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CANADA'S COALITION FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION: A CASE STUDY OF A PUBLIC INTEREST GROUP IN THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

by

Cheryl Cowan Buchwald

A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Faculty of Information Studies
University of Toronto

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CANADA'S COALITION FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION: A CASE STUDY OF A PUBLIC INTEREST GROUP IN THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

Doctor of Philosophy, 1999
Cheryl Cowan Buchwald
Faculty of Information Studies
University of Toronto

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to investigate the role of Canada's Coalition for Public Information (CPI) in the federal information policy-making process for the information highway. CPI, formed in 1993, was an initiative of the Ontario Library Association that attracted a broad constituency of information professionals and individuals concerned about information and technology issues. CPI believed that information policy decisions leading to major economic and social consequences would emanate from the information highway debate and that integration of the public perspective into new information policy was therefore imperative. This study used as its framework two public policy models to build an understanding of events, context, stakeholders, strategies, and influence: the policy process model developed by John Kingdon, and
the policy community model described by William Coleman and Grace Skogstad and by Paul Pross. The investigation followed the example of naturalistic methods including grounded theory, and data organization and analysis via NUD*IST software. After 2 ½ years of data gathering and analysis, the researcher concluded that, despite its efforts, CPI had exercised little influence over policy outcomes. CPI remained outside the decision-making network of government officials and private sector representatives owing to its limited resources, its limited political experience, and its late entry into the policy process. Policy makers, convinced of the necessity for instituting the private sector values of market competition and deregulation, essentially ignored CPI's publicly oriented agenda in their information highway policy. However, CPI did succeed in helping to bring a perspective other than the market agenda to the public, to the policy community, and to policy makers. CPI contributed to the process by educating the public, the government, and the private sector to access and other information highway policy issues. Although CPI has learned a great deal that it can use to its advantage in the future, the group continues to work toward establishing itself as a significant player within an institutional structure that does not favour public interest groups. In order to increase its effectiveness as a public interest watchdog in such a setting, CPI must secure adequate resources and continue to increase its expertise through exposure to the policy process.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this thesis marks the end of a happy and satisfying period of my life. To be offered the opportunity to pursue a personal interest for a number of years was a great gift from my community and from those who supported me throughout the process. The faculty and staff at the Faculty of Information Studies guided me through both my Masters and my PhD during the past decade. My fellow PhD students not only shared the good times but also helped me through the not-so-good moments. Members of the steering committee of Canada’s Coalition for Public Information indulged my request that they be observed for my research and made me feel welcome in the group, even though they were not sure what the outcome might be.

I was immensely fortunate to be directed by a committee that made meetings a pleasure to attend. My supervisor, Professor Joanne Marshall, allowed me my independence but was always available when I needed advice. Professor Grace Skogstad’s research in policy community theory provided me with a theoretical framework for my study and ultimately with an eminent committee member in the field. She generously gave of her time and knowledge as I explored public policy for the first time. Professor Ethel Auster’s encouragement and practical advice never let me down.

On the home front, my husband, Manuel Buchwald, convinced me that I was capable of succeeding at a feat such as this and his support never faltered throughout my studies. I can even boast that he is one amongst what I am sure is a tiny minority of spouses who have read all of their partner’s papers, thesis included. Without him I never would have embarked on this adventure and I offer him my gratitude and love for always seeing the best in me.

Finally, I dedicate this work to my father, Professor Ralph Cowan, who inspired me with his respect for education at any age and with his courage and determination in completing his PhD in his late 40s. Until his death, my thesis was a further bond between us and he derived a great deal of pleasure in playing the role of my unseen fourth committee member.
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<tr>
<td>ASTED</td>
<td>l'Association pour l'avancement des sciences et des techniques de la documentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCE</td>
<td>Bell Canada Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CANARIE</td>
<td>Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry and Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Community Access Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>CISTI</td>
<td>Canadian Institute for Scientific and Technical Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLA</td>
<td>Canadian Library Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLA</td>
<td>Canadian Labour Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>Canada’s Coalition for Public Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRTA</td>
<td>Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FNACQ</td>
<td>Fédération nationale des associations de consommateurs du Québec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTA</td>
<td>Canada/U.S. Free Trade Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>GATT</td>
<td>General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>IHAC</td>
<td>Information Highway Advisory Council</td>
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<td>IHWG</td>
<td>Information Highway Working Group</td>
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<td>ITAC</td>
<td>Information Technology Association of Canada</td>
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<td>NAFTA</td>
<td>North American Free Trade Agreement</td>
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<td>NAPO</td>
<td>National Anti-poverty Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NII</td>
<td>National Information Infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>NLC</td>
<td>National Library of Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>OLA</td>
<td>Ontario Library Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>ONIP</td>
<td>Ontario Network Infrastructure Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>OPLA</td>
<td>Ontario Public Library Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCO</td>
<td>Privy Council Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIAC</td>
<td>Public Interest Advocacy Centre</td>
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<td>P-IHAC</td>
<td>Public Information Highway Advisory Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>PMO</td>
<td>Prime Minister’s Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>SITT</td>
<td>Spectrum, Information Technologies and Telecommunications Sector</td>
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<td>TC</td>
<td>Telecommunities Canada</td>
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<td>WIC</td>
<td>Western International Communications Ltd.</td>
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH CONTEXT: INFORMATION HIGHWAY POLICY AND THE COALITION FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION

This study examines the role of a public interest group, Canada’s Coalition for Public Information (CPI), in federal policy making for the information highway. In its attempts to influence policy outcomes, CPI was most often at odds with the predominant stakeholders in the policy community, Industry Canada and the Stentor Alliance. Throughout the process, CPI worked to convince these actors that they should take a more socially oriented approach to information highway policy.

In order to assess CPI’s influence in the policy community, the study includes an account of the development of CPI, an assessment of the political context of information highway policy development, and an analysis of CPI in the policy community and in the policy process. The study is founded in observations of CPI activities, interviews with actors in the community, and analysis of documentation created by actors in the community.

Most of the activities in this study revolved around two major events: the Information Highway Advisory Council (IHAC) phase 1 consultations and the Canadian Radio-television and

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1 Originally the group was called the Coalition for Public Information. Later it was renamed Canada’s Coalition for Public Information to reinforce its intention to be a national organization.

2 The Stentor Alliance and its policy arm, Stentor Policy Inc., represented the 10 major telecommunications companies in Canada: BC Tel, AGT, SaskTel, Manitoba Telephone System, Bell Canada, NBTel, Maritime Tel and Tel, Island Tel, and Newfoundland Telephone, and associate members Québec-Téléphone and NorthwesTel.
Telecommunication Commission (CRTC) Convergence Hearing. These two events brought structure to the policy process and were major sources of recommendations. The issue that centres the study was the debate over universal access. CPI and other public interest groups were mainly concerned with the potential loss of universal access if the information highway was founded on the principle of market competition alone. CPI wanted to have a voice in policy decisions about this issue. The first phase of the process ended with the release of the government’s policy, *Building the Information Society: Moving Canada Into the 21st Century* (Canada. Government of Canada 1996). This policy disappointed CPI and other public interest groups.

Chapter 1 sets the stage for the conflict that arose between, on the one hand, the government and the private sector, which preferred the market model of competition, and, on the other hand, public interest groups such as CPI that wished to preserve the ideal of the telecommunications universal access model and extend it to the information highway. The chapter provides an introduction to the research goals and objectives and the research design. This is followed by a discussion of the scholarly and practical significance of the research to the field of information policy. Chapter 1 concludes with an outline of the seven chapters to follow.

Public policy reflects the times in which it is created; those who wish to participate in the policy-making process represent the values of the times. In policy making, values are in

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3 The term “convergence” represented the results of technological advances that increasingly were allowing technologies such as telecommunications and broadcasting, via cable or satellite, to combine. Such capabilities led to demands for changes in legislation and regulation to allow telecommunications and cable companies to enter into each other’s previously protected markets, thus facilitating convergence at the corporate level. Policy discussions soon focused on the internet, which was rapidly developing combined telecommunications and broadcasting characteristics, making it an appealing symbol of convergence.

W.I. Jenkins (1978) defines public policy as “a set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where these decisions should, in principle, be within the power of these actors to achieve” (p. 15).
conflict frequently (Abella 1991, p. 5; Paquet 1991, p. 173; Stone 1988, p. 53; Tuohy 1982, p. 562). Public interest groups, such as CPI, that are participating for the first time in the policy process often represent values that conflict with the values of those who regularly contribute to policy decisions. The policy challenge that engaged CPI and other public interest groups was to bring alternative proposals to the direction that was being promoted by the private sector for the information highway.

Information highway policy was an issue that attracted the attention of public interest groups such as CPI because the issue represented a threat to the values of those concerned about the public element of information issues. In addition to conflicts within the private sector, the information highway soon became an issue of public-versus-private interests in an era of policy making that was well on its way to replacing post-war welfare ideals with liberal market ideals. Thus the climate was ripe for conflicting demands. On the one hand, public interest groups wished to protect Canadian programs of universality, which in this context were represented by universal access to telephone services, until then maintained by a monopoly system in telecommunications. On the other hand, the private sector and government wished to open the telecommunications and cable markets to increased competition. The information highway issue appeared in the midst of the telecommunications debate.

The universal access model had been under attack since the 1980s, to a great extent because of the growth and deregulation of the international telecommunications industry. The existing monopoly system, represented by the provincial Bell telephone companies, was under great pressure from the international demand for more competition and the opening of national markets. The federal government had made it clear that it was prepared to dismantle its monopoly policy in favour of a quasi-market-regulated policy. This led to a conflict over government regulation of telecommunications. All of these situations were seen as threats by supporters of universal access, particularly those in public interest groups. These telecommunications policy activities were soon portrayed in terms of conflicts between public and private interests, universal access and competition, and government regulation and market self-regulation.
By 1994, a policy community had begun to form around the information highway. The concept of the information highway was born of the internet. Until the early 1990s, the internet had been steadily developing as an information and communications resource, first for the U.S. military and academic communities and then for computer-literate members of the public. Supported by governments and universities as it grew, the internet was accessible to those who possessed the technology. However, by 1993 the private sector began to recognize the commercial viability of the internet. The Canadian government, anxious to relinquish financial responsibility to the private sector and strengthen the competitive edge of the telecommunications industry, followed the U.S. lead in promoting the notion of an information highway developed and maintained by the private sector.

For public interest groups, the promotion of the market-oriented information highway idea was a wake-up call. Libraries, community organizations, freenet groups, and individuals enjoying the unregulated anarchy of the internet were alarmed at the potential restrictions to universal access that might grow with the deregulation of telecommunications and the privatization of the information highway. This issue represented the renewal of a clash in values between public and private interests.

The Ontario Library Association (OLA) was one of the public interest groups that were apprehensive early on about the turn of events. The OLA’s concern that new information policy be balanced in relation to issues such as universal access prompted it to form CPI. CPI was the first group created specifically to address information highway issues and remained active throughout the policy process. For this reason, CPI provided a relevant example for studying the potential of a public interest group for influencing policy makers in the information highway policy process.

This study examines CPI and its activities as it attempted to influence information highway
policy at the federal level. Because the issue of universal access was the focal point of public interest groups such as CPI during the height of policy activity, it is the issue that is emphasized throughout the research. The study assesses the political environment, the relative influence of CPI in the policy community, and CPI’s own strengths and weaknesses. It furnishes accounts of reactions to actors and events, as well as assessments of CPI both from within CPI and from external sources.

In practical terms, CPI, a small, inexperienced public interest group, had little hope of swaying the predominant liberal-market thinking that was prevalent in government. The leaders of CPI were cautiously optimistic initially. They represented a well-established, respected sector of the community. CPI thought it might change the direction of policy discussions by getting its ideas to the policy-making community through membership on government committees, dissemination of its policy proposals, educating the public, and building a large membership by attracting people across the country and beyond the library community. However, this study will demonstrate that the odds were against CPI’s success for a number of reasons, some obvious and others unknown to the group as it began its work. Problems posed by the closed nature of the policy community, the imperative that groups have an in-depth understanding of government and the policy process, and the need for long-term continuity and persistence on the part of a group were all in wait for an inexperienced group like CPI.

1.2 RESEARCH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The central goal of this thesis is to contribute to an understanding of public interest groups in the information policy community and their role in the process of policy making. Although the body

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5 Many provinces also became involved in creating information highway reports that directed their governments to take steps similar to IHAC’s recommendations. While provincial-level governments were not the focus of this study, and were rarely mentioned in the data, these governments did have a role to play in areas of provincial responsibility, such as education. During the course of IHAC, federal-provincial discussions of such issues were held.
of public policy research around policy-making issues is growing, little work has been done related to information policy. Therefore, this research is intended to inform future research in the information policy area. More specifically, the research was conducted in order to provide a view of policy making with an emphasis on the potential influence of public interest groups. Thus the findings are also intended to inform participants in the information policy community, particularly those participants from public interest groups who often have little experience in the domain of federal politics.

When the OLA formed CPI it also created the opportunity for exploring the role of a public interest group attempting to influence the outcome of information policy making, in this case for the information highway. Research questions were designed to determine CPI's role and relative influence. The questions were directed at examining CPI's strengths and weaknesses, identifying and describing other groups with whom CPI interacted, and assessing the relative influence of CPI in relation to the more successful groups. The questions also led to a description of how the policy process unfolded and how that related to CPI's activities and ultimately to its ability to influence policy makers. The questions that informed this study include the following:

- What were the stages of the policy process for the information highway?
- Who were the principal actors in the information highway policy community?
- Where did CPI fit in the policy community?
- Did CPI display institutional characteristics that indicate a group's potential for influencing the policy process?
- Did CPI use strategies that indicate a potential for influencing the policy process?

6In addition to the research of John Kingdon (1984) and William Coleman and Grace Skogstad (1995, 1990c; see also Coleman, Skogstad and Atkinson 1997) which is discussed extensively in this thesis, a number of recent doctoral dissertations have focused on this area. For example see Hall (1995), Gorges (1993), McEldowney (1995), Warner (1995).

7Examples of research in the area of information policy making include that of Marc Raboy (1990) in the area of broadcasting policy making and Lauren Whyte (1992) in the telecommunications area.
• How did CPI attempt to influence the policy process?
• How was CPI perceived by other actors in the policy community?
• How did CPI perceive itself?
• What role did CPI play in the information policy-making process?
• What was the outcome of the policy-making effort in relation to CPI's goals?
• How successful did CPI appear to be in influencing information highway policy?

1.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to answer the questions emanating from the problem statement, a naturalistic study was designed using qualitative methods for data gathering, organizing, and analysis. The research proceeded in two stages. To begin, members of the CPI steering committee were observed at committee meetings, conferences, public meetings, and a presentation before the CRTC. These occasions provided the researcher with a deeper understanding of the actions and motivations of actors both in CPI and in the greater policy community. Much of this understanding relied on the perspective of the CPI steering committee.

Along with the participant observation, the researcher also collected official and unofficial documents and reports that provided both public and private views of events. Initial interviews were conducted with members of the group who were involved in the evolution of what was to become CPI. These interviews provided both the background and rationale for creating the group, as well as a sense of how key CPI actors anticipated that events would unfold.

The second stage of the research consisted of a series of in-depth interviews with key informants from the policy community including federal government officials, private sector executives and members of public interest groups. Open-ended interviews were designed and modified for each group of participants and were aimed specifically at responding to the research questions. At the same time, they allowed respondents to react freely, thus contributing
unanticipated data.

Data collected from committee meetings, interviews, and field notes were transcribed verbatim. Thereafter the data were organized and analyzed by means of grounded theory methods that provided a means of transforming raw data to descriptive data, and descriptive data to concepts. Finally, it was possible to theorize about the role of CPI.

1.4 SCHOLARLY AND PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Research into information policy is not new to scholars, who have studied policy issues related to privacy, intellectual freedom, access, and copyright for many years. However, technological advances have had a great impact on information and communications in all of their forms. While the issues are fundamentally the same, the convergence of technologies, manifested particularly in the continuing development of the internet, implies that the policy-making environment may also experience permutations. The fact that the policy-making process has been a little-studied area of information policy, coupled with the political ramifications that changes in technology are bringing to information and communications providers and the public alike, make the area of information policy, and specifically information highway policy, relevant to information policy scholars. No longer are information policy debates confined to often seemingly unconnected issues; convergence technologies and the information highway unite the issues. No longer are debates confined to local or national levels; the information highway forces participants to recognize the local, national, and international agendas that have developed around the issues.

Public policy theories have a great deal of relevance for information policy, a discrete category of public policy. Overman and Cahill (1990) define information policy as: the set of all public laws, regulations, and policies that encourage, discourage, or regulate the creation, use, storage, and communication of information (p. 803). These policies "profoundly affect" the way individuals and society make political, economic, and social decisions (Mason in Hernon 1989,
The focus of information policy has not remained the same over time, according to Kathleen Eisenbeis (1988). Information policy issues have shifted from communications in the 1930s, to scientific information, libraries, and information networks in the 1970s, and on to information technology and the management of government information in the 1980s. In Eisenbeis's opinion, these streams have converged into information policy. An examination of activities in the 1990s indicates that the focus has shifted once again to address the issues of the information highway.

Like public policy, information policy, at the macro level, is driven by the pursuit of a number of identifiable values. These values are often contradictory, as Overman and Cahill have observed. Information itself is considered to be a basic need for effective democracies. Overman and Cahill emphasize the relationship of societal values to information policy. In their opinion, "most approaches to information policy have understated the role of values and normative structures" (Overman and Cahill 1990, p. 803). The authors define normative structures as "the entire constellation of policy values in which multiple value-sets often exist and conflict can occur" (Merton in Overman and Cahill 1990, p. 804). Overman and Cahill identify seven values that are inherent in information policy: access and freedom (democratic right); privacy; openness (right to know); usefulness; cost and benefit (economic value of costs associated with production, storage, dissemination); secrecy and security; and ownership. "Conflict and convergence over these core values establishes the normative structure of debate on national information policy design" (Overman and Cahill 1990, p. 805).

Overman and Cahill elaborate that similar values inherent to information policy are grouped together to form a normative structure. The authors distinguish two competing perspectives, which they define as distributive and restrictive. The distributive perspective envisions information as a public good: that is, information is freely available in the public domain and the public has a right to access. Values such as access, freedom, privacy, and openness
support and encourage the distribution of information. The restrictive perspective pictures information as a private good: that is, information is restricted in collection and use. Values such as cost, usefulness, security, secrecy, and ownership apply to the restrictive perspective. Overman and Cahill go on to state that:

A political economy of information policy operates whereby economic values of cost, secrecy, and ownership dominate until political values of access and freedom are violated. (Overman and Cahill 1990, p. 814)

Ultimately, information policy is a series of “marginal trade-offs ...between competing distributive and restrictive values on a case by case basis” (Overman and Cahill 1990, p. 814). For information highway policy making, the value conflicts are manifested in the generally distributive outlook of public interest groups, such as CPI, and the more restrictive approach of the private sector, particularly the telecommunications industry.

Public interest and private sector groups must confront their conflicting values when faced with specific issues such as individual privacy versus the collection and trading of consumer data; or affordable, widespread public access to information versus private sector profit maximization. Economic, social, and political issues divide the community between collective and producer values. Information policy conflicts reveal many of the same societal problems that arise for public policy issues, such as debates over public and private goods or the recognition of power imbalances among groups. These conflicting values set the stage for the information highway policy debate.

Public interest groups like CPI that wish to protect certain publicly oriented values, such as universal access to information and communication sources, intellectual freedom, and individual privacy, must have the resources with which to enter into the debate. Groups must also recognize the enormous advantage that comes from understanding the policy community and its process. This research is intended to provide some of this knowledge by presenting a longitudinal case study that examines policy making for the information highway from the perspective of one
The thesis is organized into seven chapters. Chapter 2 describes the methodology that was used to carry out the study. It is divided into three main sections. The first section is devoted to a discussion of the rationale for choosing a naturalistic conceptual framework for the study. Naturalism offers a means of observing activities over time and takes into account the complexity of human activities. It is well suited to examining the intricacies of policy making. The researcher enters the natural setting of the phenomenon and manipulates events as little as possible to avoid disturbing activities.

Qualitative methodologies that were utilized for the study are discussed in the next section. The research was done in a case-study setting that included the CPI steering committee as well as critical members of the policy community. Research was carried out via purposive data collection through observation of members of CPI in various situations, key informant interviews, and analysis of relevant documentation. Grounded theory methodology provided the basis for the collection, organization, and analysis of the data. Through a process of iterative data comparisons, the researcher built data into concepts and finally theoretical generalizations.

