

Book Readers Borrow More, Buy Less

Michel Frève, Project Manager, Book Publishers and Exclusive Agents Survey

In the field of books, as in most cultural sectors, there is a wealth of interrelated data that are often difficult to reconcile. The purpose of collecting the data, the scope of the data, the definitions or the length of the time series may make these sets of data to some degree incompatible with each other. But after taking account of these differences, it is nonetheless possible to see whether the trends in each are consistent.

A survey of Canadians' reading habits commissioned by Communications Canada in 1991¹ provides us with the opportunity to verify some findings about the increase in the reading participation rate and the sources of reading material, borrowed or bought. Have public libraries placed more books at people's disposal? Do the trends in libraries' expenditures on acquisitions and Canadian families' expenditures on books agree with the sales figures for publishers and exclusive agents? If there has been a significant increase in reading, has this led to a greater number of books coming onto the market in Canada and improved the financial situation of publishers? A look at data from surveys of reading habits, public libraries, family expenditures, and publishers and exclusive agents will provide the answers to these questions.

Are Canadians Reading More Than They Used To?

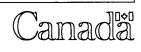
Reading in Canada 1991 informs us that, compared to the figures for a similar survey conducted by Statistics Canada in 1978, the participation rate for book reading has increased by more than 20 percentage points. Eighty-four per cent of respondents indicated in 1991 that they had read at least one book for pleasure in the last twelve months (compared with 63% in 1978). Forty-three percent of respondents in the 1991 survey indicated that they had read more than 10 books in the last year. Not only did the number of readers increase from 1978 to 1991, the number of hours devoted to book reading jumped from 2.7 to 4.4 per week. The types of books read for pleasure covered a wide range, including tradebooks, both fiction and non-fiction, self-help and how-to books and reference books. Forty-six per cent of respondents indicated that they had obtained their last book from a bookstore, a book club or other commercial outlet for new books. Another 12% said they had received the book as a gift. These figures are similar to those of the 1978 study. However, among those who indicated they had borrowed their last book, the discrepancy between the two surveys is wider. As in 1978, 37% of readers indicated in 1991 that they had borrowed the book. But in 1991 a greater percentage of borrowed books came from a public library (16% in 1991 and 9% in 1978), and the percentage of books borrowed from other libraries (4% in 1991 and 7% in 1978) or from an individual (17% in 1991 and 21% in 1978) declined.

Having sketched a brief portrait of book readers with the help of *Reading in Canada 1991*, let us now examine whether other sources of data can verify and corroborate this portrait. While it is

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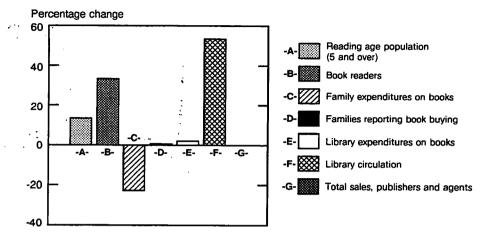
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¹ <u>Reading in Canada 1991</u>, Ekos Research Associates, Minister of Supply and Services Canada, Cat. Nº Co22113/1992





(Sales and expenditures calculated in constant dollars.)

obvious that we cannot directly link consumer spending, book purchases and library use, or publishers' book sales with reading habits, it is nonetheless interesting to see whether the trends are consistent.

Less in the Family Budget to Buy Books

Let us begin by examining some figures from a consumer survey, the Family Expenditure Survey. In 1990, 52.5% of Canadian families bought books, a slight increase compared to 51.8% in 1978. The amount of money they spent on books doubled over this period, rising from \$39 to \$78, but when these figures are weighted by the Reading Materials Price Index, we observe a decrease of 23%. Even the percentage of after-tax family income spent on books fell from 0.3% in 1978 to 0.2% in 1990 once inflation is taken into account. Viewed as a portion of their total expenditures, family spending on books was 33% lower in 1990².

The percentage of families who spent part of their income on books has remained virtually unchanged between 1978 and 1990, so we must conclude that the increase in participation noted earlier comes from borrowing.

Public Libraries: an Increasingly Important Source of Books

The 1991 study showed that the total number of book readers had increased by 33% since 1978. Sixteen per cent of respondents indicated that they had borrowed books from a public library, which is an increase of seven percentage points over the 1978 figure. During this time, public libraries reported an increase of 53% in their loans (including books and all other types of material), from 116 million in 1978 to 178 million in 1990. The increase in the reading age population is not sufficient to explain such an increase. The number of Canadians over five years of age increased by only 13% during this period.

