

# Thinking about Identity and Ideologies

## Chapter

# 1

### KEY SKILL

Analyzing, organizing and evaluating the underlying assumptions of positions

### KEY CONCEPTS

Exploring influences on individual and collective beliefs

### Key Terms

Ideology  
Worldview



Figure 1-1

How do my actions reflect my ideology and identity?



The following news story introduces a movement called The Compact. Some people would say that those who join The Compact are acting on their personal ideologies. As you read the story, try to decide whether or not you could be a member of this group. Does your decision indicate something about your ideology? How important is it to act on your ideology?

## Shunning materialism saves money

Candice Choi, The Associated Press, July 19, 2008

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NEW YORK—Give up worldly goods and help save the Earth. Oh, and save lots of money.

As the economy worsens, one group of Americans is turning to an Earth-friendly way of life as a hardline strategy for saving. The Compact started a few years ago in San Francisco as a group of people who vowed to shun consumer culture for a year in the name of conservation. Now it has over 9 000 members and spinoff groups are sprouting up across the country...

It seems what's good for the Earth is good for the wallet. Since joining in January, The Compact has turned a flood light on [Julia Park Tracey's] family's frivolous spending—scented lotions, flavored lattes, iPod accessories. Now they no longer dry clean their clothes and even make their own cat food.

"All that was money out the window. We could not keep going like that and make ends meet," said Julia Park Tracey, whose budget is being stretched thin by escalating food and gas prices.

What makes The Compact compelling for average Americans is that there are no hard-and-fast rules...Members simply try to conserve the best they can. When necessary, they borrow, barter or buy second hand. Food and hygienic purchases are OK, but the idea is to cut back there too.

The goals sound a lot like those of a growing population of Americans squeezed by inflation. "People are coming for all different reasons, with credit card debt or others who say 'my kids are so materialistic and out of control'," said John Perry, founder of The Compact.

Perry didn't start The Compact to save money, but it's one of the lifestyle's intrinsic perks. He saves at least a couple of hundred dollars a month, which leaves more cash for his mortgage, charity and children's savings accounts. Cutting out dry-cleaning and Starbucks alone is saving Tracey's family \$250 a

month. Biking and walking conserves not just oil, but piles of gas money. Gone too are the mindless drug store sprees where Tracey would blow \$100 or more on cosmetics and snacks.

"The real surprise is that it's so much easier than you would think," Perry said. "If you hang on, it's like dieting—the hunger goes away." Since so much of consumerism is on making upgrades—faster gadgets, the newest sneakers—ending such purchases isn't even all that painful, Perry said.

A sudden en masse withdrawal from consumerism might shock the economy at first, but industries would likely adjust and perhaps even become more efficient over time, said Brian Bethune, an economist with Global Insight. Higher fuel prices, for example, are spiking demand for smaller cars and in turn hurting US auto makers, Bethune said. But that means car companies need to adjust their strategies, he said. "I don't see that as being bad for the economy," he said.

The conservation movement is nowhere close to crippling consumerism, however. Even devoted members of The Compact still buy things like shower curtains or kitchen appliances. Tracey's children, for example, may not eat out as often as some of their friends, but they still have cell phones and iPods they either got as gifts from their grandparents or bought second hand.

"There are different levels of adherence. It's what makes sense to your economic or personal conditions," said Rachel Kesel, one of the founders of The Compact.

Kesel, a 27-year-old San Francisco resident who describes herself as "anti-capitalist, anti-corporate" is on the more radical end of The Compact's membership. But many members resemble the average American family.

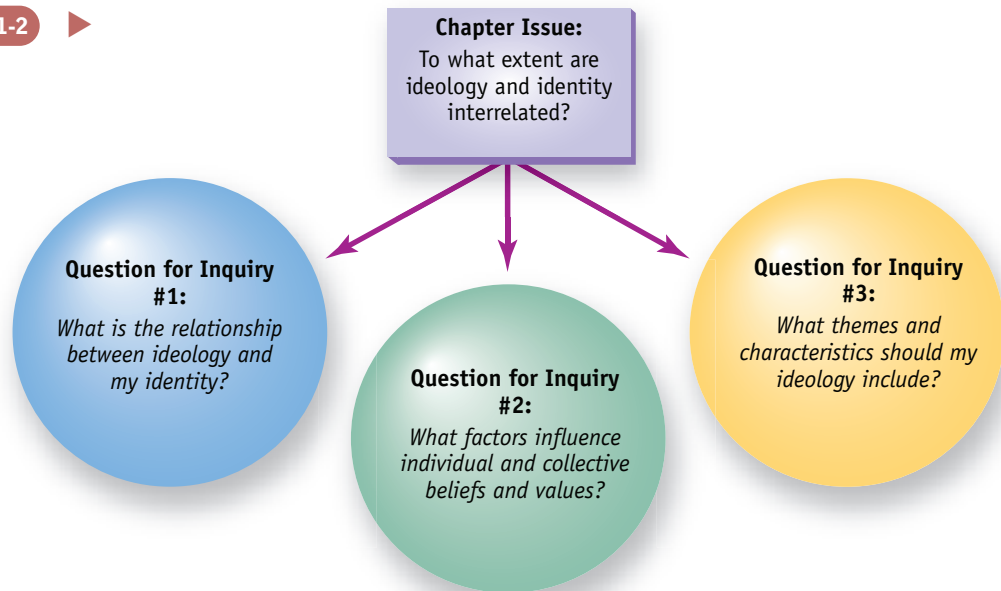
"It's very low level activism. It can fit into a lot of different scenarios," Kesel said.

## Chapter Issue

In this chapter you will explore the concepts of personal and collective identity, and identify the factors that influence the beliefs and values that make up part of your identity. You will also think about how your beliefs and values affect the way you see the world and your place in society in order to better understand the relationship between identity and ideology. You will be considering the Chapter Issue: *To what extent are ideology and identity interrelated?*

It is important that you think about ideology in terms of your own identity. This chapter will help you identify your own personal beliefs and values and examine their connections with ideology. This chapter will also help you examine the nature of ideologies: their themes and characteristics. We will provide you with quotes, pictures, and examples so that you are aware of what others have said about ideology and identity. But it is up to you to conduct this inquiry and make the decision about the extent to which identity and ideology are interrelated.

Figure 1-2



# Understandings of Identity

*...the culture of individualism has come to represent not just personal freedom but the essential shape of the social fabric itself. As British prime minister Margaret Thatcher famously summed up this individualist ethos, "There is no society, only individuals and families." In the so-called do-it-yourself society, we are now all entrepreneurs of our own lives.*

—Charles Lemert and Anthony Elliott,  
**Deadly Worlds: The Emotional Costs of Globalization**  
(Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), p. 3.

*No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main...any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind...*

—John Donne, **Meditation XVII**, 1623.

What is identity? The term *identity* has a wide range of meanings, depending on the context in which it is being used. In a very broad sense, one's identity is *who* or *what* one is. Social scientists and philosophers have described identity as a sense of personal continuity—being the same identifiable individual over the course of time—and an understanding of oneself as unique from others.

Two types of identity frequently discussed in sociology are personal identity and collective identity. **Personal identity** is the idea you have of yourself as a unique individual. It is the collection of traits that you think of as distinguishing you from others. A **collective identity** is one that you share with other people as a member of a larger social group, such as a linguistic, faith, cultural, or ethnic group.

A person's identity may be influenced by such things as gender, religion, language, or culture. If a group of people have the same shared experience, such as a particular religion, then their identities may be influenced in a similar way by that shared experience.

**Beliefs and values** are important aspects of identity. Just as past experiences and aspects of our lives such as culture and language form our identities, they also help us choose sets of beliefs and values. Although beliefs and values are abstract ideas, they can have real effects on our lives; they influence our behaviour and choices and guide us in our interactions with others.

Different understandings of identity may consider some factors to be more important than others. For example, a holistic Aboriginal perspective like the one on page 25 might stress the importance of community and environment in the formation of one's identity.



## PAUSE AND REFLECT

Do you agree or disagree with the ideas expressed in the quotes?

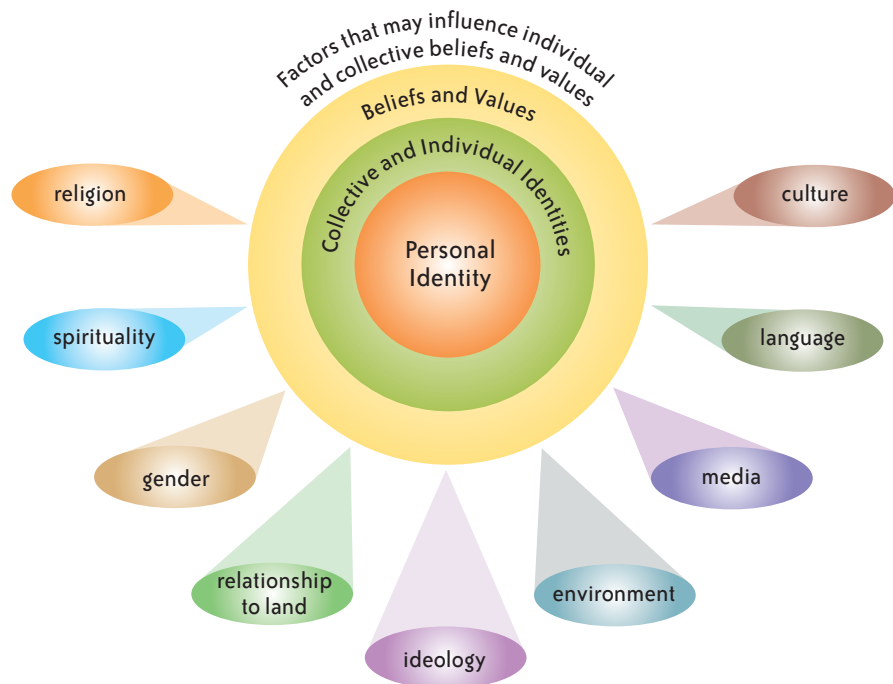
*Aboriginal worldviews teach that everyone and everything is part of a whole, and each is interdependent with all the others. Each person has a right to a personal identity as a member of a community but also has a responsibility to other life forms and to the ecology of the whole. It is inconceivable that a human being can exist without a relationship with the keepers of the life forces (totems), an extended family, or his or her wider kin.*

—Source: James (Sa'ke'j) Youngblood Henderson,  
“Ayukpachi: Empowering Aboriginal Thought”  
in *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision*,  
ed. Marie Battiste (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000), p. 269.

