

The Interim

PLUS + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + + Curriculum Supplement For Schools

The *Interim Plus* is a periodical dedicated to educational matters and specifically designed to assist teachers in integrating relevant life issues in their lesson planning.

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In this edition we preview the annual national March for Life scheduled for May 10 in our nation's capital. Related to this we offer a personal story of one teacher who "converted" to a more active educator, coming to the conclusion that he ought to accept the challenge of the March and find out for himself rather than rely on biased media reports re: pro-life supporters.

Two other themes are the Drummond Report in the province of Ontario and the release of head count from Canadian Census of 2011. The former raises important public issues as to the role and reach of government, also offering insights as to what can go wrong or what choices need to be made regarding the raising and spending of public moneys; while the latter reveals major trends and shifts within Canada.

Finally, we announce with pleasure the prize winners in the Father Ted Colleton Scholarship program for the 2011-2012 academic year:



Isaac Longworth

first prize, Isaac Longworth of Woodstock; second prize, Selina Hunt of Sault Ste. Marie; and third prize Aditya Rau of Richmond Hill, all from Ontario. Congratulations to these three committed students and to all the participants. The essays of the prize winners will be published in the spring editions of *The Interim*. Thanks are expressed also to Niagara Region Right to Life for their



Selina Hunt



Aditya Rau

generosity in providing financial support for the scholarship program. Individuals and companies can donate to Niagara Region RTL

and receive tax receipts for supporting this scholarship program. Their address is 111 Rose Avenue, Thorold, ON L2V 3E2. Please encourage your senior students to participate in the next edition. The essay theme for 2012-2013 will be announced by June to give students an advance opportunity to consider the scholarship program.

I Think All Pro Life People Are Crazy

By Dan Pigeau



When I was a student at King's University College a priest once said to me, "Most people write because they feel they have something to say". The priest who said these words taught me Catholic History, and he was one of my favourite professors when I was an undergrad. He spoke those words during a conversation we had when I found out he was going on a sabbatical in order to write a book about one of London's first bishops. In my personal opinion a book about a bishop from London Ontario did not sound that interesting, and I asked him if he thought many people would buy and read the genre of book he was writing. He responded by saying that he wasn't writing with the hopes of publishing a best seller. Most people write about things that interest them, and because they feel they have something to say.

Today I sit and write because my heart is telling me that I

have something to share with others. The first thing I would like to say is, “I think all pro life people are crazy. They stand outside abortion clinics holding graphic images, yelling obscenities, and harassing women as they enter those facilities.” Now that I have gotten your attention, I must confess that I do not believe the statement I just wrote in the previous sentence. However, I did believe the statement to be true up until almost four years ago. My image of pro life and pro family people was tainted by media reports of an American group protesting Canada’s decision to legalize gay marriage. In my mind I can still recall the image of so called “Christians” holding signs that read, “God Hates Fags”. I am personally in favour of traditional marriage, but in my heart I felt disgust when I saw people holding signs with “God Hates Fags” written on them. Personally I think God hates their signs. Unfortunately as a result of the articles I read, and the photos I saw I ended up painting all pro life and pro family people with the same paint brush.

My opinion of pro life and pro family people started to change roughly four years ago. In June of 2008 my wife became pregnant with our daughter Gabriella. Up until this point I had always believed that abortion was wrong. I was raised a Catholic, attended a Catholic high school, and I even attended a Catholic university located next to a seminary, thinking I would one day become a priest. My Catholic education and upbringing taught me that abortion was a sin, but when I heard my daughter’s heartbeat and saw her in an ultrasound my opinion on abortion changed. In a split second I went from thinking abortion was wrong to knowing abortion is wrong. The ultrasound image proved to me scientifically that abortion involved the destruction of a unique human life.

In July 2008 I decided to teach summer school in order to get some extra money to prepare for our little bundle of joy. The course I was teaching was in a classroom belonging to an extremely pro life teacher. All around his classroom were photos of him and students at the March for Life in Ottawa. His classroom also contained many books, pro life literature, and a beautiful display with photos and information about fetal development. I remember looking at the pictures in amazement, realizing that these photos were depicting exactly

how my baby would grow and develop over the next several months.

