

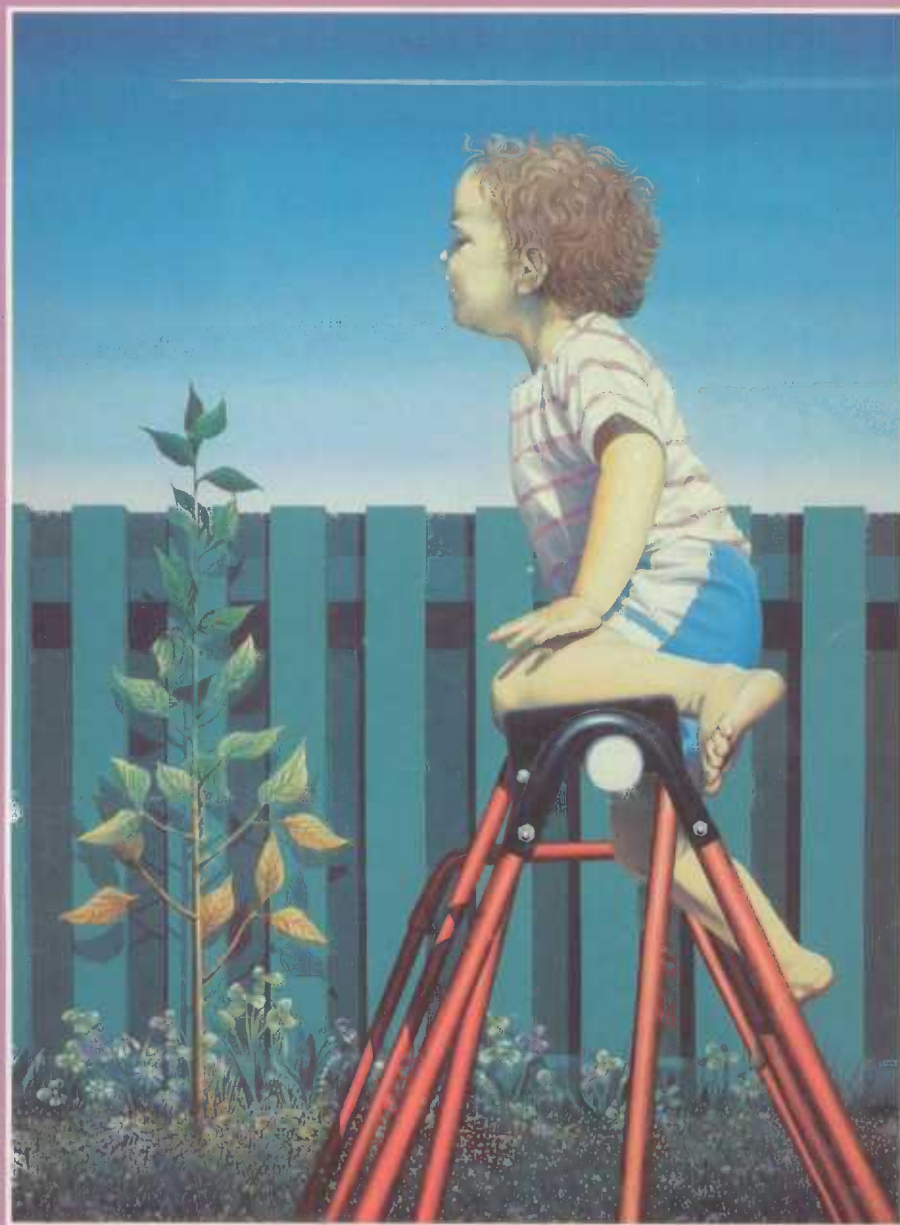
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SOCIAL TRENDS



MARRIAGE ☐ STREET PROSTITUTION



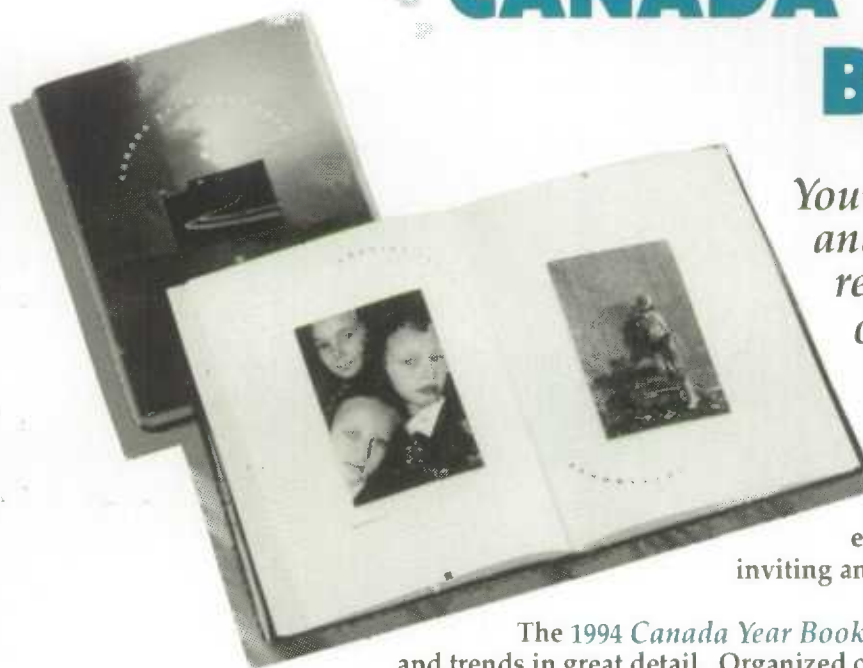
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About the artist:

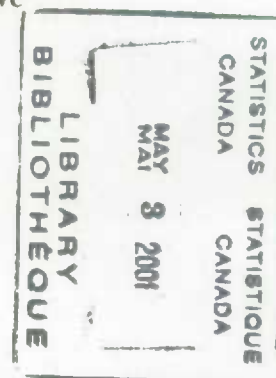
Born in West Germany (1936), **Horst Guilhauman** received his initial education in graphic arts in Germany. Mr. Guilhauman immigrated to Canada in 1967 and has established himself as a leading exponent of "renouveau romantique" painting in Canada. His work is story-telling at its best, as he captures his subjects in their own intimate environment. He currently resides in Wolfville, Nova Scotia.



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Marriage in Canada

Changing
Beliefs and
Behaviours
1600-1990

Adapted by Jillian Oderkirk

From Jean Dumas, *Report on the Demographic Situation in Canada, 1992*, Statistics Canada Catalogue 91-508 and Jean Dumas and Yves Péron, *Marriage and Cohabitation in Canada*, Statistics Canada Catalogue 91-534E.

From the beginning of Canada's colonial period until the 1960s, most Canadians viewed marriage as a lifetime commitment, and the only circumstances under which a couple could live together and raise a family. In the past twenty-five years, however, attitudes toward marriage have changed profoundly. Marriage is no longer necessarily a lifetime commitment, as a large minority of couples now divorce. Many Canadians of all ages do not consider marriage a necessary prerequisite to living with a partner and have chosen common-law arrangements – sometimes temporary, sometimes permanent. Mainly for this reason, births outside of marriage are not as unusual and the legal distinction between legitimate and illegitimate births has been abolished.

Although these changes have affected the stability and exclusivity of marriage, they have not caused the institution to disappear. Indeed, the majority of Canadians are still expected to marry, at least once, before their 50th birthday. Compared with twenty-five years ago, however, marriage is now less prevalent, occurs later in life and often does not last long enough for couples to raise their families.

Marriage beliefs and practices From its remote origins, the traditional marital institution was a means of passing assets, real or symbolic, from one generation to another. Satisfaction of spouses was not considered very important and dissatisfaction with a marriage was not grounds for breaking a union. This rationale for traditional marriage made divorce virtually impossible and marriage annulments were almost the only way to terminate a union. Divorce only became possible when marriage began to be based on spousal affection and fulfilment. When such fulfilment lapsed, spouses could seek a break of the union. Despite this, few divorces occurred. At that time, large families were common, and the resultant childrearing responsibilities limited women's access to the labour market. The institution of marriage was also reinforced by churches that considered the union sacred.

Social changes in the last few decades, however, have eroded these century-old beliefs and practices. The change with perhaps the greatest impact was the emergence

of widely available, reliable birth-control methods. This facilitated a huge decrease in fertility and family size and, in turn, gave women greater opportunity to achieve financial independence. Following these changes, it became more difficult for religious institutions to keep couples together who wanted to break their marriage bonds. Increased societal demand for legal dissolution of marriages led to the emergence of laws liberalizing divorce.

Colonization: men married late, women married early During Canada's colonization in the 17th century, Europeans emigrating to Canada predominantly were men. The imbalance between the genders resulted in women marrying at young ages and in men, many of whom had difficulty finding a partner, marrying at older ages or not at all. Data from this period are limited to the colony of New France.

In New France, Roman Catholic marriage and the civil laws of France were adopted and records of marriages were maintained by the church. Divorce was illegal because the Roman Catholic religion considered marriage a sacrament that could not be dissolved, even after the physical separation of spouses.

Most early Quebec settlers were unmarried men who came to the colony as soldiers or indentured workers. Because there were few women to accommodate the resultant demand for wives, Louis XIV of France recruited 800 young women of marriageable age to travel to the colony between 1663 and 1673. Nonetheless, before 1700 there were still two men for every woman among the colonists. This imbalance resulted in a high proportion of early marriages among women born between 1640 and 1679. The average age at first marriage of women was 20, while the average age of men was 28. The imbalance lessened for those born from 1700 to 1739. Women's age at first marriage increased to 23, while that of men fell slightly to 27.

During 19th century, many married late or not at all Cultural beliefs among people in Canada in the 1800s, most of whom were immigrants from Northern and Western Europe, reflected those prevalent in their countries of origin. In Northern and Western Europe, children

who were not heirs to the family estate usually left the family home when they married. In contrast, in Southern and Eastern Europe, it was common for married children to remain in one of their parent's households.

Throughout this period, households were the unit for the production of goods and services, and setting up an independent home required a large investment. To afford a marriage, young people in Northern and Western Europe often had to spend several years doing paid work. As a result, it was common for people to be either older when they married or to remain single.

Estimated from census records, the average age at marriage for both Canadian men and women in the 1800s was high. For example, among those born from 1821 to 1830,¹ the average age at first marriage was 26 for men and 23 for women. Among those born four decades later, 1861 to 1870, the average age at marriage rose to 29 for men and to 26 for women.

Fewer men and women born during the second half of the 19th century married than did their predecessors. The proportion of men still single at age 50 increased from 10% of those born from 1826 to 1845 to a high of 15% of those born from 1861 to 1865. Of men born during the remaining decades of the 19th century, the proportion who never married fluctuated between 13% and 14%. The pattern was similar among women, with the proportion who were still single at age 50 rising from just under 11% of those born before 1846 to 12% of those born from 1851 to 1870. Among women born during the remaining decades of the century, the proportion was about 11%.

Divorce unobtainable in 19th century Ontario and Quebec Before Confederation, English civil law, which recognized religious marriages and civil marriages conducted by public officials, was established in the provinces, with the exception of Quebec. Under English civil law, cohabitation between unmarried people was considered a common-law marriage if the relationship was stable or resulted in children. Such unions were

¹ The average age at first marriage of birth cohorts includes only those married before age 50.

unusual, however, as most couples married. The various colonies were free to adopt English divorce laws, although only New Brunswick and Nova Scotia did so before Confederation. In Quebec, which maintained its own Civil Code under provisions of the *Quebec Act* of 1774, divorce was not legal.

The *British North America Act* of 1867, the terms of Confederation, respected regional diversity in marriage laws. Provincial legislatures were granted authority over marriage and the definition

of its legal effects, marriage annulment and legal separation. Jurisdiction over divorce was shared between the federal parliament that enacted the law and the provincial legislatures that gave their courts authority to grant divorces. Quebec and Ontario did not endow their courts with this authority and thus, divorce was unobtainable in Canada's two most populated provinces.

Conscription during World War II led to earlier marriages As was the case for

Canadians in the 19th century, those born during the early 20th century tended to marry late, and many did not marry at all – more than one-in-ten remained single at age 50. The economic problems of the early 1930s contributed to the postponement of many marriages. Among those born from 1906 to 1914, the average age at first marriage was 28 for men and 25 for women.

World War II caused an upswing in marriages culminating in 1940, 1941 and 1942. Canada entered the war in 1939, but was geographically far from the battlefield, and thus initially sent only career soldiers and volunteers. Conscription was extensively debated and was not decided upon until a 1942 referendum. During these years of uncertainty, the prospect of being drafted into the armed forces was a potent stimulant to marriage for young single men, since they would be called first to go to war. Among those born during the last half of the 1910s and early 1920s, the average age at first marriage dropped to 27 for men and to 24 for women.

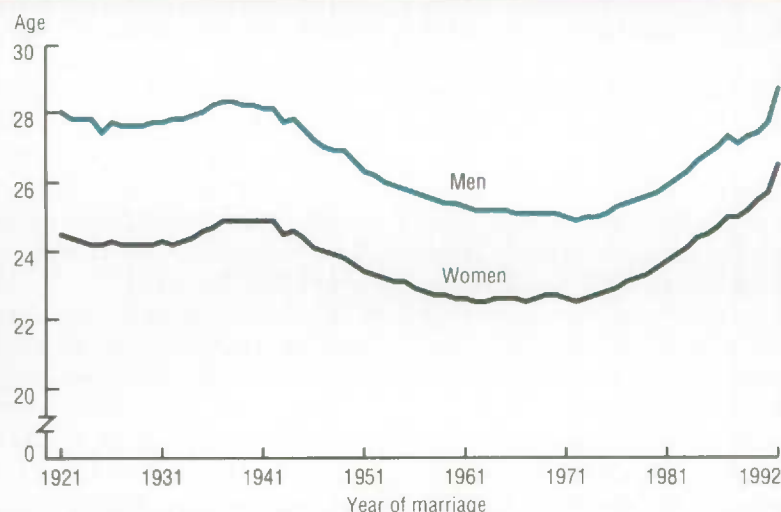
Marriage earlier and more universal from mid-1940s to 1970 The generations who married following World War II, from the mid-1940s to the 1960s, were not only more likely to marry than their elders, but to do so at increasingly younger ages. The average age at first marriage among men dropped from 26 among those born from 1924 to 1929 to 25 among those born from 1930 to 1938. For women, the average age at first marriage fell from 23 among those born from 1924 to 1932 to 22 among those born from 1933 to 1938. In addition, the proportion remaining single at age 50 also dropped to under 5% of those born during the 1930s.

Those born in the 1940s also showed a strong tendency to marry. As of 1988, only 5% of those born from 1939 to 1943 had not married by age 45 and only 8% of those born from 1944 to 1948 had not married by age 40.

Since 1973, marriage is less common and occurs later in life It was not until 1973 that marriage rates among single people began dropping significantly and uninterruptedly, reaching levels in the 1980s and 1990s comparable with those at the height of the Great Depression. This decline led to a corresponding increase in

Average age at first marriage, 1921 to 1992

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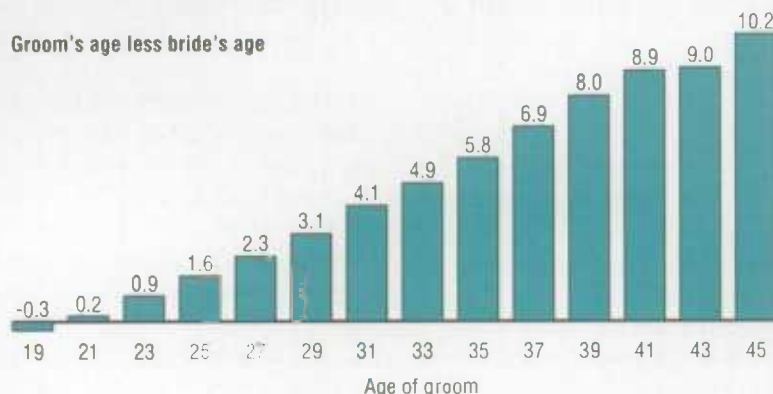


Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 91-534E.

Age difference between spouses, by age of groom at marriage,¹ 1987

CST

Groom's age less bride's age



¹ Includes only marriages between two single people.
Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 91-534E.

the proportion of young singles, which also reached or surpassed 1930s' levels.

Today, first marriages are not only less prevalent, they are also taking place later. By 1992, the average age at first marriage was 29 for men and 27 for women. This is an increase, for both genders, of three years since 1989 and four years since 1980. In contrast, during the 1960s and most of the 1970s, the average age at first marriage remained stable at 25 for men and 23 for women.

Following the propensity to marry observed in 1990, only 631 of every 1,000 men and 674 of every 1,000 women in Canada are expected to marry at least once before age 50. In contrast, from 1939 to 1972, total first marriage rates remained above 900 of every 1,000 men and women. Since the early 1970s, however, total marriage rates declined below 900 per 1,000, falling steadily to under 700 per 1,000 by 1980. This was the first time since the Great Depression that marriage rates were this low.

The total marriage rate in 1990 varied across Canada, particularly between Ontario and Quebec. Ontario appears to be a more traditional society with the highest total marriage rates of all provinces and territories. In 1990, 725 of every 1,000 men and 769 of every 1,000 women in Ontario were expected to marry at least once before age 50. In contrast, total marriage rates in Quebec, 438 per 1,000 men and 481 per 1,000 women, were the lowest in Canada with the exception of the Northwest Territories. In the Northwest Territories, where there is a large Aboriginal population among whom legal unions have always been less common, only 363 per 1,000 men and 372 per 1,000 women in 1990 were expected to marry at least once before age 50.

