Policy Analysis and Governance: Analytical and Policy Styles in Canada

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ABSTRACT *The policy analysis movement revolves around the idea that a generic analytic toolkit can be productively applied to substantive policy problems, but different patterns of policy analysis can be observed across organizations, sectors, and jurisdictions. This article identifies how policy analysis and governance contexts can each be differentiated at a theoretical level, and how the latter might affect the former. It is argued that successful modes of policy analysis are attributable both to the skills of policy analysts/managers, and congruence with broader institutional contexts. The case of Canada is used to probe the ability of investigators to identify distinctive policy styles over time and to encourage more systematic, finer-grained, comparative study. The article considers the implications for teaching policy analysis and for managers balancing the need to match policy analysis styles with institutional context and to challenge the perceptions of decision makers.*

Introduction

Policy analysis is a relatively recent movement, dating back to the 1960s and the US experience with large-scale planning processes in areas such as defense, urban redevelopment and budgeting (Lindblom 1958, Wildavsky 1969, MacRae and Wilde 1985, Garson 1986). Seen as a social movement, albeit with technical discipline, it represents the efforts of actors inside and outside formal political decision-making processes to improve policy outcomes by applying systematic evaluative rationality. There have been debates about whether policy analysis has improved on the outcomes associated with less instrumental processes such as bargaining, compromise, negotiation and logrolling (Tribe 1972, Fischer and Forester 1993, Majone 1989). However, there has been no fundamental challenge to the *raison d'être* of policy analysis that remains: to improve policy outcomes by applying systematic analytic methodologies to policy problems (Meltsner 1972, Webber 1986, Fox 1990).[1]

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There has always been a range of methodologies used in policy analysis, but the policy analysis movement originally revolved around the idea that a generic analytic toolkit (law, economics, quantitative methods, organizational analysis, budgeting, and so forth) could be productively applied to a wide range of substantive problems by astute policy analysts inside and outside government (Weimer and Vining 1999). Education and training was for many years, therefore, largely a matter of familiarization with generic analytical tools, along with cases, workshops, simulations, or real-world projects to illustrate their use in specific circumstances and contexts, and to understand that the ''art and craft'' had owed much to iterative as opposed to deductive reasoning: matching tools and context, and producing time-sensitive advice that policy makers could absorb (Wildavsky 1979, Vining and Weimer 2002, Guess and Franham 1989, Weimer 1992, Bardach 2000, Geva-May and Wildavsky 1997). However, empirical studies of how policy research and analysis are generated, interpreted and utilized show how these processes are affected by the needs and beliefs of ultimate users, the delicacy of the political relations, coalitions and conflicts among decision makers, the history of previous policy reform efforts, individual personalities and agendas, organizational routines and other factors (Weiss 1977a, b, Sabatier, 1987, Shulock 1999). In short, analytic opportunities appear to be idiosyncratic, requiring, at minimum, additional practical or pragmatic judgments on the best method to apply in specific circumstances.

Recently, however, scholarly attention has turned to discerning more general patterns of policy analysis, influence, and effectiveness (Thissen and Twaalfhoven 2001). While sympathetic to the basic postulates and aims of the policy analysis movement, it has been argued that (a) different styles of policy analysis can be found in different organizations and jurisdictions (Peled 2002); and (b) these can be linked to larger patterns of political behaviour and structures whose condition is not completely manipulable by policy analysis (Bevir and Rhodes 2001, Bevir, Rhodes and Weller 2003a, b). This suggests that the nature of policy analysis, and the effectiveness of those repertoires and capabilities, depend on how congruent they are with national governance and administrative traditions (Peled 2002, Christensen, Laegreid and Wise 2003, Howlett 2004).

This article taps into frameworks that have broadened our conception of policy analysis in order to contribute to the growing interest in matching the observed use of tools, repertoires, and capabilities to governance contexts; one which presumes that very different patterns or styles of policy analysis can exist in different jurisdictions, policy sectors, and organizational contexts, including the penchant for consultation, participation, and the use of certain policy instruments (Richardson, Gustafsson and Jordan 1982, van Waarden 1995, Howlett 2000). We argue that successful modes of policy analysis are not simply a matter of the choice and skill of policy analysts and managers, matching analysis to context, but are conditioned by these very contextual elements (Shulock 1999, Radin 2000). Whether these larger contextual elements are cultural, institutional, or derive from other aspects of the policy-making context is a point of debate, but it is the combination of these forces that constrain or create opportunities for different policy analysis activities and produce discernible policy analytic styles. While some might argue that ''effective'' policy analysis arises out of congruence between a nation's governance traditions and policy analytic style, a contrasting view suggests that some distance is desirable if

policy analysis, no matter what style predominates, is to speak truth to power and challenge policy actors.

This article is exploratory in nature. It begins by identifying ways in which policy analysis can be differentiated, and then reviews three different governance contexts – national, policy sector, and organization – and considers their implications for affecting the conduct of policy analysis. The case of Canada is used to probe the ability of investigators to identify distinctive policy styles and what information might be useful when conducting more systematic, comparative study, which it is hoped will be encouraged by this. Finally, the implications for governments seeking to build policy capacity, and university programmes that seek to train policy analysts are briefly considered.

Parsing Out Policy Analysis

If this article is to explore whether policy analysis might vary in different governance contexts, then it must be specified theoretically what are the sources and dimensions of variation. In this section several ways in which policy analysis might be conducted are identified: roles, sources of expertise, capacity, and relative autonomy to those commissioning policy analysis or standing as intended audiences.