At our next P.A day I located the teacher in whose classroom I taught summer school and I told him how awesome I thought his classroom set up was. During our conversation I mentioned that it was providence that I was teaching summer school in that particular classroom while other events were occurring that were solidifying my pro life convictions. It was then that he asked if I would be interested in bringing some of my students to the March for Life with him that year. I told him that I respected what he was doing but I did not think going to the March for Life was a good idea. He asked me why I felt this way and I responded by saying, “Because I think that people who go to the March for Life and who pray outside of abortion clinics are a little crazy. They stand outside of abortion clinics holding graphic images, yelling obscenities, and harassing women as they enter those facilities; and I don’t agree with what they are doing.” I told him that I believe that abortion is wrong, but I am not interested in doing what he does.



The teacher responded by kindly and politely asking me several questions. The first thing he asked me was “Have you ever been to the March for Life, or 40 Days for Life?” and my answer was “No”. He then asked me, “If you have never been to either, then how do you know what happens there and how the people conduct themselves?” I told him that I was basing my opinion on what is reported in the media. He asked if I felt the media could be biased, and I answered “obviously”. His final statement was, “So you agree the media can be biased but you are basing your opinion on what they are telling you. Do you not think that it is unfair that you are judging an entire group of people based on what the media is reporting? Would it not be a good idea for you to go and see what it is like for yourself and then judge?” He suggested that I attend and see for myself. If after going I still believed that pro life people were crazy then I should return and tell everyone never to attend the March for Life.

I ended up travelling with him and his school to the March for Life that year, and I brought eight students with me. To be honest the only people I saw who were acting crazy and inappropriate were the hundred or so “pro choice” people protesting against us. My students and I ended up returning to

our school, and the following year we brought in pro life guest speakers and filled our own bus to the March for Life. This year we officially formed a pro life club at our school and we plan on doing as many pro life activities as our principal will allow. Luckily we have a good principal who has been very supportive of our club and has allowed us to do all of the activities we have proposed.

I would encourage all people to attend the March for Life and 40 Days for Life. I plan on attending the March for Life again this year, and I also plan to participate in 40 Days for Life. For those who have participated in the past I would encourage you to participate again, and for those who have

never participated I would encourage you to come and see what happens for yourself. If you are someone who has never been and think it is not for you, then I would ask you the same questions I was asked. "Do you not think that it is unfair that you are judging an entire group of people based on what the media is reporting? Would it not be a good idea for you to go and see what it is like for yourself and then judge?" Hopefully we will see you there.

For an inspiring, upbeat, promotional video on **The March for Life 2012** go to

http://www.campaignlifecoalition.com/index.php?p=March_For_Life

Questions to guide a class discussion of the article

1. What experiences motivated Dan Pigeau to write this article?
2. To what did he attribute his negative image of pro-life supporters?
3. What was the first important event in his personal life that began the change of opinion about pro-life activists?
4. What scientific observation convinced him about the nature of abortion?
5. How did the teaching of summer school influence his views?
6. When first invited to consider accompanying student s
7. What challenge was he given?
8. How did he respond and what did he conclude about the March?
9. Is his story offering a challenge to you? Are you willing to accept the same challenge?
10. How common is the point of view first held by Dan Pigeau?
11. What can be done to change people's opinion and get them on board with the annual March?
12. Look at the promotional video cited above and note the age of the participants, energy, enthusiasm. Is Pigeau correct in his changed assessment of the people on the March for Life?

The Drummond Report Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services

<http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/reformcommission/chapters/summary.html>

Societies at times are headed in the wrong direction whether moral, fiscal, social or political. Governments, pressed to take action, try to address the problem by setting up a study group to investigate the problem and come up with a report. In a democratic system, it is the responsibility of the elected governing body to make the decisions regarding any recommendations.

Simcoe.com



Governments around the globe are trying to cope with a huge and growing gap between their spending and their revenues. The province of Ontario is one Canadian jurisdiction which is in the midst of this public process. In early February,

2012 Don Drummond released his much-awaited report on the state of the Ontario economy and the spending priorities that the government should pursue in order to bring down the province's deficit.