Divorce laws liberalized in 1968 Legal separation and annulment are integrated into Canadian civil laws and for centuries have been accepted by Christian churches, including the Roman Catholic Church. Until the 20th century, these were the only two recourses available to married couples in most provinces. Provincial courts have been empowered to grant divorce only since 1930 in Ontario, since 1945 in Prince Edward Island and since 1968 in Quebec and Newfoundland. Before then, it was possible to submit requests for divorce to

the federal parliament, but such requests were few. Existing laws were very restrictive and, generally, divorce was only granted with proof of adultery.

It was only after the 1968 *Divorce Act* that divorce became truly accessible in all provinces. This Act was innovative because it recognized lasting separation as sufficient grounds for divorce. The Act required that when a divorce was requested, an abandoned spouse must have been separated for three years and a departing spouse, for five years.

Couples already separated at the time of the Act were the first to benefit from this provision. Thus, these couples accounted for a more than doubling of divorces between 1968 (11,300) and 1970 (29,800). The first divorces under these new grounds were not granted until July 1971. After that, the number of divorces rose from 32,400 in 1972 to 54,200 in 1976.

A new *Divorce Act* that came into effect in the spring of 1986 resulted in an increase in divorces in 1986 and 1987. This Act reduced the minimum separation time to one year until a divorce could be granted. A decrease in divorces in 1984 and 1985 suggests that some couples, anticipating new legislation, postponed their divorce requests until after the Act came into effect. The number of divorces in the late 1980s peaked at 90,900 in 1987 before falling to 78,200 in 1990.

Marriages can be legally dissolved by either the death of a spouse, a divorce or an annulment. Since 1980, the proportion of legal marriages dissolved by divorce has risen dramatically and, as a result, divorce is rapidly becoming nearly as important a factor in marital dissolutions as the death of a spouse. While divorce accounted for only 2% of marriage dissolutions between the two world wars, it represented 9% to 12% of dissolutions during the 1950s and 1960s. Its share climbed to 28% in the early 1970s and reached 42% in 1990.

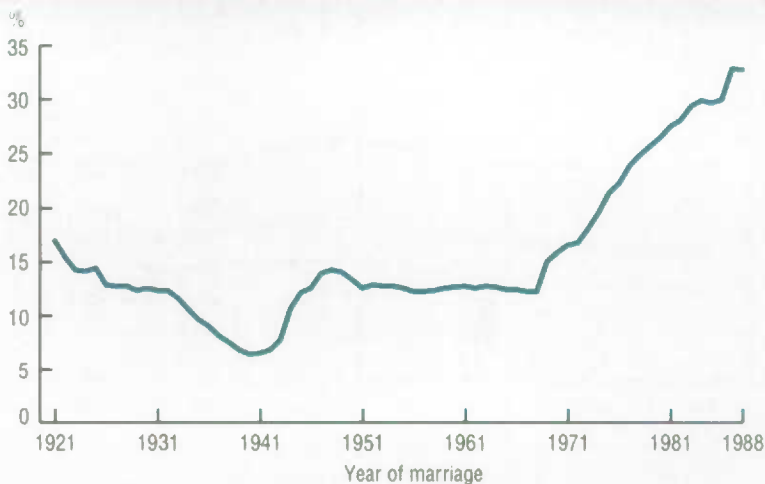
Rising divorce rates lead to an increase in remarriage

Since the late 1960s, divorce has become more common and divorce rates have risen substantially. According to the 1990 total divorce rate, 3,800 of every 10,000 marriages would end in divorce before 25 years, an increase of almost three times since 1969 (1,400 per 10,000). Consequently, the annual number of people becoming eligible for remarriage has grown considerably, since each divorce adds two new people to the marriage pool, whereas the death of a spouse adds only one.

Unlike most widowed people, many re-entering the marriage pool after divorce are still at an age when the likelihood of finding a new partner is high. This continuous influx of many young marriageable

Proportion of marriages in which at least one spouse was previously married, 1921 to 1988

CST



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 91-534E.

people has triggered a steep annual increase in remarriages since the 1960s. Over the same period, first marriages between single people have fallen sharply. This is partly because of an increase in the number of single people marrying divorced people and also because many single people are living common law.

Up to 1968, over 90% of both men and women who married were single before their marriage and the proportion who were divorced was less than 5%. Since then, the proportion of newly-married people who were single before their marriage has continued to decline for both genders. By 1988, about 75% of men and

women were single before their marriage, while about 20% were divorced. Combining people who had been widowed as well as those who were divorced, one-third of all marriages in 1988 included at least one spouse who was remarrying.

Early marriages most unstable

Marriages among teenagers are the most likely to result in divorce. From 1976 to 1987, the annual divorce rate for every 10,000 first marriages of men who were aged 15-19 at the time of their marriage was more than 5,000 every year except 1985 when it was 4,700.² Similarly, over that period, the divorce rate for every

10,000 women who married when they were aged 15-19 was more than 4,000 each year. In contrast, divorce rates among those aged 25 and older at the time of their first marriage were much lower. From 1976 to 1987, the annual number of divorces for 10,000 first marriages of people aged 25 and over at the time of their marriage was fewer than 4,000 among men and fewer than 3,500 among women each year.

Marriages of divorced women tend to be more unstable than those of single people or divorced men. This may be because divorced women often have custody of children from their previous marriages. In 1985, there were 1,600 divorces for every 10,000 marriages between a divorced woman and a single man, and 1,500 divorces for every 10,000 marriages between a divorced woman and a divorced man. In contrast, there were 1,300 divorces for every 10,000 marriages between a divorced man and a single woman, the same rate as that for marriages between two single people.

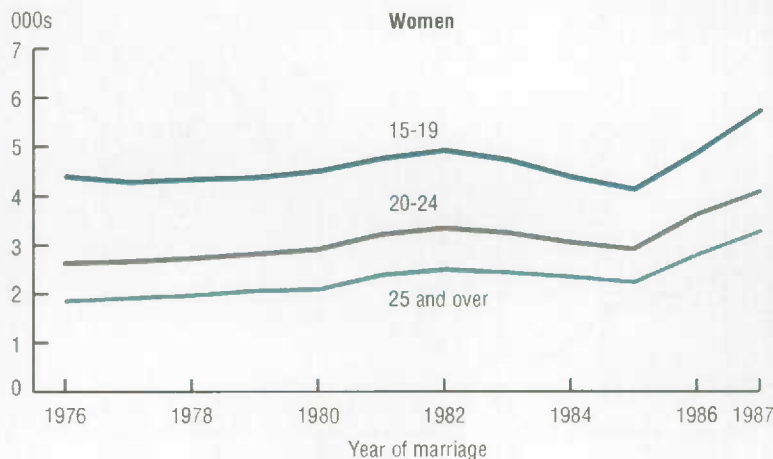
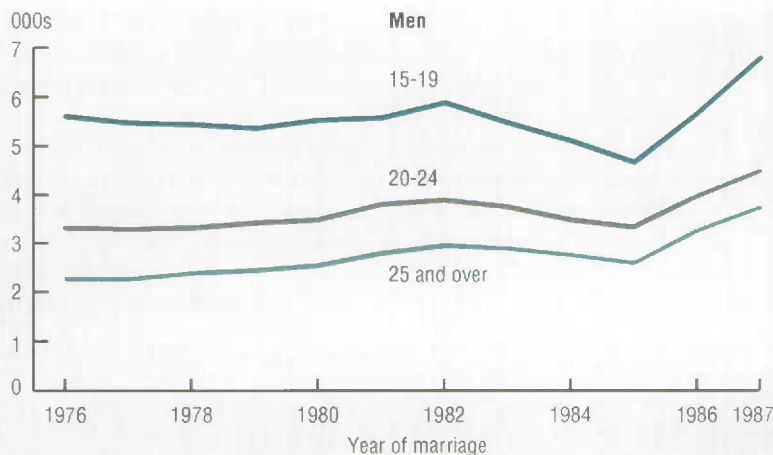
Cohabitation before marriage For three centuries, Canadians considered marriage necessary for establishing a conjugal relationship and, accordingly, people's first marriage coincided with the beginning of their first union. However, with each new generation born since World War II, marriage has become a less and less common part of early conjugal life.

According to the 1990 General Social Survey (GSS), people born just before or during World War II were the last to almost exclusively marry before living together as a couple. Among people aged 45-54 in 1990, only 5% of men and 2% of women had lived common law before marriage or before age 30. Following them, those born from 1946 to 1955, the first members of the baby boom, reached marriageable age at the same time that modern contraceptive methods became widely available. Among this group, 19% of men and 16% of women had lived common law before marriage or before age 30. Subsequent generations have been involved in common-law unions in greater numbers. Among those born from 1956 to 1960, 40% of men and 36% of women had lived common law before marriage or before age 30. Even higher proportions are expected for those born

Divorce rate for first marriages, by age at marriage, 1976 to 1987

CST

Divorces per 10,000 marriages



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 91-534E.

during the 1960s, many of whom are choosing common-law unions over marriage in early conjugal life.

According to the 1990 GSS, common-law unions were often a prelude to marriage. Slightly more than half of common-law unions formed during the 1970s resulted in marriages between the same partners. Of unions formed during the first half of the 1980s, more than 40% had been legalized at the time of the survey (42% among men and 46% among women). Presumably, for many couples, marriage is often already planned or expected when the union begins.

Most who reported that their first union was by common law were no longer living

common law in 1990, but had married either their common-law partner or another person. This was true for 75% of those who began a common-law union during the 1970s. For those who entered a common-law union during the first half of the 1980s, the proportion who were married by the time of the survey was lower (51% of men and 59% of women), but could increase with time.

In addition, most first common-law unions had led quite rapidly to either marriage or separation. Among those who entered their first union between 1980 and 1984, only 16% of men and 12% of women were still living common law with their first partner in 1990. The corresponding

proportions were even lower among first unions formed before 1980.

Future trends uncertain Following three centuries of relative stability, the institution of marriage has been in turmoil since the 1970s and the future of the institution is unclear. Marriage has become less of a prerequisite for a couple to live together and has tended to vanish from early conjugal life. Marriage also seems increasingly fragile, as marriage breakdown occurs more frequently and with increasing ease. Nevertheless, it appears that most singles who live common law eventually marry and many divorced people remarry.

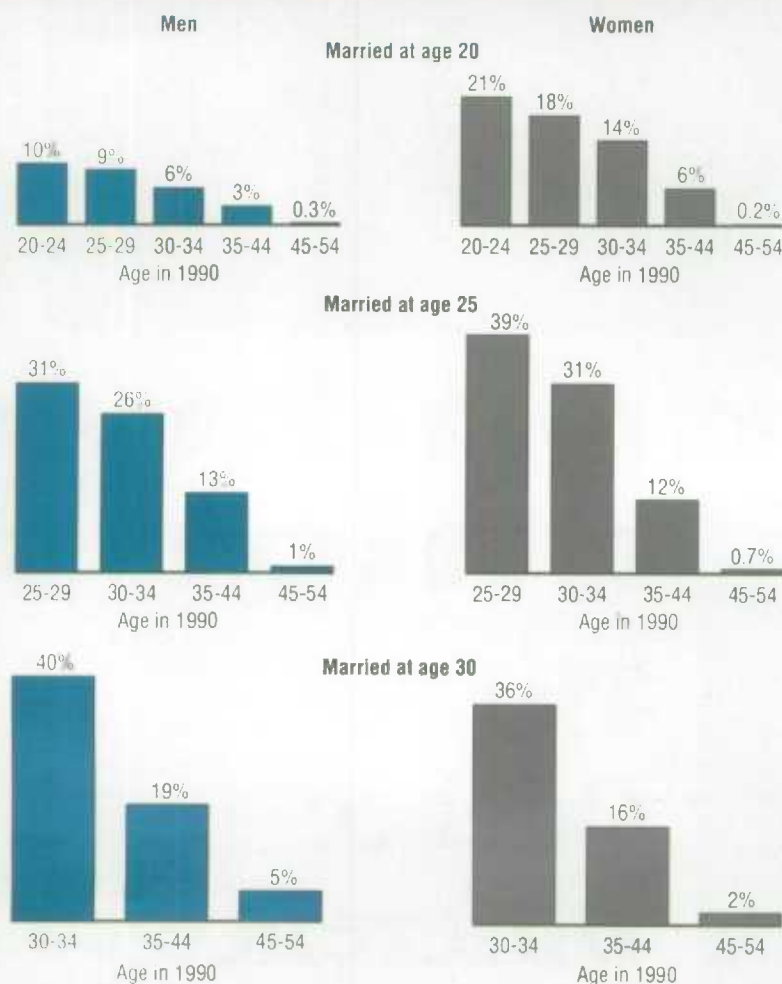
Increasing marital instability combined with decreasing fertility affects society in several ways. More and more adults alternate between conjugal and solo-living periods, and there are fewer children. Private pacts between partners – common-law unions – whose terms can be questioned at any time by either partner without any social sanction, increasingly are being favoured over marriages. In addition, more and more children are being born into common-law families and as a result, divorce indices increasingly underestimate union breakdown and the formation of lone-parent families.

² The annual divorce rate includes all divorces from marriages lasting up to 25 years (90% of all divorces).

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

Proportion of Canadians who lived together before marriage, 1990

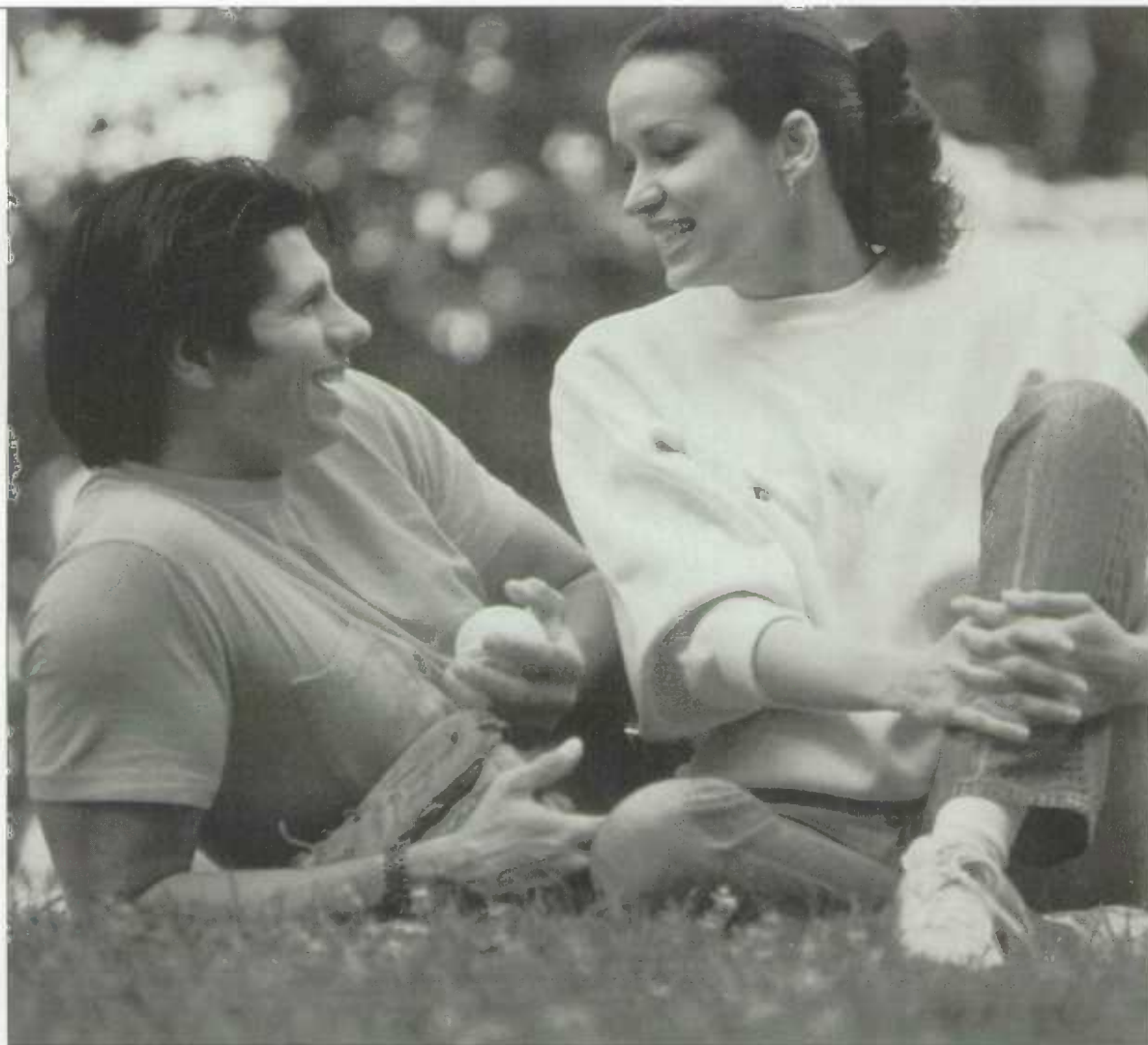
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Source: Statistics Canada, 1990 General Social Survey.



1994 International Year of the Family
Année internationale de la famille



common-law unions

People across Canada are increasingly choosing to live as couples outside the traditional legal bonds of marriage. This trend toward living common law, however, has been much more pronounced in Quebec than in other provinces. By 1991, the proportion of couples living common law in Quebec was double that in the other provinces, regardless of the age of common-law partners or the presence of children.

