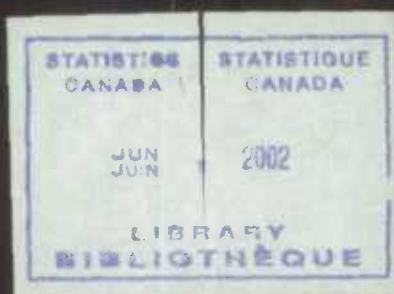


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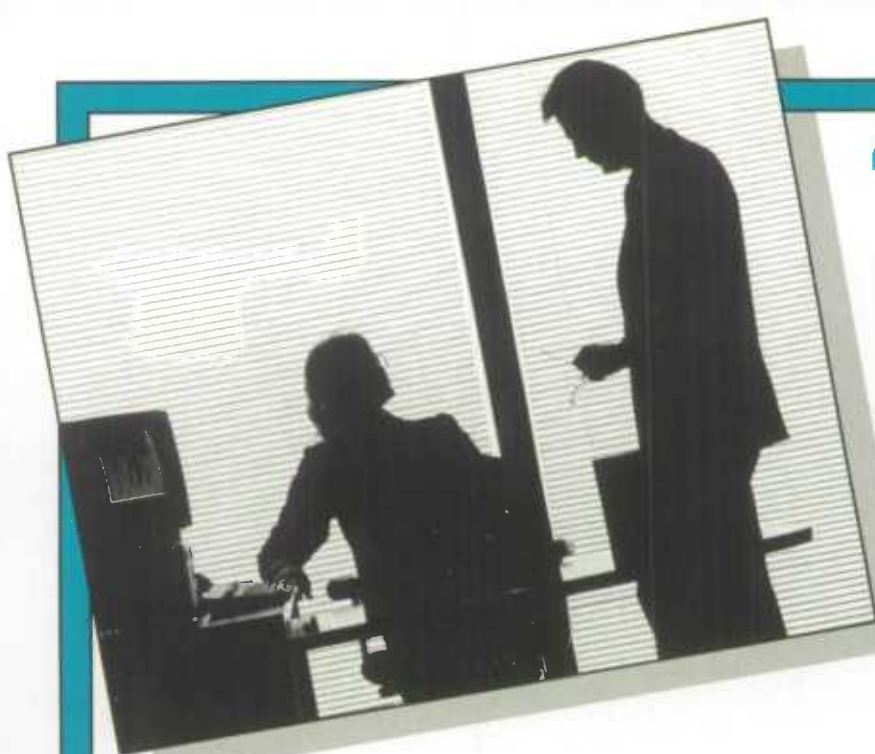
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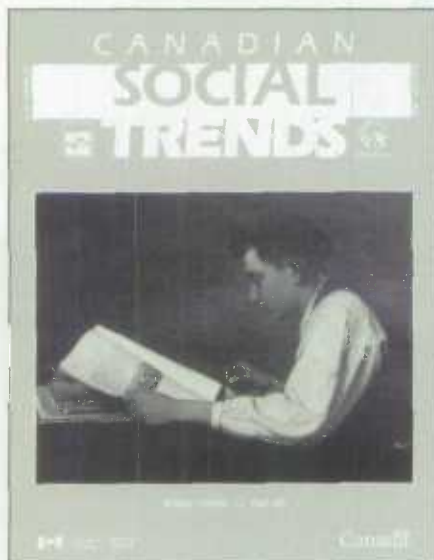
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#### About the artist:

Born at St. Hilaire, Quebec, **Ozias Leduc** (1864-1955) acquired much of his artistic training through observation and self-teaching. In his early twenties, he painted beautiful still life studies bathed in warm candle light or light from a distant window. Later in his career, his work was influenced by French impressionists but translated into his own unique style. O. Leduc is well known for his religious murals and paintings.



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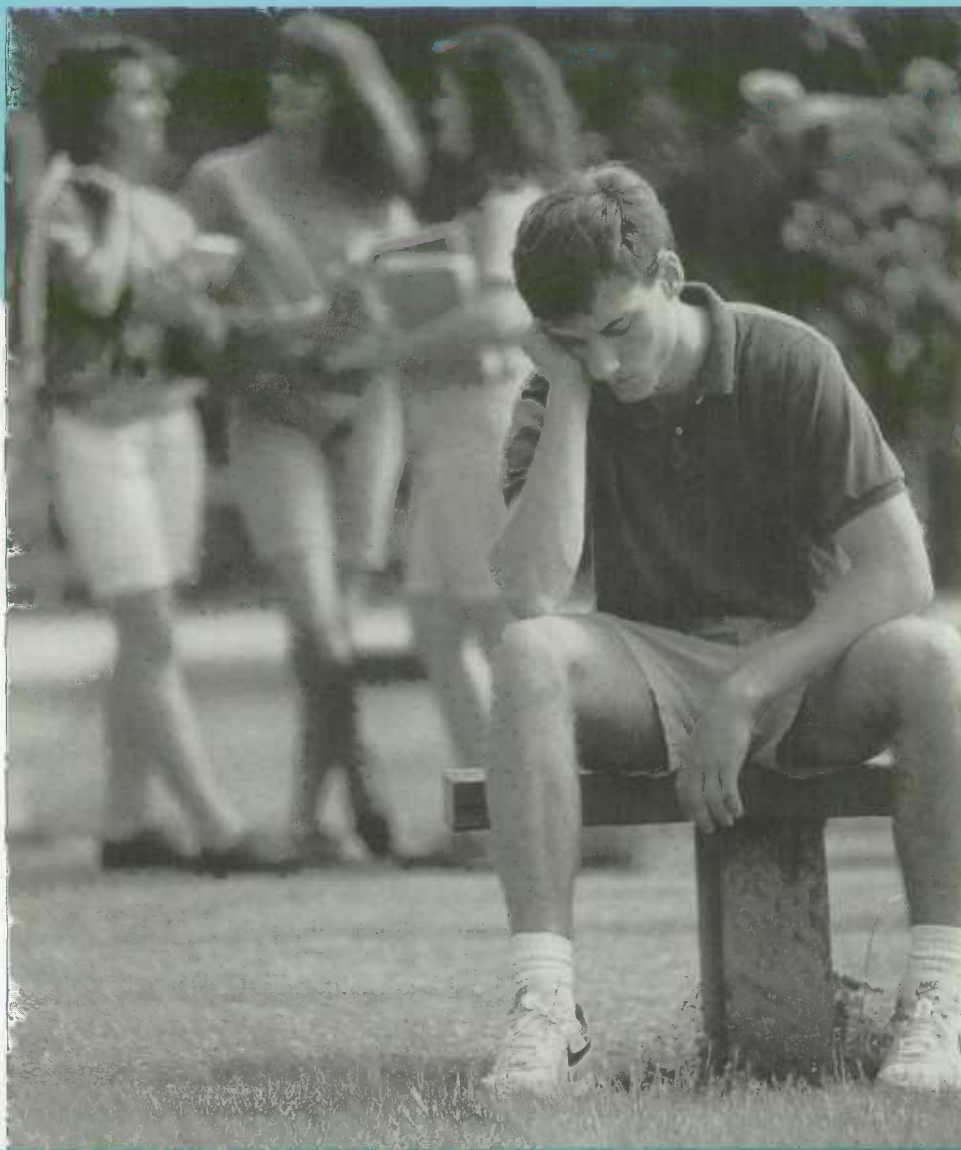
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ISSN 0831-5698

# SCHOOL LEAVERS

by Sid Gilbert and Bruce Orok



*Many Canadians think of high school dropouts as having been unmotivated, low-achieving students from disadvantaged backgrounds who used drugs and worked long hours at a job instead of studying. After leaving school, they are thought to be unemployed and living on social assistance, with no occupational, educational or training plans. According to Statistics Canada's School Leavers Survey, high school leavers did not quite fit this stereotypical image.*



**M**any came from two-parent families in which both parents were employed. In addition, many were doing well at school and either did not have a job or were working only moderate hours. After quitting school, leavers tended to be employed and to work long weekly hours with most planning to take further education or training.

The term "dropout" carries a derogatory connotation associated with individual failure, but often is still used to describe all people who have not completed high school, regardless of the reasons for their leaving. The term "school leaver", however, has a more neutral designation and is used throughout this article.

**School leaver rates** According to the School Leavers Survey, 18% of 20-year-olds in 1991 were dropouts or leavers, that is, they were not attending school and had not graduated with a diploma or certificate. Almost two-thirds (62%) of leavers had a Grade 10 education or less, while 32% had completed no more than Grade 9. More than one-third were aged 16 or younger when they left school: 21% were age 16 and 17% were aged 14-15.

Leaving school tended to be more common in the Atlantic provinces than in the Western provinces. Provincial education systems vary considerably which may have had some bearing on this pattern. In 1991, 25% of 20-year-olds who studied in Prince Edward Island and 24% of those in Newfoundland were school leavers. In contrast, 14% of 20-year-olds who studied in Alberta reported having quit school, while the leaver rate in Saskatchewan and British Columbia was 16%. About one-in-five 20-year-olds had left school in Nova Scotia (22%), Quebec (22%), New Brunswick (20%) and Manitoba (19%). The school leaver rate in Ontario was 17%.

**Gender differences in school leaver rates decrease from east to west** Young men age 20 were more likely than women that age to have left school before receiving a diploma or certificate (22% versus 14%). While school leaver rates were higher for men than for women in most provinces, differences between the proportions were smaller in the four Western provinces than elsewhere in Canada. In Saskatchewan, for example, an equal proportion (16%)\* of men and women age 20 were school leavers. The largest gap in the west – 4 percentage points – was in Alberta (16%\* for men and 12%\* for women). In contrast, the difference between male and female leaver rates went as high as 16 percentage points: in Prince Edward Island, 33% of men age 20, compared with 17% of women that age, had not completed high school.

**Reasons for leaving differ for men and women** Among male leavers aged 18-20,<sup>1</sup> the two most important reasons for leaving were that they preferred work to school (28%)\* and boredom (19%)\*. Other important reasons cited by young men included having to work for financial reasons (9%)\* and problems with teachers (8%)\*.

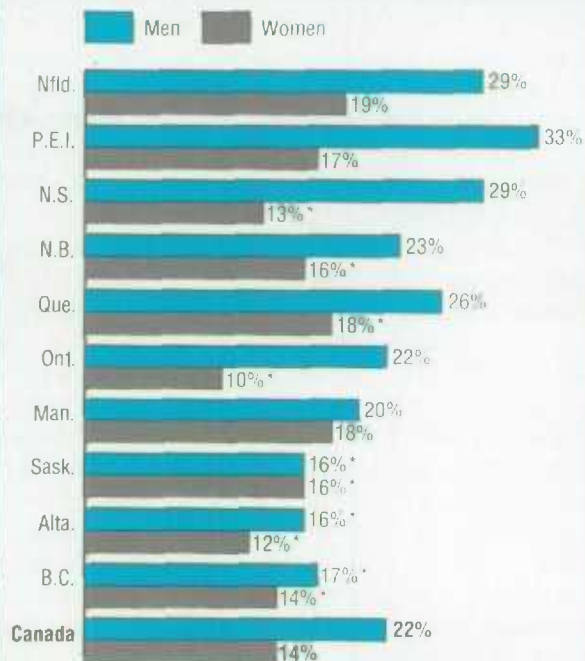
Female leavers aged 18-20 cited boredom (22%)\* and problems with school work (13%)\* as the top two reasons for leaving school. Another 10%\* of female school leavers preferred work to

<sup>1</sup> To allow detailed analysis, data in this and subsequent sections are for people aged 18-20.

\* High sampling variability is associated with these estimates, and therefore, they should be used with caution.

**Proportion of 20-year-olds who were school leavers, by province and gender**

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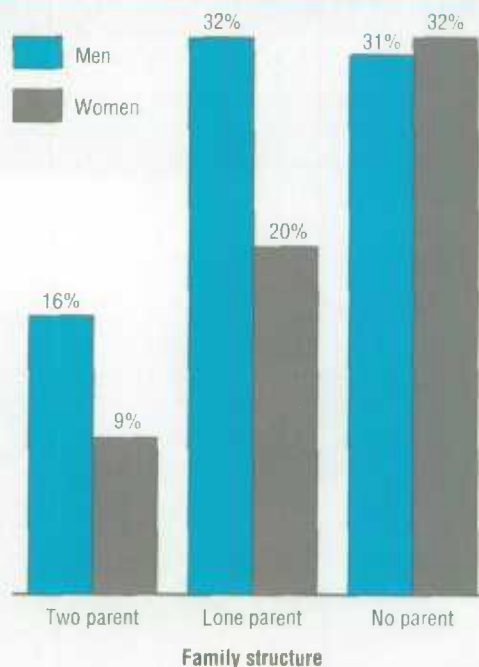


\* High sampling variability.

Source: Statistics Canada, School Leavers Survey, 1991.

**Proportion of 18-20-year-olds who were school leavers, by family structure and gender**

CST



Source: Statistics Canada, School Leavers Survey, 1991.

school and 9%\* reported pregnancy/marriage as the most important reason for leaving.

**Family background** Most school leavers (61%) and graduates (83%) came from two-parent families. A greater proportion of leavers than graduates, however, lived with one or no parent during their last year in school. In 1991, 25% of leavers lived with a lone parent and 13% with no parent. The proportions among graduates were 12% and 5%, respectively.

Young men aged 18-20 living with at least one of their parents were more likely than their female counterparts to have left school. In 1991 for example, 32% of young men from lone-parent families were school leavers, compared with 20% of young women. In contrast, equal proportions (just under one-third) of young men and women not living with a parent were school leavers. The relatively high percentage of leavers among young women living without their parents may be related to the presence of a child. In 1991, 27% of female school leavers aged 18-20 had dependent children.

The proportion of school leavers in lone-parent families or living without a parent was much higher than the

proportion in two-parent families. This was likely related to the high incidence of low incomes experienced by lone-parent families and young people living alone. Children living in poverty often suffer from malnutrition and other health problems, live in inadequate housing and experience discrimination. As a result, they may not have the same opportunities to succeed in school as those who are financially better off.

**Parents' education and employment status** School leavers were more likely than high school graduates to have at least one parent with a low level of educational attainment. In 1991, 45% of leavers aged 18-20 had a parent who had not obtained a high school certificate or diploma, compared with 32% of graduates. Still, over one-quarter (28%) of school leavers had parents with medium or high levels of education.<sup>2</sup>

Given these differences in educational attainment, it is not surprising that leavers were more likely than graduates to have parents in blue-collar occupations (primary industries, processing, etc.). In 1991, 55% of leavers from two-parent families had fathers in such jobs, compared with 40% of graduates. In contrast,

only 11% of leavers had fathers with managerial, professional or technical jobs, compared with 30% of graduates.

School leavers from two-parent families were twice as likely as graduates to have a father who was not working (14% compared with 7%). Similarly, 30% of leavers and 24% of graduates in two-parent families had mothers who were not working. Leavers (18%) and graduates (19%) from lone-parent families, however, were equally likely to have a parent without a job.

Nonetheless, substantial proportions of leavers in two-parent families had both parents working in "white-collar" occupations. In 1991, 25% of fathers and 54% of mothers were in clerical, sales, service, managerial, professional or technical jobs.