The Drummond Report (*Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services : Public Services For Ontarians: A Path to Sustainability*)

and Excellence) contained 362 recommendations covering all aspects of the Ontario public services, from health care to the environment and natural resources, from primary and secondary education to labour relations and compensation. At more than 500 pages, the report thoroughly inspected the public services system of Ontario, noting its very good qualities and identifying areas needing change in order to make the entire enterprise affordable and sustainable for the long term. The chief author of the report, Don Drummond, warns that

Ontario faces more severe economic and fiscal challenges than most Ontarians realize. We can no longer assume a resumption of Ontario's traditional strong economic growth and the continued prosperity on which the province has built its public services. Nor can we count on steady, dependable revenue growth to finance government programs. Unless policy-makers act swiftly and boldly to prevent such an outcome, Ontario faces a series of deficits that would undermine the province's economic and social future. Much of this task can be accomplished through reforms to the delivery of public services that not only contribute to deficit elimination, but are also desirable in their own right. Affordability and excellence are not incompatible; they can be reconciled by greater efficiency, which serves both the fiscal imperative and Ontarians' desire for better-run programs. Balancing the budget, however, will also require tough decisions that will entail reduced benefits for some. Given that many of these benefit programs are not sustainable in their current form, the government will need to decide how best to target benefits to those who need them most. The treatment may be difficult, but it is worth the effort.

Drummond explained the parameters for the report and its recommendations, and he realistically cautions about “don’ts” and “dos” for example:

- *Do not simply cut costs. The imperative to restrain spending should instead be an opportunity to reform programs and service delivery;*
- *Avoid across-the-board cuts. They represent an abdication of the government’s responsibility to make real, and often difficult, decisions;*
- *Do not hang onto public assets or public service delivery when better options exist; and*

The “dos” apply across the entire public sector:

- *The government should issue a road map setting out its vision. Such a document would both inform the public about the changes that lie ahead and also serve as a script for all bureaucrats;*
- *Policy development should be more evidence-based — with clear objectives set based on sound research and evidence — and relevant data collected and used to evaluate programs;*
- *Governments must minimize the cost of operations, but they also need rules to ensure that taxpayers’ money is not abused. The pendulum has now swung too far towards excessive rules, with too many layers of watchers at the expense of people who actually get things done. The Ontario government must find a new middle ground;*

Effectively, Drummond was painting a positive, ambitious vision



... a province that provides the best public services, delivered in the most efficient manner, in the world. ... and What does being the best at public policy and services look like?

Public service would be an honourable calling that would draw the province’s

best and brightest people into government. The best public service would set clear objectives, use proper metrics to measure progress and provide clear accountability for those expected to meet the objectives. It would benchmark itself against the best in the world. It would constantly evaluate priorities; if a new priority is identified, others would move down a spot and some, now outdated, would be discarded. It would drive relentlessly towards effectiveness and efficiency. It would focus on outcomes, not inputs, and give managers the flexibility to do the job best within their budget. It would approach risk from a scientific basis.

Such an objective could instill in our politicians, our public servants and all Ontarians a sense of purpose that would help see us all through this monumental mission.

The mission is to carry out necessary reforms to avoid the real danger of Canada’s most populous province doubling its deficit by 2017-2018 by which time the debt could rise to a staggering \$411 billion – more than half its gross domestic product if tough decisions are not made to curb spending in the public sector. It is impossible to provide a comprehensive framework for the 362 recommendations contained in the report. However, one can get a good sense of the scope of the problems and the urgency of the moment. Central to the difficult choices the province faces... *involves labour compensation. Since the total*

bill for wages, salaries and benefits accounts for about half of all Ontario government program spending, it is difficult to believe that program spending can be held to annual growth of 0.8 per cent if labour costs rise appreciably.

Preliminary Questions

1. Is Drummond guilty of hubris when he lays out the ambitious goal or mission of government bureaucrats for solving society’s problems? Or is this goal setting just what is needed to reform the public finances and services of Ontario?
2. Is there a contradiction between humaneness and efficiency? Between effectiveness and freedom?
3. Was the McGuinty government truthful about the continued viability of the province’s fiscal status (budget, expenses, revenues, etc.) prior to the last election? Did they run on a dishonest platform? Were the Progressive Conservatives or NDP any different in their assessment of the province’s fiscal health?
4. When tough decisions have to be made, what are the prime factors considered by the government of the day? Re-election prospects? Amount of time remaining in their mandate?
5. Is the exercise or inquiry undertaken by the Drummond-led commission worthwhile?

