

Interest Groups and Policy Networks: The Influence of Canadian Scholarship in the World

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In the past ten years, at least three articles were published on the Canadian contribution to the literature on interest groups and policy networks (Pross, 1996; Haddow, 1999; Philips, 2004). Haddow and Philips agree that Canadian political scientists were awakened to the importance of interest groups by Paul Pross, who believed there was something for Canada in American pluralism despite the distinctiveness of Canadian institutions. Both authors also agree that tremendous progress since the publication of the work of Paul Pross was achieved in understanding the role of interest groups in Canadian politics, notably in the idea that interest groups interact with the state in policy networks. More significantly, however, both also suggest theoretical progress in the Canadian literature whose relevance reach far beyond Canada. The idea behind this article is not to propose yet another reading of the Canadian literature on interest groups and policy networks, but rather to examine its importance in international scholarship. In other words, I ask whether this literature informs Canadian politics only or whether it has theoretical relevance for international scholars interested in comparative public policy.

To answer this question, I rely extensively on data available in the Social Science Citation Index (SSCI). It should be underlined that this method displays a number of significant biases. First, the SSCI indexes only journal articles. Therefore, books and book chapters, which diffuse a significant amount of Canadian scholarship, are not accounted for in this paper. Second, SSCI does not index the *Journal of Public Policy*, which published several articles, including some from Canadian scholars, on interest groups and policy networks. However, SSCI does index the three main journals where Canadian scholars published most of their articles on interest groups and policy networks: the *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *Canadian Public Administration* and *Canadian Public Policy*. Third, the SSCI indexes very few journals in languages other than English; yet several Canadian political scientists published on interest groups and policy networks in French. *Politique et sociétés*, the journal of the *Société québécoise de science politique*, is notably absent from the SSCI. The SSCI, it could therefore be argued, is unreliable for Canada. For example, Vincent Lemieux's contribution on policy networks is undeniable, but for the most part it is published in French language books. Nevertheless, I think this bias should not be exaggerated. If French speaking-political scientists have not ceased writing in French, they also write in English. And it is especially true in the area of public policy, interest groups and policy networks, which are topics far better covered in the American than in the French literature.

In any case, it is clear to me that a SSCI-driven analysis of the international impact of Canadian scholarship on interest groups and policy network can provide only a particular perspective on this matter. It would be interesting to examine the importance of books and book chapters as means to diffuse the ideas of Canadian scholars. In addition, if researchers are interested in the frequency by which their articles are cited, I suppose that they primarily want to know which of their ideas are retained by international scholars. Only a qualitative analysis can provide such information. Unfortunately, I cannot provide such analyses in this paper.

If this analysis provides only a particular perspective, it should be noted that SSCI-based rankings of all sorts are becoming increasingly popular in political science, slowly

establishing themselves as a standard (Hix, 2004). As Plümer and Radaelli (2004: 1112) recently wrote: “In Great Britain the quality of publications (especially articles in refereed journals and books), together with other indicators of the quality of research, by and large determine the distribution of public funds for research to institutions of higher education ... In the USA, the number and quality of journal articles of a department determine its ranking in national evaluations and indirectly influence not only the tuition fees, but also the career opportunities of students.”

Specifically, the paper is organised around the five following questions:

1. Who contribute to the literature on interest groups and policy networks in Canada?
2. Do Canadian contributors publish in journals that have an international public?
3. Do they get cited and where?
4. Can we speak of a Canadian school on interest groups and policy networks?
5. How does Canadian scholarship on policy networks compare with that of the UK?

Under each of the question, I begin by addressing issues of method; I follow by providing the data; and I end with tentative answers. Overall, the answers to these questions suggest that Canadians make a significant contribution, not only to Canadian politics, but also to the international comparative public policy literature.

Who Contribute to the Literature on Interest Groups and Policy Networks in Canada?

This question is the logical point of departure of this analysis. Before assessing an impact, one has to know whose impact to assess. Not only does this question provide a logical point of departure, it appears to be a relatively simple question. In fact, attempting to answer this apparently simple question prompted me, several times, to wonder whether this analysis was doable at all.

Very few people in Canada who write on interest groups and policy networks identify themselves as scholars of interest groups and policy networks. Therefore, when I asked my research assistant to survey the web sites of every single department of political science in Canada to identify scholars whose work touched on the matter of interest groups and policy networks, very few names emerged. It was no surprise to my research assistant because, as she pointed out, I do not even myself mention interest groups or policy networks in the short description I provided to my department for its web site. And this failing was not specific to me as William Coleman does not mention groups or networks either. Grace Skogstad does better, including policy networks in her statement of research interest.

