

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 of *The Interim Plus* we present two lesson resources, applicable to the teaching of mathematics and politics. Special thanks are extended to summer intern Josie Luetke for the bulk of the material for Part A. The second Part of the supplement takes a look at the American election process from a classic political science point of view, trying to see if and how the principles of Machiavelli might apply to the national election in the United States.

Please remind your own students and the school guidance department about the Father Ted Colleton Scholarship and essay contest. The deadline for submission of all pertinent documents, including the written essay is December 1, 2016. The prizes are \$1500, \$800 and \$500 respectively. Encourage students to participate. It is a good learning experience for them while also possibly earning valuable funds for post-secondary education. Niagara Region Right to Life is the generous sponsor of the scholarship program. It is part of their mission to help educate young people about life and family issues.

Part A: Mathematics of Data Management

Introduction

What is data? Data is information, often numeric, from which we can draw conclusions. The examples that could be provided and of interest to students may range from baseball statistics to oil production in the Middle East, from income taxes collected to amounts spent by different countries on Third World Aid.

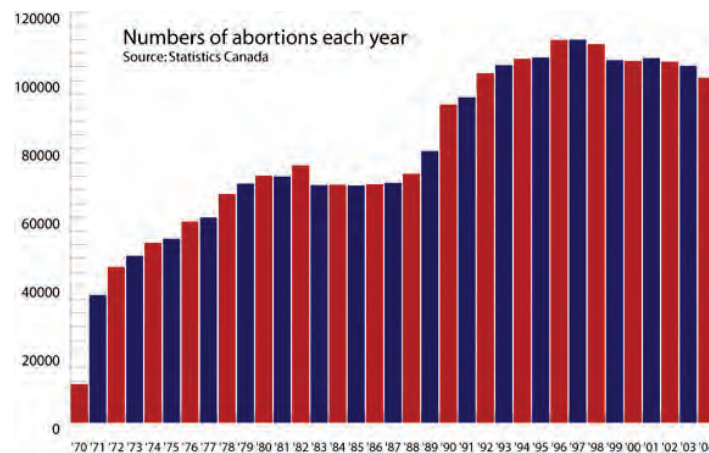
In this lesson, we will examine abortion statistics and analyze the data to answer some questions about abortion, a moral plague affecting many nations but in this case, focusing on Canada. We will use tables to create graphs to represent abortion statistics. We will learn how to think critically about data by recognizing the possibility of bias, which can influence both the collection of data and the conclusions we draw from it. Though this lesson takes a mathematical perspective, the information about abortion gleaned through it may be shared with teachers and students of different subject areas.

Aside from the data it is also important to consider the actual action under examination. Abortion was a very rare practice for much of the history of humankind. It is the killing of an unborn human being and as such it was condemned and harshly disapproved of by society and enshrined as such in law in most nations. Nonetheless, the practice was present in virtually every society during human history, from the Greeks and Romans to the Chinese and the Indians. The statistical information cited pertains to more contemporary realities.

There are some subheadings associated with the general topic: number of abortions; reasons for abortion; facilities where abortions are committed; variability of abortion rates; public readiness to restrict the practice; availability of abortion statistics; Canadians' awareness of the country's abortion laws.

Section A The Abortion Numbers 1970-2004, Biases

We begin with a graph of statistics representing the number of abortions performed each year in Canada since 1969. To better understand the context of the statistics be reminded that it was in that year that the Canadian Parliament decriminalized abortion.



Source: <http://www.theinterim.com/issues/abortion/the-costs-and-consequences-of-abortion/>

There are Various Types of Graphs:

Bar Graph: A graph using parallel bars of equal width to represent discrete data

Circle Graph/ Pie Chart: A circle divided proportionally according to represented variables

Pictograph: A visual representation of data using pictures or symbols

Split-bar graph: A bar graph in which two (or more) different quantities are represented by the length of the bars

Scatter plot: A graph of a set of ordered pairs (x, y) that is used to represent a relationship between two variables

It is important to note that numbers are not pure entities when representing the frequency and nature of human actions. The collection and reporting of numbers or data may be subject to bias, that is, the person collecting the information or analyzing it or publishing it or not publishing it may have a “prejudice, hold a preconceived opinion about something or someone” [Dictionary.com], or “an attitude of mind that predisposes one to favor something” [Merriam-Webster.com] or takes “the action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, because of allowing personal opinions to influence their judgment” [cambridge.org/dictionary]. In addition there may be bias associated with the source of sampling or data gathering.