To satisfy this growing clientele, public libraries added almost 20 million books to their collections over the 12-year period and their book acquisition expenditures mushroomed from \$29 million in 1978 to \$75 million in 1990. While impressive, in constant dollars the total increase is less than 2%, mainly because expenditures over the last four years have averaged an annual increase of 1.7%.

Publishers and Exclusive Agents

Assuming that sales by publishers represent overall market trends, let us look at changes over the last twelve years. Sales of

tradebooks and reference books published in Canada in 1978 were an estimated \$106 million. In 1990, the figure was \$251 million. But when these figures are adjusted for inflation, the real value of sales decreased by 8% over this period. This drop would have been even larger had it not been for the slight recovery in book sales over the last four years. But if we add to these figures those for exclusive agents, which are mainly imports, the market picture becomes more comprehensive and sales post a real increase of 0.2% between 1978 and 1990. Over the last eight years, sales for publishers and exclusive agents increased at an average annual rate of 1.9%.

Publishers have also brought out a large number of new titles. From 1987 to 1990, about 5,000 tradebooks and reference books were published each year, about 2,000 more than in 1978. Even though new works are the most profitable, the variety of books available during this period is not directly reflected in any increase in revenues. During this period, the average revenues of publishers for each title in their catalogues dropped by 32% for tradebooks and reference books.

An Ongoing Debate

After taking account of the fact that the Reading Materials Price Index has outpaced the Consumer Price Index since 1983, the growth in average purchases of books by consumers and institutions appears relatively small. This is what the Family Expenditure Survey and the Survey of Public Libraries indicate, and these findings are also in line with the observed stagnation of book sales over the last 12 years.

This suggests that if reading is on the increase, it is not necessarily because book readers are buying more books. Changes in reading habits are, however, in line with the increase in library circulation. But while libraries are circulating more items, these are not only books but also many non-book items. Results from the 1992 General Social Survey, which will be available this summer, will shed further light on this question, providing data on book reading, as well as data on participation in many other daily and less frequent cultural activities.

² The Reading Materials Price Index was used to convert figures for books into constant dollars. The Consumer Price Index was used to convert total family income and expenditures.

Recession Has Mixed Impact on Canadian Consumer Periodicals

Fidelis Ifedi, Project Manager, Periodical Publishing Survey

The circulation of Canadian consumer periodicals has been sluggish over the past few years, perhaps reflecting the lack of consumer confidence in the economy. While this part of the periodical industry performed better than expected in the face of the recession, its performance has been mixed: some periodicals made money; others had a hard time breaking even.

Magazine Buyers Feel the Pinch

Indicating the slowdown in demand, spending on consumer periodicals stood at virtually the same level in 1990-91 as it was in 1986-87, after taking account of inflation. Expenditure per family was \$57 in 1990-91, compared with \$56 in 1986-87.

The total annual circulation per issue of consumer periodicals declined two years in a row, representing a drop of 3% from 1989-90 and 4% from 1988-89. This is a downturn from the growth years of 1986-87 to 1988-89 when the circulation of consumer periodicals grew an average rate of 4.3% annually. Average annual circulation per issue followed a similar trend, falling by 3% from the previous year to reach 28 million copies in 1990-91, and decreasing by 6% from 1988-89 (Figure 1).

Figure 1

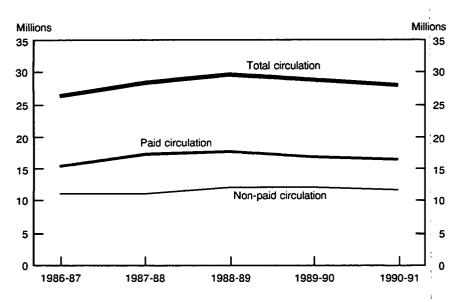
Paid circulation, which represents 58% of total circulation of consumer periodicals, dropped 3% from 1989-90, mainly because of a 12% decrease in newsstand circulation - the hardest hit by the recession. Newsstand (single copy) circulation accounts for onesixth of the paid circulation.

Subscription circulation remained fairly stable, declining only slightly (less than 1%) in 1990-91 from the previous year. This compares with a drop of 4% for the subscription circulation of business periodicals. For Canadian periodicals as a whole, circulation through subscription in 1990-91 was almost at the same level (19 million copies per issue) as in the previous year.