Therefore, I decided to use a broader selection criterion to begin the analysis. In a first selection, I asked my research assistant to retain every political scientist, who is professor in a political science department or a school of public policy, who identifies, in addition to interest groups or policy networks, public policy and social policy as his or her area of expertise on his or her institution’s web site. To make sure as few people as possible were

forgotten, I crossed the information with that provided in the 2004 repertory of Canadian political scientists, published by the Canadian Political Science Association. I also looked at the bibliographies of recent Canadian publications on interest groups. Using such a wide selection criterion to make a first selection reduces the possibility of missing contributors to the interest group literature. Also, it provided a sense of proportion about how many policy scholars contribute specifically to the interest group literature.

A list of 227 names was thus constituted. This group of 227 comprises several individuals who could be considered, at best, at the margin of the field of public policy. In addition, some contributors could still be absent from the list either because they did not have an up to date web site or an entry in the repertory of Canadian political scientists. To correct these problems, I opted for a survey of the articles published in the three main Canadian journals relevant to policy analysts: the Canadian Journal of Political Science, Canadian Public Policy and Canadian Public Administration. I treated as a sign of marginality anyone who, in the list of 227, had not published in any of these three journals since 1985. This is unfair to researchers who have chosen to publish elsewhere than in these three journals, but who have nonetheless published a great deal. However, it is the best method I could imagine to avoid having a list overly inclusive. 173 individuals were thus subtracted from the list. Seven individuals, who were not on the list of the 227, wrote articles relevant to interest groups, policy networks or public policy. They were added to the final list. Therefore, the final list, presented in Table 1, comprises 61 professors.

Table 1: 61 Policy Scholars

Name	Affiliation	Publications pertaining to interest groups or networks
Abelson Donald	University of Western Ontario	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Atkinson Michael M	University of Saskatchewan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Banting Keith	Queen's university	
Bashevkin Sylvia	University of Toronto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bennett Colin J	University of Victoria	
Bennett Scott E	Carleton University	
Bernstein Steven	University of Toronto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bhatia Vandna	Carleton University	
Boase Joan	Athabasca university	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bourgault Jacques	UQAM	
Bradford Neil	Huron University College	
Brooks Stephen	University of Windsor	
Burt Sandra D.	University of Waterloo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cameron David M.	Dalhousie University	
Carroll Barbara	McMaster University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Cohn Daniel	Simon Fraser University	
Coleman William D.	McMaster University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Crête Jean	Université Laval	
Dacks Gurston	University of Alberta	
*Dobrowolsky Alexandra	Saint Mary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Doern G.Bruce	Carleton University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dufour Pascal	Université de Montréal	
Dunn Christopher	Memorial University	
Fierlbeck Katherine	Dalhousie University	

Grace Joan	University of Winnipeg	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Haddow Rodney	University of Toronto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Harrison Kathryn	UBC	
Hoberg George	UBC	
Howe R. Brian	University College of Cape Breton	
Howlett Michael	Simon Fraser University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Imbeau Louis	Université Laval	
Jenson Jane	Université de Montréal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Klassen Thomas R.	York University	
Knopff Rainer	University of Calgary	
Lemieux Vincent	Université Laval	
Lindquist Evert	University of Victoria	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lum Janet M.	Ryerson University	
Malloy Jonathan	Carleton University	
Mark Sproule-Jones	McMaster University	
McDougall John	University of Western Ontario	
Montpetit Éric	Université de Montréal	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Noël Alain	Université de Montréal	
Orsini Michael	Université d'Ottawa	
Pal Leslie	Carleton University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Perl Anthony	University of Calgary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pétry François	Université Laval	
Phillips Susan D.	Carleton University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pross Paul	Dalhousie	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Simeon Richard	University of Toronto	
Skogstad Grace	University of Toronto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Smith Miriam	Trent university	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Soroka Stuart	McGill University	
St-Martin Denis	Université de Montréal	
Thérien Jean-Philippe	Université de Montréal	
Thomas Flanagan	University of Calgary	
Toner Glen	Carleton University	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Trimble Linda	University of Calgary	
VanNijnatten Debora	Wilfrid Laurier University	
White Linda	University of Toronto	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Woodside Kenneth	University of Guelph	
Young Lisa	University of Calgary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Young Robert	University of Western Ontario	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The survey of the articles of the three Canadian journals was further useful to identify whom, among the 61 authors, made contributions to the literature on interest groups and policy networks. It should be noted that very few public policy scholars in Canada devote themselves exclusively to interest groups and policy networks. I was also generous in deciding what constituted a contribution to the interest group and policy network literature. For example, a number of articles appeared on women and politics in Canada, discussing the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. I treated these articles as making a contribution to the literature on interest groups. Thus, 21 articles related to interest groups and policy networks were found in the three journals. The authors of these articles were marked in the last column of Table 1, in addition to those

who indicated an interest for group or network politics on their web sites. Therefore, 24 out of the 61 professors listed in Table 1 made at least a periodic contribution to the literature on interest groups and policy networks. This is not an insignificant proportion of Canadian public policy scholars.

