach. Depressions were, by all indicators, short sharp shocks that were tougher on some than on others, but a smart administration was one that "didn't blink," that allowed the invisible hand of the economy to do its job.

Key Points

- New France, British North America, and Canada all experienced cyclical economic booms and busts.
- The incidence of economic crises was increasing at the end of the 19th century, and the pre-war era ended with a severe downturn in 1912.
- Readjustment to a peacetime economy was accompanied by an interwar downturn in the early 1920s.
- Orthodox thinking in government and financial circles was that governments should not interfere in the economy, a perspective that was to inform Ottawa's response to the crisis in 1929.

Media Attributions

- The Cowardly Lion, 1900 © W.W. Denslow is licensed under a Public Domain license

8.5 The Great Depression

The 1930s Depression is profoundly and deeply associated, in the popular mind, with the prairie **Dust Bowl**, one of the greatest environmental catastrophes in Canadian history. It was, in fact, something like a ticking time-bomb.

The British sent an expedition across the Prairies in the 1850s, led by John Palliser (1817-1887). Thereafter, his name was given to a tract of arid land along the 49th parallel. *Palliser's Triangle* was identified as the northern tip of the Great American Desert, a region identified in the 1820s as stretching like a wall north from Texas and west from the 100th meridian to the Rocky Mountains. In 1874 a corps of 275 North-West Mounted Police, led by Commissioner George Arthur French (1841-1921), were dismayed to find Palliser's Triangle so inhospitable. Sent to the West to begin the process of the Canadian occupation of Indigenous lands, French's troops struggled to find drinkable water and, when they met up with Sioux soldiers, French "impressed upon them the fact that we did not want their land."[1] He wasn't lying. There was nothing about the region to suggest any farming potential to French and the Mounties. Thereafter, the plains and prairies entered into a wet period, the landscape turned a more promising shade of green, and its agricultural limitations were brushed aside by a Canadian government eager to populate the region with producers of food and consumers of manufactured goods.

Elsewhere on the prairies, and deep into the American plains as well, the prevalent form of agriculture in these years was dry land farming, which involves breaking the soil (with iron or steel ploughs) to a significant depth to release the moisture captured below ground. Once that moisture is used by the crops or evaporates, there is little to hold together the topsoil other than broken plant roots. After a generation or so under the plough, that part of the soil's integrity vanishes as well. A drought — even a single year with little or no rain — could cause significant and widespread damage.

The "southern route" taken by the CPR ensured that Palliser's Triangle was quickly surveyed and homesteaded. Improved grain prices in the 1920s led to more aggressive and widespread sod-busting across the prairies. When drought began in 1930 — an unfortunate coincidence with the Wall Street Crash — the reach of modern agriculture across the centre of North America had reached a new peak. Everything came to a head in the 1930s due to bad choices in the distribution of land, the heavy and sudden resettlement of the West, an over-aggressive and industrial approach to soil use, the elimination of trees as windbreaks (instead, trees were used as fuel and building material for homesteads), a booming economy in the 1920s, and the depletion of aquifers.

The Dirty Thirties

Palliser had recognized — more than 70 years earlier — that the southern Prairies were subject to drought conditions and these, as it turned out, were cyclical. The conditions in the early 1930s were

1. Quoted in David C. Jones, *Empire of Dust: Settling and Abandoning the Prairie Dry Belt* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1987), 8.

ideal for dust storms. Prairie topsoil was picked up by the wind and blown from the southwest as far as Hudson's Bay. Dust storms became increasingly common (and larger) as the Depression wore on. In 1935, one pan-continental storm turned the skies black for days and reduced visibility to a matter of feet. Dunes of dust obliterated whole farms, leaving the landscape unrecognizable. The influential 1941 Canadian novel *As For Me and My House* by Sinclair Ross describes "dust clouds lapping at the sky" and the constant intrusion of dust under the windowsills and doorsills, and into clothes, food, and the pores of exposed skin.[2] If this wasn't enough, the West faced two other plagues: grasshoppers and hailstorms. More than a few contemporary writers have referred to these hardships as of biblical proportions.



Figure 8.4 Southern Saskatchewan in the Dust Bowl years, ca. 1930-1935.

A quarter million Canadian farmers — the greatest number from Saskatchewan — fled this catastrophe between 1931 and 1941 by heading for British Columbia (mostly) and Ontario. Those who remained behind received some support from a relief effort mustered by private citizens and government. The Dust Bowl changed the farming landscape of the prairies, and it would have a long-term impact on farming practices. It also created a new diaspora out of first- and second-generation Westerners who had left behind other homelands to become homesteaders and were now environmental refugees. As well, the Dust Bowl contributed significantly to the growth of distinctive political ideologies and attitudes that propelled reform movements on the right and left.

When the Wall Street stock market crashed in October 1929, a dogmatic position of non-interference in the economy was orthodoxy. It was embraced by Canada's federal Liberal and Conservative parties alike. Given that the core electorate in these years was still decisively in Ontario and Quebec (where economic diversification dampened some of the worst impacts of the crisis) and the Maritimes (which, already in poor shape, didn't experience the 1930s as a disaster of quite the same magnitude), the instinctive caution of federal politicians should have come as no surprise.

A Perfect Storm

Even by 1928, more than a year before the stock market disaster, there were signs of trouble.

2. Sinclair Ross, *As For Me and My House* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1941), 26.

Commodity prices were wobbling and new house construction was slowing. Population growth was another issue. The inter-war years (1919-1938) began with substantial out-migration from war-torn Europe, which decreased almost as quickly. Immigration from China was effectively stopped by the *Chinese Immigration Act, 1923*. Growth in the population of Canada was coming from natural increase (births over deaths) more than immigration for the first time since the 1870s, despite the fact that the number of men of marriageable-age was reduced by the mortalities of 1914-1919.

Indebtedness was another factor leading to a fall. The arrival of new combine harvester technology in the 1920s meant that farm families borrowed to mechanize their output. As well, families were graduating from the sod-huts and simple wood frame cabins of homesteaders into larger and more expensive homes. In addition, automobiles were becoming more common, many of which were bought on credit.



Figure 8.5 On the eve of the Depression, combined harvester-threshers reduced the need for itinerant threshing crews, and pitched farmers into debt. High Prairie, Alberta, 1930.

There were external factors to consider as well. International currencies were in trouble, most spectacularly in the Weimar Republic (Germany). The system of mutual dependence produced by Germany's obligation to pay **reparations** after the Great War meant that all countries had a significant stake in what was occurring in Weimar. In addition, most North Atlantic economies had returned to the gold standard (a commonly-pegged way of insuring the value of a nation's currency), but at the pre-WWI rate, which significantly disadvantaged several currencies.

Another factor often overlooked is the inexperience of new stock markets. Until 1914, the City of London was the unquestioned financial capital of the world. As the interwar years began, there was growing competition for this title from financial hubs and stock exchanges in Paris, Tokyo, and New York, among other places. Decentralized control over the global investment economy pulled capital in different directions, increasing risks (and exposure to inexperienced brokers) while adding little to the building of a global fiscal safety net.

Thus, the stage was being set for a massive economic collapse by inflated currencies, the popularizing of gambling on the stock exchange, over-extension of household and industrial credit, heavy capital

investment in machinery and buildings, a teetering international monetary and capital network, and a bubble in the commodities exchanges. When trade on the New York Stock Exchange crashed on **Black Tuesday**, 24 October 1929, the die was cast.

Living with Depression

In late 1929, no one could know for certain how long it would be before prosperity returned; few would have guessed that a whole decade of economic pain would pass before the economy could be urged back to life. The axiom that "generals are always ready to fight the last war" was, in fact, coined in the 1930s to describe the economic strategies that were wheeled out to deal with the crisis. Ill-equipped to tackle either the fiscal complexities of the Depression or the social catastrophe that it produced, governments in Canada (for the most part) shied away from interfering and hoped for the best.

The collapse of the international commodities market dramatically impacted the Canadian and Newfoundland economies. What, after all, was the commodities market but another term for the **staple economy**? Both Dominions had been producing unprocessed goods for trade abroad since the 16th century and, despite some progress in central Canadian manufacturing, they were doing much the same in the 20th century. Grain dominated, closely followed by wood products (lumber and paper) and minerals. These were precisely the commodities that bottomed out. The monoculture of Prairie farming was effectively vapourized by the Crash and the Dust Bowl. In British Columbia, the company towns and logging camps that relied on transient labour (much of it comprised of single males) were likewise hit hard. Migrant workers from the prairies and BC's own seasonal workers followed a cycle of working across the West and then back to Vancouver to ride out the winters. The city's oldest neighbourhood was carpeted with hotels, "flophouses," brothels, vaudeville theatres, and saloons to take advantage of this traffic. The financial crisis occurred as the annual migration to the west coast hotels was underway, and when the 1930 work season arrived, vastly fewer jobs were available. As a "mecca to the unemployed," Vancouver continued to attract large numbers of unemployed through the course of the Depression, with explosive results on several occasions.

Similar conditions prevailed on the East Coast. Unemployment and a stagnant economy was nothing new to the Atlantic region, but the old strategy of out-migration and seeking greener pastures was no longer available. The United States closed the door to Maritime immigrants, the Prairie West was wholly unattractive, and Canada established restrictions on immigration from Newfoundland. While seasonal work — as a way of making a living — survived in some regions, the appearance of full-time and continuous work in industry and in the office sector complicated matters. It was no longer just a matter of surviving until the next season of work came around; unemployment in the 1930s meant, for many people, the loss of full-time work. As unemployment climbed to 20% across the Atlantic region, in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, relief costs propelled one county after the next to consider bankruptcy.



Figure 8.6 Unable to afford gasoline and having disposed of their buggies, many Canadians gutted their cars and hitched them to horses during the Depression. These hybrid vehicles were called, bitterly, "Bennett buggies" after the Prime Minister.

The mechanization of farming across the Prairies had made possible massive increases in productivity while reducing the year-round value of family labour. Farm boys and farm girls were increasingly surplus to the family farm and, as they got older, they looked increasingly to urban or other rural pursuits. Some found work with threshing crews — teams of men and women who moved from farm to farm (at harvest time) along with the newest machinery for processing the wheat crop. These crews depended heavily on temporary workers who were hired and dismissed seasonally. Labour mobility was a critical part of the farm economy, and the cash income of threshing crew workers was important for the household economy as well. With the collapse in grain prices compounded by the Dust Bowl, seasonal work became immediately scarce, and impoverished by their inability to produce or sell grain, family farms found it a real burden to feed these temporary workers. The eldest sons in particular often were compelled to seek work elsewhere, to try to survive on their own, typically in cities and mines.

It is important to note that the impact of the Depression was felt well beyond the corridor of cities and farms in southern Canada. The 1920s had witnessed a boom in the fur-trade tied to the brief flicker of an international luxury market. This was good news for Native trappers and traders in the North, as was the arrival in 1901 of the Parisian Revillon Frères fur trading company; prices went up as Revillon went toe-to-toe with the local HBC traders. This situation, of course, invited growing competition from non-Native trappers and hunters, some of them by now long-residents in the region. The Innu of Labrador, for example, found themselves pushed further and further inland in the 1920s to eke out an existence that now was based almost entirely on the trade in furs. The possibility of fishing and hunting for food was by this point so reduced that they had no option but to adopt a European diet and Euro-Canadian clothing made available through the trade in furs.[3] The 1929 Wall Street Crash echoed even on the Labrador plateaus west of Nain and Kaipokok, and they would not be relieved — like the rest of the country — until the outbreak of the Second World War.

3. Lynne D. Fitzhugh, *The Labradorians: Voices from the Land of Cain* (St. John's: Breakwater, 1999), 375.

No Relief in Sight

As the Depression deepened, governments across Canada typically did very little. Conventional economic thinking called for a hands-off approach to economic downturns, and most provincial and federal administrations were very conventional in their thinking.

In retrospect, Mackenzie King was fortunate to have lost the election in 1930 because the worst years occurred under the Conservatives led by R.B. Bennett (see Section 6.7). The Conservatives arguably were inclined even more than the Liberals to allow the Depression to run its course, but they had no way of knowing how deep the troughs could get. Although by 1931 things were very bad, a slight hint of recovery arose in 1932 or, at least, things weren't worsening as badly as in 1929-31. When 1933 came along, the Canadian economy plunged headlong into the deepest trade depression in its history. Unemployment reached 30%, and real GDP shrank by more than 10% in both 1931 and 1932. Some recovery would occur in 1934, but setbacks followed in 1935. Throughout these years, the federal government took a minimalist approach, holding onto its faith in a temporary readjustment and an unassisted return to prosperity. The electorate and the unemployed did not share that faith.

Thanks to the Depression, the 1930s would witness a dramatic politicization of the Canadian people. A variety of new partisan strategies would be explored at the ballot box, including the social democratic CCF (provincially and nationally), the monetarist Social Credit Party in Alberta, communist parties that could evade restrictions on their legal status, and even some fascist parties (see Sections 6.8 and 7.9). However, the issues of unemployment, dispossession, homelessness, and even hunger were so acute that they could not wait for election day. Unemployed workers, transients, and their supporters repeatedly took to the streets to register their bitter disappointment and to challenge authority.

Nowhere was this life of politics beyond the ballot box more visible than in Vancouver. Beginning in 1930, there were public demonstrations calling for action from civic, provincial, and federal levels of government. City charters limited what municipal authorities could do, and their tax base was drying up rapidly. Seizing homes in default of outstanding property taxes in a market like the 1930s only encumbered city governments. In the absence of anything like unemployment insurance, and with only a very limited welfare state in place, cities were the first stop for the unemployed looking for "relief." This category of support could include anything from food (or chits for food), temporary housing, cash for necessities, clothing hand-outs, and/or work. Anglo-Canadian Protestant ethics made the case against relief as weakening recipients' resolve to find employment, creating dependency, and as being demoralizing. Potential recipients likewise often found it shameful and degrading to accept, let alone ask for, relief. In language that spoke to heterosexual and patriarchal norms, people said it wasn't manly. The sense that unemployment was the fault of the unemployed, however, began to dissipate in 1931 when it became clear that the Depression was the inevitable by-product of an international economic collapse. The result was that cities like Vancouver resisted giving relief, and the unemployed only asked for relief when they already were desperate. By 1931, many were desperate.

Social welfare is constitutionally a provincial responsibility. Provincial governments were hardly better off than the local authorities, and they were inclined to reinforce the message that it was first and foremost a local (that is, civic or municipal) matter. At the same time, they demanded that Ottawa address a problem that was clearly national in scope and made worse (in the case of many provinces) by the presence of migrant and out-of-province workers looking for relief or **dole**.



Figure 8.7 The hobo jungles took many forms. This early structure housed 14 unemployed men; things would soon get much more desperate. Vancouver, 1931.

Conflict erupted in 1931, and again in 1933, in public demonstrations and around homeless men's camps also called **hobo jungles**. Vancouver was especially attractive to the unemployed because it was at the end of the rail line, and the winter weather was relatively mild and tolerable. Communist activists and evangelicals campaigned in the hobo jungles. Both treated the unemployed community as a powder keg. The City of Vancouver (and other urban governments) responded by evacuating the jungles and relocating their residents to federally-built and Department of National Defence-run **Relief Camps** outside of the city limits, sometimes in remote parts of BC. Others were established in the national parks of the Rocky Mountains. The campgrounds and other holidaying facilities that post-WWII touring families would come to associate with the National Parks, were mostly created by unemployed workers in relief camps. For the most part, however, the unemployed in the relief camps performed meaningless routine work, colloquially referred to as "boondoggles."[4] The unemployed worked for 20 cents a day (hence the nickname of the camps as the "Royal 20 Centers") and under military-style discipline, which bought the city a little time that ran out quickly.

By 1933 conditions had worsened to such a point that the resident unemployed were clamouring for relief. What the City could offer in terms of projects or payments was by this stage very limited. Police surveillance of the unemployed was met with street fights and the occupation of public buildings and department stores. In 1933 the communists organized the Relief Camp Workers' Union, which mobilized the extremely alienated unemployed across the region to abandon the camps and put their issues directly before Prime Minister Bennett. The **On-to-Ottawa Trek** set off from Vancouver on 3 June 1935 but was stopped in Regina, the site of the RCMP headquarters. Trek leaders headed on to Ottawa to meet with Bennett, but the discussion was cut short and quickly degenerated into name-calling. Once the leaders were back in Regina, a rally was called for the 1st of July — Dominion Day — in Regina's Market Square. The Mounties' riot squad surged into the crowd of 1500-2000 people

4. Bill Waiser, *Park Prisoners: The Untold Story of Western Canada's National Parks, 1915-1946* (Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1995).

(most of them local residents) with truncheons swinging. The Trek leadership was arrested, one constable and one protester died, and the campaign was broken.



Figure 8.8 Unemployed workers board boxcars headed east from Kamloops, BC for the On-to-Ottawa Trek, 1935.

On the face of it, the **Regina Riot** seems extraordinary, but in the context of the Dirty Thirties, it was not. Conditions that led to the **Battle of Ballantyne Pier** were unfolding even as the Trekkers left Vancouver. Local dockyard workers had gone on strike and were replaced with strikebreakers brought in by the Shipping Federation (an organization of waterfront employers). Fifteen days after the Trekkers left Vancouver, the strikers marched to the waterfront, led by a Great War veteran and decorated hero. Confronted by mounted and armed City police, BC Provincial Police, and Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the march rapidly turned into a melee. Fighting continued for three hours across the East End, culminating in 24 arrests, about the same number hospitalized, and untold numbers injured.



Figure 8.9 The Battle of Ballantyne Pier spills into residential streets as Mounties pursue strikers down the sidewalk.

New Dealers

Another casualty of these events was R. B. Bennett. His counterpart in the United States, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945), launched a "New Deal" program shortly after his election in 1933, aimed at stimulating the economy through spending. This was heresy, in the context of conservative economic thinking, but it was attractive to legislators and civil servants because it put them in a position to act rather than defend inaction. Even Bennett seemed changed by this example. Beginning in January 1935, he endorsed economic intervention by the federal government. He introduced the **Bank of Canada** and the **Canadian Wheat Board**, but did not pursue economic pump-priming or efforts to spend his way out of the crisis. The electorate, worn out by conflict, hardship, and lack of government solutions; shocked at the violence inflicted on Canadians by Canadians; and convinced that the wealthy and snobbish Bennett was flinty-hearted tossed out the Conservatives in October 1935 and returned Mackenzie King's Liberals.

Despite the rhetoric suggesting a greater sympathy for the unemployed, King turned out to be no more an interventionist than Bennett. King's Liberal counterpart in BC, Thomas Dufferin "Duff" Pattullo, however, launched his own "Little New Deal" that, warts and all, demonstrated **Keynesian** thinking was gaining traction in some parts of Canada. King's response was to reintroduce the hated relief camps, albeit with some slight improvements and significantly more isolation than before. These initiatives were not enough to still significant urban unrest. On 20 May, 1938, unemployed protesters occupied the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Hotel Georgia, and the main Post Office on Hastings Street at Granville. A month later, on Sunday, 19 June at daybreak, the Vancouver Police oversaw the largely peaceful evacuation of the Art Gallery; and at the same moment, the RCMP stormed the Post Office with teargas and truncheons. A window-smashing campaign followed and, hours later, a demonstration of support took place at an East End park where 10,000 to 15,000 locals gathered.



Figure 8.10 "Citizens Protest Police Terror" at Oppenheimer Park on Bloody Sunday.

The **Regina Riot and Bloody Sunday** were merely the worst episodes in a long decade of street battles between various police forces and the unemployed. The war that terminated the economic Depression would force a reconsideration of economic orthodoxy in a way that the financial crisis had not, and the events of 1929-1939 would shape more than a generation of Canadian political culture. The sustained popularity of the CCF and Social Credit, mistrust of Ottawa and civic police forces, and a widespread tolerance for state intervention in the economy were only a few of the ways in which this one decade would transform Canada.

Key Points

- The 1930s Depression consisted of several events, including the Dust Bowl and the collapse of the commodities market.
- Economic and environmental disaster produced an out-migration from the Prairies, particularly from Saskatchewan.
- Seasonality in employment was deeply impacted with bad results for tens, if not hundreds of thousands of itinerant and semi-itinerant Canadian workers.
- The downturn profoundly affected all parts of Canada, some more deeply than others.
- Successive Conservative and Liberal governments developed few plans to directly reform the economy or introduce social welfare measures like employment insurance.
- The massification of unemployment and the concentration of the jobless in cities like Vancouver created conditions that led to violent street battle confrontations with police forces.

Media Attributions

- A dust storm over the prairies © Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan (S-A295) is licensed under a Public Domain license

- Combined Harvester-Thresher operated by tractor © Library and Archives Canada (PA-040497) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Bennett buggy, Alberta, 1936 © Glenbow Archives (NA-3958-3) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Strikers from unemployment relief camps en route to Eastern Canada during “March on Ottawa” © Library and Archives Canada (C-029399) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Battle of Ballantyne, 1935 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Citizens protest police terror is licensed under a Public Domain license

8.6 The New Economy

Doug Owram; Department of History; and University of British Columbia - Okanagan

The years after World War I marked the emergence of the modern Canadian economy. As a means of comprehending the longer-term trends underlying this development, it is useful to think in terms of continuities and changes. As a nation with a vast geography and small population, the Canadian economy would continue to be shaped by resources and the need to sell its goods internationally. However, urbanization, continuing industrialization, and the shifting international landscape altered the precise way in which these factors interacted, often in a disruptive fashion.

The years preceding WWI had been marked by the great expansion of the wheat economy. The so-called Laurier boom was a rapid expansion of agricultural production and exports that, in turn, helped to fuel the overall Canadian economy. The 1920s marked a transition. Agriculture continued to expand for a few more years but would recede in scale and relative importance in subsequent decades. By the end of the 20th century, the change was summed up in a statement of the Canada Year Book: "In 1941 some 3.3 million people, then 27% of Canada's population, lived on a farm. In 1996 this had dropped to only 267,000 people, or 2% of the working population…. Once a mainstay of Canada's economic health and security, [in 1996] farming represented just 2% of the country's GDP." [1] Instead, Canadian employment growth depended much more on a new, non-agricultural base.

This budding economic foundation was manifested both directly and indirectly. Directly, the 1921 census marked the first time that more Canadians were counted as urban than rural. This trend would never reverse. In the West, major centres like Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver grew rapidly and were no longer just small service centres for the surrounding agricultural communities. In Central Canada, new technology — especially automobiles and related sectors — created significant employment opportunities. By the end of the 1920s, more than a quarter-million vehicles were being produced annually. Vehicle production stalled during the depression of the 1930s and in the face of wartime demands throughout 1939-1945, but took on an even greater importance thereafter. By the 1960s, autos and auto parts would become Canada's most important secondary industry.

The indirect impact of the new economic order came in the commodity sector. The growing urban, industrial, and North American-wide market created a tremendous demand for materials. For example, minerals like nickel, copper, and iron-ore were mined to feed industrial production in Canada and the United States. Two products deserve particular mention. First, in the inter-war years, pulp and paper expanded rapidly to support the rapid growth in newspapers. Canadian production increased six-fold in the decade after the Great War, and Canada became the largest pulp and paper producer in the world. Newsprint was very much an export product with some 80% of interwar-era production going south of the border.

The second emergent commodity was oil. Beginning in the later 19th century, oil grew in importance to feed the demand for kerosene lighting, and then industrial production and automobiles. Initially Canada produced very little oil from only a few small fields in the Turner Valley of southern Alberta and near

1. Statistics Canada, *Canada Year Book 1999* (Ottawa: Minister Responsible for Statistics Canada, 1999), 337.

Sarnia, Ontario. However, a major strike at Leduc, Alberta in 1947 ushered in a new era. Oil production increased from practically nothing in the late-1940s to more than half a million barrels a day 20 years later, and more than two million barrels a day by the turn of the 21st century.

Oil can be viewed as one segment of Canada's overall energy sector. Coal and natural gas also grew in these years, but especially important was hydroelectric power. Major developments in the early 20th century, at Niagara Falls and along Quebec's numerous rivers, created new opportunities for cheap industrial power, and convenience for an increasing number of Canadian homes. Hydroelectric power also quickly became another export industry, which continues to the present day.

However, as important as hydroelectricity is, oil is the most important energy product of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. Prices are notoriously volatile, but the commodity is always a vital part of a modern industrial society. As with other key industries, oil has a series of important linkages that increase its importance. Pipelines criss-cross Canada and the United States, transporting products to market. Refineries, which transform oil into gasoline, were originally clustered near Edmonton and in southwestern Ontario for the most part. At the same time, the exploration for new sources of energy became a significant employer in its own right. Most recently, the oil sands around Fort McMurray have added a layer of intensive investment (and controversy) to the industry. Energy overall, and oil in particular, remains a major engine of economic growth, creating a westward tilt in Canadian politics, regional population movements, and income.



Figure 8.11 Oil sands were first exploited as a ready-made source of asphalt. Mining "tar sands" near Waterways, AB, in 1925.

For all the changes that have occurred in the last century, commodities remain a central part of Canada's economy. Another related continuity is Canada's reliance on international markets. Due to a strong commodity base and small population, Canada is dependent on international trade for much of its prosperity. This hit home in an unfortunate way when the world sank into the Depression of the 1930s. International trade collapsed as corporations ceased to purchase materials and equipment, while nations increasingly retreated behind tariff barriers. Canada, already affected by poor agricultural conditions, was hit harder than most. Indeed only two nations, the United States and Germany, had a greater decline in overall economic activity in that decade.

Long after the depression ended, however, Canada remained a trading nation, dependent on international markets. Once again, though, changes have occurred over time. In the interwar years,

trade with the United States and Great Britain predominated. After 1945 the United States was by far Canada's largest trading partner. By the mid-60s, Canada's exports to the United States were five times greater than the next largest partner, and represented more than 60% of all Canadian exports. The importance of the United States was recognized with the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement of 1988, which subsequently was expanded into the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) when Mexico joined in 1994. Most recently, the rise of the Asian economies has moderated this trend, and countries like Japan and especially China have become important markets for Canadian goods. However, the constants continue: commodities dominate, and trade remains vital to Canada's economic well-being.

Key Points

- As Canada's economy modernized after the Great War, its focus shifted increasingly from farming to industry and services, from rural to urban.
- In 1921 the population of the country as a whole was more urban than rural for the first time.
- Despite slowdowns in the 1930s and during WWII, the automobile industry emerged as a leading sector.
- New sectors — specifically pulp and paper and oil/petroleum — emerged in the 1920s and 1940s, as did hydroelectricity.
- The energy sector as a whole grew throughout the 20th century.
- Commodity sales remained important throughout the century, and trade relations with the United States only grew in importance.

Media Attributions

- Tar sand for bituminous pavements, 1/2 mile East of Waterways Station, Alta © Canada Dept. of Mines and Technical Surveys, Library and Archives Canada (PA-019904) is licensed under a Public Domain license

8.7 Three Sectors

The first and foremost of Canada's resource-extraction industries was the fisheries. It is the oldest export-oriented economic activity in the post-contact era that began in the 16th century. Fisheries made Canada's sea-going traditions critically important. At the time of Confederation, the necessity of an ice-free port was one of the attractions of uniting New Brunswick and Nova Scotia to the old Province of Canada. Both of these Maritime provinces had a long and distinguished record in the production and mobilization of fleets of fishing boats and globe-ranging vessels. Prince Edward Island was not far behind. Also, Newfoundland's orientation to the sea has been all but complete because of its very limited agricultural and forest hinterland. On the West and North coasts of Canada as well, shipping has been a means to make a living and a symbol of sovereignty. Shipbuilding and the fisheries — two primary areas of commerce, employment, and investment — are briefly explored in Sections 8.8 and 8.9.

More contemporary, the oil and gas industry is considered in Section 8.10. Supplying energy became a core element of the industrial economy in the 19th century. Canada has participated in the energy revolution(s) in the modernizing world since Basque whalers first visited the Labrador Coast in the 16th century (if not earlier). The transition from organic sources of heat and light — wood, whale oil, dogfish oil — to inorganic sources like coal, kerosene, oil, petroleum, natural gas, and uranium was relatively easy for a country that had access to all of these options. In a fuel-hungry millennial world, energy is one staple export that comes close to balancing the bulk:value ratio.

8.8 The Shipping Industry in Canada, 1867 – 1945

Eric W. Sager; Department of History; and University of Victoria



Figure 8.12 Launching of SS Ashby Park at Pictou Shipyards, Nova Scotia, 1944.

Canada has the longest coastline of any country in the world, and a large overseas trade. However, for more than 50 years, the country has not had a large merchant marine. Why this apparent paradox? For much of the 19th century, the colonies and the Dominion of Canada had relatively large shipping and shipbuilding industries. By the 1870s, the official statistics suggest that Canada had the fourth largest domestically-registered merchant marine in the world. Most of the tonnage consisted of wooden-hulled sailing ships, most of which were registered in the Maritime provinces and Quebec. The shipping industry had developed in large part to transport bulk commodities — mainly timber and wheat — from the colonies to Britain. By the third quarter of the 19th century, Canadian ships were deeply committed to the transport of bulk cargoes from the eastern United States to Britain and Europe.

Older history books have a simple explanation for the decline of the shipping and shipbuilding industries after the 1880s. Wooden-hulled sailing ships became obsolete; therefore the industry declined. This explanation is no longer acceptable, since it is considered technological determinism. Canadian shipowners operated iron steamships, and Canada had the resources to build iron and steel ships. Some Canadian shipowners, such as Hugh Allan, established liner companies that operated in the North Atlantic. Yet, shipping experienced a relative decline because capitalists perceived better investment opportunities elsewhere in Canada; because governments did not offer much support or protection for shipping; and because cheap shipping services were increasingly available from other countries.

During the two world wars, Canada renewed its involvement in shipping and shipbuilding. In 1918 the federal government created the Canadian Government Merchant Marine (CGMM), which operated merchant ships for several years at a time when the war had caused a decline in available tonnage.

During the Second World War, another government-owned company, Park Steamships Limited, made a vital contribution to wartime trade with Britain. After the war, the deep-sea merchant marine declined, and by the 1970s, few Canadian flag ships operated in ocean trades.

Key Points

- Canadian and Newfoundland shipping was a powerful and internationally credible sector of the economy in the late 19th century.
- Built to handle bulk goods, Canadian shipping played an important role in transporting goods between the United States and Europe.
- Although historians disagree over the causes of the decline of the Canadian shipping sector, the former emphasis on technological change has given way to a movement of capital out of shipping into other investments.

Additional Readings

Heal, Syd C. *A Great Fleet of Ships: The Canadian Forts and Parks.* Ontario: Vanwell Publishing, 1999.

Sager, Eric W. and Gerald Panting. *Maritime Capital: The Shipping Industry in Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990.

Sager, Eric W. *Seafaring Labour: The Merchant Marine of Atlantic Canada, 1820-1914.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989.

Media Attributions

- S.S. Ashby Park, 1944 © Pictou Historical Photograph Society is licensed under a Public Domain license

8.9 Canada's Ocean Fisheries

Miriam Wright; Department of History; and University of Windsor

Canada's Atlantic and Pacific coast fisheries changed dramatically in the years after Confederation. Marine creatures, including fish, shellfish and marine mammals had sustained Indigenous peoples on those coasts for thousands of years, and these same resources later attracted European settlers. In the 20th century, however, new technologies enabled people to catch far more fish. Fishing enterprises expanded and consolidated, changing the structure of the fishing industry and greatly affecting the lives of men and women who earned their living from fishing. These changes also affected fish, and by the end of the 20th century, many fish populations, including Atlantic cod and Pacific salmon, were severely depleted.

Historically, Atlantic cod was the predominant fishery on the Atlantic Coast. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, merchants outfitted wooden ships and engaged crews to fish for cod off the coasts of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. As well, families, supplied with credit from merchants, fished inshore with small boats — the men and boys catching the fish, and the women and girls curing the catch on shore. In the days before refrigeration, people salted the cod that went to markets in Europe, the Caribbean, and South America.

By the 1940s, advances in refrigeration and freezing technologies meant that fishing companies could sell fish fresh or quick-frozen to customers in North America. Soon, women who had previously cured fish on shore were working in fish plants owned by frozen fish companies. While many fishing people continued to use small boats (although now equipped with gas engines), the companies acquired large fishing trawlers that operated offshore. By the early 1970s, inshore fishing people, plant workers, and trawler crews in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia had unionized to secure fair wages and control over prices in an increasingly industrialized environment. Industrialization, however, also put pressure on the cod populations as Canadian trawlers were joined offshore by vessels from Europe. In 1992, after declining for decades, the cod populations were so weakened that the Canadian government declared a moratorium on fishing. Despite these protective measures, the Atlantic cod off the coast of Newfoundland have not recovered. Other fisheries including crab and shrimp have replaced cod as the most significant species in the region, but these new fisheries employ far fewer than the cod fishery once had.

Like the Atlantic coast fishery, Canada's Pacific coast fishery was diverse, including salmon (the most important species by far), herring, and halibut. The rich salmon rivers of British Columbia, such as the Fraser and the Skeena, have provided sustenance for Indigenous peoples for thousands of years. Thus, Indigenous people were also among the first workers in the commercial fishery in the 19th century when non-Indigenous people built canneries on the salmon rivers. Indigenous families spent the summers at the canneries, with women on the canning lines and men fishing from small wooden boats. Before long, other groups of immigrant workers arrived, including Chinese men who worked inside the canneries, immigrants from Japan who fished, and people of European descent.

In the 20th century, new technologies and industrial consolidation brought opportunities and challenges for those involved in the British Columbia salmon fishery. Gas engines arrived in the 1920s, but the

biggest changes came after World War II: vessels became larger with more powerful engines and more effective nets and gear. The salmon companies closed their older canneries, centralized their operations in Vancouver, and encouraged fishers to invest in larger craft. While some did, others were shut out. Indigenous peoples in particular found it harder to stay in the fishery with the cannery closures and barriers to getting larger vessels. As well, a 1968 federal license limitation plan removed hundreds of small boat fishers from the industry.



Figure 8.13 Halibut harvest, British Columbia, 1937.

Although fishing vessels had become larger and more efficient, catches, on the whole, declined in the decades after the Second World War. By the 1990s, the salmon fishery was in crisis as salmon populations fell to historic lows.[1] Years of intensified fishing was certainly an important factor, but so were environmental problems. Decades of mining, logging, and hydro-electric development along salmon rivers destroyed the fish habitats. As well, changing conditions in the ocean, where salmon spend part of their lives, may also have been a factor. The federal government was accused, by industry stakeholders and scientists, of not protecting the resource and supporting the technological expansion of the industry. Although people in the industry have noted strong salmon returns in 2010 and 2014 for the important Fraser River sockeye, the future is still unclear.

The 20th century brought many opportunities for expansion and growth in both the Pacific and Atlantic coast fisheries, but these opportunities came with a high price. Fishing people and plant workers found it increasingly difficult to remain in an industry that favoured centralization and capital intensity. The wild species that had been part of the rich ecosystems of both coasts were under pressure from humans fishing and destroying their habitat. The destruction of these important ecosystems and habitats from over-fishing has threatened the livelihoods of thousands, and whether or not Canada's wild ocean fisheries survive into the current century remains uncertain.

1. Joseph Gough, *Managing Canada's Fisheries* (Sillery, QC: Septentrion, 2007), 455.

Key Points

- Changes in fishing technologies and techniques in the 20th century drove certain stocks to a crisis point.
- The East Coast cod fishery was organized around offshore and inshore operations, both capitalized by local merchants.
- The advance of refrigeration technologies shifted fisheries employment from villages to processing factories, which led to a greater organization of fisheries labour.
- More aggressive fishing led to the closure of the cod fisheries in 1992, producing widespread unemployment in the Atlantic region.
- Similar outcomes were reached on the West Coast in the context of the salmon fishery, which was mechanized with motor vessels and canneries.
- Over fishing and environmental damage resulted in salmon depopulation and cyclical crises in the industry.

Additional Readings

Cadigan, Sean. *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant-Settler Relations in Newfoundland, 1785-1855*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995.

Newell, Dianne. *Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.

Newell, Dianne and Rosemary Ommer, eds. *Fishing Places, Fishing People: Traditions and Issues in Canadian Small-Scale Fisheries*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

Wright, Miriam. *A Fishery for Modern Times: The State and the Industrialization of the Newfoundland Fishery, 1934-1968*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Wright, Miriam. "'Building the Great Lucrative Fishing Industry': Aboriginal Gillnet Fishers and Protests over Salmon Fishery Regulations for the Nass and Skeena Rivers, 1950s-1960s." *Labour/Le Travail* 61 (Spring 2008): 99-130.

8.10 Oil and Gas and the New West



Figure 8.14 Leduc in 1947: its effects were, literally, explosive.

In 1947, on the 13th of February, Leduc blew in.

Let's situate that in the context of mid-century Alberta. Following a period of promising growth before 1914 and in the 1920s, the provincial economy was devastated by the Depression of the 1930s and the environmental catastrophe of the dust bowl. Alberta was a poor and scruffy place. Paved roads were a rare sight. The major cities were barely more than large towns. Winters were cold and long, and to heat their homes and businesses, Albertans depended on wood (of which there was little in the Prairie region of the province) and coal, much of it mined in the murderously dangerous mines of the Crowsnest Pass. The Second World War charged up the local economy a bit, encouraging grain and livestock farmers as well as meat-packers in Calgary, but the return to peace raised fears of a return to economic stagnation. The Great War was, after all, followed by an influenza pandemic, industrial unrest, political instability, and an economic crisis in 1921. Albertans in 1947 could be optimistic only if they made a point of ignoring the recent past.

Leduc changed everything. The first oil discovery in a field about 30 km south of Edmonton at long last vindicated a generation of geologists. According to one account, "Imperial Oil, which had drilled 133 dry holes and spent $20 million with little to show, finally had a major discovery." Thereafter it was madness: "The spectacular Atlantic No.3 well, which came in as a gusher in March 1948, blew

wild for six months, spilling over a million barrels of oil over the surrounding fields." [1] The discovery at Leduc followed previous discoveries of naphtha gasoline at Turner Valley near Calgary, and even older coal mining resources, so Alberta already had something of an energy industry in place. However, this discovery was the start of something vastly larger, something that would alter the face of both Alberta and Canada as a whole.



Figure 8.15 What used to be called "Turner Valley Skunk Juice" — naphtha gasoline — is piped into drums, 1914.

The Rise of the West

The oil boom of the post-war years rekindled old resentments toward Central Canada. Ottawa had enjoyed extensive control over the national economy during wartime, and the "Minister for Everything," C.D. Howe, was still of a mind that he could accomplish whatever was in the interest of Canada as a whole, even in peacetime. That meant getting gas and oil from Alberta to factories in Ontario via a pipeline. For Albertans, this suggestion was worrying in the extreme. The carbon energy resources of the province were, they believed, the key to economic diversification. A province dependent on commodities like wheat and livestock would always be vulnerable to the booms and busts of the international market. Cheap fuel, however, could improve the quality of life and create new industries. In an age that lionized large-scale manufacturing, Alberta — and the West as a whole — still had precious little secondary production capacity. Albertans could look to Texas, another oil-rich jurisdiction, to see how its main cities had turned their wealth to good advantage. That vision would be realized in part, but not during the mid-century.

What quickly became most evident was that Alberta was in the process of a socio-economic revolution. In 1921 the United Farmers of Alberta — a political party based on cooperative values, social gospel instincts, and the primacy of the agricultural sector — formed the provincial government in Edmonton. They were succeeded in 1935 by the Social Credit Party, an antimodernist, monetary reform

1. Howard Palmer with Tamara Palmer, *Alberta: A New History* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1990), 300-301.

movement/party with strong fundamentalist Christian values. These were political traditions that clearly had a religious component as well as an economic aspect. In a province that was mostly made up of homesteads and small towns, this made sense in that the local congregations were an expression of community and much of that community was doing the same thing: producing food. But Alberta was urbanizing slowly … and then oil sped up the process.

Alberta tipped the scales to just slightly more urban than rural in 1951, 30 years after Canada as a whole. Fifteen years later, more than 7 in 10 Albertans were city folks. What's more, the rural population was not just shrinking as a proportion: it was falling in real terms as well. In 1951 the high water mark for rural Albertans was reached at 488,733; it would bottom out at 458,870 (25%) in 1976. The rural share of population steadily fell from 61% in 1941 to 25% in 1976 and further to 17% in 2011.[2]

This reallocation of population took place against a background of profound growth. Between 1951 and 1961, the overall population grew by 40%, much of that expansion coming from natural increase. In 1941 there were just under 800,000 Albertans, and by 1971, that number had doubled to 1.63 million. There was, too, a renewal in the arrival of immigrants, many of whom headed to the expanding cities. The population of Calgary and Edmonton, both of which had languished for nearly two decades at around 80,000 residents, doubled in the 1950s, and pushed past the half-million mark in the late 1970s. In 1941 their populations were at the bottom rungs of the top 10 largest Canadian cities, but in 1961, Edmonton was the fourth largest and the third largest in 1971, eking out Vancouver (not including its suburbs). During the same period, Calgary moved into fourth place and was 33% larger than Ottawa.

This explosive demographic growth was spurred by economic expansion, most of which occurred in the **oil patch**. Production more than tripled between 1960 and 1973. Ancillary industries associated with finance opened branch offices in Albertan cities. Calgary in particular emerged by the 1980s as a centre of the insurance industry. Economic diversification, however, remained elusive. The aging Social Credit regime faltered with the retirement of long-time Premier Ernest Manning (1908-1996) in 1968, and a new, more aggressively pro-development Conservative government came to power in 1971 under Peter Lougheed (1928-2012). Fifty years had passed since Albertans had elected one of the two mainstream parties to the legislature in Edmonton, and criticizing Ottawa for provincial woes had become an institutionalized pastime. The Lougheed administration continued that tradition while breaking sharply with the rural-oriented economic visions of the past, applying a stronger planning model, and building on the Social Credit government's investment in education and training. Their timing was perfect.

Blue-eyed Arabs

Global oil prices were remarkably flat from the 1920s to the 1970s. Whether measured in real dollars (based on 2008 values) or unadjusted prices, there had not been much fluctuation, notwithstanding a bit of a trough in the 1930s. This stability was achieved by the collaboration between the "Seven Sisters" — the largest international oil companies — and an economy-wide lack of price inflation. By 1970, however, American crude production was falling, and Washington's involvement in the 1973 Yom

2. Statistics Canada, "Population, Urban and Rural, by Province and Territory (Alberta)," accessed August 20, 2015, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/demo62j-eng.htm.

Kippur (or Ramadan or October) War in the Middle East spurred a dramatic and overnight response from the **Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)**. In October 1973 OPEC raised the price of oil by 70%, imposed an embargo on sales to the United States, and cut output. What came to be called the "first OPEC oil shock" combined with instability in global finances (caused by the collapse of the post-WWII Bretton Woods system of currency alignments), which led to widespread price inflation, rising unemployment, industrial failures, and the beginning of an **economic recession**. In addition, some oil/petroleum rationing occurred in North America. These features of the oil crisis were felt across the Western world (targeted by the Arab-dominated OPEC nations) and were compounded by a sagging Canadian dollar, which impacted Canadian manufacturers' exports.

These events set the stage for rising economic and political tensions in Canada. Alberta, which to this point had profited modestly on oil sales, suddenly became enormously wealthy. Its political and economic elites — described at the time as "blue-eyed Arabs" — took the centre stage of national affairs and were increasingly confrontational when it came to Ottawa's involvement with the energy sector.

The constitutional context of the oil industry was important in these debates. Provinces control their natural resources but only until they reach a borderline. Movement of oil or natural gas through pipelines into another province — let alone exports into the United States — brought Ottawa into the equation. The Social Credit governments had done much to ensure provincial oversight when it came to internal pipelines so as to limit Ottawa's influence. Demand from Central Canada's growing metropolises and factories guaranteed sales whenever American markets cooled, but it also ensured the involvement of the Ontario and Quebec dominated administrations in Ottawa. In the late 1950s, both gas and oil/petroleum were being piped to Central and Eastern Canada, where they had to compete with the oil being imported from the Middle East and elsewhere. In 1961, the federal government drew the "Borden Line" along the Ottawa River to create two oil markets in Canada, and oil in the market west of the Borden Line was as much as a third more expensive.

This changed in 1973: first due to a new export tariff (introduced under Pierre Trudeau's administration) and second with the OPEC oil shock. By this stage, Saskatchewan had joined the ranks of natural gas and oil producing provinces, which already included British Columbia and Alberta. (Moreover, BC had had its own run-in with Ottawa over energy policies when its government negotiated the Columbia River Treaty over hydroelectricity exports with the United States in the early 1960s.) The possibility of a regional protest against federal energy interventions was greater in the 1970s than in any previous decade, and the stakes were vastly higher. Ottawa took the view that Alberta was enjoying "windfall" profits, which rightly belonged to all Canadians, although Albertans felt differently. They disagreed with the National Energy Board's assessment that oil supplies were limited in the extreme and should thus be preserved for domestic use and treated as a special commodity (with echoes of wartime control over key supplies). Albertans were determined to use oil as part of a strategy to diversify the provincial economy so that when the OPEC-produced windfall inevitably ended, Alberta would have a resilient economic order in place.

Oilers Nation

Ottawa developed several strategies. The first was to ensure energy security for Canada by slapping an export tax on shipments destined for south of the border. Even during the apparent oil shortage of the

1973 OPEC oil shock, this tax reduced Alberta's oil profits. Lougheed responded with an increase on royalty charges on publicly-owned (Crown) resources. Oil companies had grown accustomed to writing off royalties in their federal corporate taxes, and they hoped to weather this increase in provincial taxes by continuing to do so; however, Ottawa closed that tax loophole. It took the rest of the decade to disentangle the bad feelings and confusion over pricing and revenues.[3]

If tariffs and royalties were inadequate to the task of establishing national oil security, there were other options to pursue. The foremost of these came into play in 1975 when the federal government launched a nationally-owned oil company called *Petro-Canada* (aka *Petrocan*). In part this was a result of the Liberals having lost their majority in the House and being dependent on an NDP balance of power (which was highly pro-Petrocan). Treated with suspicion by Alberta, the new corporation was challenged to acquire high quality properties, processing capacity, and oil reserves. Despite all of this, tempers cooled as the decade came to a close.

However, matters took a turn for the worse in 1979. The second OPEC oil shock (1979-1980) saw a return to sniping between Ottawa and Edmonton. The return of the Trudeau government (restored after a 9-month Conservative administration under Joe Clark) was quickly followed by the introduction of the **National Energy Program (NEP)**. By this time, the price of crude oil had leapt from the pre-1973 price of $3 to nearly $40 a barrel.

The NEP addressed purported shortages by guaranteeing national energy self-sufficiency, taxing the fuel resource to benefit Canadians outside of Alberta, and extending still further Canadian ownership of the oil sector through the instrument of Petrocan. The whole package was based on predictions that oil prices would continue to rise over the next decade. In fact, they reversed, falling to $10 a barrel. Ottawa was left carrying the cost of subsidies to oil-consuming industries with none of the revenue-stream that had been anticipated. Federal deficits grew and the government's popularity shrank. Opposition in Alberta was ferocious: the mayor of Calgary, Ralph Klein, advocated turning off the pipelines and snarled, "Let the Eastern bastards freeze in the dark!" — a sentiment that afterwards appeared on bumper stickers across the West. The NEP stirred up a hornets' nest of constitutional disputes, did little to support energy self-sufficiency, plunged Ottawa into debt, and undermined the principle of equalization payments. It did, however, raise the question of whether there might be a Canadian "national interest" and determined the extent to which regional disparities in wealth and opportunities should be suffered or ameliorated.

Oil Sands

The existence of oil-saturated sands along the banks of the Athabasca River had been known about for centuries. The tarry substance was used by First Nations to seal the hulls of their canoes long before the arrival of European traders. Commercial exploitation of the oil sands was, however, extremely limited until the 1970s. Its first commercial use was as a kind of asphalt road surface mined straight out of the ground. By the 1960s there were several methods available to extract the oil from the sand, but they were prohibitively expensive. The oil shocks of the 1970s changed that equation.

Following the first OPEC crisis, various companies were in a position to begin a commercial scale

3. Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owram, *A History of the Canadian Economy* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1991), 613.

separation of oil and sand. At the forefront of these companies was Syncrude, which began production in 1978. The downturn in global oil prices after 1981 reduced interest in the oil sands, but improved processes, and the rising oil prices enabled Syncrude to increase production to 90 million barrels per year in 2001.

An insatiable demand for skilled and semi-skilled labour turned the neighbouring town of Fort McMurray into one of the country's fastest growing communities in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1961 there were fewer than 2,000 people in the village, and by 1971 6,800; this latter number more than doubled in the next 5 years, and then doubled again to 31,000 in 1981. It is currently reckoned to have a population of 77,000 — at least one-fifth of which is non-permanent. Criticism of the environmental implications of oil sands extraction, and the subsequent transportation of bitumen, may have taken some of the shine off of the oil sands industry, but it has significantly extended the prosperity of Alberta.

Historian Sean Kheraj (York University) investigates the history of pipeline failures and Canadians' connection with their energy sources.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: *https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=424#oembed-1*

Over a Barrel

The two oil crises of the 1970s had several important consequences. First, they pitched Alberta into the spotlight of national events and made a national figure of Peter Lougheed — an articulate and thoughtful politician. Second, they created significant tensions within Canadian federalism, increasing demands for decentralized authority or, what was called at the time, **centrifugal federalism**. These crises also undermined the federal formula for "have" and "have-not" provinces that was based on provincial per capita incomes and assumed that wealthy provinces would necessarily have large populations (not the case, relatively speaking, in Alberta). National equity programs were suddenly in jeopardy, which was felt sharply in the Maritimes.

For most Canadians, what mattered was how the oil crises changed their daily lives. Inflation — almost unheard of since the 1920s — was back with a vengeance. The cost of shipping food products grew dramatically, as did household food expenditures. For the first time since 1945, Canadians were experiencing, on a very broad scale, a fall in their average standard of living.

There were technological and environmental consequences as well. Gas-guzzling North American automobiles were being challenged by smaller, lighter Japanese imports. A whole new sector of the Canadian auto-industry would eventually emerge, along with the development of redesigned North American vehicle engines. Efforts to reduce gas consumption, and thus operating costs, was complemented by attempts to diversify energy sources. Experiments involving nuclear, solar, and wind energy accelerated in these years, although to little effect.

The global context of the oil crises would be felt by Canadians for years. OPEC was regarded by successive governments in Washington as mostly at odds with America's "national strategic interests" in the Middle East. What began as a protest against American and European involvement in the Yom Kippur War — a chapter in the Cold War in which the USSR was supporting Egypt — catalyzed anti-Western feeling. The toppling of the Shah of Iran in 1979 (which precipitated the second oil shock) had consequences for regional affairs that would percolate into the 1990s and the 21st century, drawing Canada into wars and interventions in Kuwait, Iraq, and Libya (see Sections 9.12 and 12.2).



Figure 8.16 Alberta Premier Peter Lougheed (centre) and Quebec Premier René Lévesque had a common foe in Ottawa. At a 1981 meeting of premiers.

Finally, the rise of Alberta in the 1970s — complemented by a strong British Columbian economy and the growth of the natural gas, potash, and uranium sectors in Saskatchewan — tipped the balance of power in Ottawa. The election of Calgary Conservative, Joe Clark, as PM in 1979 was one indication, however brief, that the tide was turning. The much more successful government of Brian Mulroney, from 1984 to 1993, depended heavily on **western alienation** for its success. In addition, the appearance of Western separatist sentiment and the Reform Party led by Preston Manning (son of the former Albertan Premier) had deep roots in the events of the 1970s. Reform would go on to transform the "Progressive Conservative" party into the "Conservative Party" led by Stephen Harper, another Calgarian (see Section 12.3). Ironically, Alberta became much more Canadian through this process: the oil patch created jobs that attracted Canadians from every province. Indeed, Mr. Harper (born and raised in Toronto) moved as a young man to Edmonton to take up a low-level office job at Imperial Oil before moving on to the University of Calgary to study economics.

Key Points

- The oil economy in Alberta took off in the 1940s and 1950s, and accelerated with the first OPEC oil shock in the early 1970s.
- Some of the effects of the oil boom included a dramatic shift from rural to urban life, and a rapid

increase in population in Calgary and Edmonton in particular.

- Federal attempts to capture some of the windfall profits of the oil shocks in the 1970s provoked strident anti-Ottawa feeling in the West.
- Rising oil prices brought within reach the development of the oil sands, extending for decades Alberta's oil-based prosperity.
- The oil crises of the 1970s and 1980s had international repercussions, but most Canadians felt it in their wallets, since inflation reduced household incomes significantly and rapidly.

Media Attributions

- Leduc No. 1 Oil Well, 1947 is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Filling drums with oil at Dingman Well © Lane and Mitchell is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Peter Lougheed and René Lévesque, 1981 © Robert Cooper, Government of Canada, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3575754). No restrictions on use

8.11 Fashioning a Post-War Economy



Figure 8.17 The path to happiness in the post-WWII era is paved not with gold but with blacktop. Consumerism as an economic growth strategy and a lifestyle is embodied in the family automobile, such as the short-lived Ford Frontenac, 1960. [*[Long Description]*]

Probably no period in human history has witnessed such a concentrated attempt to plan and shape the national and international economy as the years after 1944. In the middle of a devastating World War, Western, Allied governments met at **Bretton Woods** in New Hampshire to identify the tools necessary to rebuild the liberal democratic and capitalist order, assuming they could beat the Axis Powers. The **World Bank** and the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** were two institutions that emerged from Bretton Woods and, along with the **Marshall Plan** (aka the European Recovery Plan or ERP) in 1947, they were geared to restoring Europe's economic health so to avoid the kind of post-war turmoil that followed the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. As Soviet interest in participating in the ERP waned, these instruments of investment and recovery became imbued with a stronger ideological hue that reflected the sentiments of the emerging Cold War (see Section 9.4). They were about providing legitimacy for capitalism and turning off the appeal of revolutionary movements in the post-war world.

Cold War Capitalism

These measures were important to Canada for several reasons. First, although Canada was one of the very few strong economies left standing at the end of the war, it depended on exports to survive. The United States could absorb only so much, so Western European markets were essential to a Canadian transition to peacetime prosperity. Canada engaged directly in recovery efforts in Europe for this reason, while establishing a role in the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)** as an instrument for economic regeneration. The Canadian establishment also understood that the appeal of communism in Canada was enhanced in the 1940s by the alliance with Stalin's USSR, the appearance of several new communist regimes in Eastern Europe and, in 1949, the People's Republic of China. The most effective case against hard-left dissent was high levels of employment, good wages, and overall prosperity at home. Capitalism had to appear as though it was working. To that end, Canada had to strike a balance between sending resources abroad to rebuild markets on the one hand, and investing in jobs at home on the other. Thse two goals weren't necessarily at odds: Canada sold billions of dollars' worth of materials to the **Marshall Plan** in the late 1940s, which was a stimulant to economic growth. Almost simultaneously, from 1949 to 1953, tensions and then war in the Korean Peninsula proved to be a fillip to both the Canadian economy and anti-communist rhetoric (see Section 9.4).

More generally, Ottawa and the provinces began to intervene more actively in the economy. New infrastructural projects appeared in these years as the shift to an automobile economy was more fully underway and the demand for cheap electricity grew. Highways and hydroelectric dams were to the post-war era what railways had been to the pre-1914 Dominion. These were the elements of the command-led practices of the past that survived, although Canadian economic planners laid greater emphasis on demand-led (consumer-led) growth. Critical pieces of the puzzle involved stabilizing industrial relations (considered by Peter McInnis in Section 8.12) and encouraging the growth of a working-class with disposable income. Economists had observed the benefits of consumerism in the 1920s and, conversely, what the loss of spending power meant in the Depression. Investing public money to create jobs — a Keynesian approach — worked during the war, and this strategy would be applied during the following three decades.

As we'll see in Chapter 9, much of this economic growth took place in the suburbs of the nation's largest cities. The engine that would drive forward a post-war Canadian economy included house construction, the development of services (sewer, electricity, telephone lines), the sale of automobiles for commuters (and gasoline, of course), and the furnishing of every home with appliances and televisions (starting in the 1950s). As Katharine Rollwagen describes below, this process enlisted people at an early age, consciously fashioning generations of consumers.

Youth and Consumerism

Katharine Rollwagen, Department of History, Vancouver Island University

> Today's teen-agers are cuddled, coddled, and courted and their juvenile notions on love, life and the cosmos are eagerly sought and retailed by some of their raisin-brained elders. – Frank Tumpane [1]

In the 1950s, many young people were coming of age in an era of relative abundance. Goods that families couldn't afford in the 1930s and couldn't purchase in the 1940s due to wartime restrictions on production were becoming more common. New consumer products, too, were entering the market. Between 1950 and 1960, homes in Canadian cities and towns acquired items such as automatic washing machines and electric refrigerators (rural homes often didn't have the electricity and plentiful running water these appliances required). New automobiles were increasingly abundant and affordable. Televisions were growing in popularity; the children of the 1950s were the first to grow up with access to this medium, which brought advertising into the home in a new and — some believed — invasive way.

Although young people had more products to purchase after the Second World War, they were not the first generation to be targeted by advertisers and retailers. In the early decades of the century, advertisements first began offering parents specialized infant foods and clothing. Manufactured toys increasingly replaced homemade ones, and young people had more commercialized leisure options, such as the cinema. Many store owners liked the idea that they might secure customer loyalty early in life. They offered special promotions to draw young people into their stores, hoping to ensure their business as they aged.

The 1940s presented a new opportunity for retailers to reach a somewhat captive audience of teenagers. As my research demonstrates, department stores, in particular, noticed the increase in high school attendance and paid more attention to the school-aged customers in their stores. Stores like Eaton's and Simpson's presented the teenager as a new type of customer. The teenaged customer was more mature than little sister or brother — she (or he) shopped without their mother, placed a high value on peer approval, and were decisive, savvy shoppers. Both Eaton's and Simpson's joined a North American industry trend by creating teenager advisory boards in the 1940s. These groups of high school students met weekly at department stores in Canadian cities to discuss current fashion trends in their schools and to give their opinions of store merchandise — clothing, music records, shoes, and even furniture. Also in the 1940s, clothing manufacturers began making garments in a new teen size range, and producing style lines specifically for teenaged girls and boys.

In the 1940s and 1950s, women's magazines, such *Canadian Home Journal*, ran special teenager features and advertising, while *Chatelaine* started a monthly teen column called "Teen Tempo." By the time *Chatelaine* publishers decided to start their own magazine for teenaged girls in 1966, *Miss Chatelaine*, Canadian girls had already been reading American teen magazines *Seventeen* and *Young and Modern* (also known as *YM*) for twenty years, and purchasing (or coveting) the products sold in their glossy pages. At mid-century, selling to youth had become an integral part of retail business in Canada.

Additional Readings

Owram, Doug. *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.

Rollwagen, Katharine. "Eaton's Goes to School: Youth Councils and the Commodification of the Teenaged Consumer at Canada's Largest Department Store, 1940-1960." *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 47, no. 95 (2014): 683-703.

1. Frank Tumpane, "Stop Pampering Our Teenagers," *Macleans*, May 26, 1956, 4, 65-66.

By the mid-1950s, the Canadian economy was well into a new industrial revolution during which **consumer durables** intersected with popular culture. It was also when success was, for the first time since 1867, measured less against the benchmark of the United States (although that persisted as well) and more against Cold War enemies in the Soviet Bloc. The fact that this was political as well as economic is evident in the uneven division of spoils across Canada in the post-War years. Economic growth took place principally in Ontario and Quebec, Alberta, and British Columbia; the Prairie economies of Manitoba and Saskatchewan struggled, as did those of Atlantic Canada (the subject of Section 8.13). These **have-not** provinces benefited from equalization payments but continued to lag behind for decades. The fact that the post-war prosperity was not universally shared is further underlined by the experiences of Indigenous peoples (see Chapter 11).

Key Points

- The post-WWII economy was built on renewed public sector investment in infrastructure and other measures designed to stimulate the growth of consumer demand.
- Internationally, Canada was part of a project to rebuild the European economy and markets for Canadian exports, while keeping communism at bay.
- Much of the growth in domestic demand came from suburban growth and the creation of a culture of consumerism among adults and children.

Long Descriptions

Figure 8.17 long description: Picture of a red two-door Frontenac station wagon. A family of five is inside, three children in the back, father driving. The trunk is packed. The advertisement proclaims the vehicle is a “sensible size” with “amazing economy.” Across the bottom of the advertisement, there is a maple leaf before the word “Frontenac” in large letters.

There are two smaller photos in the advertisement. One shows a rear view of the car. Two people inside the car look over their shoulders out the rear window. The caption says “Tailgate has outside window control. With optional power assist, windows can be operated from driver’s seat. You lower tailgate floor-flat with one hand.”

The other smaller photo shows the open trunk from the rear. The trunk is packed with camping supplies, including a sleeping bag, a cooler, a blanket, and some luggage. The caption says “Half ton load capacity for bulky cargo. Stows items as long as 8½ feet without overhang. Tailgate opening is fully 4 feet wide, only 23 inches off ground.” [Return to Figure 8.17]

8.12 The Postwar Settlement in Canada

Peter McInnis; Department of History; and St. Francis Xavier University

Canadian workers have long struggled to achieve improved job and living conditions for themselves and their families. Most efforts to organize unions faced the combined might of employers and the state, and the resulting discord often led to harsh repression and violence. Traditionally, only the most highly skilled craftsmen had opportunities to influence their working environment through collective action. Leverage was achieved, however, by ensuring that the trade unions were inherently exclusive and limited only to those with specific training — often excluding racialized and gendered minorities. This rudimentary system of union organization functioned with limited success, but during times of economic downturn or overt oppression from employers and governments, these early trade unions declined.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, Canada was forced to initiate a massive program of military expansion to contribute to the Allied cause. A vital aspect of this project was enticing new workers to cooperatively join in this rapid industrialization. The accelerated economic transition was especially challenging as the "ten lost years" of the Great Depression had left Canada's industrial sector in disarray. In Ottawa, the Liberal government of William Lyon Mackenzie King, equipped with extraordinary authority under the *War Measures Act* and following the lead of earlier American legislation, introduced a series of measures to spur wartime industrial growth. One such measure was ***Privy Council Order PC 1003 (1944)*** that, for the first time, allowed unions to engage in widespread organization and bargain collectively for job contracts. This change was advantageous to the many workers drawn to wartime jobs and seeking representation from new unions (modelled on the concept of large sectorial or "industrial unions") that brought together members regardless of skill levels. As the numbers of unions and union members increased exponentially, organized labour quickly assumed a higher profile in public deliberations.

After the victory over Nazi Germany looked certain, the federal government started to scale down its war-related industrialization. Wartime labour protections, such as PC 1003, were thus scheduled to end. The question before many Canadians was whether unions would be once again forced to struggle (or even lose ground) to retain the gains they had achieved during the war. In the immediate postwar period, many Canadians spoke of a desire for a reformed nation that embraced greater fairness for all its citizens. Aware of this debate, most political parties veered toward satisfying this progressive mood, whereas others sought to retrench conservative values. This volatile atmosphere shaped the framing of the **postwar settlement**.

An important strike in late 1945 at the Ford Motor Company in Windsor, Ontario resulted in a landmark legal ruling by Mr. Justice Ivan C. Rand. The **Rand Formula** (1946) provided unions with a pathway to gain legitimacy and long-term stability if, but only if, they agreed to conduct themselves "responsibly." In exchange for receiving obligatory union dues (the "check-off"), labour groups

promised to take charge of their membership and ensure worker militancy was regulated strictly.[1] For the most part unions were amenable to play by the rules of the game and balance their rights against a set of procedures and obligations. This agreement was the foundation of the postwar settlement, since it set out the semi-formal accord between labour, business, and the state to secure workplace harmony in the years following the end of the Second World War. Workplace discord, in the form of strikes and lockouts, continued sporadically during the 1940s-1950s, but labour's postwar settlement appeared to have achieved a decisive compromise between organized labour and business.

In the broader context, this postwar settlement also involved the widespread public consensus that Canada ought to develop a mixed economy under the auspices of Keynesian economics and the introduction of a limited welfare state. The achievement of unemployment insurance, child benefits, pension reforms, and publicly-funded healthcare were indicative of this expansive civil society, which invited unions to play an ongoing part in Canadian society. This approach was in stark contrast to the rightward shift in the United States, where stridently anti-labour legislation sought to curtail the growing power of unions.

Canadian unions, wary of invoking a conservative backlash, were careful to reinforce their hard-won legitimacy by adhering to the federal and provincial labour regulations that made spontaneous, mid-contract **"wildcat" strikes** illegal. This pragmatic stance alienated some of the more seasoned workers whose Depression-era experiences taught them to use unions as a springboard to achieve far-reaching social reforms. This regime of bureaucratic "industrial legality" may have also excluded recent converts to unionization who resented a top-down labour hierarchy. Throughout the 1960s, a series of protracted wildcat strikes in both the public and private sectors led to a formal inquiry — the Task Force on Labour Relations (1968).[2] This inquiry marked the beginning of a plan to reset the initial terms of the postwar settlement, described by a some as the shift from "consent to coercion."[3] By the 1970s, Canada was facing the dilemma of **stagflation** — stagnant economic growth coupled with persistently high rates of inflation. Limits applied to global petroleum production resulted in several "oil shocks" that shook the confidence of many Western nations. Governments at all levels were under intense political pressure to reign in unruly unions and redistribute the balance of power to employers and the state. The postwar settlement, along with some components of the welfare state, started to unravel.

In the decades following the initial economic crisis of the 1970s, both governments and employers have acted to limit the fundamental rights of unions to organize, negotiate collective agreements, and when necessary, strike to compel a resolution to an impasse. Increasingly, unions have been forced to accept harsh concessions or have been driven into dissolution. The postwar settlement as an expression of expanded workplace activism, and the engagement of labour as a progressive force in Canadian society have been undermined and eroded consistently, which has continued into our contemporary era under the mantra of neo-liberal austerity. Despite this, the accord, remarkably, remains influential in its

1. Peter S. McInnis, *Harnessing Labour Confrontation: Shaping the Postwar Settlement in Canada, 1943-1950* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

2. Stuart Marshall Jamieson, *Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict, 1900-1966* (Ottawa: Task Force on Labour Relations, 1968), 395-451.

3. Leo Panitch and Donald Swartz, *From Consent to Coercion: The Assault on Trade Union Freedoms,* 3rd ed. (Aurora, ON: Garamond, 2003).

broadest contours and continues to exert a working-class perspective in the ongoing campaign for a fair and equitable Canadian society.

Key Points

- Wartime demands led to PC 1003, which stimulated the growth and influence of unions. The return of peace raised fears that the new rights enjoyed by organized labour would be withdrawn.
- In 1946 the Rand Formula staked out a new relationship between labour, capital, and government, which confirmed a post-war settlement that stabilized industrial relations.
- This post-war settlement also entailed greater state interventionism and the establishment of a welfare state.
- By the 1970s economic and industrial conditions had changed and there was increasing pressure on the state to regulate labour. Although some elements of the post-war settlement were abandoned, others survived.

8.13 The Atlantic Provinces



Figure 8.18 The cod fishery was central to Newfoundland's economy for centuries, ca. 1941-44.

History has not been kind to the Maritimes. The liberal, progressive vision of an environment in which men and women would be freed from arbitrary government (and thus able to better pursue their fortunes and best interests) didn't play out as hoped. In the case of Nova Scotia, historians Ian McKay and Robin Bates have pointed to "the province's frustratingly non-linear history":

> [Nova Scotia's] nineteenth-century enlightenment did not (at least by most conventional measures) eventuate in a twentieth-century liberal society of contented and prosperous individuals, but in a de-industrializing province scarred by mass unemployment, poverty and out-migration.[1]

Even so, in the 20th century, Nova Scotia was the most successful of the Maritime provinces. The

1. Ian McKay and Robin Bates, *In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 40.

addition of Newfoundland in 1949 to what was thereafter the “Atlantic Provinces” did nothing to change that. It just meant there was one more province going to Ottawa with cap in hand.

Structural Traps

Early 20th century changes in the Atlantic Rim economy took a heavy toll on the Maritimes and Newfoundland. The decline in shipping using wooden ships was compounded by falling markets for (and retreating sources of) lumber. The region’s traditional sources of trade were simultaneously undergoing change. The West Indies were not the source of cane sugar and rum that they once were, having been overtaken by sugar beet production in the United States, Canada, and Continental Europe, and the opening of distilleries closer to markets. With less to trade, the Maritime connection with Britain’s Caribbean colonies declined. Other changes in the marketplace worked against the Atlantic provinces as well, the foremost of which was the opening of the Panama Canal. British Columbian (and American West Coast) timber, paper products, and tinned salmon could now reach the major markets of the American East Coast more directly, faster, and cheaper than they could by rail via Montreal, Moncton, and Halifax. Even the Annapolis Valley apple industry was affected: with very good sales to Britain after the war, local producers saw no reason to diversify their crop away from an inexpensive but not very versatile variety; the arrival of Okanagan species along with other competitors’ hard fruits forced the Maritime orchardists to undertake an expensive and time-consuming readjustment, which involved tearing out older trees and replacing them with newer varieties.

The Great War provided a boost to the regional economy, but it sank severely thereafter.
British demand for fish sagged, as it did in other markets; worse news, some Scandinavian countries were making headway into traditional markets for Maritime fish. Newfoundland fleets kept their costs razor thin (possibly to their own detriment) and thereby outcompeted their Maritime rivals for a while. Then, in 1921, the Americans established a tariff on imported fish. There was some recovery in the fisheries in the two decades that followed, particularly in the fresh fish market, but this can be read as a bad sign: American buyers were scooping up Atlantic region fresh fish for packing purposes. Processing and canning opportunities were thus being exported to the States, as Maritimers and Newfoundlanders failed to build the forward linkages of canneries and packing houses.

Nova Scotia’s industrial leadership in coal and steel production also began to suffer after the Great War. Demand for steel was down in peacetime; there was a postwar surplus of shipping capacity, and the railroad-building sector on which the industry was founded was no longer crying out for rails and rolling stock. Jobs in the sector fell by 85% between 1919 and 1921.[2] Coal output shrank as a consequence, and was further hit by competition from natural gas and oil as home-heating fuels, and by electricity as a fuel for lighting. Employment levels in Cape Breton’s industrial hubs began a long-term decline, which affected the province and the Atlantic region as a whole.

2. Margaret R. Conrad and James K. Hiller, *Atlantic Canada: A Concise History* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2006), 165.

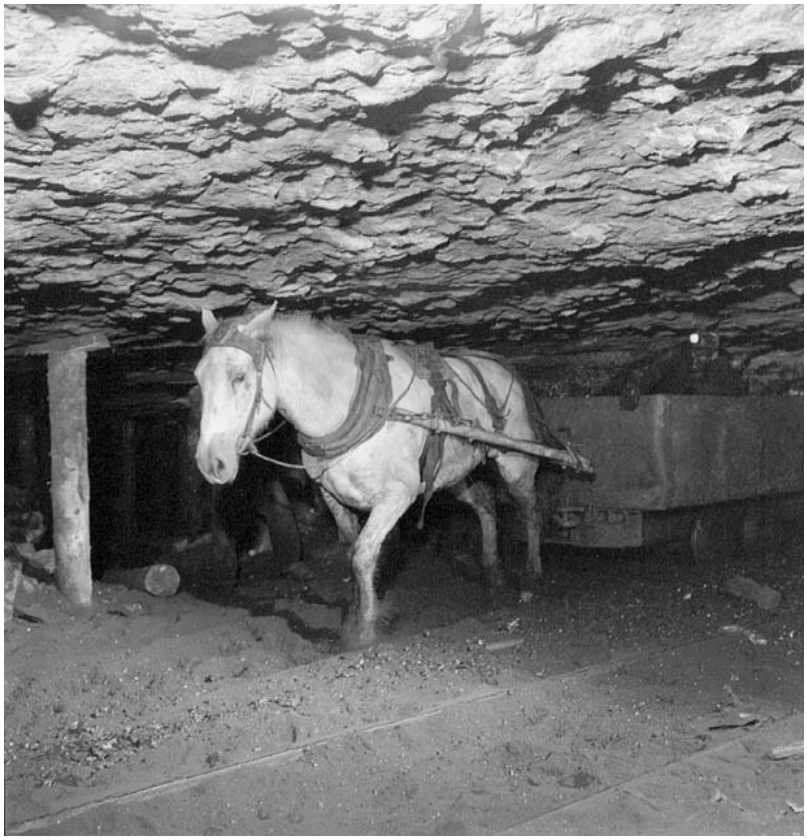


Figure 8.19 Pit pony and miner in a coalmine at New Aberdeen, Nova Scotia, ca. 1946.

A large part of the Atlantic economic crisis was structural. The industrial economy of Nova Scotia was geared toward large corporate consumers during wartime, such as railways and government. This was much closer to a **command-led** than a **demand-led economy**. The same could be said of the fisheries that produced tons of material purchased for processing elsewhere. Local urban markets were very small compared to the many cities of central Canada. Even Halifax, hit hard by the 1917 harbour explosion, slipped out of the list of the top 10 largest cities in 1921. Thus, local demand for manufactured consumer goods was negligible, and shipping costs to central Canadian markets (especially in the face of iniquitous freight rates) made a transition to consumer manufacturing nonviable without subsidy.

Regional sentiment also was bitter at the apparent advantages Ontario and Quebec had horded for themselves. By annexing large chunks of what had been Rupert's Land, the two provinces achieved their current shape and access to a multitude of natural resources. Likewise Manitoba and the two new prairie provinces had been gifted with large chunks of the North West Territories. Nothing similar came the way of the Maritimers who were obliged to work with the resources they had to hand in 1867.

As their options narrowed, so did their strategies for recovery. Workers in Cape Breton waited for mine owners to improve their conditions, for markets to recover, and for governments to intervene. None of those prospects was likely in the 1920s, and especially not likely in the 1930s. Weakened before 1929, the regional economy was crippled by the Depression.

Silver Lining

One bright spot in the region was the silver fox fur industry in Prince Edward Island. Beginning in the 1890s, the raising and processing of captive foxes made fortunes for some in PEI and provided small farmers with the means to survive the Depression. Sales were divided between American urban markets and all of Western Europe. The outbreak of war, however, closed the European option, and wartime austerity took a bite out of North American demand. Subsequent changes in fashions meant that the fox industry never fully recovered.



Figure 8.20 The so-called "silver rush" in PEI had nothing to do with minerals or mining. The fur trade had become part of the farm sector.

A fleeting but vocal **Maritime Rights** movement caught on in the interwar years, but resulted in few concessions from Ottawa. As chance would have it, the prime minister in the earliest and worst years of the Depression was R.B. Bennett, a native of New Brunswick. He may have been more sympathetic to the Maritimes' plight than Liberal leader Mackenzie King, or at least he understood the language of the regional economy. Incremental improvements in Atlantic heavy industry could be seen, but this recovery was from a very deep nadir. The election of King's Liberals in 1935 did little to change matters significantly before the return of war.

Wartime, Boomtime

As was the case elsewhere, the Second World War brought a return to prosperity. Or at least relative prosperity.

Demand for steel and iron increased dramatically. Ship construction grew at a startling rate, and Maritime shipyards struggled to meet the need for supply. Naval vessels and convoy ships were being sent to the bottom of the Atlantic by German submarines and had to be quickly replaced. Even agriculture recovered nicely in this command-led economy, as did the federal government-sponsored efforts to industrialize food processing. However, the coal sector did not recover fully, and Cape Breton remained the site of conflict between miners' and owners' interests, despite federal intervention. The presence of military personnel in the region — in huge numbers — was another economic driver.

Army, air force, and naval demand for services and resources provided rare opportunities for Atlantic Canadians. It also strained relations between locals and troops when they were in competition for basic resources like water and food. Those tensions boiled over in Halifax when Victory in Europe Day (**VE-Day**) celebrations turned into riots. Some of the 18,000 naval personnel stationed in the city looted liquor outlets and smashed store windows while scuffles broke out and civilians took advantage of the confusion to stock up on shoes and clothing.

> Watch this *V.E. Day Riots in Halifax, Nova Scotia* film without narration to see Haligonian crowds behaving badly.

The Rowell-Sirois Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations reported, in 1940, that greater efforts were needed to rebuild and redirect the Maritime economy. The outbreak of war put those recommendations to one side, although there was widespread acknowledgement that the WWII wartime prosperity (as in WWI) would not survive the peace. To avoid a return to desperate times, the federal government introduced a package of initiatives, which would not have been conceivable in the political climate of the 1920s or 1930s. What had changed was this: Keynesian economic principles had found widespread support in Canada. Conventional economic wisdom had argued against deficit spending and relief to unemployed Canadians, but the 1930s and the Second World War obliged political leaders to consider a more activist role for government.

There was hope in the Maritimes that this new enhanced role for Ottawa would include transfer payments, improved social welfare grants, and investment in economic stability, if not growth. The relative position of the region was poor by many measures. Despite a greater density of universities than any other part of Canada, primary and secondary education facilities were poor, school completion was low, and literacy levels were dragging down the national average. There were, for example, believed to be 473 schools on PEI, 405 of which were single-room schoolhouses, and 69 of which were in terrible condition.[3] Unemployment rates in the Post-War era were consistently higher in the Maritimes than in any other region. The outmigration of younger people meant that the demographic aging of the remaining population was accelerating. Infrastructure was underdeveloped in much of the rest of the country, but there were no plans in the Maritimes to change that situation, and certainly no means to do so. In short, per capita incomes, education, opportunities, and security were all grossly uneven across Canada and consistently worst in the East. Measured by virtually any standard of living or quality of life indicator, the Atlantic region fell significantly below national averages.

Addressing Regional Disparities

Two things changed the economic prospects of the region from the mid-1950s (which now included the new province of Newfoundland). The first was the economic boom that Canada as a whole was enjoying in the Post-War era. The Ottawa treasury was in a good position to fund programs that might alleviate the worst problems in the East, and perhaps set some of the economy on an even keel. Regional **equalization** programs appeared first in 1956. An Atlantic Development Board (ADB) followed in 1962 under Diefenbaker and continued under Pearson. It invested $188 million before being subsumed within the Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE) under Pierre

3. Ibid., 187.

Trudeau in 1969. From a Maritimes perspective, Trudeau's initiative started strongly, but it was quickly sucked under the wheels of counter-separatist politics in Quebec. From a high of 51% of DREE's expenditures in 1969-1970, the Atlantic Provinces' share fell to 38% by 1973-1974. Quebec's share rose in the same period from 12 to 39%.[4]

Second, the Atlantic provinces were responding, mustering, and presenting their case more effectively. The Atlantic Provinces Economic Council (APEC), established in 1954, was led by non-partisan, and largely private, individuals (that is, not politicians). The APEC coordinated much of the information and argument behind a more comprehensive and strategic approach to remedying the region's continuing malaise. East Coast politicians followed APEC's lead and mounted what has been described as the "Atlantic Revolution." What changed the most in this regard was the tenor and effectiveness of political lobbying, although economic performance measured by GDP barely budged.

There was, to be sure, new investment in the regional economy. Hydroelectricity projects were the main target of the ADB and DREE grants, including the massive Churchill Falls Dam in Labrador (which opened with much promise but was instantly locked into a money-losing contract with Quebec). The principal problem was that the economic strategy was backward-looking: with the exception of pulp and paper mills, most of the growth took place in 19th century sectors like mining, fishing, agriculture, and lumber. Tourism was the exception, the one newish sector that became increasingly important. There was change as well in the farming sector, which was marked by a trend toward consolidation, as smaller and less financially viable operations were sold to make way for larger and more mechanized properties. Something similar was happening across Newfoundland as "resettlement" initiatives resulted in the depopulation (and effective extinction) of about 300 small and marginal outports between the 1950s and the 1980s.

> Watch this *Townships Moved By Sea* video to see how the resettlement initiatives involved the physical relocation of houses and roughly 30,000 people.

Larger centres were thought more capable of meeting community needs than the small and isolated outports. As well, the shrinkage of the inshore fisheries meant a reorientation toward offshore resources, which were tapped by larger fleets operating out of bigger ports. Similar moves were taking place in Labrador as the Moravian missions consolidated their work with the Inuit. Formal relocation programs ended in the mid-1970s (and there has since been a small but significant reversal of this migration).

Diversification

In the 1960s and 1970s, Nova Scotia enjoyed something like a surge in industrial diversification. French tire manufacturer Michelin set up works in Granton, near New Glasgow, and expanded production in the late 1970s against a backdrop of labour relations controversy. Swedish automobile-maker Volvo opened an assembly plant in Dartmouth, and began production in 1963. This initiative depended heavily on provincial and federal subsidies, which provoked a diplomatic and legal battle

4. Donald J. Savoie, *Pulling Against Gravity: Economic Development in New Brunswick During the McKenna Years* (Montreal: Institute for Research in Public Policy, 2001), 49.

with the United States as a consequence. Nevertheless, Volvo remained a small but significant part of the regional economy until the late 1990s.[5]

Another attempt at secondary manufacturing came in the early 1970s when a "safety sports car" aimed at a specialty market was built in a disused shoe factory in Saint John, New Brunswick. The *Bricklin* suffered from many design and manufacturing problems, and it failed to make the necessary breakthrough into the American market. The plant closed in 1976. The fate of the Bricklin was echoed in several other regional attempts to build manufacturing capacity. These failures drew a great deal of media attention and criticism, but it was the continuing troubles of the coal mining and steel industries that imparted the most instability to the regional economy.

Newfoundland suffered similar bad luck. An oil refinery opened at Come By Chance in 1971 and closed a little over two years later due to bankruptcy, despite heavy federal and provincial subsidies. The province seemed to catch a break in the late 1970s, however, with the discovery of oil in the Hibernia Field, 300 km southeast of St. John's on the Grand Banks. Offshore oil exploration had been underway since the 1960s, but it took two oil shocks in the 1970s to make development economically viable. Production would not come online, though, until 1997. In between, efforts to map the field were underway, one of which ended in disaster. In the early hours of 15 February 1982, a drilling platform — the *Ocean Ranger* — capsized in high seas, resulting in the death of all 84 personnel on board. The findings of a subsequent Royal Commission inquiry into the tragedy were damning as regards personnel training, safety measures, and vessel design. A 20 million dollar legal settlement followed, as did an overhaul of safety practices in the sector. (This event has been the subject of at least two films and a novel, *February*, by St. John's writer Lisa Moore in 2009.) Efforts by Newfoundland Premier Brian Peckford to establish exclusive provincial control over offshore resources failed a 1984 test at the Supreme Court, although some ground was regained the next year in the Atlantic Accord. The Come By Chance refinery reopened two years after, a sign of things to come.

Prince Edward Island's economy diversified in the post-war era, but the gains it made were initially very small. Fox farming collapsed and potato farms dominated the agricultural sector. Although PEI came to lead the potato market in Canada, capturing as much as one-quarter of annual production, this is a high volume and low value crop, exactly the opposite of the fur industry. Reflecting the limited opportunities available in the province, the Islander population failed to grow at a rate comparable to the rest of the country; in fact, it fell from a high point of 109,000 in 1891 to a low of 88,038 in 1931, and recovered slowly through to the late 1960s. Two sectors showed some improvement in the 1950s, and have come to define much of the shape of the PEI economy. The first is the lobster fishery. Lobster meat had to overcome several obstacles to achieve a significant market value, not the least of which was its reputation as poor people's food. Canned lobster was sold in a variety of markets into the interwar era until the shipment of live lobster to major American urban markets elevated it to the status of a luxury food. The economic downturn of the 1930s impacted the lobster fisheries, but the industry recovered in the 1940s with the availability of more regular air and sea shipment, and advances in refrigeration. Starting in the 1960s, the value of lobster output doubled every 10 years; from 1980 to 2000 it doubled every five years.[6]

5. Dimitry Anastakis, "Building a 'New Nova Scotia': State Intervention, the Auto Industry and the Case of Volvo in Canada," *Acadiensis*, 34, no.1 (2004), 3-30.

6. Della Stanley, "The 1960s: The Illusions and Realities of Progress" in *The Atlantic Provinces in Confederation*, eds. E.R. Forbes and D. A. Muise (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991): 421-459.

The other sector to experience revolutionary change in PEI was tourism. Many factors were involved but perhaps the most important and enduring was the success in Japan of Lucy Maud Montgomery's novel *Anne of Green Gables*. Adopted as part of the school curriculum in 1952, the book spawned a globe-straddling tourist industry. An improved car-ferry infrastructure was a further and related advantage in the tourism sector so much so that three new vessels, running from 1969 to 1997, were named the *Lucy Maud Montgomery*, the *Holiday Island*, and *Vacationland*. The fleet was effectively replaced in 1998 by the opening of the Confederation Bridge, connecting PEI to New Brunswick. However, none of these developments did much to alleviate PEI's relative poverty compared to the other provinces of Canada. At the end of the Cold War, the Canadian Air Force abandoned bases on the Island and these facilities were subsequently exploited by a growing aerospace industry which now claims to have captured a quarter of the value of all exports from PEI. Given the low baseline for exports and the prominence of spuds in that equation, this may not yet constitute a full-blown economic transformation.

The Atlantic region as a whole suffered through turmoil and loss in the fisheries. Although Canada in the 1960s and 1970s finally began to define and patrol its national boundaries at sea — some 340 km from shore — the cod fishery was already in trouble. Over-harvesting had been underway since the 1950s, and it was believed that a larger Canadian zone would enable conservationist measures to take hold. Instead, foreign competition was replaced by Canadian over-fishing; Canadians were now using larger and more lethally efficient trawlers. A brief collapse in cod numbers in the mid-1970s was followed by a sharp recovery, leading some authorities and fisheries into overestimating the ability of cod to rebuild its numbers. In 1992 the cod population utterly collapsed. The fishery was closed for what was intended to be two seasons to allow for a recovery, but that turnaround did not occur — and still has not occurred to date.

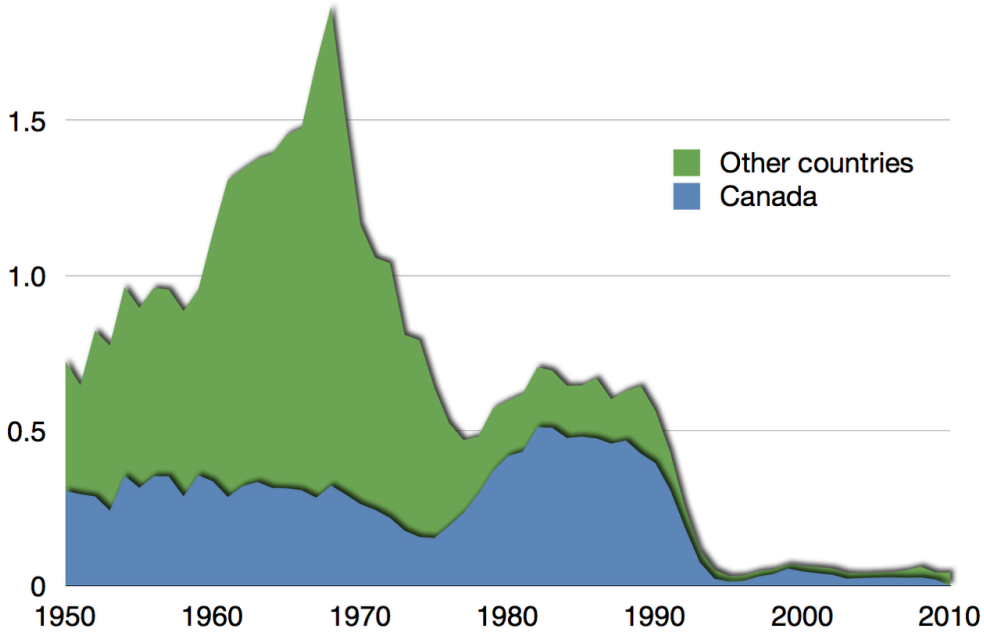


Figure 8.21 Capture of the Atlantic northwest cod stock in million tonnes, with Canadian capture in blue.

The impact on the Newfoundland economy in particular was disastrous. In excess of 35,000 people worked in the fisheries and processing; it was the largest sector in the economy, and the source of much

local culture and identity. The population peaked in 1991 at 586,000; by 2005 more than 80,000 had moved away, many of them heading to the oil patch in Alberta. The cod fisheries crisis and the shift to the crab and shrimp fisheries continues to affect the Atlantic region.

Although the federal government made repeated commitments in the post-WWII era to the idea of regional development, equalization payments, and diversification, its track record has not been very good. An acknowledgement was made in the 1940s that the three Maritime provinces had suffered from discriminatory freight rates and the westward focus of the National Policy. Ottawa began to act on the need to compensate for the disadvantages the region had suffered, and under Diefenbaker (who was, significantly, a Westerner with influential support in the Maritimes), steps were taken to strategically change the situation. Even after the political centre of gravity shifted back to central Canada under Pierre Trudeau, the Liberal ideal of mitigating what were called *regional disparities* enjoyed support. By the 1980s, however, Quebec separatism and increasing signs of trouble in the manufacturing heartland of Ontario changed the rhetoric and reality of regional economic development. Ottawa concluded — prematurely — that the West and the East were rising on a tide of oil revenues and that the federal focus needed to be on Ontario and Quebec. It cannot be said, therefore, that the Atlantic region enjoyed so much as a single generation of sustained support of the measures designed to retool, redirect, and repurpose the four Atlantic provinces' economies.

Key Points

- The Maritime provinces and Newfoundland struggled against external economic factors in the first half of the century, including the loss of markets, technological change, and reorganization of the modern economy.
- Although almost all other provinces directly benefited from the Canadian capture and disbursement of Rupert's Land, the Atlantic provinces did not.
- WWII economic growth did not outlast the war, and demands were made for equalization or transfer payments.
- Outmigration from the region was made easier in the second half of the 20th century, which drained off a workforce and taxbase.
- Active efforts to reposition the Atlantic region's economy and to achieve greater equity in Confederation met with limited successes and some prominent failures (including the Bricklin project).
- Newfoundland's foray into oil production did not begin to produce significant returns until the late 1990s.
- Tourism became an important sector in the region as a whole, but was not large enough to offset major losses in the fisheries.
- Changes in national politics and in the manufacturing heartland of Central Canada in the 1970s and 1980s served to postpone further a coordinated response to Atlantic Canada's economic shortcomings.

Media Attributions

- Codfish, “Newfoundland currency” © Canada Post Corporation, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2256000) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Pit pony and miner in a mine in New Aberdeen © John F. Mailer, National Film Board of Canada. Photothèque, Library and Archives Canada (PA-116676) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Blue fox ranch, Montague, Prince Edward Island, 1913 © Canada. Patent and Copyright Office, Library and Archives Canada (PA-030116) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Time series for collapse of Atlantic northwest cod © Wikipedia user Epipelagic is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

8.14 Economic Nationalism

Doug Owram; Department of History; and University of British Columbia - Okanagan

Relatively speaking, Canada came out of the Second World War in good shape. It was able, over the next few years, to absorb the wartime debt, convert its economy to peacetime production, and set the stage for nearly three decades of prosperity.

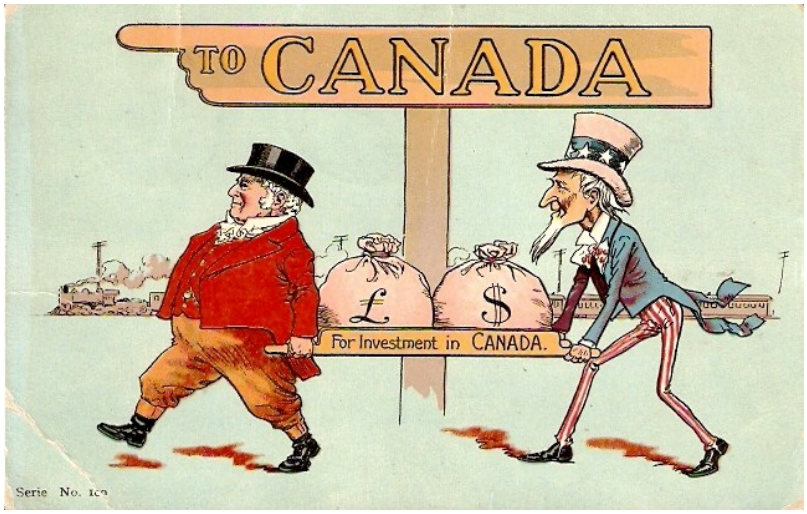


Figure 8.22 In 1907 foreign investment in Canada equalled British and American (direct and indirect) investment. By mid-century the implications of an economy that was largely foreign-owned were a growing concern.

However, there was a problem. Throughout much of its history, Canada sought to maintain political and economic autonomy by balancing the overwhelming influences of its two most influential trading partners and cultural influences, Great Britain and the United States. The so-called North Atlantic triangle prevented Canada from being pulled exclusively into the orbit of either of the much larger powers around it.

By the post-war years, that equilibrium was failing. Britain, already weakened by the First World War, left the Second World War mired in debt and challenged by an obsolete manufacturing base. In contrast, the United States was indisputably the world's greatest economic and military power — the first "**superpower**." By the 1950s, two-thirds of Canada's exports and imports were with the United States. Even more dramatically, more than three quarters of all foreign capital invested in Canada came from south of the border. When such economic dominance was compounded by the influence of Hollywood, American magazines, radio, and the emerging medium of television, many worried — as did Canada's foremost economist, Harold Innis — that we had gone "from colony to nation to colony." Thus, economic policy in these years was inseparable from wider fears about Canadian identity.

Table 8.1 Foreign Long Term Capital invested in Canada (%)[1]

Decade	UK	USA
1926	44%	53%
1945	25%	70%
1955	18%	70%

Over the next 20 years, Canadians wrestled with how to manage a relationship with an ally, economic powerhouse, and dominant neighbour. For all political parties, Canadian nationalism and American influence became a significant and often contentious issue.

Traditionally, it was the Conservative party that had stood as the primary defender of the British connection and opponent of excessive American influence. The pattern seemed to continue when, in 1957, John Diefenbaker defeated the long-reigning Liberal party, to some extent, on the question of undue American influence in the building of a trans-Canada oil pipeline. However, old traditions were hard to maintain in the new world of the American superpower.

For the six years they were in power, the Conservatives tried various strategies. The first approach was both the most traditional and the most unrealistic. The Conservatives sought, in various ways, to strengthen British trade as a means to counter-balance American influence. Diefenbaker talked of diverting 15% of trade to Britain, but he had no idea how to carry it through. Britain's economic clout was no longer anything near that of the United States. Second, the power that Britain retained was increasingly oriented to the European continent — a direction that would eventually lead Britain into the European economic zone. By 1963, the year the Conservatives left office, British trade with Canada was lower in percentage than it had been in 1957.

The second approach to counteracting American influence was to try to develop internal measures that would decrease the American presence. Drawing on John A Macdonald's vision for the west, Diefenbaker called for Canadians to invest in the North. Through programs such as "Roads to Resources," the government sought to create the necessary infrastructure. Moreover, as the North was a territory not a province, the federal government had a freer hand. In 1960 oil and gas regulations sought to limit outside influence. In the end, though, the northern economic strategy remained more vision than substance, and investment patterns were not altered. American multi-nationals still dominated key Canadian sectors like energy. Overall, during these years, American foreign investment in Canada increased by around 30%, whereas British investment in Canada remained stagnant.

When the Liberals returned to power in 1963, they did so in part because of Canadians' unease with Diefenbaker's policies toward America — though more related to defense than trade. The message conveyed during the election campaign by the new Prime Minister Lester Pearson (1897-1972), was to work for better relations with the United States. Everything, therefore, seemed to point to less economic nationalism. Certainly, there were tendencies in that direction, most importantly the 1965 Automotive Products Agreement (known as the **Auto Pact**) that created a formidable North American

1. Data source: Canada. "Domestic Saving and Foreign Investment in Canada." *Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects, Final Report* (Ottawa, ON: Queen's Printer, 1958). Table 18.2, 381.

market for Canadian-made autos and auto parts. The message seemed clear: co-operation created jobs, even if the companies were American controlled.

Nationalism had not disappeared, however. On the right, Diefenbaker remained leader of the opposition, condemning the Liberals for abandoning British ties and selling out to American interests. On the left, the old CCF party had transformed into the more urban and nationalistic New Democratic Party (NDP). American Cold War policy, especially in Vietnam, made the NDP suspicious of the United States' influence over any part of Canadian life. In the increasingly restive mood of the 1960s, therefore, the Liberals were aware they had to watch pressures from nationalism on the left and right.

Not all the pressure was external to the Liberal party. Walter Gordon, Pearson's Finance Minister, had chaired the 1955-1957 Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects that raised questions about foreign ownership. In his first budget, he moved on his concerns by instituting various measures, including a 30% takeover tax on foreigners buying control of a Canadian company. The reaction from business was immediate and harsh, and Gordon had to retreat. Nonetheless, as Finance Minister until 1965, Gordon continued to propose nationalist measures. Even after leaving the cabinet, he was able to use his influence to help establish a new study of foreign investment, led by economist (and NDP co-founder) Mel Watkins.

The findings of Watkin's Task Force on Foreign Ownership and the Structure of Canadian Investment were even more alarmist than Gordon's study a decade earlier. The NDP embraced the Watkins Report (1968) and faced an internal battle as elements within the party, known as the Waffle movement, took an even more radical position in the following year by condemning American imperialism in all its forms. The extreme political rhetoric of the later 1960s and early 1970s kept the issue before the public, while maintaining pressure on the governing Liberals to take at least some action.

In response to both internal and external pressure, the Liberals under Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau took two concrete steps. The first was the Canada Development Corporation (CDC), designed in 1971 to help increase Canadian investment in Canadian companies. The second arrived in 1973 in the form of the Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA), which gave government the power to review and possibly prevent a foreign takeover of a Canadian company.

Although FIRA and the CDC remained on the books until the mid-1980s, the fact is that the high level of concern about foreign investment was already waning. An economic recession in 1973 suddenly made new money more attractive, whatever the source. The NDP expelled the Waffle movement in 1972 and, exhausted by its internal battles, turned increasingly toward a more domestic and less divisive focus. As for the Conservatives, John Diefenbaker had been forced out in 1967, and the party's stance was morphing into a more pro-American one. This shift would culminate in a major free trade agreement with the United States in 1988, crafted by Tory Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

Of course Canadian concern about American dominance will always be a part of our national landscape. However, growing markets in Europe and Asia and growing pools of investment capital at home mean that — viewed from the perspective of the present — the period from the 1950s through to the early 1970s stand out as a particularly volatile era in Canadian economic nationalism.

Key Points

- Canada's post-WWII economic recovery depended largely on transferring export dependence on Britain to the United States.
- It also involved accepting and encouraging American dominance in foreign capital investment.
- Strategies to counter American influence in the Canadian economy included Roads to Resources, tariff arrangements like the Auto Pact, and the establishment of FIRA.
- Ottawa's efforts to secure greater economic sovereignty have largely failed, and the issue has proved divisive even with individual political parties.

Media Attributions

- Foreign Investment in Canada, 1907 is licensed under a Public Domain license

8.15 The Boom Years, the Bust Years

The Canadian economy's dependence on staples created vulnerabilities when it came to the volatile commodity market. Success depended on demand in foreign markets for fish, fur, wood products, paper, grain, etc. A reorientation toward consumer goods in the mid-20th century meant that Canadians themselves could contribute to the stability of their economy by purchasing Canadian-made products. Also, after the Second World War, Canadian products were easy to find in many sectors, although competition from American and, in the 1960s, Japanese manufacturers would arise. The period from the early 1940s into the 1980s is sometimes described by economic historians as the "longest sustained boom in history;" its very length gradually made prosperity seem normal and hard times unthinkable. This was, of course, a delusion.

After 1945, much of the economic action in Canada continued to centre on cities. The major urban areas were becoming metropolitan in their reach as suburbs spread outward into farmland. The rural periphery retreated to make way for more roads, single-detached homes, and automobiles. These bedroom communities were in fact the engines of economic growth for the manufacturing sector. Other resources, however, were being tapped. They included hydro-electricity and mineral wealth, both of which were typically found well beyond city limits and very often in the northern parts of Canadian provinces. The effect was to create new northern centres, greater province-wide integration (Hydro Quebec, with its enormous James Bay dam, is possibly the best example), and more provincial debt to service all of this new infrastructure.

This was, therefore, a time of expanding provincial economies and administrative structures. Just as "nation-building" was a feature of the first 50 years of the Dominion, **province building** became a dominant feature of the political economy after 1950. The pulp and paper industry fed provincial coffers in most parts of the country, while relatively new mining opportunities – copper and molybdenum in BC, potash in Saskatchewan, nickel in Sudbury and Timmins in northern Ontario – reinvented the sector and created an important revenue stream for government. Similarly, uranium-bearing ore was being mined at Great Bear Lake in the NWT, in northern Saskatchewan, and at Elliot Lake and Bancroft in Ontario; it was refined at Port Hope on Lake Ontario where tonnes of ore were required to produce grams of useable uranium. Smelting, a companion industry of the mining sector, was another area of growth in Quebec and Ontario in particular but also in Trail and Kitimat in BC: the former continued as a prominent centre for zinc and lead production, while the latter was a new, purpose-built aluminum smelting town designed along the lines of a **garden city** made viable because of the cheap electricity that was provided by the province's monopoly BC Hydro.

Slight dips in GDP and little spikes in unemployment appeared in the early 1960s. It was only in the 1970s, however, that severe readjustments became necessary. The oil shocks of the 1970s and 1980s (see Section 8.10) signalled the beginning of the end for continuous growth, and ushered in threats to the state's involvement in economic growth.

Exercise: Think like a Historian

In Canada You Get to See the Mall (with apologies to Stompin' Tom Connors)



Figure 8.E1 The prototypical shopping mall, Park Royal opened in 1952 in what was becoming Vancouver's wealthiest suburb. Soon, everyone wanted one.

Historians approach the study of shopping from many angles. It's part of economic history, but it's also rooted in social experience; it's bound up in consumerism (which is, itself, a moving target) and has important ramifications for gender studies. There are significant spatial aspects as well: where do people shop for the many things they might need and how does that impact the function of a city?

In 1952 the first shopping mall in Canada, Park Royal, opened in chichi West Vancouver. Whether a plaza or a full-blown mall consisted of department (or "anchor") stores and many other outlets or just a large grocery store, they always bragged of "plenty of free parking." In colder parts of Canada, malls were typically enclosed so to fend off bad weather. Many of these were designed with all the attractive aesthetic features on the inside, and plain, boring sheet walls on the outside.

The mall was a revolutionary break from the old "high street" model of small and specialized shops including shoe repair, butchers, bakery, pharmacist, and hairdresser. Strip malls followed in the third quarter of the 20th century, some of which have, in the last two decades, attempted to recreate the scale and feel of the old urban or town environments. "Big box stores" arrived around the same time but went in another direction — away from the intimacy of small spaces to vast parking, utilitarian exteriors and interiors, and a mostly impersonal consuming experience.

Look at the shopping environment around where you live. When was most of it built? What is its target market? How does its existence impact the social and economic life of the community? What features dominate? Parking or drive-thru? Attractive exterior or ugly box? What do these features tell you about its historical context?

Key Points

- In the post-WWII years, much of the infrastructure-building activity switched from Ottawa to the provinces, which became more elaborate and sophisticated administrative units.
- The economic boom from 1945 to the 1970s was fed by new, massive projects and by a rising consumer demand in growing suburban areas.

Media Attributions

- Park Royal Shopping Centre, 1952 © Art Jones is licensed under a Public Domain license

8.16 The New World Economic Order

The end of post-war prosperity coincided with unprecedented levels of public indebtedness, and it is difficult to disentangle these processes. The baby boom created demand for housing and schools but also for toys and furniture and a larger family car. The infrastructure to service these needs placed burdens on municipal, provincial, and federal governments that nevertheless became wealthy from development fees, property taxes, and income taxes. As the boomers aged into their late teens, demand increased for more university spaces, leading to the creation of nearly 50 new post-secondary institutions and the expansion of the 18 or so that had existed before 1950. A better educated and more skilled and flexible workforce fed new sectors of the economy while establishing a potential disaster plan should mass unemployment return. A predominantly middle-class economy meant less power in the hands of the nation's trade unions, meaning that the postwar settlement might now be significantly amended by the state and employers.[1] Public budgets, in short, had expanded in an unprecedented manner and with the onset of the OPEC crises, inflation, and stagflation, tax bases fell into decline, and debt levels became increasingly problematic.

Neo-Liberal Economics

These were global changes, and the solutions and models were increasingly found on a global stage. The rise to power of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom led to an end of the postwar settlement there, and to the privatization of assets like state-owned social housing. Her regime included a campaign for small government, the shrinkage of the welfare state, and a return to the sentiment that unemployment was the fault of feckless workers rather than a structural phenomenon. These perspectives derived from a set of ideas known as **neo-liberalism** that came to be known almost instantly as **Thatcherism**. An American version associated with **monetarism** and the **trickle-down effect** was led by President Ronald Reagan and, almost inevitably, was branded **Reaganism**.

Canadian politicians — influenced by British and American political trends — began to make similar noises in Ottawa and in provincial capitals. As unemployment and interest rates moved upwards into double-digits for the first time since the 1930s, voters began looking to austerity-minded regimes. From 1979, the Social Credit party in British Columbia pursued an ideologically-charged Chicago School-inspired program of neo-liberalism under the leadership of William "Bill" Bennett (1932-2015). Ironically, Bennett's father, W. A. C. Bennett, Premier of British Columbia from 1952 to 1972, was a lauded province-builder who had established two new universities, more than a dozen community colleges, countless schools, the first continuous highway from Vancouver to Alberta, a massive hydro-electric generation system, and several publicly-owned corporations and utilities that he nationalized. In the space of less than a decade, the political economy had changed dramatically from growing the state to shrinking government.

1. As regards the expansion of existing universities in the post-war period, a good example can be drawn from the University of Saskatchewan that, in 1950 had about 200 faculty members, and in 1975 roughly 1,000. Peter MacKinnon, *University Leadership and Public Policy in the Twenty-First Century: A President's Perspective* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 17.

In Ottawa this reorientation toward neo-liberalism was led by Conservative Prime Minister Brian Mulroney (b. 1939). Elected in 1984 and faced with a massive $86 billion deficit, the government set about reducing expenditures. Attempts to index Canada pensions and to control unemployment insurance pay-outs were attacked by the provinces and other critics, but Mulroney's government endorsed reducing the size of the welfare state and took steps in that direction as well. In Ottawa and in the provincial capitals, the public sector unions came under attack as governments sought to reduce the size of their payroll. These themes continued into the 21st century. Deregulating the economy, downsizing the state, balancing budgets, reducing taxes, and liberalizing trade were all part of the neo-liberal strategy of the 1980s and 1990s.

Since the end of Reciprocity in 1866, there has always been an element in Canadian business and politics that wished to see an end to tariff barriers between Canada and the United States. Macdonald's government responded to American protectionism with tariffs of their own, and this was a fundamental part of the Conservative Party creed for a century. Liberal governments, by contrast, sought a return to reciprocity with greater zeal. Frustrated by negotiations with the Americans, Wilfrid Laurier's government put free trade on hold until the 1911 election. With an agreement in hand, Laurier went to the polls and was roundly defeated. Even the Americophile Mackenzie-King could not bring free trade back onto the table, although the Ogdensburg Agreement (see Section 6.13) did much to tie the two economies together. The United States emerged from the Second World War as Canada's biggest market and, conversely, Canada was the largest importer of American goods. (This continues to be the case: more than 62% of our exports go to the United States, and 45.5% of our imports come from south of the border.) The trade barriers in place kept branch plants thrumming along, so Liberals saw little need for change. The economic nationalism of the 1960s and 1970s called for more barriers, rather than fewer. Given this history and the context, Prime Minister Mulroney's decision to pursue free trade with his fellow neo-liberal, United States President Reagan, was a major change in direction.

The first Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in 1989 reduced tariff barriers and raised fears of manufacturing jobs moving south of the border. It also raised concerns about the saturation of Canadian media with American television and radio programming. The immediate effects of the FTA are difficult to identify: some 200,000 jobs were lost in manufacturing in the early 1990s, but this may have been due more to a series of economic crises unrelated to the FTA. Canada's cultural industries did not disappear, although some institutions — the CBC, Canadian theatre, and a homegrown film industry — might have done better without free trade. If a line may be drawn at this time (and economic historians are still very much undecided), it would favour the emergent high-tech industries in Canada (which did very well) and not the old heavy manufacturing sector whose decline led to the creation of a **rust belt**. Whatever the short term impacts, the FTA was not rolled back. It was hugely unpopular in the 1988 general election (in which the NDP and the Liberal Party nevertheless split the anti-Conservative vote), and it was unpopular again in the 1993 election that saw Mr. Mulroney's successor, Kim Campbell, defeated (see Sections 12.2 and 12.3). A Liberal government was returned under Jean Chrétien, but there was no reversal in the tariff policy. Mulroney and Campbell had negotiated a successor treaty to the FTA, the **North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)**, which added Mexico to the partnership. Chrétien's commitment to renegotiate (if not tear up) the FTA and NAFTA came to little more than a few amendments, and NAFTA went forward in 1994. The Liberals were once again the party of free trade. Protectionism (the legacy of a century of Conservatives) was now the virtual monopoly of the New Democrats.

The FTA and NAFTA stimulated a cross-border movement of goods, but so too did the dollar. The

Canadian dollar traded poorly against the American dollar through most of the 1980s and 1990s. Allowed to float since the early 1960s (apart from one brief return to fixed rates), the trend was progressively downward until it hit $0.63 in August 1998. Further depths would be plumbed in the early 21st century. A cheap dollar, of course, means that Canadian exports do well, but the cost of imports (which increasingly includes food) does not. Again, it is difficult to isolate the effect of changing currency values from that of the free trade agreements. In the very year that the FTA was signed, the Japanese car manufacturer Toyota opened its first two North American plants, one of which is in Cambridge, Ontario. Within a decade of its first vehicle rolling off the assembly line, the plant produced a million vehicles. The rising cost of importing foreign-made vehicles (caused by the falling dollar) made Canadian manufacturing viable; the FTA made it possible to sell as much as two-thirds of the Cambridge output into the Unites States. Cheaper (and less organized) plant labour also served to make the Toyota operation a success. Yet, while this kind of manufacturing was increasing, industrial production in Canada as a whole was falling.

Deindustrialization

By the mid-1970s, the share of GDP contributed by manufacturing had collapsed from an all-time high in the Second World War to a level comparable to the Depression. The movement of investment and employment out of manufacturing was well underway. Canada's manufacturing share of GDP troughed in 1982 at about 16%. Indexed to 1961 as a base year (=100), relative employment in manufacturing shrank by more than 40 points by the mid-1990s, and by about 50 points in 2004. Part of this decline can be explained by greater automation and a fall in relative prices; part may be explained, as well, by the enlarged share of GDP captured by other sectors, including the **service sector**.[2] Regardless, the move away from an old-style industrial order — a process called **deindustrialization** — was clearly underway.

The electrical products industry in Canada — associated so strongly with household appliances like washing machines, refrigerators, and sound equipment — was already competing badly against American competitors, but even branch plants like General Motors and General Electric faltered when faced with the new competition from abroad. The auto industry in central Canada — along with its sibling plants across the border — sputtered along while Japanese "imports" established more successful, less expensive, and more fuel-efficient products on the market. Shiploads of automobiles began arriving in Canada from Asia and Europe in these years, transforming harbourfronts on the Pacific and Atlantic. Canadian ports were also reorganized in the 1970s and 1980s to handle shipping containers rather than bulk goods. Fewer auto-plant workers and fewer longshoremen (aka: stevedores) were needed, and the same was true for steel producers and machinists.

The industrial revolution with which Canada was launched in the 1860s was retreating in the face of **off-shore production** and **outsourcing**, increased automation of manufacturing, improved oceanic and air transportation of freight, and the reduction of state involvement in the economy as a whole. Falling fertility rates resulted in reduced consumer demand for goods as market saturation points arrived. For

2. Statistics Canada, Ryan Macdonald and John R. Baldwin, "The Canadian Manufacturing Sector: Adapting to Changes," *Economic Analysis (EA) Research Paper Series*, no.2009057e, accessed October 15, 2015 http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/access_acces/alternative_alternatif.action?teng=11f0027m2009057-eng.pdf&tfra=11f0027m2009057-fra.pdf&l=eng&loc=11f0027m2009057-eng.pdf.

example, dishwashers could be found in 26% of Canadian households in 1979, rising to 38% in 1986. Clearly there were opportunities for greater market saturation for that product, but the other key appliances — refrigerators were in nearly 100% of Canadian households from 1976, if not earlier — had reached their ceilings and were being replaced only slowly. At the same time, the oil economy in Canada was becoming stronger, and economic and political power was shifting to what was commonly called the **New West** (see Section 8.10).

A Legacy of Laundry



Figure 8.23 A pre-WWII washing machine produced by Beatty Brothers. Note the wringer – or mangle – in which children's fingers are going to get squished.

The Beatty Brothers firm provides a neat overview of the history of industrialism in Canada since Confederation. Established in Fergus, Ontario in 1874, it initially specialized in farm equipment. (Their first plant was in a building that became known later as the Old Temperance Hall, an interesting overlap with one

of the leading reform movements of the day.) In 1879 they moved to a new purpose-built plant on the Grand River that gave them access to water power. In 1911 they moved again, this time to a steampowered factory that included extensive office space — thus, managerial and clerical transformations were keeping pace with technological change.

At around the same time, Beatty Brothers shifted their focus away from farm implements to barn equipment. This change presumably reflected the end of the pioneering days of the Prairie West and the coincidental expansion of the dairy industry. It was a small step to go from one indoor line of products to domestic needs.

Pioneers in the design and production of mechanical washing machines in the interwar years, the Beatty brand could be found in households throughout Ontario and the rest of Canada. Beatty Brothers benefited from tariff barriers that kept out cheaper American manufactures, but they suffered as those same barriers encouraged the establishment of branch plants north of the border. In the post-WWII era, American producers like General Electric and Westinghouse had greater economies of scale and were able to dominate production and distribution from the 1950s through the 1960s. Beatty Brothers disappeared when it was bought by General Steel Wares (GSW) in 1969 in a wave of consolidations that would see many smaller producers vanish.[3]

Through the 1990s, the Canadian economy continued to adjust to what was clearly becoming a globalized marketplace. The end of the Cold War and the fall of the Iron Curtain opened eastern European markets to the West for the first time since before 1939. Similarly, economic liberalization in the People's Republic of China created new opportunities and witnessed accelerated trade between the Pacific Rim ports. This new development augmented the rise of other "Asian Tiger" economies led by Japan and South Korea. While Canada exports high value service products (like international education) to markets in Asia, it also continues its dependence on traditional commodities by exporting unprocessed (or barely processed) forest products, grain, coal, gas, and oil. In return, Canada imports automobiles from Japan and South Korea and high tech equipment from across southeast Asia. This new economic revolution of the 1990s saw steel mills, coal mines, and auto plants in Ontario and Nova Scotia shuttered. The pattern was repeated across the whole spectrum of manufactured goods, as Canadian shoe, clothing, and textile producers moved production elsewhere or simply went bankrupt.

Key Points

- The end of the economic boom in the 1970s facilitated the growth and popularity of neo-liberal responses to debt, and a strategy of shrinking the public sector.
- Efforts to improve the economy included a new version of reciprocity: the FTA and NAFTA.
- A long term shift out of manufacturing accelerated in the 1980s and 1990s as global competitors entered the Canadian marketplace and competition for capital investment increased.
- Deindustrialization was a narrowing of manufacturing diversity and a shedding of jobs in the secondary sector.

3. A diligently researched history of the company may be found at the "Old Time Trains" page at www.trainweb.org, accessed October 15, 2015, http://www.trainweb.org/oldtimetrains/industrial/history/beatty.htm.

Media Attributions

- Washer, wringer © Canada Science and Technology Museum, Ottawa (1977.0307.001) Used with permission.

8.17 Post-Industrial Canada

A great many Canadians continued to depend on wages and salaries in the industrial/manufacturing sector in the last quarter of the 20th century. Even so, the sector was changing dramatically. Industrialization a century ago required proximity to sources of energy, raw materials, shipping/railway infrastructure, and a source of cheap, skilled labour. The **information age** required different strategies.

High technology industries were drawn to nodes where there was proximity, principally, to workers with extraordinary skills in computer sciences. The founding of software giant Corel in Ottawa in 1985 nearly coincided with the 1984 opening of Research In Motion (RIM) — eventually renamed BlackBerry Limited — in Waterloo, Ontario, which both depended on the dense population of science and engineering graduates from nearby universities. These also were flagships of what was called the **knowledge economy**. The post-secondary sector responded with increased investment in the "mobilization of knowledge" and **commercialization**. Just as Canadian industrialists once looked south to the steel industry of Pennsylvania and the auto industry of Michigan, late 20th century entrepreneurs, cabinet ministers, and local governments wished to emulate the success of California's **Silicon Valley**, pairing entrepreneurial vision with fresh research coming out of the country's leading universities.



Figure 8.24 The enormous success of Corel was manifest in its $20 million sponsorship (and subsequent rebranding) of the NHL Ottawa Senators' new home arena in 1996.

It is probably too soon for historians to judge the contrary currents flowing in the millennial decades. On the one hand, globalization was viewed as a cause of deindustrialization and the loss of 'rustbelt' jobs; at the same time, labour in Asia and engineering skill in India in particular was critical to the rise of the information age. From about 2001, the knowledge economy and the **creative economy** are presented as heirs in a long succession of economic engines. Just as the agricultural revolution of the

18th century made possible, and gave way to, the industrial revolution in the 19th, they were both followed by the commercial and service revolution of the mid-20th century.

To use a well-stretched analogy, this may be making a silk purse from a sow's ear. Do we cheer the arrival of new activities so as to obscure the creaking sound from declining sectors? Without the agricultural revolution, there would not have been the food nor the people to run the industrial revolution; however, the former didn't end with the start of the latter. The agricultural and industrial revolutions had an ongoing co-dependence then and, indeed, to this day. Industrialism provided the systems necessary to mass produce electronic goods, for example, and it also established — in partnership with state capitalism at mid-century and the rise of consumerism — the intellectual means and popular market for high-tech inventions. The extent to which the knowledge economy can lay claim to the "revolutionary" qualities with which it is sometimes associated has yet to be proven.

Vancouver, Then and Now

A striking visual example of the rise of industrialism, and its retreat, can be seen along Vancouver's False Creek. Currently, the site of a significant urban planning experiment, it is an area that has literally been re-formed repeatedly in the city's 130 years.



Figure 8.25 The False Creek mudflats at high tide in 1890, only recently denuded of trees but still a salmon spawning ground and a source of clams.

Despite the name and the historic presence of several feeder ravines, it is not a creek at all but rather a short inlet that once had extensive mudflats at its eastern extremity. Indigenous peoples harvested a range of foods here, including seals. Early Asian settlers grazed cattle and pigs across the marshes. European immigrants made similarly benign use of the flats until the late 1880s and early 1890s when slaughterhouses appeared on its south bank at the outlet of Brewery Creek. Waste from the eponymous breweries joined the dumping of offal and animal scraps into the flats, and residents and the city on the eastern and northern shore began dumping their garbage into the most inland coves. By 1910 high tide marks were littered with all kinds of debris and gore.

The eastern flats were drained and filled in between 1915 and 1917 to create space for new railyards and warehouses. The remaining shoreline west of Main Street (repeatedly threatened with further massive drainage projects) was populated with sawmills and other railyards from the 1880s forward. Huge beehive burners belched sparks and smoke over the city's East End, and a towering gas plant hissed and glowed blue above Chinatown. There was little housing along False Creek before the 1970s, apart from shanty housing — mostly shabby floathouses without plumbing — and some nearby "coolie" housing (high density housing for single, and mostly poor, Chinese men). Sewage poured directly into the eastern part of the inlet, and the whole stank terribly. Shipyards joined metal-bashing and barrel-making industries along the south side of the inlet and grew at an enormous rate during the 1940s with the wartime production of "Liberty Ships." Crossed by three bridges, False Creek was the heart of industrial Vancouver until the need for larger sorting yards pushed the lumber industry to the Fraser River; likewise, the shipyards shut down one after another because they needed bigger slips on which to build a new generation of larger peacetime vessels and a deeper, wider pond into which they could be launched.



Figure 8.26 The Big Smoke. False Creek in 1936, its size reduced by one-third and its waters choked with log-booms.

Incrementally vacated by industrial leaders, the northern portion of False Creek was spanned by two highway viaducts in 1972, with more freeways believed to be on their way. At that point, City Council developed a new vision of the area and, in partnership with the Trudeau government, began to redevelop the southwest side as a combination of street market and modest-density housing with green spaces and pedestrian seawalls. Granville Island Market was one outcome, and townhouses began to stretch eastward from Granville Bridge. Consolidating the remainder of the land represented a challenge that was solved by hosting a **World's Fair** — Expo 86. That opportunity cleared the way for converting the north shore of False Creek from industry to fairground and then to high density tower housing in the space of a decade. More glass towers followed on the eastern shoreline, the southern corner of which was consolidated and bulldozed in order to host the 2010 Winter Olympics and the athletes' village. The dormitories were quickly converted into market housing.



Figure 8.27 The Swiss Pavilion dominates this view of Expo 86.

What was once — well within living memory — a smoky, rat-infested, industrial septic field is now a smart, green, sophisticated urban space. There are very few industries *per se* in the area, except for the return of craft breweries. What has emerged along the shorelines of False Creek is a highly photogenic example of the clean and urbane knowledge/creative economy.

It is easy to lose sight of the fact that the industrial core that gave Vancouver its nickname — "the Big Smoke" — was also lauded in its time. Heavy industry and shipyards were profitable and they provided jobs for thousands of skilled and unskilled workers (including more than 10,000 women during WWII) who lived in the city core, on Fairview Slopes, and in the East End. More than that, these industries were symbols of patriotism in the 1940s and through the Cold War. Mills and factories were as much an indicator of Vancouver's modernity as condo-towers are a manifestation of the city's postmodernity.

Similar reinventions of industrial lands can be seen in every Canadian city. Whether it is the Canadian War Museum (built on the railyard and working-class neighbourhood LeBreton Flats in Hull), the revitalized packinghouse district on the waterfront of Kelowna, or almost any new arena or stadium in the country, these **brownfield projects** re-purpose and, sometimes at enormous cost, rehabilitate industrial spaces for post-industrial use.



Figure 8.28 Myfanwy MacLeod's The Birds dominates a public square in the Olympic Village condo complex in a thoroughly deindustrialized (but hardly natural) False Creek, 2011.

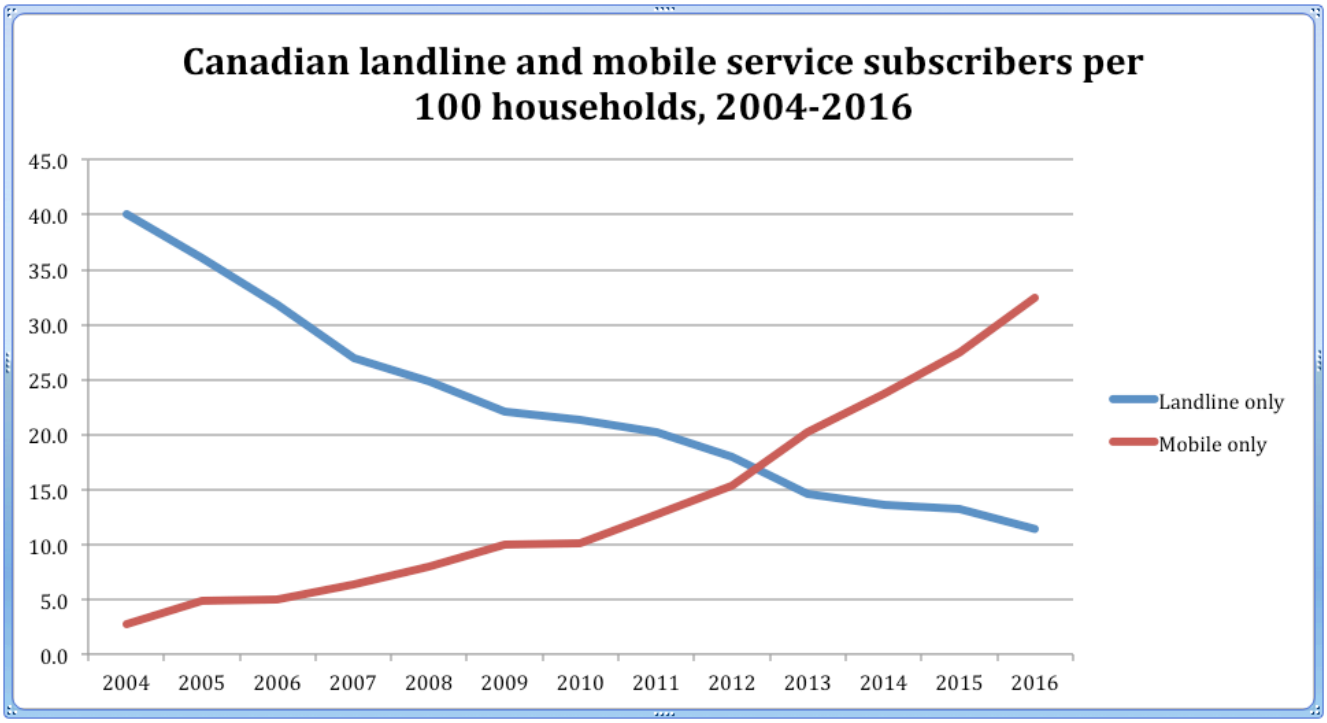
Bubbles

Several factors brought instability to the Canadian economy after 1982. The rising cost of fuels and other components in the auto industry continued to reduce its profits. Startlingly high interest rates (close to 20%) gutted the housing sector and reduced consumer spending in the early 1980s. Growing environmental concerns rocked the pulp and paper and forest industries, resulting in a reduction of output and exports beginning in the 1980s and accelerating through the 1990s. Volatility in the stock market was also a destabilizing factor.

Between the Wall Street Crashes of 1929 and 1987, there were no major stock market disasters, but then they started to come quickly. Black Monday on 19 October, 1987 was followed two years later by the dramatic collapse of the Brazilian stock exchange; in the summer of 1990, a three-year long recession began that was linked to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait; in 1991 Japan's meteoric rise ended with

what was to be a two-decade long downturn; the common European currency, the Euro, experienced a crisis of its own in 1992; five years later, the Asian economic meltdown provoked a global crash of stocks and, in the summer of 1998, the Russian economy seemingly collapsed. The century ended with the **dot-com bubble** crisis that marked the end of a stunning run for Internet investors.

This last aspect of the new post-industrial economy in some ways resembles the frenzy of railway building in the Victorian era. The Internet went from being a modest structure in the 1970s and 1980s to the **World Wide Web** — invented in 1989 and launched in 1991. It is now, along with **cellular** communications, the largest communication infrastructure in existence. At the consumer level, this is a vast and revolutionary change: by 2014 more than 80% of households used a cellphone and landlines were seemingly on the way out.[1] The future of Canada Post is uncertain, and while it is still possible to send a telegram today, many do more for the sake of irony than efficiency.



By 2016 more than 80% of Canadians were using mobile phones of some kind and households fully dependent on landlines were down to about 12%. (Source: Canada, Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission, Communications Monitoring Report, 2018, https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/policymonitoring/2018/cmr1.htm, accessed 7 April 2020.)

Canadians observed these changes unfolding in the 1990s and were uncertain. What potential did the Internet truly present? In 1989 only 10% of Canadian households had home computers; five years later, that figure had more than tripled to 32%; in 2000 it reached 65%. Until the late 1990s, these computers were essentially word processors: household Internet usage was only about 7% in 1997. Suddenly, in 2000, this leapt to 53%, and home computers were in a position to revolutionize domestic, civil, and

1. John Greenwood, "Why Canadians are hanging up on their landline phones", *Financial Post*, June 24, 2014, accessed October 16, 2015, http://business.financialpost.com/fp-tech-desk/why-canadians-are-hanging-up-on-their-landline-phones.

social life.[2] Again, in the mid-1990s, this transformation was being foretold by only a handful of early adopters. Resistance to these trends can be seen in the apparent inability of print media to develop new strategies for survival, which is evident in the closure of many local newspapers. At the same time, automobile sales continued to surge (sustained by sprawling cities), so deindustrialization was far from complete. As was the case in the past, the post-industrial economy did not utterly supersede the service or industrial or agricultural economies.

Key Points

- Information technologies began in the late 1980s, and in the 1990s, began to mobilize more capital and labour, even as traditional manufacturing sectors declined.
- The knowledge and creative economies became increasingly referenced as cleaner and more sophisticated models that would replace dependence on industrial production.
- The Internet age began with a frenzy of investment that produced financial bubbles that inevitably burst.
- Technological change made significant inroads in everyday life in the 1990s, and accelerated at the turn of the century.

Media Attributions

- Corel Centre, 1999 © Wikipedia user Steggall is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- View looking north on Main from 7th Ave. – False Creek before fill, 1890 © H.T. Devine, Vancouver Public Library Historical Photographs (VPL accession no. 36) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Canadian landline and mobile service subscribers per 100 households, 2004-2016 © John Belshaw is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

2. Lance W. Roberts, Rodney A. Clifton, Barry Ferguson, Karen Kampen, and Simon Langlois, *Recent Social Trends in Canada, 1960-2000* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 210.

8.18 Summary



Figure 8.29 Packing crate art and design became an industry in its own right in the early 20th century, whether the produce was Okanagan hard fruit or Nova Scotian lobster meat. [*[Long Description]*]

Two weeks after the start of the Great War the Panama Canal opened. In the 1920s, new grain elevators appeared along the Great Lakes and on Vancouver's waterfront, a sign of the expanding market the canal created for the foremost of Canada's staple exports: wheat. In the same decade, new processes enabled the growth of the pulp and paper industry and hydro-electricity became an industry in its own right. The suburbanization that would characterize the post-WWII years was evident in the 1920s as well, as new houses and early electric appliances took the place of wood and coal stoves and ice-boxes. Ownership of the newest communications innovation — the telephone — leapt from one-in-four households in 1921 to three-in-four by 1931; the electric radio very nearly kept pace. The 1920s also saw an increase in Canadian trading with the United States. One consequence of this trading was the acceleration of the automobile industry and the extension of car-ownership to more and more Canadians. Governments borrowed heavily to build the infrastructure needed to support automobile ownership, and cities started reshaping their streets to facilitate private transportation — often at the expense of public transportation. The 1920s were, in many respects, the defining decade of the 20th century.

It is easier to speak with confidence about events nearly 100 years ago than in the last decade or two. Historians demonstrate a reluctance to weigh in on the recent past because the questions it raises are unsettled, the sources one needs to tap are as yet unavailable, and the measures one might apply not fully clear. This is nowhere more the case than in economic history. What can be said for sure about the Canadian economy since 1920 is that it experienced three major watersheds: the Depression, the post-war boom, and the disruptions associated with the post-industrial era. Some constants remain throughout this period. The Atlantic provinces continue to struggle economically; for them, Confederation has not paid off as well as it might have. Dependence on staple products has not gone away; for every BlackBerry or graphic arts design studio, there is a boxcar of coking coal headed to a ship bound for Japan or China, a pipeline full of oil coursing its way to the American Midwest, and

millions of bushels of grain — or perhaps rapeseed or soy — heading into the Atlantic or Pacific. Consumerism, which appeared first as a hopeful engine of growth, defined the 20th century and continues to assert itself in the 21st. Although blue-collar wages have not continued their mid-century growth, the need for highly technical skills has redirected students into fields where their post-secondary education may secure them middle-class salaries, or at least will acculturate them to middle class values and spending habits.

The role of population in this story is quite possibly the most critical piece. The impact on Canada of two World Wars was serious but nothing as bad as it was on Britain, Germany, the USSR, and Japan. What's more, as a thriving economy in a world of badly ruptured economies, Canada was once again a highly attractive destination for immigrants after 1945. Without the sort of food and fuel shortages that bedeviled other nations, Canadians were well fed and warm. The baby boom, however, rounds this out. Without prior planning and largely by serendipity alone, the baby boom provided a market for family-oriented products like suburban homes and washing machines, bicycles, and station wagon cars. More than that, the timing was ideal in that all but the latest of the baby boomers came into the job market during a rising economy. They could access high school and higher education like no previous generation, and these advantages paid out in better wages and salaries. Working people also could find work from an early age in the resource extraction industries. This created a generation with disposable income and the ability to fire up the consumer economy. Their accumulation of wealth over a lifetime continues to have a rising effect on the Canadian economy, even as they pass those savings onto their heirs. It takes little to imagine what a baby boom born into a *declining* economy would look like. (Indeed, one gets a sense of what might have happened in Canada by looking at baby boomers in the underperforming economy of Great Britain in the 1950s.) Doug Owram has written that, in terms of opportunities, the baby boomers were "born at the right time." As regards the needs of the economy, the same is true.