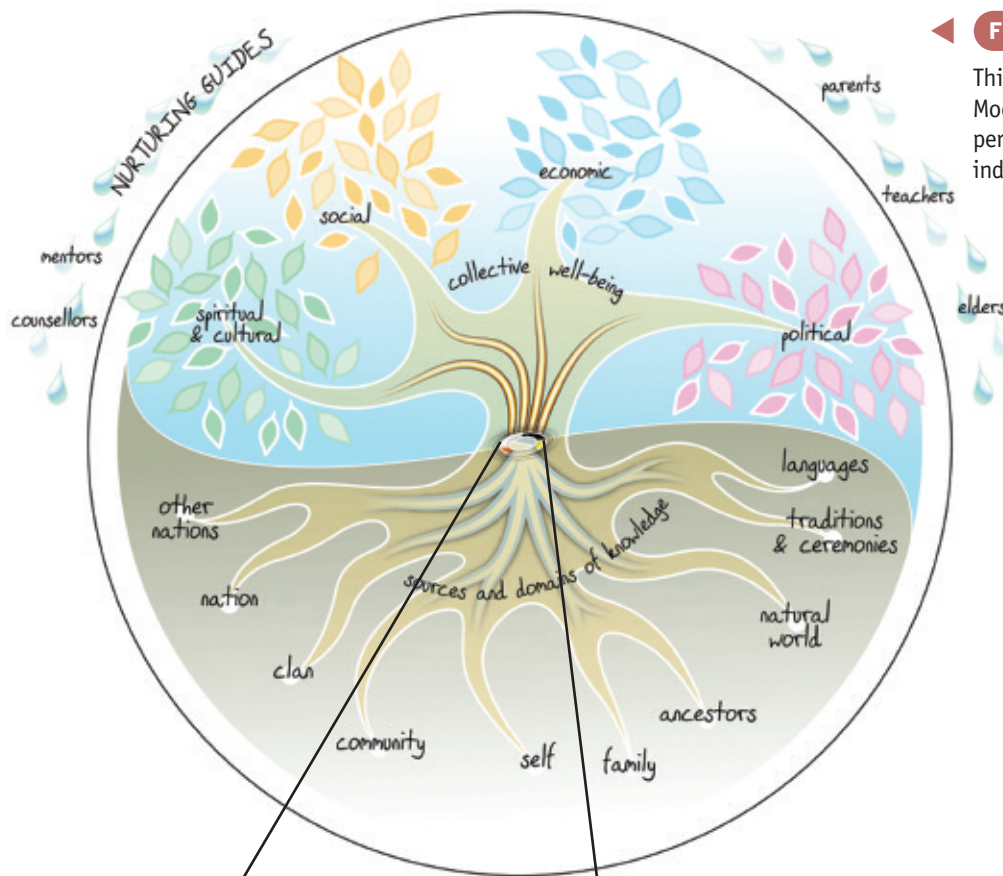
**Ideology** can also influence a person's identity. Political scientists consider an ideology to be a set of principles or ideas that explain our world and our place within it. An individual might embrace a particular ideology because it mirrors certain beliefs and values about the world that the individual already has. Once people consciously embrace an ideology, it may cause them to re-examine and reinterpret their own lives according to the principles of that ideology. Similarly, a group of people may choose to embrace an ideology that reflects its members' shared beliefs and values.

**Figure 1-3**

Understandings of identity vary from one society to another, and even from one individual to another. This diagram is one possible illustration of the interrelationship between identity and ideology. Various factors may influence your beliefs and values, as well as your individual and collective identities and personal identity. In turn, your individual and collective identities and beliefs and values can guide you toward an ideology, a way of explaining the world, that is in alignment with your way of seeing the world. What factors do you think have the most influence on your identity?

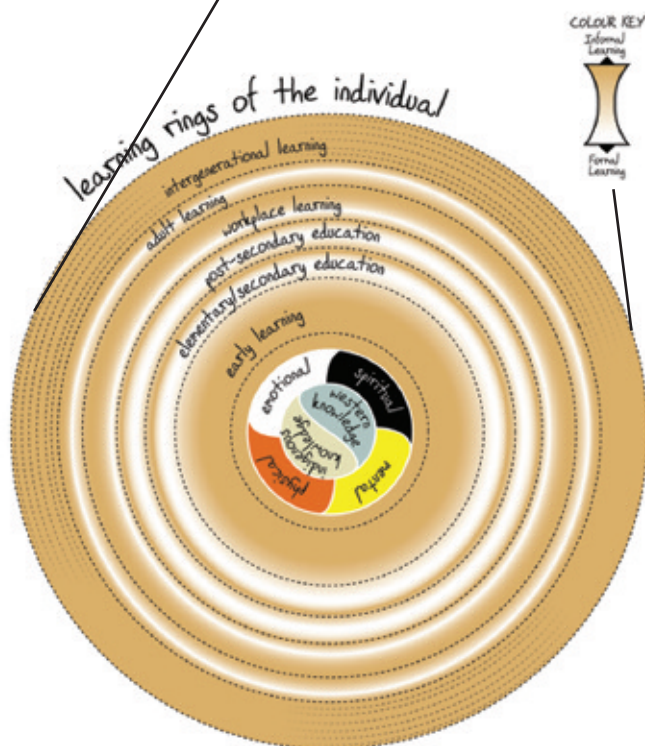






**Figure 1-4**

This First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model is one example of an Aboriginal perspective on factors that influence an individual.

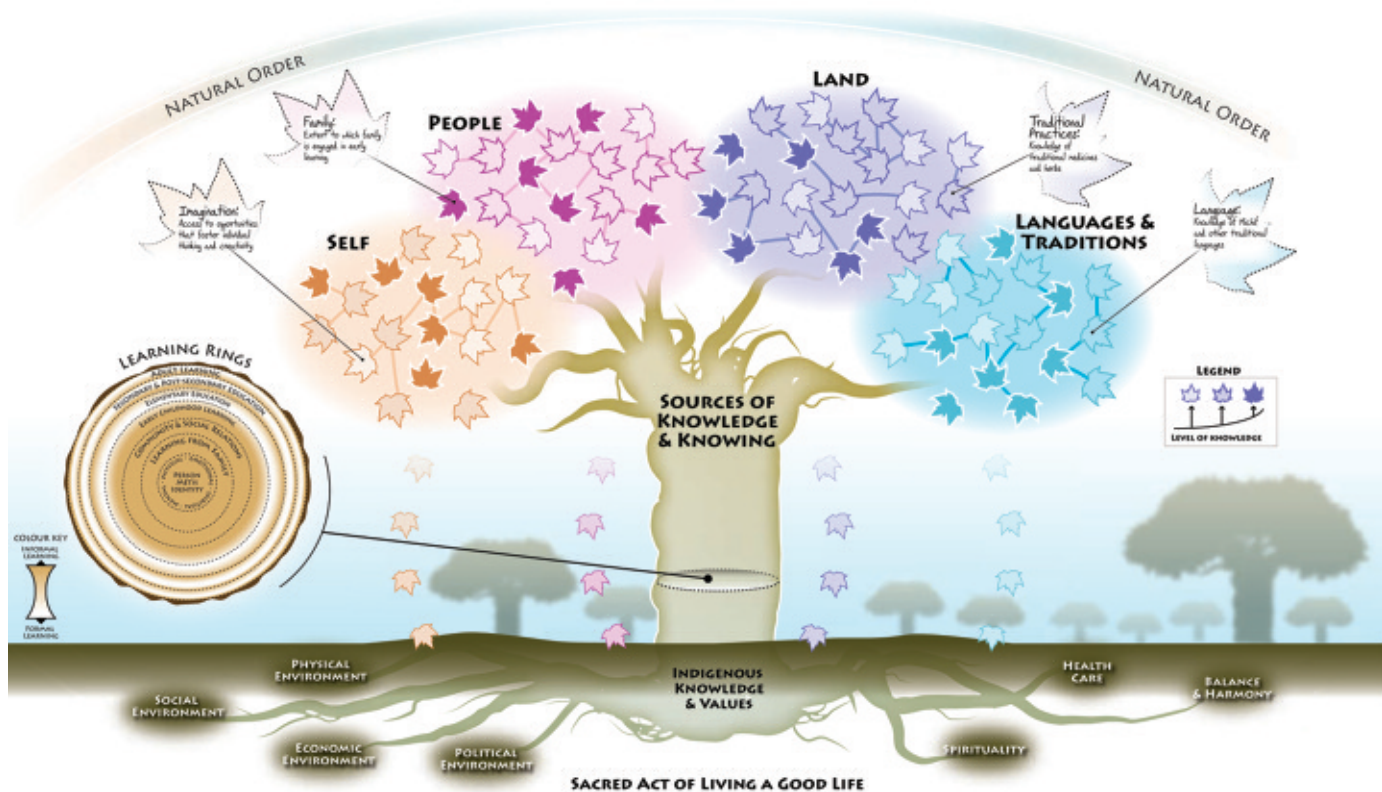


The First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model represents the link between First Nations lifelong learning and community well-being, and can be used as a framework for measuring success in lifelong learning.

For First Nations people, the purpose of learning is to honour and protect the earth and ensure the long-term sustainability of life. To illustrate the organic and self-regenerative nature of First Nations learning, the Holistic Lifelong Learning Model uses a stylistic graphic of a living tree. The tree depicts the cycles of learning for an individual and identifies the influences that affect individual learning and collective well-being.

—Source: Canadian Council on Learning,  
“Redefining how success is measured  
in Aboriginal learning.”

<http://www.ccl-cca.ca/NR/rdonlyres/93F93D9E-9CD4-482D-987D-8009D1DC088D/0/CCLLearningModelMET.pdf>.



**Figure 1-5** ▲

This Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Model is another Aboriginal perspective on factors that influence an individual.

*The Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Model represents the link between Métis lifelong learning and community well-being, and can be used as a framework for measuring success in lifelong learning.*

*The Métis understand learning in the context of the “Sacred Act of Living a Good Life,” a perspective that incorporates learning experienced in the physical world and acquired by “doing,” and a distinct form of knowledge—sacred laws governing relationships within the community and the world at large—that comes from the Creator. To symbolize these forms of knowledge and their dynamic processes, the Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Model uses a stylistic graphic of a living tree.*

—Source: Canadian Council on Learning,  
**“Redefining how success is measured in Aboriginal learning.”**  
<http://www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Reports/RedefiningSuccessInAboriginalLearning/RedefiningSuccessModelsMétis.htm>.

How do these illustrations (Figures 1-3, 1-4, and 1-5) explain the relationship between identity and ideology?

# Conceiving the Self

## Question for Inquiry

- What is the relationship between ideology and my identity?



Figure 1-6

Huxley's *Brave New World* describes a dystopian future society.

In *Brave New World* (1932), English writer Aldous Huxley describes a futuristic society where the state controls human reproduction and uses selective breeding to produce five separate castes, or classes, of people. Each caste is genetically engineered to fulfill a specific range of roles in society. Not only are the individual members of the castes physically and intellectually matched to their prescribed roles in society; they are psychologically conditioned to accept and enjoy their roles. As the director of a laboratory for genetic engineering observes in the book, “that is the secret of happiness and virtue—liking what you’ve got to do. All conditioning aims at that: making people like their unescapable social destiny” (*Brave New World*, Chapter 1).

The characters in the book are aware that they have been engineered for their particular destinies. Lenina, of the Beta caste, and Henry, of the Alpha caste (the two highest classes), discuss what it might be like to be a member of the Epsilon caste (the lowest class):

*“I suppose Epsilons don't really mind being Epsilons,” she said aloud.*

*“Of course they don't. How can they? They don't know what it's like being anything else. We'd mind, of course. But then we've been differently conditioned. Besides, we start with a different heredity.”*

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

- What are the similarities or differences between Huxley's fictional world and our world?
- Are we born into a way of life and a perspective on the world, or do we choose our future and our outlook? Do we experience anything like the conditioning in *Brave New World* that might lead us to embrace a particular ideology?



*"I'm glad I'm not an Epsilon," said Lenina, with conviction.*

*"And if you were an Epsilon," said Henry, "your conditioning would have made you no less thankful that you weren't a Beta or an Alpha."*

**—Source: Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*  
(New York: Bantam Books, 1932), pp. 49–50.**

## Who Are We?

Aldous Huxley was writing about a fictional future society, but can his fictional scenario also be taken as a metaphor for contemporary society? Do the immediate influences of family members, and the more general influence of the culture in which we live, provide us with a predetermined worldview?

There are some aspects of our identities over which we have no control: our cultural background, gender, and family. Nonetheless, an understanding of the influence these things have on our sense of self might allow us to have more control over the choices we make.

## The Influence of Our Beliefs and Values

Over time, the events and experiences of living cause us to form and modify our beliefs and values. These new beliefs and values guide our behaviour and help us answer questions such as:

- What is important to me?
- What are human beings like? How should they act?
- Are my concerns restricted to my own self-interest, or do they extend to others as well?
- Should I also be concerned with the well-being of people I do not know?
- What sort of world do I want to live in? What effect can I have on my world, if any?