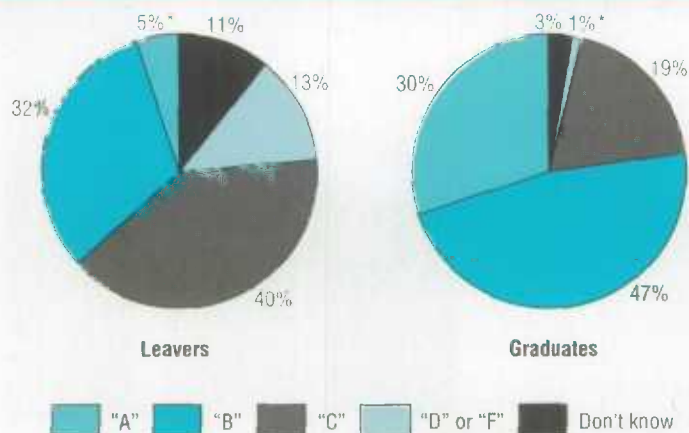
**Parental attitudes** Almost all parents (93%) considered high school completion to be very important regardless of their own educational background. This attitude about the value of education seemed to influence their children's behaviour. For example, in 1991 only 14% of children of parents who valued education reported leaving school. In contrast, for the small minority of parents who did not think high school completion was

## CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER

CST

### Grade average of 18-20-year-old high school leavers and graduates<sup>1</sup>

CST



<sup>1</sup> During last year of school

\* High sampling variability.

Source: Statistics Canada. School Leavers Survey, 1991.

### School Leavers Survey

Employment and Immigration Canada commissioned Statistics Canada to conduct the School Leavers Survey to estimate the extent of the problem and the circumstances associated with dropping out of school. A sample of 9,460 18-20-year-olds was interviewed using a computer assisted telephone interview, administered from April to June, 1991. For more information on the results of the survey, contact Doug Higgins, Projections and Analysis Section, Education, Culture and Tourism Division, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0T6, Telephone (613) 951-5870.



important, 49% of their children had left school without graduating.

**Leavers' school experiences** In 1991, 41% of leavers aged 18-20 said that they did not enjoy school, compared with 10% of graduates. A higher percentage of leavers than graduates were dissatisfied with both the variety of courses (25% versus 19%) and their usefulness (29% versus 20%). About 75% of leavers said that they skipped classes in their final year at school, compared with 59% of graduates. Leavers were much more likely than graduates to report that they did not get along with their teachers (15% versus 2%). Also, more leavers (14%) than graduates (5%) said that they did not "fit in" at school.

While there were distinct differences between leavers and graduates concerning their school experience and reactions to it, most leavers enjoyed school, were not dissatisfied with their courses, got along with their teachers and felt that they did fit in at school.

### **Leavers' academic performance**

School leavers were more likely than graduates to have experienced failure in elementary school. Among young men aged 18-20, 41% reported failing a grade in elementary school, compared with 11% of graduates. Similarly, 27% of female leavers, compared with 5% of graduates, experienced early failure.

More than one-half of leavers aged 18-20 in 1991 had grade averages of "C" or lower before leaving school: 40% had a "C" average and 13%, a "D" or "F" average. In contrast, 20% of graduates had grade averages of "C" or lower.

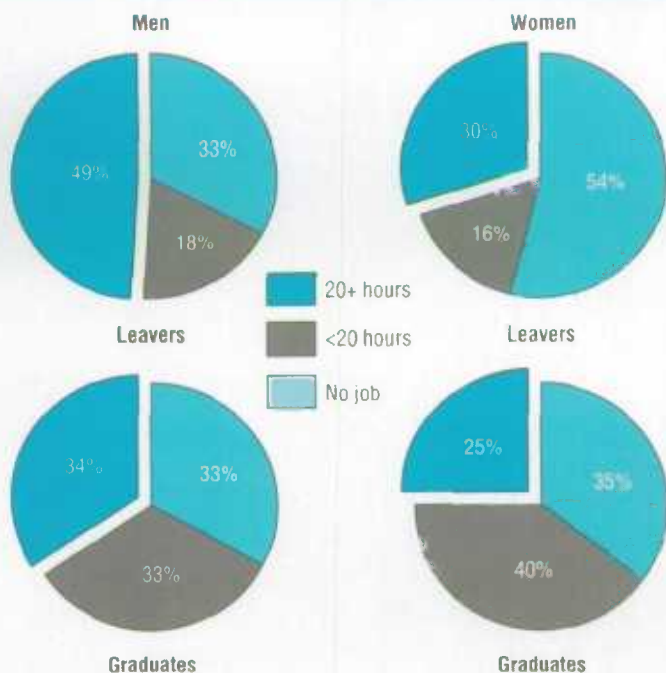
Although they did not do as well as graduates, over one-third of leavers had an "A" (5%)\* or "B" (32%) average during their last year of school. These leavers quit school despite very good academic performance. Moreover, 49% of leavers who cited personal or family reasons for leaving achieved "A" or "B" averages in their last year in school.

<sup>2</sup> In two-parent families, a "medium" level refers to families where both parents were high school graduates or where one parent had at least some postsecondary education and the other parent had less. In lone-parent families, the parent must have graduated from high school. "High" parental education refers to both parents or the lone parent having at least some postsecondary.



### Work experience of 18-20-year-old high school leavers and graduates while still in school, by gender

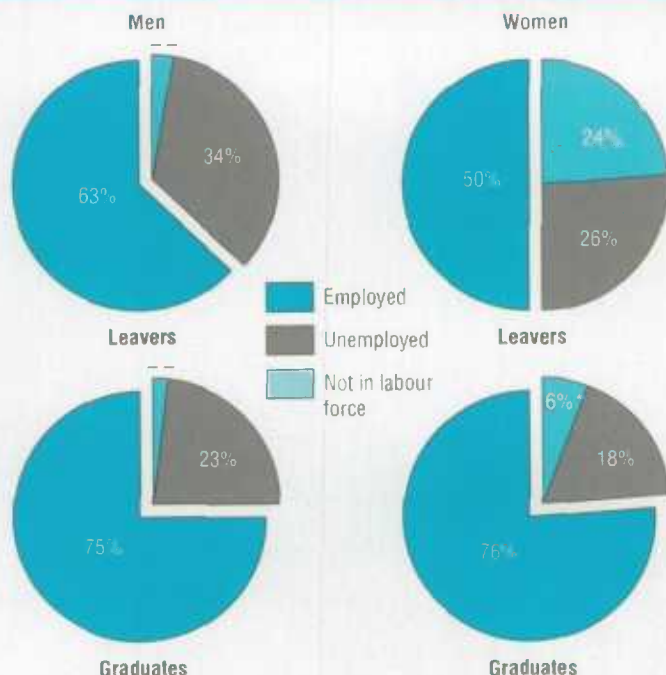
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Source: Statistics Canada, School Leavers Survey, 1991.

### Labour force status<sup>1</sup> of 18-20-year-old high school leavers and graduates, by gender

CST

<sup>1</sup> April-June 1991.

\* High sampling variability.

Source: Statistics Canada, School Leavers Survey, 1991.

**Working while in school** Some controversy exists about the effects of employment during the school year. On the one hand, students who work long hours at jobs unrelated to school work may not have the time, energy or motivation to adequately focus on their studies. On the other hand, exposure to the job market at an early age may give students valuable experience and skills useful for their future working life.

High school graduates were slightly more likely than leavers to work during their last year at school: 66% compared with 59%. Still, most leavers had no job during their last year of school or worked moderate weekly hours at a part-time job. In 1991, 33% of male leavers and 54% of female leavers held no job during the school year. Another 18% of male leavers and 16% of female leavers worked less than 20 hours per week.

School leavers, however, were more likely than graduates to work long hours. In 1991, 49% of male leavers and 30% of female leavers spent 20 or more hours per week at a job, compared with 34% of male and 25% of female graduates.

**Lifestyle** Most students drank alcohol during their last year of school. The proportion was lower for leavers (67%) than for graduates (75%). Leavers were more likely than graduates to have consumed alcohol on a regular basis: 18% of leavers, compared with 11% of graduates, reported drinking often.

The use of drugs, such as marijuana and hashish and the misuse of prescription drugs, such as tranquilizers, was much less common than alcohol consumption among students. Still, 30% of leavers and 16% of graduates reported the use of such drugs during their last year of school. Most drug use by both groups, however, was experimental, with only 9% of leavers and 1%\* of graduates reporting regular use. In addition, few graduates and leavers reported using drugs, such as cocaine, crack, speed or LSD, or sniffing glue or solvents.

School leavers were more likely than graduates to have been in trouble with the law during their last year of school. In 1991, 12% of leavers reported that they had been convicted of a criminal offence, compared with 3% of graduates. These criminal offences excluded parking and



speeding tickets. However, most leavers (88%) had no criminal convictions.

**Half regretted leaving school** In 1991 almost one-half of school leavers aged 18-20 said that they were not happy with their decision to leave school. Still, 29% (32% of men and 23% of women) were happy with their decision.

The reason most frequently given by those who regretted dropping out of school was that they now recognized the value of an education: 56% of male and 50% of female leavers gave this as a reason. Other reasons for being unhappy with the decision to leave school included wanting or needing a diploma (40% of men and 32% of women) and being unable to get a good job (30% of men and 27% of women).

**Employment picture worse for leavers** Leavers aged 18-20 were more likely than graduates to be unemployed. During the period April-June 1991, 34% of male leavers, compared with 23% of male graduates, were unemployed. Among women, 26% of leavers and 18% of graduates were unemployed. A much higher proportion of female leavers (24%) than graduates (6%) were not in the labour force. This was likely related to the higher proportion of female leavers who had dependent children.

Nonetheless, most school leavers were employed (63% of men and 50% of women). Male school leavers (62%) were more likely than graduates (47%) to work in blue-collar primary industries and processing occupations. Among both female leavers and graduates, similar proportions (76% and 78%, respectively) worked in clerical, sales and service positions.

**Low incomes for leavers and graduates** Both school leavers and graduates had very modest incomes, reflecting their low level of education and entry-level jobs. In the 12 months preceding the survey, 51% of both male leavers and graduates had a total personal income (before taxes and deductions) of \$10,000 or less. Sixty-one percent of female leavers and 66% of female graduates had total personal incomes in this range.

These low incomes, particularly for men, did not appear to be due to working few



hours. In 1991, 26% of male leavers worked an average of 50 or more hours per week and another 47% worked 40-49 hours per week.

Sources of income varied between leavers and graduates. Leavers, for example, were somewhat more likely than graduates to have received unemployment insurance in the previous year (28% compared with 23%). They were also more likely to have received social assistance or welfare. This was particularly true for female leavers, 30% of whom received welfare, compared with 10% of female graduates. Two-thirds of all leavers and graduates did not receive any financial support from their family, including a spouse or common-law partner.

#### Most plan to further their education

Most school leavers (85%) and graduates (87%) planned to continue their education in the future. In 1991, 46% of male school leavers said that they wanted to obtain skills or training in engineering and applied science technologies and trades. Female leavers were interested in commerce, management and business administration (17%), and fine and applied arts (12%).

Twelve percent of male leavers thought they would be working in the construction trades in five years. Female leavers expected to be employed in clerical and related positions (15%) and in service occupations (13%).

**Conclusion** There are relationships between school leaving and family background, school and work experiences, academic performance and after high school labour force activities. However, school leavers are a relatively more heterogeneous group than traditionally perceived.

In a marketplace dominated by new knowledge, technologies and skills, high educational attainment appears to be a prerequisite for most occupations. The labour market outcome of school leavers may, therefore, be grim. Without a high school diploma, school leavers may lack the basic literacy and numeracy competency needed for additional training or upgrading their education. It is likely that those with low education, training or skill levels, including both leavers and high school graduates without further education or training, will have difficulty obtaining a reasonable job, earning a decent living and coping, in general, with today's society.

**Sid Gilbert** is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Guelph and **Bruce Orok** is an analyst with *Canadian Social Trends*.



# Educational Achievement

## An International Comparison

by Jillian Oderkirk

adapted from *Education at a Glance, OECD Indicators*<sup>1</sup>

Educational attainment is a primary determinant of the skills of a nation's labour force, and, in turn, its ability to compete in today's international marketplace. A well-educated labour force can provide a country with the innovation necessary for sustained and expanded economic growth in an increasingly competitive global economy.





Compared to other OECD nations, Canada has the highest or near-highest proportion of university-educated adults, current enrolment in higher education and public expenditure on education. However, a relatively lower proportion of students in Canada graduate with science or engineering degrees. Also, fewer young people in Canada than in many other OECD nations complete a secondary education (high school).

As science and engineering specialists are necessary for increased and improved research and development, maintaining a low ratio of graduates in these fields may limit Canada's ability to compete with other nations. In addition, high rates of high school leavers represent a loss of potential talent and place a burden on Canada's social programs.

The proportion of women with a university degree lags behind that of men in all OECD countries; however, the extent of these gender differences varies. The proportion of women with a non-university higher education, on the other hand, equals or exceeds that of men. Women are also over-represented among adults whose highest level of educational attainment is a secondary education or less. These discrepancies will likely diminish in Canada and most OECD nations, however, because gender differences in current enrolment at all levels are now negligible. In nations where low levels of educational attainment among women persist, women will likely continue to encounter limited employment opportunities.

**High educational attainment among Canadian adults** In 1989, 15% of adult Canadians aged 25-64 had a university degree. This proportion was higher than that of all other OECD countries, with the exception of the United States (23%). Following Canada and the United States, 13% of adults in Japan and 12% of those in Sweden were university educated. Portugal (4%), Austria (5%), Italy (6%) and the Netherlands (6%) had the lowest proportions of university-educated adults.

Non-university higher education was less common among Canadian adults (15%) than among those in Australia (21%) and New Zealand (22%), where

<sup>1</sup> *Education at a Glance, OECD Indicators*, Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, (OECD: Paris, 1992).

## CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER



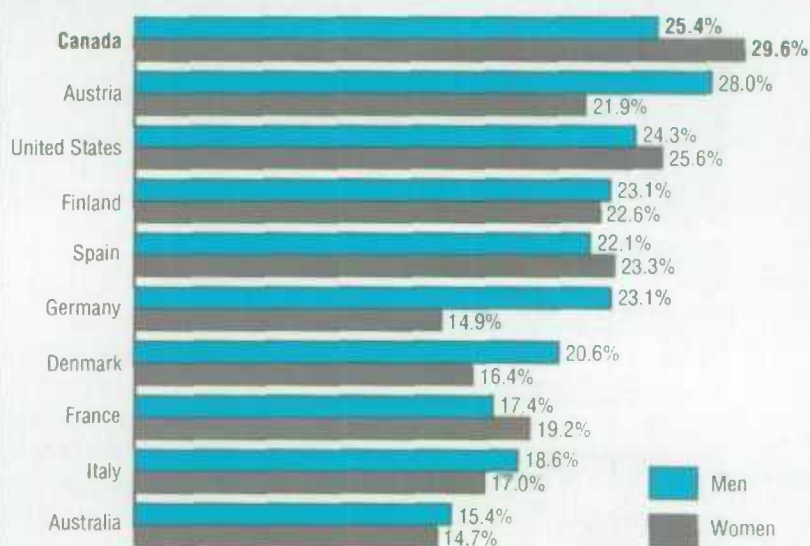
**OECD**, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, has developed a series of education indicators for member countries which provide comparative information on the organization and operation of their education systems.