Key Terms

Auto Pact: The Canada-US Automotive Products Agreement was signed in 1965. It removed tariffs on vehicles and automotive parts traded between Canada and the United States, creating a much more dynamic Canadian automobile sector and improving the trade deficit in that sector.

Bank of Canada: Canada's central bank, introduced by R.B. Bennett, January 1935, as part of a federal government economic intervention.

Battle of Ballantyne Pier: 18 June, 1935; a violent confrontation between striking Vancouver dockyard workers and a force made up of city police, provincial police, and RCMP.

Black Tuesday: 24 October, 1929 (a Tuesday) was the day the New York Stock Exchange crashed, beginning the decade-long Great Depression.

Bloody Sunday: Sunday at daybreak, 19 June, 1938, while the Vancouver Police peacefully evacuated the Art Gallery (occupied by unemployed protesters), the RCMP stormed the Post Office with tear gas and truncheons. A window-smashing campaign followed, and hours later, a demonstration of support took place at an East End park where 10,000 to 15,000 locals gathered. Many were hospitalized that day.

boondoggles: Meaningless routine work, associated with "work relief" for the unemployed, intended to keep them busy but not necessarily productive.

Bretton Woods: Established in July 1944, a system of institutions, principles, and processes by which the international monetary system could be managed. The Bretton Woods system lasted until 1971 when the United States ended the convertibility of the dollar to gold.

brownfield projects: Civic projects that re-purpose (sometimes at enormous cost) or rehabilitate industrial spaces for post-industrial use.

Canadian Wheat Board: Canada's Marketing Board for wheat and barley was introduced by R. B. Bennett in July 1935 as part of a federal government economic intervention.

Capital markets: A combination of institutions that enable the buying and selling of money through instruments like loans and securities.

cellular: A telecommunications system involving a wireless connection. Cellular telephones first became available to the public in the mid-1980s.

centrifugal federalism: Federalism as a dynamic process of decentralization and recentralization, or centrifugal versus centripetal forces.

command-led economy: An economic order in which government is the principal buyer of goods produced, for itself or for distribution. See demand-led economy.

commercialization: In late 20th century post-secondary education, the search for opportunities to develop revenue streams by taking new ideas to market.

consumer durables: Products that last a long time and which consumers do not have to buy often, for example, cars, furniture, and appliances.

Corn Laws (1794-1846): A result of population growth and an economic downturn at the end of the Napoleonic Wars; tariffs and restrictions were imposed on imported grain (to Britain), which increased prices in an attempt to give domestic producers an edge.

creative economy: In the late 20th century, the idea that the economy was shifting away from an industry-dominated model to one in which ideas and creativity would matter more.

deindustrialization: The process of moving away from an old-style industrial order, which typically involves the shuttering of declining industries.

demand-led economy: An economic order in which the free market dominates and in which industries and consumers are the principal buyers of goods, thereby determining what goods will be produced. See command-led economy.

dole: Colloquial term for "relief" or welfare payments.

dot-com bubble: A late 20th, early 21st century investment frenzy based on advances in Internet-based commerce that burst with the collapse of the market in 2000, which crippled growth in the sector for several years.

Dust Bowl: Describes the drought conditions that occurred across the prairies and plains of North America in the 1930s and the concurrent poverty associated with the economic depression.

equalization: Refers to programs and policies geared to redistribution of wealth between provinces to ensure a comparable level of services and quality of life in all parts of Canada.

forward linkages: Other industries are developed or expanded to help to link a product or staple export from the suppliers to the customers, as part of the distribution chain, for example, transportation, grain elevators, and port facilities.

Free Trade Agreement (FTA): Between Canada and the United States; signed in 1988, and brought into effect in 1989, the FTA created a single market for most goods and services.

garden city: A movement among city planners beginning in the late 19th century imposed order on new

communities, including extensive greenspace and boulevards. A garden city is simultaneously modernist and antimodernist.

gold standard: In monetary policy, the linking of a nation's currency to the value of gold, which is also called the *gold exchange standard*. Canada (and Britain) abandoned the gold standard at the start of the First World War, resumed using the system in 1926, and then left it permanently in 1929.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP): The value of all goods produced in a country during a specified period of time.

have-not (provinces): As opposed to "have" provinces, the prosperity of "have-not" provinces is below the average for the country as a whole; equalization payments were designed to address these inconsistencies.

hobo jungles: Homeless men's camps, usually in marginal spaces in cities and towns, proliferated during the 1930s Depression.

information age: A view of the post-industrial economy in which digitized information is the basis of a new economic order.

International Monetary Fund (IMF): Created at Bretton Woods in 1944 to work with the World Bank to reinvigorate post-war economies by achieving currency stability, stimulating international trade, and rescuing national economies in distress.

Keynesian economic principles: Named for the British economist John Maynard Keynes, it broke with orthodox thinking by advocating government spending during downturns so as to stimulate the economy; these principles also encouraged aggressive taxation during times of prosperity to offset recovery-era spending. Resisted and rejected by orthodox economic thinkers and conservatives who deplore the idea of a large, bureaucratic, and interventionist state.

knowledge economy: In the late 20th century, the trade in intellectual property and educational property; the preeminence of technological and other kinds of knowledge and information as economic drivers.

Laurier boom: The period of economic and demographic growth that coincided with the coming to office of the Laurier Liberals in 1896; it concluded in the period 1912-1914.

Maritime Rights: An interwar-era political common front of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia that argued for greater federal support for the regional economy.

Marshall Plan: Also called the *European Recovery Plan* (ERP); an American program giving billions of dollars of aid to rebuild European economies after WWII, in part to restore markets but also to offset the appeal of Communism.

mercantilism: The system of economic relations established between European empires and their colonies; emphasis is on the use of merchants in the home country to establish production in a colony of largely unprocessed goods that would be shipped to the home ports; leaves colonies economically dependent and underdeveloped.

monetarism: In macroeconomics, the theory that the money supply and central bank policies are key to understanding inflation and fluctuations in GDP. By controlling the money supply, monetarists argue, one can contain inflation. One instrument for achieving these goals is to raise interest rates — making money more expensive — and thereby reducing its velocity. Monetarist policies were introduced along with austerity measures in Britain under the Thatcher government from 1979. Similar efforts (without austerity) were attempted in the United States under Ronald Reagan. Both were influential on Canadian fiscal policy.

National Energy Program (NEP): Controversial legislation introduced under Pierre Trudeau's administration in 1980-1985. The thrust of the policy was to secure Canadian oil for Canadian markets in eastern Canada (hitherto dependent on cheaper — but, in the context of the second OPEC shock, insecure

— imported oil). Prices for Albertan oil in Quebec would be lower than in the United States (to which most of Canada's oil was sent), which meant lower profits in the oil patch.

neo-liberalism: An ideological position that favours smaller government, deregulation, freer trade, and lower taxes; and is tied to monetarism.

New West: Term used to describe the Prairie provinces following their move from a monocultural economy based almost entirely on grain production and export to an economy with diverse and more valuable bases.

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA): 1994; trade pact with the United States and Mexico. Expands on the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed in 1988.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): Established by the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 that brought together the Treaty of Brussels nations (Britain, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, and France), Canada, the United States, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Italy, and Portugal as a mutual defense league — an attack on one would be an attack on all.

off-shore production: Manufacturing of goods or parts in another country.

oil patch: Shorthand for Alberta's oil industry, from mining and processing to sales and financing, from the field to the head offices in Calgary and Edmonton.

On-to-Ottawa Trek: Beginning in June 1933, the Relief Camp Workers' Union mobilized the unemployed in British Columbia to abandon the camps and put their issues directly before Prime Minister Bennett, travelling across Canada on railway boxcars. The Trek started in Vancouver but was stopped in Regina and culminated in a riot.

Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC): Established in 1960 as a regulating body for the oil industry's biggest producers, most of which were located in the Middle East and Africa. By 1970 decolonization had advanced so far that emerging countries sought greater control over the value of their oil exports. OPEC responded by setting higher prices, which triggered the first "oil shock" of the decade.

outsourcing: The export of jobs; part of the process of deindustrialization.

post-war settlement: A suite of agreements between employers, unionized workers, and the state in 1946; allowed for "responsible" labour activity while prohibiting excessive militance; committed employers and the state to recognizing unions and supporting the checkoff of union dues. See Rand Formula.

Privy Council Order PC 1003 (1944): Allowed unions for the first time to engage in widespread organization and to bargain collectively for job contracts.

province building: The strategy pursued by some provinces to become more substantial players in their jurisdictions by investing in economic expansion and engaging in a growing number of social programs. Associated with the post-WWII period.

Rand Formula (1946): Based on a landmark legal ruling by Mr. Justice Ivan C. Rand, the Rand Formula provided unions with a pathway to gain legitimacy and long-term stability if, but only if, they agreed to conduct themselves "responsibly."

Reaganism: Also Reaganomics; associated with the neo-liberal (also neo-conservative) goal of reducing the size of government, expenditures of government, and size of personal and capital gains taxes; tied, as well, to monetarism.

recession: Generally a down-cycle in economics characterized by price inflation, rising unemployment, industrial failures, and lower household income.

Regina Riot: 1st of July 1935, at the conclusion of the On-to-Ottawa Trek, a rally called by the Relief

Camp Workers' Union in Regina's Market Square culminated in a confrontation between the Trekkers and their supporters and the RCMP.

relief camps: The federal government's response to the massing of unemployed single men in Vancouver early in the 1930s Depression; in 1932, a nationwide system of generally quite isolated camps run by the Department of National Defense that became hotbeds of radical opposition to government inaction on the economic crisis.

reparations: At the end of the First World War, Germany accepted responsibility for acts of aggression leading to the conflict; the Treaty of Versailles (1919) ordered Germany to make extensive payments as a consequence. Both the idea of war guilt and reparations became a contentious issue in Germany; the country's inability to pay the enormous reparations fees led to severe international economic instability, particularly when Germany sharply devalued its own currency to pay the debts more easily.

rust belt: Former heavy manufacturing regions that have experienced deindustrialization.

service sectors: Those parts of the economy that support the financing, governing, feeding, administering, training, and health of the rest of the economy and the population. Examples include government bureaucracy, education, restaurants, police, and financial services. Also called the "tertiary sector," as distinct from the primary (resource extraction) and secondary (processing and manufacturing) sectors.

Silicon Valley: Term used to describe the concentration of high-technology industries in the Bay Area of California, particularly after the 1970s.

stagflation: Stagnant economic growth coupled with persistently high rates of inflation.

staple economy: The staples theory argues that an economy dominated by valuable and traditional commodities will be shaped — in terms of the larger economy, the polity, and the society — by the needs and nature of the primary staple(s). Also a model for understanding the political economy of a country in which staples are fundamental to the export economy. An approach developed by historians Harold Innis and W. A. Mackintosh.

superpower: A leading economic and military power with a nuclear arsenal; a cold war era term applied mainly to the USSR and the United States.

Thatcherism: Simultaneously the approach taken by and leadership style of British Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and the array of anti-trade union, pro-free market policies and economic philosophies that were popular in the Conservative Party from the 1970s through the 1980s; contains some elements of neo-liberalism and what has been described as Reaganomics.

trickle-down effect: In neo-liberal economics, particularly Reaganomics, the idea that reducing taxes on the wealthy and corporations will result in their increased profits "trickling down" to lower socio-economic classes. Referred to also as "free market economics" and "voodoo economics."

VE-Day: Victory in Europe Day, 7 May 1945; marked the end of WWII in Europe.

western alienation: The growing sense from the mid-20th century of the four western provinces that Canadian political machinery and culture favoured Ontario and Quebec and that federal economic policies were devised to favour central Canada over the West.

"wildcat" strikes: Labour disputes launched by workers without the authorization or permission of the union leadership; an unofficial strike that does not follow the established procedures for taking industrial action.

World Bank: Created at Bretton Woods in 1944 to work with the International Monetary Fund to reinvigorate post-war economies. Dominated by the United States, it was used also as an instrument to reduce communist influence in western Europe.

World's Fair: Alternatively, World Exposition, hence "Expo"; first organized in the mid-19th century to

showcase industrial and technological advances; the first "Expo" was hosted in Canada in 1967 at Montreal, by which time the fairs were more about national showcases and culture; Canada's only other Expo was held in Vancouver in 1986.

World Wide Web: A network of information connected via the Internet; emerged in the late 1980s.

Short Answer Exercises

1. What is the *staples economy* and why does it matter in Canadian history?
2. What are *capital markets* and how were they organized in Canada in the 19th and 20th centuries?
3. What causes economic upturns and downturns? What were the most significant peaks and troughs in Canadian history to the 1940s?
4. In what ways was the "New Economy" a continuation of the old economic order in Canada?
5. What major changes occurred in shipping, fisheries, and fossil fuel production?
6. What were the major differences between the economy before and after WWII?
7. What was the Post-War Settlement and how did it impact the Canadian economy?
8. To what extent was 20th century Canada not one economy but several?
9. What is *neo-liberal* or *neo-conservative economics*? Why did it arise when it did in the late 20th century?
10. What indicators suggest that we have left the industrial age behind?

Suggested Readings

Dawson, Michael. "The Second World War and the Consolidation of the British Columbia Tourist Industry, 1939-50." In *Selling British Columbia* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 2004). 116-152.

Forbes, Ernest. "Consolidating Disparity: The Maritimes and the Industrialization of Canada during the Second World War." *Acadiensis* 15, no. 2 (1986): 3-27.

McInnis, Peter S. "Planning Prosperity: The Debate on Postwar Canada." In *Harnessing Labour Confrontation: Shaping the Postwar Settlement in Canada, 1943-1950* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2002). 47-85.

Marchildon, Gregory P. "The Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration: Climate Crisis and Federal–Provincial Relations during the Great Depression." *Canadian Historical Review* 90, no. 2 (2009): 275-301.

Srigley, Katrina. "Stories of Strife?: Remembering the Great Depression." *Oral History Forum/ d'histoire orale* 29, Special Issue (2009): 1-20

Wright, Miriam. "'Building the Great Lucrative Fishing Industry': Aboriginal Gillnet Fishers and Protests over Salmon Fishery Regulations for the Nass and Skeena Rivers, 1950s-1960s." *Labour/Le Travail* 61 (2008): 99-130.

Long Descriptions

Figure 8.29 long description: Packaging for Union Brand lobster, packed in Nova Scotia, Canada, by South Shore Packing Co. in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The label depicts a detailed lobster. Beside it is the logo for South Shore Packing Co., which has the name of the company on a ribbon surrounding a portrait of a woman. The woman is dressed in a toga and bears a shield that depicts the Union Jack. She wears a Spartan helmet with a plume on top and hoists a red, white, and blue flag high. [Return to Figure 8.29]

Chapter 9. Cold War Canada, 1945-1991

9.1 Introduction



Figure 9.1 The high-street grocery store – like this one on Ottawa's Rideau Street in the late 1950s – would face competition from suburban shopping malls in the Cold War years.

The period from 1945 to 1991 was one of dramatic technological and social change. Much of the material texture of life had so changed from the pre-war era that it is difficult to imagine that the two eras were somehow related. The shape of cities, the availability of affordable clothes, the appearance of new household appliances, the explosion of automobilism, and crucial developments in the area of media and entertainment all created a shockingly new version of the modern world.

While there were massive watersheds, however, there was also continuity. Of these, William Lyon Mackenzie King was only the most obvious. Even after King's retirement from politics, his immediate successors were drawn from the pool of politicians who were born in the late 19th century and could remember World War I almost as clearly as World War II. That connection to the Edwardian — let alone the Victorian — era was, however, receding behind decades of social and economic trauma.

Demographically, the Canada that was emerging after 1945 was distinct from what went before. The young couples who were rushing to marry and restore what they regarded as "normalcy" after the Depression and World War II were mostly products of the interwar years and were glad to put all that behind. Their children — that generation born as early as the late 1930s but especially after VE Day and in rising numbers to the late 1950s — were the baby boomers whose very existence transformed the economy. Rising fertility rates led to investment in maternity wards; rising infant numbers to more children's clothes and toy factories; rising child numbers to more schools and skating rinks. The arrival of a generation of adolescents called for vastly more high schools and new ideas about consumerism and music. And by the time the baby boomers were in their late teens and twenties, by the time they were entering universities, the workforce, and the electorate, they were a democratic tidal wave. This was a generation that was welcomed in the context of Canadians' appetite for greater normalcy in

domestic relations. They were also an asset in the new consumer-led economy. The main legacy of the baby boomers, however, would be structural challenges to those underlying postwar values.

There was evidence of dissatisfaction, new ideas, and experiments in many aspects of Canadian life. Chapter 10 considers elements of modernity as it evolved from the early 20th century through the postwar years. This chapter, however, focuses more specifically on the links between social, economic, and political changes that took place in the **Cold War** years. It begins with a survey of the events leading to the amalgamation of the two Dominions and a consideration of the experience of the North as the Cold War era took root.

It has been customary to think of the 1960s as a turning point that toppled old social and cultural values, and there are elements of truth to that. What an overview of these years most clearly demonstrates, however, is the continuing struggle between ideals like the liberal-democratic order, the interventionist state, the rights of the individual versus collective identities, and the continuing vigour of conservative social and economic philosophies. Many of these themes were picked up internationally, especially in the English-speaking world. The internationalization of media was a critical element in that synchronizing process as was the internationalization of markets. In Canada, discussions over what constituted “progress” were the backdrop for a return to the pre-WWI debate over what constituted the idea of “Canada.” As it became increasingly clear that Quebec’s visions of the future of Canada were different from those of English Canada, the confederation skated close to the edge of disintegration from the 1960s to the 1990s.



Figure 9.2 No nukes is good nukes: a mothballed Bomarc missile on display at the Canada Aviation Museum, Ottawa in 2006.

Every debate about family, prosperity, unemployment, sexuality, entertainment, and technological developments in these years took place in a unique historical context: the Cold War. After 1953 especially, the fear of **mutually assured destruction (MAD)** amplified fears in the Western world of the threat posed to its particular social and economic world by the Soviet Union and the expanding reach of communist regimes. A polarized world populated every conversation. What happened in suburbia, factories, the bedroom, and the classroom had implications for success or failure in the face of what was either just an alternative ideology or, as United States President Ronald Reagan provocatively called it, the “evil empire.”

Learning Objectives

- Describe the idea and experience of the Cold War and how it affected Canada and its regions.
- Identify the main features of Newfoundland's economy and society and the factors that led to its joining Confederation in 1949.
- Assess the ways in which Canada's international role changed from 1939 to 1990.
- Account for changes in Canada's political culture, including the rise of human rights.
- Consider the changes in Canada's relationship with the United States.
- Outline the forces behind the *Grand Noirceur* and the Quiet Revolution.
- Account for the popularity and the level of success achieved by Quebec's separatist movements.
- Describe the proposed constitutional changes of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s and the extent to which they succeeded and failed.
- Expand on the social and economic changes in Canada's cities and in the countryside after 1945.
- Discuss the cultural changes taking place after 1945 and especially in the 1960s and 1970s.

Media Attributions

- IGA on Rideau Street, 1950s © Unknown. Source has been removed is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license

9.2 One Dominion

What constitutes a nation's history? Canada is a combination of parts, some of which had very little to do with one another during the modern era, not to mention the colonial period. Does adding them together create a quilt of histories or a common heritage of historical experiences? To take one example, New Brunswick was once part of Nova Scotia (and, before that, both were mostly Acadia). Does its history before 1783 belong to Nova Scotia, and do those "Nova Scotians" who overnight became "New Brunswickers" continue to have a stake in Nova Scotia's history? Ought New Brunswickers to think of the larger region before 1783 as part of their historic heritage? Might Nova Scotians think of New Brunswick since 1783 as a continuation of a Nova Scotian story?

Such questions seem abstract, but in the building of a national consciousness through historic awareness they are very practical and real. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the history of another Atlantic colony.

Newfoundland's Crisis

The oldest area of European economic activity in North America, the site of the longest continuous commercial link between North America and Europe, Newfoundland has a colonial history that follows a trajectory unlike any other major settlement on this side of the Atlantic. Newfoundland's Indigenous population was mostly eradicated by the 1830s (a Mi'kmaq presence remained on the South coast despite the disappearance of the Beothuk); European settlement proceeded slowly; there was almost no agricultural frontier; and the economy remained tied to a seasonal round of fishing, sealing, forestry, and shipbuilding that remained largely unchanged from the 18th century into the 20th.



Figure 9.3 The 1920 Newfoundland $2 bill features iron ore miners (presumably on Belle Isle) and a caribou, but no prominent politicians or royalty.

There are ways of looking at this that suggest a slow-to-modernize, backward-looking society and economy. Certainly Newfoundland (and Labrador even more so) moved to a different historical rhythm

than the rest of North America. Sectarian rivalries between Catholic and Protestant communities persisted, while they declined in Canada. The size and scope of government was so limited that Labrador communities were essentially left to the missionaries to administer, well into the 20th century. The mainland annex mattered so little to St. John's that the island Dominion of Newfoundland attempted repeatedly and without success to sell it to Canada. Corruption in government was thought to be endemic, and the ejection of the Liberal-Reformers Party under the leadership of Sir Richard Squires (1880-1940) was a violent affair that took Responsible Government down with it. The Dominion of Newfoundland receded from view as a British-appointed Commission of Government restored, in every way that mattered, the old colonial order from 1934 until its union with Canada in 1949. Newfoundland before 1949 was pauperized, locked in the 19th century, riven with religious divisions and spite, and then stripped of its hard-won autonomy as an independent member of the Imperial order.

This is only one way of looking at the situation. Another draws attention to the accomplishments of a small population in an inhospitable environment. The sea was the nation's larder, which Newfoundlanders exploited in a great variety of ways. The rise of the whaling industry, for example, was Newfoundland's entry to the lubricant and fuel oil industry, a theme subsequently rejoined with off-shore oil. Sealers adapted to more versatile fleets, and the fisheries repeatedly shifted its focus with changes in market and environmental conditions. Hydroelectric development began in the 1880s; in the 1920s, the pulp and paper plant at Corner Brook and a smelting operation at Buchans were being fed by a hydro station on Deer Lake. Efforts were made to launch a Newfoundland railway and to thereby open up agricultural, mineral, and forestry opportunities in the northern interior of the Dominion, a scheme that echoed Macdonald's National Policy. Government became enlarged as a consequence, though its tax base remained precarious and subject to the vicissitudes of the commodity market in the Atlantic Rim. Sectarian division was, it is true, a fact of life in Newfoundland — but it was, too, in Toronto (called in the 1920s the "Belfast of Canada").[1] Party loyalties largely reflected denominational loyalties (as they did in much of Canada), although class lines were also important at the polls. There was widespread government corruption, but one cannot look at the Squires bribery case without recalling the Pacific Scandal or, more contemporaneously, the support of the Ku Klux Klan by Saskatchewan Conservative Premier James Anderson (1878-1946), or Alberta UFA Premier John Brownlee's (1883-1961) career-ending sexual relationship in 1934 with a young staffer in the Attorney-General's office. If immorality or unethical behaviour on the part of public figures was cause to relegate a province to colonial status, there would be hardly anything left of Canada by the end of the 1930s.

Giving up Responsible Government was a setback for democracy but it was also a prudent move in a period of political and economic turmoil. It was a tough decision to make but it was made by the legislature itself in 1934. The new PM, Frederick Alderdice (1872-1936) of the United Newfoundland Party, thus oversaw his own redundancy and thereby gave the island Dominion a respite from contentious politics. The Commission of Government piloted Newfoundland through the rest of the Depression, into and out of World War II, and to the beachhead of Confederation in 1949.

1. On this topic, see Mark McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), and William J. Smyth, *Toronto, the Belfast of Canada: The Orange Order and the Shaping of Municipal Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).

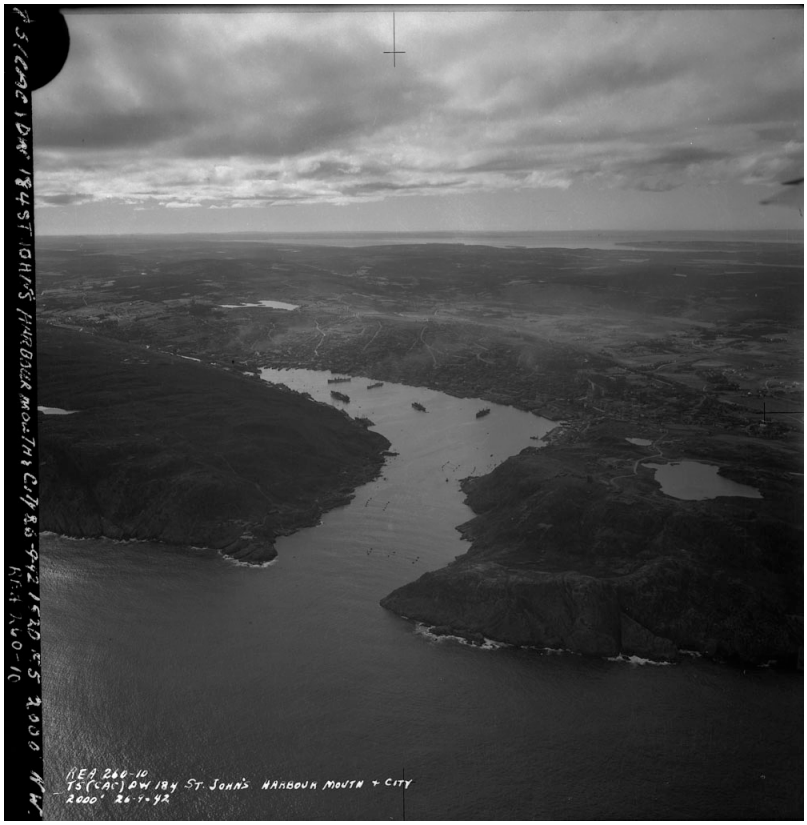


Figure 9.4 Battleships and cruisers cluster in St. John's Harbour in September 1942.

From Commission to Confederation

If there is a recurrent theme in Newfoundland's political history, it may be unfounded optimism. The promises made by incoming governments in the first half of the 20th century seem to repeatedly promote a sense of hope among a population whose economic world was all too often unforgiving. Once disappointed, the electorate could be unforgiving in return, as Prime Minister Squires discovered. The Commission of Government realized this truth, too, in the late 1930s. The loss of responsible and autonomous government was a blow to the morale of Newfoundlanders and, whatever good the Commission accomplished — and it did do much to improve the administrative and educational environment in the former Dominion — it was confounded in its efforts by the economy. This changed almost instantly in 1939 with the outbreak of war.

Newfoundland, the easternmost point in North America, was immediately of strategic importance. Convoys of supplies from Canada and the United States were necessary to sustain the British war effort, and these had to be protected from German air and sea attacks. The investment in military infrastructure stimulated the Newfoundland economy in ways that would have been unimaginable only months before. It is reckoned that 20,000 jobs were created in construction and related jobs in 1942, as the United States entered the war and poured millions into forward bases on the island and in Labrador. It was on the mainland that change sped ahead most rapidly: Labradorians were not being ushered into a modern economy exemplified by automobiles and small factories; instead, they were suddenly confronting military airbases where thousands of men and women worked with precision tools on

machinery that was delivered out of the sky. Democracy had not before this time reached the mainland of the old Dominion, and its people had been pretty much left to their own devices. The Moravian missions and the Hudson's Bay Company between them had governed the region at the behest of St. John's. With the war underway, both Canadian and Newfoundlander influences grew in Labrador.



Figure 9.5 A British Digby Mark I aircraft is towed out of the sea at Dover, Newfoundland, in the winter of 1942.

One of the conditions of the Commission of Government was that Responsible Government would return as soon as Newfoundlanders wanted it. This was a vague assurance, not least because there was no clarity around how popular desire for the old constitution might be measured. There was no legislative assembly, so elected officials could not force the issue. The British administration had its own agenda: it wished to see Newfoundland independent of imperial oversight and, moreover, it was anxious to avoid a return to the bad old days of rolling financial crises. Britain had bailed out Newfoundland repeatedly and now felt the need to back out gracefully from that commitment.

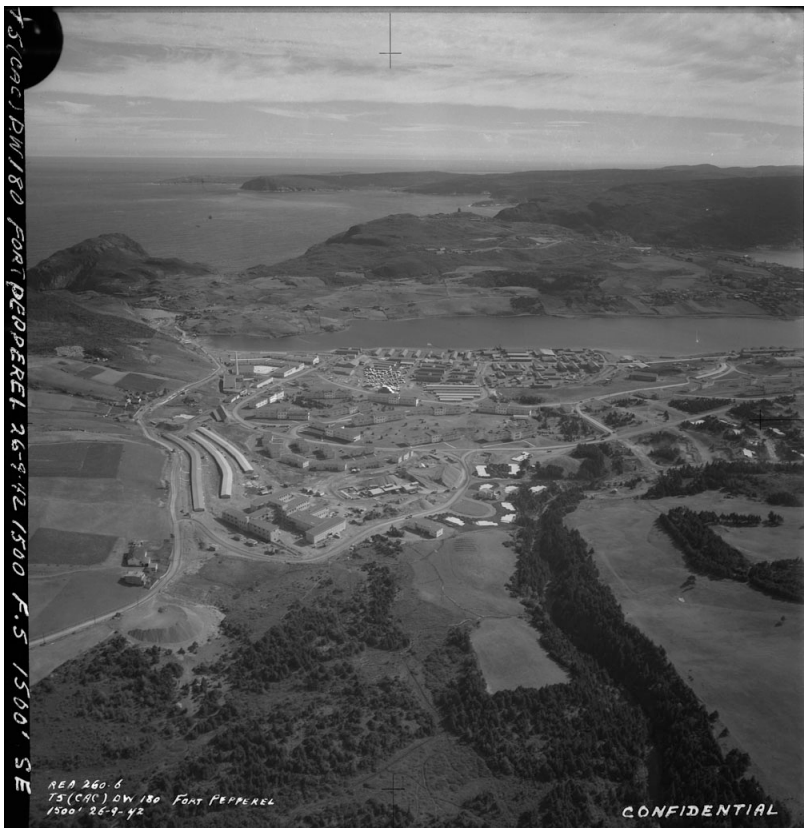


Figure 9.6 Building the massive American Fort Pepperell provided jobs to hundreds of Newfoundlanders and confirmed a United States presence in the former Dominion that drew it into the orbit of Washington.

Timing was critical. By the middle of World War II, there was trans-Atlantic planning underway for a postwar economy. The aftermath of WWI had been marked by trade depression and spikes in unemployment in Canada and Britain; Westminster anticipated that war's end would see American, Canadian, and British investment in Newfoundland quickly come to an end, and the former Dominion would be pitched into poverty once more. Echoing fears that have been raised regarding the fate of every former British colony in North America since the 1860s, there was concern that the strong American influence in the region and the booming American economy might reorient St. John's toward Washington rather than Westminster (let alone Ottawa). Clearly, annexation with Canada was a preferable outcome and, for once, Canadians seemed keenly interested.

Feeling in Newfoundland and Labrador was conflicted. While, historically, Newfoundlanders had viewed Canadians with suspicion and even some contempt, wartime contact had softened that view. There were some who wished to see a return to independent Dominion status — the Responsible Government option — and there was a significant number who preferred to see the Commission of Government continue. What all sides feared most was a return to the inequities and hardships of the pre-Commission days. The British administration sampled opinion and empowered the local population to craft their own constitutional future through a national Convention, which met from late 1946 to early 1948. The expectation was that voters would be offered up a referendum in which Confederation would be a leading option. While there was a demonstrable appetite for union with Canada during the Convention meetings, the delegates voted in favour of a two-choice referendum: Commission of

Government versus Responsible Government. Horrified, the British brushed aside the local process and inserted Confederation on the ballot. The outcome was at first inconclusive: on 3 June 1948, the most popular option was Responsible Government with nearly 45% of the vote, followed by Confederation with 41% and the remaining fraction going to the Commission. A second ballot was held a month later. The Commission option was removed from the ballot and Confederation pulled ahead, but with only 52.3% of the vote.

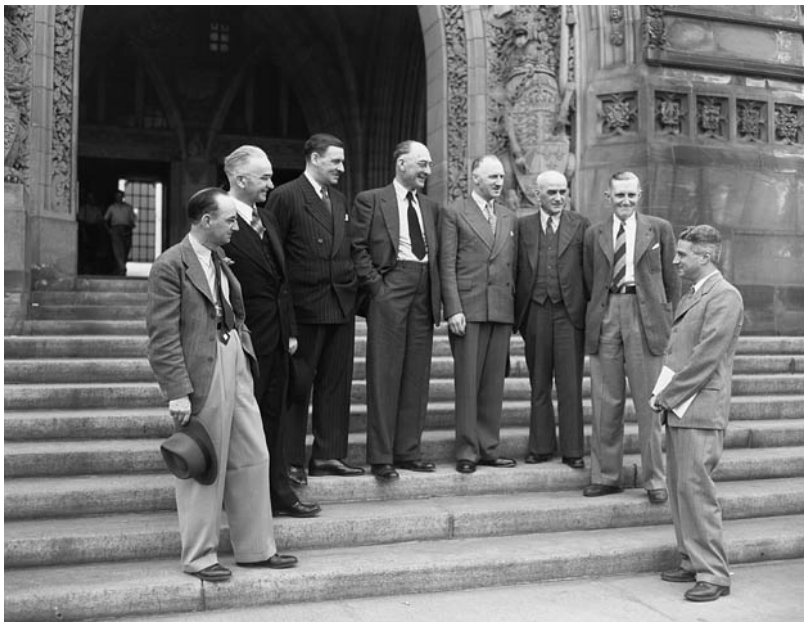


Figure 9.7 The delegation that negotiated Newfoundland's annexation to Canada. Joey Smallwood stands on the far left, hat in hand.

This was a highly divisive process. The British were seen to be moving the goalposts as regards the Convention's mandate. The more heavily populated constituencies of the Avalon Peninsula went for Responsible Government, while the sparsely populated rural and Labrador communities supported Confederation. The Orange Lodge — sensing that the winds of loyalism were blowing toward Ottawa — accused the Catholic clergy of stirring up anti-Confederation sentiment. For their part, Catholic voters feared that union with Canada would result in the loss of their separate schools; indeed, Canada's track record on this issue was atrocious. Joey Smallwood (1900-1991) led the pro-Confederation movement and pulled together a curious coalition. A former union organizer with the politically active (and typically anti-Catholic) Fishermen's Protective Union, he worked mostly as a journalist, failed as a Depression-era politician, and — like many populist figures of his time — moved into radio. As a delegate at the Convention, he pushed the Canadian option and decried Responsible Government as an elitist scheme that would see poverty continue unchecked. Thus, the vote was coloured along the fracture lines of class, sectarianism, and rural versus urban.

Smallwood subsequently became the leader of the Liberal Party in Newfoundland and, as the new province of Newfoundland entered Confederation in 1949, he became its first premier. This was an office he would hold for nearly 23 consecutive years. As a writer and a public personality, he crafted much of his own legend over time and into retirement, describing himself as the "last living Father of Confederation." Newfoundlanders were divided on the Smallwood legacy, particularly as it became more and more apparent that joining the mainland Dominion was no guarantee of prosperity. There

remained a strong sentiment favouring Newfoundland independence and this was very slow to dissipate, not that it ever has done so entirely.



Figure 9.8 Prime Minister St. Laurent begins the process of carving Newfoundland's coat of arms into the arch of the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa.

Key Points

- Newfoundland's special relationship with Britain preserved a political economy that was more oriented to the Atlantic than to the rest of North America.
- Economically vulnerable, Newfoundland and Labrador did not modernize much before the 1940s and World War II.
- In 1934, the political and economic situation in the Dominion was so bleak that the government voted itself out of existence and back into colonial status.
- The war led to significant improvements in the economy and a change in attitudes towards the mainland. A referendum campaign concluded with a bare majority of Newfoundlanders preferring Confederation over independence and multilateral economic bonds.

Media Attributions

- Newfoundland Two-Dollar Bill is licensed under a Public Domain license
- St. John's, Newfoundland, 1942 © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 4164991) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Robbie Sproule Pull the Digby from the sea, 1942 © Robbie Sproule is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license

- Fort Pepperrell, St. John's, Newfoundland, 1942 © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 4164988) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Delegation negotiating the union of Newfoundland with Canada, 1947 © George Hunter, National Film Board of Canada, National Archives of Canada (PA-128076) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Newfoundland Confederation ceremonies, Prime Minister St. Laurent initiates the work of carving Newfoundland's arms © National Film Board/Library and Archives Canada (C-006255) is licensed under a Public Domain license

9.3 The North: Economy and Territory

Kelly Black; Department of History; and Vancouver Island University

In Canadian history, the concept of the North — What is it? Where is it? What does it mean? — has been a contested and debated subject. At various times during Canada's past, the geographic location of the North shifted as Canada acquired, surveyed, and mapped new territory. If we ask, "Where is the North?" we may think of the provincial north (Fort St. John, British Columbia; Timmins, Ontario; northern Quebec; Labrador), the territorial north (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut), or any land north of the 60th parallel.



Figure 9.9 The line between the north and the North is generally agreed to be the 60th parallel.

Whichever location comes to mind, all are home to a diversity of Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples have made these places their home since time immemorial, and each of these peoples has specific territories and traditions. The North has also been central to the creation of particular narratives of Canadian identity. Historian Shelagh Grant has written that most southern Canadians "view the Arctic in terms of southern impact, such as the effect of weather patterns, the potential of untapped resource wealth, or simply national pride in a unique,

majestic landscape."[1] Just as the North moulds the nation, the nation fashions the North. The history of the North in Canada has been shaped by changing boundaries, changing priorities, and the development of a national, northward-looking imagination.

Canada First

The creation of the Dominion of Canada in 1867 caused some English Canadians to consider what attributes would define their new identity as Canadians. A group called Canada First was formed in 1868 when five men from Ontario gathered to consider a future as Canadians, and not as British colonists. Historian Carl Berger argued that the Canada First movement used notions of the North to promote the idea that Canadians would rise to greatness in North America and abroad because of their northern character:

> The adjective "northern" came to symbolize energy, strength, self-reliance, health, and purity, and its opposite, "southern," was equated with decay and effeminacy, even libertinism, and disease. A lengthy catalogue of desirable national attributes resulting from the climate was compiled. No other weather was so conducive to maintaining health and stimulating robustness.[2]

The idea that Canadians were hardy, masculine, and northern people stood in contrast with the United States to the south. However, Canada First members also wanted to contrast Canadians with peoples from other colonies within the British Empire. The idea that people from southern climates could not live in the North was taken directly from the concepts of Social Darwinism emerging at the time. It was used to underwrite a cool welcome to (or a door bolted against) immigration from the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, and the African-American diaspora. Social Darwinism took Darwin's theory of evolution — survival of the fittest and natural selection — and applied these ideas to society and politics. Canada First's doctrine argued that a northern climate meant only hardy, manly, and white peoples could live in Canada. This conveniently ignored the presence of Indigenous peoples but, to most Canadians at the time, Indigenous peoples were understood to be vanishing. With this "icy white nationalism," as Eva Mackey has put it, whiteness, the rugged northern landscape, and climate came to signify Canada to Canadians.[3]

1. Shelagh Grant, "Arctic Wilderness – And Other Mythologies," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32.2 (1998): 35.
2. Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867 – 1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 129.
3. Eva Mackey, ""Death by Landscape": Race, Nature, and Gender in Canadian Nationalist Mythology," *Canadian Woman Studies* 20.2 (2000): 126.

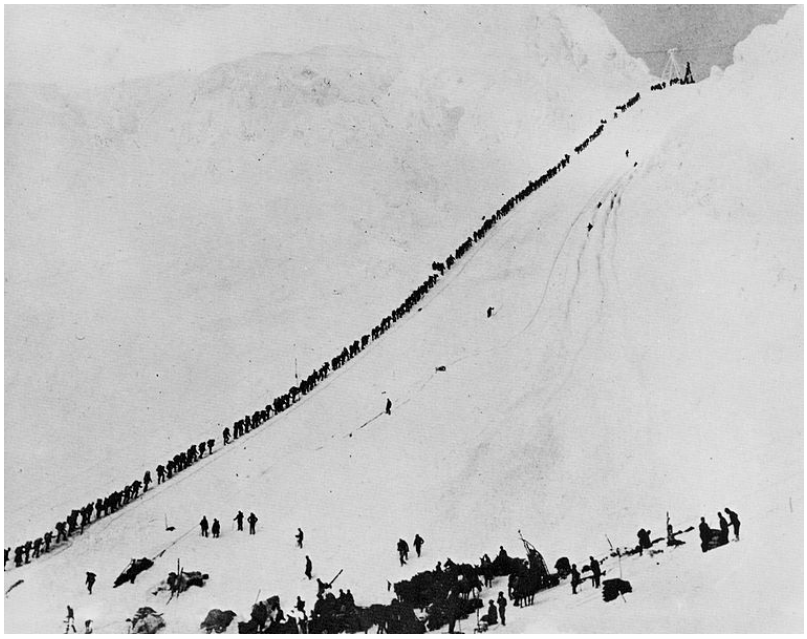


Figure 9.10 The Chilkoot Pass at the height of the Klondike gold rush.

Territorial Expansion

The British government purchased "Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory" from the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) in 1870**.** Fearing annexation of the territory by the United States, Section 146 of the *British North America Act* (1867) provided for the inclusion of the vast area into the newly created Dominion of Canada. This acquisition brought an influx of settlers, particularly from Ontario, into the Red River area, and led to the Red River Resistance by the Métis and the creation of the "postage stamp" province of Manitoba in 1871. It was not until 1905 that the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan were carved out of the territory and brought into Confederation. In 1912, the current borders of the prairie provinces and northern Ontario were established.

For much of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the far North, the lands North of 60, remained largely unknown to southern Canadians. It was not until 1880 that Britain transferred possession of the high Arctic islands to Canada. However, these islands were seen to be of little value to political leaders in Ottawa. Rather than being viewed as the home of the Inuit, the Arctic was mired in myth as the site of ill-fated expeditions in search of the Northwest Passage and thought to be a place of inhospitable climate; harsh landscape; and monstrous creatures such as whales, narwhals, and walruses.



Figure 9.11 A footrace in Dawson City, ca. 1900.

The Klondike gold rush of 1896 brought an influx of gold seekers to the North (especially from the United States), and the Canadian government responded by creating the Yukon Territory in 1898. Historians Ken S. Coates and William R. Morrison note that the Klondike gold rush "is one of the few events in Canadian history — perhaps the only one — that has entered into the collective memory of the entire world."[4] The word **Klondike** is derived from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, the name of the First Nation upon whose territory gold was found. The rush to riches had devastating impacts on the environment and First Nations cultures in the region, but it is the romance of the gold rush that remains ingrained in the Canadian imagination through the poems of Robert W. Service (1874-1958) , the books of popular historian Pierre Berton (1920-2004), and the famous images of stampeders climbing the treacherous Chilkoot Pass route to the goldfields.

4. Ken S. Coates and William R. Morrison, *Land of the Midnight Sun: A History of the Yukon* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 77.



Figure 9.12 Robert W. Service, seen here in 1941 with screen star Marlene Dietrich (1901-1992), struck gold with poetry.

Listen to this recording of *The Cremation of Sam McGee*. Service reads one of his best known poems, *The Cremation of Sam McGee*.

The gold rush reminded the Canadian government of the need to assert its sovereignty in the North, and, in 1904, the Liberal government of Wilfrid Laurier (1841-1919) commissioned the Canadian Arctic Expedition and the ship *Arctic* to help with this task. From 1913 to 1918, the Canadian Arctic Expedition journeyed through the Arctic and found major errors in previous maps. The expedition actually added four new islands to Canada's territory that were previously unknown by the government. During this time, missionaries and the Royal North West/Canadian Mounted Police established outposts throughout the provincial and territorial North. These outposts, along with the Hudson Bay

Company (HBC) stores, became central to the region's colonization and administration prior to World War II.

Despite the acquisition of Rupert's Land by Canada, the HBC remained a strong presence in the North well into the 20th century. In 1920, the company marked its 250th anniversary with the release of the silent film *The Romance of the Far Fur Country*. The film reinforced the prominent role of the HBC in Canada and provided southern audiences with one of their earliest glimpses into life in the Arctic. Two years later, the American film *Nanook of the North* (*nanook* means "polar bear" in the Inuktitut language) was a huge success at the box office and contributed further to the mystique of the North and its peoples.

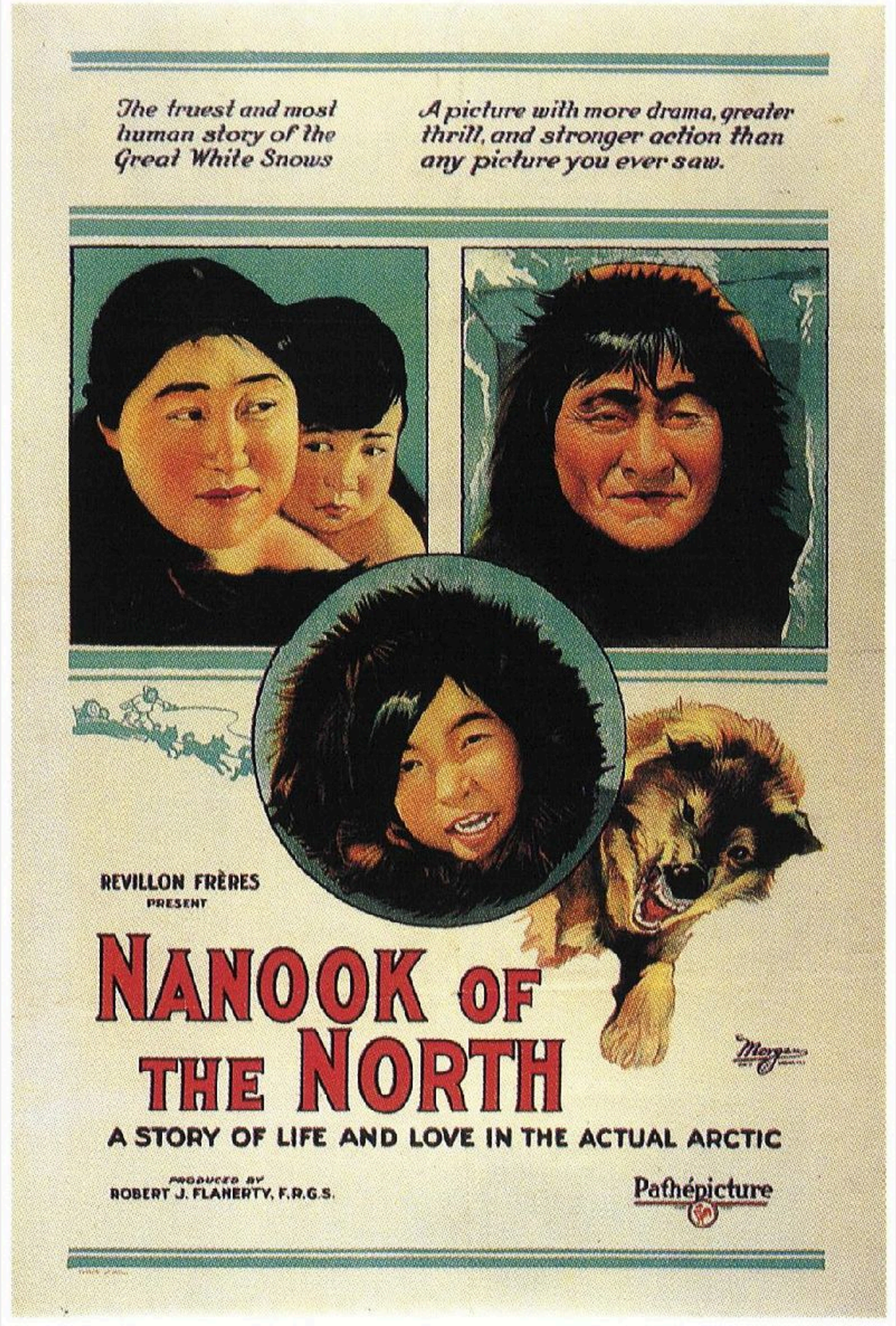

The truest and most human story of the Great White Snows
A picture with more drama, greater thrill, and stronger action than any picture you ever saw.
REVILLON FRÈRES
PRESENT
NANOOK OF THE NORTH
A STORY OF LIFE AND LOVE IN THE ACTUAL ARCTIC
PRODUCED BY
ROBERT J. FLAHERTY, F.R.G.S.
Pathépicture

Figure 9.13 Poster for Nanook of the North. [Long Description]

Watch *Nanook of the North*, a remarkable (if ethnographically unreliable) documentary.

World War II and the Cold War

World War II brought rapid and profound change to the North and to Indigenous peoples in the region. When the United States and Canada declared war with Japan in December 1941, the Pacific coast of North America was particularly vulnerable to a Japanese attack. To aid the movement of troops and supplies into the North, work began on the **Alaska Highway** in Fort Nelson, BC, in 1942. With Canada's permission, 10,000 American troops and workers came to northern British Columbia and the Yukon to build a 1500-mile (2400-kilometre) road to Alaska. As with the gold rush, the North was transformed almost overnight. American troops remained in the North not only to build the highway but also to facilitate defence and the transportation of military supplies across the North.

Prior to the war, it was possible for many Indigenous peoples in the North to live their lives without interacting with Canadian institutions and peoples. However, concerns about sovereignty and security quickly brought scientific and military projects into the everyday lives of Indigenous peoples. A mine near Great Bear Lake in the Northwest Territories supplied uranium ore for the Manhattan Project to develop the first atomic bomb. The Dél̨ı̨ne First Nation of Sahtu worked to extract the radioactive materials and were never informed by the government of uranium's deadly effects: many died from various forms of cancer linked to their exposure.[5] Advancements in technology following the war meant that the Arctic very quickly went from a place of mystery to a place that could be accessed, studied, defended, and monitored. During the 1950s, the **Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line** was built across the North to provide radar surveillance and protection from a Soviet airborne invasion or missile attack via the Arctic Circle. Although such an invasion never came, the United States military maintained a strong presence in the North throughout the Cold War.

High Arctic Relocation

As southern Canadians came to know more about the North, the federal government extended the postwar welfare state to Northern peoples. This was not simply an offer of social programs; the federal government wanted to resettle Indigenous peoples off the land and into planned settlements in an attempt to reproduce life as it was for southern Canadians. This rapid transformation in people's lives often meant disruption of traditional ways of knowing and the break-up of family groups. The need for energy and other resources in the postwar years also brought resource extraction to the North. In the quest for resources, traditional hunting grounds were destroyed and settlements were relocated to make way for mining operations.

In the late summer of 1953, the government forcibly relocated several Inuit families from Inukjuak, Quebec, in the name of Canadian arctic sovereignty. The families, along with a single RCMP constable, were sent to Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord in the Northwest Territories as part of a

5. Peter C. van Wyck, *The Highway of the Atom* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010).

government relocation program. Three other families from Pond Inlet were sent to teach the Inukjuak families to survive in the high Arctic. All of these families were told they were being sent north so that they could be provided better hunting and living opportunities. In 1955, more people were relocated from Inukjuak and Pond Inlet to Resolute. The high Arctic was completely different than the home territories of these families, and they were sent North with poor supplies and no knowledge of the terrain or wildlife. In 1996, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples found that the government relocated these Inuit families for several dubious reasons:

- To support Canadian sovereignty claims (in effect, using the relocated populations as "human flagpoles");[6]
- To centralize Inuit in communities where they could provide labour for the Royal Canadian Air Force and government weather station. Many Inuit did these jobs but were not paid. Their wages were kept by the government and issued in the form of credits at the government store;
- To fulfill a desire to improve the situation of Quebec Inuit whose livelihoods were thought to be under threat due to decreased game stocks; and,
- To reduce what was seen to be growing Indigenous dependence on government assistance.

For decades, the federal government claimed that these families had moved voluntarily. Inuit rejected this claim and spoke of the intergenerational trauma inflicted by forced relocations. It was not until 2010 that the federal government issued an apology for these **relocation programs**.

Division of the Northwest Territories

Since 1867, the size and shape of the NT has been altered several times as districts, provinces, and territories were created. Prior to the 1960s, the administration and governance of both the Yukon and Northwest Territories was the responsibility of the federal government. In 1966, the **Carruthers Commission** recommended that the federal government begin to transfer these responsibilities to the people of the Northwest Territories. Following the commission's report, the capital of the Northwest Territories was shifted from Ottawa to Yellowknife in 1967 and, by 1975, a fully elected legislative assembly had been created. Gradually, control of education, local government, and social services were handed over to both territories, a process known as **devolution**.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, Indigenous peoples of the North began to organize politically into groups such as the Yukon Native Brotherhood, the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories, the Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement, and the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada. These groups advocated for the protection of their culture and traditions and called for the signing of treaties and the right to determine their own future. As a creation of Ottawa, the boundaries of the Northwest Territories were artificial and did not represent the cultural and linguistic differences between Inuit and First Nations in the Eastern and Western Arctic. Inuit made up the majority of the population in the East, while Dene and Métis concentrated heavily in the West, around Great Slave Lake and the Mackenzie River.[7] In

6. Bruce Campion-Smith, "Ottawa apologizes to Inuit for using them as 'human flagpoles,'" *Toronto Star*, August 18, 2010.

7. Frances Abele and Mark O. Dickerson, "The 1982 Plebiscite on Division of the Northwest Territories: Regional Government and Federal Policy," *Canadian Public Policy/Analyse De Politiques* 11.1 (1985): 2.

1982, residents voted in a plebiscite that asked if they were in favour or against a division of the Northwest Territories. Nearly 57% of voters cast a ballot in favour of the proposal. Ten years later, in 1992, residents voted on and approved the proposed boundaries for the two territories. In 1993, the **Nunavut Land Claims Agreement** was signed between Inuit of the Eastern Arctic and the federal government. The finalization of the land claim agreement was one of the last major hurdles towards the creation of Nunavut, which became Canada's newest territory on 1 April 1999.

Key Points

- The North has played an important role in the psychology of national identity since the earliest days of Confederation.
- In the early 20th century, much northern territory was divided between the Prairie provinces, Ontario, and Quebec.
- Efforts to assert Canadian sovereignty in the North were insignificant before the Klondike gold rush and increased thereafter.
- Government involvement grew and extended dramatically during World War II.
- Mineral resources began being tapped in the Northwest Territories precisely as the Cold War began, adding new concerns about sovereignty and a degree of militarization in response.
- Human populations — mostly Inuit — have been repeatedly moved in the service of Canadian claims.
- Democratic institutions were introduced in the 1960s and 1970s while, at the same time, Indigenous peoples organized in response to Ottawa's interest in their homeland.
- One outcome was the establishment of Nunavut as a separate territory in keeping with Inuit ambitions.

Additional Resources

CBC Digital Archives. The Creation of Nunavut

Mapping the Way: Yukon First Nation Self-Government

CBC Interactive Timeline: NWT Devolution

Long Descriptions

Figure 9.13 long description: A 1922 movie poster for *Nanook of the North: A story of life and love in the actual Arctic.* There are images of an Inuit woman and child, an Inuit man wearing a parka, an Inuit child wearing a parka, and a wolf, baring its teeth and leaping. The text at the top of the poster says "The truest and most human story of the Great White Snows" and "A picture with more drama, greater thrill, and stronger action than any picture you ever saw." The film is presented by Revillon Frères and produced by Robert J. Flaherty, F.R.G.S. [Return to Figure 9.13]

Media Attributions

- 60th parallel in Canada © Wikipedia user Bazonka is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Packers ascending summit of Chilkoot Pass, c.1899 © E.A. Hegg, Library and Archives Canada (C-005142) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Foot race, Dawson City, YT, about 1900 © McCord Museum (MP-0000.2360.36) is licensed under a CC BY-NC-ND (Attribution NonCommercial NoDerivatives) license
- Nanook of the North (1922) © Robert J. Flannery / Pathe Pictures is licensed under a Public Domain license

9.4 The Cold War

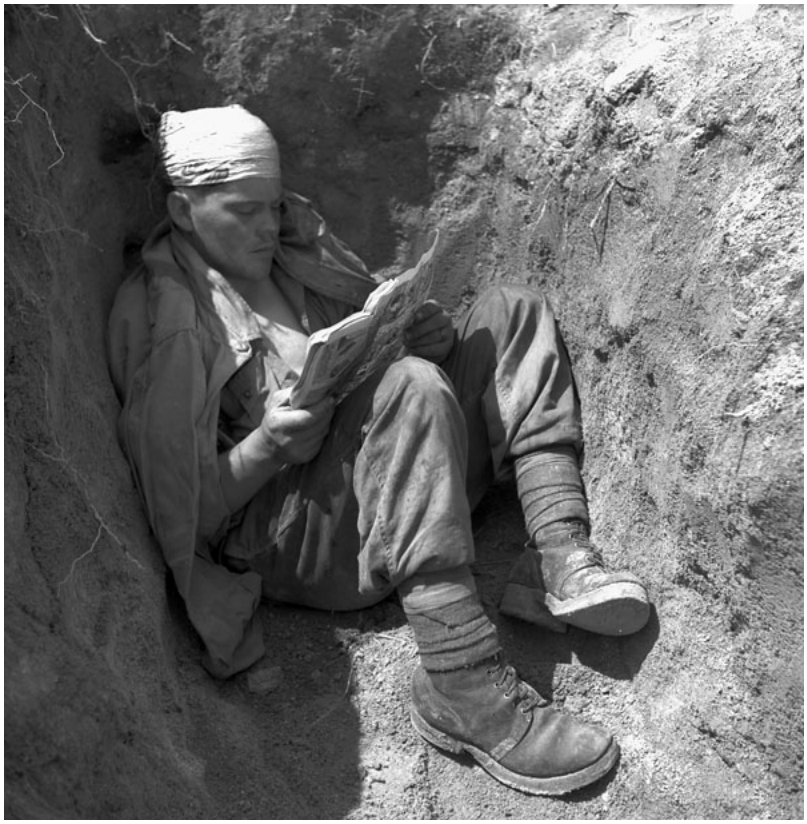


Figure 9.14 War is mostly about waiting. A soldier with the Vandoos, Private G.U.I. Lambert, reads a comic book in a foxhole in Korea, 1951.

The **Cold War** refers to the period of heightened tensions between the West (that is, the United States, Canada, Britain, France, and their allies) and the Soviet Union, lasting roughly from 1945 to 1991. Its origins can be traced to several sources but it rapidly became a war of postures and **proxy wars** between the two heavy-hitters, the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). The Cold War was so named as it never featured direct military action between the two superpowers or their main allies. With the old "great powers" of Europe exhausted and battered by World War II, the United States (largely unscathed, the main creditor state in the world, and heavily industrialized) and the Soviet Union (badly beaten up but in a position to rebuild its defences) emerged as the dominant powers. The addition of atomic bombs to their respective arsenals entitled them to a new title: superpowers.[1]

1. Boundless. "Origins of the Cold War". Boundless U.S. History. Boundless, 21 Jul. 2015, accessed 17 Dec. 2015 from https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory/chapter/the-cold-war/

The Allies Fall Out

Having combined to defeat the Axis Powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan), the Allies (principally, the USSR, the United States, and the United Kingdom) found themselves disagreeing on the shape of the postwar world. At the February 1945 Yalta Conference, the Allies could not reach a consensus on crucial questions like the occupation of Germany and whether Germany should be forced to pay reparations again. Given Russia's historical experience of invasions from the West and the immense death toll it recorded during the war (estimated at 27 million), the Soviet Union sought to increase security by dominating the internal affairs of countries on which it bordered, and especially Germany. On the other hand, the United States sought military victory over Japan, the achievement of global American economic supremacy, and the creation of an intergovernmental body to promote international cooperation.

At the Potsdam Conference in July 1945, the Allies met to decide how to administer the defeated Nazi Germany. Serious differences emerged over the future development of Central and Eastern Europe. The atomic bombings of Hiroshima (6 August 1945) and Nagasaki (9 August 1945) were, in part, a calculated effort on the part of the American government to intimidate the Soviet Union, limiting Soviet influence in postwar Asia. The bombings served to fuel Soviet distrust of the United States and are regarded by some historians not only as the closing act of World War II, but as the opening salvo of the Cold War.

Canada lacked the profile of the Americans in these events but was up to its elbows in complicity. The Quebec Agreement was signed by United States President Franklin Roosevelt (1882-1945) and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill (1874-1965) on 19 August 1943 in the old capital of New France. The agreement ensured British and American collaboration on what became known as the Manhattan Project; Canadian involvement was simply assumed. In 1944, Canadian scientists and technicians joined the multinational team in the United States, along with tons of uranium-bearing ore from the Northwest Territories. A Combined Policy Committee was established on which Canada was represented; it had oversight and coordination responsibilities regarding the atomic bombs. Canada was not, however, permitted to participate in the decision-making process as to when and where to deploy the new weapons.



Figure 9.15 In April 1935, W.L. Britnell and Stan McMillan unload the first shipment of uranium concentrate from the Northwest Territories. The photo is good, but everyone in it was overexposed.

Canada's role in the Manhattan Project and the corollary — that there were Canadians who possessed sophisticated knowledge about how to manufacture the world's first weapon of mass destruction — made Canada a target worth spying on. In Ottawa on 5 September 1945, a Ukrainian cypher clerk slipped out of the Soviet Embassy where he worked, carrying more than 100 top-secret documents detailing Russian espionage activities in Canada. Igor Gouzenko (1919-1982) disclosed the existence of a spy ring that included **sleeper agents** working under deep cover in Canada. The whole of the operation was geared towards uncovering nuclear secrets so that the Soviet Union could match the American arsenal at the earliest opportunity.

By February 1946, the public was aware of the **Gouzenko Affair**, which played out in the press and in Parliament. Fred Rose (1907-1983), the lone Communist Party MP in Ottawa, was implicated in the Gouzenko documents and was subsequently jailed for nearly five years. The late 1940s, then, saw the beginnings in Canada of a panic about spies that would push Canada further and faster away from her former Soviet ally and deeper into the orbit of Cold War America.


Where to find it

The Globe and Mail

Fair and Cold

108rd Year. No. 30,008. Metropolitan Edition ★ TORONTO, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1946. 2 Cents Per Copy 28 PAGES

FBI JOINS OTTAWA SPY HUNT

Investigation Now Focused On Munitions Department

Documents Included In Roundup

Investigation of Spy Ring In Canada Started Last Fall

Secrecy Is Maintained By Officials

Figure 9.16 The age of atomic espionage opens. [Long Description]

On 5 March 1946, Churchill gave a speech declaring that an **Iron Curtain** had descended across Europe. This metaphorical curtain divided East from West, leaving those nations behind it, as Churchill said, "subject, in one form or another, not only to Soviet influence but to a very high and in some cases increasing measure of control from Moscow." To the Soviets, the speech seemed intended to incite the West to war with the USSR, as it called for a broad western alliance against the Soviets.

In response to perceived Western aggression, in September 1947, the Soviets created Cominform (Communist Information Bureau) to enforce orthodoxy within the international communist movement and tighten political control over Soviet satellites through coordination of communist parties in the **Eastern Bloc**.[2]

Tensions between East and West continued to rise. In the spring of 1948, the focus shifted to Berlin. Germany and Berlin — along with Austria and its capital city, Vienna — had been divided into British, French, Soviet, and American sectors. The western Allies were on the verge of unifying their respective sectors of Germany as a whole — a development that the Russians were understandably unwilling to tolerate. In response, the Soviet Army initiated a blockade of Berlin, ensuring that food and fuel could not reach the American, French, and British zones in the capital. Unable to deliver goods by land or water through Russian-controlled Germany, the Western nations gambled on an airlift into the city.

Just as these events were unfolding, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Britain, and Luxembourg entered into a new mutual defense treaty. The Berlin blockade and the vastly superior Soviet land forces in central Europe obliged the Treaty of Brussels group to look to a wider association that would include the United States, Portugal, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Iceland, and Canada. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was the outcome: a mutual protection agreement under which an attack on one was to be regarded as an attack on all. For its first few years, NATO was not much more than a political association; the first NATO Secretary General, Lord Ismay (1887-1965), stated in 1949 that the organization's goal was "to keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down." However, events quickly galvanized the member states, and an integrated military structure was built up in which Canada played a prominent role. [3]

By the late 1940s, the tone of global diplomacy and relations had changed dramatically from what it had been in 1939. When Britain declared war on Germany, the Canadian delay in responding was, in part, symbolic of the nation's new relative autonomy; now, if Russia made a move on Luxembourg or Iceland, Canada would automatically be at war, regardless of what Britain might decide to do. These agreements reflected fears of a conventional attack involving aircraft, navies, and heavy armoured tank divisions. Then, in 1949, things became significantly more complicated and ominous.

On 29 August 1949, the Soviet Union exploded its first atomic bomb. The United States' monopoly on nuclear weaponry was over. A few months later, on 1 October 1949, Chinese Communist Party leader Mao Zedong announced the triumph of the Chinese Communists over their Nationalist foes in a civil war that had been raging since 1927. The Nationalist forces, under their leader Chiang Kai-shek (蔣中正, 1887-1975), departed for Taiwan in December 1949. A few months later, an unresolved situation on

2. Boundless. "Origins of the Cold War". Boundless U.S. History. Boundless, 21 Jul. 2015, accessed 17 Dec. 2015 from https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory/chapter/the-cold-war/

3. Boundless. "North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)". Boundless U.S. History. Boundless, 21 Jul. 2015, accessed 17 Dec. 2015 from https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory/chapter/the-cold-war/

the Korean peninsula would lead to the first hot moment in the Cold War. The Soviet Union had been granted control of the northern half of the Korean peninsula at the end of World War II, and the United States occupied the southern portion. The Soviets displayed little interest in extending their power into South Korea, and Stalin did not wish to risk confrontation with the United States over Korea. North Korea's leaders, however, wished to reunify the peninsula under Communist rule. In April 1950, Stalin finally gave permission to North Korea's leader Kim Il-sung (김일성, 1912-94) to invade South Korea, and provided the North Koreans with weapons and military advisors.



Figure 9.17 With the possible exception of the comedian Dashan (大山, aka: Mark Rowswell), Dr. Norman Bethune is the most famous Canadian in China. Given the numbers, this makes him possibly the most famous Canadian historical figure. A medic in Mao's People's Army, he is seen here on the left in 1938.

The Korean War

On 25 June 1950, troops of the North Korean People's Democratic Army (PDA) crossed the 38th parallel, the border between North and South Korea. Within only a month, the PDA captured all but the southernmost region of the peninsula. The first major test of the West's policy of **containment** in Asia had begun, for the **domino theory** held that a victory by North Korea might lead to further Communist expansion in Asia, in the virtual backyard of the West's former enemy and newest ally in East Asia — Japan.

The **United Nations (UN)**, which had been established in 1945, was quick to react. On 27 June 1950, the UN Security Council denounced North Korea's actions and called upon UN members to help South Korea defeat the invading forces. As a permanent member of the Security Council, the Soviet Union could have vetoed the action, but it had boycotted UN meetings following the awarding of China's seat on the Security Council to Taiwan instead of Mao's People's Republic of China (PRC). Spurred by the UN's response, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester B. Pearson (1897-1972), proposed that Canada send troops under the UN flag, led by American military.

The Canadian troop commitment in the **Korean War** eventually reached nearly 27,000, and Canadians were active on sea, on the ground, and in the air — some of them flying combat jets, introduced in

World War II but used only sparingly before Korea. Canadians performed many tasks but saw the most difficult fighting in three ground battles: Kapyong, Hill 355 (aka: Kowang-San), and Hill 187. Despite rapidly retaking not only the Republic of Korea but almost the whole of North Korea as well, the UN forces were confronted on the PRC's border by hundreds of thousands of Chinese troops in the People's Volunteer Army, who pushed the front back to the original dividing line, the 38th parallel, and forcing the American Eighth Army into a humiliating retreat. The status quo ante bellum was restored in 1953 — but not peace. Canadians stayed on duty in the PRC until 1957, monitoring — among other things — the Demilitarized Zone (aka: the DMZ). Both Koreas remain, technically, at war today. Five hundred and sixteen Canadians died in this conflict which, held against World War I or II, may not seem a great number. Nevertheless, this remains the third-largest loss of warriors experienced by Canada since Confederation.

Korea was a testing ground, too, for Canada's approach to the Cold War. While the American administration under President Harry S. Truman (1884-1972) and Secretary of State Dean Acheson (1893-1971) was gambling on an Asian conflict that would cause the PRC to collapse in turmoil, the Canadians were much more committed to the objectives of the United Nations. Pearson was repeatedly at odds with Acheson, and the two foreign affairs offices developed a deep-seated mutual distrust and dislike. To take one example, Acheson claimed that a large number of Chinese and Korean prisoners of war (POWs) requested that they be allowed to remain in South Korea at the end of hostilities. The numbers were dubious, the whole idea was in conflict with the **Geneva Convention**, and Acheson's transparent propaganda ploy blew up in his face when prisoners in the Koje-do Island POW camp demanded that they be returned to the North and to the PRC. Canadian troops were deployed to put down the ensuing riot, but without official Canadian consent. The effect was to entangle Canada in an affair that ran counter to its own foreign policy. As one study demonstrates, "Korea revealed the contradictions between the liberal-internationalist desire for the peaceful resolution of differences and the limitlessly aggressive logic of the anti-Communist Cold War crusade undertaken in Washington."[4]

4. Reg Whitaker and Gary Marcuse, *Cold War Canada: The Making of a National Insecurity State, 1945-1957* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 396-401.

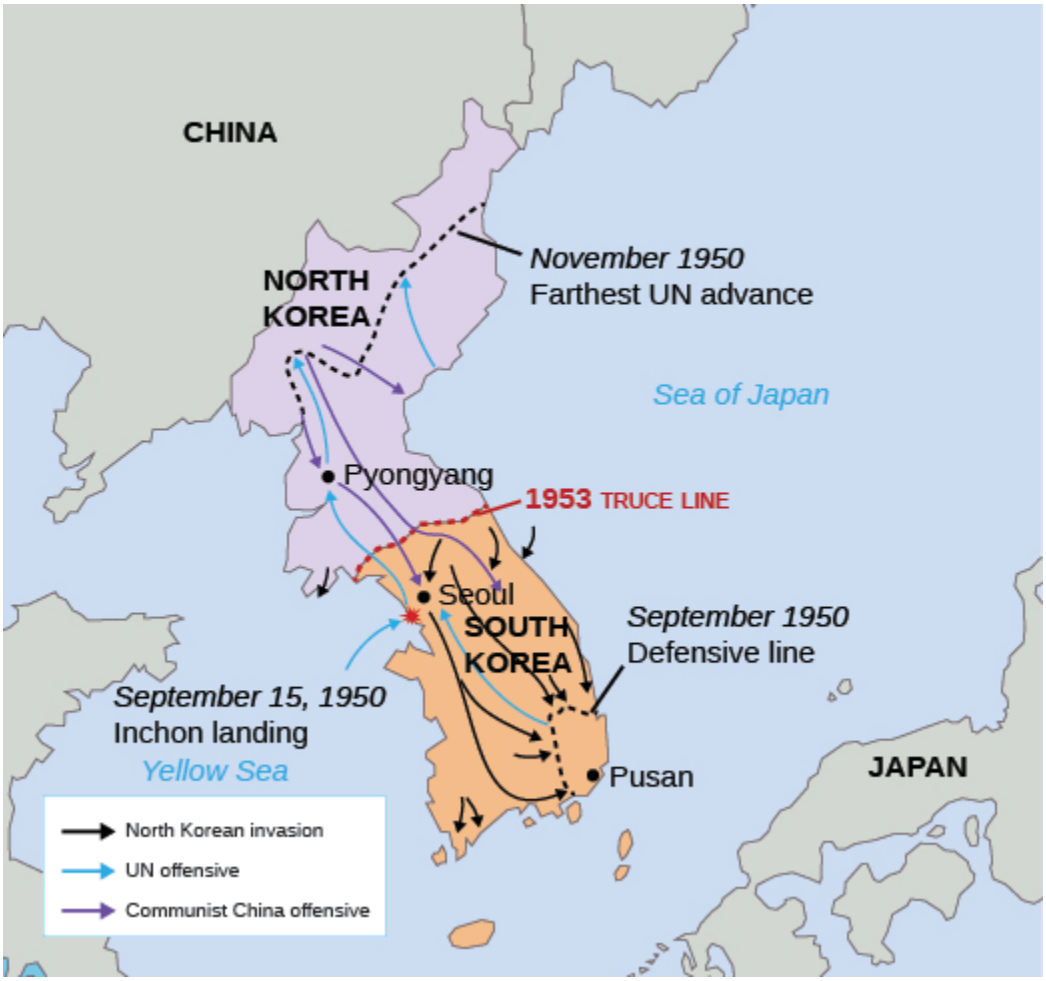


Figure 9.18 After the initial invasion of South Korea by the North Korean People's Democratic Army (PDA), the United Nations (UN) established a defensive line in the southern part of the country. The landing at Inchon in September reversed the tide of the war and allowed UN forces under General Douglas MacArthur to retake the city of Seoul, which had fallen to North Korean troops in the early days of the war.

A Frosty Cold War

The Soviet Union's involvement in Korea included its new and impressive fleet of MiG-15 jet fighters, the PRC demonstrated its ability to put a massive and effective army into the field, and the UN showed that it could call on various member nations to contribute to the cause. It was also clear that the Americans had an agenda that was rather different from that of the UN, although they stopped well short of deploying atomic weapons to bring about a decisive victory. The Korean War, as well, served to establish a kind of Cold War protocol. Client states could host proxy wars that would stand in for the toe-to-toe conflict between the two superpowers.

Joseph Stalin's (1878-1953) death did nothing to blunt fear of a Russian attack on Western Europe. By the mid-1950s, the West had come to terms with the need to re-arm West Germany (aka: the Federal Republic of Germany) because no other state had the population or industrial capacity to act as a physical barrier to Soviet aggression. A unified and re-armed West Germany was, of course, anathema

to the Russians, who responded by bringing together their Eastern European tribute states (Poland, Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, and Bulgaria) into a mirror image of NATO: the Warsaw Pact. As in 1939, the northern hemisphere was dividing between liberal democracies and regimes characterized by the use of authoritarian power.

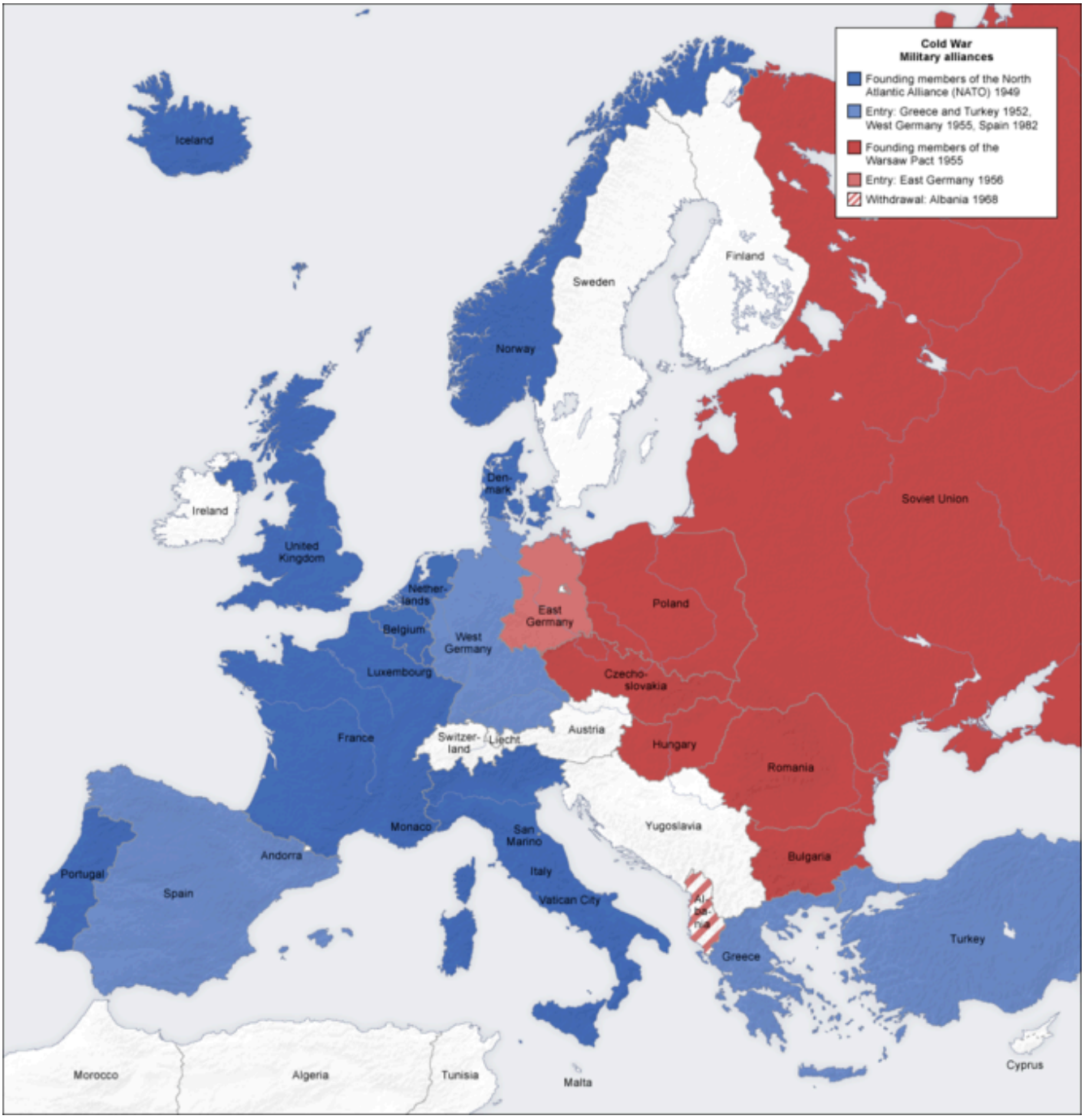


Figure 9.19 NATO and NATO-aligned nations (in blue) square off against the Warsaw Pact nations (in red, of course). *[Long Description]*

At home the Canadian response to the Cold War would take several forms. There were anti-communist purges in trade unions, the civil service, and elsewhere in Canada even before the McCarthyite **witch hunts** in the United States. Trade unions with a strong communist tradition, including waterfront

workers' organizations, were smashed under the leadership of Hal Banks (1909-1985), an American brought in to replace the left-leaning unions with the Seafarers' International Union. As in Britain and other NATO countries, homosexuals were targeted (for reasons discussed in Section 12.7).

American fears of homegrown communist movements springing up in the Americas and in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia prompted interventions in various countries. In some instances, American involvement resulted in defeat of legitimate left-wing movements; in others, liberal democratic regimes were propped up. In Cuba, an unpopular regime faced local rebels who were supported by an American embargo. The government fell and was replaced by a regime headed by Fidel Castro (b. 1926), which proceeded to turn sharply left and align with the USSR rather than the United States. The Cold War was now in the Americas.

Polar and Polaris

Technologies associated with warfare rapidly evolved after World War II. Canadian interest in jet-propulsion was led by A.V. Roe Canada (aka: AVRO), a British branch-plant in Malton, Ontario. Missile developments were also accelerating. Much of the advance made after 1945 was due to the availability of former German engineers who found themselves at the end of the war in either the Soviet or American spheres. In both the East and the West, **intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs)** were being developed with a greater range and payload than conventional bomber aircraft. These delivery systems brought Soviet and American targets within striking distance, providing they crossed the Arctic and Canadian airspace. The 1971 post-apocalyptic novel by Ian Adams, *The Trudeau Papers*, described Canadians' worst fears in these years, not of being targeted by the Russians but just being caught in between the two superpowers in a missile-slinging match. The spread of nuclear know-how and armaments to France (the so-called *Force de frappe*) and Britain (with its arsenal of submarine-launched Polaris missiles) did little to calm a growing sense that the world, including Canada, had no place to hide in the event of a nuclear war. The first material expression of these fears was the construction of the Pinetree Line beginning in 1946 and improved through the 1950s. This radar system, running from west to east from 50 to 54 degrees latitude, was introduced to detect an incoming Soviet bomber attack. In the 1950s, the Mid-Canada Line (or McGill Fence) was added further north in the face of advances in jet engines, which meant a faster target to intercept. The successor Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line followed in the late 1950s and through the 1970s as a response to the possibility of ICBM attacks. Strung across the Arctic Ocean from Alaska to Baffin Island, the Dew Line still stands as Canada's single largest investment in infrastructure in the high Arctic.

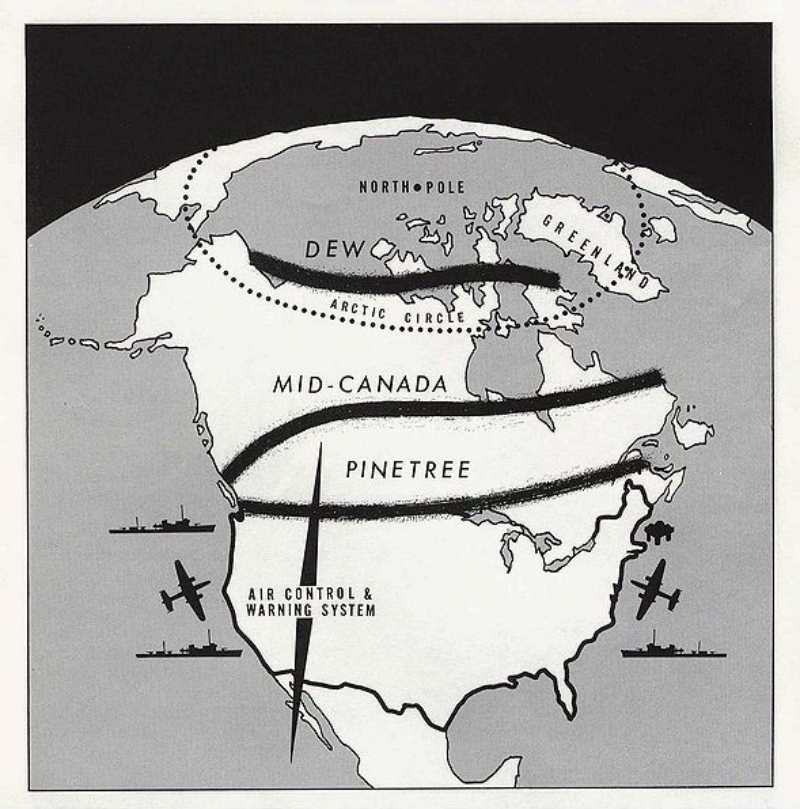


Figure 9.20 Whether NORAD's triple radar defence structure would do what it was designed to do was never fully put to the test.

Spy World

In 1963, British newspapers announced a scandalous liaison between Christine Keeler (a model and showgirl, b. 1942) and the Secretary of State for War, John Profumo (1915-2006). Keeler was also having a relationship with a Soviet military intelligence officer, Yevgeny Ivanov (1926-1994). The Profumo Affair, as it became known, set the tone for a similar scandal in Canada. In both, a *femme fatale* figured prominently as a sexual predator who could compromise national security. The Canadian press latched onto details as they came out of Ottawa, eager to sell a salacious affair to their readers.

Gerda Munsinger (1929-1998) was the main figure in this web of intrigue. She made several failed attempts to emigrate from postwar Germany under her birth-name (Hesler, Hessler, or Heseler, although she used several aliases). In 1955, she managed to elude immigration checks and arrived in Montreal, where she worked for a year as a maid and then as a sex worker and a hostess at Chez Paree, a Montreal nightclub. High-ranking government officials regularly frequented establishments like Chez Paree, and in no time Munsinger was having sexual relations with several of them. What's more, she established regular liaisons with two of John Diefenbaker's (1895-1979) cabinet ministers: Minister of Transport George Hees (1910-1996) and Associate Defence Minister Pierre Sévigny (1917-2004). Both the American Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the RCMP believed that Munsinger might pose a threat. Wiretaps on her apartment confirmed that she was having an affair with one or more cabinet ministers. Sévigny's identity was allegedly confirmed by a thumping sound on the RCMP tapes that turned out to be his prosthetic leg coming off and hitting the floor. There was, however, no evidence of a security breach. Diefenbaker was advised of

the situation in 1960; he instructed Sévigny to break off the relationship, Sévigny did so, and the matter was left there until 1966.

Spy cases continued to surface. The new Liberal government's handling of one on the West Coast drew fire from the Progressive Conservative Official Opposition. Diefenbaker criticized the Minister of Justice, Lucien Cardin (1919-1988), of being lax in his pursuit of traitors; Cardin responded by invoking Diefenbaker's involvement in the – to this point, secret – Munsinger case. Despite repeated attempts on Prime Minister Pearson's part to contain the issue, Cardin disclosed what he knew to the press and was the first to draw the comparison with the Profumo Affair. There were, however, no new revelations of espionage, just marital infidelity on the part of Sévigny.

By this time, Munsinger had returned to Germany, where she remarried. The investigative journalism program, *This Hour Has Seven Days*[5], pursued the story and was abruptly cancelled thereafter by the CBC. The Munsinger Affair – which billed the central figure as a Cold War "Mata Hari" – perpetuated the notion of good men brought down by shady women working for enemy states. It was also something of a last gasp of the pre-sexual liberation era and says much about domestic, monogamous heterosexuality as not only a moral ideal but a matter of political and even national security as well.



Figure 9.21 Canadian members of the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) patrolling the border between Egypt and Israel, 1962.

Surviving the Cold War

Following the **Suez Crisis** in 1956 (see Sections 9.5 and 9.7), Canada engaged in a series of peacekeeping missions. These grew out of then-Foreign Affairs Secretary of State Lester Pearson's idea of a UN observer force to calm relations between Egypt, Israel, France, and England. In the decade that followed, Canadian troops would be sent to Lebanon, Congo, West New Guinea, Yemen, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, and along the India-Pakistan border — sometimes as observers, sometimes as trainers, sometimes as a barrier between opponents still snarling at one another despite a ceasefire,

5. From which the comedy troupe, *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, derives its name and news-show format.

sometimes all these things at once. Eleven more missions would follow in the years before the end of the Cold War. While some of these missions involved client states of the West and East or their respective partisans, mostly they could be defined as events associated with decolonization. This was the case in the Congo (as Belgium made an undignified exit), West New Guinea (where conflict arose between colonialist Netherlands and newly independent Indonesia), and also in the long-running dispute between India and Pakistan in the generation following their independence from Britain. The Cypriot Mission — which began in 1964 and shows few signs of abating — also came on the heels of independence from Britain, followed by Greek and Turkish attempts to lay claim to what had been a Crown Colony. What is striking in these years is the extent to which these Cold-War–era conflicts were more fundamentally about 19th century imperialism than postwar superpower spheres of influence. This was not the case in Cuba.

The Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 deepened Canadian fears of a nuclear war between Russia and the United States. The long-range missiles that the Soviet Union proposed to deploy on Cuba would certainly reach major Canadian population centres if they were ever launched. The Americans were insistent that the Soviets abort the project and, for the better part of two weeks, Washington and Moscow (which was, itself, affronted by the forward deployment of American missiles in Turkey) stared into the abyss.

Diefenbaker's government offered support to the American government led by President John F. Kennedy (1917-1963), but not unconditionally. Diefenbaker preferred the idea of a UN-led intervention, something that got no traction whatsoever in Washington, DC. This tepid response led to heightened tensions between Canada and the United States. The crisis overall contributed to Canadian fears that the Americans would, by their own miscalculated actions, precipitate a nuclear holocaust. The Liberal Prime Ministers Pearson and Pierre Trudeau would follow Diefenbaker's lead and were publicly critical of American foreign policy. (Joe Clark's government was in office only briefly but evinced a more cooperative position generally.) After 20 years of sanctions, Ottawa opened discussions with China in 1968 and diplomatic recognition of the PRC in 1970. Canada (along with Mexico) did not sever diplomatic ties with Cuba, and Trudeau was the first Western leader to pay a visit to Havana. In 1972, Cold War drama played out on ice in the Canada-USSR Hockey Series (aka: the Summit Series); while the overarching narrative was West versus East, capitalism versus communism, the event generated in Canada considerable respect for the Soviet players, their coaches, and their fans, and thus put at least a small dent in the Iron Curtain. More formally, in 1976, Trudeau travelled to Cuba to meet with Castro. This was in keeping with Trudeau's own foreign affairs perspective, and it was also in sync with the emerging American philosophy of **détente**. Nonetheless, growing American involvement in Cold War client-state wars from Vietnam through Africa and Latin America led to growing anti-American feeling among the Canadian public and that was reflected in Ottawa's foreign policies.

The tenor of Cold War relations between Canada and the United States would continue to be mostly critical until Trudeau's Liberal government was replaced in 1984 by Brian Mulroney (b. 1939) and a Conservative majority. Mulroney's campaign to improve relations with the Americans led to a close personal relationship with United States President and arch–Cold-Warrior Ronald Reagan (1911-2004) and, eventually, to a free trade agreement between the two countries (discussed in Section 9.12). The dying years of the Cold War, then, would see Canada's position vis-à-vis the Soviet Bloc harden into something that more closely resembled the American view.

Key Points

- The Cold War began at the end of World War II and persisted through the 1980s. It represents a polarization of global forces into two camps: America and its allies (represented by NATO and sometimes the UN) and the Soviet Union with its supporters (represented by the Warsaw Pact and sometimes China).
- Canada's entry into the Cold War came with the disclosure in 1946 of a spy ring led by Igor Gouzenko.
- Involvement in NATO and support for the UN led Canada to be an active participant in the Korean War in 1949.
- In 1949, the Soviet Union detonated its first atomic bomb, and the age of superpowers was launched.
- Canadian defence strategies in the Cold War changed as Canada aligned more with the United States and prepared for a missile assault across the Arctic. Ottawa also launched an anti-fifth–column strategy to reduce the threat of homegrown communists.
- Involvement in peacekeeping missions began in this period as an attempt to find diplomatic solutions became a Canadian priority, in contrast with the American strategy of containment.

Long Descriptions

Figure 9.16 long description: Cover of *The Globe and Mail* from February 18, 1946. The headline is "FBI Joins Ottawa Spy Hunt: Investigation Now Focused on Munitions Department." Subheadings in the article include "Documents Included In Roundup," "Investigation of Spy Ring In Canada Started Last Fall," and "Secrecy Is Maintained By Officials." Beside this text are photos of a smiling man and woman. [Return to Figure 9.16]

Figure 9.19 long description: Map depicting Cold War military alliances. There are five different factions depicted:

- Founding members of the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO) in 1949. This includes Portugal, France, Monaco, Luxembourg, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark, United Kingdom, Iceland, Norway, Italy, San Marino, and Vatican City.
- Entry into NATO: Greece and Turkey (1952), West Germany (1955), Spain (1962).
- Founding members of the Warsaw Pact in 1955. This includes the Soviet Union, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria.
- Entry into the Warsaw Pact: East Germany (1956).
- Withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact: Albania (1968).

[Return to Figure 9.19]

Media Attributions

- Private G.U.I. Lambert, B2nd Battalion Royal 22E Regiment, reads comic book in slit trench, Korea, 28 May, 1951 © Paul E. Tomelin, Canada Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (PA-128806) Copyright Government of Canada. No restrictions on use.
- First load of uranium concentrate flown from Great Bear Lake to Fort McMurray, 1935 © W.L. Brintnell, Library and Archives Canada (PA-102850) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- FBI Joins Ottawa Spy Hunt, 1946 © The Globe and Mail is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Meeting between Dr. Norman Bethune (left) and Nieh Jung-Chen (centre), Commander-in-Chief of the Chin-Ch'a-Chi Border Region © Library and Archives Canada (PA-114787) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Korean War, 1950–1953 © OpenStax. Download for free here is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license
- Cold war Europe military alliances map © Wikipedia user San Jose is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- DEW Line, 1960 © United States Government is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Two Canadian soldiers scan the Egypt-Israel frontier during a desert patrol, 1962 © Canada Dept of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (PA-122737) is licensed under a Public Domain license

9.5 Post-War Leadership and State-making



Figure 9.22 A rare picture of women voting. Nursing Sisters on the Western front in WWI, 1917.

It is easy to misapprehend Canadian politics as an arena in which the rules are stable and the participants are easy to identify. Politics, ultimately, is about power, who shares in it, and how it is divided up among those participants. When Canada was created as a constitutional entity in 1867, it was with a particular body politic in mind. Fifty years later, much about that political realm had changed. A century later, and it would have been unrecognizable to the nation's founding generation.

The Elect, the Electorate, and the Elected

There are several dimensions to political life and how it evolves, among which we can include participation. As we have seen (in Chapter 3 and elsewhere), the limits of democracy were far greater in 1867 than any tendency toward inclusiveness. The most dramatic changes in the franchise came in the 20th century. Universal male suffrage was still tightly constrained: Asians and most Indigenous peoples could not vote, and property requirements ensured that many working men could not vote, as well. Rounding out race and class as restrictions on the franchise was, of course, gender. Women were unable to vote provincially and federally until the 1910s and, when the breakthrough came, the franchise only included women who fit the racialized categories of citizenship. Restrictions against the female franchise in Quebec until 1940 impacted women's federal voting rights because the province maintained both the provincial and federal voters list until the 1930s. Clearly, the move toward greater democratic rights was not a one-way street; rather, it was a highway with a passing lane and room for parking on the shoulder.

The *Dominion Elections Act* (1920) made women's suffrage a permanent arrangement rather than a

temporary, wartime expedient. It also created the office of the Chief Electoral Officer and insulated it from the pressures of patronage politics. Preparation of voters lists, the enforcement of rules for behaviour on election day, and responsibility for promoting awareness of electoral rights and polling station locations created a more level and consistent playing field for politics at the federal level, though not overnight. Most provinces quickly followed this example. By the 1940s, the formal property qualifications for the federal franchise had been excised, and transient working people were thereby brought into the electorate.

Even as these improvements were being made for some, democracy's welcome mat was being pulled in for others. The 1920 Act allowed provinces to exclude voters "for reasons of race." British Columbia's legislators decided repeatedly to block Asian immigrants from the polls and were successful; Chinese settlers in Saskatchewan suffered the same fate. During the Japanese-Canadian internment of 1942 to 1945, British Columbians of Japanese ancestry carried the question of their exclusion as they were moved to other provinces. While federal politicians were generally prepared to turn a blind eye to British Columbian racism, they were less happy when it was brought to their own doorstep. Nevertheless, wartime fears of the Japanese Empire were enough to ensure that racist barriers to Asian-Canadian suffrage persisted. Reforms in 1947 actually worsened matters by disenfranchising Doukhobors, Hutterites, and Mennonites ostensibly for their pacifism (members of these communities who served in the military were exempt from the Act's provisions). The good news in 1947 was that the Chinese-Canadian community was enfranchised; a year later, the Japanese-Canadian community won the federal vote and in 1949, the British Columbia vote.



Figure 9.23 United States President Truman, British Prime Minister Attlee, and Mackenzie King meet in 1945 to discuss the atomic bomb. King wrestled briefly with the idea of a huge number of civilian casualties but confided to his diary, "It is fortunate that the use of the bomb should have been upon the Japanese rather than upon the white races of Europe."

By 1950, only two identity groups lacked the vote: some members of the pacifist/communal communities and Status Indians. Legislation in 1955 removed religious beliefs as cause for electoral

discrimination. In 1960, the *Canadian Bill of Rights* extended the vote to all adult Indigenous individuals. Not all First Nations communities were enthusiastic supporters of the franchise. British subjecthood and, after 1947, Canadian citizenship and electoral rights had always implied or entailed some loss of Indigenous autonomy and identity. Indeed, many of the public and legislative debates on this topic revolved around the assimilative prospects of the franchise. The rights granted in 1960, however, were presented as an unconditional opportunity and were broadly accepted.[1]



Figure 9.24 Status Indians were able to vote for the first time in 1960. Lawrence Salleby, Chief Ralph Loucks, Lucy Musgrove, and Eldon Muskrat at the ballot box in the Hiawatha Council Hall, October 1960.

Who was left to enfranchise? Prisoners in Canada's penal system were excluded, as were the judges who sent them to prison. Some Canadians with mental disabilities were not allowed to vote. Reforms in 1993 responded to the existence of the new *Charter of Rights* by removing barriers to judges, people with mental disabilities, and prisoners serving sentences of two years or less. At the time of writing, the largest group left without the franchise is the non-adult population. It is worth considering that many of the arguments made, successively, against giving the vote to working men, women, and Indigenous peoples — that they were insufficiently informed or knowledgeable on political matters, subject to pressures from authority figures, and probably not interested in getting the vote notwithstanding a few loud agitators, suffragettes (and so on) — are often the very same objections raised against enfranchising non-adults.

1. A useful survey of the franchise can be found at Elections Canada, "A History of the Vote in Canada", http://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=his&document=index&lang=e, accessed 22 December 2015.

Mackenzie King's Secret Life

Christopher Dummitt, School for the Study of Canada, Trent University

No other prime minister has ever been as successful as William Lyon Mackenzie King (1874-1950). No other prime minister has ever been as strange.

The first claim is undoubtedly true. Mackenzie King governed the country for almost 22 years beginning in 1921 and lasting until 1948, with only two periods out of office — briefly in 1926 and then from 1930 to 1935. This isn't only a Canadian record. It's the longest time in office of any leader of a parliamentary democracy. But was he also very odd?

This is what many Canadians came to think about "Weird Willie" Mackenzie King. While he was alive, he was never very popular. He was not a great orator nor did he look the part of the great statesman. Yet Mackenzie King was a shrewd and intuitive political leader who, time and time again, seemed to best grasp what the largest share of the Canadian public wanted. At the time of his death in 1950, the newspapers memorialized Mackenzie King as a "great Canadian."

Only weeks after his death, the newspapers were also reporting that Mackenzie King had been a spiritualist. That is, they claimed that he believed that he could communicate with ghosts. Over the years, more and more stories emerged about how he had consulted mediums to speak to his dead mother and grandfather and the ghosts of his political idols and former opponents. When his diaries were opened up to the public in the 1970s, they seemed to show a man who had lived a double life; publicly, he was a staid politician but privately, he engaged in the oddities of the occult. The diaries also revealed, some historians claimed, that the bachelor prime minister had visited prostitutes as a young man and then returned home to confess guiltily to his diary. Novelists and poets picked up on the figure of "Weird Willie" and he showed up in novels, poetry, and plays — he even earned his own CBC television miniseries.



Figure 9.25 Mackenzie King with his dog, Pat I, the first of a succession of Pats with whom he maintained a spiritual relationship after they died.

Other historians have challenged the accuracy and usefulness of this idea of our most successful prime minister as a ghost-talking, sex-trade client. Yet whatever side one takes, perhaps the most interesting conclusion we can reach about the "Weird Willie" phenomenon is to think about why it happened at all. The popularity of this idea of Mackenzie King having led a secret life tells us something about him, but it also tells us about Canadian culture and politics in the years *after* he died.

At the time of Mackenzie King's death in 1950, journalists and historians could have known about his private life but chose not to delve too deeply into it. They remained deferential to the privacy of a statesman. Indeed, a 1949 biography of Mackenzie King even mentioned his interest in what he called psychic research. Yet no journalists followed up on these revelations.

If we fast-forward to the mid-1970s, Canadians were lining up to buy books about his double life that exposed the allegedly lurid details of his sex life and his mystical beliefs. It wasn't only that new information had emerged, something else had happened too: Canadian political culture had become much less deferential. Journalists and citizens demanded more of their political figures. As a result of the sexual revolution of the 1960s, some parts of life that had been considered out of bounds — like speaking about someone's sex life — were no longer taboo. What the ghost of Mackenzie King found out is that this new openness and frankness applied even to dead politicians.

When we think about Weird Willie and his secret life, we are actually learning about two historical eras. The first is the era in which King lived. The second is the years after Mackenzie King died, the postwar decades. The transformation in Canadian values in these years led journalists and the public to want to lay bare the secret lives of those who governed them.

Additional Readings

C P Stacey, *A Very Double Life: The Private World of Mackenzie King* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1976).

Michael Bliss, *Right Honourable Men: The Descent of Canadian Politics from Macdonald to Chretien* (Toronto: Harper Perennial, 2004).

Christopher Dummitt, *The People Unfooled: Mackenzie King's Secret Life and the Making of an Irreverent Democracy* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, forthcoming).



Figure 9.26 Louis St. Laurent and W.L. Mackenzie King at the UN Conference on International Organization in 1945.

Uncle Louis

Of all the 20th-century governments, it is probably easiest to undervalue the importance of the St. Laurent administrations. Louis St. Laurent (1882-1973) does not appear on Canadian currency. He was charismatic, but in an understated and avuncular way (unlike Diefenbaker and Trudeau, who followed him). He was not — even though perhaps he should have been — a Nobel Prize winner (unlike his successor at the head of the Liberal Party, Lester B. Pearson), and he only (only!) held office for a decade, unlike his exceptional predecessor, Mackenzie King. And yet remarkable things were accomplished under St. Laurent, and that first Cold War decade decided much about the rest of the 20th century for Canada.

St. Laurent inherited the **Prime Minister's Office (PMO)** from Mackenzie King and led the Liberals to their largest majority ever in 1949. He did comparably well in 1953. The Liberals oversaw economic and governmental expansion of a kind that was unparalleled before and after St. Laurent's mandate. The economy rebounded from the postwar doldrums and emerged from the Korean War in better shape than when it went into it.

What's more, St. Laurent personally changed the political culture in that he humanized the role of leader. He was old: when he took over the PMO, he was already 66, the oldest person to enter the position ever. Perhaps because he came to the job late in life he lacked the stuffiness of Bennett, the careerism of King, or the hustle of Diefenbaker. Indeed, St. Laurent was known to ignore voters and journalists if there were children nearby with whom he could chat instead, for which he earned the epithet, "Uncle Louis" in English Canada, and "Papa Louis" in French Canada.

Nevertheless St. Laurent's peers described him as effective and intellectually sharp. His critics thought that he was obsessively anti-communist and too quick to involve Canada in the wider world. St. Laurent would probably plead guilty to both charges. He played a leading role in the creation of NATO, established permanent Canadian bases in West Germany, took Canada into the anti-communist war in East Asia, committed resources to the Pinetree and Mid-Canada radar defence lines, and contributed significantly to Canada's role in negotiating a diplomatic solution to the Suez Crisis in 1956.

St. Laurent's worldview must have been formed decades earlier but his anti-communist instincts were sharpened by the 1946 Gouzenko Affair. St. Laurent's actions in these years speak to a Cold War-era fear of the Soviet Union and concern that small wars — Korea and the Israel-Egypt conflict — could lead to full-blown nuclear holocausts. Like King, he envisioned Canada occupying the position of **middle power**, playing a critical role and brokering peace between high-flying superpowers and the major powers. As well, he saw a role in building an alliance of like-minded nations with comparable influence. To that end, he championed the cause of an inclusive Commonwealth that went beyond the so-called "White Dominions" and included India (led in these years by its first post-independence prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru) and other emergent colonies in Asia and Africa. While he advanced these arguably progressive objectives, St. Laurent in 1949 oversaw the wholesale purge of left-wingers in the National Film Board.[2]

In terms of social policies, St. Laurent's administration promoted the agenda of the postwar settlement and the welfare state. All Canadians over 70 years of age would get pensions; those over 65 were eligible for assistance. The government pushed the provinces, too, with respect to post-secondary education and healthcare. Investments in infrastructure were part of Ottawa's job-creation plan, and it was under St. Laurent that the St. Lawrence Seaway, the Trans-Canada Pipeline, and the Trans-Canada Highway were completed. In this respect, St. Laurent inherited from King a political environment that included social democratic, agrarian socialist, and populist Social Credit traditions and parties.[3] Holding the middle ground by borrowing from both sides was a Liberal Party practice that St. Laurent's regime refined.

St. Laurent's anti-Soviet position inevitably brought him closer to the United States, something about which some Canadians were conflicted and to which others were adamantly opposed. What would have inflamed opinion among the latter group was the Prime Minister's role in the Suez Crisis. Britain (along with France and in support of Israel) had blundered into an attempt to capture the Suez Canal. This took place just as the Americans were protesting the Soviet Union's suppression of the Hungarian Uprising of 1956. Embarrassed by the timing of the British military expedition against Egypt and fearing Soviet reprisals against NATO partners in Western Europe, the Americans took a highly critical

2. Reg Whitaker and Steve Hewitt, *Canada and the Cold War: The Making of a National Insecurity State, 1945-1957* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Co., 2003), 10.

3. Alvin Finkel, *Our Lives: Canada After 1945* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1997), 6-7.

stance of Britain. For Canada to stand by while Britain was effectively at war was one thing; for Canada to side with the Americans against Britain was entirely another.

This was, in many respects, continuity rather than rupture. Mackenzie King had always been closer to the United States than to the United Kingdom. Ogdensburg certainly confirmed that. Mackenzie King's so-called Minister of Everything, C.D. Howe (1886-1960), was also St. Laurent's chief planner and carried on through these crises as though it was still 1943. Anti-American feeling, concern that members of the Liberal Party were getting fat off of government contracts, and worn out by more than a decade of Howe's steamroller approach to getting projects done, Canadians took a renewed interest in the option of voting Conservative, especially as that party had found a new, charismatic leader in John Diefenbaker.

Exercise: Documents

"Do nothing by halves which can be done by quarters." (F.R. Scott, "W.L.M.K.")

Mackenzie King's diaries survived incineration almost by chance, and we are so much richer for it. He was assiduous in maintaining a journal and surprisingly frank. And sometimes odd. Any kind of coincidence caught his attention and he filled it with meaning. The hands of a clock both at 12, the recurrence of a colour, similarities in names — they all signaled to him some higher force at work.

No other public figure in the history of Canada left us such an extensive record of their private thoughts on both personal and public matters.

Mackenzie King's careful notebooks were transcribed in typescript, beginning in 1950. These are only partial when compared to the original. Nonetheless, they present surprising detail. In December 1944, while the world was at war, Mackenzie King had a night of interrupted sleep. In the middle of the night, he recorded his recollection of a disturbing dream. In the morning, he receives news of still more psychic events in Montreal. Are these the ramblings of an exhausted prime minister, or do they reveal something of the inner workings of the early 20th century, modern mind?

Laurier House, 1334

Sunday, December 10, 1944

I slept well until some little time after 4, when I wakened after having a very vivid vision . I subsequently got up and wrote it out by hand. As I have recorded the vision, it is as follows: At 4.15, I had a vision that I was getting information by mediumship. That I was telling the H. of C. or members thereof or friends something that was coming to me by psychic means. It seemed to take longer than I had expected to retail what was being told me. Gradually a part seemed to me missing that was important. I said I will get it by going somewhere for it. Meant going some distance and like out unto a road that ran into the country. I thought at the time of the road I used to take to go riding horseback. In writing the vision, I wrote the words "like out to Merrickville". A friend said to me that was a long way to go and have to come back on foot. I said coming back, I would 'phone to L.H. and have Lay meet me with the car and drive me home. That seemed to be all right. Then suddenly I thought of a letter that came to me yesterday and which I had begun to read - from someone in Montreal. I had stopped reading when P. and G. were present, seeing it was some message from mother by direct voice. I left it on the library table upstairs and had not read it during the evening. I felt it was important to see that letter after I came upstairs to the library. It was at this point that I wakened up, and wrote out the above at 4.17. When I had finished the writing, it was 4.22, hands of my little clock so exactly together that it looked like one very thin little line. Something prompted me to write down the message, to record it as important.

I found it difficult to get to sleep after I returned to bed. I must, however, have slept off and on at intervals as when I heard the church bells opposite ringing 8 o'clock, it had not seemed like 3 ½ hours that I had been awake. Lay came with tea later. I rested a short time and got up before the 9 o'clock news. Had breakfast over and was at reading some time before 10.

The little books were as always true in their message but as is the case when one is tired, and not so completely uplifted in spirit, the significance of truths and words were not as real in some ways as during other experiences. The 12th Psalm carried its message.

After reading I looked at the letter which had come yesterday. It had been sent on December 6 from Mr. Garland Parsons, of 2039 McGill College Avenue, Montreal. I do not know him at all. In the letter he says: Please allow me to intrude upon your time for a moment to inform you of a personal and intimate incident that will interest you. At a direct voice trumpet seance held in Westmount in a private home where a group of friends gathered

Figure 9.E1 A page from the typescript version of Mackenzie King's journal, 10 December 1944. [Long Description]

Key Points

- Changes in the democratic franchise continued to be made (federally and provincially) in the mid-20th century, mostly tending toward greater inclusiveness, but there were significant reversals as well, principally based on race and pacifism.
- Mackenzie King's complex and extensive secret life of spiritualism, seances, and superstition was kept under the public radar because of greater deference shown to political leaders at the time.
- The postwar boom was ushered in by the Liberals under Louis St. Laurent — a decade that saw Canada become active in global diplomacy, counter-espionage, communist hunts, and massive infrastructure projects.

Long Descriptions

Figure 9.E1 long description: Typeset page from William Lyon Mackenzie King's diary. It is dated Sunday, December 10, 1944, at Laurier House. It reads:

"I slept well until some little time after 4, when I wakened after having a very vivid vision. I subsequently got up and wrote it out by hand. As I have recorded the vision, it is as follows: At 4.15, I had a vision that I was getting information by mediumship. That I was telling the H. of C. or members thereof or friends something that was coming to me by psychic means. It seemed to take longer than I had expected to recall what was being told me. Gradually a part seemed to me missing that was important. I said I well get it by going somewhere for it. Meant going some distance and like out unto a road that ran into the country. I thought at the time of the road I used to take to go riding horseback. In writing the vision, I wrote the words 'like out to Merrickville'. A friend said to me that was a long way to go and have to come back on foot. I said coming back, I would 'phone to L.H. and have Lay meet me with the car and drive me home. That seemed to be all right. Then suddenly I thought of a letter that came to me yesterday and which I had begun to read — from someone in Montreal. I had stopped reading when P. and G. were present, seeing it was some message from mother by direct voice. I left it on the library table upstairs and had not read it during the evening. I felt it was important to see that letter after I came upstairs to the library. It was at this point that I wakened up, and wrote out the above at 4.17. When I had finished the writing, it was 4.22, hands of my little clock so exactly together that it looked like one very thin little line. Something prompted me to write down the message, to record it as important."

"I found it difficult to get to sleep after I returned to bed. I must, however, have slept off and on at intervals as when I heard the church bells opposite ringing 8 o'clock, it had not seemed like 3½ hours that I had been awake. Lay came with tea later. I rested a short time and got up before the 9 o'clock news. Had breakfast over and was at reading some time before 10."

"The little books were as always true in their message but as is the case when one is tired, and not so completely uplifted in spirit, the significance of truths and words were not as real in some ways as during other experiences. The 12th Psalm carried its message."

"After reading I looked at the letter which had come yesterday. It had been sent on December 6 from Mr. Garland Parsons, of 2039 McGill College Avenue, Montreal. I do not know him at all. In the letter he says: Please allow me to intrude upon your time for a moment to inform you of a personal and intimate incident that will interest you. At a direct voice trumpet seance held in Westmount in a private home where a group of friends gathered …" [Return to Figure 9.E1]

Media Attributions

- Nursing Sisters at a Canadian Hospital voting in the Canadian federal election © William Rider-Rider, Canada Dept. of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada (PA-002279) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- President Harry Truman and Rt. Hons. Clement Attlee and Mackenzie King boarding U.S.C.G. SEQUOIA for discussions about the atomic bomb © Library and Archives Canada (C-023269) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- In Hiawatha Council Hall on occasion of federal by-election © Nick Nickels, Library and Archives Canada (PA-123915). Copyright Government of Canada. No restrictions on use.
- Rt. Hon. W.L. Mackenzie King with his dog Pat I at Moorside Cottage, 1940 © Yousuf Karsh, Library and Archives Canada (PA-174051) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Rt. Hon. W.L. Mackenzie King and Hon. Louis St. Laurent at the United Nations Conference on International Organization © Nicholas Morant, National Film Board of Canada. Phototheque, Library and Archives Canada (C-022717) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Page of Prime Minister King's Journal, 1944 © W.L. Mackenzie King is licensed under a Public Domain license

9.6 Dief is the Chief

From 1896 to 1957, the Liberal Party ran Canada, with only three intermissions. There was the decade from 1911 to 1920, when Robert Borden (1854-1937) and his Conservative/Union governments were in power. Arthur Meighen (1874-1960) was Prime Minister for three months in 1926. R.B. Bennett (1870-1947) held the job from 1930 to 1935. That's only 15 years of Conservative government, as opposed to 46 years of Liberal administration. And most of that Liberal lock on power was on Mackenzie King's watch. By the late 1950s, change was, arguably, overdue, as the leadership of the Liberal Party looked more and more like an aging dynasty, one that included the brusque and arrogant C.D. Howe. St. Laurent's pro-Americanism grated in many quarters and there was a growing sense that big infrastructure projects helped contractors and their friends while the government's commitment to social welfare more generally was tempered by a fiscal conservatism.

In 1957, the Conservatives under their new leader, John Diefenbaker (1895-1979), capitalized on Liberal weaknesses and a campaign that was noteworthy for embarrassing moments. Diefenbaker (aka: Dief) represented the left-wing of the conservative tradition in Canada — he was a **Red Tory**— and was committed to the ideal of the common good. His position on expanding the welfare state, for example, was more aggressive than St. Laurent's, a fact that probably cost the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) some votes and, indeed, seats. A populist speaker on the campaign trail, Diefenbaker had a near-legendary memory for faces and names; he was, as well, the first credible non-francophone, non–Anglo-Celtic leader. He was, like so many Westerners, from central European stock and was unencumbered by either the old Tory fetish for British royalism nor the reflexive North American continentalist response. He surprised the pundits by winning enough seats to form a minority government. In 1958, he went back to the polls and was returned with the biggest majority to date.

Two issues dominated the Diefenbaker years. One of these was civil and personal liberties. The other was relations with the United States. These would all overlap in ways that could only have happened in the Cold War.

Diefenbaker and the Rise of Rights

Before 1960, the rights that were enjoyed by some Canadians — and denied to others — were of two kinds. There were those established in British Common Law (some of which dated back to the *Magna Carta*) and those that could be found in various pieces of legislation such as the *Persons Act* or the *Indian Act.* There was no single statement of principles comparable to the American Bill of Rights. It is perhaps ironic that the Canadian prime minister most associated with mid-century nationalism produced a legislative statement that brought the Canadian culture of rights more into line with that of the United States. It was, however, a long-term project of Diefenbaker's. Begun in the 1930s when he was a Prince Albert lawyer, it was probably nudged along by the introduction of the *Saskatchewan Bill of Rights* in 1947.



Figure 9.27 Diefenbaker's legal career put him in regular contact with Indigenous communities in Saskatchewan. More than any of his predecessors, he took steps to involve First Nations directly in public life and the economy.

The *Canadian Bill of Rights* (1960) arose in part from an increased postwar interest in human rights. This was an ideal championed by the United Nations, made more pressing with the revelations of the Nuremberg Trials. It was also a bedrock issue in the West as regards Cold War rhetoric. That is, rights were associated with free democracies and not with communist or fascist regimes. In practice, the *Canadian Bill of Rights* was limited in its impact. Its range was limited to federal laws, it did not involve a constitutional change, and it neither called for nor engaged in the kind of housekeeping needed to eliminate contradictions in existing legislation. Nevertheless, it was a landmark in that it was a bold and concise statement of rights that extended to all members of Canadian society: to wit:

> **1.** It is hereby recognized and declared that in Canada there have existed and shall continue to exist without discrimination by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion or sex, the following human rights and fundamental freedoms, namely,[1]
>
> (*a*) the right of the individual to life, liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property, and the right not to be deprived thereof except by due process of law;
>
> (*b*) the right of the individual to equality before the law and the protection of the law;
>
> (*c*) freedom of religion;
>
> (*d*) freedom of speech;
>
> (*e*) freedom of assembly and association; and
>
> (*f*) freedom of the press,…

1. Bill c-44, *Canadian Bill of Rights*, S.C. 1960 (assented to 10 August 1960)

Diefenbaker's commitment to a more inclusive vision of Canada manifested itself in other ways, too. He extended the franchise to Indigenous peoples and, in 1960, appointed Ellen Fairclough (1905-2005) to his Cabinet, making her the first woman to hold an executive position in the federal government, and he sent James Gladstone (aka: Akay-na-muka, 1887-1971) to the Senate — the first Indigenous person to hold such an appointment.

The Canadian Identity

From 1867 to 1958, the essential debate over the nature of Canadian nationhood was between those who yearned for unity in duality and those who sought a single (typically, anglophone) nationality. The Conservatives in the 1950s continued to suffer in Quebec from the legacy of Borden's conscription policies — so much so that Diefenbaker did not bring a single Québecois MP into his Cabinet. This did nothing to repair the relationship between the Tories and Quebec. Moreover, Diefenbaker was adamantly opposed to dualism, which, given the history of the Conservatives, might not be terribly surprising. But there was a new twist: Diefenbaker objected to special concessions to Quebec and to francophones, not because he would rather they were anglophones or because doing so would subtract from the rights of anglophones, but because the binary logic of dualism impaired the citizenship of Canadians drawn from other ethnic/national groups and did nothing at all for Indigenous peoples. For Diefenbaker, legislation such as the *Bill of Rights* created guarantees for all Canadians rather than concessions based on ancestry or culture. This was the essence of his One Canada policy that was dismissed by many Canadians, although it contained the germ of what would become known as multiculturalism a decade later.

Diefenbaker and World Affairs

Although Pearson is the prime minister most often associated with diplomatic ability, Diefenbaker did much to reorient Canada internationally. He was perpetually suspicious of American influences and sought to improve Canadian trade with Britain and raise Canada's profile in the Commonwealth. When white voters in South Africa decided by referendum in 1960 to become a republic (one in which black and Asian citizens would have far fewer rights), the Commonwealth was asked to permit South Africa to continue as a member. Diefenbaker went on record as hostile to **apartheid** and was able to persuade the Commonwealth countries (other than Britain and New Zealand) that racial equality was a principle of the association. South Africa was thus obliged to withdraw from the Commonwealth.

During the Suez Crisis of 1956, Diefenbaker chided Pearson and St. Laurent for getting too close to the Americans. The White House took note and, observing Diefenbaker's pro-Commonwealth orientation, expected that he would be a difficult prime minister. But, in 1958, he carried forward the Liberal government's commitment to the **North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD)** agreement with the United States. NORAD effectively made Canada part of the American frontline of defense against a Soviet missile attack and it was responsible for administering the Pinetree, Mid-Canada, and DEW Lines. It was under Diefenbaker, as well, that the promising Avro Arrow program was scrapped. The CF-100 Canuck was, in the early 1950s, the first of Avro Canada's innovations in jet-powered aircraft, and it was followed by a much more sophisticated, delta-wing jet called the **Avro Arrow**. The first operational unit was unveiled on 4 October 1957. The date matters because of the

coincidental launch that day of the first space satellite, the Russian **Sputnik**. What might have served as a cutting-edge bomber interceptor had, in a stroke, been rendered inadequate by the possibility of long-range, rocket-launched attacks.



Figure 9.28 No love lost. Diefenbaker and (to his right) Governor General Georges Vanier host President John F. Kennedy in 1961. First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy and Olive Diefenbaker can be seen as well.

Rising costs, slumping demand from the Royal Canadian Airforce (RAF), an abject failure to sell units to the Americans or elsewhere internationally, and a growing sense that the Arrow would fare badly in an ICBM world, cast the Arrow project in a dim light. The new Bomarc anti-aircraft missile promised to perform better and, presented with an either-or choice, Diefenbaker opted in 1959 to go with the missiles. Two American-built, Canadian-managed Bomarc launch sites were constructed in Canada, but the question remained as to whether the missiles would be nuclear-tipped. Diefenbaker and his cabinet procrastinated before deciding against the nuclear-tipped option, as the 1962 election campaign drew closer. Although Diefenbaker had got on well enough with American President Dwight Eisenhower (1890-1969), there was little other than mutual loathing between the Canadian prime minister and President John F. Kennedy. (Kennedy regarded Diefenbaker as a “boring son of a bitch” and seemed determined to mispronounce the Prime Minister’s surname. Diefenbaker said, likewise, of JFK, “He’s a fool — too young, too brash, too inexperienced, and a boastful son of a bitch!”) Pressed by Kennedy to join the Organization of American States (OAS) — a hemispheric alliance that critics regarded as an American-run Cold War club — Diefenbaker pushed back, rejected the OAS and the nuclear warheads for Bomarc.



Figure 9.29 The fate of the Arrow remains a sore point for many Canadians.

The decision to cut Ottawa's losses on the Avro Arrow (the few prototypes were subsequently cut up into scrap) cost Avro thousands of jobs. This was politically bad enough but when coupled with the Bomarc dithering and the poor contrast between America's dashing new President and the far less photogenic Diefenbaker it was political poison. To make matters worse, a deflating dollar — it fell to 92.5 cents against the American dollar — brought taunts of Diefendollars and hurt the Tories' chances of reelection. In 1962, the Tories were reduced to a minority and then, in 1963, the Liberals snuck in with a minority of their own.

Beyond the Arrow



Figure 9.30 Canadian technical know-how contributed to the Lunar Excursion Module, thanks to lay-offs at Avro.

For the most part, Canadian technological achievements in the 1950s and 1960s were eclipsed by American and Soviet advances. Nevertheless, they are very much worth noting.

The Canadian automobile industry perpetually suffered against American imports and the dominance of American design and parts. This would change somewhat with the Auto Pact (discussed in Section 8.14), though not a great deal. Where Canadians did much better was, perhaps not surprisingly, in areas that reflected the country's particular environmental challenges.

In the 1930s, a Valcourt mechanic, Joseph-Armand Bombardier (1907-1964), began work on a bus that could run on snow. In 1937, he produced the first snowmobile, or *auto-neige*, a large multi-terrain vehicle for use on Quebec's winter roads. When snowplough technology improved during the war, Bombardier quickly refocused on military equipment and then on smaller versions of the snowmobile. The Ski-Dog was intended for individuals and communities in the north where dog-teams were still widely used in winter. An error in printing resulted in the 1959 Ski-Doo and the explosion of a recreational market. By 1969, the late founder's sons had taken over the firm and incorporated it as Bombardier Limited. Over the next 20 years, the company would move aggressively into air transport, rail technology, and rapid transit. Vancouver's SkyTrain system (which opened in 1986), for example, relies heavily on Bombardier rolling stock and technology. It was as a defence contractor that Bombardier first experienced significant success and it is in that area that much Canadian technological innovation has occurred, especially in aeronautics.



Figure 9.31 Auto-neiges at or near Sainte-Anne-des-Monts, ca. 1941.

Canada's involvement in the **space race** begins in earnest with the launching of the Alouette I satellite in 1962, which made Canada only the fourth country in space. The size and shape of the country means that Canada was bound to take an early interest in advances in telecommunications technologies. Direct engagement with the space race — competition between the Soviet Union and the United States to dominate beyond the stratosphere — was never on the cards. Indirect involvement, however, occurred in important ways. When the Avro Arrow project was cancelled in 1959, nearly three dozen Canadian and British engineers, including Owen Maynard (1924-2000), were freed up for work at the National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA) in the United States. Maynard, an Ontarian, produced the preliminary designs that led to the Lunar Module component of the first moon landing in 1969, and he was a chief engineer on the Apollo 11 mission. Around the same time, Canada was invited by NASA to participate in the coming **Space Shuttle** program; the end product was the Shuttle Remote Manipulator System, also known as the Canadarm.



Figure 9.32 Two other 20th century discoveries and innovations made by Canadians are insulin (Frederick Banting and Charles Best, 1922) and the humble but highly efficient paint-roller (Norman Breakey, 1940).

Not all administrations leave much in the way of a legacy. Diefenbaker's definitely did, although it is

not always easy to see what it was. His “One Canada” mantra was enough to derail the two-century-old discourse of **two founding nations** and to begin the process of legitimizing diversity in Canada. The *Bill of Rights* was a significant statement that replaced *individual* rights with *human* rights, without which the 1982 *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* would have had little in the way of foundation material. Pearson was pivotal in the evolution of Canada’s role as a broker in international affairs; Diefenbaker’s stand against apartheid contributed to the view that Canada was principled in that role, and not merely an impartial referee or a sidekick to Britain or the United States. The Diefenbaker years saw Canada align more fully with the United States in the Cold War while, at the same time, bridling against American imperialism through the OAS and American chauvinism generally. Even Pearson, whom the Kennedy administration worked quietly to help elect, found relations with the American superpower more difficult than he would have hoped.

Key Points

- Diefenbaker (Dief) was the first Conservative Party leader to win government in a generation.
- Diefenbaker proved less fiscally conservative than his Liberal predecessors and promoted welfare statism as well as a breakthrough Bill of Rights.
- Vocally nationalistic, Diefenbaker articulated a suspicion of growing American influence and, at the same time, took Canada into NORAD and scrapped the Avro Arrow program.
- Canadian involvement in the post-war acceleration of technological breakthroughs took several forms, including terrestrial and extra-terrestrial transportation.

Media Attributions

- Left to right: George Koneak, Fort Chimo, Que.; Shinuktuk, Rankin Inlet, N.W.T.; John G. Diefenbaker, Prince Rupert, Sask.; Jean Ayaruark, Rankin Inlet, N.W.T.; Abraham Ogpik, Aklavik, N.W.T. In Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, May 1959 © National Film Board of Canada. Photothèque, Library and Archives Canada (PA-114838) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Visit of the President of United States John F. Kennedy and his wife Jacqueline. Group in front of the Government House: President John F. Kennedy, Governor General Georges Vanier, Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker, Mrs. Kennedy, and Mrs. Diefenbaker © Duncan Cameron, Library and Archives Canada (PA-154665). Copyright assigned to Library and Archives Canada by copyright owner Duncan Cameron. No restrictions on use.
- Ontario-6934 – Canadian Pride © Dennis Jarvis is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Apollo 11 Lunar Lander © Neil Armstrong is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Autoneiges – Marsoui Gaspesie is licensed under a Public Domain license

9.7 The Pearson Interlude



Figure 9.33 Pearson (at right) collected in one cabinet three future PMs: Trudeau, Turner, and Chrétien, April 1967.

It is one of the remarkable features of Canadian political history that Lester B. Pearson is in some respects better regarded and more widely recognized than Diefenbaker. He never won a majority government, he was at least as much a compromiser as Mackenzie King, he did not stand up to the Americans, nor did he bring good continental relations in his wake. Pearson does, however, have that Nobel Prize going for him, and it was under his one term in office that many of the trappings of modern Canadian nationalism took form.

International Affairs

Pearson came to politics from a career in diplomacy. He joined the newly established Department of External Affairs in 1927 and was subsequently posted to London for much of the World War II. His next posting was the plum job of Canadian Ambassador to the United States. He was elected federally in 1948 and spent the next nine years as Secretary of State for External Affairs. He had a hand in the establishment of the United Nations and NATO. He was, of course,a key figure in resolving the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956, and successfully proposed to the UN the idea of a **peacekeeping** force that could be deployed with sufficient authority and firepower that it might keep warring sides at bay while diplomats sought a resolution outside of conflict. The Nobel Prize came to him in 1957, just as St. Laurent's government was about to collapse under the first Diefenbaker victory.

By 1962 domestic issues were competing with international affairs for the voters' attention. The Cold War was at its height, and some Canadians were drawn to a new Liberal Party leader who had a gold-plated resume in diplomacy. Of course, many voters simply voted against the incumbent regime. Pearson's first administration, however, was not marked by a resounding victory at the polls. The

Liberals did well in Quebec, but they were not yet restored to dominance there; indeed, the Social Credit (Socred) Party won enough seats to form a balance of power in the Commons. It was worse elsewhere in the country. In point of fact, Pearson's government was elected almost entirely from central Canada. Initially with the support of the Socreds, and then with the New Democratic Party (NDP), Pearson was able to hold his minority together until another election in 1965. Thereafter, he had to coax another minority administration along to 1968.

Pearson campaigned in 1962 on the promise of "60 Days of Decision," a swipe at the Diefenbaker government's inability to move forward on several key issues. Pearson quickly accepted the nuclear warheads for Bomarc missiles, rushed into place **universal health care** under the *Medical Care Act* (1966), and introduced the **Canada Pension Plan (CPP)**. Pro-labour policies (including a minimum wage and mandatory vacation time) won support from union elements in the NDP. **Canada Student Loans** were another product of the Pearson administrations. Pearson demonstrated solid diplomatic ability when it came to making a minority government function well, but he did less well against the Americans.

As the United States' involvement in the Vietnam War increased, Washington requested that Canada commit troops, as it had to in Korea from 1949 to 1957. The issue, from Washington's perspective, was largely the same: containment of communism. Pearson, however, resisted and sought to present Canada as a non-belligerent ally of the United States. Canadian firms profited heavily from the war as they supplied necessary materiel to the United States, including the controversial defoliant **Agent Orange**. Pearson did nothing to impede this trade but did speak out against the American campaign. On 2 April 1965, speaking as a guest at Philadelphia's Temple University, Pearson endorsed the idea of a cessation in the United States' bombing of North Vietnam so that talks might get underway between the two sides. President Lyndon B. Johnson (1908-1973) was outraged that a foreign leader would criticize his war policy, even more so because Pearson made his comments while visiting the United States. The Prime Minister was summoned to the White House where Johnson — a significantly larger man than Pearson — picked him up by the lapels and thundered, "You pissed on my rug!" After nearly an hour of being dressed down, Pearson was permitted to leave and subsequently issued an apology.

The New Nationalism



Figure 9.34 Close, but not the winner: the Pearson Pennant, ca. 1964.

If St. Laurent's nationalism contained elements of Henri Bourassa's continentalism mixed with a global

vision, and Dief's was simultaneously anti-American and somewhat pro-British, Pearson's drew on old Imperialist dreams of Canada as a leader on the world stage while disavowing both British and American orientations.

Pearson contributed to the dialogue on Canadian identity in several important, if highly symbolic ways. First, and probably most notably, he was responsible for initiating the **Flag Debate**, out of which came the successor to the Red Ensign, the Maple Leaf flag. Although his preferred version — two blue borders on a white centre with three red maple leaves — failed to get support (it was mocked as the "Pearson Pennant"), the now-familiar red-and-white flag emerged as the consensus favourite among those who supported the idea of a new flag at all; many did not. Diefenbaker, pro-British elements, and veterans' groups in particular remained hostile for many years thereafter. (They were, if possible, even less happy about "O Canada" replacing "God Save the Queen" as the national anthem in 1965.) If the new flag spoke to Pearson's view that Canada was autonomous and ought to look the part, his **Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism**, launched in 1963, was an effort to have a conversation that Canadians had mostly avoided for the better part of a century. The Bi and Bi Commission would report out after Pearson was gone from office, but its timing, along with that of the **Centennial** celebrations in 1967 (including **Expo '67**), would contribute to Pearson's legacy as a maker of a burnished Canadian nationalism.

Watch this *Canada Starts To Produce New Flag* video to see Pearson defending the Maple Leaf flag in front of a largely hostile crowd of Legionnaires.

Watch this video on *Diefenbaker's Flag Crusade* to see Diefenbaker's reply.

Key Points

- Pearson's contribution to Canada's role in international affairs is better known than his contribution to the growing welfare state and, particularly, the introduction of universal health care and the Canada Pension Plan.
- Despite being ostensibly better disposed toward the United States than Diefenbaker, Pearson found himself roundly criticized by American President Johnson.
- Pearson's introduction of a new flag was an element in a larger attempt to develop an independent and singular identity for Canada at mid-century.

Media Attributions

- Pierre Elliott Trudeau, John Turner, Jean Chrétien and Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson following Cabinet changes © Duncan Cameron, Library and Archives Canada (PA-117107). Copyright assigned to Library and Archives Canada by copyright owner Duncan Cameron. No restrictions on use.
- Pearson Pennant, 1964 is licensed under a Public Domain license

9.8 Trudeau I



Figure 9.35 Pierre Trudeau at the 1968 Liberal Leadership convention.

The election in 2015 of a government led by Justin Trudeau (b. 1971) sharpened the public's memory of his father, Pierre Elliot Trudeau (1919-2000). Raised in a well-to-do household in Outremont, Quebec, Pierre Trudeau's roots in Canada wind back to the 1650s on one side, with Scottish-French ancestors on the other. Biographers have observed this apparent bridging of the two solitudes, but everything else about Pierre Trudeau's early life suggests a strong and very conventional allegiance to things Canadien. He was educated at an elite Jesuit school and was imbued with a strong sense of French-Canadian nationalism. As a young man, he was old enough to serve in the Second World War but, like most of his generation in Quebec, he opposed conscription. He completed a law degree at the Université de Montréal, then studied at Harvard University and the London School of Economics. Although he failed to complete his doctorate, he was regarded in Montreal as an intellectual. Before he was 30 years old, he had established a reputation as a dissident writer and journalist with a strong pro-labour orientation. Personal wealth and extensive connections allowed him opportunities in Ottawa (where he worked as an economic policy advisor to St. Laurent) and the wherewithal to establish *Cité*

Libre, a publication that regularly critiqued the Union Nationale government of Maurice Duplessis and gave voice to the early stages of the **Quiet Revolution**. Duplessis, it is alleged, responded by ensuring that Trudeau could not find work in Quebec universities. Certainly it was not until after Duplessis' death that Trudeau was taken on by the Université de Montréal as a law professor. It was there that Lester Pearson approached him about a career in politics.