Here are Several Types of Bias:

Sampling Bias: When the sample is not representative of the whole population

Non-Response Bias: When surveys are not returned or finished, skewing the results

Household Bias: When a certain type of respondent is overrepresented in a sample because groupings are disproportionately polled

Response Bias: When other factors involved in the sampling method (e.g. leading questions) influence the result

Types of Non-Probability Sampling:

Convenience Sampling/Haphazard Sampling/Accidental Sampling: A type of sampling by which sample units are selected according to convenience (e.g. interviews with people off the street)

Judgment Sampling: A type of sampling by which sample units are selected according to judgments about the whole population (e.g. focus groups)

Quota Sampling: A type of sampling by which a particular number of units from sub-populations are selected (e.g. 10 girls and 10 boys)

Volunteer sampling: A type of sampling by which sample

units volunteer to participate in a survey or study (e.g. psychological studies or trials)

Other Key Terms:

Causal relationship: A relationship in which one variable affects another directly

Correlation: A relation between two variables

Mean: The “average” of a set of data; calculated by dividing the sum of all the values by the number of values in the set

Median: The middle value of a set of data; also called the resistant measure of centre

Mode: The most common value in a set of data

Odds: A ratio indicating the degree of confidence one has that an event will occur

Outlier: A value in a set of data that is very different from the rest of the values

Population: The whole group about which data is being gathered

Range: The difference between the maximum and minimum values

Sample: The portion of a population selected as representatives of the whole population

Trend: A pattern occurring over time

Note that these lists are not exhaustive

Section B Why Do Women Choose Abortion?

Prior to the 1960s as was mentioned above, abortion was a rare occurrence. So why do women choose abortion and with such frequency today? Because one of the most common defenses of abortion is the stomach-turning prospect of “forcing a woman to carry a child conceived in rape,” one might be led to believe that women have abortions because of rape far more often than they actually do. The facts, however, tell a very different story:

Why Women Choose Abortion

Reasons Given	%
Inadequate Finances	21%
Not ready for responsibility	21%
Woman's life would be changed too much	16%
Problems with relationship; unmarried	12%
Too young; not mature enough	11%
Children are grown; woman has all she want	8%
Fetus has possible health problem	3%
Woman has health problem	3%
Pregnancy caused by rape, incest	1%
Other	4%
Average number of reasons given	3.7%

PRCH & Guttmacher @ 2005 Sources: Torres and Forrest, 1988 (1987)

Source: <http://abortionincanada.ca/facts/why-women-choose-abortion/>

Questions

1. Use the above table (pg 2) to create a circle graph/pie chart of the reasons why women choose abortion, thus ending their child's life? Be sure to title your graph.
2. These statistics are from the Guttmacher Institute and Physicians for Reproductive Choice and Health, both of which are located in the United States, and are based on a survey conducted in 1987. How might the results differ if a sample of Canadian women were surveyed today? Why is it important for statistics to be recent? Are such statistics readily available for the Canadian women and abortion choices? Why or why not?
3. Read "The Sample" and "The Questionnaire" portions (p. 169-171) of the original paper: <http://www.chapter14.net/misc/Why%20Do%20Women%20Have%20Abortions%20-%20Family%20Planning%20%20Perspectives.%20July-August%201988.pdf>
The paper mentions that closed-ended questions were used. Why might closed-ended questions be better than open-ended questions? What type of sampling was used? Look over the key terms for help. Identify potential sources of bias that may have distorted the results of the survey. Hint: Who would be inclined to answer the survey? Who would be less inclined?
4. To what extent do mathematical statistical models help explain social phenomena? Why might it be useful for the pro-life movement to create graphs of information like this?

Province/Territory	Clinics	Hospitals
Alberta	2	2
British Columbia	5	18
Manitoba	2	2
New Brunswick	1	2
Newfoundland and Labrador	1	2
Northwest Territories	0	2
Nova Scotia	0	4
Nunavut	0	1
Ontario	8	28
Prince Edward Island	0	0
Quebec	36	17
Saskatchewan	0	3
Yukon	0	1
Total (Canada)	55	82

Source: <http://abortionincanada.ca/facts/where-do-canadians-obtain-abortion/>

Questions

1. Create a bar graph, a split-bar graph, or a pictograph to represent the above data. Remember to include a title, subtitles, and a legend (if applicable). Why did you select that type of graph?
2. Could we make a scatter plot to represent this data? Would it be helpful to do so?
3. The mean number of clinics is ~ 4 . $\rightarrow 55/13=4$.
The median number of clinics is 1.
The mode number of clinics is 0.
The range is 36. $\rightarrow 36-0=36$.
Calculate the mean, median, mode, and range for the number of hospitals in each province/territory. Out of the mean, median, and mode, which better represents the data?

Section C At Which Facilities Are Women Having Abortions?



This list outlines the number of clinics and hospitals committing abortions in Canada.

Section D When Does the Canadian Public Think The Law Should Protect Human Life?

Questions

1. What can the two tables following (pg 4) suggest to us about the influence the phrasing of the question has on the results of the survey? What type of bias does that fall under? (See the key terms.)
2. How might a pro-life advocate use these statistics? How might a pro-choice advocate use them?
3. Compare the poll on abortion in the *National Post* (<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/new->

poll-shows-most-canadians-support-abortion-with-some-restrictions) to the latest Insights West poll on abortion (<https://www.facebook.com/notes/right-now/press-release-poll-results-show-majority-support-for-pro-life-laws-spans-both-ag/596560803836447>) Are the results similar? How are they interpreted in each case?

Source: <http://abortionincanada.ca/facts/thirty-years-of-surveys-show-canadians-oppose-unrestricted-abortion/>

Question: In your opinion, at what point in human development should the law protect human life?