Every day we interact with a variety of other people, some of them similar to us and others very different from us. The individuals with whom you interact may have beliefs and values similar to your own, or they may have beliefs and values different from yours. If your beliefs are different, if they conflict in some way, what bearing will this have on the possible outcome of your interaction? How do you go about negotiating your differences?

As a set of principles that propose how society should work, an ideology may provide you with answers to some of the questions above. It can provide you with a framework of ideas about what role you should play as an individual in society, and what you can expect from society.

## Discovering One's Beliefs and Values: What Lies Beneath?

People sometimes take for granted their beliefs about what human beings are like and what kind of world is desirable or possible. They may make a variety of assumptions about human behaviour and how people *should* live together. Not all of our assumptions are necessarily false; in fact, many of them may be true. The problem with assumptions is that they may not have been tested or examined, so we do not know if they are valid or not. In order to take an informed position on an issue, it is important to first uncover and evaluate one's personal assumptions.

Read one of the ethical statements provided and respond to it (*I agree with this statement because...*). Find another student in the class who holds a different position. Spend a few minutes together identifying and discussing the reasons for your respective positions.

Repeat this process three times with other students who have positions that are different from your own. Note the variety of positions and reasons for supporting them. You can use the guiding questions provided to analyze, organize, and evaluate the underlying assumptions of the positions. These questions will help you explore each position more deeply and allow you to consider each position from the level of some fundamental questions: *What are people like? What is the purpose of life? What kind of society do we want?*

### **Ethical Statements for Exploration and Response**

*Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed.*

—**Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948),**  
Indian civil rights lawyer, activist,  
and political and spiritual leader



Figure 1-7 ▲

What assumptions are your beliefs and values based on?

*Until and unless you discover that money is the root of all good, you ask for your own destruction. When money ceases to become the means by which men deal with one another, then men become the tools of other men. Blood, whips and guns—or dollars. Take your choice—there is no other.*

—**Ayn Rand, *Atlas Shrugged* (1957)**  
(New York: Dutton, 1992), p. 415.

*If we go on the way we have, the fault is our greed [and] if we are not willing [to change], we will disappear from the face of the globe, to be replaced by the insect.*

—**Jacques Cousteau (1910–1997),**  
French marine explorer and ecologist

### Questions to Guide You

1. What are the different points of view that you and others shared regarding the ethical statements about beliefs and values?
2. What reasons did each of you give for your point of view?
3. What are the factors that cause each of you to hold your respective point of view?
4. How do the reasons for your position reflect your beliefs about the nature of people, the purpose of life, and the nature of society?

Now that you have examined some of your assumptions and beliefs, and those of others, has your point of view changed?

## Beliefs and Values Inventory: Where Do You Fit In?

This quiz outlines some of the fundamental beliefs relating to how people define a desirable society. Mark each sentence *often*, *sometimes*, or *rarely*, according to how you feel about it *most* of the time. Your teacher will provide you with a scoring guide.

When you have finished the quiz, work with a small group to come up with three more statements to add to the Beliefs and Values Inventory.

1. I feel that most things run better if planned by a team of people rather than by one person.
2. If you are not in it to win, then you are not in it.
3. Competition causes people to mistrust and fear one another. Co-operation is a much better way to achieve a goal.
4. People should take care of one another. We really are our fellows' keepers.
5. You are a product of all the people you have met.
6. I dislike teamwork. One person always slacks off, and my contribution should not have to make up for someone else's laziness.
7. The buck stops with me. I am responsible for my own actions at all times.
8. As a society, we would not be anywhere if everyone just did as they wanted.
9. My life is directed primarily by what I want to achieve for myself.
10. The most important thing in the world is to be yourself. Even if other people disapprove of your actions, being yourself is worth it in the end.
11. When people agree on something, they can move forward and accomplish anything.
12. What I earn I work hard for. My earnings belong to me. Why should my money go to other people?
13. At home, in school, and in life, it is important to know that rules are for the good of everyone and that we should obey them.
14. If I come across a regulation that is inconvenient to me, I speak up and say why the rule should be changed.
15. It bothers me that just a few people control so much wealth. No wonder there is so much crime. They should share it with others who do not have anything.
16. Working hard and getting somewhere in life is what it is all about.
17. We are only as strong as our weakest link.
18. I decide things for myself. Nobody has the right to make decisions for me.
19. A person's sense of fulfillment comes mainly from personal accomplishments.
20. True personal happiness is found in doing things for others.

## Explore the Issues

### Concept Review

- 1 What is identity?
- 2 What is an ideology?
- 3 What factors shape an identity?
- 4 What is the relationship between identity and ideology?

### Concept Application

- 5 Select five statements from the Beliefs and Values Inventory with which you identify or which you feel characterize you best. Based on your five chosen statements, identify the beliefs and values

underlying these statements. Work with a small group and compare your essential beliefs and values. Identify the beliefs or values that are shared by more than one member of the group.

- Are there identifiable reasons why some individuals may share the same beliefs and values?
- Are there identifiable reasons why some individuals may have differing beliefs and values?
- What tentative conclusions can you draw from these observations about the relationship between an individual's identity and his or her ideology?

# Sources of Identity

## Question for Inquiry

- What factors influence individual and collective beliefs and values?

It may be tempting to think that our belief system should be universal, that what we hold to be true is true not just for ourselves but for everyone. Many thinkers throughout history have constructed philosophical systems to argue that there *are* universal truths about the world and our place in it. There are also philosophical traditions that hold that there are no universal truths. The fact that there is disagreement over the existence of universal truths—and what those truths might be—means that people must negotiate to some extent with the beliefs and values of others.

## What Can We Gain from an Awareness of the Sources of Our Beliefs and Values?

The importance of knowing *where* your beliefs and values come from may not be immediately obvious. The simple fact that you have identified *what your beliefs and values are* may seem sufficient to you to guide your interactions with others.

But considering the origins of our ideas may cause us to examine them further and develop a deeper understanding of them. Thinking about where certain ideas come from may also lead us to accept the validity of the beliefs of others, even if we do not necessarily agree with them.

In his book, *Long Walk to Freedom* (1995), Nelson Mandela wrote the following: “No one is born hating another person because of the colour of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate...”

- What does his statement suggest about the influence of ideology on the beliefs of individuals?

## Shaping Identities

In this section you will look more closely at some of the factors, such as family, language, or media, that influence the formation of beliefs and values. As you consider these factors, think about the relative importance of each of them in your own life.

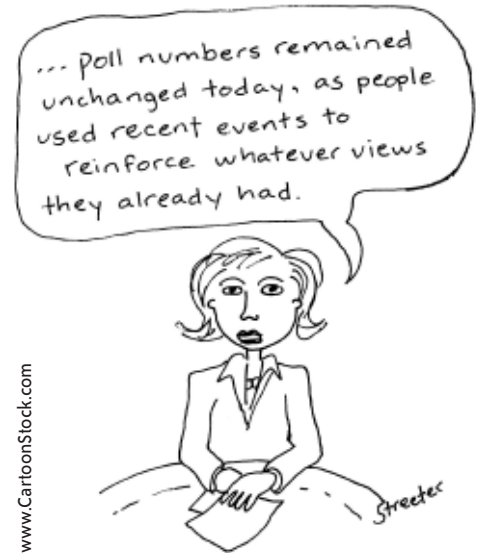


Figure 1-8 ▲

How do your beliefs and values affect your interpretation of events in the news or in your own life? What is the cartoonist's perspective on this question?

## File Facts )

### Nelson Mandela

- was born in 1918 in South Africa
- studied and worked as a lawyer
- became involved in the anti-apartheid African National Congress (ANC) after the election of the pro-segregation National Party in 1948
- became the leader of the armed wing of the ANC in 1961, and organized a sabotage campaign against government and military targets
- imprisoned from 1962 to 1990 for his activities
- awarded the 1993 Nobel Prize for Peace
- served as president of South Africa from 1994 to 1999
- was the first president of South Africa elected by **universal suffrage**



## Family Influence

Families often have a strong influence on their children's identities. For most people, the earliest influence on their personal beliefs and values is their family.

Many sociologists point to the importance of the family in the formation of identity. According to Ernest W. Burgess, "Whatever its biological inheritance from its parents and other ancestors, the child receives also from them a heritage of attitudes, sentiments, and ideals..." In his book *Family, Socialisation and Interaction Process* (1955), Talcott Parsons argues that "it is because the human personality is not 'born' but must be 'made' through the socialisation process that in the first instance families are necessary. They are factories which produce human personalities."

- What do you think of Parsons's idea that families are "factories which produce human personalities"?

Possibly the most well-known family in North America is the animated Simpson family. Consider Parsons's idea that "families are factories that produce human personalities" as you read the following description of some of the Simpsons.

*As for his family, Homer once offers thanks "for the occasional moments of peace and love our family's experienced...well, not today. You saw what happened. O, Lord, be honest! Are we the most pathetic family in the world or what?"*

*Bart (an anagram for "brat") is their ten-year-old son. Bart is the selfish but good-natured bad-boy, modeled in part on Eddie Haskell from Leave It to Beaver, the kid that gets away with everything. When Homer prays before a meal, "Rub a dub, dub, thanks for the grub," Bart speaks the unspeakable: "Dear God, we paid for all this stuff ourselves, so thanks for nothing."*

*Lisa is a good-hearted and gifted eight-year-old—often the show's conscience. She supports the poor, the powerless and the downtrodden; she is critical of the rich. She questions conventional wisdom, regardless of unpopularity. Asked to sing "The Star Spangled Banner" before a football game, she uses the occasion to announce, "Before I sing the National Anthem, I'd like to say that college football drains funds that are badly needed for education and the arts."*

—Reverend John E. Gibbons, "Simpson Family Values"  
(Unitarian minister, the First Parish in Bedford, Massachusetts),  
excerpt from sermon, October 28, 2001.

<http://www.uubedford.org/sermons/JEG-SimpsonsValues-10-28-01.htm>

- After reading this quotation, you might conclude that Bart's lack of respect for religious values is in sharp contrast to Lisa's



### PAUSE AND REFLECT

**What factors do you think have had the most influence on your beliefs and values (for example, your family, gender, or religion)? Do you think any of these factors have led you toward a particular ideology?**

respect for others and for social justice. How can you explain how two individuals from the same family would have such different points of view?

- What impact does an individual's family have on his or her beliefs and values? How much influence do you think your parents' ideas have had on your own beliefs and values? Is it possible to explain why two individuals from the same family are often so different?

## **Relating Gender to Beliefs and Values**

The way people understand gender is affected by their experiences—personal, social, cultural—as well as their beliefs and values. How a society perceives gender, sometimes even legislating what is “appropriate” gender expression, can also affect people's view of gender and the freedom to express gender orientation.

Different cultures, for example, may assign specific gender roles to their members. These roles may be based on a variety of factors—economic and religious factors; ideas about family and child security; and traditions. The specific qualities or behaviours that make up a gender role vary from one society to another. They may include particular beliefs and values, such as appropriate public behaviour; which career choices are acceptable for a man or a woman; or what kind of behaviour is expected from a mother or father when raising a child. Gender and gender roles are powerful factors in determining a person's identity.

The quotes below deal with gender roles assigned in western society. Which quote, if any, seems to be most representative of your experience of gender?

