Attendance Decline: Canada in Global Context

A Lecture Series in 4 Parts
• Professor of Sociology at Lethbridge in Alberta
• Organizer of the most exhaustive series of national surveys on religion in Canada—His stats and book remain a bench-mark
• Fragmented Gods is the book in which he first published his findings and related them to other surveys going back to the late 1940s
Bibby’s Research

• Modern industrial consumer society has transformed the role of religion

• Few have abandoned faith completely (80% believe in God), but many are no longer attending churches (only 20% attending weekly in 2001 vs. 67% in 1946)

• Fastest growing segment of Canadian religious demographic are people who claim “none” in regard to their religious affiliation (16% in 2001) 4.8 million people, compared with 3.3 million a decade earlier
Atheism?

• Despite the best-selling books by Dawkins and Hitchens and others, those who clearly declare themselves atheists has not changed significantly in 30 years

• 7% in 2005, down from 9% in 2000, and up one point from the 6% found in 1985 and 1975
Historical Overview of Religious Participation

• Before 1950s average weekly attendance in Canada was over 50% and higher than the U.S.
• Historical studies of attendance indicate that as far back as the middle ages levels probably averaged between 30% and 70%
• Majority of Canadians (80%) traditionally belonged to one of 5 “mainline” Christian denominations: Roman Catholic, United Church, Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian
Some General Stats

• Christianity at 34% remains the most popular world religion followed by Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism

• In Canada about 3 in 4 adults still identify themselves as Christian

• The next largest organized religious groups in Canada are Islam at 2% and Judaism at about 1%
Canadian Attendance Drop-off

Weekly Attendance: 1945-2005

Weeky Attendance 1945-2005

- National
- Catholics
- R.C. Quebec
- Protestant
- Conservative
- Mainline
- Other Faiths
The Mainline Fall

• Drop in the number of Anglicans in Canada between 1961 and 2001 from 1.36 million to 642,000, a drop of 53%
• Losing around 13,000 each year
• At this rate “facing extinction by the middle of this century”
• The United Church of Canada has fallen from 1.04 million to 638,000 in same period—a drop of 39 %
• Presbyterian Church in Canada suffered a loss of 35%

Fastest Growing Religious Category in Canada

"No Religion"
It starts with the boomers

Weekly Attendance by Age Cohort: 1975 & 2005

- **1975**
  - Pre-Boomers: 37
  - Boomers: 15
- **2005**
  - Pre-Boomers: 37
  - Boomers: 18
  - Post-Boomers: 24

Teenage Attendance: 1984 & 2008

- **1984**
  - 28
- **2008**
  - 47

NEVER
Non-Attenders, Disaffiliates, Weak Affiliates, Un-churched, Nones

Canadian Service Attendance: 2010

- Never: 42%
- Yearly: 30%
- Monthly: 9%
- Weekly: 19%

Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2010
Canadian Catholics Start Playing Catch Up in the Mid 1960s

Service Attendance for Protestants and Catholics 1946 to Present
Jews Also Worried

Friday, November 16, 2001 | return to: national

Decreased affiliation, rising intermarriage trends linger
by JULIE WIENER, Jewish Telegraphic Agency

Follow j. on Facebook and Twitter

A new study reporting decreased identification with Judaism and rising intermarriage rates is generating concern, but not shock, in the Jewish community.

Instead, many leaders see the new findings, released earlier this month, as a continuation of trends reported in the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey.

Rather than viewing the study as a call to radically change course, most see it as a signal to step up existing efforts to strengthen Jewish continuity.
In the U.S. Jews are as Old as Mainline Protestants

2. Age distribution: Jews are older

Jews and Mainline Protestants are the oldest, and the religiously Unaffiliated are the youngest

They typically don’t rank religion as “very important” in their lives

13. Religion is “very important” in your life

On the importance of religion, Jews score above the low-scoring Unaffiliated and below the three higher-scoring Christian groups

and also have low weekly attendance.