The Quebec Difference

by Jo-Anne Belliveau,
Jillian Oderkirk and
Cynthia Silver

The increasing prevalence of common-law unions reflects changing societal attitudes about the role of social and religious institutions in couples' living arrangements and in family life. This may be particularly true in Quebec where the institution of marriage has been strongly influenced by the Roman Catholic Church for most of the province's history. The decision to live common law also reflects individual needs and concerns. Some couples may choose this living arrangement to benefit from the financial advantages of sharing living expenses, without risking the emotional, legal and financial entanglements of a marriage. Other couples may live common law to assess their compatibility before entering into a legal marriage. Still others may believe that marriage is not necessarily a prerequisite to sustaining a long-term relationship and raising a family.

1.45 million living common law in 1991

In 1991, 1.45 million Canadians were living common law, an increase of almost 50% from 974,000 in 1986 and about double the number in 1981, 713,000. During that decade, however, increases were much faster in Quebec than elsewhere in Canada. In Quebec, the number of people living common law increased 154% to 614,000 in 1991, compared with an increase of 76% in the rest of Canada. As a result, 42% of Canadians living common law were in Quebec in 1991, while only one-quarter of the total adult population lived there.

The proportion of families comprised of common-law couples increased to 10% in 1991 from 7% in 1986 and 6% in 1981. Over the same period, the proportion of married-couple families dropped to 77% from 83% and that of lone-parent families rose to 13% from 11%. Again, changes were much more dramatic in Quebec than those elsewhere in Canada. In Quebec, common-law families accounted for 16% of all families in 1991, more than double the proportion in 1981 (7%). In the rest of Canada, however, the proportion of common-law families rose to only 8% from 5%.

Rapid growth in common law in Quebec since 1981 In 1991, 19% of all couples¹ with or without children in Quebec were living common law, more than double the proportion in all other

provinces combined (9%). That year, individual provincial proportions ranged from 7% in Prince Edward Island and 8% in Newfoundland to 10% in Alberta and 11% in British Columbia.

The large difference between Quebec and the other provinces in the proportion of couples living common law is a recent phenomenon. In 1981, the proportion of couples in Quebec that chose a common-law arrangement was only 8%, just two percentage points higher than that for all other provinces (6%). That year, the proportion of couples living common law in Alberta and British Columbia equalled that in Quebec.

Of couples with children in Quebec, the percentage living common law more than tripled to 14% in 1991 from 4% in 1981. Over the same period, the proportion for all provinces outside of Quebec doubled to 6% from 3%. Among couples without children in Quebec, the proportion living common law almost doubled to 48% in 1991 from 26% in 1981. In the other provinces, it increased to 24% from 17%.

Almost two-thirds of young childless couples in Quebec were living common law

In Quebec, of couples in which the woman was under age 35 and there were no children, 61% were living common law in 1991. This proportion was almost double that of the provinces outside of Quebec (32%). Although older couples with no children were less likely than

their younger counterparts to be living common law, proportions were higher at all ages in Quebec than in the other provinces. Among couples with no children in which the wife was aged 45-54, for example, 24% were living common law in Quebec, compared with 11% in the other provinces.

Common-law families have fewer and younger children

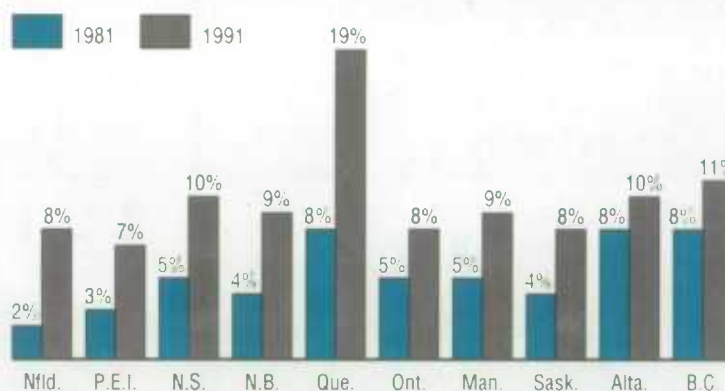
Across the provinces, common-law couples are less likely than married couples to have children. However, since 1981, the proportion of common-law families with children has been rising. In 1991, 41% of common-law families had children living at home, up from 34% in 1981. In contrast, 62% of married-couple families had children at home in 1991, down from 66% in 1981. The rising proportion of common-law families with children is due, at least in part, to common-law couples having children of their own. Another contributing factor is the increasing proportion of older people, who may have children from a previous relationship, living common law.

Common-law families in the provinces tend to have fewer children living at home than do married-couple families. In 1991, 54% of common-law couples with children had only one child, compared with 35% of married couples with children.

¹ Couples include both married and common-law partners and are referred to in Statistics Canada publications as husband-wife families.

Proportion of all couples¹ living common law, by province, 1981 and 1991

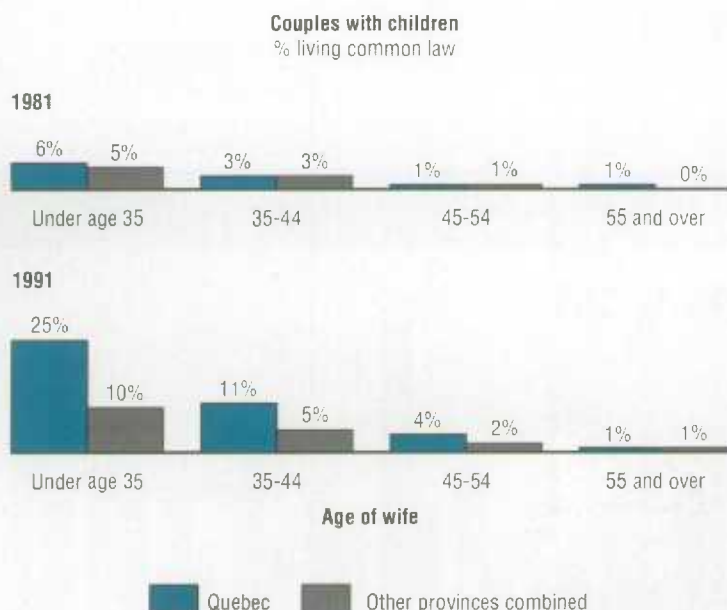
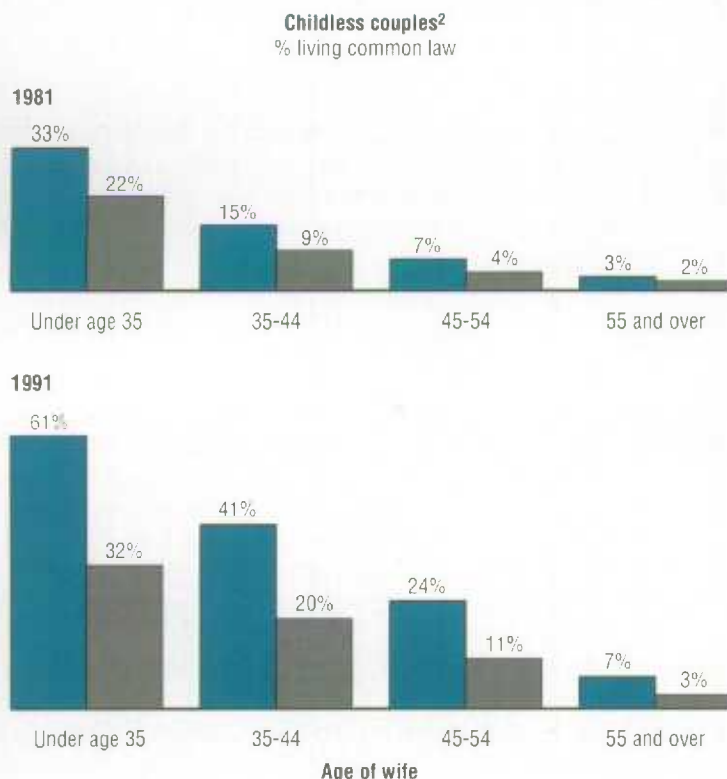
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¹ Includes married and common-law couples with and without children.
Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogues 93-312 and 93-320.

Proportion of all couples¹ living common law, Quebec and other provinces combined, 1981 and 1991

CST



¹ Includes married and common-law couples.

² Includes only couples who have not yet had children.

Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 93-320.

Also, among those with children, only 13% of common-law couples had three or more children, compared with 21% of married couples.

In 1991, among those with children, common-law couples were much more likely (54%) than married couples (34%) to have at least one child under age 6. At the same time, only 13% of common-law families had children aged 18 and over, compared with 34% of married-couple families. This is due mainly to the greater prevalence of common-law unions among young adults than among older people.

Common-law couples in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces generally were more likely than those in Ontario and the Western provinces to have children at home, a pattern similar to that among married-couple families. The proportion of common-law couples with at least one child ranged from a high of 52% in Newfoundland to a low of 37% in British Columbia.

Among the provinces, common-law couples with children in Quebec and Saskatchewan were the most likely to have at least one child under age six (60% each). In contrast, those in Ontario (44%), Nova Scotia (48%) and British Columbia (49%) were the least likely to have children that young.

One-quarter of young Quebec couples with children living common law

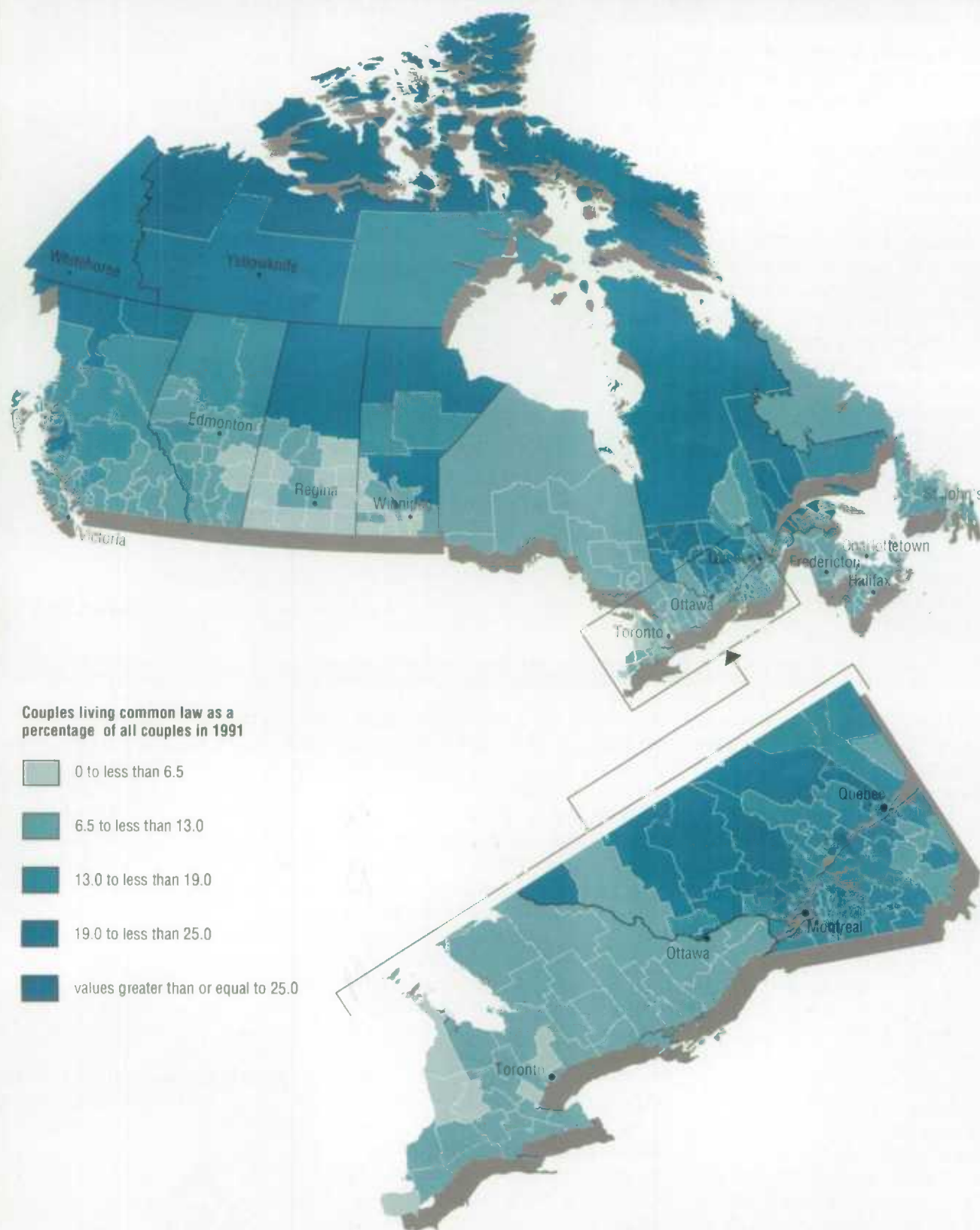
In Quebec, 25% of couples with children in which the wife was under age 35 were living common law in 1991. In contrast, just 10% of such couples outside of Quebec were living common law that year. Likewise, 11% of couples with children in which the wife was aged 35-44 were living common law in Quebec in 1991, more than double the percentage outside of Quebec (5%). Not surprisingly, the proportion living common law declined with age, but remained higher in Quebec than in the other provinces.

Empty nesters in Quebec more likely to live common law

Couples with children no longer living at home were more likely to be living common law in Quebec (9%) than such couples in the other provinces (6%). Differences were particularly great among couples in which the wife was under age 55 and whose children had already left home.

Common-law unions most prevalent in Quebec and Northern Canada

CST



Source: Statistics Canada, 1991 Census of Canada.
Census division data were derived using E-STAT 1993 edition.



Cartography by the National Atlas Information Service,
Canada Centre for Mapping, Natural Resources Canada.

CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER

CST

Common-law unions most prevalent in the two territories

Within the relatively small populations of the two territories, the phenomenon of common-law unions has been growing at a rapid pace. By 1991, the proportion of all couples living common law was 27% in the Northwest Territories and 23% in the Yukon. Proportions were much lower in 1981 – 13% in the Northwest Territories and 17% in the Yukon. In both years, however, common-law unions were more prevalent in these areas than elsewhere in Canada. Higher proportions of couples living common law in the two territories result, at least in part, from the higher proportion of Aboriginal peoples – among whom unions outside the legal bonds of marriage have long been practised.¹

Common-law couples in the North are more likely to have children and to have larger families than those in most provinces. In 1991, 65% of common-law couples in the Northwest Territories and 48% of those in the Yukon had children living at home. The national average was 42%.

Of those with children at home, 34% of common-law couples in the Northwest Territories had two children and 26% had three or more. Similarly in the Yukon, 36% had two children and 14% had three or more. In contrast, national

averages for common-law couples were 33% with two children at home and 13% with three or more children at home. The proportion of common-law couples with children in the Northwest Territories who had at least one child under age 6 (71%) was much higher than the national average (54%). The proportion in the Yukon equalled the national average.

¹ Jean Dumas, *Report on the Demographic Situation in Canada, 1992*, Statistics Canada Catalogue 91-209E.



Among these families, 23% were living common law in Quebec, compared with 14% in the other provinces. Among such families in which the wife was aged 55 and over, 4% were living common law in Quebec, double the proportion in the other provinces (2%).

English-speaking couples in Quebec less likely to live common law

Although there are many reasons people may have for living common law in Quebec, differences between the two major language groups indicate that the recent trend toward common-law living is concentrated among those who are French-speaking. This may be because values regarding marriage and family life are changing within the Francophone culture.

Quebec couples in which both partners reported French as both their mother tongue and home language were more than twice as likely to have been living common law (21%) as those in which both partners reported English (9%).

Interestingly, the proportion for English-speaking partners in Quebec was about the same as that among all couples in the other provinces (10%).

Common-law unions were also much more prevalent among non-immigrant than among immigrant couples with or without children. In 1991, 21% of Quebec couples in which the man was Canadian born were living common law, compared with only 7% of those in which the man had immigrated to Canada. In the other provinces, 10% of non-immigrant couples were living common law, compared with 4% of immigrant couples.

Although marriage is now less common, most people live in a couple relationship

Although marriage is not as common today as in the past, especially among young people, most Canadians are still choosing to live as couples. The proportion aged 15 and over living in a union, either by common law or legal marriage, was about 60% throughout the 1980s.

A relatively recent phenomenon, common-law living remains concentrated among young people who do not yet have children. In Quebec, however, more so than in other provinces, common-law unions are becoming increasingly prevalent among older couples and those having children. As a result, the characteristics of common-law families are beginning to resemble those of married-couple families. This suggests that common-law unions may be becoming more of an alternative than a prelude to marriage, at least among some couples in Quebec.

Jo-Anne Belliveau and Jillian Oderkirk are Editors, and Cynthia Silver is Editor-in-Chief of *Canadian Social Trends*.