Periodical Publishers Hit by Declining Revenues

A look at other vital indicators shows poor performance as well, particularly in the areas of revenue and employment. Total revenue reported for consumer periodicals dropped 7% in 1990-91 from the previous year. This was the result of declines in circulation and advertising sales (Figure 2). Circulation sales (made up of single-copy and subscription sales) decreased by 9%, while adver tising sales dropped 5% from 1989-90.

Circulation per Issue of Consumer Periodicals, 1986-87 to 1990-91



Revenue from other sources not directly related to current operations slumped by 20%.

Adjusting to the Recession

Despite this shortfall in revenue, consumer periodicals managed to eke out some profits (1.5% of total revenue in 1990-91). But this was only about one-half of 1989-90 levels. Periodical publishers made a profit only by cutting across the board in almost all categories of expenses. The deepest cut was in marketing and promotional expenses, down 35% in 1990-91 from the previous year. This was followed by fulfillment and invoicing costs, down 13%, and production and printing costs, down 7%. These reductions in expenses led to more efficient production of Canadian consumer periodicals, with cost per copy declining 3% from 1989-90. This was the first decrease in five years and the lowest per unit cost in the past three years.

There were other adjustments to the recession. Consumer periodicals used more outside sources for text and artwork in 1990-91 than they did in previous years. In 1988-89, 53% of text and artwork came from outside sources. By 1990-91, this figure had reached 56%, the highest share ever recorded. Furthermore, publishers spent 18% more on outside professional fees in 1990-91 than they did a year earlier. Not surprisingly, the number of employees dropped, 2% for full-time and 8% for part-time.

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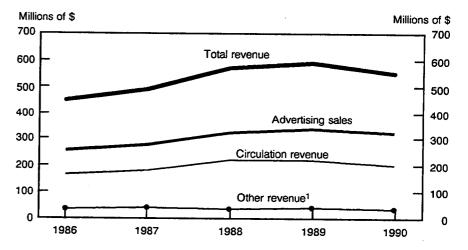
What Are Consumer Periodicals?

These include magazines of general interest to the consumer such as *Maclean's* or *L'Actualit*é which are aimed at a large portion of the market. The category also includes special interest magazines such as *Hockey News* or *Age d'Or Vie Nouvelle*. Both types try to inform or entertain the reader. Other categories of periodical covered in the Periodical Publishing Survey are: Business or Trade, Farm, Religious and Scholarly. Another area of adjustment was in the number of pages published. This was 10% less than in the previous year, a trend which paralleled the decline in advertising sales. The number of advertising pages for consumer periodicals was down 9% to 10,728 pages in 1990-91. Text or editorial pages were down as well, decreasing by 8% from 1989-90.

Mixed Results

For some periodicals, the reduction in expenses and other adjustments to the recession were not enough to avert revenue losses. Of the 618 consumer periodicals published in Canada, about half (49%) reported losses in 1990-91, 5% broke even and 46% made some profit.

If the bottom line is profitability, the results are mixed. A further analysis of the data shows that those periodicals that made money in 1990-91, did well, averaging 11% of their total revenue in profit. For those that Figure 2 Revenue of Consumer Periodicals, 1986-87 to 1990-91



Includes back issues and reprints, government grants, transfers from central services or affiliated organizations, membership fees and sale of mailing lists, etc.

lost money, the average loss was 20% of total revenue. This left the overall profit level of Canadian consumer periodicals at \$9.3 million in 1990-91. While better than expected, this was less than half of the level in 1989-90. □

From Growth to Restraint: Federal Cultural Spending Over the Last Decade

Norman Verma, Project Manager, Government Expenditures on Culture Survey

Federal cultural spending increased 74% over the last decade from \$1.7 billion in 1981-82 to \$2.9 billion in 1990-91. The effect of inflation, however, has been to reduce this increase to about 12%. The rate of growth in federal cultural expenditures was slower in the second half of the decade than in the first half, and in 1990-91, actually fell by 5%.

This article examines changes over the decade in federal support to culture by different categories of expenditure and by various cultural fields. Throughout the article, all growth rates refer to changes **after taking account of inflation**.

Types of Expenditure on Culture

All types of cultural spending -- operating expenditures, grants and contributions and capital spending -- grew over the first part of the eighties, with grants and contributions experiencing the most rapid growth of the three areas. Over the decade, operating expenditures averaged approximately four-fifths of the total federal cultural budget, by far the largest category of support. This category of spending totalled \$2.2 billion in 1990-91. After reaching a peak in 1984-85, operating expenditures fell by 5% in 1985-86, largely due to a decline in spending on broadcasting. They rose again over the latter part of the decade, but by 1990-91 had not regained 1984-85 levels.