	2002 %	2003 %	2004 %	2005 %	2006 %	2007 %	2008 %
From conception on	37	31	33	30	31	30	28
After three months of pregnancy	13	21	24	19	23	21	20
After six months of pregnancy	6	11	11	11	10	11	9
From the point of birth	30	28	28	33	30	33	33
Don't know/No answer	14	9	4	7	6	5	10

Question: This question concerns the development of human life before birth. According to medical research, a fetal heart begins to beat about three weeks after conception. Brain waves can be detected within two months after conception. By two months all organs and body parts are in place. In your opinion, at what point should the law protect human life?

	2011 %
At conception	28
From 2 months on	17
From 3 months on	17
From 6 months on	10
At birth	20
Don't know/No answer	9

Resources:

<http://www.lifecanada.org/services/national-polls>

Section E Why Do Abortion Rates Change?

When abortion rates change, both pro-life and pro-choice organizations jump to provide their own explanations. Abortion rates may be related to the overall pregnancy rate, to teenage pregnancy rates, to economic hard times, to more media exposure, more social acceptance of abortion, more sex education in schools, more knowledge about sexual matters from online sources, more education on life issues. The rate could have spiked in certain years and then gone down in other years. How could one find out the reasons for this rise and fall? It is difficult to do so. Take this article in the *Ottawa Citizen* from 1985:

Surinder Wadhera of Statistics Canada attributes the drop to a "combination of media exposure, more open discussion of the problem and more sex education programs in schools..." Meanwhile Action Life president Susan Hierlihy thinks that the decrease is in part related to their educating of teenagers

Teen abortion rate hit record low in '85

By Jane Defalco
Citizen staff writer

The number of Canadian teenagers getting pregnant, giving birth or having abortions reached an all-time low last year, according to Statistics Canada.

In contrast, statistics show there has never been a higher number of women aged 20 to 34 terminating pregnancies. They accounted for 68 per cent of abortions done in 1985.

Overall, the abortion rate in Canada dropped by about two per cent last year in a trend that has seen the number of abortions fall by about eight per cent since 1982, when a record 66,319 were performed.

The figures don't include abortions done in private clinics nor do they include the estimated 3,500 Canadian women who went to the United States for abortions.

Surinder Wadhera, head of the therapeutic abortion section of StatsCan, said the number of live births and the number and rate of abortions among Canadians aged 15 to 19 have steadily dropped from their highest level in 1979 to last year's record low.

He says a combination of media exposure, more open discussion of the problem and more sex education programs in schools has had a "positive impact" on reducing the number of unwanted pregnancies and in turn has lowered the teenage abortion rate.

In 1979, there were about 45 pregnancies for every 1,000 teenagers and of them, 17 per 1,000 resulted in abortions and about 28 per 1,000 in live births.

Last year, there were about 38 pregnancies reported for every 1,000 teenagers. About 14.5 per 1,000 of these pregnancies were aborted and 24 per 1,000 resulted in live births.

Wadhera said this represents

about a 15.5-per-cent drop from 1979 in the rate of conception among Canadian teens.

In comparison to the rest of the female population, the proportion of abortions among teenagers has also dropped from about 31.3 per cent of total abortions in 1975 to 22.9 per cent or 13,938 of the total 60,956 abortions performed in 1985.

Action Life president Susan Hierlihy said the anti-abortion group is encouraged by the statistics.

She feels the drop has in part been the result of the group's pro-life educational efforts aimed at teenagers over recent years.

"It is clear that the current teenager has developed a greater respect for the unborn child," she said.

However, Hierlihy said the group is concerned by the increase in abortions in women aged 20 to 34.

"Action Life will be increasing its efforts to reach this particular age group," she said.

Wadhera could not say why women aged 20 to 34 are having more abortions now than ever before.

Abortions in this age group have increased steadily from 59.2 per cent or 29,200 of the 1975 total to 68 per cent or 41,477 of last year's total.

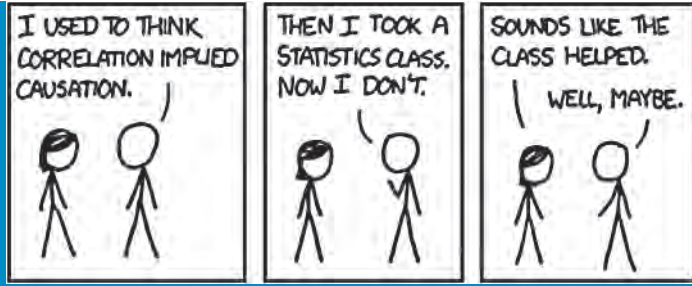
Wadhera said the jump is probably due to a combination of factors and some researchers suspect more women are aborting pregnancies for career and economic reasons.

Blodwin Piercy, local spokesman for the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, said the decline in the number of abortions may not stem from a drop in demand but from the fact more women may be having difficulty getting an abortion in hospitals.

on life issues. Finally, Blodwin Piercy of the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, says that the demand for abortion has remained the same, but accessing abortion has become more difficult.

Questions

In the *Ottawa Citizen* article, we see three different interpretations of the same set of statistics. What does this tell us about both the usefulness and shortcomings of statistics? What other data could we look at or collect to determine which of these interpretations is more likely?



What is the above comic trying to convey and how does it apply to statistical analysis?