• In 1945 membership stood at 749,374 and reached it’s highest point in 1965 at 1,064,033 (In just two decades, total membership had grown by over 40%)

• Declined slowly and fell below the one million mark in 1972 (993,190)

• This decline slowed down in the mid-1980s (1983: 891,852), before moving again into a more rapid decline (1986: 872,290) and falling below 800,000 in 1991 (785,726), which has continued over the last years, with membership falling to 558,129 in 2006
Some Comparisons

- 53% of Americans consider religion to be very important in their lives
- This compares with 16% in Britain, 14% in France, 13% in Germany, and 20% in Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Millennium Study by Taylor Nelson Sofres Intersearch in 1999.</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>Canada</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend at least weekly</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never/almost never attend</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
European Church Attendance

Religious observance in selected countries
Respondents who never attend services*, 2008, % of total

- Czech Republic
- France
- Britain
- Belgium
- Netherlands
- Spain
- Israel
- Sweden
- Germany
- Russia
- Estonia
- Portugal
- Turkey
- Ukraine
- Italy
- Croatia
- Poland
- Greece
- Cyprus

Sources: European Social Survey
*Excluding special occasions 2002
U.S. Exceptionalism?

• Public opinion polls generally do not report real opinions and events, only the information that the individuals choose to tell the pollsters.

• Quite often, their answers will be distorted by a phenomenon called “social desirability bias” where pollees answer questions according to what they think they should be doing, rather than what they are doing.

• For example, a poll by Barna Research showed that 17% of American adults say that they tithe—i.e. they give 10 to 13% of their income to their church—only 3% actually do.
Is the U.S. as Religious as Assumed?

• Well established that people misreport:
  – how often they vote
  – how much they give to charity
  – how frequently they use illegal drugs
  – males exaggerate their number of sexual partners
  – university workers are not very honest about reporting how many photocopies they make

• In 1993 Hadaway, Marler, and Chaves counted the number of people attending 4 Protestant churches in Ashtabula County, OH and in 18 Roman Catholic dioceses throughout the US and found that actual attendance was only about ½ that reported in surveys

• Jay Demerath of the University of Massachusetts comments: “Gallup and other pollsters are aware of this. It’s kind of a dirty little secret.”
In 2008 the U.S. ceased to be a “majority protestant” country.
Canada U.S. Comparison: Breakdown of Christian Population

- Non-Black evangelical Protestant (Baptist, Pentacostal, Churches of God, etc.): Canada 15%, United States 33%
- Non-Black mainline Protestant (United, Anglican, Episcopalian, Methodist, etc.): Canada 25%, United States 31%
- Black Protestant: Canada 2%, United States 12%
- Roman Catholic: Canada 27%, United States 48%
- All others (Greek Orthodox, Mormon, etc.): Canada 6%, United States 5%
High Church Attendance in the U.S. Strongly Correlates With Evangelical Protestantism
U.S. mainline groups are more affected by declining attendance

http://religions.pewforum.org/maps
Effect of Affluence Muted in U.S: Possibly b/c Evangelicals are Poorer

But elsewhere there is a strong correlation between high quality of life of countries and low attendance.
For example: Scandinavia

- **Denmark** has one of Europe’s lowest proportions of churchgoers, at about 2.5%, though the percentage has been stable for a long time now (very similar to **Sweden and Norway**)
- Yet these Scandinavian countries are also the world’s highest per capita aid donors
- Also have high numbers of infant baptisms, confirmations, declared adult church members, and attendees at Christmas, compared with most other European countries

Closing Churches

• It is predicted that by 2040, 18,000 churches in England will close

• Closer to home, experts say Quebec—where the Catholic Church once called the shots in public and private life—stands to lose about half of its 2,000 churches by 2016

The Rise of “Spirituality”

• Belief without belonging is the new norm for religion in Canada

• Despite the decline of traditional forms of religious practice 52% of Canadians said yes to the question: “Do you have spiritual needs?” (2005)