Members of the OECD are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

**ISCED**, the International Standard Classification for Education, developed by UNESCO, was used by the OECD as a means of compiling internationally comparable statistics on education. According to the ISCED, educational programs may be classified as follows:

ISCED	Education level	Definition	Canadian equivalent
0	Pre-primary	Preceding the first level	Kindergarten
1	Primary	First level	Grades 1-8
2	Lower secondary	Second level, first stage	Grades 9-10
3	Secondary	Second level, second stage	Grades 11-13
5	Non-university higher education	Leads to an award that is not equivalent to a first university degree	College or CEGEP
6-7	University	Leads to a first university degree or to a postgraduate degree	University

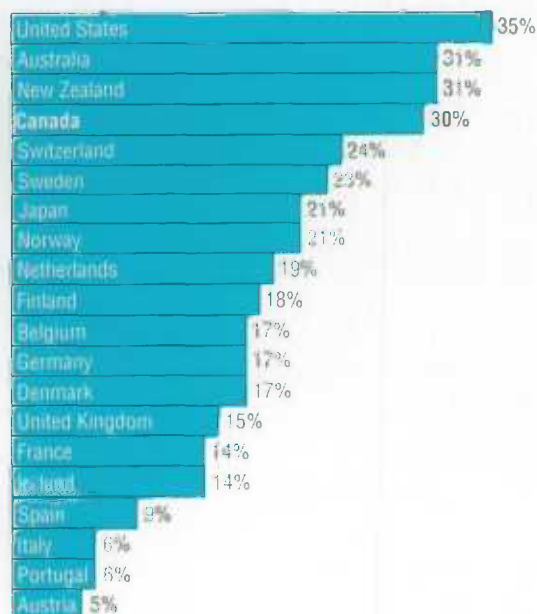
### Ten OECD countries with the highest percentage of young adults enrolled<sup>1</sup> in university, 1988



<sup>1</sup> Full-time and part-time enrolment converted to full-time equivalents. Population is those of theoretical university enrolment age (18-25 in Canada). Source: OECD, 1992.

### Percentage of the population aged 25-64 with a postsecondary education,<sup>1</sup> by country, 1989

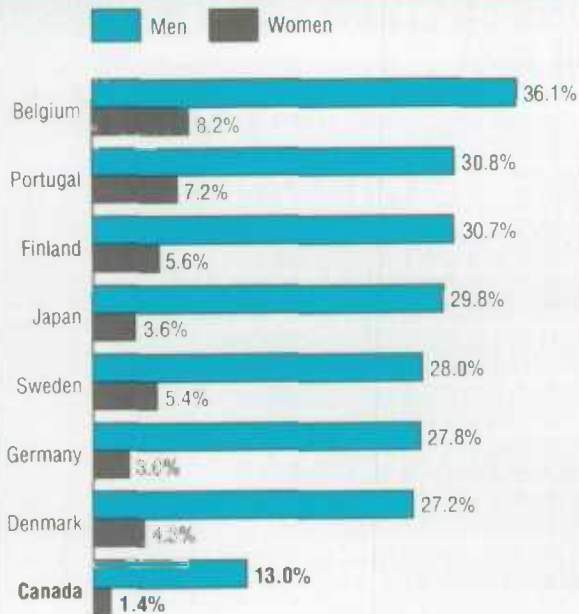
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<sup>1</sup> Both university and non-university higher education.  
Source: OECD, 1992.

### Seven countries with the largest proportion of university graduates awarded engineering degrees and Canada, by gender, 1988

CST



Source: OECD, 1992.

many programs are offered in a non-university setting. Most OECD countries, however, had smaller proportions of adults with this type of education. Proportions ranged from 2% in Portugal to 12% in the United States and 13% in the Netherlands. The only exception, other than Australia and New Zealand, was Switzerland where the proportion of adults with a non-university education equalled that of Canada.

Most adults in Canada (69%) and other OECD countries, however, had neither a university nor a non-university higher education. Proportions in the United States (64%), Australia (69%), New Zealand (68%) and Switzerland (70%) were similar to that of Canada. However, in Southern Europe (Italy, Portugal and Spain) and Austria, 90% to 95% of adults did not have a postsecondary education. In countries of Central, Western and Northern Europe, with the exception of Austria and Switzerland, 77% to 85% did not have a postsecondary education. In Japan, the proportion was 78%.

These proportions represent the educational attainment of the entire population aged 25-64. As a result, they do not reflect recent expansions in secondary and postsecondary education that have occurred in several countries, such as Portugal and Spain. Demographic factors, such as migration and mortality, also influence the data.

**Fewer women with university degrees in all countries** In Canada and most other OECD countries, men are more likely than women to have a university education, whereas women are more likely than men to have non-university higher education. This is partly because, in many nations, non-university programs provide training for traditionally female-dominated occupations, such as teaching or nursing.

For every 100 Canadian men aged 25-64 with a university education in 1989, there were 78 women with the same level of education. Gender differences were smaller in Sweden (87 women per 100 men), Spain (84 women per 100 men) and the United States (81 women per 100 men). In all other OECD countries except Portugal, however, gender differences were larger. The greatest differences were in Switzerland (45), Belgium (43), the Netherlands (39) and Japan (25). The gender difference in Portugal equalled that of Canada.

Among Canadians with a non-university higher education, there were 115 women for every 100 men. Countries where women were considerably more over-represented in non-university programs included Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Portugal and Denmark. In these countries, the ratio ranged from 163 to 340 women for every 100 men. Fewer women than men had a non-university higher education in the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Norway.

**Government spending on education in Canada high** Public expenditure on education in Canada represented 14.4% of total government spending in 1988. Only Finland (17.1%) and Switzerland (14.7%) spent a greater proportion of their total public expenditure on education that year. The average proportion allocated to education in OECD countries was 12.0%.

In Canada, 65.2% of all government spending on education was directed toward primary and secondary education and 34.8% toward both university and non-university higher education. In



contrast, most other OECD countries directed a greater proportion of their education budgets to primary and secondary education. The average percentage of public expenditure on education directed toward primary and secondary education among OECD countries was 73.0%, while expenditure on higher education averaged 21.9%. Support from the public sector in Canada has made higher education accessible to more Canadians than it would have been if all costs were privately financed.

**Pre-primary and university enrolment rates differ** In Canada, 57.5%<sup>2</sup> of young people aged 2-29 were students in educational programs ranging from pre-primary through to postsecondary education. Only three other OECD countries, Belgium (63.6%), France (62.0%) and Spain (59.6%) had significantly higher enrolment rates than Canada. The lowest enrolment rates were in Turkey, Luxembourg, Portugal and Sweden. In these countries, the average rate was 46.4%. Most of the variations in enrolment rates among countries are due to differences in participation in pre-primary educational programs and postsecondary education.

Enrolment rates in Belgium and France, in particular, are high because these

countries have nearly universal pre-primary enrolment of children beginning at age 3, with over 90% of children age 3 participating. In over one-half of all OECD countries, pre-primary education begins at age 3. Fewer children are enrolled during the first year in these countries, however, than in Belgium and France. In Canada, pre-primary education begins, typically, at age 5. The only OECD countries, other than Canada, which commence pre-primary education at age 5 or 6 are Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

Participation in higher education both within and outside of universities was more common in Canada than in other OECD countries. In 1988, 48.7% of young Canadians aged 18-20 were enrolled in full-time non-university higher education which includes colleges and CEGEP programs (Quebec). Participation in the United States (44.6%) was slightly less than in Canada. The next highest enrolment rates were in Australia (34.3%), Sweden (27.3%) and Japan (26.3%). In some OECD countries, non-university higher education was almost non-existent. Rates were less than 5% in Austria, Luxembourg, Italy and Turkey.

Similarly, a larger proportion of young adults aged 18-25 in Canada (27.5%)

were enrolled in university than young adults in other OECD countries. High enrolment rates were also found in Austria (25%), the United States (24.9%), Finland (22.8%) and Spain (22.7%). In Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Turkey, less than 10% of young adults were enrolled in university.

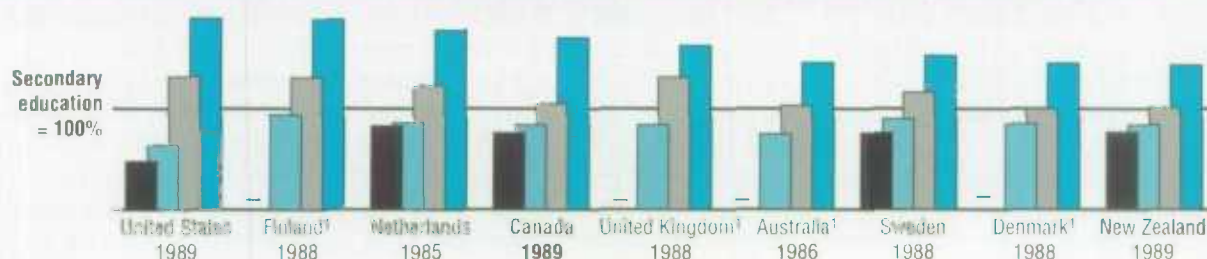
### Gender differences smaller among those currently enrolled in higher education

Although there are differences in the educational attainment of men and women overall, in Canada and most OECD countries, gaps between the current enrolment rates of men and women in higher education are now small. In Canada, the difference was less than 6 percentage points for non-university higher education and just over 4 percentage points for university higher education in 1988. Large differences in enrolment rates between men and women still persist, however, in Japan, Denmark, Turkey and Germany. University enrolment of men was more than three times that of women in Japan and double that of women in Turkey. On the other hand, women were more than

<sup>2</sup> Part-time participation in formal education was converted to full-time equivalents.

Relative average annual earnings, by education level of adults aged 45-64, selected countries

CST



Pre-primary or primary education	48%	--	83%	76%	--	--	76%	--	77%
Lower secondary education	64%	94%	86%	84%	84%	75%	90%	85%	84%
Non-university higher education	132%	131%	123%	105%	131%	103%	116%	100%	101%
University higher education	190%	189%	178%	171%	163%	146%	153%	145%	143%

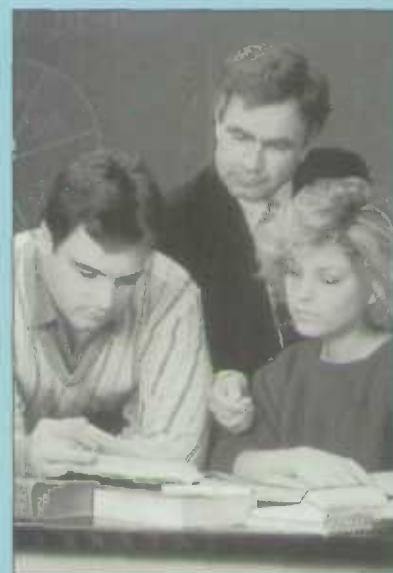
<sup>1</sup> Estimates unavailable for pre-primary and primary.  
Source: OECD, 1992.

### Seven countries with the largest proportion of graduates awarded science and engineering degrees and Canada, 1988

CST

	All science and engineering	Natural sciences	Computer sciences	Engineering
	% of all graduates			
France	39.6	10.4	7.7	21.6
Belgium	32.9	5.6	2.0	25.3
Finland	32.0	6.6	5.5	19.9
Germany	29.3	7.8	2.8	18.7
Ireland	26.9	14.1	2.6	12.3
Japan	26.1	3.1	--	23.0
Denmark	25.8	5.8	1.3	18.7
<b>Canada</b>	<b>17.6</b>	<b>6.4</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>6.8</b>

Source: OECD, 1992.



twice as likely as men to be enrolled in a non-university higher education program in Japan, Denmark and Germany.

**Secondary completion lower, university graduation higher in Canada** Young people in Canada are less likely to complete a secondary education than young people in several other OECD countries. However, the proportion completing a first university degree in Canada is second only to that of the United States and Japan.

The OECD estimated secondary graduation levels by expressing the number of secondary graduates as a proportion of the population of theoretical secondary school completion age (age 17 in Canada). According to this calculation, about one-half of all OECD countries had higher rates of secondary school graduation than Canada.

Similarly, to determine graduation rates, the population graduating with a first university degree or equivalent was expressed as a proportion of the population of theoretical completion age (age 22 in Canada). According to this calculation, the graduation rate in Canada (25.4%) was higher than that of most other OECD countries. Only Japan (26.3%) and the United States (25.6%) had higher rates. The average completion rate among OECD countries was 15.2%.

**Science and engineering degrees less common in Canada** In Canada, 17.6% of

all university degrees awarded in 1988 were science or engineering degrees. Only three other OECD countries had a smaller proportion of science and engineering graduates than did Canada: Italy (15.9%), Norway (15.5%) and Spain (13.6%). In Canada, low rates occurred, in part, because students have greater access to liberal arts programs than students in many other countries. In contrast, more than 25% of all degrees granted in Japan, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Denmark and Finland were for science or engineering. Among these top seven countries, most graduates held engineering degrees. In Canada, only 6.8% of science and engineering graduates had engineering degrees.

Very few women in all OECD countries graduated with engineering degrees in 1988. An average of 3.5% of female university graduates were awarded engineering degrees, compared with 20.4% of male university graduates. In Canada, just 1.4% of all degrees awarded to women in 1988 were for engineering, compared with 13% of degrees awarded to men.

Gender differences in the natural and computer sciences were not as pronounced. In Canada, however, there were almost twice as many male graduates with natural science degrees and more than three times as many male graduates with computer science degrees than there were female graduates.

**Higher educational attainment leads to higher earnings** Throughout the

OECD, higher levels of education were associated with higher earnings among adults aged 45-64. However, the spread between earnings by education level varied by country. Among all OECD countries with available data, the greatest differences in earnings by education level were in the United States. In that country, the average earnings of adults with a primary education in 1989 were less than half of those with a secondary education. On the other hand, American adults with a university education earned almost twice as much as those with an secondary education. The smallest earnings differentials by education level were found in Denmark and New Zealand.

In Canada, the average 1989 earnings of adults aged 45-64 with a university education were 1.7 times greater than the earnings of those with a secondary education. Similarly, the earnings of adults with non-university higher education were 1.1 times greater than the earnings of those with a secondary education. The average earnings of adults aged 45-64 with a lower secondary education were 84% of those of adults with a secondary education. The average earnings of adults with a primary education or less were 76% of those of adults with a secondary education.

**Jillian Oderkirk** is an Editor with *Canadian Social Trends*.







# Time Use of Canadians in 1992

by Mary Sue Devereaux



One-in-three Canadians feel they are constantly under stress, trying to juggle personal, family and work demands on their time. Women, particularly mothers with young children and a full-time job, feel especially time pressured. Whether they are students, working at or looking for a job, keeping house or retired, women report having less free time than men.

The amount of time that both men and women devote to any particular activity varies with their work and family responsibilities. For example, people whose main activity is working at a job or business spend the most time on paid work. Similarly, those whose main activity is keeping house perform more hours of unpaid work than any other group. Nonetheless, some generalizations can be made about how adult Canadians, overall, spend their time.

According to Statistics Canada's 1992 General Social Survey, all Canadian adults averaged,<sup>1</sup> over a seven-day period, 3.6 hours a day on paid work and the same amount of time on unpaid work, such as domestic chores and volunteer activities. Free time accounted for another 5.7 hours. The largest block of time – 10.5 hours – was spent on personal care, most of it (8.1 hours) sleep. The remaining half hour in the average day was spent on education and related activities.

### Men and women spend their time differently

Men generally spent more time on paid work than did women, reflecting their higher labour force participation and greater likelihood to work full-time. In 1992 men averaged 4.5 hours a day of paid work<sup>2</sup> and related activities (including commuting), while women averaged 2.7 hours.