Some Key/Representative Recommendations from the Drummond Report

In total there are 105 recommendations regarding health care, its delivery and its costs. *The government was being urged to evaluate all proposals for change that include efficiencies and cost savings within the vision and plan developed following*

Health

Develop and publish a comprehensive plan to address health care challenges over the next 20 years. The plan should

set objectives and drive solutions that are built around the following principles:

- a. At the provincial level, the system must be able to carry out health care capacity planning; it must look at the health needs of the population and project future needs for facilities, services, funding and human resources;
- b. Policies should be based on evidence that provides guidance on what services, procedures, devices and drugs are effective, efficient and eligible for public funding;
- c. The ideal health system would promote healthy living and emphasize the prevention of poor health instead of intervening after a problem has occurred.
- d. Health systems would be centered on patients rather than hospitals, and would feature co-ordination along the complete continuum of care that a patient might need. Divert all patients not requiring acute care from hospitals and into a more appropriate form of care that will be less expensive, improve the patient experience and reduce the patient's exposure to new health risks.
- e. Primary care would be the main point of contact, but there would be much less emphasis on treating patients in hospitals. Today, the key health issues are increasingly shifting to chronic care questions, in good part because the population is aging, but also because some lifestyle problems such as obesity are creating particular health conditions.
- f. All professionals would exercise the full scope of their skills in their work; nurses, for example, would administer vaccines, and nurse practitioners would manage chronic illnesses such as diabetes and high blood pressure.
- g. Place a wage freeze for doctors.



Questions on Health Care Recommendations

1. Students could be directed to go to the link <http://www.fin.gov.on.ca/en/reformcommission/> and click on the executive summary to get a first hand look at what is recommended for health care delivery in Ontario.
2. Why is "health care [is] at once the biggest item in the Ontario government's budget, the issue of most concern to Ontarians, the source of the most intense

and emotional public policy debate?

3. Do the principles outlined by Drummond respect the health needs of individuals equally?
4. Are there preventable diseases, e.g., obesity, diabetes, AIDS, some cancers? If so should these be treated by publicly funded health care system?
5. No mention is made about defunding certain elective practices, like abortion. If \$80 million dollars could be saved by defunding this procedure, and pregnancy is not a disease, why is nothing said about this in the report?
6. Have students collect/gather statistics on the ratio of doctors, nurses, other health professionals to the general population. Are there too many or too few such health professionals? Are they equally accessible to people across the province? Are there grossly under-served areas in the province?
7. Have students investigate how the delivery of health care differs from province to province across Canada, taking into consideration any three important aspects.
8. Which segment of the general population consumes the most health care dollars? What do the demographic projections suggest is in store for the province?
9. What could schools do to help prevent disease and promote healthy living, and thereby help to reduce health care costs?
10. Health care and services CEOs have been in the news lately, what concerns have been expressed about their level of salary compensation? Is the criticism valid or misplaced?
11. According to the Drummond Report what factors are driving up the cost of health care?



Education

While health accounts for more than 40% of all provincial public services expenditures (for example, in 2010–11, the province spent \$44.8 billion on



health [Drummond Report, executive Summary, page 7]) education comes next with almost 20% of all provincial budget expenses. The report presented 57 recommendations regarding the financing and delivery of education. Whenever

money is involved and recommendations include cutbacks or cancellation of services it creates much public debate. When one looks at the list of recommendations from the Drummond Report, there is little surprise that some of them created a storm of controversy:

1. *Limit primary and secondary education spending hikes to 1 per cent a year with colleges and universities going up just 1.5 per cent annually.*
2. *Since 2002–03, staffing has increased by more than 13,800 for non-teaching positions. To meet our target growth rate in education spending of one per cent per year to 2017–18, the Commission projects that about 70 per cent of these positions will need to be phased out by that year. Boards will have to minimize the impact of this reduction on school operations.*
3. *To get a secondary school diploma, Ontario students must complete 30 secondary school credits. Many students, however, are completing more than 30 credits; 14 per cent of Grade 12 students return for a fifth year. This is costly. The Commission recommends that public funding be capped at 32 successful credits per student. School boards should be allowed to charge a fee for additional credits.*
4. *Cancellation of the FDK program (all-day kindergarten) with appropriate phase-out provisions, as its costs associated with new staff, classroom supplies, transportation, other school operations, capital and stabilization for the child care sector will eventually amount to over \$1.5 billion per year.*
5. *The Commission believes that scarce resources should not be applied to reducing class sizes. We recommend increasing the class-size cap for primary schools from 20 to 23, and increasing the class-size averages in junior/intermediate schools from 24.5 to 26 and in secondary schools from 22 to 24.*
6. *Special education grants account for a significant portion of education spending at \$2.5 billion in 2011–12, a 55 per cent increase since 2002–03 despite declining enrolment. The link between increased funding and outcomes for students is not obvious.We recommend a full review of the province's special education programs and the results achieved, including programs for students in care, custody or treatment, and hospital boards, with a view to ensuring that funding is being used effectively to improve student outcomes.*
7. *Because public education promotes child development and future prosperity, Ontario needs the best possible teachers. Research supports the link between quality teachers and student achievement. The Qualifications and Experience grant should reward teachers who are most likely to help their students achieve better results. Training programs leading to Additional Qualifications (AQ) should be reviewed and Q&E grants should be administered by a body independent from teacher federations or school boards.*
8. *Consider raising retirement age for teachers.*
9. *The Ministry of Education should be a leader in promoting efficiency and reducing duplication.Boards should also continue to seek out opportunities to foster procurement efficiencies through their expanded buying power.....*

The government should work with school boards, teacher federations and support staff unions towards shared ownership and administration of benefit programs.....An increasingly widespread solution to the problem of underutilized schools is the consolidation of Grades 7 through 12 in one secondary school.

10. *Post-secondary education institutions should devote more resources to experience-based learning such as internships, allow for more independent study, develop problem-based learning and increase study abroad. ... Universities should be encouraged to include in their collective agreements flexible provisions with faculty regarding teaching and research workloads. Top-performing teachers and researchers should be recognized with the appropriate workloads and rewards.... Institutions should redesign incentive systems to reward excellent teachers, as they do now for researchers.*
11. *Maintain current tuition fee increases*

Questions re Recommendations on Education Services and Costs

1. Why was the shelving of the full day kindergarten program immediately rejected by the government?
2. Why was staff reduction considered necessary by Drummond?
3. Is it fair to all students if the number of credits necessary for a graduation diploma were to be maximized and no fifth year allowed free of charge?
4. Will raising the cap on class size, reducing preparation time for teachers, and slowing down the implementation of full day kindergarten hurt student achievement? What is the evidence either way?
5. Would schools deliver better service and better achievement results if teachers concentrated on academics rather than a whole gamut of social problems affecting students and families? Is too much expected of schools or not enough?
6. What does the Drummond Report say about special education expenses?
7. Do some of the other efficiency-seeking recommendations make sense to you? Why?
8. How does post-secondary education need to change according to the Drummond Report?
9. Are students better off going to public and private colleges or entering apprenticeships rather than going to universities and incurring student loan debts?
10. Which education recommendations are likely to be enacted and which are likely not to proceed, and why or why not?

Social Programs

There are vulnerable people in all societies for one reason or another: disease, poverty, lack of education, mental health issues, etc. People generally feel compassion for their plight and

are willing to help them. Many individuals and organizations devote their time and resources to caring for them. In a civilized society the government itself takes on some of the responsibility for the less fortunate. Social programs are created and services delivered. Over time they are expanded and the costs rise. The question then arises whether the services could be delivered with better effectiveness and efficiency and at a reduced cost. The Drummond Report does not question the necessity of social programs, but it raises important questions nonetheless, and makes recommendations in this sector as well.

1. *More social programs, such as social assistance, the Ontario Child Benefit, support for mental health programs for children and youth, developmental services, child care subsidies and childhood development programs, should be integrated across different ministries and different levels of government, with the client's perspective put first. Vulnerable people and their families do not care which level of government or which ministry is responsible for providing support; they just want help.*
2. *The government should work to help employers and employees alike to understand and accommodate the specific needs of these individuals in the workplace. Many people with disabilities can and want to work. Yet we are only now beginning to understand how to accommodate people with physical disabilities in the workplace; we are even further away from doing so for those with mental disabilities. Among those with severe disabilities, many are unemployable; they would be better served by a national basic income program instead of social assistance. The province should advocate for such a program with the federal government and other provinces.*

The Drummond Report had barely been released when within weeks the government seemed headed in a different direction with respect to social programs and the raising of new revenues.