• More than half (53 per cent) described “spirituality” in conventional terms (“God,” “prayer,” “religion,” and “a power beyond”); 47 per cent, meanwhile, expressed less conventional ideas (“inner self,” “oneness,” “force,” and “soul”)
The Demise of “Organized Religion"
Continuing Interest in Religion

• 70% of people say they believe there is life after death
• 26% Canadians believe in reincarnation
• Anxious about dying: 43% for those under 35, 47% for 35-54 year olds, 40% among people older than 55
Belief in Heaven and Hell Is as Strong as Ever

• 1990: 70% of Canadians said they believe in life after death, with only 14% ruling out the possibility altogether
• 1945: 70% of Canadians thought there was a heaven, with 16% ruling out the possibility altogether
• 1990: 46% believed in hell
• 1969: 40% believed in hell
Interest in Ultimate Questions

Percent of people who think about the following questions “Often”

• Why is there suffering in the world? (82%)
• What happens after death? (73%)
• What is the purpose of life (71%)
• Is there a God (69%)
• How did the world come into being? (63%)
For us, when did the rot set in?

1963
Is it Because We’re Too Conservative? Is It Because We’re Too Liberal? Is It Because of Science?

Part 2
Secularization Thesis

• Most common assumption among social scientists throughout the 20th century was that the primary cause of decline of religious adherence was that people were unable to resolve conflicts between religious beliefs and science

• Social theorists such as Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud and Émile Durkheim postulated that modernization would include a decline in levels of religiosity

• Max Weber called this process the "disenchantment of the world"
Atheism and Education

• Bertrand Russell claimed that “The immense majority of intellectually eminent men disbelieve in the Christian religion,” but higher level of education does not necessarily indicate a person is more likely to be an atheist

• Proportion of atheists is actually marginally higher among those with less than a high school education than among those with degrees

http://digitaljournal.com/article/222701#ixzz2PdSfdSrd
Non-scientific beliefs & practices...

- 35% believe in astrology
- 75% read their horoscope
- 25% believe in communicating with the dead
- 52% have had paranormal experiences: Mental Telepathy, 44%, 47% Precognition (seeing the future)
- Religiously active are actually the least likely to believe in such phenomena, and the numbers for every category have increased since 1945, not decreased
and the belief in the supernatural are as strong as ever.

Beliefs in Supernatural Phenomena Over Time: Canada
Are people abandoning “Liberal Christianity?” In a sense, yes.
Back in the 1960s, the liberal churches bet their future on becoming more open, more inclusive, more egalitarian and more progressive. They figured that was the way to reach out to a new generation of worshippers. It was a colossal flop.”
But people are not switching religions (let alone switching to more conservative religions)
Aren’t people going to new religions? No.

- Less than .05% of Canadians claim membership in “New Age” religions
- 2% Muslim (doubled since 1991 mostly from immigration and larger average family sizes)
- 1% Hindu
- 1% Buddhist
- 1% Sikh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rites of Passage</th>
<th>1987</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wedding ceremony</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funeral</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth-related</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
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</table>
But didn’t the UCC’s inclusiveness decision highly impact its membership?

“The United Church’s declaration on sexual inclusiveness in 1988 appears not to have had a major impact on the UCC’s vital statistics…To put the case another way, if you didn’t know what year the UCC made its declaration, you would be hard pressed to spot when it did based on the UCC’s published statistics.”