In contrast, women spent far more time than men on unpaid work, which includes child care, cooking and meal clean-up, house cleaning and laundry, shopping, maintenance and repairs, and volunteer activities. In 1992 women did an average of 4.5 hours a day of unpaid work, compared with only 2.6 hours for men. In addition, women spent more time than men on each individual unpaid work activity, with the exception of maintenance and repairs.

The only component of unpaid work that was clearly the domain of men was maintenance and repairs. There was no difference in the time that men and women devoted to volunteer work.

Men had slightly more free time than did women: an average of 6.0 hours a day versus 5.5 hours. Men spent most of this time watching television, an average of 2.4 hours a day, compared with 2.0 hours a day for women.

**Working as a main activity** Paid workers are a diverse group that includes young singles, couples with or without children, dual-earners and empty-nesters. Given this broad cross-section of Canadians, with varying responsibilities and obligations, it is difficult to make general statements about the way they spend their time. Nonetheless, the time use of people whose main activity is working at a job or business differs substantially from that of other adults.

In 1992 paid work and related activities (including commuting) was the main activity of 6.6 million men and 4.6 million women aged 15 and over. They represented 63% of adult men and 42% of adult women. Averaged over seven days, these men spent more time each day on the job than did women: 6.1 hours versus 5.2 hours. This is partly because women were more likely than men to have part-time jobs. As well, men spent slightly more time than women commuting to work: 32 minutes versus 28 minutes.

However, female workers made up for this difference when they got home. Not only were they more likely than male workers to do unpaid work on any given day (a daily participation rate of 93% versus 79%), but they also did more of it: 3.5 hours compared with 2.3 hours. When paid and unpaid work are combined, employed women actually "worked" slightly more hours a day (9.2) than did employed men (9.0).

Specifically, women, whose main activity was working at a job or business, spent an average of 54 minutes a day on meal preparation and clean-up, compared with 19 minutes for employed men. The discrepancy also prevailed for tasks such

as cleaning and laundry: a daily average of 47 minutes for working women and 10 minutes for men. As well these women devoted more time to shopping and primary child care than did their male counterparts. Maintenance and repair and other household work are the only household tasks on which employed men spent more time than did employed women (43 minutes a day versus 20 minutes).

Women working full-time<sup>3</sup> are more affected by the presence of young children than are men. In 1992 women who were employed full-time and whose youngest child was under age 6 did a daily average of 5.4 hours of unpaid work, including child care, while their male counterparts did just 3.4 hours of unpaid work.

Women working full-time devoted 2.2 hours a day to primary child care, whereas the corresponding figure for men was 1.2 hours. Primary child care refers only to time actually devoted to doing something for a child (for instance, feeding or bathing). It does not include the time when the main focus might be on another activity (cooking dinner, for example), although children are close by and are being supervised. In fact, if time spent with children under age 6 is considered, these mothers spent an average of 6.0 hours a

**Average time spent on selected activities,  
by main activity and gender, 1992**

CST

Activity	Total population	Main activity				
		Employed	Keeping house	Looking for work	Student	Retired
		Average daily hours <sup>1</sup>				
Paid work and related activities						
Men	4.5	6.7	--	1.1	1.0	0.2
Women	2.7	5.7	0.3	0.8	0.9	0.1
Unpaid work						
Men	2.6	2.3	--	3.4	1.0	4.0
Women	4.5	3.5	6.4	5.5	1.8	4.6
School and education						
Men	0.6	0.1	--	0.4	5.7	0.0
Women	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.2	5.5	0.0
Personal care						
Men	10.3	9.9	--	11.0	10.3	11.5
Women	10.8	10.3	11.0	10.7	10.6	11.6
Free time						
Men	6.0	5.1	--	8.0	6.1	8.3
Women	5.5	4.3	6.2	6.8	5.2	7.7

<sup>1</sup> Seven-day average.

Source: Statistics Canada, 1992 General Social Survey.



day with children; for fathers working full-time, the average was 4.3 hours.

Employed women tended to spend more time on personal care, including sleep, than did employed men. The daily average for women was 10.3 hours, whereas for men the average was 9.9 hours. Sleep accounted for much of this difference, as employed women averaged 8.0 hours a night and employed men, 7.7 hours.

On the other hand, employed men had more free time – an average of 5.1 hours a day, compared with 4.3 hours for employed women. Some of the discrepancy was attributable to television viewing, which consumed an average of 2.0 hours a day for employed men, but just 1.4 hours for employed women. Employed men also spent more time than women on active leisure activities, such as sports, hobbies and games.

### Women keeping house

Women accounted for virtually all (96%) of the 3.4 million people who described their main activity as keeping house in 1992. These women made up 30% of the adult female population.

As might be expected, women keeping house did more unpaid work than any other group – an average of 6.4 hours a day. And while the specific tasks varied for women of different ages, the total amount of unpaid work remained relatively constant.

They also spent the most time on primary child care. And if hours spent with children are considered, mothers whose main activity was keeping house and who had children younger than age 15 averaged 8.3 hours a day with their children.

The average amount of free time available to women keeping house was 6.2 hours a day, about 2 hours more than was reported by women whose main activity was working at a job or business. While television viewing took up over a

third of these free hours (2.4), socializing and active leisure pursuits together accounted for a longer period (3.1 hours).

**Job-seekers** In 1992 just over one million Canadian adults reported that their main activity was "looking for work." Men aged 15 and over (7%) were more likely than women that age (3%) to be job-seekers.



The lack of paid employment meant that job-seekers had more time for household chores, leisure and sleep. Unpaid work, in particular, claimed a considerable amount of job-seekers' time, especially among women. Overall these women spent an average of 5.5 hours a day on unpaid work, compared with 3.4 hours for men. Female job-seekers spent almost as much time on house cleaning and laundry as did women whose main activity was keeping house, but spent substantially less time on cooking and primary child care. However, at 1.3 hours, their average daily shopping time was greater than that of any other group.

As a result, male job-seekers had considerably more free time than did their female counterparts: 8.0 hours compared with 6.8. The difference was largely attributable to active leisure, which took up an average of 1.8 hours a day for men, but just 1.0 hour for women. As well, these men spent more time socializing than did comparable women (2.6 hours versus 2.3 hours). On

the other hand, both men and women looking for work devoted just under 3 hours a day to television viewing.

**Students** Students are often young single people with few family or work responsibilities. Therefore, their time is largely governed by the hours that they must devote to educational activities. In 1992 about 1.9 million people aged 15 and over reported their main activity as students. They accounted for just under 9% of both men and women this age.

Education and related activities consumed an average of 5.7 hours a day for male students and 5.5 hours for female students. Relatively few (19% of the men and 17% of the women) reported paid work. Consequently, for both men and women, daily paid employment averaged less than an hour. As well students did little unpaid work – 1.0 hour for men and 1.8 hours for women.

Therefore, their total work time (i.e. paid and unpaid) was less than that of any other group: 2.0 hours for men and 2.7 hours for women. However, if the hours spent on their studies are counted as "work" (students would be unlikely to consider it "leisure"), their total average daily work time amounted to 7.7 hours for men and 8.2 hours for women. These totals approached those of

<sup>1</sup> Daily time-use data is averaged over seven days.

<sup>2</sup> Only activities identified as the respondent's primary activity at any given time are presented; however, the respondent may have also been doing other activities at the same time.

<sup>3</sup> Working 30 hours or more at their job(s).

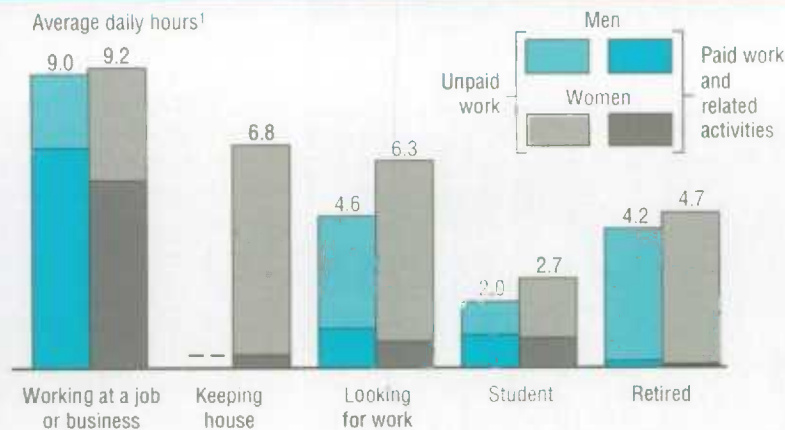
## CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER



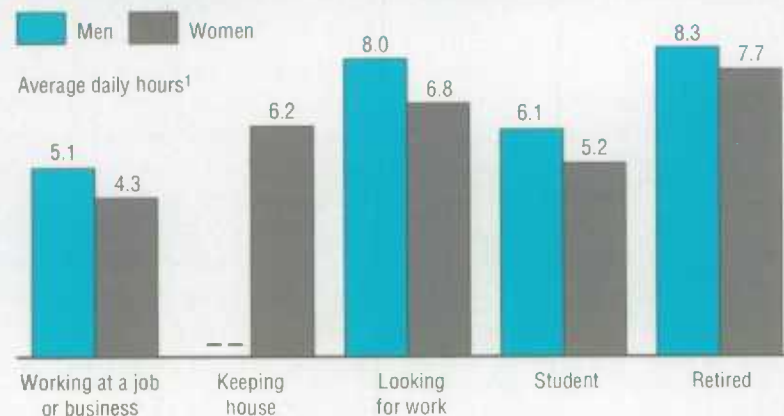
## General Social Survey

Statistics Canada's General Social Survey (GSS) collects data on a variety of socioeconomic topics from approximately 10,000 households. The survey operates on a five-year cycle, each year examining one of five core subjects: health, time use, accidents and criminal victimization, education and work, and family and friends. More information on time use is available in the General Social Survey Working Paper #9: "Overview of 1992 General Social Survey on Time Use;" from the Public Use Microdata File; or by contacting General Social Survey, Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T6, Telephone: (613) 951-0279.

## Time spent on paid and unpaid work, by main activity and gender, 1992



## Amount of free time, by main activity and gender, 1992



men and women whose main activity was paid employment.

Aside from the employed, students had the least free time of any group. However, as was typical of the other groups, male students reported more free hours than did their female counterparts: an average of 6.1 hours a day, compared with 5.2. Television viewing and active leisure pursuits took up more time for male than female students. Male students spent more time on active sports than did men in any other situation, averaging more than an hour a day. Female students, on the other hand, spent more time socializing than did male students and almost as much time as women who were job-seekers.

**Retired** The retired population in 1992 numbered close to 2.7 million. Almost 15% of adult men reported that they were retired, compared with just 11% of adult women.

The vast majority of retired people are aged 55 and over and so are less likely to have family responsibilities or to be looking for work than other adults. Therefore, retirees can devote more time to other activities, such as volunteer work.

Although the typical division of male and female time prevailed among retired people, it was less pronounced than in any other group. Retired women averaged 4.6 hours of unpaid work a day, compared with 4.0 hours for retired men. Compared to men whose main activity was working at a job or business, looking for work or studying, those who were retired spent the most time cooking, house cleaning and shopping.

The retirement years allow more time for volunteer work. Male retirees averaged 49 minutes a day on these activities, compared with 31 minutes for female retirees.

Retirees had the most free time – a daily average of 8.3 hours for men and 7.7 hours for women. And while they watched the most television (3.5 hours for men and 2.8 hours for women), they also spent considerable time socializing (about 2 hours a day for both men and women) and on active leisure pursuits.

**Mary Sue Devereaux** is an analyst with the Labour and Household Surveys Analysis Division, Statistics Canada.





# Ethnic Diversity in the 1990s

by Viviane Renaud and Jane Badets

**C**anada is becoming increasingly diverse in its ethnic composition, with proportionately more people reporting origins other than British or French. This trend is partly due to an increase in the number of recent immigrants coming from non-European rather than European countries. It is also influenced by an increase in the number of people reporting Canadian or Aboriginal ancestry. Nonetheless, most people in all provinces still claim British or French origins. Canada's ethnic make-up, however, varies considerably by region, reflecting where different waves of immigrants have settled over time.

**British and French still Canada's largest ethnic groups** According to the 1991 Census, British and French are still the largest ethnic groups in Canada. The proportion of people reporting British

British only origins declined to 7.6 million, from 8.4 million.

Relatively little change occurred in the proportion or the number of people with French ancestry. In 1991, 23% of the population reported French only origins, compared with 24% in 1986. The number of people in this group, however, increased slightly to 6.2 million from 6.1 million over the same period.

The proportions of people reporting British and French ancestry, as well as British and/or French in conjunction with other ethnic origins, also remained fairly stable between 1986 and 1991. In 1991, 4% of the population reported a combination of British and French backgrounds, while 14% reported British and/or French in conjunction with other ethnic origins.

**Increasing proportion neither British nor French** In 1991, 31% of the population reported an ethnic background other than British or French, up from 25% in 1986. There were two major reasons for this trend: first, the number of recent immigrants and non-permanent residents (who were included for the first time in the 1991 Census) with neither British nor French backgrounds increased; and secondly, higher proportions of people reported Canadian and Aboriginal origins in 1991.



only origins, however, declined over the last five years to 28% of the population in 1991, from 34% in 1986. Also over the same period, the number of people with

### More people reporting Canadian

Between 1986 and 1991, the census recorded a substantial increase in the number of respondents reporting Canadian ancestry. Pre-census publicity calling for the reporting of Canadian as an expression of national identity may have contributed to this recent increase and the corresponding decrease in other origins, especially British.

Over one million respondents, or 4% of the total population, reported some Canadian ancestry in 1991: 765,100 reported Canadian only and 267,900 reported Canadian in conjunction with other ethnic origins. People reporting Canadian were the fourth largest single response ethnic group in the country and in the top ten single response groups in every province except Quebec.

A segment of the population has always reported their ancestry as Canadian. As early as 1951 when the census first published results on Canadian ethnic origin, 71,800 people reported their origin as

Canadian. By 1986, 69,100 people reported a single origin of Canadian, while 43,800 reported Canadian in conjunction with some other ethnic background.

Two-thirds (67%) of those reporting Canadian ethnic ancestry in 1991 – both single and multiple – lived in Ontario. A further 12% resided in Alberta, 8% in British Columbia, 4% in Saskatchewan and 3% in Quebec. The remaining 6% lived in the other provinces and territories.

### Increase in reported Aboriginal origins

Just over one million people in Canada reported one or more Aboriginal origins in 1991, up from nearly three-quarters of a million in 1986. Demographic factors cannot explain a five-year increase of this magnitude. Clearly, many people who had not previously reported Aboriginal ancestry did so in 1991. This was most likely due to heightened awareness of Aboriginal issues.

*Continued on page 20*

## CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER

CST

**Ethnicity and related definitions** Measures of ethnicity are complex and can be affected by changes in the environment in which the questions are asked, as well as by changes in respondents' understanding or views about the topic. In addition, factors such as awareness of family background or length of time since immigration can affect responses to the question, as can confusion with other concepts, such as citizenship, nationality or language.