*Man is the hunter; woman is his game...  
Man for the field and woman for the hearth:  
Man for the sword and for the needle she:  
Man with the head and woman with the heart:  
Man to command and woman to obey...*

**—Alfred Tennyson (1809–1892),  
English poet laureate, “The Princess,” 1847**

*Woman is determined not by her hormones or by mysterious instincts, but by the manner in which her body and her relation to the world are modified through the action of others than herself. The abyss that separates the adolescent boy and girl has been deliberately widened between them since earliest childhood...*

**—Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986),  
French author and philosopher, *The Second Sex*,  
[*Le deuxième sexe*] 1949**

*Modern invention has banished the spinning wheel, and the same law of progress makes the woman of today a different woman from her grandmother.*

—Susan B. Anthony (1820–1906), women's rights activist,  
*History of Woman Suffrage*, 1881

## Religion and Spirituality

*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*

—The Bible, Mark 8:36 King James Version

*When I do good, I feel good; when I do bad, I feel bad. That's my religion.*

—Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865), American president 1861–1865

*What is the meaning of human life, or of organic life altogether? To answer this question at all implies a religion. Is there any sense then, you ask, in putting it? I answer, the man who regards his own life and that of his fellow creatures as meaningless is not merely unfortunate but almost disqualified for life.*

—Albert Einstein (1879–1955), German-American physicist,  
received the 1921 Nobel Prize for Physics.  
*The World As I See It* (New York: Philosophical Library), 1949.

*In heaven, all the interesting people are missing.*

—Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), German philosopher

*Say nothing of my religion. It is known to God and myself alone. Its evidence before the world is to be sought in my life: if it has been honest and dutiful to society the religion which has regulated it can not be a bad one.*

—Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826),  
American president (1801–1809)

*A society without religion is like a vessel without a compass.*

—Napoléon Bonaparte (1769–1821),  
French military and political leader

Religious belief and spirituality take many forms. They are not the same thing, although they may be interconnected. Each plays a role in shaping a person's ideology. An individual may be a practising or non-practising member of a faith community, or adhere to a spiritual tradition without belonging to an organized community. Sometimes people consider themselves to be spiritual without following a defined system of religious belief.

The world's major religions and spiritual traditions share many ideals that teach peace and respect between individuals. Religious or



## The Gender Gap?

According to some analysts, the November 2008 election of Barack Obama revealed a difference in the voting behaviour of men and women. This difference is referred to as “the gender gap.” In other words, gender seems to be related to how one votes in an election. What factors may influence this gender gap? Do males and females differ in beliefs and values in a ways that could affect decision-making? .

*Barack Obama has made a strong showing among women, exceeding the normal Democratic advantage, while fighting a virtually even battle among men, who went heavily Republican in 2004. Mr Obama won 56% of the female vote, compared with 51% of women who voted for John Kerry last time. And he was essentially tied among men, erasing the 55% to 45% advantage that President Bush enjoyed in 2004. Larry Sabato, political science professor at the University of Virginia, says that the Democrat's appeal to women has been one of the most important keys to his success.*

—Source: BBC News Online, “Who Voted for Obama?” November 5, 2008.  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/us\\_elections\\_2008/7709852.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/us_elections_2008/7709852.stm)

*In recent years, a great deal of attention has been focused on the gender gap in electoral behavior. The appearance of this gap has both intrigued and puzzled analysts. In seeking to explain it, researchers stumbled upon an even more interesting gender gap, a gap between men and women in policy preferences. Various explanations for the gap in policy preferences have been offered: men and women are socialized differently, or, feminist consciousness has altered opinions. Most such explanations share an underlying theme: the idea that, for whatever reason, women have different values and priorities than men. In effect, it is argued that there is a distinctive woman's perspective that shapes how women view politics.*

—Source: Pamela Johnston Conover, “Feminists and the Gender Gap”,  
*The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (November 1988): 1004.

- 1 The sources suggest that women and men differ in their political attitudes and behaviours, and the second source offers several reasons for these different behaviours. Based on these sources and on your own experience, offer some possible reasons for gender's influence on beliefs and values or a person's decision-making. What other factors could account for gender differences in people's actions, such as actions based on political values?
- 2 In your experience, do the two sources accurately reflect gender differences?





"You got the job, the family and now the fancy car. But it's not enough, is it? No, my friend, it's never enough."

### Figure 1-9

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

**Do any of your beliefs or values originate in a religious or spiritual tradition? Do these beliefs and values influence how you think society should operate?**

spiritual faith can give meaning to people's lives and provide them with a moral system that informs their actions as individuals. Religion or spirituality may also provide people with a set of shared traditions or a sense of community. Adherents to religious traditions may be inspired to express their belief systems through collective action. Organizations such as Habitat for Humanity or Sojourners are examples of groups that engage in collective action based on religious ideals. Nonetheless, armed conflicts can result because of intolerance between different religious groups or belief systems.

Aside from influencing some people's beliefs and values, religion can also inform particular ideologies. Christian Democracy, for example, incorporates many of the principles of Christianity into its political values. Islamism uses the tenets of Islam and Islamic law as the basis for a political system. Many other ideologies are secular, but support the idea of religious freedom in society. Still other ideologies, including some forms of Communism, are opposed to the practice of religion. Karl Marx famously called religion the "opiate of the masses," claiming that the spiritual comfort of religion prevented oppressed peoples from seeking political change.

Spirituality can be expressed outside of religious belief systems and can guide people's beliefs, values and worldview. Spirituality may be expressed individually or collectively and can incorporate many possible spiritual paths. These paths can be pursued and expressed in many ways, including meditation, self-reflection, prayer, shared spiritual traditions and stories, or a sense of purpose.

- To what extent do you think religion and spirituality can influence an individual's or a group's ideology?



**Figure 1-10**

Norman Rockwell's painting "The Golden Rule," 1961



**Figure 1-11**

Guests representing 14 faiths join together at the Interfaith Celebration of Edmonton's Centennial at City Hall in Edmonton, Alberta, on Sunday, September 26, 2004.

## Environment

Most scientists now agree that human activities are having a significant negative impact on the environment. News stories about global warming and other environmental concerns have become commonplace in the media. A British government study predicted the damage from unabated climate change will eventually cost between 5 per cent and 20 per cent of global gross domestic product each year. Rising sea levels, flooding, and drought may displace as many as 200 million people worldwide by 2050. North Americans produce almost a quarter of the world's greenhouse gases, which are a major cause of climate change.

Concern for the environment is not new. Many modern ecological movements have their origins in the social activism of the 1960s. Since then, organizations such as Greenpeace, founded in Vancouver, British Columbia, in 1971, have fought to raise public awareness about issues such as nuclear weapons testing, nuclear power, overfishing, deforestation, pollution, and, more recently, genetic engineering.

Increasing environmental awareness has had an enormous influence on the lives of many individuals. It has changed their daily habits, with practices such as reuse and recycling becoming more commonplace. It has influenced their behaviour as consumers. It has also influenced how some people vote.

As more and more people realize the importance of their relationship with the natural environment and the impact of their environmental footprint, calls for environmental stewardship are being heard by many national governments. Nonetheless, the December 2007 climate conference in Bali, where 190 countries attempted to agree on how to deal with environmental issues such as climate change,



**Figure 1-12**

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

**What impact has environmentalist ideology had on you?**



## Perspective on Relationship to Land

As energy-producing companies have begun—with the support of local councils—to expand their plants onto prime land, some Canadian farmers have welcomed the move and have benefited greatly by selling their land to these industrial interests. Edmonton-area farmer Wayne Groot represents another perspective on the value of land. Below are two submissions made by Mr. Groot at provincial hearings held to discuss land use.

*Farming is in my blood. Our family has been farming for centuries, in Holland and now for over eighty years in Canada. When I walk on a piece of land that I farm I feel a connection, with something that is alive and fruitful. There is a sacredness about it, perhaps similar in ways to the relationship that First Nations have with the creation. This land is certainly not something that I consider a commodity, to be sold to the highest bidder. And yet that is what we are being asked to do... Everything has a price, everyone can be bought. I can understand that in this complex world of ours some sacrifices have to be made for the greater good, but the sad part is that I can see very, very little of anything that contributes to the greater good in this rapid exploitation of our natural resources, or destruction of fertile soil.*

*Local food production is becoming a more and more important part of our society. We are starting to realize that the cost of transporting food many miles costs much more than the price we pay for it in the store... We are starting to realize that prime agricultural land is worthy of protection... One finds this to be true when one reads the new Land Use Framework that has just been released by the provincial government. I have a letter dated June 9, 2008 from Premier Stelmach indicating that securing Alberta's prime agricultural lands is a provincial priority. It is time we started acting on these priorities.*

**—Wayne Groot, submission to the Energy Resources Conservation Board, June 2008.**

- 1** In what ways are Mr. Groot's values and beliefs about land similar to and different from some Aboriginal values and beliefs about land?
- 2** How might a spokesperson for the industrial interests respond to Mr. Groot's submissions? Compare Mr. Groot's values and beliefs with theirs. Why might these values and beliefs differ?
- 3** Visit the Energy Resources Conservation Board website to determine its beliefs and values regarding land.



demonstrated the great diversity of opinions that countries have about these important issues. These opinions are rooted in specific ideologies. While numerous countries were pushing for significant reductions to be made to greenhouse gas emissions, for example, others were resisting such initiatives. (“Stark Words at Bali Conference: Ban Ki-Moon Warns of Climate Change ‘Oblivion’”, *Spiegel Online*, December 12, 2007, <http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/0,1518,522929,00.html>)

Environmentalism has also spawned the political ideology known as “Green politics”. There are Green parties in numerous countries in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas, including Canada. Although the specific policies of Green parties may differ from one country to another, the general principles of Green politics stress environmentalism, ecology, and sustainable economics. Many Green supporters see their ideology as an alternative to more traditional political ideologies such as socialism, conservatism, and **liberalism**, in that it approaches many political issues from an environmental perspective.

- What influence do you think Green politics has on the beliefs and values of individual Canadians?

## **Relationship to Land**

*The Great Land of the Inuit is the sea, the earth, the moon, the sun, the sky and stars. The land and the sea have no boundaries. It is not mine and it is not yours. The Supreme Being put it there and did not give it to us. We were put there to be part of it and share it with other beings, the birds, fish, animals and plants.*

—Source: Sam Metcalfe, quoted in *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 4, Perspectives and Realities, Chapter 3, “Elders’ Perspectives”, 1996.*

<http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ap/pubs/sg/cg/cj3-eng.pdf>, p. 2.

The relationship you have to the land you inhabit is another factor that influences your beliefs and values. For example, if your livelihood is connected to land or natural resources, this might exert a strong influence on your identity: a farmer might have a different **worldview** than a journalist living in a city. Many people who live on the prairies rely on the land for their livelihood, as this region has a long tradition of farming and ranching. Small-town fairs and rodeos, or larger ones such as the Calgary Stampede, celebrate this tradition and demonstrate an economic and cultural connection to the land. How we connect to the land and our experiences with our environment determine some of the beliefs and values we hold that shape our identities.