(Brian Clarke & Stuart Macdonald, 2011)
K-Grade 8, Grades 9–12 and Young Adults
Summary of Church

Chart 2.14. Summary evaluations of church, by spiritual type

James Penner, Rachael Harder, Erika Anderson, Bruno Désorcy and Rick Hiemstra (2011)
Hemorrhaging Faith: Why and When Canadian Young Adults are Leaving, Staying and Returning to Church.
The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada Youth and Young Adult Ministry Roundtable
Spiritual Types by Attendance

Chart 2.8. Frequency of attendance at religious services, by spiritual type

- Engagers: 71% Weekly or more, 16% Once or twice a month, 12% Seldom, 0% Never
- Fence Sitters: 60% Weekly or more, 6% Once or twice a month, 27% Seldom, 7% Never
- Wanderers: 43% Weekly or more, 56% Seldom, 0% Never
- Rejecters: 24% Weekly or more, 0% Once or twice a month, 76% Seldom, 0% Never
Church is obviously not too liberal for the young who are staying away.
If you ask leading questions like “What would make church more attractive?” or “What don’t you like about church?” people will respond with all kinds of complaints and helpful suggestions.
Can we conclude from such complaints and suggestions that these are significant reasons for attendance decline? Probably not.
If you simply ask “Is there any major reason why not religious?” (2005)

- 3 in 10 expressed negative views of religious groups, being particularly critical of their contribution to conflict and intolerance
- 2 in 10 simply expressed a lack of interest
- 2 in 10 indicated they do not hold religious beliefs
- 1 in 10 do not see group involvement as necessary and in some cases see it as a liability
- Remainder cited other factors of a more personal nature, including the limitations of time, declining health, and advancing age
Restless Gods

• In Restless Gods Bibby used quantitative research methods to probe hundreds of unaffiliated people about whether they “might consider greater involvement in a religious group” 55% said “yes” or “perhaps”

• Based on this he suggested making the subject of sermons more topical, providing more broadly relevant church-sponsored programs, sprucing up church decor and even updating church music in order to attract inactive affiliates
Fast-forward to 2008

• One sociologist giveth, another taketh away—In a qualitative research study of 21 less-engaged affiliates Joel Thiessen found “only 3 people indicated that they definitely desire to be involved, and another two said they weren't committed one way or another.”

• “What I discovered was that for the very few people who desire to become more involved, the things that are limiting them are actually beyond the control of religious groups—for example, some of my respondents said that the people they are close to limit their involvement. One woman responded that her husband would frown on her becoming more involved. Others said they were too busy with the stresses of modern life to give up the time.”

• Thiessen concluded that more topical sermons and new programs would have no impact on these people
Conservatives Aren’t Really Better: “Circulation of the Saints”—Bibby

- Canadian conservative protestant groups in 1921 5%, 1988 6%, 2005 8%—growth almost entirely due to upswing in immigration & larger average family sizes
- Conservatives are no more successful than Mainliners in reaching non-actives (In fact only 17% of their members are former “non-attenders” compared to 20% for Mainliners)
- Bibby & Brinkhoff 1970-80 study of select “Evangelical” Churches (visitation, crusades, evangelistic services with musical guests, etc.): 70% of new additions were from other evangelical churches—20% from children, 10% from outside (marriage and friendship)
Video: The Coming Collapse of the Middle Class

Part 3
The Coming Collapse of the Middle Class

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akVL7QY0S8A

• Distinguished law scholar Elizabeth Warren teaches contract law, bankruptcy and commercial law at Harvard Law School

• An outspoken critic of America's credit economy, which she links to the rise in bankruptcy among the middle-class

• Provides wealth of details on economic stresses affecting North American families today
Is it Because of Changes in Society?

Part 4
Profile of the “Main Suspect”

• Something that has occurred (or picked up pace) in last 50 years in N. W. Europe, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the “Cone” of South America

• Something roughly correlated (except for U.S.) to increased levels of general affluence in societies

• Something that affects Mainline Protestants most, then Catholics (except in France and Quebec) and Conservatives least of all, but took an extra decade to affect Catholicism in Canada

• Affects Conservative and Reformed Judaism in North America

• Seems to correlate with the intensity of the separation between church and state in societies (except for U.S.)
Possibilities of Major Factors Fitting the Profile

• Rise of the welfare state
• Women entering the full-time workforce
• Separation of church and state (public education, removal of public privileges of religion, etc)
• Rejection of exclusivism in theology (outside the Church there is no salvation) and rise of inclusivism ("God works in us, and others by the spirit")
• Rise of consumerism
• New media and technological change
Changing family & work dynamics...