Source: <http://xkcd.com/552>

In an article *Abortion rate linked to recession*, from the *Globe and Mail*, October 4, 1994 its author, Alanna Mitchell, highlighted the effect of the 1992 recession on the abortion rate in Canada. The article made mention of a record number of abortions in 1992, reaching 100,497 and with married women for the first time being the majority of abortion seekers in hospitals. The abortion statistic represented a 47% increase from the 70,000 recorded in 1987.

In more recent years, the annual number of reported abortions in the United States and Canada has declined, although the data for both countries is also far from complete. The Guttmacher Institute, which is affiliated with Planned Parenthood, asserts that this decrease in abortion is due to an increase in sex education and the use of contraception. Others, however, credit legal restrictions being placed on abortion (in the United States) and pro-life activism.

Read this *LifeSiteNews* article for more information:
<https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/us-abortion-decline-to-half-of-1980s-peak>

Questions

1. What does the *Globe & Mail* article communicate about the connection between economics and abortion? What other statistics might one cite to elucidate this connection?
2. If economic factors play an important role in the incidence of abortion rates, what may happen to family formation when both husband and wife have to work full time to make ends meet, and today's house prices have metaphorically gone through the roof in many urban centres?
3. How might the Guttmacher Institute be biased?
4. Mark Twain popularized the phrase "Lies, damned lies, and statistics," referring to the three kinds of lies one can tell. Why might statistics be included as a kind of lie?

Section F How Common Is Abortion?

When we combine our study of abortion statistics with a knowledge of probability we can further contextualize the abortion issue and its impact. For instance, let's say that three women get pregnant. The likelihood that each one of them will abort those pregnancies is $1/64$ or just 1.5625%.

$$1/4 \times 1/4 \times 1/4 = 1/64$$

Note that miscarriage is not included in this statistic



However, the likelihood that they will all have an abortion sometime in their lifetime is a little higher, for around a third of women have had an abortion by the time they're middle-aged. So, the likelihood that the three of them will experience an abortion sometime is $1/27$ or 3%.

$$1/3 \times 1/3 \times 1/3 = 1/27$$

If it's just two women who get pregnant, the likelihood of both of them aborting these preborn children is $1/16$ or 6.25% and the likelihood of both of them having an abortion during their lives is $1/9$ or 11%.

Read this article from the *National Post*:
<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/canada/abortion-rate-on-the-decline-study-finds>

Questions

1. Using Dr. Norman's calculation that 31% of women who turned 45 in 2005 are post-abortive, approximately how many out of a group of 52 middle-aged women at a retirement party would you expect have had at least one abortion? Does this statistic surprise you? How might knowing the pervasiveness of abortion change one's behaviour?
2. Given that around 40% of abortions in Canada are carried out on women who have had an abortion before, what are the odds that a post-abortive woman will have a second abortion? Hint: Remember that odds are displayed as a ratio. What can this statistic teach us?
3. Two women enter an abortion clinic. What is the

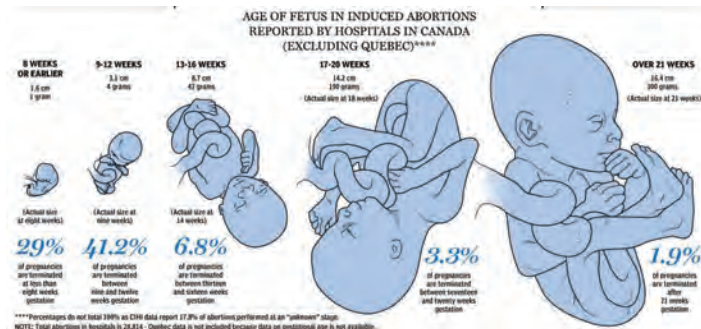
likelihood that both of them have had at least one previous abortion?

4. What angle did the *National Post* take when reporting these abortion statistics?

Section G What Other Information On Abortion Is Available?

Take a look at this graphic created by the *National Post*:

<http://news.nationalpost.com/news/graphics/graphic-abortion-in-canada-almost-100000-documented-terminations-in-2009>



Don't forget to read the disclaimer at the top of the second link! Also notice that for many abortions, the age of the fetus, whether the mother has previously given birth or had an abortion, and the method of the abortion was reported as unknown or not volunteered. Take note of the type of language that is used to describe the abortion procedure.

Resources:

<http://cambridgerighttolife.ca/abortion-in-canada-powerful-info-graphic/>

Questions

1. Approximately how many Ontarian teens had abortions in 2009?
2. Using the available statistics and considering all the provinces and territories, order each age group from highest to lowest according to the percentage of abortions they had. How might a crisis pregnancy centre use this information? Do these statistics seem to back up the previous statistics we looked at on reasons why women have abortions?
3. Discounting the percentage of abortions for which we do not know the age of the fetus, approximately how many abortions took place after the first trimester (which ends at 12 weeks) in Canadian hospitals (excluding those in Quebec) in 2009? Be sure to use the 28,814 figure of total abortions in non-Quebec hospitals for your calculations.

Section H Why Is There So Much Missing Information On Abortion?

As we can surmise, data collection and management can be very useful and often, very important. Yet, currently very minimal information is collected regarding abortion in Canada.