Modes of Policy Analysis

Recent empirical work has identified several of the basic parameters of the range of analytical styles found in different locales. Drawing on US experience, Beryl Radin identified two ''ideal types'': the rational, "modern" analyst of the 1960s and 1970s, focused on the quantification of economic costs and benefits, and the "post-modern" analyst of the 1980s and 1990s, concerned with the social construction of policy problems, policy discourses and the politics of the policy process (Radin 2000).

Drawing on European experience, Mayer, Van Daalen and Bots (2001) have provided a finer-grained dissection of the policy analysis function. They argue that policy analysis embraces research, clarification, design, advice, mediation and democratization as distinct activities, and use pairs of these activities to produce six distinct, not mutually exclusive, styles of policy analysis (see Table 1). These are:

- *Rational* – the traditional neo-positivistic style in which researchers apply mainly economic and other empirical methods to specific cases and the generation of new knowledge is the main task of the analyst.

Table 1. Policy analysis styles and tasks

Primary analytical task	Analytical styles
Research	Rational
Advice	Client advice
Clarification	Argumentative
Mediation	Interactive
Democratization	Participative
Design	Process

- *Client Advice* – where the analyst provides political and strategic advice to clients.
- *Argumentative* – where the analyst is actively involved in debate and policy discourse as a distinct independent actor both within and outside governments.
- *Interactive* – where the analyst serves as a facilitator in consultations in which key players and participants define their preferred outcome.
- *Participative* – where the researcher/analyst is an advocate, aggregating and articulating the interests of silent players in the policy process: the poor, the general interest, or any other actor not represented in the policy process; and
- *Process* – where the analyst acts a ''network manager'', steering the policy process towards a preferred outcome defined as part of the analytic task.

The framework outlined in Mayer, Van Daalen and Bots (2001) embraces Radin's two archetypes of policy analysis, and provides additional roles to consider when thinking about different styles of policy analysis. This article could go a step further and identify specific techniques that fall within each skill area, but this level of detail is not required for the purpose of this study.

From Skills to Capacities: Organization Perspectives

The framework described by Mayer, Van Daalen and Bots has the potential to be elaborated in a manner similar to Quinn's (1988) ''competing values'' framework, which identifies eight broad competencies (and specific skills within each area) needed by managers dealing with organizational challenges and their complexities. While this framework could be interpreted to argue for grooming the ''compleat'' policy analyst, the reality is that individuals come to their analytic roles with different strengths and weaknesses depending on training and work experience, and, following Quinn (1988), ''analyzing'' – just like ''managing'' – is a balancing act, requiring analysts to rely on different skills to address different challenges at different points in time. Moreover, as is discussed later in this article, organizations have recruitment systems, incentive structures, or cultures that cultivate different mixes of analytic skills.

Invoking specific skills and competencies as a way to comprehend different types of policy analytic activity naturally disposes us to think in terms of individuals. But we know that policy analysis is usually an ''organized'' activity in two senses: first, it is often done *for* organizations of some sort, and, second, it is usually produced *by* teams of analysts or researchers, however tightly or loosely-coupled (even single-authored notes and studies are vetted, reviewed, and often commissioned by other actors). Here it can be seen that another aspect of ''policy style'' concerns how expertise is secured and managed by key actors.

When an organization seeks to address a policy issue, it should have a good sense of the skills required to do a credible job. However, those skills – whether generalist or specialist in the areas noted earlier – may or may not reside with the organization in question. Organization leaders or project managers make choices in the short term and the longer term about the kind of competencies that they keep on staff on a full-time basis, and what they might secure from internal (rotational or temporary assignment from elsewhere in a larger organization) or external markets on a contract basis (Lindquist and Desveaux 1998). Some organizations may prefer a

relatively small core staff and tap into other sources of expertise as required, and others may retain far more staff with a mix of generalists and specialists, which may be buttressed by different recruitment systems and ways to identify and develop talent. This also suggests that, depending on the mix of expertise, policy organizations may have distinct ways or repertoires for approaching policy work (March and Simon 1958).

A final consideration involves assessing the capabilities mobilized, and the actual demands of the policy challenge in question. Whether the challenge is a thorny issue or a rival analysis with competing values and evidence, one has to determine if analytic capacities can meaningfully address the challenge; one could have the right mix of skills and expertise, but in insufficient amount to produce a credible response within an allotted time frame.

Values, Politics and Analysis: Speaking Truth to Power

All policy analysis seeks to "speak truth to power" at some level, and is informed by values (Wildavsky 1979, Sabatier 1988). Here it is simply acknowledged that, beyond specific skill sets and capacities, policy analysis will vary according to underlying values, aspirations of immediate relevance, and the extent to which it seeks to challenge or reinforce existing policy and administrative regimes. Whatever its specific nature, policy analysis is undertaken to further, support, challenge or test certain values.

In recent years much benefit has been derived from increasingly sophisticated models of how policy-making processes work, which take into account the dynamics of policy making and how analysis and research support actors inside and outside the state and prevailing policy orthodoxies (Kingdon 1984, Sabatier 1987). The point made here is that the extent to which policy analysis *challenges* those in power or, whoever commissioned it, is an interesting question, one inherent in the conduct of policy analysis. It is expected that there will be competing perspectives as much from inside government (Allison 1971, Atkinson and Coleman 1989) as from outside on policy questions driven by differing values, methodologies, and political aspirations. Policy analysis and research is often produced with very different time horizons (short term or long term) and pathways (direct or indirect) in mind for impact, and sometimes the intention is to play a brokering role (Sabatier 1987).

Skepticism is an important function of policy analysis, even for the "clients" who commission or fund such work. If policy analysis, of whatever kind, does not play this role, then it degenerates into communications or public relations. The relative autonomy of policy analysis, then, is an important element of discerning a policy style, and this should be the case, whether it is an individual, team, professional or even networked activity. This is a theme which will be returned to below.