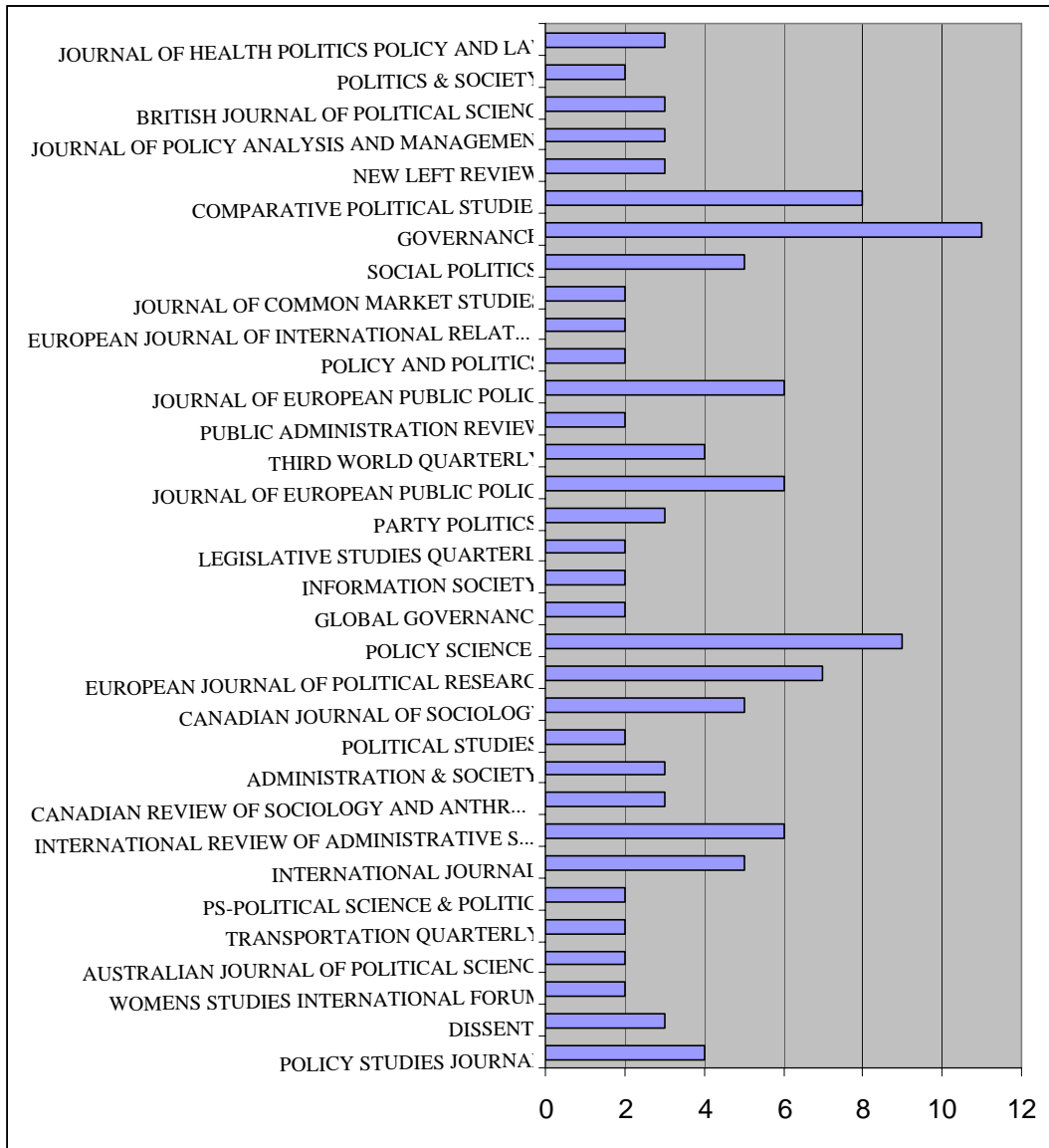
Do Canadian Contributors Publish in Journals that Have an International Public?

The names of the 61 contributors were entered in the SSCI to verify where they publish their articles. Note that I treat every journal indexed in SSCI as a journal with an international public. Therefore, a publication in the Canadian Journal of Political Science counts as a publication in a journal with an international public. The 61 contributors published a total of 403 articles in 89 different journals listed in SSCI. Of these articles, 42 pertain to interest groups or policy networks. One can therefore conclude that Canadian contributors to the literature on interest groups and policy networks do publish in journals with an international reputation.