Aboriginal peoples have a long relationship to the lands they inhabit. This relationship has social, cultural, spiritual, and economic aspects. It also involves a responsibility for the environment, as the



quote from Sam Metcalfe illustrates. Because many traditional Aboriginal activities are dependent on land, many Aboriginal people have an understanding and respect for the environment and natural resources. Consider the following remarks by Narcisse Blood and Cynthia Chambers:

*The notion of repatriation, which is commonly understood to mean the return of ceremonial objects, is offered as a model for authentic participation of Blackfoot in protecting and preserving these sites. Repatriation, as an idea and a practice, acknowledges the Siksikaitapiiksi (Blackfoot) view that places are animate, with whom humans live in relationship. Like any relationship based on interdependence, the one between people and the places that nourish them must be nurtured through unimpeded access, continued use and ceremonies of renewal such as visiting and exchanging of gifts.*

*It is easy to romanticize Niitsitapiiksi's (Real people, all indigenous peoples of North America) relationship to the land. Leroy Little Bear (Blood and Chambers 2006) points out that Blackfoot relationship to the land has almost become rhetoric. Such a simplistic formula as "Niitsitapiiksi equals ecological" infantilizes, and Disneyfies the vast knowledge Niitsitapiiksi hold collectively and individually about the land; such a stereotype reduces a complex cosmology to simplistic schemata, colour-coded medicine wheels mapping the four directions...*

**—Source: Narcisse Blood and Cynthia Chambers,  
"Love Thy Neighbour: Repatriating Precarious Blackfoot Sites",  
International Journal of Canadian Studies, Issue 39, 2009.**

The importance of land in Aboriginal cultures becomes especially evident when the relationship is disrupted. Consider the impact that bituminous sands projects are having on local indigenous groups in northern Alberta:

*Current tar-sands development has completely altered the Athabasca delta and watershed landscape. This has caused de-forestation of the boreal forests, open-pit mining, de-watering of water systems and watersheds, toxic contamination, disruption of habitat and biodiversity, and disruption of the indigenous Dene, Cree and Métis trap-line cultures.*

*"The river used to be blue. Now it's brown. Nobody can fish or drink from it. The air is bad. This has all happened so fast," says Elsie Fabian, 63, an elder in a Native Indian community along the Athabasca River...*

*The de-watering of rivers and streams to support the tar sands operations now poses a major threat to the cultural survival of these indigenous peoples. The battle over the tar sands mining comes down to the fundamental right to exist as indigenous peoples.*

*"If we don't have land and we don't have anywhere to carry out our traditional lifestyles, we lose who we are as a people. So, if there's no land, then it's equivalent in our estimation to genocide of a people," says George Poitras of the Mikisew Cree First Nation.*

—Source: Clayton Thomas-Müller,  
"Tar Sands: Environmental Justice and Native Rights."  
Tar Sands Watch, March 25, 2008.

<http://www.tarsandswatch.org/tar-sands-environmental-justice-and-native-rights>

As treaties were signed between the Canadian government and Aboriginal peoples, some First Nations were forced to leave their traditional lands and relocate in unfamiliar territory. Oscar Kistabish (Osezima) of the Algonquin spoke about the impact of relocation before the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples:

*It is on this concept of territory that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people do not understand one another. Territory is a very important thing, it is the foundation of everything. Without territory, there is no autonomy, without territory, there is no home. The Reserve is not our home. I am territory. Language is territory. Belief is territory, it is where I come from. Territory can also vanish in an instant...*

—Source: Oscar Kistabish, Val d'Or, Québec, November 30, 1992,  
quoted in *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, 1, 2,  
Chapter 11, "Relocation of Aboriginal Communities,"

[http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sg41\\_e.html](http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/sg/sg41_e.html)

What do these quotes tell you about the Aboriginal relationship to land and resources? What do these quotes tell you about the factors that help shape ideology?

Compare the Aboriginal relationship to the land with remarks made by Floyd Elgin Dominy, the commissioner of the United States Bureau of Reclamation from 1959 to 1969. The Bureau was responsible for developing irrigation in the arid Western states. Dominy stated, "I've seen all the wild [that is, undammed] rivers I ever want to see." He once described the then undammed Colorado River as "useless to anyone."

How do you think someone's views on natural resources might affect his or her ideological beliefs?

## Language and Ideology

There is a powerful relationship between language and ideology. Language is one way in which people communicate beliefs and values, worldview, cultural and societal understandings, and sense of self.

Individuals who belong to the majority linguistic group in a society may not give much consideration to the role that language plays in the formation of their identity. When people are surrounded by other



### PAUSE AND REFLECT

**How does your relationship to your natural environment inform your beliefs and values? How might your beliefs about people's responsibilities toward their natural environment change if your livelihood was connected to land or natural resources?**

## Get to the Source

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was enacted in 1982. Section 16.1 of the Charter, which reflects previous legislation recognizing Canada's two official languages, states:

**16. (1) English and French are the official languages of Canada and have equality of status and equal rights and privileges as to their use in all institutions of the Parliament and government of Canada.**

Do you think the inclusion of section 16.1 in the Charter has had an influence on the identity of Canadians? Explain.

people who speak the same language—and when their community is surrounded by advertising and other media using that same language—they may take their language for granted or not fully realize its influence on shaping their worldview.

How do you think belonging to a minority linguistic group might affect an individual's conception of language and its importance to identity? Belonging to a linguistic minority means living where a language other than one's own dominates the public space. Language in this situation may be more important to the formation of identity because it is not shared with everyone.

Minority language speakers may also struggle to overcome the forces of linguistic assimilation. For example, in Alberta, one of the stated purposes of Francophone schools is “to reverse assimilation” (Source: *Affirming Francophone Education—Foundations and Directions: a Framework for French First Language Education in Alberta* [Edmonton: Alberta Learning, 2001], <http://education.alberta.ca/media/433070/cadreeng.pdf>, pp. 17–18).

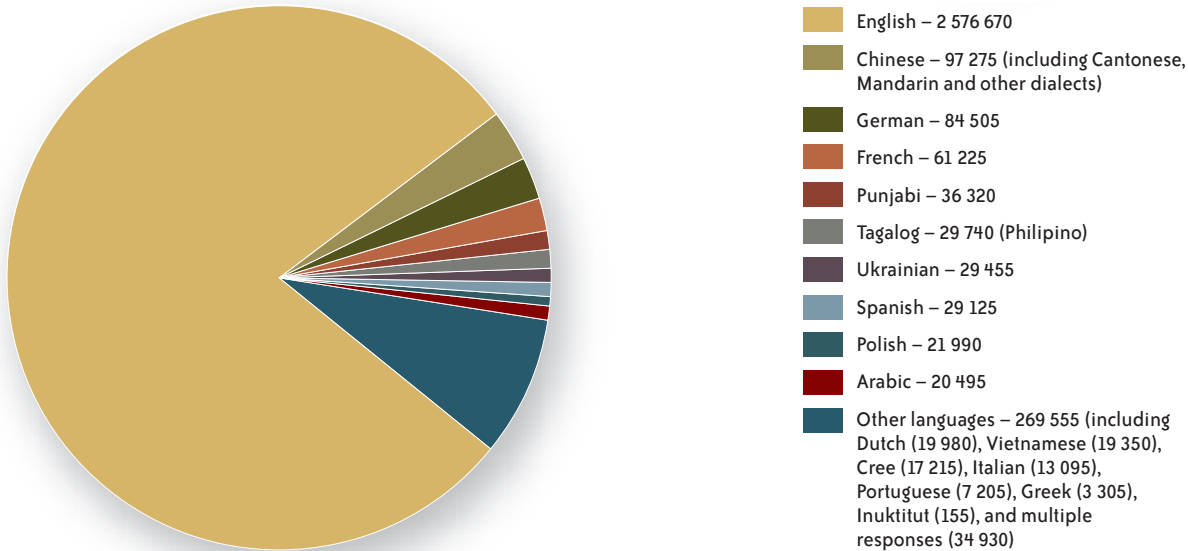
Spanish scholar Manuel Castells claims that “in a world submitted to culture homogenization by the ideology of modernization and the power of global media, language, the direct expression of culture, becomes the trench of cultural resistance, the last bastion of self-control, the refuge of identifiable meaning.” A similar idea can be found in the Canadian Heritage report on *Aboriginal Languages in Canada*: “Preserving Aboriginal languages is an extremely high priority, because of the link between cultural preservation and language—without language, the main vehicle for transmitting cultural values and traditions no longer exists.” As a vehicle of cultural transmission, the influence of language on an individual's identity is primal: “It is through language that a student self-realizes himself, as he expresses himself and makes connections with the world around him.” (Source: *Cadre commun des résultats d'apprentissage en français langue première* [M-12], 1996, p. ix, translated in Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, *La Francisation: Pour un état des lieux*, Section 2.3 [Toronto: 2002], p. 3.) These beliefs about the importance of language and identity are also shared by Francophones in Canada and play a part in why Francophones have fought to have their official language rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms respected.

- If language can be a means of “cultural resistance”, what impact might it have on an individual's choice of ideology?

Francophones have been in what is now known as Canada since the first European settlers arrived around 400 years ago. As members of one of the two official language groups in Canada, Francophones share a linguistic bond that expresses a unique perspective on the world. Both protected and promoted by the Canadian constitution, the French

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

**Francophones make up 2.2 per cent of Alberta's population. How would being a member of a linguistic minority affect an individual's identity?**



**Figure 1-13**

This pie chart shows Alberta's population according to mother tongue based on the 2006 census.

Source: Statistics Canada, "Population by mother tongue, by province and territory (2006 Census)" (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia)  
<http://www40.statcan.ca/101/cst01/demo11c.htm> [10/21/2008]

language is an integral part of a national identity. Efforts to protect the rights of Francophones date back as far as the Québec Act (1774) and more recently include the Official Languages Act (1969) and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982).

Francophone heritage in Alberta dates to the arrival of French and Canadian explorers and fur traders in the 18th century. In the late 19th century, Alberta's Francophone population grew, mostly due to migration from Québec. In 2008, Francophones in Alberta numbered 65 990, or 2.2 per cent of the population, and the struggle to maintain their language and culture remains an important part of the values and beliefs of many Franco-Albertans.

*On a quelque chose, mais on ne sait pas d'où ça vient. On ne sait pas quel prix a été payé, on ne sait pas que ça a duré 100 ans.*

Translation: *We now have something (Francophone schools), but people don't know where they [the schools] come from. People don't know what price was paid, or that it took 100 years.*

—**France Levasseur-Ouimet, professor emeritus, University of Alberta, "Fort MacLeod: Une fête pour le cinéma francophone".**

[http://www.radio-canada.ca/regions/alberta/2008/04/27/001-cinemagine\\_n.shtml](http://www.radio-canada.ca/regions/alberta/2008/04/27/001-cinemagine_n.shtml)

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

- **In 2001, approximately 7.6 million Canadians, or 22.7 per cent of the population, were Francophone. One million of these people were living outside of Québec. In what ways would a shared language provide Canada's Francophones with a common source of identity?**
- **How would the impact of language on identity differ for a member of an official language minority group, such as Francophones in Canada, and a member of another language minority group, such as a first-generation immigrant Canadian?**



The *Association canadienne-française de l'Alberta* (ACFA), founded in 1926, promotes, defends, and lobbies for the recognition of Francophone rights in Alberta. The ACFA and other community organizations also work to raise the profile of the Francophone community in the province and affirm the diversity of Francophone people.

- Could the desire to protect the rights of a language group be considered an aspect of an ideology?
- How do you think the struggle to uphold their language rights, as found in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, has shaped identity among Alberta's Francophones?