The third section of this chapter describes the application of the qualitative methodologies. First is a discussion of the expectations and limitations of the study. This is followed by an accounting of the methodologies in practice, including the application of NUD*IST, a qualitative analysis software program. The chapter concludes with a review of methods used to help ensure trustworthiness in the research and steps taken to answer ethical concerns.

Chapter 3 reviews the theoretical approaches adopted for the study. The two theories that inform this study are the policy process theory described by John Kingdon (1984) and the policy
community theory described by William Coleman and Grace Skogstad (1990b) and Paul Pross (1992). These theories provide a conceptual framework for examining the policy-making phenomenon. Policy process theory considers policy making from its procedural and temporal aspects; policy community theory considers policy making from its relational aspect. Together they provide a more complete picture by considering multiple aspects of the phenomenon.

Each of the elements discussed in Chapter 4 is intended to enrich the understanding of CPI in the information policy community and help explain why CPI remained a minor actor. Chapter 4 begins with an overview of international activities in the area of information policy that had an impact on Canadian policy decisions. The chapter continues with the OLA's rationale for creating CPI and the chronology of the events in CPI's development. These descriptions further illustrate the gulf between the values of the private sector and public interest groups.

Chapter 4 proceeds with an interpretation of the political environment in which CPI was operating. Analysis of the political environment of the early 1990s revealed six themes that were fundamental to understanding the policy situation in its complexity. The first theme examines the market agenda of the government and the private sector. The next two themes, multiple stakeholders in conflict, and consultation, are related to the relationships in the policy community, both internal and external to government. An examination of the complexity of the policy process follows.

Chapter 5 establishes the existence of an information highway policy community. It identifies members of the policy community and the relationships amongst the players. Policy actors provide their perceptions of influence in the policy community. This description is followed by a discussion of CPI's institutional characteristics offered as an additional indicator of CPI's capacity to influence policy makers. The findings are supported by the policy community theory of Coleman, Skogstad, and Pross.

Chapter 6 builds upon the findings related to the policy community by exploring the policy
process activities that took place between 1994 and 1996. In this context, more evidence points to the limited influence CPI could muster in the face of a strong and influential private sector institution and a government sympathetic to the demand for a strong competitive marketplace in Canada. The chronology of events, both in the policy community and within CPI, is outlined in this chapter. These events, considered along with the policy community analysis, further illustrate the reasons for the final policy outcomes. The impressions provided by community actors also reinforce the conclusions. An analysis of the policy network created by policy makers completes this chapter. The networking style also accounts for CPI's minimal influence in the policy community.

Chapter 7 concludes the study. The first part of the chapter provides an assessment of CPI's overall capacity to influence the outcome of the information highway policy process and its role in the policy community. The chapter explores why CPI was less successful than others. This conclusion is based in part on an evaluation of CPI's strengths and weaknesses, followed by perceptions of CPI's influence in the policy community. Finally CPI's goals are evaluated in relation to policy process outcomes such as policy decisions and CPI's input to other activities related to the information highway.

Chapter 7 continues with a look at CPI in hindsight and the lessons that it brings to other public interest groups. The chapter ends with some reflections on methodology and theory, and with considerations for future research.
CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the methodology used in the study of Canada's Coalition for Public Information (CPI). The choice of methodology was based on a determination of the best fit for a study of a public interest group, within a policy community, that was tackling a new issue over an extended period of time. The range of possibilities was narrowed to the naturalistic paradigm. This chapter consists of an argument for the use of the naturalistic paradigm, and a critique of applicable qualitative methodologies: the case study, participant observation, interviews, document analysis, grounded theory, and extended case methods. The presentation of the research design used in this study includes research questions, outcome expectations, entrée to informants, data collection methods, data analysis methods, the research schedule, tests for trustworthiness, and ethical concerns.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The research focused on the role of a public interest group, CPI, as it navigated its way through the information policy process for the information highway. The study coincided with CPI's ongoing activities in the policy process from January 1994 to August 1996. CPI was working to establish itself as a recognized member of the information policy community in Canada, in order to convince policy makers to develop policy that considered the public interest.

Policy making is a complex, little-understood process, influenced by many human factors (See Burstein 1991; Coleman and Skogstad 1990c; Howlett and Ramesh 1995; Stone 1988.)
Both the degree of policy-making complexity and the accessibility to actors and events as they unfold lend themselves to a naturalistic investigative approach. (See Figure 2-1.) A desire to understand the what and how of the information policy-making process befits the naturalistic paradigm rather than the positivistic paradigm. (These terms will be defined in the course of this chapter.) Thus, this research follows the lead of many investigators in the social sciences who adhere to the naturalistic paradigm for understanding human phenomena. Qualitative methodology, the preferred methodology in naturalistic inquiries, underlies this case study.

2.2.1 The Naturalistic Paradigm

Terminology describing non-positivistic research is often used interchangeably in anthropological and sociological literature. Yvonna Lincoln and Egon Guba (1985), whose theorizing has made a substantial contribution to explicating the naturalistic paradigm and whose methods significantly inform this research, state that the naturalistic paradigm “has other aliases as well, for example: the postpositivistic, ethnographic, phenomenological, subjective, case study, qualitative, hermeneutic, humanistic” (p. 7). Although Lincoln and Guba decline to provide a simple definition for naturalism, they do offer “prime directives” for the term: that no manipulation on the part of the inquirer is implied and that the inquirer imposes no a priori units on the outcome (p. 8). Lincoln and Guba further describe naturalism by contrasting it with the goals of positivism. Positivism aims to predict and control; naturalism attempts to understand, describe, respond to problems, and determine status (p. 26).

Characteristically, naturalistic inquiry takes place in the subjects’ natural setting in order to consider the entire context and complexity of the situation. Phenomena “take their meaning as much from their contexts as they do from themselves” according to Lincoln and Guba (p.189). The principal research instrument is the investigator, because “it would be virtually impossible to
Figure 2-1  The Flow of Naturalistic Inquiry

devise a priori a nonhuman instrument with sufficient adaptability to encompass and adjust to the variety of realities that will be encountered” and to grasp and evaluate the meaning (p. 39). Lincoln and Guba also argue that applying tacit knowledge, both through the human ability to appreciate multiple realities and to form insights from experience, is a legitimate means of augmenting understanding. Other attributes of naturalistic inquiry include the qualitative methods of purposive sampling, inductive data analysis, grounded theory, and case study reporting. Study results are judged by their “trustworthiness” rather than by their validity or reliability.

Paul Atkinson and Martyn Hammersley (1994, p. 250) argue that the concern of natural sciences lies in the discovery of universal laws whereas the concern of human sciences lies in understanding particular phenomena in their sociohistorical contexts. Similarly, Lincoln and Guba maintain that applying the positivist model to human behaviour is futile (1985, p. 143). Human behaviour is impossible to generalize “because it is so intimately bound to particular times and contexts.” Guba and Lincoln maintain the position that:

human behavior, unlike that of physical objects, cannot be understood without reference to the meanings and purposes attached by human actors to their activities. Qualitative data, it is asserted, can provide rich insight into human behavior. (Guba and Lincoln 1994, p. 106)

John Creswell (1994) agrees with Lincoln and Guba’s assessment of naturalistic research, referring to it as a search for “a ‘pattern’ of interconnected thoughts or parts linked to a whole” (p. 94). This “peculiar web or pattern of circumstances” of a particular situation is unlikely to ever reoccur in exactly the same way so that explanations apply to the situation “here and now” (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 155).

Earl Babbie (1992) discusses both the strengths and weaknesses of naturalistic research. He praises it as a means of studying phenomena that are best understood within their natural setting, and as being both flexible and relatively inexpensive. Babbie credits naturalistic research with being “especially effective for studying the subtle nuances of attitudes and behaviors and for
examining social processes over time” (p. 305).

However, Babbie states that “conclusions drawn from qualitative field research are often regarded as suggestive rather than definitive” (p. 306). Naturalism is unable to provide “descriptive statements about a large population” (p. 306). Because such phenomena rely upon the interpretation of events, often by a single investigator, they should provide comparative (e.g., the relative conservatism of participants in a study) rather than purely descriptive evaluations to measure the reliability of findings. Single-investigator interpretations of a phenomenon are also less reproducible and thus less generalizable. No two situations are the same. No two investigators have exactly the same perspective. Finally, naturalistic studies are less generalizable because they are not in search of the “typical” case (p. 308).

2.2.2 Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative methodology provides the tools for carrying out naturalistic inquiries. Creswell (1994) describes qualitative methodology as “an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting” (p. 1). He suggests a process of inductive logic that allows categories to emerge from its informants’ “rich context-bound information” (p. 7). Guba and Lincoln (1994) claim that qualitative data can provide “rich insight into human behavior” (p. 106). They state that:

the object...is not to focus on the similarities that can be developed into generalizations, but to detail the many specifics that give the context its unique flavor. A second purpose is to generate the information upon which the emergent design and grounded theory can be based. (p. 201)

Such detailed information depends upon purposive sampling in which sample units are not drawn in advance but are selected after the previous unit has been analyzed to expand on information already obtained, to contrast with previous data, or to fill in gaps (p. 201; see also Merriam 1988,
Earl Babbie (1992) states that qualitative research does not start with a hypothesis but tries to make sense of an ongoing process that cannot be predicted in advance. This makes qualitative methodology particularly effective for studying human activities that are not easily reduced to numbers: meanings, practices, episodes, encounters, roles, relationships, groups, organizations, and settlements. Babbie cites comprehensiveness as one of the key strengths of qualitative methodology.

Adding to the qualitative discourse, Catherine Marshall and Gretchen Rossman (1989) describe qualitative methodology as a process that entails immersion in a life setting, that requires valuing participants' perspectives and seeking to discover those perspectives. The researcher must view the inquiry as an interactive process between researcher and participants. The process is chiefly descriptive and relies on people's words as primary data. Due to such characteristics, “messiness” is inherent to qualitative research (p. 11).

Marshall and Rossman specifically discuss the application of qualitative methodology in the field of policy analysis through illustrations of research proposals. In one such proposal vignette, quantitative studies in policy analysis are criticized because they “too often...present evaluation and analysis of outcomes that provide little sense of how the processes created these outcomes.” What policy makers need, the proposal applicant argues, is information that helps policy makers understand the problem, identify areas they can influence, and see the consequences of policy intervention. In the final analysis, “policymakers can do little with studies that tell them that their policies have had null effect” (p. 16).

Qualitative studies demonstrate a strength in facilitating deeper understanding of the social systems and economic forces to be altered by policy. Research results “would make clear to the policymakers the relevant questions, the patterns of implementation, and the alterable variables that would lead to more effective policy outcomes” (p. 18). Marshall and Rossman elaborate that
the thick description\textsuperscript{1} and the detailed analysis involved in qualitative methodology will provide valuable explanations of processes. Because qualitative questions generally come from "real-world" observations, dilemmas, and questions, they take the form of wide-ranging inquiries such as: What techniques are used by lobbying groups trying to influence policy? Which are perceived to be effective? How do they vary according to the issue under debate? And how do lobbyists learn these techniques? (Marshall and Rossman 1989, p. 28).

Research design for a naturalistic inquiry depends upon inductive logic. Through the use of inductive logic, the investigator constructs a story or patterns from detailed categories or themes that develop during the investigation, rather than by being predetermined. These patterns or generalizations come to represent the investigator's theory (Creswell 1994, pp. 44, 95). Inductive data analysis consists of two processes: data are first broken into units of single characteristics or events in order to permit precise description; thereafter the data units are organized into descriptive and inferential categories (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 202). This process will be discussed later in greater detail.

\textbf{2.2.3 Case Study}

Many descriptions of case studies do not differentiate between case studies and qualitative methodology or naturalistic inquiry. Researchers often refer to qualitative or naturalistic research as a case study. (See, for example, Eisenbeis 1992; Merriam 1988; Yin 1993.) A distinction can be made by conceptualizing the case study as a vehicle for reporting a naturalistic inquiry, or a case report. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), naturalistic inquiry describes a paradigm, qualitative research describes a methodological approach, and the case study describes the means of reporting a phenomenon.

\textsuperscript{1}Thick description is the complete and literal description of a situation, one that is so detailed that the reader is able to decide on the transferability of conclusions to another case. (See Lincoln and Guba 1985, pp. 125, 316; Merriam 1988, p. 11.)
A case study that relies on thick description orients readers so that “if they could be magically transported to the inquiry site, they would experience a feeling of déjà vu—of having been there before and of being thoroughly familiar with all of its details” (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 214). Case studies are distinguished by the fact that they examine “a specific phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group” (Merriam 1988, p. 9; see also Stake 1994). A phenomenon in a case study is bounded by time and activity (Creswell 1994, p. 12). The study may include descriptions and analysis of on-site observations, open-ended interviews and collections of documents (Yin 1993, p. 16). Quantitative methods may also be used when deemed appropriate.

Robert Stake (1994) claims that the case study can be seen as “a small step toward grand generalization” and that ultimately what we learn from a single case derives from how the current case compares to other cases (p. 238). “A new case without commonality cannot be understood. Yet a new case without distinction will not be noticed” (p. 241). Researchers must be able to “encapsulate complex meanings into a finite report” and “describe the case in sufficient descriptive narrative so that readers can vicariously experience these happenings, and draw their own conclusions” (p. 243). Stake believes that the case study is capable of being “a disciplined force in public policy setting and reflection on human experience” (p. 245).

2.2.4 Participant Observation

Qualitative methodologies generally accepted for use in naturalistic inquiries include participant observation and grounded theory, or variations of grounded theory. Atkinson and Hammersley (1994) refer to participant observation as being a “uniquely humanistic, interpretive approach” (p. 249). For them, participant observation is “a mode of being-in-this-world” characteristic of researchers. Norman Denzin (1989) is more specific in his definition. The participant observer:
attempts to share in the subject’s world, to participate directly in the rounds of activities that make up that world, and to see the world as the subjects see it. The participant observer’s goals revolve around the attempt to render that world meaningful from the perspective of those studied. (p. 42)

Morris Schwartz and Charlotte Schwartz (1969) offer another similar perspective. Participant observation is a:

process in which the observer’s presence in a social situation is maintained for the purpose of scientific investigation. The observer is in a face-to-face relationship with the observed, and, by participating with them in their natural life setting, he gathers data. Thus the observer is part of the context being observed, and he both modifies and is influenced by this context. The role of the participant observer may be either formal or informal, concealed or revealed; the observer may spend a great deal or very little time in the research situation; the participant observer role may be an integral part of the social structure or largely peripheral to it. (p. 91)

Dan Jorgensen (1989, p. 12) states that participant observation is particularly valuable for discovering meanings from the perspective of “insiders” through observation of everyday situations. Research questions should be sufficiently broad to permit inclusion of central issues and concerns while narrow enough to serve as a guide in data collection. Inquiry is open-ended, flexible, and opportunistic and requires constant redefinition of the problem as facts are gathered. The participant observation role involves the establishment and maintenance of relationships with the “natives” in the field. Direct observation is combined with other methods such as interviews and casual conversation (p. 14). In addition, the researcher must minimize any disruption she might make in order not to distort the environment. The researcher must build rapport and trust with her subjects to create the intimacy necessary to receive accurate and dependable inside information. All of these activities must be recorded as field notes. Eventually the investigator will find that the act of participant observation becomes a “never-ending cycle of observation, analysis, redefinition and observation” (p. 84).
2.2.5 Grounded Theory

Grounded theory derives from the work of Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1978; 1967). Glaser specifies that the goal of grounded theory is "to generate a theory that accounts for a pattern of behavior which is relevant and problematic for those involved" (1978, p. 93). Unlike quantitative methodologies, which are more involved with verifying existing theories, grounded theory eschews initial attachment to a theory in favour of allowing theory to emerge from the data. This stance is taken in the belief that theory based on grounded data will be more enduring. Strauss (1990) describes grounded (or pattern) theory as:

one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. That is, it is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon. Therefore, data collection, analysis, and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other. One does not begin with a theory, then prove it. Rather, one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge. (p. 23)

The researcher readies herself to embark upon such inquiries by building up theoretical sensitivity: insight, and capacity to understand and distinguish pertinent information and give it meaning. This can be accomplished through intensive reading in sociology and in fields other than that of the study. The investigator must be sensitive enough to pick out the attributes she is looking for without being biased by existing theories in the literature (Glaser, 1978, p. 5; see also Strauss and Corbin 1990).

The task of the researcher is to collect jointly, to code, and to analyze data via a systematic set of procedures. The comparative analysis process provides the basis for deciding what data to collect subsequently (Glaser 1978, p. 31). From the iterative comparison of these empirical data, conceptual categories are constructed, leading to comparisons between categories. This process of constant comparison facilitates building generalities, strengthening explanatory power, and generating new theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p. 93).
2.2.6 Extended Case Method

The minimal reliance upon literature and existing theories as espoused by Glaser and Strauss can be of concern to a novice investigator who requires more structure, focus, and boundaries. More recently, Strauss and Corbin (1990) modified grounded theory to accept the introduction of background literature (p. 50). Nevertheless, they state that a great deal of the literature should not be reviewed beforehand “because if we are effective in our analysis, the new categories will emerge that neither we, nor anyone else, had thought about previously” (p. 50). Strauss and Corbin claim that existing theory can be useful in providing concepts and relationships that can be checked with the data and thus can act as a means of stimulating theoretical sensitivity. This knowledge can be used in the field to help guide initial observations, generate questions, and look for evidence (p. 50). As Strauss and Corbin explain, “the interplay of reading the literature and doing an analysis of it, then moving out into the field to verify it against reality can yield an integrated picture and enhance the conceptual richness of the theory” (p. 55). They conclude that:

if one is interested in extending an already existing theory, then one might begin with the existing theory and attempt to uncover how it applies to new and varied situations, as differentiated from those situations to which it was originally applied. (p. 51)

Michael Burawoy (1991) is also a proponent of the comparison of new findings to existing theory. He proposes the application of the extended case method, first introduced by Max Gluckman (1961), that is similar to the method suggested by Strauss and Corbin. Using the extended case method, the investigator enters the field with admitted expectations and looks for the unexpected. The investigator draws upon existing knowledge in the form of popular belief or academic theory to determine that a situation is “abnormal” (Burawoy et al. 1991, p. 9). These “counterinstances” can be used to reconstruct rather than reject theory. Like grounded theory, the extended case method employs constant comparative analysis and then goes one step further by incorporating both the investigator’s expectations and existing theory into the data analysis (p. 11). When expectations are contradicted, theory can be used to show how the theory itself fails to
explain the phenomenon under study. Anomalies appearing in the data help to improve these theoretical shortcomings.

Jaap Van Velsen (1967) points out that while most anthropologists work to describe what is consistent in society, "inconsistency and contradictions between various sets of norms in different fields of action are a feature of all societies." He suggests that "to live with these inconsistencies by manipulating the norms" so that "people can continue to stay together in social order" is a problem that all societies must solve. Therefore the inconsistencies in society become a problem worthy of study (p. 132). Using the extended case method to analyze social processes where individuals select among relationships and alternative norms, may be a more appropriate means for capturing the reality in phenomena (p. 142). This method is particularly designed to study "norms in conflict" (p. 146), that is "analysing the interrelation of structural ('universal') regularities, on the one hand, and the actual ('unique') behaviour of individuals, on the other" (p. 148).

2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The investigation of CPI fits the naturalistic paradigm. As a study of political processes as well as group characteristics and dynamics, the phenomenon was suited to the application of qualitative methodology and techniques, such as participant observation, key informant interviews, grounded theory, and extended case methodologies. The research was purposive in design. It depended upon the constant comparison of data from the field, and on the comparison of that data with relevant theories that both guided the investigation and acted as theories to be extended. Use of the extended case method of considering theory and experience along with research questions helped to frame the inquiry and keep the research process focused.

Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman's (1994) matrix and network models provided a method for data display and analysis of concepts such as relationships and processes. These models
were helpful both at the outset of the research, to visualize the framework under development, and as conceptual ideas emerged from the data.

Data were tape-recorded and transcribed in preparation for analysis. Research plans, descriptions of activities, and observations about the efficacy of the various attributes of qualitative methodology were among the elements recorded in an “audit trail” log. The research design also included measures for guaranteeing trustworthiness.