SSCI provide impact scores for most journals. Impact scores are the frequencies by which journals are cited in other journals, divided by the number of articles each journal publishes. All things been equals, the more one publishes in journals with a high impact score, the more one has chances of been cited. Impact scores are used as indicators of the prestige of a journal. Although impact scores should be read with caution, they provide a means to measure the extent to which the 61 contributors publish in prestigious journals. Figure 1 presents the number of publications of Canadian scholars in international journals, ranked by their impact score in 2003. For the sake of clarity of Figure 1, I retained only the journals that have an impact score and in which Canadian scholars have published more than once. Given that the numbers of publications in the Canadian Journal of Political Science (86), in Canadian Public Policy (43) and in Canadian Public Administration (79) are high, the three journals do not appear in Figure 1.

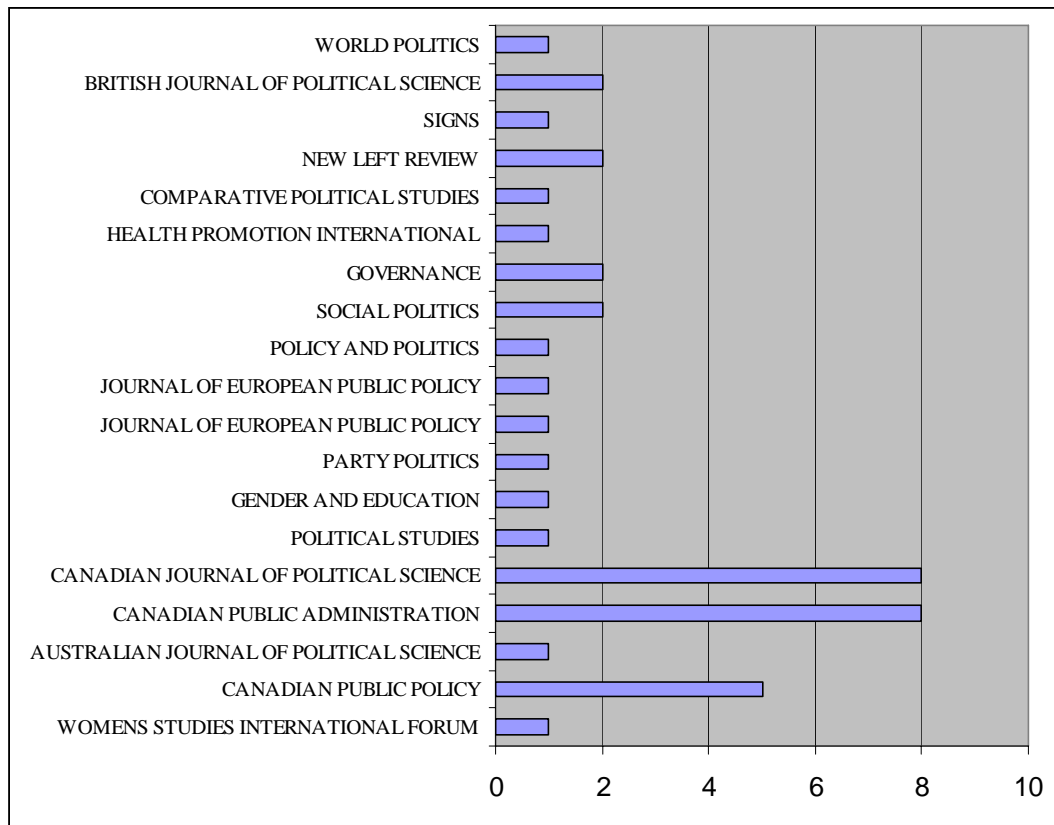
From Figure 1, one can conclude that Canadian policy analysts do publish in prestigious international journals. Of the articles that appear in Figure 1, 80 out of 126 were published in journals with an impact score above 0.5. The largest number of articles was in Governance (11), one of the most prestigious journals in public policy. Looking at all 403 articles, 105 or 26 percent were published in journals with an impact score above 0.5.

Figure 1: Number of Publications on Policy in Journals Ranked by Impact score



These results are for public policy in general. What about contributions more specifically pertaining to interest groups and policy networks? Figure 2 pertains specifically to articles on interest groups and policy networks. In this case, clarity did not require removing articles from the Figure and therefore it includes all the 42 articles on groups found in ISSI. Naturally, this difference limits the possibilities of comparison with Figure 1. In any case, Figure 2 shows that three articles on groups were published in two highly reputed journals: World Politics and the British Journal of Political Science. Moreover, of the 42 articles, 16 were published in journals with an impact score above 0.5. This represents 38 percent and compares favourably with the 26 percent for public policy in general.

Figure 2: Number of Publications on Groups in Journals Ranked by Impact Scores



Far from me the intension to claim that these figures are spectacular. However, it would be unfair to claim that the small community of Canadians who work on interest groups and policy networks, at least periodically, make no effort to diffuse their ideas to an international public.

Do Canadian Contributions Get Cited and Where?