Grants and contributions to artists and cultural organizations accounted for about 14% of the total cultural budget in 1990-91 or \$416 million. Although a relatively small category of spending, it grew at a faster rate than other forms of support -- 61% alone between 1981-82 and 1986-87. Much of this growth resulted from a considerable increase in assistance provided by Telefilm Canada to stimulate filmmaking for television and theatrical release. Grants and contributions grew more slowly over the next three years and actually dropped by 3% in 1990-91.

Outlays on capital projects, the third category of spending, have fluctuated from year to year, averaging about 10% of the federal cultural budget. As with other forms of support, capital spending grew in the early part of the decade -- by 16% between 1981-82 and 1984-85. By contrast, the second part of the decade saw considerable fluctuation in capital spending: expenditures fell by 18% in 1985-86, but rose again by 47% over the next four years. Finally, capital spending dropped by a significant 34% in 1990-91. In 1990-91, capital spending totalled \$242 million. New projects, such as the construction of the Canadian Museum of Civilization, as well as capital funding for broadcasting and for the construction and expansion of historic parks and sites, accounted for most of these fluctuations.

Continued p. 5

Support by Cultural Sector

In 1990-91, *broadcasting*, the largest cultural industry, consumed \$1.5 billion, or about 50% of all federal spending, a proportion almost unchanged since 1981-82. Over most of the decade, spending on broadcasting increased, with the exception of a reduction of 9% in 1985-86. As with other cultural sectors, 1990-91 also saw reductions in cultural spending -- 3% in the case of broadcasting.

The next largest area of spending was *heritage activities* (including museums, historic sites and nature parks). The federal government spent a total of \$648 million in 1990-91, well over onefifth of federal cultural spending. Spending in this area was fairly stable between 1981-82 and 1985-86. Then, over the next three years, spending rose by 22% while major construction activities were undertaken. In 1989-90 and 1990-91, as these projects neared completion, spending was down and declined 4% between 1989-90 and 1990-91.

Federal spending on cultural industries other than broadcasting (**book and periodical publishing, film and video, and sound recording**) amounted to \$496 million, or 17% of the total federal cultural budget in 1990-91. Spending on these areas increased 30% from 1981-82 to 1988-89, then dropped by 2% in 1989-90 and by 12% in 1990-91, due to reductions in the postal subsidy which had provided for reduced postal rates for books, periodicals and newspapers.

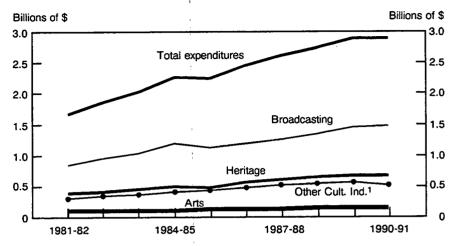
Federal spending on *the arts*, including performing arts, visual arts and crafts, and arts education, totalled \$129 million in 1990-91, the smallest category at only 5% of total federal spending on culture. Spending on the arts increased by 21% between 1981-82 and 1989-90. However, in 1990-91 there was a decrease of 12% from the previous year, largely due to a reduction in financial aid to performing arts organizations.

From Growth to Restraint

An examination of federal data for the last ten years shows that, in general, the rate of growth in federal spending on culture has been slowing down. In 1990-91, expenditures actually declined from the previous

Figure 1





¹ Includes book and periodical publishing, film and video, and sound recording.

year, net of inflation. The cultural community may see larger reductions in federal support in the future, particularly as a result of the reduction in cultural grants and contributions by 10% in 1993-93 and 1994-95 announced by the Minister of Finance, December 2, 1992¹.

¹ <u>Economic and Fiscal Statement</u>, Delivered in the House of Commons by the Honourable Don Mazankowski, Minister of Finance, December 2, 1992.

Defining Federal Cultural Spending

There are three main categories of spending on culture: (1) operating expenditures, (2) capital expenditures and (3) grants and contributions. Operating expenditures include costs incurred in running cultural departments and agencies such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the national museums, the Canadian Radiotelevision and Telecommunications Commission and the Canada Council. Capital expenditures are those associated with the construction and acquisition of buildings, machinery, equipment and land. Grants and contributions represent financial assistance to artists and organizations in the cultural sector for operations and capital projects. Federal cultural spending is primarily financed through parliamentary appropriations, but also through other sources such as advertising revenues (e.g. Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) and reinvestments (e.g. Telefilm Canada).