The Three Wise Men

In his mid-40s, Trudeau still had close ties with labour organizations and was favourably disposed toward social democrats within and without the CCF/NDP. But he regarded their ability to achieve change as very limited and was persuaded to join the Liberal Party in 1965 as part of a trio of Quebec recruits known as the **Three Wise Men** (or *les trois colombes*): Trudeau, Gérard Pelletier (1919-1997), who was another founder/writer for *Cité Libre*, and Jean Marchand (1918-1988), who was a trade union organizer and activist. Marchand was, in many respects, the high-profile member of the three, and he was quickly given a prominent role in the Pearson government. Trudeau was made Parliamentary Secretary to Pearson, a kind of personal advisor, and he quickly acquired an understanding of the **Prime Minister's Office (PMO)**. Soon thereafter he was made Minister of Justice, despite having only just joined the Liberal Party and having never before held elected office.

In 1967, the Liberal Party began the process of finding a successor to Pearson through a leadership convention. Marchand was favoured to run as the French-Canadian candidate but he declined, claiming (correctly) that his English was insufficient.[1] Trudeau was persuaded to run but his candidacy was divisive. As Justice Minister he had made divorce easier to obtain, he had permissive attitudes toward abortion, and was regarded by many in the Party as radical on other social issues. It took four ballots for Trudeau to narrowly win with only 51% of the vote.



Figure 9.36 It is difficult to imagine Pearson or Diefenbaker meeting and being photographed with rockstars. John Lennon, Yoko Ono, and Pierre Trudeau in 1969.

1. To be fair, this sort of concern did not impact English-Canadian leaders the same way until the late 20th century. "Diefenbaker-French" was a term widely used to describe a garbled version that was incomprehensible to Francophones but strangely recognizable to Anglophones.

The Leadership Convention received unprecedented media attention and served as a launchpad for the federal election the same year. Echoing the appeal of “British Invasion” bands of the decade, public fascination with Trudeau was promoted as **Trudeaumania**. Although he was nearly 50 years old, Trudeau was seen as youthful and virile — the personification of a generation’s desire to shake up establishment values. He arrived on the political scene at roughly the same time that the Baby Boomers born in 1945-47 became voters and, raised on a cultural diet of television news and the sexual revolution, they regarded Trudeau as one of their own. The contrast with his two opponents — Conservative Party leader Robert Stanfield (1914-2003), heir to a textile manufacturing fortune, a Red Tory, and a former Nova Scotian Premier, and Tommy Douglas, leader of the New Democratic Party, a former Premier of Saskatchewan, and the author of the nation’s first healthcare legislation — was sharp. Stanfield and Douglas (both thoughtful and arguably no less intellectually gifted than Trudeau) had age and experience on their side, but they also had age and experience working against them. Stanfield was only five years Trudeau’s senior but he seemed much, much older. Douglas was ten years older still, and many of those years had been spent in public life. Trudeau could play to these differences, even capitalizing on his status as a relative newcomer in politics. He brought little baggage with him and was, as well, suavely articulate in both languages and ready to speak out against radical nationalists in Quebec. The results were a convincing majority for the Trudeau administration in 1968.

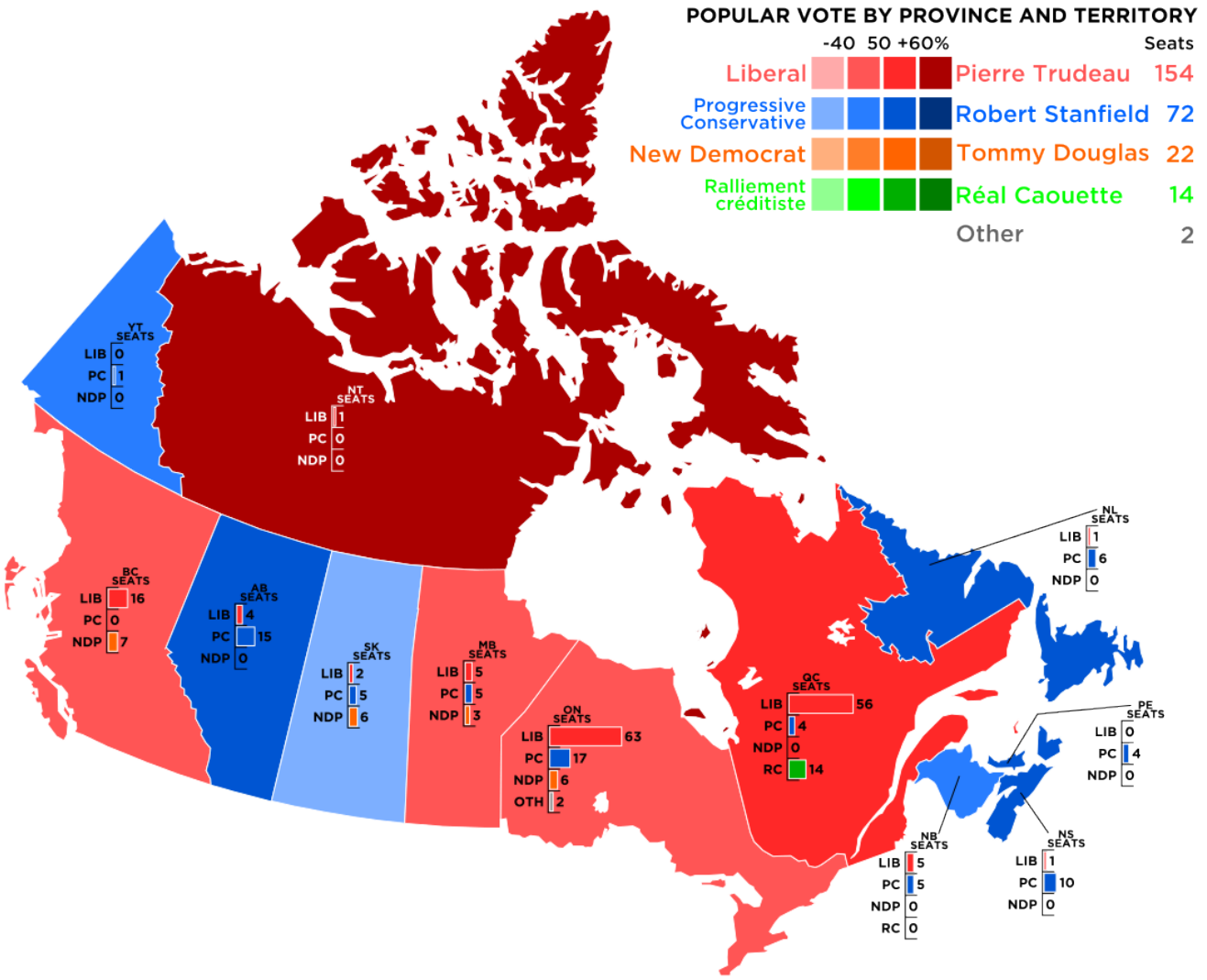


Figure 9.37 Even at the high point of Trudeaumania, the popularity of the Liberal Party was far from universal. [Long Description]

In later years, Trudeau would be regarded as nationally divisive. If we look at the 1968 results, it is clear that some of the fracture lines were already present. Although the Liberals did well in central Canada and British Columbia, Manitoba was a wash, Stanfield's Conservatives were runaway winners in Alberta and Atlantic Canada, and the NDP came out on top (narrowly) in Douglas' home province. The precariousness of Trudeaumania would become clear only four years later.

Trudeau's first years in office were marked by controversial policies and events. The 1968 election took place against a backdrop of increasingly violent separatist protest in Quebec. Indeed, Trudeau's unwillingness to leave a viewing platform at the pre-election Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day parade, despite being heckled and bombarded with bottles and stones, was seen by many as a demonstration of the toughness needed to stand up against separatism. It is even regarded by some historians as a turning point in the election campaign. But it presaged the principal difficulty he would face over the next 15 years: the challenge of Quebec's historic dissatisfaction with Confederation.

Key Points

- Pierre Trudeau's arrival on the national political stage followed decades of activism in support of organized labour and his writing as a dissident intellectual in Duplessis' Quebec.
- Trudeau was recruited by the Pearson Liberals as part of a package aimed at reviving party fortunes in Quebec.
- In a brief career as Minister of Justice, Trudeau was able to introduce new laws and more liberal attitudes on social issues.
- Despite being in his late 40s, Trudeau was regarded by the electorate as a fresh personality who could be tough on separatism.

Long Descriptions

Figure 9.37 long description: Map depicting the results of the 1968 Canadian federal election. The Liberal Party (Pierre Trudeau) won 154 seats, the Progressive Conservative Party (Robert Stanfield) won 72 seats, the New Democrat Party (Tommy Douglas) won 22 seats, and the Ralliement créditiste party (Réal Caouette) won 14 seats. Two seats went to other parties. Broken down by province or territory:

- British Columbia: 16 seats for the Liberals and 7 for the New Democrats (NDP) (69.6% Liberal)
- Alberta: 4 seats for the Liberals, 15 for the Progressive Conservatives (78.9% Progressive Conservative)
- Saskatchewan: 2 for the Liberals, 5 for the Progressive Conservatives, 6 for the NDP (38.5% Progressive Conservative)
- Manitoba: 5 for the Liberals, 5 for the Progressive Conservatives, 3 for the NDP (38.4% Liberal)
- Ontario: 63 for the Liberals, 17 for the Progressive Conservatives, 6 for the NDP, and 2 for other (71.6% Liberal)
- Quebec: 56 for the Liberals, 4 for the Progressive Conservatives, and 14 for the Ralliement créditiste (75.7% Liberal)
- Newfoundland: 1 for the Liberals, 6 for the Progressive Conservatives (85.7% Progressive Conservative)
- New Brunswick: 5 for the Liberals, 5 for the Progressive Conservatives (50% Progressive Conservative)
- Nova Scotia: 1 for the Liberals, 10 for the Progressive Conservatives (90.9% Progressive Conservative)
- Prince Edward Island: 4 for the Progressive Conservatives (100% Progressive Conservative)

- Yukon Territory: 1 for the Progressive Conservatives (100% Progressive Conservative)
- Northwest Territories: 1 for the Liberals (100% Liberal)

[Return to Figure 9.37]

Media Attributions

- P.E. Trudeau at the Liberal Leadership Convention, Ottawa, Ont. © Duncan Cameron, Library and Archives Canada (PA-111213). Copyright assigned to Library and Archives Canada by copyright owner Duncan Cameron. No restrictions on use.
- John Lennon and Yoko Ono with Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau © D. I. Cameron, Library and Archives Canada (PA-110805). Copyright Library and Archives Canada. No restrictions on use.
- Canada 1968 Federal Election © Wikipedia user Lokal_Profil is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

9.9 Cold War Quebec



Figure 9.38 Maurice "Le Chef" Duplessis, ca. 1950.

The mid-20th century produced several provincial leaders who would cast a long shadow over their provinces in an age of growing government involvement in economic, infrastructural, educational, and social policy. This has been called an era of province building. Its chief practitioners — Ernest Manning in Alberta; Tommy Douglas in Saskatchewan; Joey Smallwood in Newfoundland; W.A.C. Bennett in British Columbia; Richard Hatfield in New Brunswick; and a trio of Conservative Premiers (Leslie Frost, John Robarts, and Bill Davis) who governed Ontario from 1949 to 1985 — were each in office for at least a decade, and for as much as 22 and a half years. Each of them had the time to map out and execute significant changes in their respective jurisdictions. Such longevity in politics was rare before World War II; it has been rarer since 1990. They were, clearly, a generation of leaders who had the good fortune to be in office in rising economic times. In Quebec, the political beneficiary of these circumstances was Maurice Le Noblet Duplessis (1890-1959), an exceptional personality in Canadian politics.

Pre-WWII Leadership in Quebec

The first half of the 20th century saw remarkable continuity in Quebec's political leadership. Between them, only four men held the position of premier from 1905 to 1959. Lomer Gouin (1861-1929) became premier in 1905 after a bitter struggle between factions in the Liberal Party in Quebec. Divided between moderate and radical wings, the Liberals were torn on issues like support for modernizing industrial corporations and rapprochement with the Catholic Church on the one hand, versus state control over education and a more aggressively pro-labour policy on the other. Gouin stood out as a compromiser who had Wilfrid Laurier's support. He spent 15 years extending Quebec's northern borders, enticing new industrial enterprises to invest in the province, and advancing the nationalist agenda by developing technical schools and programs that would enable more Quebecers to take advantage of the emergent modern economy. Gouin also calmed the clergy by promising to keep the state out of education and even enhancing Church control over technical education. *Nationalistes* and labour complained that Gouin was too keen to attract foreign investment and foreign-owned plants that siphoned off profits to other countries and consigned Quebecers to low paying industrial jobs. Just as the West was crafted as an Anglo-Canadian settlement frontier, the growing French-Canadian population was inclined to look to colonization opportunities within the newly expanded Quebec. This was not, however, part of Gouin's vision. His Conservative and *nationaliste* opponents alike attacked him for trading off Quebec lands for timber and mining purposes rather than making those properties available for Québecois resettlement and colonization. Gouin's political instincts were, otherwise, outstandingly shrewd. He supported Laurier in 1911 but swung to Borden's side at the outbreak of war. As conscription became a sharper issue, Gouin abandoned Borden and joined the chorus of nationalist voices in Quebec, criticizing Ontario's Regulation 17 and Anglo-Canadian Francophobia generally (see Sections 6.3 and 6.4). By 1919, Gouin was demonstrably an ideological conservative — a defender of Quebec's rights in Confederation, while simultaneously a Canadian nationalist. He commanded respect in Quebec City and in the corridors of power in Ottawa.[1]

Gouin's resignation in 1920 placed the Liberal Party and the provincial administration in the hands of Louis-Alexandre Taschereau (1867-1952). Like Gouin, Taschereau would hold the reins of power for 16 years. Biographies of Taschereau describe him as more pro-industry and pro-business than his predecessor, as well as less likely to defer to the Catholic clergy on education matters. This is true, but it is certainly the case that Taschereau inherited a more industrialized and modernized society than the one first governed by Gouin. In other words, it may be said that he was simply continuing the arc of earlier developments. And he was faced with long-term Québecois concerns. Emigration from Quebec — understood as a depopulation that sapped the strength of the French nation in Canada — had been underway since the mid-19th century. In the 1920s and, even more decisively, the 1930s, this exodus was renewed as young Québecois people searched for work elsewhere and principally in the New England states. Efforts on the part of the National Assembly to slow, halt, and even reverse that trend were applauded by all flavours of French-Canadian politics and society. To that end, Taschereau was noteworthy for developing some of the first major hydroelectric projects in Quebec, massive employers that offered a foretaste of the economic nationalism of the post-1960 provincial economy. These and other initiatives favoured urbanization over agrarian Quebec, the secularization of education (including an attempt to bring Quebec's large Jewish community into the educational decision-making process),

1. Richard Jones, "Gouin, Sir Lomer", in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 15, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed January 12, 2016, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/gouin_lomer_15E.html.

and adding cosmopolitan aspects to cultural life in an otherwise very provincial province. These more controversial projects ran up against *nationalistes*, clergy, Conservatives, and radical Liberals alike, particularly as the 1930s Depression deepened. Elements of the left-wing of the Liberal Party split off to form *Action libérale nationale* (ALN), a new political party led by Gouin's son, Paul, which brought together *nationaliste*, socially progressive, and rural groups. Taschereau was in trouble, but he is almost unique in Canada in that he was elected before the Depression and yet was re-elected — twice — in 1931 and 1935. A corruption scandal forced him from office in 1936, and the Liberal Party leadership was handed to Adélard Godbout (1892-1956). Quebec returned to the polls in the summer of the same year and the Liberals lost decisively.

The 1936 election was a landmark. In 1935, the opposition vote had been split between the Conservatives (with 19% of the ballots cast) and the ALN (29.4%). Although Godbout's Liberals saw their support shrink in 1936 from 46% to 39%, that would have been enough to defeat their opponents had they remained unaligned. The frustrated Conservatives and ALN, however, had come to an agreement, forming the Union Nationale (UN) coalition under the leadership of Duplessis. Gouin distanced himself from Duplessis even before the 1936 election and unsuccessfully attempted to resurrect the ALN from 1938 to 1939. What emerged was essentially a transformed Conservative Party — an ideologically conservative UN with a broad base of rural, economically regressive, pro-Church, and nationalistic voters. The UN turned its back on the Taschereau era's support for hydroelectric projects, a move that condemned rural Quebec to another generation of wood stoves, gas and kerosene lighting, iceboxes, and no radios or telephones. This anti-technological bent would persist in some form for nearly two decades.

Duplessis' victory was initially a short-lived one. In 1939, as Canada stood on the brink of war, the spectre of conscription returned to Quebec. Federal Liberals from Quebec promised to block attempts to reintroduce conscription, a commitment that served provincial Liberals well. Godbout was swept back to power with 70 of 86 seats, and the UN was reduced to a 15-seat rump. The Liberal wartime government introduced a slate of landmark legislation, including the provincial franchise for women (thereby bringing Quebec into line with all other provinces), reforms to education to make it simultaneously more accessible and mandatory, and the introduction of Quebec's first Labour Code. The first steps necessary to creating a provincially owned electricity monopoly were also undertaken at this time. These changes were widely welcomed (and widely criticized in antimodernist quarters), but what led to Godbout's defeat in 1944 was his government's insistence that it could obstruct conscription. Tied to that one issue, the government's fate was all but sealed when Ottawa finally introduced conscription.

The 1944 election returned the UN and Duplessis with fewer votes than the Liberals but a modest majority of seats nevertheless. Duplessis' bedrock of support was rural Quebec, where his antimodernist message had the greatest purchase. Even in the late 1930s, Duplessis was building a populist base, reinforced with attacks on the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Communist Party, both of which were despised by the Catholic Church. And a spell in opposition during the Godbout years helped him out: an outspoken moralist, Duplessis' earlier term in office was marked by binge drinking and a reputation as what was then called "a lady's man." By 1944, he had dried out and was regarded as a reliable opponent of pro-conscription Ottawa and a champion of Quebec autonomy (*autonomisme*) within Confederation.

Post-War Quebec

Duplessis, who was nicknamed “Le Chef,” would hold on to office until 1959. During that 15-year era of relative prosperity and economic growth, the Union Nationale — like other populist parties in Canada — behaved in contradictory and sometimes confusing ways. While Duplessis sustained the ultramontanist elements within Quebec society and relied heavily on clergy support in rural areas, he also launched initiatives that gradually reduced Church control over education while increasing state involvement. It has been argued that shrinkage in the number of active clergy made this shift necessary, but it marks a sea change nevertheless. The UN was outspokenly a part of rural Quebec, but it also now invested heavily in hydroelectric infrastructure. It was traditionalist and simultaneously — perhaps unavoidably — modernist in some of its policies. But Le Chef’s anti-Ottawa, pro-rural, traditionalist posture tended overall toward a kind of isolationist parochialism. Rather than encourage Québecois investment in mines and the pulp and paper industry — let alone acting to create a state presence in those sectors — Duplessis encouraged foreign investment in industry. These Anglo-American operations provided only low-paying and low-status jobs for French-speaking Canadians and a fraction of the royalty revenues that were won in the same sector by other provinces. (In one dramatic case, Newfoundland was found to be taking nearly ten times the royalty revenue that Quebec won from the same iron ore body located on the Quebec-Labrador border.) Moreover, Duplessis was a social conservative whose social policies left Quebecers behind much of the rest of Canada when it came to welfare provisions. Nevertheless, the UN years saw an overall improvement in economic growth and, for once, the Quebec state system was able to dominate the clergy (to which it nonetheless continued to symbolically defer). This was all executed in an environment of systematized and extensive patronage that ensured loyalty to the party and to Le Chef himself.

Duplessis’ legacy has been the subject of repeated criticism in the decades since his death. Quebec nationalists dislike his anti-separatist stance, and liberals denounce his social conservatism. Some minorities resent the privileges he granted to the Roman Catholic Church, while other religious groups were actively or passively discouraged. His critics hold that his inherently corrupt patronage politics, his reactionary conservatism, his emphasis on traditional family and religious values, his anachronistic anti-union stance, his rural focus, and his preservation and promotion of Catholic Church institutions over the development of a secular social infrastructure (akin to that underway in most of the postwar western world), stunted Quebec’s social and economic development by at least a decade. It is for this reason that Duplessis’ term in office is sometimes described as the **Grande Noirceur**, black years in which individual liberties were reduced, corruption abounded, and Quebec stagnated economically.[2]

The Quiet Revolution

Regardless of Duplessis’ intentional legacy, it is certainly the case that his administration laid the groundwork for the era of accelerated reform that followed. In 1959, Duplessis died and was replaced by the ill-fated Paul Sauvé (1907-1960), who followed Duplessis to the grave the next year at 53 years of age. Sauvé’s brief tenure was marked by a severe change in UN direction. From 1944, Sauvé served as the Minister of Social Welfare and Youth (a position he continued to hold even as premier-designate), and his first steps in 1959 involved strengthening the public education system and

2. Maurice Duplessis, Project Gutenberg, Self-Publishing Press: http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/maurice_duplessis CC BY-SA 3.0

envisioning, publicly, a changed Quebec society. Whether he would have achieved even a part of what he promised matters less than the fact that he urged upon Quebecers an attitude of transformation. The still shorter interregnum government of Antonio Barrette (1899-1968) fell to a revived Liberal Party led by Jean Lesage (1912-1980), campaigning under the banner, “Il faut que ça change” (“Things must change”).

Quebec in 1960 was not what it was in 1940. The population had grown from just over 3 million to 5.3 million, and the movement of people off the land and into urban areas rendered Duplessis’ agrarian focus obsolete. Sprawling, metropolitan Montreal in 1961 contained 2.1 million people, 40% of the province’s total population. Liberal Party support — and support for substantial social and economic change — was to be found in the politically powerful urban areas first and foremost. And it was there that modernization was most in demand. Improved educational and social welfare programs were a first priority, as was the **nationalization** of the entire hydroelectric sector, vastly increasing the capacity and reach of Hydro-Québec.



Figure 9.39 Manic-2 (aka: the Jean Lesage Generating Station) was assembled in the 1960s as part of the Quiet Revolution’s province building agenda.

This prominent initiative was undertaken by the Minister of Hydraulic Resources, a former television journalist named René Lévesque (1922-1987). It represented such a substantial step in public policy that the Liberals called an election in 1962, only two years into their first majority mandate, on the issue of nationalization. They won only 5% more of the vote, but won 12 additional seats in the 95-seat National Assembly. This improved mandate was a signal that the key directions of Lesage’s proposed **Quiet Revolution (*Revolution tranquille*)** enjoyed broad support. The hydroelectric monopoly allowed the government to ensure that Quebecers had first call on construction-related jobs and that highly skilled francophones would not be denied management and technical positions as they arose. The crown corporation functioned in French first and was the centrepiece of a suite of policies aimed to achieve the Liberal goal: ***Maîtres chez nous*** **(masters of our own house)**. Downstream benefits included a standardized pricing system that would attract industry and energy independence. The provincial government thereafter applied similar nationalizing models to other areas of their resource sector, increasing jobs and government revenue at the same time.



Figure 9.40 The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Montreal found itself increasingly overshadowed by the state, finance, and commerce.

Educational reforms in support of this modernizing economic vision included improved access to state-run secondary education and an increase in the age of compulsory attendance from 14 to 16 years. These changes were meant to address the parlous levels of high school completion in Quebec — roughly half the rate found in English Canada in the 1950s — and to prepare a growing number of Québecois for technical careers. To that end, the old classical colleges were replaced with general and technical colleges, known as **CÉGEPs**. Most of these reforms were mounted in 1964.

The timing of education reform was significant. Removing the Catholic Church from its dominant position in education — sometimes referred to as **declericalization** — coincided roughly with the **Second Vatican Council (Vatican II)**. Reforms in the Church at this time were extensive and the possibility of careers for nuns and priests as educators and health professionals was now in retreat. What's more, Vatican II meant that the ultramontanist elements in Quebec found little favour in Rome. The Quiet Revolution was not going to be derailed by an interventionist Pope.

All of these changes combined to be revolutionary in the sense that authority increasingly resided with the state, not the Church; it was at home in the cities, not on the land. French-speakers were enabled and encouraged to become managers and directors rather than day-labourers. Francophone technocrats and planners acquired a new kind of prestige as leaders of change. The branchplant economy survived but it was increasingly challenged by homegrown industries and sectors. The Liberals could convincingly point to evidence that Québecois were, in fact, becoming *maîtres chez nous.* What's more, they were exporting this pride: as early as 1961, the Liberal government opened its first trade houses or *Maisons du Québec* — embassies without diplomatic status — in London, Paris, and New York.

These advances and the rhetoric of nationalism, embraced by the Liberals and articulated by the *nationaliste* newspaper *Le Devoir,* was increasingly articulated in demands for greater *autonomisme* and, for the first time in many decades, *separatisme.*

Nationalisme, Autonomisme, Separatisme

The 1940s and 1950s witnessed the decolonization of much of Africa and Asia. As imperial forces withdrew from what were, mostly, nations conquered by European armies in the 18th and 19th centuries, some in Quebec began to question whether it was time to liberate New France. Fear of assimilation and English oppression was a driving force in Quebec politics from 1759 on. Two centuries after the Conquest, *nationalistes* (whose views were articulated in *Le Devoir* , which was founded in 1910 by Henri Bourassa) were increasingly unconvinced that the strategy of *autonomisme* implicit in Confederation was still a viable strategy for their community. The fact that most of the wealth in Quebec was thought to be in the hands of English-speakers (huddled in Montreal's Westmount and in the Eastern Townships) led some Quebecers to conclude that Canada was an unequal bargain, a colonial relationship in which ethnicity, language, and religion worked systemically to the disadvantage of French-Canadians. One example will suffice: clerks in Montreal stores were obliged to speak English to their customers, regardless of the customer's first language. How could this be experienced as anything other than colonization?



Figure 9.41 The symbolic value of a visit from the French Minister of Culture — the novellist, veteran of the Spanish Civil War, and French Resistance fighter André Malraux (right) — was enough, in 1963 to bring out Premier Lesage (left), as well as the elite of Canadien culture and society in Montreal.

As well, the 20th century was bearing down on Canadien culture. The rise of electronic media like radio, movies, and television exposed francophones to an onslaught of images and values from English Canada and the United States. Antimodernists, of course, were particularly critical of this tidal wave of entertainment-culture and one response was to intensify relations with Metropolitan France, an option that had been largely closed off by years of ultramontanist hostility toward the French Republic. Modernists, for their part, saw in nationalized industries a means to advance Quebec's economy and society but only if that could be done in a context in which francophones were no longer discriminated against when it came to top jobs. As regards Ottawa's priorities and values in international relations, culture, trade, and even monetary policy, *nationalistes* believed those priorities did not reflect their own.

Several strategies to achieve change emerged in the early 1960s. The first of these was constitutional change. In order to address some long-standing concerns and immediate goals, there would need to be a means for amending the *British North America Act*. And, because the Act was a product of the British Parliament, there was the issue of **patriation**. Nine anglophone provinces and one francophone province, however, saw this process rather differently. The **Fulton-Favreau Formula** gained support at this time from every province but Saskatchewan; it proposed consensus agreement on issues involving all provinces, regional consensus or single-province agreement for more localized changes, and further subdivisions of process that made it, in the words of one constitutional expert at the time, "an unmitigated constitutional disaster."[3] Nevertheless, opposition to Fulton-Favreau was limited and even Lesage supported it; that support quickly dissipated as *nationaliste* elements in Quebec became more vocal in their belief that this cumbersome system would more likely perpetuate rather than relieve the inequities of federalism.

If federalism could not be changed by its own institutions, it was argued, then Quebec needed to reclaim its pre-1867 authority (such as it had during the Confederation negotiations) or withdraw — entirely or in part — from the federation. This was a position taken along a spectrum of alternatives by diverse groups in Quebec in the early to mid-1960s. Conservative *nationalistes* — like the *Alliance laurentienne*, founded in 1957 – soon found themselves arguing different sides of the same coin with left-wing *nationalistes*. In 1960, the *Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale* (RIN) brought together the *Alliance laurentienne* with more moderate and, eventually, more radical left-wing nationalists inspired by the vibrant campus protests and anti-colonial movements of the time. The RIN engaged in electoral politics without success but maintained a high profile in public protests, such as demonstrations against the Royal Visit of Queen Elizabeth II in 1964. When Pierre Trudeau — freshly appointed as Prime Minister designate — took a seat in the main viewing platform of the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day Parade in 1968, it was the RIN that mounted a noisy protest and threw objects at Trudeau. The leader of the RIN, Pierre Bourgault (1934-2003), was a participant in this last event and was arrested, along with hundreds of others. In the midst of these street-level confrontations, more moderate and conservative members of the RIN split off to form the *Ralliement National* (RN), another political party that would compete for separatist votes.

Further to the Left was the *Action socialiste pour l'indépendance du Québec* (ASIQ), the *Réseau de résistance (RR)*, and the *Comité de liberation nationale*. These groups had closer relations with communist and anti-colonialist movements and took inspiration from the Algerian and Cuban revolutions in particular. While there was a tradition of civil disobedience in Quebec, this quickly became overshadowed by more violent tactics, including vandalism and destruction of federal property.

3. Bora Laskin, quoted in Editor's Diary, "The Search for an Amending Process, 1960-1967," *McGill Law Journal*, vol.12, no.4 (1966-67): 345.



Figure 9.42 Radio-Canada journalist René Lévesque interviews Lester Pearson in Moscow in 1955.

Beginning around 1967 to 1968, these diverse movements began to coalesce around two principal ideals and organizations. Those who favoured electoral strategies turned increasingly toward the new *Mouvement souveraineté-association* (MSA) led by René Lévesque, the former cabinet minister who abandoned the Liberal Party over the issue of significant constitutional change. The RN merged with the MSA in 1968 to form the *Parti Québécois* (PQ); much of the membership of the RIN joined as well when that party, too, was dissolved. The concept that Lévesque championed, called sovereignty-association, represented a compromise between continued, reformed federalism and full-blown independence. Quebec would, in this vision, become an independent and sovereign state but one with strong ties to the rest of Canada that bore some similarity to the arrangement struck between the Low Countries in Europe (called Benelux) and the European Economic Community (EEC).

The electoral separatism offered by the PQ was up against several more starkly nationalistic movements who were inclined to the view that change would not come through the ballot box. The *Front de Libération du Québec* (FLQ) embraced guerrilla tactics being used by Palestinians in their struggle against Israel. It also took advantage of historical images of rebellion in French Canada, including the tri-colour flag used by Papineau's 1837 Patriotes and the silhouette of an armed *habitant* from the 19th century Rebellions. Beginning in the spring of 1963, the FLQ launched a series of largely ineffectual bomb attacks. They targeted Canadian Army barracks and a length of rail line east of Montreal. The FLQ quickly graduated from Molotov cocktails to heavy explosives. In April 1963, a 65-year old custodian at a Recruiting Office was killed by an FLQ bomb, and a month later one of 11 explosives planted in post boxes severely injured an Army bomb-disposal expert. By the end of 1968, the FLQ could claim to have detonated close to 100 explosives of various shapes and sizes, all of which targeted federal property of some kind. They had, as well, engaged in a robbery spree calculated to get both money and arms for the movement. Along the way, the organization was responsible for the injury or death of at least four people. In other decades, this might have been enough to alienate support but conditions were different in the 1960s. The sustained support for the FLQ has to be understood within the context of growing opposition to the American war in Vietnam, the civil rights and Black Panther movements in the United States, increasing youth unrest on campuses, the spread of various liberation

movements internationally (into which the FLQ networked), and the FLQ's well articulated socialist objectives in Pierre Valliere's 1968 book, *Nègres blancs d'Amérique* (translated as *White Niggers of America*).



Figure 9.43 Expo '67 pavilions, built on specially created islands in the St. Lawrence.

In 1967 and 1968, then, and at the height of **Centennial** celebrations in Montreal at **Expo '67**, Quebecers found themselves confronted by political movements of an unprecedented kind. The terrorist campaign undertaken by the FLQ was decried by Lévesque and the PQ; the FLQ regarded the PQ as insufficiently aggressive in its objectives and techniques. The Liberal Party, for its part, retained an interest in renegotiating elements of the constitution should a satisfactory patriation formula be found. In short, everyone in Quebec politics agreed that change was necessary, but disagreed strongly on the extent of change and the means by which it would be achieved.

Gaullism

A wildcard in the *separatiste* deck was the French President, General Charles de Gaulle (1890-1970). Elevated to power during a *coup d'état* in 1958, de Gaulle viewed the English-speaking world with suspicion and hostility. Rebuilding an independent French military and financial powerhouse was his principal goal, and to that end he sought to diminish the strength of his competitors, chiefly the United Kingdom and the United States. Canada, which he understood first and foremost to be an English-speaking country, was a less critical impediment to French advancement, but it was a potentially useful stepping stone. By destabilizing relations between Quebec and the rest of Canada, he would destabilize North America as a whole. Keeping in mind that this was a decade that witnessed leftist revolutions in several countries, the idea of a radicalized, French-aligned, and nationalistic regime in Quebec would cause worry in Washington and Ottawa alike.



Figure 9.44 French president Charles de Gaulle destabilizes Canada at Montreal's City Hall, 1967.

It was in this context that de Gaulle travelled to Canada in July 1967, ostensibly as part of the centennial celebrations and Expo '67. Rather than head first to Ottawa, de Gaulle's entourage landed at Quebec City and drove in a motorcade along the banks of the St. Lawrence — through the heart of old New France — along the route of the 18th-century highway, the *Chemin du Roy*. Passing throngs of French *tri-couleur* flag-waving Québecois, it has been suggested that de Gaulle might have been reminded of his own triumphal return to Paris in 1945 as the leader of the Free French. Whatever was on his mind — whether it was nostalgia, affection for Quebec, or causing a disturbance — on 24 July, he took to a balcony of Montreal's City Hall and shouted to an ecstatic crowd, "Vive le Québec. Vive le Québec libre!" Then he went home without meeting any Canadian officials.

The role of France in stimulating French-Canadian separatism is difficult to measure. It was there before de Gaulle and it didn't need French support to keep it alive. The distinguished Canadian historian, J.F. Bosher, has argued that Gaullists (de Gaulle's followers in the Fifth Republic of France) conducted a kind of undercover and subversive operation in Quebec, providing resources and succour for a movement that might otherwise feel entirely isolated.[4] Whatever his motives, de Gaulle's gun-and-run visit marked a dark day for Quebec federalists, excited support for the sovereigntist and separatist movements, and irritated English Canada.

Key Points

- Provincial politics in 20th century Quebec were distinguished by the importance of sustaining good relations with the Catholic clergy, addressing the needs of a large rural and anti-urban population, and struggling to preserve and advance francophone opportunities in an economy dominated by anglophones.
- The Conservative Party was rendered unelectable by the conscription issue in WWI and needed to reinvent itself as the Union Nationale in order to become an effective opponent of the provincial Liberals.

4. J.F. Bosher, *The Gaullist Attack on Canada, 1967-1997* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999).

- The 15-year administration of Maurice Duplessis was viewed at the time, and since, by most historians as a period of antimodern, ultramontane, traditionalism, and/or a *Grande Noirceur.*
- The economic and social stagnation of the Duplessis years contributed to the appeal of significant change, embodied in the ideals of the *Revolution tranquille*, whose goal it was to make Quebecers *maîtres chez nous.*
- The Quiet Revolution included extensive state involvement in education and declericalization which coincided with Vatican II. It focused, as well, on providing greater middle- and upper-management opportunities for Québecois.
- Increasingly *nationaliste* elements identified the limits to change that could occur under the existing constitutional relationship with the rest of Canada. This produced an array of *separatiste* political parties and movements that coalesced around the *Parti Québécois* in electoral politics and the FLQ in direct action politics.
- *Separatisme* in 1960s Quebec occurred against a background of anti-colonial, civil rights, and guerrilla movements globally and in North America. The tone it took reflected its historic context.

Media Attributions

- Quebec Premier Maurice Duplessis giving a speech © Library and Archives Canada (PA-178340) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Archidiocèse_Montréal
- René Lévesque, Radio-Canada reporter, interviewing Lester B. Pearson outside the Canadian Embassy in Moscow © Soviet, Library and Archives Canada (PA-117617). Copyright Soviet. No restrictions on use.
- Expo 67 Montreal, P.Q. © Frank Grant, Library and Archives Canada (C-030085). Copyright Government of Canada. No restrictions on use.
- Le-général-de-Gaulle-au-balcon-de-lhôtel-ville-de-Montréal-24-juillet-1967

9.10 The October Crisis

FLQ bombing attacks intensified in 1969 and early 1970. The targets now included American-owned businesses; the homes and offices of elected and non-elected civic officials (including the City of Montreal Mayor Jean Drapeau, 1916-99); a traditionalist nationalist organization (the Sherbrooke *Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste*); and businesses engaged in labour disputes. A National Airlines flight from New York to Miami was hijacked and the Montreal Stock Exchange was bombed: 20 people were injured. Despite the arrest and imprisonment of nearly two dozen members of the movement, it continued to operate and, early in 1970, its members began to roll out a new strategy involving kidnappings and ransom demands. On separate occasions, police foiled plans to abduct the Israeli consul and the American consul-general in Montreal. On 5 October, however, the FLQ was successful in taking James Cross (b. 1921), the British Trade Commissioner in Montreal.

As this event elevated the separatist problem to an international level, Ottawa was directly involved. Prime Minister Trudeau's response called for a coordinated strategy between the federal government, the provincial government, and the City of Montreal. This put Mayor Drapeau and, to a lesser extent, Liberal Premier Robert Bourassa (1933-1996) in the spotlight; neither was prepared to meet the FLQ's demands for half a million dollars, the release of 23 FLQ members in Quebec jails, and the broadcast of the FLQ's manifesto. Attempts to block the release of the manifesto were unsuccessful; several of the French-language newspapers reprinted it in full. Two days into the crisis, it was broadcast on radio with an eye to reducing tensions and working toward Cross's release. The FLQ cell or unit holding Cross repeatedly made it clear that his life was at stake while, in the meantime, Montreal and Quebec authorities hoped for a successful police resolution to the standoff.

Five days after the kidnapping of Cross, a separate cell within the FLQ captured the Quebec Minister of Labour, Pierre Laporte (1921-1970). Faced with the fact that one of their own was now at risk, the Quebec government took a more conciliatory tone. At the same time, the federal government began ramping up its protection of officials and buildings, putting more security (including military personnel) onto the streets, and engaging the federal RCMP more directly in attempts to track down the two cells. On 13 October, eight days into the **October Crisis**, Trudeau was informally questioned by journalists on the steps of Parliament. This became famous as the "Just Watch Me" interview.

"How Far Would You Go?"

This is a partial transcript of the interview of PM Pierre Elliott Trudeau conducted by the CBC's Tim Ralfe and Peter Reilly of CJON-TV on 13 October 1970.

TIM RALFE: Sir, what is it with all these men with guns around here?

PIERRE TRUDEAU: Haven't you noticed?

RALFE: Yes, I've noticed them. I wondered why you people decided to have them.

TRUDEAU: What's your worry?

RALFE: I'm not worried, but you seem to be.

TRUDEAU: So if you're not worried, what's your … I'm not worried.

RALFE: I'm worried about living in a town that's full of people with guns running around.

TRUDEAU: Why? Have they done anything to you? Have they pushed you around or anything?

RALFE: They've pushed around friends of mine.

TRUDEAU: Yes? What were your friends doing?

RALFE: Trying to take pictures of them.

TRUDEAU: Aha.

RALFE: Is that against the law?

TRUDEAU: No, not at all.

RALFE: Doesn't it worry you, having a town that you've got to resort to this kind of thing?

TRUDEAU: It doesn't worry me. I think it's natural that if people are being abducted that they be protected against such abductions. What would you do if a Quebec minister – another Quebec minister were abducted or a federal minister?

RALFE: But isn't that one of the …

TRUDEAU: Is your position that you should give in to the seven demands of the FLQ and … ?

RALFE: No, not at all. My position is completely the opposite.

TRUDEAU: What is your position?

RALFE: My position is that you don't give in to any of them.

TRUDEAU: All right. But you don't protect yourselves against the possibility of blackmail?

RALFE: Well, how can you protect everybody that is going to be a possible target without a much bigger military force, without putting somebody on everybody in the country, and turning it almost into a police state?

TRUDEAU: So, what do you suggest – that we protect nobody?

RALFE: How can you protect them all?

TRUDEAU: Well, you can't protect them all but are you therefore arguing that you shouldn't protect any?

RALFE: That's right.

TRUDEAU: That's your position?

RALFE: Right.

TRUDEAU: All right. So Pierre Laporte wasn't protected and he was abducted. If you had hindsight, would you not have preferred to protect him and Mr. Cross?

RALFE: Well, second guessing is pretty easy, but you can't do it.

TRUDEAU: Well all right, but I'm asking you to first guess now.

RALFE: No, because it's impossible.

TRUDEAU: It would have been impossible to protect cabinet ministers of the provincial government or diplomats?

RALFE: I would suspect so, with all the diplomats there are in this country.

TRUDEAU: Well, we've got a big army.

RALFE: You're going to use it up pretty fast at this rate.

TRUDEAU: What do you mean at this rate?

PETER REILLY: Six and seven. If I could interpolate something here. You seem to be thinking, in your statement in the House this morning – you seemed to be saying that you thought the press had been less than responsible in its coverage of this story so far. Could you elaborate on that?

TRUDEAU: Not less than responsible. I was suggesting that they should perhaps use a bit more restraint which you're not doing now – you're going to make a big news item of this I am sure.

REILLY: Well, the papers – it is a big news item.

TRUDEAU: Yes, but the main thing that the FLQ is trying to gain from this is a hell of a lot of publicity for the movement.

REILLY: A recognition.

TRUDEAU: Yes and I am suggesting that the more recognition you give to them the greater the victory is, and I'm not interested in giving them a victory.

REILLY: … the proposition that perhaps it would be wise to use less inflammatory terms than "bandits" when you talk about a bunch of people who have the lives of two men in their hands?

TRUDEAU: You don't think they're bandits?

REILLY: Well, regardless of what I think, I don't think I would be inclined to wave a red flag in their face if they held two of my friends or colleagues with guns at their heads.

TRUDEAU: Well, first of all, I didn't call them bandits. I called the people who were in jail now bandits, who had been tried before the law and condemned to a prison term and I said that you people should stop calling them political prisoners. They're not political prisoners, they're outlaws. They're criminal prisoners, they're not political prisoners, and they're bandits. That's why they're in jail.

RALFE: But with your army troops you seem to be combatting them almost as though it is a war, and if it is a war does anything that they say have validity?

TRUDEAU: Don't be silly. We're not combatting them as if it's war but we're using some of the army as peace agents in order that the police be more free to do their job as policemen and not spend their time guarding your friends against some form of kidnapping.

RALFE: You said earlier that you would protect them in this way but you have said before that this kind of violence, what you're fighting here, the kind of violence of the FLQ, can lead to a police state.

TRUDEAU: Sure. That's what you're complaining about, isn't it?

RALFE: Well yes, but surely that decision is yours, not the FLQ's.

TRUDEAU: Yes, but I've asked you what your own logic is. It's to let them abduct anybody and not give any protection to anyone – call off the police, that seems to be your position.

RALFE: Not call off the police. Surely the police's job is to catch people who break the law.

TRUDEAU: Yes, but not to give protection to those citizens who might be blackmailed for one reason or another?

RALFE: Which must be half of the population of the country, in one way or another. I explained it badly I think, but what you're talking about to me is choices, and my choice is to live in a society that is free and democratic, which means that you don't have people with guns running around in it.

TRUDEAU: Correct.

RALFE: And one of the things I have to give up for that choice is the fact that people like you may be kidnapped.

TRUDEAU: Sure, but this isn't my choice, obviously. You know, I think it is more important to get rid of those who are committing violence against the total society and those who are trying to run the government through a parallel power by establishing their authority by kidnapping and blackmail. And I think it is our duty as a government to protect government officials and important people in our society against being used as tools in this blackmail. Now, you don't agree to this but I am sure that once again with hindsight, you would probably have found it preferable if Mr. Cross and Mr. Laporte had been protected from kidnapping, which they weren't because these steps we are taking now weren't taken. But even with your hindsight I don't see how you can deny that.

RALFE: No, I still go back to the choice that you have to make in the kind of society that you live in.

TRUDEAU: Yes, well there are a lot of bleeding hearts around who just don't like to see people with helmets and guns. All I can say is, go on and bleed, but it is more important to keep law and order in the society than to be worried about weak-kneed people who don't like the looks of …

RALFE: At any cost? How far would you go with that? How far would you extend that?

TRUDEAU: Well just watch me.

Increasingly there were calls to open negotiations. Lévesque and his eventual successor as leader of the PQ, Jacques Parizeau (1930-2015), along with key figures in the Quebec labour movement and student groups appealed to Bourassa. They called on the premier to take the lead, make concessions to the FLQ, and rescue Laporte and Cross. Deadline after deadline (set by both sides) passed without resolution. Bourassa requested that Ottawa deploy troops for security purposes so that the Montreal police and the *Sûreté du Québec* could pursue leads and a thousand soldiers suddenly appeared on Montreal's streets. The next day, 16 October, the federal cabinet declared that the FLQ crisis was now "an apprehended insurrection" and thus a signal to impose martial law under the *War Measures Act*. This is the only time in Canadian history that the *Act* has been invoked in peacetime and it provided police and the military with the ability to arrest and hold without charge (that is, it removed the need for *habeas corpus*). Over the next 48 hours, more than 250 people were arrested, but it was too late for Laporte. On the 18th of October his body was found stuffed in the trunk of a car. Six weeks would pass before Cross's location would be disclosed to police and his kidnappers allowed safe passage out of the country to Cuba.



Figure 9.45 Pierre Trudeau and Robert Bourassa, leaving the funeral of Pierre Laporte, 20 October 1970. James Cross was still in the hands of the FLQ.

The impact of the October Crisis on Quebec's political culture and on Canada as a whole was substantial. Although Ottawa, the RCMP, and the Liberals in Quebec City took advantage of the situation to vilify separatists and sovereigntists alike, the experience of martial law pushed *separatiste* Quebecers closer to the PQ.[1] Police raids and illegal police persecution of separatist movements (including the PQ) only served to harden attitudes toward Ottawa: the PQ's fortunes further improved. What's more, many radical separatists who had formerly supported the FLQ were by the early 1970s alienated by the FLQ's outrages. With the police crackdown on hardliners, these voters had no place to go but the PQ. The spontaneous and unorganized energy of the FLQ disappeared soon after the October Crisis but it would take nearly five years to see the extent to which the PQ was the political beneficiary of these events.

Key Points

- Beginning in 1969, the FLQ expanded its terror and robbery campaign from vandalism against federal properties to include attacks and robberies involving civic, social, business, and diplomatic targets.
- In October 1970, British Trade Commissioner James Cross was kidnapped and held for ransom. When this failed to produce the desired result, another FLQ cell kidnapped Quebec Labour Minister Pierre Laporte.
- The October Crisis produced a large-scale police operation and compelled the federal government to invoke the *War Measures Act*. Canada was under martial law.
- The murder of Laporte was followed by the release of Cross and the exile of his captors to Cuba.
- The popularity of the Parti Québécois grew as a consequence of public disapproval of the

1. Bryan D. Palmer, *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 364-5.

revolutionary option and the performance of the Liberal Party, federally and provincially, during the crisis.

Media Attributions

- Pierre Elliott Trudeau and Robert Bourassa attending the funeral of Pierre Laporte © Beck, Montreal Star, Library and Archives Canada (PA-151863). Copyright Woodbridge Company Limited. No restrictions on use.

9.11 Quebec and the ROC



Figure 9.46 Quebec divided: "Non" voters felt obliged to insist that they were no less Québecois for wanting the status quo; "Oui" voters talked about sovereignty association but imagined a liberated Quebec. *[Long Description]*

In the aftermath of the October Crisis, neither the nation nor the province of Quebec turned against the Liberals — not immediately. Trudeau, Bourassa, and especially Drapeau enjoyed a significant bump in popularity and confidence in the months immediately after the crisis. It did not last. In 1972, the Trudeau government was reduced to a minority and the NDP — led by David Lewis, a vocal critic of the emergency measures — held the balance of power. Remarkably, it was only in Quebec that the federal Liberals did especially well, losing out to the Tories in every other province. The short-term effects for the Parti Québécois (PQ) were also disappointing: from seven seats in the National Assembly in 1970, they fell to six in 1973.

Canadian politics in the post-1970 years involved visibly addressing Quebec's issues in a variety of ways. Canada joined the *Organisation international de la Francophonie (aka: La Francophonie)*, an international forum of nations (many of them former colonies of France) where the use of the French language was widespread. The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism reported out in 1969, and there was a new urgency after October 1970 to implement some of its recommendations. Material changes included more French language instruction in schools and a reversal of decades-old policies in Ontario, New Brunswick, and Manitoba that minimized the rights of francophones to instruction in their first language. Access to services in French in the courts was also addressed, and New Brunswick took steps to become officially bilingual. While these initiatives were seen by some in Quebec as a distraction from the substantive issues of power relations between Ottawa and the province, the changes were also decried by many in English Canada as evidence that Ottawa was "shoving French down our throats."[1] This anglophone francophobia was to cost the Liberals dearly at the polls in the 1970s.

1. Michael Hayday, *So They Want Us to Learn French: Promoting and Opposing Bilingualism in English-Speaking Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2015), 4.

Efforts to reform the constitutional relationship between Quebec and the rest of Canada, moreover, continued to flounder. Premier Bourassa's efforts to negotiate better terms for Quebec consistently failed. The **Victoria Charter (1971)** held out the prospect of a veto power for Quebec but it was rejected at the last minute by the premier because he feared a *nationaliste* protest. His inability to accomplish any meaningful change in this field contributed in large measure to the success of Lévesque and the *pequistes* in the 1976 election.

The *Pequistes* in Office

In the 1973 election, the Union Nationale was effectively wiped out. It failed to elect a single candidate out of a full slate of 110. The PQ, with only six seats, therefore, was the Official Opposition, squaring off against Bourassa's 102 Members of the National Assembly (MNAs). The three years that followed would see Lévesque reposition himself and his party as more than a movement of constitutional change. This was helped by Bourassa's physical awkwardness and his stilted speaking style and the cascade of scandals that embroiled the government. The 1976 Summer Olympics were held in Montreal and, despite Mayor Drapeau's promise that "The Olympics can no more lose money than a man can have a baby," it ran up a $1.5 billion debt. (Aislin responded with a cartoon showing a very pregnant Drapeau.) The Olympic Stadium — the "Big O" — incurred huge overruns and was incomplete when the games commenced. The credibility of the Liberals was now so low that Lévesque could campaign less on separatism and more on the need for good government.



Library and Archives Canada / Bibliothèque et Archives Canada
www.collectionscanada.gc.ca

Figure 9.47 Opening ceremonies at the 1976 Olympics in Montreal, marred by extensive boycotts (in the end, only 92 nations participated). Construction cranes can be seen looming over the unfinished trunk of the stadium's tower.

For Canadians in what was becoming known as the **Rest Of Canada (ROC)**, the election of the PQ on 15 November 1976 signalled the end of Confederation. The combination of terrorist attacks in the 1960s and early 1970s, government misspending, a stagnating local (and global) economy, and fear of what the PQ might accomplish constitutionally contributed to a significant out-migration from Quebec of individuals, families, and households. It is reckoned that 99,000 people left the province, turning whole swaths of western Montreal from neighbourhoods where English dominated into areas in which French was the principal language.[2] Whole corporations exited as well. Montreal was, historically, the centre of banking, insurance, and finance, a position that was being increasingly challenged by Toronto. In the decade after the PQ election, many of these firms relocated their head offices from Montreal to Toronto and, more dramatically, to Calgary. The most prominent of these moves was made by Sun Life Financial, one of the largest employers in Montreal and almost certainly the largest employer of anglophones. Following the PQ government's introduction of the Charter of the French Language (aka: **Bill 101**), which established the primacy of French in all aspects of life — from street signage to restaurant menus — and protected the rights of unilingual francophone employees against discrimination, Sun Life made a very public show of its displeasure and then left. Montreal's loss may

2. Marc V. Levine, *The Reconquest of Montreal: Language Policy and Social Change in a Bilingual City* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991), 120-1.

have been Toronto's gain (the two quickly swapped places as the nation's largest cities) but there was a strong sense that the exodus, as it was called, bode ill for Canada as a whole.

Within Quebec and the PQ there were many who hoped for precisely that outcome. As promised during the 1976 campaign, Lévesque began working toward a referendum on Quebec's place in Confederation. The first step involved reforming electoral laws so as to permit for a referendum of any kind. The second, was to settle on a question. This became a consuming part of the process, as federalists in Quebec and the ROC mobilized their pitch for continuing with the *status quo*. Within the PQ, there were elements calling for a direct and decisive approach to the question of sovereignty, while others preferred a gradualist approach (*étapisme*). Pierre Trudeau's loss of power in the 1979 election introduced a new player in the game, Prime Minister Joseph "Joe" Clark (b. 1939), elected to lead a minority Conservative government in which western Canadian MPs were a powerful force. For the separatists, this looked like a positive sign. Moreover, Trudeau — who might have posed a greater threat in Ottawa than the less-experienced Clark — had announced his retirement from politics. Clark's government, however, stumbled and fell in a non-confidence vote. The resultant election drew Trudeau back into the role of Liberal leader (a position he had never fully vacated) and, once back in office with a fresh majority, into the fray against Lévesque.

Joe Clark and the Iranian Hostage Crisis

Trudeau had his hostage crisis. Joe Clark had his.

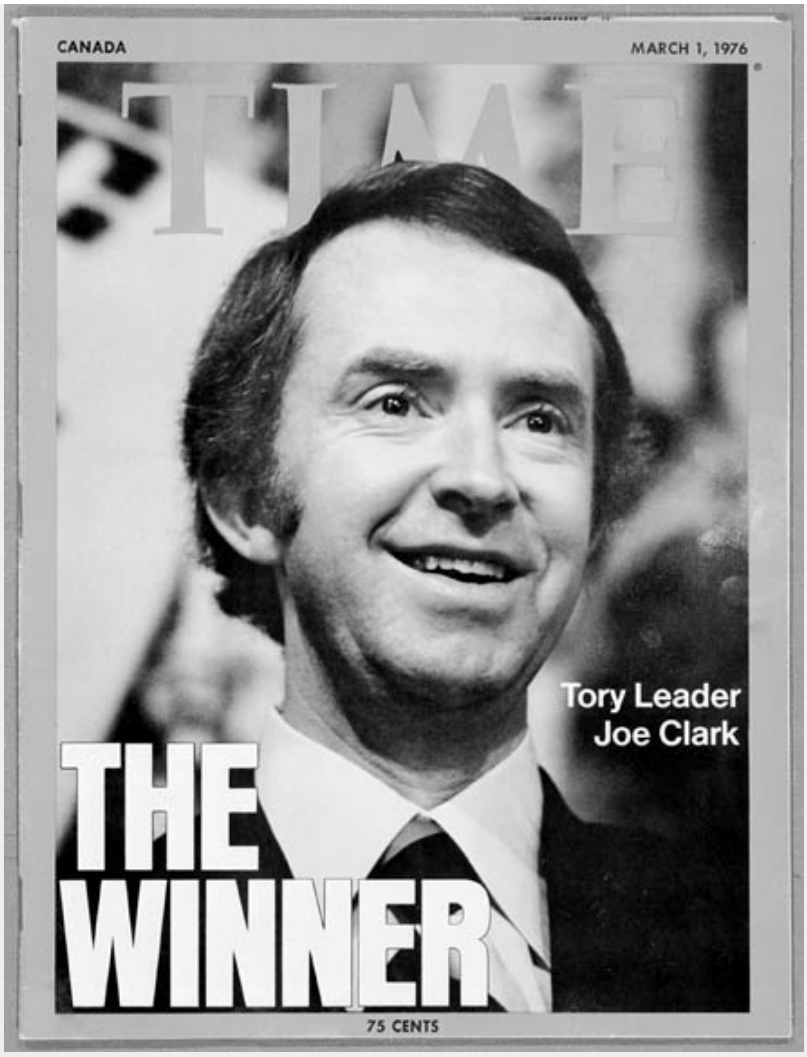


Figure 9.48 Joseph "Joe" Clark wins the Tory leadership in 1976 and lands on the cover of Time magazine.

Joe Clark's image was being diminished as soon as he moved into the public spotlight at 24 Sussex Drive. He was seen (and depicted) as physically awkward and socially unsophisticated. He was and remains the youngest person ever to become Prime Minister (the Trudeaus, *père et fils*, came to office 9 and 4 years older, respectively) and so could be forgiven for needing time to adjust. Certainly, time has demonstrated his abilities, but in 1979 to 1980, the public could hardly imagine the extent to which the 39-year-old Clark was prepared to endorse and shepherd along a successful international subterfuge.

In February 1979, the Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, was overthrown. A few months later, he departed for the United States for medical treatment. The long history of American support for the Shah's brutal regime and the offer of refuge for Pahlavi greatly angered Iranian revolutionaries. On 4 November 1979, a group of Iranian students and activists, including Islamic fundamentalists who wished to end the Westernization and secularization of Iran, invaded the American embassy in Tehran and seized 66 embassy employees. The women and African-Americans were soon released, leaving 53 white men as hostages. Negotiations failed to free them, and in April 1980, a rescue attempt fell through when the United States aircraft sent to transport them crashed.

Six of the American embassy staff escaped the compound before it fell and went into hiding with members of the Canadian embassy. The Canadian Ambassador to Iran, Ken Taylor (1934-2015), arranged to smuggle the Americans out of the country with Canadian passports issued under a special order by the Clark government.

The **Canadian Caper** was ultimately successful; the arrival home of the American hostages in January produced a burst of pro-Canadian feeling south of the border.

The fanfare came too late to save two regimes. The fate of Jimmy Carter's presidency had been settled in the November 1979 elections, but Joe Clark's administration still had hopes of recovering from a non-confidence vote. These ambitions would be dashed in the February 1980 general election.[3]

The Referendum

On 20 May 1980, nearly 86% of Quebec voters went to the polls to vote in the referendum. Meanwhile, the rest of Canada held its breath. As it turned out, federalism caught a break.

Trudeau's commitment to Quebecers in 1980 of a revamped federalism in which Quebec's aspirations might be satisfied played well with part of the "Non" vote constituency. Scholars, however, remain divided over whether the 60% who voted against "Sovereignty-Association" were, in fact, voting in favour of the *status quo*. The question posed in the referendum, over which the PQ had laboured so long, was opaque in its meaning. It was entirely possible for a separatist to conclude that the proposed agreement with Ottawa was too light on sovereignty and too heavy on association. Thus, radical separatistes might vote "Non" so as to prevent anything less than complete separation of Quebec from Canada. Certainly the victory of the "Non" side cannot be entirely explained by enthusiasm for the Liberal position.

The provincial Liberals under Claude Ryan (1925-2004) conducted a poor campaign, and the federal Liberals were hamstrung by legal restrictions on direct involvement (some of which they simply ignored). A turning point came on International Women's Day when the Quebec Women's Affairs Minister, Lise Payette (b. 1931) made the first of two speeches in which she critiqued the character of "Yvette," who, in Quebec schoolbooks, was portrayed as an ideal — a docile, submissive girl. Payette wanted to see these representations removed from the curriculum — a reasonable goal. The next day, however, she publicly accused the "Non" side of being made up of "Yvettes" and she specifically targeted Ryan's accomplished wife, Madeleine Ryan, as one. Mme. Ryan embraced the title and launched *brunch des Yvettes*, a rally of women opposed to sovereignty-association.[4] Mme. Ryan's campaign appealed strongly to Quebec housewives who felt doubly diminished by their social status and Payette's condescension. Quebec's vital feminist movement was divided, but now an important block was mobilized in support of "Non."[5]

The results of the vote were decisive but far from conclusive. It was only the first campaign in what became known as the **Neverendum**.

3. Openstax, U.S. History: "Jimmy Carter in the Aftermath of the Storm", https://cnx.org/contents/p7ovuIkl@9.5:n8t1hRY9@7/30-5-Jimmy-Carter-in-the-Aftermath-of-the-Storm.

4. Stephanie Godin, "The Yvettes as the Expression of a Federalist Feminism in Quebec," in Michael D. Behiels and Matthew Hayday, eds., *Contemporary Quebec: Selected Readings and Commentaries* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011): 340-4.

5. Constance Backhouse and David H. Flaherty, *Challenging Times: The Women's Movement in Canada and the United States* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 112-13.



Figure 9.49 Trudeau speaks to a "Non" crowd hours before the referendum.

The long and short of it

When Trudeau first responded to the election of the PQ in 1976, he indicated that he would be glad to see "clarity" on the constitutional issue in Quebec. Since then, the word "clarity" has figured prominently in discussions on this topic. It did not, however, loom large in the final version of the 1980 referendum question:

> The Government of Quebec has made public its proposal to negotiate a new agreement with the rest of Canada, based on the equality of nations; this agreement would enable Quebec to acquire the exclusive power to make its laws, levy its taxes and establish relations abroad — in other words, sovereignty — and at the same time to maintain with Canada an economic association including a common currency; any change in political status resulting from these negotiations will only be implemented with popular approval through another referendum; on these terms, do

you give the Government of Quebec the mandate to negotiate the proposed agreement between Quebec and Canada?[6]

Le Government du Québec a fait connaître sa proposition d'en arriver, avec le reste du Canada, à une nouvelle entente fondée sur le principe de l'égalité des peuples ; cette entente permettrait au Québec d'acquérir le pouvoir exclusif de faire ses lois, de percevoir ses impôts et d'établir ses relations extérieures, ce qui est la souveraineté, et, en même temps, de maintenir avec le Canada une association économique comportant l'utilisation de la même monnaie ; aucun changement de statut politique résultant de ces négociations ne sera réalisé sans l'accord de la population lors d'un autre référendum ; en conséquence, accordez-vous au Gouvernement du Québec le mandat de négocier l'entente proposée entre le Québec et le Canada?

Key Points

- Although the Liberals held on to their support in Quebec immediately after the October Crisis, they were in retreat in much of the rest of Canada in the 1970s.
- Efforts to reform the constitution and to improve the status of francophones in Canada were made but were viewed by many in Quebec as too little too late.
- The PQ came to office in an election marked by spending scandals surrounding the 1976 Olympics with the promise of a referendum to decide Quebec's future in or out of Confederation.
- The four years that followed saw anglophone households, businesses, and corporations vacate Quebec; the collapse of the Trudeau government's popularity; and further failure to find a way out of the constitutional impasse.
- The referendum on 20 May 1980 produced a 60% "Non" vote which left the door open for further referenda and renewed constitutional talks.

Long Descriptions

Figure 9.46 long description: Two badges from the 1995 Quebec independence referendum. The first is round and reads "Mon non est quebecois," which translates into English as "My no is Quebecois." This puns on the French words *non* and *nom*, which mean "no" and "name" respectively. It was a slogan that "non" voters used to defend their commitment to Quebec despite wanting to remain part of Canada.

The second badge is rectangular and depicts a blue fleur-de-lis bursting out of an egg that is painted with the Canadian flag. In the wake of the fleur-de-lis is the word "oui," meaning "yes." [Return to Figure 9.46]

Media Attributions

- Games of the XXIX Olympiad, 1976 © Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. 1994-434-254. No known restrictions

6. Canada. Quebec. *1980 Quebec Referendum* (announced 20 December 1979).

- Page couverture de la revue “Time”, édition canadienne du 1er mars, 1976 – Photo de Joe Clark élu chef du parti conservateur © Duncan Cameron, Library and Archives Canada (C-088836). Copyright assigned to Library and Archives Canada by copyright owner Duncan Cameron. No restrictions on use.
- Pierre Trudeau giving speech at “NO” referendum © Robert Cooper, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3588019). Copyright Crown. No restrictions on use.

9.12 The 1980s



Figure 9.50 Referenda notwithstanding, it was the story of Terry Fox that gripped Canadians in 1980, a drama that unfolded with a distinctive hopping gait and a tragic end. Fox is seen here ca. 1977 before his amputation.

The oil crises of the 1970s continued to damage the western economy, driving up government deficits in one country after the next (see Section 8.10). Economic stagnation combined with inflation — a rare occurrence — to produce what was called “stagflation.” The dominant economic theory of the time in Canada, a kind of modified Keynesianism, offered limited help in dealing with this new phenomenon.

Trudeau's 1975 to 1979 administration responded with **wage and price controls** and limited the ability of trade unions to bargain for improved incomes as a means of controlling inflation. This strategy undermined the postwar settlement and brought the Liberals into conflict with labour, thereby enhancing the NDP's position.

At the same time, the most — and increasingly —popular economic theory on the right called for achieving growth through monetary policy. Monetarism (described in Section 8.16) was invoked as a way of adjusting incomes outside of wage settlements. Coupled to a belief in the efficacy of free markets and the necessity of reducing the role of the state, these approaches together constituted the neo-liberal (sometimes referred to as neo-conservative) agenda. Canadians were not in a hurry to embrace these policies, but the outside world — specifically, the United States and the United Kingdom — did so from the late 1970s on. Canada was inevitably caught up in this tide.



Figure 9.51 Queen Elizabeth II adds her signature to the Canada Act, 1982.

Trudeau's Return

It is worth noting that Trudeau's unpopularity in 1979 — particularly in the West— did not recover during the Clark administration. Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes returned a Liberal majority in 1980, in a campaign in which Trudeau was regarded by his own minders as a liability to be kept mostly out of sight. Apart from two seats in Manitoba, the West did not elect a single Liberal. If this reflected, in part, the Liberal approach to energy politics the situation only worsened with the subsequent introduction of the National Energy Policy (see Section 8.10). These developments were bound up in what became known as western alienation, a parallel to Quebec's dissatisfaction with Confederation and longstanding Maritime disenchantment.

What sustained Trudeau's standing nationally was his constitutional achievement in 1982. Efforts began in 1980 to recreate the consensus between provincial leaders that was briefly achieved at Victoria (in 1971) but these ended in bitter disagreement between the premiers and Trudeau's designate in this process, Jean Chrétien (b. 1934). A November 1981 meeting between Chrétien and a group of Premiers in the kitchen of the Government Conference Centre produced what was called the Kitchen Accord (and its makers, inevitably,

were the Kitchen Cabinet). Lévesque arrived the following morning and rejected the Accord as a betrayal of trust on the part of his colleagues, after which it was known in Quebec as the "Night of the Long Knives."[1]

The federal government then settled on a unilateral approach to the problem, one that the provinces challenged unsuccessfully in the Supreme Court. This left the path open for Ottawa to request of Westminster that the constitution be patriated to Canada. Faced with this seeming fait accompli, nine of the provinces agreed to an arrangement in which the new **Charter of Rights and Freedoms** would protect some of their interests through a **notwithstanding clause** in the forthcoming ***Canada Act* (1982)**. An amending formula, however, was not settled on.

Quebec remained a hold-out in these talks and has not relinquished that position since. At the time, Trudeau (probably correctly) believed that Lévesque would not consent to any proposal to reform a constitution from which he would prefer an outright break. Certainly, if Liberal premier Bourassa in 1971 felt pressure from *nationalistes* to reject the Victoria Charter, the separatist premier Lévesque would feel that pressure even more.

Despite the constitutional victory — as it was seen by many — Trudeau's personal popularity continued to sag. By 1984, he had spent 15 years in the job and helmed the country through some of its most troubled years. Generation gaps, campus unrest, FLQ bombs, the sexual revolution, second-wave feminism, two OPEC oil crises, the end of the postwar boom, the arrival in adulthood of all of the baby boomers, and two major constitutional battles — including a nail-biting referendum in Quebec — represent only a sample of the seismic forces that were metamorphosing the country and exhausting the prime minister.

In the background, Trudeau's private life had gone from glamour to prurient gossip and judgment. It is important to note in this regard the different values that were manifest in 1970s and 1980s Canada: as Christopher Dummitt shows in Section 9.5, a leader with a secret life as complicated and messy as that of Mackenzie King could be in the spotlight for 20 years without fear of public or press prying. By contrast, Trudeau's playboy lifestyle in the 1960s drew comment and criticism; his relationship with, marriage to, and divorce from Margaret Sinclair (b. 1949) — a woman 30 years his junior and described by the press as a "flower child" — was scrutinized at every turn. Sinclair came from the Liberal establishment in British Columbia (her father was a cabinet minister under Louis St. Laurent), but she was 22 at the time of her marriage and subjected to the first wave of political **paparazzi**— whether at home, on official business, or visiting her favourite discotheque. Sinclair's departure from 24 Sussex Drive (which she has described bitterly as "the Crown jewel of the federal penitentiary system"[2]) was a blow to Trudeau's own well-being. His role as the nation's most famous single parent was yet another way in which he was a pioneer among prime ministers.

Trudeau's legacy is a complex one. His administrations were buffeted by demands for change, and they made many missteps along the way. There were important advances and substantial retreats as well. Material change — the Charter, the Constitution — was probably less consequential in some respects than the emotions he evoked in people. Early in Trudeau's prime ministership, the famously acerbic poet Irving Layton said, "In Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Canada has at last produced a leader worthy of assassination." Trudeau's undoubted intellectual powers, his coolly rational, Jesuitical way of arguing a point, his disregard for decorum (as when he slid down a bannister at the Chateau Laurier or did a pirouette behind the Queen), and his cut-throat debating style in the Commons aroused feelings of admiration and accusations of unbridled arrogance. As much as many of his predecessors have been disliked or their policies despised, Trudeau was simultaneously the most celebrated and hated man to hold the office. His successors would be held to a changed standard and all would prove to be "no Trudeau."

1. This term alludes to events in Germany in June and July 1934 in which the Hitler regime brutally purged and murdered its internal opponents as well as critics outside the National Socialist Party.

2. Quoted in Glen McGregor, "The Gargoyle – 24 Sussex: 'The Crown jewel of the federal penitentiary system,'" Ottawa Citizen, 19 June 2015.

Mulroney, Meech, and More

As neo-liberalism took hold in Britain and America, so too it acquired acolytes in Canada. The fading popularity of the Liberals worked to the advantage of the Conservatives. Clark's failure to hold onto power put his leadership in peril and, with it, the ability of the Red Tories to influence the party in a decade of rising social conservative values. In 1983, the Progressive Conservative Party's leadership convention ousted Clark and elected Brian Mulroney (b. 1939) as leader.

Born in Baie-Comeau, educated in Quebec, New Brunswick, and, Nova Scotia, Mulroney was conspicuously fluent in English and French and as much at home in boardroom Montreal as he was in rural Maritimes and Quebec. A political animal from an early age, he worked in Ottawa under the Diefenbaker government before shifting to corporate law. In the 1970s, he played an important and prominent role in the Cliche Commission enquiry into labour issues at the James Bay hydroelectric project. His disclosure of Mafia involvement in union actions put him in the public eye for the first time. The Commission also found Mulroney working alongside Lucien Bouchard (b. 1938) and in close contact with Bourassa, two political allies who would play important roles in the 1980s and 1990s. Understood to be an opportunist who could play the Blue and Red sides of the PC Party, Mulroney decided in 1984 to move his campaign in a direction that was consonant with highly popular neo-conservative regimes in Washington and London.

The 1984 campaign combined a swing to the right with a rejection of the Liberals — now led by the very uncertain John Turner (b. 1929). Turner, like Trudeau, had an earlier reputation as a good-looking, mid-century playboy (he had famously dated Princess Margaret in the 1950s) and as an effective Minister of Justice and then Minister of Finance under Trudeau. But he broke with Trudeau in 1975 over the issue of wage and price controls and spent the next nine years working on **Bay Street** as a corporate lawyer. He won a seat in the 1980 election but was not the robust fighter he had been years before. He made an easy target for Mulroney and, in one of the earliest televised debates between federal party leaders, Turner withered and crumbled under accusations that he lacked the nerve to reverse egregious patronage appointments made by Trudeau on his way out of office.

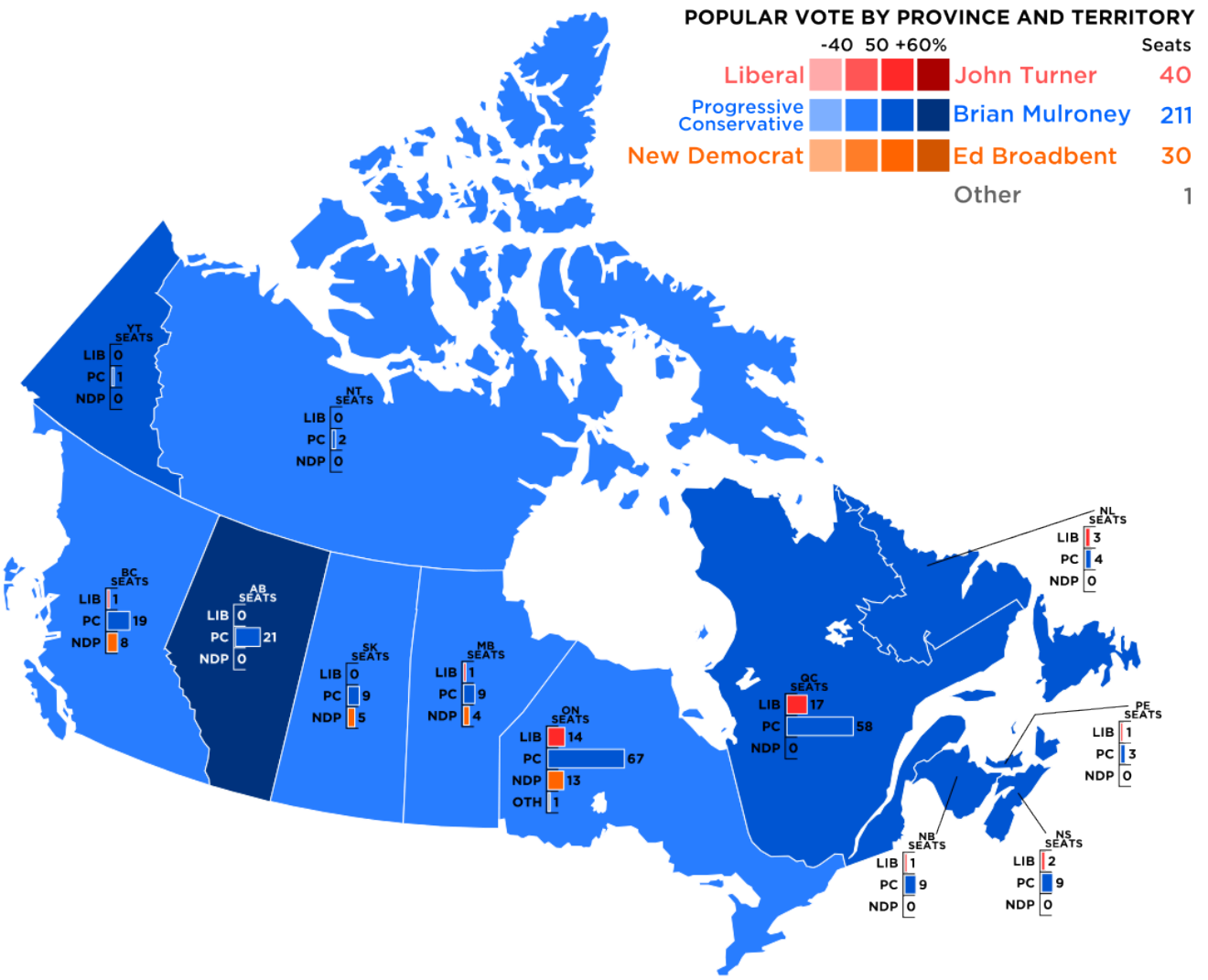


Figure 9.52 Colour the nation blue. The Progressive Conservatives in 1984 were the first in the postwar era to dominate in every region. [*[Long Description]*]

The Liberal record in tatters, Mulroney did more than inherit office from a failing government. He built huge momentum across the country. Although Diefenbaker had made headway into Quebec, it was Mulroney who reestablished the party of Borden in that province, winning 58 of 75 seats. This massive majority in the Commons, however, did not translate into an easy legislative ride. The Senate was dominated by years of Liberal appointments with little likelihood of change on the horizon. For the first time in decades, the upper house was inclined to scrutinize legislation and send it back to the Commons for amendment. These practices frustrated Progressive Conservatives who were hungry for change, and stimulated calls for senate reform. Mulroney faced other challenges, however, and some of these were internal. Having been out of office for a generation (notwithstanding the Clark regime of nine months), there was a backlog of demands from patronage appointment hopefuls. As well, the country was running a significant deficit, and attempts to reduce it only imperiled Mulroney's ability to fund projects that would reward the party faithful.

The prime minister responded with closer relations with the United States and constitutional reforms.

New Reciprocity

Free trade had always been an issue associated with the Liberal Party; now Mulroney seized upon it from a neo-liberal angle. The Auto Pact already provided for severely lowered tariffs in that sector and there were other sectoral trade discussions underway since the 1960s. Reducing trade barriers further and more generally was seen in the 1980s as a means to boost activity in a slow moving Canadian economy. It also suited Mulroney's pro-American attitudes, which were put on display at a St. Patrick's Day meeting in Quebec City in 1984 with President Ronald Reagan. The "Shamrock Summit" between the two Irish-North American leaders laid the groundwork for a freer marketplace, a sign that Ottawa was absorbing the neo-liberal view that government regulation of trade was stifling growth. The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) that followed was resisted bitterly by some manufacturers and many spokespersons for the cultural sector. The acclaimed author, Margaret Atwood (b. 1939), was only the most prominent of the many writers and artists who challenged the proposed agreement on the grounds that it would result in the destruction of Canadian culture. In a presentation to a parliamentary committee on free trade, she said, "Canada as a separate but dominated country has done about as well under the US as women, worldwide, have done under men; about the only position they've ever adopted towards us, country to country, has been the missionary position, and we were not on top."[3] The final agreement provided protection to Canadian education systems, the health sector, and cultural industries; it did not, however, cover off American access to Canadian water (for the economic impacts of the FTA, see Section 8.16).

The final draft left many Canadians uneasy and concerned about national sovereignty in an integrated North American economy. The NDP's opposition was predictable, given its record of concerns about American commercial and cultural imperialism; the Liberal Party also threw its weight against the proposed treaty, thereby claiming the anti-reciprocity position that was, for a century, a trademark of John A. Macdonald's Conservative Party. Faced with obstruction in the Liberal-dominated Senate, Mulroney opted to take the issue to the polls. The 1988 election that followed became a single-issue campaign, a poll on whether to accept the FTA. Although Tory dominance survived only in Alberta and Quebec, the NDP and Liberals split the vote everywhere else and were unable to avoid a second Mulroney majority. The FTA was proclaimed and in effect on 1 January 1989.

3. Quoted in Frank E. Manning, "Reversible Resistance: Canadian Popular Culture and the American Other," in David H. Flaherty and Frank E. Manning, eds., *The Beaver Bites Back: American Popular Culture in Canada* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993): 4.



Figure 9.53 "Get lost. I've already been tricked." Mulroney's success in the Free Trade election belies the fact that his government otherwise faced comprehensive criticism. [Long Description]

The Meech Lake Accord

The possibility of constitutional change was able to take advantage of the momentum created by the *Canada Act.* The most critical piece was the issue of an amending formula. Mulroney's popularity in Quebec was largely built on his commitment to meaningful change in this area, so long as it would address Quebecers' concerns. Lévesque indicated a willingness to seek a resolution, a move that undermined his support in the PQ, led to his resignation as leader, and the Party's defeat at the hands of Bourassa's revived Liberal Party in December 1985. In April 1987, Mulroney invited the provincial premiers to a retreat at Meech Lake, where a nine-hour meeting produced agreement on an amending formula, a **distinct society** clause for Quebec, a system for filling senate openings and Supreme Court positions with individuals recommended by the provinces, and greater provincial influence over immigration issues. This was the only thing that was accomplished with alacrity in the brief life of the **Meech Lake Accord**. In June 1990, the Accord was dead, unable to make it through the various shoals of Canadian politics. What had gone wrong?

The signs at first were promising. The opposition leaders— John Turner for the Liberals and Ed Broadbent (b. 1936) for the NDP — endorsed the Accord and the public seemed predisposed to support an agreement that would put an end to the long-running constitutional saga. As Bourassa was inclined to point out, all of Quebec's requirements had been offered up by Ottawa at one point or another over the previous 20 years, so there was little new to be concerned about. Only four of the premiers at Meech were not Conservatives, and one of those was BC Social Credit premier Bill Bennett (1932-2015) (an ideological conservative); another was Bourassa, a Liberal, who was adamantly

supportive of the Accord. That left Howard Pawley (1934-2015) (NDP), who was replaced within weeks by the Conservative government of Gary Filmon (b. 1942). All of this bode well.

And then, a month after the Meech Lake meeting, Pierre Trudeau resurfaced. No longer an MP, his thoughts on the subject were nevertheless newsworthy. He called Mulroney a “weakling” for caving into Quebec’s interests, drew attention to the dilution of federal powers to the detriment of the whole nation, took aim at the distinct society clause, and made salient points about the threat the Accord might pose to the Charter rights of less-privileged Canadians. Federalists within the national and Quebec arm of the Liberal Party began deserting Turner’s supportive position.

This was not enough to completely derail the process. A signing ceremony in June 1987 in Ottawa turned into an all-nighter of negotiations on fine points but agreement was reached and the document inked. Now, as per the existing amendment process, the clock was running: Meech Lake required official Parliamentary and provincial approval within three years or it would die on the order paper.

Three years is a long time in politics. First, Hatfield’s Conservative government in New Brunswick was devastated at the polls by the Frank McKenna (b. 1948) -led Liberal Party which, remarkably, won every seat in the legislature. Then the Pawley government fell and a minority government took its place. In 1989, Newfoundland voters threw out the Conservative Tom Rideout (b. 1948) government and voted in the Liberals under Clyde Wells (b. 1937), who — along with McKenna— believed that the Accord talks should be reopened.

Public opinion, too, was beginning to abandon the Accord. A turning point in this regard was the response of the Quebec Liberals to a Supreme Court decision on the province’s sign laws. The Court found the extensive ban on English-language signage violated Charter rights. Rather than concede the point, Bourassa drew up new legislation, **Bill 178**, which used the notwithstanding clause to renew the commitment to French-only signs. One of the aspects of the Meech Lake Accord was that the clause was not to be used to get around Charter rights. English-Canadian politicians in Quebec and elsewhere were appalled; both New Brunswick and Manitoba now turned against the Accord.

In the absence of public hearings before Meech Lake, what followed was a public outpouring of criticism. There was some support, to be sure, but accusations of elitism and the creation — through the distinct society clause —of what was called **asymmetrical federalism** raised concerns from coast to coast. New Brunswick’s opposition prompted Mulroney to appoint Jean Charest (b. 1964), a young cabinet member from Quebec, to head up a Commission to find a way forward on some of these issues. The Charest Commission recommended that the distinct society clause be subject to the Charter, a change that appealed to English Canadian premiers but which did not play well in Quebec. Bourassa would have nothing to do with the amendments and Charest’s suggestions prompted Mulroney’s old friend and cabinet minister, Lucien Bouchard (b. 1938), to resign from the government (some accounts claim he was fired). Always an undisguised *nationaliste*, Bouchard now declared himself committed to the sovereigntist vision of independence. Just as Turner was dealing with division in the ranks of the Liberal Party, now Mulroney was facing down senior members in his own cabinet.

Mulroney was himself an important factor in the failure of Meech Lake. His management style worked well in executive boardrooms, but it lacked any consultative features. There were no public hearings, admittedly a rarity in the 1980s. The optics were bad as well: a roomful of white male politicians who were all — with the exception of PEI’s Joe Ghiz (1945-1996), who was of Lebanese descent — drawn from northwestern European stock, ought to have noticed that they lacked credibility to speak for

women, Indigenous people, new immigrant Canadians, and several other constituencies. No sooner was the Accord announced, some of these groups began to mobilize opposition to the process as much as to its product. Mulroney has been criticized as being too much in a rush to get an agreement and, thus, too ready to make concessions of federal authority where there were strong arguments against doing so. In the aftermath of a final round of revisions and amendments in June 1990, Mulroney claimed in an interview that his last strategy was to gather the premiers and force an agreement. It was in this interview that he used the phrase "roll the dice" to describe the process. If the premiers had not felt manipulated or treated with contempt before, several certainly did at this point. The public, too, was outraged by Mulroney's gaff. It was this reaction that prompted Manitoba premier Filmon to call for public hearings. What support Mulroney had enjoyed from Liberal leadership hopeful Jean Chrétien now evaporated.



Figure 9.54 David Neel's "Just Say No." The catch-phrase of the war on drugs is repurposed here in a tribute to Elijah Harper. [*Long Description]*

The final scene of the Meech Lake Accord drama was held in the Manitoba legislature. The process involved in reaching the Accord consensus angered Indigenous political figures, and they were dissatisfied as well with the actual contents of the agreement. Indigenous people were never consulted, and their role or place in Canadian society was submerged beneath the rhetoric of two founding nations. Approval of the Accord by Manitoba required two votes in the legislature, the first being a vote permitting the second vote. It was during this debate that a northern Manitoba NDP member of the

legislative assembly, Elijah Harper (1949-2013), holding a single eagle feather, used legitimate procedural delays to obstruct the assembly. This act, conducted by a First Nations man — the first Treaty Indian in provincial politics — was an important moment in drawing Canadians' attention to Indigenous peoples issues and the question of where they fit within the equation of constitutional discussions. Harper's refusal in the face of substantial pressure to accede was noted widely and regarded as courageous and, in the end, it was successful. The vote could not be taken, the deadline passed, and Meech died.

Key Points

- Changing economic circumstances produced a change in the political culture, manifest in a turn toward neo-liberal (aka: neo-conservative) positions.
- Trudeau's success in patriating the constitution produced the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the *Canada Act.* What was missing was an amending formula.
- Despite these accomplishments, Trudeau's popularity continued to fall, and it did so in an era of increasingly personalized politics.
- Brian Mulroney's prime ministership moved the Conservatives from a Red Tory to a Blue Tory position on social policies.
- Mulroney broke, too, with generations of Tory leaders by endorsing closer relations with the United States in politics and in trade, manifest in the signing of the Free Trade Agreement.
- The Conservative government also moved in 1987 to settle the issue of the amending formula. The Meech Lake Accord was agreed between all ten provinces and Ottawa, but its support dissipated in the three years that followed.
- Canadian political culture generally became more ideologically charged in the 1980s, more personal, and simultaneously more public, with growing demands for consultative and transparent processes.
- The role of Elijah Harper in the defeat of the Meech Lake Accord is regarded as a watershed moment after which Indigenous peoples involvement was more consistently sought.

Long Descriptions

Figure 9.52 long description: Results of the 1984 Canadian federal election. The Progressive Conservatives (Brian Mulroney) won 211 seats, the Liberals (John Turner) won 40 seats, the New Democrats (Ed Broadbent) won 30 seats, and other parties won 1 seat. Broken down by province:

- British Columbia: Liberals won 1 seat, Progressive Conservatives won 19 seats, and the New Democrats (NDP) won 8 seats (67.8% Progressive Conservative)
- Alberta: Progressive Conservatives won 21 seats (100% Progressive Conservative)
- Saskatchewan: Progressive Conservatives won 9 seats, NDP won 5 seats (64.2% Progressive Conservative)
- Manitoba: Liberals won 1 seat, Progressive Conservatives won 9 seats, and the NDP won 4

seats (64.2% Progressive Conservative)

- Ontario: Liberals won 14 seats, Progressive Conservatives won 67 seats, NDP won 13 seats, and other parties won 1 seat (70.5% Progressive Conservative)
- Quebec: Liberals won 17 seats, Progressive Conservatives won 58 seats (77.3% Progressive Conservative)
- Newfoundland: Liberals won 3 seats, Progressive Conservatives won 4 seats (57.1% Progressive Conservative)
- New Brunswick: Liberals won 1 seat, Progressive Conservatives won 9 seats (90% Progressive Conservative)
- Nova Scotia: Liberals won 2 seats, Progressive Conservatives won 9 seats (81.8% Progressive Conservative)
- Prince Edward Island: Liberals won 1 seat, Progressive Conservatives won 3 seats (75% Progressive Conservative)
- Yukon Territory: Progressive Conservatives won 1 seat (100% Progressive Conservative)
- Northwest Territories: Progressive Conservatives won 2 seats (100% Progressive Conservative)

[Return to Figure 9.52]

Figure 9.53 long description: Political cartoon. A waist-height man with a large chin (Brian Mulroney) is dressed as a clown, standing on a man's doorstep and holding out a bag for trick-or-treating. His expression is good-natured, attempting to charm. The homeowner, standing on the threshold, holds a newspaper that has the headline "Mulroney reneges on election promises." The homeowner's dog also stands at the door, tail up and alert. The caption is "Get lost, I've already been tricked!" [Return to Figure 9.53]

Figure 9.54 long description: Poster of a pensive Indigenous man surrounded by a decorative frame. The man has his hair parted down the middle. He has a pensive expression. He is seated at a desk of sorts and looks down at the surface. He holds an eagle feather and wears a necklace depicting a black bird with a long neck and outstretched wings. The outer edge of the frame is made up of red and black triangles. Overlapping feathers sit above and below the photo of the man. Each corner of the frame has what looks like wheat. Canoe oars run alongside the photo. [Return to Figure 9.54]

Media Attributions

- Terry Fox © Simon Fraser University, Communications and Marketing is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license
- Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II with Prime Minister The Rt. Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau signing the Proclamation of the Constitution Act, 1982 © Robert Cooper, Library and Archives Canada (PA-141503). Copyright Government of Canada. No restrictions on use.
- Canada 1984 Federal Election © Wikipedia user Lokal_Profil is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

- "Get lost, I've already been tricked!" © Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. 1987-42-435. Copyright assigned to Library and Archives Canada by copyright owner Roy Carless. No known restrictions on use.
- Just Say No [Elijah Harper] © Library and Archives Canada, David Neel collection, 1991-344 (C-138082). David Neel. Reproduced with the permission of David Neel. No restrictions on use.

9.13 Cold War Society: Cities and Suburbs



Figure 9.55 Even the smallest 20th-century cities, like Whitehorse, adopted the suburban style of housing (among them, the "rancher" and the "split-level bungalow") and exploited peripheral land rather than building higher densities.

At the turn of this century, only one city in the Atlantic provinces surpassed the 100,000 mark in population. Halifax stood as the 14th-largest urban area in the country, with 359,111 people in 2001. St. John's (in 20th place) had a population of 99,182, and all of the rest were below 70,000. The combined populations of Saint John, Moncton, Fredericton, and Charlottetown were hardly more than that of Saskatoon, and if St. John's and Corner Brook were added, they still wouldn't be a match for Halifax.

Because large urban areas make more media noise than smaller centres, because media and capital are centralized in the biggest metropolises, and because the influence of the top three or four major cities is so pervasive, it is easy to lose sight of the rather more modest urban experiences of some Canadian regions in what many commentators called the "century of the city." Rare, however, is the city of any size that has not been impacted by many of the urban trends that define modern life, of which automobilism, suburbanization, the baby boom, multiculturalism, and commercialization of space are only a few examples.



Figure 9.56 Atlantic cities may have grown more slowly but they took on many of the suburbanized elements of much larger centres, as Moncton reveals from the air.

An Urban Country

The size of Canada — which includes many imperfectly mapped islands in the Arctic — inevitably produces shockingly low population density levels. At 3.4 people per square kilometre in 2015, Canada ranks slightly ahead of Iceland and Australia among developed economies but behind the rest. And yet, the majority of Canadians live in urban centres and have since 1921. In that year, 1.65 million people lived in cities with a population of 100,000 or more (of which there were only six), out of a total national population of 8.8 million; in 1941, 2.6 million out of 11.5 million were living in that largest tier of cities (of which there were now eight); and, in 1961, 4.2 million out of 18.2 million were big city dwellers. In 1976, nearly half of the 23 million Canadians were living in 100,000+ sized cities. By contrast, the percentage of Canadians living in cities of 5,000 or fewer fell from 19% in 1921 to 15% in 1951 and 11% in 1971. Small-town life has become more uncommon in part because small towns became large towns and large towns became small cities, but it is clear that the social dynamics that defined the lives of Canadians before 1921 changed dramatically in the 20th century.



Figure 9.57 The City of Surrey started as several distinct villages, and that pattern has since been overlaid with a low-density suburban grid. The city now struggles to create the density that would enable improved public transit and reduced car dependence.

Suburbia

Much of that growth was taking place not in the actual cities but in their neighbouring municipalities. It is worth noting that there have been several resource extraction towns founded in the last 100 years but no new cities. The late 19th century saw the birth of every major city in western Canada (apart from slightly older Victoria and New Westminster), but the only truly new centres in the 20th century are satellites and suburbs of the largest metropolises. Mississauga, Brampton, Surrey, Laval, Markham, Vaughan, and Burnaby are examples drawn from the largest 20 cities in Canada, none of which contained more than a few thousand in 1914, all of which are very near or past the quarter-million mark now. Each of these began as peripheral, spillover, **bedroom communities** associated with a larger urban centre and, in that respect, they were very typical.[1]

The setting for modernity was urban, but the lives of most Canadians in the 20th century increasingly became defined as something different: **suburban**.

Beginning in the 1920s, Canadians began a migration away from city centres to the margin. Initially, what was considered "suburban" was merely the outskirts of the original city. Suburbanization faltered in the 1930s and early 1940s and then resumed in earnest in the postwar period. At that time, larger and larger numbers of city dwellers evacuated old neighbourhoods for entirely new communities.

Suburbanization was driven by several push factors. Housing stock in the city centre had grown overcrowded due to the poverty of the 1930s (as mortgage payments were missed and the number of rental units increased) and with the arrival of large numbers of ex-soldiers after the war. Large older

1. Richard Harris, *Creeping Conformity: How Canada Became Suburban, 1900-1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

homes were converted to rooming houses with less privacy and aging plumbing, heating, and wiring. In Vancouver, the second Hotel Vancouver was turned into veterans' housing, so pressing was the demand for accommodations. As well, the city centres and older neighbourhoods were increasingly associated (rightly or wrongly) with crime, violence, and — from the perspective of Anglo-Celtic and Francophone Canadians — the presence of new immigrants and unfamiliar visible minorities. Finally, the baby boom (considered below) was underway and the need for more spacious houses was widely felt.



Figure 9.58 Suburbs have been criticized for "cookie-cutter" housing designs. In places like Don Mills, where the influence of the 1920s Garden City movement and modernist architecture can be seen, the whole design was in fact tightly controlled as a kind of social experiment in creating a livable space.

The pulls of suburbia were also numerous. Some industries were relocating to the edges of cities, and population followed. Housing prices were lower and so were property taxes. Suburban housing typically contained significantly more floor space than was available in houses in older blue-collar areas. Suburban lots — as large as 50 foot (15.24 metres) wide — compared very favourably to the 25 or 33 foot (7.62-10 metre) lot commonly found in the centre of western Canadian cities. Neighbours were, therefore, not cheek-by-jowl with one another. As suburban infrastructure grew there were highways that connected outlying areas with urban industrial nodes and the city centre. There were also new schools that were instantly a step up from the deteriorating facilities in the inner cities. Young postwar baby-boom families were attracted by all of these features.

Watch this video on the *New Super Super-Mart* to see one of Canada's early suburban shopping centres.

Working — without much effect — against these pulls, were several drawbacks to suburban life. Urban families tended to stick to identifiable neighbourhoods before 1945 — generally, spaces that were associated with ethnicity, church, and sources of preferred types of food. In the suburbanization process, siblings did not (or could not) necessarily buy in the same areas, which meant that the supports formerly on offer between family members were more tenuous.

Culturally, suburbs were thought to be deficient. Civic amenities might include parks, rinks, and pools, but it was rare in the period from 1945 to 1970 to find art galleries or performance spaces outside of the old city cores. Zoning that forbade commercial properties from residential areas meant that there was no corner shop to turn to for small, immediate necessities; bottles of milk and loaves of bread were often delivered door-to-door every day or two, but if a small sack of sugar was needed mid-week that meant a trip in the car to the nearest shopping plaza. Pedestrianism was discouraged by distances and also by the sprawling parking lots in shopping strips. As shopping malls appeared for the first time in the 1950s there began a process of concentrating retail space in nodes (with "plenty of free parking") rather than along "high streets," a fact that contributed further to the rise of automobile dependency. Most households therefore had to have two cars at their disposal. This luxury carried with it higher energy and individualized maintenance costs, and a concomitant rise in demand for more road capacity and parking, as well as repair shops and gas stations. There was, as a result, more air pollution and alienation from the very greenspace that once made the "leafy suburbs" attractive. In lieu of a natural town or village centre in most suburbs, the shopping mall emerged as the *de facto* focal point for social interaction. Consumerism was thus encouraged by the lack of other possible sites of community contact.



Figure 9.59 Brentwood in Burnaby was one of Canada's first suburban shopping malls. It is simultaneously a shrine to consumerism and a way of divorcing commerce from the streetscape.

Return to Civvy Street

Readjustment to peacetime in 1945 was welcomed by a generation that had lived through economic disaster and global conflict. It was also approached with some trepidation. The immediate postwar era a

generation earlier had brought unemployment, a pandemic, and labour unrest and Canadians at the end of WWII rightly feared a repetition. Some of these concerns were addressed at the political level (see Section 8.12). No initiative was as comprehensive in this respect as the 1944 **Veterans Charter**.

At war's end, there were some 900,000 men and women who had served in some capacity. The Charter provided $1.2 billion to facilitate their reintegration. This included a one-time pay-out, cash for civilian clothing, and life insurance. Funding was available for post-secondary education at university or in vocational schools. The **Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)** was created in 1946 to assist Canadians with their first home purchase and the renovation of older homes (neglected during the Depression and not helped by material shortages during the war).[2] Oversight for these and other projects was provided by the newly-established Department of Veterans' Affairs (later renamed Veterans Affairs Canada).

Legislative and social pressures combined to enable returned soldiers to reclaim their old jobs (if, indeed, they had been formerly employed). This meant, inevitably, removing women from the industrial workforce. For returning servicewomen, however, no similar commitment was made. The end effect was to make marriage and housewifery the default career path for women who were not nurses, secretaries, or teachers.

Would suburbanization have occurred with such rapidity in the postwar years had it not been for this context? It is unlikely. CMHC brought homeownership within reach of a generation that had, less than a decade earlier, experienced record-setting levels of unemployment, cash shortages, and falling wages. The economic boost provided by the war had one other related impact that drove forward suburban growth.

The Baby Boom

As economic conditions began to improve slightly in the late 1930s, so too did the nuptiality (marriage) rate and the number of births. The earliest hint of a fertility recovery, however, was nothing compared to what would come after World War II. In 1911, there were 4.8 million Canadians over the age of 15 years, of whom 2.6 million were married; that share — about half — hardly budged until the 1950s, when it reached two-thirds and then crept up to three-quarters in the early 1960s. In the post-war, Cold War years, being married, building a family, and — yes, being born — was the experience of a growing number of Canadians.

The declaration of war in 1939 was followed by a veritable stampede to the wedding altar. In Vancouver, for example, there was a 26.6% increase in the number of marriages registered over the previous year. To give this more perspective, it represents a doubling of the incidence of nuptiality Vancouverites reached in 1933. Births would follow soon thereafter.

Nationally the number of births in 1937 was only 227,900 and then it shot up to pre-Depression rates in 1940, surpassing every year in the 1920s other than 1921, at 263,993. The **crude birth rate** rose from 20.1 in 1937 to 24.3 in 1945 and kept going up until it peaked in 1947 at 28.9. It then sagged a bit and then recovered in 1954 to 1957, when it hovered just above 28 per 1000. There were twice as many live

2. Jill Wade, *Houses for All: The Struggle for Social Housing, 1919-1950* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1994).

births in 1956 (450,700) than there had been in any year in the 1930s. What is more, although the share of births that were **illegitimate** climbed during the war years from 3.9% to 4.5% of the total number of births, illegitimacy declined to a mid-1950s trough of about 3.8%.

More and more births occurred in marriage and took place in hospitals. In the 1920s, the share of hospital births was around 1 in 4; in the 1930s, it climbed to about 1 in 3, passing the 40% mark in 1939; by the end of the war, the figure was nearly 64%; by 1960, it was nearly 95%; and from 1965, it was 99%. Whatever the risks entailed in hospital births, the neo-natal and infant mortality rate fell from 81 per 1000 live population in the period 1931-1935 to 26 in 1960-1965, a remarkable achievement in public health. Likewise, stillbirths fell from nearly 32 per 1000 live births in 1931 to fewer than 12 in 1965.[3]

The enormity of immigration in 20th-century Canada (considered in Section 5.11) has tended to overshadow another important demographic behaviour: migration. As with the arrival of newcomers, the movement of Canadians from one province to another had a westward bias. The peoples of the other provinces and the Territories are more fully represented in British Columbia and Alberta than in any of the Maritime provinces, and this has been the case since the early 20th century. It is difficult to track interprovincial movement but we can identify out-migration patterns. From 1921 to 1961, there was only one decade in which Nova Scotia saw fewer people leave than arrived; in the same period PEI and New Brunswick (and, after 1949, Newfoundland) experienced substantial and sustained net out-migration. The decade in which this softens — the 1930s — offered up such poor economic prospects in the rest of the country that Maritimers were less likely to head “down the road.” Which suggests, of course, that interprovincial pulls are at least as important as pushes. The West was not exempt from abandonment: Manitoba was a net loser of population from 1921 and Saskatchewan from 1931. Alberta experienced net out-migration from 1931 to the 1950s. In fact, only British Columbia and Ontario registered net increases in migration across every decade of the 20th century.[4] Moving to where the jobs are became a powerful tradition in its own right in Atlantic Canada in the mid-20th century.

White Flight

The ability to move to suburbia seemed, at the time, a very democratic one. But, in fact, it was one enjoyed mostly by Canadians who held steady jobs, and most of those people were drawn from the British and French context populations. New immigrants continued to pour into the old urban centres and their numbers were growing as the postwar migrations gathered speed (see Section 5.11). West Indian, South Asian, and other visible minorities took over spaces vacated by those who made their way to the suburbs. Growing diversity in urban cores contributed to still more movement to the suburbs by more established Canadian households in what has been called **white flight**.

The effect on city centres of this evacuation is important to note. Downtowns in the first half of the 20th century had been a focal point for entertainment and commerce; by the 1960s, many were gutted. Live theatre and music venues closed down, old movie palaces became dilapidated and slated for demolition, neighbourhoods that were increasingly viewed as irredeemable slums were ploughed under

3. Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd edition., F.H. Leacy, ed. (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983): B1-14, B23-50.

4. Warren E. Kalbach and Wayne W. McVey, *The Demographic Bases of Canadian Society* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1971), 86.

to make way for freeways that would conduct suburbanites to and from work. Downtown department stores retained some customer loyalty, but the spread of suburban shopping malls were a blow from which they would never fully recover. The impact of this abandonment of the city centres can still be seen in many Canadian metropolises. Some, like Winnipeg, are a patchwork of vacant lots and are very unpopulated after dark. The leading cities, however, turned the availability of land in what was now called the **Central Business District (CBD)** to advantage by erecting the country's second generation of skyscrapers. Built of steel, concrete, and glass, these mostly corporate-owned or chartered bank-owned towers sprang up first in Montreal (the country's financial capital at the time and its largest city) and were as much as twice the height of pre-WWII towers. The skylines of the largest downtowns across the country followed suit and began to reflect a pattern of trademark styles. The black glass Toronto-Dominion towers were instantly distinguishable from the white-edged Bank of Montreal skyscrapers. Montreal also led the way in **suburban sprawl**, so much so that by 1996, 75% of Montrealers actually lived outside of the city proper.

Toronto's leadership responded to the changes associated with population and spatial expansion in 1953 by creating a federated Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto. Known as **Metro**, the new administrative body took in the City of Toronto and the suburban municipalities of Etobicoke, York, North York, East York, and Scarborough. This new organism accomplished much but some of its projects were highly controversial.



Figure 9.60 Nanaimo is one of the oldest cities in western Canada, but that has not saved it from sprawl. Its metro population of 98,000 in 2015 covers 1,280 km2. Greater Toronto (not Metro) covers 1,751 km2 but contains more than 5 million people.

As the flight to the suburbs accelerated in the 1950s and pressures grew to develop more and better highway systems, a generation of planners appeared whose approach to depressed areas was to bring in the bulldozers. Some took their lead from American cities where variegated downtowns were gutted to make way for sleek, high-density social housing projects and cloverleaf overpasses. Largely because the Canadian economy and population lagged somewhat behind the Americans, some cities were spared the worst excesses of this period. Even in the United States, however, the wisdom of obliterating

whole communities in the name of faster traffic flow and rationalized modern housing was being questioned.

At the forefront of the debate was New York's Jane Jacobs (1916-2006). In the mid-1950s, Jacobs began a public critique of slum clearance and urban renewal in Manhattan. Jacobs' successful crusade was noted in the Canadian media. When she emigrated to Canada in 1968 (in part to keep her draft-age sons out of the Vietnam War), she became a high-profile lightning rod for Torontonians angered at the proposed Spadina Expressway. The battle to stop the project was ultimately successful. As Ontario Premier William (Bill) Davis (b. 1929) observed in 1971:

> If we are building a transportation system to serve the automobile, the Spadina Expressway would be a good place to start. But if we are building a transportation system to serve people, the Spadina Expressway is a good place to stop.[5]

The collapse of the Spadina Expressway project in Toronto coincided with the death of radical proposals for slum clearance. The two processes — freeway construction and the clearance of poor and/or racialized neighbourhoods — were closely linked. Halifax targeted the Black community at Africville in the early 1960s, threatening to replace it with a highway (it was spared for a while then brutally demolished to make room for other uses). The Bonaventure Expressway took a bite out of Griffintown in Montreal (a neighbourhood comprised mostly of Eastern Europeans, Italians, Jews, and some Irish) and the Autoroute Ville-Marie displaced hundreds. The construction of waterfront expressways and viaducts through Vancouver's East End, Gastown, Chinatown, and Strathcona were stayed. These were unusual survivors, in that neighbourhoods containing ethnic minorities and Indigenous peoples generally did not fare well in the battle with bulldozers and highways. An African-Canadian neighbourhood in Vancouver and Winnipeg's Rooster Town, a Métis community, were both cleared to make way for, respectively, a viaduct and a suburban school.[6] Clearances of these neighbourhoods, along with the wide variety of shantytowns that existed on civic peripheries (in defiance of modern norms of property ownership and conceptions of public health), were a way to rationalize cities, to colonize neighbourhoods and pastureland alike with a modern vision of Canadian life.

Suburbanization gave the Canadians who could afford it the space they deeply wanted and a sense of building new communities that echoed the "pioneer" experience. There were significant liabilities to this trend, including the isolation of **housewives** on the periphery, the loss of access to cultural facilities, and huge environmental consequences. Publicly owned transportation systems such as streetcars were pulled out of service to create more room for privately owned automobiles. Less obvious is the extent to which private space became dominant, superseding public space. The gathering in a town square, the crowded meeting at city hall, the spontaneous spilling of crowds off a sidewalk onto the street to watch a parade or to engage in protest: these did not disappear entirely but were much less common than they had been in the pre-WWII years. The authorities could point to this change with some satisfaction because it meant that another general strike like Winnipeg's in 1919 was unlikely. The possibility of rioting unemployed workers was likewise diminished. The trade-off was several generations that retreated into their living rooms and recreation rooms to engage with the *civitas* only through a television screen.

5. John Sewell, *The Shape of the City: Toronto Struggles with Modern Planning* (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 1993).

6. David G. Burley, "Rooster Town: Winnipeg's Lost Métis Suburb, 1900-1960," *Urban History Review,* XLII, no.1 (Fall 2013): 3-25.

What came out of suburbia was a population and culture unlike any before it. More highly educated and with expectations of continued prosperity, the baby boomers challenged the state to keep up with demands for services, institutions, and opportunities. As a voting population, they have been a decisive force since they first started voting in the 1960s. This was the first generation raised on television and nurtured by consumerism, a generation for which car-ownership and home-ownership was a given, if not a right. By the 1970s, more of Canada's housing stock had been built since 1945 than before, and the vast majority of that construction took place in suburban tracts. The suburbs were the cradle of what would rapidly emerge as the majority of Canadians, and gradually it became the case that these were more diverse neighbourhoods than the enclaves left behind in the old city centres.

Discounted by planners and often ridiculed (sometimes rightly) for their alleged soullessness, no exploration of contemporary Canadian culture and values would be complete without a serious understanding of the legacy of suburbanization.

Key Points

- The 20th century saw the number of large cities increase, the share of population living in large cities rise and the experience of growing up or residing in small towns retreat.
- Most urban growth in the second half of the 20th century took place in suburban neighbourhoods. Suburbs were attractive for economic reasons and because the housing stock and schools were new, automobilism made them (and workplaces) accessible, and shopping malls made them self-sufficient.
- Suburban life was made possible by social policies like the Veterans Charter and the CMHC.
- The end of the Depression, the start of WWII, and demobilization all contributed to the baby boom which, in turn, contributed to suburbanization.
- Abandonment of city centres led to the collapse of downtown commerce and its replacement with financial districts. It also led to massive highway projects that would obliterate older — often ethnic — neighbourhoods.
- Reactions against highways projects would rescue some Canadian centres from being paved over and would generate a renewed interest on creating livable spaces in the cities.
- Suburbia emerged as the new cradle of Canadian society and culture — a place with a gendered geography and a tendency to favour private space over public.

Media Attributions

- Whitehorse, Yukon Panorama, 2008 © C. Robson is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Moncton, "Le Coude", vue aérienne © Sebastien Paquet is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license
- Surrey Aerial View is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Don Mills Homes © Simon Pulsifer is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

- Postcard: Brentwood Shopping Centre, Burnaby, BC, 1963 © Rolly Ford, Natural Color Productions is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Nanaimo Aerial View © Wikipedia user KenWalker is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

9.14 Rural Canada in an Urban Century

Daniel Samson; Department of History; and Brock University



Figure 9.61 The state's enthusiasm for science in the early 20th century is embodied in the National Observatory in Ottawa on the grounds of the Experimental Farm.

At the time of Confederation, Canada was a rural country. By the middle of the 20th century, the majority of the country was urban. Today, it's mostly urban. How did that happen? And what does that mean for our understanding of the country's history? The most obvious answer is that the late 19th-century emergence of industrial capitalism meant that waged work was available in the towns and cities of the country, and that the country's farms were able to feed this increasingly urban population.

Why were farmers able to feed so many more people? The most important change was the development of gas-powered engines and machinery. Farm mechanization had begun in Canada in the early 19th century, but increased dramatically in the years just before and after World War I. Productivity improved because mechanization meant that fewer people could do more labour on ever-larger farms. In the 1830s, most wheat was harvested by hand, greatly limiting the size of farms. Seventy years later, harvesting, winnowing, and threshing machines meant that 100s of acres, rather than 10s of acres, could be harvested and partially processed quickly and with far fewer human labourers. Many people, however, feared that all that productivity came at a cost. **Rural depopulation** also meant that rural communities shrank. Increased productivity, too, owed much to increased use of pesticides, adding to costs and multiplying the environmental consequences of agriculture. Mechanization, pesticide purchases, and other increasingly capital intensive techniques meant that steadily fewer families could sustain the higher costs of industrial agriculture.

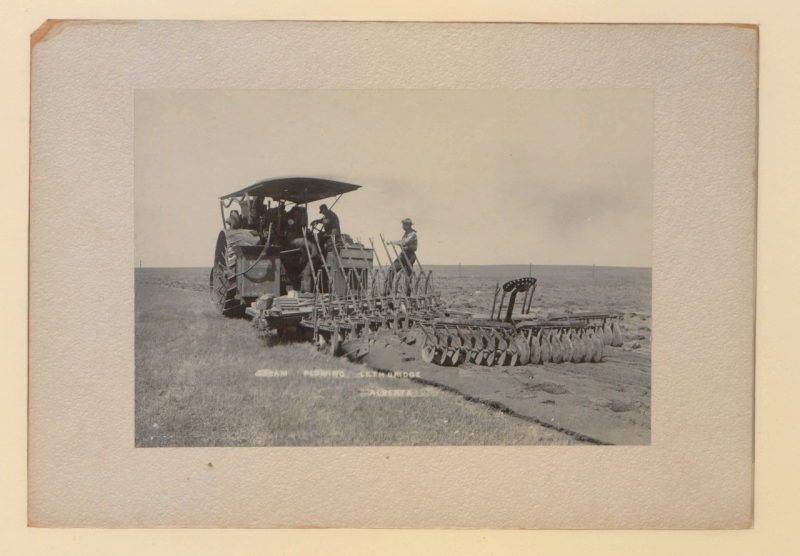


Figure 9.62 Steam-powered tractors quickly transformed farm productivity.

Many of those who were moving to the city did so because farming had become untenable. Often, the owners of small farms sold out to larger producers. Indeed, farms continue to grow larger to this day. While the number of farms peaked in the 1930s, total farm acreage has actually increased over the course of the 20th century. The average size of a farm in Saskatchewan in 1914 was about 200 acres; by 1936, it had doubled to 400; and by 1956, had reached over 600 acres per farm. Today, that number is around 1,700 acres. By the early postwar period, farms could no longer really be considered “family farms”; they were businesses — larger in scale, capital intensive, and demanding stable access to markets.

Improvements in transportation also encouraged the growth of farms. Larger producers found ready markets for their products, and the increased availability of trains and steamships meant that Canadian farmers and ranchers, even those far from the ocean ports of Halifax and Montreal, could get their products to markets in Britain and the Caribbean. Rail integration in the 20th century opened access to the United States market. The Prairies were Canada’s breadbasket, producing more than four-fifths of the country’s wheat and exporting large quantities overseas, but none of that was even imaginable until the completion of the CPR and the integration of the West into national and international markets.

Scale had a major impact on not only farm size and market conditions, but also on productive and gender relationships in farm households. In the 19th century, most butter and cheese production was done by women in farm households. The rise of industrial butter and cheese production in the early 20th century pushed women out of dairying, and moved them from major productive household responsibilities to largely reproductive ones such as childrearing.

The state came to play a much greater role in the countryside. In the late 19th-century, federal experimental farms in small places like Nappan, Nova Scotia; and Kamloops, British Columbia; provincial agricultural colleges in places like Guelph, Ontario, and Truro, Nova Scotia; and statistical agencies across the country offered research, education, and support. During World War II, the federal government stepped in to regulate grain supplies and food production. State-run agencies like the National Wheat Board were created during the Great Depression to provide price stability, particularly

for farmers dependent on international markets. Along with cooperatives and **marketing boards** for products like dairy and eggs, Canadian agriculture increasingly utilized market regulation to protect individual farmers against the uncertainties of international markets and price competition from the much larger United States agricultural sector.

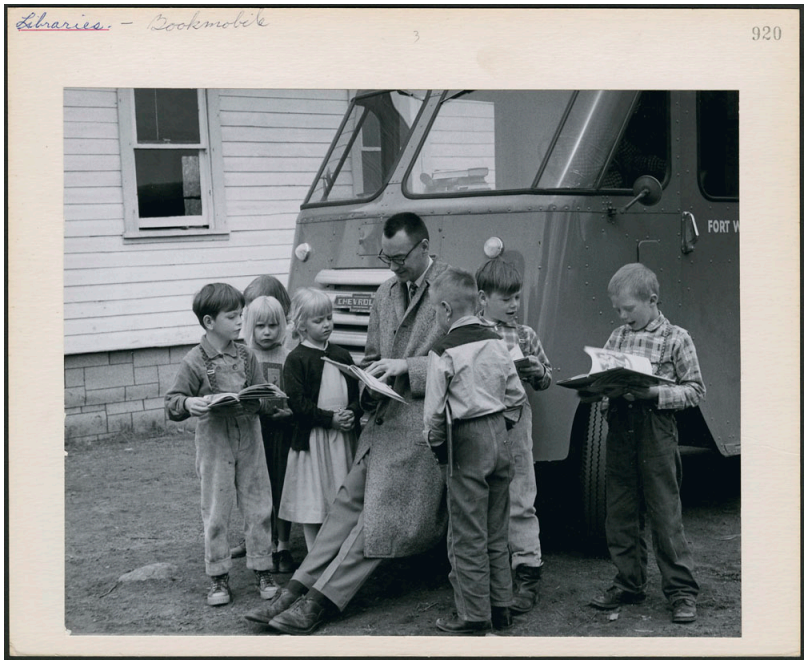


Figure 9.63 Elements of urban life – including well-stocked libraries – could not be transferred to rural Canada, but crusades to improve literacy and education could. A "bookmobile" visits northwestern Ontario at mid-century.

The fisheries in eastern and western Canada faced similar challenges. Local inshore fisheries were increasingly at the mercy of industrial fishing operations with much larger ships, more productive gear, and direct relationships with national and international processors. In the great Depression, much like Prairie farmers, Maritime fishers turned to locally organized cooperatives and marketing agencies to allow them to compete against the industrial vessels. Factory trawlers and international markets dramatically increased the ability of the industry to harvest fish, resulting in near total depletion of major fish stocks like North Atlantic cod. By 1995, depletion was so great that the federal government had to shut down the cod fishery, effectively ending the economic viability of hundreds of small fishing communities in eastern Canada.

Canada also has a racialised dimension to its rural history. Indigenous people shaped their lives around participation in the fur trade, in small-scale agriculture, and local fisheries. Despite many political and social barriers, their successes were owing to their skills in working those distinctly rural economies. And from the 18th and 19th centuries onward, African-Nova Scotians were a predominantly rural population engaged in farming, fishing, and forestry in rural parts of the province. That explains the poet George Elliott Clarke's reference to "Africadians" "gumboing" the salty recipes of Acadian cooking with the "fishy tastes of Coloured Refugees" — their culture, too, was shaped by life on the land and the sea.

Rural Canada today faces innumerable challenges. The sheer scale of production, declining population,

increasing competition for prices and market share, and restrictive international trade agreements, and the difficulty of delivering basic social services — even schools — means that sustaining rural Canada is ever more difficult. Understanding the historic pattern helps us to better understand its complexities and its challenges.

Key Points

- The century of the city was made possible by the increased ability of farmers to feed urban populations (achieved through mechanization, chemicals, heavy capital investment, and consolidation of smaller farms into larger units able to achieve economies of scale).
- The role of the state in agriculture became increasingly important and took the form of research, marketing boards, and regulation of output.
- Rural fisheries communities were challenged by the increasing industrialization of ocean harvesting.
- In some rural areas the population became racialized: dominated by visible minorities including African Nova Scotians and Indigenous communities.

Sources

The Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan, https://esask.uregina.ca/entry/farming.jsp

Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture http://www.agriculture.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=508d1598-3b66-428a-93ce-7ea9fa3abaee

Sarah Carter, "Two Acres and a Cow: 'Peasant' Farming and the Indians of the Northwest, 1889-1897," *Canadian Historical Review* 70, 1 (March 1989): 27-52.

George Elliott Clarke, *Whylah Falls* (Vancouver, Polestar Press, 1990).

Daniel Samson, "'The Measure of Our Progress': The Commission on Agriculture, Ontario, 1881", in Nadine Vivier, ed., *The Golden Age of State Enquiries: Rural enquiries in the nineteenth century* (Turnhout BE, Brepols, 2014): 255-72.

Ken Sylvester, *The Limits of Rural Capitalism: Family, Culture, and Markets in Montcalm, Manitoba, 1870-1940* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2001).

John Thompson, *The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914-1918* (Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, 1978).

Miriam Wright, *A Fishery for Modern Times: Industrialization of the Newfoundland Fishery, 1934-1968* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2001).

Media Attributions

- Observatory – Experimental Farm, 1912 © William James Topley, Library and Archives Canada (PA-010296) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Steam plowing, Lethbridge, Alberta, 1910 © Arthur Rafton-Canning is licensed under a Public Domain license
- A group of children gather around a librarian and his Bookmobile in rural northwestern Ontario © Canada Dept. of Manpower and Immigration, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 4369759) is licensed under a Public Domain license

9.15 Cold War Themes

A signifier of cultural change in the Cold War years was the transformation of musical styles and tastes. Radio and film contributed significantly to this process, as did the commercial recording industry. Music was increasingly commodified and so, too, were musicians. Trends in English Canada — which were strongly influenced by what was going on in the United States and Britain — were very different from what occurred in French Canada (elements of which are considered in Section 10.14). It would be wrong to say that this era saw the universal triumph of rock music because, in Quebec as in much of the rest of the non-anglophone world, other traditions were more important and more resilient.



Figure 9.64 Toronto's Four Lads are the not-so-missing link between the sounds of the 1940s and the beginnings of pop music in the 1950s. [Long Description]

The Beat Goes On

The dominant threads in popular music in the early 1950s were strongly connected with the **big band**

sound, close harmony vocal groups (often made up of siblings), and the more accessible forms of jazz. American and British musicians were increasingly challenging these standards, with electric blues, rockabilly, and skiffle — all forms that would contribute in some measure to what became known in the early 1950s as **rock and roll** (aka: rock'n'roll). A transition phase saw the rise of closely managed studio productions, which are now more associated with **pop music**. The gospel-inflected "The Mocking Bird" by Toronto's The Four Lads is generally thought to be the breakthrough moment in Canadian pop/rock. It is markedly distinct from, but closely related to, WWII-era swing and close harmony bands. This style did not entirely go away. Throughout this period and into the 1970s, artists like Juliette Cavazzi (b. 1927) remained popular, a fact that was made possible by CBC radio programming that favoured more conservative sounds. The influence of the national broadcaster in this respects goes some distance to explain the slow take-off of a younger sound.

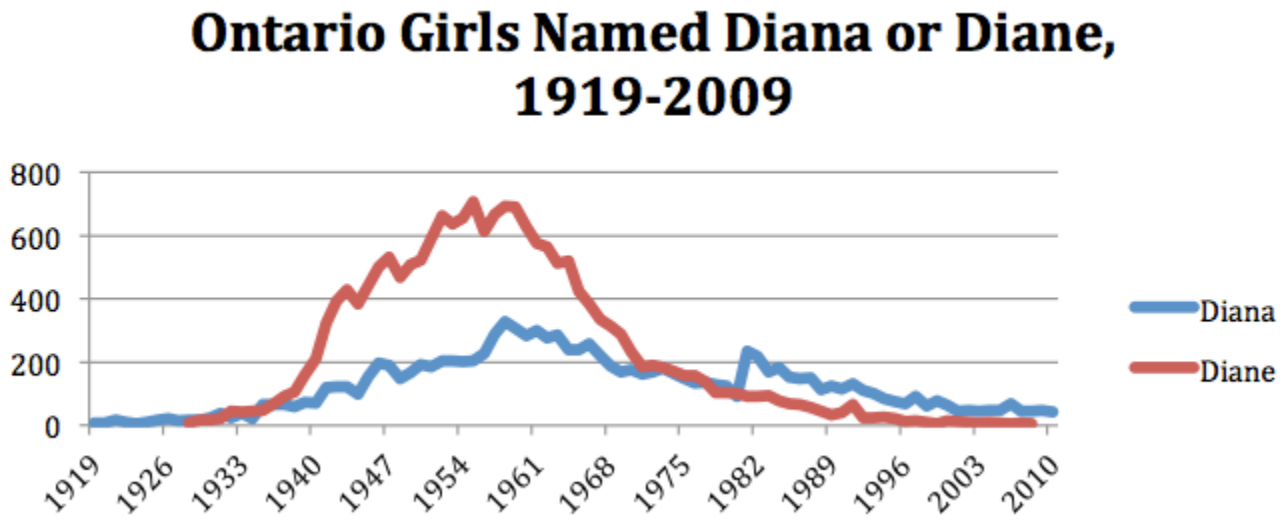


Figure 9.65 Paul Anka's 1957 hit "Diana" had an immediate impact on child-naming practices in Ontario.

It wasn't until 1957 that Canada produced its first genuine pop star, in Ottawa's Paul Anka (b. 1941). His debut hit song, "Diana," is held to be responsible for the sudden surge in the popularity of this girls' name in Canada (as can be seen in the Ontario data in Figure 9.65[1]). Anka's desperate plea — he was a hormonally charged 16-year old when "Diana" was recorded — pulls the song out of the mainstream and into something much closer to the crooner-rock of the 1950s.

American influences on popular music in Canada in the 1950s and early 1960s were extensive. The infrastructure of commercial radio and television favoured American recording artists and placed Canadians at a huge disadvantage. Ronnie Hawkins (b. 1935) moved to Canada from the United States and was highly influential from 1958 to 1964, establishing The Hawks, a Canadian backing band. It featured Garth Hudson (b. 1937), Richard Manuel (1943-1986), Robbie Robertson (b. 1943), Rick Danko (1943-1999), and the American drummer Levon Helm (1940-2012), who together would eventually re-launch themselves as The Band.

By the mid-1960s, however, the playing field had been somewhat leveled by the impact of the **British Invasion**. Bands like the Beatles, the Animals, the Dave Clark Five, and the Rolling Stones combined

1. Ontario. Top names (female), accessed 13 January 2015 from https://www.ontario.ca/data/ontario-top-baby-names-female.

elements of American rock — including the music and style of both Buddy Holly (1936-1959) and Elvis Presley (1935-1977) — with British soul, Merseybeat, and skiffle to produce a more aggressively dynamic sound. Even British pop and soul singers like Petula Clark (b. 1932) and Dusty Springfield (1939-1999) were critical influences at this point. American musicians — even acts like the Beach Boys, which were credited as an influence on the Beatles — struggled to reclaim prominence in their own market, as did Canadians.

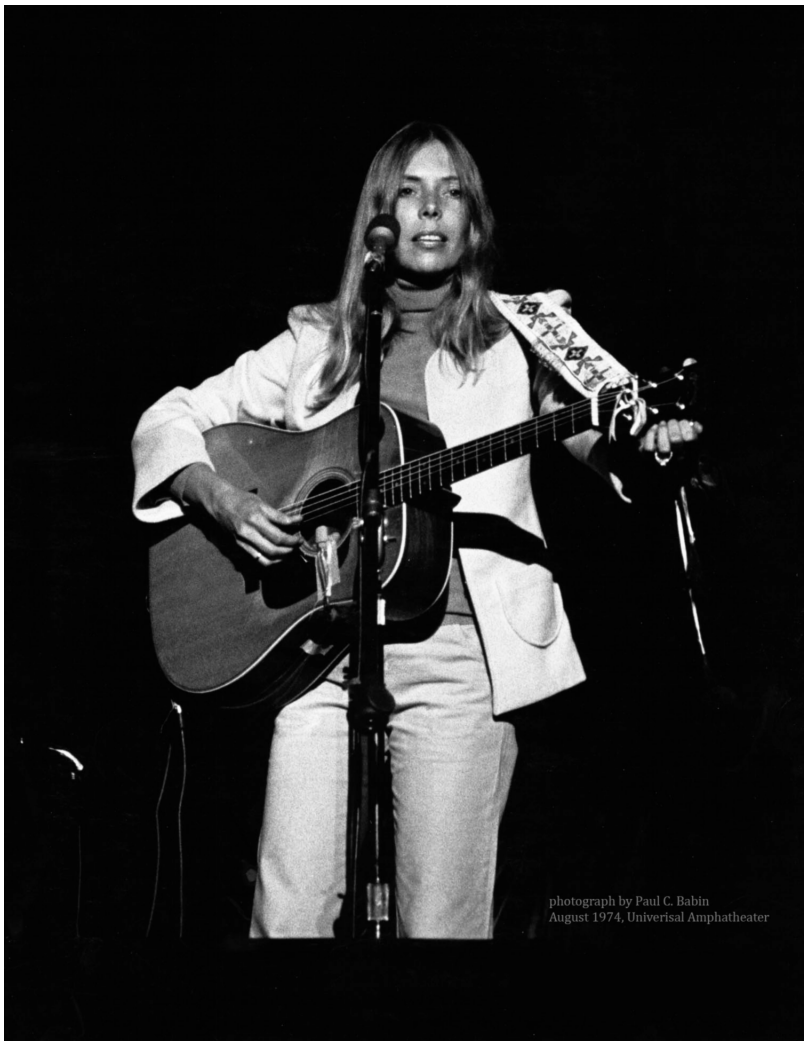


Figure 9.66 Joni Mitchell (b. 1943) in 1974.

Swinging Sixties

In Canada, the major commercial breakthroughs came from the folk-blues-rock community. Oscar Brand (b. 1920) emerged as a leading performer and a godfather of the movement in 1963, as did Ian Tyson (b. 1933). Buffy Sainte Marie (b. 1941) began her very long and extremely varied career with a folk hit in 1964, the same year that Joni Mitchell (b. 1943) began singing in Toronto. Gordon Lightfoot (b. 1938) was writing songs for Tyson and his partner Sylvia Fricker Tyson (b. 1940) in 1963 to 1964 and launched his own folk touring act in 1967. Leonard Cohen (b. 1934) released *Songs of Leonard Cohen* in 1967, and a year later Anne Murray (b. 1945) recorded “Snowbird.” All of these musicians benefited from a growing appetite in the United States for folk singer-songwriters, typified by Bob

Dylan (b. 1941); Joan Baez (b. 1941); Pete Seegar (1919-2014); The Weavers; Judy Collins (b. 1939); and Peter, Paul, and Mary — almost all of whom at some point performed music written by their Canadian contemporaries. Looking at the birth-dates of these figures reminds us that the folk revival of the 1960s was led by people born before or at the very start of the baby boom and who were just that much closer to a rural version of Canada than their younger peers in the rock movement.

Of that 1960s rock'n'roll generation, no one stands out more than Neil Young (b. 1945). The son of the prominent sports journalist, Scott Young, Neil Young moved to California in the late 1960s, where he became part of a folk-rock supergroup, Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young. In many ways, Young exemplifies the essence of a difficult-to-define musical style in that his physically exhausting live performances, high degree of musicianship on guitar, and emphasis on authenticity — rather than studio work, thrashing chords, and studied affect — are what most stands out. Joni Mitchell, a contemporary and peer both in Canada and the United States, is comparable in that she demands more of her chief instrument — her voice — than was typical of even 1950s harmony singers or the earlier gospel-folk singers.

CanCon

Young and Mitchell were not the only Canadian musicians to seek fame and fortune south of the border. By 1968, it was clear that Canadian talent was profoundly underappreciated at home. Without record sales and radio play in the United States, a Canadian pop or rock performer could not expect to receive much attention from commercial radio north of the border. Beginning in 1968, the **Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)** began a project to stimulate artistic output under **Canadian content (CanCon) rules**. From 1971, radio stations were required to devote one-quarter of their airtime to Canadian music. To do so, many stations had to actively search out producers and performers who could deliver records that met the criteria. The focus was to be placed on Canadian songs performed by Canadian musicians.

Sometimes the criteria were stretched in bizarre ways: the British psychedelic/progressive rock band, Procol Harum, in 1971 recorded their song "Conquistador" with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra (ESO) providing support. The ESO's involvement conferred on a clearly British product CanCon advantages: "Conquistador" went to #7 in the Canadian charts. Other strategies for avoiding the CanCon constraints were pursued, as well. Some radio stations addressed what they saw as revenue-draining local recordings by playing them continuously in the small hours of the night, in what became known disparagingly as "beaver hours."

The new CanCon rules took time to create benefits and some of the musicians who were supported at the beginning were clearly filler rather than great local talent. The program nonetheless produced a generation of performers who could expect and would receive more playtime on Canadian commercial radio than their predecessors. Bands like the Guess Who appeared in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and enjoyed enormous popularity in Canada and abroad, as did their spin-off project, Bachman-Turner Overdrive. Rush emerged out of blues tradition and moved into Progressive (Prog) Rock in the late 1970s. One could provide a long list of bands that enjoyed every degree of popularity from one-hit-wonderdom to long term success: Trooper, Prism, FM, April Wine, and Chilliwack are among the most prominent of the 1970s and early 1980s bands. It is probably no coincidence that this was the decade that saw the greatest number of baby boomers entering adulthood, a fact that no doubt explains the

endurance even now of both classic rock stations and what has become anthemic hockey-arena music. Which is to say, it doesn't get played because it's necessarily good; it gets played because of the demographic that nurtured it along and still proclaims its popularity.

"All this machinery making modern music"

The conundrum facing Canadian musicians in general, and rock musicians in particular, was the business model of the industry. Record labels stateside dominated the business through their control of distribution and their influence on radio networks. The sale of records was key to making a living as a musician. So, despite rock'n'roll's do-it-yourself, or DIY attitude — embodied in every four-piece band that wrote and performed their own music — it was necessary to make use of the recording industry. American labels like Capitol established branch plants north of the border where they used the same business model, one of the features of which was exclusive ownership of a musician's product. A rock musician whose work was defined by live performances could now only get meaningful engagements through recording agents and industry impresarios. Bands played live in support of their studio product and, increasingly, merchandise like posters and t-shirts. As rock giants emerged, they could demand arena and then stadium venues, absorbing more and more of the disposable wealth of a younger generation of consumers, and leaving less and less behind for bands that could not get, or did not want to get, signed to an exploitative recording contract. Musicians who once appeared edgy or challenging were smoothed into manicured products.