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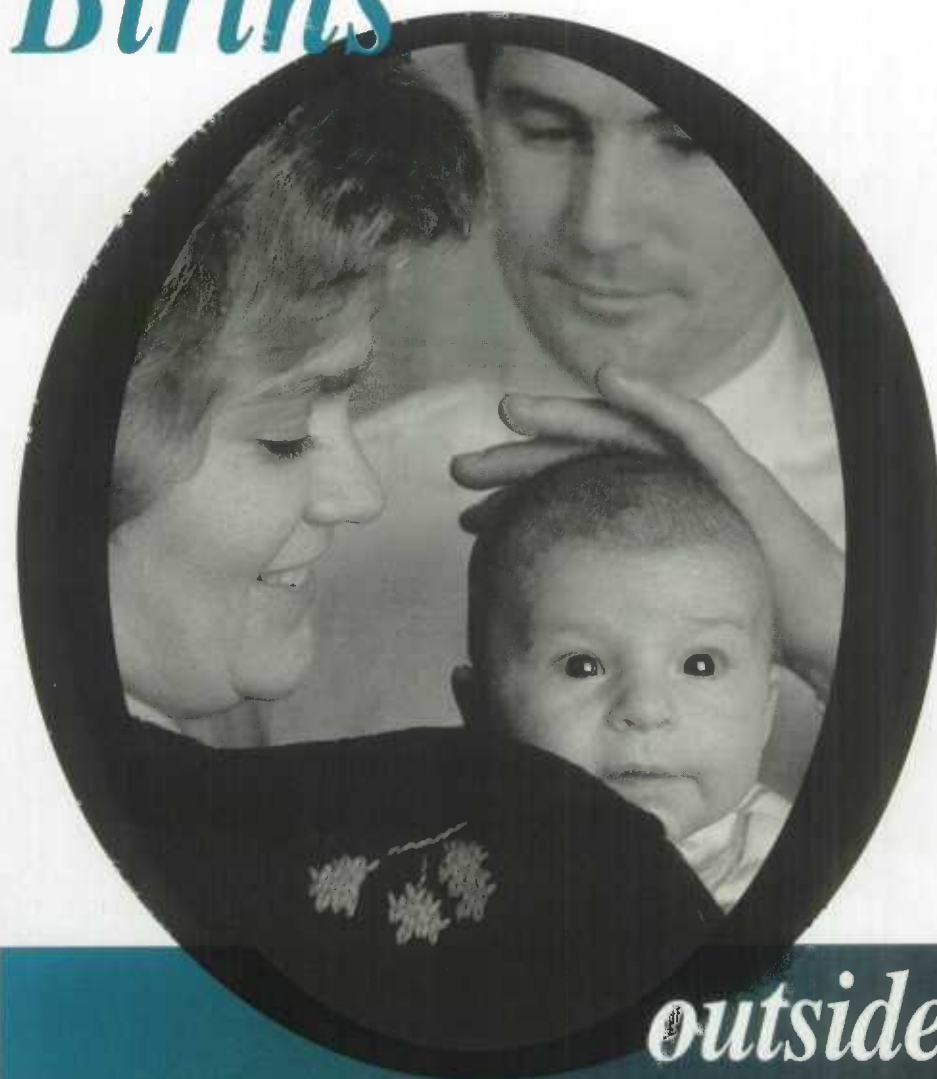
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Births



Over the last thirty years, and particularly during the past decade, the proportion of births to unmarried mothers has increased dramatically. In addition, the circumstances surrounding these births has changed. Until recently, unmarried mothers tended to be young and unattached. Today, however, women having children outside of marriage are older and many are in common-law relationships.

outside marriage

A Growing Alternative

by Marilyn Belle and Kevin McQuillan

Growth in the proportion of births to unmarried women has varied across the country, resulting in large provincial differences. In Quebec, where the proportion of couples living common law is double that of other provinces, the proportion of births outside of marriage is the highest. On the other hand, in Ontario, where the proportion of common-law couples is relatively low, the proportion of births outside of marriage is the lowest. These large provincial variations result from emerging and long-standing

differences in beliefs regarding the role of legal marriage in family formation.

Proportion of non-marital births now 6 times higher than in 1961 The proportion of births to unmarried mothers has been increasing almost continuously since 1921, when only 2% of all Canadian births were outside of marriage.¹ The rate increased slowly in the decades that followed, reaching almost 5% by the end of World War II. This upward trend was briefly reversed during the 1950s' baby

boom when the percentage of non-marital births fell to 4% before returning to just under 5% in 1961.

Since 1961, however, there has been a much stronger upward trend in non-marital births. The proportion of births to unmarried women doubled between 1961 and 1971 to 9%, and then grew to 14% in 1981. Since then, rapid increases continued and by 1991, 27% of births occurred outside of marriage.

Such a large growth in the proportion of births to unmarried women during the

1980s is related to the emergence of common law as an alternative living arrangement for couples. According to the census, 11% of all Canadian couples were living common law in 1991, up from 6% in 1981. In addition, common-law couples account for an increasing proportion of all couples with children. By 1991, 8% of all couples with children were living common law, up from only 3% in 1981.

Non-marital fertility up since mid-1970s

Although the proportion of births outside of marriage increased over the last three decades, factors influencing this trend changed. During the 1960s and early 1970s, decreases in the fertility rate of married women (births per 1,000 married women) and increases in the proportion of unmarried women of childbearing age were the major causes of this growth. It was not until the mid-1970s that a sharp rise in the fertility rate of unmarried women began to drive the increase in the proportion of births outside marriage. By 1991, the number of births for every 1,000 unmarried women had increased to 32 from 21 in 1981 and 18 in 1961.²

Age of unmarried mothers rising

Both the circumstances surrounding a birth and the consequences for a mother and child are quite different for a teenaged mother living at home than for a woman in her early thirties in a cohabiting relationship. Three decades ago, giving birth outside of marriage was very much a young woman's experience. In 1961, 72% of non-marital births occurred to women under age 25. Today, however, almost half of births outside of marriage occur to mothers aged 25 and over. This reflects, in part, the declining proportion of married women aged 25-34 and the increasing likelihood that unmarried women this age – many of whom are in common-law unions – will bear a child.

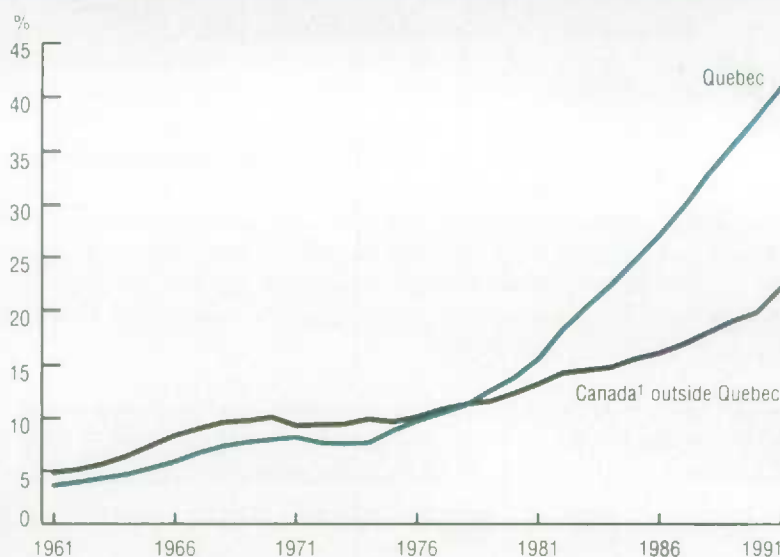
Non-marital fertility rates for women aged 25 and over increased sharply in the 1980s, after having declined during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Among

¹ National data exclude Newfoundland.

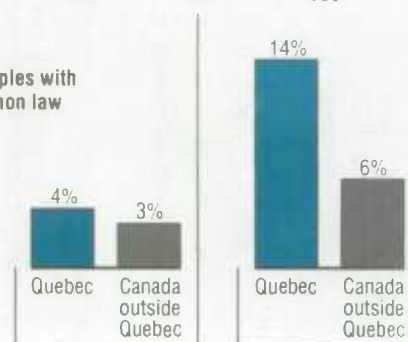
² Prior to 1981, women in common-law unions were considered married when fertility rates were calculated; since 1981, they have been considered unmarried. Because the proportion of women living common law was very small until the 1980s, this change did not affect the overall trend.

Proportion of births to unmarried women, 1961 to 1991

CST



Proportion of all couples with children living common law

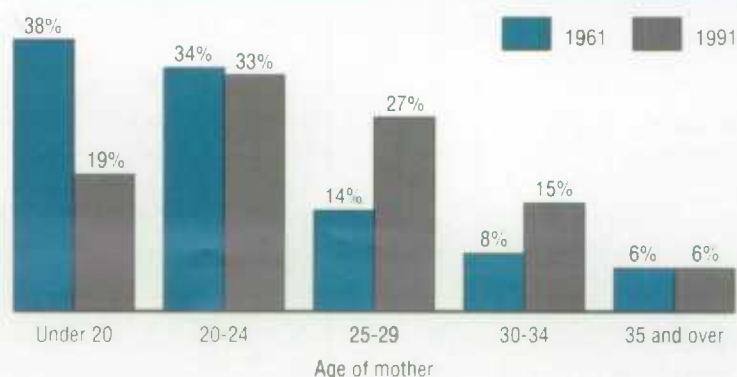


¹ Excludes Newfoundland.

Sources: Bureau de la Statistique du Québec, Statistics Canada unpublished vital statistics and 1991 Census of Canada.

Proportion of births to unmarried women, by age of mother, 1961 and 1991¹

CST



¹ Excludes Newfoundland.

Source: Statistics Canada, unpublished vital statistics.

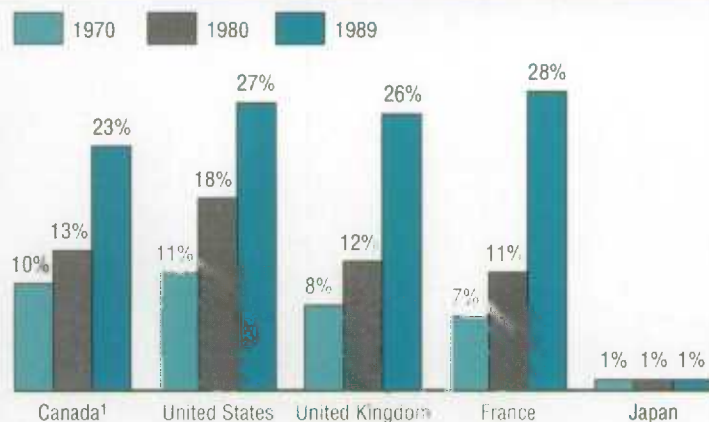
CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER



Trends similar in other industrialized nations Canada is not the only industrialized nation to experience a major increase in non-marital childbearing. Sharp increases also occurred in the United States, France and the United Kingdom. In these three countries, around 10% of births in 1970 were to unmarried women. Like Canada, proportions in these countries rose slowly through the 1970s and more sharply during the 1980s. By 1989, the proportion of non-marital births in each of these countries was over 25%.

However, this pattern is not found in all industrialized societies. In Japan, for example, the proportion of births outside marriage has remained very low. In 1989, only 1% of Japanese births occurred to unmarried women, a proportion unchanged since 1970.

Proportion of births to unmarried women, selected countries, 1970, 1980 and 1989



¹ Excludes Newfoundland.

Source: Dennis A. Ahlburg and Carol J. DeVita, "New Realities of the American Family," *Population Bulletin*, Vol. 47, No. 2, 1992.

Proportion of births to unmarried women, by birth order, 1990¹



	1st child	2nd child	3rd child	4th child
	%			
Prince Edward Island	32	15	6	7
Nova Scotia	35	18	14	15
New Brunswick	36	17	13	12
Quebec	47	29	20	15
Ontario	21	10	8	10
Manitoba	33	20	19	26
Saskatchewan	37	19	20	25
Alberta	29	14	13	17
British Columbia	28	17	15	17

¹ Comparable data for Newfoundland was unavailable.
Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue 91-209E.

women aged 25-29, the non-marital fertility rate doubled to 50 per 1,000 in 1991 from 22 per 1,000 in 1976.

Similarly, among women aged 30-34, the non-marital fertility rate increased to 37 from 16 per 1,000. Among teens, on the other hand, non-marital fertility has been rising slowly but steadily since the early 1960s. In 1991, there were 24 births per 1,000 unmarried women aged 15-19, up from 17 per 1,000 in 1976.

Highest proportion of births outside marriage in Quebec

Among the provinces, Quebec had the highest proportion of births to unmarried women in 1991 – 41%. In contrast, Ontario had the lowest proportion, with only 17% of births in 1991 occurring to unmarried women. Proportions in the remaining provinces ranged from 31% in Saskatchewan and 30% in New Brunswick to 24% in both Alberta and Prince Edward Island.

Unmarried women in Quebec were also more likely than those in all other provinces, except Saskatchewan, to have had a child in 1991. That year, 42 of every 1,000 unmarried women in Quebec had given birth. In Saskatchewan (46 per 1,000) and Manitoba (40 per 1,000), non-marital fertility rates were also very high. Unmarried women in Ontario, on the other hand, were the least likely to have given birth (22 per 1,000 unmarried women). In the remaining provinces, rates ranged from 29 to 34 for every 1,000 unmarried women.

Third and fourth births outside marriage more common in Quebec, Saskatchewan and Manitoba

In 1990, 29% of women in Quebec having their second child were unmarried. In the other provinces, however, proportions were much lower, ranging from 20% in Manitoba to 10% in Ontario. Similarly, in 1990, 20% of Quebec women having their third child were unmarried. Again, proportions were much lower in the other provinces, with the exception of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Proportions of women having their third child outside of marriage ranged from 20% in Saskatchewan and 19% in Manitoba to 8% in Ontario and 6% in Prince Edward Island.

Of the few women who had a fourth child, the proportion who were unmarried in 1990 was higher in all four

Western provinces than in Quebec and the other provinces. Among the Western provinces, proportions ranged from 26% in Manitoba to 17% in Alberta. Proportions in the remaining provinces ranged from 15% in Quebec and Nova Scotia to 7% in Prince Edward Island.

Non-marital fertility related to emergence of common-law unions During the 1980s, when the proportion of births outside of marriage doubled, the proportion of couples living common law also

rose sharply. In addition, as with growth in the proportion of non-marital births, increases in the prevalence of common-law unions were more dramatic in Quebec than in the other provinces.

By 1991, Quebec couples with children under age 18 were more than twice as likely to be living common law (14%) as those in all other provinces combined (6%). Also that year, the proportion of births outside of marriage in Quebec (41%) was almost double that of provinces outside of Quebec (22%). Such

large differences are a recent phenomenon, however, having emerged only in the last decade. In 1981, the proportion of couples with children living common law in Quebec (4%) was about equal to that in the other provinces (3%). Similarly, there was little difference between the proportion of births outside of marriage in Quebec (16%) and in the other provinces (13%).

Although vital statistics records contain only information on the legal marital status of mothers, some evidence of the growing proportion of births to common-law couples in Quebec is recorded on birth certificates. According to the Bureau de la Statistique du Québec, between 1976 and 1991, around 5% of all births were to unmarried women who listed the father as unknown. Over the same period, the proportion of all births that were to unmarried women who listed the father as known increased to 37% from 5%.

The fact that relatively high proportions of women are having more than one child outside of marriage in Manitoba and Saskatchewan is also likely related to common-law unions. Within these provinces, there are large communities of Aboriginal peoples, among whom unions outside of legal marriage have always been common.³ However, the proportions of all couples living common law in Manitoba (9%) and Saskatchewan (8%) were less than the national proportion (11%) in 1991.

In Ontario, where the proportion of births to unmarried women is the lowest in the country, the proportion of couples living common law is also low. In 1991, 8% of couples in Ontario were living common law, up only slightly from 5% in 1981.

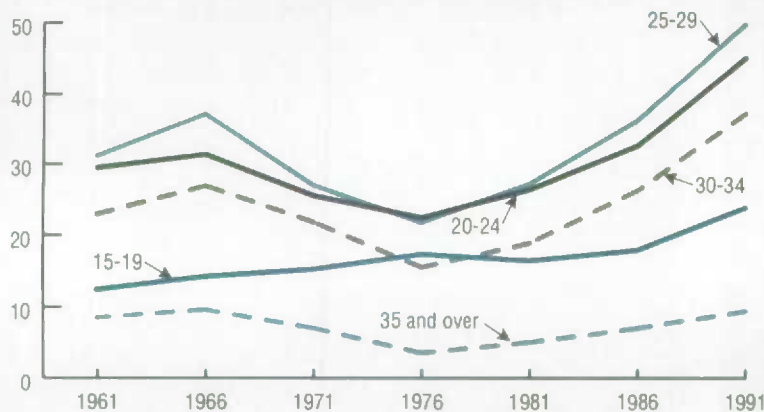
³Jean Dumas, **Report on the Demographic Situation in Canada, 1992**, Statistics Canada Catalogue 91-209E.

Marilyn Belle is a Lecturer and **Kevin McQuillan** is an Associate Professor of Sociology, both with the University of Western Ontario.

Births to unmarried women, by age, 1961 to 1991¹

CST

Per 1,000 unmarried women²



¹ Excludes Newfoundland.

² Since 1981, women in common-law unions have been considered unmarried.

Source: Statistics Canada, unpublished vital statistics.

Proportion of births to unmarried women, by province, 1991

CST



Source: Statistics Canada, unpublished vital statistics.



1994 International Year of the Family
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Street Prostitution

IN CANADA

by Lee Wolff and Dorota Geissel

Street prostitution has become a greater concern in most large Canadian cities since the early 1980s, when residents noticed a growth in the number of visible street prostitutes.¹ In 1985, changes to Canada's prostitution laws made it more difficult to communicate publicly for the purposes of prostitution. Since then, enforcement of the laws controlling the street trade has increased dramatically.