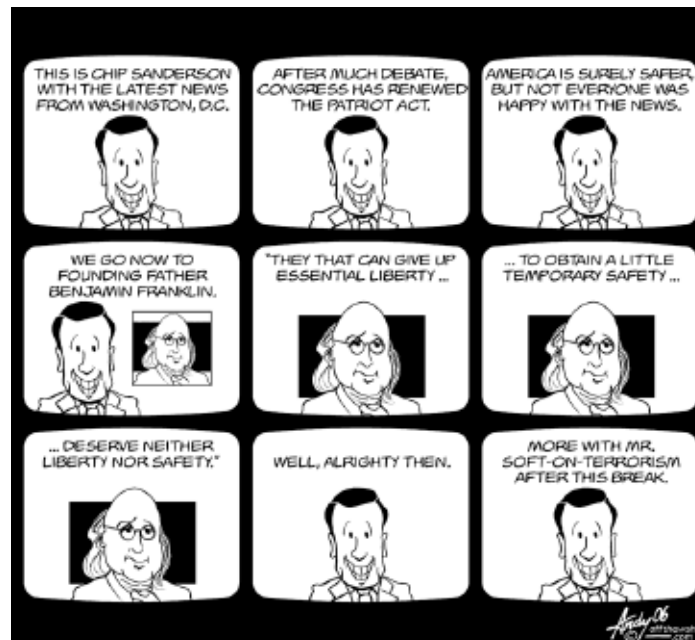
## Media, Beliefs, and Values

Figure 1-14

What influence do the media have on your perception of events?



www.CartoonStock.com



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As new forms of media emerged and spread in the 20th century, many thinkers turned their attention to the effects they might have on individuals and whole societies. Canadian theorist Marshall McLuhan claimed that the “medium is the message”—that the form of the communication was more important than the actual content. According to McLuhan, the predominance of print media prior to the 20th century had favoured the rise of individualism. He thought that the increasing dominance of electronic media would lead to the formation of a “global village”—a trend toward a collective identity shared by all consumers of the same media. McLuhan did not necessarily consider this to be a positive development: he felt that if people were unaware of the effects of electronic media, it could be used against them to establish a form of **totalitarian** control (a totalitarian state is one in which a powerful central government exercises strict control over all aspects of citizens’ lives and does not allow political opposition). Some critics of McLuhan disagree with his dismissal of the role of content in media’s influence on its audience.

Like McLuhan, many media theorists focus on the potential of media for the establishment of **hegemony**—the political control exerted by one group over others. Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, for example, claim that the content of mainstream media sources reflects the commercial and political interests of the corporations that own them. In the words of Herman,

*...the dominant media are firmly imbedded in the market system. They are profit-seeking businesses, owned by very wealthy people (or other companies); they are funded largely by advertisers who are also profit-seeking entities, and who want their ads to appear in a supportive selling environment. The media are also dependent on government and other major business firms as information sources, and both efficiency and political considerations, and frequently overlapping interests, cause a certain degree of solidarity to prevail among the government, major media, and other corporate businesses.*

—Source: Edward S. Herman,  
**“The Propaganda Model Revisited.”**  
**Monthly Review (July, 1996).**

<http://www.chomsky.info/onchomsky/199607--.htm>

As a result of hegemony,

*...producers of a media text design it with a certain meaning in mind. They hope that audiences will decode their text in a certain way—particularly if the text is an advertisement. Preferred readings are those which tie in with hegemonic beliefs—for instance, the idea of beauty and the “ideal” female shape propounded in Western magazines. It is accepted as “natural” that models in women’s magazines should be young and drastically underweight. Since the 1960s the preferred reading has been*



#### PAUSE AND REFLECT

- In your opinion, to what extent do most media sources provide information in an unbiased manner?
- How much influence do you think the media have on people’s opinions? Do you think people are fully conscious of the impact of media?

*that these women are beautiful. However, there are signs that, as hegemonic belief begins to adapt to the concerns of many that this body shape is actually unhealthy, the preferred reading is beginning to shift...*

—Source: Karina Wilson, MediaKnowAll, “Ideology.”

[www.mediaknowall.com/alevkeyconcepts/ideology.html](http://www.mediaknowall.com/alevkeyconcepts/ideology.html)

- Can you think of specific examples of the media’s influence on the beliefs and values of you and your peers?
- Who owns the major sources of news? To what extent do you think the media are used to reinforce the values and ideologies of the most powerful members of society, or can media also provide opportunities to challenge these powerful interests?

### Government Shaping Identity

Canada is made up of citizens from diverse cultural backgrounds. Visible minorities make up 13.4 per cent of the population. According to Communications Canada, 85 per cent of Canadians describe Canada as a “multicultural society.” Various government policies recognize this perception, by seeking “the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.”

Multiculturalism is a manifestation of **pluralism**. A multicultural society comprises diverse cultural, religious, linguistic, or ethnic groups. In a political context, pluralism is a policy that actively promotes the acceptance of diversity in a society. Other manifestations of pluralism in Canadian society include official bilingualism, Charter rights prohibiting discrimination, and the constitutional guarantees of the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.

The recognition of pluralism has not always been government policy in Canada. Policies such as the head tax on Chinese immigrants and several amendments to the Immigration Act in the first half of the 20th century sought to control the ethnic makeup of Canadian society by excluding immigrants on the basis of ethnic background.

Government efforts to create a more inclusive society based on pluralism and the accommodation of diversity date back to the first Canadian Citizenship Act (1947) and include among other measures the Multiculturalism Policy (1971). The Multiculturalism Act of 1985 states that it is the policy of the Government of Canada to

*...recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage...*

—Source: Canadian Multiculturalism Act R.S., 1985, c. 24 (4th Supp.).



#### PAUSE AND REFLECT

**In 1965, during the inauguration of Canada’s maple leaf national flag, the Honourable Maurice Bourget, Speaker of the Senate, declared, “The flag is the symbol of the nation’s unity, for it, beyond any doubt, represents all the citizens of Canada without distinction of race, language, belief or opinion.” To what extent do you think it is possible for a symbol such as our national flag to help create a collective identity and a unifying ideology for all Canadians?**

- What are the benefits and challenges of a multicultural society? How do Canadians benefit from the diversity of our country's citizenry?
- How do you think the policy of multiculturalism, which is based on pluralism (valuing diversity), has affected Canadians?
- How does it help foster certain collective beliefs among Canadians?

## Explore the Issues

### Concept Review

- 1 a) What factors can influence the formation of personal and collective beliefs and values?  
b) For each of the factors, identify a specific example of the influence it has had on the beliefs and values of an individual or a group.

### Concept Application

- 2 Make a list of no more than 10 beliefs or values that you consider to be the most fundamental aspects of your personal identity. Review the factors discussed in this section of the chapter and consider how they have influenced the 10 items on your list. Create a concept web showing the origins of the items on your list.
- 3 Consider the items on your list, and consider what kind of ideology each item reflects. Are they indicative of individualism, collectivism, or a middle ground between the two?
- 4 Explore the relationship between identity and ideology. Ask friends and family to talk about their beliefs and values. Encourage them to reflect on factors from this section of the chapter by asking them directed questions. How did they come to form the beliefs and values they hold? What influenced them the most? Do their beliefs and values reflect a conscious choice of ideology?



# The Themes and Characteristics of Ideology

## Question for Inquiry

- What themes and characteristics should my ideology include?

*For her wedding to the love of her life, Calgarian Clare Stoeckle wore her mom's circa-1970s wedding dress, "raw, unbleached cotton with little embroidered daisies on it." She borrowed a pair of white leather flip-flop sandals and carried a bouquet of lilacs and daisies, freshly picked by her aunts and bridesmaids.*

*Her husband, Paul Kelly, rode his bike to the church—a 50-kilometre trip from Calgary to Okotoks—and their guests ate locally grown organic food, including a "cake" made from green tea and banana cupcakes...*

*...The theme of her bridal shower was "no plastic, no electric appliances," so friends gave no-nonsense gifts such as manual egg beaters and measuring cups.*

*Instead of a department store gift registry, the couple signed up with Sedmek, a Calgary company specializing in renewable energy systems.*

*"Now our laundry, hand washing and showers are all heated by the sun, which is wonderful," Kelly says.*

*Welcome to the world of eco-weddings, planned by and for people who care deeply about the environment.*

—Source: Shelley Boettcher, "Green Wedding: Calgary couples hitch their nuptials to the eco-movement." *Calgary Herald* 2007.

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<http://www.canada.com/topics/lifestyle/organicfoodguide/story.html?id=4601fde8-65ee-4eb4-9170-dee513bde93e&k=3715>

## PAUSE AND REFLECT

- How have Clare Stoeckle and Paul Kelly incorporated beliefs and values into their identities? What ideological stance have they adopted?
- What impact have their choices had on their social community?
- Can you think of specific beliefs and values that have had a direct impact on your identity? Do these beliefs and values reflect a particular ideology?

As some of the examples in this chapter have illustrated, the beliefs and values that help make up an individual's identity can influence him or her to adopt an ideology that reflects those beliefs and values. Alternatively, an individual's beliefs and values may be part of an ideology that he or she is not even aware of having embraced.

If you embrace a particular ideology, it can have profound effects on your identity. It may influence your actions and choices. It may provide you with a particular perspective on the world. As a blueprint for a society, an ideology can affect groups as well as individuals. It may determine how members of a society relate to one another.

In this section, you will look at some themes and characteristics of a few different ideologies and examine how those aspects of ideology have influenced people's identities and actions.

## The Characteristics of Ideology

All ideologies contain a set of beliefs and values about similar things. They are all concerned with the essential questions of life, such as

- What are humans like, and why do they act as they do?
- How should society be organized?
- How has the world worked in the past?
- How should it work in the future?

The answers an ideology provides to these questions form the characteristics of that ideology.

## The Nature of Human Beings

Beliefs about human nature—about whether people are essentially good or bad, for example—are fundamental to any ideology. Do you usually trust people until they give you a reason not to, or do you generally approach people with caution? If you approach people openly, it is likely that you believe humans are essentially good. If you are cautious, you likely believe that they are not. This core belief will be part of the way you deal with the world.

For example, consider the following quotation from the Edicts of Ashoka, which were made by the Emperor of India from 273–232 BCE. Ashoka had converted to Buddhism and was determined to spread Buddhism across his empire.

*People see only their good deeds saying, “I have done this good deed.” But they do not see their evil deeds saying, “I have done this evil deed” or “This is called evil.” But this [tendency] is difficult to see. One should think like this: “It is these things that lead to evil, to violence, to cruelty, anger, pride and jealousy. Let me not ruin myself with these things.” And further, one should think: “This leads to happiness in this world and the next.”*

—Source: Ven. S. Dhammika [trans.],  
“Seven Pillars Edicts.” *The Edicts of Ashoka*.  
[www.cs.colostate.edu/~malaiya/ashoka.html](http://www.cs.colostate.edu/~malaiya/ashoka.html)

- How might such a view of human nature influence your choice of ideology?

## The Structure of Society

Social structures are what bind us together as a society and help the society to function in an orderly fashion. The social structures of any society reflect the beliefs and values of that society.

Economics is an example of a structure of society. For example, there are both wealthy people and people living in poverty in Canadian society, but our provincial governments do have minimum wage laws, meaning that all businesses must pay a minimum amount of

money to their workers. Through these means, these governments are trying to maintain the structure of what they perceive to be a fairer society.

There are also informal social structures. Informal social structures are the unwritten rules about acceptable social behaviour and actions. For example, some societies show more respect for people who are elderly and disadvantaged, or place more importance on gender equality, than others do.

### ***Interpretations of History***

Interpretations of history, or the past, are another characteristic of ideology, because the events of our pasts tend to influence the beliefs and values that we hold. An individual whose life has been difficult may have a pessimistic view of life and consider that life is a struggle against the odds. Other individuals may grow up believing that it is their duty in life to help people who are disadvantaged because they themselves have been privileged. Their views of the past affect their identities and the way they interpret the world.

Countries also have ideological interpretations of their histories that affect the identities of their citizens. This is sometimes manifested as demonstrations of patriotism, in which the citizens tell their stories to themselves and the world. Remembrance Day ceremonies are an example of such an event, as Canadians pay tribute to the men and women who made sacrifices to protect the liberal democratic traditions of Canada. These stories inform a nation's or a country's historical interpretations, which provide it with an ideology that guides its subsequent actions.

### ***Visions of the Future***

Graduating from high school is a sobering experience for many 17- and 18-year-olds. Students getting ready to graduate sometimes experience anxiety about what is in store for them in the future. You most likely have a good idea of what you want your future to look like. If your vision of the future is something like having a job you love, enough money for you to be comfortable, and a happy family, you need to think about the actions you need to take in order to achieve these goals.