Conclusion: Policy Styles as Mixes of Roles, Skills and Capacities

This discussion shows that policy analysis is highly variegated, even if we have not tried to pursue this point in great detail. Several dimensions have been outlined (see Table 2) along which it might vary including: different roles and techniques to inform

Table 2. Dimensions for assessing effectiveness of policy analytical styles

Key variables	Key dimensions	Key criteria/measures
Roles and styles	Generalist vs specialist recruitment systems	Relative autonomy of administration
Capacities	Internal vs external range and amount of expertise	Path of influence to, and relationships with, key decision makers
Values and politics	Support vs challenge value orientation	Aspirations of analysts towards relevance and immediacy of impact and extent of skepticism of decision makers towards analysis

policy making; different ways to mobilize expertise; different degrees of relative capacity; different types of relationships with policy actors; and different aspirations of relevance and immediacy of impact. It has also been argued that, even when policy analysis is undertaken for specific clients, it necessarily challenges how people conceive and think about how to solve policy problems, thereby creating a tension even when analysis is "aligned" with its intended audience. This range of possibilities suggests that it should be possible to identify different patterns in the way the policy function is organized in different contexts.

Governance Context and Policy Styles

Patterns in policy analysis ought to be intimately linked with its governance context and analytical culture. A full discussion of the impact of analytical culture is beyond the scope of this article (see Peters 1990). However, in modern polities in which recruitment is standardized and credentials required from professional policy, public administration, management or law schools, the variation in this variable is much muted from times past. The hegemony of the "craft" model of training and pedagogy points attention away from analytical culture and towards contextual, structural, factors in understanding variances in analytical styles (Wise 2002; Considine and Lewis, 2003). Distinct governance contexts for policy making have been identified at different levels of analysis (Howlett 2002c). Here these structural factors and their implications for policy analysis are identified.

National Governance Traditions

National policy systems can be seen as the offshoots of larger national governance and administrative traditions or cultures (Dwivedi and Gow 1999, Bevir and Rhodes 2001) such as parliamentary or republican forms of government, and federal or unitary states. This leads to different concentrations of power in the central institutions of government, degrees of openness and access to information, and reliance on certain governing instruments.[2] Civil service organizations have rules and structures affecting policy and administrative behaviour such as the constitutional

order establishing and empowering administrators, and affecting patterns and methods of recruiting civil servants and how they interact with each other and the public (Bekke, Perry and Toonen 1993). Accordingly, the policy analysis function is influenced by the precepts of the governance and administrative model constituting its operating environments (Vogel 1986, Harris and Milkis 1989, Castles 1990, Kagan 1991, 1996, Eisner 1993, 1994). For example, if the top priority of a national government is debt reduction or increasing internal security, then the scope for other new policy initiatives will be reduced, and there may be more of a focus on, review, control and accountability. Or if a country has a more inclusive governance tradition, or is an elected government which aims to make this a hallmark of its mandate, then a greater premium will be placed on consultation and facilitation. Similarly, countries with weaker central institutions of government are likely to provide more scope to departments and agencies in developing new policy ideas, while stronger, more autonomous representative legislatures will create additional demand for policy analysis which can challenge bureaucratic policy expertise. And, if civil service institutions centrally control recruitment and seek ''generalists'', and place limits on contracting, this may constrain policy units that would otherwise seek specialists to deal with emerging issues.

Policy Sectors

Vogel (1986) and others have argued that policy makers work within specific national policy or regulatory contexts. Many policy studies suggest that distinct contexts can also be discerned at the sectoral level, and are linked to common approaches taken towards problems such as health, education, forestry, and others (Lowi 1972, Salamon 1981, Freeman 1985, Burstein 1991, Howlett, 2001). Freeman (1985) has observed that ''each sector poses its own problems, sets its own constraints, and generates its own brand of conflict''. Moreover, the authorities and capabilities for making and influencing policy may vary considerably across sectors. Like Allison (1971), Smith, Marsh and Richards (1993) have argued that the ''central state is not a unified actor but a range of institutions and actors with disparate interests and varying resources'', and therefore not only may there be different degrees of coherence within the state but also different cultures of decision making and inclusion of outside actors with respect to policy development (collaboration, unilateral, reactive). In different sectors, societal actors – such as business, labor, and special interest groups, as well as think tanks and university centers – may have different capabilities and policy expertise, different degrees of independence with respect to funding, and different relationships with state actors. For example, in some sectors, policy expertise might be located with non-state actors and governments might tap into it regularly. Different policy sectors may have higher priority for governments depending on their policy ambitions and circumstances, or the regime may be contested to a greater degree, which may affect not only the appetite for change but also for policy analysis and research (Lindquist 1988). Some policy sectors, broadly speaking, may be anticipatory or reactive on how to deal with challenges confronting the entire sector, and therefore will differ in their support for analysis and research that challenges existing regimes (Atkinson and Coleman 1989). Finally, some sectors might only have ''thin'' policy expertise, which may fuel only

partisan or ideological positioning, as opposed to more extensive talent and forums for debating policy issues in the context of research-based findings (Sabatier 1987, Lindquist 1992).

Organizational Factors

Policy analysis is also shaped by the nature and priorities of public sector departments and agencies (Richardson, Jordan and Kimber 1978, Wilson 1989, Jordan 2003), which have distinct organizational mandates, histories, cultures, and program delivery and front-line challenges (Lipsky 1980, Scholz 1984, 1991, Quinn 1988, Hawkins and Thomas 1989). Organizations and leaders might attach different value to policy analysis in light of managerial and budgetary priorities; have different views on how inclusive to be when developing policy with inside and outside actors; demand certain types of policy analysis; have different degrees of comfort with challenges from policy analysis of current policy and program regimes; and have different models of accessing and dispersing policy capabilities across the organization (for example, whether there is a single corporate policy unit, or others attached to program areas). This may lead to certain repertoires for policy analysis and types of recruitment for policy expertise: the more operational a department or unit, the more likely its policy style will be rational; the more involved a department is in a major policy initiative, boundary-spanning activity, or liaising with central agencies, the more likely its policy style will be participatory and facilitative; if a policy shop is a corporate entity, as opposed to directly supporting a specific program, the more likely its policy style will emphasize client advising and interaction; and the more involved in regulatory enforcement, the more likely an agency will have an interactive or process style (Jordan 2003).