2.3.1 Research Questions

The study of CPI attempted to answer research questions related to the public policy process and CPI’s role in that process. The form of the questions guiding the study evolved as the study progressed. The intent of the questions throughout the study was to address the question of CPI’s role in the information highway policy community and the amount of influence it exerted by investigating the various contributing factors. Questions included the following:

- What were the stages of the policy process for the information highway?
- Who were the principal actors in the information highway policy community?
- Where did CPI fit in the policy community?
- Did CPI display institutional characteristics that indicate a group’s potential for influencing the policy process?
- Did CPI use strategies that indicate a potential for influencing the policy process?
- How did CPI attempt to influence the policy process?
- How was CPI perceived by other actors in the policy community?
- How did CPI perceive itself?
- What role did CPI play in the information highway policy-making process?
- What was the outcome of the policy making effort in relation to CPI’s goals?
- How successful did CPI appear to be in influencing information highway policy?
Researchers bring their expectations, based on knowledge of the literature and personal experience, to their investigations. In the political context of information policy development around the information highway, the researcher expected CPI to have a limited role in policy making. Influencing the policy outcome was possible but not probable. CPI came into the policy process with the positive public image of the library community. It had the stable backing of the library community in a number of provinces and had the backing of organizations such as the Association of Canadian Publishers, the Association of Community Information Centres in Ontario, and more recently formed groups such as Telecommunities Canada and the Toronto FreeNet Inc. Nevertheless, CPI did not have the political clout or financial backing that would have placed it alongside private sector organizations at the policy table. The researcher believed that the group's sharing of responsibility amongst members was skewed (with a few people doing most of the work) and could eventually contribute to CPI's disintegration.

CPI had a membership consisting mainly of organizations and took an organizational approach to the policy process and its relationship with the government. The researcher believed that CPI would be able to use these characteristics to its advantage in building credibility with the federal government and in establishing rapport with key members of the private sector. On the other hand, the institutional image that the group projected of being cooperative and accommodating, and the fact that it preferred not to take confrontational positions, would make it more difficult for CPI to project forcefully dissenting opinions.

Finally, the researcher began with the impression that the relationship between Industry Canada and the Stentor Alliance was very strong. The bond between the private sector and the government added to her preconception that pressure from multinational companies in Canada, as well as government preoccupation with international competition, would lessen CPI's ability to influence policy makers away from their preference for deregulation and competition.
Although the researcher’s preliminary expectations revealed her limited faith in CPI’s ability to influence policy outcomes, she was nevertheless sympathetic to their positions and policy goals. Her background in the library community and her affiliation with the Faculty of Information Studies provided an indication to respondents of her perspective in the study. However, every attempt was made to remain impartial in gathering and analyzing data.

Policy community theory as described by William Coleman and Grace Skogstad (1990c) and Paul Pross (1992) guided the researcher’s initial analysis of field data. This theory describes a community of political actors, interested in specific policy issues, who organize around federal government agencies. The potential for influencing outcomes depends in part on the dynamics of the particular policy community. Groups that exhibit certain institutional characteristics are more likely to succeed in influencing policy. Policy community theory relies upon the theory of interest group institutionalization, which Pross claims is a necessity for influencing policy. “Because the environment is bureaucratic, pressure groups have had to become increasingly institutionalized to work effectively in it” (Pross 1992, p. 116).

A network design of the researcher’s initial understanding of the policy process and CPI relationships provided a conceptual starting point before collecting the majority of the data. (See Figure 2-2.) It was the first of the visual representations that greatly assisted in the discovery of potentially significant areas for analysis as well as possible coding categories.

2.3.3 \textit{Entrée to CPI}

The researcher’s introduction to those who were to become the leaders of CPI came through the

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\textsuperscript{2}The policy process was originally seen as a means of organizing ideas about the policy community. Policy process theory became more central as analysis progressed.

\textsuperscript{3}Matrix and network models also contributed significantly to the data analysis process.
Ontario Library Association (OLA) when it released its document, *A Proposal for an Information Policy for Ontario* (Ontario Library Association 1992). The researcher was both interested in its proposal and sympathetic to its goals. Her entrée to the group occurred in January 1994 when she attended CPI's first public meeting. At that meeting she introduced herself to members of the interim steering committee as a PhD student interested in studying the group's activities. She also volunteered to assist the group in exchange for access to its activities, documents, members, and any other sources that would further her research. The CPI organizers agreed with her request.

The researcher was accepted into CPI's steering committee as a student researcher. All of its members were aware that she was collecting information about the group and its activities. CPI granted her access to documents-in-progress, especially since she was willing to read, comment upon, and edit CPI proposals to the government, funding agencies, and the public such as CPI's strategic document *Future-Knowledge: The Report* (Skrzeszewski and Cubberley 1995a), and to do the odd photocopying job. She also began to follow discussions on CPI's listserv and to attend steering committee meetings. She travelled with members of the CPI steering committee to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) Convergence Hearing in Ottawa in March 1995, and assisted with CPI's conference, *Digital Knowledge*, in February 1996.

Being a part of the CPI steering committee soon after its inception gave the researcher first-hand experience and the opportunity to observe strategic planning activities and gather ephemera that might not have been available after the fact. She had many opportunities to discuss issues and activities with members of the group and to observe their formal and informal approaches to getting the work of the group done. She was privy to gossip and group speculation. However, the steering committee was aware of her data gathering and, for example, at sensitive points during steering committee meetings would ask her to turn off her tape recorder.
2.3.4 Data Collection

Creswell (1994) specifies three data collection steps: "(a) setting the boundaries for the study, (b) collecting information through observations, interviews, documents, and visual materials, and (c) establishing the protocol for recording information" (p. 148). The boundaries in this research were set as a case study of one group, CPI, and its actions and relationships in the information highway policy process. Data collection was expected to cover a minimum of one year and up to two years, depending upon events. Ultimately, data collection spanned the period of the Information Highway Advisory Council phase 1 activities, a period of approximately 2 ½ years.

The study was also bounded by the conceptual framework offered by policy process and policy community theory. These theories provided a preliminary way of approaching the data, without closing the inquiry to other new questions that arose from new or reconsidered data as the study progressed.

The investigation was pursued from a vantage point within CPI. Political processes, strategies, and interrelationships were explored and CPI's role in the policy community was investigated. Most participant observations took place at monthly steering committee meetings, with a secondary setting being meetings with other groups and government officials. Another site for observation was the internet, where CPI maintained a listserv for sharing information among members and where contributors to other electronic lists shared information and engaged policy community members in policy dialogues (e.g., P-IHAC’s listserv at pac-highway@cunews.carleton.ca). Participant observation also took place at conferences and public gatherings. CPI steering committee members, key members of other groups, and relevant government officials were interviewed. Documents were collected from CPI internal communiqués, meetings, conferences, listservs, government reports, CPI submissions to government hearings, and newspaper articles and other publications.

The protocol for recording information was entered into the audit file for easy access. The
protocol was set up to follow the example of the grounded theory method of gathering, organizing, and analyzing the data. Initially raw data were organized by type (e.g., meeting transcripts, interview transcripts, field notes). As they were unitized, the data were arranged into more descriptive categories. The data organization to be used to build from raw data to concepts in NUD*IST was incorporated into the procedures.

The fact that CPI was beginning its activities while the researcher was in the process of completing course work meant that she began data collection much sooner than she would have under ideal conditions. Collecting data from 1994 forward allowed the researcher to obtain information that would have been unavailable or limited to the recollections of respondents. However, the juxtaposition of course work and data collection resulted in a decreased ability to follow the guidelines of grounded theory for organizing and analyzing data immediately after their collection.

2.3.4.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation offers an alternative to interviews and documents for gathering information about a phenomenon, in that it allows the investigator first-hand experience of the phenomenon in its natural setting. Participant observation provides a view of participants and their roles; of activities and interactions; of subtle factors that are informal and unplanned, symbolic or nonverbal; and of unanticipated results arising from the complexity of the situation. Observation provides the opportunity for discovering or exploring topics that subjects do not want to discuss (Merriam 1988, p. 88). Participant observation also allows the investigator to become oriented to the situation and to develop an overview before launching into individual interviews.

The researcher’s role in this study was more inclined to observation than full participation. She was a member in good standing: she paid her dues; she attended eleven steering committee meetings, annual membership meetings, and various other meetings; and she volunteered when
help was needed. However, in the interest of maintaining some distance for research purposes and in attempting not to disrupt the natural setting, she helped out with smaller tasks rather than putting herself in a more responsible position where she might influence the group in its decisions.

As a participant observer the researcher was able to gather impressions about actors in the policy community and build rapport with members of CPI and other public interest groups. Being present at CPI events provided an opportunity for observations that verified or contradicted statements made at these events or elsewhere. Non-verbal cues in meetings (e.g., rolling eyes) provided another indicator of contradictions that required further verification.

The weakness of participant observation in this case was that the researcher could not observe all of the group's activities, nor was she invited to observe them all. This meant that the researcher was not privy to some of the most intense strategy sessions amongst members of the executive and that she was not included in many meetings between CPI and other groups. Participant observation also was less efficient in the context of steering committee meetings where activities were formal and structured. However, it provided enough data to help build an understanding of CPI's group dynamics which was important to understanding CPI's potential effectiveness. Ultimately, participant observation in the form of tape-recordings was useful in the context of steering committee meetings and interviews but was minimally informative in the context of being able to observe interactions among groups rather than within a group (which became dependent upon interviews).

2.3.4.2 Field Notes

Investigators use notes to record participant observations in the field (Adler and Adler 1991; Lofland 1971; Lofland and Lofland 1995; Sanjek 1990). Experienced participant observers such as John and Lyn Lofland stress the importance of taking notes about observations as soon as possible. This can be done in the field, if taking notes would not be out of place in the situation—
for example, at a meeting where others are also taking notes. If this is not possible, then extensive notes should be written at the end of the day in order to avoid memory loss. Field notes should include a chronological running description of the setting, the actors, their activities and the processes under way, and conversations and other things that are heard. Analytic ideas and inferences should be included as they occur and marked as such. Notes should be “full enough to adequately summon up for one again, months later, a reasonably vivid picture of any described event” (Lofland 1971, p. 107).

In this study, field notes were recorded after meetings and interviews. These notes added to the verbatim tapes that were recorded in both situations. As stated previously, the researcher found that because steering committee meetings maintained a formal set of protocols, observations were less rich than if the situation being observed had been more informal and less structured. From time to time, more informal conversations did occur (e.g., after meetings) and provided a sense of the undercurrent of the group. Notes taken after interviews recorded the researcher’s reaction to the interviewee and to the content of the interview. She compared the comments of different interviewees, along with her own perceptions of situations. Field notes represented the initial step in the “memoing” process that made up much of the analysis task.

A second source of field notes in this inquiry was the tape recordings of CPI steering committee meetings. These tapes provided verbatim data for analysis and were the primary source of data. Recordings were transcribed soon after the event in order to add analytic ideas and inferences to the transcription while the researcher’s memory was still fresh.

2.3.4.3 Interviews

Lincoln and Guba (1985) refer to the interview as “a conversation with a purpose.” The interview has a number of goals: to obtain “here and now constructions of persons, events, activities, organizations, feelings, motivations, claims, concerns” (p. 268); to obtain reconstructions of the
past; to obtain projections into the future; to obtain extension and verification of information received from other sources; and to obtain extension and verification of constructions developed by the investigator. (See also Jorgensen 1989; Lofland 1971; Spradley 1979.)

Interviews may be structured or unstructured. In the structured interview, the investigator "knows what he or she does not know and can therefore frame appropriate questions to find it out." In the unstructured interview, the investigator "does not know what he or she doesn't know and must therefore rely on the respondent to tell him or her" (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 269). Structured interviews utilize preestablished questions that allow for little variation in response. All respondents receive the same questions. Unstructured interviews are open-ended and in-depth. They are used to "understand the complex behavior of members of society without imposing any a priori categorization that may limit the field of inquiry" (Fontana and Frey 1994, p. 366). Either conversational context is valuable for eliciting copious amounts of information quickly from a large number of subjects (Denzin 1989, p. 22).

Interviews in naturalistic inquiry are usually unstructured but may become more structured as the investigation becomes more focused (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 269). Investigators can follow a set of guidelines rather than formal questions. Although some researchers refrain from predefining unstructured interviews, investigators can use techniques that maintain an informal atmosphere for conversation while staying close to the guidelines for the topic (Fontana and Frey 1994, p. 371). Babbie (1992) recommends that unstructured interviews be prepared with a general plan of inquiry and not a specific set of questions. The plan establishes a general direction for the interview conversation (p. 249).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest five steps in the interview process: deciding on whom to interview, preparing for the interview, initial moves (i.e., warm-up questions), pacing the interview and keeping it productive, and terminating the interview and gaining closure (p. 270). In the instance of a naturalistic inquiry, the selection of interviewees is purposive. The investigator is searching for respondents who can provide the most knowledgeable accounts of the
phenomenon. Familiarity with the case helps the researcher to identify the most significant players to interview initially. In her research, Louise Signal (1994) relied initially upon interviews with key informants, which she found useful for a public policy study. Key informant interviewing involves:

interviewing people with a significant role in, or understanding of, the situation being investigated. By interviewing a number of strategically placed individuals it is possible to understand a policy situation and, at the same time, develop the support of key people, possibly stimulating their interest in the issue. (p. 20)

Signal identified a few additional informants using the “snowball technique” of asking informants who else should be interviewed. If an individual was mentioned a number of times, Signal included him or her on the list of interviewees (p. 21). Babbie (1992) adds to these sampling options the “quota,” or selecting persons representing all different participation categories; and the “deviant case,” or selecting those who do not fit the regular pattern (p. 246).

Preparing for the interview, the investigator should at least be well informed about the subject and have a plan for the direction of the interview and the areas to be covered. This plan should consider the initial moves in the interview, for example beginning with grand-tour (i.e., broad, general) questions that allow the informant to become comfortable and to organize thoughts. The interview should be paced so that questions become more specific as the interview progresses. At the point of terminating the interview, the investigator should summarize the major points she believes have been made. This allows the informant to react to the investigator’s interpretation of the conversation and possibly to add more data (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 270).

Interviews are subject to problems originating with either the interviewer or the respondent. The interviewer may not ask the questions that elicit the appropriate response. She may be biased and not consider other points of view. The respondent may not cooperate or tell the truth. The respondent can alter responses to improve an image, avoid answering a question, or provide the information he thinks the interviewer wants to hear (Marshall and Rossman 1989, p. 82).
In the study of CPI, initial unstructured interviews were conducted with three members of the steering committee executive. (See Appendix A for samples of interview questions.) The chair, the chief executive officer, and the deputy chief executive officer were particularly helpful in identifying other key informants outside of CPI. "Deviant cases," which increased the understanding of CPI within the policy community, were also identified. Twenty-two unstructured interviews of approximately one-hour each were then conducted with officials from Industry Canada, members of the Information Highway Advisory Council, members of CANARIE, industry representatives, and members of other public interest groups. The early interviews were open-ended until the focus of the investigation became more evident. Interviews conducted with individuals outside of CPI, which occurred later, were more directed to exploring other perspectives and answering questions that arose from previous interviews.

Interviews were aimed at identifying the role of CPI from its own perspective and from that of other members of the policy community. Therefore it was necessary to find out who CPI believed were the decision-makers, the roles of other organizations in the process, and who had power in the private and government sectors. Subsequently, questions were directed toward identifying the access CPI had to these influential actors, what kind of relationship CPI had with influential actors and other organizations, how much capacity the government had for making policy, how many values CPI shared with influential actors, and whether consensus could be reached. Questions were designed to evaluate CPI’s potential for influence by assessing its resources, internal cohesion, institutional attributes, and policy strategies (Skogstad 1996). Interview questions varied with the role of the individual being interviewed as well as with the direction that the inquiry was taking according to data from participant observation and data from previous interviews. Interviews were approximately one hour in duration and concluded with a request for names of knowledgeable individuals who should be included in the study.

Some problems were encountered in attempts to elicit the desired information. In one instance, terminology provided a stumbling block in the initial interviews with CPI respondents. Reference to the “policy process” was generally misinterpreted or not understood at all and the
researcher replaced it with more general terms such as "steps" or "pattern of activities." A question requiring the drawing of a diagram of the information highway policy community evoked enthusiastic and detailed renderings but the visual representation often resulted in the respondent's pointing and referring to "this person" on the chart rather than names, which made the transcript less useful. Most of the non-CPI interviews took place in Ottawa, with no opportunity for follow-up interviews. The few remaining interviews with respondents outside of Toronto were conducted by telephone. However, since these interviews were the culmination of data collection, they satisfied the outstanding study queries.

Interviews were taped with the consent of respondents. These interviews were transcribed verbatim for analysis. Access to the full text offered the advantage of always having the source data available so that the researcher did not have to rely solely on summaries or interpretations from field notes. Furthermore, the entry of the transcript data into the NUD*IST analysis software meant that the original data were easily available and could be referenced throughout the analysis process. As discussed previously, field notes were taken during interviews to record supplementary observations. These notes were also added to the data in NUD*IST and provided one of the means of triangulating the data to ensure trustworthiness.

2.3.4.4 Documents

Merriam (1988) refers to documents as "all forms of data not gathered through interviews or observations" (p. 105). Documents such as meeting minutes, letters, newspaper articles, reports and discussion papers, and membership lists provide valuable substance to the data collection methods of participant observation and interviews. Signal (1994) contends that:

there are a number of advantages to using existing data. It can save valuable research time and money and, if the data are from official sources, they may have a high degree of credibility. Furthermore, this form of data causes very little disruption to the situation under study. (p. 17)
Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that documents are a stable source of information that is in the natural language of the setting, often legally unassailable and always available (p. 276).

In the CPI study, documents were gathered wherever available. CPI itself provided the major source for documentation. That included correspondence among members via the internet; internet correspondence among public interest groups; and correspondence, both internet and regular, with federal government ministers. CPI also created meeting minutes, flyers, position papers, responses to reports, interventions to the CRTC, and its seminal policy document *Future-Knowledge*. Further documentation was provided by the OLA and by respondents in the course of interviews. The government, through Industry Canada, the CRTC, and IHAC, released a number of related reports. These reports were gathered whenever possible. The potential problem of relying on the decisions of others as to what is collected and retained was avoided in this study because the researcher was part of the process and could collect documents from their sources as they were produced or could request them from respondents before much file weeding was done.

### 2.3.4.5 Recording Protocol

As previously discussed, raw data were gathered in the form of written field notes, tapes of meetings and interviews, and originals or copies of documents. All materials were logged; information about tapes was recorded in the audit trail file, and document information was input to the EndNote bibliographic database. Field notes and tapes were sent out for professional transcription. When returned, the transcripts were compared with the original recordings to verify the accuracy of the transcription. At that time, they were also edited in WordPerfect to conform to the structure required for input to NUD*IST qualitative analysis software. Raw data were broken into paragraph-length “text units,” each one identifying the speaker.
2.3.5 Data Analysis

Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 202) describe inductive data analysis as a process for making sense of field data. Data are constructions from the source material. Constructions constitute a "process of abstraction where units of analysis are derived from the 'stream of behavior'.” Analysis of extracted data leads to their reconstruction into “meaningful wholes” (p. 332). Resulting conceptual categories are subjective in the sense that they derive from the actors themselves and not from terms interjected by the investigator (p. 334). As previously noted, Creswell refers to stories or patterns developing from these detailed categories or themes.

2.3.5.1 Unitizing and Categorizing the Data

The inductive data analysis process consists of two steps: unitizing and categorizing the data. Unitizing or coding involves aggregating data into units that permit a precise description of relevant content characteristics. Each unit should have two characteristics: it should be heuristic, in the sense that it is aimed at some understanding or action that the investigator needs to have; and it should be the smallest piece of information that can stand by itself and be interpretable without additional information other than the broad context (p. 345).

Categorizing follows unitizing. In this process, as proposed by Glaser and Strauss's constant comparative method (1967), the unitized data are organized into categories identifying descriptive or inferential information about the unitized content. Sorting is based upon "look-alike characteristics" (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 202). Merriam (1988) states that categories should exhibit certain characteristics: they should be exhaustive, mutually exclusive, and independent and reflect the purpose of the research (p. 136).

The process of data analysis is systematic although it is not linear. Naturalistic practitioners generally adopt strategies similar to Glaser and Strauss's grounded theory. Investigators first must
scan data looking for categories of phenomena and relationships through which they can build working typologies and hypotheses. These typologies and hypotheses are subject to modification on the basis of subsequent information. Emerging categories are then compared to generate more hypotheses (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 335).