I have shown that Canadian scholars diffuse their work on interest groups and policy networks internationally. But do international scholars read and use the work of Canadian scholars? If publishing in journals that have a high impact score increases the possibility of been cited, it by no means guarantees that individual articles will be cited. It was

therefore necessary to verify if and where the 403 articles identified in the previous section get cited.

According to ISSI, 270 of the 403 articles were cited 1248 times. 24 of the 270 articles were cited more than ten times. Half of these articles and slightly less than half of the citations (238/504) come from articles that have at least some relevance to interest groups and policy networks. The most frequently cited article on interest groups and policy networks is Atkinson and Coleman’s 1989 article of the *British Journal of Political Science*: “Strong States and Weak States: Sectoral Policy Networks in Advanced Capitalist Economies”. The 24 most cited articles are listed in Table 2.

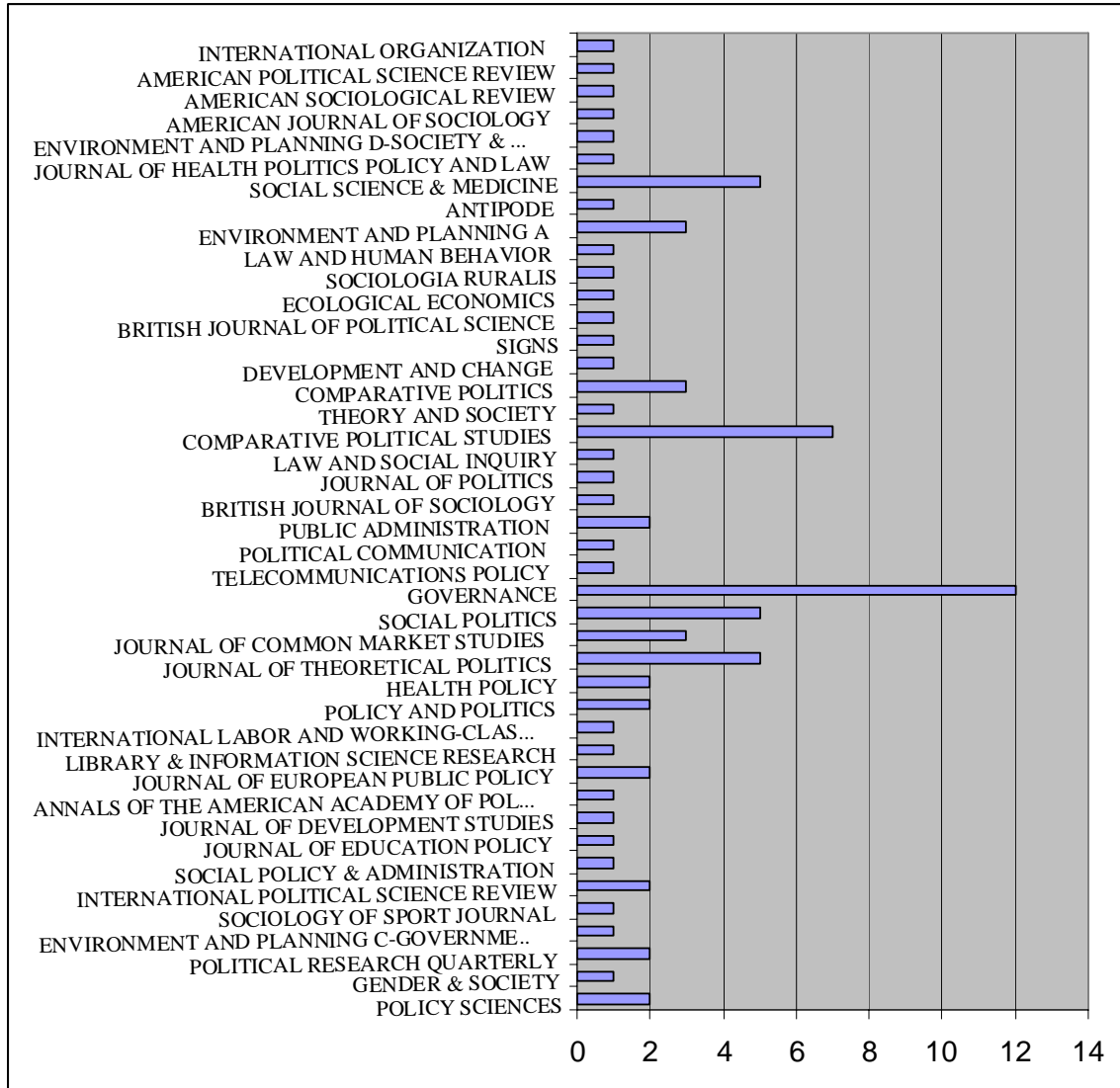
Table 2: Articles Cited more than Ten Times