- *Ethnic origin* refers to the ethnic or cultural group(s) to which an individual's ancestors belonged; it pertains to the ancestral roots or origins of the population and not to place of birth, citizenship or nationality.
- *Single ethnic response* occurs when a respondent reports only one ethnic origin. For example, 750,055 people indicated that their only ethnic origin was Italian.
- *Multiple ethnic response* occurs when a respondent reports more than one ethnic origin. For example, 397,720 people gave a response which included Italian and one or more other ethnic or cultural groups.
- *British only origins* include single responses of English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh or other British, as well as multiple British only responses – that is, a combination of English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh or other British.
- *French only origins* include the single responses of French, Acadian, Québécois and multiple French only responses – that is, a combination of French, Acadian or Québécois.
- *Non-permanent residents* refers to people who hold student or employment authorizations, Minister's permits or who are refugee claimants.







## Ethnic origins, 1991

**CST**

	Total	British only	French only	British and French	British and/or French and other	Other	Other main groups (single responses as % of total population)	%
<b>Newfoundland</b>								
%	100.0	88.3	1.7	3.9	3.6	2.5	Aboriginal	0.9
Number	563,940						German	0.2
							Canadian	0.2
<b>Prince Edward Island</b>								
%	100.0	65.6	9.4	12.3	8.7	4.0	Dutch	1.0
Number	128,100						Canadian	0.6
							German	0.5
<b>Nova Scotia</b>								
%	100.0	58.2	6.3	9.0	15.5	10.9	German	2.8
Number	890,950						Black	1.2
							Canadian	1.1
<b>New Brunswick</b>								
%	100.0	44.0	33.5	9.2	8.3	4.9	Canadian	1.3
Number	716,495						German	0.6
							Aboriginal	0.6
<b>Quebec</b>								
%	100.0	5.1	74.6	2.7	3.7	13.9	Italian	2.6
Number	6,810,300						Jewish	1.1
							Aboriginal	1.0
							Greek	0.7
<b>Ontario</b>								
%	100.0	34.9	5.3	4.6	15.5	39.7	Canadian	5.3
Number	9,977,055						Italian	4.9
							German	2.9
							Chinese	2.7
<b>Manitoba</b>								
%	100.0	24.8	5.0	2.9	19.8	47.4	German	8.7
Number	1,079,390						Aboriginal	6.9
							Ukrainian	6.9
<b>Saskatchewan</b>								
%	100.0	23.4	3.1	2.5	25.2	45.8	German	12.4
Number	976,040						Aboriginal	6.8
							Ukrainian	5.7
<b>Alberta</b>								
%	100.0	27.7	3.0	3.3	24.6	41.5	German	7.4
Number	2,519,185						Ukrainian	4.1
							Canadian	3.7
<b>British Columbia</b>								
%	100.0	35.2	2.1	3.3	21.7	37.7	Chinese	5.6
Number	3,247,505						German	4.8
							East Indian	2.7
							Aboriginal	2.3
<b>Yukon</b>								
%	100.0	29.6	3.2	4.2	28.6	34.4	Aboriginal	13.7
Number	27,655						German	3.8
<b>Northwest Territories</b>								
%	100.0	14.7	2.4	2.5	16.1	64.3	Aboriginal	51.2
Number	57,430						Canadian	1.8
<b>Canada</b>								
%	100.0	28.1	22.8	4.0	14.2	30.9	German	3.4
Number	26,994,040						Canadian	2.8
							Italian	2.8
							Chinese	2.2

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 Census of Canada.

resulting from the considerable public attention given to these issues in the year prior to the 1991 Census.

The sharp increase in the number of people reporting Aboriginal origins resulted in a rise in the proportion of the population with this ancestry. In 1991, 2.0% of Canada's population reported Aboriginal origins in combination with other backgrounds, up from 1.4% in 1986. The increase was somewhat less for those reporting single Aboriginal origins (to 1.7% from 1.5%).

**Increase in people with Asian origins** A rise in the number of people reporting Asian ancestry reflects increased Asian immigration to Canada in recent decades. Those reporting single Asian origins (South Asian, East and South East Asian) represented 5.1% of the total population in 1991, up from 3.5% in 1986. The largest Asian single response groups in 1991 were Chinese (2.2% of the total population) and East Indian (1.2%).

People of Caribbean or Latin/Central/South American origins comprised 0.7% of the total population in 1991, up from 0.3% in 1986. The proportion reporting a single Black ancestry (0.8%) was about the same in 1991 as in 1986.

People reporting European ancestry continue to comprise the largest proportion of the population with neither British nor French origins. In 1991 people reporting a single European origin made up 15% of the total population, a proportion virtually unchanged since 1986. The three largest European single origin groups were German (3.4%), Italian (2.8%) and Ukrainian (1.5%) in 1991.

#### Atlantic Canada has highest proportion with British roots

Among all provinces, Newfoundland had the highest proportion of residents reporting British only origins (88%). Other proportions ranged from 66% in Prince Edward Island and 58% in Nova Scotia to 44% in New Brunswick.

People of French only ancestry represented one-third of the population of New Brunswick in 1991. The proportion reporting French only origins was less than 10% in each of the other three Atlantic provinces.

Of the four Atlantic provinces, Nova Scotia (11%) had the highest proportion reporting origins that did not include British or French. This compared with 5% or less in each of the other three provinces.

**Three-quarters of Quebec's population report French only origins** Quebec had, by far, the highest proportion of people reporting French only origins (75%). This was down from 78% in 1986.

Nonetheless, Quebec was a common destination for many non-British, non-French ethnic groups. In 1991, 44% of people reporting Arab single origins resided in Quebec, the largest Arab community in Canada. Quebec also had the largest Haitian community in Canada, with 95% of all people in Canada reporting Haitian single origins residing in this province. Next to Ontario, Quebec had the largest communities of people with Italian, Jewish, Greek, Portuguese, West Asian, Indo-Chinese, Latin/Central/South American, Caribbean and Black origins.

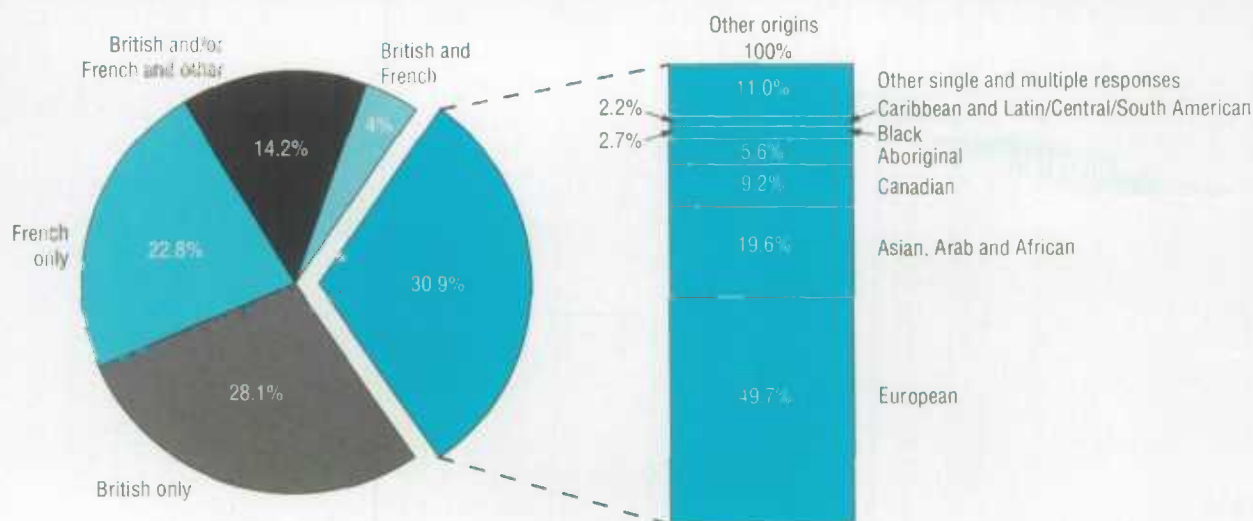
People in Quebec with origins other than French or British were concentrated in the Montreal census metropolitan area (CMA). In 1991, 85% of all provincial residents who reported origins other than French or British lived in that CMA. The largest Lebanese and Haitian communities in Canada were in Montreal.

**Ontario: a diversity of ethnic groups** Over half of Canada's immigrant population resided in Ontario in 1991. The attraction

*Continued on page 22*

### Ethnic composition of Canada's population, 1991

CST



Statistics Canada, 1991 Census of Canada



## CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER

CST

**Reporting of mixed ethnic backgrounds** Since 1981, Canadians have been able to describe their ethnic background more fully on the census by reporting more than one ethnic origin. Nearly eight million people in 1991, or 29% of the population, reported more than one ethnic origin. This proportion is about the same as it was in 1986 (28%).

Nearly one-third (32%) of the Canadian-born population reported a mixed ethnic background in 1991, compared with only 11% of the immigrant population. However, the reporting of multiple ethnic origins varied among ethnic groups. For example, 81% of people reporting Irish and 79% reporting Scottish origins also reported other ethnic origins. Mixed ethnic backgrounds tended to be especially common among people originating in Northern, Western and Eastern Europe. For example, 82% of Swedish, 78% of Norwegian, 76% of Russian, 67% of German, 63% of each of Polish and Dutch and 61% of Ukrainian responses were multiple.

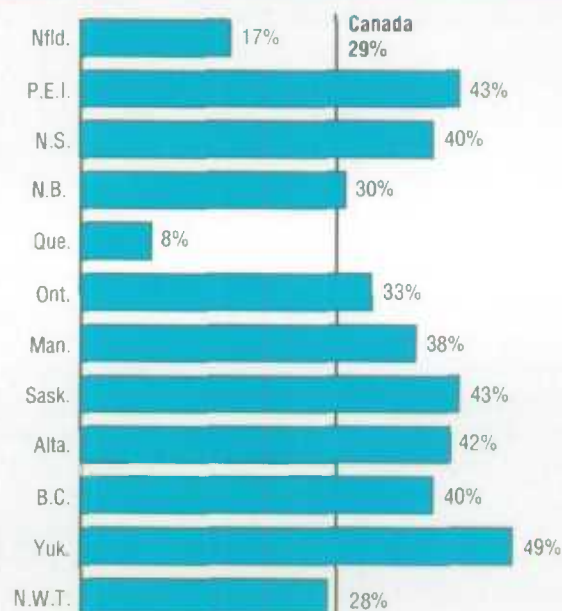
On the other hand, groups reporting French and Southern European origins were less likely than others to have mixed ethnic backgrounds. In 1991, 16% of Portuguese, 21% of Greek, 27% of French and 35% of Italian responses were multiple.

Ethnic groups with high levels of recent immigration were the least likely, by far, to report a mixed background. For example, only 4% of Koreans, 7% of Afghans, 9% of Cambodians and 10% of Chinese reported two or more ethnic origins.

There was also considerable regional variation in the reporting of single and multiple ethnic backgrounds. Quebec had the highest proportion of single responses (92%), while the Yukon Territory had the highest proportion of multiple responses (49%). Moreover, for some ethnic groups, the reporting of mixed ethnic backgrounds

## Multiple responses as a proportion of all responses, 1991

CST



Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 Census of Canada.

varied from province to province. For example, only 7% of people reporting a French ancestry in Quebec did so in combination with other origins, while 80% of those of French origin in British Columbia reported two or more origins. Likewise, the proportion of people reporting British ancestry in combination with other ethnic origins ranged from 18% in Newfoundland to 68% in the Yukon.

## Proportion of population reporting origins other than British or French, 1991

CST



Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 Census of Canada.

of immigrants to Ontario is reflected in the diversity of ethnic groups living in this province. In 1991, 40% of Ontario's population reported ethnic origins other than British or French. Those of British only ancestry made up 35% of Ontario's population and 5% reported a French only origin.

Ontario was home to large communities of many ethnic groups. Over half of all people reporting West Asian (54%), South Asian (55%), Caribbean (63%), Black (67%) and African (70%), single ethnic origins lived in Ontario.

Compared to all CMAs, Toronto had the highest proportion of people reporting origins other than British or French. In 1991, 59% of Toronto's population reported non-British/non-French ancestry, up from 45% in 1986. About one-half of this increase was due to the rise in the proportion of people reporting Canadian ethnic origins. In 1991, 7% of Toronto's population reported Canadian ancestry, up from less than 1% in 1986. Also contributing to the increase was the rise in the number of immigrants settling in Toronto since 1986 and the inclusion of non-permanent residents in the 1991 Census.

Those reporting a single European ancestry made up 26% of the Toronto CMA's population, 14% were of single Asian origin and 3% reported a single

Black ancestry. Some of Canada's largest ethnic communities in Canada were in Toronto. For example, the largest Italian, Portuguese, Greek, Polish, Jewish, Chinese, South Asian, Filipino, Black and Caribbean communities were in the Toronto metropolitan area.

**Prairies reflect earlier immigration waves** The Prairie provinces had the highest proportions of people reporting origins other than British or French (excluding the Northwest Territories). The non-British, non-French group made up 47% of the population in Manitoba, 46% in Saskatchewan and 41% in Alberta.

In the three Prairie provinces, people of European ancestry represented the largest percentage of those with origins other than British: 26% in Manitoba and Saskatchewan and 21% in Alberta. Ethnic groups, such as German and Ukrainian, who immigrated to Canada earlier in the country's history were generally more prevalent in these provinces.

People reporting Aboriginal origins represented a larger proportion of the three Prairie provinces' populations than elsewhere, with the exception of the Territories. Those reporting single Aboriginal origins made up 7% of the population in both Manitoba and Saskatchewan and 3% in Alberta.

Overall, those of British only ancestry represented about one-quarter of the population in each of the three Prairie provinces. People of French only ancestry made up 5% or less of each of the province's populations.

**One-in-nine British Columbia residents of Asian origin** People of Asian ancestry (single response) represent an increasing share of British Columbia's residents. In 1991 they accounted for 11% of the provincial population, up from 8% in 1986. Six percent of British Columbia's residents reported Chinese and 3% reported East Indian as their only ethnic origin in 1991.

The Vancouver CMA has been the focus of recent immigration to Canada from Asia, a trend which is reflected in the growing proportion of Asian ethnic groups. In 1991 those reporting a single Asian ancestry accounted for 19% of the population, compared with 13% in 1986. After British, Chinese (11%) and East Indian (4%) were the largest single ethnic groups in Vancouver.

In 1991, 38% of British Columbia's population reported having origins other than British or French, followed by 35% who were of British ancestry, 22% of British and/or French and other origins, and 2% of French only origins. Those of single European ancestry were the largest of the non-British, non-French groups, accounting for 17% of the provincial population.

**Aboriginal origins the majority in the Northwest Territories** The Northwest Territories was the only province or territory where neither British nor French constituted the largest ethnic group. Over half of the population reported single Aboriginal origins in 1991: 32% reported Inuit, 15%, North American Indian and 4%, Métis.

The Yukon also had a relatively large Aboriginal population. In 1991, 14% of the territory's population reported single Aboriginal origins, the largest single response group after British.

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### Ethnic origins, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, 1991

CST

CMAs	Total	British only	French only	British and French	British and/or French and other	Other	Other main groups (single responses as % of total population)	%
<b>Toronto</b>								
%	100.0	26.2	1.4	2.2	10.9	59.3	Italian	8.1
Number	3,863,110						Canadian	6.9
							Chinese	6.0
							East Indian	3.7
<b>Montreal</b>								
%	100.0	6.7	59.1	3.1	5.2	26.0	Italian	5.4
Number	3,091,110						Jewish	2.5
							Greek	1.6
							Black	1.3
<b>Vancouver</b>								
%	100.0	32.6	1.8	2.9	18.4	44.4	Chinese	10.6
Number	1,584,115						East Indian	4.2
							German	3.9
							Italian	1.9

Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 Census of Canada.