One reaction to this was the rise of alternative and independent recording artists and performers. **Punk rock** was, in its late 1970s incarnation, an expression of alienation from the pop music industry's emphasis on extravagance in the studio and on the stage. Bands like DOA, Teenage Head, Viletones, Pointed Sticks, and the Subhumans recorded very little but performed a lot, breathing second life into old downtown venues too small for rock gods. Appreciated as much for their political, anti-authority stance as for their music, the Canadian punk movement (and, to a lesser extent, New Wave) found audiences in the United States and Britain. **World music** influences began to shape Canadian performers as well, as could be seen in Toronto especially. Jamaican and other West Indian immigrants in the 1960s brought ska, rock steady, and reggae to Canada where it evolved its own sound. Fresh immigration from a destabilizing Caribbean brought new artists but, by the 1980s, the Canadian variant was distinctive for its less confrontational forms. Largely contained to the multicultural cities, this was and remains, nevertheless, a vibrant field.

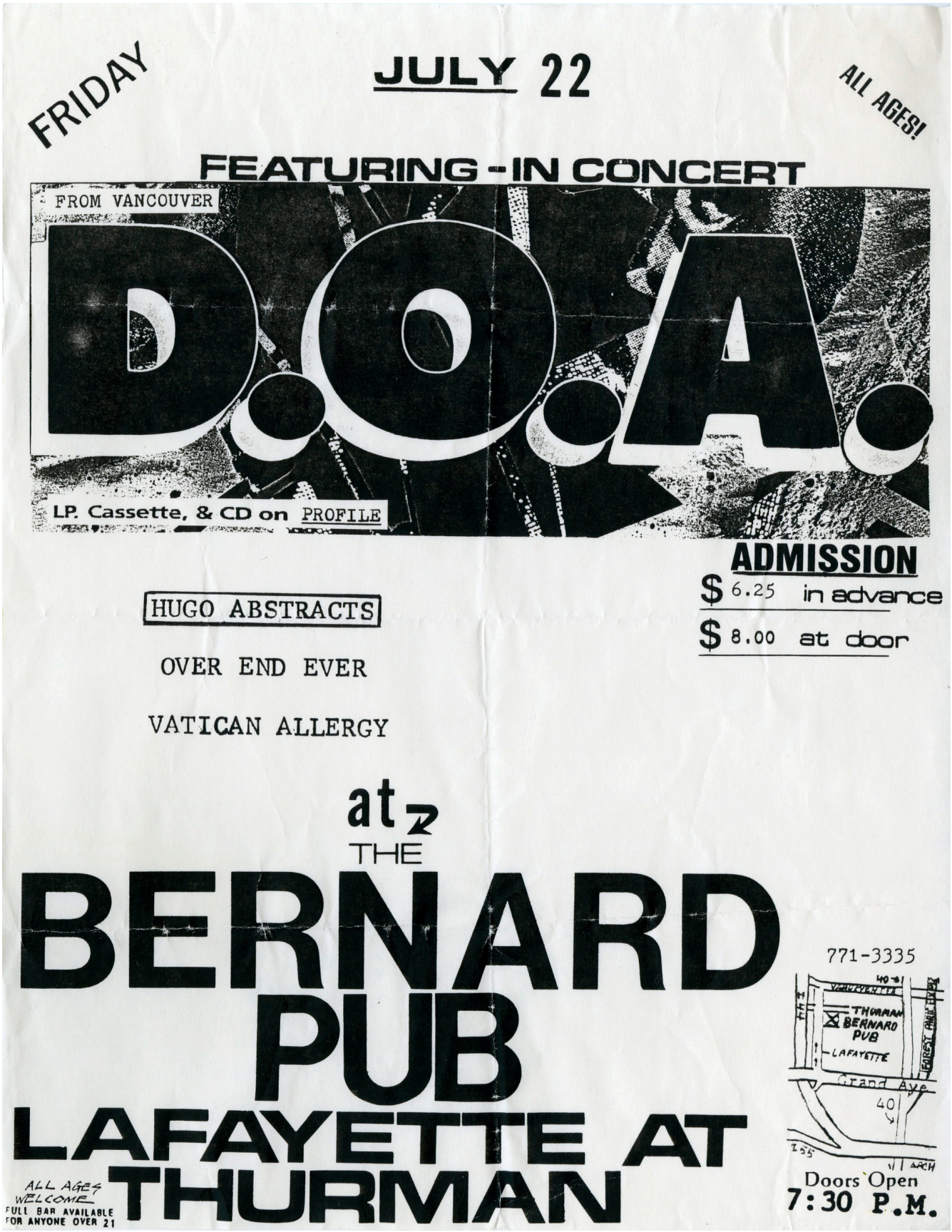


Figure 9.67 Canadian West Coast punk rockers, DOA (led by Joey "Shithead" Keithley), enjoyed international

popularity. The DIY quality of their performances and recordings is echoed in their promotional posters. [Long Description]

While innovators in these areas were trying to recapture the spontaneity and DIY feel of earlier musical generations, the studio business model had its acolytes in Canada. Big rock'n'roll machines — Bryan Adams, Prism, Streetheart, Tom Cochrane, Headpins, Gowan, and Platinum Blond — dominated the airwaves and the arenas in the 1980s. These were bands that mostly echoed older rock'n'roll themes from the 1950s which included endlessly cruising in cars, heterosexual adolescent love, and nostalgia. Nothing captures this better than Adams' anachronistic hit "Summer of '69": born in 1959, Adams was probably not "young and restless" at the age of 10, nor is it likely he bought a guitar at the "five and dime." Few of these musicians had much to say about global politics, although Prism's "Armageddon" conjures the possibility of a nuclear holocaust through which everyone just rocks it out.

French-Canadian music evolved very differently in the Cold War years. Its roots were a combination of Québecois and Acadien fiddle/folk music along with the *chansons* of France, whose recordings were eagerly imported and consumed. Aglaé (aka: Jocelyne Deslongchamps, 1933-1984) and Guylaine Guy (b. 1929) were two Québecois chanteuses who became very popular in mid-1950s Paris, reversing the flow of talent for a while. Michel Louvain (b. 1937) was Quebec's foremost singer in the "crooner" tradition in the late 1950s. Other continental influences in this period include the pop-rock form, *yé-yé* (somewhat akin to what is today called "twee pop") taken up by Nanette Workman (b. 1945) and the slightly more rocking styles of musicians like Louise Forestier (b. 1943) in the late 1960s. Prog Rock became more popular, and earlier in French Canada than in English Canada, and jazz remained more at home in Montreal than anywhere else in the country. Although one could point to two solitudes in terms of popular and commercial music in these years, the influence of folk music remains a common (if differently coloured) thread. For every Randy Bachman in these years, there seems to be, in English Canada at least, one Bruce Cockburn; likewise, in Quebec, even pop-rockers like Forestier felt comfortable reviving music with roots in the 19th if not the 18th century.

This is by no means a full survey of musical styles and innovations in the late 20th century, but it draws attention to some important elements. Music matters in this period in part because it emerged as the dominant art form. However grand the galleries or the symphony halls might have become in the 1960s and 1970s, nothing was quite as likely as a daily encounter with pop music. AM stations multiplied, and FM took tentative steps in 1968 to move away from easy listening and classical into album rock programming. More and more television airtime had a pop music component. It became a means to express social change, even as it manifested change itself. Nowhere was this more evident than in the transformation of youth culture in the 1960s.

Key Points

- The postwar period would see the emergence of new musical styles that nevertheless drew on older and even traditional forms.
- Canadian pop music struggled for years in a commercial context that favoured both American and British recording artists, large studios and distributors, and impresarios who featured big acts while neglecting local talent.

- The early strength in Canadian pop music came from the folk-blues-rock performers like Joni Mitchell, Leonard Cohen, and Neil Young.
- Government efforts to support Canadian culture extended to Cancon rules that were intended to benefit homegrown musicians. In the short term, it reinforced a star system that favoured a few big acts, but by the 1980s, there was a number of reasonably successful acts.
- Alternative music — broadly defined — emerged as a reaction to and a kind of sub-culture of the popular music industry, drawing on punk and immigrant cultures.
- Popular music traditions in Quebec were, in almost every regard, distinctive in these years.

Long Descriptions

Figure 9.64 long description: Cover of the album *The Four Lads' Greatest Hits.* The cover shows four men in black suits with white shirts and white ties, all with slicked-back hair. The songs featured include "The Mocking Bird," "Standing on the Corner," "Istanbul," "The Bus Stop Song," "Gilly Gilly by the Sea," "There's Only One of You," "Enchanted Island," "Moments to Remember," "Who Needs You," "No, Not Much!", "Down by the Riverside," and "Put a Light in the Window." The album is produced by Columbia. [Return to Figure 9.64]

Figure 9.67 long description: Poster for a performance by the band D.O.A. on Friday, July 22, 1988. D.O.A. is advertised to be from Vancouver and will have LP, Cassette, and CD on Profile. Other bands featured are Hugo Abstracts, Over End Ever, and Vatican Allergy. Admission was $6.25 in advance, $8.00 at the door. The concert venue was the Bernard Pub at Lafayette at Thurman in St. Louis, Missouri. All ages are welcome to the show, and a full bar is available to anyone over 21. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. A map is drawn in the corner of the poster. [Return to Figure 9.67]

Media Attributions

- The Four Lads © Peter Zimmerman. Photo removed. is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license
- Ontario Girls Named Diana or Diane, 1919–2009 © John Douglas Belshaw is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license
- Joni Mitchell, 1974 © Paul C. Babin is licensed under a Public Domain license

9.16 The 1960s Counterculture



Figure 9.68 Sign of the times. An anti-hippy notice survives in a Vancouver antique store.

There were international events that encouraged a questioning of the status quo, of which the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) beginning in 1962 was among the most prominent. Also, the apparent ratcheting up of tension on the Cold War front gave people everywhere good reason to think that the current situation was untenable. The American U-2 spy plane fiasco over Russia in 1960, the Bay of Pigs Invasion in April 1961, followed a few months later by the erection of the Berlin Wall, and the near-catastrophe of the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962 all contributed to a sense of unease. The assassination of United States President John F. Kennedy on 22 November 1963 was similarly shocking and it gave a special posthumous force to his admonition to do service through institutions like the Peace Corps.

Overwhelmingly, however, the single greatest factor causing social change was the numbers. By the mid-1960s more than half of Canada's population of 20 million was under the age of 25. The baby boom started slowing in the late 1950s, but it would take until the 1980s before it would finish growing up. Four decades of a population juggernaut passing through childhood and adolescence into adulthood was bound to impact many aspects of Canadian life.

The fact that other countries were experiencing the same phenomenon simply magnified the sense that this was all part of an emerging global norm. Of course, the baby boomers were more likely to be found in countries that had experienced prosperity in the 1920s, high unemployment in the 1930s, and total war from 1939 (or, in the case of the United States, 1941) to 1945. Nations that retooled from command-led economies to demand-led consumer economies were more like Canada than those that did not or (like Britain) were slow to do so. Canadian post-war prosperity fed this demographic engine and created the conditions under which it would produce a critique of its parents' world.

The Kids Are Alright

Historian Christopher Dummitt has described how this generation began entering the workforce in large numbers around 1960-63. The availability of good paying work and a shortage of labour meant that there was every incentive for males in particular to leave school as early as possible — typically at 16 — and take a job. University opportunities were increasing but still 90% of "youth moved directly into the paid labour market." Within a matter of years these young labourers were a significant presence within Canadian labour organizations and they were in large part responsible for an astonishing 9.3% growth in membership between the start and end of 1965 alone. These younger, new members, however, often had political agendas that were distinct from those of their elders. They were, for one thing, less deferential toward authority, more likely to be advocates for workers' control of the workplace or industrial democracy, and inclined to question the career arc of working hard for one company for years and settling into domestic normalcy. More young women wanted to work and to pursue careers, and more young men experienced a sense of economic freedom rather than their parents' fear of unemployment.[1]

As for that 10% that went on to university, one-tenth of a rapidly growing pie strained the post-secondary system across the country. Existing universities were expanded but the real growth occurred in the number and variety of institutions. Between 1945 and 1959 only three new universities opened; between 1960 and 1969 another 13 were added. The college sector grew as well, vastly increasing vocational training opportunities.

Canada is unique among the world's leading economies and democracies, in that it does not have a national education policy. That is because, of course, education resides in the provincial jurisdictions. While Ottawa might use instruments to stimulate provincial action, the decision to launch new post-secondary institutions had to come from the provincial governments. More than a dozen new universities might have translated into sectoral chaos, but it did not. There is an unwritten, highly informal, and yet universally accepted principle between institutions and provinces on what a Bachelor's degree ought to look like, and there has been an informal understanding as well that every university's undergraduate degree meets standards that should get a student through the door of a graduate, law, or medical school in another province, assuming their grades are sufficient. (This second consensus is perhaps honoured more in principle than in the breech, and perhaps it was easier to do so 60 years ago when the number of universities in Canada was much smaller and peers from one end of the country to the other knew one another or at least knew their work.)

The expansion of Canada into the West brought with it models of education that had roots trailing back to the St. Lawrence Valley and from there to New England, to Oxford and Cambridge, and even to Germany. The new provinces might have experimented with different models but they all placed their bets on universities that would disseminate established Euro-Canadian educational ideals of knowledge and learning. Consistency, rather than innovation in this respect was more important. In this way, the universities of the West became instruments of colonialism and also expressions of provincial power. This is perhaps most clearly seen in the history of the University of Saskatchewan, established "as one of the foundational institutions of the young province," only two years after the province itself came

1. Ian Milligan, *Rebel Youth: 1960s Labour Unrest, Young Workers, and New Leftists in English Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014), 4, 15.

into being in 1905.[2] This is to say that universities were not politically neutral nor utterly objective institutions: they had a mandate. Their transformation in the 1950s, ’60s, and ’70s into massified operations witnessed challenges to many of these post-secondary sectoral assumptions.

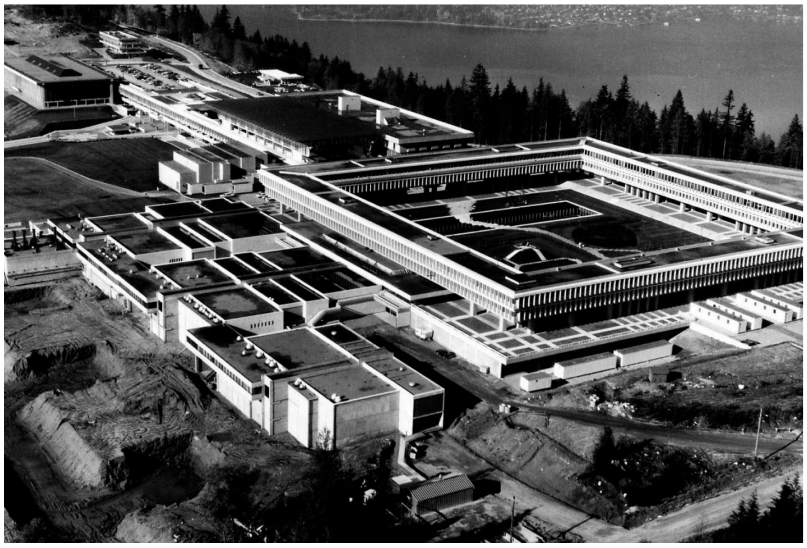


Figure 9.69 One of many new universities built to serve the baby boom generation, Simon Fraser University opened to unrest and student protests.

Campus Life

The growth of youth numbers in the workforce and on campus set the stage for what is sometimes called the counterculture phenomenon. Several factors were involved.

American media played an important role in familiarizing Canadian households with dissent. United States news broadcasts brought coverage of the often violent **civil rights movement** into Canadian living rooms. Adults and youths far from Mississippi became familiar with the struggle of African-Americans to acquire a greater degree of social and political equality in the 1950s and ‘60s. Likewise, the American war against Vietnam (which picked up as the French imperialist forces retreated from Indo-China in the mid-1950s and lasted until 1975) produced news of American atrocities and incompetence. These were echoed in images of growing domestic protests against the war. Much of the activism behind both of these movements could be found on American university campuses. American professors and students were making their way to expanding Canadian universities — especially the new ones — and the traffic in ideas further bonded those campus environments together. The rise of Second Wave Feminism in these years (see Section 7.10) provided yet another critique of the status quo, as did the emergence of the **American Indian Movement (AIM)** (in which many Canadian Indigenous men and women participated).

Socialist elements in these movements tended to align with what was called the **New Left**. Efforts to

2. As regards the expansion of existing universities in the post-war period, a good example can be drawn from the University of Saskatchewan which, in 1950, had about 200 faculty members and in 1975 had roughly 1,000. Peter MacKinnon, *University Leadership and Public Policy in the Twenty-First Century: A President’s Perspective* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 21.

scotch pro-communist feeling in North America in the 1950s had forced even social democratic parties like the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation further to the right. Joined up with a fairly conservative trade union movement headed by the Canadian Labour Congress in 1961, the emergent New Democratic Party attracted many young people on the left but it fell short for many as well. Advocates of the New Left — it was neither a party nor an organization, more a set of shared beliefs — directly challenged the anti-Soviet, red-baiting propensities of the Cold Warriors in North America. On campus and on city streets, the protest leaders of this decade favoured civil disobedience over the ballot box. Protest rallies, marches, sit-ins, and **demonstrations** — or demos — were the tactic of choice.

There opened in these years a gulf between the experiences of parents born before the Depression and their heirs, born after WWII. This generation gap played out in many ways but it was evident at every turn. Arts and music were one expression of this change. So was clothing (blue jeans became the uniform of a generation in these years as suits and dresses were actively eschewed) and longer hair styles for men. Given that university was the exclusive preserve of the country's elite and most ambitious before WWII, the fact that a greater share of baby boomers were able to attend the new institutions was viewed by some as a cross-generational reward for hard work and evidence of social mobility. The fact that baby boomers turned some of those campuses into sites of protest and conflict was a jarring turn of events. Simon Fraser University (SFU) opened in 1965 in the heart of NDP country: suburban Burnaby. By 1968 it achieved international notoriety for sit-ins and the occupation of administrative offices. Most accounts of these developments cite the dismissal of teaching assistants and conflict within one or two academic departments. What is often forgotten is the anti-colonialist element involved that effectively critiqued the nationalist historical narrative of Canada:

> In the summer of 1968, members of the Students for a Democratic University, using their newly-acquired positions in the Simon Fraser Student Society, passed a motion to change the name of the university to Louis Riel University. These activists argued that rather than being a "Loyalist, fur-trader and explorer," Simon Fraser was actually a "member of the vanguard of pirates, thieves, and carpet baggers which dispossessed and usurped the native Indians of Canada from their rightful heritage."[3]

The critique of **establishment** values was comprehensive. Working-class students — typically the first in their family to attend university or college — were at the forefront of many of these struggles, some of which ended in arrests. Simon Fraser University became a dependable source of headlines but comparable protests were occurring on campuses across the country. Nationalist and conservative critics of these events pointed to the "Americanization" of campuses and the influence of American leftists. This was itself a novel twist on the venerable Canadian fear of a **fifth column** led by Moscow. The protests, however, were deeply rooted in decades-old traditions of **free speech** protests and still older concerns for **academic freedom**. It was the fact that universities occupy this space — an arena for the free discussion of ideas — that made them mostly impervious to censorship and, thus, attractive to a generation that wanted to take on the rules of normalcy, Cold War horrors, and what George Grant called the "crawl through university simply as a guarantee of the slow road to death in the suburbs."[4]

Campus protests peaked in 1968, the same year as militance in Paris was cresting and the **Prague**

3. Robert Lexier, "'The Backdrop Against Which Everthing Happened': English-Canadian Student Movements and Off-Campus Movements for Change," *History of Intellectual Culture*, vol.7, no.1 (2007).

4. Quoted in James M. Pitsula, *New World Dawning: The Sixties at Regina Campus* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, University of Regina, 2008): 299. See also, Paul W. Bennett, "Campus Life in Canada's 1960s: Reflections on the 'Radical Campus' in Recent Historical Writing," *Acadiensis*, XLII, no.2 (2013).

Spring. It needs to be said that many student populations in Canada were not radicalized and, on many campuses, student elections soon saw moderates replace radicals. The impact of this brief moment in Canadian intellectual history, however, was significant in that it drew into question hitherto unassailable institutions and politicized a generation of people on- and off-campus.

Hippies And The Counterculture

The new wave of cultural dissent that arose in the 1960s was in many respects a resumption of earlier historic trends. The total package of the counterculture offered an alternative to the bland homogeneity of middle-class life, patriarchal family structures, self-discipline, unquestioning support for the United States, and the acquisition of property. In fact, there were many alternative cultures, some of which were more visible than others.

Hippies rejected the conventions of traditional society. Men sported beards and grew their hair very long; both men and women wore clothing from non-Western cultures, made a point of defying their parents, rejected what were regarded as traditional social manners, and turned to music as an expression of their sense of self. Drug use, especially of marijuana and psychedelic drugs like lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) was common and symbolic of a break with authority. Most hippies were also deeply attracted to the ideas of peace and freedom.

Some hippies “dropped out” of mainstream society altogether and expressed their disillusionment with the cultural and spiritual limitations of the Western world. They joined communes, usually in rural areas, to share a desire to live closer to nature and respect the earth, and share a dislike of modern life and a disdain for wealth and material goods. Many communes grew their own organic food. Others abolished the concept of private property, and members shared willingly with one another. Some sought to abolish traditional ideas regarding love and marriage; **free love** was practiced openly, and there was some support for the emergent cause of gay rights.[5]

5. Openstax, U.S. History: Identity Politics in a Fractured Society, https://cnx.org/contents/p7ovuIkl@9.5:1M86e-iu@8/30-1-Identity-Politics-in-a-Fractured-Society.



Figure 9.70 An anti–Vietnam War protest march on Vancouver's West Georgia Street in 1968.

Lines between movements were blurry. Many New Leftists were also hippies but not all hippies were consciously supporters of the New Left. Nonetheless, a common denominator was their shared opposition to the war in Vietnam.

In Canada this played out as an increasingly vocal strain of anti-Americanism on the left, a movement that called simultaneously for a more independent Canada. So, while in the United States hippies were challenging American patriotism, in Canada Canadian hippies contributed — ironically — to a growing sense of Canadian nationalism. Some 30,000 American males, many of them hippies, crossed the border in these years in the largest northbound migration wave since the Loyalists arrived in the late 18th century. In this case, however, they were fleeing "the draft" — conscription to serve in the Vietnam War. White, middle-class Americans with some university education were over-represented among the **draft dodgers**, so they proved to be an articulate and largely invisible group in Canada's white, middle-class cities. Significant numbers — including large numbers of women — pursued the goal of communal self-sufficiency on farms in the Kootenays and along the coast and islands of the Strait of Georgia (aka: Salish Sea). Mark Vonnegut (b.1947), the son of the famous American anti-war author, Kurt Vonnegut, wrote of his experiences on the coast in a hippie commune in *The Eden Express* (1975).[6]

Hippiedom reached its highwater mark around 1970, after which its appeal diminished. Some of the political energy went to the **Yippie (Youth International Party)** movement. The beginnings of the war on drugs also played a role in the movement's decline. The "acid rock" elements that were featured at the 1969 Woodstock Festival in New York (attended by thousands of Canadians among the half million-strong crowd) included Jimi Hendrix — who spent much of his childhood in Vancouver. In 1970 Hendrix was one of several hippie/rock musicians to die from a drug overdose, events that further compromised the hippie ideal. As the war in Vietnam wound down, the movement lost another of its

6. Historians have only recently turned their attention to these asylum seekers. See, for example, these memoir-based and scholarly accounts: Douglas L. Hamilton and Darlene Olesko, *Accidental Eden: Hippie Days on Lasqueti Island* (Halfmoon Bay: Caitlin Press, 2014) and Kathleen Rodgers, *Welcome to Resisterville: American Dissidents in British Columbia* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014).

main rallying points. Economic uncertainty and rising unemployment following 1973 refocused many young people on finding a secure place in the mainstream. Inevitably, successive cohorts of baby boomers would seek to express themselves in ways that were distinct from that of older (hippy) siblings. The liberating impact of the hippies in terms of fashions, art, and sexual relations was doubtlessly the movement's greatest legacy.

Key Points

- The arrival of the massive baby boom generation in the workplace and on campuses served to challenge established norms of behaviour in the 1960s.
- Increases in the size, number, and variety of post-secondary institutions was required by the rise of the baby boom population and a relatively new demand for access by social classes and groups that had not been much of a presence on campus before.
- Events in the United States — including the Civil Rights Movement and the war in Vietnam — stimulated the growth of protest movements there and these had an influence on Canadian youth as well.
- Student protests were strongly influenced by the New Left and some campuses offered up a comprehensive critique of modern society and its institutions.
- Elements of these protest movements contributed to the appearance of the hippy phenomenon and the full-scale counterculture movement.
- The arrival of American draft dodgers added around 30,000 young Americans to the population and further contributed to a deepening generation gap.

Media Attributions

- SFU, 1967 is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Anti–Vietnam war demonstration, Vancouver, BC, 1968 © John Hill is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

9.17 The Sexual Revolution



Figure 9.71 The Canadian-American actress, Norma Shearer, won an Academy Award for her performance in The Divorcee (1931).

Of the many challenges to established norms in the Cold War years, one of the more complex and lasting is the **sexual revolution**. This was, again, a social change that occurred internationally — not just in Canada nor just in North America.

Origins of the Revolution

It seems both obvious and provocative to state that sex is at the heart of the Canadian project. Whether one looks at the *filles de roi* of 18th- century New France, the bride ships of 1860s Vancouver Island, or the efforts to recruit whole households to settle the West, the idea of the family as the core productive unit in Canada is a dominant theme. So dominant, in fact, as to be largely unspoken. Historians have increasingly questioned the historic norms of family and sexual relations because of what they reveal about the ideology of Canada and citizenship and because of what they exclude.

The patriarchical structures of citizenship have been mentioned already. Men, particularly men who were understood to be the head of household, were seen as the sole representative voice of their families. One study points out the continuity between 19th- and 20th-century patriarchy, despite what mid-century modernists might claim: “Postwar Canadians could look askance at the backward Victorians and their patriarchal families even as they continued to support a quite similar structure of

family life."[1] Married men had first call on citizenship in the modern world. In industrial communities where housing was provided by the employer, first call went invariably to married men and their families. A family sustained local shops more so than a single man; a family sustained local churches and schools as well. And families produced labourers who would not need to be recruited from elsewhere.

Women were profoundly disadvantaged in this situation. Their entitlement to waged labour was vastly less powerful than men's. Their bodies were considered engines of population growth and thus as good as the property of the state. Women who defied social sensibilities (which advocated heterosexual marriage and reproduction) faced considerable sanctions. In one particularly harrowing 1947 homicide case in Vancouver, a murdered woman — Viola Woolridge — whom the court subsequently decided was, in life, a poor mother and an inadequate wife, was effectively put on trial for her own death at the hands of her husband. She was found wanting as an example of Canadian womanhood, and the charges against her husband/killer were dropped.[2] It is not too much to say that women were occasionally reminded that their defiance of what constituted normalcy could be repaid with their lives.

Challenges to the patriarchal order were led in the 1960s by what became known as second wave feminism and, later in the decade, the Women's Liberation Movement (described by Robert Rutherdale in Section 7.10). One element of this movement was a reclaiming of women's bodies and biology in a way that inevitably addressed issues of sexuality and sexual morality. Some feminists critiqued the institution of marriage itself as inherently repressive and essentially about women's reproductive capacity. This was a position that could be taken because, at mid-century, the question survived of whether sex served any purpose other than reproduction; women's sexual activity, it was widely held, ought to be constrained to marriage where it served a rational purpose. Feminists in this period — and they came from a wide band of radicals, liberals, conservatives, and others — proposed that sanctions against pre-marital sex were obsolete. (Even this line of reasoning, however, often presumed the eventuality of marriage.)

Young feminists took this critique of normal into popular culture. The hippy movement advanced the case for free love (that is, sexual relations outside of the institution of marriage and an end to marital monogamy). For men, this could mean a variety of things; for women, it presented challenges as far as pregnancies outside of marriage were concerned. Whatever advances feminists and counterculture spokespersons were able to make, society still took a dim view of unmarried motherhood and illegitimacy. Finding the means to control fertility was, therefore, a critical piece in the building of a sexual revolution.

Contraception

The significance of **birth control** changed through the 20th century. Before 1914, social sanctions against fertility controls were paired with fear of a falling fertility rate. Eugenicists tied this to race suicide, while imperialists feared the ongoing fertility transition would weaken the nation when it came time to muster soldiers for war. Although birth control and its advocacy remained punishable under the

1. Christopher Dummitt, *The Manly Modern: Masculinity in Postwar Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007), 9.

2. Diane Purvey, "'Woolridge Driven to Kill Wife': Lessons on How to Get Away with Murder," *Vancouver Confidential*, ed. John Belshaw (Vancouver: Anvil Press, 2014): 205-14.

Criminal Code, statistical and other evidence shows that middle class couples were clearly using some measures to reduce fertility even before the 1930s. They were doing so, moreover, without much in the way of professional advice. The first family planning clinic in Canada was established in 1932 in Hamilton under the direction of Dr. Elizabeth Bagshaw (1881-1982); it operated illegally until reforms allowed it fully into the light in 1969. Morality and the law notwithstanding, unwanted pregnancies were a profound economic issue in the Depression years; in wartime, illegitimacy was a greater concern.

Part of the challenge arose from the lack of reliable techniques for reducing fertility, let alone preventing pregnancy. Condoms, of course, would help, but their sale was illegal until the 1960s (although they were discretely available through most barber shops). Besides, condoms were associated in the public mind more with preventing the transmission of venereal diseases than staving off pregnancies. A great deal of publicity and propaganda accompanied campaigns to protect young men (not so much women) from sexually transmitted diseases, especially during and immediately after WWII. This issue perpetuated eugenicist sentiments with regard to race suicide and its cure, muscular Christianity. Venereal diseases were principally blamed on promiscuous women or female prostitutes (often understood by the police, the press, and the public to be one and the same) and seldom on their clients.[3] Sex outside of wedlock, for any purpose other than procreation was thus bound up in hazards, as were condoms.

The context of discussions about birth control changed at mid-century. Fertility rates had recovered (thanks to the baby boom) and illegitimacy was in retreat: consequently, opposition to contraception moderated. Moralists, militarists, and eugenicists could no longer whip up hostility to the conversation about contraception as they had earlier. Indeed, moral panics about teenagers (as surveyed in Sections 10.10, 10.11 and 10.12) created circumstances that favoured a reconsideration of contraception as a positive. Folk solutions were overshadowed by scientific advances in technological barrier prophylactics like condoms and diaphragms, although these could still be notoriously difficult to obtain. Rather suddenly, in 1960, there was a new option.

In that year, an American team produced the first state-approved oral contraceptive pill. The case for the **Pill** advanced rapidly in part because it had the sanction of science behind it (even though that same science was reeling at the same time from the **thalidomide** disaster). As historian Angus McLaren describes it,

> [Physicians] drew their metaphors from the science of engineering. They appeared to be more comfortable — given their references to “pelvic floors”, “follicle walls,” “cervical canals,” “storage and transport of ovum” — when regarding the uterus as a construction site rather than as a human organ. Similarly, doctors who were still embarrassed to fiddle with a messy cream or floppy rubber contraption were happy to distribute a pill, a product of scientific research, a “preventive medicine” that was simply prescribed.[4]

Because the Pill was so effective, simple, clean, easily packaged, distributed, and obtained (and, by the middle of the decade, so widespread), it drew renewed but largely repositioned debate about the moral and health consequences of premarital sex and promiscuity.

3. Joan Sangster, *Regulating Girls and Women: Sexuality, Family, and the Law in Ontario, 1920-1960* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2001), 85-130.

4. Angus McLaren, *A History of Contraception From Antiquity to the Present Day* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 241-2.

Never before had sexual activity been so abstracted from reproduction. For a couple using the Pill, intercourse became purely an expression of love, or a means of physical pleasure, or both — but it was no longer exclusively a means of reproduction (not that it ever was). While this was true of previous contraceptives, their relatively high failure rates and their less widespread use failed to emphasize this distinction as clearly as did the Pill. The spread of oral contraceptive use thus led many religious figures and institutions to debate the proper role of sexuality and its relationship to procreation. The Roman Catholic Church, for example, reiterated the established Catholic teaching that artificial contraception distorts the nature and purpose of sex.[5] These sanctions had particular resonance in Quebec, or they might have done so only a few years earlier. Despite the apparent authority of the Catholic Church, Quebec women's fertility plateaued from 1947 to 1957, between 28 and 31 births per 1,000 women, and then halved in the next 15 years to 14.3 births. It continued to fall until 1986, when it rallied a little. From the highest provincial fertility rate in Canada before the war (rates that were, as well, higher than those in France, Britain, and the United States), the Quebec rate became the lowest from the mid-1960s to the millennium. Clearly, this could not have been accomplished without resort to contraceptives or terminations. Resistance to birth control did not, however, instantly evaporate: it wasn't until 1969 that aiding in birth control was removed from the *Criminal Code*. Thereafter, the **Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada** became a more prominent part of the public discussion about fertility limitation. The appearance of changing sexual behaviour beginning in the early 1960s (if not earlier), then, reflected the arrival of the baby boomers into their years of sexual activity, diminished concern over falling fertility levels, and technological change. This was accompanied and complemented by the advent of second wave feminism. In Quebec, the Quiet Revolution also played a role in that it invited challenges to conservative traditions and assumptions. Social and demographic behaviours thus transformed in ways that were, quite simply, revolutionary.

Termination

Cold War rhetoric positioned the family as the bedrock of the Western democracies; anything that undermined the fundamental strengths of this social bond — including obstructions to fertility — was regarded dimly. And yet evidence from Ontario and British Columbia suggests that it was precisely in these years that the rate and number of abortion-related deaths was on the rise, an indicator that more abortions were taking place. Surgical terminations — abortions — were illegal, so women sought out 'back-alley' medical facilities and interventions delivered by medical amateurs (including well-meaning women), or they turned to folk remedies involving toxic substances. Between 1921 and 1946, it is reckoned that between 4,000 to 6,000 women died of "bungled abortions."[6] This stands in evidence — terrible as it is — of the risks women were prepared to take in order to get a termination.

Abortion remained a shadowy part of the birth control equation until a Montreal physician, Henry Morgentaler (1923-2013), began in 1969 to challenge the existing laws by providing abortions from the nation's first "abortion clinic." Prosecuted unsuccessfully under the *Criminal Code* (Quebec jurors refused to find him guilty), Morgentaler became a target for the provincial state and spent 18 months in

5. Boundless. "The Sexual Revolution and the Pill". Boundless U.S. History. Boundless, 21 Jul. 2015, accessed 17 Dec. 2015 from https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory/chapter/expanding-the-civil-rights-movement/

6. Angus McLaren & Arlene Tigar McLaren, *The Bedroom and the State: The Changing Practices and Politics of Contraception and Abortion in Canada, 1880-1997,* 2nd edition (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997), 49-51.

prison in 1973-1976, some of it in solitary confinement. By the time he was freed, the provincial government had changed and the Parti Québécois decided that the law was unenforceable. For all intents and purposes, abortions were now legal, at least in Quebec. The *Criminal Code*, however, was not amended to reflect the *de facto* changes until 1988. The fact that it took 20 years after the first change in abortion laws in 1968 to come up with provisions that actually allowed for and made accessible safe abortions under any circumstances is an indication of how firmly some Canadians continued to believe in the heterosexual and reproductive family as a foundational element of the culture.

The Post-Revolutionary Era

Fears of the sexual revolution leading to out-of-control fertility and illegitimacy proved unfounded. As one landmark study shows, teen pregnancies fell from 57,000 per year in 1974 to 38,000 in 1992, at a time when educational elements of birth control were advancing faster in Canada than south of the border. The authors add, "The fact that the Canadian teenage pregnancy rate was less than half that of the United States suggested that north of the border birth control education had enjoyed some success."[7]

Marriage, too, was undergoing changes in the 1960s and 1970s. Women's average age at first marriage actually increased in the 1970s, which meant that first births were also postponed and subsequent births were fewer in number. Co-habitation out of wedlock increased in the 1960s and continued to do so into the 21st century. In Quiet Revolution Quebec, the backlash against clergy control of social and moral life produced a generation that opted for civil marriage ceremonies rather than church services, or chose a common-law arrangement. In those cases, co-habitation was as much an anticlerical political statement as it was a facet of the sexual revolution. These actions did not have the same meaning in English-Protestant Canada, but anti-establishment attitudes and an ethos of anti-conventionality certainly played a role. This could be seen as well in the shortened life-expectancy of marriages.

'Til Death Do We Part

Escaping unhappy marriages was one area where both women and men were limited by state and church authorities that placed a high value on heterosexual marriage.

Divorce courts first existed in British Columbia, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, spreading to Ontario, Alberta, and Saskatchewan before 1939.[8] The involvement of Parliament was otherwise necessary and the only accepted cause for divorce was adultery: physical abuse and desertion, to take only two other possible reasons to end a marriage, were not sufficient. Despite these constraints, the divorce rate climbed steadily from the 1930s on, as did the rate per hundred thousand population. In 1933, the rate was 8.8, rising to 21.4 in 1941, 42.3 at the end of the war, and peaking (for a generation) at 65.6 in 1947. The number continued to rise, but not as fast as the population. Because divorce was

7. Angus McLaren & Arlene Tigar McLaren, *The Bedroom and the State: The Changing Practices and Politics of Contraception and Abortion in Canada, 1880-1997,* 2nd edition (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997), 139.

8. Roderick Phillips, *Untying the Knot: A Short History of Divorce* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 195-6.

associated for years in the public mind with working women, the battle against liberalized divorce laws became effectively synonymous with limiting female participation in the workforce. Laws ostensibly about marriage were thus used to regulate the supply or oversupply of labour.

Divorce law in Canada prior to 1968 could be more accurately described as *anti*-divorce law because it set up barriers to ending marriages (see Section 10.9). Under the more liberal *Divorce Act (1968),* the causes or requirements for a successful divorce case expanded from adultery to mental or physical abuse, desertion, and imprisonment of one spouse. The effect of these changes was immediate and dramatic: in 1968 there were 54.8 divorces per 100,000 population; in 1969 there were 124. The rate continued to rise, passing 200 around 1974-1975, and levelling off in the high-200s per 100,000 population in the mid-1980s. Further reforms to the *Divorce Act* were introduced in 1985 and the rate nearly doubled, peaking at 355 in 1987. Thereafter, however, the rate began to fall, heading to a rate once again below 200 per 100,000 population in the early 21st century.[9] While the sexual revolution was a factor in these changes, so too was the declining power of religious sanctions against divorce and the increased availability of paid employment for women (which lends to a greater degree of independent security — albeit in a wage environment that still favours men). Social demographers have also identified the rising life expectancies of Canadians as a factor: marriage unto death for a 25-year-old is a much greater commitment when the average life expectancy has leapt from 64.6 (in 1941) to 80 years (in 2001) and the probability arises of being with the same partner for 55 years rather than 40.[10]

But the focus on divorce rates belies other, increasingly important trends. Rising common-law unions or cohabitation as a share of marriages means that there are fewer marriages *per se* that can end in divorce proper. In short, there's a difference in what we are attempting to measure. And some of this behaviour is driven by the sheer weight of the baby boom as it ages. There was a bubble in marriages in the decade after 1963 and it is echoed, 10 years later, in the rate of divorces. That is to say, baby boomers born in or shortly after 1941 were entering their marriageable years around 1963; they increased the incidence of marriages and, 10 years or so later, were getting divorced. Once that wave had passed, the marriage rates declined and — a decade later — the divorce rates did the same.

Key Points

- Laws and attitudes toward the regulation and management of fertility and the extent of the state's control over a woman's body changed throughout the 20th century, with significant new features arriving in the 1960s.
- The sexual revolution was made possible by a combination of changes in attitudes toward the family unit, pre-marital or extra-marital sex, and birth control methods.
- The Pill made it possible for individuals and society to disentangle heterosexual intercourse for pleasure from sex for reproduction.
- Following on the fertility explosion of the baby boom, fertility rates across Canada — and

9. Lance W. Roberts, Rodney A. Clifton, Barry Ferguson, Karen Kampen, Simon Langlois, *Recent Social Trends in Canada, 1960-2000* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 126-7.

10. Ibid., 79, Table 3.

especially in Quebec — fell dramatically during the Cold War.

- The heterosexual family unit was regarded as a fundamental piece of the Western world's strategy in the Cold War, which meant that challenges to that normative view might be regarded as dangerous.
- Reforms came in the late 1960s, when counselling birth control and abortion was decriminalized and divorce liberalized.

Media Attributions

- Portrait of Norma Shearer by George Hurrell – 1932 © George Hurrell is licensed under a All Rights Reserved license

9.18 Summary

Drawing a line at the end of the Cold War era is not without challenges. Beginning in the 1980s, there were significant shifts in the political environment in Soviet Russia. Hardliners were on the way out. The USSR's president, Mikhail Gorbachev (b. 1931), faced economic stagnation, increasing military expenditures in the arms race and an unwinnable war in Afghanistan, and heightening international tensions; his response was to propose a significant reduction in nuclear weapons on both sides. His twin policies of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring) offered an olive branch to the West. United States president Ronald Reagan was able to obtain American concessions that led to a rapid de-escalation of global sabre rattling. Within two years, border defences between the West and the Soviet Bloc were coming down. The most momentous of these events was the demolition of the Berlin Wall, which began in November 1989. Liberal democratic regimes with free market sensibilities began to appear across Eastern Europe. The last days of Soviet power were coming fast. Civil wars began to break out in the south, and breakaway movements appeared in the Baltic States. A failed *coup d'état* attempt broke the back of the regime, and the USSR's constituent republics fell away. The Cold War was, for all intents and purposes, over.

For nearly half a century, the Cold War had given shape to Canadian politics and society. Economic growth, social satisfaction, and **social mobility** were seen as the surest formula to inoculate against communist movements at home; suburbanization and consumerism were instruments in the new demand-led economy; investing resources to nuclear-age defences would protect Canada from trans-Arctic assaults from the Warsaw Pact; positioning the country as a middle power that supported UN efforts to de-escalate international tensions was meant to protect Canada from a US/USSR nuclear holocaust. Reactions against these strategies included second wave feminism's critique of patriarchal normalcy and a counterculture attack on the arms race and late 20th-century imperialism. Nationally, politicians struggled in their relationship with the federal status quo and with the United States. It is no coincidence that the two greatest legacies of the Mulroney years include an attempted constitutional rapprochement and the Free Trade Agreement with Washington.

Holding the country together was a continuing theme from the early 1960s on. That is, it was a priority for federalists. For those in Quebec who had concluded that repairing federalism was either impossible or simply not desirable, the drawn-out dialogue on patriation of the constitution was simply a distraction. Finding a voice for these sentiments took some into the more radical, guerrilla-style tactics of the RIN and the FLQ, while others pursued change through democratic means, mainly through the Parti Québécois. The emergence of these separatist and sovereigntist streams in the 1960s exposed the tentativeness of Canada as a project and the unavoidable necessity of working on that relationship continuously.

The Canada that emerged after 1945 was in a constant state of change and transformation. Nowhere was this more evident than in Quebec, but in every province the increased force of secularism, state activism, consumerism, and youth culture pointed at one shared phenomenon: modernity.

Key Terms

academic freedom: The privilege and responsibility on the part of scholars to conduct enquiry and communicate their findings free of sanction by external authorities.

Agent Orange: A herbicidal defoliant, used by the United States Army to destroy jungle cover in the Vietnam War.

Alaska Highway: A highway built during WWII to facilitate the movement of troops and materiel from the United States to its northern territory (not yet a state), Alaska. It was constructed between Dawson Creek, BC, and Delta Junction, Alaska, and completed in 1942. It served to open the Yukon to greater traffic and activity.

American Indian Movement (AIM): Founded in 1968, an advocacy group established to counter the United States government's Indian Termination policies of the 1950s and 1960s. Inspired by the civil rights movement, it was influential among Canadian First Nations activists.

apartheid: A political and social system predicated on racial discrimination and/or segregation; associated with the Republic of South Africa from 1948 to 1994.

asymmetrical federalism: A federation in which one or more constituent parts enjoys more autonomy and/or authority than one or more of the other constituent parts. In the case of the Meech Lake Accord, it was suggested that recognition of Quebec, as a distinct society would create an asymmetry in confederation.

Avro Arrow: An interceptor jet aircraft designed and built by A.V. Roe (Avro) Canada in the 1950s, capable of Mach 1.98. Production of the Arrow was stopped in what remains, in the mind of many Canadians, a controversial political decision.

Bay Street: In Toronto, the location of Canada's leading financial offices, banks, and corporations, as well as the Toronto Stock Exchange.

bedroom communities: Suburbs to which commuters return at the end of the day to do little other than sleep before commuting out to jobs elsewhere; applies especially to those suburbs that are largely free of industry and other sources of employment.

big band: A musical group involving as many as two dozen players; associated with jazz and swing music from the interwar and early post-WWII years.

Bill 101: The Charter of the French Language, passed into law in 1977, which advanced the provisions of the *Official Language Act* (Bill 22) of 1974, and which made French Quebec's official language. Bill 101 established the primacy of French in day-to-day life.

Bill 178: One of several amendments to the Charter of the French Language (see Bill 101); introduced and proclaimed in December 1988 in response to a Supreme Court ruling that would end the unilingual French signage provisions of the Charter. It is significant for its reference to the "notwithstanding clause" of the federal Charter of Rights.

birth control: Any method or practice aimed at reducing fertility or preventing the complete gestation of an infant; may include abstinence, the use of chemicals/drugs, termination, and prophylactics.

Blacklist: A list of people suspected of having Communist sympathies who were denied work as a result.

British Invasion: A surge of popularity enjoyed in North America by British musicians, artists, writers, and film makers in the 1960s.

***Canada Act* (1982):** Federal legislation that enabled the patriation of the Canadian constitution and the possibility of its amendment in Canada, rather than in Britain.

Canada Pension Plan (CCP): Introduced by the federal government in 1965; the first publicly funded pension plan in Canada; transfers earnings from working people to retired citizens.

Canada Student Loans: Replaced the Dominion-Provincial Student Loan Program (1939-1964); guaranteed the banks' risk in extending loans to post-secondary students under the auspices of the program.

Canadian Caper: The rescue of six American diplomats during the Iranian Revolution of 1979 to 1980.

Canadian content (CanCon) rules: Under the authority of the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), CanCon regulations were established to ensure a quota of Canadian creative product in various media, particularly in television and radio.

Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC): An independent government agency established in 1968 to regulate and supervise all elements of the broadcasting systems.

Carruthers Commission: Established in 1963 and reported out in 1966; recommended a devolution of authority from Ottawa to the North-West Territories; headquartered at Yellowknife.

CÉGEPs: Publicly funded pre-university colleges in Quebec.

Centennial: A 100th anniversary; in Canada, is used as shorthand to refer to the 1967 celebration of 100 years of Confederation.

Central Business District: The concentration of commercial, business, and finance enterprises generally in the centre or downtown of most cities. Some cities, like Toronto, have several such hubs.

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC): Created under the National Housing Act, 1944; enabled low income families (including demobilized servicemen and women) to obtain low cost mortgages; created social housing; funded construction of new rental housing; and continues to function in 2016.

Charter of Rights and Freedoms: Also known simply as the Charter; incorporated by the British government in the *Canada Act, 1982*; comprises the first part of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

Civil Rights Movement: In the United States, beginning in the mid-1950s, this was a movement to secure the rights promised in court decisions. Widespread protest, frequent violence, and growing support throughout the USA — much of which was televised — influenced Canadians who sought to address inequities in their own society.

Cold War: The prolonged period of tension between the United States and the Soviet Union, based on ideological conflicts and competition for military, economic, social, and technological superiority and marked by surveillance and espionage, political assassinations, an arms race, attempts to secure alliances with developing nations, and proxy wars.

containment: The American policy that sought to limit the expansion of Communism abroad.

crude birth rate: The number of births occurring in a community or nation per 1,000 population.

declericalization: A movement to replace church authority with state authority in the running of schools and other institutions.

demonstrations (or demos): Protest events; includes marches, sit-ins, and occupation of offices, as well as other forms.

détente: The relaxation of tensions and improvement of relations between the West and the East in the Cold War during the 1970s.

devolution: This is when a senior level of government hands some of its authority to a lower level or

ostensibly lower level of administration. In Canada in the 1960s, authority over the North-West Territories devolved to the new administration in Yellowknife, NWT.

Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line: The northernmost of three Cold War radar systems aligned from west to east to identify incoming Soviet missiles in the event of an attack.

distinct society: A term devised during the Quiet Revolution to describe Quebec vis-à-vis the rest of Canada; a "distinct society clause" was created that would recognize and enshrine that difference. In the Charlottetown Accord, this was spelled out as recognition of "a French speaking majority, a unique culture and a unique civil law tradition."

domino theory: The theory that if Communism made inroads in one nation, surrounding nations would also succumb one by one, like a chain of dominos toppling one another.

draft dodgers: Principally refers to American men who avoided mandatory, selective service in the Vietnam War by fleeing to Canada in the 1960s and 1970s.

Eastern Bloc: The alliance of pro-Soviet (or USSR-dominated) countries in Eastern Europe in the post-WWII era, consisting of Poland, East Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and, more loosely, Albania; Yugoslavia, another communist-dominated country, regularly declared itself separate from the Eastern Bloc; formalized in the mutual security agreement, the Warsaw Pact, in 1955.

establishment: An elite, colloquially in the 1960s; the conventional social and economic order.

Expo '67: A "World's Fair" held in Montreal in 1967; part of the Centennial celebrations.

fifth column: A population within a community that supports the efforts of an external force to topple that community or nation; examples include Cold War fears of Canadian communists who were loyal to Moscow rather than Ottawa.

Flag Debate: Arising out of PM Lester Pearson's decision to replace the Red Ensign in the early 1960s.

free love: Sexual relations outside of the institution of marriage; critical of the idea of marital monogamy.

free speech: A movement that begins in earnest in the early 20th century, calling for the elimination of laws barring public discussion of any number of topics; some subjects regarded as seditious — including calls for violent overthrow of the regime — have been subject to intermittent bans.

Fulton-Favreau Formula: A formula for amending the *British North America Act* (1867) developed in the 1960s; rejected by Quebec in 1965; provided the framework for subsequent discussions in 1982.

Geneva Convention: 1864, 1906, 1929, 1949; a succession of international agreements on the treatment of prisoners of war (POWs) and civilians.

Gouzenko Affair: Post-WWII espionage case involving a clerk at the Soviet embassy in Ottawa who disclosed the existence of a spy ring in Canada.

Grande Noirceur: In Quebec, the period from 1944 to 1959 in which policies were introduced under the Union Nationale government of Maurice Duplessis.

hippies: A youth movement originating in the 1960s that was anti-war (specifically, opposed to the war in Vietnam), critical of social conventions, and associated with experimentation with psychedelic drugs.

housewive: A married woman whose principle (unpaid) occupation is the maintaining of her household, including preparing food, cleaning clothes, providing pre-school education, and cleaning house.

illegitimate: In legal and demographic terms, a child born to unmarried parents (or "out of wedlock").

intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs): Cold War-era surface-to-air missiles with no less than a 5,000 km range; typically nuclear-tipped.

Iron Curtain: A term coined by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to refer to portions of Eastern

Europe that the Soviet Union had incorporated into its sphere of influence and that no longer were free to manage their own affairs.

Klondike: The locus of the 1890s gold rush in the Yukon Territory, along the Klondike River valley; used to describe the gold rush as a whole.

Korean War: A war that began in 1950 and ended inconclusively in Armistice in 1953; this was Canada's first Cold War era military engagement, and it involved significant casualties.

***Maîtres chez nous* (Masters of our own house):** The slogan used by Jean Lesage's Liberals in Quebec in the 1960 election, ushering in the Quiet Revolution.

marketing boards: An agricultural producers' marketing tool; often established by the producers themselves or by government, which acts as a buyer of output and then a marketer. Constitutes a kind of monopoly in that producers cannot sell their goods through any other means. See also **wheat pools**.

Meech Lake Accord: 1987; an agreement reached between all the provincial premiers and the Prime Minister that provided for a constitutional amending formula, a distinct society clause for Quebec, senate and Supreme Court reforms, and a devolution of some immigration issues to the provincial level. Despite a promising start, the Accord failed to achieve final approval.

Metro: The federated Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto.

middle power: The idea that Canada might occupy a position between "great power" states like Britain and the United States and, after the World War II, at a level between the superpowers (the US and the USSR), the second tier of military and economic powers (e.g.: Britain and France), and other nations; tied to Lester Pearson's vision of peacekeeping and Canada as a referee or fair broker.

mutually assured destruction (MAD): The Cold War belief that the sheer number of thermonuclear devices and delivery systems in the hands of the Soviet Union and the United States meant that neither side would survive an assault initiated by the other. By assuring their mutual destruction, they would be deterred from initiating a nuclear war.

nationalization: The imposition of state ownership over a corporation or sector; examples include the provincial nationalization of hydroelectricity providers (e.g.: Ontario Hydro, Hydro-Québec , and BC Hydro), and the water transport monopoly in British Columbia (BC Ferries).

Neverendum: The series of referendums dealing with Quebec separatism (or sovereignty-association) and proposed changes to the constitution, beginning in 1980.

New Left: Associated with campus radicalism in the 1960s and the writings of German philosopher Herbert Marcuse; less interested in the class struggle and labour power than with social justice.

North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD): Arising from a pact signed with the United States in 1957; provides detection and defence against Soviet missile and other airborne attacks on North America.

notwithstanding clause: Section 33 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982)*; allows any provincial, federal, or territorial government to override some select rights in the Charter for a fixed period of time.

Nunavut Land Claims Agreement: 1993; set the stage for the *Nunavut Act*, *1999*, which created the new territory of Nunavut; the first major land claims agreement negotiated by the federal government since Treaty 11 (1920 to 1921).

October Crisis: This was a combination of events in October 1970 including the kidnapping of James Cross and Pierre Laporte, attempts to ransom the two men, the execution of Laporte by his abductors, and the use of the *War Measures Act* for the first time in peacetime.

paparazzi: Photo-journalists who principally target celebrities and public figures and whose technique is sometimes intrusive.

patriation: The transfer to Canada from Britain of the *British North America Act* (an Act of the British Parliament), thus enabling its amendment in Canada.

peacekeeping: Under the United Nations in the Cold War and post-Cold War era, the use of military and other military personnel in non-combatant roles to maintain peace between adversaries so as to enable the peace-making process.

(the) Pill: Refers to the first successful oral contraceptive; approved for public use in 1960.

Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada: Established in 1964, the Federation was the descendant of a long line of organizations advocating education and support around birth control.

pop music: A music sub-genre within the larger rock and roll (rock'n'roll) genre; adheres to obvious structural qualities, tends to be melodic, and aims at a younger audience.

Prague Spring: 1968, a brief period of liberalization of government policies and democratic rights in Czechoslovakia; countered by the invasion of Warsaw Pact troops under the command of the Soviet Union.

Prime Minister's Office (PMO): Also the Office of the Prime Minister or the PMO; the centre of political decision making in the Parliamentary system, consisting of the Prime Minister and her/his chief political advisors; in Ottawa, located in the Langevin Block on Parliament Hill.

proxy wars: Cold war era conflicts conducted by third party countries in which the United States and the Soviet Union had a stake, rather than a direct conflict between the two superpowers.

punk rock: A variant of rock'n'roll that appeared for the first time in the late 1970s; marked by an anti-establishment, anti-authority stance.

Quiet Revolution (*Revolution tranquille*): A period of rapid and consequential change in the character of Quebec politics and society beginning in the late 1950s.

Red Tory: A Canadian Progressive Conservative who takes an essentially 19th century conservative position on the social obligations of the upper classes; a position sometimes described as *noblesse oblige*.

relocation programs: A federal government initiative in the mid-20th century to move Indigenous peoples in the North to locations where they would serve as a sign of Canadian sovereignty and/or where services (education, healthcare, administration, and the church) might be more effectively centralized; a program to which Inuit in particular were subjected, their lives disrupted, and their economies severed.

Rest Of Canada (ROC): A term used to describe all Canada apart from Quebec; has the advantage of avoiding the idea of dualism (as in English vs. French Canada).

rock and roll (rock'n'roll): Also rock'n'roll and rock & roll; a musical style originating in the 1950s characterized at first by a synthesis of blues, jazz, country, western, and boogie-woogie; became in the 1960s and later an umbrella term for many styles that incorporated any of these elements, including a strong youth component; regarded at mid-century as rebellious in its presentation and content.

Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism: Created in 1963 and reported out in 1969; co-chaired by A. Davidson Dunstan and André Laurendeau (who was succeeded at his death by Jean-Louis Gagnon); identified underrepresentation of Franco-Canadians in many areas of public life, second-rate services in French in national and relevant provincial systems, and poor opportunities for Francophones in post-secondary institutions outside of Quebec; recommended the establishment of a Commissioner of Official Languages.

rural depopulation: Movement of people — generally younger people — off the land and into the cities; associated with urbanization and also with the collapse of village and town economies.

Second Vatican Council (Vatican II): Convened by Pope John XXIII in 1959; ended 90 years of papal infallibility by opening dialogue regarding doctrine and the relationship between the Catholic Church and the modern world; upset many long-standing convictions about unchanging features of Catholic life; in Canada, contributed to the sense of social, spiritual, and secular fluidity that was bound up in the Quiet Revolution.

sexual revolution: A complex of social changes associated with the 1960s; loosening of moral codes as regards premarital sex, illegitimacy, divorce and remarriage, pornography, and sex for pleasure (as opposed to procreation).

sleeper agents: Espionage agents who are deeply embedded in the host community and dormant, awaiting activation.

social mobility: The movement of individuals, households, or communities through social hierarchies; generally associated with upward mobility — but downward is also a possibility.

space race: Competition between the United States and the Soviet Union to establish a dominant commercial, scientific, and military presence in near space; initiated with the launch of the Soviet satellite, Sputnik I in 1957; marked by American determination to reach the moon first.

Space Shuttle: A low orbit space craft developed by NASA in the 1970s and launched first in 1981; includes reusable sections and the craft is capable of reentry and a controlled surface landing on return. Nine Canadians have flown in Space Shuttle missions.

Sputnik: The first artificial satellite, launched by the Soviet Union on 4 October 1957; credited with starting the space race between the USSR and the United States.

suburban, suburban sprawl: The low density housing districts beyond the city limits; the expansion of cities beyond their boundaries into bordering municipalities, creating low density and car-dependent districts with few amenities other than housing.

Suez crisis: The 1956 invasion of Egypt by Israel, followed by France and Britain with the objective of seizing the Suez Canal. The failure of England and France to inform their former Allies — especially the United States — of their plans led to a rift between Britain and the USA in particular. Canada's response, led by Lester Pearson, was to propose a large multi-national peacekeeping force in the region.

Thalidomide: A drug prescribed to pregnant women for morning sickness; available in Canada from 1959 to 1962; resulted in catastrophic side effects, including severe disfigurement and defects in more than 100 infants in Canada alone.

Three Wise Men: *Les trois colombes,* a term used mainly by commentators to describe the trio of Jean Marchand, Gerard Pelletier, and Pierre Trudeau when they were recruited to the federal Liberal Party in the 1960s.

Trudeaumania: Term used principally by journalists to describe public and media fascination with Pierre Trudeau in the course of the 1968 Liberal leadership convention and then the general election; alludes to the phenomenon of Beatlemania, associated with the British Invasion.

two founding nations: The narrative of Canadian history that privileges the idea of the French and British as co-equal founders of Canada; ignores roles played by Indigenous nations and implicitly reduces the importance of Canadians drawn from other ethnicities and countries; is at the heart of dualism.

United Nations (UN): An international body established in 1942; originally was the rough equivalent of the Allied Nations in the Second World War; expanded to a post-war role in 1945 as an intergovernmental assembly and series of agencies tasked with reducing international tensions and addressing international social and economic crises.

Universal Health Care: Provision of health insurance coverage to all members of society; pioneered in

German in the 1880s; similar programs appeared first in the British Commonwealth in New Zealand (1939); in Canada, introduced first in Saskatchewan in 1962 and nationally in stages from 1966-72.

Veterans Charter: Introduced in 1944; provided funds to enable the transition to civilian life of Canadian troops; included free university education, payment for time served, life insurance, and money for civilian clothes. The Charter also guaranteed that ex-servicemen and women could reclaim their former jobs, which had the effect of displacing women who had worked in industry during wartime.

Victoria Charter (1971): An agreement to patriate the *British North America Act*, which included an amending formula, new civil, personal, and language rights, and provisions for regional equalization; achieved agreement from nine provinces and narrowly failed to secure Quebec's approval from Premier Robert Bourassa.

wage and price controls: Introduced as part of the *Anti-Inflation Act, 1975* as a response to an inflation rate approaching 11%; marked the beginning of a move away from the post-war settlement in that it established new restrictions on organized labour. The controls and the Anti-Inflation Board were dismantled in 1978.

white flight: Colloquial term for the migration of middle and working class European-Canadians from declining and multi-ethnic city centres for the suburbs; associated earlier in the United States with racial tensions in cities and more homogeneously Euro-American suburbs.

witch hunts: Colloquial term used to describe security campaigns conducted in capitalist democracies during the Cold War which targeted, mainly, communists but also homosexuals and any other group regarded as potentially seditious.

world music: An umbrella term used to describe mostly non-European, non-North American styles of music, including indigenous and hybridized forms. The term is problematic in that it includes essentially everything while, at the same time, implicitly otherizing anything that is not North American mainstream.

Yippie (Youth International Party): Countercultural youth movement originating in the United States in 1967; combined anarchist views with environmentalist perspectives.

Short Answer Exercises

1. Why did Newfondland join Confederation in 1949?
2. What changes took place in the North in the 20th century? How were the lives of Northerners affected?
3. What were the causes and principal features of the Cold War?
4. In what ways did the Cold War change Canadian society and politics?
5. What trends and institutions were challenged by the Quiet Revolution in Quebec?
6. How did Canada's relationship with the United States change between 1945 and 1990?
7. Why were the Liberals far more successful than the Progressive Conservatives in holding onto power federally?
8. In what ways did Canada change technologically in the Cold War years?
9. What were the sources of separatism in 1960s and 1970s Quebec?

10. Why was the War Measures Act invoked in 1970?
11. What were the objectives of efforts to patriate the constitution?
12. Why were referenda the route to failure for the Parti Québecois and for constitutional reformers?
13. In what ways do the 1980s indicate an end to the Postwar Settlement and, thus, a break with the post-WWII order?
14. What were the key social changes of the Cold War era?
15. In an increasingly urbanized and suburbanized Canada, how was rural life changing?
16. How did youth culture emerge in the post-war era and how did it influence mainstream culture?
17. What changes led to and enabled the sexual revolution?

Suggested Readings

Carr, Graham. "'No Political Significance of Any Kind': Glenn Gould's Tour of the Soviet Union and the Culture of the Cold War," *Canadian Historical Review*, 95, Number 1 (March 2014): 1-29.

Churchill, David S. "Draft Resisters, Left Nationalism, and the Politics of Anti-Imperialism," *Canadian Historical Review*, 93, Number 2 (June 2012): 227-60.

Martel, Marcel. "'They smell bad, have diseases, and are lazy': RCMP Officers Reporting on Hippies in the Late Sixties," *Canadian Historical Review*, 90, Number 2 (June 2009): 215-45.

Onusko, James. "Childhood in Calgary's Postwar Suburbs: Kids, Bullets, and Boom, 1959-1965," *Urban History Review/Revue d'histoire urbaine*, 43, number 2 (Spring 2015): 26-37.

Stettner, Shannon. "'We Are Forced to Declare War': Linkages between the 1970 Abortion Caravan and Women's Anti-Vietnam War Activism," *Histoire sociale/Social history*, 46, Number 92 (Novembre/November 2013): 423-41.

Stevens, Peter A. "'Roughing it in Comfort': Family Cottaging and Consumer Culture in Postwar Ontario," *Canadian Historical Review*, 94, Number 2 (June 2013): 234-62.

Stevenson, Michael D. "'Tossing a Match into Dry Hay': Nuclear Weapons and the Crisis in U.S. – Canadian Relations, 1962-1963," *Journal of Cold War Studies*, 16, Issue 4 (Fall 2014): 5-34.

Chapter 10. This is the Modern World

10.1 Introduction



Figure 10.1 The 20th century produced a greater visual record than any earlier era. From flash powder exploding in studios (such as the one shown above) to miniaturized digital cameras, from silent motion pictures to "talkies" to satellite photography, photographic technology has made it possible for us to have an occasional and unguarded glimpse of people in the past.

Modernity is the term given to a constellation of behaviours, values, and beliefs associated with the industrial, urban era. This term is associated with challenges to traditional values and ways of looking at the world and is often used in connection with 20th-century artworks, literature, and architecture. In

some respects, the term is a shorthand for the 19th-century break with traditional oligarchy and feudal authority; the rise of nation-states and democratic society (with its emphasis on the rights of the individual); changes in the life-course (including the emergence of childhood as a period of dependence, predominance of nuclear rather than extended families, later first marriages, and falling fertility rates); and enthusiasm for public spectacle (such as vaudeville, movies, spectator sports, and even religious revivals). Modernity was also stamped upon gender roles and ideals of both womanhood and manhood. Science, technology, innovation, and professionalization are other facets of modernity, as is the widespread belief in progress and, implicitly optimism.

This chapter explores several themes and aspects of modernity that are now so interwoven with the fabric of life in Canada as to be almost invisible. At one time, however, they were revolutionary, or nearly so.

Learning Objectives

- Provide working definitions of modernity and modernism.
- Identify the forces behind modernization, its constraints, and its opponents.
- Describe the connections between modernism, secularism, and organized religion.
- Assess the impact of modern values on gender roles and family households.
- Account for changes in the experience of childhood and adolescence.
- Outline developments in the arts, media, sports, and popular culture.

10.2 Defining Modernism



Figure 10.2 Bicycling became enormously popular in the late 19th century, particularly among women, for whom it offered a new — if sometimes provocative — independence. Mabel Williams in Ottawa, 1898.

Modernity in Canada took many forms. It is nearly impossible to connect it to any one symbol or idea. The bicycle comes close for late 19th- century modernism because it was so completely without precedent, an expression of engineering and metallurgical skills, and — very literally — an expression of the power of the individual. As production costs fell and competition in the sector rose, unit prices came down far enough by the late 1890s to make the bicycle affordable to middle- and some working-class Canadians. The growing urban centres necessitated new means of getting around (when weather permitted) and delivering goods that depended less on horses and carts and more on individual mobility. Inveterate gamblers saw in bicycles an opportunity for competition and wagering. In the first three decades after Confederation, as Glen Norcliffe states, “Bicycles and tricycles presented men and (later, when they became safer) women with a highly visible opportunity to demonstrate that they were in the mainstream of modern life.” Mass-produced and consumer-oriented, aligned with fitness (and sometimes with temperance), and widely observed in urban settings, the bicycle was thoroughly modern, at least until the arrival of the automobile.[1]

Motorized transportation began its conquest of city streets shortly after streetcars had laid claim to much of the original downtown landscape. The movement — begun by the bicycle — from collective to individual transportation thus continued, helped along by steam-powered and, later, petroleum-powered engines. There is no doubt that the automobile constitutes one of the most powerful symbols

1. Glen Norcliffe, *The Ride to Modernity: The Bicycle in Canada, 1869-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 30-36.

of modernity in the 20th century, with its revolutionary technological sophistication, luxurious trappings, and — of course — speed, all of which would only advance further and further over the course of the next hundred years. The automobile was also modern in that its manufacture increasingly depended on managerial science and the refinements of the **assembly line**. As a consumer item, it cost less than a house, but more than almost anything else a Canadian family would ever purchase.

The mechanisms for extending the reach of modern systems and values in Canada were numerous and subtle. Take the rural post office, for example. Historian Jack Little has described it as "traditionally … the centre of rural conviviality, but also serving as the main point of contact with the outside world."[2] The post office system across southern Canada enabled the relatively rapid movement of information from other parts of the country. Letters home from the cities allowed one generation to describe to another how their world was changing in material and intellectual ways. Reports sent back from the farming frontier in the West or from the goldfields of the Yukon stimulated latent wanderlust. Rural towns in economically less viable regions began to leech population. Demands were made for more modern services such as telephones (which begin to appear in homes in the 1880s) and electricity (the use of which expanded rapidly after 1906).[3] The telephone itself accelerated this process of disseminating modern values and ideas. Rural electrification and telephone service was vastly more expensive than the same process in concentrated urban centres, an irrefutable fact that created different rates of modernization of technologies, lives, and — inevitably — values. The idea of being so-called "old-fashioned" only makes sense when something else is considered "new-fashioned." Thus, the horse-and-buggy, wood stove, Sunday-suit-wearing folks back East in the Gaspé or the Petitcodiac, in the outports and across the whole of PEI, were decidedly old-fashioned.

The links between modernity and energy sources are explored by York University historian, Sean Kheraj.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: *https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=572#oembed-1*

Little also points out how expanding and increasingly sophisticated systems of banking and communication dissolved small-town economies.[4] This could be seen on Vancouver Island and throughout the Maritimes, where wealthy families that had once dominated their local communities and provided some degree of beneficent philanthropy began investing their money elsewhere. The CPR, the steel companies, and the farm machinery giants were all attractive options with better returns and fewer headaches than reinvesting in local industry. The railway could deliver goods from Toronto to any hamlet along a rail line. Why try, then, to produce redundant goods in a village? The effect was to make economically backward (non-modern) towns more backward still, while advancing the modern age in privileged centres of production and innovation.

2. J. I. Little, *The Other Quebec: Microhistorical Essays on Nineteenth-Century Religion and Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 253.

3. in 1885, Ottawa became the first city on earth to have its streets all lit by electricity.

4. J. I. Little, *The Other Quebec*, 253.

In short, it wasn't the case necessarily that non-modern settlements and whole regions were choosing to lag behind in the march to modernity. There were structures at work that determined the reach of modern life. At the same time, there were opponents to modernization in rural Canada and urban Canada as well, as is shown in Section 10.3. Consumerism, as discussed in Section 10.4, was a powerful antidote to those forces.

There was a shifting of gears after 1945. Technological achievements and the increased role of government in the interwar years and WWII put Canada on a course for what is called **high modernism**. This is a period of large-scale infrastructural projects funded by the public purse: freeway construction, hydro-electric dams, subway systems, and urban renewal. It is also an era of intensified public involvement in the form of the **welfare state**, increased investment in secondary and post-secondary education, and the growth of the healthcare sector (which, in Canada, had a profoundly important public — as opposed to private or corporate — component). Historian Christopher Dummitt describes this watershed:

> After the war, Canadians retreated from much of the emphasis on hyper-efficiency that had characterized the war years, but a widespread belief in the possibilities and benefits of control remained. This was reflected in a variety of ways. Partly, it meant managing economic and social life through the welfare state, and a host of new programs came into place, including the Veterans Charter, family allowances (1944), a new old-age pension (1951), and hospital insurance (1957).[5]

These were all features of what has been called "modern." It crops up in many parts of 20th-century culture and is distinctive, almost instantly recognizable, as different from what one could find in the 19th century. Describing modernity can be difficult, making it a job … a job for…

5. Christopher Dummitt, *The Manly Modern: Masculinity in Postwar Canada* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007), 9.

Superman

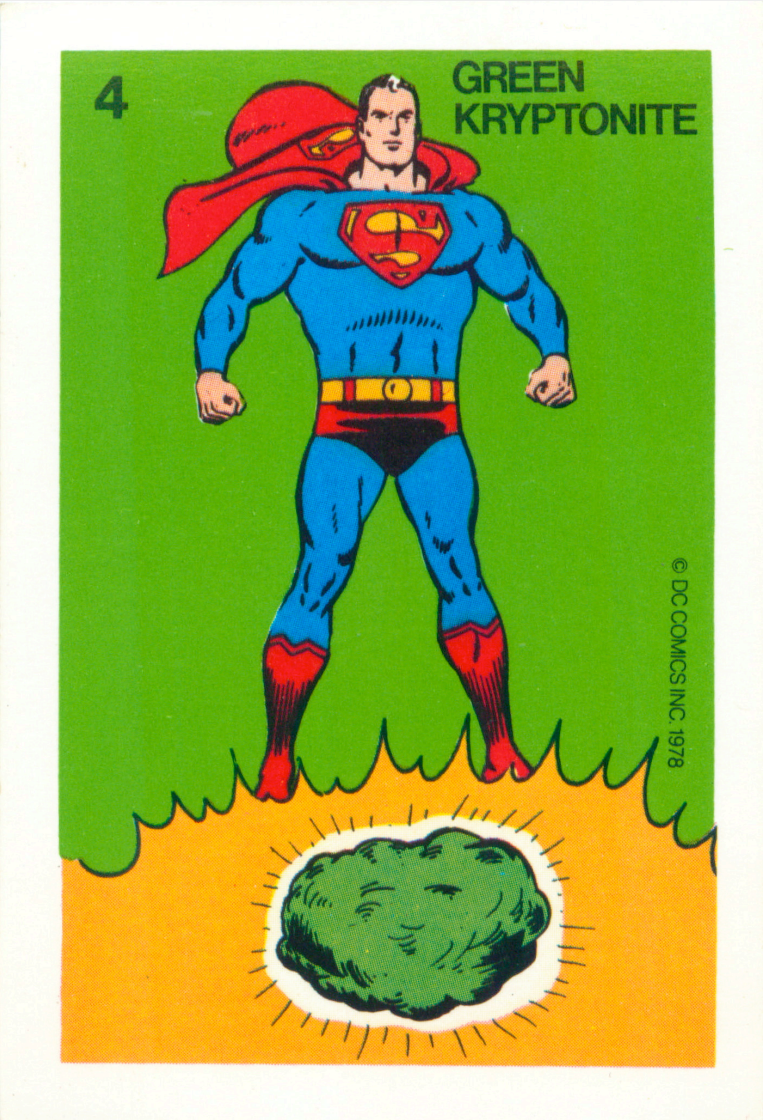


Figure 10.3 Sent to Earth from a dying planet.

Growing levels of literacy in the interwar years — a result of growth in public and mandatory education and the extension of high school education to a larger segment of the adolescent-population–fed demand for newspapers, serious literature, pulp fiction, magazines, and comic books. The last of these appeared in the late 1930s and very quickly settled into a recognizable format and structure. Comic strips emerged earlier in the century, and European publishers were ahead of North Americans in producing the sequentially panelled and coloured storylines that would become defining elements of the comic book. But it is the appearance in 1938 of *Action Comics* and the debut of Superman that signals a watershed in this evolution.

Superman was the creation of Joe Shuster (1914-92), a Canadian whose parents had emigrated from the Netherlands and Ukraine, and his American cousin Jerry Siegel (1914-96). Set primarily in the fictional city of Metropolis — based on Toronto, where Shuster grew up — and at the *Daily Planet* newspaper — modelled on Toronto's *Daily Star,* where Shuster worked, *Action Comics* and its Kryptonian protagonist drew on Canadian experiences and values, some of which were rooted in a rural past while others arose from a modern

urban present. The alien refugee arrives in rural North America, a generation after the first great waves of settlement spread out to colonize the West, and is raised in the morally upstanding and old-fashioned but still recognizable grain belt of the plains. Grounded in seemingly indestructible values, he moves to the big city where there is crime to fight — which he does as an independent actor and not, significantly, as a member of a police force. The famous trappings of the Superman story — a rocket-ship voyage to earth, a planet named for a recently discovered gas, a visual spectrum that includes X-rays (another recent scientific breakthrough), and an ability "to leap tall buildings in a single bound" — just as city skylines were starting to sprout upward to as much as 30 stories — speak to the modern technological world in which Shuster and Siegel lived.



Figure 10.4 Vastly less successful and memorable than Superman was Shuster and Siegel's late 1940s attempt to put the comic back into comic book.

Superman can act also as a metaphorical bridge between the modernity of the interwar years and the high modernity of the post-1939 period. Superman is famously vulnerable to two things: magic and kryptonite. As Dummitt reveals in Section 9.5, interest in spiritualism, and offshoots like magic and the occult, were at a high water mark in the interwar years, and their influence reached the highest public office in Canada. Pulp novels and radio programs in the 1920s and 1930s featured sword-and-sorcery storylines and popular fictional characters with magic-derived abilities, like the Shadow. "Magic" was as contemporary to Shuster

and Superman as were skyscrapers and rockets. So, too, was radiation. X-rays might be helpful but they were known to be harmful as well. Radium — like krypton gas and X-rays — had been discovered in the 1890s; by the 1930s, Canada was one of the world's two leading producers of uranium. What is sometimes called **big science** would emerge in the course of World War II in the form of the Manhattan Project. Thereafter and throughout the Cold War, public understandings of radiation poisoning were heightened and kryptonite (a fictional radioactive substance derived from Superman's home planet) became a more plausible — and fearsome — vulnerability than, say, Mandrake the Magician (who was, incidentally and allegedly, based on Leon Mandrake, a Canadian performer).



Figure 10.5 New Westminsterite Leon Mandrake began his career in stage magic in the 1920s. The comic strips he inspired would spin off into radio series, books, and films.

Katharine Rollwagen addresses the rise of the teenager in Section 10.11, observing that high schools were

necessary to the creation of this new phase in life. With the teenager came a panoply of new interests and cultural artifacts, of which the comic book was one. (Quite obviously: no teenager, no *Archie Comics*.) But comic books in the era of high modernity were also subject to greater regulation, not least because they were thought to incite serious anti-social behaviours, including homicidal impulses. As a cultural artifact that both reflects and allegedly transformed a generation's values, the humble comic book ought not to be casually dismissed.

Key Points

- Modernity consisted of technological, social, and intellectual changes and practices that began in the 19th century and accelerated through the 20th century.
- Creating systems and products that made sense of new cities and new productive systems was at the heart of modernization.
- The modern state was, by definition, a more interventionist state which took on more roles in a secular environment.
- Popular culture — including icons like Superman — can be analyzed to demonstrate the extent to which modern (and high modern) values and obsessions permeate day-to-day life and the imagination.

Media Attributions

- Mabel Williams with bicycle at 54 Main Street, residence of James Ballantyne © Photograph attributed to James Ballantyne, Library and Archives Canada (PA-132274) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Superman Card – Green Kryptonite © Whitman is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license
- Funnyman, 1948 © Joe Shuster is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Mandrake the Magician Exhibit Card © King Features Syndicate, Inc. is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license

10.3 Antimodernism

Sharon Wall; Department of History; and University of Winnipeg



Figure 10.6 Hirshfield House in Vancouver's West End is an example of the Arts and Crafts style that recalled English village life rather than embracing modern city life.

Just as enthusiasm for modernism and wonder at the fruits of scientific and technological progress were attaining their early heights in the late-19th century, a counter-tendency we have come to call **antimodernism** developed within North-American culture. While modernism touted the marvels of progress and civilized society, antimodernists began to worry about the possibility of overcivilization, of the possibility of too much comfort, and about the physical and psychological impact of a world devoid of hard work, physical activity, and struggle.[1] For some, life was becoming all too easy.

To compensate for the possibility of overcivilization, antimodernists glorified what they called "the simple life"; to compensate for too much ease, they sought to rough it, especially in their leisure time.[2] Just as production was becoming more thoroughly mechanized and their work lives less physically demanding, early antimodernists fuelled an **Arts and Crafts** revival movement, took a new interest in martial arts, and took a renewed interest in back-to-nature activities. Men took up big-game hunting, while both men and women took part in canoeing, camping, and wilderness vacations. Children were not left out either; many thought it was most discouraging to observe how, even for them, life was becoming too easy. In response, the scouting, guiding, and summer camp movements promised to take 20th-century children away from the evils of the city and back to the wonders and simplicity of nature

1. T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

2. David E. Shi, *The Simple Life: Plain Living and High Thinking in American Culture* (New York : Oxford University Press, 1985).

where, it was argued, their character would be strengthened.[3] Overall, antimodernists sought intense experience in all kinds of forms.

Antimodernism affected more than just leisure; it was also a way of thinking about peoples, culture, and history. Indigenous peoples were glorified and even imitated (though in very artificial ways) as "Indians" who lived the simple life.[4] In some cases, individuals romanticized their own histories; in Nova Scotia, an entire tourist industry was built up around the notion of Nova Scotians as a simpler folk engaged more in the production of handicrafts and folktales than industrial goods, a people whose lives had seemingly escaped the touch of modernity.[5]

Not everyone was an antimodernist. One doesn't long for the simple life or thrill at the prospect of roughing it unless one has already tasted the comforts of the good life. Most antimodernists came from comfortable middle- and upper-class backgrounds: professional men, Christian ministers, intellectuals, and others who had already felt the benefits of progress. These were people with time on their hands and a tendency toward self-analysis and reflection. Women of these same classes could also feel antimodernist sympathies. Their homes were among the first to benefit from such things as electric lighting, running water, and flush toilets, making living without such amenities while camping or canoeing seem exciting.

The critique mounted by antimodernists, whatever their gender, contained fundamental contradictions. Founders of summer camps, for example, often wanted to clean up nature, to add walk-in fridges and hot showers to make life not quite so rough. People who glorified what they called "Indians" also appropriated land on which Indigenous people still hunted and fished. In Nova Scotia, images of simple folk ignored the fact that coal-mining and industrial development were as important to the province's history as folk ballads and handspun linen. Further, these simple, folksy creations, as much as summer camps, wilderness vacations, and a host of other goods and experiences which were valued for their connection to a pre-modern past, became modern consumer products to be marketed and sold.

As these examples suggest, the antimodernist critiques were limited; by the 21st century, we might say they were only half-hearted. Ultimately, few people ever truly wanted to turn back the clock to live a pre-modern existence. Antimodernist dissatisfaction, however, is a feeling that still lingers today as some question the merits of a modern lifestyle that we cannot truly escape.

Key Points

- Management, systemization, and regulation of daily life in the modern world was resisted in some quarters.

3. Sharon Wall, *The Nurture of Nature: Childhood, Antimodernism, and Ontario Summer Camps, 1920-55* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009).

4. Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

5. Ian McKay, *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth C>entury Nova Scotia* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994).

- Some antimodernists were concerned that modern life was too soft and would lead to a weakening of the individual and society alike.
- Modern styles were also resisted as cold and artificial while older traditions and economic underdevelopment were celebrated as authentic and preferable.

10.4 Consumerism

Tracy Penny Light and Thompson Rivers University



Figure 10.7 Large downtown department stores emerged in the Interwar years as temples to consumerism. Window shoppers outside Simpson's in Toronto view styles alongside the sizing details of Hollywood's first generation of stars (including Canadian Norma Shearer).

Magazines were important harbingers of consumerism in the 20th century. Not only did they bring goods for consumption to many through advertisements, but they also brought messages about what Canadians should consume and for what purpose. For women, they advertised products that would allow them to find and keep their husbands, ranging from beauty products to appliances, as well as goods that promised to make them good mothers. For men, they advertised products that would allow them to demonstrate their masculinity. While the advertisements (ads) used slightly different copy and language over the 20th century to reflect broader cultural interests and to suit the shifting norms and values, for the most part, the prescriptions for normal (middle-class, white) women and men can easily be seen.[1] As such, consumerism has been an important framing concept for Canadians throughout the

1. Tracy Penny Light, "From Fixing to Enhancing: Shifting Ideals of Health and Gender in the Medical Discourse on Cosmetic Surgery in Twentieth Century Canada," in Penny Light, Tracy, Barbara Brookes and Wendy Mitchinson (eds.), *Bodily Subjects: Essays on Gender and Health, 1800-2000* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015): 319-346; Tracy Penny Light, "Consumer

20th century. And it is a concept that shapes how other groups frame their discussions around different aspects of life in Canada. For instance, the medical profession uses consumer culture to sell their services, whether it is by reinforcing the suitability of products for consumers with their expertise (for instance, "97% of doctors say this product will…") or by selling their own expertise as a product in and of itself, a phenomenon witnessed especially since the 1980s.[2] Depending on the marketing vehicle, other groups, such as the legal profession or organized religion, can also be seen to use consumerism to promote their positions on Canadian culture.

While one could argue that the influence of consumerism is particularly subversive if consumers are not critical in their consumption, there is also evidence to show that Canadians are good at using vehicles like magazines to promote their own interests. In her study of *Chatelaine* magazine in the 1950s and 1960s, Valerie Korinek demonstrates that women successfully advocated for changes to women's status in society through both the advertisements and articles in the magazine.[3] It is important to remember, though, that these were, generally speaking, the perspectives of the privileged members of society. Marginalized groups (such as those with different racial, class, or sexuality positions) tend to be overlooked even today. In fact, one might argue that the **hegemony** of consumerism helps to reinforce existing inequalities.

Key Points

- Constructing consumerism involved educating citizens in the business of buying things they didn't know they needed.
- Consumerism became a way of framing the economy and day-to-day life in the 20th century.
- Magazines in mid-century became vehicles for dissemination of consumerist attitudes and the promotion of group and professional interests.

Media Attributions

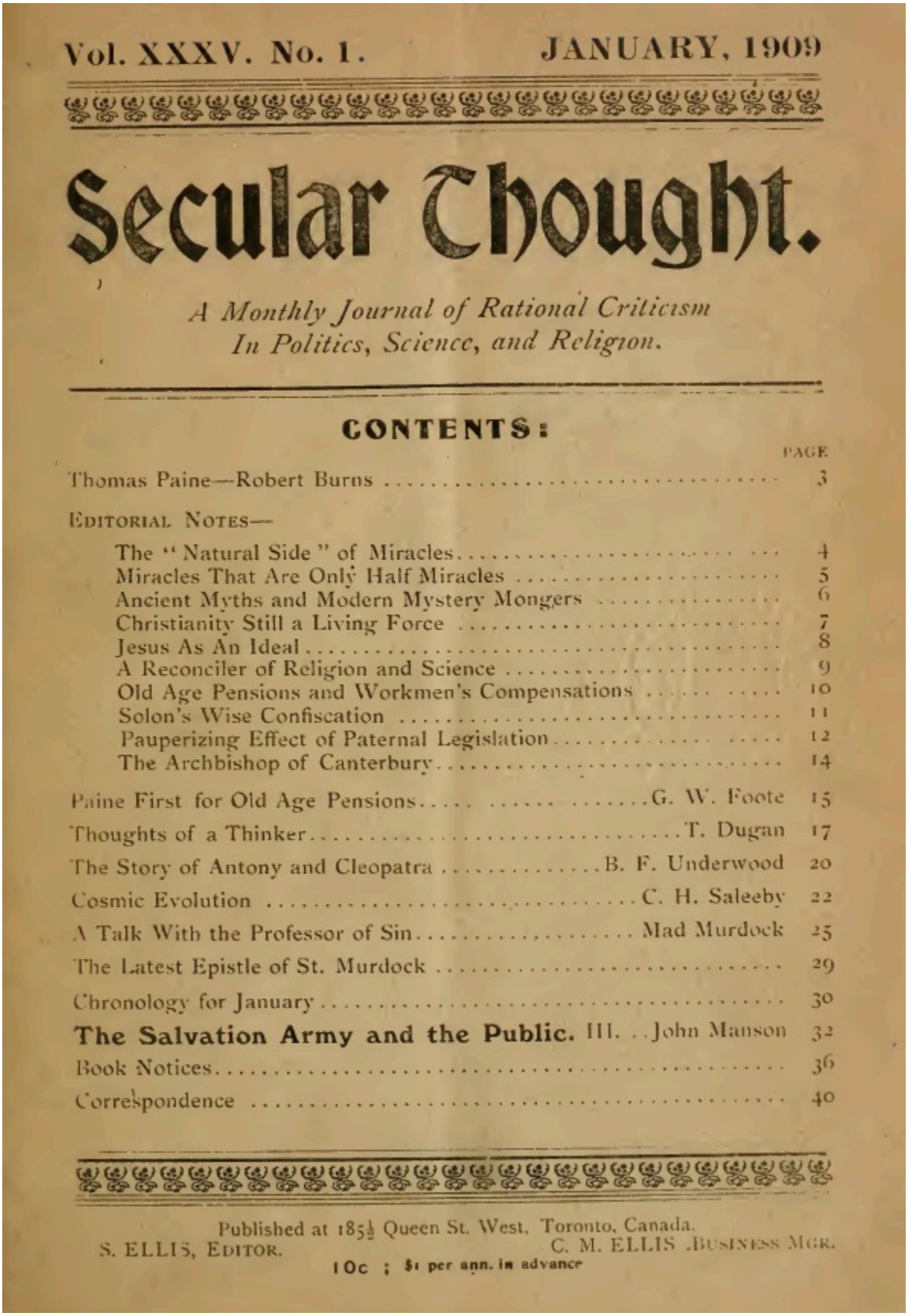
- Window shopping at Simpsons © Alexandra Studios is licensed under a Public Domain license

Culture and the Medicalization of Gender Roles in Interwar Canada," in Cheryl Warsh and Dan Malleck (eds.), *Consuming Modernity: Gendered Behaviour and Consumerism before the Baby Boom* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2013): 34-54.

2. Tracy Penny Light, "'Healthy' Men Make Good Fathers: Masculine Health and the Family in 1950s America," in Isabel Heinemann (ed.), *Inventing the Modern American Family: Family Values and Social Change in 20th Century United States* (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2012): 105-123.

3. Valerie Korinek, *Roughing it in the Suburbs: Reading Chatelaine Magazine in the Fifties and Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000.)

10.5 Secular Canada



Vol. XXXV. No. 1. JANUARY, 1909

Secular Thought.

A Monthly Journal of Rational Criticism In Politics, Science, and Religion.

CONTENTS:

PAGE

Thomas Paine—Robert Burns 3

EDITORIAL NOTES—

The "Natural Side" of Miracles 4
Miracles That Are Only Half Miracles 5
Ancient Myths and Modern Mystery Mongers 6
Christianity Still a Living Force 7
Jesus As An Ideal 8
A Reconciler of Religion and Science 9
Old Age Pensions and Workmen's Compensations 10
Solon's Wise Confiscation 11
Pauperizing Effect of Paternal Legislation 12
The Archbishop of Canterbury 14

Paine First for Old Age Pensions ..... G. W. Foote 15
Thoughts of a Thinker ..... T. Dugan 17
The Story of Antony and Cleopatra ..... B. F. Underwood 20
Cosmic Evolution ..... C. H. Saleeby 22
A Talk With the Professor of Sin ..... Mad Murdock 25
The Latest Epistle of St. Murdock 29
Chronology for January 30
The Salvation Army and the Public. III. ..John Manson 32
Book Notices 36
Correspondence 40

Published at 185½ Queen St. West, Toronto, Canada.
S. ELLIS, EDITOR. C. M. ELLIS, BUSINESS MGR.
10c ; $1 per ann. in advance

Figure 10.8 Ideals of science, progress, technology, and reason had been running up against religion and faith for centuries. By the 20th century, the tide was running with the secularists. [Long Description]

A key feature of modernity is **secularism**, the movement away from religious belief most often manifested in the separation of church and state. Anticlericalism in the 19th century took the position that the business of the church was saving souls, not running schools or hospitals, and certainly not influencing governments. In English-speaking Canada, secularism was often a compromise solution to a culture that featured multiple denominations — mainly Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Congregationalist — none of which could lay claim to a majority of the population. If there was not one creed that could lead, then none would. This goes some distance to explain the suspicion and, indeed, hostility felt by many Anglo-Protestants to the roles played in Quebec by the Catholic Church.

And yet, as the secular, democratic state was growing in modernist English Canada, so too was the popularity of certain faiths. The consolidation in 1925 of the Methodist, Congregationalist, and (most of) the Presbyterian churches into the **United Church of Canada** strengthened that wing of Protestantism, making it overnight the third largest denomination in the country. Within the member-denominations of the United Church — and among the Anglicans as well — there were strong Social Gospel elements (see Chapter 7). So, while secularism and modernism called for a separation of church and state, religious activists were often political and social activists as well. While United Church adherents would generally throw their support behind the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, Catholics supported the Liberal Party, and Anglicans the Conservatives.

Organized religion, in short, still played a vital role in political and social life. This was nowhere more apparent than in the rise of evangelical Protestantism in the 20th century (aspects of which are considered in Sections 7.6 and 7.9). Essentially antimodernist in its outlook, sects like the Union Baptists and the Pentecostal Church tended towards a study of and adherence to what they called the "fundamentals" of scripture, and thus became known as **fundamentalists**. As Tina Block demonstrates in Section 10.6, there came a tipping point in the middle of the 20th century when secularism became a defining feature of Canadian society in tandem with multicultural trends, at which point the antimodernist forces in Christianity and other creeds were marginalized.

And here we have one of those great 20th-century ironies. The Canadian regime most influenced by the Pentecostal Church and fundamentalist values was that of W.A.C. Bennett in British Columbia from 1952 to 1972. Phil "Flying Phil" Gaglardi (1913-1995), a leader of Pentecostalism in the Interior, regularly boasted that he was both a minister of the Crown and a minister of God. Yet no administration embraced modernity more. The potential of technology, engineering, and science to make a bigger and better economy was an article of faith among the BC Socreds (Social Credit Party). One lesson to be drawn from this is that elements of modernity were so pervasive that even the most conservative chapters of Protestantism could not fully resist their influence.

Religious organizations continued through the remainder of the 20th century to exercise an influence that belied their fall from popular favour. No other organization or institution has sufficient influence to partner with the state in the delivery of education, and the norm in Canada is that religious education is subsidized heavily by the provinces (so as to ensure religious schools' adherence to provincial curricula). Indeed, disenchantment with public schools encouraged a renewed interest in clerical education in the late 20th century. Schools, however, were also the setting for a worsening crisis in credibility: disclosures of abuse of children by clergy and church-sponsored educators in various settings, but most notably at Mount Cashel Orphanage in St. John's and in many residential schools, poured forth during the 1980s and on and continue to trouble Canadians.

Key Points

- Secularism — the removal of organized religion from the running of the state and social institutions — is one of the dominant features of modernity.
- Anticlericalism in Catholic-dominated Quebec played out differently from anticlericalism in multi-denominational English-Canada.
- Religious activists often took their perspectives and goals into public life in mainstream political organizations.
- Many denominations and faiths responded to modernism with hostility, seeing it as an agenda for their marginalization.

Long Descriptions

Figure 10.8 long description: The table of contents of the journal *Secular Thought*, "a monthly journal of rational criticism in politics, science, and religion." This issue is Vol. XXXV, No. 1, from January 1909. The contents are as follows:

- Thomas Paine—Robert Burns (page 3)
- Editorial Notes
    - The "Natural Side" of Miracles (page 4)
    - Miracles That Are Only Half Miracles (page 5)
    - Ancient Myths and Modern Mystery Mongers (page 6)
    - Christianity Still a Living Force (page 7)
    - Jesus As An Ideal (page 8)
    - A Reconciler of Religion and Science (page 9)
    - Old Age Pensions and Workmen's Compensations (page 10)
    - Solon's Wise Confiscation (page 11)
    - Pauperizing Effect of Paternal Legislation (page 12)
    - The Archbishop of Canterbury (page 14)
- Paine First for Old Age Pensions by G. W. Foote (page 15)
- Thoughts of a Thinker by T. Dugan (page 17)
- The Story of Antony and Cleopatra by B. F. Underwood (page 20)
- Cosmic Evolution by C. H. Saleeby (page 22)
- A Talk With the Professor of Sin by Mad Murdock (page 25)
- The Latest Epistle of St. Murdock (page 29)

- Chronology for January (page 30)
- The Salvation Army and the Public. III by John Manson (page 32)
- Book Notices (page 36)
- Correspondence (page 40)

Published at 185½ Queen St. West, Toronto, Canada. Editor is S. Ellis. C. M. Ellis is Business Manager. Each issue is 10¢; the journal is $1 per annum in advance. [Return to Figure 10.8]

Media Attributions

- Secular Thought Cover Image (Jan. 1909) © J. S. Ellis, Secular Thought [Toronto], January 1909, p. 1 is licensed under a Public Domain license

10.6 Religion And Irreligion In The Postwar World

Tina Block; Department of History; and Thompson Rivers University

"When one looks back at the 1950s," writes historian Doug Owram, "religion stands as one of the great gulfs separating that age from the present."[1] In that era, Christianity occupied a privileged place in Canadian public life, appearing in most public schools across the country, in the speeches of politicians, and even in the official mandate of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.[2] The decade and a half following World War II was a time of significant growth for Canada's Christian churches: church membership levels increased, new churches were built at a rapid rate, and Sunday schools burst at the seams.

Despite clear indicators of church growth, there were also signs that Christianity was losing its hold on Canadian life during the 1950s. Consumer culture was on the rise, and Canadians seemed more preoccupied with material than with spiritual concerns. In cities across Canada, there was a growing demand for professional sporting events on Sundays, challenging older patterns of Sabbath observance.[3] Religious holidays, such as Easter and Christmas, became increasingly commercialized. The church pews were filled on Sundays, but religious knowledge, interest, and enthusiasm appeared to be fading. Christian leaders feared that postwar churchgoing had less to do with genuine religious commitment, and more to do with a desire for stability and security after years of economic depression and war.

Dechristianization and the Sixties

As it turns out, Christian leaders had reason to be concerned. Levels of church involvement fell across Canada during the 1960s (the 'sixties). Moreover, the proportion of Canadians claiming to have no religion grew from 0.4% in 1951 to 4.3% in 1971 — a sharper increase than at any other time in this country's history.[4] The changes were especially dramatic in Quebec. As the Quiet Revolution unfolded in that province, many clergy left religious orders and the influence of the Roman Catholic Church waned. Across the country, there were growing challenges to the longstanding notion of Canada as a Christian nation. It was during the 1960s, according to historian Gary Miedema, "that the historic privileging of Christianity in Canadian national public life began very visibly to crumble."[5]

1. Doug Owram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 103.

2. Gary Miedema, *For Canada's Sake: Public Religion, Centennial Celebrations, and the Re-making of Canada in the 1960s* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), xv.

3. Brian Clarke, "English Speaking Canada from 1854," in Terrence Murphy and Roberto Perin (eds.), *A Concise History of Christianity in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996): 357.

4. Mark Noll, "What Happened to Christian Canada?," *Church History* 75:2 (June 2006): 248.

5. Miedema, *For Canada's Sake*, 4.

Several factors account for the dechristianization of Canada during the sixties. In that decade, the Christian churches in Canada and beyond came under attack from people both within and outside their congregations. For example, in his 1965 bestseller *The Comfortable Pew*, Pierre Berton lambasted the mainstream churches as complacent and out of touch with the critical issues of the day.[6] Charged with irrelevancy, Canada's Christian churches were also edged out, by an expanding state, of their traditional domains of health, education, and welfare. Furthermore, a postwar wave of immigration that included many non-Christian newcomers made the notion of a uniformly Christian Canada untenable. As Canada became more religiously diverse, its public schools came under increasing scrutiny for privileging the Christian faith. In the public realm, Canada started to be represented as a multi-faith nation (rather than exclusively Christian) at state-sponsored events such as the 1967 Centennial celebrations.[7]

At the close of the turbulent sixties, Canada was a different place, religiously, than it had been when it emerged from World War II. It had not become a wholly secular country — most Canadians still maintained some religious beliefs and affiliation. However, Christianity's position of unquestioned power and privilege in Canadian culture had come to an end, and the churches were no longer widely recognized as the cornerstones of moral authority.

Key Points

- At mid-century, materialism supplanted spirituality as a defining feature of Canadian life.
- Church-going declined in the Cold War era, and a growing share of Canadians claimed to be atheists or otherwise without religious beliefs.
- Dechristianization has been explained by a failing of the mainstream churches, the arrival of newcomers with different belief systems, and the rise of multiculturalism (which challenged the automatic pre-eminence of Christianity).
- The role of the church as arbiters and leaders in moral authority was no longer intact by the 1970s.

6. Pierre Berton, *The Comfortable Pew: A Critical Look at Christianity and the Religious Establishment in the New Age* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1965).

7. Miedema, *For Canada's Sake*, 4.

10.7 Gendered Roles after the Wars

Robert Rutherdale; Department of Philosophy & History; and Algoma University

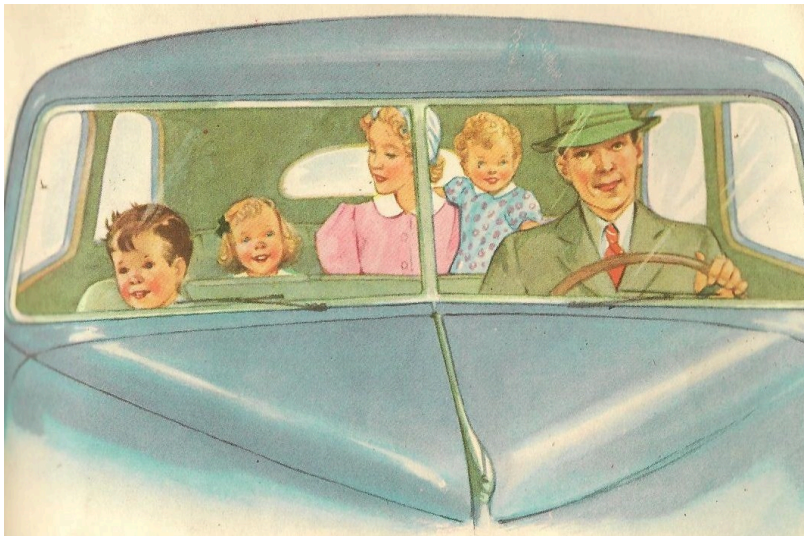


Figure 10.9 Gendered roles and ideals of normalcy were transmitted through primary-school readers like the Dick and Jane books (produced in the United States but reprinted in Canada in French, and in corrected English in the 1950s).

Gendered roles in modern Canada have passed through a period of significant change since the interwar period, especially during the 1960s. As the work of historians Veronica Strong-Boag, Mary Louise Adams, Magda Fahrni, Elise Chenier, and others illustrate, the politics of home life and gendered family regimes was dominated by a complex set of forces following demobilization in 1945-46 and into the late 1950s. Housing shortages were experienced in many parts of Canada; the peacetime restoration of domestic goods production and consumption took a decade longer in Canada than in the United States. But the desire to impose, immediately after the war, a regime of normalization, of bread-winning fathers and homemaking mothers, persisted throughout the 1950s. It was driven in part by a new family formation manifest in the baby boom between 1939 and the late 1950s. Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau have described this as an "interregnum period," an extended era of post-war adjustment that lasted to the mid-1950s.[1] Historians situate changes in gendered roles and demographic patterns in the context of shifting historical forces which shaped the masculine and feminine lives of men and women and their "baby boomer" children.

For the parental generation, the dark shadows of the Great Depression and the devastation of the war years motivated the search for security — for jobs, for homes, and for a restoration of feminine domesticity supported by masculine providers — and a nationwide drive towards a better life. This was especially true for many newcomers from war-torn Europe. Such hopes, however, were based on older

1. Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, eds., *Cultures of Citizenship in Post-War Canada, 1940-1955* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003).

models of gender relations arising in the era of industrialization, some of which were already dated and challenged in the period from 1914-39. The re-mapping of gender roles as Nazism was defeated and the Cold War loomed can thus be approached as a generational as well as a gendered social historical script.

The societal urge for post-war normalization and security in Canada led many towards a search for "home" as both a public-realm cultural ideal and a private-life aspiration. Explanations for origins of the baby boom itself invariably point to a postwar-gendered and generational search for security through domesticity. The gendered family regime of mothers, fathers, and children in the 1950s thus had deep historical roots yet was shaped by a quest for normalization in its context as a postwar measure. Security through normalized gendered roles was a classed (middle) and ethnically specific (white) ideal found and promoted in television advertisements and many sitcoms of the era. It was also a cultural backdrop to the public discourse that often cut across class and ethnic differences. Imposed from above through state policies and embraced from below by many Canadians, gender roles were shaped in the 1950s and early 1960s by conformity to a nostalgic sense of the past — one that was open to challenge.

Early postwar patterns in gender roles were marked by patriarchal norms. This was especially true as a new generation of fathers and mothers began to form their own families in search of what both American and Canadian journalists, writing for the middle classes, referred to as the "good life." As I have suggested elsewhere, some wives balked at the patriarchal power (sometimes called "hegemonic masculinity[2]" by theorists today) it imposed, but few fathers did. Postwar family life was, as Strong-Boag puts it, an "ambivalent" experiment: many wives, mothers, and homemakers who reached maturity at this time (marriage ages were comparatively younger in the 1950s) did not look back on their home dreams with bitterness, but many other women did.[3]

Men's experiences of postwar domesticity were not without problems. Notions of "masculinity in crisis"— modern men facing a challenge to their identities as men, to cite a prominent example, had been a perennial concern across many decades — though each era, since the 19th century, generated its own mythologies about how men suffer in the modern age. In the 1950s, mid-century modern men seemed to face three crises in parables of woe that found considerable space in publications, not only in popular magazines like *Maclean's* and *Chatelaine*, but also in some of the leading sociological publications of the day, most notably *Crestwood Heights: A Study of the Culture of Suburban Life* (1956). A particular triad of social forces was seen as standing against the modern man as a self-disciplined, autonomous, inner-directed, assertive being: modern bureaucracies and the modern factory system; family togetherness, which prescribed a new dictate for fathers — play with your children as if you were, almost, one of them; and, possibly worst of all, moms as matriarchal menaces, who exerted too much pressure on sons — some of whom, it was feared, would become homosexual as a result. This last challenge to manhood was, of course, also a critique of womanhood; a mixing of messages endorsed the maternal housewife while condemning her at the same time.

With respect to lived experience, these cultural myths and storylines reflected little in terms of the

2. On this topic, see R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept". *Gender and Society*, 19, 6 (2005): 829-859.

3. Veronica Strong-Boag, "Home Dreams: Canadian Women and the Suburban Experience, 1945-60"," *Canadian Historical Review* 72:4 (December 1991): 24-34.

enduring inequalities in gendered roles in the private and public spheres. Following the immediate postwar forced exodus of most women in non-traditional jobs, there was a slow and then accelerating return to the workforce by married women. By the early 1960s, women comprised one-third of the paid workforce. Full-time earnings, however, stood at only 59% of men's for the same labour categories and at just 54% for part-time female workers. Despite the challenges to their masculinity that most men were supposed to be facing, work-time studies of women's labour in the home as homemakers revealed an even more gender-skewed expectation that women were responsible — as an essential characteristic of their gendered role — for most infant child care and most housework.



Figure 10.10 Postwar women could find pink-collar jobs in teaching and nursing but also in industry, where they were valued for fine work — but not so much that they were paid as much as men. Women at Canadian Marconi in Montreal, ca. 1949-58.

What stands out in histories of the postwar period, at least to the rise of the sexual revolution in the late 1960s, was the equation of heterosexuality with what the state and society considered normal gender relations. Deviance in this respect is considered in Section 12.7.

Connections between sexuality and gender roles are complex. They continue to be debated by historians today. Gender roles, if approached as shifting social and cultural responses to sexual differences, consistently demonstrate historical categories and powers that connect the body to boundaries of class, age, and ethnicity. In 2014, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and

Development (OECD) released its *Better Life Index*, indicating that Canadian women spend, on average, some 254 minutes per day cooking, cleaning, and caring for children, compared to 160 minutes for men performing the same tasks. These 21st-century trends have deep historical roots in gender roles defined more by patriarchy than by equal partnership. Histories of the struggle for women's rights and the gendering of experience are one means for challenging those persistent norms. Now more than ever before, these confrontations with histories of inequality become apparent in legislation and official policies that embrace still-wider notions of gender and identity. In this sense, the translation of historic roles and restrictions into **postmodern** constructions of gender roles in Canada is part of a continuity of transformation, and not only a landscape of change.

In the decade of the first postwar generation, as Bryan Palmer observes, the turbulent sixties brought with it a "generation gap" in social mores and gender roles between young women and men in Canada, as elsewhere — but this came later, as the postwar generation of baby boomers reached maturity in the late 1960s.[4]

Key Points

- Normalizing gender roles in the form of bread-winner fathers and homemaker mothers was part of the postwar project of rebuilding Canadian society and its economy.
- This pursuit of a new gendered 'normal' has been interpreted as part of a search for security and relative prosperity on the part of a generation directly impacted by the Depression and WWII. Normalcy may have been imposed from the top but it was embraced from below as well.
- Features of these gendered roles include a strengthening of patriarchal authority and privilege for men in heterosexual circumstances.
- By the early 1960s, women were returning to the workforce in significant numbers, despite wage and other barriers to their participation.
- Historical studies of gender roles and sexuality indicate a complex pattern of ongoing transformation and show us that traditional roles are, themselves, transitory.

Media Attributions

- On the Road © Miriam Story Hurford is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license
- An assembly line of women working at the Canadian Marconi Company, Montreal © Canada Dept. of Manpower and Immigration, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 4369810) is licensed under a Public Domain license

4. Bryan Palmer, *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

10.8 Canada Noir



Figure 10.11 Montreal's Saint Catherine Street aglow in neon lights, ca. 1937.

Modernity brought significant social, cultural, and moral changes that not everyone was pleased to see. This produced a rolling tide of uncertainty and anxieties, some of which we refer to as **moral panics**. The temperance movement was rooted in moral panic, as were elements of eugenics. There was a succession of so-called "red scares" in the 20th century, beginning in 1918-19 with the Russian Revolution and followed by a year of general strikes in North America, a decade of unrest during the Depression, and Cold War fears of a nuclear apocalypse (which continued until the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989-91). Building a strong, moral, and disciplined nation that deferred to authority was the goal of many Canadian leaders. Many Canadian citizens did not fall easily into line.

Sins of the City



Figure 10.12 Anna Labelle (alias Mme. Émile Beauchamp) was a powerful Montreal brothel keeper before WWII who kept police on the payroll.

In a recent study of crime and society in early 20th century Halifax, Michael Boudreau makes the argument that Nova Scotian critics of modernity railed against the moral softening of an increasingly secular and ethnically diverse society. This was an essentially antimodernist position that looked backwards to a time of ethnic and spiritual simplicity. Their response to these conditions? Ironically, it involved a very secular and modernist agenda of government agencies, scientific police methods, and the employment of psychologists and other experts who could treat the criminal and the deviant.[1]

What was happening in Halifax was playing out in different ways across the country. In Vancouver, long-time mayor L.D. Taylor (1857-1946) repeatedly rebuffed morality crusades, proud of the fact that his city was not a "Sunday school town." Vancouver's middle-class voters, however, increasingly challenged his liberal view of "victimless crimes," and in 1928 defeated him under the banner of "New Town, Not Blue Town."[2] Taylor's relaxed attitude was replaced by an increasingly bureaucratic administrative structure that, at best, talked a good fight. Modernist responses had to be made with the human resources available and many of the people involved in administrations, police departments, and morality crusades were every bit as compromised as the people they sought to change.

1. Michael Boudreau, *City of Order: Crime and Society in Halifax, 1918-35* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2012).

2. Daniel Francis, *LD: Mayor Louis Taylor and the Rise of Vancouver* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2004), 150.



Figure 10.13 Race + drugs = double jeopardy. The building beside the middle telephone pole was an opium factory in Vancouver's Chinatown, ca. 1907. Mackenzie King investigated and drew up legislation designed to end the opium trade, beginning the war on drugs even before the Great War got underway.

Modern society was urban, and urban life was a problem that needed solving. Cities, it was feared, were corrupting the morals and the very fibre of Canadians. Gambling, drinking, drugs, illegitimacy, and divorce — not to mention homosexuality — were dreaded, criticized, and policed from the 19th through most of the 20th century. Criminality was often understood in xenophobic ways that, for example, held the Chinese community responsible for gambling and opium; connected the Italian enclaves with violent crime, prostitution, and bootlegging; and connected Eastern Europeans, African-Canadians, and Japanese women with brothels. Indeed, the sex trade seems to have been widely regarded as a field into which Anglo-Celtics and Franco-Canadians could hardly hope to break. Eugenicists weighed into these conversations with their fears for the future of the race (most often meaning the British race), and alleging the corrupting moral influence of immigrants while pointing a finger at the decline of Canadian manhood (and, eventually, womanhood) through urban living.

The goal of clean, safe, go-ahead, and ethical metropolises was elusive, however. Sometimes, it was easier to promote a different vision. Throughout the mid-20th century, Vancouver and Montreal in particular enjoyed reputations as cities in which sins could be serviced. Vancouver was the northern-most stop on an entertainment circuit based in San Francisco, then Los Angeles, and eventually Las Vegas, and which covered the western United States.[3] Vaudeville acts, musicians, and variety acts were mainstream elements in this network, but there was also a lively culture of strip-shows and burlesque. Night clubs and music hall-style theatres sprang up across the city centre; at one point, both Hastings Street (now the economically and socially depressed main artery of the Downtown East Side) and Granville Street were billed as the city's "Great White Way" because of the enormous quantity of neon lights that blazed outside entertainment venues. The Cave, Palomar, Penthouse, Commodore, and Isy's Supper Club (later, Isy's Strip City) dominated what passed for the respectable trade, and between them

3. Becki Ross, *Burlesque West: Showgirls, Sex, and Sin in Postwar Vancouver* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

offered thousands of seats most nights to audiences and diners. On the east side, showrooms and tiny venues jostled one another for space and offered a wide variety of entertainments. Because of restrictions on the serving of liquor, some of these clubs facilitated sales of bootlegged alcohol and provided hiding spaces under the tables for bottles brought in by customers. All had a reputation for keeping the local police happy with bribes. Some, more than others, provided a setting for the negotiation of the sale of sex. The combination of alcohol, sex, and music that had an African-American or Asian quality was viewed by critics as the triple-crown of immorality.[4] Sex and booze and ethnicity combined then to create a very artificial air of exoticism: the sense that this was something not of Canada but, at the same time, available only in Canada.

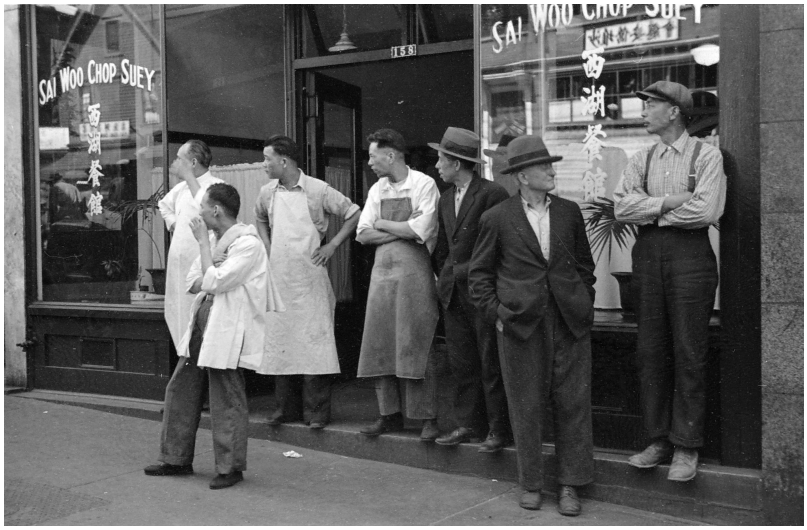


Figure 10.14 In Vancouver's Chinatown, ca. 1936.

Montreal's burlesque world was even more famous (or notorious) at the time, mainly because Canada's largest city had a strong connection with both New York and Boston. Business elites of these American cities regularly travelled to Montreal, where they were treated to a nightlife that seemed genuinely foreign and *risqué.* Brothels, gin-joints, and gambling thrived through the first half of the century, mostly under the eye of Mayor Camillien Houde (1889-1958). Like Taylor, Houde was a populist, a man of the people, despite his snappy suits and glossy shoes. He supported fascists in the 1930s, opposed conscription and was branded a traitor by his English-speaking opponents, served time at Petawawa during WWII, and reemerged in 1945 more popular than ever. Under Houde, Montreal was an "open" city with limited restrictions on the sex trade, betting, and drinking. This was an affront to the sternly moralistic *Union Nationale* regime of Premier Maurice Duplessis (discussed in Section 9.9), and opposition to libertine Montreal grew through the 1950s. By 1955, a corner had been turned; brothels were being closed and other elements of the city's entertainment industry were in peril. Houde stepped down and a new, more censorious era began.[5]

4. John Belshaw and Diane Purvey, *Vancouver Noir: 1930-1960* (Vancouver: Anvil Press, 2011).

5. William Weintraub, *City Unique: Montreal Days and Nights in the 1940s and '50s* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1996).



Figure 10.15 The staff at Chez Paree, a popular Montreal nightclub, in 1951. Four years later it would be the stage for a spy scandal (see Section 9.4).

The timing of Montreal's clean-up campaign roughly coincides with Vancouver's. The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) had repeatedly found itself at the wrong end of corruption enquiries beginning the 1920s and continuing through the Depression into the postwar era. By the mid-1950s, it was clear that the rot extended to the Police Commissioner and included bootlegging, numbers running, and prostitution — all of which were being protected by the VPD. Effective opposition to such practices in both Montreal and Vancouver reflected the growing influence of a middle class committed to their small-l liberal vision of individual rights, the protection of property, the law as an instrument of morality, and professionalization of institutions like the police. They were motivated as well in the postwar era by those aspects of Cold War rhetoric that regarded anything that weakened the capitalist West as a victory for the Soviet East.

To some extent, then, the moral liberality that could be found in some Canadian cities before the 1960s was an expression of modernity and antimodernity at one and the same time. Its embrace of low-brow entertainments and rejection of law-and-order agendas, its refusal to be controlled by the state, its lust for non-rational fun, and its happy exploitation of differentness as a source of amusement — seen most graphically in the persistence of fairground freak shows but also in ethnic entertainments and **slumming**— is all directly descended from pre-modern practices. By the same token, these aspects of

urban life could only be expressed in urban settings. Definitively modern cultural symbols like jazz and the blues, all-night restaurants, and cocktail lounges belong to this era.

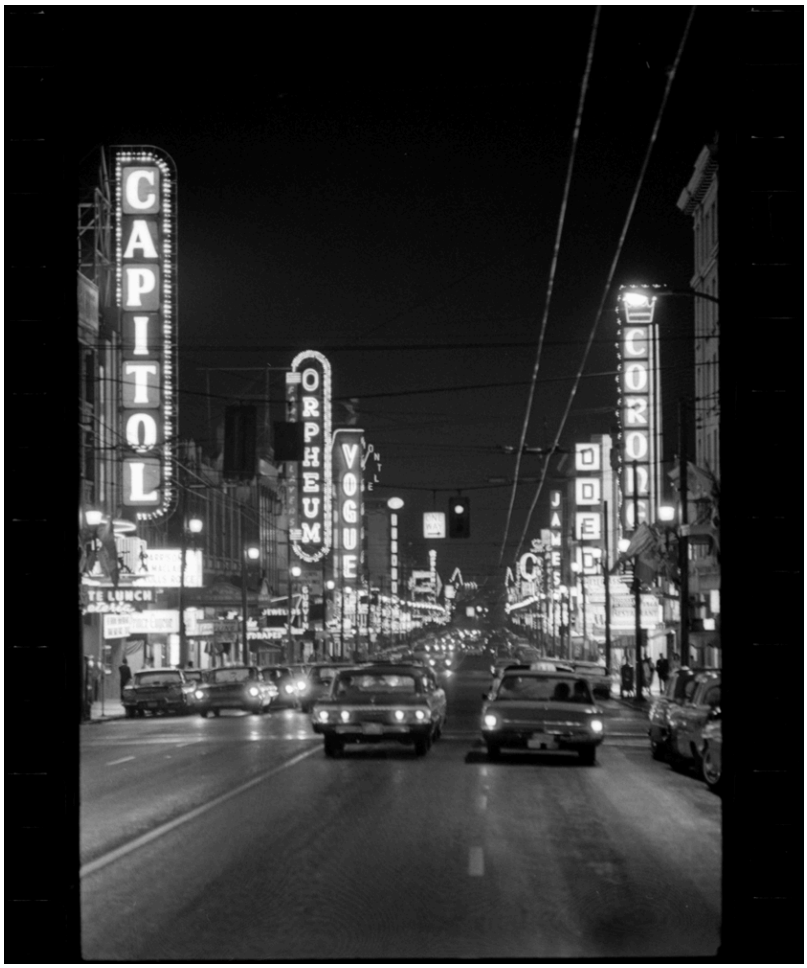


Figure 10.16 Even in the late 1960s, neon lights and rain-soaked streets in downtown Vancouver suggested film noir rather than suburban domesticity.

So, too, did the tearing down of some of the racial and ethnic barriers that had been erected, ostensibly to protect mainstream and white society from what that society's members considered as "others." Chinatowns, like Vancouver's (the largest in Canada), "represented otherness, crime, unleashed sexuality, opium dens, gambling, filth, run-down housing and mysterious back-alleys."[6] As a neighbourhood, it was experienced by outsiders as a largely inhospitable place until it was exoticized in the 1930s. Thereafter the ribbons of neon light, and the late-night chop-suey houses and the nightclubs, provided a legitimate urban attraction while gambling provided a less legal alternative. At that point in time, the status of Chinatowns across Canada began to shift from civic eyesore to civic asset.

6. John Zucchi, *A History of Ethnic Enclaves in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 2007), 9.



Figure 10.17 In 1946, Viola Desmond, an African-Canadian Haligonian, sat down in the Whites-only section of a New Glasgow cinema. She was ejected, roughed-up, and jailed overnight. Her subsequent legal battle, though unsuccessful, was a catalyst in the fight for greater rights among African-Canadians.

The experience of African-Canadians and African-Canadian communities was less straightforward. In the mid-20th century, performers like Oscar Peterson, Joe Sealy, and Eleanor Collins challenged **colour barriers** on both sides of the border with their extraordinary talents. But long before and well after the Civil Rights movement in the United States, African-Canadian neighbourhoods were regarded by civic and provincial leaders as problematic spaces where crime and lack of hygiene were issues. African-Canadians have thus been especially vulnerable to displacement from Canadian cities. “The Bog,” a Charlottetown neighbourhood near the city centre populated by an economically and socially marginalized African-Canadian community, was redeveloped out of existence around 1900. Vancouver’s 20th-century African-Canadian neighbourhood, Hogan’s Alley, was viewed by lawmakers and journalists as the scene of immorality, petty crime, and poverty; what locals regarded as a lively and vital community with its own African Methodist Church and businesses was bulldozed in the late

1960s to make way for a pair of highway overpasses. In both cases, the African-Canadian community never again coalesced; indeed, many of its members moved away for good.

Exercise: Documents

Les quartiers disparus

Often, historic artifacts document something other than what was intended. In the early 1960s, the City of Montreal was planning the *Autoroute Ville-Marie*, a freeway that would cut through the old downtown from one end of Île de Montréal to the other. This necessitated the removal of many buildings, homes, and businesses — along with their tenants — and the construction of large swaths of social housing. The City sent out a team to systematically photograph these spaces and residents before they all disappeared. View a selection of the photos from the collection Les quartiers disparus de Montréal.

Start with the following three pictures. What looks familiar to you and what looks alien? If you were asked to document the material lives of 1960s Montrealers who were facing expropriation from their homes and offices, what could you glean from these photos?



Figure 10.E1 The expropriation of 856 rue Richmond, 17 May 1967.



Figure 10.E2 Workers at Dominion Button Ltd., 1850 rue Saint-Antoine, 31 May 1967.



Figure 10.E3 Victoriatown, Montreal, 1963.

Key Points

- Moral panics were a driving force in urban reforms in the mid-20th century, and the changes associated with modernism were among their many causes.
- Behaviour that had been tolerated in early generations increasingly came under scrutiny as middle-class city dwellers launched campaigns against gambling, drinking, drugs, the sex trade, and police corruption.
- Some cities were able to market themselves as entertainment hubs in which vices were actively promoted and ethnic differentness were presented in a positive light as exotic.
- By the mid- to late-1950s campaigns to clean up city life were carrying the day. Nightclubs were closing, ethnic "slums" were being erased, and corruption was being punished. It is worth noting that these changes took place precisely when the old downtowns were being abandoned for the suburbs.

Media Attributions

- Saint Catherine looking east at night, 1937 © Conrad Poirer is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Anna Labelle, alias Mme Émile Beauchamp, tenancière, 1939 © Archives de la Ville de Montreal (P43-3-2_V26_E271-01) is licensed under a CC BY-NC-SA (Attribution NonCommercial ShareAlike) license
- Montreal night life. Staff of 71 runs medium-sized Chez Paree club. Weekly wage bill is $3000 but earnings are higher as many rely on tips for bulk of income © Louis Jaques, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3615421). Copyright Library and Archives Canada. No restrictions on use.
- Granville at night © Province Newspaper, Vancouver Public Library Historical Photographs (43347) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Viola Desmond © Winnipeg Free Press is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Expropriation : 856 rue Richmond © Archives de la Ville de Montreal (VM94-C1023-038) is licensed under a CC BY-NC-SA (Attribution NonCommercial ShareAlike) license
- Expropriation : Canadian Buttons Limited, 1850 rue Saint-Antoine © Archives de la Ville de Montreal (VM94-C1027-084) is licensed under a CC BY-NC-SA (Attribution NonCommercial ShareAlike) license
- Victoriatown. 1963 © Archives de la Ville de Montreal (VM94C270-1114) is licensed under a CC BY-NC-SA (Attribution NonCommercial ShareAlike) license

10.9 Historicizing Childhood: The Changing Fortunes of Children and Youth in Canada

Georgia Sitara; Department of History; and University of Victoria



Figure 10.18 A boy, one of the Home Children, ploughs a field at Dr. Barnardo's Industrial Farm, ca. 1900.

The experiences of children and youth underwent profound change from the 19th century to the end of the 20th century.

In the 19th century, children and youth were important contributors to the family economy. Most children learned by working alongside adults. Children's work, both paid and unpaid, was crucial to their own and to their families' well-being and survival. Only in the postwar (post World War II) era did mothers replace children as their families' secondary earners.

At the beginning of the 21st century, everyday life for most children in Canada revolved around school. This way of life, which made schooling the central organizing principle of children's lives, has its roots in the first Canadian compulsory education legislation enacted in 1870 and mandated children to attend school for four months of the year. Even then, work, family responsibilities, and other considerations meant that attendance for most children remained irregular, despite families' hopes for their children's education and future.

The idea of childhood as a time in which children did not work took over a century to put into everyday practice. The first Canadian legislation to regulate child labour, the *Ontario Factory Acts* of 1884, legislated boys, 12 years and over, and girls, 14 years and older, to work no more than 10 hours a day, six days a week. Despite the protective legislation, families' needs and individuals' survival meant that in practice boys and girls continued to work. Well into the 20th century, reform efforts and even child protection organizations expected children and youth to work. Work was considered a necessary part of their training in the habits of thrift and industry as well as responsible citizenship.

> In the images and voices of children and youth, captured in the oral history video series *Growing Up Canadian*, we are reminded that they were proud to work, to bring home an income, and to make a contribution to their families.[1] In their stories, sometimes in fragments in the written record, and in surviving photographic evidence, we can see that children and youth were capable, sometimes enterprising, heroes of their own lives.

Historian Dorothy Chunn suggests that we should interpret education, labour, and other legislation as the codification of childhood and youth as a time of dependence.[2] In *Dominion of Youth*, Cynthia Comacchio demonstrates that by the 1920s, children and youth were growing up very differently from their parents.[3]

Alongside these historic shifts, children and youth continue to appear in the most unlikely places in the 20th century. Between 1880-1930, over 80,000 Home Children immigrated to Canada without their families.[4] At least 20,000 underage soldiers enlisted and served in World War I.[5] One of the eight On to Ottawa Trek leaders to meet with Prime Minister Robert Bennett in 1935 was 14 years old. Children and youth across Canada held a chocolate bar strike in 1947 when, to their horror and disgust, the price of chocolate bars went from five to eight cents. From the spectacular to the ordinary, children and youth made history.

1. *Growing Up Canadian*, directed by Sheila Petzold and Susan Terrill, produced by Hoda Elatawi (Montreal: National Film Board, 2003) http://onf-nfb.gc.ca/en/our-collection/series/?ids=516825&nom=Growing%20Up%20Canadian

2. Dorothy Chunn. "Boys Will Be Men, Girls Will be Mothers: The Legal Regulation of Childhood in Toronto and Vancouver." In *Histories of Canadian Children and Youth*, ed. by Joy Parr and Nancy Janovicek (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2003): 188-206.

3. Cynthia Comacchio, *Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920-1950* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2008).

4. Joy Parr. *Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

5. Tim Cook, "'He was Determined to Go': Underage Soldiers in the Canadian Expeditionary Force," *Histoire Sociale, Social History* 41.81 (2008): 41-74.



Figure 10.19 Children in Edmonton protest rising prices in 1947.

Work continued to be a factor in most children's lives. In the 1940s, some youth were self-supporting by the age of 14. Neil Sutherland's work on the history of children and youth in British Columbia shows that as late as the 1960s, youth recall, "we always had things to do."[6] Indigenous children and youth in residential school always worked more than they studied.

It is a painful irony, and it should not be ignored, that the century that invented childhood as a time of innocence and dependence also endangered children and youth in unprecedented ways. Institutions that were established in the name of protection, as Steven Maynard demonstrates, often locked danger in.[7] Revelations about the brutal and genocidal conditions in Residential schools were made as early as 1907 by the Indian Affairs medical officer P.H. Bryce, and disturbing disclosures continue to unfold in our own day.[8] Richard Cardinal's 1984 *Diary of a Métis Child* is a testament in a youth's own words: policies and practices established for the protection of children created suffering and have resulted in deadly harm.[9]

The lives of children and youth were transformed over the course of the 20th century and not always in a good way.

6. Neil Sutherland, "'We always had things to do': The Paid and Unpaid Work of Anglophone Children Between the 1920s and the 1960s." *Labour / Le Travail* 25 (Spring 1990): 105-141.

7. Steven Maynard, "'Horrible Temptations': Sex, Men and Working-Class Male Youth in Urban Ontario, 1890-1935," *Canadian Historical Review* 78. 2 (June 1997): 191-235.

8. Cindy Blackstock, Wanted: Moral Courage in Canadian Child Welfare," *First Peoples Child & Family Review,* 6.2 (2011): 35-46.

9. *Richard Cardinal: Cry From the Diary of a Métis Child*, Directed by Alanis Obamsowin (Montreal: National Film Board, 1986).

Questions for Discussion

What is the age of the historical subject in your head? Is adult the default historical subject?

What do children and youth gain over the course of the 20th century? What do children and youth lose?

In what ways did children and youth gain and lose power over the course of the 20th century?

Key Points

- Childhood in the post-Confederation era changed over time, and its experience varied based on geographic and racialized context.
- Children's labour was a recognizable feature of life in Canadian households until after WWII.
- Regulation of child labour was slow in coming, largely because the expectation was widespread that children's work was valuable in and of itself.
- As early as the 1920s, the transformation of childhood into a period of dependence was visible.
- The creation of more institutions and systems to regulate childhood too often created significant hazards to the welfare of children.

Additional Readings

Adams, Mary Louise. *The Trouble with Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.

Dauda, Carol L. "Childhood, Age of Consent and Moral Regulation in Canada and the UK." *Contemporary Politics* 16.3 (August 2010): 227-247.

Milloy, John S. *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999.

Parr, Joy and Nancy Janovicek. Eds. *Histories of Canadian Children and Youth.*Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Parr, Joy. Ed. *Childhood and Family in Canadian History*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982.

Prentice, Alison. *The School Promoters: Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Upper Canada*. Toronto: McClelland Stewart, 1977.

Rollings-Magnusson. *Heavy Burdens on Small Shoulders: The Labour of Canadian Children on the Canadian Prairies*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2009.

Sutherland, Neil. *Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus.* Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2000.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission. "They Came for the Children: Canada, Aboriginal Peoples and Residential Schools" [PDF]. 2012. http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/resources_2039_T&R_eng_web[1].pdf

Media Attributions

- Boy ploughing at Doctor Barnardo's Industrial Farm © Library and Archives Canada (PA-117285) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Children in Edmonton Protesting Inflation, 1947 © Lenny Flank is licensed under a CC BY-NC-SA (Attribution NonCommercial ShareAlike) license

10.10 Teenage Rampage

Another theme that recurs through the post-Confederation era and that played out mostly in urban areas is the public's fear of youth. Migration from the countryside into the cities from the 1860s brought children in tow and created the demographic conditions for an explosion of young, dependent populations. Schooling was one response to this development as a means to contain and channel the energies of children, and this became even more important after the introduction of child labour laws that incrementally stripped economic purpose from children. Fear of youth was, as well, a spur to the **rational recreation** movement of the late 19th century (explored in Section 10.16) and to the creation of a national militia. In 1913, before the Great War was fully on the horizon, the Minister of the Militia Sam Hughes outlined his vision in this regard: he claimed that one purpose of military training was to "make the youth of Canada self-controlled, erect, decent and patriotic through military and physical training, instead of growing up as under present conditions of no control, into young ruffians or young gadabouts…."[1] Prosperity in the 1920s and unemployment in the 1930s were both seen as contributing forces in the creation of dangerous youths, and these were themes that were reinvested with urgency in the post-1945 period. From zoot-suiters in the 1940s, through greasers in the 1950s, to hippies in the 1960s, the mid-20th century produced a succession of caricatures of young men and women as deviant and disruptive.[2] The creation of additional (and freer) high schools and new post-secondary institutions were meant to absorb some of that unbridled energy as it bubbled forth from the advancing baby boom. Historian Katharine Rollwagen comments on aspects of this moral panic in Sections 10.11 and 10.12.