The 1969 law on abortion required statistics on abortion be both collected and published. When the law was struck down in 1988, the requirement to report abortions also fell away. The "Therapeutic Abortion Survey" became voluntary and reporting from various provinces was very inconsistent.

In 1995, the responsibility of collecting statistics on abortion was transferred from Statistics Canada to the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI), although Statistics Canada retained the responsibility of disseminating the information. Check out this 1996 Campaign Life Coalition letter to supporters highlighting the concerns with this development.

Campaign Life Coalition
 National Public Affairs Office
 Suite 100, 1355 Wellington Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1Y 3C2
 Phone (613)729-0379 Fax (613) 729-7611

October, 1996

Dear Friends,

The latest abortion statistics, issued by Statistics Canada on September 25, tell us that **106,255 unborn children were killed by abortion in Canada in 1994**. As if this were not tragic enough, the statistics also reveal that **one in three women having an abortion on any given day in Canada has already aborted at least one other child**. That fact is appalling.

There is another disturbing aspect of Canadian abortion statistics which our lobbying office is taking steps to address. Over the last few years the detailed demographic and medical information compiled on the women having abortions has steadily decreased. The items include the age and marital status of the

woman, the number of previous births or abortions, the gestational age of the child being aborted, and any complications of the abortion. **Hospitals in British Columbia and Quebec, and many abortion clinics across the country, simply do not report this information to Statistics Canada.**

Given the well-known connection between induced abortion and serious effects on the health of women such as reduced fertility, cervical incompetence, early deliveries, severe depression and an increased risk of breast cancer, it is imperative that accurate demographic and medical data be kept on women procuring abortions.

The situation has been made even more critical by the announcement that Statistics Canada will no longer be responsible for collection and publication of abortion data. This function has been handed over to a new non-governmental organization called the Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI). It is not known what, if any, demographic data CIHI will choose to request from hospitals and abortion clinics, or whether the abortion providers will comply with a nongovernmental request for information. Given the lack of information provided at the request of a government body (Statistics Canada) it is unlikely that compliance will be increased under CIHI.

Our lobbying office has informed Members of Parliament of the decrease in available data, and we will continue to discuss with them, and John Manley, the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada, the transfer of abortion data collection to a non-governmental organization. The Canadian pro-life movement is united in its desire to ensure that complete and accurate statistics are kept on the practice of abortion in Canada. You can help by writing to John Manley, Minister of Industry, and your own MP to demand **that the Canadian government require hospitals and abortion clinics to provide complete abortion data, including relevant demographic and medical items, and that the government compile and publish these statistics in a timely fashion.**

We would appreciate receiving copies of any replies you receive from Mr. Manley or your Member of Parliament.

Thank you for your on-going support of our lobbying efforts on Parliament Hill.

We depend upon your generosity to continue our work.

Sincerely,

Sue Hierlihy

In 2007, the CIHI took over the role of disseminating the information on abortion too.

Though abortion statistics have long been dismal, the amount of information on abortion has continued to drastically diminish. Consider the statistics for 2010: https://www.cihi.ca/en/ta_10_all/datatables20120417_en.pdf. On the very first page, the CIHI acknowledges “this is probably an underestimate of induced abortions done in the country...” That is partially because data from Ontario clinics and both Quebec hospitals and clinics does not include women who received abortions at those facilities but were not covered under that particular province’s health insurance plan. Data from clinics in British Columbia is also incomplete. The ages of women procuring abortions in clinics in New Brunswick, Manitoba and British Columbia goes unreported.

Examine the tables for “Induced Abortions Reported in Canada in 2014” (on the subsequent page): https://www.cihi.ca/en/quick-stats?field_type_of_quick_stats_tid=All&field_top-

[ic_tid=All&items_per_page=10&page=4](https://www.cihi.ca/en/quick-stats?field_type_of_quick_stats_tid=All&items_per_page=10&page=4)

New Brunswick clinic data is now absent too and other important factors like gestational age and the age of the mother continue to go underreported.

In 2015, Health Canada approved RU-486 or the abortion pill (to be marketed under the name Mifegymiso) despite the fact that in Canadian trials of the drug in 2001, a woman died of septic shock. Now that chemical abortions are an option for women, even more abortions will go unreported.

Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ru-486-what-you-need-to-know-about-the-recently-approved-abortion-pill-1.3173657>



Questions

1. Why do you think the government is not keen on keeping more accurate records on abortion?
2. Besides the medical reasons mentioned in the letter, why might it be important to collect accurate statistics on abortion?
3. What proposals might be made toward resolving this problem of an absence of crucial information on abortion?