Articles	# of citations	Relevance to interest groups or policy networks
Atkinson MM and Coleman WD, <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> , 1989.	50	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Banting KG, <i>Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology</i> , 1987.	10	
Bennett CJ, <i>Governance</i> , 1997.	17	
Bennett CJ and Howlett M, <i>Policy Sciences</i> , 1992.	40	
Bennett CJ, <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> , 1991.	62	
Bernstein S and Cashore B, <i>Canadian Journal of Political Science</i> , 2000.	12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hurley J, Lomas J and Bhatia V, <i>Canadian Public Administration</i> , 1994.	19	
Carroll BW and Carroll T, <i>Governance</i> , 1999.	11	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Coleman WD and Perl A, <i>Political Studies</i> , 1999.	16	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Coleman WD and Skogstad G, <i>Australian Journal of Political Science</i> , 1995.	13	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Harrison K, <i>Journal of Policy Analysis and Management</i> , 1995.	22	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Harrison K, <i>Policy Sciences</i> , 1991.	11	
Harrison K and Hoberg G, <i>Canadian Journal of Political Science</i> , 1991.	18	
Hoberg G and Harrison K, <i>Canadian Public Policy</i> , 1994.	10	
Howlett M and Rayner J, <i>Canadian Public Administration</i> , 1995.	10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Howlett M, <i>Policy Studies Journal</i> , 1991.	12	
Jenson J, <i>Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology</i> , 1993.	27	
Jenson J, <i>Canadian Journal of Political Science</i> , 1990.	26	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Jenson J, <i>Canadian Journal of Political Science</i> , 1989.	25	
Jenson J, <i>Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology</i> , 1989.	41	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Lindquist EA, <i>Canadian Public Administration</i> , 1992.	15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Noel A and Therien JP, <i>International Organization</i> , 1995.	15	
Phillips SD, <i>Canadian Journal of Political Science</i> , 1991.	11	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Skogstad G, <i>Governance</i> , 1998.	11	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Where were articles on interest groups and policy networks cited? Were they cited in journals with high impact scores or in journals with scores lower than those of journals where the articles were published in the first place? Canadian articles pertaining to interest groups and policy networks were cited 184 times in 71 journals that have impact scores. Of these journals, 43, or 61 percent, had impact score above 0.5 in 2003. As a reminder, 38 percent of the articles of Canadian scholars working on interest groups or policy networks were published in journals with an impact score higher than 0.5. In other

words, Canadian contributors to the literature on interest groups and policy networks are cited in journals that are more prestigious than those in which they publish. This is not entirely surprising as several of the publications of Canadian scholars are in journals of Canadian origin that have impact scores under 0.5. The good news is that international scholars who work on interest groups and policy networks quote these journals in their articles. Figure 3 shows the number of citations of Canadian scholars working on interest groups and policy networks in journals ranked by their impact score.

Figure 3: Number of Citations in Journals with an Impact Score above 0.5



Can We Speak of a Canadian School on Interest Groups and Policy Networks?

So far, I have treated the literature on interest groups and policy networks as if it was forming a unified whole. I simply looked at whether and where Canadian scholars working on interest groups and policy network publish and get cited. But international

scholars, when they look for literature on interest groups and policy networks, do they come across the work of individuals, who happen to be Canadian, or can they recognise a Canadian school on interest groups or policy networks? The fact that I use two expressions to describe the literature, “interest groups” and “policy networks”, already suggests an answer. However, it is important to push the analysis of this question deeper, if only because it sheds some light on the more general question of whether it matters or not to conduct research on interest groups and policy networks from Canada. In other words, does the institutional and cultural environment of Canada provide an original angle from which to study interest groups and policy networks?

In order to answer the question, I took the twelve most cited articles on interest groups and policy networks presented in Table 2 and verified the extent to which their authors quote each other in their work in general (not just in the 12 articles). For example, the article of the British Journal of Political Science by Atkinson and Coleman, cited 50 times, was quoted only by three of the authors of the twelve most cited articles, including Coleman himself. The results of this latter analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Canadians Quoting Canadians on Groups and Networks

The articles most frequently Cited	Canadians Citing the Articles
Atkinson and Coleman	1.Howlett 2.Coleman 3.Skogstad
Bernstein and Cashore	1.Bernstein 2.Howlett 3.Skogstad
Carroll and Carroll	1.Carroll
Coleman and Perl	1.Cashore 2.Howlett 3.Skogstad
Coleman and Skogstad	1.Skogstad 2.Coleman 3.Carroll 4.Howlett
Harrison	1.Harrison
Howlett and Rayner	1.Howlett 2.Rayner
Jenson	1.Jenson
Lindquist	1.Phillips 2.Howlett 3.Lindquist
Phillips	1.Howlett
Skogstad	--

Note: the two articles by Jenson were treated together in Table 3

If Canada were to have a school of thoughts on interest groups or policy networks, the authors of the articles listed in Table 3 should be engaged in a dialogue, revealed by frequent references to the work of each other. Table 3 does not suggest such a dialogue. Michael Howlett quotes the twelve articles most frequently (7). Unfortunately, the other authors are far from quoting Howlett’s work as frequently. Instead, Table 3 suggests a

small cluster around William Coleman and Grace Skogstad. As is well known, this small group works on policy networks.