Inevitably these were principally urban concerns and they were bound up in modernity. The perceived weakening of familial and clerical influences, the loss of the discipline associated with employment from an early age, the appearance of too much leisure time, and the (presumably baleful) influence of popular culture through new media like cinema, radio, television, and recorded music was the array of modern social features that connects Hughes' "gadabouts" to teenage hoodlums, juvenile delinquents, punk rockers, and late-20th–century "slackers." It also, of course, played out in gendered ways, as women — mothers — were rather predictably held responsible for deviant behaviour by the nation's children. Finally, science – notably in the form of psychology – was mobilized to address the issue of child and youth problems.

Key Points

- Growing numbers of children and youths, particularly in cities, fed a public fear of purposeless young people who might pose a threat to property, values, and public order.

1. Quoted in Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 5th edition (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2007), 128.

2. Joan Sangster, "Creating Social and Moral Citizens: Defining and Treating Delinquent Boys and Girls in English Canada, 1920-65," in *Contesting Canadian Citizenship: Historical Readings*, eds. Robert Adamoski, Dorothy E. Chunn, and Robert Menzies (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2002): 338-9.

10.11 Historical Experiences of Adolescence at Mid-century

Katharine Rollwagen; Department of History; and Vancouver Island University

The idea that adolescence was a separate and vital stage of human development only emerged at the turn of the 20th century. By the end of the 1950s, when the largest cohort of children ever born in Canada reached adolescence, the depiction of teenaged children as moody and rebellious was widespread, and psychologists and educators were publishing books to help parents understand, guide, and discipline their teenagers. It's likely that many adolescents caused their parents no less and no more grief than they do today.

While "kids these days…" may seem a timeless adult complaint, several aspects of adolescent experience changed in mid-century Canada. One important change was the frequency of secondary school attendance and graduation. In 1939 in Ontario, studies showed that for every 100 pupils that started school at age five, less than half reached Grade 11 and only 12 finished high school. The secondary school curriculum was focused on academics and university preparation, and at least half of teenagers left school as soon as they could, at age 16. In farming communities, boys' education was often shortened or interrupted because their labour was needed on the farm; in urban centres, working-class boys and girls continued to contribute to the family income, either through part-time or full-time jobs. By 1951, the census recorded that 40% of young people aged 15 to 19 years were attending school. More were obtaining high school diplomas than ever before.



Figure 10.20 The baby boom generation stayed in school longer, causing demand for new facilities and more teachers. Laurentian High School, Ottawa, 1959.

As more young people remained in school, the high school became the institution most associated with teenagers and with youth culture. The growing influence of youth culture was another important change in adolescent experience in mid-century Canada. High schools gathered more adolescents together, more often, and for longer periods than any other institution. In the postwar years, more Canadian high schools had sports teams, music bands, and other extra-curricular activities to bring young people together. Since the 19th century, secondary school students had fostered their own, age-based and class-based cultures; however, when fewer teenagers attended school, the impact of that culture was not noticed beyond the schoolyard. By mid-century, adolescent trends, athletics, and activities were widely reported in newspapers and magazines, and many adults — from psychologists to journalists and medical doctors to advertising agencies — saw the high school as the best laboratory in which to study the habits, values, and desires of Canadian boys and girls. Teenaged behaviours were closely scrutinized and often criticized as deviant and — in the context of the Cold War —potentially dangerous. For example, the media, psychologists, and parents all questioned the teenaged trend towards going steady (developing longer and more serious heterosexual relationships rather than dating a greater number of people). Teenagers claimed going steady gave them the social advantage of always having a date, and that it relieved the economic pressure of spending too much on social outings. Adults, on the other hand, worried that teenagers' need to fit in reflected a tendency towards social conformity that could undermine democracy.

Finally, if adolescence was prolonged, it ended more abruptly than it had for teenagers in previous generations. School attendance, youth culture, and popular psychology encouraged the idea that the teenaged years were a distinct and crucial stage of personal development, but at the same time the

generation that came of age in the 1950s and 1960s reached conventional markers of maturity — economic independence, marriage, employment — much sooner than their parents or grandparents. During the 1930s, unemployed young men riding the rails or populating the government's relief camps were unable to start their adult lives. Marriage and birth rates fell as couples delayed starting families. In contrast, during and after World War II, the growing economy meant that high school graduates — and even drop-outs — found jobs more quickly. A greater measure of economic security meant more young people could marry at younger ages. In 1950, more than a third of all Canadian women were married by the time they were 22 years old. Compare this to the first decade of the 21st century, in which only 10% of women married before they were 25 years old.

Many adolescents at mid-century could look forward to greater access to education, more recreational opportunities, and a society that expected them to spend time with their peers, explore their own personalities, and delay adult responsibilities. However, it's worth remembering that many adolescents did not have these experiences. Young First Nations boys and girls continued to have limited employment opportunities and were forced to attend Residential schools, where many suffered physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. In Alberta and British Columbia, several thousand adolescents defined as having developmental and physical disabilities were sexually sterilized, sometimes without their knowledge or permission. Many more lived in institutions. Racial discrimination meant that Chinese-Canadian, Japanese-Canadian and African-Canadian youth were rarely represented in the media, nor targeted by retailers seeking teenaged customers. Historians strain to hear the voices of these adolescents in the historical record, and little is yet known of their experiences of growing up.



Figure 10.21 The emergent norms of teenagehood did not extend to everyone. Angakkaq was born and raised at Arviat on the west coast of Hudson's Bay. She was in her teens when she died of influenza in the 1940s.

Key Points

- Adolescence, as a stage of human development, was only widely recognized in the 20th century. It was studied and increasingly treated as a problem for adults to solve.
- Increased and prolonged enrollment in schools led to the creation of teenage culture and high schools was the crucible in which that occurred.
- Staying in school longer was enabled by an economy that could readily absorb young workers and which thereby contributed to earlier and more widespread marriages.

- Racialization of communities impacted the ability of many young Canadians to enjoy the opportunities made available to southern, urban, and European-Canadian teens.

Additional Readings

Comacchio, Cynthia. *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of Modern Canada, 1920-1950.* Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006.

Sutherland, Neil. *Growing Up: Childhood in English Canada from the Great War to the Age of Television.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.

"Young in a Small Town" (1967), produced for Camera West, a CBC television program.

Media Attributions

- A geography class, Laurentian High School. Ottawa, Ont. © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 4301846) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Young Inuit Woman [Angakkaq, born ca. 1928, daughter of Aliqqut, died as a teenager of influenza in the 1940s. Her brother Louis Angalik, born in 1938, still lives in Arviat] © D.B. Marsh, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3576505) is licensed under a Public Domain license

10.12 Youth and Moral Panics

Katharine Rollwagen; Department of History; and Vancouver Island University

Sociologists use the term **moral panic** to describe what happens when a society overreacts to events or specific behaviours, usually because there is a perceived threat to the social order. Exaggerated rhetoric from the media or public figures can create the feeling that social morality is breaking down. During the 20th century, children were the focus of moral panics over issues such as comic books, dance crazes, devil-worship, and unmarried pregnancy, to name a few. In each case, young people were portrayed as victims amid calls for a new law or policy to reform social morality and protect children. Casting youth in the role of victim makes sense when we remember that Canadians increasingly saw young people as naturally innocent and easily corrupted. Many adults thus believed children needed protection and separation from the mature, adult world. Children also represented the future of the nation, both materially and symbolically, and so anything that threatened young people took on added significance.

Moral panics can appear quaint, laughable, or simply unimportant in retrospect — historians have been able to demonstrate in several cases that exaggerated rhetoric and panic was unwarranted. However, historians can learn from moral panics. Take comic books as an example. In the late 1940s, a group of Canadians — educators, parents, medical experts, and the media — opposed comics that told graphic stories of crime, and called for such comics to be outlawed. Comics were blamed for encouraging kids to be violent, prolonging illiteracy, and exposing children to hidden sexual messages. Comics did not lead to the destruction of children's minds and souls. However, the opposition to them reveals a deeper social anxiety about how family life had changed during WWII. The often-exaggerated concerns of adults also led to actual legislative changes that affected both those who made comics and their youthful consumers. So, moral panics — even if they overstate the extent, gravity, or outcomes of a particular behaviour — have consequences.



Figure 10.22 Superior Publishers ran its own line of comics until trade barriers made it easier to reprint American titles for the Canadian market. [*[Long Description]*](#)

Key Points

- Moral panics related to childhood and youth may prove to be unwarranted but, in the moment, they can produce substantive responses, as has been documented in historical studies.

Long Descriptions

Figure 10.22 long description: Cover of an issue of *Mysteries Weird and Strange*, published by

Superior Publishers Limited, July 1954, No. 8. A woman wearing a red dress and standing in an alley throws a hand on her head, looking terrified, as a shadowy figure with claws approaches her. Stories in this issue include “The Devil’s Birthmark,” “Corpse, Come Back!”, “Happily Dead,” and “Vampire Terror.” [Return to Figure 10.22]

Media Attributions

- Mysteries #8, Superior Publishers Limited, 1953 Series © Superior Publishers is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

10.13 Modern Culture



Figure 10.22A Descended from Black Loyalists, the Nova Scotian vocalist Portia White (1911-68) began singing in a Baptist church choir and, in the 1940s, became renowned for her command of European classical and "Negro spirituals."

"Culture" is a concept both widely understood and impossible to define. When it comes to music, entertainments, the arts, and so on, the 20th century experienced a commodification of culture that alienated many of its forms from day-to-day practitioners. One of the great themes of sport history is the transition from "amateur" athletics (meaning top quality athletes who were sufficiently well off financially so they didn't seek compensation for playing, running, rowing, or jumping) to "professional" athletics (originally a contemptuous term for men who were "paid to play" and later a term associated with the highest caliber of physical prowess). The same could be said of the arts generally in Canada. That is, they transitioned from an amateur phase to a professional one.

Historian of culture Maria Tippett has written of the late Victorian era as one that nurtured parlour-room musical performances, local art exhibitions, and thousands of church choirs of many denominations. Because most Anglo- and French-Canadians went to church every Sunday, it's safe to say that they all either sang or heard singing in the company of others at least once a week. Tippett describes the Jarvis Street Baptist Church of Toronto, with its "250 voices" in the early 1890s, as the

basis for the professional and semi-professional performance ensembles that emerged in the 20th century.[1]

Although we tend to understand **high culture** or high style as elite art forms associated with the upper classes and exemplified by opera, classical music and painting, and Shakespearean theatre, there is something of high culture in those church choirs, too. That is, the form, sound, meaning, and purpose — even the setting — of choral music was something that originated elsewhere, travelled around the world, was fairly rigid in that it wasn't really locally modified (if at all), and was pretty much the same whether sung in Westminster or New Westminster, in Halifax, UK or Halifax, NS, in Paris or Parisville. Hymnal books provided a kind of corporate continuity within a denominational and ethnic context across the globe. What, then, of local culture? Where were its shoots likely to emerge?

1. Maria Tippett, *Making Culture: English-Canadian Institutions and the Arts before the Massey Commission* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

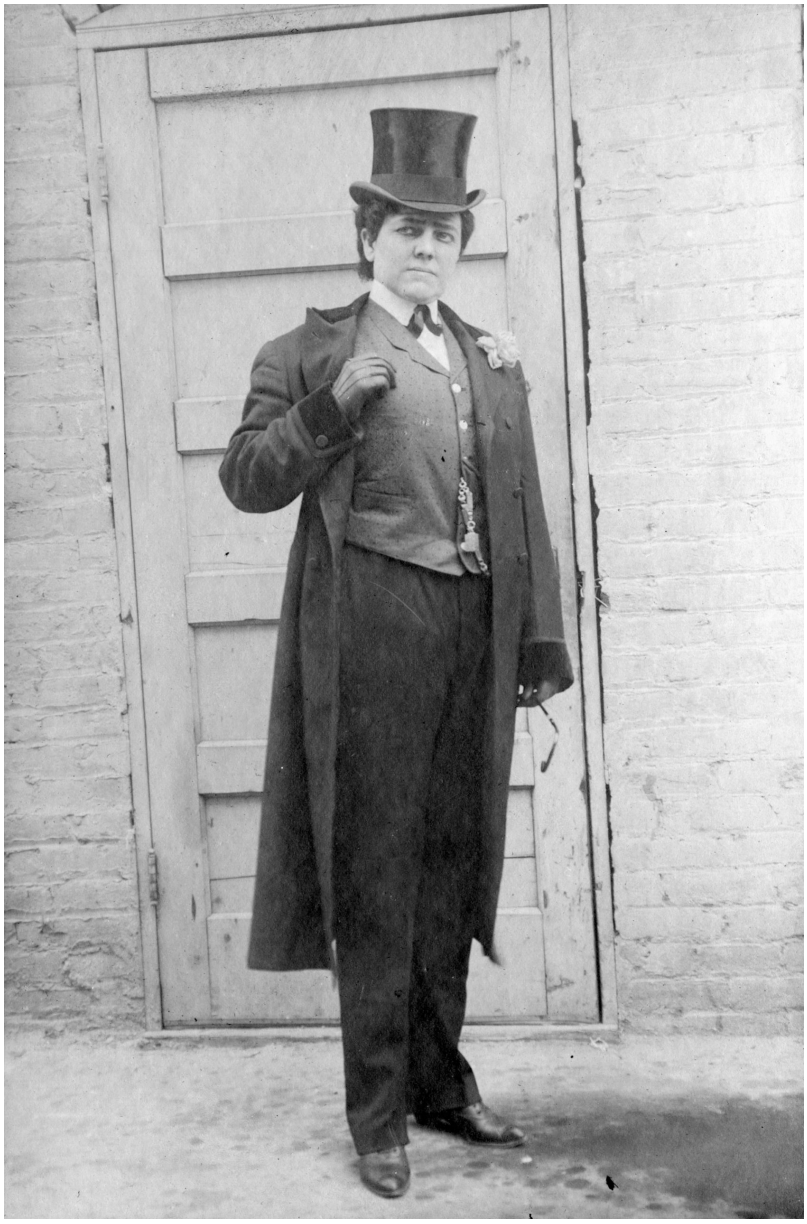


Figure 10.22B Popular culture (sometimes called low, low-brow, or vernacular) began the process of massification of culture in the modern era. Daisy D'Avara, pictured here ca. 1909, was a dancehall girl in the Klondike and a vaudeville performer thereafter.

Canada's Got Talent

Jonathan Vance, a leading historian of Canadian culture at the University of Western Ontario, has argued that the late 19th century witnessed the birth of a tension in Canadian society about cultural production. There was a hope that, in creating a nation-state, Canadian culture would emerge and flourish. When French-Canadians heard English-Canadians say "culture" they heard "assimilation." The metaphorical ramparts around "Fortress Quebec" remained up as a consequence. What is more, ultramontanism gave pre-enlightenment European art a leg-up in Quebec, and European high-style was idealized. Meanwhile, in English Canada, the fetishizing of things British persisted. The schooling

system in English Canada "celebrated British culture, idealized British history, and inculcated British values." [2] And, of course, cultural growth in the expanding United States was producing an alternative and distinctive tradition of painters, sculptors, architects, writers, and even historians — any of which could be drawn upon by Canadian art buyers, governments, and readers.

Canadian artists, faced with these outward orientations, struggled to earn a crust. The idea of becoming a full-time creator of music or statuary, paintings, or magazines in Canada was fraught with problems. The safest path was to imitate the things that the Europeanists, Britophiles, and North American Continentalists admired and to avoid the pigeonholing of originality. These constraints were fundamental in holding back the growth of an indigenous English "Canadian" cultural form in the pre-1914 period. Similarly, the ultramontanist and conservative ideology of many Quebec cultural leaders reinforced a rejection of the secular modernist imagination and the kind of cultural experimentation that was going on in Paris. Quebec culture at the start of the 20th century was rooted in the experience of New France and distinct from that of post-Revolutionary France; it stood apart in many ways from Anglophone cultures, as much because of its aversion to modernism as for reasons of language and religion. Canadian talent was trapped in an imitative blind alley.

Vance points out, too, the legal environment in which art was produced in the Victorian era. Copyright laws in Canada did little to protect writers, whose works could be (and were) reproduced — pirated — by presses in the United States, Britain, and even by other Canadians. Cheap knock-off copies of three-cent popular fiction — the original "pulp" novels, so-named because they were made on low grade paper — out-competed the originals, which sold for much closer to a dollar. A struggling Canadian writer might be able to get into the Dominion market at seventy-five cents a copy but could not hope to attract the sort of sales and circulation that even reputable publisher/pirates could generate. Nor could such a writer survive on pennies a copy.[3] The establishment of tariffs on American publications did something to shore up publishers in wartime in particular, but Canadian presses struggled against both British and American novelists and poets who had strong markets at home. A Mark Twain, Victor Hugo, or H.G. Wells could saturate the market while a Sara Jeanette Duncan, Ralph Connor, or Lucy Maud Montgomery struggled to become recognized at home, let alone abroad. Not much would change in this regard for English-Canadian writers of fiction and non-fiction before the middle of the 20th century.

French-Canadian writers might have fared differently. There was an opportunity there to build on an early 19th century base and the histories of François-Xavier Garneau (1809-66), which predate Confederation, but the conservatism of the ultramontane establishment was powerful and effective in silencing modernist voices. Bishop Ignace Bourget (1799-1885) initiated in 1858 what would become a 30-year campaign to destroy the liberal-minded, anticlerical ***Institut Canadien*** (shuttered finally in 1885). What literature emerged in the early 20th century was rural-focused and idealized a pre-industrial Quebec or, perhaps more accurately, one in which industry was the exception. Although Montreal was the nation's largest city, Quebec as a whole was more rural than urban until 1941, which explains the anti-urban focus in literature to some extent. Phillipe Panneton (1895-1960) wrote the novel *Trente Arpents* under the *nom de plume* "Ringuet" in 1938; the book was a landmark because it painted rural life as one of repeated challenges above which the protagonists could not necessarily rise, and as part of a world in which cities played a role. This was far from full-on modernist literature, but it

2. Jonathan F. Vance, *A History of Canadian Culture* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2009), 168-9.

3. ibid., 176-7.

broke out of Quebec with a 1940 translation, won a Governor-General's Award, and thus constitutes an early contribution to the development of a national, pan-Canadian literature — some 70 years after Confederation.



Figure 10.22C In the US market, Wilf Carter went by the name "Montana Slim" but evidently composed under his own name. *[Long Description]*

Modern Music

There are, of course, other avenues for artistic and cultural expression. The explosion of the folk art movement in the early 20th century — an expression of antimodernism — fed the growth of fiddle music in the Atlantic provinces and in Quebec and later the development of both country and western (originally and sometimes still distinguished by loyal fans).

Wilf (Montana Slim) Carter (1904-96) is a common thread joining both the Maritime and Western traditions. Born in Port Hilford, NS, he took up yodelling as a youth, left home at 15, and became an itinerant worker across the West, including a stint as a cowboy near Calgary. Singing while playing guitar — something of an innovation in its own right — Carter is responsible for the links between Swiss yodelling and country & western (C&W) vocals. His first radio appearances in 1930 in Calgary

were followed by a move to New York in the mid-1930s where he polished the singing cowboy routine. Carter influenced his contemporaries — including fellow Nova Scotian, Clarence (Hank) Snow (1914-99) — and other C&W figures like the Maritimer/vagabond Charles Thomas (Stompin' Tom) Connors (1936-2013).

While these musical styles were rooted in **vernacular** forms that had, to some extent, developed locally in the Maritimes, they were also an expression of the globalization of entertainment. The yodelling, for example, was picked up from touring Swiss singers. And while performers like Snow and Carter were often antimodernist in their focus on the virtues of rural life, they built early- and mid-20th century careers around the modern technologies of radio, recording, and television. They also felt it necessary to move to the United States in order to achieve artistic success, a trend that would continue for generations (although in this respect, as in so many others, the nationalistic Connors stood apart — calling them out as "turncoat Canadians").

Of all musical styles in the 20th century, no form is so associated with early modernism as jazz. Like folk/country, jazz begins as a kind of vernacular form, spreading rapidly from New Orleans across North America. (It is worth noting that early jazz contained elements of the French quadrille, and so is part of the legacy of New France.) The jazz phenomenon was aided and abetted by railways that hurried performers from one venue and town to the next. Vancouver's Patricia Hotel, for example, was home in the early interwar years to African-American jazz pioneers Ferdinand (Jelly Roll) Morton (1890-1941) and Ada (Bricktop) Smith (1894-1984). Sustained by African-Canadian communities in Montreal, Vancouver, and Toronto, jazz cross-fertilized other styles, including the big bands of the era. Of these, the one that acquired the greatest fame and popularity is Guy Lombardo and His Royal Canadians, led by Gaetano (Guy) Lombardo (1902-77) of London, Ontario.



Figure 10.23 The daughter of a vaudevillian, Hamiltonian Florence Lawrence is often described as the first "movie star."

Stage and Screen

The music halls and vaudeville theatres of the early 20th century were made possible by rapid urbanization and, in return, were crucibles for talent and styles. Marie Dressler (1868-1934), Walter Huston (1883-1950), Florence Lawrence (ca.1890-1938), Mary Pickford (1892-1979), Raymond Burr (1917-93), and Yvonne de Carlo (1922-2007) all learned their craft on the music hall stage in Canada before heading to success in Hollywood. At the same time, a great many American and British actors (including Vincent Price, Jack Benny, and the Marx Brothers) honed their skills touring Canadian theatres on their way to what was now, in the 20th century, called "stardom."

The dinner clubs and nightclubs of the major cities carried forward this tradition into the mid-20th century. As "entertainment" overtook culture and became an industry in its own right, there were plenty of what was called "marquee" talent or headliners whose musical or theatrical credentials were

affirmed by appearances on live radio, in movies, and — beginning in the 1950s — television. Entertainment was rapidly becoming a fully integrated business and in every Canadian city (with the possible exception of Toronto), this was more fundamental to the cultural lives of a greater number than professional ice hockey. Canadian talent like bebop musicians Moe Koffman (1928-2001) and Fraser MacPherson (1928-93) were part of a generation that benefited from this multi-urban cultural ecology. Musicians had the further advantage of new recording technologies that took their performances beyond the stage and even beyond live radio into “canned” performances on the air or into the home with the diffusion of phonograph technology.

For the most part, these are examples of **popular culture** from the first half of the century. They were produced for urban audiences, people who earned wages for a living. The suggestion that these kinds of entertainment can be dismissed as **escapist** misses the point: they were meant to offer relief from lives of hard work, worry about finances, wartime anxieties, and a rapidly changing, modernizing world. They were meant to provide distraction and, yes, escape. If entertainments of this kind appear to us now, in retrospect, to be unsophisticated and stilted, it has to be remembered that the years from the 1890s to 1939 saw the appearance of mediums of communication and culture that had never before existed. These were years of unparalleled experimentation in music, film, and theatre that would set the tone for the rest of the century. The energy generated by this new populist era provides, as well, as stark contrast with the stagnation and limits of high style cultural practices like opera or the symphony — something that would generate increasing concerns by elites in the 1940s and ‘50s.



Figure 10.24 J.E.H. MacDonald was a founding member of the Group of Seven. His “Dark Autumn, Rocky Mountains” was painted in 1930.

Visual Arts

If writing, music, and film-making in Canada were limited by the size of the audience before WWII, that was not the case for the fine arts. Some cultural productions will thrive in a marketplace dominated by wealthy patrons. Such was the case of the Algonquin School, also known as the **Group of Seven**.

Lawren Harris (1885-1970) was heir to the Massey-Harris fortune (acquired in the production of agricultural implements and machinery) and capable of acting as patron to the Group while being an active and gifted member himself. The thrust of their philosophy was that the Canadian experience was intimately connected to the wild landscape and that the Group's art, therefore, served a nationalistic purpose. The Group was 100% Anglo-Canadian and (despite the association of non-member Emily Carr) 100% male. Influenced by the Symbolist movement in Europe and some of the Expressionists, the Group of Seven's output was sufficiently accessible — and the group so well connected that their work became representative of the modern art movement as a whole in Canada. Based in Toronto, the Group of Seven used their extensive social connections and their membership in the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto (effectively a posh clubhouse for artists, writers, and performers) to advance their interests. The Art Gallery of Ontario and the National Gallery in Ottawa were quick to stock up on their work, displaying it approvingly as the work of the nation's leading artists.



Figure 10.25 Bertram Brooker's "Ascending Forms", ca.1929.

There were many artists who did not fit within the Group of Seven paradigm. Their contemporaries in Montreal, the **Beaver Hall Group**, was equally inclusive of women and men and more fully committed to a modernist and urban sensibility that did not echo the Group of Seven's wilderness ideal of Canada. **Abstract** pioneers like Kathleen Munn (1887-1974) made connections with the Group but her outlook was simultaneously too modernist and too international for their appetites. Her friend and fellow abstract painter, Bertram Brooker (1888-1955) had his feet planted firmly in Canada, but also felt

overshadowed by the Group, which he criticized in the 1930s as having become the very "orthodoxy" against which they had once railed. The Group came in for further criticism from artists in Montreal who rejected the nationalist aesthetic. The rival **Eastern Group of Painters** was established in the 1930s and one of its members, John Lyman (1886-1967), championed its successor group, the **Contemporary Arts Society**. These associations were, however, dominated by Anglophone artists. Further down the road of modernist techniques, it was ***Les Automatistes*** led by Paul-Émile Borduas (1905-60) who most fully embraced abstract styles and did so as a critique of what they regarded as the repressive political culture of Maurice Duplessis' Quebec and the continuing influence of the Catholic Church on daily life in the province. The *Automatistes* issued a manifesto in 1948 that was explicitly anticlerical, anti-religious, and anti-establishment. This document, *Le Refus global*, remains a powerful example of the collision of modernist and antimodernist sentiment in the arts and in society and is sometimes cited as a catalyst in Quebec's Quiet Revolution (discussed in Section 9.9).



Figure 10.26 Paul-Émile Borduas' "Composition 11", ca. 1957.

Artists who were geographically, ethnically, or sexually on the margin of these central Canadian organizations worked largely in isolation, influenced by what was becoming the dominant style while developing their own. Of these artists, none is more deservedly well-known than Emily Carr (1871-1945), a British Columbian Post-Impressionist artist whose lush and flowing canvases are

populated by Northwest Coast housepoles and towering cedars. While Tom Thomson's *Jack Pine* and Harris' *Lake and Mountains* are typical of a Group of Seven view in which people are conspicuous by their absence, Carr's paintings document and celebrate the interplay between landscape and Indigenous and contemporary societies. In her works, the environment is a place in which humans must — and do — find their way, while being neither dwarfed nor dumbstruck by it.



Figure 10.27 "Kitwancool," 1928, by Emily Carr.

Key Points

- While high style cultural elements could be — and were — imported from abroad, Canadian artists struggled in the first hundred years after Confederation to be recognized.
- Those artists who neither imitated British, French, or American styles nor emigrated to make their careers in larger, foreign markets, were constrained by the structure of the publication and performance businesses in Canada, and a small and divided Canadian marketplace.
- French-Canadian writers in particular turned away from urban and modernist themes and therefore became too parochial for a national audience.
- Musicians also took up antimodernist themes that celebrated the vernacular cultures of rural

Canada, although the most successful moved to the United States where opportunities were greater.

- The links between urban performance venues enabled the circulation of modern musical innovations like jazz and big bands, along with various stage performance styles.
- Painting was an area where a few wealthy patrons could take the place of a mass market audience. In that environment, artists associated with the Group of Seven thrived, producing a style that claimed to reflect the wilderness as the basis of a distinctive Canadian culture.

Long Descriptions

Figure 10.22C long description: Record by Wilf Carter, also known as Montana Slim. Side 1 is labelled "New Orthophonic," high fidelity. The songs listed are:

1. Roll Along Kentucky Moon (Bill Halley)
2. It Makes No Difference Now (Jimmie Davis-Tillman)
3. You Are My Sunshine (Jimmie Davis-Charles Mitchell)
4. I'm Hittin' the Trail (Wilf Carter)
5. Rye Whiskey (Arr.: Wilf Carter)
6. Sittin' by the Old Corral (Wilf Carter)

The record is made in Canada by RCA Victor Company, Ltd., Montreal—copyrighted. [Return to Figure 10.22C]

Media Attributions

- Portia White, 1945 © Yousuf Karsh is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Wilf Carter, Montana Slim – label, side 1 © Peter Zimmerman. Photo removed. is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license
- Florence Lawrence, c. 1908 © Frank C. Bangs is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Dark Autumn, Rocky Mountains © J.E.H. MacDonald is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Ascending Forms © Bertram Booker is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Kitwancool, 1928 © Emily Carr is licensed under a Public Domain license

10.14 A Culture under Siege?



Figure 10.28 What's showing? An early cinema or nickelodeon, so called because it cost a nickel (5 cents) to get in, on Queen Street West in Toronto, ca. 1910.

Even as modern styles were stirring the pot of creativity and innovation in the first three decades of the century, censorious clouds were gathering. The fear of the modern was expressed in antimodernist ways and through modern political movements that might, for example, admire scientific progress while simultaneously decrying the emergence in the 1920s of the modern woman.

The **Motion Picture Production Code (1930)** in the United States tamed Hollywood movies so that popular culture would not be threatened by shifts in popular moral codes. While the Code had no impact on Canadian film-making (such as it was at the time), it impacted the careers of Canadians in Hollywood and, of course, Canadians experienced its effects whenever they visited a cinema.

This was the case, in part, because of the Americanization of Canadian culture. The movement of goods and ideas never had much respect for the boundary lines between British North America and the United States, and the 20th century border was only more porous. Radio — and, later, television — signals swept back and forth across the international frontier unimpeded. American listeners in the northern states picked up the few radio stations producing signals in Canada, while Canadian audiences dialled in to programming that originated, principally, in New York. It was then relayed through networks of private broadcasters to cities like Bangor, Duluth, or Spokane from whence the AM waves worked their way into neighbouring provinces. Some American programming was so popular in Canada that Canadian private stations carried the shows themselves. In many instances, American radio station owners simply bought up private broadcasters in Canada and thus extended their reach.

Radio and TV Broadcasting

By Norm Fennema, Department of History, University of Victoria

As in the United States, radio broadcasting in Canada began in the early 1920s. Because radio use began with mariners, licenses were initially available from the department of Marine and Fisheries for any interested party, with payment of a $25.00 fee. By the mid 1920s, upwards of 30 commercial broadcast licensees — often churches or electrical equipment businesses — operated limited daytime programming in major centres such as Toronto and Montreal.

The impetus for a federal role grew in tandem with the growing availability and popularity of American programming and the apparent chaos of the American commercial system. The formation in 1922 of the **British Broadcasting Corporation** — an early model of public ownership — seemed to hold the promise of aligning the broadcasting spectrum with its nation building potential. Action was hastened by a national controversy over the cancellation of broadcasting rights of the Jehovah's Witnesses, operators of Canada's first and only national network. An ensuing parliamentary firestorm was quelled by the government's announcement of a Royal Commission on radio broadcasting — the first of many.

The recommendation of the **Aird Commission**, named for the commission president, that "broadcasting…be placed on a basis of public service and that the stations providing a service of this kind should be owned and operated by one national company" was finally realized in the passage of the 1932 *Broadcasting Act*, by which the Canadian Radio-Broadcasting Commission came into being.[1] A major victory in one of the hardest fought advocacy campaigns in Canadian history, the battle to realize the Commission's vision was led by the indomitable patriot, socialist, and anti-American nationalist Graham Spry (1900-1983).[2] Mandated to regulate the existing commercial stations as their operations were being phased out, the new public broadcaster formed an East-West system, partly through appropriation of the Canadian National Railway Radio network, which included a French language service. Retooled as a Crown corporation in 1936, the rechristened **Canadian Broadcasting Corporation** was hamstrung by chronic underfunding and the Depression.[3] The original goal of a single public system was also contested by commercial station owners through the Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB), whose lobbying efforts initiated a battle that is played out to this day with the Friends of Canadian Broadcasting — successor to Spry's Canadian Radio League. The result was a hybrid system of public and private broadcasting, with the public service continually mandated to provide "a wide range of programming that informs, enlightens and entertains" and one that "should be predominantly Canadian, serve the needs of the regions, be in English and in French, and be available throughout Canada."[4] Nationally popular programming such as *Hockey Night in Canada* clearly fulfilled this mandate, while the French language *Radio Canada* helped engender a renewed sense of Québecois identity.

Reinjection of a nationalist raison d'être for broadcasting came in the context of renewed support for bilingualism and the advancement of multiculturalism in the later 1960s. This resulted in a mandated minimum of 60% Canadian content on television and 30% on radio for both systems. While leaders in news

1. Canada, Report of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, September 1929, in Roger Bird, *Documents of Canadian Broadcasting* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1988): 52.

2. Rose Potvin, *Passion and Conviction: The Letters of Graham Spry* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1992), 2, 79.

3. Mary Vipond, "The Beginnings of Public Broadcasting in Canada: The CRBC, 1932-36," *Canadian Journal of Communication*, vol. 19, issue 2 (1994): 155.

4. *Broadcasting Act*, subsection 3(1)(m).

and information programming, the much greater costs of television (20 times that of radio) meant CBC entertainment and dramatic programming tended to compete poorly against American offerings.

The CBC remains an important national institution, though dwarfed in size by the commercial system, still without a guaranteed funding formula, and continually subjected to government cutbacks. Long-running programs such as David Suzuki's *The Nature of Things* (which began under Donald Ivey in 1960) and *The National* are Canadian staples, and despite its loss of *Hockey Night in Canada* to Rogers Communications in 2014, the network retains millions of viewers and experiences annual growth in online traffic.

A significant rationale for the existence of a public broadcaster was that it would provide that which a commercial system would not. The *Broadcasting Act* of 1932 was a declaration of federal sovereignty over the airwaves predicated on a conviction that radio broadcasting, in whatever form it might take, was a *prima facie* public resource, a view that seems to still be supported by most Canadians.

Hollywood and the North

Cinema could have been different from radio. After all, cinemas were not obliged to show American films; and the cans of motion picture reels, unlike radio programming, could be stopped at the border, if need be. Viewed by not one government in Canada as worthy of investment or control, the American and (secondarily) British film industries found their way into Canadian movie houses unobstructed. The world's first national film production office, the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau, was established in two stages from 1918 to 1923 and from the start specialized in the news-reel style of film-making for national promotion purposes. Indeed, the first movies made in Canada were overwhelmingly documentaries, some of them immigrant recruitment fodder about life on the plains. Although fictional dramas followed early in the 20th century — including some of the earliest war movies, drawing on the 1660 Battle of Long Sault and the War of 1812 as source material — these were to prove exceptions to the rule. This early efflorescence was soon overwhelmed by American product, which was something the Bureau actively encouraged. The first director of the Bureau, Bernard E. Norrish, was dismissive of the possible success of a Canadian film industry, commenting that Canada "had no more use for a large moving picture studio than Hollywood had for a pulp mill."[5] Other countries, recognizing the threat posed by Hollywood to their own film artists, imposed quotas; nothing of that order occurred in Canada. Canadian cinemas were made more deluxe — this was the era of the movie palace — so as to make the experience of moviegoing still more escapist than the film's subject matter. Hollywood might occasionally experiment with Canadian-themed movies involving Mounties (some of them singing), but otherwise the experience of entering a darkened movie house in Canada was much the same as it was in Des Moines, Iowa.

5. Quoted in "The History of the Canadian Film Industry", *Historica Canada*, accessed 10 December 2015, http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-history-of-film-in-canada/.



Figure 10.29 In 1945, the city centre cinemas were still thriving. Shows were usually continuous, hence the saying, "this is where I came in."

By the late 1930s, there was not much left of the Canadian film business. It was with the nurturing of the documentary tradition in mind that the **National Film Board (NFB)** was established in 1939. Its mission was almost immediately transformed by the outbreak of war. Still steering clear of fictional drama, the NFB now concentrated on wartime propaganda. After WWII, efforts to build a Canadian film industry continued to fail. The consolidation of the theatre chain system and its place in a vertically integrated Hollywood-based industry meant that the major American studios controlled everything from story-pitch through production and distribution. Under these circumstances, it was astonishingly difficult for a Canadian film to find a Canadian audience. By the late 1940s, the Canadian film industry was another arena in which Canadian cultural sovereignty and health was becoming a matter of some concern to policy makers as well as to artists, entrepreneurs, and social commentators.

The State and Culture in the Cold-War Era

Between them, the Group of Seven founder Lawren Harris and his contemporary and close friend Vincent Massey (1887-1967) delivered the one-two punch of 20th-century Canadian culture. Both men were born in the 19th century and were heirs to strong traditions of individualism and, more importantly, to the Massey-Harris industrial fortune. Harris' role in the founding and success of the Group of Seven is considered in Section 10.14. It was Massey, however, who would advance the question of what was to be done about Canadian culture as a whole.

Massey played a managerial role at the family firm for a while before being drawn into politics by Mackenzie King. By the mid-1920s — while still in his early 40s — Massey was playing important diplomatic roles for Canada. In 1949, he was tasked by Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent with chairing the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, eponymously known as the Massey Commission.

The Commission reflected growing concern on the part of government about the impact of American culture. Even as Canada was gaining greater autonomy from Britain in constitutional and foreign affairs areas, there was a growing reaction to the influence of the United States. Partly this was spurred on by the growing power of the federal state. WWII had laid down the foundations of a vastly increased bureaucracy and government intervention in the economy as well as in social and educational policy areas. The planning state could, quite naturally, extend its reach to cultural concerns.

The *Massey Report*, issued in 1951, was both a response to American cultural imperialism and an alarm bell. It legitimated government involvement in cultural institutions, laid out a game plan, and endorsed federal spending on post-secondary education for the first time. The Commissioners drew attention to the paucity of performance venues for the high arts and the unlikelihood of all but a handful of artists earning a living from their craft in Canada. American culture was saturating Canada and talented Canadians were heading south because in the United States they could earn a living in the culture industries. Canadian genius went out with the tide and Disney swept back in.

The Commission's recommendations resulted in the creation of the Canada Council for the Arts in 1957, which stimulated the growth of both literature and research in the humanities and social sciences. This second role was hived off in the 1970s into the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). Leading figures in the Liberal Party were not alone in their belief that Canada's newly won global prominence at the end of WWII meant that the country should shed some of its outward backwardness and become more refined. They sought to use culture as an instrument of a liberal and humanist nationalism and, conveniently, Americanization served as a nice counterweight — a palpable threat — to the health of Canadian arts and letters. This provided a further justification for Ottawa's involvement and leadership in the field.

Critics of the Commission have jumped on their nationalism as a narrowing and necessarily proscriptive view of Canada, one that held out little for people who came from cultures other than French and English. It has also been dismissed as "a bunch of stuffy college dons trying to force a good dollop of 'culchah' down the throat of a gagging Johnny Canuck."[6] The Commissioners took pains to reassure Canadians that they had no interest in dictating tastes; at the same time, their instincts ran strongly to high culture and large institutions. New homes for the National Art Gallery and the National Library and Archives (now Library and Archives Canada) were called for and eventually delivered; the NFB was beefed up; and money was made available for a generation of big theatres that would be suitable for symphony orchestras, ballet performances, and serious theatre. The Commission also indirectly encouraged investment and enthusiasm for the arts. The Winnipeg Ballet acquired the modifier "Royal" two years after the Commission, and the Stratford Shakespeare Festival got underway in 1952. Cultural spokespeople in Quebec were, however, particularly critical of the Commission, seeing it as an intrusion on the constitutional space occupied by the provinces. Artists and consumers of art whose tastes were not those of the elites were inevitably disappointed that the Commission had little

6. Paul Litt, *The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 6.

to offer the culture of working Canadians. Finally, the Commission's timing was such that it could not grasp fully the implications of the newest medium: television. Finding ways to support Canadian literature, theatre, and humanist education and research was, at the end of the day, an important investment in the development of a distinctive Canadian voice; failing to address the issue of television was like leaving down the drawbridge.

The arrival on the scene of television in the early 1950s added a new technological wrinkle to the communications and entertainment industry, effectively combining the radio industry with the film industry. The old radio giants in the United States – the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) and the National Broadcasting Company (NBC) – moved easily into the television market and enjoyed an immediate technological, talent, and distribution advantage over all North American competitors, including the upstart American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC). The CBC moved into television with fitful success based on its own national radio infrastructure and the cultivation of teams of writers and performers in both English and French. Early television, however, depended heavily on live performance and this presented enormous challenges in a country as wide as Canada. American broadcasters moved more rapidly into taped/recorded programming, led by ABC. In the nearly twenty years between the first appearance of television and the arrival of cable distribution in the late 1960s, American stations were as easy to access as Canadian broadcasts in all of the large markets. Inevitably the CBC began purchasing taped editions of American programming for broadcasting on their own channels within their own schedules.

The regulation of culture in the late 20th-century music industry is considered in Section 9.15. Canadian television companies faced similar constraints on content and these were met without much enthusiasm or concern for quality. While Québecois audiences were able to sustain locally made, French-language programming, English-Canadian stations competed with expensively produced American dramas and comedies that could be purchased and delivered more cheaply than the price of making something in Canada by Canadians. Some exceptions occurred, including *The Littlest Hobo* (a Canadianization of *Lassie*), *Quentin Durgens, MP* (a political drama), and *The Beachcombers* (which ran from 1972 to 1990), but most efforts faltered quickly. Some, like the notorious *Trouble with Tracy*, were ostensibly produced at the lowest possible cost simply to satisfy regulators' demands for Canadian content. Documentaries and nature programs proved more durable, as did current events programs like *W5*, which debuted in 1966. Children's programming proved to be especially successful: both *Chez Hélène* and *The Friendly Giant* first appeared in the 1950s and enjoyed very long runs.

These efforts could not, however, stem the tide of American television broadcasting. Even as the Massey Commission's recommendations were bearing fruit, they were doing so in the face of an increasingly suburbanized population's infatuation with television. The history of communications, film, and broadcasting in Canada continues to reflect this bias that worked against an indigenous, homegrown creativity comparable to what one finds in other English-speaking countries.

Key Points

- Modern culture was increasingly dominated by electronic media like radio and television, both of

which were dominated in North America by manufacturers in the United States.

- As Norm Fennema points out, attempts to regulate and stimulate the production of Canadian radio and visual broadcasting began in the 1930s, with mixed results over the three decades that followed.
- Cinema was not regulated and a branch plant system of American-owned screens in Canada ensured the supremacy of American-produced movies.
- The NFB gave Canadian filmmakers credibility, though principally in the field of documentaries.
- State and elite concerns for the future of Canadian culture and for the threat of Americanization was manifest in several forms, including the Massey Commission.
- The *Massey Report* led to the creation of a cultural support infrastructure that put arts and academic research funding into a kind of order. The kind of culture favoured by the Commission tended to be highbrow, for which it was criticized.
- Television escaped scrutiny for many years, by which time American programming dominated Canadian television schedules, despite a few rare exceptions.

Media Attributions

- Auditorium Theatre in Toronto © William James is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Strand Theatre box office showing advertising for “The Last Chance,” Vancouver c. 1945 © Jack Lindsay, City of Vancouver Archives (CVA 1184-2590) adapted by Canadian Colour is licensed under a Public Domain license

10.15 The National Pastime(s)



Figure 10.30 Nothing says gentlemanly, amateur sports like cricket, especially when it's being played at Upper Canada College. Social class barriers stood in the way of cricket becoming the professional and commercialized product that it became in other Commonwealth countries.

Canadians might agonize over American and other influences on their culture (they did, and they still do) but one area that has remained largely exempt in that regard has been sports. Whether it is ice hockey or Canadian football, issues of national cultural integrity are seldom as intense as they are with regards to content on radio or television.

Robin Anderson and Russell Field explore aspects of sport history and the history of spectatorship in Sections 10.16 and 10.17. What both identify as critical in modern sports is the speed with which commercialization became not only their defining feature but also the surest test of their quality: if you have to pay money to watch it, it must be good. There were exceptions in the 20th century, and curling is merely the first that comes to mind. Lacking the explosions of activity that made for good radio and difficult to professionalize until the late 20th century, curling persisted as mostly a participant sport.



Figure 10.31 Enormously popular in places like Dartmouth, NS, curling was nevertheless slow to professionalize. Even as an amateur sport it had a low profile: it arrived at the Winter Olympics in 1924 and then disappeared until 1998.

Of the masculine sports, Canadian rugby's two branches offer perhaps the greatest contrast. In the 1880s, college teams from Ivy League institutions in the United States challenged Canada's premier university at the time — McGill — in what started out as something very much like English rugby but which quickly acquired distinctive features on both sides of the border. The mutated versions emerged as Canadian-rules and American-rules "football".[1] The link between true rugby and the Canadian Football League is to be found on the Grey Cup itself, said to be the oldest trophy in professional sports: it is awarded annually to the best team in the Canadian Rugby Union. The cup has been stolen on at least two occasions: it is either a myth or a public secret that it was abducted by members of the Canadian Rugby Union (aka: Rugby Canada). Both English rugby and Canadian rugby remained amateur sports until the mid-1950s when the Canadian variant became the **Canadian Football League (CFL)**, a fully professional operation comprised of separate eastern and western unions. Rugby retreated to university campuses and private clubs, although football by the mid-century had a grip on varsity sports as well.

1. Robert A. Stebbins, "Ambivalence at the Fifty-five-Yard Line: Transformation and Resistance in Canadian Football,"*The Beaver Bites Back? American Popular Culture in Canada*, eds. David H. Flaherty and Frank E. Manning (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993): 164-7.



Figure 10.32 Ottawa meets the Hamilton Tigers in a 1910 "football" game that looks a lot like rugby.

Lacrosse offers a contrary example of a sport that was widely played, quickly professionalized, and progressively marginalized. Lacrosse enjoyed its best years as a spectator sport in the pre-1914 period. By the 1920s, the game was moving indoors and was becoming professionalized, typically as an arm of existing pro-hockey teams like the Canadiens, the Maple Leafs, and the Maroons. Despite the game's current status as one of Canada's two national sports, it has repeatedly failed commercially; clubs have folded and been revived, and it is sustained mostly by a rabid (if small) fan base. What challenges lacrosse is the same thing that vexes the CFL: a limited television market. The most profitable pro-leagues in North America have capitalized on advertising revenues to such an extent that watching public sports in a private space (the home) has come to define the supporter experience for Americans and Canadians. The size of a sports corporation's profits were once tied to the number of fans they could bring into an arena or stadium; that has not been the case since the 1960s for the NHL, American football, or professional baseball.

As Anderson points out in Section 10.16, the history of Canadian sports is intensely gendered. The intersections between the body, athleticism, the marketplace, and the crowd are facets of sports in the modern world that have drawn attention from historians, and on which much research remains to be done.

Key Points

- One of the features of the modern world is the rise of massified spectator sports. These shifted the balance from the value of athleticism as a means to personal development to the commercial opportunities of arena sports and advertising revenues.

Media Attributions

- Cricket, Upper Canada College, Forest Hill © Alexander Galbraith, City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1568, Item 197 is licensed under a CC BY (Attribution) license
- Ottawa and Hamilton Tigers football game © William James Topley, Library and Archives Canada (PA-009601) is licensed under a Public Domain license

10.16 Sport and Leisure in Post-Confederation Canada

Robin Anderson; Department of History; and University of the Fraser Valley



Figure 10.33 A shinny match breaks out in 1919 Winnipeg.

The story of sport and leisure since the mid-19th century has been shaped by many factors, but three historical processes stand out in particular. The first is **social hegemony** in sport, the process by which dominant groups define the possibilities and limits on sport, leaving outlier groups having to struggle for inclusion. The second is **fan identification and representation**, the process in which a sport grows from a haphazard set of localized experiences to a phenomenon that fuels powerful allegiances to city, region, and nation. The third is **commodification**, the process of turning what originally was an informal and voluntary set of sport and leisure practices into a thoroughly commodified cultural marketplace. We will briefly look at each of these historical processes next.

Social Hegemony in Sport

As with most cultural activities, sport and leisure in the 19th and 20th centuries reflected the wider patterns of existence, social hierarchy, and class behaviours of Canadians. While human societies have always displayed a desire for play, organized sport with its emphasis on rational outcomes and fair play began in Great Britain in the late 18th century and was exported to British North America in the early 19th century as an extension of the leisure activities of the newly arrived British middle-class. Most historians agree that Montreal's Anglophone middle-class men defined many of the enduring structures and practices of organized sport across Canada by the middle decades of the 19th century, including drafting the first rules of play, establishing the standard playing surfaces and equipment, creating the first sport organizations, leagues and events, and articulating a set of middle-class beliefs about the social and personal value of organized sport and leisure. Their vision of appropriate sport was a limited one but one that lined up closely in its broad outlines with similar developments in Europe and the United States.

While this relatively small group of sports-minded men had the money, leisure time, and social influence to define much of the physical activity in the 19th century, less powerful groups were still able to play their games within the nooks and crannies of rural and urban Canada. For instance, many of Canada's Indigenous peoples continued to play their traditional games, although some of these, like the richly complex and multipurpose Iroquoian stick and ball game *Tewaarathon*, came under a re-forming process in the mid-19th century to become the standardized and rationalized sport lacrosse to mimic other contained European field games. Ironically, many eastern-Canadian Indigenous communities embraced the simplified European game of lacrosse and used their superior fitness and skills to regularly crush their white opponents. Other non-Anglo groups, including eastern European and Asian immigrants in the late 19th century, faced similar challenges to maintain their sport and leisure practices in the face of the dominant sport culture. And, while middle-class male enthusiasts refined the game of ice hockey, informal varieties of shinny (ice hockey) continued to be played on frozen ponds by rural and working class Canadians.



Figure 10.34 A visiting British watercolourist attended a Montreal v. Caughnawaga (Kahnawake) lacrosse match in ca. 1882-83 and painted six of the First Nations players.

Organized sport was also designed in the 19th century as something *men* did, and was defined as a training ground for appropriate manhood. The masculinizing aims of sport shifted over time to reflect changes in the dominant form of manhood, but the attachment of sport to men has always been its central feature. This had, and still has, the effect of alienating some men who did not identify with the cultural messages around sport. And in much greater numbers, women were overtly excluded from most organized sports. By the late 19th century, however, women began to infiltrate and eventually demand equal access and resources within sport. The 1920s was a kind of golden decade for female athletes; high-profile Olympians Fanny "Bobbie" Rosenfeld (1904-69), Myrtle Cook (1902-85), and others simply represented the pinnacle of what were thousands of active women sports participants across the country. But the struggle was not over. Women's efforts to gain an equal foothold in sport would continue through the 20th century in the face of ideological barriers about appropriate femininity, the supposed limitations on the female body, and overt male resistance. We live in a world today where sport opportunities are still heavily tipped in men's favour and where media sport culture functions like a virtual man cave.



Figure 10.35 Myrtle Cook crosses the line first in a 100-metre heat at the 1928 Olympics.

Fan Identification and Representation

Notwithstanding the large crowds for sporting events in ancient Greece and Rome, there was a time more recently when sport fans did not exist — and no one thought they should. Modern organized sport began in the early 19th century as private activities for the benefit of the participants alone. Over time, however, that changed. Sport spectators, known as "fans" today, emerged as an important feature of sporting life and they came to identify local sports teams and high profile athletes as representing them and their community. Sports historians refer to this phenomenon as the representational **value of sport**, and its emergence parallels the growing commercialization and **professionalization** of sport, and team sports in particular. Of course, Canada was not isolated from sporting developments elsewhere. In Britain in the early 19th century, many of the enduring patterns of sport identity and representation were established at competing public schools like Eton and Rugby; in the United States, professional baseball quickly took on representational value, following the American Civil War in the 1860s.

By the early 20th century, the notion of "following your team" was firmly established in Canada. And the energy of this identification, combined with the pocketbooks of fans, helped to drive the growth of professional sports. In Vancouver before the 1920s, as in most Canadian cities, three professional team sports — field lacrosse, baseball, and ice hockey — competed for the attention and allegiance of local fans, albeit in more limited regional settings. It was not until after WWII that city-based sport teams began to compete in leagues (such as the Canadian Football League) that were truly national in scope. Even so, the NHL lost three Canadian teams between the wars, as the league expanded into the United States in search of larger markets, and only added one — the Vancouver Canucks — before 1979. By the end of the 20th century, team sport identification had become arguably the most powerful communal attachment and experience that Canadians have. Today, the proliferation of local team jerseys worn as flags to identify fan loyalty, the ubiquitous media saturation that accompanies the games, the huge amounts of capital — both real and emotional — that are expended to support local

teams demonstrate the apparently boundless power and appeal of sport representation. Ironically, however, the majority of players on the teams we choose to represent us are not from our communities, and most leave once their playing days are over.



Figure 10.36 One jersey that never caught on. The women's Fernie Swastikas (ca. 1922) wear a symbol that was not yet associated with Nazism.

Arguably the most potent representational force in sport is its connection to nationalism. Sport nationalism was slow to develop, and had to wait for the emergence and maturity of international sports organizations in the early 20th century. The modern Olympic Games, which began in 1896, first gave Canadians a taste of sport nationalism during the interwar years, demonstrating that even **amateur** athletics had the power to capture sports' representational value. The 1928 Olympic Games produced sports heroes like two-time gold medalist sprinter Percy Williams (1908-82) and the successful women's track and field team, the so-called "Matchless Six." After the Second World War, Canada's Olympic dreams shifted to the Winter Games, seen as more naturally suited to Canada's northern character, with the success of skater Barbara Ann Scott (1928-2012) in 1948 and skier Nancy Greene (b. 1943) in 1968. Canada would eventually host three Olympic Games, in Montreal (1976), Calgary (1988), and Vancouver (2010), all of which became sites for intense national fervour and the rather dangerous emotional game of placing the fate of the nation in the hands of a very few. Canadians were disappointed most of the time.

Even more than the Olympic Games, Canadian sport nationalism has focused on international hockey. For most of the 20th century, the amateur code that governed most international sports organizations kept Canada's best professional hockey players out of international competition. For generations, the **National Hockey League (NHL)** operated in a North American bubble, but with the confidence that the best hockey players in the world were those Canadians who toiled in the NHL. That began to change with the integrative forces of globalization from the 1960s onwards. In 1972, the NHL allowed its players to participate in an eight-game series with the best players from the Soviet Union. The

resulting Summit Series and all the drama that the heroic narrative provided, capped by the iconic last-minute goal by Paul Henderson (b. 1943), became the high point of Canadian sports nationalism and, in the minds of Canadians for several decades, the most important national event in the country's history. The importance of the Summit Series has begun to fade in the collective memory, but hockey nationalism certainly has not. An estimated 16 million Canadians crowded around their television sets or joined strangers in sport bars to watch both the Canadian women's and men's hockey teams win the 2010 Olympic gold medal in front of home audiences in Vancouver.

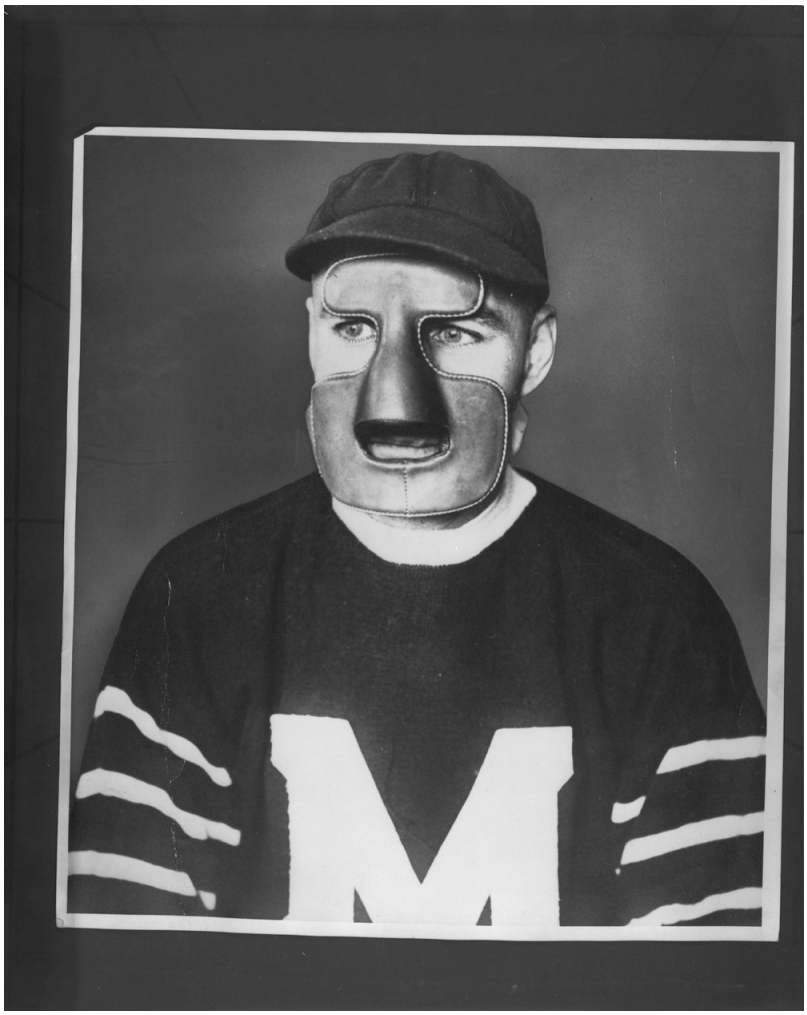


Figure 10.37 Clint "Praying Benny" Benedict (1892-1976) played for the Montreal Maroons, an NHL team that was a casualty of the Depression. Benedict pioneered the first goalie mask after breaking his nose in a game against the crosstown rival Canadiens.

Before Canadians hand their self-identity and emotional welfare over to the performance of hockey players, it would be useful to remember several important points about hockey nationalism. First, no other country in the world regards ice hockey as its most important national sport. In the United States, it is at best the fourth most popular team sport, and several other professional sports such as golf and NASCAR rate much higher in attendance and viewership. When Canada won the two gold medals in Vancouver in 2010, both against American teams, the Americans graciously complimented the Canadians and then went about their business. In some European countries, like Sweden, Finland, and Russia, hockey occupies an important place, but lags far behind football (soccer) and other sports

specific to their own sports heritage. Canada has chosen a sport to distinguish itself on the world stage that no one else cares about, at least not nearly as much as Canadians do. Canadian accomplishments on the soccer, rugby, or even cricket pitch would carry far more prestige on the world's sporting stage.

We should also remember that a sport is an unusual and troubled way to define national character and purpose. Canada is one of the few countries that holds up a game as a definer of what that country is. Some cultural historians and critics have argued that Canada's lack of coherent unity or any sense of collective values has forced it to embrace an activity as a symbol of its essential nature. Some suggest Canadians are just lazy and wish to avoid the conflicts that would accompany making those important choices. So, instead of choosing specific meaningful ideals that reflect and shape what Canada is as a country — a task that other countries have done — Canadians assign importance to the vagaries of a competitive game that presents conflicting messages to differing audiences, one that is played by a small and diminishing minority of mostly boys and men, and a game whose elite performers and major decision makers choose to work in the United States.

Commodification

The final factor that shaped the evolution of sport and recreation — commodification — is arguably the most important, and was probably unavoidable. The history of sport, after all, did not happen in a bubble, but rather paralleled the evolution of modern capitalism. As such, it has reflected the contours of social and cultural change that accompanied the industrial revolution. So, the initial emergence of organized sport forms in the mid-19th century has everything to do with the rise of industrial enterprise, the growth of wage labour, the expansion and increasing demands of the marketplace, the rapid growth of urban areas, the proliferation of industrial technology (especially advances in transportation), the invention of "leisure time," and the growing confidence and recreational desires of the middle-class. When we talk about sport commodification, we mean the commercialization of events, which happened early, and the professionalization of players and athletes, which happened later and in some circles with greater controversy.



City of Toronto Archives, Series 393 f1548_s0393_it16432

Figure 10.38 Parallel universes. Amateur cricket in the foreground and baseball — a game at which one could make money — being played in Willowvale Park (now Christie Pits), Toronto, 1920.

Right from the start, sport was attached to commercial opportunities, as enterprising individuals used athletic and physical activities to generate money. One-time sporting events, including prize-fights, canoe races, impromptu foot races, and strong-man competitions, were a common feature of 19th century Canadian life, and were almost always used as opportunities for gambling. One odd but typical example was the so-called "fat man" races that swept through Western Canada and the United States in the 1860s and 1870s. An advertisement in the Victoria *British Colonist* newspaper from 1872 gave readers ample notice:

> Novel Race: A match has been made between two well-known Fat Men of this town, to run a foot race on the Queen's birthday for 30 dollars a side. Beacon Hill [Park] will shake to its very base when these two great bodies are set in motion. Timid persons are requested to leave town for the day.[1]

Gambling helped fuel the process of commercialization in many sports in the 19th century. And with this economic energy came sports professionalism, first with paid athletes in individual sports, and then, by the end of the century, with professional rosters in team sports. The best known and certainly most colourful professional athlete in 19th century Canada was the world single-sculls rowing champion Ned Hanlan (1855-1908). Hanlan grew up in a working-class Irish family in the Toronto area and learned to row while helping his father illegally smuggle rum across Lake Ontario. After he mastered the new technology of the single-sculls sliding seat, a skill that was crucial to his singular success, Hanlan went on to dominate the enormously popular rowing competitions in Canada, the United States, and Britain in the 1880s. Hanlan and his backers knew how to milk the entertainment value and gambling opportunities of a close and uncertain outcome, and quite often the consummate showman Hanlan intentionally slowed down to make races appear closer than they actually were.

1. Ad from the *British Colonist* (Victoria, 1861), cited in Gary Kingston, "B.C.'s first "sports event" probably a cricket match", *Vancouver Sun*, (10 November 2009), accessed 13 May 2016, http://www.vancouversun.com/first+sports+event+probably+cricket+match/2207952/story.html.



Figure 10.39 "Ned Hanlan: Champion Sculler of the World," a crayon and watercolour lithograph from 1880.

Sport historians are quick to remind us that even the strictest adherents of amateurism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries could not escape the needs of the marketplace, and even encouraged them. For instance, the **Montreal Amateur Athletic Association (MAAA)**, the first and most powerful multisport organization in Canada before WWI, was formed in 1881 by Montreal middle-class sportsmen to pool capital to purchase land and club facilities. If they wanted to stay afloat, the MAAA and other amateur organizations were going to have to come to terms with the cash nexus. Money was needed for facility rentals, park development and the purchase of clubhouses, event expenses (including promotion and advertising), participant rewards and prizes, and the cost of players' equipment and team accessories. All sports organizations — amateur included — charged gate admission to recover some or all of their related costs.

Amateur organizations like the MAAA were highly critical of professionalized team sports, which they saw as debasing the true spirit of voluntary recreation and the ideals of sport for sport's sake. The potent forces that came to shape team sports, particularly the representational value of sport, 19th-century civic boosterism, and the overwhelming need to win, led to the practice of hiring the best players. Most major team sports moved incrementally from having the occasional paid player to stocking teams with dedicated professionals. By the early 20th century, most team sports were ignoring the voices of amateurism as they counted paying spectators filing into the ball parks, playing fields, and ice arenas across Canada.

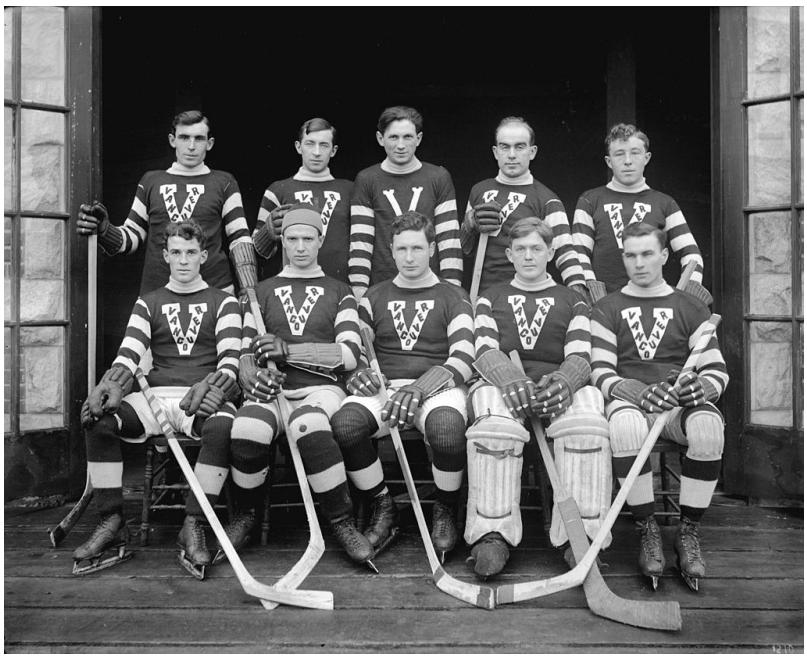


Figure 10.40 The Vancouver Millionaires of 1913-14. Fred "Cyclone" Taylor (2nd from right, back row) was a key figure on the team and, also, in the Komagata Maru affair.

One early example of the possibilities of commodification in team sports was the **Pacific Coast Hockey Association (PCHA)**F, a professional hockey operation that began in southwestern British Columbia by Frank and Lester Patrick in 1911. The Patrick brothers are remembered as creative innovators in hockey history, bringing in a slew of rule changes and practices that revolutionized the game, including the forward pass, the blue line, the use of in-play line changes, and the post-season playoff format. However, the PCHA was also a prime example of a fully commodified sports league. The Patricks owned and controlled every team in the PCHA, built state-of-the-art arenas with artificial ice, and moved teams around frequently to maximize revenue. They stocked the league with star players that were lured (some say raided) from the **National Hockey Association (NHA)**, the leading professional hockey league in eastern Canada that would become the National Hockey League (NHL) in 1917. The best known of these star players was Edouard "Newsey" Lalonde (1887-1970) and Fred "Cyclone" Taylor (1884-1979). Centralized team ownership meant that the Patricks could control player salaries and manipulate team rosters to achieve parity in the league, two issues that vex professional leagues today. The stability and public profile of the PCHA forced the NHA into a predictable east-west playoff structure for the Stanley Cup, effectively ending the challenge cup format that was in place since 1893. As a result of the Patricks' investments, the Vancouver Millionaires were Stanley Cup champions in 1915, winning a best of three series from the Ottawa Senators three games to none. The PCHA's Seattle Metropolitans would also win the Cup in 1917.

The opportunities for profit in sport increased exponentially in the second half of the 20th century. From the 1960s onwards, Canadians experienced an acceleration of commodification as the marketplace entered every area of life. Sport was part of this process. The revenue streams available to professional sports began to increase with television coverage in the 1960s and the delivery of commercial advertising through sports entertainment. Rising ticket prices to games reflected the higher income levels of certain segments of the Canadian population. Player salaries also rose and soon escalated to keep step with the growing profits available in professional sports leagues. By the 1980s,

sport commodification moved beyond television contracts and ticket revenues into retail sales and sponsorship agreements. Today, professional sport is a foundational element of modern capitalism because its emotional appeal is so easily attached to the capitalist marketplace.

The forces of sport commodification would eventually kill amateurism. The Olympic Games, or the "Olympic movement" as advocates prefer to call it, positioned itself early in the 20th century as the global defender of amateur principles. However, the lure of increased revenues for the Games after WWII proved too enticing even for members of the **International Olympic Committee (IOC)**, the appointed officials who governed the organization. What began as relatively small television contracts for the Games in the mid-1950s soon mushroomed in size to reflect profits to be made in media coverage. The IOC added sponsorship agreements to its revenue pool in the 1980s, as giant corporations such as McDonald's, Coca-Cola, and Visa payed millions of dollars to be official partners for the Games. Once the commercial door was blown open by huge amounts of corporate money, it proved difficult to keep professionals out of the Games and maintain the principles of amateurism. For one, the public demanded to see the best athletes perform, professional or not. To accommodate, in 1988 the IOC allowed the international sports federations that governed each sport to define Olympic participation themselves. Most would eventually choose to abandon the amateur code.



Figure 10.41 The survival of amateurism in sports narrowed to events like the 1940 Highland Games in Antigonish. A kilted stone-thrower in action.

Today, the Olympic Games stand as the quintessential example of a thoroughly commodified sports entity. Its revenues rival the annual income of some countries, its commercial tentacles penetrate every market opportunity imaginable, and its boardroom of lawyers vigilantly polices its trademarks and

other marketable symbols. But of course it is not alone. We uncritically admit today that modern sports organizations are businesses, first and foremost, and in so doing we allow them whatever latitude available to pursue their economic goals. However, we usually fail to recognize the underlying context of expansionary capitalism that has moved sport and sport entertainment into the centre of our lives. We also fail to see the gap that has developed between elite professional sports celebrities and the rank-and-file sports fan.

Key Points

- Historians of sport observe that social hegemony works to privilege some activities and marginalize others, which in Canada has meant the middle class definition of appropriate organized games was a racialized and sexualized — white and male — space.
- Spectator sports are historically tied to the notion of the representational value of the games, which is tied to urbanization and the professionalization of playing.
- Canada's obsession with ice hockey has eclipsed interest in sports with a far greater international cachet.
- Industrialization and urbanization contributed to the emergence of leisure time and the use of disposable income to support sports enterprises. Sports became professionalized and turned into a commodity for sale.

Additional Readings

Bouchier, Nancy. *For the Love of the Game: Amateur Sport in Small-Town Ontario.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003.

Burstyn, Varda. *The Rites of Men: Manhood, Politics and the Culture of Sport.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.

Hall, M. Ann. *The Girl and the Game: A History of Women's Sport in Canada.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.

Gruneau, Richard and Whitson, David. *Hockey Night in Canada: Sports, Identities, and Cultural Politics.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.

Howell, Colin. *Blood, Sweat, and Cheers: Sport and the Making of Modern Canada.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001.

Kidd, Bruce. *The Struggle for Canadian Sport.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.

Morrow, Don and Wamsley, Kevin B. *Sport in Canada: A History*. 3rd Edition. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Poulter, Gillian. "Montreal and its Environs: Imaging a National Landscape, c. 1867-1885" *Journal of Canadian Studies* 38:3 (2004): 69-100.

Media Attributions

- Hockey, 1919 © H.J. Woodside, Library and Archives Canada (C-079313) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Caughnawaga Indian Lacrosse players: study of five figures © Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. R9266-224. Peter Winkworth Collection of Canadiana is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Myrtle Cook of Canada (left) winning a preliminary heat in the women's 100 metres race at the VIIIth Summer Olympic Games © Library and Archives Canada (PA-150994) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Fernie Swastikas hockey team, 1922 © Fernie Swastikas is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Clint Benedict, Montreal Maroons © Hockey Hall of Fame, Library and Archives Canada (PA-048898) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Cricket and baseball – Willowvale Park © Toronto City Archives, Fonds 1548, Series 393, Item 16432 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Edward (Ned) Hanlan © Library and Archives Canada, Acc. No. R9266-3343. Peter Winkworth Collection of Canadiana is licensed under a Public Domain license
- 1914_Vancouver_Millionaires © Stuart Thomson, City of Vancouver Archives (CVA 99-126) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Highland Games, Antigonish, Aug. 1940, athlete throwing stone © Ronny Jacques, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 4315254) is licensed under a Public Domain license

10.17 Commercial Sport and Spectating

Russell Field; Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management; and University of Manitoba



Figure 10.42 A full house at Maple Leaf Gardens, 1932. Note the 1930s-vintage jumbotron.

Modern sport emerged in the second half of the 19th century under the conditions of industrial capitalism in urban contexts. Embraced by upper–middle-class professional men, who had both leisure time and a belief that the practice of physical competition would inculcate the values and skills of civic leadership, early organized sport was imbued with the ideologies and regulations of amateurism. The classed and gendered realities of amateur sport, which was almost exclusively male until the 1920s, informed global movements such as the Olympics and continued to hold sway until the 1970s.

Despite the influence of middle-class notions of respectability in establishing the values of amateur sport, sporting events were also included within the popular commercial amusements of the late-19th and early-20th centuries. Often organized around one-off contests in individual sports — such as rowing, boxing, foot-racing, and horse-racing — commercial sport was associated with disreputable practices such as drinking, gambling, and rowdy behaviour among spectators. Moreover, the professional athletes who earned a living through such events were castigated by amateur sport leaders as having sacrificed the character-building aspects of amateurism and the pursuit of sport for sport's sake.

By the 1930s, the sanctification of professionalism as a marker of ability rather than a moral failing was well underway. One of the most significant features of this shift were the spaces that were built to accommodate paying customers (spectators), most prominently in the 1920s. In the decades prior, spectator behaviour was a significant issue for entrepreneurs. Profit was tied to the respectability that was conferred upon the practice of spectating. Indeed, one of the earliest appearances of women as sport spectators was the late-19th century creation of Ladies' Days at baseball grounds. (Baseball was

one of the few team sports that did not attract the interest of amateur sport leaders.) Women were admitted free to games in the hopes that their presence would improve the behaviour of the men in the stands and on the field.

By the 1920s, the built-spaces for sport had evolved considerably. Consider the case of hockey in Toronto and New York. Ontario's first artificial ice rink, Arena Gardens, opened in December, 1912 and had, according to the Toronto *Daily Star*, "room for 2,000 skaters and 7,000 spectators." Typical of arenas built in this era, when facilities were intended as much for participation as spectating, Arena Gardens' management set aside Friday nights for public skating. Cultural and economic circumstances were markedly different for commercial hockey in Toronto only two decades later, and public skating was not a feature of the arenas built in the 1920s to 1930s. The defining feature of these new sporting palaces was that, above all, they catered to spectators interested in spending disposable income on watching sporting events. The experience of the sport spectator did not occur within a vacuum, but among an increasing array of consumption possibilities in the 1920s and 1930s. The building of sport spaces needs to be understood alongside the construction of other major sites of public consumption in interwar cities, including vaudeville theatres and music halls, cinemas for the new "talking" motion pictures, department stores, and museums.

To compete in the burgeoning entertainment economy of the late 1920s, entrepreneurs located their arenas in entertainment districts. The new Madison Square Garden, for example, was built in 1925 only a block from the Broadway theatre district, far removed from its eponymous square. Investors in these facilities envisioned sport spaces that would project an aura of middle-class respectability. Architects with experience designing non-sporting spaces of consumption such as theatres and department stores were called upon to create these new arenas. In both Toronto and New York, architects sought to gentrify the practice of sport spectating without eliminating the possibility of distinctions within the arena. The nature of the seating, for example, was increasingly less comfortable as one travelled higher in the arena, and the building was designed to prevent spectators from moving between the different tiers of seats.

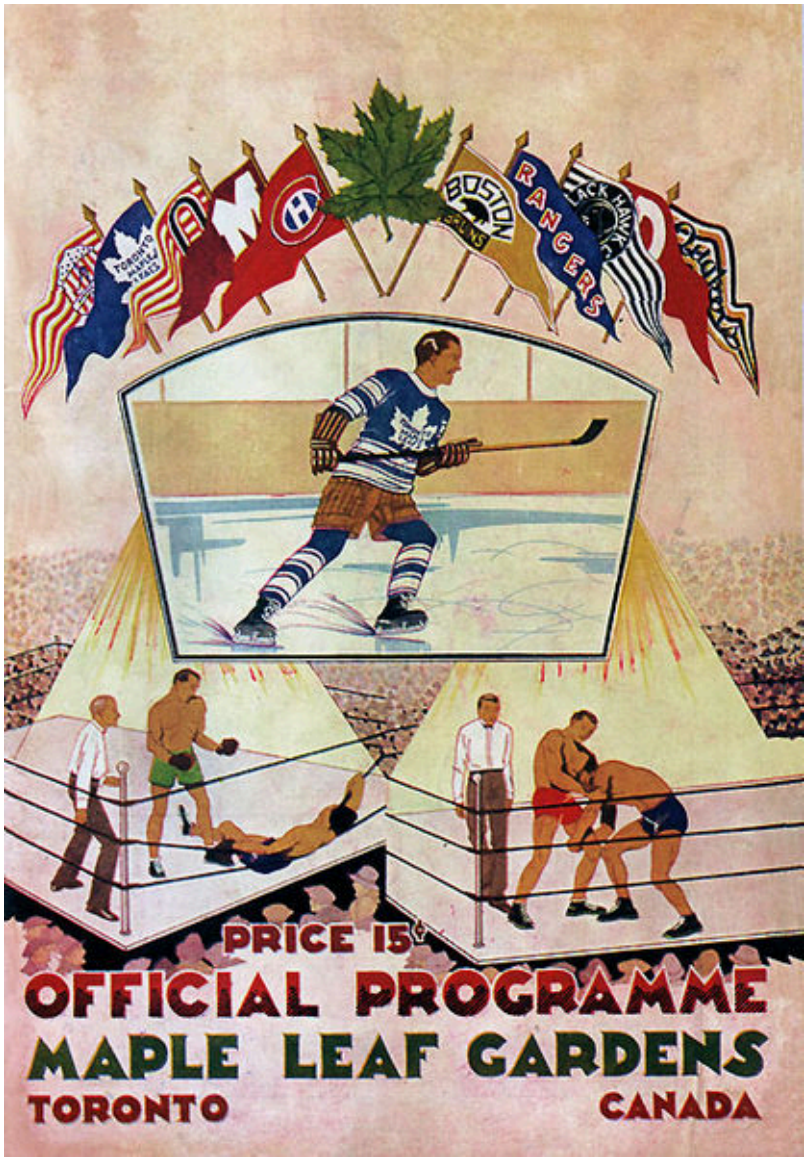


Figure 10.43 Respectable but rough. Entertainments at the newly erected Maple Leaf Gardens are very masculine but also overseen by fair-minded referees. Note that the NHL banners include 10 teams (not the so-called "Original Six" that survived the Depression and WWII). From the Leafs' first match at Maple Leaf Gardens in 1931. [Long Description]

Into such spaces entrepreneurs hoped to attract a respectable middle-class spectator, one who was likely male but who would feel that the new arena offered sufficient comfort to bring a female companion. An analysis of ticket subscription records from the mid-1930s reveals that Maple Leaf Gardens attracted a crowd of middle-class men and women. But the presence of a middle-class audience does not imply that its members always spectated in respectable ways. The spectator experience cannot be easily distilled to a single experience — indeed, it was a pastiche of many different experiences. Former box-seat patrons at Maple Leaf Gardens recall the expectation to be suitably (and formally) attired, while others who were located elsewhere in the arena remember the impact that such demonstrations of respectability had on their own choices. By contrast, former spectators at Madison Square Garden recall the highest tier of the arena being the denizen of the gallery gods. Designed with the narrow

confines of the boxing ring in mind, rather than the wider field of vision required for hockey, Madison Square Garden's gallery required most patrons to stand, leaning forward, enjoying the spectacle in physical contact with one another. Within this milieu, a culture of spectating unique within the arena developed — from the practice of racing upstairs to claim non-reserved seats to the insults and projectiles that were hurled.

Many spectators took pleasure in the spectacle that unfolded on the ice surface before them, both in the speed of the game and its (often violent) physicality. But it was not the spectacle alone that attracted the spectator. Former spectators recall the many ways in which hockey spectating was a social occasion: a parent taking a child to his/her first game, a heterosexual couple going on a date, as well as couples choosing to attend with other couples. The dominant narrative is that many women entered arenas on the arms of the men escorting them to the game. Despite this, there were women who went to hockey games at Maple Leaf Gardens in the interwar years in the company of other women. One female spectator recalled how she and five companions, all female, went to professional hockey games in Toronto every Saturday from 1925 to 1931. This dedicated group began spectating *prior* to the opening of Maple Leaf Gardens in 1931, but, with the construction of the modern, new arena, their weekly outings took on the air of an occasion as the sextet dressed in their finest each Saturday night. This woman, whose grandson recounted this story, recalled the "fashion show in the stands" where she and her friends sat in Maple Leaf Gardens' gray seats, the cheapest seats, most distant from the ice. While sport spectating has been constructed as a masculine pastime, in the new spaces of sport in the interwar years, women in Toronto also used one of the city's most prominent public buildings as a site for their own socializing.

Key Points

- The gentlemanly virtues of amateurism were at odds with the (largely working class) desire to be paid to play (that is, professionalism). It was also at odds with gambling and more individualistic sports like racing and fights.
- The creation of modern arenas and stadia enabled the merchants of sports to present their products in a more respectable environment that competed well against other entertainment options.
- A barometer of respectability was the extent to which women felt welcome to the new arenas and were eager to attend matches.

Additional Readings

Field, Russell. "Constructing the Preferred Spectator: Arena Design and Operation and the Consumption of Hockey in 1930s Toronto." *The International Journal of the History of Sport, 25* (6), May 2008, 649-677.

Field, Russell. "'There's more people here tonight than at a first night of the Metropolitan': Professional Hockey Spectatorship in the 1920s in New York and Toronto". In Andrew Holman.

(Ed.). *Canada's Game: Hockey and Identity*. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009).

Howell, Colin. *Blood, Sweat, and Cheers: Sport and the Making of Modern Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001). See especially Chapter 3: Money.

Kidd, Bruce. *The Struggle for Canadian Sport* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996). See especially Chapter 5: "Brand-Name Hockey."

Long Descriptions

Figure 10.43 long description: Poster for an event at Maple Leaf Gardens. It shows two boxing rings, each of which is hosting a match and has a referee looking on. In the background are hundreds of dots representing spectators. Above the boxing rings is an image of a Toronto Maple Leaf hockey player, skating and gripping a hockey stick. Above the hockey player are a maple leaf flanked by ten hockey banners, including those for the Montreal Canadiens, the Boston Bruins, the Toronto Maple Leafs, the New York Rangers, and the Chicago Blackhawks. The bottom of the poster reads "Price 15¢. Official programme. Maple Leaf Gardens, Toronto, Canada." [Return to Figure 10.43]

Media Attributions

- Maple Leaf Gardens, Carlton St. north-west corner Church St.; Interior, Toronto, Ont. © Special Collections Toronto Public Library (979-38-2 Cab) is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Maple Leaf Gardens, 1931 © Toronto Maple Leafs is licensed under a Public Domain license

10.18 Tourism in 20th Century Canada

Michael Dawson; Department of History; and St. Thomas University



Figure 10.44 Air travel for business and pleasure became more common in the 1930s. Passengers at Vancouver Airport in 1937 get ready for a flight on United Air Lines Mainliner.

Mountains, lakes, totem poles, Mounties, moose, and a certain house said to have been inhabited by Anne of Green Gables: what do these items all have in common? They have all become staples of Canadian guide books and tourist itineraries.

Of course, sightseeing did not begin in the 20th century. Canada (and British North America before it) had long been a popular destination for travellers keen to experience its natural wonders — and pursue its animal life in the hopes of demonstrating their skill and vigour in killing it. But the scope and scale of tourism in Canada expanded dramatically over the course of the 20th century.

A number of factors facilitated this expansion.

First, technological advances played an important role as railways, roadways, and eventually air travel, dramatically reduced travel times and encouraged visitors to embark upon more ambitious vacations. The invention of the automobile was particularly transformative. Although an automobile was a rare sight in Canada at the beginning of the 20th century, there were over 1 million cars traversing the country's roads by the end of the 1920s.[1] Gas stations, motels, and diners quickly emerged to service automobile-propelled travellers.

Second, a relatively sustained period of *economic* growth from the late 1940s to the early 1970s

1. "In Search of the Canadian Car", accessed 8 September 2015 http://www.canadiancar.technomuses.ca/eng/frise_chronologique-timeline/1920/ . This was a North American phenomenon. See, for example, John A. Jakle, *The Tourist: Travel in Twentieth-Century North America* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985), Chapter 7.

ensured that Canadians and international visitors possessed disposable income to spend on leisure travel.

Third, shifting attitudes toward leisure (from something to be mistrusted and frowned upon to something to be embraced and celebrated) produced a *social* transformation that facilitated the expansion of Canada's tourism industry. Canadians and international visitors thus secured increased opportunities to tour the country over the course of the 20th century. But governments, too, played an important role. And the timing of government intervention in the tourist industry is an important part of the story.

In the first three decades of the century, civic organizations and provincial authorities endeavoured to attract visitors to their locales. Some of these bodies hoped that these visitors would return to settle as investors who would bring agricultural and industrial wealth to their local communities. Others focused more directly on the money that these visitors spent in the towns they visited and tried to maximize their immediate, short-term, economic impact. The economic dislocation engendered by the Depression encouraged tourism promoters to focus their efforts even more intently on maximizing tourists' expenditures. At a time when jobs were scarce and retailers were desperate to sell their wares, many observers argued, it made sense to encourage outsiders, especially Americans, to visit Canadian communities, for in doing so they would be injecting outside money into local economies.[2]

Pursuing this aim, many argued, required a coordinated and efficient campaign — and thus the involvement of the federal government. In response, Ottawa created the Canadian Travel Bureau in 1934. Tasked with expanding and modernizing the nation's tourist industry, the bureau offered advice to Canadian entrepreneurs keen to profit from tourism, embarked upon hospitality campaigns that implored Canadians to treat visitors nicely, and orchestrated publicity campaigns that aimed to lure tourists (especially Americans) to visit Canada.[3]

2. On these competing yet overlapping rationales for tourism promotion campaigns, see Michael Dawson, *Selling British Columbia: Tourism and Consumer Culture, 1890-1970* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2004), Chapter 2.

3. On the formation and development of the Canadian Travel Bureau, see Alisa Apostle, "The Display of a Tourist Nation: Canada in Government Film, 1945-1959," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association,* 12, 1 (2001): 177-97, and Alisa Apostle, "Canada, Vacations Unlimited: The Canadian Government Tourism Industry, 1934-1959," Ph.D. dissertation. Queen's University, 2003.



Figure 10.45 Motor hotels (motels) were part of the commercial infrastructure of the new tourism and car culture. Built in 1946 in south Vancouver, 2400 Motel is a distinctive, bungalow-style structure that was built, like other motels across North America, along a major corridor.

Today, tourism plays a central role in Canada's economy. A recent estimate suggests that tourism is responsible, directly or indirectly, for almost 1 in 10 Canadian jobs.[4] This development did not happen overnight. It was, instead, the product of important technological, economic, and social transformations over the course of the 20th century that were, in turn, facilitated by consumer demand, entrepreneurial initiatives, and government support and coordination.

Key Points

- Tourism advanced in the modern era, helped along by improved modes of travel that included automobiles and aircraft.
- Increased travel brought in its wake a service sector that provided fuel, food, and lodgings, as well as tourist destinations.
- Although there were signs of growth in this sector before 1945, after WWII it increased dramatically thanks to greater disposable wealth in the population and more leisure time.
- The involvement of government in the promotion of tourism from the 1930s established the industry as a credible and lucrative source of incomes and jobs. Along with the technological, social, and economic transformations that enabled the tourism phenomenon to occur, the expansion of the modern, interventionist state played a role.

4. Tourism Industry Association of Canada, "The Canadian Tourism Industry: A Special Report" [PDF] (Fall 2012), 7, accessed 8 September 2015 http://tiac.travel/_Library/documents/The_Canadian_Tourism_Industry_-_A_Special_Report_Web_Optimized_.pdf .

Media Attributions

- People lined up to board a United Airlines U.S. Mail Air Express (NC 16071) “The Mainliner” © James Crookall, City of Vancouver Archives (CVA 260-719) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- 2400 Motel, Vancouver, B.C. is licensed under a Public Domain license

10.19 Summary



Figure 10.46 Eleanor Collins was one of mid-20th century Canada's outstanding supper-club voices.

The modern world comes in many forms but it always travels in style. In the 19th century, countries around the world did their level best to attract railway investment and to build efficient train lines. This was the case in the industrializing world, and it was also the case in Africa, Latin America, and Asia. The CPR was, in that context, part of a global fashion trend. In the 1950s and 1960s, as independence raced across the map of Africa in particular, colonial airlines were supplanted by national airlines, the newest and most modern expression of statehood and technological sophistication. Whether their fleet of aircraft was large or small, the national airlines were symbols of modern commerce, a certain kind of travelling glamour, and utterly dependent on the availability of skilled technicians and petroleum. While these travel options were ramping up, the number of cruise ships on the high seas fell precipitously. Sea travel by the mid-20th century had become plodding, inconvenient, and somehow very 19th century.

Modernity resists a concise definition, but we find its imprint across the 20th century, especially in the years before the 1980s. It expresses itself in a kind of confidence that is shored up by validating measures like units sold, crowd size, science (and quasi-science), media prominence, and distance from pre-modern and rural values. This is why irreligion and the rise of stadium-venue evangelicals can co-exist on a continuum of modernism. It is how we can speak of the hegemony of middle-class-style domesticity and the spread of divorce and female independence as concurrently modern. It is how consuming the country through tourism and consuming country music and folk culture could only happen in the modern era, even though they consistently reference the wilderness and simpler, more bucolic times.

There were, as we have seen, antimodernist points of resistance. Some — like hobby farming, scouting, weekend hiking, and so on — were largely benign and not very convincing; others, like the antimodernist sentiment of conservative regimes in Quebec (as described in Chapter 9) were genuinely oppressive. However, even under the archly Catholic *Union Nationale* or the conservative-protestant Social Credit regimes in Alberta and British Columbia, the technocrats and urbanites had considerable influence.

The social, political, and intellectual movements and rebellions of the 1960s challenged many of the underpinnings of modernity. This is ironic insofar as it was the spread of good-paying jobs in an advanced industrial economy, better access to post-secondary education, and the communications infrastructure of modernity that enabled it to be challenged. What followed was a change in national values and the beginnings of what would come to be called **postmodernism**, a theme that is taken up in Chapter 12.

Hinged on values like progress, commercialization, and the growing influence of the nation-state, modernity is also (importantly) a colonizing force: it colonizes its own people and it colonizes others. There is no way to understand the processes of cultural and economic assimilation inflicted on Indigenous populations in the 20th century, outside of the paradigm of modernism. Schools, medical science, and bureaucratic management, as the next chapter shows, were all complicit in the post-Confederation world of the First Nations; these were all modern institutions. The reaction against these initiatives in the last generation of the 20th century was, therefore, both postmodern and post-colonial**.**

Key Terms

abstract: An artistic technique that makes use of images that are not clearly representative of conventional visual references.

Aird Commission: The Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, 1922 to 1932; recommended the creation of what became the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

amateur: In the context of the history of modern sport, refers to athletes who do not accept pay to play; also implies a middle- and upper-middle class ethos of fairplay and a hostility toward professionalism.

Americanization (ch 10): The trend identified especially in the post-WWII era towards the adoption of American cultural practices, vocabulary, and tastes, especially among Anglo-Canadians.

Arts and Crafts: The Arts and Crafts Movement was an anti-industrial and antimodernist decorative tradition that looked to older hand-built styles of craftsmanship in visual arts, furniture, and domestic architecture.

assembly line: Refers to manufacturing processes that are systematically organized; most often associated in the public mind with the building of automobiles.

Beaver Hall Group: A group of nearly two dozen painters based in Montreal whose modernist and urban style was at odds with the Group of Seven's wilderness and nationalist abstractions.

big science: Associated with the large scale experiments and processes that became possible after the Second World War.

British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC): Established in 1922, the BBC is a crown-owned public service broadcaster. Its equivalent in Canada is the CBC.

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC): In full, the CBC/Radio Canada; Public broadcasting system established in 1932 following the recommendations of the Aird Commission; its status as a Crown Corporation was clarified under the *Canadian Broadcasting Act (1936);* modelled in large measure on the BBC.

Canada Council for the Arts: Established in 1957, the Canada Council arose from recommendations contained in the Massey Commission report. It was established as the principal funding agency for arts and culture.

Canadian Football League: Established in 1958 when Canadian-style rugby teams left the Canadian Rugby Union to establish a nine-team professional league.

colour barriers: Racial segregation; specifically, the exclusion of people of colour from activities or services enjoyed by European-Canadians.

commodification: In the context of the professionalization of sports and leisure, the process of turning what originally was an informal and voluntary set of practices into a commodity to be bought and sold.

Contemporary Arts Society: Formed in 1939 in Montreal; lasted until the late 1940s; influential in its production and advocacy for modern art.

Eastern Group of Painters: Established in Montreal in 1938.

escapist: Typically refers to entertainments that divert one's attention from banal features of everyday life.

fan identification and representation: In the context of, principally, professional sports, the phenomenon of fan allegiance to a team or player; manifest in the wearing of sports merchandise or loyalty to a team or club, and consciously encouraged by local media.

fundamentalists: Any conservative theological movement that regards holy scripture as literal truth.

Group of Seven: A group of artists (also known as the Algonquin Group) who emphasized landscape painting as the key to expressing Canadianness.

hegemony: The dominance of a set of ideas or a particular group or social class.

high culture (high style): Also called high style; refers to cultural activities associated with elites; largely consistent across continents; spatially large with little differentiation (in contrast with vernacular styles which are spatially narrow and come in many forms); examples include classical music, liturgies, opera, many visual arts, and theatre.

high modernism, high modernity: A phase of modernism beginning in the interwar era and accelerating during WWII; characterized by a deepened confidence in science and engineering. See also big science.

Institut Canadien: Established in 1844 under the leadership of young francophone liberal professionals

(physicians, lawyers, notaries, teachers) who sought to enrich and secularize *Canadien life;* provided the intellectual firepower of *les Rouges*.

International Olympic Committee (IOC): Established 1894; responsible for the organization and operation of the Olympic Games (both winter and summer versions).

***Les Automatistes**:* Surrealist painters and performers based in Montreal, 1942 to 1948; overlapped with the Contemporary Art Society.

Massey Commission: The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences was appointed in 1949 and reported out in 1951. Chaired by Vincent Massey, it recommended substantial federal government investment in arts and culture, including the Library and Archives of Canada.

Montreal Amateur Athletic Association (MAAA): Created in 1881, a federation of non-professional sports organizations, including bicycling, lacrosse, and ice hockey clubs; argued for a gentlemanly view of athletics, one which built character and community; opposed to the professionalization of sports and games.

moral panics: Public fears of declining values and worsening behaviours that could lead to social turmoil and/or crisis. Examples include temperance, anti-gambling crusades, the 1950s campaign against comic books, and several recurring moral panics regarding adolescents.

Motion Picture Production Code (1930): Also called the Hays Code; operated until 1968; established to address a public relations crisis in the film industry regarding risqué subject matter and scandals in Hollywood; prescribed anodyne subject matter and self-censorship by filmmakers as regards profanity, sex, nudity, and a long list of other perceived offences. It is worth noting that language, sexuality, and humour had a much wider berth in the first 30 years of the century.

National Film Board (NFB): Established under the *National Film Act, 1939* with a mandate to produce propaganda films during wartime; subsequently a centre for creative excellence in documentary production.

National Hockey Association (NHA): One of several early 20th-century professional hockey leagues and the direct precursor of the National Hockey League.

National Hockey League (NHL): Established in 1917 after a dispute among team owners in the National Hockey Association. It was, originally, an all-Canadian league but expanded in 1920 to Boston. Its higher salaries and American market led to the decline and disappearance of other professional leagues and the rise of an effective monopoly by the 1940s.

Pacific Coast Hockey Association (PCHA): One of several early 20th-century professional hockey leagues; pioneered use of artificial ice in indoor arenas; merged with the Western Canada Hockey League in 1924.

popular culture: Denotes arts, values, and ideas that are entrenched in a large slice of the population. "Popular" in this respect signifies that it is both widely appreciated and desired, and generated by this mainstream population. A 20th-century idea, it was sometimes referred to as "pop culture" in the later 20th century.

postmodern, postmodernism A complex system of views arising in the late modernist period that questioned the era's certainties, invited a skeptical analysis of conventions, focussed on pluralism rather than unity (both politically and artistically); contains anti-modernist elements (such as the return to craft and artisanal production) but is not otherwise anti-modern in the way that the original opponents to modernism were.

professionalization: Generally, the creation of exclusive policies that limit entry into a particular business or trade, such as the need for a teaching certificate from a recognized institution in order to become a

teacher; in sports, the phenomenon of paying players to play, which moved games and athleticism away from the 19th century ideal of gentlemanly and unpaid (amateur) competition.

progress The view that the history of humanity is a constant movement forward toward a better and better society.

rational recreation: A 19th-century response to the leisure activities of working people — gambling, competitions of strength, drinking, and low-brow performances — which sought to replace these with controlled, morally superior, and character-building (improving) activities.

representational value of sport: In the context of, principally, professional sports, the phenomenon of athletes whose performance is seen by the community and by fans especially as representing the community and its members; applies to local and to national players/teams.

secularism: The separation of church and state; the belief that a modern state is best served by individuals not directly associated with organized religion. See also **anticlerical**.

slumming: Colloquial for seeking recreation or entertainment in a locale that is associated with a lower socio-economic class or different cultural group than one's own.

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC): Arose out of the recommendations of the Canada Council for the Arts in 1977. Along with the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) constitutes the Tri-Council that funds a great deal of scholarly research.

social hegemony: Influence enjoyed by one social group over all others; dominance in tastes, culture, and values, among other indicators.

United Church of Canada: Created in 1925 as a result of a merger between three denominations: Congregationalist, Methodist, and Presbyterian. Some members of each denomination remained outside of the United Church but it was, nonetheless, immediately the third-largest denomination in Canada.

vernacular: In language, a local dialect; in design and cooking, styles developed in a specific locale and which are, in the case of emigrants, transported to other locations intact where they are reproduced. Examples of regional vernacular include Canadien stone houses influenced by the pre-Conquest era and, among immigrants, Doukhobor communal housing.

welfare state: Initiatives taken on a large scale on the part of government to provide the population with payments or services that ameliorate the worst effects of economic or social dislocation. Sometimes called a social safety net.

Short Answer Exercises

1. What is modernity? In what ways can it be used to distinguish the mid-20th century from the Victorian and the postmodern eras?
2. What resistance was mounted to modernity? What sources of authority were challenged by modernity?
3. In what ways was consumerism part of something more than an economic model?
4. How were gendered roles changed in the modern era?
5. What role(s) did moral panics play in supporting and undermining modernity?

6. How was childhood changing in the 20th century?
7. In what ways were the arts changing in the modern era? What do they reveal about changing social and national values?
8. What was the function and appeal of professionalizing and spectator sports?
9. How did tourism change in the 20th century?

Suggested Readings

Block, Tina. “Religion, Irreligion, and the Difference Place Makes: The Case of the Postwar Pacific Northwest,” *Histoire sociale/Social history*, 43, Number 85 (Mai-May 2010): 1-30.

Nelson, Jennifer J. “Panthers or Thieves”: Racialized Knowledge and the Regulation of Africville,” *Journal of Canadian Studies/Review d’études Canadiennes*, 45, Number 1 (Winter 2011): 121-42.

Rudy, Jarrett. “Do You Have the Time?: Modernity, Democracy, and the Beginnings of Daylight Saving Time in Montreal, 1907–1928,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 93, Number 4 (December 2012): 531-54.

Sangster, Joan. “Creating Social and Moral Citizens: Defining and Treating Delinquent Boys and Girls in English Canada, 1920-65,” in *Contesting Canadian Citizenship: Historical Readings*, Robert Adamoski, Dorothy E. Chunn, and Robert Menzies, eds. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2002.

Stanger-Ross, Jordan. “Municipal Colonialism in Vancouver: City Planning and the Conflict over Indian Reserves, 1928–1950s,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 89, Number 4 (December 2008): 541-80.

Swainger, Jonathan. “Teen Trouble and Community Identity in Post-Second World War Northern British Columbia,” *Journal of Canadian Studies/Review d’études Canadiennes*, 47, Number 2 (Spring 2013): 150-79.

White, Richard. “Urban Renewal Revisited: Toronto, 1950 to 1970,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 97, Number 1 (March 2016): 1-33.

Media Attributions

- Eleanor Collins in South American costume, 1950s © William Cunningham, Province Newspaper, Vancouver Public Library Historical Photographs (59988) is licensed under a Public Domain license

Chapter 11. First Nations from Indian Act to Idle No More

11.1 Introduction

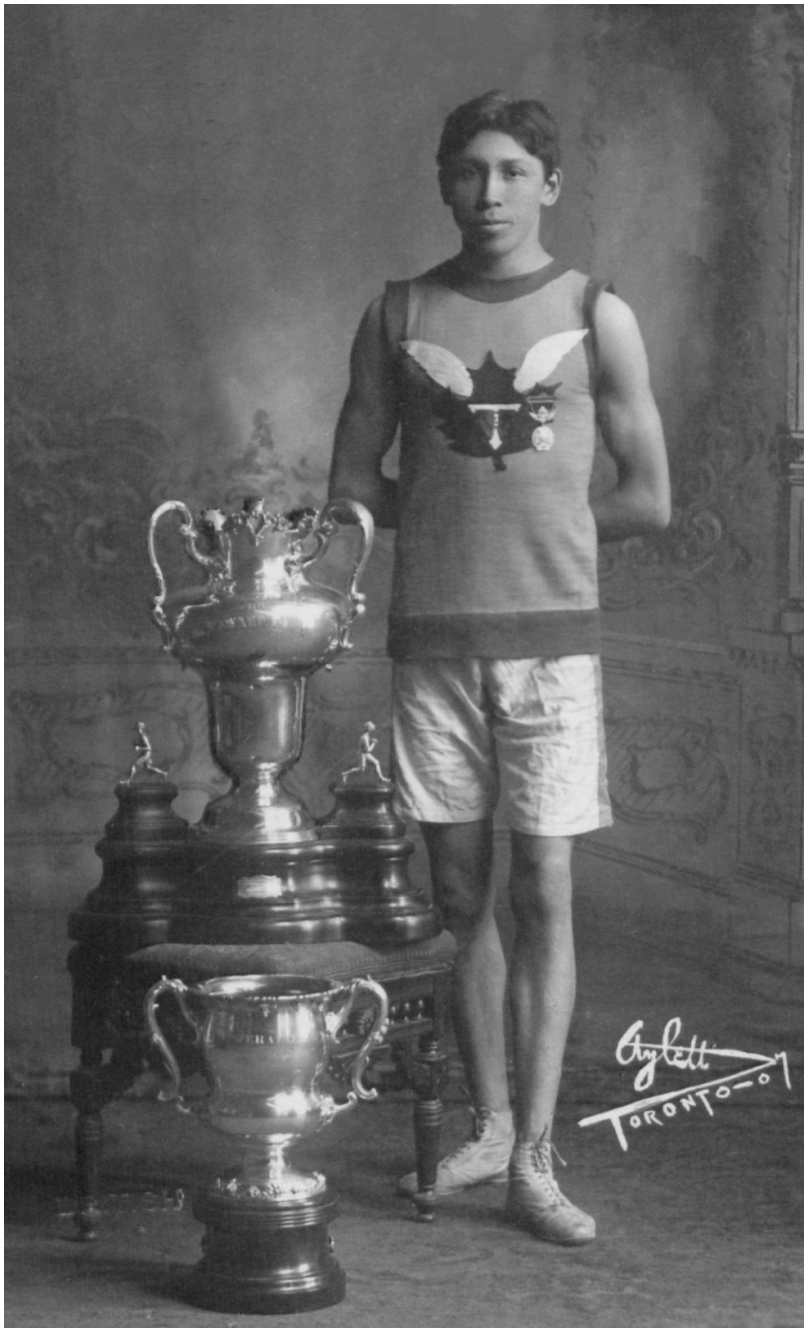


Figure 11.1 Tom Longboat (1887-1949) was a legendary Onondaga distance runner from the Six Nations Reserve in Ontario. Given the experiences of Indigenous peoples in Canada over the last 150 years, it seems right to start with a marathoner.

The experiences of Indigenous people since 1867 have appeared intermittently in the chapters of this history. As what Laurier called “Canada’s century” took shape, Canada became more urban and soon

more modern; however, most Indigenous people did not travel this path. Overwhelmingly rural (insofar as the majority lived outside of city limits), confined to reserves in many cases, excluded from the modern industrial and technological economy by real and implicit barriers, mostly denied the fundamental rights of citizenship (including the vote), institutionalized and subjected to assimilationist policies while exposed to the worst expressions of racism, Indigenous people in Canada may be excused if they do not see themselves in the broad outlines of this country's historic narrative.

Writing Indigenous history presents many challenges. Most of the documentation that has been easily available has come from sources whose job was to mainly manage or change or control First Nations. For structural and systemic reasons, Indigenous accounts have been fewer and further between. The effect of this limited Indigenous perspective has been the positioning of Indigenous people as a community on which history has acted, rather than as actors.

Opportunities to redress this stark imbalance have opened in the last 30 years. Indigenous historians, traditional oral accounts, and a succession of inquiries, royal commissions, court cases, and public hearings have given us the privilege of access to Indigenous voices from across the country. The effect has been to reposition Indigenous Canadians in the Canadian story, and to see that story, simultaneously, as a First Nations tale in which Canada is a mostly external but consistently imposing participant. So, the challenge is to put First Nations, Métis, and Inuit at the centre of the story and Canada at the edge.

This chapter begins with a consideration of the First Nations population over 150 years. No group in what became the provinces and territories of Canada has experienced such dramatic and confounding demographics. Subsequent sections explore aspects of the colonial relationship, attempting throughout to give priority to what Indigenous peoples thought they were pursuing. This approach involves a survey of the treaty process, efforts to assimilate Indigenous people into the economically and politically dominant non-Indigenous society, and growing expressions of frustration on the part of First Nations.

In the previous chapter, we explored aspects of modernity. The confidence that industrial urban society was the emergent pinnacle of civilization and the preferred model of human relations drove Canadians to disregard and attack alternative (alter-Native?) visions. As the modern gave way to the postmodern and as colonialism was confronted by **post-colonialism**, awareness grew among Indigenous peoples of the pathways that could restore and nurture back to health traditional relations and beliefs while also sharpening modernist beliefs about human rights into a weapon against the colonialists.

Indigenous histories in the northern half of North America are complex. They include tales of resilience and strength, but are sometimes so heavily laced with tragedy as to be unbearable. Due to the complex of jurisdictions and the enormous differences between, for example, the Nuu-chah-nulth, Niitsitapi, and Nippising, one cannot speak of one single history, although commonalities emerge. At the very least, one can say that Indigenous histories are the most effective way to understand Canada as a whole insofar as they hold up a mirror to both the dominant society and the very idea of Canada in a way that no other histories can.

Learning Objectives

- Assess the transformations of Indigenous peoples resource bases since 1867.
- Survey the main demographic changes in Indigenous societies in the 20th century.
- Describe the main contours of Indigenous-settler relations since 1867.
- Identify the main features of the Treaties between Canada and Indigenous peoples, and the issues they have created.
- Account for attempts to change Indigenous economies through schools and farming.
- Outline Indigenous peoples' response to Canadian colonialism since WWII, and assess its effects.
- Describe and explain the changed political relationship between Indigenous people and the Canadian state since the 1990s.

Media Attributions

- Tom Longboat, the Canadian runner, 1907 © Charles Aylett is licensed under a Public Domain license

11.2 Environment and Colonialism



Figure 11.2 The Sinixt people of the Arrow Lakes controlled salmon fisheries along the Columbia River system, including this site at Fort Colville in what is now Washington State. Epidemics, ranching, mining, industrial fisheries, and hydroelectric projects reduced their numbers to such an extent that in 1956 they were declared "extinct" by Ottawa, much to the chagrin of the Sinixt still living in BC.

One of the more subtle features of colonialism is the way in which it creates environments that favour newcomers over natives. NASA defines *terraforming* — a staple of many science-fiction movies — as "the process of transforming a hostile environment into one suitable for human life."[1] But what kind of "human life"? If it's European human life, extensive grazing lands will be required for their dairy animals and meat herds, and even larger territories will be required for grain production and a variety of edible and non-edible crops that include tobacco and cotton, among others.

European societies effectively terraformed North America to make it more amenable to their familiar and preferred food sources. By doing so, the kinds of animals and plants on which innumerable generations of Indigenous peoples survived were reduced, removed, or eliminated. Bison herds, salal berries, camas roots, and many other resources were chased off, burned away, or ploughed under to make way for beef cattle, strawberries, and potatoes. This occurred in small plots across New France and British North America before 1867, and in the post-Confederation years, the wholesale transformation of the Prairie West under the plough is one of the most rapid and enormous examples of environmental colonialism in history. Accomplishing this required a reorganization of the land itself (into lots), the addition of modern-era infrastructure (roads, rails, airports), and the development of energy sources to keep this new economic order moving. From the mid-century to the present, hydroelectricity projects have had the greatest impact on indigenous populations. The Columbia and Peace River projects in British Columbia, Churchill Falls in Labrador, and the James Bay dams in

1. Mars Team Online, accessed February 1, 2016, http://quest.nasa.gov/mars/background/terra.html.

northern Quebec have flooded more than a million hectares of land. There have been cases (BC's Columbia Valley system, for example) where Euro-Canadians have been displaced, but these are the exceptions that prove the rule. Mostly "native land" has been terraformed so as to be unusable for anything other than the production of electricity.

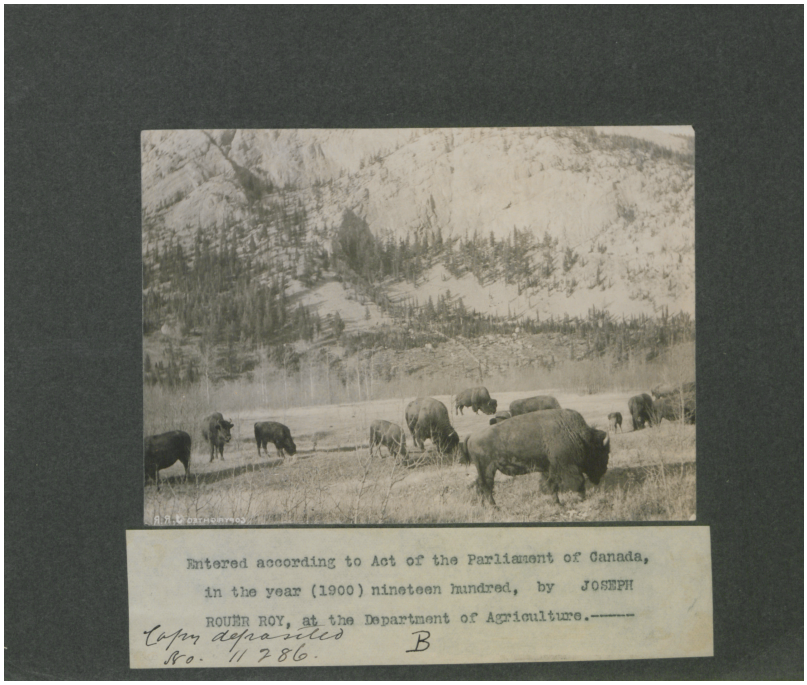


Figure 11.3 By 1900 bison herds were virtually extinct, and their rangeland was being converted to wheat fields. [Long Description]

Sometimes these changes have been less immediate but no less disastrous for Indigenous economies and communities. The commercial salmon fishery in Georgia Strait (aka: the Salish Sea) in the early part of the 20th century plundered the sockeye and spring runs so aggressively that fewer and fewer spawning fish made it into the Interior along the Fraser and Thompson River systems. Communities that relied on these resources, and which had fewer fallback alternatives, suffered from an industrialized fishery hundreds of miles away. However, the situation could be worse: it is thought that the Sacramento River in California was the largest salmon spawning ground on the west coast of North America in the 19th century, but today, the native fish are as good as extinct.

The loss of resources like salmon or bison is often used as a reason to relocate native communities. Having terraformed Canada to suit the needs of the Euro-Canadian food and economic cultures, Canadian administrators were tasked with finding spaces where alienated native people could be huddled together with alternative resources or services delivered from "the south." Thus, relocations and their consequent economic marginalization became common themes in Indigenous history in the 20th century.

Environmental historian Sean Kheraj (York University) describes how one mammal species bounced back in a Europeanized environment.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=661#oembed-1

Key Points

- Indigenous people experienced the arrival Euro-Canadian agriculture and other industries as a process that alienated land and food resources, as well as traditional spaces with more complex meanings.
- European food cultures have been historically incompatible with Indigenous food resources.
- The mega-projects of the 20th century displaced permanently large numbers of Indigenous peoples by utterly destroying their landscapes.

Long Descriptions

Figure 11.3 long description: Herd of buffalo at the foot of a mountain. The photo is of a photo beside a slip of paper. The paper, written on a typewriter, says “Entered according to Act of the Parliament of Canada, in the year (1900) nineteen hundred, by Joseph Rouer Roy, at the Department of Agriculture.” [Return to Figure 11.3]

Media Attributions

- Bush Camp © Paul Kane is licensed under a Public Domain license

11.3 Natives by the Numbers



Figure 11.4 This is a strange pastiche from a pre-Photoshop era. What "The Evening of his Race" conveys, however, is the belief of many in settler society that First Nations' days were numbered.

In the 19th century, Karl Marx predicted the withering away of the state, and John A. Macdonald and his contemporaries predicted the withering away of Indigenous peoples.

Many non-Indigenous people anticipated that it would be a matter of only a few generations until the First Nations of Canada ceased to be. Some Native people would sacrifice their status and be assimilated into the mainstream of Canadian society, but the bulk would simply perish. Viewed in this light, it is necessary to understand the initiatives like the treaties, reserves, and the industrial schools as temporary measures that would not be needed for long. Why invest heavily in an educational system that won't be necessary in 20 years?

From where did this expectation of a vanishing population arise? Although the mid-19th century saw an improved understanding of infectious diseases, it didn't do much to stop their spread. Germ theory was just beginning to gain a toehold, and the prevention and cure of some illnesses was coming within reach. The Euro-Canadian population would experience enormous benefits from this revolution in medical science, but Indigenous peoples did not. Indeed, the settlers tasked with the guardianship role envisioned by Ottawa were often misguided in their understanding of how health sciences operated. Missionaries in the mid- and late-19th century debated the health advantages of intermarriage between Indigenous peoples and non-Natives. According to one historian, the Moravian Church in Labrador during the 1860s "began to sanction intermarriage on the grounds that European blood, with its

resistance to Western diseases, might protect the Inuit from extinction."[1] It certainly didn't make much difference elsewhere. Exotic diseases were still having a severe impact on Indigenous populations, even where there had been decades of intermarriage. Smallpox was by no means done at the end of the 19th century; as recently as 1862-1863, the last great smallpox epidemic burned through British Columbian Indigenous populations, claiming upwards of 20,000 lives. The Haida, to take one specific case, numbered in excess of 8,400 in 1840 and barely 1,600 in 1881; the Heiltsuk, to take another, were reckoned to total more than 2,000 in 1835 and only 204 in 1890. The loss of access to resources that occurred around the same time on the West Coast and the plains, in particular as settler societies arrived, reduced Indigenous peoples access to traditional foods, and thus poverty's grip intensified and Aboriginal people became malnourished. This cycle was repeated for much of the next century: vulnerability led to death; deaths led to dispossession; dispossession created greater vulnerability; and so on.

An Overview

Canadians' understanding of Indigenous population numbers is somewhat akin to looking through the wrong end of the telescope. Resettlement of the Prairies and British Columbia occurred when native numbers were already slashed. However, historians disagree over the pre-contact demography of Canada. Only a few years ago, scholars spoke with confidence of a probable 100,000 Indigenous individuals in what became Canada, but now moderate estimates suggests that there were three to five times that number in the Pacific Northwest alone. By 1867, however, the total number of First Nations was about 125,000, including roughly 10,000 Métis in the West and 2,000 Inuit in the North.

These numbers were not stable. Indigenous demographics worsened up until the 1920s. Population numbers bottomed out — reached their **nadir**— in most communities sometime between the 1890s and the interwar era, and then began a slow but steady recovery. From 113,724 in 1921, the total more than doubled by 1951 and surpassed half a million in 1971.[2] The 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples used a more restrictive definition of *Aboriginal* but, even so, it observed population increases of 42% from 1961 to 1971, 57% from 1971 to 1981, and nearly 47% from 1981 to 1991.[3]

This 20th century turn-around was fuelled by high fertility rates and came in the face of terrible health conditions. Even at the end of the 20th century, by which time the fertility transition saw overall Canadian fertility drop to below 2.1 births per woman (which is to say, below replacement levels), it was comfortably in the 3.0 range on reserves. In the 1960s, the Indigenous crude birth rate stood at 47 per 1,000 population, falling to 28 per 1,000 by 1980, and rebounding a little to 29.5 in 1991.[4] Indigenous fertility rates have resisted global and Canadian trends toward smaller families in part because of socio-economic factors: educational attainment — for mothers in particular — is a strong predictor of life-time fertility and, generally, Indigenous females have had fewer opportunities in this

1. Lynne D. Fitzhugh, *The Labradorians: Voices from the Land of Cain* (St. John's, NF: Breakwater, 1999), 250-251.

2. Statistics Canada, *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2nd ed., ed. F. H. Leacy (Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada, 1983), A154-184.

3. Lance W. Roberts, Rodney A. Clifton, Barry Ferguson, Karen Kampen, and Simon Langlois, eds. *Recent Social Trends in Canada, 1960-2000* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005), 32.

4. Juhee Suwal and Frank Trovato, "Canadian Aboriginal Fertility," *Canadian Studies in Population* 25, no. 1 (1998): 75.

respect than non-Indigenous women. Poverty, artificial and racist barriers to secondary education, and cultural disinclinations to stay in school (partly a product of the dismal record of residential schools) contributed to higher fertility throughout the 20th century and into the new millennium.

Having more babies, however, is only part of the equation. While there were additions (few of which, incidentally, came from immigration — unlike in a newcomer society), there were also significant subtractions. Poverty and malnutrition, along with overcrowding on reserves, poor state-provided housing, and cramped living conditions among children in residential schools were ideal circumstances for the spread of **epidemic tuberculosis (TB)**. Well-established within Indigenous communities in the East by 1800, TB spread to the West Coast in the early 19th century, the Plains during the railway boom, the sub-Arctic in the early 20th century, and the Arctic soon thereafter. Mortality rates were at record levels. Tuberculosis is more conventionally known as a disease associated with rapid urbanization, tenement housing, and slums, but its toll in industrializing Europe was surpassed by rural, isolated Aboriginal communities. Fully 700 per 100,000 population died in First Nations communities in the 1930s and 1940s and, even though this ranks as one of the worst rates recorded, it is utterly eclipsed by the 8,000 per 100,000 mortality recorded in residential schools.[5] By the 1950s, the TB epidemic among Inuit had affected a third of the population, many of whom were sent south for treatment (that included surgical draining of the lungs and the removal of ribs). It was not until advances in antibiotics and specifically the development of streptomycin in the mid-1950s that mortality rates fell among Indigenous peoples (the rest of Canadian society already had experienced enough socio-economic improvements to reduce its mortality rates).

Removal and resettlement confounds any effort at a continuous demography of Indigenous peoples. Although the First Nations that signed ("took") treaties had the expectation that the Canadians would provide medicine and would exercise a "guardian"-like role, the colonial authorities proved incapable of settling on a consistent definition of *aboriginal* and *indigenous*. Repeated efforts on the part of Canada to reduce its obligations produced fluid categories and a shell-and-pea approach to counting people in Indigenous communities. Doing so left Indigenous peoples exposed to health crises and, from the demographer's perspective, continues to vex any understanding of the population history of Indigenous peoples. Status and non-Status categories make matters slippery enough, but Métis self-identification compounds things considerably. From a fraction of the total in the pre-WWII period, Métis, as a share of the Indigenous total, have leapt to 32%.[6] Changes to the legal definition of *Status* and the reinstatement of Indigenous women and their children as Status Indians beginning in 1985 gave a major boost to Indigenous numbers and demonstrates: a) the arbitrariness of this census category, b) the way it was used by government to give the false impression of declining numbers, and c) a sense of how badly undercounted Indigenous populations may have been in the 100 years after the *Indian Act*.

Other significant changes include growth in urban Indigenous numbers. Winnipeg's Indigenous population, to take one example, quadrupled from 1985 to 2010, rising to 10% of the city's total

5. "TB and Aboriginal People", *Canadian Public Health Association,* accessed February 11, 2016, https://www.cpha.ca/tb-and-aboriginal-people.

6. Statistics Canada, *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: First Nations People, Metis and Inuit, National Household Survey, 2011,* Catalogue no. 99-011-X2011001 (Ottawa: Minister of Industry, 2013): 6.

population.[7] In the cities as well as in rural areas, this population continues to be young: roughly one-quarter of the Indigenous population is under 15 years of age, which reflects the high fertility rates that have pulled Indigenous numbers up from the 1920s nadir levels. It also reflects the high rates of morbidity and lower life expectancies of Indigenous people. In 1975 Indigenous males had a projected life expectancy of 59.2 years, whereas Canadian males generally were at 70.3 years. The gap closed significantly by 2000 to 69.5 and 76.0 years respectively, but the distribution of elders is still starkly different: in the non-Indigenous population, individuals over 75 years of age constitute close to 6%, whereas Indigenous elders constitute less than 1% of their population.

Métis Populations

The significant Métis presence in the West was almost overwhelmed after the defeat of the Northwest Rebellion in 1885. Just as the Canadianization of Red River squeezed the Métis out of southern Manitoba and into the Saskatchewan River Valleys, the hanging of Riel was followed with further movement to the north and west. The Métis diaspora retained roots in what would become the province of Saskatchewan, although greater and greater numbers moved into Alberta. In 1900 Treaty 8 provided land grants to Métis in the north, but poverty obliged many to sacrifice those gains to make some ready cash.

At this time, the Métis occupied an administrative and legal space that was neither as good nor as bad as that of First Nations. They had little in the way of Treaty rights, but they were not as heavily administered as Reserve bands. Racial discrimination was an increasing concern as the category of "half-breed" — once almost a neutral descriptor — became a term of contempt. The ongoing Métis relationship with the Catholic Church and allies in Quebec, however, was both fortuitous and a strategy for survival in the emergent Canadian nation. Openness to supporters and reinforcements in fact brought changes to the Métis in the 20th century. In prairie communities where the presence of Métis francophones and the clergy attracted Québecois settlers, the Métis' *Canadien* traditions and French identity became of greater importance; however, in those areas where connections with the Cree were stronger, an Indigenous identity became more apparent. These were only two of several emergent divisions across Métis communities in the West. The "New Nation" struggled with definitions that made it simultaneously more and less inclusive. Was being "Métis" a category into which anyone of mixed ancestry might fit or was it a hybridized culture that was more than the sum of its Plains Native and Franco-Canadien parts?

Beginning in the 1930s, Métis organizations emerged and gained traction politically. Although membership inevitably included individuals who had Indian Status, most Métis do not. For this reason, many Métis have not viewed organizations like the Native Indian Brotherhood bodies as sufficiently representative of Métis interests. Nevertheless, inclusion in Section 35 of the *Constitution Act* of 1982 as "Aboriginal" peoples with legally entrenched rights has presented an opportunity. There are now more than 400,000 Canadians who identify as Métis.

7. Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, "Fact Sheet – Urban Aboriginal Population in Canada," accessed February 11, 2016, https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100014298/1100100014302.

The Return of the Native

Bulked up Métis numbers are only part of the current picture. In the 10 years after 1996, the number of Canadians who identify themselves as *Aboriginal* in the census expanded from slightly under 800,000 to 1,172,790. What happened after 1996? The changes that Bill C-31 (1985) introduced with respect to *Status* took a while to process, but led inexorably to "identity mobility."[8] This was coupled with a growing emphasis on Indigenous community recovery, enthusiasm for reviving languages, and greater public awareness of First Nations issues. Although the law and colonialism had dissuaded Indigenous from claiming this identity in the past, the circumstances had changed. The resumption of the mandatory long-form census in 2016 will likely reveal a continuing growth curve, although possibly less dramatic. The reappearance of Indigenous numbers at the millennium may well have been a one-shot increase, although fertility rates remain outstanding.

Key Points

- Indigenous populations were declining severely until they reached their nadir in the years between 1890 and 1930.
- Depopulation, which was accelerating in the late 19th century and made worse by TB in the early 20th, impacted Indigenous peoples' view of colonization and Canada's view of Native people.
- Accessing reliable numbers of Indigenous populations after Confederation is complicated by categories like *Status* and *non-Status*, relocation projects, and differing understandings of who qualified as "Métis."
- Population recovery in the 20th century has been aggressive, even though it has had to counter high mortality rates and low life expectancy rates.
- Indigenous numbers in urban areas increased in the late 20th century as more First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people moved into cities and as those urban populations themselves experienced natural increase (that is, births over deaths).

Media Attributions

- The Evening of His Race © B.W. Leeson is licensed under a Public Domain license

8. Lisa Monchalin, *The Colonial Problem: An Indigenous Perspective on Crime and Punishment in Canada* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 8-9.

11.4 Indigenous – Settler Relations before Confederation

Jennifer Pettit; Department of Humanities; and Mount Royal University

Relations between the Crown and Indigenous peoples in what is now Canada began hundreds of years ago and have been affected by both internal and external forces. These interactions have changed over time and continue to evolve today. While there were periods in which some have deemed the association a partnership, more often it has been exchanges that were largely characterized by myopic policies and actions by the British, and later Canadian federal government; a lack of consultation; and an absence of consent by Indigenous peoples — in short, Canada is built on colonialist foundations. Some, such as the recent **Truth and Reconciliation Commission**, have even described the government's policies for Indigenous peoples as **cultural genocide**.[1] In the words of historian Susan Neylan:

> …most Canadians have trouble regarding themselves as living in an Aboriginal nation or seeing how historical legacies have relevance for contemporary identities. However, scholars of Aboriginal History are well aware of how Canada was founded upon acts of resettlement and dispossession. The erasure of its original inhabitants and their histories is the byproduct of a persistent "settler myth" that views Aboriginal peoples as obstacles to, or in the least, passive players in the "real" history of non-Indigenous peoples, who are presumed to have dealt peacefully and benevolently with those Aboriginal societies.[2]

This section and the three that follow trace the history of these dealings of the British and Canadian government with Indigenous peoples from just prior to Confederation up until and including more recent events such as political activism, land claims, confrontations such as Oka, and new movements such as Idle No More.

Economic and Military Allies

Historians such as J. R. Miller have described early interactions between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous newcomers as an "era of cooperation" in which reciprocal relationships existed.[3] These contacts began hundreds of years ago when Europeans began to travel to North America in search of resources such as fish and timber. Soon they discovered that furs, in particular beaver, was a profitable commodity. While the extent to which Indigenous groups became involved in the fur trade varied, many willingly and readily became "partners in furs," since they too saw various benefits to being

1. Canada, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, "Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada" [PDF], last modified July 23, 2015, http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/trc/IR4-7-2015-eng.pdf.

2. Susan Neylan, "Colonialism and Resettling British Columbia: Canadian Aboriginal Historiography, 1992–2012," *History Compass* 11, no. 10 (2013): 833.

3. See works such as J. R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000).

involved in the trade.[4] However, in these early years, the British and French clashed over control of the trade and other events external to North America. Before long, Indigenous peoples were drawn into various battles and were also encouraging the British and French to join with them as allies in their own conflicts.

Cognizant of the value and importance of military alliances with Indigenous peoples, in 1755, the British government established the British Indian Department, which was divided into two parts: a Northern Department under Sir William Johnson (1715-1774) who was named Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and a second department that was to manage affairs with Indigenous peoples farther south. Both departments were under the jurisdiction of the Commander of the British Forces in North America. Shortly after the creation of the Indian Department, the Seven Years' War broke out in which rivals Britain and France fought for control not only of what would become the country of Canada, but beyond on a global scale. The main goal of the Indian Department during these battles was to ensure that various Indigenous groups were allies, or at the very least remained neutral. In the end, the British would gain control of Canada from the French, and Indigenous peoples would officially fall under British imperial authority.

The Royal Proclamation

In 1763 shortly after the end of the Seven Years' War, the British passed the **Royal Proclamation** that set aside a large territory west of the British-American **Thirteen Colonies** and that more importantly, also recognized inherent Indigenous land tenure rights or Aboriginal title to the land. The Proclamation set out a fiduciary or protector relationship in which the Crown would act as a trustee who would supposedly act in the best interests of Indigenous peoples, overseeing the policy that Aboriginal title could be extinguished only by treaty with the Crown. The Royal Proclamation also promised that Indigenous peoples would "not be molested or disturbed." Alongside these changes, the Indian Department grew in size and complexity, in part, because of the failure of the Royal Proclamation to keep colonists off Indigenous lands, but primarily due to a series of other battles including the American Revolutionary War (1775-1783). Thus, the main goal of the British government remained to maintain Indigenous peoples as allies.

The "Indian Problem" and Early Government and Church Solutions

The end of the War of 1812 (1812-1815) initiated a new era of relations with Indigenous peoples. As the threat of future North American wars retreated, increasingly, Indigenous peoples were seen as a "problem."[5] This situation was exacerbated by the decline of the fur trade in some areas, growing demand for Indigenous land by settlers, and increasing costs of supplying presents to First Nations groups to ensure their loyalty. With costs rising and returns dwindling, the British government sought a

4. See Daniel Francis and Toby Morantz, *Partners in Fur: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay, 1600-1870 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983) and Robin Fisher, Contact & Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890*, 2nd ed. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1992).

5. See Noel Dyck, *What is the Indian "Problem": Tutelage and Resistance in Canadian Indian Administration* (St. John's, NF: Institute of Social and Economic Studies, 1991).

new direction for their interactions with Indigenous peoples. Thus, in 1829 under Major General H.C. Darling, Superintendent of Indians, a new plan was proposed that would supposedly address the "Indian problem."

Darling proposed a plan to "civilize" Indigenous peoples by assimilating them into Euro-Canadian society. This plan would shape Canadian Indian administration thinking for many years. Whether or not this plan was assimilation or genocide has been debated, although assimilation did become a justification in Canada for colonialism. The plan to civilize and protect Indigenous peoples resulted in significant changes to the Indian Department in 1830, including moving control of the Department from the military to the civil arm of government.

This new "civilization" plan sought to turn Indigenous peoples into self-sufficient Christian farmers who would integrate into settler society and no longer be a costly expense for the government.[6] To keep up with the economic, technological, and social changes in the Canada, Indigenous peoples were to be converted to Christianity; taught to practice a trade (usually farming); and educated on how to live, act, and dress as Euro-Canadians. As a result, model farming communities such as the one at the Coldwater Narrows reserve near Lake Simcoe were built. In addition, treaties moved from a model of largely peace and friendship to treaties whose goal was land cession in which First Nations peoples would be placed on reserves. The government argued that this was for the protection of Indigenous peoples until they could assimilate or until they disappeared completely (what many at the time saw as an inevitability). It also, of course, helped clear the path for non-Indigenous settlement.



Figure 11.5 The Mohawk Institute and Farm at Brantford, 1917.

Government officials felt it would be best to begin "civilizing" at an early age, which would take place in schools in which children would be removed from the influences of their parents. While day schools existed, there was not yet a manual labour or industrial school system in place in which students would receive basic academic instruction and also be taught a trade. Soon, the first of these industrial schools, the **Mohawk Institute**, opened in Brantford, Ontario in the 1830s under the auspices of the New England Company.[7] While there would be an initial outlay to construct and maintain the schools, these costs were borne largely by the churches, and it was assumed that assimilation would happen quickly.

6. See Jennifer Pettit, "'To Christianize and Civilize': Native Industrial Schools in Canada" (PhD dissertation, University of Calgary, 1997).

7. See Jennifer Pettit, "From Longhouse to Schoolhouse: The Mohawk Institute 1834-1970" (MA thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1993).

Some officials such as Lieutenant-Governor Sir Francis Bond Head (1793-1875), however, argued in the mid-1830s that any attempts to assimilate Indigenous peoples were folly and that the Indigenous peoples of what is now Ontario should be gathered up and moved to Manitoulin Island. Bond Head's plan failed to gain support, and the government forged ahead with Darling's civilization plan instead.

From the 1830s to the 1850s, the British government also undertook a number of investigations into Indigenous affairs in the newly created united Province of Canada. As was the case up to this point, these inquiries were made without any consultation with Indigenous peoples. One of the earliest of these studies, the Bagot Commission, reported in 1844, argued that changes needed to be made to a number of areas including the management of Indigenous land. A number of Acts followed, including the *Gradual Civilization Act* (1857), which promoted voluntary enfranchisement and the gradual dissolution of reserve lands. Another significant change took place in 1860, when the British government transferred the control of Indian affairs to the Province of Canada.