While recognizing that data collection, coding, and analysis are simultaneous and iterative, Lincoln and Guba (1995) suggest a simple process for constant comparison of the data. Beginning with a stack of unitized cards, the investigator notes the contents of the first card. She then selects the second card, notes its contents, and decides whether that card is similar to the first card. If it is, she places the second card with the first card; if it is not, she begins a second category. The investigator continues this process, adding cards to existing categories and creating new categories. Cards that do not seem to fit any category are placed in a miscellaneous pile for later review. Categories will emerge rapidly at first, but after about fifty to sixty cards have been processed, the rate of emergence diminishes significantly (p. 347).

When category piles contain about eight cards, the investigator can begin to delineate category properties and combine them to devise a covering rule. This provisional rule should be given a name, and the name written on another card and kept with the category cards. Then the rule and the cards should be reviewed to determine if the rule requires revision to more satisfactorily accommodate the cards. The investigator should watch for anomalies, conflicts, and other inadequacies. Once a category has a rule, new cards should be added only if they fit the rule.

These steps continue until all cards are exhausted. At that point, the entire category should be reviewed for overlap. “Categorization can be accomplished most cleanly when the categories are defined in such a way that they are internally as homogeneous as possible and externally as heterogeneous as possible” (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 349). Categories should also be inspected to see if they should be subsumed by other categories or subdivided. Original categories will be reduced as the investigator’s category definition and integration improve. Categories that are incomplete will require further investigation in the simultaneous data collection process. Categories

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that demonstrate a need for further data can be followed up using strategies such as extension (i.e., using the items as the basis of questions or guides); bridging (i.e., using known but disconnected items to make inquiries that will identify the connection; and surfacing (i.e., proposing and verifying the existence of new information that should be found in the field).

As categories become more integrated and their properties are tested, the exercise evolves into a development of the attributes of explanatory theory. The explanations that develop represent "a 'pattern' of interconnected thoughts or parts linked to a whole" that lead to a theory (Creswell 1994, p. 94). According to Glaser (1978), the goal of grounded theory is "to generate a theory that accounts for a pattern of behavior which is relevant and problematic for those involved" (p. 93).

The logic of this process remained fundamentally the same when using NUD*IST but adopted a different procedural form. Raw data were broken into text units that identified the speaker. (See Appendix B.) Data were coded into different categories (referred to as "nodes" in NUD*IST) as required. Entire documents were coded into a category, usually one reserved for basic data or types of data, such as a category reserved for interview transcripts. Eventually this meant, among other possibilities, that questions could be aimed at specific categories and comparisons could be made between categories. NUD*IST categories were set up for visual analysis in an inverted tree structure. (See Appendix C.) "Free" nodes that can be constructed independently from the tree were used to develop concepts. (See Appendix D.)

In order to make the decision to terminate data collection and processing, the investigation should meet a number of criteria: sources should be exhausted, categories should be saturated (no new properties are emerging and the same properties emerge continually in the data—Glaser, 1978, p. 53), regularities (patterns) should have emerged, and any new information should be "far removed" from the category cores. The investigator should also review the categories for any oversights (Lincoln and Guba 1985, p. 350).

Data analysis for material gathered about CPI and the information highway policy
community adhered to the process previously described of saturation of data categories and pattern development. Data were first organized into a structure according to “what I knew” (i.e., the information available from transcripts and documents). Data, in the form of whole documents and in lesser units such as interview questions and steering committee agenda items, were entered into categories in NUD*IST. They provided the basis from which to begin asking questions of the data. These categories were coded further according to more detailed concepts that began to arise from reading, questioning, and organizing the data.

The newly coded units were organized into distinct categories. At each iteration, memos were written to record ideas about the data, such as patterns arising from the data and unexpected discoveries in the data. Thus categories went from general structural information (e.g., interview categories) in which the data were first slotted, to categories that organized the data content (e.g., chronology of events), and finally to conceptual categories (e.g., relationships) built from the growing understanding of the data as recorded in the memos. These memos constituted the second half of the analysis structure, in the form of free nodes, as they evolved into the concepts of “what I found.”

2.3.5.2 Memos

While Lincoln and Guba (1985) mention the writing of memos as an appropriate strategy when conflicts arise in the data (p. 341), John Lofland and Lyn Lofland (1995) believe that creating memos or adopting a similar tool is of critical importance to the process of building theory. They define memos as “the written-out counterparts or explanations and elaborations of the coding categories” (p. 193) and quote Glaser’s (1978) description of memos as “the theorizing write-up of ideas about codes and their relationship as they strike the analyst while coding” (p. 83). Memo-writing, in effect, proceeds from comments written in field notes and increases with the coding of the data. Memos “become a larger and larger feature of your work, even as the range of topics with which they deal becomes narrower (i.e., codes become more focused)” (Lofland and Lofland
The purpose of memos is to develop an interrelated set of ideas that will form a coherent analysis. It is with these ideas, and not the raw data, that the investigator will ultimately work to develop her theory.

Lofland and Lofland (1995) suggest the use of visual representations of relationships through diagrams, matrices that display the patterns of topics, and concept charting as aids to understanding the phenomenon. They propose flow charting to visualize the order of elements in a process (p. 197). Lofland and Lofland also offer strategies for facilitating the flexible thinking required in data analysis. If thinking becomes blocked, questions can be rephrased with different word orders or new words. Different forms of diagrams can be drawn. Continued constant comparison of items for similarities and differences can stimulate ideas. Talking and listening to other analysts or drawing back from the details of the analysis can foster new ideas. Finally, the investigator avoids making judgments about the ultimate shape of the analysis for as long as possible (p. 202).

Memos created in NUD*IST accounted for a critical part of the study’s data analysis in moving the data from the raw, detailed state to a higher conceptual level. Strategies such as noting patterns and relationships between variables, noting frequencies, developing a matrix of events, designing network representations of process and relationships, exploring inconsistencies, and finally building the pieces into a logical, coherent whole, took place as part of the memoing process. It was also at this point that the researcher reviewed policy process and policy community theory to make comparisons and search for explanations for her findings. Using NUD*IST provided an additional benefit. The concepts in the form of memos could be maintained in a manner that kept them “attached” to the original data units. This feature provided a means for later verification of the soundness of the theorizing.
2.3.6 Closure

The initiation of activities related to information highway policy making coincided with the plan for this study. Research efforts began at the point that CPI and the Information Highway Advisory Council (IHAC) were created and concluded at the point of the release of the government’s response to IHAC’s phase 1 report, a period of 2 ½ years. The study spanned the most conspicuous and relevant period of formal policy-making activity for the information highway. The final reports provided concrete and official evidence against which to measure CPI’s effectiveness. The conclusion of the research coincided with the researcher’s departure from Toronto for a few months, which provided a simple exit from her participation on the CPI steering committee.

2.4 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Demonstrating trustworthiness in naturalistic inquiries is a necessary step in ensuring the accuracy of the depiction of the phenomenon (Creswell 1994; Kirk and Miller 1986; Lofland and Lofland 1995). Eisenbeis (1992) quotes Goldhor as stating that the qualitative case study “maximizes validity [i.e., trustworthiness] by increasing the number of variables on which information is secured and by the depth of analysis it tends to produce, especially with regard to an understanding of the pattern of cause and effect” (p. 79).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) are thorough in their treatment of methods for establishing trustworthiness. They suggest that field journals should be maintained. These journals consist of logs of daily activities, reflexive musings, and methodological decisions, forming part of an audit trail. Credibility is enhanced by prolonged engagement in the field so that the investigator knows the culture, has built trust with the subjects, and has tested for misinformation. Persistent observation means that the investigator has a better opportunity for identifying the characteristics and elements most relevant to the problem and for focusing on them while removing irrelevancies. Triangulation through the use of multiple sources, methods, and theories assists in confirming
credibility. Peer debriefing probes the investigator’s biases and helps in the exploration and interpretation of the data. Referential adequacy (archiving a part of the data for use after tentative findings have been reached) confirms the raw data’s fit with the findings. Finally, allowing subjects of the investigation to peruse a draft of the study (referred to as member checks) is important in establishing credibility.

Naturalistic investigators also identify two positivistic criteria that they claim are less relevant to naturalistic inquiries: transferability (external validity) and reliability. Merriam (1988) asserts that generalizing does not make sense because the investigator is interested in understanding the particular in depth rather than “what’s generally true of many” (p. 173). The reader, considering her local condition, can then decide if the case applies to her own situation. The second criterion, reliability, is not measured in naturalistic inquiries because “human behavior is never static” (p. 170). The exact conditions of one naturalistic study cannot be reproduced; new human situations are never entirely the same as past situations. Situations are uncontrolled and complex and vary even in similar situations. However, the depth of analysis and the thick description make it possible for researchers to consider the similarities of one study to make comparative judgements with other studies.

A number of the above techniques were employed to strengthen trustworthiness in the study of CPI. The 2 ½ years over which the research extended allowed the researcher to build considerable knowledge about the case. A field journal was kept along with logs of research activities, thoughts, and methodological decisions. Data were organized for the purpose of an audit trail as previously described. Coding terms were defined and recorded in the audit file for later reference to increase their reliability. Testing for intercoder reliability was not attempted because no other researcher was available who knew the area of research well. Moreover, as coding continued and the picture became clearer, coding terms changed. As an alternative check, three transcripts were recoded to ensure that coding was consistent.

Statement validity rules were adapted from Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 267) to assess
the relative value of information provided by respondents. Rules included the following:

A statement is valid if:

1. It was mentioned by more than one informant or mentioned by one and not contradicted by others.
2. It was provided by an informant who was knowledgeable and/or close to the event.
3. It was a ‘hard fact’ (e.g., an official document).
4. It could be triangulated via several independent sources or confirmed by more than one instrument.

The minimum criterion for acceptance of a statement was that it was made by more than one informant or by one and not contradicted by others. The other three criteria—a knowledgeable respondent, hard facts, and triangulated sources—carried more weight, with triangulation being particularly convincing. These rules were tempered with caution against accepting every statement that met the rules, to guard against situations such as respondents’ providing the organizational position (i.e., the “company line”) rather than what they have observed.

Triangulation was practised using a combination of methods: participant observation, key informant interviews, and documentation. Data gathering also involved multiple sources from CPI, the government, the private sector, and other public interest groups. Confirmation from multiple sources provided a second means of triangulation. A further validation of trustworthiness was undertaken through a member check of the dissertation draft by two members of the CPI steering committee. They confirmed that the document was a “fair reflection” of the situation.

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4 Thus unattributed statements related to general opinions from respondents should be understood to represent the opinion of most of the respondents.

5 Another respondent agreed to take part in a member check but did not provide any feedback.
2.5 ETHICAL CONCERNS

In their discussion of ethics in sociological and anthropological research, Lofland and Lofland (1995) assert that too much can be made of ethical questions. They argue that "the fieldwork situation is no more (although certainly no less) difficult ethically than everyday life," especially if the investigator has entered into voluntary agreements and relations with subjects of "essentially equal power" (p. 64). However, a few steps can be taken to ensure that these basic agreements are made and understood by all parties. Merriam (1988, p. 179) suggests that problems that may arise during a study include that of the researcher becoming involved in the situation, problems of confidentiality, and problems of anonymity. (See also Cassell and Jacobs 1987.)

In the study of CPI, a number of steps were taken to alleviate ethical concerns and to conform to the human subjects protocol of the University of Toronto. Participants were informed either orally or in writing (see Appendix E) of the intent of the study and were asked for permission to observe them and record their conversations. CPI, as an organization, was asked for its written consent to allow the researcher to observe activities, conduct interviews, and access documents. Members of the CPI steering committee also gave written consent for the recording and use of meeting data. Key informants were advised of the general intent of the research before they signed the consent form for recording and use of the interview data they were about to provide. (See Appendix F.)

Recorded information was professionally transcribed for the most part. The professional transcribing service provided written confirmation that it would comply with confidentiality requirements. (See Appendix G.) Data tapes and transcription files were stored in a secure environment and were available only for the researcher’s purposes.

The identity of participants in the study was masked as much as possible. The problem with a group such as CPI is that it was unique in its particular policy area and therefore the identity of its members was difficult to conceal. While readers involved with CPI may recognize individuals
in the study, position titles and numeric identifiers only were used to maintain as much privacy as possible in the wider audience. In the case of other respondents, because the interviews were spread over a number of groups and in some instances only one person per group was interviewed, these respondents were identified by their position, their group affiliation, and their numeric identifier. (See Appendix H for a glossary of organizations participating in the study.)

2.6 CONCLUSION

Chapter 2 presented the methodology used for the study of CPI. Research was conducted from the perspective of the naturalistic paradigm, which attempts to deal with the complexity of human problems in their social context. Qualitative methodology provided the foundation for the study. Grounded theory guided the collection and analysis of data. The extended-case method, which both explores social processes and suggests simultaneous reference to existing literature during data collection and analysis, supplemented the grounded theory. This research represented the examination of one phenomenon: that is, the case of CPI in the federal information highway policy community.

The data were gathered through participant observation, key informant interviews, and review of documents. These data were entered into NUD*IST for coding and analysis. The trustworthiness of the data was demonstrated by strategies such as keeping logs of activities, thick description, triangulation of sources and instruments, member checks of the manuscript, and a prolonged engagement in the field. Ethical concerns were addressed by informing participants of the intent of the study, by asking their permission for the use of data that they provided, and by using position titles and numeric identifiers to avoid recognition.

6 Throughout the analysis chapters, the citations refer to either “R,” interview respondents, or “C,” steering committee meetings.
CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the public policy theories that constitute the theoretical framework for this study. The wealth of scholarly knowledge related to public policy provides a solid foundation for a study of information policy making for the information highway in Canada. These theories assist in capturing the different aspects of a complex situation and making judgements about the effectiveness of Canada's Coalition for Public Information (CPI).

In particular, Chapter 3 presents the two primary theories that inform the examination of CPI and its role in the policy process. The policy community work of William Coleman and Grace Skogstad and of Paul Pross forms the basic framework for describing the policy community and for studying the relationships within that community. It also provides a means for judging the relative potential for influence amongst vying groups. The policy process as described by John Kingdon furnishes a model for identifying and analyzing the temporal and procedural aspects of the information highway policy phenomenon. The policy process model also is used to assess CPI's capacity for influence.

The information highway policy area, like many others, was one in which there were trade-offs to be made between public and private interests. At a fundamental level, the decisions that were made ultimately reflected value choices. The selection of one set of values over another depended upon a complex melange of factors inherent in the composition of the policy community and the events of the policy process. Concepts such as values, needs, and rights, public and private goods, the distribution of power between low and high incentive groups, and the problem of "free riders" contributed to building an understanding of CPI's role in the information highway.
policy process. The policy community and policy process models then provided the framework for the research.

3.2 PUBLIC POLICY

The decisions that guide a nation at every level are rooted in public policies, from industrial strategies and immigration quotas to traffic regulations. Information policy and the issue of the information highway also fall within the definition of public policy. W.I. Jenkins defines public policy as:

a set of interrelated decisions taken by a political actor or group of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where these decisions should, in principle, be within the power of these actors to achieve. (Jenkins 1978, p. 15)

Policy "consists of political bargaining in complex and crowded arenas" (Jenkins 1978, p. 3). According to Carolyn Tuohy (1982), the issues are economically, politically, and ethically complex:

Economic markets are characterized by externalities, barriers to mobility, and transaction costs. The political process is marked by a diversity of interests, constituencies, and jurisdictions. Ethical considerations require the reconciliation of conflicting rights, duties, and values, and a confrontation of the political and economic effects of unequal endowments. (p. 562)

Gilles Paquet (1991) also refers to policy making as being "a complex, messy and ill-understood process that evolves through time as participants, perspectives, situations, and base values change" (p. 173). The fact that values do change over time is an important concept to grasp in relation to public policy. Policy decisions are not final. They represent a temporal effort to recognize and deal with a problem.
Deborah Stone (1988) describes public policy objectives as “forged in political conflict” and “not handed down on a stone tablet” (p. 53). Bruce Doern (1983) describes policy change as starting with some kind of aggressive policy advocacy sometimes informed by analysis, sometimes in opposition to “objective facts,” and sometimes propelled by an affinity for both current facts and a preferred idea or future state (p. 40).

From a procedural perspective, John Kingdon (1984) states that public policy making may be described most simplistically as a set of processes which include at least:

1. the setting of the agenda,
2. the specification of alternatives from which a choice is to be made,
3. an authoritative choice among those specified alternatives, in a legislative vote or a presidential decision, and
4. the implementation of the decision. (p. 3)

Jenkins’s definition of public policy guides this study. The other authors bring observations to the discussion that enhance the understanding of the intricacies of making public policy.

3.3 CULTURAL CONTEXT: VALUES, NEEDS, AND RIGHTS

Some of the complexity of public policy making can be accounted for by the set of values or beliefs influencing decision making. Sam Overman and Anthony Cahill (1990) define values as “those characteristics or principles by which we consider something desirable or worthwhile” (p. 804). Leslie Pal (1992) describes value assertions as statements of ethics (how things should be). Political scientists also refer to needs and rights. The terms values, needs, and rights are often used interchangeably by political scientists. The positions taken by members of a policy community usually promote the values of each member and help to account for conflict in policy debates.
3.3.1 Values

Belief systems comprise values that individuals or groups maintain as an expression of their perceived needs. For instance, people have a world view that determines the distribution of goods:

If one conceives of property and value as individually created, then one is likely to favour policies that respect individual freedom to acquire and use things as one wishes. If one conceives of property and value as socially created, one is more likely to favour redistributive policies that guarantee everyone some access to socially created goods. (Stone 1988, p. 47)

Thus, community "welfare" values are demonstrated in social services such as old age pensions, unemployment insurance, and health benefits, whereas "liberty" values are demonstrated in the right of individuals to own enterprises and capital.

Public ownership of services and institutions such as housing and education in Europe or Canada illustrates the government response to public demands to recognize collective values. In the United States, the state has maintained a limited role in such services, making that country different from many industrialized countries. Americans value free enterprise and private initiative (equality and liberty). They view government as endangering liberty, and they do not feel that governments should "provide people with things they can provide for themselves" (King 1973, p. 418).

As exemplified above, not everyone holds the same values. For example, not everyone agrees that air pollution control is in the public interest (Lindblom 1968, p. 17). When values conflict, as in the case of pollution control, policy issues arise. Policy formulation is one mechanism for resolving value conflicts (Overman and Cahill 1990). While values limit the scope of change possible for policies by imposing boundaries, new policies can modify social relationships and alter the values and beliefs that support the social structure in the direction of the changing preferences (Wildavsky 1979). Thus, those who began by opposing pollution control
may gradually be convinced to support or at least tolerate such control according to new policy developments.

Canadian public policy is based on liberal values from British and American influences that are apparent in our economic system. Our public policy also contains elements of conservatism (especially prominent in Quebec as a method of preserving the culture) and socialism, evident in public ownership and health insurance schemes (Manzer 1985, p. 6). Despite the fact that the Canadian economy is essentially capitalist, we maintain a strong adherence to collectivist norms and have had less confidence in the promises of capitalism than the United States (Doern 1983, p. 25). Doern states:

Though linked to the values of liberalism and individualism, there has always existed in Canada an ambivalence about the idea of efficiency inherent in capitalism. The numerous rough edges of Canadian capitalism have always been moderated by an inclination to use the state. (p. 25)

Doern identifies dominant values in Canada: the enduring concern for efficiency, individual freedom, equity, stability, redistribution, national unity and identity, and regional sensitivity (Doern 1983, p. 35). However, the values of foreign economic interests, such as the United States, also play a critical role in influencing the federal and provincial governments because of their strong presence in Canada and their influence on major economic interest groups. Both foreign ownership and trade dependence are important political and policy issues (Doern 1983, p. 27).

In the case of the information highway, opposing values related to public and private goods distinguished groups like CPI from private sector interests. The debate over access pitted the public interest groups' vision of guaranteed universal access to information and communication, for fostering an informed and educated public, against the private sector's vision of open competition, for developing an unsubsidized profit-generating information highway.
3.3.2 Needs

Ronald Manzer (1974) relates “needs as political goods” to Abraham Maslow’s classification of basic human needs. Manzer identifies five political goods—welfare, security, fraternity, equality and liberty—which he asserts correspond with Maslow’s needs: physiological, safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. Political need fulfilment follows a hierarchical progression from basic welfare (physiological) needs such as to be fed, to security (safety) needs to be free from danger, and to needs for fraternity (belonging) in human communities. Thereafter, humans strive to meet equality (esteem) needs as participants in the community, and to attain liberty (self-actualization) needs to develop to their full potential. Manzer states that political goods are comparative and that people weigh one need against another according to the situation.