• It now takes almost two working people to bring in the same inflation-adjusted income that one person, usually the man, could earn in the 1960s (due primarily to automation leading to deindustrialization)

• Women who used to be the volunteer lifeblood of church organizations are now working for money, either by choice or, more often, by necessity

• Husbands of women who work fulltime are also less likely, according to studies, to attend church or volunteer
In Canada the average commuting time increased from 54 minutes in 1992 to 63 minutes in 2005.

Women entering the paid workforce in increasing numbers had a significant impact...

but the effect was limited.

The persistent sex differential in church attendance found by many researchers has often been attributed to differential labor force participation. Using 1980 survey data from the National Opinion Research Center, this paper explores the effect of workforce status of women on their church attendance. While there is indeed a statistically significant mean attendance differential between working and nonworking women, it is not due to coefficient differences in the explanatory variables, but is due to differences in the mean values of certain of the significant explanatory variables, particularly religious intensity, spouse of the same denomination, age, presence of young children in the household, and membership in non-mainline denominations. Thus, the rise in female labor force participation cannot generate long term projections of declining attendance on that basis alone.
Religion of Technology?

“1982 poll of high school seniors, nearly 2 of every 3 young persons now believes that ‘when things get tough enough, we’ll put our minds to it and find a technological solution.’ This proportion represented an increase from only a bare majority who felt this way in the mid-1970s” (Robert Wuthnow, The Restructuring of American Religion, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988, 292)
New Media

• In the meantime, the culture, through changes in technology and “lifestyle,” has created cultural conditions that make the transmission of literary and theologically (i.e. intellectually and politically) oriented religious traditions difficult.

• E.g. Literacy performance has been declining steadily (probably highly influenced by all the “screens” in our lives which encourage scanning rather than narrative forms of reading).

• But engagement with sacred narrative is the “mediation practice” of our religious tradition!
screens, screens, screens

Television and Learning

Figure 5.1  Relationship between viewing television and academic achievement

Welfare State and Separation of Church and State

• Christian Institutions “secularized” over last century and a half:
  – The disastrous residential schools
  – Universities (including for us Mount Allison, Queen’s and Victoria)
  – Public school education (preceded by the development of “Sunday schools", which were initially schools of basic literacy for adults and children)
  – The foundations of the Healthcare System (hospitals, medical schools, clinics)
  – Mission societies (which laid the foundations for international development orgs and NGOs)
  – YMCA/YWCA, etc.
The “privatization of religion...”
roughly correlates with lower monthly attendance.
Pierre’s Story

• Christianity (after emperor Constantine) became “imperial Christianity”
• Over centuries it ceased to be a sincerely held spiritual conviction, and instead became mere enculturation
• In the 1960s people “woke up” and realized Christianity was mere enculturation and so they cast it off as inauthentic (except as we have seen above they are actually generally okay with God and even their denominations)
Jim’s Story

• Christianity before and after Constantine was a “state within a state”—Heeding the call to justice at the heart of Judaism, followers of Jesus did not simply worship—they served their fellow citizen’s vital needs

• In the 20th century, responding to multiculturalism and liberalism, mainline Christians handed over most of these vital functions (and the cultural capital they represented) to the state and renounced an array of subtle public supports (large and small) of religion

• It turned out worship was not so vital a function (at least for many) and mainline churches failed to find new vital functions within the public realm
Secularization a Self-Reinforcing Process

• Over the past 50 years we have created a culture that is essentially toxic to the cultural transmission of civically-focused and intellectually oriented (i.e. non-emotional or enthusiastic) forms of Christianity (i.e. Mainline Protestantism and Catholicism)

• And thus as Ruiter and Tubergen observe:

  “more secular countries accelerate toward religious decline: secularization is self-reinforcing. In those countries, people who are raised religiously are less strongly sanctioned when they leave the religious community, leading them to adjust to their more secular environment. For the next generation, the initial conditions have changed...”