Key Points

- Pre-Conquest relations between Indigenous nations and newcomers (principally French and British) could be described as military and economic alliances and collaborations.
- Beginning with the Royal Proclamation in 1763, Aboriginal title was recognized by the British regime at a time when military alliances with powerful indigenous communities were sought after.
- Military circumstances changed after 1815 and so too did the Euro-Canadian perspective on Indigenous peoples.
- The phase that followed focused on assimilating Indigenous peoples into the economic and cultural norms of Euro-Canadians. This process was known as "civilizing."

Media Attributions

- Mohawk Institute farm in Brantford, [Ont.] © John Boyd, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3309629) is licensed under a Public Domain license

11.5 Indigenous-Settler Relations since Confederation

Jennifer Pettit; Department of Humanities; and Mount Royal University



Figure 11.6 A Mi'kmaq delegation waiting to meet with Governor General Marquess of Lorne in 1878.

Additional attention to Canadian policy for Indigenous peoples came about as the result of Canadian Confederation in 1867. Section 91, Subsection 24 of the *British North America Act* made the federal government responsible for all matters related to Indigenous peoples, and made First Nations peoples into wards of the Federal Government. The portfolio of Indian Affairs was placed under the guidance of the Secretary of State and, despite some early failures, much of the earlier legislation and policies were maintained including the civilization plan, treaties, and the reserve system. Additionally, some new legislation was passed including the *Enfranchisement Act* (1869), which made enfranchisement compulsory in some cases (such as when an Indigenous woman married a non-Indigenous man),

promoted individual land ownership, and granted the government the power to impose an elective band council system of governance. As had been the case in the past, these changes were made largely to benefit non-Indigenous society without consultation with First Nations peoples. The government was concerned with the territorial growth of Canada; acquiring land from the Hudson's Bay Company in the West; creating the new provinces of Manitoba, British Columbia and Prince Edward Island; and creating an Indian Lands Branch in the new Department of the Interior in 1873.

"Christianize and Civilize"

The most significant piece of legislation in this period was the passage of the *Indian Act* of 1876.[1] Consisting of 100 sections, the *Indian Act* consolidated earlier legislation and addressed a wide variety of areas concerning lands, status, and governance. At the core of the *Act* was the reinforcement of the policy of aggressive assimilation and colonization. This *Act*, among other things, defined who was and was not an "Indian" according to the government, described band election procedures, defined a *band* and *reserve*, and discussed the management of resources including timber and band monies. Invasive and paternalistic, the *Indian Act* ignored the diversity among Indigenous groups in Canada, and treated Indigenous peoples as children who required management. Made into wards of the state, Indigenous peoples were no longer autonomous according to the government. As was the case in the past, central to the *Indian Act* and new policies was the plan to separate Indigenous peoples from their land through a system of treaty-making and reserves, and increased farming instruction and schools for Indigenous children. This plan was particularly important in Western Canada to clear the way for settlers who were central to Prime Minister John A. Macdonald's National Policy, one part of which was the settlement of the West through immigration (see Section 3.3). However, first, the government had to extinguish Indigenous title through a series of treaties signed in the early and mid-1870s.

Given the changes brought about by the numbered treaties and the expanding importance of the Indian Affairs portfolio, in 1880, the Indian Branch of the Department of the Interior was turned into a separate department called the Department of Indian Affairs, although the Minister of the Interior continued to act as Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs and oversaw the new department. There would be much to focus on, including strengthening the civilization program through the promotion of farming instruction and schools.

Key Points

- In 1867, the Dominion of Canada inherited Britain's responsibility for maintaining relations and honouring agreements made with Indigenous peoples.
- Between the years 1867 and 1900, the policy of "civilization" continued, to which was added a greater focus on Christianization.
- The *Indian Act* (1876) took a "pan-Indian" view of Native peoples and created categories and processes that were both artificial and bureaucratic, which provided the means for aggressive colonization and displacement.

1. See John Leslie, *The Historical Development of the Indian Act* (Ottawa, ON: Treaties and Historical Research Centre, 1978).

Media Attributions

- Micmac Indians Waiting to Receive Lord Lorne, Halifax © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2839092) is licensed under a Public Domain license

11.6 Living with Treaties

Keith Smith; Departments of History and First Nations Studies; and Vancouver Island University

Not unlike communities in Europe or elsewhere, the Indigenous peoples of North America confirmed access to resource sites, facilitated trade, resolved conflicts, settled alliances, and navigated the mass of other relations with their neighbours by negotiating agreements. When European newcomers found their way into Indigenous territories, they realized it was in their interest, and often necessary for their survival, to learn Indigenous treaty protocols and to fit themselves into Indigenous commercial networks. After these initial encounters, over time, treaty making changed in intent and content, but whether for military alliance, access to land and resources, or for some other reason, all of those involved understood that only agreements of this sort could protect the often divergent strategic, cultural, and economic interests of the treaty partners.[1]

The significance of treaty making to the newcomers is evident in Britain's *Royal Proclamation* (1763) that, in part, committed it and then Canada to gain the consent of Indigenous Nations before settling in their territories. This commitment led to several treaties on Canada's West Coast, and in what became Ontario and southern Manitoba prior to 1867. Soon after Confederation, the treaty process continued with the negotiation of the so-called "numbered treaties," the first seven of which were concluded between 1871 and 1877 and covered the southern region between Lake Superior and the Rocky Mountains. For its part, Canada was primarily concerned with the acquisition of land and the fulfillment of its promise to British Columbia for a transcontinental railway. First Nations, on the other hand, were generally interested in protecting their territories and resources from incursion, while at the same time ensuring their cultural survival and independence. For them, these treaties were peace treaties. As Piikani (Peigan) elder Cecile Many Guns (aka: Grassy Water) confirmed almost a century after the treaties, the intent was that there would be "no more fighting between anyone, everybody will be friends…. Everybody will be in peace."[2]

From the perspective of the newcomers, the transfer of land stood above all other policy considerations, and the numbered treaties were presented as successful mechanisms by both politicians of the day and many later historians. However, it is becoming increasingly recognized that rather than representing everything that was agreed to, the written treaties are much more reflective of Canada's goals and Euro-Canadian interpretations of treaty-making, and much less representative of the objectives of First Nations and of Indigenous understandings of treaty processes. Many of the arrangements that were presented and agreed to orally during treaty negotiations are absent or minimized in the text of the numbered treaties.[3] The actual meaning of these treaties remains in dispute among historians and in the courts.

1. On treaty making in Canada across time see J. R. Miller, *Compact, Contract, Covenant: Aboriginal Treaty-Making in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009).

2. Interview with Mrs. Cecile Many Guns conducted by Dila Provost and Albert Yellowhorn Sr., n.d. University of Regina, *oURspace*, http://ourspace.uregina.ca/handle/10294/586.

3. Sarah Carter, *Aboriginal People and Colonizers of Western Canada to 1900* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 118-127.

Reserves

As a central provision of the **numbered treaties**, and where there were no treaties as Federal Government policy initiatives, isolated enclaves called *Indian reserves* were created to accommodate Indigenous people. The reserve system, as it developed in the mid to late 19th century, was meant as a temporary measure only, providing closed sites where missionaries and agents of the state could indoctrinate Indigenous populations in the economic, political, religious, and social conduct acceptable to settler Canada. Reserves offered residents refuge of sort from the various forms of discrimination they faced in the outside world, but to policy makers and church officials, they were laboratories of reform where residents could be observed and judged and where "Indian-ness" could be instructed, legislated, or coerced out of Indigenous people.[4] On these fragments of ancestral territories, Indigenous residents held the right to occupancy only. Ownership and title remained in the hands of Canada.



Figure 11.7 Medals were issued to Indigenous signatories of the numbered treaties. This 1873 example was given to Muskeekee Eyineer, one of the Manitoban signatories to Treaty 3.

Since non-Indigenous lawmakers took for themselves, even in treaty areas, absolute authority to decide who would own land, reserve size depended largely on local settler demand. Even in areas covered by the numbered treaties, reserve size was calculated differentially on the basis of between 160 and 640 acres per family of five, while in British Columbia, for example, 10 acres per family was established as the standard. These inequities, and the smaller average reserve land base in Canada compared to the United States, were recognized and challenged by Indigenous political movements such as the Allied

4. Keith Smith, *Liberalism, Surveillance, and Resistance: Indigenous Communities in Western Canada, 1877-1927* (Edmonton, AB: University of Athabasca Press, 2009), 50.

Tribes of British Columbia during the First World War and Interwar period, but they have largely remained to the present day.[5]

Regardless of the original size of reserves, even these small tracts remaining to Indigenous people were often under threat. While the Federal Government restricted the ability of reserve communities to manage the lands they lived on, Canadian officials were more than willing to alienate reserve lands themselves to meet settler demands for mineral, forest, or agricultural lands; for the construction of transportation routes or military sites; or for a myriad of other purposes. While often, though not always, Indigenous agreement of a sort was sought, this consent was regularly acquired under circumstances that were at best questionable. Additionally, the sale of reserve lands was consistently presented as being in the long-term interests of the reserve communities, although it was railway and corporate executives and other members of the settler elite — including senior **Department of Indian Affairs (DIA)** and other public officials — who gained possession of the alienated reserve lands during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.[6] Some of these land sales continue to be the subject of land claims and court challenges.

The contradictions here are apparent. While Canada presented its policies as beneficial to Indigenous peoples, and while it maintained that its goal was to remake reserve residents into farmers, the best agricultural land was the first to be removed from First Nations' control. Even the right to use modern farming equipment and to participate in training programs, farm organizations, and **wheat pools** like their non-Native neighbours were curbed by Canadian officials. Further, amendments were made to the *Indian Act* soon after its creation, and more strictly applied after the mid-1880s, whereby reserve residents were required to secure a permit before selling or giving away any goods located or produced on reserves or by reserve residents. While some, like Cree elder John Tootoosis (1899-1989), recognized the positive aspects of the permit system as a means to protect First Nations vendors and consumers, he nonetheless saw it as a "loaded gun" that was, in the end, turned against those it was ostensibly designed to protect. Certainly, there was ongoing resistance to all of this from Indigenous communities, but for the most part, the protests were disregarded in Ottawa.[7]

Restricting Movement and Cultural Practices

Most Canadians are secure in their right to move about freely and practice whatever form of spirituality they choose, but in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Canadian and church authorities went to some lengths to restrict both for those they defined as *Indians*. The kinds of activities allowed on ever-shrinking reserves were increasingly limited, restrictions were placed on movement, and cultural

5. Ibid., 132; Robert White-Harvey, "Reservation Geography and Restoration of Native Self-Government," *The Dalhousie Law Journal* 17, no. 2 (1994): 588-589; *Statement of the Allied Indian Tribes of British Columbia for the Government of British Columbia* (Vancouver: Cowan & Brookhouse, 1919) in LAC, RG 10, vol. 3821, file 59335, part 4A.

6. Robert Cail, *Land, Man and the Law: The Disposal of Crown Lands in British Columbia, 1871-1913* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1974), 14; Peggy Martin-McGuire, *First Nation Land Surrenders on the Prairies, 1896-1911* (Ottawa, ON: Indian Claims Commission, 1998), 15-16, 42, 493-494, and 497-498.

7. Sarah Carter, *Lost Harvests: Prairie Indian Reserve Farmers and Government Policy* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 253-258 and 156-158; Smith, *Liberalism, Surveillance and Resistance*, 99-103; Jean Goodwill and Norma Sluman, *John Tootoosis* (Winnipeg, MB: Pemmican Publications, 1984), 123-125.

practices among reserve residents were policed and penalized. The suppression of liberty among Indigenous peoples was central to Canada's Indian policy.

The Pass System

The confinement of Indigenous peoples to reserves was set in motion through the application of a matrix of laws, regulations, and policies meant to "elevate" reserve residents while advancing the interests of non-Indigenous settlers. In much of Canada, movement was limited through the **vagrancy** provisions of the **Criminal Code** or the restrictions against trespass in the *Indian Act*. However, in the region that became the prairie provinces, the most notorious and comprehensive element of the restrictive matrix was implemented through a Federal Government policy known as the **pass system**. Under this initiative, a reserve resident was required to first secure a written pass from their Indian agent if they wanted to visit family or friends in a nearby village; check on their children at a residential school; participate in a celebration or attend a cultural event in a neighbouring community; leave their reserve to hunt, fish, and collect resources; find paid employment; travel to urban centres; or leave the reserve for any other reason.[8] According to Assiniboine Chief Dan Kennedy of the Carry the Kettle First Nation in Saskatchewan, "[t]he Indian reserve was a veritable concentration camp."[9]

Official correspondence from the decade before 1885 reveals that procedures were already in place and that there was a will at all levels of the D.I.A., the North-West Mounted Police, and political hierarchies, including Prime Minister John A. Macdonald himself, to restrict Indigenous movement in the West. The Northwest Resistance of 1885 provided the justification for the application of a comprehensive pass system in the Prairie West, regardless of whether individuals or their communities were part of the resistance.

All of those involved in the implementation of the pass system understood that it had no basis in Canadian law. It was never included in the *Indian Act* or any other piece of Canadian legislation, which naturally put senior police officials in a difficult position. The regulations were at odds with settlers who relied on Indigenous labour and trade (and so opposed the restrictions), but high-ranking policemen also feared that they would be humiliated once Indigenous people recognized the pass system lacked a legal foundation and then chose not to comply with the policy. Generally, the NWMP/RNWMP/RCMP leadership preferred compliance by persuasion rather than by force, although individual officers were at times even more zealous than Indian agents, and chose to apply force when they felt it was necessary. Indigenous people naturally resisted their confinement to reserves and seem to have made little distinction between being persuaded to remain on, or return to, their reserves and being escorted back by a contingent of mounted policemen. They tended to choose to comply with the policy, or openly defy it, according their own judgment of the specific situation.

There is textual evidence that passes continued to be issued until after World War I, and oral evidence that the pass system remained in operation into the mid-1930s at least. Even though Canada never had the capacity to forcibly restrict all off-reserve movement, the will of both the police and the D.I.A. to do what they could in this regard — regardless of the lack of legal foundation — is evident, even if some in the upper echelons of the police were sometimes uncomfortable.

8. This section on the pass system is drawn from Smith, *Liberalism, Surveillance and Resistance*, 60-77.

9. Dan Kennedy, *Recollections of an Assiniboine Chief*, ed. James R. Stevens (Toronto, ON: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), 87.

Cultural Restriction



Figure 11.8 State and church combined to end Indigenous cultural practices. Ceremonies were targeted, as were burial and mourning practices. By 1907 memorial poles were combined with headstones at Kitwanga as new forms were adopted while older ones persisted.

Not only were Indigenous people restricted in their right to move about freely, even in their traditional territories, but also spiritual practices that were fundamental to personal and community identity and well-being — and that had been practiced since time immemorial — were targeted for suppression. State and church officials alike were intolerant of these practices, which they regarded as alien and immoral. Canadian and religious authorities also recognized that spiritual systems were integral components of the cultural, political, economic, and social structures of Indigenous communities. To transform one, the others had to be reconfigured as well.[10]

10. Katherine Pettipas, *Severing the Ties that Bind: Government Repression of Indigenous Religious Ceremonies on the Prairies* (Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press, 1994), 3-4.



Figure 11.9 Potlatching continued at Alert Bay (aka: 'yalis) until an RCMP crackdown in 1921.

While there is evidence of this cultural repression across the country, the ceremonies of West Coast peoples known collectively as the **potlatch** received particular attention from politicians, missionaries, and government officials. The term *potlatch* refers to a complex of strictly regulated ceremonies that continue to be of critical significance to the Kwakwaka'wakw, Nuu-chah-nulth, Coast Salish, Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian, Heiltsuk, and other peoples of the North West Coast of North America. The potlatch is the central institution that binds each of these societies together. Potlatches can be held to confirm leadership, alliances, or access to land and resources. Names (and, thus, status) can be given or passed down, debts repaid, dishonour erased, marriages performed, births announced, or the loss of loved ones memorialized. Potlatches provide a forum for history to be transmitted and verified, and gifts are given to witnesses who are obliged to remember and confirm what they have experienced. In addition to handling and healing earthly concerns, potlatches also have important spiritual components.[11]

Many in late 19th and early 20th century settler society who were fortunate enough to witness potlatch ceremonies first hand, or who benefited materially by providing supplies, supported their continuation. On the other hand, Indian agents who saw families working for months to meet the expense of a potlatch denounced the institution as "foolish, wasteful, and demoralizing." It seemed to them that these ceremonies were held solely to give away material goods, a concept that was directly opposite to settler goals of capitalist accumulation and private property, and which simultaneously challenged settler understandings of what constituted "wealth."[12] Missionaries, for their part, tended to see potlatches simply as a manifestation of evil. Thomas Crosby (1840-1914), who worked as a Methodist lay missionary to Coast Salish peoples of southern Vancouver Island and the lower Fraser Valley, from 1863 to the 1890s, said of potlatches, "Of the many evils of heathenism, with the exception of witchcraft, the potlatch is the worst, and one of the most difficult to root out."[13]

11. John Lutz, *Makuk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 2008), 58.

12. Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890*, 2nd ed. (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1992), 206-207; Jean Barman, *The West Beyond the West: A History of British Columbia* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 160.

13. Thomas Crosby, *Among the An-Ko-me-nums or Flathead Tribes of Indians of the Pacific Coast* (Toronto, ON: William Briggs, 1907), 106.



Figure 9.10 Plains peoples like the Niitsitapi struggled to preserve ceremonies like the sun dance in the face of Canadian efforts to eradicate Indigenous cultures.

In 1884, the *Indian Act* was amended to include a ban on the potlatch along with the expressly spiritual dances associated with plains ceremonial practices. Unlike the pass system, the prohibition against these institutions and practices was backed up by the force of law that became ever more strict and comprehensive over time. Despite the legislative prohibitions, many communities felt they had no alternative but to continue to hold potlatches and dances, even if they went to considerable effort to make them more portable and keep them out of the view of missionaries and Indian agents. Even with these precautions, there was a wave of prosecutions and subsequent incarcerations soon after World War I. It wasn't until 1951 that the prohibitions against Indigenous ceremonies were finally dropped from the *Indian Act*. Some of the masks and other spiritual objects confiscated during the period of the ban have since been returned to their owners, but many others remain in the hands of museums and private collectors.

Key Points

- Treaties evolved as instruments for negotiating accommodation between Indigenous peoples and settler society. By the late 19th century, settler governments and citizens saw treaties as a means to acquire resources and manage Indigenous populations.
- The final versions of the numbered treaties do not always or honestly reflect what was agreed (or understood to have taken place) in the treaty-making processes.
- Reserves were accepted by Indigenous peoples as lands that were protected against intrusion; the Canadians carved out reserves as contained spaces in which assimilative efforts could be conducted more efficiently.
- Reserve size and resources were determined more by settler needs than Indigenous requirements

or expectations.

- Federal policies like the pass system and prohibitions against the potlatch and the sun dance were bureaucratic tools used to extinguish Indigenous culture while restricting basic freedoms of movement and belief.

Media Attributions

- Chief medal presented to commemorate Treaty No. 3 © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2851194) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Totem pole with modern tombstone © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3349323) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Sun Dance, Blackfeet Indians © Trueman, Library and Archives Canada (C-014106) is licensed under a Public Domain license

11.7 From Agricultural Training to Residential School

Jennifer Pettit; Department of Humanities; and Mount Royal University



Figure 11.11 The Numbered Treaties cover all of the Prairie West, the western North, most of northern Ontario, and a quarter of British Columbia.

By the time the numbered treaties and the reserve system were created, Indigenous peoples in what is now Western Canada faced dire conditions. Many communities were ravaged by diseases such as smallpox, and devastated by the whisky trade. The bison, on which they relied, was almost extinct.[1] The Canadian government once again decided that the solution was model farms to accompany a policy of peasant farming through which Indigenous families were to receive "2 acres and a cow" — and through which they were not encouraged to utilize any labour-saving machinery. The government felt this would ensure Indigenous peoples would be converted to sedentary farmers, but would not be so successful that they would compete with the new settlers moving west. Not surprisingly, the plan failed. Government bureaucrats at the time blamed the supposed "lazy" nature of First Nations peoples. Historian Sarah Carter has since proven that Indigenous peoples were interested

1. See James Daschuk, *Clearing the Plains: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life* (Regina, SK: University of Regina Press, 2013).

in farming, but that the government's policies and practices undermined reserve agriculture.[2] More important to the government was a new system of schools for Indigenous children.

Though they had weak results in the early schools in central Canada, the Federal Government was optimistic that expanding schools into the Prairies made sense, hopeful that the Indigenous peoples there could also be "civilized and Christianized."[3] Starving and destitute, some Indigenous peoples also hoped the schools would teach their children the skills necessary to adapt to changing conditions and, ideally, to learn a trade that would make them self-supporting. What remained to be determined though was what kind of education system would best serve the Indigenous peoples living in the West. To help answer that question in 1879, the government enlisted Nicholas Flood Davin (1840-1901), a Regina newspaper editor and the M.P. for Assiniboia West, to study the American system of industrial schools for Indigenous peoples. Notably, as was the pattern in government dealings with Indigenous peoples, Davin did not consult First Nations. He concluded that industrial schools in which children learned a trade and which were similar to those in the United States would be appropriate and useful in the West, despite disappointing results in similar schools in Central Canada. Davin also suggested that the Canadian government forge alliances with the churches to manage the schools.[4] These "industrial" schools were costly, however, and as a result, a parallel system of day and boarding schools was also created. Boarding schools were similar to the industrial schools, but were typically smaller with a much reduced focus on trades instruction. The first of the industrial schools — the Qu'Appelle Industrial School and the Battleford Industrial School located in the future province of Saskatchewan, and the St. Joseph's School (also known as the High River or Dunbow school) southwest of Calgary — opened in the 1880s. These schools would lay the groundwork for a system of schools that would eventually spread across the Prairies and into British Columbia and the North.



Figure 11.12 The Fort Qu'Appelle Indian Industrial School was one of the first to open. Seen here ca. 1885 with teepees and carts outside the fence.

2. See Sarah Carter, *Lost Harvests: Prairie Indian Reserve Farmers and Government Policy* (Montreal, QC: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990).

3. See J. R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1996) and John Milloy, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986* (Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press, 1999).

4. Canada, *Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds* by Nicholas Flood Davin. 14 March, 1879. Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 10, Vol. 6001, File 1-1-1.

By the time the last school closed in 1996, over 130 would have operated and over 150,000 Indigenous children would have been forced to attend what would ultimately be deemed tools of cultural genocide.[5] Indigenous children were taken from their homes, separated from their communities and families, and were forbidden to speak their languages or practice their culture. Students were poorly fed; subjected to medical experiments; forced to undertake manual labour; and were subjected to physical, sexual, and mental or spiritual abuse.[6] The legacy of this appalling treatment is still being felt in Indigenous communities today.[7]

To ensure the schools "succeeded," the government enacted a number of measures including compulsory attendance in 1894 (and reinforced in further legislation in 1920). However, the parents of Indigenous students were not passive participants in the plans of church and state to "civilize" their children, and many did whatever they could to prevent their children from attending these schools and to demonstrate their displeasure. Parents were angered that their children were being abused and that they were taken so far away from the reserves. Parents were also upset that students were alienated from their culture, were forced to work long hours, were not properly cared for, and could not find employment after graduation. This opposition took place, however, in a power relationship in which Indigenous peoples were unable to bring about real change. Thus, their opposition had only a limited effect. What did sway the administrators was rising costs.

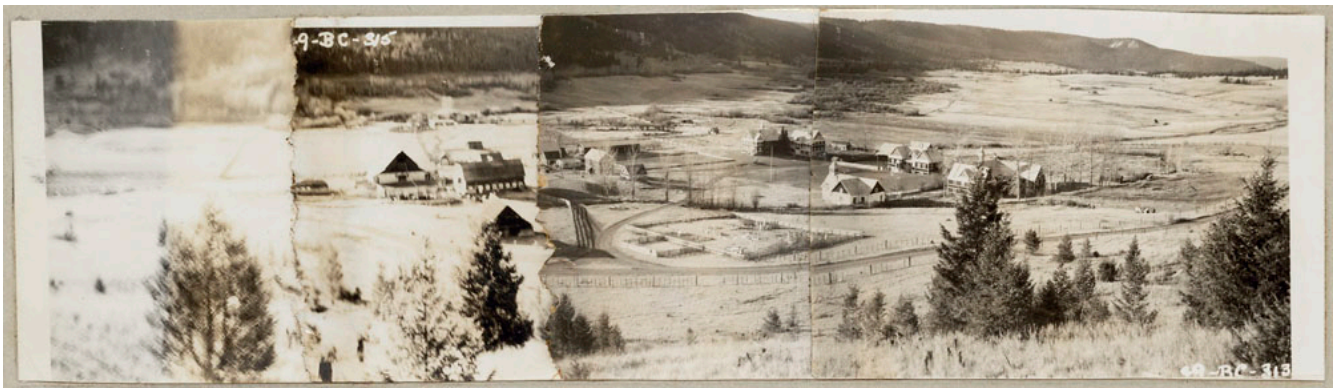


Figure 11.13 St. Joseph's (Cariboo) Indian Residential School was established in 1891 as one of the several schools run by the Catholic Church in BC.

Originally thought to be a quick and relatively inexpensive way to deal with what administrators deemed the "Indian Problem," the schools had evolved into a costly and complicated system that was not producing significant results. As a consequence, Duncan Campbell Scott (1862-1947), who was appointed to the position of Superintendent of Indian Education in 1909, changed the professed goal of schools for Indigenous peoples from integration to segregation (in the words of Scott: "for civilized life in his own environment"). In 1923 officials merged the industrial and boarding schools to create a new

5. Canada, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, "Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada" [PDF], last modified July 23, 2015, http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/trc/IR4-7-2015-eng.pdf

6. Ian Mosby, "Administering Colonial Science: Nutrition Research and Human Biomedical Experimentation in Aboriginal Communities and Residential Schools, 1942-1952," *Histoire sociale/Social History* 46, no. 91 (2013): 615-642.

7. Canada, *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Vol. 5: Renewal: A Twenty-Year Commitment. In For Seven Generations: An Information Legacy of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* [CD-ROM] (Ottawa: Libraxus, 1997.)

category of schools known as "residential schools."[8] Scott, though, still very much believed in a policy in which Indigenous peoples should be obliterated as a distinct community. In 1920 he made this now famous statement: "I want to get rid of the Indian problem. I do not think as a matter of fact, that the country ought to continuously protect a class of people who are able to stand alone.… Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question…."[9]

Key Points

- Setting Indigenous people down the path to become European-style agriculturalists was underfunded and purposely organized to ensure they did not compete with European newcomers on the Prairies.
- Canadian-organized schools appealed to Indigenous people because they held out the hope of skills and opportunities that would help their people escape poverty.
- The industrial schools were augmented by boarding schools in which industrial skills were minimized, the clergy were heavily involved, and costs were managed by obliging the children/pupils to do maintenance work.
- Compulsory attendance was legislated in 1894, enabling the abduction of children from their parents by the local Canadian authorities.
- By 1909 the objectives of the schools had changed again from integration to segregation and the combination of industrial and boarding schools to produce residential schools. Superintendent Duncan Campbell Scott believed that Indigenous peoples could never occupy an equitable position in Canadian society and was satisfied to use the schools to build a marginalized people.

Media Attributions

- Numbered Treaties Map is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Distant view of Fort Qu'Appelle Indian Industrial School with tents, [Red River] carts and teepees outside the fence © O.B. Buell, Library and Archives Canada (PA-182246) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Panorama of Cariboo Indian Residential School, William's Lake, British Columbia, 1949 © Canada Dept. of Indian and Northern Affairs, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 4674075) is licensed under a Public Domain license

8. Brian Titley, *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1986).

9. Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian affairs, testimony before the Special Committee of the House of Commons examining the *Indian Act* amendments of 1920, Library and Archives Canada, Record Group 10, vol. 6810, file 470-2-3, volume 7, pp. 55 (L-3) and 63 (N-3).

11.8 WWI to 1970

Jennifer Pettit; Department of Humanities; and Mount Royal University

At the same time these events were transpiring, over 4,000 Indigenous people fought in World War I (see Section 6.12).[1] They returned, not to significant progress for First Nations, but to a country in which some of their lands had been taken without their permission and in which they were still not entitled to vote. While the Canadian economy was strong in the 1920s, by the 1930s the Great Depression hit and the Department of Indian Affairs was reduced to a branch of the Department of Mines and Resources. When WWII broke out, Indigenous peoples once again volunteered in significant numbers. This time, however, they returned to a Canada with a burgeoning concern for the conditions facing First Nations. As a result, in 1946 Parliament created a Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons to undertake a study of the *Indian Act*. Unlike earlier commissions, the Joint Committee also sought feedback and consultation with Indigenous associations such as the North American Indian Brotherhood and the Indian Association of Alberta. When they reported in 1948, the Committee recommended a number of changes, including allowing Indigenous peoples to vote in federal elections; creating a treaty claims commission; enacting self-government; giving title of reserve lands to Indigenous peoples; and encouraging integration rather than assimilation. In the end, the federal government ignored many of these recommendations. There were, however, some changes made to the *Indian Act* in 1951, including lifting the ban on Indigenous dances and ceremonies, permitting Indigenous groups to pursue land claims, and increasing the powers of chiefs and band councils. However, it would not be until the 1960s that significant changes in the relationship between the federal government and Canada's First Nations would begin to transpire.

"Citizens Plus" — the 1960s

The Hawthorn Report

The decade of the 1960s saw significant changes begin to take place. The right to vote in federal elections was extended to Indigenous peoples in 1960, and in 1961 the compulsory enfranchisement provisions were dropped from the *Indian Act*. A stand-alone Department of Indian Affairs was created in 1966. Another significant event was the Hawthorn-Tremblay Report entitled *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada: Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies*. Based on a series of cross-Canada consultations, the 1966-1967 Hawthorn Report concluded that Canada's First Nations were marginalized and disadvantaged due to misguided government policies like the residential school system (which the Report recommended closing). Hawthorn argued that Indigenous peoples needed to be treated as "Citizens Plus" and provided with the resources required for self-determination. As a result of this report, the Canadian government decided to take policies in an entirely new direction, which were outlined in the **White Paper** of 1969.

1. Canada, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, "Aboriginal Contributions During the First World War", last modified October 24, 2014, https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1414152378639/1414152548341.

The White Paper and the Red Paper

In the White Paper, the stated goal of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau and Jean Chrétien, Minister for Indian Affairs, was to achieve greater equality for Canada's First Nations. The White Paper called for an end to Indian status, the closure of the Department of Indian Affairs, the dismantling of the *Indian Act*, the conversion of reserve lands to private property, and immediate integration. While the federal government believed this to be desirable, Indigenous groups across Canada were outraged, and argued that forced assimilation was not the means to achieve equity and that the White Paper had not addressed their concerns. They responded with a document called *Citizens Plus,* which became known as the **Red Paper**. In the Red Paper, Indigenous peoples stressed the importance of land and upholding the promises made in the treaties, and called for political organization. In response, the government withdrew the White Paper in 1970.

Over 200 years has passed since the passage of the Royal Proclamation of 1763, and yet the deeply flawed *Indian Act* still remains in effect today. Altough there has been some progress, such as the entrenchment of Aboriginal and treaty rights in the 1982 Constitution and the 2008 Federal Government apology for residential schools, much remains to be done. The fight for this recognition has unfolded in a number of ways: peaceful movements like **Idle No More**; violent clashes such as the events at Oka; issues such as land claims reconsidered in the courts; and consultations that were part of studies, such as the 1996 Royal Commission and the more recent Truth and Reconciliation Commission (discussed in Sections 11.9 and 11.11).

Key Points

- Indigenous leaders were finally able to secure Ottawa's interest in their complaints shortly after the Second World War.
- Recommendations arising from the 1948 Special Joint Committee were acted on incrementally, first by ending the ban on the sun dance and potlatch, removing the sanctions against legal claims against Canada, and devolving authority to band leadership.
- Winning the franchise in 1960 was followed by the Hawthorn Report of 1966-1967, which adopted the approach of "Citizens Plus."
- Motivated to act, the Trudeau administration in 1969 issued the White Paper, which was instantly rejected by Indigenous leaders as assimilative. They responded with the Red Paper.
- Issues that were identified decades earlier remained off the table and continue to be avoided by Canadian governments.

11.9 The Aqueduct and Colonialism

Adele Perry; Department of History; and University of Manitoba

Located at the forks of two major rivers and prone to flooding, the city of Winnipeg often seems awash in water, but an adequate supply of clean drinking water has been a continual problem for the city from its earliest days as the Red River Settlement to its incorporation as a city in 1874 to the present day. In his classic *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (1977), Alan Artibise explains how in the last decades of the 19th century, Winnipeg experimented with private companies and public water supply operations. They filtered river water and dug artesian wells, but still had to deal with problems like "hard" water (with a high mineral content), inadequate supply, and, more pressingly, annual outbreaks of typhoid. 1904 was especially bad: 1,276 people, or a little over 5% of 67,300 Winnipeggers, were diagnosed with typhoid.

By 1913 the ambitious settler city had decided to address its enduring problems with the water supply by building an aqueduct to transport water from Shoal Lake. Located about 150 kilometers east, Shoal Lake straddles the borders of Ontario and Manitoba, and is within Anishinaabe territory, which is covered by the provisions and promises of Treaty 3, signed in 1873. Supporters of the Shoal Lake Aqueduct were well aware of just how expensive and ambitious the plan was, and argued that the estimated cost of $13.5 million would be well worth it to secure Winnipeg's human and economic growth.

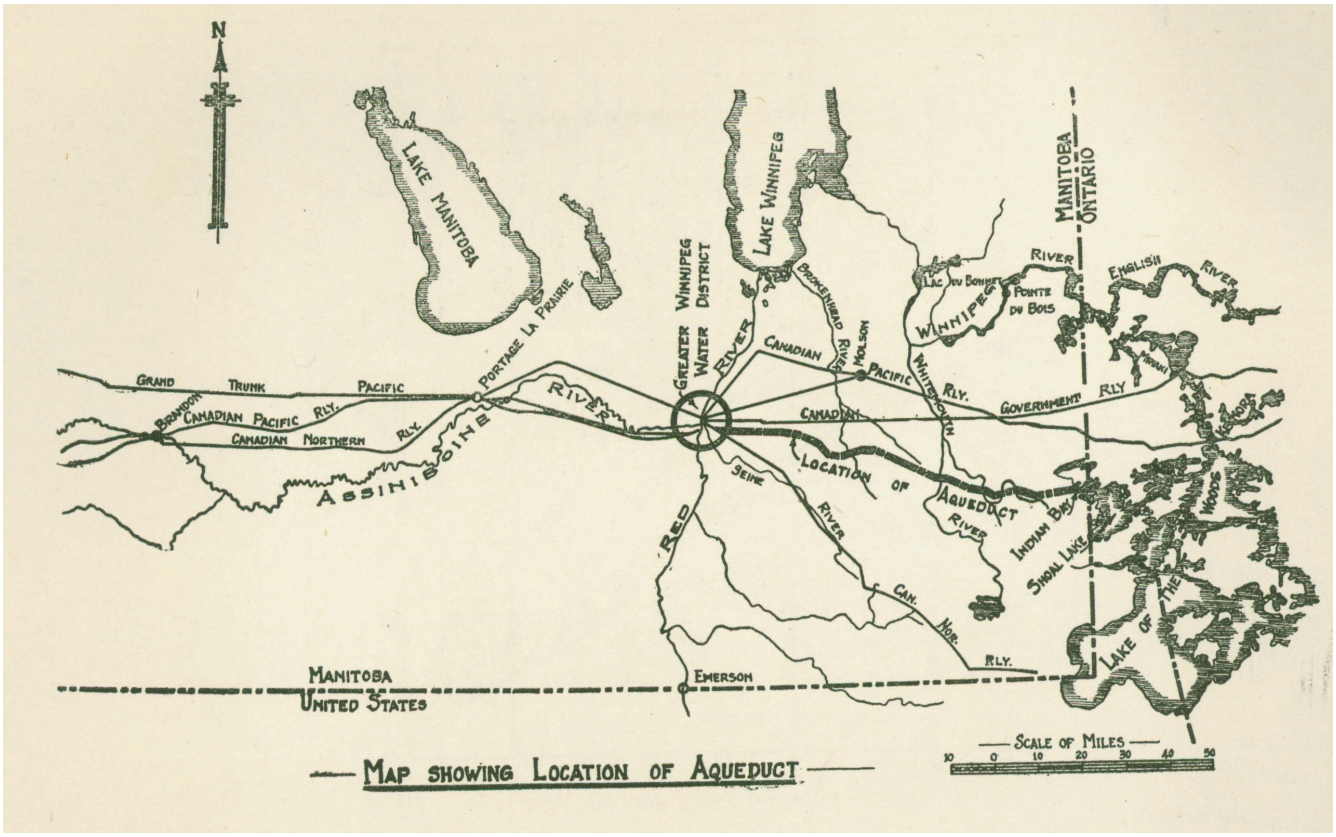


Figure 11.14 A spider's web of infrastructure radiates outward from Winnipeg, claiming territory and water. Greater Winnipeg Water District Map, 1918.

What this plan might mean for the Anishinaabe communities at Shoal Lake rarely entered into the conversations about what the Aqueduct could do for the mainly settler city of Winnipeg. In 1914 the Federal Government used its enormous powers under the *Indian Act*, first passed in 1876, to sell approximately 3,000 acres of land belonging to Shoal Lake 40 Reserve to the Greater Winnipeg Water District (GWWD) for the sum of $1,500. In an effort to separate "dark" water from the more palatable water destined for the city, the GWWD then built a canal and a dyke, which effectively made the community of Shoal Lake 40 an artificial island.

Shoal Lake water first flowed in Winnipeg's water mains in 1919, less than half a year after the armistice of the Great War and a few months before a General Strike would rock the prairie city. The project carried an enormous price tag: it cost $17 million at the time, which translates to about $229,861,702 in 2016 terms. The Shoal Lake Aqueduct project involved the building of a railroad, telephone lines, and tunnelling under multiple rivers, and employed as many as 2,000 men at one time — all during the labour shortages of World War 1. The Aqueduct has served the city of Winnipeg well and continues to supply the city with its drinking water.

It did not take long for Winnipeggers to begin celebrating the Aqueduct as a triumph of engineering and public-minded policy. It would take much, much longer and an enormous amount of activism and advocacy from Indigenous communities for awareness to grow with respect to what the Aqueduct cost the Anishinaabe communities of Shoal Lake. Surrounded by Winnipeg's water supply, Shoal Lake 40 nevertheless lacks a reliable source of fresh water, and the community has been on a boil water advisory since 1998. (They are not alone: as of the summer of 2015, there were about 175 drinking

water advisories in Reserves across Canada.) Also, the approximately 250 people of Shoal Lake 40 lack a year-round way of coming and going from the community, and as a result, have poor waste removal, emergency services, and postal services. During the winter, they use an ice road across water, but for a few weeks every fall and spring, they face the danger of travel across thinning and uncertain ice.

The fact that the community of Shoal Lake 40's poor water supply and any chances for ameliorating it can be tied directly to the Aqueduct that secured Winnipeg's water supply tells us a lot about the history of colonialism in modern Canada. The relative prosperity of non-Indigenous people in 20th century Canada has come at the expense — sometimes general and sometimes very specific — of Indigenous people. Alongside the histories of World War 1, the Winnipeg General Strike, and the provision of municipal services in Winnipeg and across Canada, we also need to analyze the histories of Indigenous dispossession that undergirded the stories of settler vision, conflict, and triumph.

Key Points

- The ability to undertake large engineering projects in the 20th century recasts colonial relations between Canada and Indigenous communities like Shoal Lake 40; the issue is not simply the taking of Indigenous land, but any other resource that is needed by the colonial society. As is the case at Shoal Lake 40, this is very much to the detriment of the colonized people.

11.10 Canada and the Colonized, 1970-2002

The White Paper and the Red Paper demonstrated how far out of sync Ottawa was with respect to the Indigenous leadership across Canada. It was, however, a moment in Canadian history that catalyzed First Nations groups into new political action.

When one looks at the period between the Great War and the late 1960s, it might seem that Indigenous peoples mustered very little opposition to colonialism. Although resistance was widespread, and small victories were won at the immediate, on-reserve level, the systemic obstacles to Indigenous protest were too significant to be bypassed. Indigenous people who held Status could not vote until 1960, so that avenue was closed. Moreover, although band leadership was typically elected, it was often at the mercy of the local Department of Indian Affairs Agent, whose interests were very frequently at odds with those of the bands. In the 1920s there were two telling developments. Section 141 of the *Indian Act* forbade bands from hiring lawyers to pursue entitlements or damages owed by the federal government; raising funds to do so was itself a criminal offence. In a stroke, Ottawa had criminalized legal action in support of Aboriginal rights. Almost simultaneously, the RCMP was directed to be more aggressive in suppressing Indigenous cultural events: one outcome of Dan Cranmer's potlatch in 1921 at Alert Bay was the arrest of more than 40 participants, and the conviction and imprisonment of roughly half their number. (Another outcome was the confiscation and subsequent loss of several generations' artistic creations, sacred items, and cherished family possessions.) Starting in the 1930s, Indigenous people from Coast to Coast found themselves being relocated. In Nova Scotia in 1942, for example, 20 settlements were consolidated into 2 to ease administrative and assimilationist processes, entirely in the face of Mi'kmaq opposition. Housing and services were inadequate for the growing populations, and by the 1950s, the provincial government in Halifax lost interest in trying to fix the mess the Federal Government had created.

At mid-century, a similar situation emerged on the Labrador Coast. Davis Inlet (aka: Utshimassit) was attractive to coastal traders from the late 18th century on because of its deep natural moorage. At around 1870, the Hudson's Bay Company offered Indigenous traders access to inoculation against smallpox and a variety of trade goods, but the site had no profound, traditional meaning to the Innu who visited it only when it served their purposes. Missionary work in the region was intermittent at best until the 1950s. At that time, growing interest and commerce in the region led to an outbreak of alcohol abuse. The missionaries stayed aloof from families and households in which drinking was routine and/or problematic; the Innu who suffered from alcoholism also steered clear of the church and held themselves separate from non-drinkers as well. This phenomenon exposed fissures within the Innu population that — when they were relocated wholesale north to "New Davis Inlet" — became part of a new dysfunctional and divided normalcy. Moving from tents into Euro-style housing appeared — to observers outside the community — to indicate permanence and settlement, but it concealed deep social problems that were to manifest in violence, several kinds of abuse, and horrendous suicide rates.[1]

Like so many other Indigenous peoples, the Mi'kmaq at Shubenacadie and Eskasoni and the Innu at New Davis Inlet were impoverished by relocation and the structural unemployment that was sustained

1. Lynne D. Fitzhugh, *The Labradorians: Voices from the Land of Cain* (St. John's, NF: Breakwater, 1999), 261-263.

by anti-Indigenous racism. Also, they were fearful of further decapitation of community leadership by governments that didn't seem reluctant to incarcerate troublemakers. First Nations facing these conditions and others struggled to find strategies and tactics suitable for the modern era of colonialism. In 1951 Ottawa lifted the barriers to raising funds for legal challenges, sanctions against the potlatch and other ceremonies were dropped, and steps were taken toward enfranchisement. A new era in Indigenous-Newcomer relations was about to begin.



Figure 11.15 In 1953, at the start of the Cold War, Inuit communities were relocated from Inukjuak to Resolute Bay (left arrow) and Grise Fiord (right) to act as "human flagpoles" for Canadian sovereignty in the high Arctic.

New Organizations

Political organizations had been struggling for years, but the White Paper gave them new life, as did 1960s organizations like the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the civil rights movement in the United States. Harold Cardinal (1945-2005) gave voice to Indigenous leaders' concerns at the time in his 1969 book *The Unjust Society*, which took its title from Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's 1968 campaign slogan of a "just society." The **Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC)** and the **National Indian Brotherhood (NIB)** were established the same year, not so much as responses to the White Paper as part of a longer history of organization across communities and regions. The UBCIC built on the accomplishments of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia (established in 1931 and itself heir to the earlier Allied Tribes of BC) and was, thus, part of a long and expanding tradition of building unity in the westernmost province.[2] The NIB similarly grew out of a foundation established by the

2. Sarah A. Nickel, *Assembling Unity: Indigenous Politics, Gender, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2019): 41-45.

Federation of Saskatchewan Indians and the National Indian Council, and its creation also included a divorce from the leading Métis organization.

The movement faced challenges from the outset as First Nations with treaty rights pulled in one direction while those without pursued solutions under Aboriginal rights. The leadership of George Manuel (1921-89) was critical in the early years of the NIB. A Secwepemc leader from Neskonlith on the South Thompson River, Manuel emerged as a capable spokesperson and a theorist. His conception of the **Fourth World**, a category of largely small and colonized Indigenous populations around the globe, resonated with those advocating for Aboriginal rights, informed the thinking of Indigenous organizations in Canada generally, and contributed to the establishment of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples, which Manuel led in the mid-1970s. Manuel was able to secure federal funding for research into a variety of native claims and set the movement on a solid financial footing for the first time.[3]

The thrust of the NIB's efforts and those of its successor, the **Assembly of First Nations (AFN)**, was to obtain progressively greater and greater degrees of self-governance for Indigenous communities. Social work and child welfare were priorities, although it was in education that the greatest victories were won. As the role of the **Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND)** was progressively reduced, **band offices** took up a larger share of local responsibility. The AFN — established in 1978 — played a key role along with the UBCIC in securing recognition for Aboriginal rights in **Section 35** of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

New Legal Precedents

The first court case to significantly change the landscape of Indigenous-Canadian relations came in 1973. The Nisga'a First Nation of northwestern British Columbia successfully demonstrated that title to their land had never been extinguished. The **Calder Case** worked its way through the BC court system and reached the Supreme Court of Canada. Although the Court agreed that Aboriginal title existed before Confederation, it was split on whether title persisted after 1871. The British Columbia government took this as a signal that they owed nothing to the Nisga'a (nor, if it came to that, to any other First Nations with which post-1871 administrations had failed to negotiate a treaty or purchase of land); Ottawa, however, took the view that the Calder decision demanded the start of a new treaty negotiation process. The entrenchment of Aboriginal rights in the *Constitution Act* gave further weight to this position and, with the election of a new NDP government in BC in 1990, Victoria joined in the process of seeking a new generation of treaties. In 1998 the Nisga'a Final Agreement was reached. Since 1998, a handful of other post-Calder treaties have been negotiated under the BC Treaty Process but only three final agreements (involving the Tsawwassen, Maa-nulth, and the Tla'amin First Nations) have been finalized.

At roughly the same time that the Nisga'a brought forward their initial claim, the Cree and Inuit of Northern Quebec sought a legal solution for their own situations. The expansion of Quebec into the Ungava Peninsula in 1911 was meant to be followed by a round of treaty negotiations, which never

3. J. R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*, revised edition (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 231-233. See also "George Manuel", accessed January 9, 2016, https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/george_manuel/.

took place. Despite Indigenous protests, the Provincial Government's aggressive mid-century hydroelectricity development program around James Bay uprooted and displaced First Nations. Late in 1973, the provincial courts made it clear that the province's obligation to negotiate a treaty had not disappeared and, in the year that followed, an agreement was reached with the Grand Assembly of the Cree and the Northern Quebec Inuit Association. Although this was an "Agreement," it was a "Treaty" in every other respect and is regarded as the first in 50 years. Using the courts to get provinces and Ottawa to the bargaining table was rapidly becoming an accepted process.

Courtroom challenges and precedents were slowly won, and every time a significant watershed was crossed, it happened at the Supreme Court of Canada. In 1990 — the same year British Columbia joined in the treaty-making process — a precedent was set by the case of *Regina v Sparrow.* Five years earlier, Ronald Sparrow, a fisherman and member of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (aka: Xwméthkwiyem or Musqueam) First Nation, was caught using a drift net that exceeded the dimensions permitted by the *Fisheries Act.* Sparrow admitted the offence but challenged the charge, citing **Aboriginal rights** provided under Section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act* (1982). The case was initially lost, but successive appeals were made all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada where Justices reached a unanimous decision that supported Sparrow's position. Specifically, any activity or "right" that existed before 1982 that had not been explicitly and specifically extinguished was recognized as continuing unabated. This was the first significant test of Aboriginal rights, and it was an important win for First Nations.

In the case of **Delgamuukw v British Columbia**, the Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en First Nations decided against the slow federal treaty negotiation process (in which British Columbia's Provincial Government had initially refused to participate) and sought a resolution through the legal system. At first this went very badly for the plaintiffs: in 1991 Chief Justice Allan McEachern (1926-2008) ruled — contrary to Calder — that Aboriginal rights existed only because, and so long as, the colonial power said they did. Moreover, he ruled that oral tradition did not constitute a viable source of evidence. Also, McEachern's tone was condescending to such an extent that it swung public support toward the Gitksan-Wet'suwet'en side. The Supreme Court of Canada decided in 1998 that McEachern was wrong in both regards. On the topic of oral history, the court stated:

> Notwithstanding the challenges created by the use of oral histories as proof of historical facts, the laws of evidence must be adapted in order that this type of evidence can be accommodated and placed on an equal footing with the types of historical evidence that courts are familiar with, which largely consists of historical documents.[4]

As regards Aboriginal title, *Delgamuukw* was definitive that (a) it existed, and (b) it was exclusive. That is, a province and/or Ottawa could not lay claim to land within traditional territories without extinguishing title first through treaty negotiations.

This decision was further reinforced in *Haida Nation v British Columbia* in 2004 and as recently as 2014 in the case of *Tsilhqot'in Nation v British Columbia*, both of which involved provincial forest policies and grants. In the case of *Haida*, a dispute over corporate access to forest resources on Haida Gwaii (aka: the Queen Charlotte Islands), Crown rights to grant access, and Haida Aboriginal rights to harvest red cedar began in 1961. More than 40 years later, it was decided by the British Columbia Court of Appeals that the Crown has a duty to conduct meaningful negotiations with First Nations over the use of resources in unceded territories and to accommodate their interests. *Tsilhqot'in* strengthened

4. *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia,* [1997] 3 S.C.R. 1010 at para. 84. File No.: 23799.

this position in 2014 in a dispute over licenses to log forests on unceded traditional territory. Once again, appeals took the case from the provincial level to Ottawa and the Supreme Court and, once again, the highest court in the country decided against the Provincial and Federal Governments. The Court concurred with earlier decisions that Aboriginal title exists and, almost ironically, turned the *Indian Act* back on the governments, stating that a fiduciary responsibility exists between the Crown and Indigenous people. In short, governments cannot hand over to third parties resources that are unceded, since doing so would be to cheat the First Nation in question out of the inherent value of those resources. The implications of *Tsilhqot'in Nation* are still being worked out but, on the face of it, the judgement prohibits resource extraction on any unceded territories without the permission of the relevant First Nation(s). (It is worth noting at this point that the approach taken by settler society has been to identify, catalogue, pursue, extract, and profit from individual and specific "resources" or commodities; Indigenous societies, in contrast, generally perceive their lands more holistically, not as a vault full of riches from which one may selectively make withdrawals.)

The fact that so many of the key legal precedents come out of British Columbia speaks to its distinctive (although not unique) experience of treaties. Apart from the fourteen **Douglas Treaties** signed by Governor James Douglas in the colonial era, and the part of Treaty 8 that spills over from Alberta into the British Columbian Peace District, there were no attempts to extinguish title with the vast majority of First Nations in the province. On the East Coast, as well, the treaty system developed very differently. Treaties were never signed with the Indigenous peoples of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Mi'kmaq of Newfoundland are politically related to their cousins on the Maritime mainland but not in terms of treaty. The situation for the Innu and Inuit of Labrador is similar. They have had full Canadian citizenship for about a century now, which includes voting rights, and they have never been covered by the *Indian Act*; thus, notions of Status and non-Status are irrelevant to them. Moreover, they never have been wards of the state. This means that they have escaped some of the worst effects of colonialism but, at the same time, they were rendered invisible to the D.I.A. Their territory — what the Innu call Nitassinan — has been viewed by outsiders as so bereft of human occupancy and culture that the region has been repeatedly pounded by NATO aircraft on training missions.[5]

A different story unfolded in the North West Territories (NWT) beginning in the late 1970s. Ottawa engaged the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (now called Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami) in negotiations over claims to the eastern third of the NWT (what was, at the time, called the District of Keewatin). The idea of a separate, autonomous Inuit administrative unit gained ground and, in 1982, a referendum of residents of the whole Territory showed overwhelming support for the idea. It took another decade to complete the land claims negotiation process (the *Nunavut Land Claims Agreement Act, 1992*), and that was followed by legislation that created the new Nunavut Territory. The government in Iqaluit represents a population that is more than 80% Inuit, and Inuktitut is the Territory's first official language.

Reforming the Indian Act

The White Paper failed at the first hurdle, and the Red Paper set a new agenda for change. Nevertheless, legislative change was slow in coming. The **Penner Report** in 1983 recommended to Ottawa a form of autonomy that represented to most Indigenous leaders an advance on what had gone before it, but the government changed, and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney's administration took a

5. Lynne D. Fitzhugh, *The Labradorians: Voices from the Land of Cain* (St. John's, NF: Breakwater, 1999), 376-377.

different approach. Informed by a neo-conservative fear of fiscal mismanagement and public dependency, the Mulroney government first looked for ways to reduce spending on band issues. Offering up a kind of municipal-level of self-government, the Tories hoped to dismantle the bureaucracy of guardianship that had existed for a century. To many native leaders, this looked like White Paper 2.0, and they pointed to the implicit shift in dependence from Ottawa to the provinces (to which municipalities are subservient); only a small number of bands perceived it as an opportunity to seize upon. The overall effect of the first year of Conservative government was a sudden increase in rancour and bad press. The Mulroney administration looked elsewhere to secure change.

Efforts were made in 1985 to reform some of the most egregiously discriminatory elements of the *Indian Act.* The most noteworthy of these changes pertains to *Status* and Indigenous women. Before Bill C-31, the *Indian Act* specified that Indigenous women who married non-Indigenous men lost Status. What's more, children of that marriage also lost any claim to Status. Indigenous men who married non-Indigenous women, however, were not similarly impacted. Since bands were (and are) funded based on the number of Status members on their lands, an incentive exists to prevent non-Status members from residing on-reserve and making demands on band services. Loss of community and access to resources pitched many non-Status Indigenous women and their children into economic and social vulnerability (the fact that they gained the right to vote in Canadian elections may seem poor compensation but the increased engagement of Indigenous women in electoral politics perhaps suggests an outcome no one at the time anticipated).

The 1985 reforms restored Status to Indigenous women and children from whom it had hitherto been stripped. It was celebrated at the time as a significant step forward for Indigenous women's rights and, symbolically at least, it was. However, the amended law simply carried forward into the next generation the prospect of losing Status through marriage to non-Indigenous people. In that respect, it was more of a temporary amnesty rather than a wholesale elimination of a discriminatory law.[6]

Extra-Legal Protests

Several factors contributed to the rise of protest tactics among Indigenous leaders. One was the American Indian Movement (AIM) that appeared in the late 1960s in the United States. Sometimes described as **Red Power** (in a nod to the Afro-American Black Power movement), AIM inevitably reached across the border to Canadian First Nations with shared grievances against colonialist forces. Beginning in 1970, AIM-style demonstrations appeared in Canada including road blockades, the occupation of government offices, and attempts to seize lands that had either been unilaterally cut out of reserves or never covered by treaty. The frequency of protests increased through the decade, many of which became high profile confrontations. In the North West Territories, Dene mobilized to block the proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipeline. A Royal Commission from 1974 to 1977, chaired by Justice Thomas Berger (b. 1933), accepted much of the Dene case and called for extensive land settlement agreements before the pipeline project could proceed. Effectively, this established a moratorium on a major infrastructural development, a significant win for Indigenous activists. Similar confrontations took place in northern Quebec over the James Bay hydroelectric development program, a process that hardened Innu and Cree sentiment against *Péquiste* separatism.

6. The ways in which the new laws impose a "two generation cut-off" is described nicely in Thomas King, *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America* (Toronto, ON: Anchor Canada, 2012), 167-169.

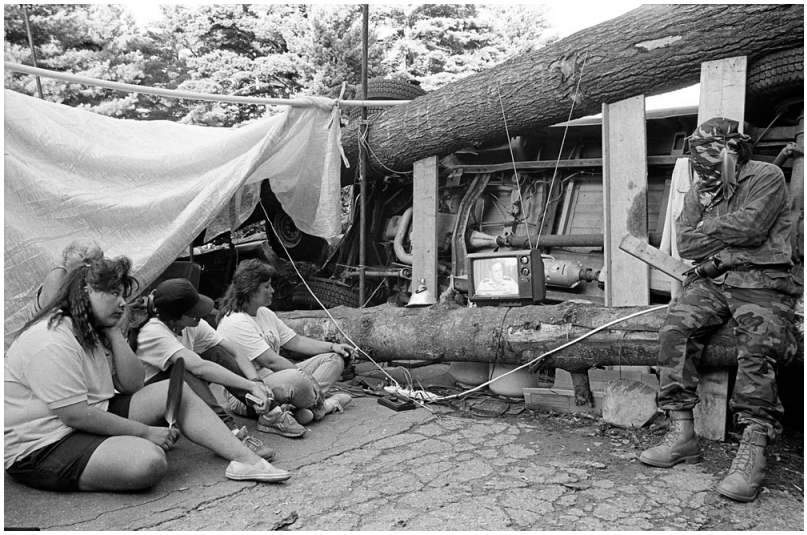


Figure 11.16 Members of the Mohawk First Nation at the barricades, Kanesatake, 1990.

The temper of events cooled in the 1980s, but when it returned, it had changed in tone. The town of Oka, a village to the northwest of Montreal, in 1989 approved the expansion of a private golf course into land claimed by the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) of Kanesatake, and which contained a Mohawk burial site. The band's response included a blockade of access to the proposed construction site in July 1990, which engendered the **Oka Crisis**. Beginning with a party of 30 armed Kanien'kehá:ka band members, a teargas attack by the *Sûreté du Québec* led to a firefight in which one *Sûreté* member was killed. The ranks of the Oka protesters grew almost overnight to nearly 100 and then to 600. Another Kanien'kehá:ka community at nearby Kahnawake supported the standoff by blockading access to the Mercier Bridge. RCMP reinforcements were sent to Oka in support of the *Sûreté,* which were soon augmented by members of the Canadian Armed Forces' Royal 22nd Régiment (the Van Doos). Seventy-eight days after the confrontation began, the Kanien'kehá:ka forces at Oka stood down. Although the golf course expansion was cancelled, none of the outstanding land claims issues were addressed. Ottawa purchased the land in question from the developers, but the courts have steadfastly rejected Kanesatake's claims.

Similar events unfolded at the other end of the country near Gustafsen Lake (a.k.a. Ts'Peten) in central British Columbia in the summer of 1995. Secwepemc spiritual leaders had established an annual sun dance on rangeland claimed by a local rancher, and which was within the traditional and unceded lands of the Secwepemc. Despite initial cooperation between the parties involved, goodwill evaporated in the winter of 1995, leading to a confrontation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous allies against the RCMP. As at Oka, gunfire was exchanged, although there were no fatalities. The RCMP mobilized enormous resources, including helicopters, armoured personnel carriers, and several hundred tactical squad members. In September, the Secwepemc side dismantled its position and left Gustafsen Lake. As at Oka, arrests of protesters followed (despite assurances otherwise), and 15 people received sentences of 6 months to 8 years.

Gustafsen Lake was still simmering when another protest flared at Ipperwash Provincial Park at the south end of Lake Huron, where a stretch of shoreline that contained an Anishinaabeg burial site was expropriated from Kettle Point 44 Reserve under the *War Measures Act* during WWII. Ottawa promised to return the land at the end of the war but did not follow through. In 1994 members of the

Kettle Point band initiated a round of occupations and protests to remind authorities that this issue had not been resolved. In September 1995, a group of protesters set up a camp in the park for a more formal and sustained protest. At the outset, the Ontario Provincial Police attempted to achieve a negotiated outcome so as not to repeat the mistakes of Oka, or to echo events concurrently underway in British Columbia. This strategy was replaced by riot police with shields, batons, and helmets. On September 6, the two sides confronted one another in the park, and events quickly spiralled out of control. Gunfire occurred (participants disagree as to whether shots were fired both ways), and Dudley George (1957-1995) was struck three times by a police sniper. Attempts to get George to a hospital were blocked by the OPP, and the man bled out. The sniper, Sergeant Ken Deane, was subsequently tried and found guilty of criminal negligence. The role of the Ontario Provincial Government, led by Conservative Premier Mike Harris (b. 1945), was resolutely opposed to the Anishinaabe protest. Harris was quoted by his Attorney-General as saying "I want the fucking Indians out of the park."[7]

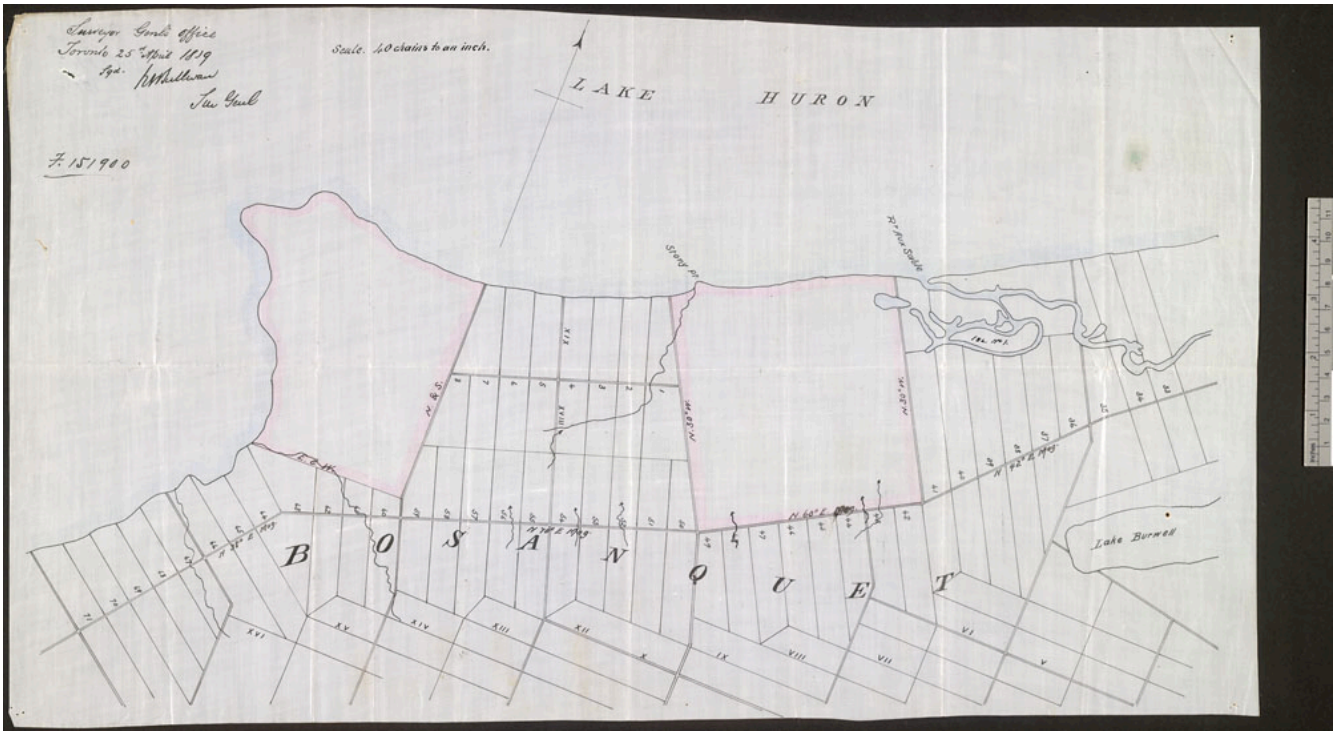


Figure 11.17 The Kettle Point 44 Reserve was appropriated by Ottawa during WWII and never returned.

Four years after Ipperwash, confrontation over resources on the East Coast captured the headlines. The **Burnt Church Crisis** of 1999-2002 bears similarities with *Sparrow* in that it proved a test of Aboriginal rights over resource gathering. In this instance, the Burnt Church First Nation, a Mi'kmaq community at the mouth of the Miramichi River in northeastern New Brunswick exercised what they understood to be their right to harvest reasonable amounts of maritime resources, regardless of Department of Fisheries ideas of seasonality. Their attempt to trap lobster "out of season" resulted in confrontations with settlers (mostly commercial lobster trappers) who attacked Mi'kmaq equipment and, reportedly, thousands of lobster traps. The conflict expanded into a community-wide civil war with attacks launched by both sides against property and individuals. By 2002 the Department of Fisheries itself was attacking Mi'kmaq boats as the region descended into near-lawlessness.

7. Ontario, *Report of the Ipperwash Inquiry*, Vol.1 (Ontario: Government of Ontario, 2007), 363.

Agreements were reached in the same year that permitted the Mi'kmaq to fish for subsistence and not for commerce, regardless of "seasons."

Indigenous people continue to pursue redress, compensation, and rights through legal avenues and protest. Democratic processes are limited in their ability to achieve results because First Nations constitute relatively small and mostly isolated populations with limited ability to secure change through the ballot box. Even at the local level, bands are not always united on the best strategy to pursue and so do not always speak with one voice in formal negotiations. From a historical perspective, attempts to win advances using extra-parliamentary means speaks to the fact that Indigenous peoples have a working relationship with the Crown and an adversarial relationship with Canada.

Key Points

- Legal challenges to Canada's approach to Treaty obligations were essentially illegal until the 1950s, which significantly dampened Indigenous people's recourse.
- Resettlement and dispossession of traditional lands accelerated in the 20th century.
- Once legal organization was permitted, new Indigenous organizations like the UBCIC and the NIB were established to advance First Nations' concerns.
- Following effective lobbying, Aboriginal rights were enshrined in the Constitution.
- Legal precedents tended to favour Indigenous claimants beginning in the 1970s with *Calder*, *R. v Sparrow*, and *Delgamuukw.* These cases served to clarify the extent of Aboriginal title and rights, particularly in the absence of treaties.
- The benchmarks for Status were changed in 1985 in a move that remedied the situation of many Indigenous women and their children.
- The failure of Parliament to address outstanding issues and the costs and slowness of pursuing legal remedies encouraged some Indigenous leaders to make use of more confrontational strategies beginning in the 1980s, especially where the issues were immediate. Examples include Oka, Gustafsen Lake, Ipperwash, and Burnt Church.

Media Attributions

- Canadian High Arctic Relocation is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Mohawks watching Oka crisis news on barricades © Benoît Aquin, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3602895). Copyright Library and Archives Canada. No restrictions on use.
- Kettle Point Reserve no. 44. Plan showing the Kettle Point and Stony Point Indian Reserves, Ont. © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3694469) is licensed under a Public Domain license

11.11 Residential Schools



Figure 11.18 Study period at the Roman Catholic Indian Residential School, at Fort Resolution, NWT, n.d.

The goals of the Residential School system (described in Section 11.5) were explicitly assimilationist. The program existed precisely to replace Indigenous economic practices with those of the mainstream colonial economy, substitute English and French for indigenous languages, erase indigenous belief systems with some kind of Christianity, and interrupt the transmission of social practices (including fundamental familial relationships) by capturing children and keeping them away from their parents, siblings, and other relations. This needs to be underlined: there was nothing accidental about the way the residential schools turned out; these were clearly stated goals and tactics.

In the 1960s and 1970s, as plans advanced to end the program, the consequences of a century of residential schools were everywhere visible. Traumatized children became traumatized adults. Social workers drawn from the colonizing society were sent to reserves — often with RCMP and other police supports — to "rescue" children from dysfunctional environments in which colonialism itself was heavily implicated. In the decade after 1955, as a study by Christopher Walmsley points out, "Aboriginal children in the care of the Province of British Columbia jumped from less than 1% to 34.2%, and this pattern was repeated in other parts of Canada during the same time."[1] Just as residential schools were being closed, the Federal Government's monopoly over the management of Indigenous communities on-reserve began to fray, and provincial responsibilities increased:

> The principal response of provincial child welfare authorities during the 1960s was the apprehension and

1. Christopher Walmsley, *Protecting Aboriginal Children* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 2005), 2.

> removal of Aboriginal children from their families and communities. Known as the "**sixties scoop**," social workers explained their actions by arguing that they were in the best interests of the children.[2]

Citing poverty, health concerns, and even malnutrition, the secular authorities perpetuated the alienation of children from their communities that had begun by missionaries and residential schools. Indigenous children in care were placed with non-Indigenous families, and some were exported to the United States. In almost every case, the link between child and ancestral culture was severed. Whether in care or in residential schools, the same outcomes prevailed: practices — especially, but not exclusively, those censured by the anti-potlatch and sun dance laws — were inadequately passed from one generation to the next; the skills taught at woefully underfunded schools prepared students for 19th century field labour but not 20th century factories or offices, let alone professions. Substance abuse on reserves, particularly alcohol, was extensive as generations self-medicated to deal with everything from a personal sense of diminished self-worth to cultural alienation to systemic poverty and — from generation to generation — to the loss of children. Whereas the reserve system and pass system were designed to keep Indigenous people physically in check, the residential school system and the intervention of colonialist social workers and police authorities were intended to keep them culturally in check.

The enormous educational, social, and moral failures of the residential school system are now widely known. The system contained a single ineluctable contradiction: it proceeded from an explicitly racist assumption that indigenous cultures were inferior and proceeded to strip away those features with an eye to assimilating native people into "mainstream" society, but neglected to address the implications of that racism *in settler society.* Widespread discrimination ensured that Euro-Canadians would not hire, marry, work with, drink with, study with, lend money to, extend the franchise to, or vote for Indigenous people, regardless of whether they were "schooled" or not. "Assimilation" was entirely about change, and not about inclusion. It could hardly be otherwise under the circumstances.

At the peak in the 1930s, there were roughly 80 residential schools in Canada. They were in seven of the nine provinces; there were none in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, nor were there any in the Dominion (later, the province) of Newfoundland. Most of the schools were located far from urban centres. As institutions go, the large brick or stone structures were universally imposing. At Kamloops (Tk'emlúps), for example, the Indian Residential School, opened in 1893, was the largest brick structure in the Thompson Valleys and, indeed, between the Lower Mainland and the CPR hotels of the Rocky Mountain national parks. An entire brickworks was established to enable its construction. On Kuper Island, at Alert Bay, and in town after town across the Prairies, two- and three-storey buildings were erected to enable the warehousing and transformation of generations of Native children.

The involvement of the nation's Christian churches from the outset was viewed by officials as a good way to transmit Euro-Canadian cultural values, morals, and discipline. It was, as well, cheap, because missionary groups would effectively work for free. Over half of the schools were run by the Catholic Church, most of the rest by the Anglicans, and the remainder by the United Church and the Presbyterians. Conditions varied from place to place, but few were adequately funded; by the second quarter of the 20th century, child labour was an essential component of the residential school business model. Through most of their history, the general practice at residential schools was to provide only half-day schooling; the rest of the day was dedicated to labour in the fields and workshops, and mopping the floors to keep the children busy and reduce operating costs. The schooling the students

2. *Ibid.*, 13-15.

received was light on the humanities, lighter still on sciences and math, and heavy on religion and theology. Generally speaking, girls were taught domestic skills like cooking and sewing, while boys were taught basic agricultural skills and some crafts.

Children were housed in dormitory rooms. Rows of beds allowed for little privacy. Boys and girls were separated and kept separate: stories abound of brothers and sisters who were allowed no contact despite being kept in the same building. Showers and baths were spartan. Meals were Dickensian, and children suffered from malnutrition. Complaints of cold facilities are sustained by a terrible record of mortalities from illnesses, including tuberculosis (which claimed as many as 60% of the student population). Every residential school has its own sad little graveyard, and some of them aren't that little. As Mary-Ellen Kelm has pointed out, some schools kept their mortality statistics low by shipping fatally ill children home to their families, which consequently inflated mortality rates on reserves. Kelm also has noted that the transformation of Indigenous diets to Euro-Canadian foods was part of an attempt to colonize not only the mind but the Indigenous body as well.[3] Doing so could be lethal: only recently, it has become known that nutritional experiments conducted on children under Ottawa's auspices resulted in deaths.

If the colonizing society wasn't intervening in education or abducting children from what authorities judged as poor environments, it was managing some of the health crises in which it was — once again — complicit. "Indian hospitals," separate from non-Indigenous facilities, were established to deal with the specific illnesses (mostly tuberculosis) that afflicted Indigenous populations. On the whole, these Indian hospitals functioned as another element in the government's management of Indigenous lives.

Sainty Morris

In the mid-1940s, perhaps a little later, Sainty Morris — still a very young child — contracted tuberculosis from his older brother, with whom he shared a bed in his parents' home on the reserve near Duncan on Vancouver Island. Soon thereafter, he was sent by medical authorities to the Nanaimo Indian Hospital, more than 60 km north. He passed along this account — from which I quote at some length — to a historian of healthcare Laurie Meijer Drees. One would have to have a very flinty heart indeed to read this and not be moved; more than that, however, it serves to show the severe disempowerment of Indigenous people and the complicity of far more than a handful of officials and professionals in the business of controlling Indigenous children.

> In the hospital the food was good. At the time we were used to our native ice cream [made from berries and fish grease whipped together…] and other food that we were raise[d] on. At that time, my family had little money, and we lived mainly off the land and the beaches. When I was in hospital, I wished I had clams, duck, and all that food from home that I could not have.
>
> The nurses when I first got in there were funny. They were mean and there was one nurse who used the strap on us. I remember a particular time. It was when I first got to the hospital. They had what you called a rest period. It was set for an hour in the morning and an hour in the afternoon. I was new there and could not force myself to sleep so I picked myself up a book, a comic book. As I was lying there reading, I remember how suddenly the book was smashed out of my hand. I got strapped! The nurse took my comic book away and strapped my hand with leather.

3. Mary-Ellen Kelm, *Colonizing Bodies: Aboriginal Health and Healing in British Columbia, 1900-50* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1998).

On the other hand, there was another nurse who was very friendly. […]I thought she was a very wonderful friend as opposed to the other one. I wasn't the only one that was strapped. She strapped a lot of other children.

I was there off and on for, I can't remember, years, months, days. I was in there for a year and a half when they sent me to Kuper Island Indian Residential School. After being there for a while, I was sent back to the Nanaimo Indian Hospital.

[…]One day the head nurse came to see me, and she told me I was going home. I was so happy! She said, "We are going to measure you for clothing and are ordering your clothes from Vancouver. Then you are going home." A few weeks later, the nurses came and brought me to change into my new clothes. I got a bath and changed clothes, and then I asked if I could visit my friends and relatives [in the hospital]. I was allowed to visit, and they said, "We'll find you when the nurse is ready." Miss Fletcher finally showed up, and we got into her car and starting heading south, towards where my family lived.

We started going towards Chemainus [a town between Nanaimo and Duncan]. I thought we were going to a store there, but when we got to the wharf, she told me to get out. I thought, "What is going on?" She told me, "You are going to Kuper Island Residential School." I told her, "No, they told me I was going home." That's when the nurse told me, "No, I've got strict orders not to leave you until you get onto that boat." So I got onto the boat, and they brought me there….



Figure 11.19 Kuper Island Residential School.

This school was another awful place. They [the hospital staff] didn't tell my parents they were shipping me to Kuper Island! My parents didn't know where I was! My … sister-in-law, Therese [another TB case at the Indian Hospital], she phoned my parents to ask how I was doing, and that's when it turned out they didn't know where I was. I finally wrote a letter to let them know I was at the school. When I asked the principal why they sent me to Kuper Island, he said that I was here for a rest. Some rest that was. I tell you, I did not know why they did that!

As soon as I got there, they had me scrubbing things on my hands and knees and washing everything by hand. After I finished one place, I had to wax. I had to do every room in that school, both the boy and girl sides. The other kids were in school, and I went to class part of the time. One day they told me to go to the top dormitory and to wash the outside of the building and to be careful not to fall down. There was no rope, no safety, and if there was a streak I would have to go back and clean it. Eventually I got sick again, and I was sent back to the hospital in Nanaimo.[4]

4. Sainty Morris, interviewed in Laurie Meijer Drees, *Healing Histories: Stories from Canada's Indian Hospitals* (Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press, 2013), xviii-xxx.

Whether First Nations leaders found the concept of the industrial and then residential schools helpful to their people or not, the reality fell very far short. Parents often resisted sending their children away, and it was one of the functions of the RCMP and units like the BC Provincial Police to assist the clergy with annual roundups of students. It wasn't until the late 1950s that the educational curriculum improved, nor was it until then that children were allowed to visit with family over the holidays. The record suggests that a great many parents discovered that their child had died at school only when the summer holidays began.

These are the elements of the systemic weaknesses and shortcomings of the residential schools. Underfunding alone would have produced many of these negative outcomes. Tales of physical and sexual abuse operate at a different level. The principle Christian denominations were viewed by Euro-Canadian society as moral guardians; as a result, Canadians found it difficult to accept tales of abuse. Evidence began to accumulate and patterns began to emerge in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1990 the leader of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, Phil Fontaine (b. 1944), publicly disclosed the sexual abuse he suffered as a child in residential schools, along with his reckoning that every boy in his class was similarly mistreated. This disclosure led to others and, in 1991, a Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples was convened. Seven years later, the Minister of Indian Affairs issued a formal apology to victims of sexual abuse in the schools, and a multi-million dollar fund for healing was established. While this process uncovered some very grim tales, it did not speak to the psychological, physical (in addition to sexual), and emotional abuse experienced routinely in the schools. Priests and nuns alike, as well as secular workers at the schools, were named, some charged, and some convicted of a wide range of sadistic practices. One survivor of St. Anne's Residential School at Fort Albany, ON went on record to describe the kind of abuse meted out by one nun:

> I remember being in the dining room having a meal. I got sick and threw up on the floor. Sister Mary Immaculate [Anna Wesley] slapped me many times and made me eat my own vomit. So I did, I ate all of it. And then I threw up again … Sister Mary Immaculate slapped me and told me again to eat my vomit. … I was sick for a few days after that.[5]

Beginning in the 1950s, Indigenous children were permitted to attend public schools for the first time, and as day-students. Family connections were rebuilt, but the residential schools remained in place for most of the youngest First Nations children in the country. In 1969 the D.I.A. took over the operation of the schools from the churches, which coincided with the Red Paper and the rise of Indigenous political organizations. However, this is not to say that there was unanimity among First Nations as to what should happen next. Gradually, the responsibility for the schools' operations shifted to local band councils. By 1986 all of the schools were in the hands of Indigenous managers, and many had been closed down entirely. It is reckoned that 150,000 children passed through the system from the end of the 19th century to the mid-1980s.

Some of the structures are still standing: St. Eugene near Cranbrook has been converted into a luxury resort/casino and now generates revenue for the Ktunaxa First Nation; the Kamloops Indian Residential School houses offices and a museum for the highly entrepreneurial Tk'emlúps te Secwepemc. Other schools are no more: the Penelakut/Kuper Island school was demolished in the 1980s, as was St. Michael's at Alert Bay in 2015 — in both cases, the prohibitive costs of repair and rehabilitation were a factor, as was an unwillingness to tolerate the gloomy presence of the buildings any longer.

5. Jesse Staniforth, "Cover up of residential school crimes a national shame", *thestar.com,* August 25, 2015, accessed January 31, 2016, http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2015/08/25/cover-up-of-residential-school-crimes-a-national-shame.html.

In 1988 Ottawa issued the first of two official apologies for the residential school experiment. Lawsuits followed and, by 2005, Ottawa had accepted a measure of culpability and set aside $1.8 billion in a compensation fund for survivors of residential schools. In 2008 Prime Minister Stephen Harper issued a fulsome apology in the House of Commons; in an unprecedented move, the leaders of Canada's various Indigenous political organizations attended. Although the apology was a landmark in that it involved culpability and knowledge that children placed in the care of the state were harmed, it did not accept liability. While some Indigenous people were pleased with the apology, for many it was insufficient. When Stephen Harper announced to the G-20 in 2009 that Canada has "no history of colonialism," questions were asked with respect to the sincerity and intelligence of his apology. Aspects of the apology and the political movements arising from it are considered in the next section.

Key Points

- The residential schools were a project devised to replace Indigenous culture with a version of Euro-Canadian, Christian culture, and part of a larger concerted effort to interrupt the reproduction of cultural traditions in Indigenous communities.
- Education and training did little to prepare Indigenous pupils for the Canadian economy.
- The 80 residential schools located in every territory and province other than New Brunswick, PEI, and Newfoundland were operated by Christian clergy.
- Conditions were very poor, resulting in malnutrition, vulnerability to disease, and high levels of mortality.
- There were extraordinarily high levels of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse in the schools, principally by the clergy.
- The schools began closing in the 1980s; all have now been closed, demolished, or repurposed.

Media Attributions

- R.C. Indian Residential School Study Time, [Fort] Resolution, N.W.T. © Library and Archives Canada (PA-042133) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Kuper Island Indian Residential School © Canada Dept. of Interior, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 4820442) is licensed under a Public Domain license

11.12 Idle No More

Mary-Ellen Kelm; Department of History; and Simon Fraser University



Figure 11.20 Idle No More marchers in Ottawa, 2013. [Long Description]

On June 11, 2008, Prime Minister Stephen Harper rose in Canada's House of Commons to give an official apology for residential schooling. He called the treatment of Indigenous children in the schools "a sad chapter in our history," for which "the Government of Canada sincerely apologizes."[1] Mr. Harper and the other party leaders expressed palpable remorse for the past injustices of Canadian policy, and leaders representing First Nations, Métis, Inuit peoples, women, and urban Indigenous people gravely responded to the apology from the floor of the House.

For many Canadians, this promised to be a turning point in our relations with Indigenous peoples. Until the 1990s when stories of abuse in the schools hit the media and the courts, most Canadians had never

1. Stephen Harper, "Statement of Apology to Former Students of Indian Residential Schools", House of Commons, Ottawa, June, 11, 2008, accessed April 27, 2016, https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015644/1100100015649

heard of the schools. Now the Prime Minister of Canada was admitting that a government policy had been wrong and that the attitudes that inspired the policy have "no place in Canada." More importantly, he promised a new relationship between Indigenous peoples and Canadians, one of shared history, renewed understanding, and new respect for all cultures, traditions, and communities.[2] Two processes were meant to bring this new relationship about. First there was compensation for those who attended the residential schools. Second, the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)** was tasked with documenting the full history of the schools. Restorative justice scholars gave the Harper apology high marks.[3]

However, the apology was not a turning point. Its major failing was that it situated all the wrongs of government policy in the past. It did not commit the Canadian Government in any concrete way to changing its actions towards First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in the present. This was a significant mistake because a changed relationship with Canada was what Indigenous people wanted.[4]

By 2008, Indigenous people in Canada had already begun to shift the conversation between themselves and Canadians in really fundamental ways. In the 20th century, Indigenous people demanded government recognition of their rights and title to the land. As a new generation of Indigenous leaders arose, they increasingly sought resurgence — of their own cultures and communities — rather than recognition. They wanted a new relationship with Canada, the kind of relationship of sharing and mutual respect that their ancestors had expected when they signed treaties.

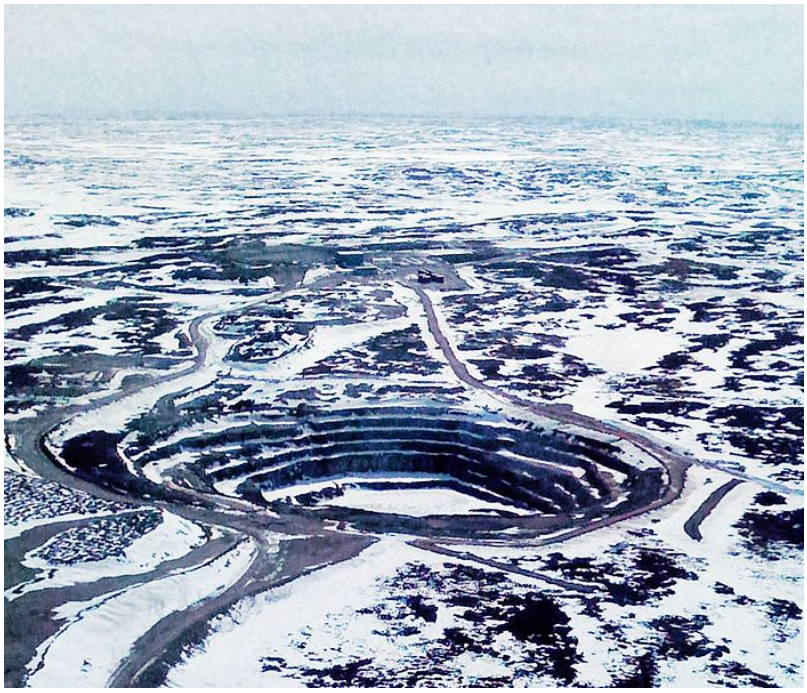


Figure 11.21 The Jericho Diamond Mine pit in Nunavut, n.d.

2. Ibid.

3. Sheryl Lightfoot, "Settler-State Apologies to Indigenous Peoples: A Normative Framework and Comparative Assessment," *Journal of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association* 2, no. 1 (2015): 33.

4. Beverley Jacobs, "Response to Canada's Apology to Residential School Survivors," *Canadian Woman Studies* 26, no. 3/4 (2008): 223; Sheryl Lightfoot, "Settler-State Apologies to Indigenous Peoples: A Normative Framework and Comparative Assessment," *Journal of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association* 2, no. 1 (2015): 33.

The trouble was that Indigenous people have not shared equally in Canadian wealth. In some parts of Canada, Indigenous people have poverty rates that are three times those of other Canadians.[5] Less money is spent on reserve schools and Indigenous children are ten times more likely to end up in foster care.[6] So while Mr. Harper was apologizing for the damage done to Indigenous children and families by residential schools, the legacies of residential schooling continued unabated.[7]

The Cree community of Attawapiskat has become emblematic of Canada's dysfunctional relationship with Indigenous people. An isolated community on the shores of James Bay, Attawapiskat made the news repeatedly in the early 2000s. Its only school was condemned as a health hazard, and student Shannen Koostachin took her demands for a new school to Ottawa in 2007. Four years later, Chief Theresa Spence (b. 1963) declared a state of emergency over inadequate housing. What made the situation worse was that the multinational corporation DeBeers was just 80 km away making a steady profit mining diamonds from Cree lands. The agreement DeBeers signed with Attawapiskat to share the mine's benefits did not include infrastructure, such as schools and houses, because that was, they argued, the responsibility of the Canadian government.[8] On December 11, 2012, Spence announced that she would go on a hunger strike to protest unfulfilled treaties.[9]

When Spence announced her hunger strike, she joined an already growing wave of protest and resurgence among Indigenous people. The protest centred on government Bill C-45, a 457-page omnibus bill that loosened legal restrictions inhibiting investment in Canadian resources. The changes that C-45 introduced to the *Indian Act*, for example, made it easier to lease or surrender reserve land by removing the democratic requirement for a community-wide vote. First Nations were not consulted on any of these changes. Within a month of C-45's first reading, on 10 November 2012, four Indigenous women in Saskatoon — Sylvia McAdam, Nina Wilson, Jessica Gordon, and Sheelah McLean — conducted a teach-in on the bill, which they publicized under the name **Idle No More**.[10]

For the next six months, Idle No More exemplified Indigenous resurgence. Social media was a major force in Idle No More: by May 2013, there had been over 1.2 million Twitter mentions of the #Idlenomore hashtag. The social media profile of Idle No More underscores an important feature of the movement: it was diverse and dispersed in its power and its leadership — not linked to any mainstream Indigenous organization. Idle No More acknowledged the importance of women in Indigenous

5. Shauna MacKinnon, "The Harper 'Apology': Residential Schools and Bill C-10" (Winnipeg: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, Manitoba Office, January 24, 2012); Aboriginal Children in Care Working Group, *Aboriginal Children in Care: Report to Canada's Premiers [PDF]* (Ottawa: Council of the Federation Secretariat, 2015): 45. July 2015: 45.

6. Don Drummond and Ellen Rosenbluth, "The Debate on First Nations Education Funding: Mind the Gap," Working Paper, Queen's University Policy Studies (Kingston: Queen's University, December 2013); Aboriginal Children in Care Working Group, "Aboriginal Children in Care," 7.

7. Aboriginal Children in Care Working Group, *Aboriginal Children in Care*, 6.

8. Kelly Crichton, Producer, *8th Fire: Canada, Aboriginal Peoples and the Way Forward*, Documentary Series, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 2012, accessed April 27, 2016, http://www.cbc.ca/player/Radio/More+Shows/8th+Fire+-+CBC+Series/Doc+Zone+video/Promos/ID/2172311969/.

9. The Kino-nda-niimi Collective, *The Winter We Danced: Voices from the Past, the Future, and the Idle No More Movement* (Winnipeg, MB: ARP Books, 2014), 391.

10. Ibid., 390.

communities, and they often took the stage at events. To honour her leadership, the movement rallied behind Chief Spence in her hunger strike.

To emphasize the social media component is, however, to miss the incredible live experience of the movement. Hundreds attended teach-ins across the country to learn more about bill C-45, and how it violated treaty rights. Thousands marched on Parliament Hill on January 10, 2013 and participated in coordinated days of action across the country.

The Harper apology in 2008 and the subsequent findings of the TRC, released in 2015, have given Canadians ample reason to reflect on their failed relationship with Indigenous people. Yet Indigenous people ask not that Canadians focus on the past, but on the present and the future. TRC Chair, Chief Justice Murray Sinclair, has said that Canada will fail to uphold the spirit of the 2008 apology unless it commits to involving Indigenous people in decisions about their lands and resources.[11] This too was Idle No More's demand as the movement expressed renewed pride among Indigenous peoples for their grassroots leadership and traditional methods of peaceful social change.

Key Points

- The intent of Harper's 2008 apology was to bring an end to the saga of the residential schools, but it provided little in the way of a plan for moving forward.
- Compensation and a Royal Commission on Truth and Reconciliation followed.
- Indigenous peoples sought two things in particular: a resurgence, rebuilding of their cultures and communities, along with an equitable share of Canadian prosperity. Substandard housing conditions, water supplies, and school facilities on reserves became a focus.
- Changes to the *Indian Act* introduced in 2012 promised to further weaken Indigenous control over reserve and traditional lands — a prospect that spurred the Idle No More movement.
- One result of these developments has been a shift in discourse among Indigenous peoples and among Canadians generally.

Long Descriptions

Figure 11.20 long description: Protesters holding a banner that says "Idle no more! Unity, sovereignty, coast to coast. Nipissing First Nation. UOI-WBAFN-NFN." On the banner is a fist clenching an eagle feather. The protesters are bundled in winter clothes. [Return to Figure 11.20]

Media Attributions

- Idle No More, Ottawa, 2013 © Wikipedia user Moxy is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

11. APTN National News, "PM Harper Has Failed to Live up to Promise of 2008 Residential School Apology: TRC", June, 2, 2015, accessed April 27, 2016, http://aptn.ca/news/2015/06/02/pm-harper-failed-live-promise-2008-residential-school-apology-trc/.

- Jericho Diamond Mine pit, Nunavut, Canada © Tom Churchill is licensed under a Public Domain license

11.13 Summary



Figure 11.22 Members of the Alkali Lake Braves hockey team in Vancouver, 1932. A few years later liquor became available to the Esketemc and an alcoholism epidemic was underway. The band's collective recovery began in the 1970s and has become legendary, although recovery from cultural genocide, abuses in schools, and on-reserve poverty continues to be a work in progress.

The thrust of Canadian policy as regards Indigenous people was, from 1867 on, assimilation. John A. Macdonald said that "the great aim of our legislation has been to do away with the tribal system and assimilate the Indian people in all respects with the inhabitants of the Dominion, as speedily as they are fit for the change."[1] There were several obstacles to this project, one of which was the racism deeply embedded in Canadian society and laws that implied that Indians would never be "fit" for inclusion. Another obstacle was the resistance mounted by Indigenous peoples to assimilationist institutions and laws.

To be sure, Canadian efforts on this front were also clumsy and largely ineffectual. Decades of promoting the benefits of relinquishing Indian Status and joining Canadian society resulted in only 250 Indigenous people taking up the offer of enfranchisement by 1920. Despite the menacing look of the laws against the potlatch and the sun dance, they were feebly enforced (with a few notable exceptions), as was the pass system.[2] Residential schools were much more efficient at crippling family relations and damaging childhoods than they were at producing new "Canadians" ready to join the mainstream

1. Quoted in J.R. Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*, revised edition (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 189.

2. ibid., 190-194.

economy. Leaving the business of education in the hands of parsimonious missionary religious orders meant that the absence of traditional cultural practices would not be replaced with an education of comparable value. Indigenous parents and communities who had hoped for relevant training to prepare their children for a world with narrower resources and new economic structures would be disappointed. Children themselves resisted the sham of industrial and residential schools by running away, committing acts of vandalism and arson, and by being uncooperative.

The circumstances faced by Indigenous peoples after 1867 varied by place and over time. The Métis diaspora — or at least some of it — was, culturally speaking, in a better position to integrate into the emergent Canadian systems of land ownership, commerce, and knowledge. But at the same time, the Métis lacked any kind of homeland comparable to the reserves that provided First Nations with a base of operations. That said, these reserves offered little in the way of guaranteed community prosperity. This was especially the case among relocated communities in the sub-Arctic and Arctic, Nova Scotia, the Kootenays, and along the Great Lakes (to name only a few locations where people were shunted about to make way for efficiencies, the military, hydroelectricity, and mines). Nothing flags poor conditions on reserves and across the North as much as the ubiquity of tuberculosis in Indigenous communities — TB is a symptom of poverty, inadequate housing, and poor diets. Colonial-era changes in traditional food supplies were coupled to immediate and general environmental degradation to produce conditions that favoured tuberculosis. The fact that Indigenous populations recovered in impressive numbers in the face of these grim environmental circumstances begs the question: What would the demographic curve look like if Indigenous peoples from the 1920s to the 1980s had enjoyed better housing, water, food, schools, and incomes…and less TB?

Dealing with TB required the further bureaucratization and institutionalization of Indigenous life. “Indian hospitals” joined a long list of systems that measured, monitored, rationalized, and individualized Native people. At the same time, these modernist institutions — schools, courts, prisons, hospitals, and Indian Affairs — had to identify “Indian-ness” to fulfill their task of expunging it. Treating all Indigenous people as one was a kind of pan-Indian approach that, along the way, made it possible for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis to find common ground and to build the foundations of a response.

Whatever the shortcomings of the colonialist experience, Indigenous leaders could nonetheless play the role of magpies, keeping their eyes sharp for the few shiny opportunities that became available. They found useful tools for building up band offices, commercial enterprises, and social programs. The Tk’emlúps te Secwepemc (formerly the Kamloops Indian Band) exemplifies the ways in which First Nations people exploited Canadian assimilationist policies to fashion an effective hybrid culture of entrepreneurship based on principles of band ownership. Several of the Niitsitapi bands enjoy significant advantages arising from their oil-rich reserve lands. The Wei Wai Kum and We Wai Kai of Campbell River and Cape Mudge have utilized other models of economic advancement through commercial development and **Aboriginal tourism**. Each of these experiments began in earnest in the 1980s, and each has leveraged economic success to build cultural and linguistic recovery. It is trite to say that not every experiment has met with victory and that many have faced criticism from within and without individual bands; of course, that is the case. Failure, regrouping, and further trial and error is in the nature of experimentation.

It would be even more trite to suggest that the success of a few bands negates the fact that most Indigenous people continue to live in poverty. A disproportionate number are incarcerated, and

violence, abuse, suicide, and homicide are a reality of Indigenous lives much more so than for non-Indigenous Canadians. Racism has not gone away; it remains a lived experience. While eugenics (see section 7.8) may have little following today, the forced sterilization of Indigenous women evidently still occurs, at least down to 2018.[3] One consequence of events since 1970, however, has been the emergence of a cadre of Indigenous leaders — many of them highly educated and quite a few of them women — whose prominence in government, the arts, media, and commerce are impossible to miss. It is not the business of history to suggest where this may go, nor are historians especially concerned with where we are right now. However, an exploration of the experience of Indigenous peoples in the past points to themes — the continuing exploration of the relevance of treaties and mutual sovereignty, the necessity of dialogue, the many acts of resistance mounted by native people against colonialism, and the persistence of dramatic inequalities in a country that ostensibly places a high value on humanism — that have contributed to the energy and success of both Idle No More and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The current context of that story — the post-Cold War, post-colonial, and postmodern world — is examined in the next chapter.

3. Avery Zingel, "Indigenous women come forward with accounts of forced sterilization, says lawyer," *CBC News*, 18 April 2019, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/forced-sterilization-lawsuit-could-expand-1.5102981



Figure 11.23 Jody Wilson-Raybould (b. 1971) is a Kwakwaka-wakw politician from Comox who was elected in the riding of Vancouver Granville in 2015. She was the Federal Minister of Justice from November 2015 to January 2019 — the first Indigenous person to hold that position.

Key Terms

Aboriginal rights: Defined in two ways: 1) as an abstract set of inherent and collective rights available on principle only to Indigenous peoples, which may include land, resource and treaty rights; 2) also or alternately, cultural rights associated with traditional or customary practices that are thought to predate European contact. The latter are protected in the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

Aboriginal tourism: Usually associated with cultural displays and/or performances, sometimes with Indigenous lifestyle experiences. The sector was very small in the 1990s, but since has become an annual multi-million dollar industry.

Assembly of First Nations (AFN): The successor to the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB); the AFN, a national advocacy organization that represents Indigenous peoples, was established in 1982.

band offices: The administrative centre of a First Nation band; a unit of government within the First Nation; applies principally to populations covered by the *Indian Act* (that is, Status Indians). The band council is the decision-making assembly in the band office.

Burnt Church Crisis: Between 1999 and 2002, a confrontation between the Burnt Church First Nation (a Mi'kmaq community in New Brunswick) and non-Indigenous fishers and the Federal Department of Fisheries.

Calder Case: Supreme Court case (Calder v British Columbia) in 1973 that decided that Aboriginal title existed prior to colonization and persisted after 1871.

***Criminal Code*:** Properly, an Act respecting the criminal law*;* the *Criminal Code* is a regularly amended body of legislation pertaining to criminal — as opposed to civil or statute — law.

cultural genocide: Premeditated and systematic attempts to eliminate a culture while not necessarily exterminating the population.

Delgamuukw v British Columbia: 1997 landmark decision in the Supreme Court of Canada; established a test for the existence of Aboriginal title, extended title beyond evidence of past use to include custodianship of territory, and thus includes a cultural relationship — rather than simply an economic relationship — with the land.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development: Created in 1966, a successor administrative unit to the Department of Indian Affairs (D.I.A.).

Department of Indian Affairs (DIA): Established in 1888 to administer the Federal Government's responsibilities as regards First Nations; was housed for many years under the office of the Minister of the Interior (who was also responsible for settling the West with immigrants).

Douglas Treaties: Negotiated by Governor James Douglas of Vancouver Island in the colonial era and concluded with 14 First Nations in the colony in the early 1850s; apart from Treaty No.8 in the Peace District, the only treaties in British Columbia before the late 20th century.

Fourth World: A category of mostly small and colonized indigenous populations around the globe; juxtaposed with First (northwestern European and North American), Second (Soviet bloc of developed nations), and Third (developing) Worlds; formalized with the establishment of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples led by George Manuel in the mid-1970s.

Idle No More: A peaceful protest and awareness-raising movement launched in 2012 by a group of Indigenous people and allies; catalyzed by Federal Government legislation that threatened Treaty rights.

Mackenzie Valley Pipeline: Proposed in the early 1970s as a means of transporting natural gas from reserves in the Beaufort Sea to processing and transhipment sites in Alberta, it was put on ice following the report of a commission of enquiry headed up by Justice Thomas Berger in 1974-77. Specific concerns included impact on ecosystems and Indigenous communities.

Mohawk Institute: First industrial school for Indigenous people, principally Mohawk; taught basic academic instruction and trades; based in Brantford, Ontario; opened in the 1830s under the auspices of the New England Company.

nadir: The opposite of zenith; it is the trough, and in demographic terms, it means the point at which a

falling population bottoms out and from which it recovers. In the case of First Nations populations, they continued to fall until the 1920s at which point they began a steady recovery.

National Indian Brotherhood (NIB): Established in 1967-1968 and propelled into action by the appearance of the White Paper (1969). See also Assembly of First Nations.

numbered treaties: Treaties struck between Canada and Indigenous peoples from 1871 (Treaty 1) to 1921 (Treaty 11), covering a territory that stretches from Ontario's eastern boundary in the North West to British Columbia, incorporating the whole of the Peace River Valley and the Mackenzie River drainage basin. Areas not covered by numbered treaties include southern Ontario (including the Rainy River area and Thunder Bay-Nippissing corridor), most of British Columbia, most of the Yukon and North West Territories, and all of Quebec, the Maritimes, and Newfoundland-Labrador.

Oka Crisis: In 1990 armed Mohawk band members from Kanesatake blockaded access to the proposed construction site of a golf course in Oka; the arrival of Canadian Armed Forces troops was followed by disruptions of traffic through reserve lands to the south by Mohawk band members from Kahnawake.

pass system: Indigenous reserve residents were required to secure a pass from their Indian agent in order to leave the reserve.

Penner Report: Recommended to Ottawa in 1983 that Indigenous peoples constitute a distinct order of government and ought to be recognized as such.

post-colonial, post-colonialism: The range of experiences and perspectives that look beyond the paradigm of colonial society and colonialism; associated with the late 20th century.

potlatch: Refers to ceremonies associated with First Nations cultures on the Pacific Northwest Coast.

Red Paper: Also called *Citizens Plus*; prepared by Harold Cardinal and the Indian Association of Alberta in 1970, the Red Paper was a response to Ottawa's 1969 White Paper (aka: *The Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969*); called for preservation of Treaty rights and recognition of Aboriginal rights.

Red Power: A continent-wide movement led by Indigenous peoples in the late 1960s and through the 1970s to place Indigenous issues on the political agenda.

Royal Proclamation: 1763; Britain's first constitution for post-Conquest Canada; recognized inherent Indigenous land tenure rights or Aboriginal title to the land, making it impossible for any authority or individual other than the Crown to alienate Aboriginal title; provoked objections among the American colonists because it interfered with their plans for westward expansion; sometimes called the *Indian Magna Carta*.

Section 35: Of the *Constitution Act, 1982*; recognizes and affirms Aboriginal rights.

sixties scoop: The apprehension and removal of Indigenous children from their families and communities by provincial child welfare authorities during the 1960s.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC): A commission tasked in 2008 with documenting the full history of the residential schools; report presented in 2015.

tuberculosis (TB): An epidemic associated with rapid urbanization, tenement housing, slums, and poverty; spread rapidly in the post-Confederation period, becoming epidemic among Indigenous populations; tuberculosis sanatoria were established and operating across Canada until the 1960s, by which time antibiotics (especially Streptomycin) had severely reduced the incidence and morbidity associated with TB.

Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC): Established in 1969 in response to the Federal Government's White Paper; replaced rival coastal and interior groups.

vagrancy: The state of being without work or employment, homelessness, and (often)

transience; associated with poverty and begging. Vagrancy was treated as a crime and was listed in the *Criminal Code* until 1972. The 21st century has seen the return of anti-vagrancy laws with different names.

wheat pools: Typically cooperatives made up of grain growers who combined (pooled) their output — and risk — to reduce competition and overheads while securing the best price; replaced temporarily by the Canadian Wheat Board in 1935; competed against private grain elevators in the post-war era.

White Paper: Also known as *The Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969*; proposed the dismantling of the *Indian Act*, an effective end to Indian Status, and the conversion of reserve land to private property; introduced by the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau and led by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Jean Chrétien; met with strident opposition from Indigenous leaders, part of which took the form of the Red Paper.

Short Answer Exercises

1. In what ways did the Euro-Canadian colonization of Canada reduce the ability of Indigenous people to thrive?
2. What were the principal demographic forces governing Indigenous populations in the post-Confederation era?
3. What principles and rights did Indigenous peoples believe they enjoyed at the time of Confederation? How, why, and to what extent were these removed in the decades that followed?
4. How did the relationship between Canada and Indigenous peoples change in the years from 1876 to the early 20th century?
5. What purposes lay behind the Numbered Treaties and schools? Consider both the Indigenous people's goals and those of the Canadians.
6. Why did Canada attempt to dissolve the *Indian Act* in 1969 and what was the consequence of that initiative?
7. Why did Indigenous resistance increasingly take the form of court challenges and extra-legal protests?
8. What was impact of the residential school experiment?
9. What is the historic context of Idle No More and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission?

Suggested Readings

Girard, Michel F. "The Oka Crisis from an Environmental Perspective, 1870-1990." In *Consuming Canada: Readings in Environmental History*, edited by Chad Gaffield and Pam Gaffield, 298-315. Toronto, ON: Copp Clark, 1995.

Kenny, James and Bill Parenteau. "'Each year the Indians flexed their muscles a little more': The Maliseet Defence of Aboriginal Fishing Rights on the St. John River, 1945–1990." *Canadian Historical Review* 95, no. 2 (2014): 187-216.

Knickerbocker, Madeline Rose. "'namała, Su Na chii k'chige, ʔems taʔaw: Indigenous-Academic Collaborative Histories." *Histoire sociale/Social history* 48, no. 96 (2015): 294-302.

Lutz, John. "After the Fur Trade: The Aboriginal Labouring Class of British Columbia, 1849-1890." *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 3 (1992): 69-93.

Lux, Maureen K. "Care for the 'Racially Careless': Indian Hospitals in the Canadian West, 1920–1950s." *Canadian Historical Review* 91, no. 3 (2010): 407-434.

Neimi-Bohun, Melanie. "Colonial Categories and Familial Responses to Treaty and Metis Scrip Policy: The 'Edmonton and District Stragglers,' 1870–88." *Canadian Historical Review* 90, no. 1 (2009): 71-98.

Neylan, Susan. "Colonialism and Resettling British Columbia: Canadian Aboriginal Historiography, 1992–2012." *History Compass* 11, no. 10 (2013): 833-844.

Rueck, Daniel. "Commons, Enclosure, and Resistance in Kahnawáke Mohawk Territory, 1850–1900." *Canadian Historical Review* 95, no. 3 (2014): 352-381.

Media Attributions

- Indian Hockey Team [from] Alkali Lake, 1932 © Stuart Thomson, City of Vancouver Archives (CVA 99-4112) is licensed under a Public Domain license

Chapter 12. Canada at the End of History

12.1 Introduction



Figure 12.1 The National Film Board came under heavy fire in the early 1990s when it produced a 3-part series, The Valour and the Horror, on what it claimed were less-than-noble moments in Canada's WWII record. The CBC aired the series and was excoriated by politicians and veterans alike.

Just as 1914-1918 marks a watershed in the history of the modern world, so does 1989-1991. The end of the Cold War signalled to some a turning point in international affairs and, thus, the end of the "short 20th century."

Francis Fukuyama (b. 1952), an American political economist, argued in his 1992 book *The End of History and the Last Man* that the centuries-long struggle between competing ideologies was essentially settled and that liberal democracies with market economies had won. It wasn't that "history" itself was over but that the idea of history as an unfolding of alternative models of social and economic relations was done. This constitutes a response to Karl Marx — the 19th century political economist — who predicted, instead, the inevitable triumph of the industrial proletariat, the elimination of national governments and states, and the emergence of global (though not Soviet) communism.

One could debate endlessly whether Fukuyama was on target, premature, or a decade late. His work nevertheless underscored the fact that the world had reached a watershed in the early 1990s. The growth of the nation state since the 18th century — as an idea and a phenomenon — had dominated thinking about history for two centuries. The Western perspective was severely linear and, after the mid-19th century, evolutionary as well. Nations developed from antiquity through feudalism, absolutism, capitalism, and sometimes communism, to something new. Each nation moved along this

course at its own speed because its economic needs favoured one system over the last. This view was at the heart of Marxist theory but also the models of most other Western thinkers, journalists, and — importantly — historians. For example, the Whig historians of the 19th and early 20th century argued that the history of humanity was a constant movement forward — progress — toward a better and better society. However, the Whigs were no Marxists; they were small-l liberals who believed that greater freedoms — from feudalism or monarchism, for example — led to greater happiness and a better nation state. For the most part, the business of writing history has been bound up with the question of how nations form and operate. This has been done in the service of the idea of a Fukuyama-esque *history*, the unfolding of a nation's story from beginning to end (or more cheerily) to a continuously brighter and better future.

If History (with a capital "H") existed to serve (and serve up) the national story of progress, it was deeply rooted in modernity. The modern age, with its emphasis on social and technological progress, was both the environment of the state and a measure of its success. Democracy, a wider distribution of wealth and opportunity, and the latest infrastructural fashions were the means and ends simultaneously. The blueprints of modernity, as we have seen nearly two centuries ago, would inevitably require revision.

At the end of the Cold War, the balance of global power changed dramatically. International bipolarism was over, and when the stand-off between the two superpowers evaporated, the necessity and perhaps the possibility of mutually assured destruction (MAD) also went out the door, even though more nations had joined the "nuclear club." The urgency felt by successive governments in Canada to deliver the "good life" so to make communism look less appealing was effectively gone as well. Beyond foreign affairs and domestic policies, however, the "end of history" also suggested the end of the meta-narrative. In this new postmodern era, the saga of the nation had outlived its purpose. History — that assembling of stories about the past that offer insights into the affairs of humans then and now — could shift its focus away from what the popular historian Pierre Berton (1920-2004) called "the national dream."[1] The spotlight could now fall on stories that had either been viewed as unimportant or irrelevant to the main event, or to histories that actually countered modernity's forward march.

The most visible facet of that postmodernist trend in the writing of history has been post-colonialism. At one stage in the history of Canada — for something like 200 years — colonization (biological settlement and populating) and colonialism (the intentional suppression of Indigenous peoples) were regarded approvingly as two of the foremost elements of the Canadian project. Through that lens, "Aboriginal history" or "Indigenous history" was almost an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms. Post-colonialism made room for histories of First Nations that provided other perspectives and, from time to time, spoke with Indigenous voices.

This chapter engages with several of these ideas. What was Canada like in the first decade or so at the "end of history"? In what ways was the postmodern made manifest in domestic, social, economic, and international affairs? How had our world and historic view changed? Could Canada continue to hide from its colonialist past in a post-colonial world? Canada's emerging international and domestic preoccupations are explored, including the fringe political movements of the day. As the meta-narrative of Canadian history began to fray, it became possible to look with some detachment at the ways in

1. Berton's history of the CPR, *The National Dream*, was first published in 1970 and was followed the next year by *The Last Spike*. Both describe the project and the politicians and capitalists behind it in heroic, nation-building terms. These are, in all likelihood, the best selling Canadian history books ever. A great popularizer of history, Berton was also a champion of the nationalist school.

which national identity and alternative identities were constructed in the 20th century, which included challenges to the "normal" that were increasingly launched in the 1980s, 1990s, and the new millennium. If the histories that sustained the national project were no longer vitally necessary or particularly welcome in the academy, what replaced them? As the postmodern world fractured storylines into increasingly specialized fragments, historians began to question whether a national history was even possible. This chapter explores some aspects of the newer historical interests, including two considerations of digital histories.

History Wars

The idea that historical method has responded to this changed world is also engaged in this chapter. If the focus of historical research is no longer the political history of the state, it moves from the parliamentary archives into different places and employs different tools while asking different questions. *History* itself changes along with the society that has emerged at history's end.

The writing of history proceeds unevenly for many and diverse reasons. In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a sudden explosion of excellent social and political history for three reasons. First, as a response to the baby boom and a national Cold War-era commitment to further education (which, notably, replaced an earlier ideology of exclusivity), there were vastly more university and college campuses and seats available to a rising generation. Second, that cohort was itself more diverse than any other in Canadian post-secondary education to that time, and it brought to the seminar table its own concerns about society and the stories we tell. Third, out of that hothouse came a generation of scholars — larger than any before it — with a shared cultural experience and language that enabled the transformation of historical studies. The benefits have been a rich legacy of investigations into the society and culture of Canada with the chief liability being a bottleneck of Cold War-era academics whose views continue to dominate as successive generations of historians strive to be heard.

By way of an example, we can look at histories of the West. Valerie Korinek, an authority on Prairie and queer history, offers some insight into where Canadian history has failed to go, and calls for Western historians in particular to pay attention to the late 20th century:

> This was a time of considerable transformation for the Prairie West (some might argue Western ascendancy, albeit uneven) as it reconfigured from a primarily rural to an urban place, as it became an economic powerhouse, and as demographic shifts made it an increasing social and political force within the country. This transformation needs to be explored and assessed historically. Regretfully, Western historians have failed to participate in enumerating and evaluating these substantive historical changes in the second half of the twentieth century….[2]

It is not fair to say that Western Canadian historians are stuck in the past (insert winking emoji here), but the truth is that contemporary or even post-centennial histories are rare. What Korinek identifies is, in part, the challenge of **contemporary history**. How old do events have to be before they slip from one side of the ledger (made up of Politics, Economics, Sociology, etc.) over to the other side (where we find History)? There's no ironclad rule on this front. The 20th century historian Kenneth McNaught (1918-1997) is said to have claimed that everything after World War One constituted "current events."

2. Valerie Korinek, "A Queer-eye View of the Prairies: Reorienting Western Canadian Histories," in *The West and Beyond: New Perspectives on an Imagined Region*, eds. Alvin Finkel, Sarah Carter, and Peter Fortna (Edmonton, AB: Athabasca University Press, 2010), 281.

To someone born in 1918, that might make some sense but, as all historians come to realize, that boundary is always in motion. The historians who came of age in the late 1960s — mostly born in the 1940s — might be excused for feeling uncomfortable with histories of life after 1939, although that has not held back everyone. Alvin Finkel's *Our Lives: Canada after 1945* and Doug Owram's *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* show baby boomers successfully tackling the mid-century as an historical environment. However, as Korinek points out, older discourses persist, narratives become embedded within narratives, and we risk becoming unaware of the changes that history might reveal to us.

In *Canadian History: Pre-Confederation*, I describe the current state of historical writing, including the conflict between generations of historians that took place in the 1990s. The so-called **History Wars** pitted the older **nationalist historians** against the rising generation of scholars who argued there was no longer one meta-narrative of the Canadian experience. Building a national identity out of a shared historic experience was the task set before modern historians; **deconstructing** those stories to show how they implicitly privileged certain groups and perspectives was the challenge taken up by newcomers to the field.

While the leading nationalist historians — Jack Granatstein among them — remained productive but increasingly marginalized from the innovative work in the discipline, their advocates did not completely surrender the battlefield.[3] Efforts to recast Canadian history as something comfortably familiar were undertaken in first dozen years of the twenty-first century by conservatives who regard the Pearson years and its "pennant" as the point in time when Canada drifted from its moorings. For example, a cohort of British, imperialist fans of military history sought to restore a common curriculum of nation-serving historical studies in the schools and universities. They failed… mostly. While English-Canadian historical research turns its back on nationalist histories, nationalist views are increasingly embedded in the teaching of French-Canadian history in Quebec. "The History Wars," writes University of Guelph historian Mark Sholdice, "are really not about history, but rather politics."[4] It's about whose story gets told and which heroes are honoured or 'destatued.' The great English historiographer E. H. Carr wrote: "The facts speak only when the historian calls on them"; the historian "decides to which facts to give the floor…."[5] We make those decisions based on, among other things, the politics around us and the politics we live, be that green, feminist, conservative, separatist, religious, or nationalist. It isn't that political history is at an end; rather, the net we cast to capture political change must necessarily be larger.

Learning Objectives

- Account for the rise of "identity politics" in the post-Cold War era.

3. There is no universally accepted collective noun for historians, but the phrase, "an argumentation of historians" is sometimes preferred.

4. Mark Sholdice, "The History Wars in Canada", *Toronto Review of Books*, May 5, 2013, accessed January 27, 2016, http://www.torontoreviewofbooks.com/2013/05/the-history-wars-in-canada/#_edn1.

5. E. H. Carr, *What is History?* 2nd ed. (Markham, ON: Penguin Canada, 1987), 11.

- Explain the failure of both the Charlottetown Accord and the 1995 Referendum.
- Describe the ways in which the end of the Cold War changed Canada's foreign policy and domestic politics.
- Identify ways in which historians have adapted their craft in a postmodern world.
- Outline the ways in which the Canadian national character and symbols have been crafted and changed since Confederation.

12.2 The End of the Cold War



Figure 12.2 Somali youths captured by the Canadian Airborne Regiment, bound and wearing signs that say Thief. The Somalia Affair would mark one of several low points in the peacekeeping tradition in the 1990s.

The legacy of the Cold War continues to influence world affairs. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the post-Cold War world became **unipolar** instead of **bipolar**, with the United States the sole remaining superpower. Being caught geographically between two superpowers from 1945 to 1991 gave shape to Canada's international role and its aspirations for middle power status. Defining a new international role in the post-Cold War era would take Canada into new conflicts.

In November 1989, the world — including foreign policy experts and espionage agencies from both sides of the Iron Curtain — watched in surprise as peaceful protesters in East Germany marched through guard stations at the Berlin Wall. Within hours, people from both East and West Berlin flooded the checkpoints and began tearing down large chunks of the wall. For months, demonstrations in East Germany had called on the government to allow citizens to leave the country. These protests were one manifestation of a larger movement with origins in Poland's Solidarity (*Solidarność*) movement, which would sweep across East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania, leading swiftly to revolutions — most of them peaceful — and resulting in the collapse of Communist governments in Central and Eastern Europe.

In Budapest in 1956, and Prague in 1968, the Soviet Union had restored order through a large show of force. In the case of Hungary, over a thousand Soviet tanks were involved, with 30,000 troops, and as many as 3,000 Hungarians died; in 1968 the USSR mustered half a million troops from the Warsaw Pact nations and more than 6,000 tanks to put down (with far less bloodshed) the Prague Spring. That these events were not reprised in 1989 was an indication to all that the Soviet Union was itself collapsing. In July 1991, Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev (b. 1931) and United States President George H. W. Bush (b. 1924) signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or **START**, which

committed their countries to reducing their nuclear arsenals by 25%. A month later, in an attempt to stop the changes begun by Gorbachev's reforms, Communist Party hardliners tried to remove him from power. Protests arose throughout the Soviet Union, and by December 1991, the nation had collapsed. In January 1992, 12 former Soviet republics formed the Commonwealth of Independent States to coordinate trade and security measures. The Cold War was over.[1]

A More Dangerous World?

The dust had barely settled on the crumbling Berlin Wall when the global order began to shift. The United States was, effectively, unleashed from whatever restraint the fear of provoking Moscow previously exerted. Cold war subterfuge gave way to direct attacks on enemy and rogue states. In December 1989, the Bush administration launched a military intervention in Panama and, claiming to be acting on behalf of human rights, deposed the military dictatorship of Manuel Noriega (b. 1934). Former CIA connections between Bush and Noriega, as well as United States interests in maintaining control of the Canal Zone, prompted the United Nations and world public opinion to denounce the invasion as a power grab. Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm followed in 1990-1991, as American forces backed Saudi Arabia and Kuwait against Iraq: this conflict drew the American military deep into the Middle East. Involvement in conflicts in two disintegrating countries — Yugoslavia and Somalia — came soon after. A brazen attack on New York City and Washington, DC on September 11, 2001 resulted in the deployment of American troops in Afghanistan. Two years later, the Second Gulf War (or the War in Iraq) began.

Canada's relationship with the outside world would likewise turn more violent in the decades after the fall of the USSR. Between 1956 and 1981, Canada began (and mostly completed) eight distinct peacekeeping missions with the United Nations (UN). Half of these were active missions in the 1970s. From 1981 to 1989, however, no new missions were undertaken. Then, at the end of the Cold War, Canadian involvement increased by an order of magnitude. Peacekeeping missions — sometimes repeat missions — were undertaken from 1989 to 2000 in Namibia, Western Sahara, Cambodia, Somalia, the Balkans, Haiti, Rwanda, Central Africa, East Timor, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Ethiopia and Eritrea. The stability that had been provided by the Cold War was gone. This was most clear in the former Yugoslavia, where a communist regime independent of Moscow and the Warsaw Pact descended into bloody ethnic and religious conflict. Out-of-bounds to Western interference prior to 1989, Yugoslavia became increasingly vulnerable to external influences, especially as its economy began to collapse. Canadians were part of a large contingent of NATO troops sent into newly independent Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo. The situation in Somalia is perhaps more instructive: the Somali regime in the 1970s was essentially Marxist and benefited from Soviet support and investment; in 1978, however, it switched its allegiance to the United States. The end effect was that this strategically critical country on the east coast of Africa had built up enormous military stockpiles and the largest army on the continent. When the dictatorship (supported by the United States) began to crumble in the mid-1980s, neighbouring nations started picking at the edges while internal dissent created the conditions necessary for civil war. No longer able to whipsaw the East against the West, Somalia became a **failed state** in which there was no national administration, only warring factions. Canadian troops trained as peacekeepers were stretched to their limits,

1. OpenStax CNX, "31.3 A New World Order", *U.S. History*, OpenStax CNX, accessed January 24, 2016, https://cnx.org/contents/p7ovuIkl@9.5:OCsuwNr2@7/31-3-A-New-World-Order.

particularly since most were now assigned to keep the peace where no peace existed. Regular combat troops were added to the mix, including the Canadian Airborne Regiment, which was sent into Somalia in December 1992 as part of the humanitarian mission. The Canadian Regiment's violent, arbitrary, and murderous behaviour led to several civilian deaths (including the beating to death of Shidane Arone) and a political scandal at home, which was dubbed the **Somalia Affair**. Another consequence of the East African fiasco was a loss of public confidence in the military and a loss of faith in the peacekeeping tradition.

Clearly, the destabilization of global politics at the end of the superpowers era was taking Canadian diplomacy and external affairs into new territory, both geographically and operationally. Foreign policy retained its focus on multilateralism, but this emphasis was quickly swept up by the American sense of urgency in the Middle East. In response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the UN Security Council encouraged nations to help repel an aggressor-state. The Canadian government opted to commit a limited force, believing that a contingent of CF-18 jets was both more feasible and more palatable to domestic opinion than a large ground force. Economic sanctions were introduced while care was taken not to lose Iraq as a major buyer of Canadian grain. Opposition to the mission was diffuse and incapable of mounting an anti-war campaign. What is more, some Canadians argued that the post-Cold War environment itself called for a response. Bernard Wood, the Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, made the case for military involvement:

> If our decades of paralytic confrontations between the superpowers has led many Canadians to see themselves more as spectators and critics than as actors on the world stage, they had better recognize, for better or for worse, that the world has changed and we are once again called upon to act.[2]

The goal of Canadian policy makers in these circumstances was to establish a truly multilateral, post-Cold War order, one in which no geopolitical giants would dominate as they had down to 1989. External Affairs minister — and former PM — Joe Clark did not share this view and events seemed to prove him right. In the case of Iraq, what began in late 1990 as a multilateral UN initiative parallel to American objectives quickly became a United States-led, 34-nation coalition aimed to push Iraq back to its own borders. Incredibly well armed after years of buying weapons and fighter aircraft from Western nations and amassing Soviet-built Scud missiles, Iraqi forces were nevertheless quick to retreat behind a flaming wall of sabotaged oilfields. The ground war, which began on February 24, 1991 was over in 100 hours. The whole affair barely lasted two months. Brief though it was, the Gulf War (or, as it became known a decade later, the First Gulf War) was the first conflict in which Canada was a belligerent since Korea. Amazingly, Canadian forces suffered no casualties.

Setting aside this initial and fierce conflict, there was hope in the early 1990s that the end of the Cold War would bring with it a **peace dividend**. That is, the cost of maintaining readiness in the face of the threat posed by the Warsaw Pact and other communist countries would come to an end, and resources could be spent in other ways. This was not to be the case globally, since President Bush continued to pursue a **New World Order**. Canadians, however, were mostly sanguine about playing an active military role internationally and the Canadian Forces were positioned for severe cuts. Canadian bases in Germany — a holdover from both WWII and the Cold War — were closed. Spending on Armed Forces materiel, however, actually accelerated in the early 1990s until a change of government turned the tide against National Defence Headquarters. As the new Liberal administration led by Jean Chrétien (b. 1934) rounded their fiscal guns on the Forces, news of the Somalia Affair broke, and a Commission

2. Quoted in Robert Davis, "Canada and the Persian Gulf War," unpublished M. A. thesis, University of Windsor, 1997, 74.

of Enquiry was launched. The Commission produced a parade of embarrassments, including systemic misogyny at every level, cover-ups, conflicts of interest, defalcations, and outright lies. When the Commission presented its report in 1997, the Forces and National Defence HQ were comprehensively blamed for illegal, immoral, undisciplined, irresponsible, and inhumane behaviour. Recommendations for change were equally comprehensive, and the pressure was on to retool the Armed Forces as a more diverse organization that more closely resembled civilian Canada. The peace dividend proved to be illusory, and Canada adjusted to a more technological and expensive era of war making and peacekeeping.

In the same year as the Somalia report, Canadian troops returned to the Balkans. In 1993 Canadian soldiers with the United Nations Protective Forces (UNPROFOR) were deployed in the Medak Pocket, a region claimed by Croatia and by invading Serbian troops. The Canadians were to create a barrier between the two forces but came under fire from the Croatian side. This 15-hour firefight was the first significant challenge to Canadian ground troops since Korea. Four years later, the focus shifted to Kosovo. Canada's involvement in this phase was as an aerial combatant: CF-18s flew repeated sorties into Serbia in an effort to bring an end to **ethnic cleansing** in the Albanian enclave.[3] In the first decade after the fall of the Eastern Bloc, Canada engaged in more actual combat missions than it had in the 20 years after the Korean War. The trend would continue into the new century.

3. Desmond Morton, *A Military History of Canada*, 5th ed. (Toronto, ON: McClelland & Stewart, 2007), 277-292.

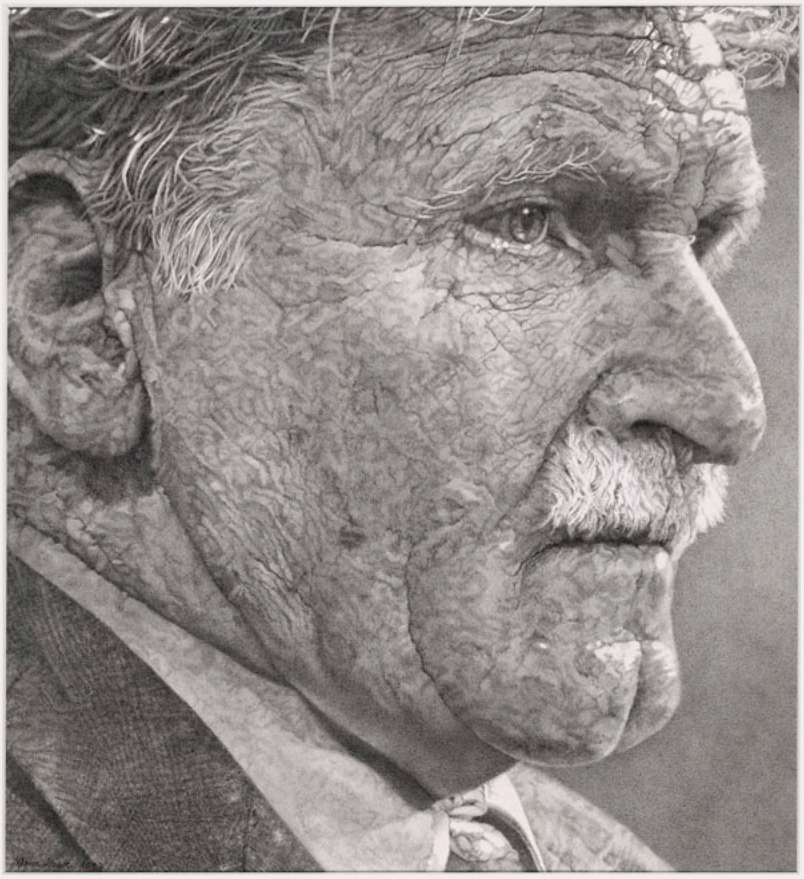


Figure 12.3 Artist Elaine Goble's drawing of Roméo Dallaire ("Rwanda has my soul") captures the personal and emotional burden of the frustrated peacekeeper.

Rwanda

Genocide, the horror that the 20th century found the means to massify, was a feature of the conflict in the former states of Yugoslavia and central Africa. Just as the end of the Cold War set free decades of resentment in the Balkans, the end of colonialism let loose ancient hostilities and enmities nursed under European empires. Independence movements sprang up that pitted one formerly colonized people against another. Divisions that tangled up ethnic histories, language, religious identity, ideology, unsettled and conflicting claims to ancestral lands, and uneven distribution of the spoils of decolonization pitched African communities into civil wars and military campaigns. This was the pattern in Rwanda, formerly German East Africa and then, from 1919, occupied by the Belgians. Under the European imperialists, the line between the minority (the more privileged Tutsis) and the majority (the less advantaged Hutus) became sharpened. Distinct "racial" identities were ascribed to both groups and, under the Belgians, identity cards were issued that signified whether one was "Tutsi" or "Hutu." Generally speaking, European powers in the region, along with the Catholic Church, favoured the Tutsi and their historic advantages were enhanced. Things began to unravel as independence movements gained ground in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Thirty years later, the legacies of colonialism in central Africa included a long-running battle between the Hutu-led government of Rwanda and Tutsi-dominated Burundi next door. Tutsi populations from Rwanda went into exile in Burundi and then fought to restore their position at home. A genocidal campaign against Hutus in Burundi was launched in the 1970s (perhaps as many as 200,000 were killed), with the result that

thousands of Hutu were driven into Rwanda, where their resentment towards the Tutsi continued to grow. By 1990 the Hutu-led administration and military in Rwanda began preparations for a “final solution” to their rivalry with Tutsi populations. The 1991 invasion from Burundi of the Tutsi Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) heightened tensions and, as civil wars erupted in both Rwanda and Burundi, led to the deployment of a United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) in October 1993. UNAMIR’s mandate was to monitor the Arusha Accords between the Hutu and Tutsi factions and to oversea the crafting of a transitional government and humanitarian aid. The UN placed Canadian Brigadier-General (subsequently Major-General) Roméo Dallaire (b. 1946) in charge of a small and poorly supplied force.

By January 1994, Dallaire was receiving intelligence to the effect that a massive genocidal attack on the Tutsi minority was being planned. Weapons were being stockpiled, and Hutu were receiving clandestine training. Dallaire passed his information to the UN in what became known as the “Genocide Fax” and made plans to raid suspected weapons caches. He was chastised for attempting to overstep the mission’s mandate. Dallaire’s hands were officially tied.

Then, in April 1994, the recently elected Hutu president of Burundi and the Hutu president of Rwanda were assassinated when the aircraft they were travelling in together was shot down over the Rwandan capital. The succession struggle that followed was rapid and bloody: the Prime Minister — Agathe Uwilingiyimana — was murdered by Rwandan troops, along with the 10 UNAMIR soldiers assigned to protect her. Moderate leaders were hunted down and executed as the genocidal slaughter got fully underway. Dallaire’s combined force of Canadian, Pakastani, Ghanaian, Tunisian, and Bangladeshi troops were sufficient to protect 32,000 Tutsi in Kigali. Elsewhere, the campaign claimed some 800,000 lives.



Figure 12.4 Belgian personnel with UNAMIR were tortured and executed at this site in Kigali, which is now a memorial.

Dallaire’s account of the outrages, *Shake Hands with the Devil* (2003), provides rare insight into peacekeeping in the post-colonial, post-Cold War era. The Rwanda mission — along with a decade of disasters in Somalia and the Balkans — led to reduced Canadian enthusiasm for the peacekeeping tradition that was first presented to the world by St. Laurent and Pearson.

9/11

On September 11, 2001 the Canadian Armed Forces were probably as badly staffed, armed, and equipped as they had been at any time in the 20th century. Naval craft were outdated and fighter aircraft dangerously old. The Forces' ground equipment was unsuited for a world in which guerrilla warfare, sniper fire, and land mines impeded the movement of troops everywhere. The attacks on the World Trade Towers and the Pentagon brought a cry for revenge from the United States, and President George W. Bush (b. 1946) declared the **War on Terror**. NATO was automatically involved because of its foundational policy to respond to an attack on one as an attack on all. Faced with American fears that the international boundary with Canada was an unguarded gateway for terrorists heading to targets in the United States and the consequent closure of border crossings, Ottawa committed quickly to the American crusade. The enemies, in this case, were principally the **Taliban** (the Islamic regime in Afghanistan) and **al-Qaeda**, a *jihadist* group pieced together in the 1980s by the Americans to fight against the Soviet Union.