# Seniors 75+

## Living Arrangements and Lifestyles

**S**eniors aged 75 and over are forming a growing share of Canada's population. This is due to recent low overall fertility rates and increased longevity. In addition, a larger proportion of today's older seniors are living in their own homes. Consequently, the lifestyles of older seniors will have a significant impact upon a broad range of goods and services provided by the market and by government and non-government organizations.

According to the census, 4.7% of Canadians were aged 75 and older in 1991, compared with 3.1% in 1971. The population of older senior women more than doubled during this period to 785,900 and is

projected to nearly double again to 1.43 million by 2011. From 1971 to 1991, the number of men aged 75 and over grew 71% to 479,000. In the next twenty years, the male population is projected to grow to 823,200.

The characteristics of older senior men and women differ considerably. Women aged 75 and over tend to live longer than men that age. Therefore, it is not surprising that in 1991 most older seniors were women (62%) and that of these women the majority (65%) were widowed. Most older senior men, on the other hand, were married (65%). The presence of a spouse has a significant effect on the living arrangements and lifestyles of older seniors.



# Seniors 75+

## Living Arrangements

by Gordon E. Priest

*adapted from a paper presented to the Canadian Association on Gerontology, October 22, 1992*



growing population of Canada's older seniors are staying in their own homes. Along with a small increase from 1971 to 1991 in the proportion of men and women aged 75 and over who lived with a spouse in their own home, there was a large increase in the proportion living alone. Conversely, fewer older seniors lived in other people's homes in 1991 than in 1971. Over the past decade, the percentage of seniors living in institutions, such as hospitals and special care homes has stayed the same.

**Older senior men much more likely to be married and living in their own home** In 1991, 35% of older seniors were living with their spouse in a dwelling they maintained. Older senior men aged 75 and over (58%) were much more likely than women that age (20%) to be in this situation. This is not surprising given that two-thirds of older senior men were married in 1991, while two-thirds of senior women were widowed.

The proportion of married senior men maintaining their own home in 1991 was up from just over 50% in 1971, while the proportion among senior women was about the same in the two reference years. By 2011,<sup>1</sup> assuming a modest convergence in the life expectancies of men and women, the proportion of both men and women living with a spouse in their own home should increase slightly.

In most provinces, the proportion of older seniors living with a spouse in a home they maintained was close to the national average in 1991. Only British Columbia (39%) and Saskatchewan (38%) had higher proportions, while the proportion in Quebec (31%) was lower.

High rates of in-migration of retirees in British Columbia and relatively high rates of home ownership and a rural character in Saskatchewan may have led to high proportions of seniors living with a spouse and maintaining their own home in these provinces. Quebec, on the other hand, had the highest proportion of women aged 75 and over who had never married (15% compared with the national average of 9%).

While some metropolitan areas have characteristics that attract retired couples, a higher proportion of senior couples in many provinces were living in smaller urban or rural areas.

In 19 of Canada's 25 census metropolitan areas (CMAs), the proportion of older seniors maintaining a dwelling with a spouse was lower than the proportion of seniors in this situation in the provinces where the CMAs were located. The proportion of women aged 75 and over maintaining a dwelling with their spouse ranged from a low of 15% in the CMAs of Sherbrooke and Quebec to a high of 25% in Victoria.

### **Women 75+ more likely to live alone**

In 1991, 31% of seniors aged 75 and over were living alone. Older senior women (312,000) were almost four times as likely as men that age (82,000) to be in this situation. Twenty years ago, gender differences were much smaller.

Thirty-nine percent of older senior women in 1991 were living alone, up from 35% in 1981 and 26% in 1971. A further increase in the proportion to 42% is projected for 2011. In contrast, the proportion of older senior men living alone rose to 17% in 1991, from 16% in 1981 and 13% in 1971.

The proportion of older seniors living alone generally declines from west to east. Proportions in Ontario and the Western provinces were above the national average, while those in the Eastern provinces generally fell below. The smallest proportions of seniors living alone were in Newfoundland (20%) and Quebec (28%).

Within urban areas, the proportion of senior women living alone ranged from 27% in Chicoutimi-Jonquière, 31% in Sherbrooke and 34% in Trois-Rivières to 46% in Victoria, 48% in Saskatoon and 49% in Winnipeg.

### **Fewer seniors living in other people's homes**

Few seniors aged 75 and over in 1991 (11%) lived with others, such as their children, in a household they did not maintain. This proportion has declined since 1971 and is expected to decline further in the future.

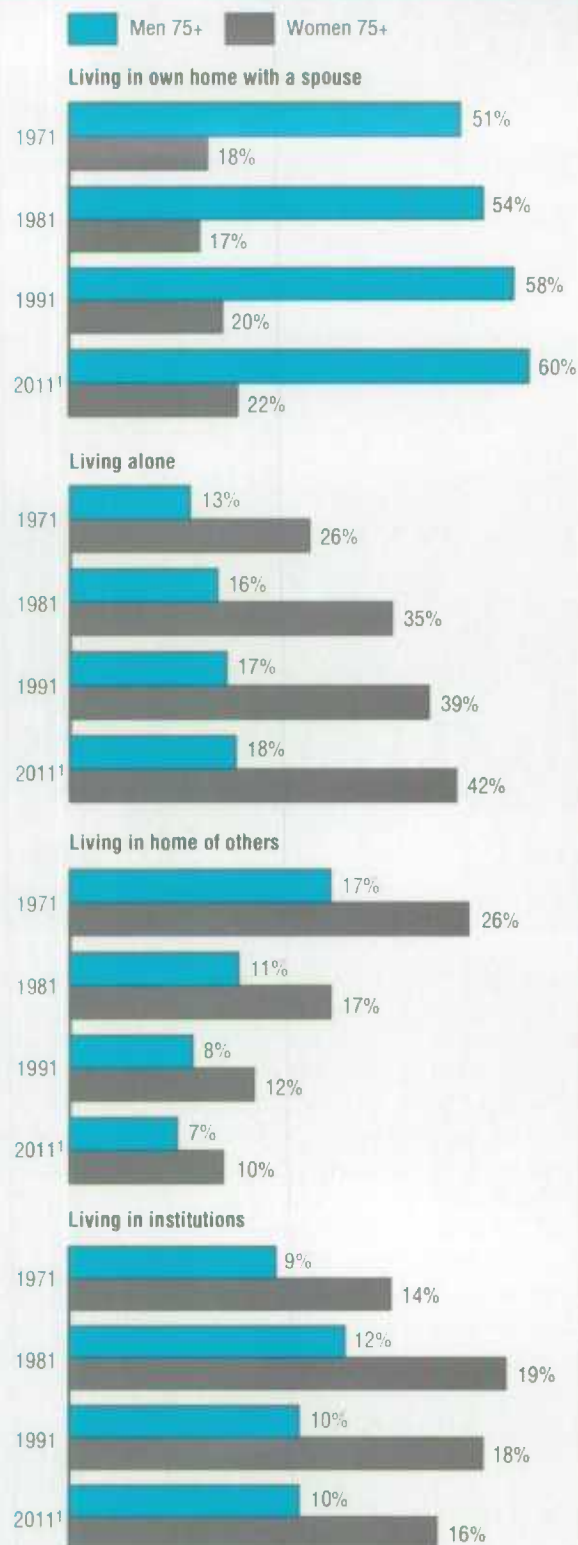
The proportion of older senior women living with others fell to 12% in 1991, from 17% in 1981 and 26% in 1971, while the proportion of senior men dropped to 8% in 1991, from 11% in 1981 and 17% in 1971. Modest declines to 10% for women and 7% for men are projected for 2011.

Proportions of seniors living in other people's homes are well below the national average in the Western provinces, but above it in the Atlantic provinces. In Newfoundland, in particular, the proportion of older seniors living in other people's homes (20%) was almost double the national average. This suggests that residents of that province are more likely than others still to be providing care for seniors in multi-generational households. In fact, the



## Living arrangements of older seniors, 1971-2011

CST



<sup>1</sup> Projections were estimated by the author based on Statistics Canada population projections.  
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada.

situation in Newfoundland in 1991 was not unlike that of the whole country in 1971.

### Institutional living: more common among women, trends stable

The proportion of older seniors living in institutions has remained relatively stable since the mid-1970s. About 18% of older senior women in both 1991 and 1976 were living in this situation. This is up from 1971 when 14% were living in an institution. Although the proportion of men aged 75 and over living in institutions in 1991 (10%) was somewhat lower than in 1981 (12%) and 1976 (11%), it was up slightly from 9% in 1971.

Fewer older seniors lived alone in Quebec (28%) than in all other provinces except Newfoundland, perhaps because a large proportion of older senior women in Quebec (almost 20%) lived in institutions. This suggests a stronger collective or community-based support system in that province. Also, a higher proportion of women in this province may have spent their lives living in collective dwellings. One-third of all special care units and one-half of all religious residences in Canada are located in Quebec. Quebec men were less likely to live in institutions (8%) than their counterparts in all other provinces.

There are considerable differences in the proportions of women aged 75 and over living in institutions, even within the same province. For example, in Quebec, Sherbrooke had the highest proportion of institutionalized women of any CMA in Canada (27%), while Trois-Rivières had one of the lowest (14%). Regional and local autonomy in the provision of institutional care may explain differences in institutional living among CMAs as well as among provinces.

**Conclusion** More older seniors today, particularly senior women, are living alone in their own homes instead of in the homes of other relatives. This may have occurred because government income security programs for seniors have improved their financial situation and hence their choices of living arrangements. Also, the families of older seniors today are more geographically dispersed and busier, particularly because the number of dual-earner couples has increased. Therefore, they may be less able to provide care for older relatives in their homes. Regardless of the reasons for this change, a growing population of older seniors living alone will result in an increased demand for goods and services that enable older seniors to maintain an independent lifestyle.

<sup>1</sup> Living arrangement projections were estimated by the author based on Statistics Canada population projections.

**Gordon E. Priest** is Director of the Housing, Family and Social Statistics Division, Statistics Canada.

# Seniors 75+

## Lifestyles

by Sandrine Prasil

**T**he lifestyles of older seniors have changed considerably in recent years. These changes have been due to improvements in people's health and longevity, as well as in the quality and variety of services for seniors. Statistics Canada's 1991 Survey on Ageing and Independence provides a profile of the current lifestyles of people aged 75 and over living in private households.<sup>1</sup>

According to the Survey, low incomes and sparse accommodations were more common among senior women aged 75 and over than among men that age. Nonetheless, almost all older women and men were relatively satisfied with their incomes. Many older seniors living at home were limited because of a long-term illness or physical disability. For some, health problems led to feelings of stress or unhappiness. Most older seniors, however, had people in their lives they could rely on for support and perceived their lives as happy. Many older seniors also provided help to others.

Seniors enjoy a wide variety of activities both at home and away from home. Reading and going for walks were common leisure pursuits. In addition, many older seniors reported having a driver's license and enjoyed going for drives. Travel, both domestic and international, was also popular among many older seniors.

**Most older seniors homeowners – nearly all mortgage-free** In 1991, 56% of seniors aged 75 and over lived in a dwelling they owned. Almost all older seniors who owned their dwelling said they were mortgage-free (96%). Fourteen percent of senior homeowners also



owned other property, such as a vacation home, or rental or business property.

Another 37% of older seniors rented accommodations with most renters (89%) in apartments. Female renters tended to live in smaller dwellings than did male renters: 55% lived in a one-bedroom unit, compared with 40% of men. The situation was reversed for two-bedroom units occupied by 44% of men aged 75 and over who rented and 33% of women that age. About 6% of people who rented accommodations owned another residence.

The remaining 7% of older seniors lived in someone else's home. This included living with their children.

**Living within lower incomes** Most people aged 75 and over in private households (62%) had household incomes under \$20,000 in 1990. Women (70%) were more likely than men (50%) to have a household income that low. This is

consistent with the greater odds of women living alone on one income. Relatively few senior men (12%) and women (6%) had household incomes of \$40,000 and over. Those with higher household incomes were more likely than others to be married and to be closer to age 75.

In 1991, 49% of those with personal incomes under \$10,000 were homeowners. On the other hand, 73% of those with personal incomes of \$40,000 and over owned their homes.

Most older seniors received benefits from government pensions, including Old Age Security (92%) and Canada or Quebec Pension Plans (69%). Such pensions were the major source of income for 79% of women aged 75 and over and 60% of men that age. Older senior men (26%) were much more likely than women (9%)

<sup>1</sup> This article focuses only on older seniors living in private households. It excludes those living in nursing homes or other institutions.



to have retirement pension plans as their major income source. This is not surprising, given that relatively few women that age would have been employed when they were younger and able to contribute to private pension plans.

Despite relatively low incomes, 85% of both men and women felt that their incomes and investments satisfied their current needs adequately or very well. In fact, there was little evidence that older seniors lived beyond their means as 93% reported that their debts did not exceed \$5,000.

Income seems to have little affect on older seniors' satisfaction with their lives. For example, those with personal incomes under \$10,000 were as likely (45%) as those who had incomes of \$40,000 and over to say they were very satisfied with their lives as a whole in 1990.

**Health limits everyday activities** Over one-third (38%) of those aged 75 and over were limited in the kind or amount of activity in which they could participate because of a long-term illness, physical condition or health problem.

Among those with limitations, 43% said they could not walk three blocks.

A larger percentage of older senior women than men said they needed help because of an activity limitation. For example, 7% of women compared with 3% of men needed help to walk three blocks, while 17% of women and 13% of men were unable to walk that far even with help. Eight percent of women and 4% of men needed assistance going up or down stairs, while another 8% of women and 7% of men were unable to climb a flight of stairs.

Among older seniors who reported limited activities because of their physical condition, 18% of women and 14% of men had a street-level entrance to their home, without steps. Fourteen percent of women and 7% of men said they had an elevator or lift device because of their condition. This included people living in apartments served by elevators.

Personal care activities were difficult for some older seniors, many of whom lacked the manual dexterity and flexibility of younger people. For example, 10% of women and 7% of men were so activity-limited they could not clip their

own toenails without help. About 3% of both women and men needed help dressing or undressing.

### Satisfaction with life related to health

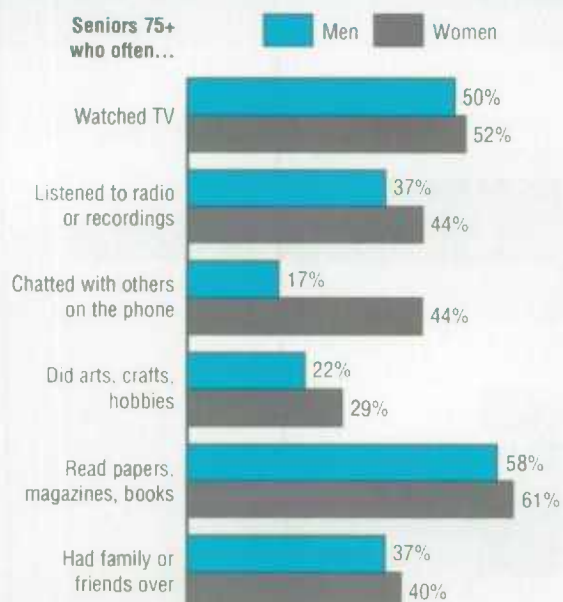
Nearly two-thirds (65%) of older seniors living outside institutions who reported excellent health were very satisfied with their life as a whole. In contrast, only 25% of those in poor health were very satisfied.