Table 3 summarizes these three levels of governance contexts as well as the constraints and opportunities they present for policy analysis. While policy analysis encompasses a diverse range of activities and techniques, different governance contexts can lead to "grooved" patterns or distinct bundles of policy analysis (including skill mix, capabilities and value congruence) which may reinforce each other, creating a distinct and enduring policy style; or create cross-currents that make the patterns more precarious and highly dependent on what government is in power and who leads key departments in policy networks. Generally, we believe that the concept of policy analytic style should be reserved for aggregate assessment. Teasing through and assessing the extent of influence of these factors on patterns of policy analysis augers strongly for systematic comparative analysis (Freeman 1985, Smith, *et al.* 1993).

This suggests that contra the prevailing orthodoxy, only in rare circumstances do analysts choose an analytical strategy that reflects their ideological penchants and methodological skill-set – such circumstances might include academic work, or opportunities in a "skunks work" unit within a public bureaucracy or think tank. Otherwise, it would be normal to find persistent patterns of analytical activity over time; this might be due either to how the governance system works, the structure and dynamics of a policy network, the culture and mission of organizations, and the very nature of policy problems, which would affect the funding, mode of analysis, opportunities, capabilities, recruitment and training of analysts.

Table 3. Governance context and institutional focal points

Level	Structural vantage point	Dimensions to consider
National governance traditions	National and sub-national governments	Governance system Civil service traditions Government priorities Strong or weak centers Strong or weak legislatures Recruitment systems
Policy sectors	Policy networks and communities	Distribution of power Distribution of expertise Depth of expertise Dynamics of dominant and other advocacy coalitions Priority of government Moment of crisis
Departments, agencies	Organizational culture, repertoires, capacities	Organization culture policy, service delivery, control Types of policy capability Distribution of internal policy expertise Critical challenges Priorities of the centre Disposition towards inclusion and engagement External networks for policy expertise

Patterns and Trends in Canadian Governance: Implications for Policy Analysis

It has been argued in this article that to fully explore how different governance contexts affect policy analysis will require systematic comparative research. In what follows some of these concepts are tested by reviewing at a broad level Canada's evolving governing contexts – national, policy sector, and departments and agencies – and the implications of these changes for the demand and conduct of policy analysis are explored.

National Level: Westminster Traditions, Competitive Federalism

The critical factor conditioning policy advising found inside and outside the Canadian state is the predominance of British Westminster parliamentary institutions and relationships. The result is executive-dominated government without the checks and balances associated with the US style of government, which established competing branches of government, or with European and other systems where legislatures enjoy relative autonomy due to proportional representation or upper-house elections (Savoie 1999a, b). Despite vigorous efforts of reformers, particularly from the western provinces, national governments have steadfastly resisted ideas to convert the Canadian Senate into an elected institution and to adopt forms of proportional representation into either the House of Commons (elected) or the Senate (appointed). The adoption of UK-style institutions also meant that

Canadian governments did not have to contend with strong judicial review for many decades (Franks 1987, Dunn 1995, Manfredi 1997, Thomas 1997, Manfredi and Maioni 2002).

This has several implications for the conduct of policy analysis. First, interactions among federal and provincial governments (see below) are filtered through and conditioned by parliamentary institutions and incentive systems, resulting in a key policy process being "peak-bargaining" among governments (Atkinson and Coleman 1989, Tuohy 1992). Second, generally non-partisan and professional public service institutions serve governing parties and their executives (Lindquist 2000). The unwillingness of prime ministers and premiers to grant autonomy and to fund competing advice in legislatures meant that, for many years, governments and their public service institutions had analytic capabilities rivaled only by the largest business firms and associations and, to a lesser extent, labor organizations. This led to patterns of closed sectoral bargaining relationships among major government, business, and labor actors, not subject to great public scrutiny (Atkinson and Coleman 1989, Pross 1992, Lascher 1999, Montpetit 2002). The British influence also resulted in a preference for quasi-legal regulation, with more emphasis on education and negotiation than on litigation, although US influences and the arrival of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 has steadily shifted this emphasis (Kagan 1991, Howlett 2002a, b).

Federalism is the second distinctive feature of Canada's governance landscape. Despite the efforts of Canada's founders to allocate residual powers to the federal government, the unanticipated changes in the challenges confronting the country, as well as key court decisions, ensured that the provinces steadily accrued increasingly more responsibility throughout the twentieth century for delivering and designing programs for citizens, including shared jurisdiction with the federal government in almost every policy domain (Smiley 1964, Banting 1982). Aside from political debates over policy directions in different domains, this resulted in a steadily increasing frequency of committee meetings held at the federal, provincial and territorial level for premiers and the prime minister and their ministers in specific policy domains (health, labor market, transportation, education, finance and many others), and myriad working committees and subcommittees of officials (Simeon 1980). It is difficult to overstate the complexity of Canadian federalism and its supporting policy institutions in such a huge, regionally and linguistically diverse country, with provinces and territories of starkly different fiscal, population and land bases (McRoberts 1993, Howlett 1999).