Expansion of Gaming Industry Seen as a Solution to Lack of Government Revenues

The government of Ontario on Monday, March 12 offered a novel solution to its fiscal problems. The provincial Finance Minister, Dwight Duncan, along with OLG head Paul Godfrey, announced plans to expand and modernize the gaming business in Ontario. A large Casino would be built in Toronto, and in other urban centers that wanted them, while under-performing gambling facilities would be closed down, and slot machines placed in more locations not just the race tracks, and private companies would get more lottery ticket outlets. It is estimated that this boost to the gambling industry would generate an additional \$1.4 billion in revenues for the government, and thus permit the continuation of certain services that would otherwise need to be cut or reduced. Paul Godfrey, Chair of the OLG, claimed that the move "will create jobs, and be a catalyst for economic growth and prosperity. It will generate new revenue and be crucial for tourism." (Toronto Star, p 6, March 13).

One can certainly question the logic and the underlying

assumptions of the government. If generating new revenues is the principal consideration then perhaps the government is bankrupt of ideas. Critics worry that the social consequences of this government action would be negative and fall mostly on those who are already ill-disposed to deal with the fallout. Some social experts warn that more access to gambling opportunities (for example, on line gambling) will lead to more mental health and social problems associated with an addiction and dependency like gambling. The NDP accused the government of trying to balance the books on the backs of "desperate families who want to try to become millionaires". The editorial of the Toronto Star on this issue is worth reading. (<http://www.thestar.com/opinion/editorials/article/1144962--a-casino-in-toronto-is-a-terrible-idea-that-smacks-of-desperation>)

Questions

1. Is gambling (casinos, lotteries, slot machines etc.) vastly overrated as an economic stimulant?
2. Is gambling a good solution to the economic woes of Ontario?
3. What are the social costs of gambling?
4. Is this proposal to "expand and modernize" gaming activities in Ontario a sound policy for balancing the provincial books?
5. How can one reconcile the Drummond Recommendation re social programs with this proposal that would harm those social programs and increase the need for more expenditures? Are the two positions contradictory?

The Canadian Census 2011: First Release

In early February Statistics Canada released the first findings from the 2011 Canadian Census. Successive releases touching upon different questions that were asked of Canadians as part of the census will follow over the next few months. The short form census' main objective was a simple a head count. The long form included the remaining questions that were focused on getting respondents' socio-economic information in areas such as the labour market, income, language, transportation, education, disabilities, housing, marital status, citizenship and ethnicity. There is considerable interest in Canada on census issues, as was quite obvious during the controversy over the long-form census in the summer of 2010. For opinions and exchanges on the nature of census and the short form versus long form controversy see <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/canadas-long-form-census-debate/article1647591/> and the special article on the topic *Ten ways the census could affect you* Tavia Grant

(<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/ten-ways-the-census-could-affect-you/article1646825/>) Here is what she had to say about how the census can affect people and businesses and government services etc.

Libraries: Collecting census details by neighbourhood is vital for planning libraries because it yields information on incomes, languages, density and education levels.

Business start-ups: New businesses use census data to decide where to set up shop, examining measures such as education levels, incomes and occupations in particular areas.

Junk mail: Many marketers tailor their mailing lists using data from the long-form census. Without a reliable collection method, consumers can expect more intrusion from “poorly targeted” marketing campaigns, Environics warns.

Bus lines: A lack of detail about neighbourhoods will make it unclear where public transit needs are greatest.

Jobless benefits: Governments will have a tougher time determining whether to extend or change employment insurance benefits in regions.

Condos: Home builders and research groups rely on the census’s picture of changing demographics to determine how local housing needs change over time.

Immigrant settlement services: Many newcomers will be less likely to respond to a voluntary census, meaning it will be tougher to plan services to support them.

Schools: Hiring teachers and planning schools gets more difficult without local information on languages, education levels and incomes in neighbourhoods.

Charities: Non-profits and charities use the long-form of the census to track changing environmental, social, economic and cultural challenges in communities.