The same is true for an ideology, which has a vision of what the world should be like in the future. This vision of the future will help guide the actions of people who embrace the ideology.

### ***The Themes of Ideology***

Typical themes of concern to ideologies include nation, class, race, environment and relationship to the land, gender, and religion, among

others. Most ideologies talk about, or are concerned with, these themes. In some cases, it may seem as though one or two themes predominate in an ideology—for example, Marxists concentrate heavily on the theme of class, and capitalists emphasize the theme of freedom.

**Progressivism** is an umbrella term for various ideologies that advocate moderate political and social reform through government action, such as using anti-trust laws to prevent corporations from establishing monopolies in the marketplace. Progressive ideologies generally support social justice and the rights of workers.

The table below displays some of the more important themes of ideologies and examples of each of them.

Theme	Description	Example
nation	a community of people usually occupying a defined territory, often politically independent	The Kurds live in parts of Turkey, Iraq, and Iran and seek self-determination as a nation. Although they number 30 million, the Kurds of Turkey, Iraq, and Iran are not recognized as a nation-state. One aspect of their ideology is to seek self-determination as a nation.
class	a division of society, such as the <i>middle class</i> , usually defined by income, wealth, privilege, or role in society	Some ideologies which embrace collectivist values, such as communism, seek to eliminate class distinctions in society through income and wealth redistribution. Other ideologies see class as evidence of a fair distribution of society's resources based on people's talents and initiative.
race	a grouping of human beings distinguished according to biological traits such as skin colour	Some ideologies seek to eradicate racial discrimination; a few ideologies, such as Nazism, have asserted the superiority of one race over others and have sought to separate people along racial lines.
environment and relationship to land	the natural surroundings in which a person lives, and his or her connection to those surroundings	Green ideology espouses, among other things, the principle of <i>ecological wisdom</i> , or respect for ecology. Some thinkers believe that the landscape has an influence on how the people of that land see the world. For example, people living in a mountainous region might have a different worldview than those living in on an agricultural plain.
gender	the male or female sex considered as a sociological category	Feminist ideologies are concerned with attaining equal legal and political rights for women.
religion	the worship of one or more deities and acceptance of a particular set of values associated with that worship	Some ideologies, such as liberalism, promote freedom of religion. Other ideologies try to create a society based on the values of a particular religion.

## Ideologies in Practice

Read the quotations that follow by three very different thinkers and use a retrieval chart to analyze their ideas. What kinds of themes are



addressed in the three speeches? Can you find evidence of beliefs about human nature, beliefs about the structure of society, and visions for the future? Is there evidence of concerns about nation, class, environment, relationship to the land, gender, religion, and change? Which of these themes and characteristics of ideology do you consider most important? Why? Which thinker's ideas are closest to your own? How does this demonstrate the relationship between your personal beliefs and values and your ideology?

### Tommy Douglas

Tommy Douglas said the following as he was speaking about his legacy to a New Democratic Party audience in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, on November 27, 1970:

#### File Facts )

##### Tommy Douglas

- lived from 1904 to 1986
- was a Member of Parliament from 1935 to 1944 (Co-operative Commonwealth Federation [CCF]) and from 1962 to 1979 (New Democratic Party)
- was the premier of Saskatchewan from 1944 to 1961 (CCF)
- led North America's first socialist government as the premier of Saskatchewan
- created Canada's first publicly owned automobile-insurance program (1945)
- introduced the Saskatchewan Bill of Rights, Canada's first general law prohibiting discrimination (1947)
- created Saskatchewan Medicare, the first universal health-care program in Canada (1960)

*Sometimes people say to me, "Do you feel your life has been wasted? The New Democratic Party has not come to power in Ottawa." And I look back and think that a boy from a poor home on the wrong side of the tracks in Winnipeg was given the privilege of being part of a movement that has changed Canada. In my lifetime I have seen it change Canada.*

*When you people sent me to the House of Commons in 1935, we had no universal old age pension. We have one now. It's not enough, but we have one. We had no unemployment insurance. We had no central Bank of Canada, publicly owned. We didn't have a wheat board, didn't have any crop insurance, didn't have a Canada Pension plan, didn't have any family allowances.*

*Saskatchewan was told that it would never get hospital insurance. Yet Saskatchewan people were the first in Canada to establish this kind of insurance, and were followed by the rest of Canada. We didn't have Medicare in those days. They said you couldn't have Medicare—it would interfere with the "doctor-patient relationship". But you people in this province demonstrated to Canada that it was possible to have Medicare. Now every province in Canada either has it or is in the process of setting it up.*

*And you people went on to demonstrate other things with your community health clinics. You paved the road, blazing a trail for another form of health service, to give people better care at lower cost. You did these things. You have demonstrated what people can do if they work together, rather than work against; if you build a cooperative society rather than a jungle society...*

*Sure things have changed. Hair has gone down and skirts have gone up. But don't let this fool you. Behind the beards and the miniskirts, the long hair, this generation of young people, take it from me, is one of the finest generations of young people that have ever grown up in this country.*

*Sure they're in rebellion against a lot of our standards and values and well they might be. They have got sick and tired of a manipulated society. They understand that a nation's greatness lies not in the quantities of its goods but in the quality of its life. This is a generation of young people who are in revolt against the materialism of our society. They may go to extremes at times but this is a generation with more social concern, with a better understanding of the need for love and involvement and cooperation than certainly any generation I have seen in my lifetime...*

*We ought to expand our economy. There ought not to be one idle able-bodied person in Canada. We need a million new homes in Canada. We need schools. We need recreation centres. We need nursing homes, housing projects, particularly for old people and for people on low incomes. We've got pollution in this country that needs to be cleaned up before we strangle ourselves in our own filth. We need a reforestation program. Many things need to be done. We could put every able-bodied person in this country to work, not just making holes and filling them up but doing useful work. That's the first thing we ought to do.*

*The second thing we ought to do is to recognize that we haven't had inflation in Canada. What we have had is maladministration of income. What do I mean by that? Well, what is inflation? According to the economic text books, inflation is too much money chasing too few goods. Do you think there is too much money chasing too few goods? Where has this too much money been? Any around here? Do you think the old age pensioners get too much money? Or the unemployed? Or the farmers? Or the fishermen? The Economic Council of Canada says that there are five million Canadians who live below the poverty line. Do you think they've got too much money? That's a quarter of our population, living in poverty.*

*What about this too few goods? How many supermarkets have you seen close at two o'clock in the afternoon because they haven't got any more goods to sell? We're not short of goods. What we have is inequitable and unfair distribution of income. Raising the old age pension would put money into the pockets of people who spend it. Unemployment insurance of \$100 a week would be spent and the economy would begin to move again.*

*The other thing we could do to redistribute income is to bring in tax reforms. The Carter Commission said that too large a share of the taxes falls on people with incomes of under \$10 000 a year. The commission said that if we made the banks, the insurance companies, the mining companies, the gas companies, and those who live off capital gains pay taxes the same as the rest of us do, we would lower the income tax by 15 per cent for everybody with incomes under \$10 000 a year and the government would still have \$600 million a year more coming in than is coming in at the present time...*

**—Tommy Douglas, "On His Legacy: to a NDP audience in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan—November 27, 1970." Tommy Douglas Research Institute.**

<http://www.tommydouglas.ca/speeches/legacy-1970>

### Milton Friedman

- lived from 1912 to 2006
- won the 1976 Nobel Prize in Economics
- was a prominent member of the Chicago School of Economics
- was a highly influential advocate of free-market economics
- was the economic advisor to former American president Ronald Reagan; his ideas also influenced former British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, former Canadian prime minister Brian Mulroney, and former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet

### Milton Friedman

This is an excerpt from Milton Friedman's speech "Economic Freedom, Human Freedom, Political Freedom," which he delivered on November 1, 1991:

*A free private market is a mechanism for enabling a complex structure of cooperation to arise as an unintended consequence of Adam Smith's invisible hand, without any deliberate design. A free private market involves the absence of coercion. People deal with one another voluntarily, not because somebody tells them to or forces them to. It does not follow that the people who engage in these deals like one another, or know one another, or have any interest in one another. They may hate one another. Everyone of us, everyday without recognizing it, engages in deals with people all over the world whom we do not know and who do not know us. No super planning agency is telling them to produce something for us. They may be of a different religion, a different color, a different race. The farmer who grows wheat is not interested in whether it is going to be bought by somebody who is black or*

*white, somebody who is Catholic or Protestant; and the person who buys the wheat is not concerned about whether the person who grew it was white or black, Catholic or Protestant. So the essence of a free private market is that it is a situation in which everybody deals with one another because he or she believes he or she will be better off.*

*The essence of human freedom as of a free private market, is freedom of people to make their own decisions so long as they do not prevent anybody else from doing the same thing. That makes clear, I think, why free private markets are so closely related to human freedom. It is the only mechanism that permits a complex interrelated society to be organized from the bottom up rather than the top down. However, it also makes clear why free societies are so rare. Free societies restrain power. They make it very hard for bad people to do harm, but they also make it very hard for good people to do good. Implicitly or explicitly, most opponents of freedom believe that they know what is good for other people better than other people know for themselves, and they want the power to make people do what is really good for them...*

*If you consider medical care, which is another major problem now, total spending on medical care has gone from 4% of the national income to 13%, and more than half of that increase has been in the form of government spending. Costs have multiplied and it is reasonably clear that output has not gone up in anything like the same ratio. Our automobile industry can produce all the cars anybody wants to drive and is prepared to pay for. They do not seem to have any difficulty, but our government cannot produce the roads for us to drive on. The aviation industry can produce the planes, the airlines can get the pilots, but the government somehow cannot provide the landing strips and the air traffic controllers. I challenge anybody to*

name a major problem in the United States that does not derive from excessive government...

The important point is that we in our private lives and they in their governmental lives are all moved by the same incentive: to promote our own self interest. Armen Alchian once made a very important comment. He said, "You know, there is one thing you can trust everybody to do. You can trust everybody to put his interest above yours." That goes for those of us in the private sector; that goes for people in the government sector. The difference between the two is not in the people; it is not in the incentives. It is in what it is in the self interest for different people to do. In the private economy, so long as we keep a free private market, one party to a deal can only benefit if the other party also benefits. There is no way in which you can satisfy your needs at the expense of somebody else. In the government market, there is another recourse. If you start a program that is a failure and you are in the private market, the only way you can keep it going is by digging into your own pocket. That is your bottom line. However, if you are in the government, you have another recourse. With perfectly good intentions and good will nobody likes to say "I was wrong" you can say, "Oh, the only reason it is a failure is because we haven't done enough. The only reason the drug program is a failure is because we haven't spent enough money on it." And it does not have to be your own money. You have a very different bottom line. If you are persuasive enough, or if you have enough control over power, you can increase spending on your program at the expense of the taxpayer. That is why a private project that is a failure is closed down while a government project that is a failure is expanded.

—Milton Friedman, quoted in Micheline Ishay, *The Human Rights Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 343–346.

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## Ovide Mercredi

This is an excerpt from a speech Ovide Mercredi made at the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations' All Chiefs Legislative Assembly in 1992.