Ministerial and official intergovernmental committees are instruments of the executive branches of each government, and usually work in camera without the direct scrutiny of legislatures and the public (Doerr 1981, Radin and Boase 2000). Citizens are typically only engaged if certain governments are attempting to build public support for positions, usually at the agenda-setting stage of the policy process, or if statements or decisions are communicated. Intergovernmental officials – who may be located in cabinet agencies or line departments depending on the size of government – function like central officials as either primarily process facilitators or actively championing positions and values on behalf of the government. Although some units and individuals might develop considerable substantive expertise, they typically do not rival that of policy units in line departments or in finance or treasury departments.

Discerning Canada's policy style through the lens of federalism does not produce an image of orderly, productive, and co-operative processes. Rather, it is one of increasing distrust and rivalry between different orders of government, particularly since the federal government has steadily reduced the real value of transfer payments to provincial governments and the tradition of supporting shared-cost programs in many different policy sectors since the 1960s. Provinces and territories attempt to create a united front against the federal government, but this papers over fundamental regional differences on transfer payment and financial regimes, as well as other policy, regulatory and representational issues. For these arenas, policy analysis is rational and argumentative, intended to support government positions. Depending on the trajectory of a policy domain, such as environmental policy during the late 1980s and early 1990s, intergovernmental affairs may encourage participation, but this is the exception to the rule (Lindquist 1996). There is the possibility that several provincial governments may adopt forms of proportional representation, and the current prime minister has indicated that standing committees in the House of Commons will receive additional funding and expanded roles in the policy-making process, and this may create additional demand for independent policy analysis and contestability of bureaucratic policy advice.

The 1960s and early 1970s were a period of rapid growth in government in Canada, the result of a generally buoyant economy. This provided fertile conditions for an activist federal government, which used the power of the purse to induce change through shared cost programs with provincial governments, and fostered an era of co-operative federalism (Smiley 1987). Many of these policy initiatives were informed by social science research and the new field of policy analysis; indeed, as in the US, Canadian governments designed increasingly elaborate planning and budgeting systems predicated on policy analysis and evaluation, although they proved to be exercises in frustration (Hartle 1978, Prince 1979, French 1980). Federal and provincial governments experimented with new structures for informing and co-ordinating the development of policy: there was liberal use of royal commissions, new cabinet committees and central planning capacities. A range of government councils and other advisory mechanisms were established inside government including the first modern think tanks (the Economic Council of Canada and the Science Council of Canada). Outside government, more independent think tanks were developed: some heavily subsidized by government like the Institute for Research on Public Policy and the Canadian Council on Social Development; others funded largely by business, such as the C. D. Howe Institute, the Fraser Institute, the Conference Board of Canada, and the Canada West Foundation (Lindquist 1998). In the terms expressed by Mayer, Van Daalen and Bots (2001), the predominant policy styles could be said to be rationalistic, client-oriented, and argumentative. And, despite the development of some outside expertise, the capacities for designing public policy and leading public discourse continued to rest almost exclusively with governments across Canada.

The 1980s and early 1990s provided a significant contrast. A sputtering, unpredictable economy, combined with the unwillingness of governments to undertake expenditure cuts, led to growing deficits, increasing debt, and interest payments taking up a steadily increasing proportion of public expenditure. An overarching challenge for governments was to contain growth in existing programs,

and they resorted to across-the-board reductions and repetitive budgeting (''managerialism''). Less emphasis was put on designing new policy interventions, although framework policies were put in place (for example, free trade, constitutional reform, tax policy, and so forth) that would not have effects until years later. In identifying new executive talent in government, emphasis was put on managerial acumen, not policy capabilities. However, Canadian governments eventually launched concerted deficit reduction strategies and program reviews leading to eliminating and reshaping of programs, often informed by significant efforts to consult the public (Armit and Bourgault 1996). Think tanks and consulting firms continued to proliferate, and this led the federal government to eliminate several councils and other advisory mechanisms. These developments, along with Quebec's nearly successful referendum for sovereignty, dramatically affected federal-provincial relations. The federal government cut transfers and offloaded decisions to provincial governments (which, in turn did the same to local governments) and aggressively confronted the sovereignty movement. This led to increasingly bitter struggles between federal and provincial governments, and an ever more cynical citizenry.

By the late 1990s, the federal government and several provinces had eliminated their deficits and began to experience surplus positions. The federal government has been reluctant to restore funding for shared cost programs, and actively sought instruments to address its priorities and showcase its contributions, as opposed to meeting provincial priorities. Increasingly bitter and fractious intergovernmental relations were the result, notwithstanding the Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA), which attempted to reduce, but did not eliminate federal government unilateralism in areas of shared jurisdiction. These initiatives point to another aspect of the current Canadian policy context. The federal government has attempted to demonstrate more systematically its relevance to Canadian citizens and communities by directly providing services, rather than work through ''mediating'' organizations such as the provincial and territorial governments. More generally, it has reduced its reliance on traditional shared cost programs for broad purposes with the provinces in different sectors; believing it received insufficient exposure for this policy posture despite considerable outlays of funds. Many other programs – such as the Millennium Scholarships, the Canada Research Chair program, and the Canada Foundation for Innovation – are attempts to deal directly with groups in areas of provincial jurisdiction (Lindquist 2001).