Political needs were used to argue for universal access in the information highway policy debates. Most participants in policy discussions agreed that the information highway would become the primary means of communication and information creation and sharing for all citizens. Therefore, public interest groups, including CPI, argued that not guaranteeing universal access to the information highway would deny many citizens the opportunity to fulfill the basic political needs for fraternity, equality, and liberty.

3.3.3 Rights

Rights are defined as “claim[s] made against the state authorities of a political community for some specified kind of treatment to be accorded to individuals or groups” (Smiley in Manzer 1985, p. 145). They are a means of “protecting or ensuring a way of life” (Elkins 1989, p. 701). Stanley Benn notes (1967) that the rights of life, liberty, and property defined by John Locke have been expanded in contemporary times to include human rights such as the right to an education,

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1 For a detailed description see Abraham Maslow’s Motivation and Personality (1954).
health care, and a defined standard of living as indicated by the United Nations' *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (pp. 195-99). Deborah Stone believes that the dysfunction between moral and legal rights drives the system of rights: “the legal rights of real political systems are energized, constrained, and constantly challenged by normative meanings of rights” (Stone 1988, p. 267).

Government assumes a distributive role in the allocation of rights, manifested as goods and services (e.g., health care). This distribution may not always achieve equality. As Lawrence Brown (1978) states, “the effort to achieve equality for some may inadvertently produce or aggravate inequalities, not to mention other social costs, for others” (p. 518).

David Elkins (1989) defines collective rights as “rights which are not phrased in terms of individuals or categories of individuals but of collectivities or communities” (p. 701). He describes the distinctions between individual rights and community rights in relation to Canada. Individual rights relate to benefits which accrue to a specific individual, with the “externalities” limited to the establishment of precedents for another individual’s ability to exercise these same rights. Collective or community rights, on the other hand, may convey benefits on individuals, but those benefits will “spill over” onto a specific community, although not necessarily to all individuals, and perhaps not even equally to all members of the community (p. 702).

The Canadian Constitution contains several rights which are collective in nature. These rights pertain to community rights and legislative overrides (of individual rights) such as linguistic or aboriginal rights. Negative rights, enacted by legislative overrides, are rights “to be exempted from some other right” (Elkins 1989, p. 702). For example, Newfoundland can restrict the right of workers from outside the province to work in Newfoundland where the rate of employment is below the national standard. Negative rights also shield community rights which have a historical basis, such as the rights of the French community. Elkins concludes that the community rights culture is ubiquitous in Canada, at both the federal and provincial levels. Community rights are congruent with "‘the public enterprise culture’ of Canada as distinct from the private
enterprise orientation of the American culture and the Constitution” (Hardin in Elkins 1989, p. 708).

In the case of the information highway, CPI and other public interest groups fought for the right of communities, such as those in rural and remote areas, to receive the same basic level of access and service, without higher costs, as subscribers in urban locations. They also fought for special consideration for public institutions. While the individual rights of the private sector prevailed, the final policy included some concessions to schools, libraries, and hospitals.

3.4 ECONOMIC AND POWER THEORIES

3.4.1 Perspectives on Public and Private Goods

Interest groups vie for benefits from the government, generally in the form of public or private goods. Réjean Landry (1990) defines public goods as “goods available to everyone” and private goods as “goods that may be directed at some individuals only” (p. 295-96). Mancur Olson (1965) places the responsibility for providing public or collective goods with governments and defines public goods as:

any good such that if any person Xi in a group X1,...,Xi,...,Xn consumes it, it cannot feasibly be withheld from the others in that group... those who do not purchase or pay for any of the public or collective goods cannot be excluded or kept from sharing in the consumption of the good, as they can where noncollective goods are concerned. (p. 14)

David Weimer and Aidan Vining (1992) refer to public and private goods in terms of rivalrous/nonrivalrous and excludable/nonexcludable characteristics. Private goods are rivalrous in consumption: “what one person consumes cannot be consumed by anyone else” (p. 42). For example, a loaf of bread purchased by one individual is no longer available to other individuals.
Private goods are also excludable in ownership: "some particular person has exclusive control over the good" (p. 42). The baker may do with his product as he wishes.

Public goods, on the contrary, are nonrivalrous and nonexcludable. They are nonrivalrous in the sense that "more than one person can derive consumption benefits from a given level of supply at the same time" (p. 42). Economist Richard Zeckhauser (1970) argues that information is a:

superb example of a public good. Its consumption by one individual in no way reduces the amount that is available to be consumed by another....As a public good, information is efficiently provided at zero marginal cost. (p. 113)

Public goods are nonexcludable when "it is physically or legally impractical for one person to maintain exclusive control over [their] use" (Weimer and Vining 1992, p. 42). Weimer and Vining suggest that the mobility of fish in the ocean creates a nonexcludable resource for fishermen. Information has traditionally been viewed in the same manner. Gary Byrd (1989) demonstrates that information does not behave like a conventional commodity and is not easily controlled. For example, more than one person can be in possession of the same information. The owner retains the information even after he sells it, and can resell it. Thus, the supply is never exhausted (p. 195). One of the fears of public interest groups in the information highway policy community was that the private sector would manage to redefine information as a private good and use information highway technology to control the flow of information to industry’s benefit, thus forcing information to act as a commodity and restricting access.

A major problem for groups according to economists, is the problem of “free riders” (Landry 1990, Olson 1965, Weimer and Vining 1992). Landry defines the free ride as “the phenomenon whereby a group has an incentive to capture a benefit for which it can avoid assuming the production costs” (p. 311). Olson elaborates:
Though all of the members of the group therefore have a common interest in obtaining these collective benefits, they have no common interest in paying the cost of providing that collective good. Each would prefer that the others pay the entire cost, and ordinarily would get any benefit provided whether he had borne part of the cost or not. (p. 21)

Doern (1983) also identifies the “free rider” as a problem (“if others pay to advance your interests while advancing their own, why pay?”) that causes inequities between the private sector and public interest groups (p. 77):

The free rider notion basically suggests that producer groups in industry and agriculture have far greater incentives and capability in organizing to exert pressure about a government policy essential to their livelihood than do broader labour, consumer, health, safety and environmental groups. (Doern 1983, p. 78)

Producer groups can more easily exclude free riders by methods such as imposing dues or attracting members with offers of individual services. Public interest groups bear the brunt of free riders when they attempt to attract both members and financial resources in the pursuit of public goods. Free riders provide one explanation for CPI’s difficulties building its membership and financial base.

3.4.2 Low and High Incentive Groups

Theorists have begun to investigate the probability of interest group success in influencing the policy agenda, sometimes with surprising results. Réjean Landry (1990) uses public choice theory to categorize interest groups according to low or high incentives for lobbying coupled with low or high costs for the activity. Low-incentive groups tend to be less organized groups seeking public goods whereas high-incentive groups tend to be organized associations pursuing private
goods.\(^2\) Low incentive groups are composed of individuals who are part of a diffuse group such as consumers and taxpayers. Landry considers such groups to be high-cost coalitions, since their startup costs are greater than their anticipated benefits. For example, the general lack of strong public opposition to local telephone rate increases in Canada (a yearly increase of $2 per month, over three years) exemplified low-incentive/high-cost groups. The public was neither organized to defeat such decisions nor convinced that the cost of the fight would be justified in individual paybacks.

Conversely, those whose incomes may be affected by government policy, "owners of production factors—workers, entrepreneurs, professionals—have a greater incentive to support the organizational costs required for the presentation of their policy demands to government" (Landry 1990, p. 294). Joined together in lobbying efforts, for example as groups of entrepreneurs, they form low-cost/high-incentive coalitions. These coalitions have the particular advantage of operating their lobbying activities as a "byproduct" of the ongoing activities of the groups; consequently, they avoid the majority of the startup costs for lobbying.

Olson (1965), like Landry, accepts the "byproduct" theory. He states that "the common characteristic which distinguishes all of the large economic groups with significant lobbying organizations is that these groups are also organized for some other purpose" (p. 132). For large economic organizations such as labour unions, farm organizations, and professional organizations, lobbying is often an activity that plays a secondary role to other activities of more value to individual members. Professional organizations such as medical associations offer their members individual benefits—such as medical journals, continuing education, conferences, and

\(^{2}\)Doern (1983) divides interest groups between producer and collective rights groups, which are comparable to Landry's high and low incentive groups. Producer groups such as business, agriculture, and the professions are composed of relatively well-defined sectors. Collective rights groups such as labour unions, consumer and environmental groups, women, and students draw from a broader segment of society. The public is inclined to differentiate between the two groups by associating economic policy pursuits with producer groups and social policy pursuits with collective rights groups.
defence against malpractice suits. Members are thus attracted by collective and noncollective benefits and also by “subtle forms of coercion”: for example, doctors who are not part of a medical association leave themselves without peer support in the event of lawsuits (p. 140).

Business groups constitute the largest number of lobbies. These lobbies are highly organized. Because they normally each represent a business sector consisting of a few industries with similar values and interests, it is much easier for businesses to organize into associations. Business interest groups are often successful in their lobbying efforts by virtue of being the only organized force approaching the government. Not surprisingly, low-cost coalitions tend to be more effective at influencing policy makers. They are more organized, better funded, and more motivated than high-cost coalitions (Olson 1965, p. 141).

However, business groups in the aggregate, such as the Chamber of Commerce, are not as successful partly because they represent a larger spectrum of viewpoints, and must therefore dilute the positions of the organization to satisfy all members, and because at a national level they may be opposed by other large organizations of equal power—for example, the Chamber versus organized labour (Olson 1965, p. 141-7). Furthermore, these groups may share values and ideas such as the business sector belief in efficiency, profit, free market, and a suspicion of labour, but they are not a “homogeneous mass” (Doern 1983, p. 82). There may be conflicts between large and small producers, foreign-owned and domestic producers, or producers from different regions.

Landry maintains that “policy-makers and organized groups have an incentive structure biased toward private goods and away from public goods” such that there is a transfer of wealth from high-cost to low-cost interest groups (p. 296). When low-cost coalition lobbies approach the government, they are interested in policies that will benefit them—that is, those that will provide them with private goods.

Organized interest groups have no incentive to pursue lobbying activities that would yield outcomes that are pure public goods, that is goods available to everyone. Organized groups have an incentive to free ride at the expense of the
rest of the society. (p. 295)

Landry summarizes the results of his research, a content analysis of all the public statutes adopted by the Quebec National Assembly between 1960 and 1985. He found that a very small percentage (13-15%) of benefits from this legislation was directed to the public. Owners of production factors benefited the most. Landry's research also presented him with an unanticipated result. The ruling party, regardless of its ideological stance, from social democratic to conservative (i.e., Parti libéral du Québec, Parti québécois, or Union nationale), did not alter the balance of benefits favouring entrepreneurs. Landry concludes that the "political market feeds the private market," rewarding owners with benefits "so massive that one cannot associate the private market to a free market. It is a market regulated through governmental interventions" (p. 309).

Landry shows that the private sector can benefit from its self-interest when organizing and supporting political action. By contrast, public interest groups face greater startup costs and more difficulty organizing. These factors help to explain both the external and internal challenges with which CPI had to contend.

3.4.3 Exercising Power

Charles Lindblom (1968) states that citizens give the power for policy making to a small number of government officials, whom he designates as "proximate" (i.e., immediate) policy makers. Proximate policy makers are individuals who can undertake the tasks of:

initiating, vetoing, coordinating, planning, establishing general constraints on the alternatives to be considered, widening the range of choice, stimulating new policy ambitions, adjudicating conflicting intentions, and controlling through the purse-strings. (p. 31)

In Canada, this power resides with the executive: the Prime Minister, the Cabinet and the
bureaucracy (Doern 1983, p. 30). As Doern states, “There is of course little dispute that the executive branch of Cabinet-Parliamentary government is the fulcrum of policy making” (p. 31).  

Both Lindblom (1968) and Hartle (in Doern 1983) describe policy making as a game. Power is shared by a number of people and policy is made “through the complex processes by which these persons exert power or influence over each other” (Lindblom 1968, p. 29). As Lindblom perceives it,

The play of power in policy making is not a slam-bang imposition of will on will; it is instead...a game-like process in which power is exerted according to man-made rule...the power of various social groups like the rich or the whites is less a determinant of policy outcomes than itself a result of the rules that men have made to govern the policy-making process. (p. 34)

Lindblom describes the play of power in terms of the policy analysis process as undertaken by specialists. Policy analysis acts as an instrument in the power game, providing a vehicle for cooperation and persuasion toward agreement. Hartle, on the other hand, finds that the game playing is more related to the self-interests of the groups involved in a “series of interlocking games. the special-interest group game, the political game, the bureaucratic game and the media game” (Hartle in Doern 1983, p. 144).

Theodore Lowi claims that “the most significant fact about government is that government coerces” (1972, p. 299). The state, through public policy, has the legitimate right to coerce “a majority over a minority, or vice versa...one region’s preferences over another, or...one class or group over another”(Doern 1983, p. 35). Governments attempt to control society and individual behaviour through the “instruments” of exhortation, regulation, taxation, or public ownership. According to Doern, politicians weigh the political “price” of each option:

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3Parliament and the legislatures represent public opinion, legislate, oppose, and criticize, but they do not initiate policy. The courts interpret law. Legislators enact legislation and the judicial makes policy rulings.
For example, if spending is denied them as an instrument because the political costs of spending are too high, they will probably regulate *more* not less because they have to do *something* (p. 89)

Whatever the situation, the critical factor remains that politicians *cannot be seen to be doing nothing* (p. 89).

In policy power plays, interest groups must be able to influence proximate policy makers’ decisions. Interest group leaders receive respect:

not because they wield power but because they are perceived to be representatives of interests entitled (by the accepted norms or rules governing the few activists) to be heard and to be accorded consideration. (Lindblom 1968, p. 64)

Interest groups depend upon their authority as defined by their position in society, or other inducements such as money (p. 39).

There should be no doubt that interest groups, particularly cohesive producer groups, exert a significant influence both in preserving the *status quo* and in promoting manageable change favourable to their interests. (Doern 1983, p. 80)

An interest group leader must be influential enough to bring his policy agenda to the forefront and to convince government officials to accept it. A combination of cooperation, persuasion, and influence constitutes the informal, behind-the-scenes “wheeling and dealing” (p. 93).

Doern states that many factors influence group tactics, including level of resources, expertise, and tactical concerns. When less influential groups cannot gain access to ministers and senior officials, they take their appeals to the media and mount public campaigns. This is especially true for “social” groups, who have more difficulty reaching and influencing proximate policy makers because of deficiencies in any or all of these areas. For example, in the late 1980s,
the Canadian government did not act upon the dioxin problem. Greenpeace and other environmental groups resorted to the press to exert pressure (Harrison and Hoberg 1991, p. 9). Even though their media campaign was successful, this type of strategy is generally a much less effective means of influencing policy. It is the tool of last resort when groups can find no other means of influencing policy makers.

Lindblom, Doern, Hartle, and Lowi explain influence in relation to whom a group represents. Interest groups employ inducements such as their economic resources and position in society to exercise power. This theoretical approach begins to explain why a private sector interest such as the Stentor Alliance would be more influential in the information highway policy community and a group like CPI would be less influential. However, the focus on the power relationships alone does not fully account for the policy outcome.

### 3.5 INSTITUTIONAL MODELS

According to Coleman and Skogstad (1990a), institutions are a major consideration in public policy making in Canada. "The structural (i.e., institutional) characteristics of sectoral-level organizations, whether these be state agencies or societal actors, constrain the options available to policymakers and reinforce particular values and beliefs in the policy process" (p. 15). Sectoral institutions are organized into policy communities of state actors and other organized interests and together they shape public policy (Coleman and Skogstad 1990d, p. 312).

#### 3.5.1 Policy Community Theory

Stephen Wilks and Maurice Wright (1987) define a policy community as "a group of actors or potential actors... whose community membership is defined by a common policy focus" (p. 299). Policy community members are linked by epistemic concerns, a common interest in a policy
focus, or some material interest that encourages regularized contact (Howlett and Ramesh 1995, p. 129). For instance, the banking, fishing, and poverty sectors each are represented by their own policy communities. According to Coleman and Skogstad (1990c), policy communities should be studied within the context of broader macro-level determinants such as political, economic, and ideological viewpoints, as well as within the context of the society's history.

Paul Pross (1992) has developed a model of the policy community that describes the relative position of policy actors according to their potential for policy-making influence (Figure 3-1). He describes the policy community as consisting of two segments: the sub-government, which is the policy-making body of government agencies and institutionalized interest groups including the minister in charge, senior officials, and representatives from a few interest groups and other affected agencies; and the attentive public, a less clearly defined segment of players who attempt to influence policies but are not regular participants in the process (p. 120). This model offers a means for identifying community members and for describing the relative position of policy community institutions to decision makers.

Cabinet and government agencies are situated at the centre, in the sub-government of the policy community, and both are very powerful. According to Pross, Cabinet is virtually inaccessible to groups. Consequently groups focus on participants proximate to Cabinet such as aides to influential ministers. Ministers are expected to take the concerns of their community to Cabinet and they may count among their advisors members from the community.

To influence government agencies, groups must understand the institutional framework of the agency—for example, how much power it has, how it works, and who its rivals are. Pross states that government bureaucracies do not like conflict or unprofessional behaviour, and thus groups must decide whether they want to embarrass policy makers to expand public support or work quietly behind the scenes (pp. 147-53). Groups must be prepared to undertake institutional

*For accounts of research in these policy community sectors see Coleman and Skogstad (1990c).*
Figure 3-1  The Policy Community


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functions because “a good deal of emphasis will be placed on formal research and analysis of policy options, and on written presentation of group positions” (p. 149).

Members of the attentive public do not have the privileges of access to policy makers. If a group from the attentive public is opposed to prevailing trends, it is even more likely to be excluded from access to the sub-government (p. 121). Pross describes relations between the sub-government and the attentive public as “more volatile.” The attentive public is more prepared to challenge the status quo and less inclined to accept the norms of the sub-government (p. 159). Pross refers to the attentive public as “the forum for exploring and testing new ideas and new approaches without disrupting the stability that is so important to charter members of the sub-government” (p. 160).

Homeshaw (1995) found in her science policy study that Pross’s distinction between the sub-government and the attentive public helped identify those who made significant decisions and those who influenced decisions (p. 525). However, she concluded that Pross’s model, although appealing in its simplicity, should include three additional distinct categories (p. 529): an executive core (central core actors who come together only at times of “crucial resource decision-making”), a coordinating sub-government (an agency, such as an advisory council, that oversees policy stages), and an international attentive public (network of organizations that interact at the international level to influence policy but do not have “sovereign powers or rights”). Thus, Pross’s model required expansion to five categories of actors to describe the science policy community in Australia.

Homeshaw also considered useful Coleman and Skogstad’s approach to policy-making activities that crossed functional boundaries and moved between public and private areas. Using this model, she could analyze actions in the science policy community that are not usually widely debated. Moreover, policy network categorization was useful in identifying changes in patterns of action (p. 525).
In this study, policy community theory offered a means for identifying the actors in the community and for establishing their relationships. In combination with interest group characteristics, the model provided the tools for specifying CPI's position in the community.

3.5.2 Policy Network Theory

A policy network describes how a policy community operates. It is characterized by "the relationships among the particular set of actors that form around an issue of importance to the policy community" (Coleman and Skogstad 1990b, p. 26). This network of relationships determines the form the sub-government takes while dealing with a particular policy issue. Each type defines which stakeholders are included in the network and how power is divided among the stakeholders, thus presenting the opportunity to influence the direction the policy will take.

Coleman and Skogstad's typology of policy networks identifies three major categories: pluralist, closed, and state-directed. Pluralist networks exist as three types: pressure pluralism, where the authority of the state is fragmented (i.e., spread amongst departments), and interest groups are not fully developed, clientele pluralism, where state authority is dispersed or underdeveloped to the point that the state depends upon interest groups to participate in policy development; and parentela pluralism, where members of interest groups have dominant positions within the ruling political party. Closed networks occur in two situations: corporatist, where the state is strong and acts as a mediator between conflicting interest groups; and concertation, where a strong state agency shares policy formulation with an association representing a particular sector, such as the pulp and paper industry. State-directed networks occur where highly autonomous and coordinated state agencies exist alongside weak sectoral interest groups (pp. 27-29).