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Note of Appreciation

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The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of American National Standard for Information Sciences – Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48 – 1984.

Four Decades in the Balance: Retrospective on the Performing Arts in Canada

Joanna Warwick, Manager, Client Communications, Education, Culture and Tourism Division Claire McCaughey, Editor, <u>Focus on Culture</u>

Canada today has hundreds of professional performing arts companies in cities large and small, directly employing on a full or parttime basis over 25,000 Canadians. In the not-for-profit area, 226 theatre companies, 100 orchestras and other music companies, 54 ballet and modem dance companies and 15 opera companies are surveyed by Statistics Canada.

Scenes from the Past

Quite a switch from the level of activity four decades ago! The 1951 report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences drew a portrait of flourishing **amateur** activity in the performing arts, but found **professional** activity confined to just a few larger centres, with limited opportunity for Canadian performing artists. Smaller centres at that time were "...largely dependent on the radio and on moving pictures, an inadequate substitute for the concert artist and the living drama."

Those few professional companies and artists faced enormous challenges. There were, for example, only four orchestras "...equipped to present the more serious and more elaborate types of symphonic music." And they were all faced with "more or less acute financial problems which can readily be aggravated if they venture to present what their audiences consider to be an excessive amount of modern music." The Commission reported that "a concert of Canadian music given by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in January 1948, although well advertised, was so poorly supported that it resulted in a deficit of almost \$3,000." It also noted that "obviously no orchestra can undertake such a venture without some form of guarantee or subsidy".

The 1951 Royal Commission had much to say about the vital role of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (C.B.C.) in the artistic life of the country. "The C.B.C. Opera Company, using the resources and facilities of the Opera School of the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto, has aroused wide enthusiasm in Canada...". Festivals too played a key part in the development of the performing arts: "The demand for opera in Canada and the ability of Canadians to meet this demand are both well illustrated by the Société des Festivals de Montréal which for more than fifteen years has done so much for Canadian musicians and for the musical life of this country."

Ballet was a late-corner to the arts in Canada, but proved an immediate success. Canadians apparently were beginning to "discern the fallacy in the ancient maxim, 'no sober man ever dances'". In 1939. there were three ballet companies in Canada. By 1951 there were at least twenty in cities from Halifax to Vancouver, and in November 1950, at the third Canadian Ballet Festival held in Montreal. fifteen Canadian companies presented twenty-three original Canadian ballets. Ballet companies were, however, up against "the crippling cost of travel over our vast distances" as well as a scarcity of competent instructors and the absence of a school of advanced training.

Theatre in the late 1940s was "...restricted to sporadic visits in four or five cities by companies from beyond our borders, to the laudable but overworked and ill-supported efforts of our few repertory theatres, and to the amateur companies which have done remarkable work against remarkable odds, largely for their own private pleasure." The Commission commented that Canada had no shortage of theatrical talent but that this talent received little encouragement or outlet apart from the C.B.C. Theatre schools were non-existent, and talented young actors. producers and technicians were forced to leave the country for training, and returned only rarely.

From Amateur to Professional

It was in the two decades after the Second World War that professional activity in the performing arts finally came into its own. The creation of the Canada Council in 1957 helped to spur this development. In its 1967 <u>Annual Report</u>, the Council described how Canadian professional companies were making their mark on the international scene. Between 1957 and 1967, performing arts attendance had more than doubled. And we can track, through Statistics Canada's Performing Arts Survey, how attendance has grown since then. In 1967, professional companies reported attendance of 2.7 million. By 1990-91, attendance had reached 13.5 million, a fivefold increase over 25 years.

Today, although companies still face an ongoing financial struggle (annual deficits totalled almost \$8 million in 1990-91), funding from the private sector and government at all three levels has created a remarkably changed environment for the performing arts. This funding allows companies to undertake more performing activity than might otherwise be possible. including the creation and performance of works by Canadian artists. In 1990-91, performing arts companies received \$125 million in grants from government at all three levels and about \$59 million from private sources, including corporations, foundations and individuals.

Maintaining the Balance

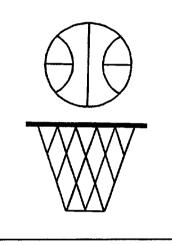
But the other half of the equation is equally important. Box office and other earned revenues accounted for \$189 million in 1990-91, 51% of the revenues of performing arts companies. Twenty-five years ago, the Canada Council stressed that the evolution of the performing arts should take place with an eye to the ticket-buying public. Performing arts activity, as measured by the number of performances, increased more than ninefold from 1967 to 1990-91. The number of professional companies increased tenfold from 33 to 395, 164 of which are small companies.