There are several other trends in governance at the national level to consider. First, a highly personalized and centralized federal decision-making system took shape in the hands of the prime minister and minister of finance (Savoie 1999a, 1999b), which, in addition to the already ''strong'' center tradition in Ottawa (Lindquist 2000), meant that while ministers and departments could develop policy proposals, much rested on the preference and instincts of the two key ministers in terms of the timing, content and passage of bills and laws. At some stages of the policy process, however, there is greater transparency in priority-setting and policy development, and considerable, although sometimes rhetorical, focus on performance management. Tight budgets and a results orientation have led all governments to increasingly adopt horizontal and holistic perspectives on problems and to align the initiatives across governments and sectors. A consensus developed

inside the federal public service that Ottawa's policy capacity needed re-energizing, particularly if departments were to assist identifying new priorities and strategies for ministers in the post-deficit era (Anderson 1996, Armstrong *et al.* 2002). The Policy Research Initiative also called for collaboration not only internally across departments but also externally with university institutes and think tanks, as well as improving efforts to recruit a new generation of policy researchers (Bakvis 2000). Although the latter was a short-lived program, it was complemented by substantial investments in R&D in the sciences, health and social sciences. Finally, technological, economic, social and international developments continue to press Canadians and governments to change. Despite regular consultations and political leaders with access to polling data and focus groups, and more access to information, citizens continue to lose trust in governing institutions. More recently, several scandals involving mismanagement and lack of transparency over the use of public funds under Prime Minister Chretien's government have greatly affected the political fortunes of the successor, Prime Minister Paul Martin, and also corroded confidence in the public service and the ability of central agencies to provide oversight (Association of Public Service Financial Administrators 2003, Lindquist 2004). The implications of this for the policy function of departments will be considered later in this article.

Policy Sectors: Dispersed Expertise, Selective Consultation, Power Asymmetries

The emergence of an "attentive public" monitoring the "sub-government" of key state and non-state actors actively shaping public policy and existing programs, has been a key characteristic of the development of the governance context of Canadian policy making in the past two decades, which has a significant impact upon the types of policy analytical styles present in the country. The growth of policy-relevant expertise residing with interest groups, think tanks, and universities has also significantly expanded the range of actors present in the networks associated with policy sectors.

Think tanks, for example, began proliferating in the early 1970s, although Canada still lacks a significant, well-resourced cadre of think tanks by US standards. This is due, partly, to insufficient sustained demand for policy research and analysis from actors other than government departments, and, partly, to the lack of a strong philanthropic tradition in Canada (Sharpe 2001). Thus, while think tanks have greatly expanded in number and diversity, their expertise typically does not rival that of federal and provincial governments (Dobuzinskis 1996, Lindquist 1998, Abelson 2002). The same holds for academics at universities; while institutes have expanded tremendously over the last few years, often serving as home bases for world-renowned specialists in certain fields, they tend to lack the data and specialized expertise required to challenge governments in the policy analytic process. Generally, think tanks, institutes and public academics monitor and provide commentary on government actions, and may try to influence agenda-setting through framing, critical evaluations and other techniques, but rarely have strong impact on decision and design (Soroka 2002).

The "attentive public" also includes citizens and interest groups, and the literature points to the enduring challenge for governments about how to engage them on

specific issues (Lenihan and Alcock 2000). Canadian governments are often accused of not undertaking enough consultation with citizens and groups, and some such activity rarely constitutes normal business for government. On the other hand, some government departments do regularly consult, and leaders inside and outside government often worry about "consultation fatigue" of key stakeholders (Howlett and Rayner 2004). The federal Privy Council Office has a small unit that monitors and co-ordinates consultation activities across the government, and serves as a node for a functional community of consultation specialists across the public service. The perception of insufficient consultation derives from early attempts to solicit advice from outside the bureaucracy: the federal government experimented by creating councils in the 1960s with representatives from different sectors and regularly relied on royal commissions to tackle big policy questions by commissioning research and holding public hearings over several years (Bradford 1999–2000). During the late 1980s and early 1990s it also launched mega-consultation processes for the Green Plan, the Charlottetown Accord, budget-making, and the Social Security Review, including, among other things, public conferences and workshops co-hosted with independent think tanks and other organizations, and receiving exposure as media events (Lindquist 1994, 1996).

Though somewhat less public, but perhaps less expensive and more effective, current Canadian governments are more likely to opt for more selective and low-key consultations, working with representatives of interests from specific sectors and constituencies (Atkinson and Pervin 1998). There has been interest and flirtation with e-consultation as a new means for engaging citizens, but this has not substantially modified policy making, though it has increased efficiencies in distributing information and receiving views from groups and citizens (Alexander and Pal 1998). Think tanks and consultants have been engaged to manage citizen "dialogues" on issues, but this has not supplanted more traditional decision making (Lindquist 1998).

Other orders of government and sectors are increasingly important policy actors. The courts have repeatedly affirmed that major urban municipalities are creatures of provincial governments, but the federal government views them as important drivers of economic growth, anchors for regions and rural communities, and deserving of federal assistance. Such awareness leads to both vertical and horizontal interventions spanning the traditional boundaries of departments and governments, despite federal and provincial rivalries, and has been best illustrated with the new jointly funded Infrastructure Works program. Aboriginal communities increasingly seek resolution of land claims, closure on treaty negotiations, and self-government, including, at the very least, co-management of natural resources (Notzke 1994). These matters, as well as the stark health and social issues confronting their communities, require working across the traditional boundaries of government to better align policy initiatives and dispersed expertise. Progress on land claims and treaties has been mixed, but prodded by impatient courts, governments are exploring new ways of sharing power. Recently, the federal government has sought to increase transparency and accountability for management of the funds received by bands. The federal government also recently launched the Voluntary Sector Initiative, designed to build capacity to deliver better "public goods" in communities in exchange for better governance and accountability – a clear reversal from the early

1990s when, labeled as "special interest groups", many voluntary and nonprofit organizations lost sustaining funding as part of the Program Review exercise and its precursors (Philips 2001).