Legislative evaluations by the Department of Justice indicated, however, that in the three years following implementation, the 1985 legislation had not been successful in suppressing the street trade in most cities. Further, laws introduced in 1988 to protect youths from sexual exploitation were found to be





ineffective in bringing customers and pimps of youth prostitutes to justice.

While research is inconclusive, it does provide some insight into the conditions under which many enter the street trade. Some research suggests that most prostitutes enter the trade when they are very young. Factors identified as important influences on a young person's decision to prostitute include childhood sexual abuse, episodes of running away from home and the expectation of financial gain. Research findings also suggest that understanding the circumstances leading to entering prostitution may be important in developing strategies to curb the entry of youths into the street trade, and to limit the exploitive and often threatening situations many prostitutes face.

Canada's laws Prostitution among consenting adults has never been a crime in Canada, but has always been subject to very restrictive legal parameters. Throughout Canada's history, attempts to control prostitution through the Criminal Code reflect tensions between those who acknowledge the practical aspects of the trade and those who view the trade as immoral.²

Today, sections 210 to 213 of the Criminal Code prohibit those activities related to prostitution that are considered threatening to public order or offensive to public decency. Activities include being involved in a common bawdy house; procuring or soliciting a person to exchange sexual services for money; and communicating for the purposes of prostitution in a public place, regardless of how orderly that communication may be.

These laws, which prohibit many transactions necessarily associated with prostitution, make it very difficult to practice the trade without breaking the law. In the case of communicating, those convicted face a maximum penalty of six months in jail, a \$2,000 fine, or both.

Changes in law result in wide variation in enforcement practices

The nature of Canada's prostitution laws has changed, particularly over the past two decades. Canada's first Criminal Code (1892) dealt with female prostitutes on the basis of status, such as the control of vagrancy, rather than any overt act. This law prevailed for 80 years, until, in 1972, a law was introduced to control the overt act of solicitation. Since then, laws concerning the street trade have undergone significant changes, resulting in varying police enforcement practices. Indeed, over the past two decades, the annual number of prostitution offences reported by the police in Canada has ranged from under 1,000 to over 10,000.

Much of the variation in practices resulted from the unclear meaning of the 1972 soliciting law. In 1978, the Supreme Court of Canada held that for the activities of a prostitute to be criminal, the conduct had to be "pressing or persistent." Since the mere indication that sex was for sale was not illegal, the Criminal Code was rendered ineffective in reducing problems associated with the street trade. As a result, following the 1978 ruling, police enforcement of the soliciting law became minimal. The

¹ Department of Justice Canada, **Street Prostitution, Assessing the Impact of the Law: Synthesis Report**. Ottawa, 1989.

² C. Bagley, B. Burrows and C. Yaworski, "Street Kids and Adolescent Prostitution: A Challenge for Legal and Social Services," **Canadian Child Welfare Law: Children, Families and the State**, 1991.

Sentencing patterns in Ontario and Alberta

Although prostitutes and customers in Ontario and Alberta were convicted of communicating in close to equal numbers during the early 1990s, there were differences in sentencing patterns between the two provinces.¹ Sentencing data, however, are limited because prior criminal history is not accounted for – a factor which is always considered at time of sentencing and is known to have an impact on sentence severity. Studies conducted by the Department of Justice found that, while prostitutes were sentenced more severely than customers, this was, at least in part, due to their more extensive criminal records. Another factor unaccounted for in the data is the presence of additional charges that may be associated with the communicating incident (e.g., breach of probation), and hence considered at time of sentencing.

In Ontario, communicating convictions among women often result in prison terms During the period under study, 44% of charges against women (mainly prostitutes) resulted in prison terms, followed by probation (26%), fines (22%) and absolute discharges (8%).² Median prison terms were 10 days and median fine amounts were \$150.

Men (mainly customers) convicted of communicating in Ontario were most frequently fined (42%) or given an absolute discharge (35%). Probation (17%) and prison sentences (6%) accounted for

a much smaller proportion of charges among men. Median prison terms were 10 days and median fine amounts were \$100.

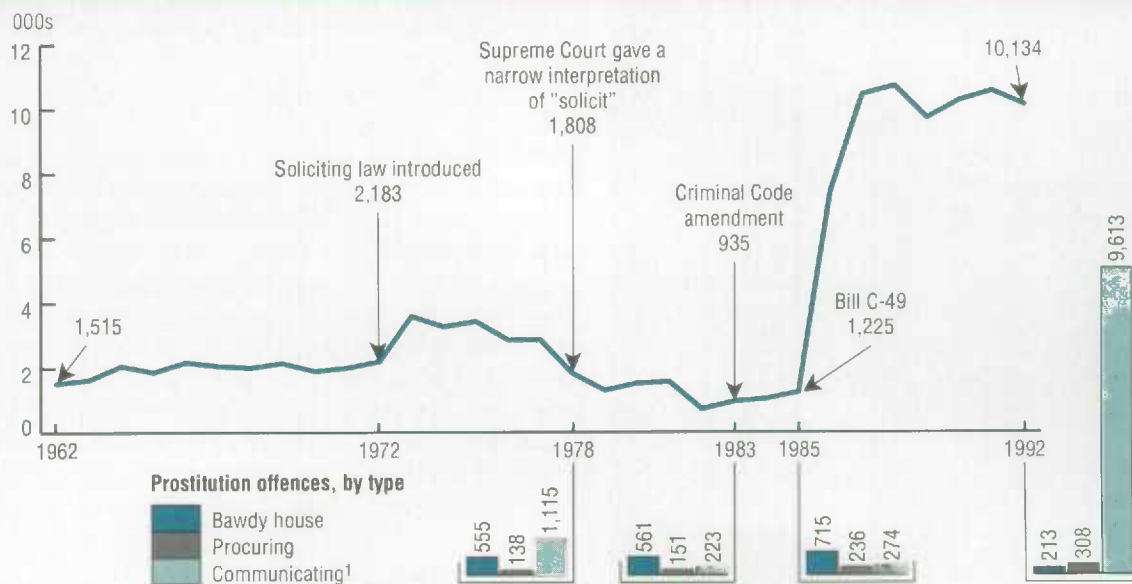
In Alberta, communicating convictions among women often result in fines In Alberta, fines were the most frequent dispositions for communicating convictions among women (mainly prostitutes). During the period under study, 66% of charges against women resulted in fines, followed by prison (19%), probation (13%) and absolute discharges (2%). Median prison terms were 30 days and median fine amounts were \$200.

Most convictions among men (mainly customers) in Alberta resulted in fines (89%). Probation (6%), absolute discharge (3%) and prison sentences (2%) accounted for only a small percentage of convictions against men. Median prison terms were 30 days and median fine amounts were \$200.

¹ This information was obtained from the Sentencing Database Project maintained by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. Data for Ontario refer to the 15-month period from June 1991 to August 1992, when 3,595 charges resulted in conviction. Alberta statistics are based on the 22-month period between January 1991 and October 1992, when 2,228 charges resulted in conviction. Court statistics were not available for other provinces where communicating offences are frequently reported.

² When more than one disposition is ordered on a charge, the charge is characterized by the most serious disposition. Prison sentences are the most serious of all sentences, followed by probation orders, fines and absolute discharges.

Prostitution offences, 1962 to 1992



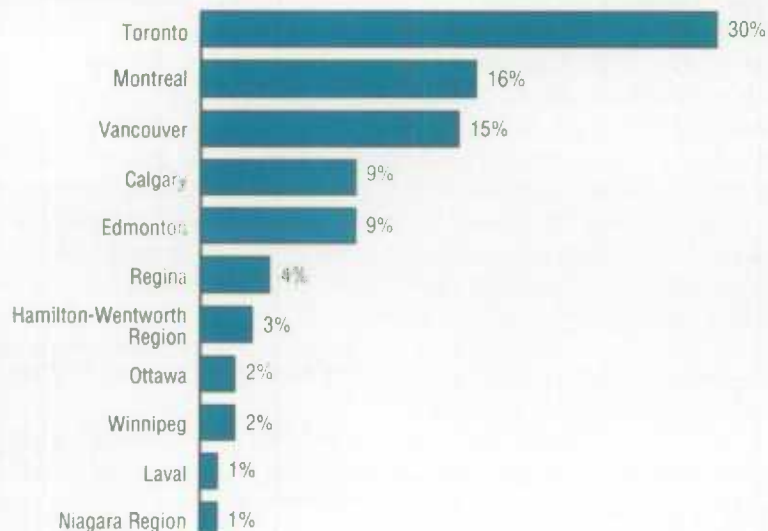
¹ The communicating law replaced the soliciting law in December 1985.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

Location¹ of communicating offences, 1992

CST

% of offences occurring in:



¹ Police jurisdictions.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Aggregate Uniform Crime Reporting Survey.

soliciting section of the Code was also problematic because it did not define "public place," and it was not clear if it applied equally to female prostitutes, male prostitutes and customers.

In 1983, a Criminal Code amendment was introduced, specifying that the soliciting law applied to both female and male prostitutes. Later, in December 1985, the soliciting law was replaced with the communicating law (Bill C-49) which stands today. This law, applicable to both prostitutes (female and male) and customers, prohibits solicitation that impedes or otherwise interferes with the use of streets and public places.

Following the implementation of Bill C-49, those involved in the street trade became easy targets for police intervention, as is evidenced by the dramatic increase in the number of prostitution offences reported (7,426 in 1986, compared with 1,225 in 1985). However, since that time, the constitutionality of the communicating law has been challenged in many courts, resulting in variable enforcement practices across the country. It was not until May 1990 that the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of the law's validity.

Most reported prostitution offences are for communicating

Since many activities necessarily associated with prostitution are illegal, those involved are at constant risk of criminal prosecution. This is particularly true for those involved in the most visible aspect of the trade – street prostitution. Since 1986, when it became illegal to communicate publicly for the purposes of prostitution, most prostitution charges have been for communicating. In 1992, 10,134 prostitution incidents were reported by the police, 95% of which involved communicating offences. Bawdy house and procuring offences (recruiting a person to engage in prostitution) accounted for the remaining 5%.

The number of reported procuring offences is relatively small, at least in part, because traditional police methods are not always appropriate for enforcing sections of the Criminal Code involving procurement. Extensive police investigations are often required. In addition, offenders may be charged with related offences such as abduction, forcible confinement, weapons offences and sexual assault, which are not included in prostitution statistics.

Both prostitutes and customers can be charged under Canada's communicating

law. Prostitutes, however, may be at greater risk of being charged given their higher visibility. Although police and court information systems do not distinguish between customers and prostitutes, it is generally acknowledged that most prostitutes charged are female and most customers charged are male. Since 1986, the number of males charged has been relatively close to the number of females charged. In 1992, for example, 5,262 females and 4,695 males were charged with communicating for the purposes of prostitution. This suggests that the police are charging prostitutes and customers in close to equal numbers.

Highest proportions reported in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver

Since 1990, the police have reported about 10,000 communicating offences annually. Among the 11 police jurisdictions where most of these offences are reported, the Toronto police report the largest proportion (30% in 1992), followed by the police in Montreal (16%) and Vancouver (15%). Together, 11 police jurisdictions reported 93% of all communicating offences in 1992. These same police jurisdictions reported 35% of all Criminal Code offences that year.

The number of offences reported among police agencies, however, is not necessarily indicative of the prevalence of street prostitutes and customers. Differences in police practices and resources have an impact on the volume of communicating offences reported among police agencies.

Who is entering the street trade?

While young women aged 12-17 comprise a very small proportion of women charged in communicating incidents (6% in 1992), research suggests that, for many prostitutes, the decision to enter the trade is made in youth. The Badgley Committee on Sexual Offences Against Children and Youth³ found that one-half of prostitutes interviewed in 1984 entered the trade when they were under age 16, and almost all (96%) had become prostitutes before the age of 18. Prostitutes were, on average, aged 18 at the time of the Committee's interviews.

Considerable research has focused on those factors which may be important in guiding a young person's decision to

prostitute. While findings are not conclusive, some researchers believe that this choice is often made within the context of abusive childhood experiences.^{2,4} Others, however, argue that the decision to prostitute may be largely motivated by a rational expectation of financial gain.⁵

Research suggests many are run-aways An overwhelming majority of prostitutes interviewed by the Badgley Committee had run away from home at least once – 93% of females and 97% of males. Further, 67% of females and 46% of males had run away several times.⁴ Research also indicates that street prostitutes leave home at an earlier age than do other Canadians. Earls and David found that female prostitutes left home at an average age of 13.7 years, 3.6 years earlier than their counterparts who were not prostitutes.⁶ Similar findings were reported for males.

The underlying problems associated with running away from home are often inter-related and highly complex. Fisher found that among young people who ran away more than once, family problems, such as parental drinking, parental conflict, family/child interaction problems, mental illness, spousal abuse and child physical or sexual abuse, were invariably present.⁷ Also, a large proportion of those who ran away more than once (80%) were found to have been involved in delinquent activities, primarily as a means of support, and about one-fifth of these children reported having turned to prostitution.

Childhood sexual abuse may also be a factor Some studies indicate that childhood sexual abuse may be an important influence on young people's decisions to enter the street trade.^{3,4,6,8,9} Although tentative, findings suggest that sizeable numbers of street prostitutes were sexually abused in childhood.

A comparison of data from two surveys commissioned for the Badgley Report indicates that prostitutes were at least twice as likely as other members of the population to have experienced a first unwanted sexual act involving force or threats of force.⁴ More recently, Earls and David found that female and male prostitutes were more likely than non-prostitutes to have had some sort of sexual interaction with a family member.⁶ Also, of young

people who had had a sexual encounter with a family member, this study found that among prostitutes it was more likely to have been a father or uncle, while among non-prostitutes it was more likely to have been a cousin of the same age.

While these findings support the view that prostitutes are more likely than non-prostitutes to have been sexually abused in childhood, other research suggests that the link to prostitution is not direct, but involves runaway behaviour as an intervening variable.¹⁰ That is, adolescent prostitution can be viewed as a survival behaviour, suggesting that runaway prevention strategies aimed at providing supportive environments are needed, as are strategies to meet the everyday needs of runaway children.

A dangerous trade Street prostitutes face several health and safety risks. The 1984 Badgley Committee reported that about one-third of those interviewed were frequent or heavy users of alcohol or drugs and over one-half had contracted a sexually transmitted disease. About two-thirds had been physically assaulted while working as prostitutes, 44% of whom required medical attention. In addition, for many, prostitution led to broader ranges of deviance, including theft, assault and drug dealing.³

Homicide statistics highlight the dangers associated with the prostitution trade. During 1991 and 1992, 22 known prostitutes (all females) were murdered, representing 5% of female murder victims aged 16 and over. In 1991, 4 of the 14 prostitutes murdered were aged 16-17. In 1992, all prostitute victims were over age 17.

Murder cases involving prostitutes were less likely to be solved than those involving victims who were not prostitutes. For prostitute victims, an accused was identified in one-half of all cases (11 of the 22 cases) reported during 1991 and 1992. The comparable rate for all murders was 78%.

Customers were accused in 8 of the 11 cases of murdered prostitutes solved by the police in 1991 and 1992. Customers, however, were also victimized. During 1991 and 1992, 10 prostitutes were implicated in the murder of 8 victims, 4 of whom were believed to be customers.

Much remains unknown about street prostitution What is known about

prostitution pales in comparison to what is not known. Justice statistics tell us about those who come into conflict with the law, but we do not know how representative this group is of all prostitutes and customers. Research studies tell us about the experiences of prostitutes, but, while informative, findings are typically limited to small and often selective samples. What we do know is that, despite the introduction of a restrictive communicating law in 1985, the world's "oldest profession" persists in Canada. We also know that, sometimes, it persists at the expense of human life.

³ Badgley Committee, **Sexual Offences Against Children**, Ottawa: Supply and Services Canada, 1984.

⁴ J. Lowman, "Street Prostitutes in Canada: An Evaluation of the Brannigan-Fleishman Opportunity Model," **Canadian Journal of Law and Society**, 1991.

⁵ A. Brannigan and J. Fleischman, "Juvenile Prostitution and Mental Health: Policing Delinquency or Treating Pathology," **Canadian Journal of Law and Society**, 1989.

⁶ C.P. Earls and H. David, "Early Family Sexual Experiences of Male and Female Prostitutes," **Canada's Mental Health**, 1990.

⁷ J. Fisher, **Missing Children Research Project: Volume 1, Findings of the Study**, Ottawa: Solicitor General of Canada, 1989.

⁸ M. Silbert and A. Pines, "Sexual Child Abuse as an Antecedent to Prostitution," **Journal of Abuse and Neglect**, 1981.

⁹ C. Bagley and L. Young, "Juvenile Prostitution and Childhood Sexual Abuse: A Controlled Study," **Canadian Journal of Community and Mental Health**, 1987.

¹⁰ M. Seng, "Child Sexual Abuse and Adolescent Prostitution: A Comparative Analysis," **Adolescence**, 1989.

Lee Wolff and **Dorota Geissel** are senior analysts with the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada.

• For additional information, see **Juristat**, Vol.13, No.4. Statistics Canada Catalogue 85-002 or contact Information and Client Services at (613)951-9023 or toll-free 1-800-387-2231, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 19th Floor, R.H. Coats Building, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0T6.