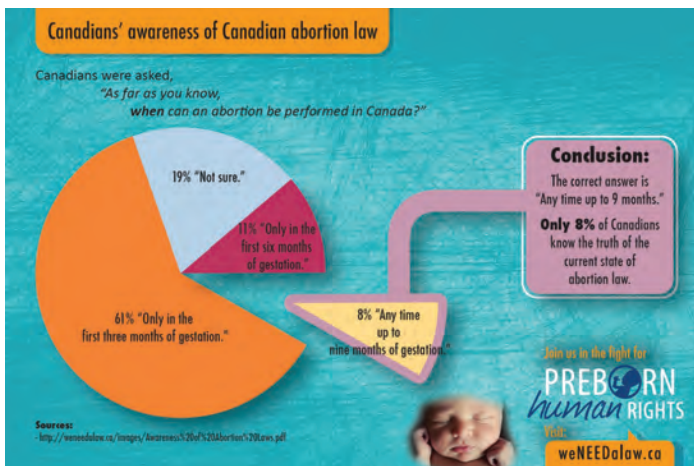
Resources:

- <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-223-x/2007000/4153226-eng.htm>
- <http://abortionincanada.ca/stats/abortion-rates-by-province/>
- <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/breaking-health-canada-under-conservatives-approves-ru-486-abortion-drug-hu>
- <https://www.thesignalhill.com/options/abortion-information/abortion-and-the-law-in-canada>
- https://www.campaignlifecoalition.com/index.php?p=RU-486_abortion_pill

Conclusion

In this lesson, we have learned how graphs can be used to easily communicate abortion statistics to inform the community and government and to inspire action. We used our knowledge of probability to more fully realize how abortion can have a ripple effect. We also apprehended that complete and accurate information on abortion in Canada is needed. At the same time, we should be wary about how this information can be manipulated to propagate a certain viewpoint—for instance, that sex education and increased use of contraception decreases abortion rates. By being conscious of bias, we may be better able to detect misuses of data. If we continue to develop a proper and nuanced understanding of data management, many other questions about abortion can be answered.

For Further Reflection/Exploration



1. The graphic in the left column reveals that only 8% of Canadians are aware that Canada lacks any law whatsoever on abortion. Do you think they even know that approximately 100,000 abortions take place every year in our country? Would they still support the status quo if they did? Conduct your own survey on abortion to find out. Organize the results in a spreadsheet and create graphs to represent the data. Indicate the type of sampling system you used. Is it representative of the population? Is your sample size large enough from which to form reliable conclusions? Might your results be biased in any other way? Present your discoveries to your fellow classmates, a church group, a right-to-life group, etc.

Suggested questions to include in your survey:

What do you think the most common reason for having an abortion is?

- a. Pregnancy caused by rape, incest
- b. Problems with relationship; unmarried
- c. Inadequate finances
- d. Not ready for the responsibility
- e. Woman has health problem

Approximately how many abortions do you think happen in Canada every year?

- a. 0-25 000
- b. 25 001- 50 000
- c. 50 001-75 000
- d. 75 001- 100 000
- e. 100 001+

At what point in development should Canadian law protect human life?

- a. From conception on
- b. After three months of gestation
- c. After six months of gestation
- d. From the point of birth
- e. Unsure

2. Select three years for which Statistics Canada or CIHI has more complete demographic information on those procuring abortions. Look at factors like the ages of the women receiving abortions, the stage of the pregnancy the abortion took place at, whether the abortion took place in a clinic or not, etc. Create graphs to represent the data. Write up a report comparing the results. What trends do you observe? How might you explain those trends?

Resources:

<http://abortionincanada.ca/facts/why-women-choose-abortion/>

Part B: A Truly Insightful View or a Cynical View of the American Political System?

During the current American campaign for the office of president, many observers are decrying the baselessness of the process and the content of the respective campaigns. There is a constant barrage of charges and countercharges between the two camps, each portraying the other's candidate in the most unflattering ways possible. Each camp is resorting to lies and spinning events and debate performances in the best light possible for their candidate even when their actual performance was poor or downright pitiful.

Some independent (?) media spokespersons say that role of the media appears to be totally biased in favour of Hillary Clinton and out to destroy Donald Trump; that they do that by playing up the weaknesses and foibles of the one but ignoring the weaknesses or lies of the other. Most of the mass media and the large donors support Clinton through favorable coverage and with huge donations for television ads designed to keep Trump on the defensive. The revelations from Wikileaks show a lot of background chicanery by Clinton and her coterie of advisers. Yet, except for one news channel there is no mention of those problems on the other news outlets. In short, many political writers have never seen such a debased, vitriolic election campaign, with smearing of individuals, religious groups, and secret deals within the American justice system itself to protect a particular candidate from a proper investigation and a likely indictment. Some point to debates which are rigged in advance by biased moderators, and by giving one candidate some of the questions in advance. And despite all these shenanigans the race remains tight at the time of writing this article for the curriculum supplement.

But, behind the scenes, what is really at stake in this election to our south? Is the whole thing meant as entertainment for the masses, while the real issues are taken care of behind closed doors by the puppet masters? What are the economic prizes and rewards at stake and who stands to benefit? What levers of power are up for grabs? Could either candidate end up in jail if the other wins? The following article explores this darker side of American politics. The authors take the lessons taught by Niccolo Machiavelli and try to apply them to the current American scene. Keeping in mind the nature of the American political, economic and social systems and the protagonists involved, have students read the article and then answer the accompanying questions for discussion in class. Another time the same "universal" principles of Machiavelli could be applied to the Canadian political structure and how it operates at election time and with similar results.