French services: Information on where people speak French in Canada will be eroded, making it more difficult to extend services to groups such as immigrant Canadians who speak French as their second language

Everyone had to complete the short form census and several million Canadians were given the long form version to complete voluntarily rather than compulsory as in the past. This change caused a real stir among some editorialists, economists, provincial government leaders and opposition leaders in the federal parliament.

The best direct source of information regarding the census results was in fact the organization responsible for taking the census. Go to <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/as-sa/98-310-x/98-310-x2011001-eng.cfm> .

But virtually every newspaper and media outlet in Canada reported on the census results. The material made for interesting reading and interpretation as to the direction of the country and the trends noted regarding the rate of growth of Canada’s population in absolute terms and in comparison to other members of the G8. However, the source of the increase is troubling as perhaps being quite insufficient to overcome the creeping demographic crunch about to hit Canada. It is also true that media in different parts of the country had contrasting reactions to some of the shifts and trends noted.

Resources

<http://news.nationalpost.com/2012/02/08/canada-census-2011-see-which-cities-and-towns-have-grown-the-most/>
<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/news/2011+census+results+reveal+shifts+Canada+makeup/6102047/story.html>
<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/Making+sense+2011+Census/6122714/story.html#ixzz1opiw69um>

The national broadcaster CBC provided good interactive site. To find out about specific communities, cities and regions consult <http://www.cbc.ca/news/interactives/cp-census/> . On the other hand some of the best newspaper coverage appeared in *The Montreal Gazette*. Its had ample reports on all aspects of the released information.

<http://www.montrealgazette.com/news/2011-census/index.html>. One can click on the individual headlines and get a detailed report on that aspect.

These are the highlights as they appeared in the *Montreal Gazette*.

Den Tandt: Census shows Ontario no longer centre of Canadian universe

You wouldn’t have guessed, as Premier Dalton McGuinty basked in the adulation of fellow Liberals at the party’s biennial convention here last month, that he has presided over what may be a permanent decline of Ontario’s place within Confederation.



Census: Saskatchewan turnaround, B.C. and Alberta growth lead to rise in West

Kent Smith-Windsor will tell you that people in Saskatchewan saw this coming. On Wednesday, census numbers released by Statistics Canada showed the province had a turnaround in its growth rate over the past five years, actually adding people to its population after years of declines.

Census: Newcomers drive population growth

Canada is well on its way toward becoming a nation of immigrants – figuratively and literally.

Census: Ontario’s growth slows along with economy

The country’s largest province saw a decline in its growth rate over the past five years, resulting in the lowest growth rate Ontario has experienced in the past quarter century.

Census: Edmonton, Calgary fastest-growing cities

Four of Canada’s fastest growing cities are in the West, where Calgary and Edmonton have posted the highest percentage increases in population among the country’s 33 metropolitan areas.

<http://www.calgaryherald.com/news/alberta/Census+2011+Calgary+Edmonton+fastest+growing+cities+Canada/6120838/story.html>

Census: Windsor, Thunder Bay, Ont., only major areas where population dropped

A drop in the population of two major urban centres in Ontario is perhaps symbolic of a gradual shift in people and power to the West.

Census: Quebec losing clout in Canada

The Quebec population is losing its historic clout within the Canadian federation, suggests new census data released Wednesday by Statistics Canada.

Census: Montreal’s loss is Laval and the North Shore’s gain

The 2011 census shows the population of the Island of Montreal grew to 1,649,519 for a modest 1.8 per cent over the last five years, well below the national average of 5.9 per cent.

Video: Census reveals Western population shift

Census figures show that for the first time in the country’s history, the population in Western Canada - B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba - is now greater than the combined total of Atlantic Canada and Quebec.

Census video: Immigrants behind P.E.I. population boom, but will they stay?

The changing multicultural face of Charlottetown is

apparent on the streets of the city. Immigrants are behind a population spike, and they are also helping jumpstart the local economy in the face of a global economic downturn by snapping up and vehicles and houses. There is no doubt immigrants are making an impact, but the question remains: how long will they stay?