Responses?

• Why put the responsibility on individuals and congregations rather than the denominational level or gov’ts, which can possibly influence whole culture?
  – Holiday provisions for folks of *all* religions?
  – Right to special sports teams that don’t practice on holidays?
  – U.N. Human Rights Committee case against Canada—Why should public education be “sanitized” of group specific religious teachings?
  – National program of “United Church” daycare?

• Do we have a theology of attendance? Do we clearly communicate the benefits (e.g. Church attendance adds 5-7 years to lifespan) and our expectations about attendance (advertising)?

• Do we enforce or encourage attendance in any tangible ways (like the evangelicals do)?
  – Work together with other mainline denominations to enforce national standards of participation before loosely affiliated can expect “a right to a rite” (as Bibby puts it)?
Start Thinking Like a Minority!

• Mainliners have been at the forefront of the process of secularization, but this effort has been largely based on a perceived position of power and unrealistic assumptions about how cultural transmission really works (functioning traditions require tangible community supports and can’t just be left to the “voluntary efforts” of individuals—a truth Native Canadians could tell us much about)

• We relinquished control of education, welfare, social services (and the vast capital investments behind these and the multitude of subtle supports they embodied) and yet thought that “cultural momentum” alone would somehow “magically” maintain our traditions

• We also have based our secularization efforts on misperceived notions about the American model of “separation of Church and State”
In Canada our attempts to express the American ideal of “separation” lead to cases like these

Hamilton school bans noon-hour Christian club

Published: Thursday May 6, 2004, 9:27 am | Author: Tony Gosgnach The Interim

A situation in Hamilton has seen dozens of students meeting outside their public high school once a week from September to mid-December over the winter because they formed a Christian-oriented discussion group. They continue to do so and have drawn nation-wide media attention as a result.

The Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board and Westmount Secondary School kicked the students out of the school last November over their noon-hour meetings. The board claimed the meetings were in violation of the Ontario Education Act, which it believed prohibits religious activities during the school day, including at lunch time. Despite this, the school’s Muslim students were permitted to continue meeting with an imam for Friday afternoon prayers.
A small Christian club at Prince of Wales secondary school in Vancouver has been forced to go underground because principal Jack Bailey has refused to give it official-club status, says a column in the Vancouver Courier.

The privilege of that status is reserved "for more stately student organizations such as the Prince of Wales YO-Yo Club and, of course, the Environmental Club – an offshoot of the world's fastest-growing religious movement," the Courier’s Mark Hasiuk writes.
General Rule: The Equal Access Act ("EAA") (20 U. S. C. §§ 4071-74) requires public schools which meet certain criteria to treat all student-initiated groups equally, regardless of the religious, political, philosophical or other orientation of the groups. This means that to the extent that a school board opens up its school facilities to any student-led and run non-curriculum related group, it must uniformly open its facilities to all student-led and run groups, including religious ones. The EAA was adopted by Congress in 1984, and its constitutionality was upheld by the U. S. Supreme Court in Board of Education of Westside Community Schools v. Mergens, 496 U. S. 226 (1990).
A Christian Group Finds Its Place in the Public Schools

Seekers, a Christian group, has a presence at about 30 high schools in the city. At Stuyvesant High School, some Seekers hold a prayer during Jesus Day.