Canada's interests in the Middle East are complicated by its relationship with Israel, the central foe of organizations like al-Qaeda. One of the first countries to recognize Israel in 1947, Canada has maintained close relations ever since, with a few important breaches. There was, for example, a broad loss of Canadian confidence in the Israeli regime following the First Intifada in 1987; sympathy for the Israeli people was, however, aroused by Iraqi missile attacks on Israel during the First Gulf War. Concurrent Canadian sympathy for Palestinians, however, has not sat well with Tel Aviv. Despite these interruptions, the largely strong connection has been manifest in a bilateral free trade agreement that was reached in 1996. When **9/11** produced the War on Terror, Islamicist groups understood Canada to be first and foremost an ally of their sworn enemy. This was not a conflict in which Canada might employ its historic commitment to multilateralism or negotiation.



Figure 12.5 Canadian infantry searching for Taliban and al-Qaeda cave strongholds in the Tora Bora region in Afghanistan, May 2002.

The commitment of troops and materiel to the **Afghanistan War** was substantial. The first troops — including an elite team of snipers — arrived in Afghanistan in 2001 with an anticipated end-date of 2003. Canadian operations included training local forces to protect the post-Taliban regime as well as

relieving American troops in Kandahar Province at the centre of al-Qaeda territory. In 2005 troop numbers were increased substantially as the focus of the war shifted to dealing with a resurgent Taliban. Canadian involvement in Afghanistan is reckoned to have involved 40,000 Armed Forces personnel from 2001-2014. Withdrawal from the fray has been announced repeatedly, but to date it remains an inconclusive withdrawal — Canadians continue to participate in developing and training Afghanistan systems and forces engaged in anti-Taliban efforts, despite a formal declaration in 2014 that Canadian military involvement was at an end.

In fact, the official end of the Afghanistan campaign came just five months shy of the 100th anniversary of the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand (1863-1914) and the start of the Great War. Armed conflict had, in this *long* 20th century, changed dramatically. The World Wars introduced and refined industrial means of killing large numbers; the War on Terror represents a return to guerrilla tactics of a kind with which 18th century Canadians and First Nations had greater familiarity. Ambushes, traps, and sniper fire — along with improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and suicide bombers — gave the conduct of war a very different shape. Although statistics on wartime casualties and fatalities are difficult to verify, it is thought that nearly 11% of Canadian troops died between 1914 and 1918, and that the ratio of combat injuries to combat deaths in WWI was nearly 3:1; only 159 fatalities were recorded in Afghanistan (a mere 0.4% of the 40,000 troops deployed), although the ratio of casualties to fatalities is more than 4:1. Guerrilla warfare is geared to inflicting injuries and depressing morale; as well, medical advances make it possible to save the lives of badly damaged soldiers and other personnel and, thus, inflate the casualty list. Nonetheless, it is clear that 21st century wars — so far — have been distinctive.

Another feature of war that has changed is the awareness and treatment of what has been called, since the 1970s, **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**. The Great War produced conditions that included heavy and continuous shelling of military positions from which troops could neither advance nor retreat; one consequence was a kind of psychological condition called *shell shock*. Subsequently, after the Second World War, this was rebranded as *combat stress*, a term that was used until the end of the Vietnam War. It was then that PTSD came into common use. The 20th century is the first century in which psychology, psychiatry, and psychotherapy became recognized as both academically legitimate areas of study and publicly available forms of analysis and treatment. The mental health consequences of warfare in the long 20th century could only be understood in the context of contemporary and evolving ideas about the human mind. The post-Confederation period saw warfare evolve quickly: from pitched sniper fire (of the kind conducted in Saskatchewan in 1885), through the appalling graveyard of trench standoffs in WWI to the bombing of civilian targets (and the appearance of atomic weaponry) in WWII, on to the technologically-reliant but seemingly less predictable conflict of the early 21st century. Adjusting to these changes has taken a severe toll on the health of soldiers.

Post-Cold War NATO

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, NATO was drawn into the breakup of Yugoslavia, and conducted its first military interventions in Bosnia, and later Yugoslavia in 1999. Politically, the organization sought better relations with former Cold War rivals, and several former Warsaw Pact states joined the alliance in 1999 and 2004. The September 2001 attacks signalled the only occasion in NATO's history that Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty has been invoked as an attack on all NATO members. After the 9/11 attack, troops were

deployed to Afghanistan under NATO's leadership, and the organization continues to operate in a range of roles, including sending trainers to Iraq, assisting in counter-piracy operations, and enforcing a no-fly zone over Libya in 2011.[4]

Key Points

- The collapse of the Warsaw Pact and the end of Soviet power produced a set of changed global conditions.
- The American policy of "containment" was superceded by more unilateral action, often in zones that would have attracted the interest of the Soviet Union in the Cold War era.
- Rather than becoming less involved internationally, in the two decades after the Cold War, Canada became more engaged with military and peacekeeping missions, including several in Africa (but most notably in Somalia and Rwanda) and in the former Yugoslavia.
- Internal crises in the Canadian Armed Forces and changing military needs in a technologically evolving era produced a simultaneous desire to reduce military costs while investing heavily in new and more sophisticated systems and hardware.
- After nearly three decades of Canadian satisfaction with peacekeeping missions, events in Somalia, Croatia and Kosovo, and Rwanda turned public opinion against this tradition.
- Canada's NATO obligations compelled it to participate in the American reaction to the events of 9/11, leading to more than a decade of entanglement in Afghanistan.

Media Attributions

- Canadian Airborne Regiment, Chaplain Capt. Mark Sargent Behind a Group of Bound and blindfolded Somali Civilians © Commission of Inquiry into ... Deployment of Troups ... Somalia, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3604003). Copyright Government of Canada. No restrictions on use.
- Rwanda has my soul [Roméo Dallaire] © Elaine Goble, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3959433) Copyright PTV Productions Inc. No restrictions on use.
- Operation Torri Command Post © United States Air Force (ID 020504-F-JQ435-004) is licensed under a Public Domain license

4. Boundless, "North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)", Boundless U.S. History, July 21, 2015, accessed Dec. 17, 2015, https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory/chapter/the-cold-war/.

12.3 Postmodern Politics



Figure 12.6 Reform of the "Red Chamber" – the senate – was an increasingly prominent goal in constitutional talks and Canadian politics in the 1990s.

For all intents and purposes, the function of federal politics from 1867 to 1987 was to knit together the economic, political, social, and cultural concerns of the country and hold the federal structure together. When the Parti Québecois under Mssr. Lévesque was campaigning for sovereignty-association in 1980, every party in Ottawa came out in support of federalism (while offering varying degrees of reform for the relationship between Quebec and the ROC). The failure of the Meech Lake Accord shattered the illusion of a shared vision for federalism, even in the ROC.

Return to Charlottetown

Charlottetown, the Prince Edward Island capital, is where confederation was first proposed to the Atlantic colonies by the Canadians. That 1864 meeting enabled Charlottetown to bill itself as the "Cradle of Confederation," despite the fact that PEI's representatives decided to give the offer a pass on the first try. The symbolism of a return to where confederation began was clearly attractive to Conservative leader and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney; in 1992 he convened another meeting of Premiers on PEI with an eye to approving what some called "Meech 2." Opponents of Meech Lake had pointed to the lack of consultation that preceded its creation, and Mulroney sought to address this failing with a new agreement. Extensive public discussion took place over nearly two years, including obtaining input and approval from the Assembly of First Nations, the Inuit Tapirisat, and the Métis National Council. The effect on the **Charlottetown Accord** was dramatic. Aboriginal rights were enshrined, as was Quebec's distinct society clause. **Senate reform** was more clearly spelled out than in Meech, similar changes extended to the Supreme Court, and there was a commitment to education and social policies and principles. The overall trend was to empower the provinces and protect their ability

to act independently on cultural matters. One facet of this shift was the proposal to eliminate the disallowance clause against which 19th century premiers like Oliver Mowat had railed.

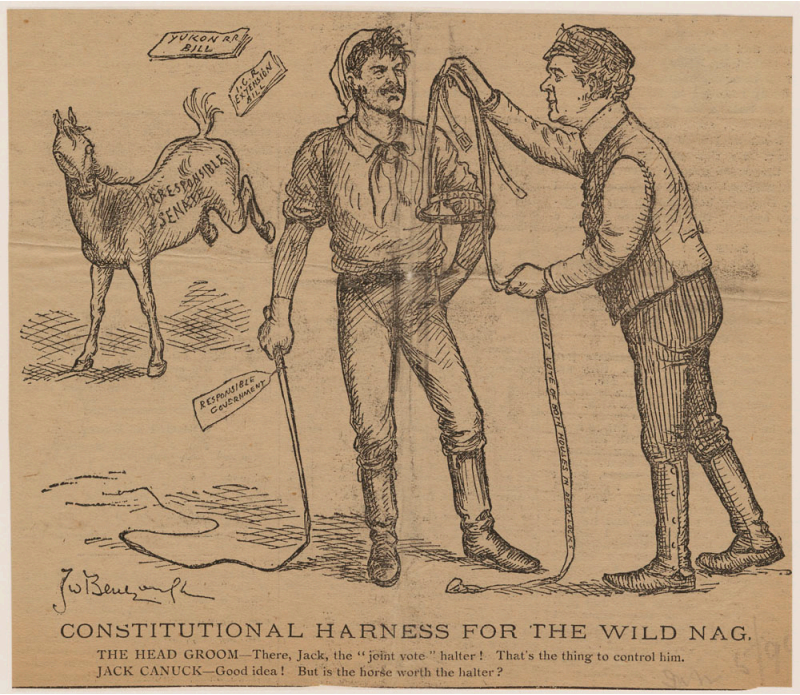


Figure 12.7 Senate reform has a long pedigree. In 1899 cartoonist J. W. Bengough shows an "Irresponsible Senate" bucking in the background while Laurier holds out a harness labelled "Senate Reform." Jack Canuck (the voter) holds a whip marked "Responsible Government" and wonders, "Is the horse worth the halter?" Abolition, in other words, was an option. [*[Long Description]*]

All 10 premiers – including Quebec's Liberal premier Robert Bourassa – approved of the Accord. The three major federal political parties – the governing Progressive Conservatives, the opposition Liberals, and the NDP – were also committed. In this instance, however, whatever was agreed to at the table would need to be approved in a national referendum.

Initially, broad public support seemed likely, even in Quebec (where it was, predictably, close). Several factors contributed to its defeat, the first of which was strong campaigns in Quebec by separatists (who were uncompromising in their view that a revived federal arrangement was not the same thing as autonomy) and the Prairie-based Reform Party (which argued that the Accord did not do enough to transform political structures, that it was a pact between old party elites, and that it gave too much to Quebec). The comprehensiveness of the Accord also invited criticisms: there was inevitably something with which anyone could quibble. Prime Minister Mulroney's personal unpopularity was also a factor; a vote against Charlottetown was seen by some as a vote against an unpopular and (in some quarters) untrusted administration. A final and prominent component in the opposition camp was the involvement once again of Pierre Trudeau. A widely-read critique in *MacLean's* magazine saw the former prime minister describe it as the end of federalism and a recipe for a disintegrated Canada. Indeed, supporters of the Accord similarly warned that a *No* vote could just as easily lead to the break-up of the country, which was a kind of brinksmanship that, on balance, probably favoured inertia over change, a *No* vote over a *Yes*.

On October 26, 1992, Canadians went to the polls to vote in a very rare national referendum. The results were complex, but the overall pattern was a victory for the *No* side with 54.4% of the vote. Four provinces voted against – British Columbians were the most adamant with 68% voting *No* – and the Territories split (Yukoners opposed it at 56%, but the NWT was 60.6% in favour). Without a strong tradition or experience of referenda, there was confusion as to how Ottawa would interpret the results, but there was a general consensus that rejection by any province could be a deal-breaker, particularly if that province was Quebec. In any event, Nova Scotia, Quebec, and the Prairie Provinces joined BC and the Yukon in rejecting the Accord. Charlottetown was as dead as Meech.

The referendum result was a a blow to the Progressive Conservatives' credibility. Conversely, it enhanced the profile of the Reform Party and the Parti Québecois. Examining the results of the Accord referendum in Quebec, separatists began planning for a referendum of their own.

The 1995 Referendum

The 1993 federal election returned a Liberal majority government under Jean Chrétien. It was, as much as anything else, a rout of the Mulroney Conservatives (now under the leadership of Kim Campbell). The Tories didn't win a single province, having been completely replaced by Reform in British Columbia and Alberta, and the Atlantic provinces provided the Conservatives with only one seat. The most ominous sign, however, was the arrival of an anti-confederation party at the federal level: the *Bloc Québecois.* Separatist strength in Quebec was growing once again.

The origins of the *Bloc Québecois* can be found in the long conflict between the federalist Liberals in Ottawa and the separatists in Quebec. During the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, the role of Pierre Trudeau was pivotal in pushing the Liberals away from their old tolerance for Quebec nationalism. The separatist *Parti Québecois* offered a credible alternative at the provincial level (where, significantly, they defeated the provincial Liberals), but there was nothing equivalent at the federal level. (Theoretically – if not in practice – all Conservatives and Liberals from Quebec were federalists once they reached Ottawa.) In the 1980s, the anti-Liberal *Péquistes* increasingly looked to the Conservative Party to carry forward their agenda federally. Then, the failure of the Meech Lake Accord in 1990 drove the Conservative Minister of the Environment, Lucien Bouchard (b. 1938), to draft seven Quebec MPs — five Conservatives and two Liberals — into a new party.

Unlike the 1867-vintage Anti-Confederate Party from Nova Scotia, the Bloc proved highly successful at the polls. In its first outing in 1993, the *BQ* (or *Béquistes* or *Bloquistes*) won half the popular vote and more than two-thirds of the seats in Quebec.[1] This made the *BQ* the second-largest caucus in 1993-1997, despite being elected in only one province. A separatist party was now Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, and Mr. Bouchard was its leader.

Success at the federal level was echoed 11 months later in Quebec when the Liberal government of Bourassa was defeated by the Parti Québecois, which had been revived under the leadership of Jacques Parizeau (1930-2015). It is worth noting some of the numbers in this process: nearly 57% of Quebec voters voted *No* in the Charlottetown Accord referendum in 1992; the Bloc Québecois won 49.3% of the vote in Quebec in the 1993 federal election; and the Parti Québecois took just under 45% in the

1. This is the one breakaway party that has not, to date, been reunited with its ancestor party/parties. It remains a credible political entity.

provincial election in 1994. Clearly, there was a bedrock of support for separatist and/or sovereigntist positions, perhaps enough to win a second referendum on sovereignty.

Despite the separatist strength going into this referendum campaign, divisions soon racked the leadership. Bouchard and Mario Dumont (b. 1970), the leader of the new conservative and populist *Action démocratique du Québec* (ADQ) insisted that the referendum should include the option, and even the goal, of a continued economic and social partnership with Canada — this was the sovereigntist option. Parizeau and other hardliners argued for a clean break, a separatist or *indépendantiste* position. Fearing a fatal schism in the movement, Parizeau agreed to a referendum question that, if successful, would open sovereignty-association negotiations but, should those talks fail, the provincial government would be automatically empowered to declare independence unilaterally. The mechanisms for achieving autonomy were laid out in an *Act Respecting the Future of Québec* (also called the Sovereignty Bill or Bill 1), which passed first reading and waited on the Order Paper for the outcome of the referendum. As was the case in 1980, however, confusion over objectives led to a convoluted question:

> Do you agree that Quebec should become sovereign, after having made a formal offer to Canada for a new economic and political partnership, within the scope of the Bill respecting the future of Quebec and of the agreement signed on 12 June 1995?[2]

In the event of a successful referendum result, Bill 1 identified areas of partnership between Canada and the new country of Quebec, which included a customs union (essentially a free trade zone with a shared currency – the Canadian dollar); unfettered movement of individuals, services, capital, and goods; and a shared citizenship comparable to what could be found in the European Union. There was no clarity as to who would negotiate this agreement on the part of Canada. (Could Mssr. Bouchard participate? Would his caucus be permitted to vote on the outcome? What about Québecois civil servants in the federal administration?) Nevertheless, Parizeau's concessions were enough to forge an alliance with Bouchard and Dumont. Bouchard took over the leadership of the *Yes* campaign in its last month, and the tide looked to be turning their way. One portent of the likely outcome came on the eve of the vote as Ottawa moved to get its CF-18 fighter aircraft out of Quebec even as the Parizeau government made plans to seize the Canadian Forces bases in the aftermath of a *Yes* victory.

When the ballots were counted, the *No* side had once again triumphed but this time by the narrowest of majorities. More than 93% of the registered electorate turned out for the referendum, and 50.58% voted *No*. Leadership blunders and demographic factors had undermined the *Yes* side. Parizeau's role could be singled out as polarizing because of his tendency to make ethno-nationalist comments that favoured the *Canadien* heritage far more than the pluralist society that Quebec had become. In the 15 years between the Lévesque referendum and the Parizeau-Bouchard-Dumont referendum, Quebec had become even more diverse and less *pure laine* (dominated by a population derived from the settlers of New France). The Francophone and Anglophone communities were growing slowly and, of course, many Anglophones had moved away between 1975 and 1995 in reaction to the Francization of daily life and commerce. A new and expanding community of immigrants with a higher fertility rate was making its presence felt, and their lack of connection to the historic grievances of New France, Lower Canada, and Quebec made the pitch for sovereignty that much more difficult. These newcomers – often lumped together as allophones – bore the brunt of Parizeau's referendum night wrath. In a televised

2. Canada. Quebec. *Quebec Sovereignty Referendum*, 30 October 1995, in response to Bill 1 or the Sovereignty Bill.

interview he claimed that the *Yes* side was defeated by "money … Anglo and ethnic votes." The spectre of ethnic nationalism had been raised once again.

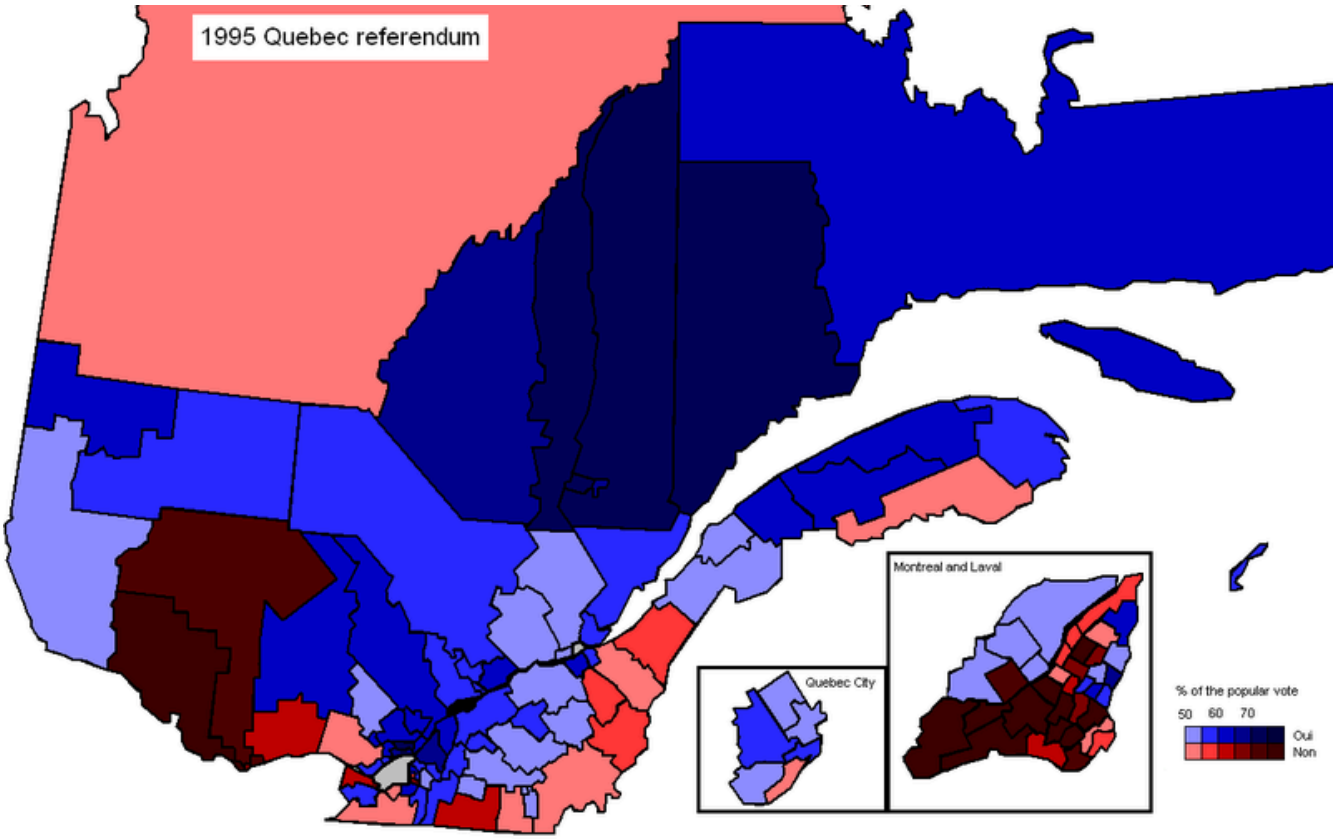


Figure 12.8 Support for the Yes side in the 1995 referendum was strongest in rural Quebec, particularly in the Saguenay. It was weakest in the areas nearest Ottawa, in west Montreal, in the Inuit/Innu/Cree-dominated lands of the north, in the Eastern Townships, and along the borders with the United States and New Brunswick.

Border Disputes

Both the 1980 and the 1995 referendums provided opportunities for Canadians to think again about territorial assumptions. Quebec separatists viewed the entirety of the province's boundaries as sacrosanct, but both the Inuit of Nunavik – the northern third of Quebec – and the Cree announced through their own referendums their intention to stay in Canada. The position they took was the same as Quebec's: that they had a right to national self-determination. Given that the Cree homeland includes the enormous James Bay hydroelectric complex — symbolically and economically a mainstay of modern Quebec — the loss of that territory would be a body blow to the proposed independent state of Quebec.

The idea of **partition** had supporters within urban Quebec as well. Pierre Trudeau said in 1980 that "Si le Canada est divisible, le Québec doit être aussi divisible." Anti-separatist anglophone communities in the Eastern Townships and the western half of the island of Montreal have also indicated a readiness to secede from Quebec so to maintain their connections with the rest of Canada.

What is more, Canada's strategic interests have repeatedly been invoked in this discussion. Would it be necessary to create a Canadian corridor across southern Quebec to sustain connections with the Maritimes?

Similarly, Quebec politicians have voiced a belief that the boundary with Labrador is not what it should be and that an independent Quebec would expect to receive some of that (iron ore rich) territory.

The effect of these challenges would be to pare Quebec back to something much more like Lower Canada or what the province was at the very beginning of Confederation. Naturally, this line of arguing is regarded in Quebec as highly provocative, and its opponents argue that it is unlikely to stand the test of international law.

There were several important outcomes to the referendum. As constitutional language around *distinct society* became more widely accepted in Canadian political culture, it was entrenched in legislation. The **Calgary Declaration** of 1997 parcelled out veto powers over future constitutional change and received the endorsement of every provincial government apart from Quebec. The next year, the Supreme Court declared on the question of unilateral declarations of independence: contrary to Mssr Parizeau's plans, Quebec would not be able to simply walk out of confederation, although negotiations for an exit would be required of both sides. Finally, the slim victory of the *No* side pushed the Chrétien government to introduce the *Clarity Act (2000)* that demanded a clear question and a decisive outcome at the polls in any future referendum of national significance.

Eventually, constitution and referendum fatigue set in, and no government since 2000 has had an appetite for more debate on the subject. Quebec remains the only province that has not endorsed the *Canada Act*, and there is still no formally approved amending formula in place. The *Canada Act* is now more than 30 years old, which means it has outlasted both the *Proclamation Act (1763)* and the *Act of Union (1840)* and is currently the third longest-functioning constitution in the history of British North America, despite being fundamentally flawed.



Figure 12.9 Three Prime Ministers in the second half of the century shared Arthur Meighen's unfortunate experience of foreshortened tenure. Joe Clark held on for 9 months, Kim Campbell (above) for less than 5, and John Turner for 2 and a half.

The Campbell Moment

Something else happened in 1993 that marked a sea-change in Canadian political culture. The most visible was the appointment of a woman – Kim Campbell (b. 1947) – as Prime Minister. Campbell won the Progressive Conservative leadership convention and took over the reins from Brian Mulroney as he retired in June. Despite a promising start, Campbell's popularity disintegrated once the election was called. Meech, the Free Trade Agreement, the Goods and Services Tax (GST), the Gulf War, and the entire record of the Mulroney administration was placed on Campbell's shoulders. What's more, the appearance of the *Bloc* in Quebec was mirrored by rising support in the West for the Reform Party under Preston Manning. Although the Reform Party had campaigned on the slogan "The West Wants In" from 1988, it was very much heir to a century of western alienation and was prepared to play separatist cards of its own. The ideological contrast between the BQ and Reform was significant in that the former pursued many of the social democratic and social justice issues that were the trademark of the Parti Québecois, whereas the latter was more archly conservative, in important ways, than the Mulroney and Campbell Tories. The effect of having two parties speaking up for regional disenchantment was decisive: the Progressive Conservatives suffered their most devastating loss on record as they were reduced to only two seats in the Commons. The NDP faired only slightly better, holding on to 9 of their pre-election 44 seats. Campbell was defeated in her own Vancouver-Centre riding and disappeared from politics.

An administration that lasts for only a couple of months might be said to have no legacy whatsoever. In the case of the Campbell administration, one could argue instead that its wholesale collapse was legacy aplenty. Was its rejection in 1993 a reaction to the neo-conservative, Thatcherite/Reaganomic posture taken by Mulroney or a rejection of his vision of a renewed constitutional process? In some respects, the outcome is reminiscent of the no-win situation faced by Laurier 90 years earlier when compromise only brought the contempt of Nationalist and Imperialist alike. In Campbell's case, the Tory record on the constitution was not enough for Quebec and too much for the West. Campbell's inability to reassure either side was certainly outstanding.[3] One should also point to the breakthrough of a woman leader, although Campbell shared this pioneering position with others. Jeanne Sauvé (1922-1993) became Canada's first female Governor-General, serving from 1984 to 1990. Rita Leichert Johnston (b. 1935) was the first woman to lead a provincial government when, like Campbell, she took the poisoned chalice (in 1991) from a failing administration in British Columbia and lost in the very next election. In the same year, Nellie Cournoyea (b. 1940) became the first First Nations person to lead a government as Premier of the Northwest Territories (where a consensus-based selection process was used). Catharine Callbeck (b. 1939) was elected Premier of Prince Edward Island in 1993 in a more conventional parliamentary system and thus broke the curse of the appointed-successor. The fundamental breakthrough might properly belong to the federal NDP who elected Audrey McLaughlin as its caucus leader in 1989, which meant that two parties went into the 1993 campaign under female leaders. McLaughlin's caucus survived but only barely, and she was succeeded in 1994 by Alexa McDonough. Sixty years after the Persons Case (1929), women were leading key parties and governments, and success in this regard would increase from province to province so that by 2012, half of the premiers were women.

Key Points

- Although the costs and benefits of federalism have been repeatedly questioned since 1867, the last 30 years has witnessed several attempts to rethink it, reconstruct it, and reject it.
- The failure of the Meech Lake Accord was followed by another, more consultative effort in the form of the Charlottetown Accord, which failed to win sufficient support in a national referendum.
- The rise of the *Bloc Québécois* as a federal separatist party was followed by another separatism referendum in Quebec. This was another *No* win, but only narrowly.
- The 1995 referendum and its fall-out included increased tensions between some ethno-nationalist Québécois and the growing allophone population.
- Indigenous peoples in Quebec voted overwhelmingly against the referendum.
- Changes in the Progressive Conservative Party began in 1993 with the election of a female leader and the party's subsequent electoral collapse.

3. Sharon Carstairs and Tim Higgins, *Dancing Backwards: A Social History of Canadian Women in Politics* (Winnipeg, MB: Heartland Associates, 2004), 282-285.

Long Descriptions

Figure 12.7 long description: Political cartoon depicting the “irresponsible senate” as a bucking horse, the average voter as Jack Canuck, and Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier as the head groom of a stable. Smiling, Laurier offers a harness to Jack Canuck labelled “senate reform.” Trailing down the length of the harness are the words “joint vote of both houses in [illegible].” Jack Canuck holds a whip labelled “responsible government” and looks at Laurier skeptically. The irresponsible senate bucks wildly in the background, flinging into the air such bills as the Yukon RR Bill and the I.C.R. Extension Bill. The cartoon is titled “Constitutional Harness for the Wild Nag.” It is captioned as such: “The Head Groom: There, Jack, the ‘joint vote’ halter! That’s the thing to control him. Jack Canuck: Good idea! But is the horse worth the halter?” [Return to Figure 12.7]

Media Attributions

- Constitutional Harness for the Wild Nag © J.W. Bengough, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3964533) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Quebec Referendum © Wikipedia user Earl Andrew is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Kim Campbell is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

12.4 Political Recalibrations

There are many examples of regional political movements in Canada's history, but most bought into the essential ideas and values of confederation. These were essentially "modern" qualities in that they were in support of the nation-state. The Parti Québecois challenged the legitimacy of one nation-state by proposing that Canadian federalism undermined the legitimacy of another: the nation-state of French Canada. The failure of the 1980 referendum and efforts to change the constitutional landscape seemed to address this, although by 1990, forces were at work in Canada that wished to challenge the very model of modernity.

The West Wants In

The near-disappearance in 1993 of the Progressive Conservatives and a poor result for the NDP ushered in a new era in Canadian federal politics. Conservatives — especially the more ideologically pro-business and socially conservative or "Blue Tories" — started shifting toward Preston Manning's Reform Party. This move was especially the case in the West and BC; electoral success east of Manitoba, however, eluded Reform in the 1997 election, which was due partly to the populist stance of Reform that often pandered to the electorate's cynicism and bigotry. Many of its MPs were on record as misogynists, homophobes, Francophobes, and racists, and the party expressly embraced neo-liberalism to an extent that surpassed even the Mulroney Conservatives.[1] Unable to expand its base, Reform was nevertheless able to form the Official Opposition in 1997. The former occupant of Stornoway, the separatist Lucien Bouchard, made way for Manning (b. 1942), the leader of a party that would rather see Quebec leave than agree to additional concessions.

By moving into Stornoway — something he promised not to do — Manning alienated himself from some of his erstwhile supporters. Further desertions came when he disciplined Reform MPs for making public statements that supported discrimination and endorsed limitations on individual rights based on race, sexual orientation, and health. The rise in the 1990s of the notion of **political correctness** provoked right-wingers within the party. Manning's inability or unwillingness to take to task the more outrageously outspoken elements in Reform led to desertions from the party; at the same time, his half-hearted efforts to rein in the outliers led to other departures. One of the Reform Party MPs who disagreed with Manning on several fronts was a young representative from Calgary, Stephen Harper.

Manning's call for a decentralized Canada in which all the provinces were inherently equal took several forms. Western Canada's long-standing appetite for Senate reform was a key measure, taking the form of a **Triple-E Senate** — elected, equal, efficient. Reforms like this were aimed at dismantling the effective stranglehold that Quebec and Ontario had enjoyed in Canadian politics for more than a

1. David Laycock, "Populism and the New Right in English Canada," in *Populism and the Mirror of Democracy,* ed. Francisco Panizza (London, UK: Verso, 2005), 172-201.

century.[2] Without central Canadian support, however, the Reform Party was going to be forever mired in the Opposition benches. The solution that Manning sought was a fusion of conservative elements into one party.

The merger of the Tory and Reform parties was accomplished in 2000. The right-wing or "blue" elites in the Progressive Conservative Party joined with Manning's Reform supporters to form the Canadian Conservative Reform Alliance. (This party name lasted for only one glorious weekend as journalists from one end of Canada to the other noticed that if you added *Party*, the acronym became CCRAP.) Thereafter, it was the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance (CRCA) and, in October 2003, the party of Macdonald, Borden, and Diefenbaker officially merged with Reform to produce the Conservative Party of Canada. Gone was *Progressive,* and in the next year, former Reform MP Stephen Harper was elected leader.

Not everyone in the old Progressive Conservative Party supported this move. Joe Clark was one of many old, and very often "Red" Tories who could not support the new CPC. The Progressive Canadian Party appeared in 2003 or 2004 as a vehicle for some of the disenchanted Tories who feared the loss of a particular kind of conservatism in Canadian politics. Its impact has thus far been inconsequential.

2. Richard Sigurdson, "Preston Manning and the Politics of Postmodernism in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 27, no. 2 (1994): 249-276.

Politics as Performance Art

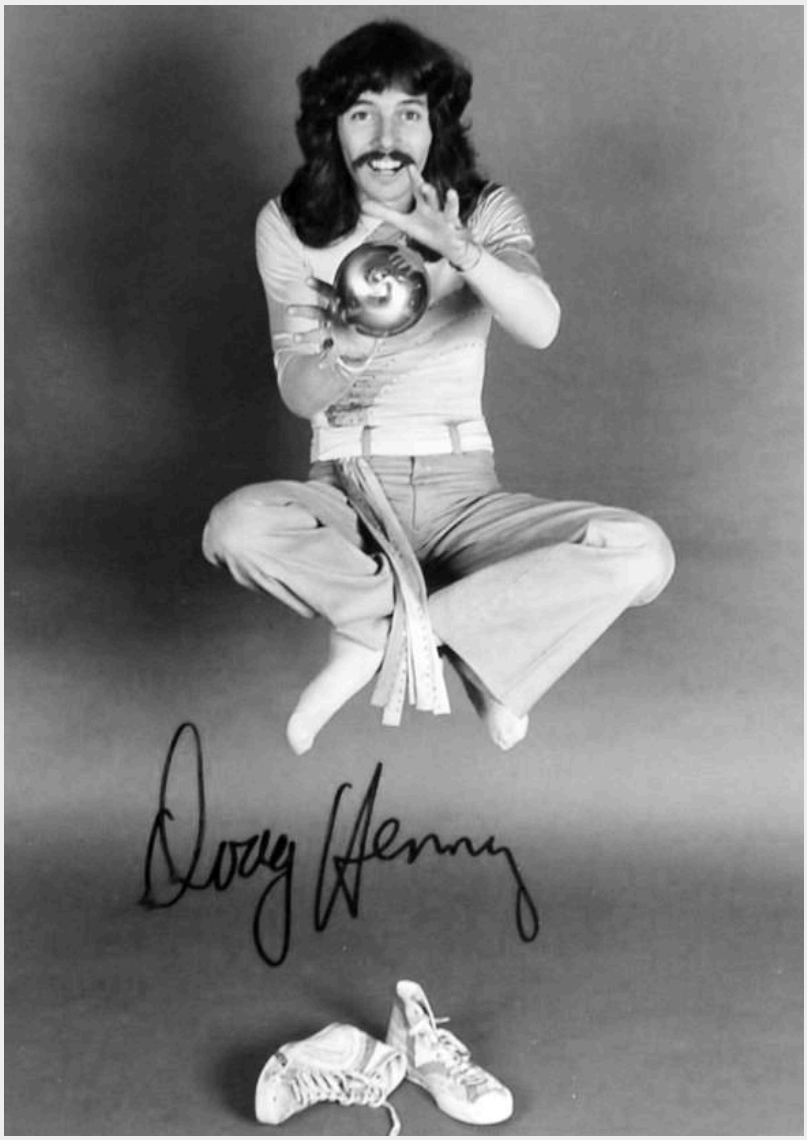


Figure 12.10 Doug Henning (seen here levitating in 1976) first acquired some fame as a stage magician and then ran for office as part of the Natural Law Party in Britain, and then in Canada.

Small and even self-consciously absurd political parties appear from time to time and are a feature of many parliamentary democracies. Examples include Britain's Monster Raving Loony Party and Australia's Deadly Serious Party; for several years in the 1970s, Vancouver's civic elections featured The Peanut Party led by Mr. Peanut (alias Vincent Trasov), which was supported by an all-woman dance troupe called the Peanettes. Satirical or joke parties serve several purposes, some of them not intentionally. They draw attention to the political process, even if they are criticizing its weaknesses. Assuming they succeed in making voters laugh, they read the mood in the country and measure what the electorate regards as worth satirizing.

The Rhinoceros Party (*Parti Rhinocéros*) has been the most successful and enduring of the joke parties in Canada. It was established in 1960s Montreal as a means to satirize political campaigns and political promises. They declared war on Belgium (because the Belgian comicbook character, Tintin, killed a rhino);

promised to switch the right-of-way on Canadian roads from right to left (but this would be phased in gradually, starting with large tractor-trailer trucks first, followed by buses, smaller cars, then — last — bicycles and wheelchairs); and threatened to hold an inventory of the Thousand Islands to see if the Americans had filched a few. The party briefly went dormant in the early 1980s when a Montreal-area candidate, Sonia "Chatouille/Tickle" Côté finished second in her riding, ahead of the NDP and Tory candidates. The shock of a near victory passed, but the Rhinos were effectively barred from further involvement in federal politics by new laws in 1993 that required a $1,000 deposit and no fewer than fifty candidates to enjoy official party status.

Founded on the ideals of transcendental meditation, the Natural Law Party of Canada (NLPC) took the new regulations in stride and ran 231 candidates in 1993 in their inaugural election campaign. Magician Doug Henning (1947-2000) was a fixture in the party's leadership and an exemplar of "yogic flying." Natural Law never presented itself as satirical; in fact, it sometimes seemed to take itself too seriously. Nevertheless, it was so far out on the fringe as to add welcome relief in an election that was otherwise (rather typically) mean-spirited. The Party's share of the vote topped at about 0.63% and thus it never really got off the ground.

Not Easy Being Green

While parliamentary democracy allows for peculiar joke parties, it is also somewhat receptive to new — serious — political movements. Small but growing in ambition and support is the Green Party of Canada. Established in 1983, it was initially a federation of like-minded local activists that has evolved into a fully-functioning national organization with provincial wings. Setting aside its advances in the 21st century, the first 20 years of its existence produced little in the way of material results. No candidates were elected, and the party organization effectively went to sleep between election campaigns. In 2000 the Green share of the vote passed 0.81%, and four years later it was 4.3%; it would take until 2011, however, for the election of the first Green MP.

Canada's political culture has several very deep and widely understood primary themes, one of which is the expectation that political parties offer different visions of economic growth. It might be agricultural or industrial, central Canadian versus "regional," short-term or long-term, protective or free-trade, but there is always this note that must be struck by competing parties — a promise of more jobs. In this respect, the Green Party struggled in the 20th century insofar as many of its fundamental platform planks have to do with restricting unbridled economic growth, reducing environmental damage by reeling in resource exploitation and manufacturing, and planning urban growth more carefully. The century closed, however, with the growing realization that human-induced climate change is a reality and that environmental concerns are no longer the monopoly of single-issue activists.

Like the NDP, which is a member of the Socialist International, the Greens belong to a worldwide family of parties with a common list of objectives — the Global Greens. It is worth noting that there are no parallel organizations for Liberals or Conservatives.

Key Points

- Changes in the political landscape in the post-Cold War years include the rise of the Reform Party

(which eroded the Tory base in the West) and the eventual disappearance of the PCs into the new Canadian Conservative Party.

- These changes brought Blue Tories into an alliance with Albertan conservatives whose populist politics were informed by Christian fundamentalism and a deep-seated mistrust of central Canadian elites.
- The structure of Canadian parliamentary democracy allows for the appearance, from time to time, of fringe and new parties that illuminate the limits of the existing political order.

Media Attributions

- Doug Henning, 1976 © NBC Television is licensed under a Public Domain license

12.5 Identity Politics

The historic experience of *Canadiens* — the descendants of the settlers of New France — has been different from the rest of Canadians. As a result, a separate and distinctive identity came easy for the Québecois. The same is not true of most non-francophone and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada, most of whom are descended from immigrants who arrived after Confederation. With few exceptions, these newcomers cannot lay claim to an ancestral landscape within Canada, although some groups have been able to scaffold a separate identity onto the different ways in which they have experienced Canada. In some instances, this is an outcome of the persecution of their linguistic and artistic culture by Anglo-Celtic assimilationists, education systems, and marketplaces. Some recalcitrant groups (like the Doukhobors, for example) have even faced jail time for failing to conform. Experiences like these have forged identities that are as powerful as — if not more powerful than — conventional nationalism.

There have been times when Quebec's French-Canadian population has reached out to *les Francophones hors-Québec*. These franco-Canadians number approximately a million, against the six million in Quebec, and they include a quarter-million *Acadiens,* a half-million *Franco-Ontariens,* 70,000 *Franco-Colombiens* in BC, and more than 50,000 *Franco-Albertains*. The Bilingualism and Biculturalism Commission took seriously the historic and current condition of French-Canadians across the country but, outside of New Brunswick where francophones represent more than 30% of the total population, and in parts of northern Ontario, the electoral power of this group was small, and the strength of its collective identity was not enough to turn heads in Ottawa or in Quebec City.

Despite these limitations, *les Francophones hors-Québec* constitute in total, and in their various parts, an important identity group, one of the earliest to emerge anew in the post-WWII period. There are many others, so many that a comprehensive list would be nearly impossible to assemble. However, among the earliest and most important, we can include Indigenous Canadians, women, Westerners, and Japanese- and Chinese-Canadians. These groups stand out because they each had a grievance against the status quo, sufficient numbers to create political noise, and were either widely distributed so as to be an issue everywhere or tightly concentrated so as to create an important constituency in one or two locales. Respectively, they were able to bind together over issues of colonialism, patriarchy, and **regional disparities** in federalism; the experience of internment and dispossession during the Second World War; and a legacy of racism that included the Head Tax and legal barriers that divided families for generations. To be an Indigenous person anywhere in Canada was to experience at least some — probably most — of the ills of colonialism; likewise, women everywhere were exposed to systemic sexual discrimination.

The 1960s saw the rise of **identity politics** that mobilized these groups in ways that proved impossible in the past. The factors driving the change varied, but the common consequences were an abandonment of loyalty to one party or another; a weakening of the connection with the conventional story of Canada; and a sense that a collectivity or a whole branch of Canadian society had experienced abuse, neglect, and a lack of authority. The three decades that followed witnessed the emergence and consolidation of still more identity groups.

African Canadians and people whose identities and orientations were not heterosexual were part of this

eruption of identities. Northerners; the Inuit; rural Canadians; fundamentalist Christians; individuals who had been managed by the state because of their mental health: in each instance, their "identity" became a critical factor in building a political, economic, social, and civic role. It was no longer enough for politicians or merchants to roll out their wares and see what appealed; in the late 20th, they had to go to where the identities were. Politicians and others were told they had to speak to issues like residential schools, abortion, compensation for racist policies, religious education, self-government, language preservation, and homophobia — issues that had been kept off the table for the first century of Confederation.

Hidden Histories



Figure 12.11 The largest of British Columbia's mental health asylums was variously known as Essondale and Riverview. Deinstitutionalization of mental health patients in the 1980s depopulated facilities of this kind.

The late 20th century witnessed increasing interest in the histories of groups that hitherto had eluded study. Indigenous Canadians, "ethnic" Canadians, and visible minorities were more intensively studied, as were women who, because of patriarchal lenses, had never really been in focus. Working people were also more fully examined. Three other categories joined these ranks in the years after the 1960s: children (explored by Georgia Sitara in Section 10.9), the incarcerated, and people whose sexuality fell outside of the heterosexual paradigm (the subject of Section 12.7).

Megan Davies (York University), a specialist on the history of madness, discusses conditions in asylums in Canada in the 20th century. For reasons you might easily imagine, there are few firsthand accounts from inmates or patients. French social theorist Michel Foucault's book *Madness and Civilization* (1964) continues to inspire scholars to ask questions about institutionalization and social power. Davies' account of asylums and forced sterilization provides a sense of how the growth of state power played out in the area of mental (and often social and/or moral) deviance. In the second video, Professor Davies addresses deinstitutionalization and how it contributed to the growth of a new kind of identity.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=725#oembed-1

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=725#oembed-2

This multitude of voices and stories is viewed as one of the key qualities of the postmodern era. Multiculturalism is part of a long-running nationalist narrative of "tolerance" in Canada, a storyline that has minimized difference and maximized themes of inclusion. However, this is only one version of nationalism in Canada. In Quebec — particularly in the context of the 1995 referendum — nationalism had an exclusive flavour. Inevitably, these nationalisms wind up being measured against one another. As Eva Mackey observes, in the context of the Quebec sovereignty campaigns, "the demands of *French* Canada are equated [by Anglo-Canadians] with intolerance and racism, and *English* Canada, in opposition, is constructed as the opposite, a modern tolerant nation." Differentness, therefore, is implicitly deployed — ironically — as a tool of unity.[1] And yet, this unity itself has limits as feminist and postmodernist critics have pointed out.

By the mid-1980s, these critiques were erasing smug nationalist perspectives on the country's history. Systemic racism, sexism, cultural genocide, and impoverishment were being revealed, often by historians. The new histories that were emerging at this time gave identity groups their own narrativized mandates, setting up a postmodern, post-colonial, post-patriarchal Canada in which the old constants — like the Liberals and Conservatives alternating in Ottawa — were not simply being questioned but gutted. (Just as the Tories were reduced to 2 seats in 1995, keep in mind that the Liberals fell to third party status in the Commons in 2011 with only 34 seats.)

One of the keys to the rise of identity politics is the right to have an identity, which should be obvious but often it is not. Gays, lesbians, members of ethnic and/or visible minorities, married couples with different racial ancestries, individuals and groups belonging to religious creeds that constitute no more than a minority in their communities, and even women were unable to advance their cause until their identity was recognized. Very often this recognition came in the form of anti-discriminatory legislation. The 1953 *Equal Pay Act* in British Columbia served to identify groups that had suffered from discrimination and established that they had a right to complain when they were oppressed on the basis of that identity.[2] Later in the 20th century, in 1988, the Japanese-Canadian community won an apology and wrung compensation out of the Federal Government for the humiliating internment of WWII and the state's confiscation and sale of their property in the 1940s. (Although 22,000 people had been interned, only 1,400 received compensation for property losses prior to the 1980s.)[3] Many Canadians, including Pierre Trudeau, opposed this move, claiming that it would open the floodgates for similar

1. Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 4-16.

2. Dominique Clément, *Equality Deferred: Sex Discrimination and British Columbia's Human Rights State, 1953-1984* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 2014), 86.

3. Audrey Kobayashi, "The Japanese-Canadian Redress Settlement and its Implications for 'Race Relations'," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 24, no. 1.

complaints based on past actions. Indeed, subsequent claims were made, although few achieved as much compensation as that awarded to the survivors of internment. The larger effect of the redress settlement made to Japanese-Canadians was the way in which it raised human rights abuses in Canada as a historic issue that needed to be confronted. This redress has served to validate other identity groups — such as residential school survivors — whose claims of abuse are not isolated to the distant past, since they took place in the post-war era when human rights was a concept well known to government, the media, and the public.

The following two sections explore aspects of identity politics in Canada over the last century and more recently. The images that shaped a mainstream Canadian identity can be contrasted with the ways in which some groups were consciously excluded and punished for differentness.

Key Points

- One feature of the Canadian experience has been the development of many, separate, and sometimes conflicting identity groups, of which French-Canada is merely the most obvious.
- "Identity politics" became more visible in the 1960s, and gained importance later in the 20th century.
- The very fact of embracing multiculturalism and diversity has offered support to the growth of identity politics while, conversely, building a sense of shared experience and, thus, unity.
- Identity politics contributed to the destabilization of the political *status quo*, which led to the loss of hegemony by the federal Liberal and Conservative parties.

Media Attributions

- Building for Chronic Male Patients, ca. 1913 © Niall Williams is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

12.6 Building a National Identity

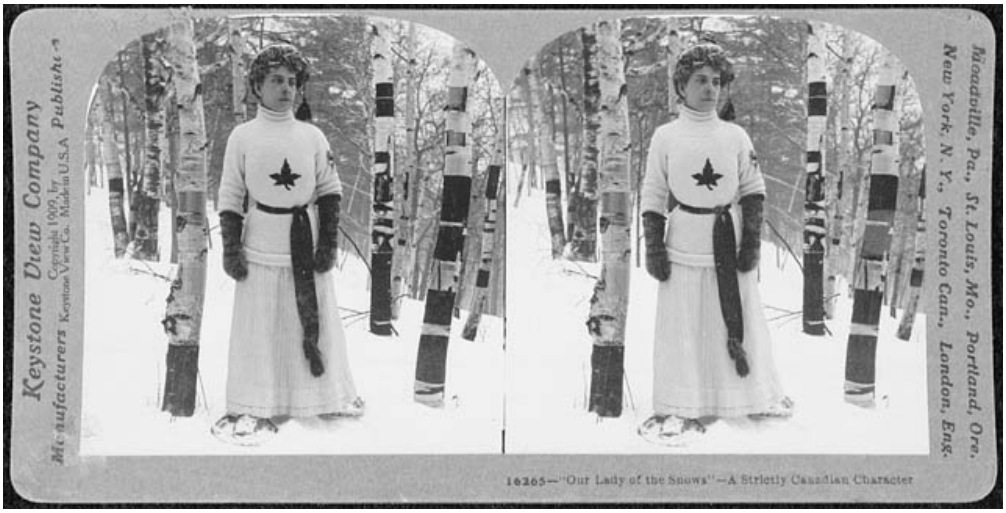


Figure 12.12 Inventing images that evoke a Canadian tradition distinct from that of Britain or the United States has been a minor industry in Canada. Here, Catholic traditions meet Quebec folkways in Our Lady of the Snows, 1909.

> A British subject I was born — a British subject I will die.
>
> — John A. Macdonald, 1891[1]

John A. Macdonald functions as something of an official repository of stirring and/or aggravating quotes. He spoke these words on the campaign trail in 1891 when the Liberals were arguing for closer economic ties to the United States. Evoking fear of annexation — economic certainly, political probably — Macdonald summoned up what he thought was core to being Canadian: British subjecthood. In Macdonald's day and age, being part of the biggest imperial chain on the planet was something to boast about, and he was counting on other Canadians to feel the same way when he uttered this statement. He was, however, on the record as preferring a kind of arms-length colonial relationship with Britain in which the Dominion was utterly loyal but mostly autonomous. The Canadian High Commission in London was an expression of this: established in 1880, the High Commissioner represented Canadian interests in Westminster and to the Crown, a slight reversal of the role played by the Governors-General.

More than a century later, what is the national identity? Canadians are not "British subjects," regardless of the fact that the Queen of Canada is also the Queen of Britain. It is difficult to imagine a Prime Minister today invoking that connection the way Macdonald did (successfully, by the way) in 1891. Was there ever a common agreement on that identity? No. The Provincial Rights movement of the late Victorian era eroded loyalty to the larger nation even as the Dominion struggled to establish its *bona*

1. John A. Macdonald, from 1891 election campaign speech: "As for myself, my course is clear. A British subject I was born — a British subject I will die. With my utmost effort, with my latest breath, will I oppose the 'veiled treason' which attempts by sordid means and mercenary proffers to lure our people from their allegiance." Macdonald opposed the US commercial treaty proposed by the Liberals.

fides. Fealty to region did not end with Confederation; it survived throughout the 20th century, and not only in Quebec. A symbolic language of identity at odds with the national equivalent has consistently acted as a counterweight to the notion of Canadian-ness.

These debates and divisions are important to note because they all contributed to the building of national and provincial identities. In addition, they go some way to explaining why the history of Canada is so elusive.

Jack Little, a historian at Simon Fraser University, considers how early tourist accounts contributed to a national sensibility among Canadians.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: *https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=733#oembed-1*

Making Canada, Making Canadians

In the language of 21st century marketers, Canada had a weak "brand" at the start of the post-Confederation era. Was it a British colony or a free nation? The citizens were British subjects … which meant what, exactly, in Quebec? Was Canada a North American nation or an extension of the British Isles and, maybe, Western Europe as a whole? Such issues did not trouble the Americans who had nowhere to look but North America. They cut themselves loose from Europe in the 1780s and built their own continent-wide empire. The word *patriot* — which derives from the words *pays* and *patris*, thus meaning loyalty to the country of one's father — was looked at askance in Canada because it was associated with American revolutionaries in the 18th century and the *Patriotes* of Lower Canada who led the 1837 rebellion against imperial authority. As well, for some more imperially-oriented Canadians, being a "nationalist" implied loyalty to the nation-state as a structure rather than to the larger ideals of the the empire, the Crown, and so on. The search for a common denominator, a shared bond that was both affectionate and inspiring was underway.

What was Canada in 1867 other than a collection of colonies? They'd fought no great battles together and, in fact, they'd sparred with one another from time to time. Adding on three more colonies by 1873 did nothing to change this. Settling and exploiting the West became something of a common project, although Westerners might argue that their disadvantages under the National Policy ought not be considered a source of national identity or pride. In the 19th century, the mechanisms for overcoming this alienation, or at least disinterest, were limited. There was no national media (unlike in Britain where *The Times* of London circulated widely) and there was no national education system (again, unlike in Britain); in point of fact, education proved to be one of the most divisive issues in the early days of the two Dominions.

Imperialists jumped on adventures like the Boer War as a means of manufacturing national consciousness, much as English-Canadians had thrown themselves into the 1885 events in the West. While nationalists might call for a Canadian Navy, imperialists believed that a Canadian investment in the Royal Navy made the whole Imperial fleet a symbol of Canada. The persistence of royal imagery in

these years suggests that Britain was a stronger source of icons than the Dominion itself. Certainly the monarch appears on Canadian postage stamps and currencies to the exclusion of any other leader until the 20th century. Other more Canadian traditions were, however, making an appearance. When Macdonald proclaimed himself a British subject forever in 1891, his campaign poster — "The Old Flag, The Old Policy, The Old Leader" — had him astride the shoulders of a factory worker and a farmer (both of whom look well pleased), brandishing a variant of the Red Ensign. The "old flag" in this case wasn't the Union Jack after all, but a colonial model with the Union Jack prominent in the upper corner. The flag was far from "old" and using it in this way was meant to inspire a sense of Canadian tradition.

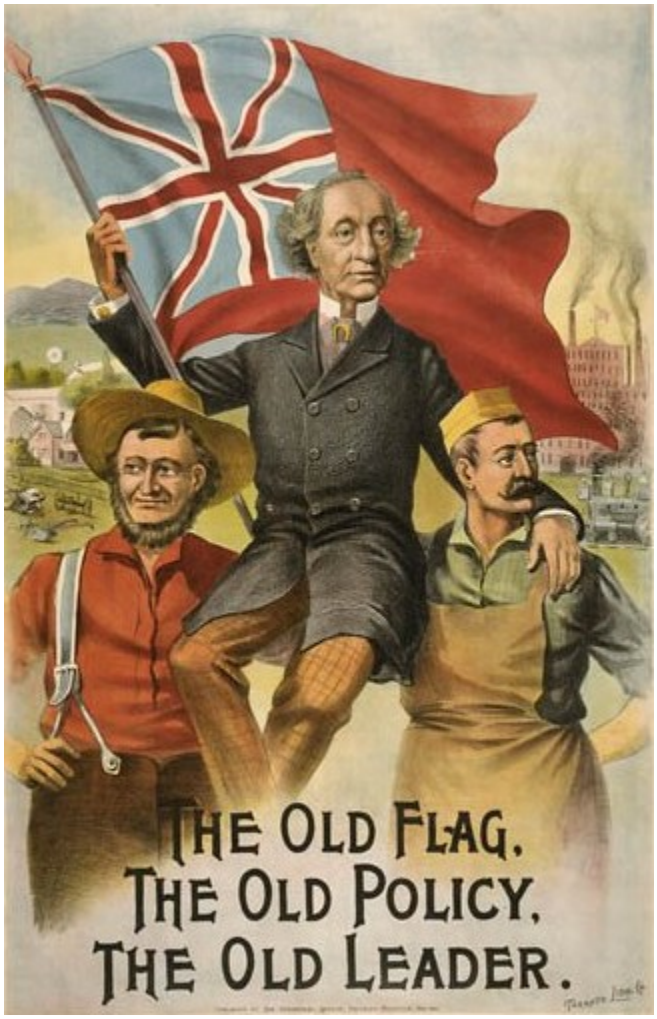


Figure 12.13 Is this a statement of emergent Canadian nationalism? [Long Description]

Artistic representations like this one cannot be underestimated as a source of Canadian identity and part of the process of what historians call "the invention of tradition."[2] Posters were more easily mass-produced and more colourful than the photographs of the time, and the Post Office served as a distribution system. The Federal Government could issue these images, as could the national political

2. Eric Hobsbawm, "Introduction: Inventing Traditions," in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-14.

parties. In fact, the Post Office itself, with a presence in almost every community of any size, was an instrument in shaping the Canadian idea.

Putting a Stamp on Canadian Identity

Across the Western world in the late 19th century, several strategies were exploited to build national sentiment in both new and old countries. Monuments and statuary were used in Germany, France, and the United States to good effect. Caricature icons also became a vehicle for people's collective identity, such as "John Bull" for Britain and "Uncle Sam" for the United States. National holidays — the 4th of July in the United States, *La Fête Nationale* (aka: Bastille Day) in France on the 14th of July, the monarch's birthday in Britain (celebrated in June since the 18th century), many "Independence Days" in Latin America, and countless saint's days — constituted another convention and mechanism for identifying and rallying around a national storyline. Similar strategies were deployed in Canada, but with less grip.

Nationalist statuary in Canada is, for whatever reason, less dramatic and less effective than in other countries. Busts of royals show up everywhere, but there are few national heroes who got that sort of treatment before 1914 and even fewer after 1930 (see Alan Gordon's discussion of "Monuments and Memory" in Section 12.12). There are, moreover, no enormous triumphal arches in the major cities, no equivalent to New York's Statue of Liberty (1886), and — despite the importance of the Notre-Dame Basilica in Montreal — no national cathedral. Attempts have been made to create a personification of the nation in the form of "Johnny Canuck," a sort of all-purpose character who appeared in newspaper cartoons and other visual forms from the late 1860s on. Typically, a fine physical specimen wearing a Mountie-style Stetson and riding boots, Johnny (sometimes "Jack") Canuck (in these iterations at least) served as a counterpoint to John Bull and Uncle Sam (the former being corpulent and the latter what Shakespeare might call "lean and hungry"). Canuck, however, doesn't appear to stand for anything — prosperity? freedom? ironic detachment? — and so hasn't seen much action over the years. What's more, there was no feminine equivalent: nothing to match Britain's Britannia, America's Columbia, or France's Marianne.

Generally, national holidays have proved more durable and effective. The monarch's birthday (now held on the 24th of May) was transplanted from Britain. Dominion Day (renamed Canada Day in 1982) was celebrated on the first anniversary of the *British North America Act* and every 1st of July thereafter. Labour Day followed and was officially recognized by Ottawa in 1894, even though it had been celebrated by trade unionists since 1872. (Saint-John-Baptiste Day is older than both, but it had a much rougher time acquiring government sanction and did not become a parallel national holiday until 1925.) Thanksgiving in Canada was an imported American event grafted onto existing celebrations of the harvest and was proclaimed a national holiday in 1879. These days off from work may not seem to have much to do with building Canadian identity, but they were an effective means of disseminating shared customs and practices (turkey dinners, parades and marches, and picnics in civic parks) to both established Canadians and newcomers who needed to be assimilated into the mainstream culture. Such tactics could be seen perhaps most clearly in Canadian classrooms. Even in the absence of a national education program, the infrastructure of schooling contained many secular images designed to promote a national identity. Portraits of the current monarch adorned most classrooms, as did maps that underlined Canada's enormity. Well into the 20th century images of the current Prime Minister gazed down on rows of schoolchildren as well. In offices across the country, one could find portraits of

Laurier or Macdonald — depending on whether the occupant was a Liberal or a Tory — long after the two statesmen were out of office, which is a symbol of the power of patronage and party loyalty more than a shared national character.



Figure 12.14 A gathering of national personifications from Britain and the United States. *[Long Description]*



Figure 12.15 Johnny (or Jack) Canuck appears more as an "everyman" character, often scowling at Uncle Sam's antics and invariably being a good son to Britain. [Long Description]

Another venue for disseminating a national identity was still more humble and assuming. The 1890s ushered in an era of unprecedented image-making expressed through postage stamps."[3] Pre-Confederation stamps included images of a beaver and symbols of the British connection; these were followed, after Confederation, by three decades of stamps bearing the likeness of Queen Victoria. As a reminder of the country's principal loyalties, this use of the Queen's likeness was itself a powerful message. Then, in 1898, the first post-Confederation stamp without any relation to the Queen appeared, which was a map of the world in which Canada is prominent at its centre and the lands of the British Empire are highlighted in bright red. Thereafter, historic themes are gradually explored, including five

3. Eric Hobsbawm, "Mass Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914," in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983): 281-282.

commemorative stamps that appeared in 1908 to mark the tercentenary of the founding of Quebec City (and thus Canada and New France). Nothing more would be done on this theme until 1917 when a commemorative of the Charlottetown Conference of 1864 was produced.

A similar venue for imagery is the national currency. Paper currency was in circulation from before Confederation, and images of logging recur, for example, on the 1898 dollar bill. The more widely-circulated 25 cent bill — the "shinplaster," so called because of its small size and square-ish shape — was, however, the preserve of royal imagery. The first coin minted in Canada did not appear until 1908. Like many of its contemporary bills and stamps, it featured a royal head (Edward VII) and — more subtly — a winding vine of maple leaves. In the case of both postage and currency, the appearance of "Canada" was itself a simple and subtle building block of national identity.

All of these modes of expressing and shaping a national brand experienced a boom in the 1930s as Canada gained greater independence from Britain, although some of the key elements had already been established. Royals, political leaders, and maple leaves were among the most favoured themes. The creation of the CBC shifted the symbolic language of national identity to radio waves; advances in photography and photographic publication in magazines and other documents were also important. Historians Ian McKay and Robin Bates have demonstrated how the provincial tourism industry of Nova Scotia took advantage of developments in printing to disseminate, within and beyond, images with strong historic reference points.[4] This process, which they call the "making of the public past," created a new and arbitrary iconography. Parallels can be found in every province, examples of an emergent national consciousness at the regional level. McKay and Bates have demonstrated that this process introduces a shift in focus from "history" to "heritage":

> If both draw on the actual events of the past, history as such necessarily upholds a notion (however nuanced and qualified) that some stories about the past are better — more accurate, complex, verifiable, ethical — than others. […] Unlike history, heritage does not advance falsifiable positions, not even when it comes to us arrayed in the forms of history: "It uses historical traces and tells historical tales, but these tales and traces are stitched into fables that are open neither to critical analysis nor to comparative scrutiny."[5]

Heritage speaks to group identity in a manner that History cannot. We hear references to "our railway heritage" or "our fiddle-music heritage" that are meant to evoke an inclusion (suggested by "our") and, by definition, an exclusion (not everyone is "we" or "us"). In addition, heritage elevates an iconography of the past without problematizing conflict. "Our railway heritage" or "our prairie homestead heritage" looks very different to a Canadian of settler descent whose ancestors were given a quarter-section of free land and another whose Indigenous great-grandparents' land was seized, carved up, and given away.

Such simplifications and mythologizing explain, in part, the durability in the Canadian mind of Anne of Green Gables, the Cariboo gold miner, the homesteader, Champlain and the heroic age of New France, and the Franklin Expedition. These are symbols that are comprised overwhelmingly of European faces and values, in which Indigenous peoples are noticeably missing. Asian- and African-Canadians are similarly conspicuous by their absence. By creating a language of national heritage that excludes other

4. Ian McKay and Robin Bates, *In the Province of History: The Making of the Public Past in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010).

5. Ibid., 15.

stories, this focus on the Euro-Canadian narrative (invariably told as a narrative of success) eclipsed other possible identities and narrowed the possible stories available to be told.



Figure 12.16 Green Gables Heritage Place in PEI is a shrine to a literary character but, of course, the house was merely the inspiration for Lucy Maud Montgomery's imaginary setting. What "heritage" is actually being commemorated?

Advancing these images and others became part of the national project (and parallel provincial and regional projects as well). The same processes occurred in other countries, and we continue to see these enterprises today, if we take the time to look.

Two Founding Nations

At the time of Confederation, there was little appetite in English-Canada (especially Orange Ontario) for a dualist vision of the country. Catholicism was regarded by many leading anglophones as treasonous, and French people were characterized as backward and superstitious. Anglophones and Protestants, by contrast, were regularly depicted as vital, aggressive, dynamic, and tough-minded. Anglicizing the West — the clearing away of the French-Catholic Métis — was not an accident, and French-Canadians generally were on solid ground when it came to fears of assimilationist intentions on the part of their neighbours. If the English-Canadians could not eliminate the French fact in reality, they would often do so symbolically. For proof one has only to remember the lyrics to Canada's other national anthem, *The Maple Leaf Forever*, which thrillingly recounts the defeat of Montcalm by "Wolfe, the dauntless hero," and the fact that the "thistle, shamrock [and] rose entwine the Maple Leaf" implied that the fleur-de-lis was not allowed to take its turn.

Listen to the original version of *The Maple Leaf Forever*.

Most often, nationalistic music excludes the foreign but, in the case of *The Maple Leaf Forever*, it actually excludes a core group of Canadians. As one specialist explains:

> Rather than representing the nation as a whole and serving purposes beneficial to everyone, nationalist music acquires more specific functions, perhaps the dissemination of a restrictive set of ideological values or the aggrandizement of a ruling group or an elite oligarchy. Music presents the nation with a way of preserving its past and thus writing the history of its present…. By injecting nationalist sentiments into national music collections, scholars and government agencies alike *ipso facto* make room for some residents of a nation while taking away space from others.[6]

Dualism clearly presented problems when it came time to imagine Canada as a product. How to build it? How to maintain it? If the strength of the Dominion derived from its British traditions and military might, then how does one celebrate the culture of a different — and ostensibly defeated — culture? Military symbols were among the most powerful of the Victorian and Edwardian eras through to the Great War. It is no accident that the North West Mounted Police uniform is modelled on that of a British regiment in occupied Ireland: the red tunics announce Britishness. Moreover, the force was recruited exclusively from anglophone Canada. The Mounties are the symbol of Canadian authority *par excellence* in the West; read differently, they are evidence of intolerance for a dualistic national ideal.

And yet dualism emerged in the 20th century as the most durable of the national myths. “Two founding nations” has its roots in the *BNA Act*, which seeks to preserve French and Catholic institutions at the provincial level. The French-Canadians who negotiated the constitution argued that the provisions of the *BNA Act* would also enable the co-building by both French and English of a larger country. Anglophone contemporaries understood it differently: French-Canadian Catholicism was now corralled within one province where it would stay. Again, one may turn to the separate schools debates across the country in the pre-WWI era for evidence of how these two visions were mutually exclusive. Gradually in the 20th century, there opened up a little more tolerance in some areas, while in others the space for dualism closed further and faster.

Several landmark events fostered a growing nationalism that contained space for both French and English sentiments. The Great War marks a turning point in this respect, since it was a source of pride for Canadians with respect to the performance of the nation’s troops in the face of extremely grim circumstances and under what was generally thought to be poor British leadership. It was also divisive, however, in that the conscription crisis divided French and English Canada. There followed a series of events that both built on the embryonic patriotism fostered by the war and downplayed the contentious issue of conscription.

The first of these is the Halibut Treaty of 1923, an agreement struck directly between Canada and the United States without the involvement of Britain. Shortly thereafter, in the same year, Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King attended the Imperial Conference in London, at which it was agreed that Commonwealth countries could now pursue their own foreign policy initiatives independent of the Empire. Effectively, this agreement put an end to the Canadian Imperialist dream except insofar as Canada remained an important part of a loose alliance of nations with Britain at the centre. These changes were enshrined in the Balfour Declaration of 1926 and the Statute of Westminster in 1931. In 1939, *O Canada* was officially declared a companion national anthem, alongside *God Save the King/ Queen* — a symbolic but important change.

In these years as well, both the Liberal and Conservative Parties nationally took steps to reduce internal

6. Philip V. Bohlman, *World Music: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 94, quoted in Robin Elliott, “Maple Cottage, Leslieville, Toronto: (De)Constructing Nationalist Music History”, *Institute for Canadian Music Newsletter*, ISSN 1705-1560, accessed June 22, 2015, http://sites.utoronto.ca/icm/0101b.html.

fissures between French and English elements. The Liberals enjoyed far greater success in this regard by adopting an informal or de facto policy of alternating leadership between English and French Prime Ministers.[7] Following the Second World War, it became possible for the first time to hold "Canadian citizenship" under new 1946 legislation. Finally, in the 1960s, three events occurred in close succession. In 1963, under the Pearson regime, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was established; it made a preliminary report in 1965 and concluded with a full report in 1969. Its existence and six years of work did much to change the tenor of nationalist discourse. Coincidentally, the replacement of the Red Ensign with the Maple Leaf flag in 1965 was seen as a nationalist step that placed further distance between Canada and the Imperialist (implicitly anti-*nationaliste*) vision. Finally, the celebration of the centennial of Confederation in the form of Expo '67 in Montreal was another step toward a thaw in English-Canadian attitudes toward dualism. The fact that this took place against a backdrop of growing French-Canadian nationalism and separatist feeling was, of course, ironic.

What is sometimes regarded as the genius of Pierre Trudeau was his ability to move beyond dualism to a multicultural nation state. This was an expression of the reality in Canada's cities in particular, but also the West generally, which were home to a multitude of ethnicities for whom the French vs. English debate in central Canada was less and less meaningful. The nationalism of Bourassa (essentially a dualistic vision of Canada as a continent-wide home for French and English alike), the nationalism of Maurice Duplessis (which fostered a view of Quebec as French-Canada in its entirety and closed off from the rest of Canada), and the nationalism of the Diefenbaker-Pearson years (which espoused a "de-hyphenated" national identity) were thus superceded by a national pluralism in which multiculturalism was a dominant value.

Heritage Fare

In 1972 a popular CBC radio show host, Peter Gzowski (1934-2002), opened a competition to find a Canadian equivalent to the phrase "as American as apple pie." The winning submission came from a Sarnia, Ontario woman, Heather Scott, who suggested "as Canadian as possible under the circumstances." Generations that followed have been, on the whole, more or less content to agree. Indeed, the popular self-perception Canadians have is of a humble nation not given much to flag-waving, which is certainly a convenient place to land after decades of Union Jack-waving that only divided Canadians.

Yet the symbolic language of national identity continues to constitute a small industry. Every national monument or park, every backpack bearing a Maple Leaf flag, and every debate about Quebec's place in Confederation (never English-Canada's place in Confederation) is part of that discourse. So, too, are nationalistic uses of sports: lacrosse was declared the national sport in 1859 and demoted to "Canada's National Summer Sport" in 1994 when hockey was elevated to a parallel status for winter. (The fact

7. However, there is some slight of hand involved in this alternation. While it is true that Laurier was succeeded by King, St. Laurent was not King's choice — he would have preferred his Finance Minister Douglas Abbott (1899-1987), an anglophone from Montreal. Following St. Laurent, Lester Pearson's rise was meteoric, given the Nobel Prize for Peace, so it is difficult to imagine any other contender at the time from any part of Canada becoming PM. In addition, while Pierre Trudeau's ascent was also dramatic, it is easy to forget that the field was made up of many credible candidates and that the leadership convention vote went to an unprecedented four ballots before Trudeau won 50.9% of the vote against the now entirely forgotten Bob Winters (1910-1969) who had a very credible 40.3%.

that the professional leagues in both sports play from autumn into late spring is evidently neither here nor there.) Olympic and other international competitions have been exploited for nationalistic momentum and examined by journalists and scholars alike for signs of "what it means to be Canadian."[8]

The struggle to construct nationalisms leans heavily on history, and history has tended to serve nationalism. One need only think of early accounts of the NWMP/RCMP as a bold and venturesome extension of Canadian will — as opposed to a brutal and often clumsy and undignified imposition of foreign rule — for an example. As historians Laura Peers and Robert Coutts point out, as Canadian history has privileged the accounts of Euro-Canadian experiences, it has necessarily downplayed Indigenous stories:

> Prior to the 1980s, Aboriginal people were seldom mentioned in either scholarly texts or at historic sites; when they were, the discussions emphasized colonial control over Aboriginal people within historical narratives that celebrated the establishment of that control. Thus, the choice of sites, figures, and events for commemoration emphasized "great men" (such as explorers) and their discoveries, military forts as representations of the establishment of European control in a region, and technological advances associated with nation building such as water locks that facilitated shipping.[9]

In thinking about the history of Canada one must, therefore, make space for the history of the "idea" of Canada. Too often that gets bound up in notions of "Canadian heritage," which it is not. What the concept of *Canadian-ness* has accommodated and left out tells us, as historians, a great deal about the society that people in the past thought they were building, and the place in which they believed they lived.

Lament for a Nation

One of the most powerful 20th century essays on the state of Canada appeared in 1965. *Lament for a Nation* was a social conservative reply to the decision reached by the Liberal government of Lester B. Pearson to host American nuclear missiles on Canadian soil. It was written by George Parkin Grant (1918-1988), a philosophy professor at McMaster University in Hamilton.

Grant took the position that human freedom is the end-goal of history. He maintained that Canada had a special role to play in that process by dint of being a North American country steeped in French and British political philosophical traditions, and yet distinct from the republic to the south with its powerful legacy of slavery. Continentalism was, in this respect, the enemy. Grant was alert to the changes in symbolic language that pointed in that direction: to him the loss of the Red Ensign flag was a signal that Canada was casting off one of the ropes that tied it to European perspectives. Like many Canadian nationalists, his vision of Canada was one that engaged globally and led internationally, rather than one tied to a North American economic engine: material wealth was less important to him as a measure of national greatness than engagement globally.

8. If I sound cynical on this score, it is only fair that you should know that I am wearing a Canadian soccer jersey in support of the women's team in the 2015 World Cup.

9. Laura Peers and Robert Coutts, "Aboriginal History and Historic Sites: The Shifting Ground," in *Gathering Places: Aboriginal and Fur Trade Histories*, eds. Carolyn Podruchny and Laura Peers (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 2010), 276.

Lament was viewed at the time (and has been almost revered since) as a radical statement of Canadian nationalism in the face of creeping Americanism. Was Grant on the outside looking in? Or was *Lament* a manifesto of elite despair? Indeed, one can hardly imagine someone more entitled to the title "establishment figure" than George Parkin Grant. He was the grandson of two Canadian Imperialists: on his mother's side George Robert Parkin and on his father's side George Monro Grant. His mother's sister, Alice Parkin (1880-1950), married Vincent Massey (1887-1967, of the Massey-Ferguson agricultural implement fortune) who became from 1952-1959 the first Canadian-born Governor-General. Raymond Massey (1896-1983), uncle Vincent's brother, was one of the great Broadway and screen stars of the mid-century, a celebrity in his own right. Grant's father and his mother's father Parkin were both principals of Toronto's elite private school Upper Canada College; grandfather Grant was president of Queen's University. Historian, polemicist, and politician Michael Ignatieff (b. 1947) is the nephew of George Grant, an indication of how the value of a Canadian establishment pedigree continues to carry weight.

Exercise: History Around You

The Mountie always Gets his Man

Consider the noble Mountie. Strikingly clad in his scarlet tunic, astride his noble steed, the leather of his high riding boots and the jet-black of his thick belt. Atop his head is a cute pillbox hat tilted coyly to one side with a strap pulled tightly under his clean-shaven chin.

Wait, that can't be right….

Yes, the earliest iteration of the Mountie uniform included a hat more usually associated with 20th century bellhops, elevator operators, cigarette girls, and car valets. Its successor was a white pith helmet (*pith* being another word for cork) that stood tall on the wearer's head and which is mainly thought of today as having something to do with imperialists in the tropics and Africa. The flat-brimmed Stetson was the third-time-lucky alternative.



Figure 12.17 Members of the North West Mounted Police detachment at Fort Walsh in 1878, photograph by George Auderton. At that time, NWMP wore hats that were perfectly designed to keep the sun in their eyes and the rain streaming into their faces.

Does it matter? Perhaps. As representatives of Canadian authority in the West, there's a reason why the Mounties looked like the Royal Irish Constabulary or a regiment sent in to suppress a rising in Rhodesia. These were the shock troops of Canadian imperialism and an expression of Anglo-Canadian virility. As a familiar icon of Canadian culture, how has this been used? How does it continue to be used?

In 1995 the image of the RCMP (and its predecessor the NWMP) was sold to the Disney Corporation. Canadians were outraged. Only a few years earlier, Constable Baltej Dhillon, a Sikh-British Columbian member of the force, achieved national notoriety when he won the right to wear his turban in place of the Stetson. A chorus of Canadians were equally outraged at that development as well. As historian Michael Dawson points out, "many people considered the Mountie to be an important national symbol" and, in some respects, an inviolate symbol at that. He adds:

> Mythologies, like the one surrounding the Mountie, are instrumental in forming a cohesive bond of shared English-Canadian sentiment — a sentiment essential for English-Canadian nationalism given Canada's proximity to the United States and the necessity of developing some response to an increasingly boisterous Quebec nationalism.[10]

Look at ways in which you encounter images of the RCMP and the archetypal "Mountie." Consider the pose, the backdrop, the circumstances (royal visit, Canadian trade delegation abroad, opening of a public building), the material and medium (photograph, plastic doll, film, cartoon, music), and the typology of the individual Mountie (male, female, Euro- or Asian- or African- or Indigenous-Canadian). What is the message being

10. Michael Dawson, *The Mountie from Dime Novel to Disney* (Toronto, ON: Between the Lines, 1998), 1-5, 25.

transmitted? What does it say about the force and/or Canada? Is it a national icon, a shorthand for Canada as a whole, or something satirical? If this is a part of the national identity, one based in historical traditions, then it deserves scrutiny.

Key Points

- The history of the nation must include a history of national images.
- Canada's ability to generate coherent and widely accepted icons and symbols of the national character, values, and binding events has been challenged by divisive historical circumstances.
- There are many means of transmitting a nationalist message, including anthems, postage stamps, national holidays, and currency.
- Heritage and history get bound up in one another, as the former expresses common experiences that are meant to be unifying but are often insufficiently problematized from a historical perspective.
- Dualism grew through the 20th century as the dominant national trope, and was succeeded after the 1960s by multiculturalism.

Long Descriptions

Figure 12.13 long description: Illustrated poster of Sir John. A Macdonald being hoisted on the shoulders of a farmer and what looks like a butcher. Macdonald holds the Red Ensign flag, the Union Jack in the corner looking distinct and regal. The workers look away from Macdonald. The caption is "The Old Flag. The Old Policy. The Old Leader." In the background is farmland and a factory, whose smokestacks are churning out black smoke. [Return to Figure 12.13]

Figure 12.14 long description: A poster depicting male and female personifications of the United States and the United Kingdom allied together. Uncle Sam (tall and lean, wearing red pinstriped pants and a blue blazer) and John Bull (shorter, rotund, balding, wearing a red tailcoat) join hands in front of a stone throne, upon which Columbia (wearing a blue blouse with yellow stars and a red pinstriped skirt) and Britannia (wearing a Union Jack–crested breastplate, a Trojan helmet, and a blue skirt) sit, holding their nations' respective flags and each other's hands. On top of the throne are a stone lion and eagle. Behind the women is a plaque that says "A Union in the Interest of Humanity—Civilization, freedom, and peace for all time." On either arm of the throne are the words "Industry, Food" and "Wealth, Commerce." In the distance are warships.

At the bottom of the poster is a semi-circle of six circles. From left to right, those circles are:

- The seal of the United States: an eagle clutching arrows and a red-and-white-striped shield, with an American flag and yellow stars scattered in the background, all beneath the words "E pluribus unum"
- The naval battle of Manila, on May 1st, 1898 (led by Dewey), handily won by the United

States

- The naval battle of Santiago, July 3rd, 1898 (led by Schley), the U.S.'s decisive victory in the Spanish–American War
- The naval battle of Trafalgar, October 21st, 1805 (led by Nelson), the United Kingdom's defeat of the French and Spanish fleets during the War of the Third Coalition
- The Spanish Armanda, July 29th, 1588 (led by Drake), a legendary defeat of the Spanish fleet by the British
- The royal coat of arms of the United Kingdom: a crowned lion and a unicorn support a shield with four quadrants, standing on top of a ribbon that says "Dieu et mon Droit"

Beneath the circles are a collection of words: "Resources, integrity, valor. English tongue. Kindred interests. Colonial success, chivalry, invincibility." [Return to Figure 12.14]

Figure 12.15 long description: Poster titled "Canada's Pork Opportunity." Johnny Canuck, wearing a red shirt, a tie, and a park ranger hat, is behind a hill. He passes a piglet over the hill to John Bull, wearing a blue tailcoat and a felt hat. A tag off the piglet's ear says "Canada sells only" and written on the piglet is "130,304,947 lbs." John Bull's arms are outstretched for the piglet, and he holds a wad of money. Beside John Bull is a large pig, on whom "Britain buys 1,261,082,032 lbs" is written. Beside John Bull, there is a blue square that says, "We're glad to have it, Canada, but we need ten times more." In the corner of this square is a golden seal for the Canada Food Board, which depicts a bundle of wheat beneath the letters "S.O.S." [Return to Figure 12.15]

Media Attributions

- "Our Lady of the Snows" – A Strictly Canadian Character © Keystone View Co., Library and Archives Canada (PA-207560) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- The Old Flag – The Old Policy – The Old Leader. John A. Macdonald 1891 election campaign © Library and Archives Canada (C-006536) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- The Great Rapprochement © Donaldson Litho Co. is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Canada's Pork Opportunity, ca. 1916 © New Brunswick Museum, hosted by McCord Museum (OSF25.10.3) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Green Gables House front view © Markus Gregory is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license
- Police Fort Walsh, 1878 © George Auderton, McCord Museum (II-80118.0.1) is licensed under a Public Domain license

12.7 Queer and Other Histories

John Belshaw; Tracy Penny Light; and Thompson Rivers University



Figure 12.18 Herbert Norman, Canadian diplomat, was suspected by the RCMP of being a homosexual.

The literature on **queer history** is still in its infancy — although it is a robust infant. In a country in which heterosexual narratives overlapped so completely with the nation-building saga, finding queer histories constitutes a huge challenge in its own right.

In the pre-Confederation period, homosexual relations were punishable by death. This extreme stricture — seemingly never enforced — nevertheless served to keep homosexuality buried deep in the closet. After 1868 the *Criminal Code* described *same-sex relations* as an "act of gross indecency," and a conviction could — and frequently enough did — result in severe jail time and even flogging. These laws would not change substantially for a century.

Conditions in public and private life were hardly better than in the courts. Religious authorities of every stripe regarded homosexuality as starkly immoral. Regarded widely as sexually and psychologically deviant, and criminal, homosexuality — if discovered — could, and commonly resulted in, the loss of employment and social ostracism. To be sure, there are many examples of women engaged in what

were euphemistically described as “Boston marriages” and many “confirmed bachelors” whose sexual orientation was a public secret. Hidden histories of this order include Charlotte Whitton (1896-1975), the first woman elected mayor of a leading Canadian city (Ottawa), who spent more than two decades in a same-sex relationship. The accomplished film animator Norman McLaren (1914-87) was able to sustain a relationship with another National Film Board director, Guy Glover, from the 1930s to the 1980s. The possibility of living a fulfilling homosexual life was rarely possible, and examples such as these are the exceptions to the rule. Probably more typical of the 20th century experiences was that of the accomplished Saskatchewan novelist, Sinclair Ross (1908-96), whose homosexuality was only disclosed after his death.

Fruit Machines and Protest

By the mid-20th century, there were growing calls to liberalize both the perception and legal status of homosexuality as activists drew on the experiences of the civil rights and women’s liberation movements. These early campaigns were contemporaneous with increasing suspicion and surveillance of homosexuals by the intelligence community. Security circles had linked sexual deviance (which encompassed sex of any kind for any purpose other than reproduction) with political deviance, at least since the time of the First World War. Homosexuality came to be regarded as disloyal in and of itself, and homosexuals were thought to be easily turned against their own nation. The very illegality of homosexuality, of course, created an environment in which lesbians and gays were vulnerable to blackmail.



Figure 12.19 The “fruit machine.”

During the Cold War, the Canadian military and RCMP worked assiduously to root out from their ranks, and from higher levels of the civil service, anyone thought to be homosexual or otherwise sexually “deviant.” Security officials exposed subjects to homo-erotic images and used a device that measured pupil dilation to determine whether the subject was aroused. The so-called **fruit machine** was bad science, and it damaged (and destroyed) careers, as did Cold War-era interrogations of suspected security risks associated with homosexual orientation. The distinguished, intellectually

gifted, and unmarried Canadian diplomat Herbert Norman (1909-57) was grilled in the early 1950s regarding suspicions that he was gay; his subsequent suicide is thought by some to have been connected with his sexual orientation and fear of exposure.

Social standards had changed by the mid-1960s, and there was a greater appetite to decriminalize homosexuality. One catalyst for this shift was the conviction to indefinite detention (potential life sentence in an institution) of a North West Territories man, George Klippert (1926-1996), who had had sexual relations with consenting adult males on four separate occasions. As was the case with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender women and men in earlier generations, Klippert's behaviour was at first couched in a language of perversion and psychological illness. A stable and fearlessly honest man, Klippert stood in for everyone whose lifestyle might come under random scrutiny. His conviction was to be the last of its kind. Revision of the *Criminal Code* followed in 1968, and in 1969, homosexual relations between consenting adults was made legal.

Watch this video on Pierre Trudeau's Omnibus Interview. Prime Minister Trudeau, who had been the Minister of Justice only months earlier, was able with a single famous aphorism to shift standards in regard to homosexual relations between consenting adults.

Four years later, the Diagnostics and Statistics Manual of mental disorders — the guidebook for psychological assessment and treatment in North America — expunged homosexuality as a form of mental illness.

Megan Davies, a York University historian of institutionalization and mental health, describes the links between social constructions of mental illness and social attitudes toward sexual orientation and identity.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here:
https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=737#oembed-1

From Penal to Pride

Being gay prior to 1969 could lead to jail, so being "out" was both dangerous and unlikely to attract support. This does not mean, however, that gays and lesbians did not find opportunities to create cultures and to build connections before the *Criminal Code* was amended. Most major cities contained at least a few discrete venues that were known to be safe sites for queer gatherings. The Castle Hotel on Vancouver's Granville Street, the Odyssey Club in Regina, the Happenings Social Club in Winnipeg, the steambaths of Toronto, and bars along Montreal's Stanley Street were locations where gay men in particular could meet and form relationships or satisfy sexual needs. Even after changes in the *Criminal Code*, however, gay men experienced persecution by the nation's police forces. Legal acceptance of the right to quietly engage in private sexual relations did not extend to public identification of homosexuality, and a closeted existence continued to seem, for many, the best choice.

However, 1969 marked a turning point in the ability of the LGBT communities to announce their

collective presence and to organize campaigns for rights. As more and more Canadians emerged tentatively from the closet, they launched one campaign after the next for "gay liberation" and "gay rights." These campaigns met with the inevitable and strident objections of Canadians (straight and some gay) who were raised in generations where homosexuality equated, in public discourse and the press, with sexual perversion and even predatory and pedophilic behavior. Under these circumstances, gays and lesbians who were "outed" by the police or the courts could still face stigmatization. Suicides remained a common enough occurrence as a result. Strategies of conformity did not, therefore, disappear overnight. In the short term, as one study has it, many in the LGBT community simply built "a bigger closet."[1]

Gradually, the homophile community turned to public displays of solidarity. The pink triangle used by the German National Socialist regime of the 1930s and 1940s to identify, humiliate, and persecute homosexuals (in what is sometimes referred to as the "homocaust") was appropriated by the gay rights movement as a symbol of shared suffering and resistance. "Gay Pride" events began to appear in the early 1970s, starting very small and culminating in marches that — in little more than a decade — became major festive occasions in the nation's largest cities.

The AIDS Epidemic and the Charter

Although there is evidence for an earlier start in Vancouver in the 1970s, many members of Vancouver's LGBT community indicate 1981 as the year of the first official pride parade. This is significant in that 1981 also marks the beginning of the human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) pandemic in North America. The following year saw the first HIV/AIDS case in Canada. It struck demographics outside of the gay community, but AIDS was most firmly associated in the media and in the popular mind with gay sexual relations; it was, for a while, sneered at as the "gay plague." The tragedy of HIV/AIDS — which multiplied through the 1980s and into the 1990s — was both fuel to the homophobic lobby and a spur to increased gay rights and LGBT solidarity.

Just as HIV/AIDS was beginning to chew its way along its disease vector, a further change was coming to the legal status of lesbians and gays. The Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 provided a new foundation for gay rights, thereafter tested and approved by the courts. Despite intermittent outbursts of homophobic violence, LGBT Canadians thereafter claimed an increasing share of civic and cultural life. In 1988 Svend Robinson (b. 1952) became the first openly gay Member of Parliament, and 10 years later, Glen Murray (b. 1957) became the first openly gay mayor of a major city (more than 45 years after Whitton was elected mayor of Ottawa). In 2001 Libby Davies (like Robinson, a British Columbia NDP MP) came out as a lesbian, the first in Parliament. As the shadows hiding homosexuality rolled back, further gains were made in the courts and legislatures. Rights to benefits and pensions for same-sex couples were granted in different jurisdictions, gays and lesbians were permitted to serve in Canada's military, same-sex couples were allowed adoption rights, the definition of *hate crimes* was broadened to include anti-homosexual cases, and at the turn of the century, the civil laws prohibiting same-sex marriages were crumbling.

1. Valerie Korinek, "A Queer-eye View of the Prairies: Reorienting Western Canadian Histories" in *The West and Beyond: New Perspectives on an Imagined Region*, eds. Alvin Finkel, Sarah Carter, and Peter Fortna (Edmonton, AB: Athabasca University Press, 2010), 287.

The extension of legal tolerance at first, and then actual, legally enshrined rights for gays and lesbians from the 1960s on is a manifestation of the growing **rights culture** in Canada during those years. Although LGBT Canadians could not be ghettoized in the same way as poor immigrants or visible minorities, they endured significant disadvantages through the 20th century, which included the psychological and physical costs of being socially marginalized, physically threatened, and closeted. The gay community, however, had the significant advantage of cultural capital and representatives (and allies) atop some of the commanding peaks of the media, cultural industries, and the academy, and so were able to speak out in ways that other more visible minorities could not. (Contrariwise, Charlotte Whitton has been criticized for using her advantages as a white middle-class woman in power against the rights and needs of ethnic minorities in Canada.) Some of the gains made by the LGBT rights movement have acted as an example for other communities' rights, especially since the 1980s.

In 2002 a Durham, Ontario 12th grader, Marc Hall, made plans to bring his 21-year old boyfriend to prom night. The Catholic school that Hall attended, however, instructed him that this would be forbidden on the grounds that the Catholic Church did not accept homosexuality. The case wound up in court where, on the morning of the prom, the judge provided an injunction in favour of Hall. In this instance, the provincial government's stand against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, at least temporarily, trumped the religious freedom rights of the school and its board. For Marc Hall, this was a personal victory; from a historic standpoint, it was rather more. It revealed that the moral arbiters of Canadian society a half century earlier had either lost their authority or had changed their position dramatically. Far from being declared sexually insane and incarcerated, Hall was applauded across the country. The case also pointed to the strength of identity politics at the start of the new millennium, and the ways in which the Charter had rearranged the legal landscape. "Historic events" such as this one thus serve to reveal as much about the past as they suggest about the future.

A caveat needs to be registered. Historians and social scientists have drawn attention to the fact that the "rights" gained by LGBT Canadians might be considered *heterosexual* rights.[2] Gay marriage, for instance, "heterosexualizes" queer couples and legitimizes their unions within the boundaries of a particular notion of normal (one that includes, for example, ideals of life-long monogamy). In terms of current issues, there is ample evidence that many groups continue to be marginalized (transfolk, for instance); from a historical perspective, it is instructive to see how invisible their experiences remain in the literature. However, these histories are being brought to light by historians, many who are making good use of interviews to document experiences in the mid-20th century.

Visit the *Archives of Lesbian Oral Testimony* website. Elise Chenier's work on archiving lesbian oral history is both a landmark and a benchmark.

Key Points

- Regulations against homosexual relations and homosexuality itself remained on the books in Canada until the late 1960s.

2. See, for an early example, Marianne Valverde, *Sex, Power, and Pleasure* (Toronto, ON: Women's Press, 1985).

- Although LGBT Canadians often found ways of expressing, exploring, and pursuing their sexualities, the various pressures to conform to a heterosexual norm constituted a powerful force.
- The persecution of gay men in particular increased during the Cold War and, in the security and military services, dubious methods of interrogation were deployed to identify homosexual "threats."
- In 1968 Pierre Trudeau's government took the position that the state has no place in the bedrooms of the nation and effectively legalized homosexuality.
- The decade that followed saw the stirring of gay pride movements; the 1980s witnessed significant gay liberation and, simultaneously, the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Media Attributions

- E. Herbert Norman (1909-1957), External Affairs © Canada National Film Board, Library and Archives Canada (PA-134317) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Fruit Machine © Rebel Youth Magazine. Copy Left—reproduction encouraged with accreditation of source.

12.8 The Art of War

The invention of the smartphone has created the most photographed generation in history. Perhaps it is difficult to recall, as a consequence, how rare and special visual and audio images were in the past. The technology necessary to the creation and dissemination of photography and recordings was only just coming into being at the time of Confederation. Whereas, with very scarce exceptions, the pre-Confederation era was recorded on canvas, the post-Confederation period would be preserved in great variety of ways. Visual artifacts, therefore, constitute multiple histories: evidence of what they ostensibly document, evidence of changes in styles, evidence of evolving audiences and tastes, and evidence of changes in the technologies of representation, reproduction, and dissemination.

The late 19th century saw the rise of poster-art, as new printing technologies met new styles. The art nouveau movement gave way to Art Deco and, in between, commercial art became a growing part of an embryonic consumer economy. Whether for vaudeville or for serious theatre, CPR hotels or new household products, posters became increasingly colourful, far less fussy, and powerfully expressive.

Recruitment posters for the Great War remain iconic a century later. In the United Kingdom, Lord Kitchener’s face was so familiar to the public that his name was left out of the phrase “Wants You.” The Americans subsequently borrowed the stern look and the pointing finger for their famous “Uncle Sam Wants You” poster that came out in 1917. In Canada, the war imagery started in a jolly mood with a sense of adventure and little sense of actual fighting or danger (Figure 12.20).



Figure 12.20 A ca. 1915 poster aimed at French Canadians captures some of the positive and even light-hearted sentiment at the start of the Great War. [*[Long Description]*]

As the war dragged on the messages and images changed. A psychological approach appeared, one in which men were shamed into enlisting or their women encouraged to give them a push (Figure 12.21).

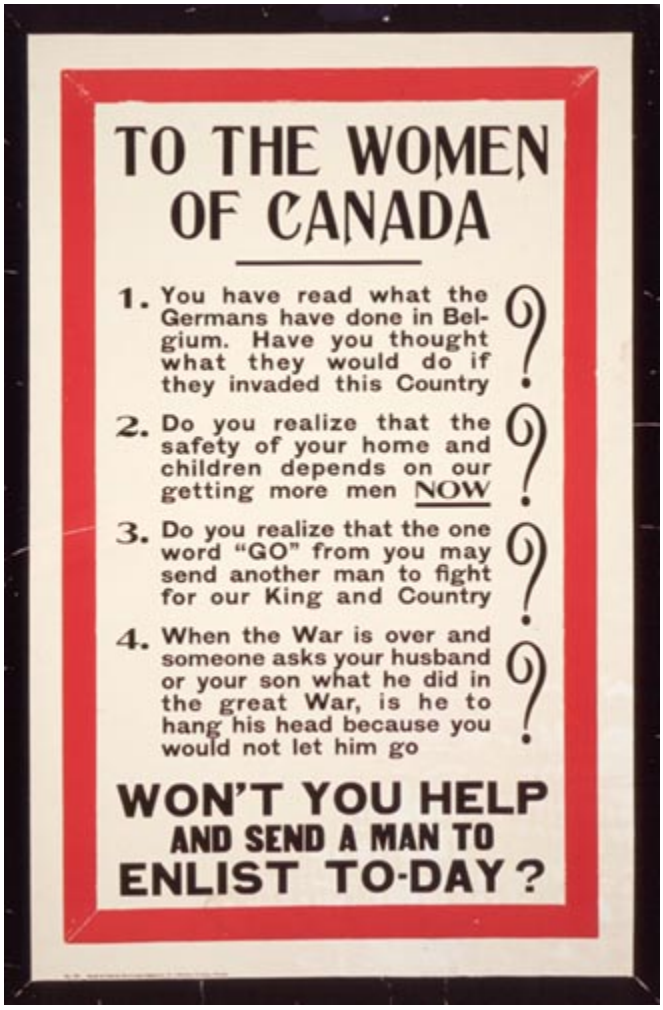


Figure 12.21 To the Women of Canada – Won't You Help and Send a Man to Enlist To-Day? [Long Description]

Appeals were made, too, to ethnic groups. The relationship between the Irish and the British was fraught during the Great War but that didn't stop Canadian recruiters from imposing their expectations of loyalism on the Irish-Canadian community (Figure 12.22).



Figure 12.22 This 1915 call to arms — "Small Nations Must Be Free" — applies as much to Irish aspirations as it does to Belgium. *[Long Description]*

The same could be said for Canadian Jews, whose experience of Christian-Canadian tolerance included Clifford Sifton's efforts to keep them out of the country entirely from 1896 to 1906. The emancipation (removal of civil restrictions and barriers to public service based on faith) of the Jews in Britain in 1858 is echoed here (Figure 12.23) as the warrior-to-be announces, "You have cut my bonds and set me free — Now let me help you set others FREE!"


THE JEWS THE WORLD OVER LOVE LIBERTY
HAVE FOUGHT FOR IT & WILL FIGHT FOR IT.
VISCOUNT READING
RT. HON. HERBERT SAMUEL
RT. HON. EDWIN S. MONTAGU
YOU HAVE CUT MY BONDS AND SET ME FREE – NOW LET ME HELP YOU SET OTHERS FREE!
BRITAIN EXPECTS
EVERY SON OF ISRAEL
TO DO HIS DUTY
ENLIST WITH THE INFANTRY REINFORCEMENTS
FOR OVERSEAS
Under the Command of
Capt, FREEDMAN
Headquarters·
786 ST. LAWRENCE BOULEVARD.

Figure 12.23 Britain Expects Every Son of Israel to Do His Duty. [Long Description]

The artwork itself was evolving: 20th-century lettering and aerial combat, along with an entirely different representative style makes an appearance in this 1916 poster (Figure 12.24).

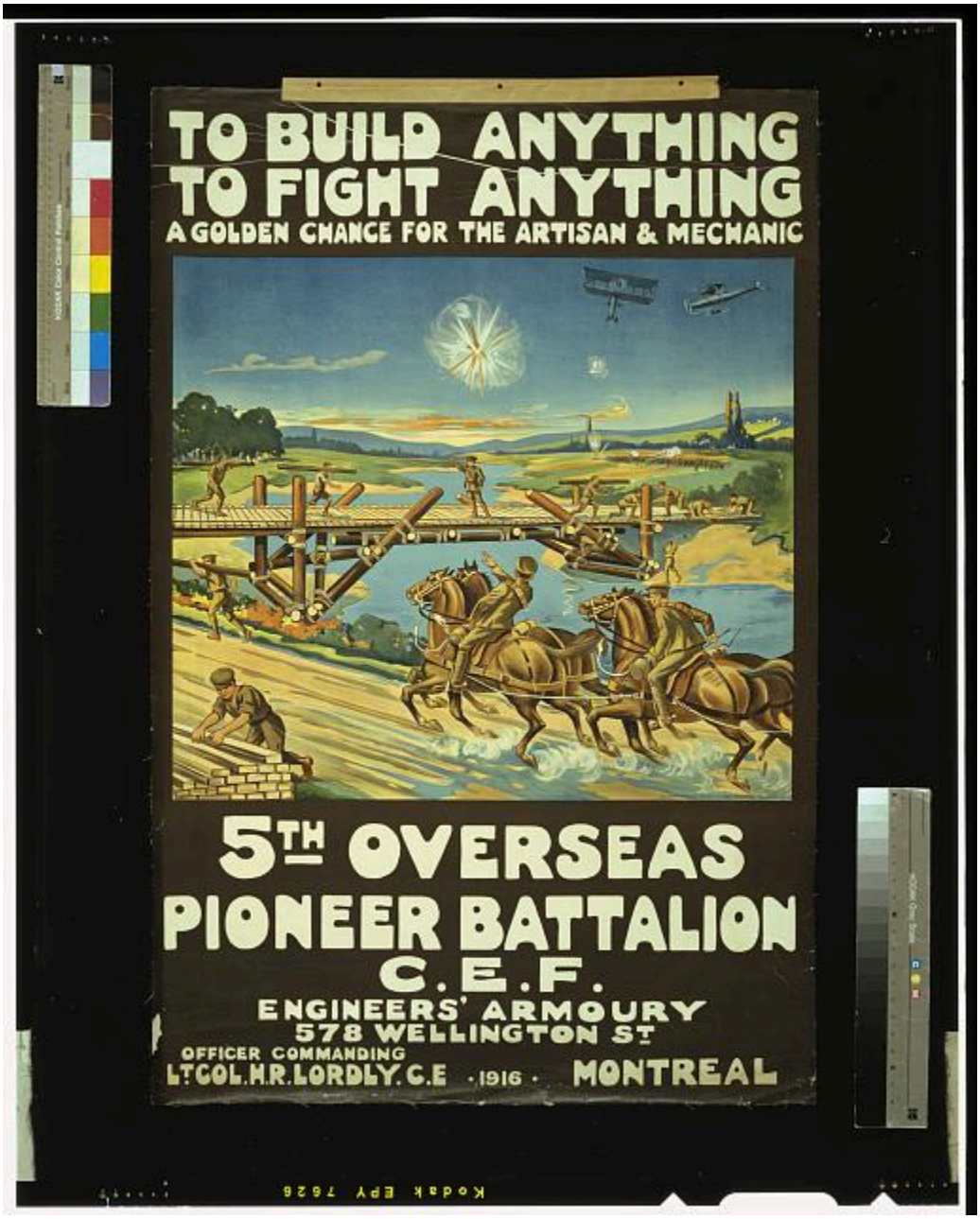


Figure 12.24 To Build Anything, To Fight Anything. 5th Overseas Pioneer Battalion C.E.F. [Long Description]

If recruitment posters could not do the job, then Victory Bonds might. The range of Victory Bond posters is staggering, and their complexity and colours are striking (Figure 12.25).



Figure 12.25 What the Canadian troops faced was trench warfare, disease, mud, madness. Here, the brave Canadian infantryman stands tall on a dry battlefield against an onslaught of artillery fire.

Images of children were conscripted to the task of selling Victory Bonds. A famous version of this was the British “What did you do during the Great War, Daddy?” poster (Figure 12.26).



Library and Archives Canada / Bibliothèque et Archives Canada
www.collectionscanada.gc.ca

Figure 12.26 Do it again Daddy Please! Buy Me a Victory Bond.



Figure 12.27 Images of women in France, obliged to pull the plough in triple-harness because their men and horses have been conscripted, are used to shame Canadians into subscribing funds to Victory Bonds.

Even at war's end, the posters continued to appear, calling for citizens' help to reintegrate the returning soldier (Figure 12.28).



Figure 12.28 Buy Victory Bonds.

Modern artistic styles become more obvious in this 1919 painting by Frederick Etchells, *Armistice Day, Munitions Centre* (Figure 12.29).



Figure 12.29 Frederick Etchells, 1919. Beaverbrook Collection of War Art, Canadian Museum of Civilization.

By the outbreak of World War II, Canadian art had become more mature and sophisticated. The Group of Seven were by now well established (see Section 10.14). One of their number — A.J. Casson — produced this glorious work as the collection of donations for a new generation of Victory Bonds, which got underway in 1941 (Figure 12.30).



Figure 12.30 Help Finish the Job. Buy Victory Bonds. [*Long Description*]

Art-deco-meets-gothic-knights in this Department of National Defense recruitment poster (Figure 12.31).



Figure 12.31 Canada's New Army Needs Men like You. [Long Description]

Wartime brought a variety of moral panics, including fear of spies, saboteurs, slackers, and sexually transmitted diseases. The last of these became associated with "loose women" and prostitutes, rather than with enlisted men. Campaigns against venereal diseases often portrayed women as infectious sexual predators who were sapping the strength of the nation (Figure 12.32).



Library and Archives Canada / Bibliothèque et Archives Canada
www.collectionscanada.gc.ca

Figure 12.32 He "picked up" More than a Girl. [Long Description]

The final word goes to the Wartime Information Board, who deployed strong colours and graphics in service of the newest Victory Bonds campaign (Figure 12.33).



Figure 12.33 Choose your "Bonds". [Long Description]

Art histories of the 20th century generally don't provide much space for these utilitarian creations but histories of social and cultural values should. These are documents that show us the past, while shaping the past at the same time.

Key Points

- Posters became both a cultural form and an important means of communicating values, goals, and other messages in the 20th century, as the poster-art of Canada at war reveals.

Long Descriptions

Figure 12.20 long description: A French-language French Canadian recruitment poster for World War I. It shows a uniformed soldier, one hand on a rifle, the other raised in victory. He smiles. The poster says “Canadiens Francais: enrolez-vous au 150^{ieme} Carabiniers Mont Royal sous le commandement du Lt. Colonel H. Barré. Un regiment d’elite compose d’hommes de choix, et commande par des officiers d’experience revenus du front de la guerre. Bureau de recrutement, arsenal du 65^{ieme} regiment, Coin Avenue des pins et Rue Henri Julien, Montreal.” [Return to Figure 12.20]

Figure 12.21 long description: Poster addressed “to the women of Canada.” It is numbered, and lists its points as such:

1. You have read what the Germans have done in Belgium. Have you thought what they would do if they invaded this Country?
2. Do you realize that the safety of your home and children depends on our getting more men NOW?
3. Do you realize that the one word “GO” from you may send another man to fight for our King and Country?
4. When the War is over and someone asks your husband or your son what he did in the Great War, is he to hang his head because you would not let him go?

The bottom reads “Won’t you help and send a man to enlist to-day?” [Return to Figure 12.21]

Figure 12.22 long description: Recruitment poster depicting two men in uniforms standing in front of a poster that says “Small Nations Must Be Free.” These men are in a circle, which is over a flame-coloured maple leaf, which is over four clovers. The top of the poster says “Irish Canadians: Enlist in an Irish & Canadian Battalion.” The bottom of the poster says “199th Battalion C.E.F., Irish Canadian Rangers. Recruiting 91 Stanley St., Montreal. Lieutenant Colonel H.J. Trihey, Order of Canada.” [Return to Figure 12.22]

Figure 12.23 long description: Recruitment poster for Jewish Canadians. It shows the portraits of the Right Honorable Herbert Samuel, Viscount Reading, and the Right Honorable Edwin S. Montagu in gold laurel frames, splayed across a Union Flag. Above their pictures are the words “The Jews the world over love liberty, have fought for it & will fight for it.” Beneath the pictures is a group of soldiers, running into battle with their rifles held aloft. One soldier undoes the ropes around a man in a vest and ascot. The man says, “You have cut my bonds and set me free—now let me help you set others free!” He looks to the soldiers running past.

Beside these men are the words “Britain expects every son of Israel to do his duty.” Beneath them, it says “Enlist with the infantry reinforcements for overseas. Under the Command of Captain Freedman. Headquarters, 786 St. Lawrence Boulevard, Montreal.” [Return to Figure 12.23]

Figure 12.24 long description: Recruitment poster showing men on horses charging into battle. In the distance are men building a bridge, men carrying lumber. The poster says “To build anything, to fight anything: A golden chance for the artisan & mechanic. 5th Overseas Pioneer Battalion C.E.F.

Engineers' Armoury, 578 Wellington St. Officer Commanding: Lieutenant Colonel M.R. Lordly, C.E. 1916, Montreal." [Return to Figure 12.24]

Figure 12.30 long description: Poster advertising victory bonds. It shows a golden lion, teeth bared, above a blue maple leaf. Behind these symbols are factories, war planes, and tanks. At the top of the poster, it says "Give us the tools and we will finish the job." At the bottom, it says "Help finish the job—Buy victory bonds." [Return to Figure 12.30]

Figure 12.31 long description: A World War II soldier pops a wheelie on a motorcycle on dirt or sand. In the distance, two other soldiers are on motorcycles. Behind all of them, enlarged and pale to indicate the past, is a medieval soldier wearing armour, a full face helmet, and riding a horse. The poster's text reads "Canada's new army *NEEDS* men like you." [Return to Figure 12.31]

Figure 12.32 long description: Poster warning against venereal disease. It shows a soldier holding a bottle and a woman holding a glass, hugging each other and getting close together. Looming behind them is a giant skull with the words "he 'picked up' more than a girl" over it. The poster continues "V.D. causes insanity, blindness, sterility, heart disease."

"Remember these facts: Avoid promiscuous sexual intercourse and you will avoid V.D. [venereal disease]."

"See your M.O. [medical officer] immediately for the slightest sore or blemish on the genitals no matter how mild or painless."

"Syphilis often sneaks into the body without outward sign. Have a blood test. KNOW FOR SURE!"

"The end results of untreated V.D. are serious—Don't take chances! It isn't worth it!"

"V.D. often spreads to innocent victims—wives and children. Don't run risks which others will pay for!" [Return to Figure 12.32]

Figure 12.33 long description: A poster advertising victory bonds. A swastika is attached to a shackle above the words "Choose your 'Bonds.'" Below is an image of a government bond paper. The paper says "Dominion of Canada victory loan. Per 3 cent. Principal payable at any of the agencies in Canada of the Bank of Canada." Below that, it says "Buy the new victory bonds." [Return to Figure 12.33]

Media Attributions

- Canadiens français (between 1914 and 1918) © Archives of Ontario, I0016177 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Bring Him Home with the Victory Loan, ca. 1918 © Archives of Ontario, I0016138 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Irish Canadians enlist in an Irish and Canadian Battalion is licensed under a Public Domain license
- The Jews the world over love liberty © Montreal Litho. Co. is licensed under a Public Domain license

- To build anything, to fight anything … 5th Overseas Pioneer Battalion, C.E.F. © Library of Congress (POS - CAN .A01, no. 49 (C size) [P&P]) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Back Him Up! Buy Victory Bonds, ca. 1918 © Archives of Ontario, I0016140 is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Do It Again Daddy Please! Buy Me a Victory Bond © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3667091) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Canada WWI Victory Bonds © Library of Congress Prints and Photographs (LC-USZC4-10650) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Re-establish Him – It's up to us – Buy victory bonds © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 3635524) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Frederick Etchells – Armistice Day, Munitions Centre © Frederick Etchells is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Give Us the Tools © Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2834370) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Canada's New Army – Needs Men Like You, 1942 © Eric Aldwinckle, Albert Cloutier, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2834359) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- He "Picked Up" More Than a Girl : sensitive campaign against venereal disease © Harry Mayerovitch, Library and Archives Canada (MIKAN no. 2851781) is licensed under a Public Domain license
- Choose Your Bonds. Buy the New Victory Bonds © Department of National Defence, Ottawa is licensed under a Public Domain license

12.9 The Historical Record in the Born-Digital Age

Ian Milligan; Department of History; and University of Waterloo

Just as **Big Data** is reshaping contemporary society, for better or worse, so too will it reshape the historical profession. The astounding growth of digital sources since the advent of the World Wide Web from 1990 to 1991 presents tremendous new opportunities for social and cultural historians, but it can also be terrifying in the sheer amount of information that these sources will contain about how life is now lived.

Web archives, created by web crawlers that systematically download websites, subsequently stored and preserved in repositories ranging from the Internet Archive to national libraries like the British Library and the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, contain incredible recollections: the everyday thoughts of Canadians, recorded on social media, blogs, websites, and beyond. You can access them yourself if you know the exact address with the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine or if you want to try searching some old Canadian websites, visit the Web Archives for Longitudinal Knowledge (WALK) Portal.

First — the opportunity. Imagine what this might mean. As James Gleick has argued in his book *The Information*, the norm before the digital age was that human information would vanish but now, "expectations have inverted. Everything may be recorded and preserved, at least potentially."[1]

We can see the signs of this enormous resource already. The old "gold standard" of historical data included collections like the records of the Old Bailey (now digitized), the central London criminal court that provides so much insight into the lives of English people between 1674 and 1913. Its custodians can today rightfully claim that it is the "largest body of texts detailing the lives of non-elite people ever published." Until now, that is. The online network GeoCities.com, which between 1994 and 2009 let everyday people create their own personal websites for no charge, saw the creation of some 38 million documents, generated by as many as seven million users. Or, during the #IdleNoMore protests in January 2013, consider that, on one day alone — 11 January 2013 — some 55,334 tweets used that hashtag.

Herein lies the problem, however, to temper this considerable opportunity. You can't read 38 million documents, nor can you feasibly read all of these tweets. To use these sources, historians will need to use computers, but that's not in itself a simple solution. To really understand how computer programs are parsing these sources, I think that historians need to know how to program. This doesn't mean that historians all need to become computer scientists, of course, but rather that they begin to think algorithmically and bring a basic digital awareness to bear on these questions that will so profoundly affect us.

This is critically important because historians can apply a sensitive humanist sensibility to these questions. Ethical dimensions may be particularly pronounced, as we begin to discuss what it means to access and use the sources generated by millions, soon billions, of people — the vast majority of whom are unaware that their sources are being preserved. Are blogs or tweets fair game for the historian, now

1. James Gleick, *The Information: A History, a Theory, a Flood* (London: Vintage, 2012), 396–7.

or in the future? As historians have considerable experience with ethical discussions, both from print and oral sources, it is yet another reminder that we can take a leading role in these conversations.

This is where resources like the *Programming Historian*, a free, open access online textbook that shows historians how to program, or my own *Exploring Big Historical Data: The Historian's Macroscope* come in handy. These are team-written projects that try to give historians the tools to interpret digital sources, and also make the case that historians need to embrace collaboration, learn their own digital skills, and face the challenges of the 21st century head on.

All historians will benefit from fruitful, technically sound, and ethically principled engagement with web archives. As we begin to write histories of the 1990s (strange as it may sound, we are almost as far from the 1990s as we were from the 1960s when histories of that decade began to appear), we will need web archives to do justice to the period. Yet, imagine: military historians will have the thoughts of soldiers deployed overseas who tweeted or used discussion boards to communicate with loved ones; political historians can trace how elections in the 1990s or 2000s played out online, or how governments forged ties with communities; and social and cultural historians can see how our societies functioned. It will require some rethinking of how we as historians approach our profession, but the results will be worth it.

Key Points

- The task of the historian changes along with the character of source material. Digital records pose new challenges and opportunities.
- Just as the data opens up new frontiers, it presents the obligation to think anew about ethical issues in archival research.

12.10 Digital Histories

John Bonnett; Department of History; and Brock University

Scholars, be they historians or humanists, are often charged with having a complex about computers. They shouldn't be. If you examine the histories of fields such as history, classics, and literary studies, you will find scholars from the earliest days of computing who used it to better understand the writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas,[1] to determine the authorship of anonymous documents relating to the creation of the American constitution,[2] and to better understand the shape and size of families in Early Modern Europe.[3] Humanities scholars, put simply, were present at the creation of the computer. There was, however, a common refrain in the early days of digital history: scholars used the computer to manipulate two things, texts and numbers.

And while those efforts produced contributions, the story I want to tell here is one that focuses on historians' use of forms of expression that are not text and are not number. Here, I'm talking about expressive forms that have two-, three- or even four-dimensions (like, for example, a model of a heritage building). Here, I'm also talking about forms of expression that are dynamic — they move — and do so in a way that is autonomous. They perform behaviours without the direct intervention of an author or programmer. This capability enables scholars to create simulations of historic battles, economies, and even cities.

Now, why would we want to use forms like these? The simple answer is that — sometimes — different forms of expression can express an idea, an historical event or a pattern more clearly than words or numbers. Consider for example the stock market. Many of us see reports on its daily progress on the news, and we watch its movements because we're interested in its behaviour. Has it gone up? Has it gone down? Has its behaviour been stable, or have prices veered all over the place? In principle, there are two ways we can communicate that information. We could present our audience with a list of prices. But that option is ultimately not a very good one, in large measure because it forces viewers to look at that list and then visualize the performance of the market in their head. It's a lot of work. A better solution is to use the formalism — the form of expression — that you see in most news reports, namely the graph. The graph is the better solution because it enables the viewer to obtain a comprehensive view of the market's behaviour with a simple glance and little cognitive work. In short, then, historians are exploring the use of different forms to help them better teach, represent, and explore the past. They are using computers because doing so makes it easier to create and disseminate those forms.

One means of creating forms is through the use of software known as Geographic Information Systems

1. Robert A. Busa, "Foreword: Perspective on the Digital Humanities," in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth, eds. (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2004): xvi-xxi.

2. Hugh Craig, "Stylistic Analysis and Authorship Studies," in *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, Susan Schreibman, Ray Siemens, John Unsworth, eds. (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2004): 284-286.

3. Peter Laslett and R. Wall, *Household and Family in Past Times* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

(G.I.S.). The basic idea behind G.I.S. is simple: it combines two things: lists (otherwise known as databases) and maps. More specifically, it assigns each item in our database-list a spatial location, and plots that location on a map using a pin, a dot, or a polygon. The idea is simple but in practice, it often produces powerful results for historians. Plotting information on a map can often reveal important spatial patterns that can deepen our understanding of social, economic, urban, and environmental history.[4] Using this method, for example, historians have been able to challenge the received wisdom on topics such as the circumstances behind the emergence of the dust bowl in the 1930s. Traditionally, historians have faulted farmers for the dust storms, pointing to methods of cultivation that were not sustainable. In the 1990s, however, the historian Geoff Cunfer, using G.I.S., was able to demonstrate that the actual cause of the storms was drought, not farmers. In almost every case, the storms emerged in sections of the United States that were not farmed. Hot weather caused the storms, not farmers.[5] Scholars have used G.I.S. to qualify or challenge our received wisdom on other topics as well. Michael McCormick, for example, used G.I.S. to demonstrate that Europe's economy revived much more quickly after the collapse of the Roman Empire than historians had customarily thought.[6] Historians John Lutz and Pat Dunae and their colleagues used G.I.S. to argue that 19th century residents of Victoria were not as racist in their behaviour as historians have usually assumed.[7]

This Roaring Twenties recording charts noise in New York City in the past. It is an example of how mapping and social behaviour in the past can be brought together in ways that are layered and impossible to convey through conventional historical description.

Historians and historical scientists have also used dynamic, autonomous forms to deepen their understanding of the past, using software that creates historical models known as agent-based simulations. The basic idea behind agent-based simulations is simple. You (as a historian) define the agents you want for your simulation. The agent can be a person, a microbe, or even a multi-national corporation. It can also be all of the above, in which case you have different classes of agents. Once you have defined your agents, the next step is to define their behaviour: to specify how they interact with each other and how they interact with their environment. Once you have stipulated their rules of conduct, your next step is to flip the switch, run the simulation, and see what kinds of patterns emerge. Researchers in the social sciences and the humanities have found these simulations to be extremely powerful because they have produced patterns that match, or nearly match, patterns that scholars have located in data from the past and present. They present a way for us to test theories and deepen our understanding of how historic economies worked, the circumstances leading to the emergence of individual cities and systems of cities, and the trajectory of significant battles in history. One reason

4. Amy Hillier and Anne Kelly Knowles, eds., *Placing History: How Maps, Spatial Data, and GIS Are Changing Historical Scholarship* (Redlands, CA: ESRI Press, 2008).

5. Geoff Cunfer, *On the Great Plains: Agriculture and Environment* (College Station, TX: Texas A and M University Press, 2005).

6. Michael McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce AD 300-900* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

7. John S. Lutz, Patrick A. Dunae, Jason Gilliland, Don Lafreniere, and Megan Harvey, "Turning Space Inside Out: Spatial History and Race in Victorian Victoria," in *Historical GIS Research in Canada* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2014): 1-26.

that agent-based simulations are important is they provide a way for historians to assess the relative importance of one cause versus another in initiating a historic event.[8]

Take the Battle of Trafalgar as a case in point; it occurred in 1805 during the Napoleonic Wars and pitted the British Royal Navy against a combined fleet from Britain and France. Britain emerged as the decisive victor. It lost no ships, while the Franco-Spanish fleet lost 22 of the 33 ships it had deployed. In explaining Britain's victory, scholars have had two possible explanations. First, Britain had bigger and better guns and ships. Second, the fleet's commander, Admiral Horatio Nelson (1758-1805), was a tactical genius. What scholars have not had is a way to differentiate the relative importance of each cause. In 2003, researchers Giuseppe Tratteur and Raniero Virgilio created an agent-based simulation to see if they could determine which of the two causes was more important. Their simulations suggested that, ultimately, it was Britain's equipment that was critical. Britain would have won the conflict, even without Admiral Nelson. What Admiral Nelson contributed was the best tactics, methods of fighting that minimized Britain's losses in equipment and personnel, but he or another commander could have contributed less and the Royal Navy still would have carried the day.[9]

Key Points

- Digital histories represent an opportunity to explore historical problems with fresh eyes and to represent them to readers, students, and peers in innovative and helpful ways.

8. Jonathan Rauch, "Seeing Around Corners," *The Atlantic Monthly*, April 2002.

9. G. Trautteur and R. Virgilio, "An agent-based computational model for the Battle of Trafalgar: a comparison between analytical and simulative methods of research," in *Enabling Technologies: Infrastructure for Collaborative Enterprises, 2003*. WET ICE 2003. Proceedings. Twelfth IEEE International Workshops. (9-11 June 2003): 377-382.

12.11 Oral History: The Stories Our Grandmothers Tell Us and More

Katrina Srigley; Department of History; and Nipissing University

What is Oral History?

At its heart, oral history is about listening to and learning from stories of the past. Rooted in ancient storytelling traditions, oral history happens all the time around dinner tables, along trap lines, in coffee shops, and classrooms. It happens between generations, among students and teachers, and researchers and historical actors. The nature of listening and sharing depends on who is involved and what participants are hoping to learn or share: sacred teachings, practical skills, or an understanding of events and experiences in the past.

Why Do We Record Oral Histories?

Oral histories have different purposes and they must be analyzed in this spirit. As historian Winona Wheeler reminds us about the Ininiw (aka: Cree) epistemological context, stories are gifts given from one person to another. Some are sacred and are not knowable outside families or communities; some can only be shared in certain seasons of the year; some will not be shared until relationships built on trust and reciprocity are established. It can take years to earn the right to listen. In these contexts, oral history has always been used as a methodology for recording, sharing, and archiving. Historians trained in Euro-Western intellectual contexts embraced oral history methodology in increasing numbers after the 1970s because it allowed them to do "history from below", uncovering perspectives and experiences not commonly available in the written documentary record. These historians were interested in eyewitness testimonies that allowed them to develop a more complete picture of the past. By the late 1980s, the field expanded to include historians interested in memory and memory making. They recorded stories to explore how and why people remember the past in the way that they do.

No matter the context, before sitting down to listen to and record stories with a smartphone, computer, digital voice recorder, or just a pair of ears, the best oral historians reflect on the following questions: why do I want to hear these stories? What do I plan to do with what I learn? Are there cultural protocols I should observe? Is there anything I might ask that would be upsetting or uncomfortable? How will I provide support if necessary? How will I thank the participant for their time? We take these steps to uphold the highest principle of ethics: *to do no harm*. In Canada, researchers are guided by the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS), 2nd edition.

How Do We Analyze Oral Histories?

As with other aspects of oral history, analysis takes different forms depending on the purpose and nature of sharing. In history classrooms we teach our students to contextualize in ways that are mindful of oral histories as historical sources created in the present and shaped by both teller and listener. We

ask why was the oral history recorded and for whom, while also exploring how stories are shaped by the context in which they are shared. It stands to reason that strangers hear the same stories differently than do family members. Further to this, people forget things, remember things differently, exaggerate, and even lie. As such, you must ask: what is the relationship between past and present in this story? Why does a person or community members remember the past in a particular way? Analyzing oral histories is a multilayered process and what any one listener takes away varies dramatically. This makes oral history one of the most rewarding and challenging methodologies for learning about the past.

Key Points

- Oral history offers the possibility of accessing the historical experiences of people about whom the standard texts and archives have little to say.
- The ethical requirements of doing oral history well and professionally are necessarily rigorous and should never be conducted without approval under an ethics review process.

Sources

Abrams, Lynn. *Oral History Theory.* London: Routledge, 2010.

Berger Gluck, Sherna and Daphne Patai. *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*. New York: Routledge, 1991.

Cruikshank, Julie. *Life Lived Like a Story: Life Stories of Three Native Yukon Elders.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1990.

Frisch, Michael. *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History.* New York: SUNY Press, 1990.

Leddy, Lianne. "Interviewing Nookomis and Other Reflections of an Indigenous Historian." *Oral History Forum/d'histoire orale*, 30 (Special Issue-2010:): 1-18.

Llewellyn, Kristina, Alexander Freund and Nolan Reilly. *The Canadian Oral History Reader.* Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015.

Perks, Robert and Alistair Thomson. *The Oral History Reader*, 2nd edition. New York: Routledge, 2006. New edition being released in 2016.

Portelli, Alessandro. *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*. New York: SUNY, 1990.

Srigley, Katrina. *Breadwinning Daughters: Young Working Women in a Depression-era City.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010.

Srigley, Katrina. **"**Stories of Strife? : Remembering the Great Depression." *Oral History Forum/ d'histoire orale*, Volume 29, (Special Issue-2009): 1-20.

Wheeler, Winona. "Reflections on the Social Relations of Indigenous Oral Histories." In *Walking a Tightrope: Aboriginal People and their Representations.* David McNab, ed. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 2005.

Yow, Valerie. *Recording Oral History: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2nd Edition. New York: Altamira Press, 2005.

Zembrzycki, Stacey. *According to Baba: a Collaborative Oral History of Sudbury's Ukrainian Community.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014.

12.12 Monuments and Memory

Alan Gordon; Department of History; and University of Guelph



Figure 12.34 The western aspect of "The Response."

In May 1939, only months before the outbreak of the Second World War, King George VI presided over the inauguration of Canada's National War Memorial in Ottawa. Dubbed "The Response," the memorial presented an idealized view of Canada's reaction to the First World War, and its inauguration was rich with symbolism evoking triumphant patriotism and devotion to the monarch. This monumental unveiling represents the culmination of a period of monument building in Canada. Indeed, most monuments still seen on Canada's streets date from the era between 1890 and 1939. Although monuments continued to be raised after WWII, the monumental landscape was largely established by 1939, reflecting the values of that era.

Canada was not alone in these efforts. A similar process began slightly earlier in Europe, Britain, and the United States, as 19th century nations sought ways to honour important people and commemorate events. They began building monuments for reasons associated with what English historian Eric Hobsbawm has called "the mass-production of traditions."[1] As nations industrialized and grew in size, they began to formalize and ritualize symbols of power and national cohesion. Monuments aided this process in a number of ways. As memorials, they helped perpetuate memories and aid civic education by recognizing great leaders and accomplishments; they helped direct common values, offering examples of civic virtue for mass consumption. Thus, monuments helped shape a sense of national history that was closely linked to national institutions: they presented political, ideological messages.

1. Eric Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions, Europe, 1870-1914," in *The Invention of Tradition*, eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-14.

Yet, while official monuments attempted to enshrine an official narrative of Canada's past, monuments could be hotly contested, since different groups saw history differently.

Certainly, there had been monuments raised in Canada prior to the industrial revolution. In the 18th century, American soldiers occupying Montreal during the American Revolution destroyed a bust of George III standing in a city square in Montreal, which demonstrated the deep and contested meanings monuments represented for people. In 1809, following the death of Admiral Horatio Nelson in the Battle of Trafalgar, Montreal raised another and more enduring monument to the hero, an action that was repeated around the British Empire.[2] In the 1820s, Lord Dalhousie tried to pacify local sentiments by placing a monument honouring both Wolfe and Montcalm in Quebec City. In the middle years of the century, other heroes, such as Generals Wolfe and Brock, as well as events such as the Battles of Sainte-Foy and Ridgeway, were also memorialized by monuments. However, it was not until the late 1880s that Canadians begin to raise monuments in significant numbers.

Between 1885 and 1922, the lives of eight Canadian statesmen were celebrated with monuments on Parliament Hill in Ottawa, linking central Canadian politics to a particular vision of historical significance. However, away from the capital, monument raising focused on other heroes and events, and reflected other ideas about history. For instance, at Quebec City in 1898, civic leaders argued over the best depiction of Samuel Champlain in the monument they were building. The interpretation that emerged from these disputes purged Champlain's religious identity to make him simply the governor of New France, a precursor of Canada's Governor-General.[3] After WWI, the focus in much of the country turned away from great figures towards the common soldiers who had laid down their lives to defend their hometowns. As historian Jonathan Vance documents, Canadian communities from Coast to Coast designed and built monuments to honour the local sons who had fought for king and country in the Great War, which culminated in the unveiling of the National War Memorial.[4] This phenomenon was less pronounced in Quebec where the war had been unpopular and where monument building in the 1920s turned instead to heroes of Quebec's past.[5] Despite efforts to stamp a singular message on Canada's monuments, the histories they told could be highly contentious.

2. On the history of the "Napoleonic columns" in Canada, see John Douglas Belshaw, *Canadian History: Pre-Confederation* (Vancouver, BC: BCcampus, 2015), Section 11.1.

3. Ronald Rudin, *Founding Fathers: The Celebration of Champlain and Laval in the Streets of Québec, 1878-1908* (Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press, 2003).

4. Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning and the First World War* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 1997); see also Vance's article, "Documents in Stone and Bronze: Monuments and Memorials as Historical Sources," in *Building New Bridges/Bâtir de nouveaux ponts: Sources, Methods, and Interdisciplinarity/Sources, méthodes et interdisciplinarité*, eds. Jeff Keshen and Sylvie Perrier (Ottawa, ON: University of Ottawa Press, 2005), 185-195.

5. Alan Gordon, *Making Public Pasts: The Contested Terrain of Montreal's Public Memories, 1891-1930* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000).



Figure 12.35 Memorials have ceased to be the monopoly of heroic figures and leading politicians as "Enclave" (the 1992 Ottawa Women's Monument to women murdered as a result of domestic violence) attests. [*[Long Description]*]

Two University of Toronto historians offer different perspectives on commemoration and public celebrations. Cecilia Morgan offers her thoughts here,

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: *https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=763#oembed-1*

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: *https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=763#oembed-2*

and here,

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: *https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=763#oembed-3*

and her colleague, Ian Radforth, makes his observations here.

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: *https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=763#oembed-4*

One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: *https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/?p=763#oembed-5*

Key Points

- Monuments and memorials have been used to assert authority, acknowledge the legitimacy of members of a society, and craft the basic outlines of history itself.
- Outwardly straightforward, monuments and statuary in Canada have often been divisive and interpreted (or reinterpreted) in conflicting ways.

Long Descriptions

Figure 12.35 long description: A monument to victims of domestic violence. About twenty small, uneven stone pillars stand in a loose circle. Also in the circle is a large stone, engraved with waves and spirals. It reads “À la memoire de toutes les femmes qui ont subi jusqu’a la mort la violence des hommes. Imaginons un monde où les femmes liberees de l’emprise de la violence s’epanouissent dans le respect et la liberte. To honour and to grieve all women abused and murdered by men. Envision a world without violence where women are respected and free.” Outlines of women holding hands are also engraved into the large stone. Several of the smaller stones are engraved with the names of victims, including Carmie Jeannot, Mary Ann Paquette, Louise Ellis, Sylvie Boucher, Pamella Behrendt, and Sharon Mohamed. [Return to Figure 12.35]

Media Attributions

- National War Memorial in Ottawa © Rebecca W is licensed under a CC BY-NC-SA (Attribution NonCommercial ShareAlike) license
- Minto Park Memorial © Padraic Ryan is licensed under a CC BY-SA (Attribution ShareAlike) license

12.13 Summary



Figure 12.36 Alternately thrilling and terrifying, hilarious and horrifying, the post-Confederation era bears comparison to a fairground ride where it is easier to assume that someone, somewhere exercises some kind of reasonable control than to actually enquire.

Closing with the "end of history" is a useful way to consider the "short 20th century," from 1914-1991, as a chapter in human history that now recedes from view. The Cold War, suburbanization, domestic women and breadwinner men, peacekeepers and peaceniks, and industrial capitalism were themes that will, in all likelihood, never again be the obsessions that they once were.

It is absolutely true that there are continuities of which we need to be aware. Colonialism in Canada remains largely intact, as demonstrated every day by the rotten conditions on reserves, the grotesque over-representation of Indigenous men and women in the penal system, and the appallingly low life expectancy of Indigenous peoples. When we look at differential lifetime wages for men and women, we will find the fingerprints of sexual discrimination everywhere. Canada remains mainly a hewer of wood and a drawer of water to the world; our economy is based on an export model that continues to favour raw, unprocessed staples like oil, natural gas, and mineral ores. At the same time, Central Canada's manufacturing sector — and the unions that have organized its workforces — still has tremendous political and economic influence. Suburbs continue to be built, sprawl continues to eat up agricultural land, and — notwithstanding improvements in public transit and bicycle lanes — automobilism continues to define our cities. Most child-rearing is unpaid work done by women (aka: mothers). The political elites survive: Paul Martin Jr. and Justin Trudeau are no doubt the best known examples of sons following in their father's footsteps, but prominent Liberal Sheila Copps followed her father into politics as well, as did Manitoba Senator Sharon Carstairs, the daughter of a former Nova Scotian premier and senator.