Census video: Explosive condo growth transforming cities

Explosive growth in the condo market is changing the shape and culture of Canadian cities. Experts say fundamental shifts in population and lifestyle, couples putting off marriage and children, workers rebelling against tiresome, traffic clogged commutes and boomers downsizing their living space and heading back to the city, are spurring one of the most pronounced and sustained real estate booms in recent history.



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Census: Toronto suburbs exploding

Canada’s largest metropolitan region continues to sprawl with two of its distant suburbs among the nation’s three fastest growing municipalities, revealed new census data released Wednesday by Statistics Canada.

Census video: The rise of Western Canada

The sun is rising on the West. Census numbers released Wednesday indicate, for the first time in census history, that Western Canada has a larger share of the Canadian population than its eastern counterpart. As a result, The cultural influence of the region in Canada is growing, and lifelong easterners who have made the move are embracing a so-called western ideology

Census video: Jobs fuelling Saskatchewan population boom

Saskatchewan is seeing a population boom as the provincial Immigrant Nominee Program sets higher targets every year, with jobs as the big draw. Demand for skilled labour in the booming oil and gas sector continues to grow. The new residents are a diverse, multicultural group, not at all what you would expect in the prairie province. And while they had reservations about moving to Saskatchewan they now say they cannot imagine living anywhere else.



Questions about census data

1. Why do countries take a census of their populations?
2. What kind of planning can result from census reports?
3. Is the census relevant and necessary to good government and to a democratic society?
4. What kind of questions are residents of Canada asked to complete on the census forms?
5. Some of the areas/topics of information include: population; make-up of households; travel habits; culture, ethnicity; race; language(s) spoken and written; religious affiliation; level of education attained; age; sex; marital status; structural type of dwelling. Are all questions legitimate?
6. Some detractors depict the census as an unwarranted intrusion, an invasion of privacy. Are they in any way justified?
7. In 2006 statistics Canada ceased to collect or report the abortion rate in Canada? Why was this done? Would such statistic not be important in a country struggling to maintain a proper population replacement level?
8. Are questions of identity helpful or harmful in a diverse or officially multicultural society like Canada? Why do some detractors depict a census as an unwarranted government intrusion, an invasion of privacy?
9. If political power is based on population, what shift is occurring in Canada between the regions and provinces?
10. What economic factors are driving these changes?
11. Despite Canada's growth in population in the past 5 years, it is not keeping pace at a replacement level. What are the current 'trends' in society today that you think could be a cause for a relative population decline?
12. Have students research the fertility rates in Canada over the last 30 years, and compare them to the previous 20 years. Have them explain 5 reasons for the drastic change in the rate.
13. Does the decline of manufacturing in Ontario, which cost the province more than 300,000 jobs over the last decade, impacting on the province's finances? See the Drummond Report above.
14. Ontario also welcomed about 100,000 fewer immigrants over the last five years than it did in the first half of the decade. While it's still growing at a healthy rate, it's not growing the way it used to. What does this do to its place within Canada?
15. Is there anything surprising about the data from the 2011 Census?
16. In a Leger Marketing poll released on March 11 it appears that 50% of Canadians believe they are worse off then ten years ago. Could the census be a reflection of these regional feelings?
(<http://www.torontosun.com/2012/03/09/a-fractured-canada>)

Yahoo! Forum for Teachers

Lastly, we bring to teachers' attention the formation of a Yahoo! group to serve as a forum for pro-life educators to exchange ideas, views, and communicate their thoughts and teaching strategies on key life issues of the day. You are encouraged to join the group and make your own contributions. This is one simple way to expand the culture of life.

The address is:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TheInterimPlus/>

Please tell friends and colleagues about this new link for communicating with like minded educators. There is so much to be done and so few to do it, especially when the few do not realize how numerous they actually are because they are not in contact with one another. Nominate friends and fellow teachers. Send this call out to them.

Also, if you have a resource to share we will gladly post it for others to access.



How to join The Interim Plus via the group page:

1. 1. Locate the group (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TheInterimPlus/>).
2. 2. Click on the Join This Group button on front (home) page, as seen above.
3. 3. If you are not signed in, you will be asked to enter your Yahoo! ID. If you do not have a Yahoo! ID, you can register by clicking on the Sign Up link.
4. 4. Set your membership preferences. When you join, you can choose a profile you would like to display to the group, select the email address at which you would like to receive group messages, choose how you receive group messages, and more.