ALBERTANS' OPINIONS ON

Street Prostitution

by Erin Gibbs Van Brunschot

Gallup surveyed Canadians in 1984, 1988 and 1992 on whether they felt that prostitution was a serious problem. Public opinion changed little over these eight years, with just over one-quarter of all Canadians agreeing that prostitution was a serious problem. Contrary to this national trend, however, the proportion of people in the Prairies who agreed that prostitution was a serious problem increased to 42% in 1992 from 26% in 1988.

Prostitution as a serious problem

According to the 1993 Population Research Laboratory Annual Alberta Survey, 37% of Alberta residents strongly agreed that prostitution is a serious problem in our society, and a total of 69% were in agreement (to some extent) with the statement.

In Alberta, more women (79%) than men (59%) agreed that prostitution is a serious problem. Among women and men who strongly agreed that prostitution is a serious problem, gender differences were even more pronounced. In 1993, 47% of women strongly agreed with the statement, compared with 27% of men.

Most urban residents of Alberta (excluding Calgary), as well as those in rural areas, agreed that prostitution is a serious problem (just over 71%). Calgary residents (63%) and those in villages (61%) were less likely to agree with the statement. This pattern differs from 1992 Gallup results, however, which indicated that the larger the community size, the more likely



people were to agree that prostitution was a serious problem.

Albertans with relatively fewer years of formal education were more likely than others to agree that prostitution is a serious problem. In 1993, 77% of those with less than 12 years of education agreed (to some extent) that prostitution is a problem, as opposed to 62% of those with 16 or more years of schooling.

Opinions also varied by strength of religious beliefs. In Alberta, nearly 79% who reported strong religious beliefs agreed (to some extent) that prostitution is a serious problem. The proportion dropped to 69% of those with somewhat strong beliefs and 66% of those with not very strong religious beliefs.

Juvenile prostitution viewed as more serious than adult prostitution

The age of a prostitute brings with it issues such as innocence, maturity, responsibility and coercion. Almost all Alberta residents (92%) agreed that juvenile prostitution is a greater cause for concern than adult prostitution, with more than two-thirds (69%) strongly agreeing with the statement. There was very little variation in Albertans' perceptions of juvenile prostitution, regardless of where they lived, or even whether they were responsible for or lived with young people under age 18.

Prostitution the result of demand Most people in Alberta (83%) agreed that prostitution exists because of customer

CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER



1993 Alberta Survey Population Research Laboratory

The Alberta Survey has been conducted annually since 1987 by the Population Research Laboratory at the University of Alberta. The 1993 survey involved a random selection of just under 1,300 respondents aged 18 and over, who were interviewed by telephone about a variety of issues and events.

demands, with 44% strongly agreeing with the statement. This would suggest a great deal of support for campaigns that focus on the customer in the prostitution transaction. Public opinion was less clearcut, however, on prostitutes' involvement in the sex trade. Slightly under 60% of Albertans agreed that most prostitutes just got off to a bad start in life. At the same time, 23% disagreed with this statement.

These perceptions were not based, for the most part, on knowing a prostitute or customer. In 1993, 20% of both men and women in Alberta reported ever having known a prostitute. On the other hand, while still a minority, the proportion of men who had known or knew someone who had paid for the services of a prostitute (36%) was considerably higher than the proportion of women who had known customers (16%). Women's lesser familiarity with customers may reflect the relative non-existence of female customers in the prostitution transaction.

World's oldest trade? Given the cliché that prostitution is the world's oldest trade, it is not surprising that almost 90% of Albertans agreed that no matter what society tries to do, prostitution will always exist. Almost 60% strongly agreed with this statement. Despite this, most Albertans (68% of women and 56% of men) disagreed that prostitution is the business of the prostitute and the customer, and that society should not get involved.

Tougher laws While most Albertans (61%) agreed that tougher laws are needed to deal with prostitution, proportions differed by gender, education and religious beliefs. In 1993, 70% of women agreed with the statement, compared with only 50% of men. At the same time,

72% of people with less than 12 years of schooling agreed that tougher laws are needed to deal with prostitution, compared with 54% of those with 16 or more years of schooling. Similarly, the proportion of people agreeing with the statement ranged from 70% of those with strong religious beliefs to 58% of those with not very strong beliefs.

Albertans' opinions were less definitive regarding how the police should respond to prostitution. While just over half of respondents agreed that the police should put more effort into cracking down on prostitution, 21% neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement, the largest proportion of neutral responses that any question produced. Nonetheless, similar patterns prevailed by gender, educational attainment and strength of religious convictions. Women (57%) felt more strongly than men (45%) that the police should be cracking down on prostitution. Area and size of residence did not appear to be related to people's opinions on this matter. However, residents of Calgary were least likely to agree with the statement (46%), whereas opinion in Edmonton conformed to the provincial average. Albertans with less than 12 years of schooling were most likely to agree that the police should put more effort into cracking down on prostitution (66%), while those with 16 or more years of schooling were least likely (41%). At the same time, more people with strong religious beliefs agreed with the statement (59%) than did those with not very strong beliefs (47%).

Don't want to see prostitutes on the street... In 1993, 48% of Albertans agreed that they are personally offended when they see prostitutes working on the street, with women (55%) more likely than men

(41%) to be offended. As proximity to street prostitution areas (strolls) increased, people appeared to be less offended by the sight of a prostitute. About 56% of people in rural areas and villages agreed that seeing prostitutes on the street is offensive. The proportion dropped to about 50% of Albertans in towns and cities, excluding Calgary. Calgary residents appear to have more liberal views, with only 41% agreeing with the statement. People with strong religious beliefs are also more likely than those with not very strong beliefs to be offended by the sight of street prostitutes plying their trade (57%, compared with 46%).

...but don't agree with red-light districts Red-light districts would confine prostitutes to a specific vicinity, thereby limiting the problem of prostitutes working the streets in full public view. This solution was viewed favourably by only 42% of Albertans, with 41% disagreeing that prostitutes should be moved to a red-light district where they would not be bothered by police. Men (46%) were much more likely than women (38%) to agree that prostitutes should be moved to a red-light district. Albertans who said that they were personally offended seeing a prostitute working on the street were much less likely to have agreed with the idea of moving prostitutes to a red-light district (34%). In contrast, those who were not offended at the sight of a street prostitute were more likely to have agreed that prostitutes should be moved to a red-light district (54%). Residents of Edmonton and Calgary again differed considerably in their views of red-light districts: 43% of those in Edmonton agreed that prostitutes should be confined to these areas, compared with 51% of those in Calgary.

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- For further information on this topic, see "Survey Highlights #15: Public Opinion Toward Street Prostitution," Population Research Laboratory (PRL), Department of Sociology, University of Alberta or contact the PRL at (403)492-4659.

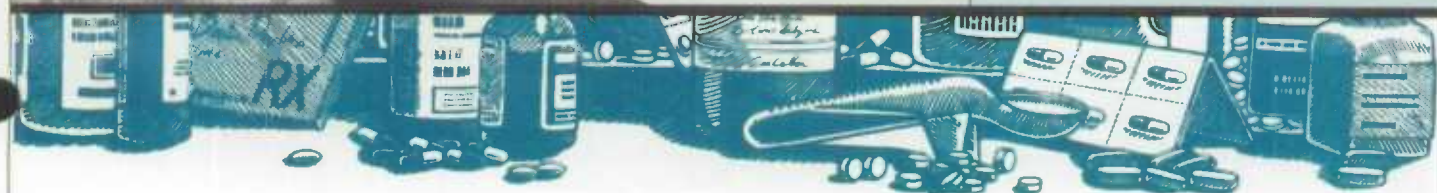


Drug Use Among Senior Canadians

by Michael Bergob

Among Canadians aged 65 and over, as well as among younger people, responsible use of prescription and over-the-counter drugs can maintain or improve well-being, while the misuse or abuse of drugs, often unintentional, can intensify existing health problems or create new ones. Although most drug use among seniors is in response to a medical need, illnesses associated with adverse drug reactions account for a significant number of hospital admissions of seniors each year.¹

Heavy drug consumption, however, is concentrated among a minority of seniors. According to Health Canada's 1989 National Alcohol and Other Drugs Survey (NADS), just over one-quarter of senior women and about one-fifth of senior men reported using three or more drugs in the month prior to the survey. Seniors who were multiple-drug users were more likely than other seniors to



feel that their health was failing, that their lives were stressful and that they could not turn to family or friends when they had a problem.

Seniors more likely than younger people to be multiple-drug users In 1989, 27% of senior women and 19% of senior men used three or more drugs in the month prior to the NADS. In contrast, only 15% of women and 13% of men aged 15-34 and

18% of women and 14% of men aged 35-64 reported this level of drug use.

Multiple-drug use increases with advancing age among senior women, but declines among senior men. About one-quarter (24%) of women aged 65-69 used three or more drugs in the month before the survey, compared with 29% of women aged 70-74 and 28% of women aged 75 and over. Among senior men, 22% of those aged 65-69 were multiple-

drug users, compared with 18% of those aged 70-74 and 16% of those aged 75 and over.

Drug use among seniors is mainly by prescription Prescription-drug use is much more common among seniors than among younger people. While seniors represent about 12% of the Canadian population, they consume 20% to 30% of all prescribed drugs.² Higher prescription-drug consumption among seniors occurs not only because of medical problems associated with advancing age, but also because all Canadian provincial and territorial governments have some type of prescription drug cost reimbursement program for residents aged 65 and over.³

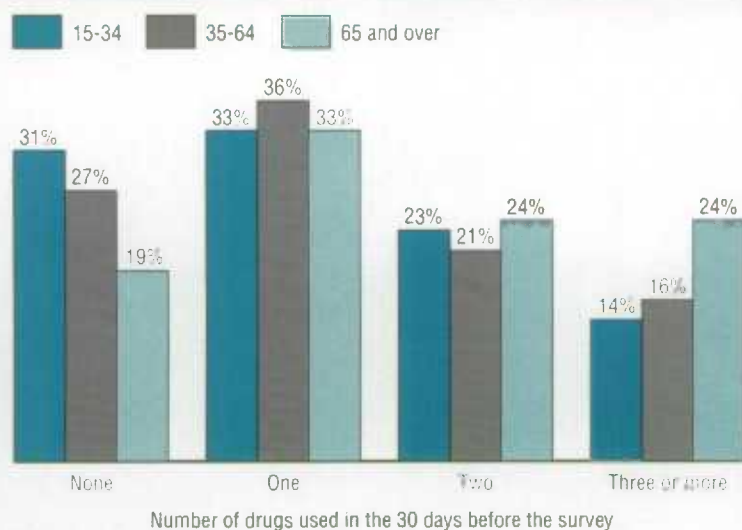
Overall, 18% of senior women and 14% of senior men used three or more prescription drugs in the month before the survey.⁴ In contrast, only 8% of women and 6% of men aged 35-64 and 5% of women and 2% of men aged 15-34 were multiple-drug users.

Among senior women, prescription-drug use tends to be associated with advancing age. About 15% of women aged 65-69 used three or more prescription drugs, compared with 19% of those aged 70-74 and 20% of those aged 75 and over. On the other hand, prescription-drug use among senior men dropped from 15% of both those aged 65-69 and those aged 70-74 to 12% of those aged 75 and over.

Virtually no seniors took three or more non-prescription drugs in the month

Drug use among Canadians, 1989

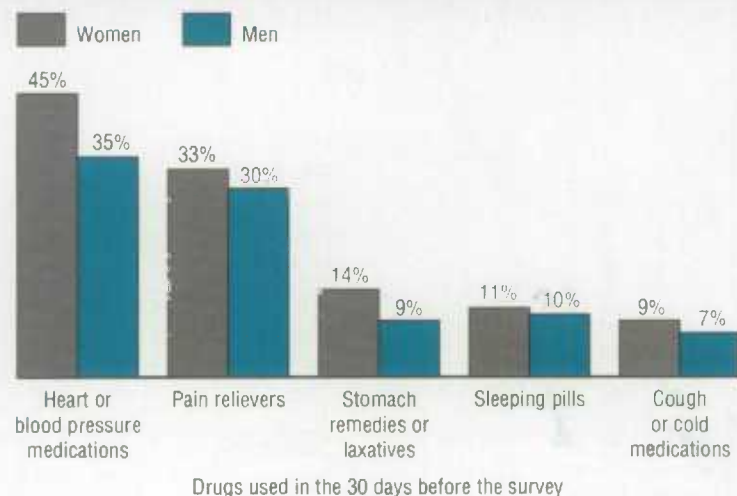
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Source: National Alcohol and Other Drugs Survey, unpublished data.

Top 5 prescription drugs used by seniors, 1989

CST



Source: National Alcohol and Other Drugs Survey, unpublished data.

¹ S. Asthana and V.P. Sood, "Prescribing for the elderly: One hospital's experience," *Geriatric Medicine (Canada)*, 1987, Volume 3:113-117.

J. Inciardi, "Acute drug reactions among the aged: A research note," *Addictive Diseases*, 1978, Volume 3:383-388.

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B.T. Wigdor, "Editorial: Some critical issues related to mental health and medication use in the elderly," *Canadian Journal on Aging*, 1991, Volume 10:296-299.

² J.D. Tuominen, "Prescription drugs and the elderly in B.C.," *Canadian Journal on Aging*, 1988, Volume 7:174-182.

³ Jeremiah Hurley and Nancy Arbuthnot Johnson, "The Effects of Co-Payments within Drug Reimbursement Programs," *Canadian Public Policy*, 1991, Volume XVII:473-489.

⁴ Other senior multiple-drug users used a combination of prescription and non-prescription drugs.

before the NADS. In contrast, 4% of women and 5% of men aged 15-34 and 3% of women and men aged 35-64 took three or more non-prescription drugs during that time. The proportion of seniors who took even two non-prescription drugs that month was also very small (less than 5%). Relatively few senior women

and men, regardless of their age, used more than one non-prescription drug.

Most common prescription medicines are for the heart and blood pressure

The drugs commonly taken by seniors provide an indication of some of the more typical health problems they experience.

By far, the most common prescription medicines used by seniors are for the heart or blood pressure. In the 30 days before the 1989 survey, 45% of senior women and 35% of senior men took these types of prescription drugs, followed by prescription pain relievers (such as aspirin), used by about one-third of senior women and

CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER



National Alcohol and Other Drugs Survey

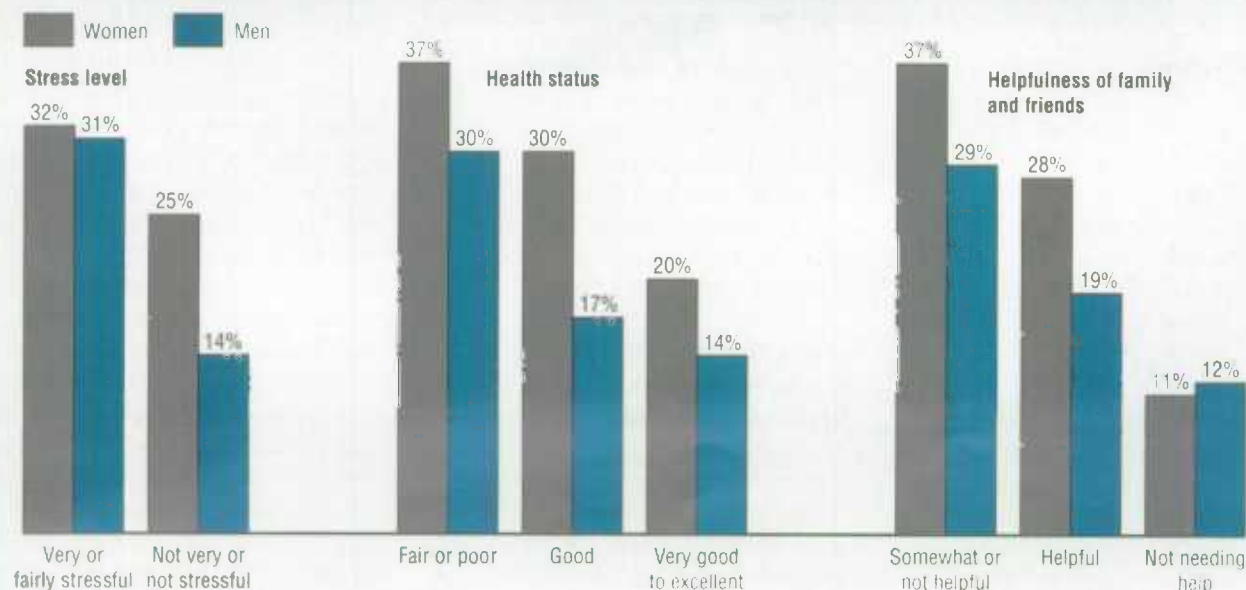
The National Alcohol and Other Drugs Survey (NADS) was conducted by Statistics Canada on behalf of Health Canada (formerly Health and Welfare Canada) in March 1989. Data were collected through telephone interviews from a sample of close to 12,000 Canadians aged 15 and over in the 10 provinces, excluding residents of institutions such as nursing homes, hospitals and prisons. Seniors living in institutions, who may be more likely than those in private households to have medical problems and thus to have higher levels of drug consumption, were not included in the NADS. Thus, the incidence of drug use among all seniors may be higher than the NADS estimates.

Drugs included on the NADS Respondents to the NADS were asked if they used the following drugs in the 30 days

before the survey and whether or not this use was with a doctor's order or prescription:

- ☐ pain relievers, such as aspirin;
- ☐ tranquilizers, such as valium;
- ☐ diet pills or stimulants;
- ☐ anti-depressants;
- ☐ pain killers, such as codeine, demerol or morphine;
- ☐ allergy medicines, such as sinutab;
- ☐ cough or cold remedies;
- ☐ penicillin or similar antibiotics;
- ☐ medicines for the heart or blood pressure;
- ☐ insulin or similar diabetic medicines;
- ☐ sleeping pills; or
- ☐ stomach remedies or laxatives.