The relevance of the work of Kathy Harrison for the literature on interest groups and policy networks is more limited, hence the absence of quotation from the authors of the twelve articles. What is more surprising is the extent to which they have ignored the work of Jane Jenson and Susan Phillips. The work of Jane Jenson was never centrally focused on interest groups. But the two articles she wrote on representation and social movements, listed in Table 2, were quoted more than 67 times by international scholars writing on interest groups. These two articles also laid the foundation of her recent work, notably in collaboration with Susan Phillips, on citizenship regimes, which contributes a great deal to understanding the relationship between the state and interest groups. Susan Phillips' article in the *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, cited 11 times, directly pertains to policy networks. In an article that marked the international theoretical debate around the notion of policy networks, Keith Dowding (1995) makes reference to Phillips' articles. In Canada, the key authors on policy networks have so far ignored her work, with the exception of Michael Howlett. It is also worth mentioning that a great deal of work was accomplished on interest groups by researchers working on women and politics. Unfortunately, this work failed to enter the main dialogue on policy networks. Rather, the work of these authors, including Jenson and Phillips, is more frequently framed to oppose the public choice literature on interest groups, popular in the United States.

In short, there is no single school of thoughts on interest groups and policy networks in Canada. There is one small cluster of researchers who have accomplished significant work on policy networks and several individuals who have done work relevant to interest groups from outside the cluster. This does not mean that working on interest groups and policy networks from Canada is like working on these matters elsewhere. It only means that the Canadian institutional and cultural context does not provide a single original angle to study interest groups.

How Does Canadian Scholarship on Policy Networks Compare with that of the UK?

We have learned thus far that Canadian researchers on interest groups and policy networks were successful at diffusing their work internationally, albeit more often individually than as a group. But how do they compare with researchers from elsewhere? In this last section, I propose a limited comparison with the UK. Why the UK? The UK, like Canada, has a cluster of researchers focusing on policy networks. Moreover, their approach to policy networks has a lot in common with the Canadian approach. Why a limited comparison? Simply because reproducing the analysis I conducted on Canada for the UK would take too much time.

Therefore, I decided to limit the analysis of the UK on the three most reputed researchers who have published on policy networks: RAW Rhodes, David Marsh and Martin J. Smith. All together, these three authors published 58 articles, alone or with colleagues, which are indexed in the SSCI. For the sake of this analysis, only the 19 publications that

pertain to policy networks were considered. While these three researchers have devoted a significant share of their research on policy networks, they have also contributed to issues such as the Whitehall model and policy transfers. I should underline that some of the work of Rhodes on Whitehall, for example, relate to policy networks to an extent. The same can be said of Marsh's work on policy transfers. Nevertheless, I did not count articles that were not explicitly about policy networks and thereby I might have slightly biased the analysis against the British scholars. As Table 4 shows, however, the British scholars do rather well despite this bias.

Table 4: Articles by British Scholars Cited more than Ten Times

Articles	# of citations
Rhodes RAW, <i>Public Administration</i> , 2000.	15
Rhodes RAW, <i>Political Quarterly</i> , 2000.	13
Rhodes RAW, <i>Political Studies</i> , 1996.	117
Rhodes RAW, <i>Political Quarterly</i> , 1994.	62
Rhodes RAW and Marsh D, <i>European Journal of Political Research</i> , 1992.	44
Marsh D and Smith MJ, <i>Political Studies</i> , 2000.	22
Smith MJ, <i>Public Administration</i> , 1998.	15
Smith MJ, <i>Public Administration</i> , 1989.	12