Most older seniors said their life was relatively stress-free, with about one-half describing their life as not very stressful and 38% describing it as not at all stressful. In 1991, 43% of those who said their life was not very stressful and 29% of those who said their life was not at all stressful reported fair to poor health.

Ten percent of women aged 75 and over and 6% of men that age described their lives as very stressful. Of these people, 35% of women and 50% of men said health was the number one reason for their stress. Two-thirds of both women and men who described their lives as very stressful said they had only fair or poor health.

### Older senior's activities at home<sup>1</sup>

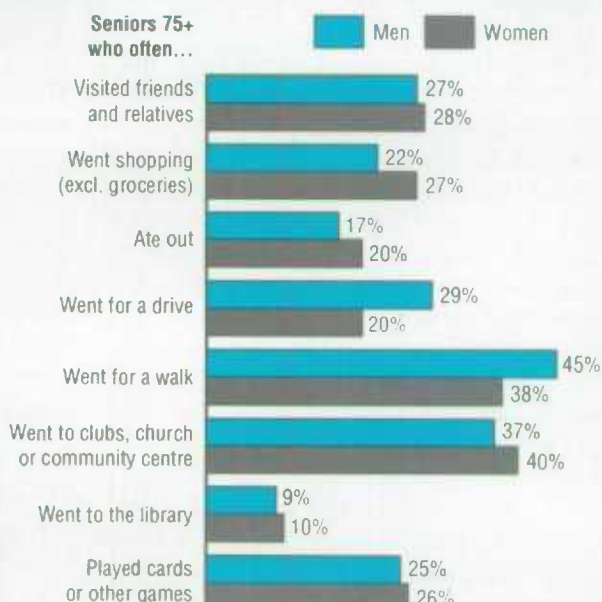
CST



<sup>1</sup> During a typical month, September 1990 to August 1991.  
Source: Statistics Canada, Survey on Ageing and Independence, 1991.

### Older seniors' activities outside the home<sup>1</sup>

CST



<sup>1</sup> During a typical month, September 1990 to August 1991.  
Source: Statistics Canada, Survey on Ageing and Independence, 1991.

### Older seniors gave and received help regularly

Friends, family, neighbours and volunteer organizations all have their place in the social support networks of elderly people living in private households. While 67% of those aged 75 and over said they received help regularly, 59% regularly provided help to others. Housework, yardwork, meal preparation, grocery shopping, transportation, babysitting, money management, personal care and emotional support were all included as aspects of "help."

For the 75 and over age group overall, spouses were an important source of help: 35% of men and 14% of women received help from a spouse, while 41% of men and 14% of women provided help to a spouse. Among married people, 82% of men and 75% of women provided help to their spouse, while 81% of married men and 72% of married women received help from their spouse.

Men and women aged 75 and over were about equally likely to help family members. Twelve percent helped sons, 15% helped daughters, 12% helped

grandchildren and 15% helped other relatives.

However, women were more likely than men to report help from every type of relative, with the most common source being daughters. Thirty percent of women aged 75 and over received help from a daughter, compared with 19% of men that age. Help from sons was received by 22% of women and 21% of men. Among older seniors, 12% of women and 8% of men were helped by grandchildren, while other family members helped 19% of women and 10% of men.

One-quarter (26%) of older seniors helped a friend or neighbour on a regular basis, while 21% received help. Men (15%) were much less likely than women (25%) to view themselves as having received help. This may be due to the higher average age of women aged 75 and over.

Older seniors in private households were more likely to volunteer their time to organizations than to receive services as clients. Men (16%) and women (15%) aged 75 and over volunteered at about

the same rate. Only 6% of older senior men and 9% of women received help through a volunteer organization.

Two-thirds of women and a slightly smaller proportion of men (63%) said they had friends to whom they felt close. Almost half (45%) of elderly people with close friends said they lived in the same neighbourhood.

### Reading and walking popular activities

Older seniors spend their leisure time at home on activities such as watching television, listening to the radio, reading, or having family or friends over. Reading was the most common activity during a typical month, reported by about 60% of men and women.

Women aged 75 and over were only slightly more likely than men that age to pursue most at-home activities. They were more than twice as likely as men, however, to chat with others on the phone (44% compared with 17%).

Leisure activities outside the home were less common than those in the home. Still, 45% of men and 38% of women said they often went for a walk.

## CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER

CST

### Survey on Ageing and Independence

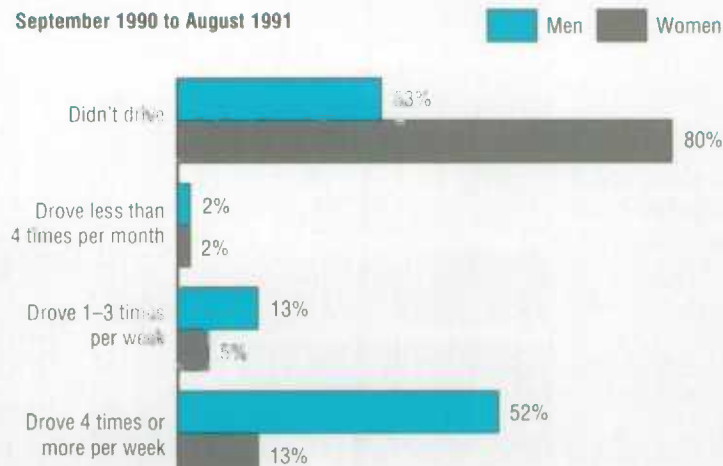
In 1991 Statistics Canada, in collaboration with Health and Welfare Canada, The Seniors Secretariat, Fitness and Amateur Sport, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Veterans Affairs Canada, the Department of the Secretary of State and Communications Canada conducted the Survey on Ageing and Independence. The survey measured factors that contributed to the quality of life and independence of today's and tomorrow's seniors in Canada.

The survey covered people aged 45 and over. Excluded were residents of institutions, people living on Indian Reserves, members of the Armed Forces and residents of the Yukon and Northwest Territories.

### Driving habits of older seniors<sup>1</sup>

CST

September 1990 to August 1991



<sup>1</sup> Includes seniors 75+ with or without licences, with or without vehicles.  
Source: Statistics Canada, Survey on Ageing and Independence, 1991.



The next most popular activity outside the home was going to clubs, church or community centres, with 40% of women and 37% of men going often.

Generally, just over one-quarter of all older seniors often went for a drive, went to visit friends and went shopping. Men, however, were less avid shoppers (22% reported that they often went shopping) and women were less likely to go for a drive (20%).

#### **Older seniors on the road**

Men aged 75 and over (69%) were much more likely than women that age (22%) to have a license. Nearly all of those with a license lived in households that owned or rented a vehicle.

Male drivers aged 75 and over with a household car or truck drove more frequently than did their female counterparts. Seventy-eight percent of men, compared with 64% of women, reported driving more than three times a week.

Only 5% of men with vehicles were passengers more often than they were drivers. On the other hand, 19% of licensed women were more often passengers than drivers.

More women (74%) than men (65%) said they had public transportation in their area. More than one-half (54%) of these women and 39% of these men used the public transit system in the previous year. Ridership could have been higher, especially for women, if those with public transportation in their area had been able to use it: 11% of the women and 5% of men had been unable to use the public transit system.

**Seasoned travellers** Many older seniors aged 75 and over enjoy travelling. About one-half (55% of men and 51% of women) reported at least one overnight trip away from their community in the previous year. Fourteen



percent of men and 11% of women said they had been away four or more weeks. Two-thirds of men and about half (55%) of women who had been away four or more weeks travelled outside Canada. This amounted to an estimated 70,000 persons, equally divided between men and women. In comparison, only 40,000 people aged 75 and over said they took a trip of four weeks or longer inside Canada.

Many elderly who travel outside Canada for long periods of time are "snowbirds", leaving Canada during the winter for warmer climates. In 1991, 4% of older seniors were travelling outside Canada in February. Travel inside Canada was more likely to occur in summer, with 2% away from home during the peak month of July.

#### **Nearly as happy as younger people**

Older seniors have more health problems and physical limitations than younger people, their incomes are lower and they are more likely to have lost a spouse. Nonetheless, based on a widely used scale of well-being,<sup>2</sup> more than half (60%) of the group could be described as happy. People aged 15-74 were only slightly more likely (67%) than older seniors to be rated as happy.

Not surprisingly, stress, health and physical limitation problems were associated with more negative feelings. Seventy-two percent of those with no stress in their lives had scores indicating positive feelings, while only 25% of those who described their life as very stressful had similar feelings. Similarly, those reporting excellent health were more likely to have scores indicating positive feelings (78%) than those reporting poor health (27%). Twenty percent of those with physical limitations had scores indicating negative feelings, compared with only 7% of those

without physical limitations.

Three-quarters (76%) of people aged 75 and over with household incomes of \$40,000 and over in 1990 had scores indicating positive feelings. Over one-half (56%) of those with incomes under \$10,000 had scores in the happiness range, a figure comparable to that for older seniors as a whole.

Married people aged 75 and over were more likely to have positive feelings (65%) than those who were widowed (55%). Widows (57%), however, more often reported positive feelings than did widowers (49%).

<sup>2</sup> Based on the Bradburn scale of psychological well-being. See: Bradburn, N.M. *The structure of psychological well-being*. Chicago: Aldine, 1969. McDowell, I., and E. Praught. "On the measurement of happiness: an examination of the Bradburn scale in the Canada Health Survey." *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 1982; 116:949-58.

**Sandrine Prasil** is an analyst with the Household Surveys Division, Statistics Canada.

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# Are Young People Farming?

by Chris O'Toole and Marc Prud'homme

*The survival of many family farms may depend upon the ability of young farmers to adapt to a rapidly changing agricultural environment. Technological advances in machinery, chemicals and plant breeding have made today's farming less labour-intensive. Consequently, fewer farms, with a smaller agricultural labour force, are now producing historically high levels of output. Younger farmers have generally been the catalyst for this more efficient approach to agriculture. At the turn of the century, farmers required mainly a good understanding of agronomy to succeed. To remain competitive today, however, farmers must also understand principles of finance and management and be proficient users of the latest production methods.*

The 1980s were difficult for many Canadian farmers. During this period, commodity prices were depressed, debt loads increased and interest rates rose.

In addition, parts of the country were plagued by severe drought. The financial strains brought on by these events have taken their toll on farming communities. This has fostered the view that younger people do not perceive agriculture as a desirable career. The loss of young farmers could impede the application of new agricultural technologies and have a negative impact on rural development.

According to the Census of Agriculture, young farmers accounted for a decreasing proportion of all farmers during the last decade. However, comparing Revenue Canada taxation statistics from the 1960s to the 1990s, there is now a higher proportion of young farmers among those whose major source of income is agriculture. In addition, women represent an increasing share of these young farmers. Still, farmers tend to be older than non-farm business proprietors.

**Operators of census farms** The 1991 Census of Agriculture defined a farm operator as someone running a farming operation with annual sales of agricultural products of at least \$250. Based

on this definition, the number of operators has declined in the past fifty years. In 1991, there were 277,330 farmers,<sup>1</sup> down from a high of 732,800 in 1941.

According to the Census of Agriculture, young farmers accounted for a decreasing share of all farm operators since the early 1980s. Of all farmers in 1991, 16% were under age 35, down from 21% in 1981. Over the same period, the proportion of farmers aged 60 and over increased to 25% from 19%. Farmers aged 35-59 represented about 60% of all farmers in both years. As a result of these shifts in the age distribution, the average age of farmers increased to 49.1 in 1991 from 46.9 in 1981.

The recent decline in the proportion of young farmers is not necessarily indicative of a long-term trend. Throughout the century, there have been several short-term fluctuations in the proportion of young farmers. For example, the proportion of farmers under age 35 declined during the period 1921 to 1931, reflecting the stabilization of the number of young immigrants to rural Western Canada. Young farmers accounted for an increasing share of all farmers between 1941 and 1951, partly as a result of young veterans returning to farming after World War II. Following that period, the share of young farmers declined. However, between 1971 and 1981, the proportion

of farmers under age 35 rose again. During that decade, farming attracted many young people because of the possible financial returns from highly-priced agricultural products. Despite these events, the proportion of farmers under age 35 has remained in the mid-to-high teens throughout most of the century.

#### **Tax filers whose main source of income is farming**

Revenue Canada defines farmers differently than does the Census of Agriculture. According to Revenue Canada, a farmer is a tax filer whose major source of gross income (more than 50%) is from (unincorporated) self-employed farming. Thus, partners, such as spouses and children, are considered farmers by Revenue Canada if their farm income is greater than their non-farm income. Prior to 1991, the Census of Agriculture recorded only one operator per farm, and therefore, did not count partners as farm operators. Differences between the two definitions result in a disparity in the number and age distribution of farmers.

The proportion of young farmers whose major source of income is from self-employed farming is higher now than during the 1960s. According to Revenue Canada taxation statistics, between 1981 and 1990, about one-quarter of farmers were under age 35. The proportion of

younger farmers was much lower in the 1960s. During this time, those under age 35 never accounted for more than 18% of all farmers. Favourable conditions in agriculture during the 1970s resulted in an increasing share of younger farmers during this period. By 1980, their share had reached a 20-year-high of 28%, up from 18% in 1971.

From 1987 to 1990, farmers aged 60 and over represented 24% of all farmers. Despite a declining proportion in the late 1970s and early 1980s, their share was the same in the late 1980s as it was in the 1960s.

The proportion of farmers aged 35-59 has declined steadily since 1970 when it reached a high of 60%. In 1990 farmers aged 35-59 accounted for 53% of all farmers.

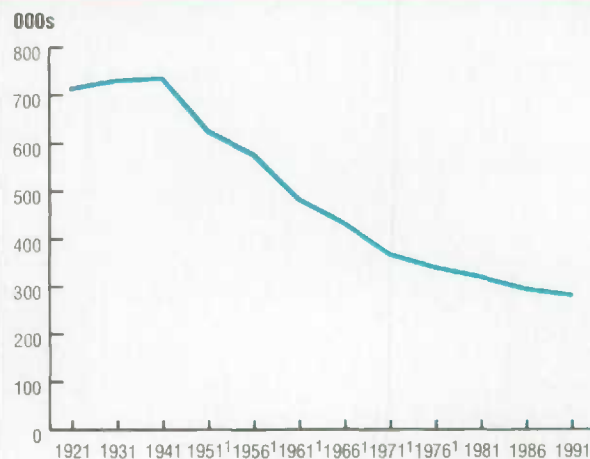
#### **Tax filers with some farm income**

The number of tax filers reporting at least some farm income increased to 423,240 in 1990 from 365,320 in 1971. The age distribution of these tax filers remained fairly constant over the two decades. However, from 1987 to 1990, the proportion of farmers in this group aged 60 and over was higher than that of farmers

<sup>1</sup> For comparability, 1991 Census figures include only the number one farm operator, although more than one could be reported that year.

#### **The number of census farms has dropped...**

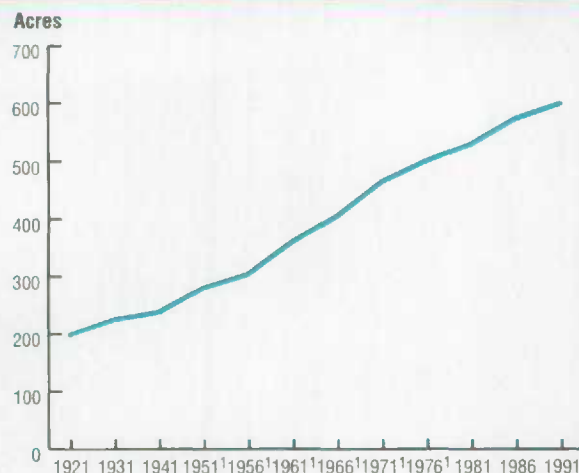
CST



<sup>1</sup> Includes data for the Yukon and Northwest Territories.  
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture.