Proportion of seniors reporting multiple-drug use,¹ 1989



¹Use of three or more drugs in the 30 days before the survey.
Source: National Alcohol and Other Drugs Survey, unpublished data.



men. Stomach remedies or laxatives were the next most common prescription drugs, used by 14% of women and 9% of men. Ironically, the need for stomach remedies may be related to the prevalence of the two leading medications: pain relievers and anti-hypertensives.⁵

Some seniors (20% of women and 19% of men) also took non-prescription pain relievers. When prescription and non-prescription pain-reliever use was combined, this group of drugs ranked first among seniors, with 53% of women and 49% of men having used at least one drug of this type in the 30 days prior to the survey. As well, 6% of senior women and 4% of senior men reported taking non-prescription stomach remedies or laxatives.

A minority of seniors reported using prescription and over-the-counter painkillers (such as codeine, demerol or morphine),

sleeping pills or tranquilizers in the 30 days before the survey. In 1989, 11% of senior women and 10% of senior men reported taking sleeping pills, and 4% of senior women and 3% of senior men reported using painkillers. The use of tranquilizers was higher among senior women (7%) than among senior men (4%).

Multiple-drug use more common among seniors reporting fair or poor health Declining health is often considered a normal part of the aging process. However, according to the 1989 NADS, three out of four seniors reported having good to excellent health when asked to compare their health with others their age. Not surprisingly, seniors who perceived their health as very good or excellent were much less likely than those who perceived their health as fair

or poor to have taken any drugs or to have been a multiple-drug user in the month before the survey.

In 1989, 21% of senior women and 29% of senior men who reported having very good or excellent health stated that they had not used any drugs in the 30 days before the survey. In contrast, only 11% of women and 13% of men who perceived their health as fair or poor reported that they had not used any drugs that month.

Only 20% of senior women who reported very good or excellent health used three or more drugs in the month before the 1989 survey, compared with 37% of senior women who reported their health as fair or poor. Similarly, 14% of senior men who reported very good or excellent health used three or more drugs, compared with 30% of those who reported fair or poor health.

Seniors reporting stress more likely to report poor health and multiple-drug use

Retirement is often idealized as a time of leisure, and, in general, seniors report having less stress in their lives than do younger people. According to the 1989 NADS, 34% of seniors reported that their lives were fairly or very stressful, compared with about 60% of both those aged 15-34 and those aged 35-64. Senior women (36%) were slightly more likely than senior men (31%) to report having stress in their lives. The NADS did not ask respondents to report on sources of stress and it is not known whether feelings of stress contribute to senior's health problems, or whether health problems produce feelings of stress.

Seniors who felt that their lives were stressful were twice as likely to report fair or poor health as those who felt little or no stress in their lives. In 1989, 37% of senior women who felt their lives were fairly or very stressful reported fair or poor health, compared with 19% who felt little or no stress. Similarly, 39% of senior men who felt stress in their lives reported their health as fair or poor, compared with 18% who felt little or no stress.

A higher proportion of women aged 65-69 reported feeling stress (39%) than did those aged 70-74 (31%) and those aged 75 and over (36%). In contrast, the proportion of senior men reporting stress increased slightly with age from 30% of those aged 65-69 to 33% of those aged 75 and over.

In 1989, 32% of senior women who felt that their lives were fairly or very stressful reported using three or more drugs in the month before the survey, while 25% of women who reported little or no stress used three or more drugs. Differences were more striking among senior men: those who felt that their lives were stressful were more than twice as likely (31%) to report using three or more drugs as those who felt little or no stress in their lives (14%).

Seniors without helpful family and friends more likely to have stressful lives and to be multiple-drug users

Most senior women (65%) and men (69%) who felt that they had family and friends they could turn to for help when they had a problem reported feeling little or no stress in their lives. In contrast, less than half of senior women (37%) and men (48%) who felt their family or friends were not helpful reported feeling

little or no stress. A very high proportion of senior women (93%) and men (83%) who felt that they did not need help from their family and friends, however, reported little or no stress in their lives.

Seniors who reported having helpful family or friends were more likely than others to perceive their health as very good or excellent. Among seniors whose family and friends were helpful, 49% of women and 44% of men reported very good or excellent health, and only 24% of women and 25% of men reported fair or poor health. In contrast, among those seniors whose family and friends were not helpful, only 27% of women and 21% of men reported good or excellent health. Seniors who felt they did not need help from family or friends, however, were the most likely to report having very good or excellent health. Among these seniors, 60% of women and 50% of men reported very good or excellent health, while only 17% of women and 10% of men reported fair or poor health.

Multiple-drug use is much higher among seniors without helpful family and friends. When help with a problem was available from family and friends, 28% of senior women and 19% of senior men reported using three or more drugs in the month before the survey. In contrast, when no help was available, 37% of senior women and 29% of senior men reported using three or more drugs. Multiple-drug use was uncommon among seniors who felt that they did not need the help of family or friends.

Some seniors experiencing stress and other problems, who are without sources of support, may seek help from professions that prescribe medical interventions. In some cases, seniors may present physical health problems to physicians instead of expressing a need for some other form of help. As a result, greater access to and awareness of counselling and other support services for seniors may reduce demand for medical care and medical interventions.⁶

Conclusion Most seniors report good to excellent health and relatively few are multiple-drug users. In addition, most drugs consumed by seniors are by prescription. Although prescription drugs are administered by health professionals, such drugs may negatively affect seniors' health if they are misused or inappropriately combined with other medications.

This can occur, for example, when seniors or their care-givers do not follow directions for a medication's use. Health professionals also have a responsibility to ensure that seniors use prescription drugs appropriately and that the drugs prescribed to seniors do not conflict with other medications they may be taking. Improved methods of monitoring prescription drugs used by seniors may help reduce the risk of misuse of medications, particularly among seniors who are multiple-drug users or who have several physicians or pharmacists.

Expenditures on prescription-drug coverage for seniors is one of the fastest rising components of provincial health care spending.⁵ As a result, concerns have been raised about the future cost of drugs for seniors in a rapidly aging population.

The drugs consumed by today's seniors, however, may be in response to health problems resulting from life experiences which differ considerably from those of younger Canadians. Today's seniors have lived through world wars, economic depression, hostile working environments, and periods when there was a lack of information about the hazards of generally accepted social practices, such as alcohol and tobacco use. Although it is unknown whether seniors in the future will be more or less likely than seniors today to use drugs, increased public awareness and adoption of lifestyles and behaviours that promote good health may result in tomorrow's seniors being healthier and less dependent on medical interventions.

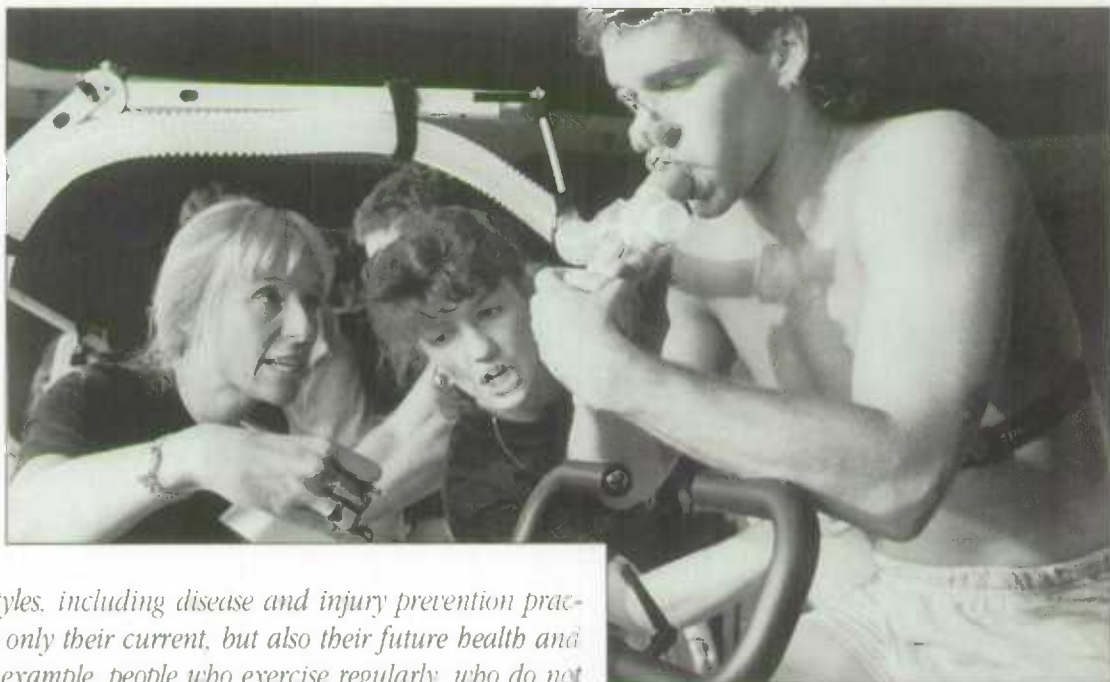
⁵ Harold M. Silverman, *The Pill Book*, New York: Bantam Books, 1992.

⁶ D.K. Freeborn, C.R. Pope, J.P. Mullooly, and B.H. McFarland, "Consistently High Users of Medical Care Among the Elderly," *Medical Care*, 1990, Volume 28:527-540.

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Provincial Differences in Health Practices

Adapted from *Canada's Health Promotion Survey 1990: Technical Report*.



Canadians' lifestyles, including disease and injury prevention practices, affect not only their current, but also their future health and well-being. For example, people who exercise regularly, who do not smoke and who are not overweight tend to view themselves as healthier than others. Lifestyles that promote good health are most common among young people, those with a university education and those with high incomes. It is not surprising, therefore, that provinces with high concentrations of young, well-educated, high-income adults – in particular Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia – have higher proportions reporting favourable lifestyles. People in these three provinces generally are more likely than those elsewhere in Canada to exercise regularly, to have their blood pressure checked and never to drive after drinking. At the same time, cancer detection practices, such as monthly breast self-examinations and Pap smears, are more common among women in Ontario and the Western provinces than elsewhere in Canada.

Population characteristics

CST

% of the population aged 15 and over with a university degree, 1991



Average household income, 1990



Source: Statistics Canada. Catalogues 93-328 and 93-331.



Health practices

Smoking: A smaller proportion of adult Canadians aged 15 and over smoked cigarettes regularly or occasionally in 1990 (29%) than in 1985 (34%). The 1990 smoking habits of Canadians in most provinces were similar. Residents of Quebec, however, were more likely than those in other provinces to be current smokers (34%).

Smoking was least prevalent in British Columbia (26%) and Ontario (27%).

Smoking was more common among Canadians aged 25-44, those with low educational attainment and those with low household incomes.¹ In 1990, 34% of those with only an elementary education or less smoked regularly or occasionally, compared with 18% of people who had a university education. Similarly, 36% of people with the lowest incomes were current smokers, compared with 25% of people with the highest incomes.

Drinking: The proportion of Canadians who were current drinkers (those who had consumed alcohol at least once in the year before the survey) remained constant between 1985 and 1990 (81%). In 1990, the proportion of current drinkers was generally lower in the Atlantic provinces than elsewhere in Canada. For example, 68% of people in Prince Edward Island had consumed a drink in the year before the 1990 survey, compared with 84% of those in Alberta and British Columbia. At the same time, current drinkers in the Atlantic provinces consumed less alcohol, on average, than did those in other provinces. Current drinkers in New Brunswick and Newfoundland consumed the least (an average of 3.8 drinks in the week before the survey), whereas those in Quebec (4.8 drinks) and Ontario (4.5 drinks) drank the most.

About one-half of current drinkers in 1990 drank twice a month or less, 46% drank at least weekly and 7% drank daily. Current drinkers consumed, on average, 4.4 drinks during the week before the survey. People between the ages of 20 and 44 were the most likely to drink (about 90%), with the proportion dropping to 62% among seniors.

There is a strong relationship between drinking, education and income. People with an elementary education were less likely than those with a university education to be current drinkers (71%, compared with 88%). Similarly, drinking increased from 62% among those in the lowest income bracket, to 92% among those in the highest bracket in 1990.

Tranquilizer and marijuana or hashish use: The reported use of these drugs was relatively limited in Canada. In 1990, 5% of Canadians reported using tranquilizers, the same proportion as reported marijuana or hashish use. Provincial differences in the use of these drugs were minor, with the exception of Quebec and British Columbia. In Quebec, 8% of residents reported using tranquilizers in the year before the survey, higher than in the other provinces where proportions ranged from 3% to 5%. In British Columbia, 8% of residents reported using

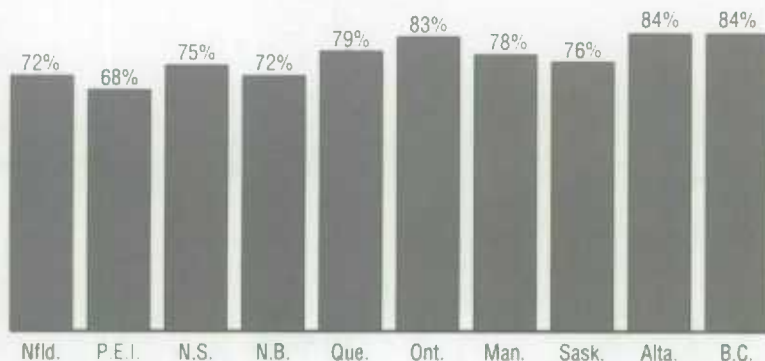
Health practices, 1990

GST

Current smokers¹



Current drinkers²



Exercise 3 or more times per week



¹ People who smoke daily or occasionally.

² People who drank in the 12 months before the survey.

Source: Health Canada, **Canada's Health Promotion Survey 1990: Technical Report**.

¹ For the purposes of Canada's 1990 Health Promotion Survey, five income brackets were defined, taking into account household income as well as the number of people in the household.

marijuana or hashish in the year before the survey, higher than the proportions of 4% to 6% in other provinces.

Use of tranquilizers and marijuana or hashish varied by age. Overall, seniors were more likely (11%) to have taken tranquilizers in the year before the 1990 survey than were younger Canadians (less than 10%). In contrast, marijuana or hashish use was more common among young adults. In 1990, 13% of those aged 20-24 and 9% of those aged 25-34 had used marijuana or hashish in the year before the survey, compared with almost no one aged 45 and over.

Exercise: In 1990, one-half of Canadians reported exercising at least three times a week. There are considerable differences in the activity levels of people across Canada, with Western Canadians generally more likely than those in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces to exercise regularly. In 1990, 57% of residents of British Columbia and Saskatchewan, and 56% of

those in Alberta exercised at least three times a week. In contrast, only 44% of people in Quebec and 49% of those in Prince Edward Island exercised regularly.



Disease and injury prevention practices

Blood pressure and cholesterol: In 1990, 85% of Canadians reported that they had had their blood pressure measured in the two years before the survey, about the same proportion as in 1985. The proportions of provincial residents reporting a recent blood pressure check were, for the most part, similar to the national figure, ranging from 82% to 88%. Quebec was the one exception, where 79% of people reported a recent blood pressure check. This may explain, in part, why Quebec also had the lowest proportion of people ever diagnosed with high blood pressure (11%).

Residents of Atlantic Canada were generally more likely than those in Ontario and the Western provinces to have had high blood pressure.

In 1990, seniors were the most likely to have had a recent blood pressure check (93%). They were also much more likely than younger people to report having had high blood pressure at some point in their lives (33% of seniors, compared with less than 8% of people under age 35).