Although attendance grew more slowly than either performances or the number of companies, it grew fast enough to help the performing arts maintain the balance between growth in the box office and government grants spoken of by the Canada Council twenty-five years ago. In 1967, earned revenues accounted for 55% of total revenues of performing arts companies; today, although lower, they still account for over one-half of total revenues.

Sports Fans!

Did you know that 17 Canadian sports museums and halls of fame drew over 660,000 visitors in 1990-91? Sports enthusiasts have also been able to catch sports exhibits at other museums, such as the "Let's Play Ball!" exhibit at The Royal Ontario Museum in the Spring of 1989.

For more on this and other information from the Survey of Heritage Institutions, contact Erika Dugas at (613) 951-1568.



Culture Counts

Culture Counts, a newsletter from the Cultural Labour Force Project (CLFP), is now available. The CLFP has been initiated by Statistics Canada under contract to Employment and Immigration to obtain baseline information on individuals in the cultural sector: their labour market status and patterns, training, financial status and demographic characteristics. The newsletter was conceived with the intent to keep the cultural community informed about the project. Over 2,000 members of the cultural community have already been in touch with us about the project. If you would like to be on our mailing list or receive other information about the CLFP, please call 1-800-661-2100.

Publications

		Canada		
New		;		
87-202	Sound Recording, 1990-91	\$22.00		
87-204	Film and Video, 1990-91	\$22.00		
87-205	Public Libraries, 1990-91	\$30.00		
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Radio and Television John Gordon	951-1565		

Selected Canadian Cultural Indicators

Indicators	1986-87	1989-90	1990-91	% Change 1989-90 to 1990-91
Direct Economic Impact				
Culture Sector GDP (\$ Millions)	10,395	13,827	14,669	6.1%
Culture Sector's Share of the Economy	2.30%	2.39%	2.44%	2.1%
Culture Sector Workforce	278,102	298,939	316,951	6.0%
Consumer Expenditures (\$ Millions)				
Culture	10,944	••	16,027	
Recreation	12,887	••	17,278	
Government Expenditures on Culture (\$ Millions	5)			
Federal	2,451	2,898	2,889	-0.3%
Provincial	1,423	1,707	1,785	4.6%
Sales (\$ Millions)			,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	
Books (Publishers and Exclusive Agents)	1,118	1,420	1.476	3.9%
Periodicals (Advertising and Circulation)	724	903	884	-2.1%
Film and Video Distribution Revenues	378	649	695	7.1%
Sound Recordings	277	454	509	12.1%
TV Air Time	1,198	1,556	1.546	-0.6%
Radio Air Time	648	764	741	-3.0%
Cable Subscriptions	997	1,521	1.664	9.4%
Market Share of Canadian Products (%)		· ·	.,	0
Books	••	37.7	39.8	5.6%
Films and Videos: Theatrical	5.0	4.3	6.1	41.9%
Films and Videos: Home Entertainment	7.8	10.2	12.0	17.6%
Sound Recordings	10.1	8.0	10.5	31.3%
Television Viewing:				07.070
Canadian Programs (%)				
News/Public Affairs – Francophones	95.6	96.3	95.5	-1.1%
News/Public Affairs – Anglophones	83.2	73.4	70.3	-4.2%
Comedy – Francophones	22.1	20.6	25.2	22.3%
Comedy – Anglophones	1.8	2.8	1.9	-32.1%
Drama – Francophones	31.1	36.0	45.9	27.5%
Drama – Anglophones	5.9	7.0	7.9	12.9%
oreign-Controlled Companies'			7.0	12.3 /0
Share of Total Revenue (%)				
Books Publishers	44.2	40.5	41.1	1.5%
ilm and Video Distributors	62.3	60.5	52.5	-13.2%
Record Companies	88.2	84.7	83.2	-13.2%

We want to know what you think of Selected Canadian Cultural Indicators! We plan to produce a series of different sets of indicators relating to cultural industries, institutions and activities. Would you like to see Selected Canadian Cultural Indicators as a regular feature of Focus on Culture? Please call, write or fax your comments to: Claire McCaughey, Editor, Focus on Culture, Education, Culture and Tourism Division, Statistics Canada, R.H. Coats Building, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0T8. Telephone: (613) 951-1562. Fax: (613) 951-9040.