BY MICHAEL LUO
Published: May 24, 2006
U.S. “Faith-based” Organizations

• Term associated with organizations such as Catholic Charities that deliver a variety of public services such as caring for the infirm, elderly, advocating for the oppressed and providing humanitarian aid

• Examples of U.S. faith-based organizations
  – Mentoring Children of Prisoners, an initiative focused on supporting the children of incarcerated adults
  – Access to Recovery, which focuses in increasing the availability of drug and alcohol treatment programs
  – the Prisoner Re-Entry Initiative which focuses on helping individuals returning from prison to successfully re-integrate themselves back into society

• U.S. Federal Government has comprehensive set of supports for groups applying for these resources
America: A “Non-mainline Country”

• U.S. is the only country among the Western developed nations in which “non-state” or “non-conformist” (aka evangelical) denominations predominate

• Therefore, over two centuries it has developed a complex religious culture which de-emphasizes the state and prioritizes the actions of individuals and private groups (including religious groups)

• Evangelical denominations also have a vast array of informal supports of adhesion:
  – fire and brimstone preaching
  – shunning
  – expectations of politicians to make statements of faith, etc.

• These are just lacking from the religious culture of mainline countries
Homer Simpson Picks a Hospital

Don’t go nuts!

Better than that…

Perfect.

http://youtu.be/I6WwFizPkos
Along with Methodism these are the dominant Churches of U.S. religious culture.
Jewish and Muslim education groups have been asking for some time for public recognition of their distinctive forms of religious education, especially their emphasis on the mastery of liturgical languages.
Universal Declaration of Human Rights

• Most Canadians think the U.N. condemned Ontario’s support of religious education, when in fact it did the opposite

• It argued instead for more fair access of religious groups to participation in public education process based on:

  Article 26:(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality... (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children
Vital functions, such as “Values Education” and longer school days, or public daycare, remain largely unmet...
Yet...

"Kids are being kinder and more compassionate and we're noticing that the whole culture of schools is changing," she said.
But Hindus know that “Yoga” is a religious practice (indeed a very complex and vital one for their traditions)
Vital functions of integration—integration that recognizes and respects Muslim piety and religious learning—remain largely unmet in Western public school systems.

Both of the Boston Bombers went to American public schools—"'I don't have a single American friend, I don't understand them,' Tsarnaev said."

All four of the bombers convicted in the London Bus Bombings were educated in British Public Schools.
FULL COMMENT

Christie Blatchford: ‘Toronto 18’ case our first sign that ‘good Canadian boys’ are being radicalized too

Police surveillance video of Toronto 18 members Saad Gaya and Saad Khalid, who both pleaded guilty after being arrested in Newmarket, Ontario.

NEWS

School yearbook photos reveal young faces of Canadians linked to deadly Algeria terror attack

Ali Medlej

Xristos Katsiourbas

Citing unidentified sources, the CBC said Ali Medlej (left) and Xristos Katsiourbas (right), high school friends from London, Ont., were the two Canadians whose bodies were found amidst the carnage. The photos are reproduced from the London South Collegiate Institute’s 2005-06 yearbook.
“Only one member of the 27 people convicted, Rachid Aglif, could be considered a “homegrown” terrorist...settled in Spain with his father and other close Moroccan relatives when he was only 10-years-old. Moreover, he attended public schools in the Madrid region... Most of the [others in the] network arrived in Spain between 1990-2001 as first generation immigrants in their late teens and mid-20s.”

The CTC concludes: “There is also a new potential radicalizing factor to be considered. Spain is now experiencing the emergence of a second generation of descendents from immigrant Muslim parents coming of age. Although this second generation, as a large aggregate, is not yet old enough for university, schools may gradually become locations where peer groups of second generation adolescents are eventually affected by a lack of effective integration into Spanish society...”
Why can’t religious and cultural groups be accommodated in our public school systems? Why the absolute dichotomy between Public Education OR Separate Schools?
Screen clipping taken: 26/04/2013 2:00 PM

École Sofiya School  Islamic Academy of Manitoba – Home http://ecolesofiyaschool.weebly.com/
Screen clipping taken: 01/05/2013 1:14 PM

TakeYogaBack | Hindu American Foundation (HAF) http://www.hafsite.org/media/pr/takeyogaback
Screen clipping taken: 26/04/2013 1:58 PM