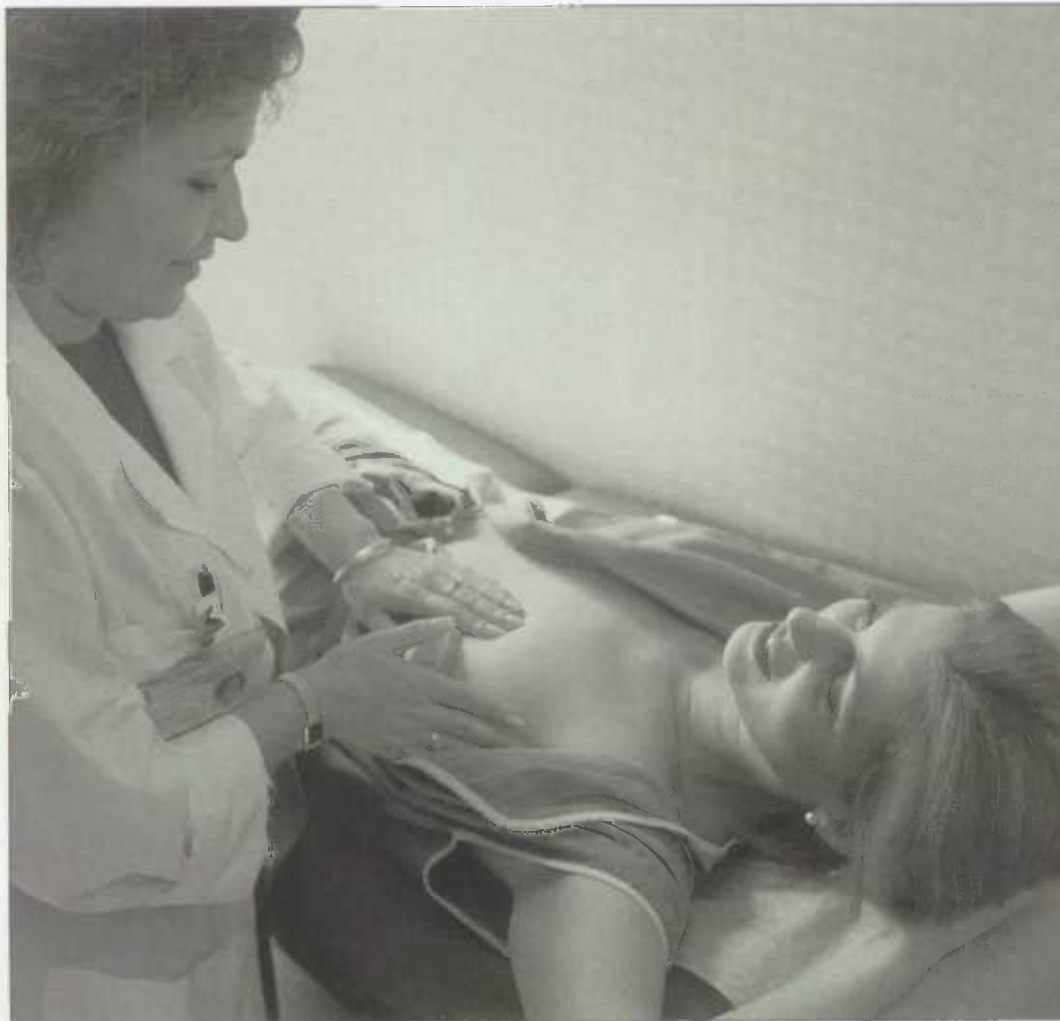
About one-in-nine Canadians (11%) reported that they had been diagnosed as having high blood cholesterol. In seven provinces, the proportions were the same as the national figure. Proportions were lower in two Atlantic provinces – Newfoundland (8%) and Prince Edward Island (9%) – and higher in the Western province of Alberta (13%).

Women's cancer detection practices:

Just over one-quarter (27%) of Canadian women reported that they had performed a monthly breast self-examination in the year before the 1990 survey.

In most provinces, the proportion of women performing monthly breast self-examinations was similar to the national figure. The major exception was Quebec, where only 21% of women reported examining their breasts monthly. Women in Quebec were also the most likely never to have examined their breasts (34%). In contrast, less than one-quarter of women in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia reported never having performed a breast self-examination.

The likelihood of monthly breast self-examinations varied considerably by age in 1990. Rates were lowest among young women aged 15-19 (about one-in-ten), and highest among those aged 45-64 (about one-in-three). Unlike most other health-related behaviours, rates were similar among women in each age group, regardless of their educational level.



In 1990, 70% of women reported having had a Pap smear (a procedure to detect the presence of cancerous cells in the uterine cervix) within three years of the survey, in accordance with the recommended frequency. With the exception of Quebec, all provincial rates were close to the national average. In Quebec, only 57% of women reported a recent Pap smear. Similarly, between 12% and 18% of women in provinces outside Quebec reported never having had a Pap smear, compared with 32% in Quebec.

The proportion of women who had had a Pap smear within three years of the survey was highest among those between the ages of 25 and 44 (about 85%). Recent Pap smears were least common among young women aged 15-19 (58%) and seniors (44%). As both very young and senior women are more likely than others to have low levels of education and low incomes, it is not surprising that the likelihood of having had a recent Pap smear increases considerably with education and income.

In 1990, about one-in-five Canadian women reported having had a mammogram within two years of the survey, although the proportion varied considerably by age. Among women aged 50-69, for whom routine screening mammography is recommended every two years, 40% had had this test in the two years before the survey. In contrast, 19% of women aged 70 and over and only 9% of those aged 20-29 had had a recent mammogram. However, regular screening is not routinely recommended in these age groups.

Among women aged 50 and over, 50% reported never having had a mammogram, with the proportion higher in the Atlantic provinces and Saskatchewan than in the rest of Canada. For example, 74% of women in Newfoundland, 67% of those in Saskatchewan and 62% of those in New Brunswick never had been screened. This was the case for 45% of women in Quebec, 46% in Alberta and 47% in Manitoba.

Women aged 50 and over with only an elementary education were more likely than those with a college or university education never to have had a mammogram (55%, compared with 44% in 1990). At the same time, just under two-thirds of older women in the two lowest income brackets never had been screened, compared with one-third of those in the highest bracket.

Dental insurance and care: Dental insurance is not universal and, therefore, not all Canadians have equal access to dental care. In 1990, 56% of Canadians had dental insurance coverage, with the proportion generally higher in Ontario and the Western provinces than in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces. In 1990, for example, two-thirds of residents of Alberta (67%) and Ontario (66%) had dental insurance, compared with only

40% of those in both Newfoundland and Quebec.

Dental insurance is most common among younger Canadians, with the proportion dropping off considerably in older age groups. About two-thirds of people under age 55 were covered by dental insurance. In contrast, only 43% of those aged 55-64 and 20% of seniors had dental insurance.

People with a dental plan were more likely (66%) than those without coverage

Women's cancer detection practices, 1990

CST

% performing monthly breast self-examinations



% having had a Pap smear within 3 years of the survey



% aged 50 and over never having had a mammogram



¹ Data suppressed due to high sampling variability.

Source: Statistics Canada, *Canada's Health Promotion Survey 1990: Technical Report*.

(46%) to have gone to the dentist in the year before the 1990 survey, a pattern common across all provinces. In addition, Canadians in the two highest income brackets were more likely than those with lower incomes to have seen the dentist in the year before the survey.

In Canada, almost all people (who had at least one of their own teeth) who went to the dentist in the year before the survey either had a check-up or had their teeth cleaned. Fillings or tooth extractions were the next most common reason for a visit. Crown and bridge work, as well as

periodontal care and dental emergencies, were more common among seniors than among younger adults.

Seatbelt use and drinking and driving:

Seatbelt use has become more common in Canada, largely as a result of the adoption of new provincial legislation and the application of specific measures to reinforce the laws. In 1990, 79% of Canadians reported that they always wore their seatbelt, up from 66% in 1985. In 1990, residents of British Columbia (87%) and Quebec (85%) were the most

likely to report that they always used their seatbelt, while those in Manitoba (64%) and Prince Edward Island (66%) were the least likely. About three-quarters of residents in all other provinces reported always wearing a seatbelt. In addition, women (86%) were more likely than men (72%) always to use their seatbelt, a pattern consistent in all provinces.

Between 1985 and 1990, it became more common for Canadians not to drive after they had been drinking. This was not due only to changes in laws, but also to school programs and mass media reinforcement of the social unacceptability of drinking and driving. In 1990, 56% reported that, in the month before the survey, they had not driven within two hours of drinking, up from 50% in 1985. There are, however, considerable provincial differences, ranging from highs of 61% in British Columbia and 59% in Alberta to lows of 50% in Newfoundland and Saskatchewan, and 51% in Prince Edward Island.

Provincial variations in perceived health status

In 1990, 87% of Canadians reported that their health was good to excellent. Despite varied health practices across the country, provincial differences in the proportion of people reporting good to excellent health were relatively small. British Columbia and Alberta residents were the most likely to perceive their health as good to excellent (90% in each province). Proportions were also higher than the national average in Newfoundland (89%) and Ontario (88%), and equalled it in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Manitoba. Residents of New Brunswick (83%), and Quebec and Saskatchewan (each 84%) were least likely to report good to excellent health.

Relatively few Canadians reported fair or poor health, but those with low incomes, regardless of age, were much more likely than others to do so. In 1990, for example, people in the lowest income bracket were seven times more likely (35%) than those with the highest incomes (5%) to report fair or poor health.

- For additional information, see **Canada's Health Promotion Survey 1990: Technical Report**, T. Stephens and D. Fowler Graham (Editors). Health Canada, Catalogue No. H39-263/2-1990E.

CANADIAN SOCIAL TRENDS BACKGROUNDER

CST

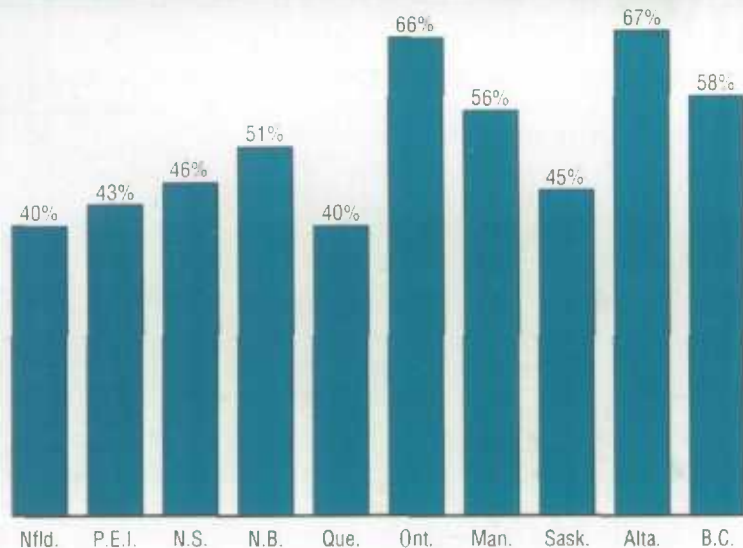
Canada's Health Promotion Survey

The 1990 Health Promotion Survey is similar to one carried out in 1985. The purpose of the 1990 survey was to update and expand the national and provincial baseline data on key health behaviours, attitudes, knowledge and beliefs, started with the 1985 Health Promotion Survey. In addition, it provides data on new topics reflecting emerging concerns, such as environmental impact on health, sexual health practices and dental health.

The 1990 survey, like the 1985 survey, was a random digit dialling telephone survey, in which one person aged 15 and over from each household was interviewed. This resulted in a total sample of 13,792 respondents from the ten provinces.

Proportion of the population covered by a dental insurance plan, 1990

CST



Source: Health Canada, **Canada's Health Promotion Survey 1990: Technical Report**.

SOCIAL INDICATORS

1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991 1992 1993

POPULATION

Canada, July 1 (000s)	26,203.8 ^{IR}	26,549.7 ^{IR}	26,894.8 ^{IR}	27,379.3 ^{IR}	27,790.6 ^{IR}	28,117.6 ^{PR}	28,435.6 ^{PR}	28,753.0 ^{PP}
Annual growth (%)	1.0 ^{IR}	1.3 ^{IR}	1.3 ^{IR}	1.8 ^{IR}	1.5 ^{IR}	1.2 ^{PR}	1.1 ^{PR}	1.1 ^{PP}
Immigration [†]	88,639 ^F	130,813 ^F	152,413 ^F	178,152 ^F	202,979 ^F	219,250 ^F	239,435 ^R	257,465 ^P
Emigration [†]	50,595 ^F	47,707 ^F	40,978 ^F	40,395 ^F	39,760 ^F	43,692 ^{PR}	48,519 ^{PR}	46,437 ^{PP}

FAMILY

Birth rate (per 1,000)	14.7	14.4	14.5	15.0	15.3	14.3 ^R	14.0	*
Marriage rate (per 1,000)	6.9	7.1	7.2	7.3	7.1	6.4	*	*
Divorce rate (per 1,000)	3.1	3.4	3.1	3.1	2.9	2.8	*	*
Families experiencing unemployment (000s)	915	872	789	776	841	1,046	1,132	1,144

LABOUR FORCE

Total employment (000s)	11,531	11,861	12,244	12,486	12,572	12,340	12,240	12,383
– goods sector (000s)	3,477	3,553	3,693	3,740	3,626	3,423	3,307	3,302
– service sector (000s)	8,054	8,308	8,550	8,745	8,946	8,917	8,933	9,082
Total unemployment (000s)	1,215	1,150	1,031	1,018	1,109	1,417	1,556	1,562
Unemployment rate (%)	9.5	8.8	7.8	7.5	8.1	10.3	11.3	11.2
Part-time employment (%)	15.5	15.2	15.4	15.1	15.4	16.4	16.8	17.3
Women's participation rate (%)	55.3	56.4	57.4	57.9	58.4	58.2	57.6	57.5
Unionization rate – % of paid workers	34.1	33.3	33.7	34.1	34.7	35.1	*	*

INCOME

Median family income	36,858	38,851	41,238	44,460	46,069	46,742	47,719	*
% of families with low income (1986 Base)	13.6	13.1	12.2	11.1	12.1	13.1	13.3	*
Women's full-time earnings as a % of men's	65.8	65.9	65.3	65.8	67.6	69.6	*	*

EDUCATION

Elementary and secondary enrolment (000s)	4,938.0	4,972.9	5,024.1	5,074.4	5,141.0	5,207.4 ^F	5,295.1 ^P	*
Full-time postsecondary enrolment (000s)	796.9	805.4	816.9	832.3	856.5	890.4 ^R	917.4 ^R	946.3 ^P
Doctoral degrees awarded	2,218	2,384	2,415	2,600	2,673 ^R	2,947	3,136 ^R	*
Government expenditure on education – as a % of GDP	5.7	5.6	5.5	5.5 ^R	5.6 ^R	6.0	*	*

HEALTH

% of deaths due to cardiovascular disease – men	41.4	40.5	39.5	39.1	37.3	37.1	*	*
– women	44.9	44.0	43.4	42.6	41.2	41.0	*	*
% of deaths due to cancer – men	25.9	26.4	27.0	27.2	27.8	28.1	*	*
– women	25.5	26.1	26.4	26.4	26.8	27.0	*	*
Government expenditure on health – as a % of GDP	6.0	5.9	5.8 ^R	5.9 ^R	6.3 ^R	6.8	*	*

JUSTICE

Crime rates (per 100,000) – violent	808	856	898	948	1,013	1,100 ^R	1,122	*
– property	5,714	5,731	5,630	5,503	5,841 ^R	6,394 ^R	6,110	*
– homicide	2.2	2.5	2.2	2.5	2.5	2.8 ^R	2.7	*

GOVERNMENT

Expenditures on social programmes ² (1991 \$000,000)	166,581.0 ^R	169,773.5 ^R	174,328.5 ^R	181,227.0 ^R	188,899.1 ^R	196,775.1	*	*
– as a % of total expenditures	56.4	56.1	56.3 ^R	55.9 ^R	56.6 ^R	58.5	*	*
– as a % of GDP	26.1	25.5	24.8	25.2 ^R	26.7 ^R	29.1	*	*
UI beneficiaries (000s)	3,136.7	3,079.9	3,016.4	3,025.2	3,261.0	3,663.0	3,658.0	3,415.5
OAS and OAS/GIS beneficiaries ^m (000s)	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 ^m (000s)	1,892.9	1,904.9	1,853.0	1,856.1	1,930.1	2,282.2	2,723.0	*

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

GDP (1986 \$) – annual % change	+3.3	+4.2	+5.0	+2.4 ^R	-0.2 ^R	-1.7	+0.7 ^R	+2.4
Annual inflation rate (%)	4.2	4.4	4.0	5.0	4.8	5.6	1.5	1.8
Urban housing starts	170,863	215,340	189,635	183,323	150,620	130,094	140,126	129,988

* Not available

^P Preliminary data

^E Estimate

^m Figures as of March

^{IR} Revised intercensal estimates

^{PP} Preliminary postcensal estimates

^{PR} Updated postcensal estimates

^R Revised data

^F Final data

[†]For year ending June 30

²Includes Protection of Persons and Property; Health; Social Services; Education; Recreation and Culture.

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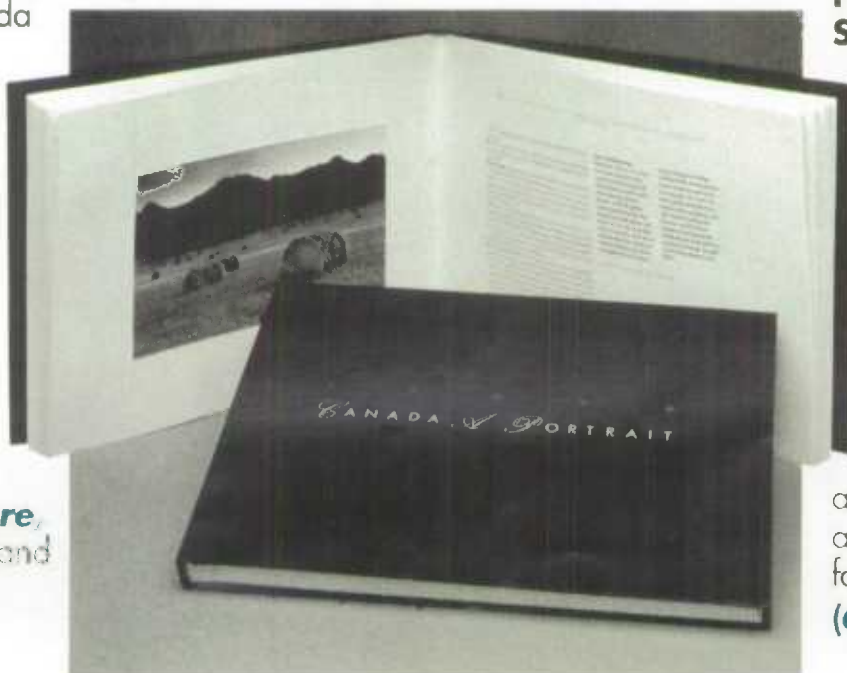
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