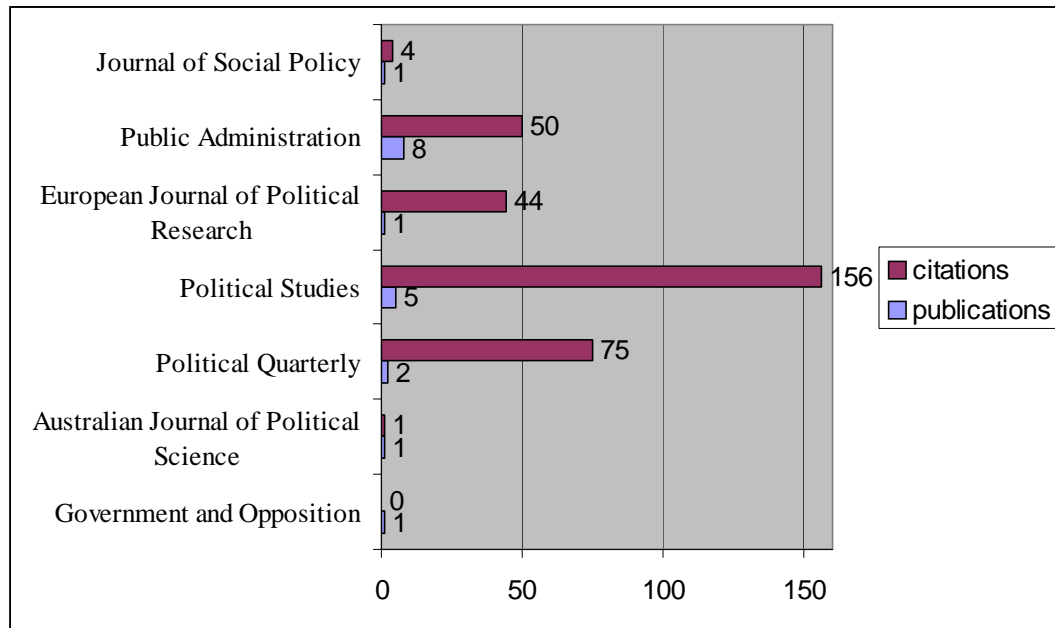
Table 4 shows the 8 articles, among the 19 they published on policy networks, which were cited more than ten times. As mentioned above and underlined in Table 2, together, all Canadian scholars working on interest groups and policy networks, published 12 articles which were cited more than ten times. Moreover, the most frequently cited Canadian article was cited only 50 times and published in 1989, while Rhodes' article in *Political Studies*, "Governing without Government", was cited 117 times and was published in 1996.

Figure 4 shows in which journals the latter scholars published their 19 articles and the journals are ranked by impact scores. Only the first two had impact scores above 0.5 in 2003. However, 8 of the 19 articles were published in *Public Administration*, a journal with an impact score of 0.866. 63 percent of the articles of the British scholars were thus published in journals with impact scores above 0.5. As a reminder, 38 percent of the Canadian publications on groups and networks were published in journals with impact scores above 0.5. Figure 4, however, shows also that the three British scholars published overwhelmingly in journals of British origin. In comparison, Canadians publish more in journals whose origin is outside Canada.

I said at the beginning of this section that the network approaches developed by the British and Canadian scholars have a lot in common. Therefore, one might expect British scholars to quote Canadians. Neither of Rhodes, Marsh and Smith quote Canadian scholars on policy networks, not even Atkinson's and Coleman's article of 1989 in the *British Journal of Political Science*. To be fair, however, British scholars, notably Jordan and Daugbjerg, who draw extensively from the work of Rhodes, Marsh and Smith do quote Canadian scholars as well, notably Atkinson's and Coleman's 1989 article. Interestingly enough, Canadian scholars equally ignore their British colleagues. The only

exceptions are Michael Howlett, who quoted them frequently, and Susan Phillips who quoted them once.

Figure 4: The Publications and Citations of Three British Network Scholars



This limited comparison suggests that British scholars who work on policy networks have a much greater impact than their Canadian colleagues. They publish in journals that are more reputed than Canadian scholars and are cited much more frequently. At first sight, therefore, the Canadian contribution to the literature on interest groups and policy networks, positive before this comparison, becomes less significant when placed in perspective. This result, however, is not entirely surprising. The UK has many more political science departments and political scientists than Canada. In addition, the Canadian journals, the main publication venues for Canadian political scientists, do not yet have the reputation of journals of British origin, the main venues for British political scientists. With an impact score of 0.866, *Public Administration* provides a venue to British political scientists far more reputed than Canadian *Public Administration*, whose impact score was of 0.282 in 2003. Even with proportionally more international publications than British political scientists, it is not surprising that, overall, Canadian scholars do not publish in journals as frequently cited. In short, the limited comparison that I provide in this paper does not cast the shadow it appears to cast on the Canadian contribution to the literature on interest groups and policy networks.

Conclusion

In a recent literature review, Susan Phillips (2004: 330) suggested that the output of Canadian scholars on interest groups was thin. This maybe true if one compares this output with that of Canadian scholars in political theory or international relations.

However, the analysis presented in this paper suggests that a fair number of public policy scholars publish articles relevant for the interest group and policy network literature. Moreover, their articles are published in journals that are reputed internationally and they are cited frequently in journals that have an even better international reputation. I think that it would be unfair to argue that Canadians make no or only a modest contribution to the literature on interest groups and policy networks. Quantitatively speaking, the contribution of Canadian scholars to this literature is significant, even, I would argue, when compared with the British contribution. Canadian scholarship on interest groups and policy networks certainly informs Canadian politics, but it also contributes to the wider field of comparative public policy. However, the Canadian contribution is fragmented to such an extent that it is difficult to speak of a single distinctive Canadian school on interest groups and policy networks.

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