Against all this, I would argue, urban densities and planning models today would be unrecognizable (and largely unappealing) to people in the 1970s. Oil and copper may be volatile exports, but so far

they haven't led us into a crisis like the one the wheat economy provided in 1929-39. Indigenous people are suffering, without a shadow of doubt, from the legacy of colonialism but now their stories are front and centre and increasingly regarded as a truth that must somehow be reconciled. We are, it is increasingly understood, all treaty people and that realization alone would have been beyond the ability of Cold War Canadians.

Surely the most important and the most obvious continuity is that of Canada itself. Despite attempts to dismantle or even fundamentally rethink the Confederation bargain of 1867, the nation-state continues to tick along. The 2015 election results suggest a country more in agreement than it has been since 1984; the Atlantic provinces and the North gave every seat they had to offer to the Liberals, and only Alberta and Saskatchewan offered succour to the previous Harper Government, as it chose to brand itself. If a study of Canada's political history teaches us anything, however, it is that governments are more often voted out than in; the Liberal victory in 2015 will one day receive proper historical assessment, but at this time it seems safe to say that it was the result of a strong anti-Harper (if not anti-Conservative) reaction more than a stampede to the Liberal platform. Building a consensus over what we all dislike is a rather different proposition from a shared vision of what the country is, needs, and might become.

Still, it has to be said that a cabinet that is evenly divided between men and women marks a significant change. How significant? Pauline Jewett (1922-1992) was a Liberal MP first elected in Pearson's 1963 win. She subsequently left the Trudeau administration in 1970 over the *War Measures Act* and joined the NDP but, before then, she was an aspirant backbencher who believed she ought to be in the Cabinet. She enjoyed telling the story of the day she approached Prime Minister Pearson and made her pitch. As Jewett was nobody's fool and a Harvard Ph.D. to boot, one can imagine that she made a compelling case for a ministerial post. Pearson listened patiently and then replied, "But Pauline, we already have a woman in the Cabinet." In that context, Justin Trudeau's decision to populate his 2015 Cabinet with women and to seek out diversity that more closely reflects the complexion of the Canadian population was not merely laudable — it was (a) badly overdue by any measure, and (b) proof that Cold War modernity had, to use a modernist phrase, left the building.

In many respects, this open textbook reflects some of the changes in both the history and the historiography of postmodern Canada. Being available online and being a document that can be changed, it is a sharp contrast with the "modern" era textbook, which was a very finite object. The historians who contributed to this project, you will have noticed, work principally in areas outside of the traditional political historical focus. Most of them, too, are drawn from a generation that is much younger than the New Social History cohort of the 1960s and '70s. Their sources have changed, as have the questions they ask.

Has this enabled the book you are now reading to achieve comprehensiveness? Hardly. There is not enough here on women's and feminist history, environmental histories are barely hinted at, and there are themes in Indigenous histories that deserve much more space. There are, as well, debates among historians that space and time do not allow us to explore here. Postmodern history finds a place for the stories of common people, marginalized people, and people for whom the nation state was at best a neutral thing, at worst an oppressive entity. Getting at those histories requires innovation in historical research; transmitting those histories requires a willingness to think outside of the paradigm of the textbook and journal article. History is built into the fabric of our communities, our environment, and our identities; finding these stories will be the task of the generation to come.

Welcome to the end of this textbook and congratulations. Perhaps it has stimulated in you an interest to pursue some questions further or to explore other histories. Perhaps you've absolutely reached your limit. Either way, you need to know that historians have a saying:

> You may be through with history, but history is not through with you.

Key Terms

9/11: Has come to signify the terrorist attacks on multiple targets in the United States on 9 September 2001, and the beginning of the War on Terror.

Afghanistan War: Following 9/11, an alliance of forces including Canada which initiated a military campaign against the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001. Troop withdrawals from active duty were complete in 2014.

al-Qaeda: A *jihadist* group pieced together in the 1980s by Americans to fight against the Soviet Union.

Big Data: Refers to collections of enormous data sets that typically include large quantities of demographic information useful in social analysis.

bipolar: The essence of the Cold War in that there were two superpowers in existence. Juxtaposed with the unipolar world at the end of the Cold War.

***Calgary Declaration*:** Also called the *Calgary Accord*; in 1997, an agreement signed between all provinces but Quebec; established principles for future constitutional change while enshrining principles regarding equality of rights, inclusion, and multiculturalism.

***Charlottetown Accord*:** 1992; a package of proposed constitutional changes; defeated in a national referendum.

contemporary history: The study of very recent history.

deconstructing: An examination of the relationship between text and meaning.

ethnic cleansing: A variant on genocide in that it combines extermination with expulsion of an identifiable ethnic group; strongly associated with the war in the former Yugoslavia.

failed state: A country that has no national administration; usually associated with civil wars.

fruit machine: A device intended to measure levels of arousal in a test subject; applied by Canadian security services in their efforts to identify sexual "deviants" and homosexuals.

History Wars: Conflict between generations of historians that spiked in the 1990s; pitted national/nationalist historians against historians of society and culture.

identity politics: An orientation in politics that begins with a sense of oppression or loss among a constituency (an identity) and moves toward an agenda of initiatives that will address those inequities; distinct from ideological politics, which begin from a position of principles and ongoing goals that are society-wide.

nationalist historians: Or "national historians"; scholars who believe that the principal role of history is to analyze and explain the history of the nation state.

New World Order: In the context of the post-Cold War era, a United States-dominated international stage in which diminished expenditures on nuclear arsenals would be turned into resources to build up

economies globally; in the context of wars in the Gulf and Middle East, an effort to impose the (Western) rule of law on recalcitrant states.

partition: The potential for, or the act of, formally dividing an established jurisdiction. In the case of Canada, Quebec's separation from Canada would not constitute partition because it existed before Confederation, but the removal of anglophone-dominated areas and Inuit and Cree territories would constitute a partition of Quebec.

peace dividend: At the end of the Cold War it was widely predicted that the cost of maintaining readiness in the face of the threat posed by the Warsaw Pact and other communist countries would come to an end and resources would be spent in other ways.

political correctness: A provocative (and often ironic) term to describe attempts to modify language in such ways as to minimize unnecessary offence, typically of minorities, women, and vulnerable populations. The inclusive ethos of sensitive language — which was essentially self-reflection on the ways in which language binds social roles and relationships — has been challenged by privileged groups in particular who regard restrictions on the ability to defame others as a loss of freedom.

post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD): Mental health consequences of trauma, typically within the context of warfare; associated with research in the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and psychotherapy.

queer history: The study of the historic experience of LGBT individuals and communities; also the analysis of popular and governmental attitudes toward LGBT communities.

regional disparities: Term used increasingly in the 1970s to describe the existence of "have" and "have-not" provinces whose inequalities were a product of long-term economic circumstances.

rights culture: Beginning in the 1960s; a belief in the existence of un- or under-recognized rights as well as the importance and value of extending and enshrining rights to under-protected groups.

Senate reform: The upper house has been the subject of chronic criticism for decades. These critiques intensified in the 1960s and especially in the 1980s. See also Triple-E Senate.

Somalia Affair: Political and military scandal arising from Canadian Airborne Regiment's violent, arbitrary, and murderous behaviour which led to several civilian deaths (including the beating death of Shidane Arone).

Sovereignty Bill: Also called an *Act Respecting the Future of Québec* or Bill 1. The legislation introduced in 1995 in Québec by the Parizeau administration to enable a referendum on Québec separation from Confederation.

START: Three Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties, the first of which was signed in 1991; committed the signatories — the USSR and the United States— to making substantial reductions in their nuclear arsenals and delivery systems.

Taliban: The fundamentalist Islamic regime in Afghanistan; deposed in 2001 following the NATO invasion in response to 9/11.

Triple-E Senate: Call for reform of the upper house that would see it become elected, equal, and efficient; a plank in the Reform Party platform since the 1980s.

unipolar: Following on the collapse of multipolar global relations in the 1940s, and the subsequent age of bipolar superpowers, the unipolar era was defined by one superpower (the United States) dominating global affairs.

War on Terror: Initially a military campaign launched against non-state organizations responsible for targeted attacks on American bases or civilians; after 9/11, included military attacks on regimes supportive of organizations regarded as "terrorist"; conducted by a broad alliance of nations predominantly in the West.

Short Answer Exercises

1. In what ways does the end of the Cold War signal a turning point in world and Canadian affairs?
2. How did the business of peacekeeping change in the post-1991 period?
3. What was the objective of further constitutional negotiations in the 1990s? Why did the *Charlottetown Accord* follow *Meech Lake* into the waste basket of history?
4. Why did the 1995 Quebec referendum fail so narrowly?
5. What breakthroughs occurred for women in Canadian politics in the post-Cold War era?
6. How and why did the Progressive Conservative Party change after Brian Mulroney?
7. What has been the cause and the effect of the rise of identity politics and rights cultures?
8. In what ways has the idea of being a Canadian changed since 1867?
9. What are some of the distinctions between history and heritage?
10. In what ways did the rights of LGBT Canadians change in the last quarter of the 20th century, and what does it reveal about Canadian society generally?
11. In what ways has the job of the historian changed in recent years?

Suggested Readings

Dick, Lyle. “The Queer Frontier: Male Same-sex Experience in Western Canada’s Settlement Era,” *Journal of Canadian Studies/Review d’Études Canadiennes*, 48, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 15-52.

Farrugia, Peter. “Convenient Truths: History, Memory, and Identity in Brantford, Ontario,” *Journal of Canadian Studies/Review d’Études Canadiennes*, 46, no. 2 (Spring 2012): 122-46.

Hayday, Matthew. “Fireworks, Folk-dancing, and Fostering a National Identity: The Politics of Canada Day,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 91, no. 2 (June 2010): 287-314.

Korinek, Valerie J. “‘We’re the Girls of the Pansy Parade’: Historicizing Winnipeg’s Queer Subcultures, 1930s–1970,” *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, 45, no. 89 (Mai/May 2012): 117-55.

Kee, Kevin, Shawn Graham, Patrick Dunae, John Lutz, Andrew Large, Michel Blondeau, and Mike Clare. “Towards a Theory of Good History Through Gaming,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 90, no. 2 (June 2009): 303-26.

McKay, Ian. “The Folk under Conditions of Postmodernity,” in *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-century Nova Scotia* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1994): 274-311.

Milligan, Ian. “A Haven for Perverts, Criminals, and Goons”: Children and the Battle for and Against

Canadian Internet Regulation, 1991-1999," *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, 48, no. 96 (Mai/May 2015): 245-74.

Appendix: Glossary

This glossary is a summary of all key terms that appear at the end of each chapter.

Glossary

9/11 (ch 12): Has come to signify the terrorist attacks on multiple targets in the United States on 9 September 2001, and the beginning of the "War on Terror."

abolitionists (ch 3): Individuals and groups associated with the movement to end slavery in the United States. In Canada, abolitionists assisted African-Americans fleeing the United States, whether they were slaves or otherwise. The abolitionist movement built the foundation for subsequent social movements in Canada.

Aboriginal rights (ch 11): Defined in two ways: 1) as an abstract set of inherent and collective rights available on principle only to Indigenous peoples, which may include land, resource and treaty rights; 2) also or alternately, cultural rights associated with traditional or customary practices which are thought to predate European contact. The latter are protected in the *Constitution Act, 1982*.

Aboriginal title (ch 11): The inherent Aboriginal right to land or territory. It is title that exists before and after contact. It is not a right granted by the government but one that is recognized in 1763 in the Royal Proclamation.

Aboriginal tourism (ch 11): Usually associated with cultural displays and/or performances, sometimes with Indigenous lifestyle experiences. The sector was very small in the 1990s, but since has become an annual multi-million dollar industry.

abstract (ch 10): An artistic technique that makes use of images that are not clearly representative of conventional visual references.

academic freedom (ch 9): The privilege and responsibility on the part of scholars to conduct enquiry and communicate findings free of sanction by external authorities.

Act of Union (ch 1): The third Canadian constitution since the Conquest in 1763. The Act of Union contained measures for the management of French-Canadians, built on the premise (from Lord Durham's 1839 *Report on the Affairs of British North America*) that assimilation of French-Canadians was essential to the future of the larger colony.

Afghanistan War (ch 12): Following 9/11, an alliance of forces including Canada which initiated a military campaign against the Taliban in Afghanistan in 2001. Troop withdrawals from active duty were complete in 2014.

Agent Orange (ch 9): A herbicidal defoliant, used by the United States Army to destroy jungle cover in the Vietnam War.

Aird Commission (ch 10): The Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting, 1922 to 1932; recommended the creation of what became the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC).

Alaska Highway (ch 9): A highway built during WWII to facilitate the movement of troops and materiel

from the United States to its northern territory (not yet a state), Alaska. It was constructed between Dawson Creek, BC, and Delta Junction, Alaska, and completed in 1942. It served to open the Yukon to greater traffic and activity.

allophone (ch 5): A person whose first language is neither French nor English.

al-Qaeda (ch 12): A *jihadist* group pieced together in the 1980s by Americans to fight against the Soviet Union.

amateur (ch 10): In the context of the history of modern sport, refers to athletes who do not accept pay to play; also implies a middle- and upper-middle class ethos of fairplay and a hostility toward professionalism.

American Federation of Labor (AFL) (ch 3): Established in 1886 as an umbrella organization of craft unions in the United States.

American Indian Movement (AIM) (ch 9): Founded in 1968, an advocacy group established to counter the United States government's Indian Termination policies of the 1950s and 1960s. Inspired by the civil rights movement it was influential among Canadian First Nations activists.

Americanization (ch 10): The trend identified especially in the post-WWII era towards the adoption of American cultural practices, vocabulary, and tastes, especially among Anglo-Canadians.

anarchist (ch 5): An individual who advocates the dismantling of the state and the creation of a structure based on voluntary association and participation.

anticlerical, anticlericalism (ch 4): Someone who believes that the separation of church and state in civic life is essential for the well-being of a successful democratic society.

antimodernism (ch 5): A retreat from modernization and modernity, often associated with rural and traditional values, spirituality, and social hierarchies.

anti-party (ch 7): The position that political parties constitute an unwelcome constraint on democratic politics.

apartheid (ch 9): A political and social system predicated on racial discrimination and/or segregation; associated with the Republic of South Africa from 1948 to 1994.

appeasement (ch 6): Refers to Britain's policy of avoiding war with Germany by making concessions.

art deco (ch 6): A visual and decorative style associated with the first three decades of the 20th century and, in its emphasis on symmetry and its association with technological advancement, is often regarded as the foremost modernist style.

Arts and Crafts (ch 10): The Arts and Crafts Movement was an anti-industrial and antimodernist decorative tradition that looked to older hand-built styles of craftsmanship in visual arts, furniture, and domestic architecture.

assembly line (ch 10): Refers to manufacturing processes that are systematically organized; most often associated in the public mind with the building of automobiles.

Assembly of First Nations (AFN) (ch 11): The successor to the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB), the AFN, a national advocacy organization that represents Indigenous peoples, was established in 1982.

asymmetrical federalism (ch 9): A federation in which one or more constituent parts enjoys more autonomy and/or authority than one or more of the other constituent parts. In the case of the Meech Lake Accord, it was suggested that recognition of Quebec as a distinct society would create an asymmetry in confederation.

automation (ch 3): A manufacturing process in which assembly or some other part of the production system is performed by machines that are subject to control systems.

Auto Pact (ch 8): The Canada-US Automotive Products Agreement was signed in 1965. It removed tariffs on vehicles and automotive parts traded between Canada and the United States, creating a much more dynamic Canadian automobile sector and improving the trade deficit in the sector.

Avro Arrow (ch 9): An interceptor jet aircraft designed and built by A.V.Roe (Avro) Canada in the 1950s, capable of Mach 1.98. Production of the Arrow was stopped in what remains, in the mind of many Canadians, a controversial political decision.

back-to-the-land (ch 5): Refers to any of several anti-urban agrarian movements in which city dwellers are encouraged to return to simpler, pre-modern ways of living.

balance of power (ch 6): In international relations, refers to a complex of evenly weighted alliances that theoretically prohibit any one participant or side from going to war.

balance of power (ch 7): In parliamentary politics, describes a minority government that is dependent on another party to provide enough votes to prohibit defeat through a vote of non-confidence.

Balfour Declaration (ch 6): In 1926, a statement released at the Imperial Conference and named for the conference chair, Lord Balfour. Formally recognizes the Dominions of the British Empire as autonomous nations capable of independent action internationally and in the workings of the new British Commonwealth of Nations.

band offices (ch 11): The administrative centre of a First Nation band; a unit of government within the First Nation; applies principally to populations covered by the *Indian Act* (that is, Status Indians). The band council is the decision making assembly in the band office.

Bank of Canada (ch 8): Canada's central bank, introduced by R. B. Bennett, January 1935, as part of a federal government economic intervention.

Barr Colony (ch 5): Located west of Saskatoon covering a massive area that extended to and across what would become the Saskatchewan-Alberta border, the colony was populated by some 2,000 immigrants recruited directly from Britain.

Battle of Ballantyne Pier (ch 8): 18 June 1935; a violent confrontation between striking Vancouver dockyard workers and a force made up of city police, provincial police, and RCMP.

Battle of Britain (ch 6): A series of aerial attacks launched by Germany against Britain beginning in July 1940 and countered by an aerial defence. Along with the strategic night bombing campaign that followed (the Blitz), it can be said to have lasted for nearly one year.

Battle of the Atlantic (ch 6): A nearly continuous series of naval confrontations that began in 1939 and ended only with the fall of Germany in 1945.

Bay Street (ch 9): In Toronto, the location of Canada's leading financial offices, banks, and corporations, as well as the Toronto Stock Exchange.

Beaver Hall Group (ch 10): A group of nearly two dozen painters based in Montreal whose modernist and urban style was at odds with the Group of Seven's wilderness and nationalist abstractions.

bedroom communities (ch 9): Suburbs to which commuters return at the end of the day to do little other than sleep before commuting out to jobs elsewhere; applies especially to those suburbs that are largely free of industry and other sources of employment.

Beothuk (ch 2): Indigenous people of Newfoundland; believed to have disappeared — due to exotic diseases, loss of territory, and armed conflict with European colonists — by the second quarter of the 19th century.

big band (ch 9): A musical group involving as many as two dozen players; associated with jazz and swing music from the interwar and early post-WWII years.

Big Data (ch 12): Refers to collections of enormous data sets that typically include large quantities of demographic information useful in social analysis.

big science (ch 10): Associated with the large scale experiments and processes that became possible after the Second World War.

Bill 101 (ch 9): The Charter of the French Language, passed into law in 1977 which advanced the provisions of the *Official Language Act* (Bill 22) of 1974, and which made French Quebec's official language. Bill 101 established the primacy of French in day to day life.

Bill 178 (ch 9): One of several amendments to the Charter of the French Language (see Bill 101); introduced and proclaimed in December 1988 in response to a Supreme Court ruling that would end the unilingual French signage provisions of the Charter. It is significant for its reference to the "notwithstanding clause" of the federal Charter of Rights.

bipolar (ch 12): The essence of the Cold War in that there were two superpowers in existence. Juxtaposed with the unipolar world at the end of the Cold War.

birth control (ch 9): Any method or practice aimed at reducing fertility or preventing the complete gestation of an infant; may include abstinence, the use of chemicals/drugs, termination, and prophylactics.

blacklist (ch 3): Sanctions taken by employers against workers whom they associate with labour organization, strikes, certain ideological movements, or other actions contrary to the employers' interests. Technically, a list of individuals who were denied work on the basis of their involvement in pro-labour activities.

Blacklist (ch 9): A list of people suspected of having Communist sympathies who were denied work as a result.

Black Tuesday (ch 8): 24 October 1929 (a Tuesday) was the day the New York Stock Exchange crashed, beginning the decade-long Great Depression.

block settlements (ch 5): An initiative in settling the West with groups drawn from the same ethnicity or creed allocated contiguous lands so as to take advantage of cultures of mutual support.

Bloody Saturday (ch 3): 21 June 1919; during a mass demonstration of solidarity (after ten OBU leaders were arrested, including J. S. Woodsworth) in which a buildup of state resources (troops, Mounties and Specials) were brought in. 30 protesters were injured and two killed.

Bloody Sunday (ch 8): Sunday at daybreak, 19 June 1938, while the Vancouver Police peacefully evacuated the Art Gallery (occupied by unemployed protesters); the RCMP stormed the Post Office with tear gas and truncheons. A window-smashing campaign followed and, hours later, a demonstration of support took place at an East End park where 10-15,000 locals gathered. Many were hospitalized that day.

Bolshevik (ch 3): A workers' party that led the Russian Revolution in October 1917 under the leadership of Vladimir Lenin.

boondoggles (ch 8): Meaningless routine work, associated with "work relief" for the unemployed, intended to keep them busy but not necessarily productive.

boosters (ch 3): Civic promoters.

bootlegging (ch 5): Unlicensed, typically illegal production of alcohol. Also, in some instances, the sale of the same or of other illicit goods.

branch plants (ch 4): Typically American-owned companies that avoided tariff barriers by establishing plants on the Canadian side of the border.

Bretton Woods (ch 8): Established in July 1944, a system of institutions, principles, and processes by

which the international monetary system could be managed. The Bretton Woods system lasted until 1971, when the United States ended the convertibility of the dollar to gold.

British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) (ch 10): Established in 1922, the BBC is a crown-owned public service broadcaster. Its equivalent in Canada is the CBC.

British Commonwealth of Nations (ch 6): A voluntary association of Britain and its former colonies. Established incrementally after 1919 and especially in the Balfour Declaration (1926).

British Invasion (ch 9): A surge of popularity enjoyed in North America by British musicians, artists, writers, and film makers in the 1960s.

brownfield projects (ch 8): Civic projects that re-purpose (sometimes at enormous cost) or rehabilitate industrial spaces for post-industrial use.

Burnt Church Crisis (ch 11): Between 1999 and 2002, a confrontation between the Burnt Church First Nation (a Mi'kmaq community in New Brunswick) and non-Indigenous fishers and the Federal Department of Fisheries.

business unions (ch 3): Trade or craft unions that approach activism from a non-revolutionary position; associated with the unions of the AFL, the TLC, and — later — the CLC.

Calder Case (ch 11): Supreme Court case (Calder v British Columbia) in 1973 that decided that Aboriginal title existed prior to colonization and persisted after 1871.

***Calgary Declaration* (ch 12):** Also called the *Calgary Accord*; in 1997, an agreement signed between all provinces but Quebec; established principles for future constitutional change while enshrining principles regarding equality of rights, inclusion, and multiculturalism.

***Canada Act* (1982) (ch 9):** Federal legislation that enabled the patriation of the Canadian constitution and the possibility of its amendment in Canada, rather than in Britain.

Canada Council for the Arts (ch 10): Established in 1957, the Canada Council arose from recommendations contained in the Massey Commission report. It was established as the principal funding agency for arts and culture.

Canada First (ch 4): Established in 1868, an English-Canadian nationalist movement.

Canada Pension Plan (CPP) (ch 9): Introduced by the federal government in 1965; the first publicly funded pension plan in Canada; transfers earnings from working people to retired citizens.

Canada Student Loans (ch 9): Replaced the Dominion-Provincial Student Loan Program (1939-1964); guaranteed the banks' risk in extending loans to post-secondary students under the auspices of the program.

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) (ch 10): In full, the CBC/Radio Canada. Public broadcasting system established in 1932 following the recommendations of the Aird Commission. Its status as a Crown Corporation was clarified under the *Canadian Broadcasting Act (1936).* Modelled in large measure on the BBC.

Canadian Caper (ch 9): The rescue of six American diplomats during the Iranian Revolution of 1979 to 1980.

Canadian content (CanCon) rules (ch 9): Under the authority of the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), CanCon regulations were established to ensure a quota of Canadian creative product in various media, particularly television and radio.

Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF) (ch 6): The name given to the troops sent overseas during the Great War (World War I).

Canadian Football League (ch 10): Established in 1958 when Canadian-style rugby teams left the Canadian Rugby Union to establish a nine-team professional league.

Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) (ch 3): Founded in 1956 in a merger of the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) and the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL). Subsequently joined with the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) to create the New Democratic Party (NDP).

Canadian National Railway (ch 6): Created in 1919 out of several financially troubled railway companies that had been inherited by Ottawa, including the Canadian Northern Railway and the Grand Trunk Railway; constituted a trans-continental operation in competition with the CPR.

Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) (ch 9): An independent government agency established in 1968 to regulate and supervise all elements of the broadcasting systems.

Canadian Wheat Board (ch 8): Canada's Marketing Board for wheat and barley was introduced by R. B. Bennett in July 1935 as part of a federal government economic intervention.

Canadian Women's Army Corps (CWACs) (ch 6): Established in 1941 as a separate non-combatant unit of the Canadian Army; provided support mainly as office staff, drivers/mechanics, and canteen workers; some served overseas.

capitalism, capitalists (ch 3): An economic system (and its practitioners) that is based on the ability of private individuals to accumulate and invest money (capital) in profit-making enterprises. Also, a system that is dominated by the private ownership of the means of production.

Capital markets (ch 8): A combination of institutions that enable the buying and selling of money through instruments like loans and securities.

Cariboo Wagon Road (ch 2): A pair of routes to the gold-bearing regions on the Interior Plateau of British Columbia, initiated in 1860. One begins in Fort Douglas, the other at Yale.

Carruthers Commission (ch 9): Established in 1963 and reported out in 1966; recommended a devolution of authority from Ottawa to the North West Territories; headquartered at Yellowknife.

CÉGEPs (ch 9): Publicly funded pre-university colleges in Quebec.

cellular (ch 8): A telecommunications system involving a wireless connection. Cellular telephones first became available to the public in the mid-1980s.

Centennial (ch 9): A 100th anniversary; in Canada, is used as shorthand to refer to the 1967 celebration of 100 years of Confederation.

Central Business District (ch 9): The concentration of commercial, business, and finance enterprises generally in the centre or downtown of most cities. Some cities, like Toronto, have several such hubs.

Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) (ch 9): Created under the National Housing Act, 1944; enabled low income families (including demobilized servicemen and women) to obtain low cost mortgages; created social housing; funded construction of new rental housing; and continues to function in 2016.

centrifugal federalism (ch 8): Federalism as a dynamic process of decentralization and recentralization, or centrifugal versus centripetal forces.

***Charlottetown Accord* (ch 12):** 1992; a package of proposed constitutional changes; defeated in a national referendum.

Charter of Rights and Freedoms (ch 9): Also known simply as the Charter; incorporated by the British government in the *Canada Act, 1982;* comprises the first part of the *Constitution Act, 1982.*

chilled steel plough (ch 3): A significant late 19th century advance in plough manufacturing. Stronger steel enabled the cutting of faster and deeper furrows and the breaking of densely packed prairie soil.

Chinatowns (ch 5): Colloquial term for enclaves of Chinese immigrants. In Canada and primarily in British Columbia, these appeared from 1858 on, with the greatest increase occurring during the

construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. Created by external forces (Euro-Canadian civic authority limiting Chinese property ownership and business licenses to a small area) and internal needs (the concentration of Chinese financial and social institutions).

Chinese Benevolent Association (ch 5): An organization that coordinated the interests and politics of the various community organizations in Chinatowns, and provided different levels of social support for its members.

Citizens' Committee of One Thousand (ch 3): During the Winnipeg General Strike, 1919, an organization established by the city's business and political elites to break the strike and challenge the authority of the Strike Committee.

Civil Rights Movement (ch 9): In the United States, beginning in the mid-1950s, this was a movement to secure the rights promised in court decisions. Widespread protest, frequent violence, and growing support throughout the USA — much of which was televised — influenced Canadians who sought to address inequities in their own society.

Clear Grit (ch 1): Reformers in Canada West (Ontario) before Confederation. Anti-Catholic and largely anti-French, the Grits opposed John A. Macdonald's Tories and advocated the annexation of Rupert's Land. In the post-Confederation period they became one section of the Liberal Party.

Cold War (ch 9): The prolonged period of tension between the United States and the Soviet Union, based on ideological conflicts and competition for military, economic, social, and technological superiority, and marked by surveillance and espionage, political assassinations, an arms race, attempts to secure alliances with developing nations, and proxy wars.

collective bargaining (ch 3): Negotiation of working conditions, pay, and other issues or benefits by an association — a "union" — of employees. Replaced the many individual arrangements made in one-on-one agreements.

colour barriers (ch 10): Racial segregation; specifically, the exclusion of people of colour from activities or services enjoyed by Euro-Canadians.

command-led economy (ch 8): An economic order in which government is the principal buyer of goods produced, for itself or for distribution. See demand-led economy.

commercialization (ch 8): In late 20th century post-secondary education, the search for opportunities to develop revenue streams by taking new ideas to market.

commodification (ch 10): In the context of the professionalization of sports and leisure, the process of turning what originally was an informal and voluntary set of practices into a commodity to be bought and sold.

company store (ch 3): An outlet owned by an employer, one that sells goods to employees of the same firm. Commonplace in company towns. See also company towns.

company towns (ch 3): A community with one major employer and few other employers; one in which most or all services — in some instances including housing and the supply of food — are controlled by the employer. Associated with remote resource extraction communities.

Comintern (ch 7): Also the Communist International, the Third International; 1919-1943; called for world revolution and the establishment of communist regimes.

concentration camps (ch 6): A prison camp established to contain and punish captured populations. The British ran concentration camps for Boer prisoners in the Second Boer War; Canada placed suspected enemy aliens — Ukrainians and Germans in the Great War, Germans, Italians, and Japanese in the Second — in camps that were not punitive but nor were they appropriately provisioned; and the Germans infamously used concentration camps as the means of executing large numbers of Jewish prisoners (along with other "enemies" of the Reich). Concentration camps continue to be used.

Confederation League (ch 2): Founded by Amor de Cosmos and John Robson in 1868, promoting the idea of union with Canada through newspapers and direct lobbying of administrations in Victoria, Ottawa, and London. Their goals included responsible government in the colony, reciprocity with the United States, and austerity measures to address colonial debt.

confessional schools (ch 4): Religious schools run by Catholic or Protestant denominations.

consumer durables (ch 8): Products that last a long time and which consumers do not have to buy often; for example, cars, furniture, and appliances.

containment (ch 9): The American policy that sought to limit the expansion of Communism abroad.

Contemporary Arts Society (ch 10): Formed in 1939 in Montreal, lasted until the late 1940s; influential in its production and advocacy for modern art.

contemporary history (ch 12): The study of very recent history.

context group (ch 5): In a society comprised of some diversity, refers to the most influential group whose culture other groups seek to adopt or are obliged to assimilate into. See also, reference group.

continuous voyage requirement (ch 5): Regulation passed by the federal government in 1908 to restrict immigration from India and Japan; required immigrants to reach Canada by means of a single, continuous, unbroken voyage. Would affect long journeys that necessitated a stop in either Japan or Hawaii. Tightened in 1914, leading to the challenge posed by the *Komagata Maru*.

cooperative movement (ch 7): Also spelled co-operative. Established in growing numbers in Britain in the mid-19th century and is associated with the "Rochdale Pioneers"; several typologies; goals include making available goods and/or supplies to members at low costs by taking advantage of economies of scale as a group, also obtaining optimal prices for community products by pooling output for sale. Surpluses and profits are redistributed to members of the cooperative; some have an educational mandate as well. Examples include grocery stores, housing co-ops, and the dairy industry. See also wheat pools.

Corn Laws (1794-1846) (ch 8): A result of population growth and an economic downturn at the end of the Napoleonic Wars; tariffs and restrictions were imposed on imported grain (to Britain), which increased prices in an attempt to give domestic producers an edge.

counter culture (ch 5): A challenge to mainstream culture posed by a group's rejection of dominant values. In the 1960s youth movements and specifically the hippy movement constituted a counter cultural moment.

Court of Chancery (ch 7): In England, the Court dealt primarily with trusts; dissolved in 1875.

craft capitalism (ch 3): Refers to a transition to capitalism led by craftworkers.

creative economy (ch 8): In the late 20th century, the idea that the economy was shifting away from an industry-dominated model to one in which ideas and creativity would matter more.

***Criminal Code* (ch 11):** Properly, an Act respecting the criminal law; the *Criminal Code* is a regularly amended body of legislation pertaining to criminal — as opposed to civil or statute — law.

crude birth rate (ch 9): The number of births occurring in a community or nation per 1,000 population.

cultural genocide (ch 11): Premeditated and systematic attempts to eliminate a culture while not necessarily exterminating the population.

cultural mosaic (ch 5): In contrast to the concept of a "melting pot," refers to a multi-ethnic and multicultural society in which differences are permitted to continue, rather than face assimilation into a single typology.

declericalization (ch 9): A movement to replace church authority with state authority in the running of schools and other institutions.

deconstructing (ch 12): An examination of the relationship between text and meaning.

deindustrialization (ch 8): The process of moving away from an old-style industrial order, which typically involves the shuttering of declining industries.

Delgamuukw v British Columbia (ch 11): 1997 landmark decision in the Supreme Court of Canada; established a test for the existence of Aboriginal title, extended title beyond evidence of past use to include custodianship of territory, and thus includes a cultural relationship — rather than simply an economic relationship — with the land.

demand-led economy (ch 8): An economic order in which the free market dominates and in which industries and consumers are the principal buyers of goods, thereby determining what goods will be produced. See command-led economy.

demonstrations (or demos) (ch 9): Protest events; includes marches, sit-ins, and occupation of offices, as well as other forms.

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (ch 11): Created in 1966, a successor administrative unit to the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA).

Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) (ch 11): Established in 1888 to administer the Federal Government's responsibilities as regards First Nations; was housed for many years under the office of the Minister of the Interior (who was also responsible for settling the West with immigrants).

deskilling (ch 3): Mechanization and automation of work, as well as assembly lines permits the systematization of work and a commensurate reduction in the skills and training needed to perform key functions. The work is said to be deskilled and, thus, the workforce too is deskilled.

détente (ch 9): The relaxation of tensions and improvement of relations between the West and the East in the Cold War during the 1970s.

devolution (ch 9): This when a senior level of government hands some of its authority to a lower level or ostensibly lower level of administration. In Canada in the 1960s, authority over the North-West Territories devolved to the new administration in Yellowknife, NWT.

Dieppe Raid (ch 6): 19 August 1942; also known as "Operation Jubilee;" an attack on the north coast of France that was meant to gather intelligence for a larger subsequent invasion; of the 6,000 Allied troops involved, 5,000 were Canadian. The mission was badly planned, atrociously researched, and tragic in its execution. Nevertheless, it contributed intelligence that helped at Normandy three years later.

disallowance (ch 2): An effective veto held by Ottawa that could be used to overturn provincial legislation.

Displaced Persons (ch 5): Peoples (principally in Europe) dislocated by World War II; refugees.

Distant Early Warning Line (ch 9): The northernmost of three Cold War radar systems aligned from west to east to identify incoming Soviet missiles in the event of an attack.

distinct society (ch 9): A term devised during the Quiet Revolution to describe Quebec vis-à-vis the rest of Canada; a "distinct society clause" was created that would recognize and enshrine that difference. In the Charlottetown Accord, this was spelled out as recognition of "a French speaking majority, a unique culture and a unique civil law tradition."

dole (ch 8): Colloquial term for "relief" or welfare payments.

dollar-a-year men (ch 6): Leading entrepreneurs, financiers, and manufacturers on loan from their companies to the federal government for the duration of the Second World War for a nominal fee of one dollar.

***Dominion Lands Act* (ch 2):** 1872; the legal mechanism that made possible the distribution of western lands.

domino theory (ch 9): The theory that if Communism made inroads in one nation, surrounding nations would also succumb one by one, like a chain of dominos toppling one another.

dot-com bubble (ch 8): A late 20th, early 21st century investment frenzy based on advances in Internet-based commerce that burst with the collapse of the market in 2000, crippling growth in the sector for several years.

Douglas Treaties (ch 11): Negotiated by Governor James Douglas of Vancouver Island in the colonial era and concluded with 14 First Nations in the colony in the early 1850s; apart from Treaty No.8 in the Peace District, the only treaties in British Columbia before the late 20th century.

Doukhobors (ch 5): An immigrant group comprised of pacifists belonging to a Russian dissident religious movement. Settled first on the Prairies then mostly relocated to British Columbia. Persecuted in the 20th century for their pacifism and their rejection of material culture.

dower laws (ch 3): Formal recognition of a widow's lifetime interest in matrimonial property on the death of her husband. See also homestead rights.

draft dodgers (ch 9): Principally refers to American men who avoided mandatory, selective service in the Vietnam War by fleeing to Canada in the 1960s and 1970s.

dualism (ch 4): The idea that Canada could or should construct its culture and institutions around two cultures, French and English. In contrast with unification (which favours one culture) and pluralism or multiculturalism in which French in particular is at risk of becoming a minority culture.

Dunkirk (ch 6): Refers to the hurried evacuation of Canadian, British, and other troops from the port of the same name following their retreat in the face of Germany's invasion of northern France in 1940.

Dust Bowl (ch 8): Describes the drought conditions that occurred across the prairies and plains of North America in the 1930s and the concurrent poverty associated with the economic depression.

Eastern Bloc (ch 9): The alliance of pro-Soviet (or USSR-dominated) countries in Eastern Europe in the post-WWII era, consisting of Poland, East Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and, more loosely, Albania. Yugoslavia, another communist-dominated country, regularly declared itself separate from the Eastern Bloc; formalized in the mutual security agreement, the Warsaw Pact, 1955.

Eastern Group of Painters (ch 10): Established in Montreal in 1938.

equal rights (ch 3): In the context of feminism, the belief that rights accorded to men and women ought to be the same. Diverges somewhat from maternal feminism which claims rights based on gendered differences.

equalization (ch 8): Refers to programs and policies geared to redistribution of wealth between provinces to ensure a comparable level of services and quality of life in all parts of Canada.

escapist (ch 10): Typically refers to entertainments that divert one's attention from banal features of everyday life.

Escheat Movement (ch 2): An organized movement in 19th century Prince Edward Island with the objective of ending absent landlordism and the distribution of lands to tenant farmers.

Esquimalt & Nanaimo Railway (ch 2): 1871; the E&N was built to connect the coalfields of the central island with the British Columbia capital, Victoria.

essential industries (ch 3): Sectors identified in a crisis (such as wartime) as fundamental to the survival of the economy or society or war effort. Workers in those sectors are typically protected against

conscription and may also be restricted in their ability to move to other jobs. In some instances, the state takes direct control of the industries for the duration of the crisis or longer.

established churches (ch 7): Organized religion recognized by the state. In Canada there are no officially recognized sects but the Anglican Church is the "established church" of England and the Queen is its head. Similarly, the Catholic Church was historically the official church of French Canada and it retains in the post-Confederation period a de facto official status.

establishment (ch 9): An elite, colloquially in the 1960s; the conventional social and economic order.

ethnic cleansing (ch 12): A variant on genocide in that it combines extermination with expulsion of an identifiable ethnic group. Strongly associated with the war in the former Yugoslavia.

eugenics (ch 7): An early theory respecting genetic transmission of physical, social, intellectual, and moral qualities which sought to advantage "races" that it considered superior stock against those that it regarded as inferior.

evangelicalism (ch 7): In Christianity, a belief that salvation is achieved through faith in Jesus; individualistic in that redemption occurs at a personal, not a social level; evangelical denominations are often associated with fundamentalism as well.

Executive (ch 1): Also called the Cabinet. The highest offices — either elected or appointed — in Canadian politics: before the 1840s, a mostly appointed Executive Council led by the Governor General; after 1867, an elected body comprised of members of the current House of Commons and supported by a majority of votes in the House of Commons.

Expo '67 (ch 9): A "World's Fair" held in Montreal in 1967; part of the Centennial celebrations.

exurban (ch 5): Refers to residential lands that lay beyond the suburban fringe.

Fabian (ch 7): A belief that reforms to capitalism can produce a social and economic order of fairness for working people; sometimes called "gradualism."

failed state (ch 12): A country that has no national administration; usually associated with civil wars.

Family Compact (ch 3): The elite network in pre-Confederation Canada that dominated colonial politics; in Quebec (aka: Canada East, Lower Canada) it was referred to as the Chateau Clique.

family reconstitution (ch 1): In demographic studies, the consolidation of population information from censuses, church records, and civic documents to enable a complete history of a family, street, or community in terms of births, marriages, deaths, divorces, movement, and other demographic behaviours.

fan identification and representation (ch 10): In the context of, principally, professional sports, the phenomenon of fan allegiance to a team or player; manifest in the wearing of sports merchandise or loyalty to a team or club, and consciously encouraged by local media.

Fascists (ch 6): Adherents and advocates of an ultra-rightwing ideology that calls for authoritarian government, social and economic regimentation, and the suppression of media and opposition. Also, often racist. In twentieth century Canada, represented by groups including the Ku Klux Klan and the *Parti National Social Chrétien.*

Father of Confederation (ch 1): Term used to describe anyone involved in the Charlottetown or Quebec Conferences leading to Confederation; sometimes extended to the first premiers of the new Dominion as well; term sometimes used to describe Newfoundland Premier Joey Smallwood from 1949.

federation (ch 1): An assemblage of states or provinces with roughly comparable rights in which all the constituent parts relinquish some of their authority to a separate, central government.

Fédération National Saint-Jean-Baptiste (FNSB) (ch 3): Founded in 1907, francophone Catholic women activists who also saw themselves as maternal feminists.

female suffrage (ch 3): One of the central issues of the first wave feminists, involving a protracted campaign with feminist activists laying claim to full political citizenship.

feminism (ch 3): An ideological position that advances the ideal of equality of women and men.

Fenian (ch 1): Irish-Americans, bound together as an anti-British army; mounted and/or threatened invasions of British North America in the 1860s and ’70s.

fertility transition (ch 7): Demographic trend in which populations move from a level of high fertility to a much lower level; associated with urbanization and modernization.

fifth column (ch 9): A population within a community that supports the efforts of an external force to topple that community or nation; examples include Cold War fears of Canadian communists who were loyal to Moscow rather than Ottawa.

first wave (ch 3): More fully: first wave feminists. Advocates for women’s rights in the late 19th and early 20th centuries; also sometimes called “maternal feminists.”

First Quebec Conference (ch 6): Held in August 1943; a top-secret high level meeting between leaders and representatives of the Canadian, British, and American governments. Canada’s actual involvement did not extend far beyond hosting the event.

Flag Debate (ch 9): Arising out of PM Lester Pearson’s decision to replace the Red Ensign in the early 1960s.

flapper (ch 6): Term used to describe fashionable young women in the interwar years; associated with hedonism, social rebellion, and style.

first-past-the-post (ch 7): Electoral system in which the candidate receiving the greatest number (though not necessarily a majority) of ballots wins; considered problematic by some when a party wins a majority of seats while winning much less than a majority of votes.

forward linkages (ch 8): Other industries are developed or expanded to help to link a product or staple export from the suppliers to the customers, as part of the distribution chain, for example, transportation, grain elevators, and port facilities.

fossil fuels (ch 3): Includes coal, oil, natural gas, and petroleum; any fuel based on the compression of carbon matter over geological time.

founder population (ch 1): A population deriving from a small initial influx of immigrants.

founding nations (ch 5): In Canada, typically refers to French and British Canadians.

Fourth World (ch 11): A category of mostly small and colonized indigenous populations around the globe; juxtaposed with First (northwestern European and North American), Second (Soviet bloc of developed nations), and Third (developing) Worlds; formalized with the establishment of the World Council of Indigenous Peoples led by George Manuel in the mid-1970s.

free labour (ch 3): Workers who are not tied to a feudal relationship, slavery, or indentured servitude and are able to move from one employer (or location) to another based on the size of pay and the character of the work.

free love (ch 9): Sexual relations outside of the institution of marriage; critical of the idea of marital monogamy.

free speech (ch 9): A movement that begins in earnest in the early 20th century, calling for the elimination of laws barring public discussion of any number of topics; some subjects regarded as seditious — including calls for violent overthrow of the regime — have been subject to intermittent bans.

Free Trade Agreement (FTA) (ch 8): Between Canada and the United States; signed in 1988, brought into effect in 1989; the FTA created a single market for most goods and services.

fruit machine (ch 12): A device intended to measure levels of arousal in a test subject; applied by Canadian security services in their efforts to identify sexual "deviants" and homosexuals.

Fulton-Favreau Formula (ch 9): A formula for amending the *British North America Act* (1867) developed in the 1960s; rejected by Quebec in 1965; provided the framework for subsequent discussions in 1982.

fundamentalists (ch 10): Any conservative theological movement that regards holy scripture as literal truth.

Galicia (ch 5): Term formerly used to describe an area of what is now part of Ukraine and Poland, which produced many immigrants to Western Canada. Also the name of a part of Spain, which did not.

garden city (ch 8): A movement among city planners beginning in the late 19th century imposed order on new communities, including extensive greenspace and boulevards. A garden city is simultaneously modernist and antimodernist.

general strike (ch 3): A labour stoppage involving most or all unions or workplaces. General strikes have been held that call on all workers in a particular city or a particular sector or across an entire country.

generation gap (ch 7): Notable differences in values, tastes, interests, and practices between individuals and whole cohorts from different generations. In the 1960s, used extensively to describe the conflict in values between people born before WWII and the baby boom generation.

Geneva Convention (ch 9): 1864, 1906, 1929, 1949; a succession of international agreements on the treatment of prisoners of war (POWs) and civilians.

genocide (ch 7): The premeditated extermination of an identifiable group of humans, often defined by race or ethnicity. See also cultural genocide.

Gentlemen's Agreement (ch 5): 1908; also known as the *Lemieux-Hayashi Agreement*; the Japanese government agreed to restrict the number of people leaving Japan for Canada. A loophole allowing wives to join their husbands led to significant use of the "picture bride" system thereafter.

germ theory (ch 7): The identification of microorganisms as the cause of some illnesses, particularly infectious diseases.

ghost towns (ch 3): Abandoned communities; associated principally with resource extraction — often mining — towns that have a very short lifespan and which close up once the resource is removed or the market disappears.

Ginger Group (ch 7): An alliance of progressive MPs in Ottawa that led to the founding of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF).

gold standard (ch 8): In monetary policy, the linking of a nation's currency to the value of gold, which is also called the *gold exchange standard*. Canada (and Britain) abandoned the gold standard at the start of the First World War, resumed using the system in 1926, and then left it permanently in 1929.

Gouzenko Affair (ch 9): Post-WWII espionage case involving a clerk at the Soviet embassy in Ottawa who disclosed the existence of a spy ring in Canada.

Governor-General (ch 6): The Crown's representative in Canada; appointed by the King or Queen.

gradualism (ch 3), gradualist (ch 7): The idea that great change can occur incrementally, in slow, small, and subtle steps, rather than by large uprisings or revolutions. Among left-wing activists, a belief that reforms to capitalism can produce a social and economic order of fairness for working people; sometimes called "Fabianism;" derided by revolutionaries as delusional. In the context of Quebec's independence movements the equivalent term is *étapisme*. See also reformist and impossibilist.

Grande Noirceur (ch 9): In Quebec, the period from 1944 to 1959 in which policies were introduced under the Union Nationale government of Maurice Duplessis.

graving dock (ch 2): Also called a dry dock; repair facility for shipping.

Great Coalition (ch 1): In 1864, an alliance between the *Bleu*-Conservatives and the Clear Grits in the Province of Canada. The Great Coalition launched a renewed effort to revise the Canadian constitution, a campaign that culminated in Confederation.

Greenpeace (ch 7): An environmental movement founded in Vancouver in the early 1970s as part of an international anti-nuclear arms movement; became more directly associated with environmental issues like sealing and whaling.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (ch 8): The value of all goods produced in a country during a specified period of time.

Group of Seven (ch 10): A group of artists (also known as the Algonquin Group) who emphasized landscape painting as the key to expressing Canadianness.

Harbour Grace Affray (ch 2): 1883 Newfoundland dispute in which Orange Lodge Protestants and Catholic neighbours came to blows; led to five deaths and a dozen casualties.

have-not (provinces) (ch 8): As opposed to "have" provinces, the prosperity of "have-not" provinces is below the average for the country as a whole; equalization payments were designed to address these inconsistencies.

Head Tax (ch 5): A fee levied by the British Columbian and then the federal government on Chinese immigrants, beginning in 1885 and continuing to 1923.

Hegemony (ch 10): The dominance of a set of ideas or a particular group or social class.

high culture (high style) (ch 10): Also called high style; refers to cultural activities associated with elites; largely consistent across continents; spatially large with little differentiation (in contrast with vernacular styles which are spatially narrow and come in many forms); examples include classical music, liturgies, opera, many visual arts, theatre.

high modernism, high modernity (ch 10): A phase of modernism beginning in the interwar era and accelerating during WWII; characterized by a deepened confidence in science and engineering. See also big science.

hippies (ch 9): A youth movement originating in the 1960s that was anti-war (specifically, opposed to the war in Vietnam), critical of social conventions, and associated with experimentation with psychedelic drugs.

History Wars (ch 12): Conflict between generations of historians that spiked in the 1990s; pitted national/nationalist historians against historians of society and culture.

hobo jungles (ch 8): Homeless men's camps, usually in marginal spaces in cities and towns, proliferated during the 1930s Depression.

homestead (prologue): A grant of free land of typically 160 acres available to males over 21 years of age, with the obligation that they "improve" no less than 40 acres and build a permanent dwelling on the land within three years; made available under the *Dominion Lands Act* of 1872; modelled on similar legislation in the United States.

homestead rights (ch 3): The *Dominion Lands Act* protected women's interest in homesteads by forbidding the sale of the homestead by a husband without the wife's written consent.

Home Children (ch 5): Over 100,000 children who were exported from Britain to Canada between 1869 and the late 1930s. Organized by charitable church organizations to alleviate overcrowding and to provide

improved and more healthy alternatives. Stories of abuse abound, although many of the children who were distributed to farms across Canada did enjoy improved circumstances.

House of Industry (ch 3): A facility typically funded out of philanthropic/charitable donations that provides housing and food for impoverished citizens with the expectation that they will do work in return. In the 19th century, associated with workhouses for the poor.

household wage (ch 3): A way of measuring income that extends beyond the breadwinner model and incorporates incomes earned by every member of the household/family.

housewives (*sing.* **housewife) (ch 9):** A married woman whose principle (unpaid) occupation is the maintaining of her household, including preparing food, cleaning clothes, providing pre-school education, and cleaning house.

human rights (ch 5): Any right thought to belong to every person. Enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1947.

Hutterites (ch 5): Along with the Mennonites and Amish, the Hutterites are an Anabaptist sectarian group; emigrated from Europe in the late 19th and early 20th century, where they faced oppression for their pacifist beliefs and the practice of adult baptism; many arrived in Canada after attempts to settle in the United States. A communal farming community that resists modernization.

Hyde Park Agreement, Hyde Park Declaration (1941) (ch 6): A wartime pact between Canada and the United States; allowed Canadian-made goods manufactured for export to Britain to be covered under the Britain-USA Lend-Lease Agreement.

identity politics (ch 12): An orientation in politics that begins with a sense of oppression or loss among a constituency (an identity) and moves toward an agenda of initiatives that will address those inequities; distinct from ideological politics, which begin from a position of principles and ongoing goals that are society-wide.

Idle No More (ch 11): A peaceful protest and awareness-raising movement launched in 2012 by a group of Indigenous people and allies; catalyzed by Federal Government legislation that threatened Treaty rights.

illegitimate (ch 9): In legal and demographic terms, a child born to unmarried parents (or “out of wedlock”).

impossibilists (ch 7): Among left-wing activists, a belief that it is impossible to reform capitalism and that it must be overthrown rather than overhauled. See also gradualist and reformist.

Indian Agent (ch 2): An agent of the federal government’s Department of Indian Affairs (or, later, DIAND) with responsibility for managing and/or supervising one or more Indigenous communities.

industrial relations (ch 3): The diplomatic business of negotiating contracts and conditions between employers and employees; typically between employers and labour organizations (unions).

information age (ch 8): A view of the post-industrial economy in which digitized information is the basis of a new economic order.

***Institut Canadien* (ch 10):** Established in 1844 under the leadership of young francophone liberal professionals (physicians, lawyers, notaries, teachers) who sought to enrich and secularize *Canadien life*; provided the intellectual firepower of *les Rouges.*

intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) (ch 9): Cold War-era surface-to-air missiles with no less than a 5,000 km range; typically nuclear-tipped.

internationalist (ch 7): In the history of organized labour, the belief that workers of all countries had more in common than they did with co-nationals who belong to other social classes. Views nationalist movements as antithetical to the interests of working people.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) (ch 10): Established 1894; responsible for the organization and operation of the Olympic Games (both winter and summer versions).

International Monetary Fund (IMF) (ch 8): Created at Bretton Woods in 1944 to work with the World Bank to reinvigorate post-war economies by achieving currency stability, stimulating international trade, and rescuing national economies in distress.

interwar (ch 6): The period between 1918 and 1939.

Iron Curtain (ch 9): A term coined by British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to refer to portions of Eastern Europe that the Soviet Union had incorporated into its sphere of influence and that no longer were free to manage their own affairs.

isolationism (ch 6): The policy of isolating one's nation-state from international turmoil and alliances.

Jewish holocaust (ch 5): The campaign launched in the 1930s and early 1940s by the German National Socialist government aimed at the eradication of the Jewish population in Europe. Estimates of the number killed run to 6 million or more.

Jim Crow Laws (ch 5): In the United States, post-Civil War racial segregation laws that discriminated against African-Americans; most formal elements dissolved in the 1950s and '60s in the Civil Rights Movement; was one cause of African-Americans emigrating to Canada in the Laurier and Borden eras.

jingoism (ch 6): Term coined in the 1870s; denotes patriotism applied in an aggressive foreign policy. Canada's involvement in the Second Boer War contained elements of jingoism.

Juno (ch 6): The invasion of France in 1944 — code-named Operation Overlord — targeted a series of beaches, each of which was assigned its own operational name associated with alphabet call-letters. The American forces struck at Utah and Omaha; the British attacked Sword and Gold; the Canadian assault came at Juno. Originally the British and Canadian beaches were named for fish (i.e.: Swordfish, Goldfish) and Juno was called Jellyfish, but British Prime Minister Winston Churchill objected to the idea that soldiers were bound to die on a beach code-named "Jelly" and insisted on the change to "Juno."

Kanakans (ch 2): Hawaiians or Pacific Island workers; this term may have been used disparagingly or in a derogatory fashion, however, the word means "human being" in the Hawaiian language.

Keynesian economic principles (ch 8): Named for the British economist, John Maynard Keynes, it broke with orthodox thinking by advocating government spending during downturns so as to stimulate the economy; these principles also encouraged aggressive taxation during times of prosperity to offset recovery-era spending. Resisted and rejected by orthodox economic thinkers and conservatives who deplore the idea of a large, bureaucratic, and interventionist state.

King–Byng Affair (ch 6): Also known as the King–Byng Thing, a constitutional crisis arising from Mackenzie King's test of Governor-General Byng's authority to call an election when requested by a Prime Minister.

Klondike (ch 9): The locus of the 1890s gold rush in the Yukon Territory, along the Klondike River valley; used to describe the gold rush as a whole.

Knights of Labor (ch 3): Fully, the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor. Established in the United States in 1869-70; expanded into Canada in the next decade; organized workers regardless of race (apart from Asians), sex, or skill levels. Competition with the new craft unions resulted in the Knights' expulsion from the Trades and Labour Congress in 1902, and its gradual disintegration thereafter.

knowledge economy (ch 8): In the late 20th century, the trade in intellectual property and educational property; the preeminence of technological and other kinds of knowledge and information as economic drivers.

Korean War (ch 9): A war that began in 1950 and ended inconclusively in Armistice in 1953; this was Canada's first Cold War era military engagement, and it involved significant casualties.

Ku Klux Klan (KKK) (ch 6): An explicitly racist, anti-Catholic illegal organization with roots in the American South; established a presence and substantial following in Saskatchewan in the 1920s, where it played a role in the outcome of the 1929 provincial election. Largely dissipated thereafter, the Klan briefly reappeared in the 1970s in British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario.

Labour Party (ch 3): In Britain, the political face of the Trades Union Congress; established in 1906. While Labour Parties also appeared in Australia and New Zealand, one never fully materialized in Canada.

labourism (ch 3): Canadian Liberal-Labour (Lib-Lab) candidates promoted an agenda that consisted mostly of democratic reforms, the 8-hour work day, a minimum wage, and educational opportunities for all.

Laurier boom (ch 8): The period of economic and demographic growth that coincides with the coming to office of the Laurier Liberals in 1896; concludes in 1912-14.

League for Social Reconstruction (LSR) (ch 7): A socialist think-tank established by Frank Underhill and F.R. Scott in 1932.

League of Nations (ch 6): A post-Great War international assembly established in 1919, of which Canada was a founding member. Its principal objective was to create conditions of collective security through a mutual defence pact and the application of economic sanctions; failed largely because of the United States' refusal to join and member states' (including Canada's) fear of being embroiled in conflicts (military or economic) abroad.

Left (ch 7): Coined during the French Revolution to describe opponents of the monarchy; since then, used to describe a spectrum of reform and radical positions and political organizations that includes some Liberals, the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, the New Democratic Party, the Socialist Party of Canada, and — at the far end of the Left — the Communist Party and, in some instances, anarchists. See also Right.

Legislative Assembly (ch 1): Until 1968 all Canadian provinces had a Legislative Assembly, either as their only house of elected representatives or as a lower house — in either instance equating to the federal and British House of Commons. In 1968 the Quebec Assembly was renamed the National Assembly of Quebec. Sitting members are described in most provinces as Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and in Ontario as Members of the Provincial Parliament (MPPs). In Quebec they are Members of the National Assembly (MNAs).

***Les Automatistes* (ch 10):** Surrealist painters and performers based in Montreal, 1942-48; overlapped with the Contemporary Art Society.

Lend-Lease Agreement (ch 6): Prior to declaring war against the Axis Powers in 1941, the United States agreed to support the Allied war effort by selling materiel to Britain on a deferred-payment program. Canada was able to take advantage of this arrangement, which led to rapid industrial recovery and expansion. See also Hyde Park Declaration.

Liberal-Labour (also Lib-Lab) (ch 3): Typically a pro-labour candidate, sometime running under a Labour or Independent Labour banner, who joined the Liberal caucus on being elected.

liberalism (prologue): A political philosophical position that, in the late 18th and 19th centuries, enjoyed widespread acceptance; prioritizes the rights of the individual (that is, the individual adult male), private property, equality (again, among adult — typically white — males), and the values of a democratic system.

Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion (ch 7): A 1,500-strong contingent of Canadian volunteers in the war against the Fascists in Spain during the Civil War, 1937-38; took their name from the two leaders of the

Rebellions of 1837-38, Louis-Joseph Papineau and William Lyon Mackenzie (the grandfather of Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King).

Mackenzie Valley Pipeline (ch 11): Proposed in the early 1970s as a means of transporting natural gas from reserves in the Beaufort Sea to processing and transhipment sites in Alberta, it was put on ice following the report of a commission of enquiry headed up by Justice Thomas Berger in 1974-77. Specific concerns included impact on ecosystems and Indigenous communities.

***Maîtres chez nous* (Masters of our own house) (ch 9):** The slogan used by Jean Lesage's Liberals in Quebec in 1960 election, ushering in the Quiet Revolution.

Manhattan Project (ch 6): 1942–46; a secretive and international Second World War research and development project conceived to develop the first atomic bomb. Canada contributed the uranium and, at what was still a prototype reactor on the Chalk River in Ontario, developed the processes for extracting weapons-grade plutonium.

manifest destiny (ch 1): American notion that it could control, and was destined to control, the whole of North America; literally, it was the will of God (destined) and it was apparent (manifest) in the incremental territorial expansions of the United States.

Manitoba schools question (ch 4): In 1890 the provincial government turned its back on commitments in the *Manitoba Act* (1870) to provide a dual — French and English — system of education, a move that was stimulated by declining French and Catholic populations. The Privy Council determined (twice) that the federal government had the power to reverse this decision. In opposition, Wilfrid Laurier blocked Ottawa's attempt at disallowance; in government he negotiated a compromise with Manitoba.

Maritime Rights (ch 8): An interwar-era political common front in New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia that argued for greater federal support for the regional economy.

Maritime Union (ch 1): A proposal to create one colony out of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island; the original impetus for the Charlottetown Conference; abandoned in favour of Confederation.

marketing boards (ch 9): An agricultural producers' marketing tool; often established by the producers themselves or by government, which acts as a buyer of output and then a marketer. Constitutes a kind of monopoly in that producers cannot sell their goods through any other means. See also **wheat pools**.

Marshall Plan (ch 8): Also called the *European Recovery Plan* (ERP), an American program giving billions of dollars of aid to rebuild European economies after WWII, in part to restore markets but also to offset the appeal of Communism.

Marxist-Leninist (ch 7): Building on the scientific socialism of Karl Marx, which argued that socialist, worker-led governments would supersede bourgeois capitalism, the Leninist thread — arising in revolutionary and post-revolutionary Russia — introduced the idea of a vanguard of the proletariat, single-party rule, internationalism, and a state-run economy. In Canadian communism, one of several variants on Marxist doctrine.

Mason-Dixon Line (ch 1): Boundary between the American colonies, then states, of Maryland and Pennsylvania; also used to define the American South from the American North, and slave and non-slave states.

Massey Commission (ch 10): The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences was appointed in 1949 and reported out in 1951. Chaired by Vincent Massey, it recommended substantial federal government investment in arts and culture, including the Library and Archives of Canada.

maternal feminism (ch 3): Also called first wave feminism; a movement to achieve greater civic rights for women; based its appeal on the biological differences between women and men, arguing that women have a natural nurturing instinct and ability which ought to be welcomed in a democratic system; women could

apply the knowledge and attributes acquired from their universal role as mothers to address various inequities and social ills.

maternal feminists (ch 7): Adherents to the ideals of maternal feminism.

mechanization (ch 3): The process of replacing manual labour with machinery; distinct from automation, which is a later phase in the deskilling process.

Medicine Line (ch 2): The 49th parallel north, so named by the First Nations of the Plains because it worked as an invisible barrier to stop attacks northward by United States soldiers.

mediums (ch 6): Individuals thought to possess the ability to act as a bridge between the living and the dead; they were the "media" through which messages could be transmitted; part of an early 20th century trend toward spiritualism that was fed, in part, by the enormous mortality of WWI.

Meech Lake Accord (ch 9): 1987; an agreement reached between all the provincial premiers and the Prime Minister that provided for a constitutional amending formula, a distinct society clause for Quebec, senate and Supreme Court reforms, and a devolution of some immigration issues to the provincial level. Despite a promising start, the Accord failed to achieve final approval.

Mennonites (ch 5): Along with the Hutterites and Amish, the Mennonites are an Anabaptist sectarian group; emigrated from Europe in the late 19th and early 20th century, where they faced oppression for their pacifist beliefs and the practice of adult baptism; settled in communities in Ontario, in Manitoba and across the Prairies, and in parts of British Columbia. A communal farming community that has resisted modernization, though with less intensity than the Hutterites.

mercantilism (ch 8): The system of economic relations established between European empires and their colonies; emphasis is on the use of merchants in the home country to establish production in the colony of largely unprocessed goods that would be shipped to the home ports; leaves colonies economically dependent and underdeveloped.

Metro (ch 9): The federated Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto.

middle power (ch 9): The idea that Canada might occupy a position between "great power" states like Britain and the United States and, after the World War II, at a level between the superpowers (the US and the USSR), the second tier of military and economic powers (e.g.: Britain and France), and other nations; tied to Lester Pearson's vision of peacekeeping and Canada as a referee or fair broker.

modernity (ch 3): Also modern and modernism; term given to a constellation of behaviours and beliefs associated with the industrial, urban era. It is associated with challenges to traditional values and ways of looking at the world, and is often used in connection with 20th century artworks, literature, and architecture.

Mohawk Institute (ch 11): First industrial school for Indigenous people, principally Mohawk; taught basic academic instruction and trades; based in Brantford, Ontario; opened in the 1830s under the auspices of New England Company.

Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (1939) (ch 7): A mutual non-aggression treaty signed between Germany and the USSR; allowed Germany to move forward with its attacks on France and the Low Countries while the Soviet Union annexed territories in the Baltic region.

monetarism (ch 8): In macroeconomics, the theory that the money supply and central bank policies are key to understanding inflation and fluctuations in GDP. By controlling the money supply, monetarists argue, one can contain inflation. One instrument for achieving these goals is to raise interest rates — making money more expensive — and thereby reducing its velocity. Monetarist policies were introduced along with austerity measures in Britain under the Thatcher government from 1979. Similar efforts (without austerity) were attempted in the United States under Ronald Reagan. Both were influential on Canadian fiscal policy.

Montreal Amateur Athletic Association (MAAA) (ch 10): Created in 1881, a federation of non-professional sports organizations, including bicycling, lacrosse, and ice hockey clubs; argued for a gentlemanly view of athletics, one which built character and community; opposed to the professionalization of sports and games.

moral panics (ch 10): Public fears of declining values and worsening behaviours that could lead to social turmoil and/or crisis. Examples include temperance, anti-gambling crusades, the 1950s campaign against comic books, and several recurring moral panics regarding adolescents.

Moravian Brethren (ch 2): An early Protestant sect from central Europe; established missions in Labrador, with the first permanent site established at Nain in 1771.

Motion Picture Production Code (1930) (ch 10): Also called the Hays Code, operated until 1968; established to address a public relations crisis in the film industry regarding risqué subject matter and scandals in Hollywood; prescribed anodyne subject matter and self-censorship by filmmakers as regards profanity, sex, nudity, and a long list of other perceived offences. It is worth noting that language, sexuality, and humour had a much wider berth in the first 30 years of the century.

muscular Christianity (ch 6): A late 19th century combination of Christian piety and athleticism, especially as regards masculinity.

mutually assured destruction (MAD) (ch 9): The Cold War belief that the sheer number of thermonuclear devices and delivery systems in the hands of the Soviet Union and the United States meant that neither side would survive an assault initiated by the other. By assuring their mutual destruction, they would be deterred from initiating a nuclear war.

nadir (ch 11): The opposite of zenith; it is the trough and in demographic terms it means the point at which a falling population bottomed out and from which it recovers. In the case of First Nations populations, they continued to fall until the 1920s at which point they began a steady recovery.

National Action Committee on the Status of Women (ch 7): Established in 1971 to agitate for implementation of the recommendations of the Bird Commission. See also Royal Commission on the Status of Women.

National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) (ch 3): A feminist activist group formed in 1893; predominantly Anglo-Celtic Protestant women who mostly identified themselves as maternal feminists.

National Energy Program (NEP) (ch 8): Controversial legislation introduced under Pierre Trudeau's administration in 1980-1985. The thrust of the policy was to secure Canadian oil for Canadian markets in eastern Canada (hitherto dependent on cheaper — but, in the context of the second OPEC shock, insecure — imported oil). Prices for Albertan oil in Quebec would be lower than in the United States (to which most of Canada's oil was sent), which meant lower profits in the oil patch.

National Film Board (NFB) (ch 10): Established under the *National Film Act, 1939* with a mandate to produce propaganda films during wartime. Subsequently a centre for creative excellence in documentary production.

National Hockey Association (NHA) (ch 10): One of several early 20th century professional hockey leagues and the direct precursor of the National Hockey League.

National Hockey League (NHL) (ch 10): Established in 1917 after a dispute among team owners in the National Hockey Association. It was, originally, an all-Canadian league but expanded in 1920 to Boston. Its higher salaries and American market led to the decline and disappearance of other professional leagues and the rise of an effective monopoly by the 1940s.

National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) (ch 11): Established in 1967-68 and propelled into action by the appearance of the White Paper (1969). See also the Assembly of First Nations.

National Policy (ch 3): John A. Macdonald's linkage of three policies into one: a tariff wall to exclude

American manufactures; a transcontinental railway (the CPR) to link the Maritimes with British Columbia; and the settlement of the West. Although most of the components were in place by 1876, it was only touted as a single National Policy in 1879.

nationalist historians (ch 12): Or "national historians"; scholars who believe that the principal role of history is to analyze and explain the history of the nation state.

nationalization (ch 9): The imposition of state ownership over a corporation or sector; examples include the provincial nationalization of hydroelectricity providers (e.g.: Ontario Hydro, Hydro-Québec, and BC Hydro) and the water transport monopoly in British Columbia (BC Ferries).

nativist (ch 5): A movement or individual committed to preserving privileges to established members of a community over newcomers; often translates into anti-immigration attitudes; many nativists are themselves merely earlier immigrants; has nothing to do with Native peoples.

Nativist millenarians (ch 2): Movements among mostly Indigenous peoples under imperialism that attempt to throw off their occupiers and return to an idealized past way of living; sometimes imbued with a mystical element that could involve divine intervention.

natural increase (ch 1): The growth of population from more births than deaths; that is, not by immigration and not factoring in emigration.

neo-liberalism (ch 8): An ideological position that favours smaller government, deregulation, freer trade, and lower taxes; and is tied to monetarism.

Neverendum (ch 9): The series of referendums dealing with Quebec separatism (or sovereignty-association) and proposed changes to the constitution, beginning in 1980.

New Canadians (ch 5): Term used since the late 1960s to describe recent immigrants, particularly those arriving from non-traditional sources like South Asia, Latin America, and Africa.

New Democratic Party (NDP) (ch 7): Successor to the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation; created out of the union of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and the CCF in 1961.

New Left (ch 9): Associated with campus radicalism in the 1960s and the writings of German philosopher Herbert Marcuse; less interested in the class struggle and labour power than with social justice.

New West (ch 8): Term used to describe the Prairie provinces following their move from a monocultural economy based almost entirely on grain production and export to an economy with diverse and more valuable bases.

New World Order (ch 12): In the context of the post-Cold War era, a United States-dominated international stage in which diminished expenditures on nuclear arsenals would be turned into resources to build up economies globally; in the context of wars in the Gulf and Middle East, an effort to impose the (Western) rule of law on recalcitrant states.

non-conformist churches (ch 7): A descriptive term attached to dissenting Protestant sects that broke with the Anglican Church as early as 1660; associated specifically with Methodism, Congregationalism, and the Baptist Church.

Nootka Sound (ch 5): On the west coast of Vancouver Island; traditional territory of the Nootka (Nuu-chah-nulth) First Nation; site of sustained contact between European, Mexican, and American traders and Indigenous peoples, along with a significant population of imported Chinese labourers in the late 18th century.

North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) (ch 9): Arising from a pact signed with the United States in 1957; provides detection and defence against Soviet missile and other airborne attacks on North America.

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) (ch 8): 1994; trade pact with the United States and Mexico. Expands on the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed in 1988.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (ch 8): Established by the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 that brought together the Treaty of Brussels nations (Britain, Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, and France), Canada, the United States, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Italy, and Portugal as a mutual defense league — an attack on one would be an attack on all.

notwithstanding clause (ch 9): Section 33 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982)* allows any provincial, federal, or territorial government to override some select rights in the Charter for a fixed period of time.

nuclear family (prologue): Describes a household comprised of one or two adults and their children. Households that include adult siblings are called "consangineal" and those that include an older generation (that is, grandparents) is called "extended".

numbered treaties (ch 11): Treaties struck between Canada and Indigenous peoples from 1871 (Treaty 1) to 1921 (Treaty 11), covering a territory that stretches from Ontario's eastern boundary in the North West to British Columbia, incorporating the whole of the Peace River Valley and the Mackenzie River drainage basin. Areas not covered by numbered treaties include southern Ontario (including the Rainy River area and Thunder Bay-Nippissing corridor, most of British Columbia, most of the Yukon and North West Territories, and all of Quebec, the Maritimes, and Newfoundland-Labrador.

Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (ch 9): 1993; set the stage for the *Nunavut Act, 1999* that created the new territory of Nunavut; the first major land claims agreement negotiated by the federal government since Treaty 11 (1920 to 1921).

October Crisis (ch 9): This was a combination of events in October 1970 including the kidnapping of James Cross and Pierre Laporte, attempts to ransom the two men, the execution of Laporte by his abductors, and the use of the *War Measures Act* for the first time in peacetime.

Official Opposition (ch 7): In parliamentary systems, the party with the second largest number of seats in the House of Commons. On occasion, the second largest caucus has refused the title of Official Opposition.

official party status (ch 7): The recognition of a political party's representatives in an assembly as sufficient to merit certain parliamentary privileges, including the right to ask questions during question period. In Ottawa, the federal House of Commons requires that a party have no fewer than 12 MPs in order to qualify for official status.

off-shore production (ch 8): Manufacturing of goods or parts in another country.

Ogdensburg Agreement (ch 6): 1940, a wartime accord signed between United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Canadian Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King; produced the Permanent Joint Board of Defence.

oil patch (ch 8): Shorthand for Alberta's oil industry, from mining and processing to sales and financing, from the field to the head offices in Calgary and Edmonton.

Oka Crisis (ch 11): In 1990, armed Mohawk band members from Kanesatake blockaded access to proposed construction site of a golf course in Oka; the arrival of Canadian Armed Forces troops was followed by disruptions of traffic through reserve lands to the south by the Mohawk band members from Kahnawake.

one big union, One Big Union (OBU) (ch 3): In the first instance, the idea (pioneered by the Knights of Labor) that working people should belong to a single organization that can fight for their rights collectively; secondly, an actual organization — the OBU — formed after 1919, as a revolutionary industrial union (which included workers in support of the Bolshevik and other left-wing revolutions).

On-to-Ottawa Trek (ch 8): Beginning in June 1933, the Relief Camp Workers' Union mobilized the

unemployed in British Columbia to abandon the camps and put their issues directly before Prime Minister Bennett, travelling across Canada on railway boxcars. The Trek started in Vancouver but was stopped in Regina and culminated in a riot.

Orange (ch 4): Refers to the Orange Order, its members, and its values; a Protestant fraternal association with roots in Ireland; marked by a strong antipathy for Catholics and Catholicism, as well as a fierce loyalty to the Crown. Supported Protestant immigrants and made use of violence and political networks to achieve its ends.

Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) (ch 8): Established in 1960 as a regulating body for the oil industry's biggest producers, most of which were located in the Middle East and Africa. By 1970 decolonization had advanced so far that emerging countries sought greater control over the value of their oil exports. OPEC responded by setting higher prices, which triggered the first "oil shock" of the decade.

other (prologue): Usually represented as "the other" or "an other", refers to the idea of groups or individuals different from one's own or one's self. The effect of recognizing an other is to sharpen one's sense of self in terms of what one is not. Historically, some groups have been "otherized" or constructed in argument and in systems as not belonging to the mainstream. This is part of the process of isolating and possibly persecuting certain groups and individuals.

outsourcing (ch 8): The export of jobs; part of the process of deindustrialization.

Pacific Coast Hockey Association (PCHA) (ch 10): One of several early 20th century professional hockey leagues; pioneered use of artificial ice in indoor arenas; merged with the Western Canada Hockey League in 1924.

Pacific Scandal (ch 2): 1873; Macdonald's Conservative Party was given significant funds from the Canadian Pacific Railway, which caused the CPR to lose the opportunity to complete the Intercolonial Railway, cost Macdonald his administration, and brought the Mackenzie Liberals into office.

pacifism (ch 5): An anti-war position; pacifists typically will not volunteer for and refuse to be conscripted into conflict. Many eastern European religious groups brought pacifist beliefs with them to Western Canada before 1914.

paparazzi (ch 9): Photo-journalists who principally target celebrities and public figures and whose technique is sometimes intrusive.

partial franchise (ch 3): With the passage of the *Wartime Elections Act* in 1917, female relatives of Canadian soldiers were granted the vote.

partition (ch 12): The potential for, or the act of, formally dividing an established jurisdiction. In the case of Canada, Quebec's separation from Canada would not constitute because it existed before Confederation, but the removal of anglophone-dominated areas and Inuit and Cree territories would constitute a partition of Quebec.

pass system (ch 11): Indigenous reserve residents were required to secure a pass from their Indian agent in order to leave the reserve.

paternalism (prologue): A system in which a source of authority exerts control over the behaviour, conditions, and rights of its subjects; may occur at the state level but also in the workplace (as managers/employers determine how workers should behave and perform) and underlies patriarchal households wherein the eldest productive male constitutes the principal source of authority.

patriarchy (ch 7): A socio-economic system in which males have legal, political, social, and economic primacy and privilege, sometimes to the complete exclusion of women. Under a patriarchy, control over children is also a male (fatherly) prerogative.

patriation (ch 9): The transfer to Canada from Britain of the *British North America Act* (an Act of the British Parliament) and thus enabling its amendment in Canada.

peace dividend (ch 12): At the end of the Cold War it was widely predicted that the cost of maintaining readiness in the face of the threat posed by the Warsaw Pact and other communist countries would come to an end and resources would be spent in other ways.

peace, order and good government (POGG) (ch 2): From Section 91 of the *BNA Act* as regards "residual" or "residuary powers" (granted to the Queen, the Senate, and House of Commons to make laws), and which could cover anything and everything that was either not itemized or as yet not imagined in the constitutional division of authority.

peacekeeping (ch 9): Under the United Nations in the Cold War and post-Cold War era, the use of military and other military personnel in non-combatant roles to maintain peace between adversaries so as to enable the peace-making process.

Penner Report (ch 11): Recommended to Ottawa in 1983 that Indigenous peoples constitute a distinct order of government and ought to be recognized as such.

Permanent Joint Board of Defense (ch 6): Established in 1940. See Ogdensburg Agreement.

Phoney War (ch 6): Having declared war against Germany on 3 September 1939, France and Britain made no effort to engage the enemy in combat for the next eight months. Note that in Canadian and British English it is always spelled "Phoney," with an "e", whereas in American English it is spelled "Phony."

Pig War (ch 2): Colloquial name for a dispute between the United States and the British Empire over the San Juan Islands, from 1859-1873.

(the) Pill (ch 9): Refers to the first successful oral contraceptive, approved for public use in 1960.

Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada (ch 9): Established in 1964, the Federation was the descendant of a long line of organizations advocating education and support around birth control.

pluralism (ch 5): In contrast to dualism, supports the concept of a community or state made of diverse parts, particularly as regards aspects like ethnicity, creed, and/or language.

political correctness (ch 12): A provocative (and often ironic) term to describe attempts to modify language in such ways as to minimize unnecessary offence, typically of minorities, women, and vulnerable populations. The inclusive ethos of sensitive language — which was essentially self-reflection on the ways in which language binds social roles and relationships — has been challenged by privileged groups in particular who regard restrictions on the ability to defame others as a loss of freedom.

Poor Laws (ch 7): A series of laws enacted in Britain, including several amendments in the 19th century; aimed at providing support for the unemployed and impoverished; characterized by the use of "poor houses" and "workhouses" in which conditions were sufficiently appalling to keep all but the least able-bodied and most desperate off of the public dole.

popular culture (ch 10): Denotes arts, values, and ideas that are entrenched in a large slice of the population. "Popular" in this respect signifies that it is both widely appreciated and desired, and generated by this mainstream population. A 20th century idea, sometimes referred to as "pop culture" in the later 20th century.

popular front (ch 6): A political alliance of left-wing, progressive parties and organizations to counter fascism in the 1920s, '30s, and '40s.

populism (ch 3), populist (ch 2): In politics, an appeal to the interests and concerns of the community by political leaders (populists) usually against established elites or minority — or scapegoat — groups. The rhetoric of populists is often characterized as vitriolic, bombastic, and fear-mongering.

pop music (ch 9): A music sub-genre within the larger rock and roll (rock'n'roll) genre; adheres to obvious structural qualities, tends to be melodic, and aims at a younger audience.

post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (ch 12): Mental health consequences of trauma, typically within the context of warfare; associated with research in the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and psychotherapy.

post-colonial, post-colonialism (ch 11): The range of experiences and perspectives that look beyond the paradigm of colonial society and colonialism; associated with the late 20th century.

postmodern, postmodernism (ch 10): A complex system of views arising in the late modernist period that questioned the era's certainties, invited a skeptical analysis of conventions, focussed on pluralism rather than unity (both politically and artistically); contains anti-modernist elements (such as the return to craft and artisanal production) but is not otherwise anti-modern in the way that the original opponents to modernism were.

postwar settlement (ch 8): A suite of agreements between employers, unionized workers, and the state in 1946; allowed for "responsible" labour activity while prohibiting excessive militance; committed employers and the state to recognizing unions and supporting the checkoff of union dues. See Rand Formula.

potlatch (ch 11): Refers to ceremonies associated with First Nations cultures on the Pacific Northwest Coast.

pragmatic (ch 4): In politics, the focus on existing conditions rather than ideological considerations or objectives. Also called realpolitik.

Prague Spring (ch 9): 1968, a brief period of liberalization of government policies and democratic rights in Czechoslovakia; countered by the invasion of Warsaw Pact troops under the command of the Soviet Union.

preferential tariff (ch 4): Charges (a tax) added to imported goods so as to make their sale price higher than domestic goods and, thus, make domestic goods more competitive; some trade partners are less discriminated (they are "preferred") over others.

presentism (preface): Or the "presentist fallacy"; the belief that the events of the past are directly responsible for conditions in the present. Presentism often ignores intervening events. It also tends to thank the past for positives (such as current freedoms) while it seldom holds the past accountable for liabilities (such as a lacklustre economy, continuing struggles over equality, etc.).

Prime Minister's Office (PMO) (ch 9): Also the Office of the Prime Minister or the PMO; the centre of political decision making in the Parliamentary system, consisting of the Prime Minister and her/his chief political advisors; in Ottawa, located in the Langevin Block on Parliament Hill.

prisoner of war (POW) (ch 6): In modern warfare there are conventions regarding the appropriate treatment of captured soldiers or POWs. Most POWs are held for the duration of the war in guarded "POW camps." Camps were established in Canada to handle POWs from the European theatre of war in the Second World War.

Privy Council Order PC 1003 (1944) (ch 8): Allowed unions for the first time to engage in widespread organization and to bargain collectively for job contracts.

professionalization (ch 10): Generally, the creation of exclusive policies that limit entry into a particular business or trade, such as the need for a teaching certificate from a recognized institution in order to become a teacher; in sports, the phenomenon of paying players to play, which moved games and athleticism away from the 19th century ideal of gentlemanly and unpaid (amateur) competition.

profiteers (ch 3): Industrialists and others who were able to profit from government contracts in wartime.

progress (ch 10): The view that the history of humanity is a constant movement forward toward a better and better society.

progressive (ch 7): In politics and social policy, the belief in the improvability of human society. In partisan politics, associated with the Progressive Party (below) and the Progressive Conservative Party. In music, indicates a sub-genre of rock and roll which tends to be more symphonic and influenced by electronic jazz.

Progressive Party (ch 6): Formed in 1920 as an alliance of the various United Farmer MPs elected to Ottawa; initially a rural protest party with strong roots in Ontario.

prohibition (ch 3): A total ban on the production, sale, and consumption of alcohol products.

proletarianization (ch 3): The transformation of non-industrial workers or skilled workers and small employers into wage labourers.

proportional representation (ch 3): Distinct from the first-past-the-post system; can take several forms but common aspect is that political parties will be elect a number of seats that reflect in some measure the percentage of votes the parties receive. For example, in a first-past-the-post system a party might win 49% of the votes in every constituency but not elect a single candidate if the only other party running wins 51% of the votes; proportional representation (sometimes called PR) would ensure that the second-place party received something closer to 49% of the seats.

province building (ch 8): The strategy pursued by some provinces to become more substantial players in their jurisdictions by investing in economic expansion and engaging in a growing number of social programs. Associated with the post-WWII period.

proxy wars (ch 9): Cold war era conflicts conducted by third party countries in which the United States and the Soviet Union had a stake, rather than a direct conflict between the two superpowers.

punk rock (ch 9): A variant of rock'n'roll that appeared for the first time in the late 1970s; marked by an anti-establishment, anti-authority stance.

queer history (ch 12): The study of the historic experience of LGBT individuals and communities; also the analysis of popular and governmental attitudes toward LGBT communities.

Quiet Revolution (*Revolution tranquille*) (ch 9): A period of rapid and consequential change in the character of Quebec politics and society beginning in the late 1950s.

race suicide (ch 7): An idea common to the eugenics movement; the idea that "inferior races" will inevitably squeeze out "superior races" by dint of having higher reproductive rates; especially popular at times when fertility in the anxious community is falling.

racializing (prologue): To ascribe inherent qualities to an identifiable group and to explain the presence of those qualities as a product of "race" — which is itself a social construct.

racism (ch 5): A set of beliefs and practices that involve the creation of largely arbitrary categories of human peoples and assigning to them behaviours, traits, and tendencies that are essentialized — that is, thought to be an inherent and immutable part of who they are. For example, laziness, alcoholism, unbridled libido, personal restraint and self discipline, deceitfulness, superior or inferior intelligence, greed, corruptibility, cowardice, and courage have, at various times, been regarded as unchangeable qualities of one race or another. As an ideology, argues that the assumed existence of these differences justifies — and necessitates — the development of social policies that reduce the impact that might be had by the less desirable races.

Rand Formula (1946) (ch 8): Based on a landmark legal ruling by Mr. Justice Ivan C. Rand, the Rand Formula provided unions with a pathway to gain legitimacy and long-term stability if, but only if, they agreed to conduct themselves "responsibly."

rational recreation (ch 10): A 19th century response to the leisure activities of working people — gambling, competitions of strength, drinking, and low-brow performances, and which sought to replace these with controlled, morally superior, and character building — "improving" — activities.

Reaganism (ch 8): Also Reaganomics; associated with the neo-liberal (also neo-conservative) goal of reducing the size of government, expenditures of government, and size of personal and capital gains taxes; tied, as well, to monetarism.

recession (ch 8): Generally a down-cycle in economics characterized by price inflation, rising unemployment, industrial failures, and lower household income.

Reciprocity Treaty (ch 1): 1854 agreement between the British North American colonies and the United States; enabled freer trade; was cancelled by the Americans at the end of the Civil War.

Red Paper (ch 11): Also called "*Citizens Plus*"; prepared by Harold Cardinal and the Indian Association of Alberta in 1970, the Red Paper was a response to Ottawa's 1969 White Paper (aka *The Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969*"). called for preservation of Treaty rights and recognition of Aboriginal rights.

Red Power (ch 11): A continent-wide movement led by Indigenous peoples in the late 1960s to through the 1970s to place Indigenous issues on the political agenda.

Royal Proclamation (ch 11): 1763; Britain's first constitution for post-Conquest Canada; recognized inherent Indigenous land tenure rights or Aboriginal title to the land, making it impossible for any authority or individual other than the Crown to alienate Aboriginal title; provoked objections among the American colonists because it interfered with their plans for westward expansion; sometimes called the "Indian *Magna Carta*."

Red Scare (ch 3): A complex of political, social, economic, and cultural responses to the rise of pro-communist feeling in Canada and internationally; fear of communist revolution at home or abroad and particularly of pro-communist spies and supporters working clandestinely to advance a communist agenda; manifest in security campaigns against perceived enemies of the state, the creation of blacklists, and other acts of intimidation.

Red Tory (ch 9): A Canadian Progressive Conservative who takes an essentially 19th century conservative position on the social obligations of the upper classes; a position sometimes described as *noblesse oblige*.

reference group (ch 5): In a society comprised of some diversity, refers to the most influential group whose culture other groups seek to adopt or are obliged to assimilate into. See also context group.

referenda (ch 7): A public opinion poll for registered voters, the results of which may or may not be binding. Members of Parliament debate actual bills that they can see and hold, and on which they may offer suggestions and amendments; referenda typically ask for general agreement on a broad principal without providing any of the details.

reformist (ch 7): Among left-wing activists, a belief that incremental changes to capitalism can produce a social and economic order of fairness for working people; derided by revolutionaries as delusional. See also gradualist and impossibilist.

Regina Manifesto (ch 7): 1933; the original statement of purpose and beliefs of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation.

Regina Riot (ch 8): 1st of July 1935, at the conclusion of the On-to-Ottawa Trek, a rally called by the Relief Camp Workers' Union in Regina's Market Square culminated in a confrontation between the Trekkers and their supporters and the RCMP.

regional disparities (ch 12): Term used increasingly in the 1970s to describe the existence of "have" and "have-not" provinces whose inequalities were a product of long-term economic circumstances.

Regulation 17 (ch 6): In Ontario, a provincial program to reduce the availability of French language education; introduced shortly before the Great War; contributed to tensions between Francophone Quebec and Anglophone Ontario and the federal government.

relief camps (ch 8): The federal government‘s response to the massing of unemployed single men in Vancouver early in the 1930s Depression; in 1932, a nationwide system of generally quite isolated camps run by the Department of National Defense that became hotbeds of radical opposition to government inaction on the economic crisis.

relocation programs (ch 9): A federal government initiative in the mid-20th century to move Indigenous peoples in the North to locations where they would serve as a sign of Canadian sovereignty and/or where services (education, healthcare, administration, and the church) might be more effectively centralized. A program to which Inuit in particular were subjected, their lives disrupted, and their economies severed.

rep-by-pop (ch 1): Representation by population; the higher the population of a province, the higher the number of seats allocated for that province in the House of Commons.

reparations (ch 8): At the end of the First World War, Germany accepted responsibility for acts of aggression leading to the conflict; the Treaty of Versailles (1919) ordered Germany to make extensive payments as a consequence. Both the idea of war guilt and reparations became a contentious issue in Germany; the country’s inability to pay the enormous reparations fees led to severe international economic instability, particularly when Germany sharply devalued its own currency to pay the debts more easily.

representational value of sport (ch 10): In the context of, principally, professional sports, the phenomenon of athletes whose performance is seen by the community and by fans especially as representing the community and its members; applies to local and to national players/teams.

resistance armies (ch 6): Also resistance forces, resistance movements; forces aligned against either a legitimate regime or an occupying regime; an unofficial army typically comprised of soldiers who have deserted the national armed forces, as well as civilians who offer services and support to actual fighters and sometimes fight themselves.

respectability (ch 3): A term used and an ideal pursued by mid-19th century organized labour — particularly skilled craft workers — and some of their successors; embraced the ideals of fair treatment, law-abiding behaviour, equality, and a commitment to the nation’s stability and growth. Manifest in many ways including working class campaigns for literacy, temperance, and rational recreation.

responsible government (ch 1): Government in which the Executive level (or Cabinet) is responsible to — and can be dismissed from office by — the majority of votes in the Assembly. In contrast to pre-Confederation systems in which the Executive was appointed by and was responsible to the Crown or its representative.

Rest Of Canada (ROC) (ch 9): A term used to describe all Canada apart from Quebec; has the advantage of avoiding the idea of dualism (as in English- vs. French-Canada).

Right (ch 7): Individuals, groups, and parties espousing a conservative perspective; a broad continuum that includes Red Tories, Blue Tories, neo-liberals/conservatives, the late 20th century Reform Party, and — far to the Right — fascists.

rights culture (ch 12): Beginning in the 1960s, a belief in the existence of un- or under-recognized rights as well as the importance and value of extending and enshrining rights to under-protected groups.

rock and roll (ch 9): Also rock’n’roll and rock & roll; a musical style originating in the 1950s characterized at first by a synthesis of blues, jazz, country, western, and boogie-woogie; became in the 1960s and later an umbrella term for many styles that incorporated any of these elements, including a strong youth component; regarded at mid-century as rebellious in its presentation and content.

***Rouge* (ch 4):** Also *Parti rouge*. Political party and tradition in Quebec; established in the 1840s, it became

increasing more pro-secular, anticlerical, and opposed to hereditary privilege; opposed to Confederation, embraced provincial rights; after 1867, merged with the Clear Grits to form the Liberal Party.

RCAF (Women's Division) (ch 6): Formed in 1941 when women from the British Royal Air Force (RAF) arrived in Canada to assist training. Embarrassed, the RCAF agreed to accept women and became the first branch of the armed forces to actively recruit women.

Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) (ch 6): Established in 1924 on the remains of several Great War flying corps with Canadian personnel.

Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (ch 9): Created in 1963 and reported out in 1969; co-chaired by A. Davidson Dunstan and André Laurendeau (who was succeeded at his death by Jean-Louis Gagnon); identified underrepresentation of Franco-Canadians in many areas of public life, second-rate services in French in national and relevant provincial systems, and poor opportunities for Francophones in post-secondary institutions outside of Quebec; recommended the establishment of a Commissioner of Official Languages.

Royal Commission on the Status of Women (ch 7): Created in 1967 and reported out in 1970; chaired by Florence Bird; produced 167 recommendations that focussed on issues of equality of opportunity and identifying the many institutional, legal, and systemic barriers to the same. While most of the recommendations have been adopted, provision of day care remains an outstanding exception. The RCSW did not address issues associated with sexual identity or sexual orientation and its failure to discuss violence against women was a major oversight. The Office for the Status of Women was established as a consequence of the Commission's report.

rural depopulation (ch 9): Movement of people — generally younger people — off the land and into the cities; associated with urbanization and also with the collapse of village and town economies.

rust belt (ch 8): Former heavy manufacturing regions that have experienced deindustrialization.

Salvation Army (ch 7): Founded in England in 1865; a Christian denomination identified with charitable works in urban industrial areas; adopted a military model with uniforms, marching bands, and ranks. Introduced to Canada in 1882, where it is also known as the "Sally Ann," sometimes as the "Starvation Army." Keenly interested in social justice issues, the Salvation Army was instrumental in the social gospel movement.

scientific racism (ch 7): The use of scientific technique or pseudo-scientific technique to provide a rational and empirically verifiable basis of racial discrimination. Utterly demolished as a theory in the postwar period, it nevertheless contributed not only to the spread of racism in Euro-Canadian communities but to its legitimation and respectability.

scrip (ch 2): A system introduced by Canada for extinguishing Métis land title, beginning in 1870. Scrip documents indicated individual entitlement to land, although not necessarily to land on which one was already settled. While the numbered treaties dealt with whole First Nations communities collectively, scrip was negotiated on an individual and household basis.

second industrial revolution (ch 3): Usually placed between ca. 1870 and 1914, renewed technological innovation which saw a significant expansion in iron and steel production, railway construction, and communications technologies like the telegraph and telephone.

Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) (ch 9): Convened by Pope John XXIII in 1959; ended 90 years of papal infallibility by opening dialogue regarding doctrine and the relationship between the Catholic Church and the modern world; upset many long-standing convictions about unchanging features of Catholic life; in Canada, contributed to the sense of social, spiritual, and secular fluidity that was bound up in the Quiet Revolution.

second wave feminist (ch 7): A renewal of movement feminism in the postwar era; focused on rights in

the workplace, equality of opportunity and pay, reproductive rights, and violence against women. See also Women's Liberation

Section 35 (ch 11): Of the *Constitution Act, 1982;* recognizes and affirms Aboriginal rights.

Section 98 (ch 6): Refers to Section 98 of the Criminal Code, which bans "unlawful associations;" introduced following the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919; targeted organizations which advocate political change through violent means; used to target the Communist Party in the 1920s and 1930s.

section and quarter-section (block system) (ch 2): The system used by land surveyors to divide land and property. One section is meant to be 1 mile square.

secularism (ch 10): The separation of church and state; the belief that a modern state is best served by individuals not directly associated with organized religion. See also **anticlerical**.

seigneurial system (ch 2) / seigneury (prologue): Used in New France; based on a feudal system in which land was granted under a royalty system, and the tenant was responsible for farming the land to meet their physical needs (food, heat, and shelter). This system was abolished in 1854.

Senate reform (ch 12): The upper house has been the subject of chronic criticism for decades. These critiques intensified in the 1960s and especially in the 1980s. See also Triple-E Senate.

service sectors (ch 8): Those parts of the economy that support the financing, governing, feeding, administering, training, and health of the rest of the economy and the population. Examples include government bureaucracy, education, restaurants, police, and financial services. Also called the "tertiary sector," as distinct from the primary (resource extraction) and secondary (processing and manufacturing) sectors.

sex ratio (ch 1): The ratio of men to women. A sex ratio of 2:1 indicates that there are two men for every one woman.

sexual revolution (ch 9): A complex of social changes associated with the 1960s; loosening of moral codes as regards premarital sex, illegitimacy, divorce and remarriage, pornography, and sex for pleasure (as opposed to procreation).

Silicon Valley (ch 8): Term used to describe the concentration of high-technology industries in the Bay Area of California, particularly after the 1970s.

Sinophobic (ch 5): Fear of China or Chinese.

sixties scoop (ch 11): The apprehension and removal of Indigenous children from their families and communities by provincial child welfare authorities during the 1960s.

sleeper agents (ch 9): Espionage agents who are deeply embedded in the host community and dormant, awaiting activation.

slumming (ch 10): Colloquial for seeking recreation or entertainment in a locale that is associated with a lower socio-economic class or different cultural group than one's own.

social control (ch 7): The regulation of social behaviour through direct (laws, policing) and indirect (social pressure, moral suasion) means.

social credit (ch 7): Primarily an economic theory and monetary policy, developed in the 1920s and touted as a solution to the Depression in Canada by Social Credit political parties.

social democratic (ch 7): A political movement that advocates reform that will achieve greater social equality, a degree of socialist governance, and the preservation of democratic institutions. Associated with the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and New Democratic Party.

Social Gospel (ch 3): A social reform movement stimulated by Christian beliefs that linked personal engagement with social salvation.

social hegemony (ch 10): Influence enjoyed by one social group over all others; dominance in tastes, culture, and values, among other indicators.

social reformers (ch 7): Advocates of change at the social — rather than individual — level; associated with 19th century social movements like the suffragettes, maternal feminism, and temperance agitation.

social mobility (ch 9): The movement of individuals, households, or communities through social hierarchies; generally associated with upward mobility — but downward is also a possibility.

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) (ch 10): Arose out of the recommendations of the Canada Council for the Arts in 1977. Along with the National Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) constitutes the Tri-Council that funds a great deal of scholarly research.

sojourners (ch 5): Immigrants whose intent is to work for a period of time, accumulate savings, and return to their home country (or province). Historically associated mostly with Chinese labourers who were brought to Canada under contract to the Canadian Pacific Railway, for example.

Somalia Affair (ch 12): Political and military scandal arising from Canadian Airborne Regiment's violent, arbitrary, and murderous behaviour which led to several civilian deaths (including the beating death of Shidane Arone).

Sons of Freedom (ch 5): Or Freedomites; a radical anarchist faction within the Doukhobor diaspora in Canada; broke away from the main settlements in Saskatchewan and resettled in southeastern British Columbia; anti-materialist protests and anti-statism led to confrontations with the provincial government in the 1920s, and 1950s–1960s.

Sovereignty Bill (ch 12): Also called an *Act Respecting the Future of Québec* or Bill 1. The legislation introduced in 1995 in Québec by the Parizeau administration to enable a referendum on Québec separation from Confederation.

space race (ch 9): Competition between the United States and the Soviet Union to establish a dominant commercial, scientific, and military presence in near space; initiated with the launch of the Soviet satellite, Sputnik I in 1957; marked by American determination to reach the moon first.

Space Shuttle (ch 9): A low orbit space craft developed by NASA in the 1970s and launched first in 1981; includes reusable sections and the craft is capable of reentry and a controlled surface landing on return. Nine Canadians have flown in Space Shuttle missions.

Specials (ch 3): Volunteer police drawn from a local population; in the case of the Winnipeg General Strike, the Specials were recruited from the Citizen's Committee.

split labour market (ch 5): A labour market in which employers have the option of hiring cheaper labour that is differentiated by race, ethnicity or, possibly, creed. Doing so improves profits and it will embitter relations between the two labour supplies. Used as a theory (split labour market theory) to explain racial divisions between workers.

Sputnik (ch 9): The first artificial satellite, launched by the Soviet Union on 4 October 1957; credited with starting the space race between the USSR and the United States.

squirearchy (ch 3): Colloquial term used to describe the elite in colonial British Columbia.

stagflation (ch 8): Stagnant economic growth coupled with persistently high rates of inflation.

standing army (ch 3): A full-time, permanent, usually salaried army, as opposed to a volunteer militia.

staple economy, staples model (ch 8): The staples theory argues that an economy dominated by valuable and traditional commodities will be shaped — in terms of the larger economy, the polity, and the society — by the needs and nature of the primary staple(s). Also a model for understanding the political economy of a

country in which staples are fundamental to the export economy. An approach developed by historians Harold Innis and W. A. Mackintosh.

START (ch 12): Three Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties, the first of which was signed in 1991; committed the signatories — the USSR and the United States — to making substantial reductions in their nuclear arsenals and delivery systems.

Status Indians (ch 6): A legal identity created in the *Indian Act, 1876*. The *Act* determines who is, in law, an "Indian" and who is not for the purposes of government services, annuities, suffrage, etc.

Statute of Westminster (1931) (ch 6): An act of the British Parliament, it codified in law the principles of the Balfour Declaration of 1926, which included legislative autonomy of Canadian (and some other colonial) parliaments. Widely regarded as the moment when Canada gained independence.

strikebreakers (ch 3): Colloquial term for a worker who continues working, or who takes a job, while a strike is ongoing. Also called a scab.

suburban, suburban sprawl (ch 9): The low density housing districts beyond the city limits; the expansion of cities beyond their boundaries into bordering municipalities, creating low density and car-dependent districts with few amenities other than housing.

Suez crisis (ch 9): The 1956 invasion of Egypt by Israel, followed by France and Britain with the objective of seizing the Suez Canal. The failure of England and France to inform their former Allies — especially the United States — of their plans led to a rift between Britain and the USA in particular. Canada's response, led by Lester Pearson, was to propose a large multi-national peacekeeping force in the region.

suffrage (ch 7): The right to vote in elections; associated strongly with women's suffrage.

superpower (ch 8): A leading economic and military power with a nuclear arsenal; a cold war era term applied mainly to the USSR and the United States.

sweated labour (ch 3): Work that takes place over long hours; exhausting and generally poorly paid; very often involves "outwork", the taking home of materials that are assembled there, usually by female employees, who are paid on the basis of output.

sympathy strike (ch 3): A labour stoppage by supportive workers who are not directly involved in a dispute.

syndicalist (ch 3): Advocate of syndicalism, the belief that industry would be best run by syndicates made up of industrial workers who would own and operate the factories themselves.

Taliban (ch 12): The fundamentalist Islamic regime in Afghanistan; deposed in 2001 following the NATO invasion in response to 9/11.

tariff (ch 3): Charges (a tax) added to imported goods so as to make their sale price higher than domestic goods and, thus, make domestic goods more competitive.

temperance (ch 3): One strand of the anti-liquor campaign in the 19th and 20th centuries, focussed on the personal impact of alcohol and personal resolve in limiting or giving up drink. Contrast with prohibition, which called for an all-out ban on the production, sale, and consumption of liquor.

Thalidomide (ch 9): A drug prescribed to pregnant women for morning sickness; available in Canada from 1959 to 1962; resulted in catastrophic side effects, including severe disfigurement and defects in more than 100 infants in Canada alone.

Thatcherism (ch 8): Simultaneously the approach taken by and leadership style of British Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and the array of anti-trade union, pro-free market policies and economic philosophies that were popular in the Conservative Party from the 1970s through the 1980s; contains some elements of neo-liberalism and what has been described as Reaganomics.

third parties (ch 7): Political parties other than the Liberals and Conservatives; distinguished from "fourth" or "fringe parties" by their more respectable showing at the polls. Principally, the CCF-NDP, Social Credit, and Reform Party of Canada. The Bloc Québécois occupies a special place in this respect because it has enjoyed a large following and has formed the official opposition in Ottawa, but is not a national party.

Thirteen Colonies of Britain (ch 1): The Atlantic Coast colonies established in the 17th and 18th centuries; rebelled against British rule in 1775-83 and became the core elements of the United States.

Three Wise Men (ch 9): *Les trois colombes*, a term used mainly by commentators to describe the trio of Jean Marchand, Gerard Pelletier, and Pierre Trudeau when they were recruited to the federal Liberal Party in the 1960s.

tied housing (ch 3): In company towns, housing that is owned by the employer and provided to employees. In some cases, residence in tied housing is a condition of employment, which enables the employer to evict strikers during labour disputes.

total war (ch 3): Describes the engagement of the whole nation in conflict, and not just the military. In the 20th century, applies only to the two World Wars.

Trades and Labour Congress of Canada (ch 3): A national association of craft unions modelled on the American Federation of Labor; established in 1883 and merged with the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL) in 1956 to create the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC).

Treaty of Paris 1763: (ch 2): Ended the Seven Years' War. France ceded all of its territory east of the Mississippi to Britain (including all of Canada, Acadia, and Île Royale) and granted Louisiana and lands west of the Mississippi to its ally Spain. Britain returned to France the sugar islands of Guadeloupe. France retained St. Pierre and Miquelon along with fishing rights on the Grand Banks.

trickle-down effect (ch 8): In neo-liberal economics, particularly Reaganomics, the idea that reducing taxes on the wealthy and corporations will result in their increased profits "trickling down" to lower socio-economic classes. Referred to also as "free market economics" and "voodoo economics."

Triple-E Senate (ch 12): Call for reform of the upper house that would see it become elected, equal, and efficient; a plank in the Reform Party platform since the 1980s.

truck shop (ch 3): An outlet owned by an employer, one that sells goods to employees of the same firm. Commonplace in company towns. See also company store.

Trudeaumania (ch 9): Term used principally by journalists to describe public and media fascination with Pierre Trudeau in the course of the 1968 Liberal leadership convention and then the general election; alludes to the phenomenon of Beatlemania, associated with the British Invasion.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (ch 11): A commission tasked in 2008 with documenting the full history of the residential schools; report presented in 2015.

tuberculosis (TB) (ch 11): An epidemic associated with rapid urbanization, tenement housing, slums, and poverty; spread rapidly in post-Confederation period, becoming epidemic among Indigenous populations; tuberculosis sanatoria were established and operating across Canada until the 1960s, by which time antibiotics (especially Streptomycin) had severely reduced the incidence and morbidity associated with TB.

two founding nations (ch 9): The narrative of Canadian history that privileges the idea of the French and British as co-equal founders of Canada; ignores roles played by Indigenous nations and implicitly reduces the importance of Canadians drawn from other ethnicities and countries; is at the heart of dualism.

ultramontanist (ch 2): Elements in Catholicism that emphasize papal authority over secular authority and, after 1870, papal infallibility. Seeks a large, extensive role for the church in daily life and objects to the main features of modernity, especially the growth of the secular state. Although ultramontanism faded in Europe after 1870, it remained a powerful force in Canada to the 1960s.

Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) (ch 11): Established in 1969 in response to the Federal Government's White Paper; replaced rival coastal and interior groups.

unipolar (ch 12): Following on the collapse of multipolar global relations in the 1940s, and the subsequent age of bipolar superpowers, the unipolar era was defined by one superpower (the United States) dominating global affairs.

United Church of Canada (ch 10): Created in 1925 as a result of a merger between three denominations: Congregationalist, Methodist, and Presbyterian. Some members of each denomination remained outside of the United Church but it was, nonetheless, immediately the third largest denomination in Canada.

United Nations (UN) (ch 9): An international body established in 1942; originally was the rough equivalent of the Allied Nations in the Second World War; expanded to a post-war role in 1945 as an intergovernmental assembly and series of agencies tasked with reducing international tensions and addressing international social and economic crises.

universal adult suffrage (ch 3): Introduced a year after the partial franchise, to grant adults the right to vote; however, select populations of women and men were explicitly left disenfranchised: Indigenous people, as well as Chinese, Japanese, and Indian immigrants.

Universal Health Care (ch 9): Provision of health insurance coverage to all members of society; pioneered in German in the 1880s; similar programs appeared first in the British Commonwealth in New Zealand (1939); in Canada, introduced first in Saskatchewan in 1962 and nationally in stages in 1966-72.

universal male suffrage (ch 3): Extension of the franchise — the right to vote — to all adult males. In practice in Canada, it excluded non-Euro-Canadians (i.e. Indigenous and Asian) adult males until the mid-20th century. Also constrained by residency requirements until the mid-20th century.

U-boat (ch 6): German term for a submarine.

vagrancy (ch 11): The state of being without work or employment, homelessness, and (often) transience; associated with poverty and begging. Vagrancy was treated as a crime and was listed in the *Criminal Code* until 1972. The 21st century has seen the return of anti-vagrancy laws with different names.

VE-Day (ch 8): Victory in Europe Day, 7 May 1945; marked the end of WWII in Europe.

vernacular (ch 10): In language, a local dialect; in design and cooking, styles developed in a specific locale and which are, in the case of emigrants, transported to other locations intact where they are reproduced. Examples of indigenous vernacular include Canadien stone houses influenced by the pre-Conquest era and, among immigrants, Doukhobor communal housing.

vertical integration (ch 3): In economics and business, a system in which the whole or most of the supply chain is owned by the same individual(s) or firm. Early examples come from the steel industry which in some cases controlled the production of coking coal, the supply of iron ore, foundries, and railways that consumed the final product.

Veterans Charter (ch 9): Introduced in 1944; provided funds to enable the transition to civilian life of Canadian troops; included free university education, payment for time served, life insurance, and money for civilian clothes. The Charter also guaranteed that ex-servicemen and women could reclaim their former jobs, which had the effect of displacing women who had worked in industry during wartime.

Victoria Charter (1971) (ch 9): An agreement to patriate the *British North America Act*, which included an amending formula, new civil, personal, and language rights, and provisions for regional equalization; achieved agreement from nine provinces and narrowly failed to secure Quebec's approval from Premier Robert Bourassa.

Victory Bonds (ch 6): Voluntary savings scheme originating in the Great War; purchasing 5 to 15 year bonds was a means of lending funds to the federal government with which to conduct the war; paid back with interest on their maturation.

V-J Day (ch 6): Victory in Japan Day, 15 August 1945; marked the end of the war against Japan and thus the end of the Second World War.

Waffle (ch 7): A faction within the NDP in 1969-1971 that embraced left-wing nationalism, feminism, and social activism, and called for an independent socialist Canada.

wage and price controls (ch 9): Introduced as part of the *Anti-Inflation Act, 1975* as a response to an inflation rate approaching 11%; marked the beginning of a move away from the post-war settlement in that it established new restrictions on organized labour. The controls and the Anti-Inflation Board were dismantled in 1978.

war brides (ch 5): At the end of both World Wars, European women — principally British — who married Canadian servicemen and relocated to Canada when their husbands returned home.

war crime trials (ch 5): Internationally-convened trials to address allegations of crimes against humanity including (but not limited to) murder of civilian populations and enslavement.

War in the Woods (ch 7): 1992-1996; a series of mass protests against logging in old growth forests in British Columbia.

War on Terror (ch 12): Initially a military campaign launched against non-state organizations responsible for targeted attacks on American bases or civilians; after 9/11 included military attacks on regimes supportive of organizations regarded as "terrorist"; conducted by a broad alliance of nations predominantly in the West.

welfare capitalism: (ch 3) Also industrial paternalism and widely associated with 'company towns'.

welfare state (ch 10): Initiatives taken on a large scale on the part of government to provide the population with payments or services that ameliorate the worst effects of economic or social dislocation. Sometimes called a "social safety net".

western alienation (ch 8): The growing sense from the mid-20th century of the four western provinces that Canadian political machinery and culture favoured Ontario and Quebec and that federal economic policies were devised to favour central Canada over the West.

Westminster (ch 1): Refers to the seat of British parliamentary government in Westminster, London.

wheat boom (ch 3): An expanding demand for wheat leading to a rapid expansion of farmland dedicated to wheat production; in Canada from ca. 1880–1914.

wheat pools (ch 11): Typically cooperatives made up of grain growers who combined (pooled) their output — and risk — so as to reduce competition and overheads while securing the best price; replaced temporarily by the Canadian Wheat Board in 1935; competed against private grain elevators in the post-war era.

Whig School (Introduction): A historical approach that sees 'progress' as central to the meta-narrative.

white dominions (ch 3): Former British colonies dominated by a European population or elite; includes Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and Newfoundland to ca. 1934–1949.

white flight (ch 9): Colloquial term for the migration of middle and working class European-Canadians from declining and multi-ethnic city centres for the suburbs; associated earlier in the United States with racial tensions in cities and more homogeneously Euro-American suburbs.

White Paper (ch 11): Also known as *The Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969*; proposed the dismantling of the *Indian Act*, an effective end to Indian Status, and the conversion of reserve land to private property; introduced by the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau and led by the Minister of Justice, Jean Chrétien; met with strident opposition from Indigenous leaders, part of which took the form of the Red Paper.

“wildcat” strikes (ch 8): Labour disputes launched by workers without the authorization or permission of the union leadership; an unofficial strike that does not follow the established procedures for taking industrial action.

Winnipeg Declaration (ch 7): Fully, the 1956 Winnipeg Declaration of Principles of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation; replaced the Regina Manifesto; significant in that it moved the party away from socialism and closer to democratic socialism and a pro-union position; made possible the alignment of the CCF with the CLC very soon after.

witch hunts (ch 9): Colloquial term used to describe security campaigns conducted in capitalist democracies during the Cold War which targeted, mainly, communists but also homosexuals and any other group regarded as potential seditious.

Women’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) (ch 3): One of the largest and most effective anti-drink lobbies in Canada. Established in 1874, months after its first branch was announced in the United States, the WCTU emerged as a vehicle for contiguous reforms in public behaviour, the political environment, and social conditions.

Women’s Liberation Movement (ch 7): Both an informal and loose organization of various women’s advocacy and political groups, and an alternative term for second wave feminism; first appeared in 1968.

Women’s Royal Canadian Naval Service (WRCNS): Last of the women’s corps to be established; founded in 1942, it was disbanded in 1946 and reformed as a reserve force during the Korean War.

World Bank (ch 8): Created at Bretton Woods in 1944 to work with the International Monetary Fund to reinvigorate post-war economies. Dominated by the United States, it was used also as an instrument to reduce communist influence in western Europe.

world music (ch 9): An umbrella term used to describe mostly non-European, non-North American styles of music, including indigenous and hybridized form. The term is problematic in that it includes essentially everything while, at the same time, implicitly otherizing anything that is not North American mainstream.

World’s Fair (ch 8): Alternatively, World Exposition, hence “Expo”; first organized in the mid-19th century to showcase industrial and technological advances; the first “Expo” was hosted in Canada in 1967 at Montreal, by which time the fairs were more about national showcases and culture; Canada’s only other Expo was held in Vancouver in 1986.

World Wide Web (ch 8): A network of information connected via the Internet; emerged in the late 1980s.

Yale Convention (ch 2): Meeting between British Columbian delegates to determine the colony’s demands as regards joining Confederation.

Yippie (Youth International Party) (ch 9): Countercultural youth movement originating in the United States in 1967; combined anarchist views with environmentalist perspectives.

Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) (ch 7): Originated in Britain in 1855 as a faith-based organization in support of the first generations of women in urban industrial settings; first Canadian chapter established in Saint John in 1870.

About the Author and Contributors



John Douglas Belshaw, Ph.D. has a long connection with Thompson Rivers University as a History professor and is now a faculty member in the Open Learning Division. He is also a consultant to the post-secondary sector and a writer. Belshaw has authored, co-authored, and edited several articles and books on the history of British Columbia.

Contributing Historians

Robin Anderson, M.A., Department of History, University of the Fraser Valley

Kelly Black, M.A., Department of History, Vancouver Island University

Tina Block, Ph.D., Department of Philosophy, History & Politics, Thompson Rivers University

John Bonnett, Ph.D., Department of History, Brock University

Melanie Buddle, Ph.D., Department of History, Trent University

Lisa Chilton, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Prince Edward Island

Chris Clarkson, Ph.D., Department of History, Okanagan College

Michael Dawson, Ph.D., Department of History, St. Thomas University

Lisa Dillon, Ph.D., Département de Démographie, Université de Montréal

Christopher Dummitt, Ph.D., School for the Study of Canada, Trent University

Norm Fennema, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Victoria

Russell Field, Ph.D., Faculty of Kinesiology and Recreation Management, University of Manitoba

Nancy M. Forestell, Ph.D., Department of History, St. Francis Xavier University

Alan Gordon, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Guelph

Esyllt Jones, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Manitoba

Mary-Ellen Kelm, Ph.D., Department of History, Simon Fraser University

Tracy Penny Light, Ph.D., Department of Philosophy, History & Politics, Thompson Rivers University

Peter McInnis, Ph.D., Department of History, St. Francis Xavier University

Ian Milligan, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Waterloo

Doug Owram, Ph.D., Department of History, University of British Columbia – Okanagan

Adele Perry, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Manitoba

Jennifer Pettit, Ph.D., Department of Humanities, Mount Royal University

Katharine Rollwagen, Ph.D., Department of History, Vancouver Island University

Robert Rutherdale, Ph.D., Department of History & Philosophy, Algoma University

Eric Sager, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Victoria

Daniel Samson, Ph.D., Department of History, Brock University

R. Scott Sheffield, Ph.D., Department of History, University of the Fraser Valley

Jonathan Swainger, PhD., Department of History, University of Northern British Columbia

Georgia Sitara, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Victoria

Keith Smith, Ph.D., Departments of History and First Nations Studies, Vancouver Island University

Katrina Srigley, Ph.D., Department of History, Nipissing University

Jordan Stanger-Ross, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Victoria

Timothy J. Stanley, Ph.D., Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa

Pamela Sugiman, Ph.D., Department of Sociology, Ryerson University

Robert Sweeny, Ph.D., Department of History, Memorial University of Newfoundland

Sharon Wall, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Winnipeg

Miriam Wright, Ph.D., Department of History, University of Windsor

Media Attributions

- johnstill03-copy-300×169-1

Other Books by John Douglas Belshaw

Canadian History: Pre-Confederation (Vancouver: BCcampus, 2015).

Vancouver Confidential, editor and author (Vancouver: Anvil Press, 2014).

Vancouver Noir: 1930-1960, with Diane Purvey (Vancouver: Anvil Press, 2011).

Becoming British Columbia: A Population History (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2009).

Private Grief, Public Mourning: The Rise of the Roadside Shrine in British Columbia, with Diane Purvey (Vancouver: Anvil Press, 2009).

Colonization and Community: The Vancouver Island Coalfield and the Making of the British Columbia Working Class (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002).

List of Links for Print Users

Links are organized by Chapter title and then listed alphabetically by link text.

Front Matter

- Adoption of an Open Textbook: https://open.bccampus.ca/use-open-textbooks/tell-us-youre-using-an-open-textbook/
- BCcampus: https://bccampus.ca/
- BCcampus Open Education: https://open.bccampus.ca/
- British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills & Training: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/ministries/advanced-education-skills-training
- *Canadian History: Pre-Confederation – 2nd Edition*: https://opentextbc.ca/preconfederation2e/
- Creative Commons licence: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/
- Hewlett Foundation: http://www.hewlett.org/
- Web version of this book: https://opentextbc.ca/postconfederation2e/

Chapter 1

- 1911 census data: http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/pages/census.aspx
- “Estimated population of Canada, 1605 to present”: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/98-187-x/4151287-eng.htm#table1
- Page from the 1891 census [PDF]: https://pressbooks.bccampus.ca/knowinghome/wp-content/uploads/sites/947/2020/03/1891-Census.pdf
- “Quebec and the Confederation project (1864-1867)”: http://faculty.marianopolis.edu/c.belanger/quebechistory/readings/queconf.htm

Chapter 2

- *British Columbia Terms of Union*: https://www.solon.org/Constitutions/Canada/English/bctu.html
- “HOWE, JOSEPH”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/howe_joseph_10E.html
- “Mistahimaskwa”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/mistahimaskwa_11E.html

- “Sane or Insane? The Case of Rose Lynam”: http://www.danielfrancis.ca/content/sane-or-insane-case-rose-lynam
- “Table 1. Population, sex, condition, denomination, profession, etc.”: https://archive.org/details/1911981911fnfldv11914eng/page/n7
- “The Trial of Louis Riel”: https://www.famous-trials.com/louisriel/855-home
- Wendake (aka: Huronia): https://opentextbc.ca/preconfederation/chapter/4-4-wendakehuronia-and-the-fur-trade/
- “William Henry Jackson”: https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/william-henry-jackson
- “W.S. Fielding and the Repeal Elections of 1886 and 1887 in Nova Scotia”: https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/Acadiensis/article/view/11499/12249

Chapter 3

- 1907 film taken from the front of a streetcar in Vancouver: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzjRs3ARo0g
- Craig Heron (York University) discusses the creation of workers’ communities and a working class: https://youtu.be/wgprVI62ckc
- Historian Craig Heron (York University) describing the industrial revolution: https://youtu.be/oXOSDwVX0Dw
- “KING, WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/king_william_lyon_mackenzie_17E.html
- Links between the second industrial revolution and urbanization: https://youtu.be/MigdkbuYGl0
- Sean Kheraj (York University), a historian of environmental questions, considers the function and meaning of parks: https://youtu.be/nyhDhcd8fvQ
- “TASCHEREAU, ELZÉAR-ALEXANDRE”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/taschereau_elzear_alexandre_12E.html

Chapter 4

- “CARTIER, Sir GEORGE-ÉTIENNE”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/cartier_george_etienne_10E.html
- “LANGEVIN, Sir HECTOR-LOUIS”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/langevin_hector_louis_13E.html
- “LAURIER, Sir WILFRID”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/laurier_wilfrid_14E.html
- “MACDONALD, Sir JOHN ALEXANDER”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/macdonald_john_alexander_12E.html

- The City of Vancouver Open Data Catalogue: http://data.vancouver.ca/datacatalogue/goadsFireInsuranceMap1912.htm
- “WOLSELEY, GARNET JOSEPH, 1st Viscount WOLSELEY”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/wolseley_garnet_joseph_14E.html

Chapter 6

- “BORDEN, Sir ROBERT LAIRD”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/borden_robert_laird_16E.html
- “Democracy at War”: http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/newspapers/canadawar/shipping_e.shtml
- “Democracy at War”: http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/exhibitions/newspapers/canadawar/women_e.shtml
- “Food on the Home Front during the Second World War”: http://wartimecanada.ca/essay/eating/food-home-front-during-second-world-war
- Landscapes of Injustice Research Collective: http://www.landscapesofinjustice.com
- “MEIGHEN, ARTHUR”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/meighen_arthur_18E.html
- *Northern Pursuit*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmveQVTNd8A
- *Warclouds over the Pacific*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VqdL919mGg

Chapter 7

- “HUNTER, ADELAIDE SOPHIA [HOODLESS]”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/hunter_adelaide_sophia_13E.html
- *Religion, Populism, and Social Credit in Alberta* [PDF]: https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/bitstream/11375/13785/1/fulltext.pdf
- “To Brew or Not to Brew: A Brief History of Beer in Canada”: http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/54/beerincanada.shtml
- Watch this undated recording by Tommy Douglas on *The Cream Separator*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IE5fOJfKRNk

Chapter 8

- “Old Time Trains”: http://www.trainweb.org/oldtimetrains/industrial/history/beatty.htm
- Watch this *Townships Moved By Sea* video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JateU8km9N0
- Watch this *V.E. Day Riots in Halifax, Nova Scotia* film: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hL2y87PoB3M

- “Why Canadians are hanging up on their landline phones”: http://business.financialpost.com/fp-tech-desk/why-canadians-are-hanging-up-on-their-landline-phones

Chapter 9

- “A History of the Vote in Canada”: https://www.elections.ca/content.aspx?section=res&dir=his&document=index&lang=e
- CBC Digital Archives. The Creation of Nunavut: http://www.cbc.ca/archives/topic/the-creation-of-nunavut
- CBC Interactive Timeline: NWT Devolution: http://www.cbc.ca/north/interactive/devolution/
- “Gouin, Sir Lomer”: http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/gouin_lomer_15E.html
- “Jimmy Carter in the Aftermath of the Storm”: https://cnx.org/contents/p7ovuIkl@9.5:n8t1hRY9@7/30-5-Jimmy-Carter-in-the-Aftermath-of-the-Storm
- “Just Watch Me” interview: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XfUq9b1XTa0
- Listen to this recording of *The Cremation of Sam McGee*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZG9kP9kAiY&feature=youtu.be
- Mackenzie King’s diaries: http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/politics-government/prime-ministers/william-lyon-mackenzie-king/Pages/diaries-william-lyon-mackenzie-king.aspx
- Mapping the Way: Yukon First Nation Self-Government: http://mappingtheway.ca/
- Maurice Duplessis: http://self.gutenberg.org/articles/maurice_duplessis
- “North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)”: https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory/chapter/the-cold-war/
- Ontario. Top names (female): https://www.ontario.ca/data/ontario-top-baby-names-female
- “Origins of the Cold War”: https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory/chapter/the-cold-war/
- *The Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan*: https://esask.uregina.ca/entry/farming.jsp
- “The Sexual Revolution and the Pill”: https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory/chapter/expanding-the-civil-rights-movement/
- U.S. History: Identity Politics in a Fractured Society: https://cnx.org/contents/p7ovuIkl@9.5:1M86e-iu@8/30-1-Identity-Politics-in-a-Fractured-Society
- Watch *Nanook of the North*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4kOIzMqso0&feature=youtu.be
- Watch this *Canada Starts To Produce New Flag* video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtL_Dhufrmw
- Watch this video on *Diefenbaker’s Flag Crusade*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6wmk6fvcJDA
- Watch this video on the *New Super Super-Mart*: https://www.youtube.com/

watch?v=7d2lNY_psLI

Chapter 10

- "B.C.'s first "sports event" probably a cricket match": http://www.vancouversun.com/first+sports+event+probably+cricket+match/2207952/story.html
- *Broadcasting Act*: http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/B-9.01/page-2.html
- *Growing Up Canadian*: http://onf-nfb.gc.ca/en/our-collection/series/?ids=516825&nom=Growing%20Up%20Canadian
- *Growing Up Canadian*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uNPo6qAIkG8
- "In Search of the Canadian Car": http://www.canadiancar.technomuses.ca/eng/frise_chronologique-timeline/1920/
- Photos from the collection Les quartiers disparus de Montréal: https://www.flickr.com/photos/archivesmontreal/albums/72157636912074984
- "The Canadian Tourism Industry: A Special Report" [PDF]: http://tiac.travel/_Library/documents/The_Canadian_Tourism_Industry_-_A_Special_Report_Web_Optimized_.pdf
- "The History of the Canadian Film Industry": https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/the-history-of-film-in-canada
- "They Came for the Children: Canada, Aboriginal Peoples and Residential Schools" [PDF]: http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/resources_2039_T&R_eng_web[1].pdf

Chapter 11

- *Aboriginal Children in Care: Report to Canada's Premiers* [PDF]: http://canadaspremiers.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/aboriginal_children_in_care_report_july2015.pdf
- "Aboriginal Contributions During the First World War": https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1414152378639/1414152548341
- "Cover up of residential school crimes a national shame": http://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2015/08/25/cover-up-of-residential-school-crimes-a-national-shame.html
- "George Manuel": https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/george_manuel/
- "Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada" [PDF]: http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/trc/IR4-7-2015-eng.pdf
- Interview with Mrs. Cecile Many Guns: http://ourspace.uregina.ca/handle/10294/586
- "PM Harper Has Failed to Live up to Promise of 2008 Residential School Apology: TRC": https://aptnnews.ca/2015/06/02/pm-harper-failed-live-promise-2008-residential-school-apology-trc/
- "Statement of Apology to Former Students of Indian Residential Schools":

https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015644/1100100015649

- "TB and Aboriginal People": https://www.cpha.ca/tb-and-aboriginal-people

Chapter 12

- "31.3 A New World Order": https://cnx.org/contents/p7ovuIkl@9.5:OCsuwNr2@7/31-3-A-New-World-Order
- Conditions in asylums in Canada in the 20th century: https://barabus.tru.ca/history1221/hist1221_mjd_u7_01.html
- The conflict between generations of historians: https://opentextbc.ca/preconfederation/chapter/1-4-the-current-state-of-historical-writing-in-canada/
- *Exploring Big Historical Data: The Historian's Macroscope*: http://www.themacroscope.org/2.0/
- GeoCities.com: https://archive.org/web/geocities.php
- "The History Wars in Canada": https://www.torontoreviewofbooks.com/2013/05/the-history-wars-in-canada/#_edn1
- Internet Archive: https://archive.org
- "Maple Cottage, Leslieville, Toronto: (De)Constructing Nationalist Music History": http://sites.utoronto.ca/icm/0101b.html
- *The Maple Leaf Forever*: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OxOhk4Lk9aE
- "North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)": https://courses.lumenlearning.com/boundless-ushistory/chapter/the-cold-war/
- *Programming Historian*: http://programminghistorian.org
- Records of the Old Bailey: http://www.oldbaileyonline.org
- Roaring Twenties recording: http://vectorsdev.usc.edu/NYCsound/777b.html
- Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS): http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/index/
- Visit the *Archives of Lesbian Oral Testimony* website: http://www.alotarchives.org
- Wayback Machine: http://archive.org/web/
- Web Archives for Longitudinal Knowledge (WALK) Portal: http://WebArchives.ca

Versioning History

This page provides a record of edits and changes made to this book since its initial publication. Whenever edits or updates are made, we make the required changes in the text and provide a record and description of those changes here. If the change is minor, the version number increases by 0.01. However, if the edits involve substantial updates, the version number goes up to the next full number. The files on our website always reflect the most recent version, including the Print on Demand copy.

If you find an error in this book, please fill out the Report an Error form. We will contact the author, make the necessary changes, and replace all file types as soon as possible.

Version	Date	Change	Details
1.01	May 17, 2016	Book published.	
1.02	May 25, 2016	Removed an incorrect footnote and fixed a capitalization error.	Section 12.13: The quote “You may be through with history, but history is not through with you.” had been incorrectly attributed to John Belshaw in a footnote. That footnote was removed. Section 4.3: “Macdonald did what generations of 70-somethings would do from the 1880s to the present: He booked a railway tour.” The capital “H” in *He* was changed to a lowercase.
1.03	June 28, 2016	Removed a duplicate image.	Section 5.12: Figure 5.24 appeared both in this section and in Section 5.11, but with different captions. The image in the previous section was removed and their captions combined in Figure 5.24.
1.04	July 29, 2016	Fixed a citation.	Section 7.12: Original: “If two ride a horse, one must ride in front”: Married Women’s Nationality and the Law in Canada 1880-1950,” Changed to: “‘If two ride a horse, one must ride in front'”: Married Women’s Nationality and the Law in Canada 1880-1950,”
1.05	August 31, 2016	Fixed a number of wording errors.	Section 8.18: “In the same decade, processes enabled…” changed to “In the Same decade, new processes enabled..” Section 9.1: “… could remember World War II almost as clearly as World War II.” The first World War II changed to World War I. Section 9.1: “…a turning point that overturned…” changed to “a turning point that toppled…” Section 9.13: Removed the comma after the *and* in “An African-Canadian neighbourhood in Vancouver and, in Winnipeg’s Rooster Town, a Métis community, were both cleared…”
1.06	September 25, 2016	Fixed errors in wording.	Section 11.3: “The significant Métis presence in the West almost disappeared …” changed to “The significant Métis presence in the West was almost overwhelmed…” Section 11.3: “The ongoing Métis relationship with the Catholic Church and allies in Quebec, however, provided allies.” changed to “The ongoing Métis relationship with the Catholic Church and allies in Quebec, however, was both fortuitous and a strategy for survival in the emergent Canadian nation.”

Version	Date	Change	Details
1.07	September 28, 2016	Fixed an error in wording.	Section 10.8: Chinatowns, like the one in Vancouver (the largest in Canada) in its early years…" changed to "Chinatowns, like Vancouver's (the largest in Canada), …"
1.08	September 27, 2017	Fixed a footnote.	Section 6.17: Changed a footnote that referred to "Mr. Tsurukichi Takemoto". It now says "Mrs. Tsurukichi Takemoto".
1.09	June 5, 2019	Updated the book's theme.	The styles of this book have been updated, which may affect the page numbers of the PDF and print copy.
2.00	August 13, 2020	Second edition published.	A number of updates and corrections made to the book.
2.01	September 7, 2021	Error correction.	Section 6.10: "Comfortably spread across northern and central Europe, the Germans turned their guns on the USSR, launching an attack in June 1940." changed to "Comfortably spread across northern and central Europe, the Germans turned their guns on the USSR, launching an attack in June 1941."
2.02	March 31, 2022	Error correction	Section 5.11: "Full citizenship for many groups, however, only came into reach slowly; Asians, for example, got the vote in the 1960s (as did some Indigenous people)." changed to "Full citizenship for many groups, however, only came into reach slowly: Canadians of Asian descent got the vote in 1948, the Doukhobors in 1955, and Indigenous men and women in 1960."
2.03	June 26, 2024	Error correction	In section 3.3 The National Policy, the text was corrected to indicate that a section of land under the *Dominion Lands Act* of 1872 was 640 acres and a quarter-section was 160 acres. As well, the spelling of "quarter-section" was standardized in the book.
2.04	March 2, 2026	Replaced video links.	Updated the links to videos throughout the book.