Once the American election is over and the results are determined, one may wish to do a post-election analysis and see whether the Machiavellian principles were in fact upheld. An

analysis of voters choices may reveal the reasons for the victory of one and the debacle of the other.

The Modern Machiavelli

By Donald L. Gilmore and David Reif



Few are likely to have a solid understanding of political affairs today without a thorough understanding of our debt to the prominent, fifteenth-century Italian political thinker, Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527). The revelations unveiled by this brilliant Florentine diplomat in his disquisitions on *realpolitik* in his book *The Prince* (*Il Principe*) caused a furor in his day because of his honest, accurate, and comprehensive treatment of the subject of politics and propa-

ganda and his analysis of political intrigue during the centuries preceding him.

The term *realpolitik*, "the pursuit of national interests by leaders without regard for ethical or philosophical considerations" probably originated in Machiavelli's analysis of the use of political power, but is German and of later origin. After the advent of Christianity, morality had a strong influence on political thinking, and this continued for the next fifteen hundred years. This caused politics to be considered a moral as well as a worldly practice. However, with the rise of various institutions, society underwent changes. Political authority became increasingly secularized both within and outside of religious practice. Old catechisms gave way as church and state drifted towards their ultimate rendezvous with our modern world.

Machiavelli's contribution in this arena was to demonstrate, through an analysis of history, that behind a veneer of pretended morality, honesty, integrity, and Christian practices and virtues there dwelt another sphere of action, a dark world, dominated by greed, ruthlessness, hypocrisy, lies, intrigue, deception, and even murder. This vicious, manipulative world described by Machiavelli still exists, as it did in his day, hidden behind a curtain of disguise and pretense. This ugly world, a product of the past but ongoing and virtually universal, still functions but is screened from view by naïve delusions and beliefs shared by most people about life and politics and continues to affect worldly outcomes.

Machiavelli wrote *The Prince* at a time when the competition for power in Italy by a number of kingdoms was so intense that this adviser of "princes" wrote his book to clarify what it would take to bring peace and national unity to the area of what is

today modern Italy. To achieve this goal, Machiavelli found it imperative to describe how powerful “princes” in Italy and elsewhere, those contemporary to him and in the past, had gained power and created stability in their kingdoms. In addition, he incorporated into his work the lessons he had learned during a lifetime of observing historic events close at hand, through advising leaders on courses of action, and witnessing the successes and failures in the use of power in Europe.

His book did not provide a pretty picture -- he is blunt -- but it was largely a correct one. Machiavelli, ultimately, was unseated from his diplomatic position through a reversal in fortune, and he wrote *The Prince* to ingratiate himself with those currently in power in order to obtain a new office. He failed in this endeavor, but his book, nonetheless, has cast a spell on powerful men ever since.

The following are some of Machiavelli’s important tenets to be practiced by “the Prince” or national leader today, to further his interests. They are as much in force today as ever, and the average citizen needs to know them so that he can peek behind the mask of state to see the truth behind the power:

Tenet One. *The leader should always wear a mask.* No leader should show his true self to his people. He must assume a persona, or mask, that hides his true self and his real intentions, the motives behind his actions, and his true goals. Showing his true colors will often work against his popular support and foil his efforts to achieve his objectives, which are often not those of the people.



Tenet Two: *The prince must be prepared to act against charity, humanity, and religion.* In order to maintain the state, Machiavelli said: [the leader] “is often obliged to act against his promises, against charity, against humanity, and against religion. And therefore, it is necessary that he [the leader] have a mind ready to turn itself according to the way the winds of Fortune and the changeability of affairs require him. As long as possible, he should not stray from the good, but he should know how to enter into evil when necessity commands . . . it is essential to understand this: that a prince [leader] cannot observe all those things by which men are considered good, for in order to maintain the state, he is often obliged to act against his promises, against charity, against humanity, and against religion.”

Tenet Three: *The prince should always mask his acts and intentions concerning his basic morality.* Machiavelli said: “A prince must be very careful never to let anything slip from his lips that is not full of the five qualities mentioned above: he should appear, upon seeing and hearing him, to be all mercy, all faithfulness, all integrity, all kindness, all religion. And there is nothing

more necessary than to seem to possess this last quality . . . for everyone sees what you seem to be, few perceive what you are, and those few do not dare to contradict the opinion of the many who have the majesty of the state to defend them.”

Tenet Four: *The prince should avoid being despised or hated.*

“What makes him [a prince] despised is being considered changeable, frivolous, effeminate, cowardly, irresolute, from these qualities a prince must guard himself as if from a reef, and he must strive to make everyone recognize in his actions greatness, spirit, dignity, and strength.”



Tenet Five: *The prince should acquire esteem through the accomplishment of great undertakings and examples of his great talents . . . he should strive in all his deeds to give the impression of a great man of superior intelligence.*

Tenet Six: *The prince should avoid inconsistency.* Machiavelli

said: “For anyone who has appeared to be good for a time and intends, for his own purposes, to become bad must do so in appropriate stages and in such a way as to be governed by circumstances, so that before your altered nature deprives you of old supporters, it will have provided you with so many new ones that your authority will not be diminished; otherwise, finding yourself unmasked and without friends, you will be ruined.” “It is necessary, [however,] to be a great hypocrite and liar: and men are so simple-minded . . . that someone who deceives will always find another who will allow himself to be deceived.”