Like all countries, Canada has had to anticipate and deal with the challenges of globalization, economic integration, and change. Canada has distinct challenges because of its proximity to the US and the degree of economic integration that existed well before the 1990s, and the ever-present flow of values, culture, expectations and politics from south of the border. Successive governments have steered Canada towards more integration by supporting the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and World Trade Organization (WTO) processes (Golub 2003). Conversely, social movements of all kinds – including anti-globalization, fair trade, and environmental groups – also tapped into and fostered international networks to further their causes. All actors in policy communities draw on international experience to inform domestic policy debates – benchmarking, international rankings, and best practices are used to raise awareness, move issues up the agenda, and identify alternatives.[3]

Hence, there was a time when Canada's policy analytical context consisted of the lead government agencies at the federal and provincial levels, and the main business and labor groups they worked with. In that era, largely coinciding with the introduction of formal policy analysis in the cabinet and expenditure management systems adopted by federal and provincial governments in the 1960s and 1970s, the analytical style followed was very much the rational type identified by Mayer, Van Daalen and Bots (Prince 1979, French 1980). However, by the early 1980s academic observers had concluded that the range of actors and the patterns of power and influence had changed, creating a more complex analytical environment which negated many of the aspirations of purely rational analysis; shelving and ignoring many of the products of this analysis (Hartle 1978, Dobell and Zussman 1981). Changes in policy communities – such as the rise of special interest groups, think tanks, citizens, and international actors – served to complicate agenda-setting and policy making, and created alternative sources of policy analysis, research and data (Pross 1992, Atkinson and Coleman 1989, Coleman and Skogstad 1990).

Notwithstanding the increasing impact of international influences and technology, as well as more actors in the attentive public with the ability to monitor and conduct policy analysis, however, power over the direction of policy regimes still tends to remain in the hands of lead government departments and key business groups, even if in some sectors coherent policy directions are hindered by rivalry across governments.

The Agency Level: Significant Variations in Analytical Capacity by Jurisdiction and Sector

Departments, ministries and agencies vary significantly with respect to size and scope of responsibilities but are key suppliers and demanders of policy analysis. They have different institutional histories, styles of executive leadership, and patterns of recruitment that flow from their core tasks and missions (Wilson 1989). Within Canadian governments, the policy analysis capacity of departments and ministries

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varies widely, and derives largely from the size of the government. Smaller provinces may have less capacity than the largest municipalities, and some of the largest provinces have capabilities rivaling other national jurisdictions (Ontario and Quebec, respectively, have populations of 11 million and 7.4 million citizens, comparable to the populations of New Zealand and Sweden).

The principles and practices of parliamentary governance ensure that central agencies in each jurisdiction regulate policy development and oversee the activities of departments or ministries, even if they are not as operationally well informed as the policy analysis and research units of those same departments and ministries (Savoie 1999a and 1999b). In some cases, departments will have corporate policy shops and others attached to specific program areas, and even the smallest departments may have dedicated policy research capabilities (Hollander and Prince 1993). However, since all ministers and deputy ministers are appointed directly by the prime minister and premiers (in some provinces, they also appoint assistant deputy ministers), policy analysis in Canadian governments, no matter how professional and non-partisan the public service in question, tends to lack independence. In some cases, efforts to seriously study new or daunting challenges can only be addressed by creating temporary administrative adhocracies to tap into technical expertise, co-ordinate across departments and agencies, consult with outside groups, and deal with central authorities (Desveuax, Lindquist and Toner 1993). If time is not of the essence, then governments can appoint independent inquires, task forces, or Royal Commissions to ensure that research and analysis are at arm's length from the normal pressures on departments by ministers (Salter and Slaco 1981, Sheriff 1983, Salter 1990, Peters and Parker 1993).

During the 1980s and the early 1990s, executives in the Canadian public service did not rise to the top by stewarding policy initiatives, but rather, by handling transition and restructuring departments and programs, better managing resources, and helping the government and ministers deal with difficult political files such as federalism, Quebec and the sovereignty movement, and free trade with the United States. While the policy function did not disappear, governments focused less on thinking broadly about problems and more about achieving focus and specific results, and more resources were allocated to sophisticated polling and commu-nications organizations inside and outside the government (Bakvis 2000). As noted above, following the June 1993 restructuring of the public service and the 1994–1995 Program Review decisions, which resulted in budget cuts, consolidations, and lay-offs, it was generally acknowledged that the policy capacity of the public service had atrophied, in part because deputy ministers allocated scare resources to deal with pressing challenges and because demand for conventional policy analysis had waned considerably. The extent to which the policy functions of departments declined, if at all, varied across the public service, yet probably remained considerably greater than those of provincial, territorial and municipal govern-ments. One result of tighter budgets in the early 1990s was that departments often became more creative in managing policy analysis and research – working with other departments, relying on external consultants to deal with specific demands if internal expertise was insufficient and cultivating networks of researchers in universities and think tanks – an approach that was accelerated by the Policy Research Initiative. Moreover, in the late 1990s, and now, in 2004, under a new

prime minister, federal governments have made it clear to the public service that they are seeking long-term policy thinking. However, it is an open question as to whether the incentives for producing high quality policy advice, and perhaps building long-term internal capacity, outweigh the demands to improve service delivery of existing programs while lowering costs, ensuring that programs are prudently and tightly managed from the standpoint of financial control, and measuring and reporting on performance.

Tentative Conclusions on Canada's Policy Analytic Style

Our review of different governance trends on the policy function in Canada has shown that parliamentary traditions in a federal context have a defining influence on where policy capacity is concentrated, and ensure that, despite the proliferation of many more policy-capable players in each policy sector – interest groups, think tanks, Aboriginal communities, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and international organizations – the fulcrum of power among major actors inside and outside government has not changed. However, in a post-deficit environment, the national government has more actively demanded policy advice, which has led to departments seeking creative ways to tap into expertise within and across governments, and with analysts and researchers in consulting firms, universities, think tanks and associations. It is a far more complicated policy-making environment for government leaders to navigate, and this requires more process-related skills. Table 4 summarizes our arguments and suggests that the country has shifted from the earlier rational, client advice and argumentative ones, to those based on process management, interactivity and participation.