Policy networks are not permanent. Coleman and Skogstad describe the transformation of networks from one type to another as the social and political environment changes over time.
For example, Coleman (1990) traces the evolution of banking policy away from closed concertation toward pressure pluralism. The old system of collaboration between the federal government and the banking community was disrupted both by increased competition from domestic and foreign firms and by the number of government departments that had become involved in policy formulation (e.g., the Bank of Canada, the Canadian Deposit Insurance Corporation, the House Standing Committee on Finance, Trade and Economic Affairs).

Michael Howlett and Jeremy Rayner (1995) lend support to Coleman and Skogstad’s model in their study of the Canadian forestry industry. Howlett and Rayner extend policy community theory in their discussion of the working of policy networks and particularly in their finding that "networks are based on the exchange of valuable resources, such as information and influence between participants, and those who have little or nothing to exchange will usually be excluded" (p. 387). This material link leads to "regular and routinized interactions" among the players.

When the policy community and the policy network no longer agree on a dominant set of ideas, the community becomes "fractious." Howlett and Rayner hypothesize that three types of political tensions and conflict exist. The first, which is common in policy networks and unlikely to cause major policy change, is related to the material interests of players within the policy network and is usually resolved by redistributing benefits and resources. The second, which is also normal, occurs in the policy community and is related to changes in ideas about how policy should be made, its ends and goals. The third source of conflict is more unusual and occurs between the policy community and the policy network when community members demand a voice in the policy network. Howlett and Rayner state that the extent of change depends on the change in the knowledge or value bases within the community and the internal configuration of the network. In the forestry sector they found that some policy networks were able to stifle new visions (p. 388).

The forestry sector offers an interesting example of a policy community in which some
members of the attentive public want to be accepted into the network sub-government, without a great deal of success. According to Howlett and Rayner, the larger community is seen as "irrelevant" by the major actors, industry and government. Although the public has attempted to influence the forestry industry, the policy networks see public participation as "largely consultative" (p. 400). Superficially, network players exhibit "hostility and impatience with the vague generalities of many public submissions to timber management planning exercises" (p. 401) The industry uses the lack of technical expertise as the basis of its criticism, but Howlett and Rayner state that at a deeper level, "this attitude reflects a quite rational reluctance to admit anyone to the network who has nothing to exchange" (p. 401). Genuine participation on the part of environmental groups is impeded by their chronic lack of funds and overstretched capacity to monitor all the issues. Finally, "even with major licence applications, few organizations possess the expertise or can afford to hire the consultants needed to be involved at the same level as the licensee and the state" (p. 401).

Applying the policy network model to the information highway policy community brought the community into sharper focus and made more evident the obstacles that CPI faced.

3.5.3 Interest Group Theory

Paul Pross (1992) is interested in the role of pressure groups that interact with government institutions within policy communities, and the ability of pressure groups to influence policy making. Pross defines "pressure groups" as "organizations whose members act together to influence public policy in order to promote their common interest" (p. 2).³ Pressure groups

³Pross makes a distinction between "pressure groups" and "interest groups." He believes that interest groups are more likely to be involved in organizational activities of a non-political nature, with politics being a minor element of their mandate, while pressure groups exist to persuade government to their point of view. The distinction in Pross's definition appears to be rather fine when compared to CPI and other information policy interest groups. For the purposes of this study, the term "interest group" is used because the groups involved, for the most part, are not limited to lobbying activities. Furthermore, CPI by its own definition is an interest group.
represent a portion of the public that has the potential to mobilize if its interests are not met in public policy. In fact, the government has encouraged the creation of pressure groups for its own benefit. Pressure groups are expected to help government as a communication liaison between the community and authorities, to help build public support for government policies and programs, to administer some programs, and to engage in regulatory activities (p. 9). For its own purposes, a pressure group’s primary goal is to persuade government to accept its policy proposals by presenting logical, well-prepared arguments, by arousing the public, and by other activities that embarrass the government or deprive it of information (p. 3).

Determinants of successful advocacy may be measured through a set of institutional characteristics. A group must be knowledgeable about both the substantive issues and the policy-making process. It must be able to generate information about specific policies as well as to mobilize support for its positions and to maintain internal member cohesion. Furthermore, a group must have the capacity to lobby. All of these activities require both financial and human resources. Above all, a group’s degree of institutionalization is often critical to its success. Pross states that institutionalization is “a process through which an organization...acquires a system of values and becomes an institution...that is peculiarly competent to do a particular kind of work” (p. 95).

According to Pross, the policy process is highly bureaucratized and the most successful pressure groups know with whom they must communicate, what is the appropriate moment for actions, and how to communicate in a bureaucratic fashion (i.e., with briefs, working papers, and professional consultations, not demonstrations). Pross states that government officials encourage groups to develop their institutional capacity for the benefit of both parties. Groups are also encouraged to form coalitions. The aggregation of groups enhances their legitimacy and allows the government to interact with one group rather than many (p. 43). Such interaction is important to government officials: “because they deal with complex, highly technical matters, they often depend on the information resources of the groups they are meant to control” (p. 136).

Pross suggests a typology of institutional characteristics for evaluating the potential
efficacy of a pressure group and for explaining its role in the policy community. These characteristics contribute to determining the credibility of a group in the community and its ability to work with bureaucracies. Credibility is a determinant of influence and ultimately "perceptions of influence affect how individual groups are treated by the media, officials, politicians, the public, and other groups" (p. 93).

In building his typology, Pross considered the politically significant characteristics emerging from the internal life of the organization which a group can exploit to bring pressure to bear on the policy process (group characteristics), and characteristics developed as a result of attempts to influence public policy (policy capacity). Group characteristics include membership, resources, organizational structure, and group outputs. Policy capacity consists of three components: the strategic ability to identify, articulate, and agree upon the organization's public policy goals and how to attain them; knowledge of both substantive matters in the policy debate and the government policy process, as well as an ability to express that knowledge meaningfully in the policy debate; and the ability to mobilize the group's resources to pressure policymakers. Pross included luck as a final, but not inconsequential, indicator of policy success (pp. 100-102).

Ultimately, Pross adapted these characteristics with the corporatist typology of institutional characteristics. His categories included membership, resources, organizational structure, and outputs (p. 100) When a group is fully institutionalized, it is effective in establishing internal agreement and communicating the wishes of its membership. The group also has developed the strategic capacity to forecast, plan, and adapt to changes. It can regularly mobilize its membership for routine activities and is in ongoing contact and cooperation with other organizations (p. 105)

The identification of institutional characteristics was fundamental to building an understanding of CPI in the policy community. This model made it possible to describe CPI's strengths and weaknesses in relation to other actors in the community. Integrated with policy community and network models, it strengthened the emerging picture of CPI's position in the
3.6 POLICY PROCESS MODELS

3.6.1 Rational Model of the Policy Process

Policy process theories in the past have been dominated by the rational process model. This model attempts to simplify understanding of the policy process by describing it as a series of discrete logical steps taken by individuals. It is a model that owes a great deal to economic and systems models. The rational model offers a prescriptive approach to “how decisions ought to be made in the interests of technical efficiency” (Jackson and Jackson 1990, p. 589). However its proponents admit that the rational model does not succeed in addressing the fact that the policy process is “two-thirds politics and one-third planning” (Wildavsky 1979, p. 124). Seymour Wilson (1981) concludes that “policy-making is too complex and too full of uncertainties and imponderables for precise mathematical calculations” (p. 146). Deborah Stone (1988) faults rationalism for failing to capture the “struggle over ideas” (p. 7).

Other theorists have developed models that attempt to describe the complexity and messiness of the policy process at the institutional level where politics are included in the model. John Kingdon’s model is a particularly notable example.

3.6.2 Institutional Models of the Policy Process

Michael Howlett and M. Ramesh (1995) reject the rational model as not accurately describing the policy process as it truly is acted out.
The idea that policy-makers react to objective conditions in a rational manner is deceptive, if not completely misleading. Rather, policy-makers are involved in the same discourse as the public and in the manipulation of the signs, sets, and scenes of a political play or theatre. (p. 109)

Their model of the policy process reworks the phases applied to problem solving to define the political cycle as agenda setting, policy formulation, decision making, policy implementation, and policy evaluation.

In the agenda setting process, problems are brought to the attention of governments. Agenda setting involves discussion, debate, and persuasion. Those who are interested, and these may include members of the public, must present evidence and arguments at this point. Policy options are developed and explored within the government as part of the policy formulation phase. Proposals may originate during agenda setting or may be developed once the government has decided to address a problem. This phase is more often restricted to those with a minimal knowledge of the issue that allows them to advise on the feasibility of options. After defining and interpreting a problem, "a highly nebulous process," the search for solutions requires identifying which options are workable and acceptable to powerful actors (Howlett and Ramesh 1995, p. 122).

Decision making marks the period when the government adopts a particular course of action or nonaction. At this point, policy options are eliminated until only a few remain for final selection. Although this phase may appear to be the most obvious moment to apply either rational or incremental processes, Howlett and Ramish point out that others disagree to the point of suggesting that decision making is closer to a "garbage can model" in which all the problems and options are thrown in the can and decisions are made ad hoc (March and Olsen in Howlett 1995, p. 145). Howlett and Ramesh further note that constraints are not necessarily based in fact and that simply believing an option will not work is sufficient grounds for exclusion. "Perception is

6 The problem solving model includes phases: problem recognition, proposal of solution, choice of solution, putting solution into effect, and monitoring results (Howlett and Ramesh 1995, p. 11).
just as real as reality itself in the policy process" (p. 124).

Policy implementation refers to the process of putting policies into effect. Policy evaluation is the last step in the cycle and describes the process of monitoring policy results by both state and societal actors, which may include re-conceptualizing problems and solutions (Howlett and Ramesh 1995, p. 11).

Like Wildavsky (1979), Lindblom (1968), and Burger (1993), who described similar models, Howlett and Ramesh’s model is intended to facilitate understanding by breaking down the complexity of the policy process. Howlett and Ramesh claim that the model offers the advantage of studying numerous cases that are at different stages and examining the roles of all actors and institutions. The drawback that they identify is the model’s inherent suggestion that policy making proceeds in a systematic and linear manner. In reality, stages are often missing, reordered, or shortened. Howlett and Ramesh also stipulate that “a variety of political, social, and ideological factors determine which problems gain access to the policy agenda for resolution by the government” (Howlett and Ramesh 1995, p. 105). Finally, the model does not provide an indication of the forces that motivate policy progress.

Roger Cobb, Jennie-Keith Ross, and Marc Ross (1976) take a slightly different tack on the policy process. They describe it as a four-stage model of agenda building consisting of the levels of initiation, specification, expansion, and entrance. The progression of steps in this model depends upon one of three approaches to policy making: outside initiative, mobilization, and inside initiative. An outside initiative occurs when a problem is initiated (i.e., a grievance is voiced), from outside government. That grievance is then translated into specific demands and expanded to more groups and the issue is linked to existing issues in order to increase pressure on or attract more attention from decision makers. Success at issue expansion leads to moving from the public agenda to entrance onto the formal (government) agenda (Cobb, Ross, and Ross

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7These four levels fit with Howlett and Ramesh’s two steps of agenda setting and policy formulation.
Where the mobilization model is in action, the first two stages take place within government, and only when a policy decision has been made does the government release it, with the aim of expanding it to the public agenda for acceptance. The inside access model describes policy that originates with a government agency or a group that has open access to the government. The objective of the actors is to keep the policy issue out of the public agenda, in order not to lose control of the discussion. The agency or group attempts to expand the issue only within selected groups. Actors prefer to enter the formal agenda either through direct access or policy brokers (Cobb, Ross, and Ross 1976, pp. 132-36).

Cobb et al. state that agenda building is complex, and in most instances both models and levels of agendas will be combined. Furthermore, “the more complex the social structure and economy of a society, the less likely that any single pattern will predominate” (Cobb, Ross, and Ross 1976, p. 137). Although this model considers the different venues possible for policy development, like those previously mentioned, it does not deal with the possibility of concurrent stages of activity.

John Kingdon (1984) characterizes linear descriptions of the policy process as “drastic oversimplification” (p. 3). His model describes three independent streams of policy making activities that must come together at some point in order to progress to a policy decision. Although he identifies a number of policy activities, he claims that none of them necessarily follows in a logical fashion. His model rearranges the steps outlined by other researchers, but he subsumes most of these steps into the process of agenda setting.

Kingdon defines the "government agenda" as "the list of subjects or problems to which governmental officials, and people outside of government closely associated with those officials, are paying some serious attention at any given time" (p. 3). A set of alternatives must also be available from which the government can choose a solution (p. 4). If an issue is
successfully manoeuvred through the government agenda, it becomes part of a list of subjects within the government agenda that have progressed to the decision agenda, where a decision will be made (Figure 3-2).

Agenda issues can originate from many sources, inside or outside government. Bureaucrats, politicians, interest groups, and the general public can be sources for agendas and alternatives. Issues may come via the diffusion of ideas in professional circles or from policy elites. Agendas and alternatives may also come from ideological changes resulting from elections, from crises, from the gradual accumulation of knowledge and perspectives by policy specialists, from developments in technology, or from "idea fads" that build through constant discussion. However, the proximate origin of policy change varies from case to case. According to Kingdon, "the critical factor that explains the prominence of an item on the agenda is not its source, but instead the climate in government or the receptivity to ideas of a given type, regardless of source." Much more relevant is why the idea took hold (p. 76).

Reaching prominence is dependent upon a "complex combination of factors" (Kingdon 1984, p. 78). To understand this process of "organized anarchy," Kingdon has developed a nonlinear model of streams of concurrent processes that couple at critical junctures. He identifies three streams of processes—problems, policies, and politics—which often develop independently.

Problem definition (Figure 3-3) frequently comes about through systematic indicators—that is, routine government or nongovernmental agency monitoring of activities and events. Feedback on existing programs can bring problems to attention; budgets can promote or constrain agendas. Disasters or crises can reinforce a preexisting perception of a problem and help push it on the government agenda.

Problem definition can have a significant impact on those attempting to influence policy. Stakeholders want problems to be defined to their advantage, to reflect their position, their values on the issue. As part of the definition process, a problem is categorized and perceptions of the
Figure 3-3  The Policy Process: Problem Definition Stream

Figure 3-5  The Policy Process: Political Environment Stream

problem then depend upon its category (e.g., is access to new technology a social issue or a technical issue?). When a problem is in the process of being coupled with a proposal, the choice of proposal may depend heavily on the accepted definition of the problem.

Policy formulation takes place in what Kingdon refers to as the “policy primeval soup” (Kingdon 1984, p. 122; see Figure 3-4). Proposals come into being as ideas float around the community, are revised, combined and refloated. Kingdon refers to proposal advocates in the community as “policy entrepreneurs.” Policy entrepreneurs initiate discussion of their proposals and promote them in many forums, “softening up” members of the community and the public through education and floating trial balloons. This softening up helps habituate people to the new/proposed ideas and build acceptance. Proposals that survive meet a number of criteria including technical and budgetary feasibility, a good fit with dominant values and current national mood, and political support. From the original proposals, the community produces a pared-down list. According to Kingdon, the community is left with a few prominent alternatives for consideration, and consensus begins to spread throughout the community. Kingdon summarizes the policy formulation process.

Ideas have been sharpened and changed, combinations have emerged that serve the purpose better than the original proposals, people have become accustomed to thinking along certain lines, the list of alternatives under discussion has narrowed, and a few ideas have emerged as the leading candidates for further serious consideration. (p. 147)

The third element, the political stream (Figure 3-5) is composed of factors such as the national mood, pressure group campaigns, election results, ideological distributions, and changes of administration, any of which may have potent effects on agendas. Kingdon defines the national mood as a large number of people from the more politically active sectors of the public who think along the same lines. The national mood can help to promote or restrain ideas. A sense of this mood is picked up by politicians through communication with their constituents, by bureaucrats
through interactions with politicians, and by media reports or election results.

The political stream plays a major part in determining what ideas reach formal agenda status. Key actors judge whether the balance of forces favours action, as well as whether the general public will tolerate the policy direction coming from the elite level. The process depends upon conflict and consensus to come to decisions. If key actors realize that interest groups and other organized interests hold the same opinion, that provides these actors with the impetus to proceed (Kingdon 1984, p. 157). If conflict arises, leaders try to strike a balance. If the balance becomes less favourable, leaders know they will pay a price for promoting the proposal. Intensity on one or the other side of the issue counts; communication is the intensity indicator. Perceptions of political resources can tip the balance for groups in the eyes of key people. However, the balance favours the status quo over change and groups must consider the demand on their resources if they pursue their policy interests. Furthermore, many interest groups will fight against proposals, using "negative blocking" of initiatives to preserve their prerogatives and benefits (p. 52).

In order for the problems and policy streams to lead to decisions, the two streams must couple at fortuitous moments with the political stream in what Kingdon refers to as policy windows (Figure 3-6). While proposals, alternatives, and solutions are floating in and around the government looking for problems to which to attach themselves, in the problem stream people become aware of a problem and look to the policy stream for an alternative that may be a solution. Solutions must have problems and problems must have solutions. According to Kingdon, the coupling of all three streams increases the probability that an issue will advance to the decision agenda level. "Generally, the rise of an item is due to the joint effect of several factors coming together at a given point in time, not to the effect of one or another of them singly" (p. 188).

Kingdon depicts his policy window as "an opportunity for advocates of proposals to push their pet solutions, or to push attention to their special problems." He likens the situation to that
Policy entrepreneurs are responsible for engineering the coupling of the streams. The possibility of success comes more readily to those who have some claim to a hearing (e.g., have expertise, are in an authoritative decision-making position), who are known for their political connections or negotiating skills, and who are persistent (e.g., give talks, write position papers, send letters, draft bills, testify, meet for lunch). Policy entrepreneurs also know how to soften up the system by pushing, lying in wait, coupling streams at the window, and being ready when the window opens.

In summation, Kingdon states that:

...events do not proceed neatly in stages, steps, or phases. Instead, independent streams that flow through the system all at once, each with a life of its own and equal with one another, become coupled when a window opens. Thus participants do not first identify problems and then seek solutions for them; indeed, advocacy of solutions often precedes the highlighting of problems to which they become attached. Agendas are not first set and then alternatives generated; instead, alternatives must be advocated for a long period before a short-run opportunity presents itself on an agenda. Events do not necessarily proceed in similar order in several different case studies; instead, many things happen separately in each case, and become coupled at critical points. (p. 215)

The primary shortcoming of Kingdon’s model for studying the Canadian policy process is that it addresses the public policy area from an American perspective. Therefore, it must be adjusted in order to account for differences in the Canadian system such as decision making at the Cabinet and bureaucratic levels and much less emphasis on political parties in the policy-
making process. Nevertheless, Kingdon's model has strengths that the other models reviewed do not have. Kingdon recognized that different stages might be governed by different processes, and that these processes could occur in parallel streams. This model was chosen as a framework for the study of CPI in the information highway policy process because of these characteristics.

3.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter 3 presented public policy theories that contributed to an understanding of CPI's role in the information highway policy process. Awareness of the function of values, needs, and rights provides a means for appreciating the motivations of the private sector and public interest groups and why differences in perspectives caused conflict. Economic theories such as free riders and low and high incentive groups help to explain the disparity between the private sector and public interest groups in their ability to build and maintain effective interest groups. Theories of political power provide a view of influence arising from wealth and position in society. All of these theories impart insights into CPI's role in the information highway policy process but they do not consider the influence that can be wielded by well-organized institutions.

The two theories deemed the most appropriate for creating a framework for the investigation were institutional theories: policy community theory from Coleman and Skogstad and from Pross, and policy process theory from Kingdon. Together, these theories offered a means of developing a more complete picture of the phenomenon than could be described by considering issues of economics or power only.

The policy community model provided the means for identifying and analyzing relational variables. This model described the policy community as split between the sub-government of decision makers and the less influential attentive public. It also identified a number of group attributes that help to position actors in the information highway policy community and to establish their relative influence. These authors' description of the policy network suggested
possible configurations that the sub-government might take during the policy process—for example, pressure pluralist and closed corporatist. Both contributed to understanding CPI and its position and relationships in the policy community. Pross's addition of pressure group characteristics to policy community theory provided a tool for evaluating CPI's potential through an analysis of its institutional characteristics, such as membership and resources, and its policy capacity, such as strategic ability, knowledge of the government policy process, and ability to mobilize.