*It is not easy for me to put a human face to the AFN [Assembly of First Nations]. I am a very private person. I am also a very quiet individual and most of all I am a very serious man.*

*Part of our job is to make ourselves stronger, to make each other stronger. And I've wondered how we do that myself. I am coming slowly to the realization that you do not become strong by politics.*

*Power politics in the community, in our organizations, do not heal our people but they create more problems that divide our*

## File Facts )

### Ovide Mercredi

- was born in 1946
- became a lawyer specializing in constitutional law
- was the regional chief of the Assembly of First Nations for Manitoba, 1989
- was the national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, 1991–1997
- is the chief of Misisipawistik Cree Nation
- is the chancellor of University College of the North, 2007– present
- advocates for non-violent methods for change



*people. So we have to do more than just become politicians as leaders. We have to, I think, try to escape the Indian Act and we have to try to operate with the traditions and the values of our society.*

*The principle of respect, and if you consider it, kindness, a very simple principle, goes a long way to healing people. In our communities, when we grew up, we were taught at least those two basic principles from the time we were crawling until to the time we left home—respect and kindness.*

*So the challenge for us is not so much the Constitution. The challenge is how we heal ourselves. The challenge is how much faith we have in our own way of doing things and how willing are we to sacrifice our individual advancement for the sake of the community.*

*You see I am an optimist. I have full confidence in my people. I know we are in pain. I know we are suffering. I know we have problems, social problems. But I also believe that we have the knowledge, we have the talent and we have the strength to change life for the better.*

*The strongest members of our society are Indian women. Our men, many of our men have fallen and they have fallen because they have lost confidence in themselves. They have fallen because they have given up because there are no opportunities for them and they feel inadequate because they cannot meet the social and economic requirements of their families. But the women have maintained the hope. They have maintained the prospects for a better future and our men are beginning to heal.*

*That's why I say that I am an optimist about our future because I know that when we come together as men and women, as Elders and children, for the collective good of our people and the advancement of our communities and our societies, not only will we benefit, but Canada as a whole will benefit.*

**—Ovide Mercredi, quoted in *Saskatchewan Indian*, 21, 3 (May, 1992), p. 7.**

## Government Responses to Crises— Evidence of Ideology

### INVESTIGATION

***Something to Think About:*** Many people believe that one of the key jobs of governments is to support and care for their citizens. We assume that governments will respond when citizens are in danger or when a natural disaster strikes. How do the actions of a country's leaders in a time of crisis reflect the beliefs and values that underlie their ideology?

***An Example:*** The world was shocked to witness a devastating cyclone smash into an ill-prepared land, and see its government doing nothing. On May 3, 2008, Cyclone Nargis hit the southern delta regions of Myanmar, killing thousands, destroying homes, cutting off electricity, destroying food supplies, and contaminating major agricultural fields with salt water and sewage. One month after the storm, an estimated 100 000 people were dead, 56 000 were missing, and 2.4 million were displaced. In the face of this catastrophe the government of Myanmar reacted by trying to shut out the world, restricting reporters, refusing aid from neighbouring countries, and refusing to issue visas to disaster experts from agencies such as the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières. However, rather than facilitating relief efforts itself, the government put its resources into holding a national referendum on a new constitution.

Many countries immediately offered assistance. Relief teams and aid materials were waiting to be deployed from Thailand, Singapore, Italy, France, Sweden, Britain, South Korea, Australia, Israel, the United States, Poland, Japan, and other countries. The United States had four ships in the area and offered to use helicopters and marines to get food and water to inaccessible areas. Yet only agencies that were in the country before the cyclone were allowed to do what they could to help the situation. No foreign personnel were allowed into the country by the government, which was especially determined to keep foreign military personnel out of the country. Many people died waiting for aid.

Eventually, terrific pressure was put on the government by neighbouring countries and by the United Nations. Myanmar reluctantly agreed to allow food, medicine, and supplies into the country but only if it was distributed by government forces and under government management. Soon stories began to circulate that some areas of the country, those friendly to the government, were receiving supplies, while other areas went without. Other stories surfaced about packages from relief agencies being re-addressed to military generals. The government, according to these stories, was using aid selectively, to reward loyal citizens and punish others. Three weeks after the cyclone struck, very little aid had reached the people who needed it.

### Myanmar (formerly known as Burma)

- In 1948, Burma (formerly a colony of Britain) became independent and almost immediately began to disintegrate as ethnic groups, communists, and Muslims all competed for power.
- In 1962, a left-wing army revolt led by General Ne Win deposed the troubled democratic government and set the country on the path of socialism. Over the next 25 years, the Burmese economy crumbled.
- In 1988, clashes between pro-democracy demonstrators and the military resulted in 3000 deaths in a six-week period.
- In 1989, the government placed Aung San Suu Kyi, the popular pro-democracy opposition leader, under house arrest. Despite her imprisonment, her party scored an overwhelming victory in a 1990 election. The military government did not accept the election results.
- The military regime has brutally suppressed ethnic groups wanting rights and autonomy, and many ethnic insurgencies operate against it. Successive military governments have been accused of corruption, heroin trafficking, and **human rights** violations—including forcible relocation of civilians and use of forced labour. The head of state in 2008 is Senior General Than Shwe.
- Myanmar is the world's second-largest producer of illicit opium, after Afghanistan.

### News Stories About the Situation

*After several days of praising the work of the United Nations and charities, the regime's official newspaper renewed its attacks on foreign aid and insisted Myanmar could survive without outside help. "The government and the people are like parents and children," the paper said. "We, all the people, were pleased with the efforts of the government."*

*The paper said that granting free access for aid workers in the delta means donors "are to be given permission to inspect all the houses thoroughly at will."*

*Myanmar needs 11 billion dollars to recover from the storm, but donors have pledged just 150 million dollars so far, it said.*

*"Myanmar people are capable enough of rising from such natural disasters even if they are not provided with international assistance," the newspaper said. "Myanmar people can easily get fish for dishes by just fishing in the fields and ditches," the paper said. "In the early monsoon, large edible frogs are abundant." "The people (of the Irrawaddy delta) can survive with self-reliant efforts even if they are not given chocolate bars from (the) international community," it added...*

—Source: Sukhpal Singh, "Myanmar condemns foreign aids for linking aid money to have full access in the region."

MindTalks.org, May 30, 2008.

<http://www.mindtalks.org/misc/myanmar-condemns-foreign-aids-for-linking-aid-money-to-have-full-access-in-the-region.html>

*On Saturday, [US Defense Secretary Robert] Gates accused Myanmar's military, which has ruled the isolated nation for 46 years, of being "deaf and dumb" to pleas to allow in more foreign aid and relief workers.*

*Than Shwe's pledge a week ago to allow in "all" legitimate foreign aid workers has yielded more visas for UN relief experts, but red tape is still hampering access to the delta.*

*Gates contrasted the generals' refusal to accept aid from the US military after Cyclone Nargis struck four weeks ago with the willingness of Indonesia and Bangladesh to accept assistance after natural disasters in recent years.*

*"With Burma, the situation has been very different—at a cost of tens of thousands of lives," Gates said.*

*The United States is expected to decide in a few days whether to withdraw its aid-laden ships from waters near Myanmar.*

*Singapore, one of the biggest foreign investors in the former Burma, said the generals feared giving greater access to foreign aid agencies would show that the regime was incapable of handling the disaster.*

However, Myint reiterated that his government was open to all aid provided that it is not politicised.

*"In carrying out the relief, resettlement and rehabilitation tasks, we will warmly welcome any assistance and aid which are provided with genuine goodwill from any country or organisation provided there are no strings attached," he said.*

—Source: C. Moore (Reuters), "A month after Nargis, junta still under fire." France 24, June 3, 2008.

<http://www.france24.com/en/20080603-burma-myanmar-nargis-cyclone-junta-aid>

*The number of people killed in the storm may never be known. The government has not updated its toll since May 16, when it said 77 738 people were killed and 55 917 were missing.*

*In a country that has not had a full census in decades, it is not even certain how many people had been living in the area before the storm. Itinerants who worked in the salt marshes and shrimp farms were probably not counted among the dead, aid workers say. But it is clear that in many villages, women and children died in disproportionate numbers, said Osamu Kunii, chief of the health and nutrition section of Unicef in Myanmar.*

*"Only people who could endure the tidal surge and high winds could survive," Mr. Kunii said. In one village of 700, all children under the age of 7 died, he said.*

*With only minimal food supplies in villages, aid workers say, delta residents will require aid until at least the end of the year. The United Nations, after weeks of haggling with Myanmar's government for permission to provide assistance, is now using 10 helicopters to deliver supplies to hard-to-reach places and alerting relief experts at the earliest sign of disease outbreaks...*

—Source: "Burmese Endure in Spite of Junta, Aid Workers Say." From The New York Times, June 18, 2008 © 2008 The New York Times.

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## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- 1 Use the Skill Path: Discovering One's Beliefs and Values to answer the following questions: **SKILLS**
  - a) How does the information in this Investigation make you feel about the actions of the government of Myanmar? What values and beliefs do you hold that cause you to feel that way?
  - b) How would you describe the beliefs and values of the members of the military junta controlling the country? What about the beliefs and values of the foreign countries and organizations who tried to provide aid during the crisis?
- 2 What are possible reasons the leaders of Myanmar could give to explain their actions in response to Cyclone Nargis?
- 3 To what extent do countries who disagree with Myanmar's government have a responsibility to help the people of that country?
- 4 To what extent do individuals like you have a responsibility to help the people affected by Cyclone Nargis or other natural or human-made disasters?
- 5 One definition of ideology might be, "a system of ideas about how the world is and how it ought to be." Based on your answers to questions 1, 3, and 4, describe your ideology.

## Explore the Issues

### Concept Review

- 1
  - a) Identify the four common characteristics of ideologies.
  - b) Identify at least four of the themes of ideologies.
  - c) For each of the three speech excerpts in this section, identify what you believe to be the speaker's most important theme.
- 2 What circumstances would cause an ideology to emphasize one theme of ideology over another?

- 3 Which of the themes of ideology is most important to you? What beliefs and values account for your selecting this particular theme?

### Concept Application

- 4 In the context of recent historical events, do you think that some ideologies carry some of the themes of ideology to an extreme? Provide evidence for your answer.





## Reflect and Analyze

In this chapter you were presented with many perspectives on ideology and identity. You looked at different understandings of identity, and how ideology can influence identity. You considered the factors that influence beliefs and values, such as family, gender, and language. You also explored the characteristics of ideology, such as interpretations of history and visions of the future, and themes of ideology such as nation, class, and race. You can now respond to the Chapter Issue: *To what extent are ideology and identity interrelated?*

### Respond to Issues

- 1 Identify one factor that influences identity. Write a research paper, create a PowerPoint presentation, design a web page, or create some other form of digital product on a historical situation in which that factor had a direct impact on the collective identity of a social group. Consider multiple perspectives on the situation in your response.

### Recognize Relationships among Concepts, Issues, and Citizenship

- 2 Select a medium such as a newspaper or news magazine, a television or radio news program, or an online news source. Examine the news stories presented in this medium and collect data that will show you the extent to which people follow an ideology. You will need to follow this medium for several consecutive days. As you examine this medium, attempt to identify the beliefs and values of the people in the news stories as well as those constructing the story. Include how the themes and the characteristics of an ideology are present along with how these reflect the connections between the people's identities and their ideologies.

Once you have completed gathering the data and have identified the beliefs and values, characteristics, and themes of an ideology, and the connections between identity and ideology, compose a response that demonstrates what you would do to promote or challenge the ideology you have discovered in your inquiry. How is this promotion or challenge an important part of being a citizen in a democratic society?

- 3 Reread the story of The Compact at the beginning of the chapter. Using the points below to guide you, write a letter to a member of a community group to convince him or her to think about forming a group like The Compact. In your letter, do the following:
  - Reflect on the various factors that may have influenced your identity: for example, family, culture, language, media, environment, relationship to the land, gender, and religion and spirituality.
  - Consider your answers to the Beliefs and Values Inventory quiz that you took earlier in the chapter. To what extent do your answers reflect aspects of individualism, collectivism, or both?
  - Think about the fundamental questions that people have tried to answer: What is the purpose of life? What are people like? What kind of society do we want?