Interestingly, the case illustrates similarities between the types of meta-analysis of policy analysis put forward by Radin (2000) and others, and those of Mayer, Van Daalen and Bots (2001). Radin's two ideal types of modern and postmodern analyst can be thought of as "bundles" of the analytical styles identified by Mayer, Van Daalen and Bots, operating at different levels of the policy-making context. The "modern" analytical style in Radin's model is rational at the level of national systems, client-oriented at the level of the subgovernment or policy community, and, at the department level, provides argumentative advice. This bundle of analytical styles was appropriate to the governance context in Canada of the 1960s, with relatively top-down centralized national control of policy making, simple bilateral or trilateral subgovernment structures and managerial agency activity. However, it was less well suited to the post-1990 context of a fiscally strapped central government, stronger provincial governments, and more complex policy communities and "intelligent" agencies in an international context. A "post-modern" bundle of policy capabilities has thus emerged alongside the more traditional orientations, and features the other three analytical styles described by Mayer, Van Daalen and Bots: process management, interactivity and participatory analysis.

Conclusion: Policy Styles and Analytical Styles

Styles of policy analytic are neither uniform, nor static, but evolve in conjunction with changes in governance context at the national, policy sector and organizational

Table 4. Governance contexts and elements of Canada's policy style

Level	Focal point	Old context 1960–1980	Old analytic style	New context 1980–2000	New analytic style
National governance systems	National and sub-national governments	Top-down, centralized parliamentary federalism	Rationalism	Fiscal austerity and de-centralization	Process
Policy sectors	Policy communities	Bi-partite and tri-partite business/labour peak associations	Client advice	More challenge from diverse communities,	Interactive
Departments and agencies	Organizational culture, repertoires, capacities	Managerialism	Argumentative	Balance tipping away from management back to policy creativity	Participatory

levels. This high level and exploratory review of the Canadian case illustrates the linkages that exist between governance contexts and evolving patterns in policy analysis, and suggests that finer-grained studies with thick descriptions would provide enormously useful detail on how this dynamic occurs in specific policy sectors and organizations. Such detail would also be necessary for first-rate comparisons across organizations, sectors, and countries, and to explore whether or not national governance traditions reinforce or seem to be in tension with the demands of policy networks and organizations for policy analysis. Prima facie, similar patterns in governance and policy analysis appear to exist in other jurisdictions, like the Netherlands, the UK and others (Considine and Lewis 2003, Kickert 2003). More research remains to be done in this area, however, before a definitive pattern of linkages between analytical styles and governance contexts can be made.

Even though the primary focus in this article has been theoretical in nature, with an ambition of encouraging more systematic comparative empirical research, the authors believe that there are implications of this analysis for pedagogical practices in professional schools of policy analysis, administration and management. The framework given by Mayer, Van Daalen and Bots, and the other features of policy analysis that have been identified in this article, gives one a better sense of the range of roles and skills potentially required of policy analysis in support of clients and communities, and implies that the skills, knowledge and dispositions required to perform those functions at a high level of competency might be different from the traditional skill-set or bundle typically taught in professional schools. Most professional programs are currently dedicated to producing generalists to perform the latter roles, but the analysis put forward in this article suggests redesigning or supplementing curricula to deepen knowledge and skill in facilitation, negotiation, or advocacy, and find ways to ensure that students and graduates can see the value of these approaches and understand how to work productively with specialists in those areas. More generally, the suggested framework might also help graduates better determine how they might begin and build their careers.

Finally, it is realized that this proposed framework could be interpreted to suggest that governance contexts "determine" patterns and shifting styles in policy analysis. Although it is thought that they are important explanatory factors, the authors believe that policy analysis has always aimed and should challenge assumptions and strategies of policy actors, whether they wield influence and power, or not. Indeed, a key challenge for any "manager " of policy capabilities inside or outside government is to balance the need to respond to immediate demands for analysis that addresses certain problem definitions and the merits of certain types of interventions, with the responsibility to challenge assumptions, inject new data and explore alternative approaches and practices. The ability to pursue the latter agenda requires some insulation from normal demands of governance and politics at all levels of governance, whether through explicit mandates or organizational slack. The authors think some autonomy in the policy analysis function can lead to insight and creativity that can better prepare governments, networks and organizations for new policy challenges. It remains an open question, however, as to whether governments, corporate strategies and the proliferation of policy actors in networks are rising to this challenge.

Notes

1. Policy analysis texts usually describe a range of qualitative and quantitative techniques which analysts are expected to learn and apply in specific circumstances, providing advice to decision makers about optimal strategies and outcomes to pursue in the resolution of public problems (Elmore 1991, Patton and Sawicki 1993, Weimer and Vining 1999).
2. A parallel argument can be found in the field of regulation. Knill (1998) has stated that regulatory styles are defined by "the mode of state intervention" (hierarchical versus self-regulation, as well as uniform and detailed requirements versus open regulation allowing for administrative flexibility and discretion) and the mode of "administrative interest intermediation" (formal versus informal, legalistic versus pragmatic and open versus closed relationships). Franz van Waarden argues that " National regulatory styles are formally rooted in nationally specific legal, political and administrative institutions and cultures. This foundation in a variety of state institutions should make regulatory styles resistant to change, and hence, from this perspective one would expect differences in regulatory styles to persist, possibly even under the impact of economic and political internationalization" (van Waarden 1995).
3. This is also consistent with the widespread rhetoric of performance-oriented governments and societies.

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