Kingdon's policy process theory elucidates the procedural aspects of the policy making process. This model uses an institutional perspective to organize the complexities of the process. Kingdon's description of his three streams—policies, problems, and politics—illustrates the non-linear and opportunistic nature of policy making. His theory provided the framework for organizing and analyzing the temporal and procedural aspects of the information highway policy process.

These complementary perspectives on the policy process, one relational and the other temporal and procedural, must be considered to understand CPI and the information highway policy outcomes. Each theoretical perspective helps to guide the researcher through a complex situation to discover and piece together the varied attributes. Together, they provided the basic themes with which to begin the research and build additional ideas. Approaching the phenomenon from more than one vantage point provided a fuller picture of the actors and events. Eventually the theories were used to compare research findings and draw conclusions.
CHAPTER 4

CPI AND THE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF INFORMATION HIGHWAY POLICY MAKING

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 4 begins with an examination of the international background of the information highway as it relates to activities in Canada. The chapter includes an historical description of the development of Canada’s Coalition for Public Information (CPI) and some of the information policy proposals developed before the formation of the Information Highway Advisory Council (IHAC). In order to comprehend CPI’s actions and reactions during the policy-making process, it is necessary to be aware of the group’s origin and motivation for entering into the debate. Chapter 4 continues with an analysis of the major policy environment characteristics around the time of IHAC provided by policy community members. These elements help to bring the policy community to life and to begin to develop a more comprehensive picture of the phenomenon under analysis.

Documents, interviews, and the literature were the basic information sources for understanding the Canadian version of the neo-liberal political environment prevailing during the time of the study. This environment was shaped by a political agenda that promoted competition and by politicians who put into policy their support for pro-market ideology that was closely tied to the international environment at the time. Also observable throughout this period was the omnipresence of private sector lobbyists with access to the government bureaucracy, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), and politicians. With the political emphasis on cutting the deficit and “less government,” government respondents expressed a sense of loss of control and effectiveness over policy-making events that was obvious also to those outside of government. The period of IHAC phase 1 was one of conflicts and competition in the private sector; between government departments, particularly Industry Canada
and Heritage Canada; within Industry Canada; and amongst the private, government, and public interest group sectors. Each of these conditions, which contributed to the complexity of policy making and combined to help explain policy outcomes, is described in this chapter.

4.2 INTERNATIONAL BACKGROUND

Until the 1980s, discussions related to information technology in Canada were left primarily in the domain of government and private sector interest groups. Policy decisions made by government were based partly upon private sector lobbying, consultations, or pressure and partly upon government responsibility for maintaining the public good (Babe 1990; Ellis 1979). By the 1990s, both the public and private sectors were predicting that the creation and dissemination of information would become dependent upon the information highway. The market-oriented approach of the private sector was applied soon to the information highway model, thus predisposing information policy deliberations to the demands of the private sector. When awareness of this probable future began to dawn upon interested members of the public, groups and individuals began to press for some public input in determining decisions related to information policy. One such group was CPI.

Canada had entered a more conservative economic and political period, exemplified in the information sector by the deregulation of telecommunications companies and the restructuring of telephone rates through changes to the Telecommunications Act and a series of telecommunications decisions at the CRTC.¹ Public interest groups such as CPI interpreted this deregulation and restructuring in the telecommunications field as an ill omen for the future of universal access because they realized the same set of rules would be applied to products and services on the information highway.

¹See, for example, the Telecommunications Act (Canada 1993); the Review of Regulatory Framework (Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission 1994)
The international telecommunications sector was promoting a technological imperative that would break down the barriers to telecommunications competition, and allow activities such as mergers and entries into the formerly forbidden territory of broadcasting2 (R261201). Europeans and Americans began investing in each other's ventures, so that governments and corporations were pooling resources and foreign firms were gaining access to previously protected national markets (Schiller 1993, p. 199). The push for modernization presented the opportunity for foreign access to previously national systems, for the interconnection of private networks with public networks, and for the privatization and deregulation of public telephone systems (p. 203). As an example, Robin Mansell cited the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) statistics that identified 25 cross-border acquisitions of companies by public telecommunications operators and other telecommunications companies in 1988-89 (OECD in Mansell 1994, p. 36).

The concept of an information highway gained international attention with the 1993 release of the National Information Infrastructure Agenda for Action in the United States (United States. Information Infrastructure Task Force 1993). This strategy paper identified the private sector as the driving force and major contributor to information highway policy. Ministers attending the G7 Mini-Summit in February 1994 agreed that more competition and thus fewer restrictions were necessary to nurture the growth of the information society (Gaunt 1995). Governments and corporations expected the private sector to take the lead in infrastructure development through investment, innovation and network standards creation (European Union, Economic and Social Committee 1995; Perry 1995).

2See documents from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) including Trade in Information, Computer and Communication Services (1990); Universal Service and Rate Restructuring in Telecommunications (1991); The Changing Public Policies in Information Technology: Canada, the Netherlands and Sweden (1992a); Telecommunications and Broadcasting: Convergence or Collision? (1992b); Convergence Between Communications Technologies: Case Studies from North America and Western Europe (1992c); Information Networks and New Technologies: Opportunities and Policy Implications for the 1990s (1992d); Usage Indicators: A New Foundation for Information Technology Policies (1993).
By 1995, Lucio Stanca, chief executive and chairman of IBM/Europe, was telling policy makers that a "true" information society could only emerge with the removal of barriers to market forces. He noted that Europeans had been reluctant to put their faith in market forces and warned that if they did not implement necessary reforms and position themselves for global competition, Europeans "risk falling behind the United States and the Asia Pacific region" (Stanca 1995). Stanca advocated changes in the regulatory environment to increase competition, changes in labour law to allow "more flexible methods of work" (e.g., telework), and changes in attitude to ensure that Europe would not become a two-tiered society (Stanca 1995).

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Commission itself stated that it expected to prepare regulatory measures and facilitate "complete liberalization" of networks and voice services by January 1998 (European Union. Economic and Social Committee 1995). The market, however, should have a "helping hand" with the infrastructure from the Commission in areas such as:

- liberalization and the regulatory framework;
- research funding and orientation,
- support for the regions;
- assessing the social impacts;
- building public awareness;
- and helping business cooperate. (European Union. Economic and Social Committee 1995)

While the European Union (E.U.) was promoting competition, it was not relinquishing the ability of the state to intercede. The E.U. still openly claimed that regulation was a positive intervention and that government agencies would interfere in the market, for example by supporting particular regions in Europe. The Commission also reported that its telecommunications operators (some of them monopolies) were forming global alliances as well as adopting European-wide expansion strategies (European Union, Economic and Social Committee 1995).

At this same summit, U.S. Vice-President Al Gore announced that the U.S. was
prepared to open its telecommunications services industry to foreign investment from countries willing to reciprocate (Gore 1995). Nevertheless, both U.S. and E.U. powers appeared to be concerned that the other was not preparing to compete fairly. Most significant for public interests was the fact that this summit was attended by high level government and corporate officials. Industry representatives were there to protect and enhance their interests.

Canada, by the 1990s, was already a partner in the Canada/U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA)³ and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The Canadian government accepted the wisdom of current international trends (primarily from the U.S.) to deregulate and open up the monopolies of the telecommunications market. One Industry Canada respondent in this study stated that the government felt international pressure to compete and to maintain a "competitive edge in terms of our business opportunities." Not keeping up on the international level was seen as leaving Canada open to being overtaken in telecommunications technology and then "we're in trouble" (R161205).

Yet, comments from a senior analyst at Heritage Canada indicated that managing to get an issue on the government agenda depended in part on the current international issues confronting the government. One economic issue could outweigh another:

Once you get up to the PMO [Prime Minister's Office], PCO [Privy Council Office], you start seeing a picture where your little initiative on the information highway is going to be balanced out against the Spaniards and cod fishing... "We can't do this now because we're doing this."(R261206).

³The FTA was superseded by the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the U.S. and Mexico
4.3 CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS LEADING TO THE CREATION OF CPI

4.3.1 The Ontario Library Association Strategic Plan

During discussions in 1987 about the future of public library service in a changing and increasingly technological environment, the Ontario Library Association (OLA) proposed a province-wide strategic plan for public libraries. A draft version of the strategic plan, originally titled The One Place to Look (Ontario Public Library Strategic Planning Group 1990), was distributed by the strategic planning group to association members for discussion in 1990. This draft reflected the opinions of both the library community and Ontario residents. The planning group asserted that change, particularly change due to technology, necessitated a review of the role of public libraries. Libraries needed to confront the reality of more widely used electronic formats; of increasing urban populations and decreasing rural and northern populations; of a growing need to share information precipitated by more efficient telecommunications; and the potential for the appearance of classes of information "haves and have-nots" (OPL Strategic Planning Group 1990, p. 6).

With these findings in mind, one of the objectives of the plan became the development of an information policy and strategy for the province that would ensure access for all citizens to the province's information resources, irrespective of format. Universal access was to be accomplished through an "integrated system of partnerships among all types of information providers" (OPL Strategic Planning Group 1990, p. 10). The planning group argued that Ontario's well-developed communications structure positioned the province to take a leadership role in developing information technology. Aware of the social and economic issues to be tackled, the planning group felt that the best means for focusing the private and public sectors on technological development would be by inviting representatives of both sectors to work together on an information policy.

The planning group's goals for the information policy were both socially and
economically oriented. In particular, the group stressed that the policy should meet individual needs for information, both at home and in the workplace, to achieve the greatest gains:

An information policy should determine the way in which information is provided to society and ensure that the maximum social, economic, cultural and educational advantages are derived by the individual for the benefit of society. (OPL Strategic Planning Group 1990, p. 11)

Recognizing information as a prerequisite to power, the planning group identified basic principles for nurturing individual and community power: equity of access, intellectual freedom, resource sharing, and partnerships (OPL Strategic Planning Group 1990, p. 11).

The information strategy devised for Ontario in the draft report, The One Place to Look, foreshadowed the concept of an information highway as the focus for information policies. The planning group recommended that common carriers be required to provide public information channels, which then would be linked to large public and private databases, creating an information "grid." They encouraged the development of local databases that would offer Ontario-related information. The planning group expected governments, both provincial and federal, to foster this development (OPL Strategic Planning Group 1990, p. 12).

According to former OLA deputy director Maureen Cubberley, significant changes were made from feedback to the draft, but the statement of the purpose and goals of the strategic plan remained unchanged in the final document. The final report, One Place to Look (Ontario Library Association 1990), recommended that an information policy proposal be prepared for the Premier of Ontario by a committee composed of representatives from the local and provincial governments, libraries, other information agencies, and the private sector. The planning group reasoned that a government-developed information policy would:

provide a set of political decisions on the best way to provide the residents of Ontario with the information they need....The policy could consist of a
combination of legislation, regulations, prescriptions, and pronouncements which would direct and manage the life cycle of information. (Ontario Library Association 1990, p. 14)

In the final report, the authors recommitted to two of the major *raisons d'être* of public libraries: to uphold equity of access and intellectual freedom as basic rights in a democracy. The authors argued that the fundamental need for information should outweigh current and future impediments:

Physical and geographical barriers must be overcome, adequate resources must be in place, and those who control information must co-operate to ensure that it is provided in a fair and equitable manner. (Ontario Library Association 1990 p. 15)

The planning group foresaw an information policy as a catalyst for an information culture, which in turn would contribute to an Ontario-based information technology industry. Ontario's information culture would provide the foundation for the extended connections essential to international competition as trade barriers were removed. The group also envisioned the policy as a means of ensuring that the information grid or highway would be public in the sense that it would allow for "the free and equitable flow of non-confidential information, accessible to each individual," and that the policy would overcome barriers such as distance, literacy levels, economic restrictions, and language (Ontario Library Association 1990, p. 14). The final report received a generally favourable response when it was presented at a one-day symposium on information policy at the annual OLA convention (Cubberley and Skrzeszewski 1992).

### 4.3.2 Creating the Ontario Information Policy Proposal

The OLA took responsibility for developing the policy proposal to be presented to the Ontario
government. Stan Skrzeszewski, the 1992 OLA president, invited information professionals from the public and private sectors to sit on the committee. Skrzeszewski, Maureen Cubberley (then with the Libraries and Community Information Branch of the Ministry of Culture and Communications), and OLA executive director Larry Moore played major roles in synthesizing the ideas of thirty public and private sector committee members and writing the information policy proposal.

In advance of the release of the proposal, Cubberley and Skrzeszewski (1992) communicated the OLA vision of provincial information policy in their article "Empowering the Individual in the Information Age." Cubberley and Skrzeszewski argued that adherence to the principle of the democratic right of citizens to be informed was required to confront effectively the restrictive elements of information technology and the commodification of information. In their opinion, individuals wanted to be more involved in community decision making and wanted to claim some collective and government powers for themselves (e.g., more personal responsibility for healthy lifestyles rather than relying on the medicare system). Cubberley and Skrzeszewski suggested that making information easily and universally available would allow individuals to assume more responsibility for themselves and to play a greater role in society. They concluded that it was incumbent on the government to empower citizens to determine their individual and collective futures (Cubberley and Skrzeszewski 1992, p. 9).

Addressing the prevalent economic agenda, Cubberley and Skrzeszewski pointed out that government and the information industry had focused only on the value of information as a profit-generating commodity and had avoided social agendas. The authors warned that if

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4Interview with Larry Moore, Executive Director, Ontario Library Association, January 30, 1995.

5The commodification of information refers to an economic designation of information as a commodity that can be enhanced, packaged and sold to consumers for a profit.
information was left under the control of market forces, "it is unlikely that the political and personal benefits to be derived from the use of information for the public good will ever be achieved" (Cubberley and Skrzeszewski 1992, p. 10). They recommended an integrated public and private information infrastructure to increase individual competitiveness and expand Canada's technology industry while addressing social agendas. A partnership would generate the greatest potential for benefits (Cubberley and Skrzeszewski 1992, p. 11).

Cubberley and Skrzeszewski visualized the information highway project as a great opportunity for all sectors in Ontario to work together, share and develop skills, enrich the technical capabilities of the workforce, and enhance the "knowledge network" of businesses, educational institutions, and individuals. At the same time, Cubberley and Skrzeszewski asked that these public/private partnerships accommodate full public access and reasonable profits for the private sector. An information policy must endorse resource sharing and be based both on reimbursement and on "enlightened self-interest and reciprocated good will" (Cubberley and Skrzeszewski 1992, p. 14).

Cubberley and Skrzeszewski's article complemented the Proposal for an Information Policy for Ontario that was presented to the Premier in 1992 by the OLA Task Force on Information Policy (OLA 1992, p. 8). In its report, the task force identified the problems to be addressed:

- libraries lacked the resources to provide equitable access
- small businesses had a competitive disadvantage when they relied on public agencies such as libraries to provide information
- the workforce at all levels was unable to keep up with technological advances
- Ontarians living in geographically remote areas received less service
  (p. 1)

The task force wished to draw attention to the critical role of information and to predict the impacts of information and technology on society. Their proposal, the primary document presenting the public perspective on policy related to information and technology, emphasized
the need to balance the "social benefits of open access to information with the commercial value of information as a tradeable and saleable commodity" (OLA 1992, p. 3).

The proposal also emphasized the need to channel technological developments for the benefit of social and economic development, rather than vice-versa. The task force argued that the only way an information policy could address the optimum public good was via a public policy. They urged the Ontario government to accept responsibility for developing a strategic policy framework that would serve as a guide for future policy and program development, legislation, and strategic public and private sector alliances. The task force also emphasized that public libraries and other public information providers must play a role in guaranteeing "equitable cost-effective access, timely dissemination and people who help" (OLA 1992, p. 1).

4.3.3 Proposal Recommendations

The Proposal for an Information Policy for Ontario suggested that the provincial government should be responsible for generating a policy framework. This framework would include recognition of the social and economic value of information; the right to equitable access; establishment of the principles of universality of access, pluralism of expression, intellectual freedom, decentralization of control, and the right of privacy. The task force also recommended that the government develop a consultative process to facilitate a broad information policy debate; to give high priority to information-related initiatives within the government (e.g., enhancing public access to government information); to harmonize provincial policies with national policies; to mandate and fund public agencies such as libraries, archives, and community information centres as networked access points for the public; to provide incentives to both private and public sectors for the development of information networks; and to provide an attractive investment climate and incentives for retraining (OLA 1992, p. 3).
The report identified the private sector as the major financial contributor to the information highway, with responsibility for designing and implementing hardware and software. The task force recommended that the government collaborate with the information industry by providing electronic data for the development of value-added information products. It predicted that benefits of this venture would include jobs, research, and economic development. Furthermore, the collaboration would lead to the export of expertise, technology, and products, and, of course, would profit all parties. The private sector would be accountable to the government for data use and access through government involvement and contractual safeguards (OLA 1992, p. 5). Labour was expected to work with the private sector to ensure that workers kept pace with technology. Unions would also continue to protect the interests of workers facing difficult job changes and displacement (OLA 1992, p. 6).

Public sector institutions such as libraries were expected to promote equity of access, to improve efficiency, and to avoid duplication of services by increasing resource sharing and by expanding networks. Educational institutions would introduce and advance information and computer skills. Post-secondary institutions would initiate collaborative research and effectively disseminate scholarly knowledge (OLA 1992, p. 6). Municipal governments would play a critical role in infrastructure development as major funding sources and providers of local information (OLA 1992, p. 6).

The authors summarized the responsibilities of the various sectors:

The creation and organization of electronic products and services will rest primarily with private industry, encouraged by government. Developing the skills required to create and operate the systems rests with business, education and labour. Marketing the concept of an information environment and its subsequent economic and social benefits will be a co-operative function of all partners. It rests with the Province to develop an information policy that will reconcile competing interests and create a network that will maximize the benefits received by all. (OLA 1992, p. 7)
The task force concluded its proposal with the vision of a province-wide network of walk-in and electronic access points with personal assistance available. Local, national, and international information would be available from both public and private information sources. The network would provide links to "homes, businesses, industries, libraries, universities, schools, government offices, community and social information providers" (OLA 1992, p. 7).

4.3.4 Establishing the Coalition for Public Information

At a strategic planning retreat in September of 1993, the Ontario Public Library Association (OPLA) of the OLA suggested that the OLA should do more to address information access issues. One month later, a crisis task force, concerned with the convergence of technology as it related to libraries, recommended forming a public information coalition. In November, attendees at the OLA's International Forum on the Transformational Effect of the Internet passed an OPLA resolution to form the Coalition for Public Information (CPI). This resolution was approved at the following OLA Annual Meeting. (OLA 1994, p. 2)

Members of the library community considered themselves to be expert defenders of principles such as access to information. Their intervention in information highway policy discussions was precipitated by increasing private sector and government interest in information as a commodity, technical developments that would change patterns of access, and concern about the limited interest in the social value of information in policy discussions.

The OLA deliberately made overtures outside of the library community when it formed CPI. The executive of the OLA decided that to have an effect on the future of libraries and on the role of information in society required a broader advocacy base than that of the library community. This was clearly demonstrated in the composition of the steering committee, which consisted of members from various public libraries, freenets, and information-providing companies. An open invitation was extended to anyone interested in public issues concerning
information. This invitation resulted in the formation of a support base of approximately 300 organizations and individuals. The OLA then stepped back from active participation in CPI but continued to provide office space, supplies, and the part time assistance of one of its deputy directors.

Thus CPI began its life under the auspices of the OLA and was supported by many groups and individuals concerned with having a voice in the policy negotiations. CPI set out with the positive public image of the library community, a sense of commitment to maintaining public goods related to information, little funding, a small number of active members, little knowledge of policy making at the federal level, and little awareness of what lay ahead of them. CPI became part of the community of public interest groups fighting to maintain the public good.

4.4 OTHER RELATED INFORMATION POLICY INITIATIVES

4.4.1 Advisory Committee on a Telecommunications Strategy

A few months after the release of the OLA's information policy proposal, the Advisory Committee on a Telecommunications Strategy for the Province of Ontario (1992) released its set of recommendations to the Ontario government. Like the OLA proposal, this strategy was developed through a collaboration representing the telecommunications industry, the government, libraries, publishers, educators, and community groups. The committee focused its efforts on generating strategies for the development of an infrastructure for Ontario and ultimately recommended a model based on partnerships. Its ten-year telecommunications plan envisioned:

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6 The majority of representatives came from the telecommunications industry.
a vast array of services and information in multiple media—data, text, voice, image and video—delivered through high capacity, interoperable networks to every home, office, school, factory, and laboratory in the province to Ontarians who know how to obtain and utilize information to meet their needs. (Ontario. Advisory Committee 1992, p. 15)

Although the committee endorsed the Proposal for an Information Policy in their strategy, and even though members of the library community were on its various subcommittees, the telecommunications report emphasized the private sector perspective on information provision: the information infrastructure depends upon a market-driven approach where progressive technological development is necessary to maintain a favourable competitive position. The report recommended a market-oriented strategy for telecommunications as an enabler of economic growth and enhanced quality of life (Ontario. Advisory Committee 1992, pp. 37-48).  