#### **...but, average farm size has grown.**

CST



<sup>1</sup> Includes data for the Yukon and Northwest Territories.  
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture.



under age 35. The last time this occurred was in 1975.

The increase in the number of tax filers receiving at least some farm income is mainly due to an increase among those receiving less than 50% of their total income from farming. The number of farmers in this group increased to 184,010 in 1990 from 70,180 in 1971. In addition, the age distribution of these tax filers remained fairly constant over the same period.

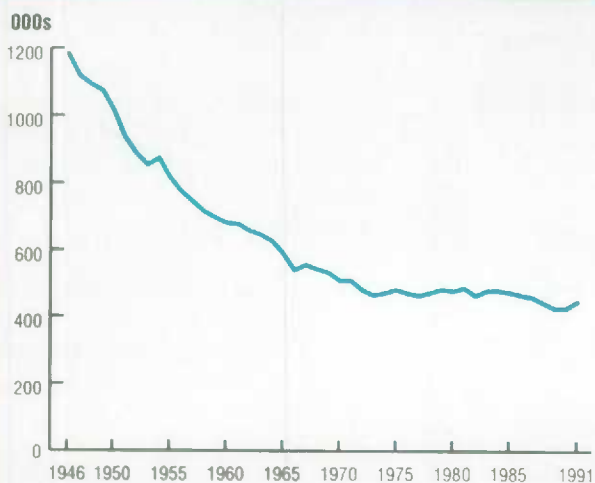
**Female farmers** In 1991, for the first time, more than one operator per farm could be recorded in the Census of Agriculture. Previously, the reporting operator was usually male. As a result, the role of women in agriculture was under-represented. Between 1971 and 1986, about 4% of farm operators were women. In 1991 the proportion jumped to 25%.

According to Revenue Canada taxation statistics, the proportion of female farmers increased over the last three decades. Women represented 19% of tax filers reporting farming as their major income source in 1990, up from 6% in 1963. Most of the increase was among female farmers under age 60. The proportion of women farmers under age 35 increased to 25% in 1990 from 3% in 1963. During the same time, those aged 35-59 increased their share to 56%, from 34%.



### The agricultural labour force has declined...

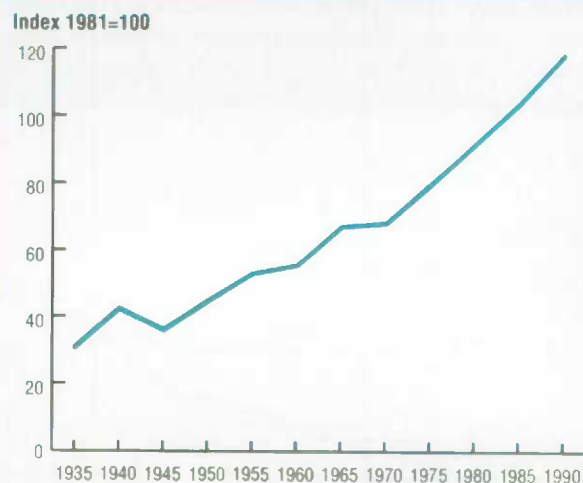
CST



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

### ...however, agricultural production has increased.

CST



Source: Statistics Canada, Agriculture Division, unpublished data

## CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER

CST

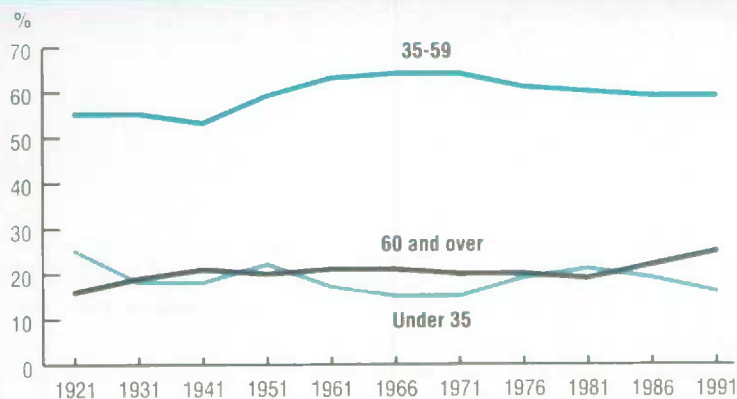
## The Census of Agriculture

The Census of Agriculture produces a profile of Canadian agriculture by providing statistics on topics, such as crop areas, number of livestock, weeks of farm labour, number and value of farm machinery, farm expenses and receipts, and land management practices.

Provisions were made under the *British North America (BNA) Act* of 1867 for a census to be taken every ten years starting in 1871. However, to monitor rapid growth in Western Canada during the turn of the century, the Census of Agriculture was taken every five years in Manitoba starting in 1896, and in Alberta and Saskatchewan beginning in 1906. By 1956 rapid economic growth and development created the need for national agricultural information at more frequent intervals. To meet this need, the five-year Census of Agriculture was extended to the entire country.

## Age distribution of census farmers, 1 1921-1991

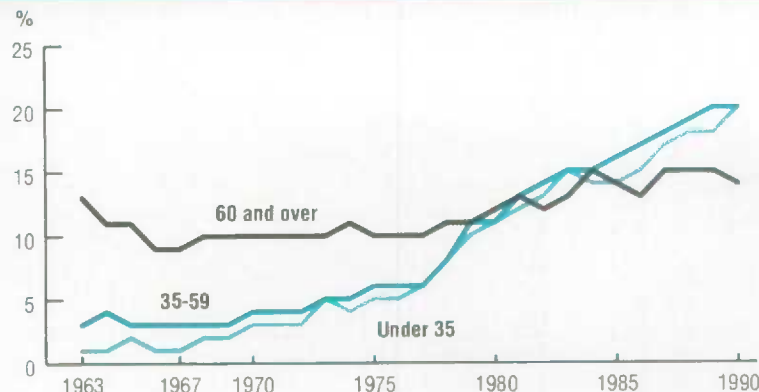
CST



<sup>1</sup> Someone operating a farming operation with annual sales of agricultural products of at least \$250.  
Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Agriculture.

## Female farmers as a percentage of all farmers, by age group, 1963-1990

CST



Source: Revenue Canada, Taxation Statistics.

Conversely, the share of those aged 60 and over decreased from 55% to 18%.

From 1977 to 1978, there was a sudden increase in the proportion of female farmers under age 35 (up 59%) and those aged 35-59 (up 68%). A legal precedent appears to have had an impact on the number of women formally involved in agriculture. Four highly publicized court cases in the mid-1970s concerned the rights of women in the farming operation. These cases may have contributed to an increase in women forming business partnerships with their husbands to ensure that the value of their labour was legally recorded.

## Comparison with business operators

More and more, family farms are looking like non-farm businesses. The resemblances are found in the capital outlays, the division of labour and management and the use of advanced technology. However, there are certain differences in the age distribution of farmers (with farming as the major source of income) and non-farm business operators (with business as the major source of income).

The proportion of young non-farm business proprietors almost doubled over the last three decades, to 32% in 1990 from 17% in 1963. Over the same period, the proportion aged 35-59 rose slightly to 60% from 54%. Older non-farm business proprietors represented 9% of the total in 1990, the lowest proportion since 1963.

Since 1978 the average incomes of farmers have been higher than those of non-farm business operators, ranging from 1% higher in 1978 to 26% higher in 1981. In 1990 the average income of farmers was 6% higher than that of non-farm business proprietors (\$18,012 compared with \$16,957). The average income of young farmers, however, equalled that of young non-farm business proprietors that year.

**Chris O'Toole** is an analyst with Farm Finance and Stabilization Division, Agriculture Canada and **Marc Prud'homme** is an analyst with *Canadian Social Trends*.





# SOCIAL INDICATORS

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
<b>POPULATION</b>								
Canada, June 1 (000s)	25,165.4	25,353.0	25,617.3	25,909.2	26,240.3	26,610.4	27,004.4 <sup>PD</sup>	27,402.2 <sup>PR</sup>
Annual growth (%)	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.5 <sup>PD</sup>	1.5 <sup>PR</sup>
Immigration <sup>1</sup>	84,062	88,051	125,696	152,285	174,495	199,527	221,798	236,723 <sup>R</sup>
Emigration <sup>1</sup>	46,252	44,816	51,040	40,528	37,437	39,650	39,201	42,503 <sup>PR</sup>
<b>FAMILY</b>								
Birth rate (per 1,000)	14.8	14.7	14.4	14.5	15.0	15.3	14.9	*
Marriage rate (per 1,000)	7.3	6.9	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.1	6.4	*
Divorce rate (per 1,000)	2.4	3.1	3.4	3.1	3.1	2.9	2.8	*
Families experiencing unemployment (000s)	990	915	872	789	776	841	1,046	1,132
<b>LABOUR FORCE</b>								
Total employment (000s)	11,221	11,531	11,861	12,244	12,486	12,572	12,340	12,240
– goods sector (000s)	3,425	3,477	3,553	3,693	3,740	3,626	3,423	3,307
– service sector (000s)	7,796	8,054	8,308	8,550	8,745	8,946	8,917	8,933
Total unemployment (000s)	1,311	1,215	1,150	1,031	1,018	1,109	1,417	1,556
Unemployment rate (%)	10.5	9.5	8.8	7.8	7.5	8.1	10.3	11.3
Part-time employment (%)	15.5	15.5	15.2	15.4	15.1	15.4	16.4	16.8
Women's participation rate (%)	54.6	55.3	56.4	57.4	57.9	58.4	58.2	57.6
Unionization rate – % of paid workers	34.4	34.1	33.3	33.7	34.1	34.7	*	*
<b>INCOME</b>								
Median family income	34,736	36,858	38,851	41,238	44,460	46,069	46,742	*
% of families with low income (1986 Base)	14.3	13.6	13.1	12.2	11.1	12.1	13.1	*
Women's full-time earnings as a % of men's	64.9	65.8	65.9	65.3	65.8	67.6	69.6	*
<b>EDUCATION</b>								
Elementary and secondary enrolment (000s)	4,927.8	4,938.0	4,972.9	5,024.1	5,074.4	5,141.0	5,221.1 <sup>P</sup>	5,287.7 <sup>e</sup>
Full-time postsecondary enrolment (000s)	789.8	796.9	805.4	816.9	832.3	856.5	890.5 <sup>P</sup>	921.3 <sup>e</sup>
Doctoral degrees awarded	2,000	2,218	2,384	2,415	2,600	2,672	2,947	3,140 <sup>P</sup>
Government expenditure on education – as a % of GDP	6.0	5.7	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.5	*	*
<b>HEALTH</b>								
% of deaths due to cardiovascular disease – men	41.7	41.4	40.5	39.5	39.1	37.3	37.1	*
– women	45.3	44.9	44.0	43.4	42.6	41.2	41.0	*
% of deaths due to cancer – men	25.4	25.9	26.4	27.0	27.2	27.8	28.1	*
– women	25.7	25.5	26.1	26.4	26.4	26.8	27.0	*
Government expenditure on health – as a % of GDP	5.8	6.0	5.9	5.9	6.0	6.2	*	*
<b>JUSTICE</b>								
Crime rates (per 100,000) – violent	749	808	856	898	948	1,013	1,099	*
– property	5,560	5,714	5,731	5,630	5,503	5,844	6,395	*
– homicide	2.8	2.2	2.5	2.2	2.5	2.5	3.0	*
<b>GOVERNMENT</b>								
Expenditures on social programmes <sup>2</sup> (1990 \$000,000)	155,990.6	157,737.2	160,670.7	164,293.2	170,125.0	175,640.0	*	*
– as a % of total expenditures	55.8	56.4	56.1	56.2	56.2	56.7	*	*
– as a % of GDP	26.2	26.1	25.5	24.7	25.0	26.3	*	*
UI beneficiaries (000s)	3,181.5	3,136.7	3,079.9	3,016.4	3,025.2	3,261.0	3,663.0	3,658.0
OAS and OAS/GIS beneficiaries <sup>m</sup> (000s)	2,569.5	2,652.2	2,748.5	2,835.1	2,919.4	3,005.8	3,098.5	3,180.5
Canada Assistance Plan beneficiaries <sup>m</sup> (000s)	1,923.3	1,892.9	1,904.9	1,853.0	1,856.1	1,930.1	2,282.2	2,723.0
<b>ECONOMIC INDICATORS</b>								
GDP (1986 \$) – annual % change	+4.8	+3.3	+4.2	+5.0	+2.3	-0.5	-1.7	+0.9
Annual inflation rate (%)	3.9	4.2	4.4	4.0	5.0	4.8	5.6	1.5
Urban housing starts	139,408	170,863	215,340	189,635	183,323	150,620	130,094	140,126

– Not available    \* Not yet available    P Preliminary data    ° Estimate    <sup>m</sup> Figures as of March

PD Final postcensal estimates (1987-1992 population estimates are still based on 1986 census counts)

PR Updated postcensal estimates

<sup>R</sup> Updated data

<sup>1</sup>For year ending May 31<sup>st</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Includes Protection of Persons and Property; Health; Social Services; Education; Recreation and Culture.



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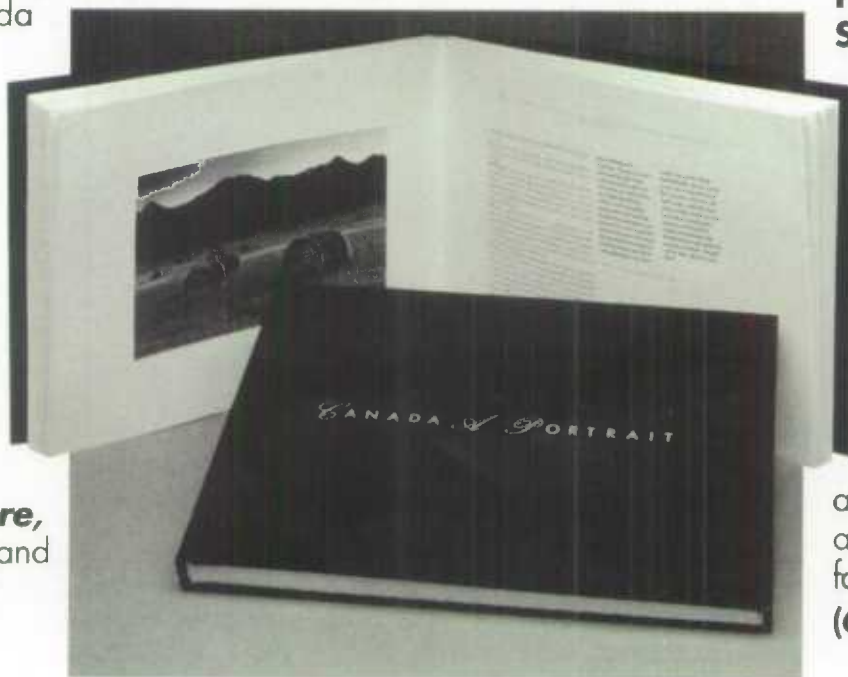
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