In today’s terms this is all about shaping the image of the politician. It has become a big business in our society to create an image or “mask” for a person. George Bush II was shaped to look like a Texan by his handlers. Photographed on the ranch cutting brush with a chainsaw, he looked the part. The Bush family, however, are from New England, and George II was an Ivy League blue blood. There are many examples of powerful American presidents who constructed masks in order to conceal their true identity. Harry Truman was portrayed as an honest



hard-working, small businessman who was a haberdasher. While the truth was that he had been involved in an endless string of unsuccessful ventures until he landed himself in the political machine of boss Tom Pendergast where he prospered. Yet his image of a simple man-of-the-people persists, and his role as agitator for causes like socialized medicine are downplayed.

These days much of the work of the medieval prince is done by the political parties and those who control them.

In the modern republic, the prince is often a composite. A group of forces using the platform of a political party as an instrument of power have become the embodiment of the Prince, but without the responsibilities an actual monarch once faced.

Thus hidden, the principles of Machiavelli can be exercised with a minimum of scrutiny. A cut-out can be constructed by the strong men and their handlers behind the scenes and manipulated. What ensues is a shadow puppet theater. A figure, the president, moves across the screen, bobbing and weaving about while the audience fills in the shadowy picture with their imagination and through cues by his manipulators.

The libretto for the performance is the observed public relations artifact provided by the shapers and marionette makers. These special technicians provide the public with an entertaining substitute for democracy. Well-meaning but naïve, the public does not know what the powerful are doing and why they are doing it, which makes them vulnerable to propaganda.

Unfortunately, the Machiavellian method is not limited to politics. It has become a cultural icon infecting other powerful institutions from business to religion -- an engine of modernism. Meanwhile, driven by the dream of earthly power and a

personal utopia, leaders become poseurs, willing marionettes skewered on the mandrel of fame.

When all goes well, the American government

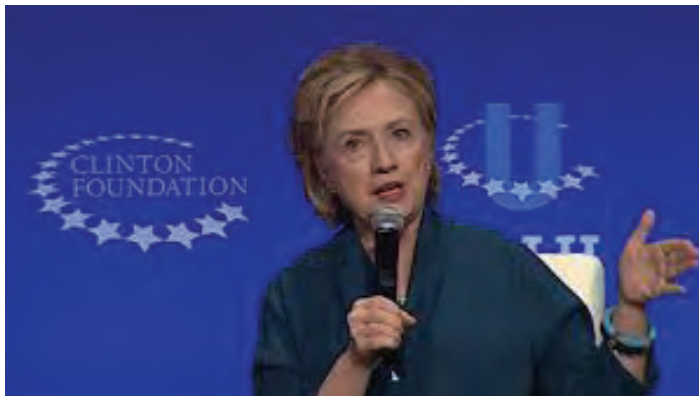
is a functioning, democratic federal republic. However in the hands of the composite Prince, who is a construction created by powerful interest groups, foundations, global corporations, One World Marxists, and just plain old fashioned plutocrats, the originally created American system is threatened.

Our cherished notions regarding public institutions have succumbed to the fiction writer and the invisible puppeteer, and the modern world has become a parade of political shadows replacing principles. While the Machiavellian ethos prevails, the will of the people is subverted while a cast of powerful manipulators struggle for control.

*The above quotations from Machiavelli were taken from: *The Portable Machiavelli*, trans & ed., Peter Bondanella and Mark Musa (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), pp.130, 134-46, 150-51.

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http://www.americanthinker.com/2012/07/the_modern_machiavelli.html#ixzz21mQaAkHq



Questions

1. Who was Niccolo Machiavelli and what was he noted for? What did he reveal about politics?
2. In point form summarize the main general principles outlined by Machiavelli for gaining and maintaining power in a state?
3. Are these true principles followed by leaders today? Does this make politicians unscrupulous in the pursuit of power? Does it mean political work is necessarily evil?
4. *The libretto for the performance is the observed public relations artifact provided by the shapers and marionette makers.* What do the authors mean by this statement?
5. Who provides the necessary 'mask' for "the Prince" today?
6. What view of the populace is being proposed by the authors of this article? How accurate are they in their insights? Are the serious issues (high youth unemployment, secure borders, fighting terrorism, huge and growing national debt, stagnant economic growth, decay of urban centres, rising crime rates, composition of the Supreme Court, military strength, foreign relations, world stability, affordable health care for the masses, huge student loan debts, etc. etc.) being addressed in any real way?
7. Who is the "composite Prince" and how does 'he' threaten the originally created American system?
8. Identify some plutocrats that help shape the political structure of nations. Who is George Soros and what role does he play in all of this?
9. Does either or both of the major candidates for the American presidency behave like the "Prince" of Machiavelli? Is one better than the other at the cynical game?
10. One candidate is reported to be demeaning toward women in talk, bragging and possibly taking advantage of them personally, while the other candidate favours the elimination of a million unborn human beings through abortion each year and took actual action that resulted in the loss of American lives. In terms of morality which is more of a problem for the conscientious person obliged to make a decision through the ballot box? Why or why not?