The Ontario government supported the recommendations in this report and established the Ontario Network Infrastructure Program (ONIP) with a budget of $100 million over four years for funding networking pilot projects (Ontario. Advisory Committee 1992). The OLA was pleased that its proposal was recognized in the report and that funding would be available for pilot projects. However, the OLA was disappointed that its ideas were not prominent among the recommendations—a harbinger of future events.

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7The recommendations of the Advisory Committee on a Telecommunications Strategy for the Province of Ontario included:
1. To promote a telecommunications infrastructure which enables economic growth and will assist Ontario in becoming more competitive.
2. To promote the growth of all aspects of Ontario's telecommunications sector, including manufacturing, services and research and development.
3. To ensure that telecommunications contributes to an enhanced quality of life for all Ontarians.
4. To ensure the strategic application of telecommunications by the Ontario government.
4.4.2 National Summit on Information Policy

The Canadian Library Association (CLA) also participated in the information policy exchange in 1992 when it hosted the National Summit on Information Policy (CLA 1992). The conference, sponsored by the CLA, L'Association pour l'avancement des sciences et des techniques de la documentation (ASTED), the Canadian Institute for Scientific and Technical Information (CISTI), Communications Canada, the Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC), and the National Library of Canada (NLC) was attended by invited representatives from the information industry, libraries, educational institutions, publishing firms, governments, and aboriginal and consumer groups. The sponsors' goals for the meeting were to facilitate improved understanding and new relationships, elevate information policy on the public policy agenda, and identify policies and strategies (CLA 1992, p. 7).

Participants emerged from the conference recommending that access to information and privacy protection be enhanced, that human resources be developed, that economic benefits be maximized, and that the infrastructure be strengthened (CLA 1992, p. 5). Many of their specific recommendations were similar to the OLA policy proposal. For example, they recommended the inclusion of equitable access in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Participants suggested that provincial and local governments mandate public libraries as the community entry point to “electronic highways” (p. 5). In the area of human resources, they recommended strengthened public/private sector efforts to make education a shared priority. They also advised federal and provincial collaboration to create a strong information sector as well as partnerships between government and industry to develop Canadian databases. Finally, the participants recommended that the government of Canada work to speed the development of “a fully interconnected and universally accessible electronic highway” (CLA 1992, p. 5). This report offered additional support for the position taken by the OLA Proposal for an Information Policy.
Figure 4-1  Environment - Event Network


Legend:
- Policy event
- Environment

G of C = Government of Canada
BHAC = Information Highway Advisory Council
CRTC = Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission
4.5 POLICY ENVIRONMENT CHARACTERISTICS

The characteristics of the policy environment provide additional background to the specific situation which CPI encountered when it attempted to participate in the policy community (Figure 4-1). Members of the policy community, particularly within government, pointed to four primary characteristics: a general adherence to a market agenda; conflict amongst multiple stakeholders within and outside government; a perceived need on the part of the federal government for consultation; and the evolution of a horizontal information highway policy process.

4.5.1 Market Agenda

By the time of the 1994 Speech from the Throne, which promised the development of an information infrastructure, liberal economic theory had become part of the Liberal Party's agenda for information highway policy (Canada. Governor General 1994). The market agenda prevailed both within and outside government. Industry Canada and the CRTC were the most visible promoters of the market agenda within government. One respondent who had worked recently for Industry Canada stated that "those with power in Industry Canada hold to 'almost a religious pro-market view' " (R161213). A member of the IHAC secretariat stated that a:

motivating fact for [Industry Canada assistant deputy minister Michael Binder] was, no doubt, the pressure that we're under internationally...there's jobs linked to this and that was the big appeal within the political process. It was jobs and growth. (R161205)

Industry Canada had set its agenda and did not waver: "They had a very purposive approach which is a certain pro-market, open market, competition view..." (R161213). A senior analyst at Industry Canada stated that "more and more of the [telecommunications] services will be in the competitive arena...We hope it's going to be the market forces" that
determine the character of telecommunications services (R261202). Industry Canada’s desire to establish the market agenda for the information highway was one rationale for its proposed public debate via IHAC.

The CRTC was on the same trail as Industry Canada. In fact, the CRTC had been in the process of deregulating telecommunications and broadcasting since the early 1990s. A CRTC Commissioner confirmed that the CRTC was moving toward setting up a competitive environment well before it was asked to preside over the Convergence Hearing (R70106). Furthermore, the Commissioner stated that the CRTC maintained the same objectives in this hearing that it had adhered to while moving to a more competitive environment for telecommunications and broadcasting (R70106).

This same CRTC Commissioner remembered the IHAC concept as the government’s response to criticism for not working on a broad information policy like that of the U.S. (R170106). According to a member of IHAC, the government’s original mandate for IHAC was to develop recommendations related to the economic potential of the information highway. Because the idea for forming IHAC came from Industry Canada, the IHAC member interpreted this as an explanation for the narrow scope of the original terms of reference: that is, passing reference to social and cultural concerns. Early in the IHAC discussions, "a group of people" on the Council convinced the government that the discussion should be "bigger than what [they] want us to talk about," indicating that the discussion should encompass more than economic issues. The discussion was broadened somewhat, but not to the degree that public interest groups would have liked (C50919). The discrepancy in what was considered "broad" and "narrow" policy among the visions of the various stakeholders foreshadowed events to come.

Participants within both the telecommunications and cable industries were pushing for advantages in the other’s formerly protected territory. While looking at convergence as an opportunity to expand, corporations, particularly the phone companies, were preparing for the
onslaught of new foreign competitors. What was important to participants in the private sector was the inclusion of their profit-oriented agendas in any policy that was forthcoming.

4.5.2 Multiple Stakeholders in Conflict

Conflict, principally over values, is inherent in the policy process. In the case of the information highway, the potential for conflict was spread even more widely because of the ever-increasing number of stakeholders who entered into the policy process. As they became more knowledgeable about the information and communications potential of the information highway, many ministries recognized the implications of the policy decisions in progress and wanted their concerns to be considered. Private sector corporations were in conflict over who would have access to what markets. Both the private sector and the government soon found themselves in conflict with public interest groups which objected to the emphasis on the market agenda.

In government, there was conflict within and between departments and ministries. Conflict in the context of policy making, from the departmental committee level to the Cabinet, was seen as a necessary element in working toward consensus:

It's a question of, even to win, not that this is a zero sum game, you have to understand your opponent. It's almost like a debating club. You know, I can't refute the argument unless I know it and understand it. Sometimes in that process we may understand a little better and change our minds. That's the most pessimistic way to put it. Practically speaking everyone wants consensus; Cabinet works on consensus. Even though everything is values and judgement, sometimes you have opposing views. And where you have to reconcile those two, one or the other, yes maybe it would be different. But at least they are reconciled and there's no zero/100 outcomes. So the system works fairly well. (R261204)

One Industry Canada respondent seconded to the IHAC secretariat found the Finance
Department and the Treasury Board less helpful than he had expected, a situation he attributed to the relative autonomy of federal government departments (R161205). Originally, other departments were reluctant to take part in the process.

When we started in 1994 it was very, very hard to get the attention of other government departments, particularly departments, not so much the agencies and regulatory bodies. The machinery of government is such that they operate independently and vertically. You know the game: the minister is in charge of his or her portfolio and everybody else can go to hell. That is basically the way it works unless the prime minister decides ultimately that there'll be some horizontal co-operation. (R161205)

So Industry Canada went ahead with IHAC more or less on its own. With the release of IHAC's 300 recommendations, departments were finally "drawn into the process, reluctantly, kicking and screaming" to respond to the IHAC recommendations (R161205). Later, when ministries were working together, problems of conflict still arose. "You would find in some of the departments and agencies you wouldn't have necessarily unanimity of opinion" (R261203).

Conflict at the ministry level was particularly evident between Industry Canada and Heritage Canada, stemming in part from ideological differences. Industry Canada perceived Heritage Canada as blocking progress, whereas Heritage Canada felt that Industry Canada was ignoring the interests of Canadian citizens and culture. A director of the IHAC secretariat described the situation as follows:

The tension between our department and the Department of Heritage at times is just unbelievable: [The tension stems from Heritage Canada's] resistance to changing aspects of cultural policy that could very well change, done with care. And from my perspective [Heritage Canada is] trying to go way too far without looking downstream at consequences. (R161205)

Another respondent from Industry Canada's constituent, the Stentor Alliance, criticized Heritage Canada for attempting to maintain the status quo, by trying to "hold back the waves, hide their head in the sand and/or get angry" (R361204):
They [Heritage Canada] have a big role in this. I'm not sure they're playing their cards right. But they have a big role to play, in as much as they're responsible for critical pieces of legislation like the Broadcasting Act. They're a key player, but they've proven to be difficult, in the sense that they're reluctant to acknowledge that the future is unfolding in ways that are fundamentally different than the past. That in turn requires that they rethink legislation, policies, instruments, the whole kit and kaboodle, if they wish to be relevant and do the public a service. (R361204)

On the other hand, a senior policy analyst from Heritage Canada described the conflict in terms of the two departments representing different constituencies. While Industry Canada represented the debate from the perspective of the private sector, Heritage Canada argued for broad social priorities related to citizen/consumer and cultural considerations for the information highway.

It's a women's issue, it's a multi-cultural issue. If you don't have access because you don't have the right language or the skills to use and produce with the technology then you will not be able to participate. You can't be an employee in the information society, or a consumer, or a citizen. (R261206)

Throughout the policy process, Industry Canada predominated and Heritage Canada played a secondary role.

Industry Canada came into conflict with the public interest groups for not including more of them in the discussions and for having a limited vision of the information highway. Groups criticized Industry Canada via whatever avenues they could access: IHAC, the CRTC, the press, and Industry Canada itself.

Within Industry Canada there was conflict between various departmental factions. The ministry was divided between an “industry elite” which comprised the “core of the department” and the former members of the Department of Communications who had remained in Industry Canada (the rest moving to be part of Heritage Canada). A director from the IHAC secretariat described the internal environment at the onset of IHAC as “pretty hostile,” with the core of the department “resistant to a lot of stuff coming from the other, former departments” (R161205).
The assistant deputy minister managed to convince the deputy minister and thereafter the minister to support the IHAC consultation concept. Eventually, policy development within the department would be brought to consensus in part because the branches and sectors were all reporting to the same departmental deputy minister. A director general from Industry Canada described the department’s working situation:

You’ve got the Consumer and Corporate Affairs people... and you’ve got the telecom regulatory people...and you’ve got the industry policy people... They all have to reach some accommodations policy-wise so that the minister doesn’t get four different briefing notes coming to him all saying different things. So it forces the bureaucrats to get together and resolve a lot of these issues more quickly than they otherwise would. That's very important. That is going to become increasingly important as the departments, these different pieces, become more and more integrated in terms of their planning and policy development. (R161206)

Thus, conflict was tolerated within the ministry but was expected to be resolved before it reached the minister.

4.5.3 Consultation

The theme of consultation loomed rather large in the minds of participants in all three sectors of the information policy community. Neo-liberal ideology dictated that government should decrease its policy-making role in issues related to the marketplace and leave the marketplace to set the rules. Officials in Industry Canada had accepted that philosophy in relation to their perception of the department’s role in policy making. As one Industry Canada director explained, "The thing you have to factor too is that the role of government is shrinking all the time. That is an important factor. We don’t run it anymore...we can’t solve all the problems" (R261204).

Cutbacks in government resources meant fewer personnel and smaller budgets. Thus, when

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*The three sectors were the federal government, the private sector, and the non-profit public interest groups.*
the government was in need of advice or was asked to fund a program, the new and approved approach was to look outside. Industry was to take on more responsibility for funding and developing projects. Government had reinvented itself as "a partner" to industry.

Following the same rationale, funding and resources for studying public policy issues were cut back. It was generally accepted in government that the traditional route of royal commissions seeking input from the Canadian public was both too costly and time-consuming to be effective (R161205, R261204), especially in relation to issues involving competition. Instead the government chose to create a council of experts from the private sector and non-profit organizations to advise it. Consequently the government was looking to a narrower community of outside sources for expertise. IHAC became a venue where appointed individuals, the majority representing the private sector, presided over presentations of invited proposals from the three sectors. This option was seen as more expedient and efficient, and less expensive, even though it decreased public involvement.

When IHAC decided that it needed further input, the CRTC was asked to hold public consultations via the Convergence Hearing. Thus public interest groups attempting to lobby the government were looking at the CRTC, previously regarded as the site for industry hearings, as their venue for input to public policy issues related to the information highway. A CRTC Commissioner commented that more and more public interest groups had been voicing their demands at the CRTC since competition (as opposed to the previous monopoly situation) had entered the policy agenda. In particular, he stated that "certainly the convergence issue brought everybody out at the same proceeding" (R170106). The Convergence Hearing, held only in Ottawa, offered the sole genuine opportunity for direct public input during the IHAC process. A number of the 1,000 responses to the Convergence Hearing originated with public interest groups from across Canada.

One IHAC council member stated that IHAC was originally formed to discuss the issue of the economic potential of the information highway. The fact that Industry Canada was
allowed to lead IHAC indicated that IHAC's emphasis would be on competition and the market. That direction was confirmed by the set of objectives set out by Industry Canada. However, some pressure was brought to bear on the government to provide an opportunity for input from sources other than the private sector. Among the successful groups lobbying the government for seats on IHAC were CPI and the arts community. Thus a broader representation of groups was permitted some input to the consultation process, but the concept of consultation clearly was intended to include experts, not the general public.

### 4.5.4 Complexity and the Horizontal Policy Process

As a member of the CLA executive aptly put it, the public policy process has an "idiosyncratic nature" (R161217). A director from the IHAC secretariat referred to the government policy process as "chaotic" (R161205). Both alluded to the fact that there was little predetermined pattern for policy development. The process followed the lead of those who were involved. A Heritage Canada senior policy analyst pointed out that "one of the things that's very difficult about government is that there are so many initiatives going on in so many different directions" (R261206). As a backdrop to the activity at the federal level, participants must also consider the international element—trade agreements and international guidelines, existing and in process, from the OECD, the World Trade Organization, and other national governments.

Despite this chaos, an Industry Canada director stated that the information highway policy process was iterative, and composed of a number of related issues that had to be considered as a whole, although the process for each could vary:

> There were a bunch of individual issues that [did have] a common thread. But at the end of the day the issues remain[ed] individual. It's like any work. You break it down into manageable pieces and you do those and hopefully you can put them back together into something more coherent. And you also have to keep your eye on the coherency of the pieces because you know they all have
to fit together. I can't just make a decision on this piece in isolation from the others. So it's an iterative process. The process that one follows on the individual pieces will vary depending on what the issue is. (R261204)

Although many informants doubted the existence of a standard public policy process in government, they agreed that in most instances decision making in government normally took place through a "vertical" decision process. A director from the IHAC secretariat stated that "the machinery of government is such that [government departments] operate independently and vertically" (R161205), indicating that the process usually took place within a single ministry in whose domain a particular issue was deemed to belong. Policy ready for assent was approved up through the ranks of the assistant deputy ministers and deputy minister to the minister, who would take it to Cabinet. In some cases, the Finance Department or the Treasury Department could be involved for budgetary reasons. Thus, an issue would find its "home" ministry, and policy activities would occur within the single ministry. That was not the case for the information highway policy process.

Industry Canada, as the lead department for the information highway policy process, was assigned responsibility for developing policy along with Heritage Canada. Industry Canada formed IHAC, created a secretariat as its administrative backup, and requested input from the CRTC during the IHAC deliberations. At the outset, when the information highway concept was relatively new, Industry Canada found it difficult to convince departments besides Heritage Canada to take part in policy discussions (R261204, R261206). About a year into the process, other departments began to recognize the relevance to their constituencies of the information and communications issues inherent in information highway policy. Most government ministries and agencies eventually felt they had a stake in the outcome. The information highway was not just the domain of Industry Canada; policy would have broader societal implications.9

9For example, the Ministry of Agriculture was concerned about communications for rural areas. Status of Women Canada brought up questions of access and the effects of the information highway on women.
Respondents from Industry Canada itself were equally aware of this alteration to the typical vertical policy-making process. With the involvement of the various departments, Industry Canada was forced to recognize this new horizontal information policy process architecture. Government respondents referred to this altered process as "unheard of" (R161205, R261203). A senior policy advisor from Industry Canada commented:

It’s becoming more recognized that you can’t solve these problems without dealing with a lot of different government departments as well. Where you used to have your clients in your particular department, you now have the clients of all these other departments. So when we sit down at the table, we have a long reach focus, a lot of people. (R261202)

By the close of the first phase of IHAC, the government had instituted inter-departmental and intra-departmental working groups to put together what was to be a response to IHAC, and to assist in the development of a Memorandum to Cabinet. A consultant to the IHAC secretariat described the process leading to the Memorandum to Cabinet (MC) for the information highway:

Well, the material was in a state of flux because the process of consultation over a Memorandum to Cabinet that’s this broad is an ongoing thing. It’s an ongoing exercise and it’s a very difficult exercise because you have thirty-two federal departments and agencies involved and somehow you had to come up with some collective position amongst all of those. Some [departments /agencies] were more important than others clearly. On top of that, you would find in some of the departments and agencies that you wouldn’t have necessarily unanimity of opinion about how to approach all this. It’s a very, very challenging exercise in terms of just trying to get everyone working together. In some ways bureaucratic Ottawa is like a feudal society and it’s very challenging to get people all singing from the same hymn book, to use a terrible metaphor. You had this consultative process going on so the material in the Memorandum to Cabinet would be shifting… (R261203)

This complex horizontal process successfully led to a departmental consensus in the form
of a Memorandum to Cabinet that was signed by seven ministers.\textsuperscript{10} The number of signatures on the Memorandum was, in effect, an indication of a potential modification in government policy processes. A director from the IHAC secretariat was struck by the change in the process:

Well I've never seen it happen, but I couldn't absolutely guarantee that it's unique. Certainly nobody I've talked to has come up with a comparable initiative where seven ministers signed a Memorandum to Cabinet, and something like thirty-plus departments and agencies were involved to some degree in the process of defining that policy framework. The same goes for the action plan as well which came up from government, and was the product of the same sort of general involvement across the government. It's unique in recent times. (R361205)

The very nature of the information highway, with its issues related to information, communications, and globalization, forced a range of departments and agencies to begin to recognize their inter-connectedness as technology progressed.

Another layer of complication existed in the participation of groups outside of government who were influencing decisions to various degrees. Those outside government entered into the equation via their presentations before IHAC and the CRTC, as well as through their visits with bureaucrats and politicians. Though policy developers depended upon some of these sources for expertise related to the information highway issues, it made the process that much more complex. Advice and opinions varied widely, ranging from the position of the Stentor Alliance to that of the National Anti-Poverty Organization.

Two respondents from CPI, on the other hand, found it difficult to discern from their perspective outside government exactly how the policy process was working and whom they should lobby, even though they had worked previously for provincial governments. They followed the most obvious course, to approach Industry Canada. One of these respondents

\textsuperscript{10}Those ministries were Industry Canada, Heritage Canada, Health Canada, Public Works and Government Services Canada, Department of Justice Canada, Human Resources Development Canada, and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat.
indicated that, in his experience, government was not particularly transparent or easy to comprehend from the outside. What he observed at Industry Canada was:

"umpteen sub groups working on [information highway] policy internally, and so there is something happening with a bunch of groups, committees within Industry Canada, trying to come up with this policy. How it all comes together I've no idea. (R161009)

The fact that the information highway issue opened up a horizontal process added to the demand on CPI's scarce resources and further complicated its attempts to understand the process.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The political atmosphere in the early 1990s was overwhelmingly in support of the open market approach to the information highway. In the Canadian federal government, Industry Canada predominated. Its most powerful sectors favoured neo-liberal approaches to information and communications technology, symbolized in this case by the information highway. The "industry elite" core of Industry Canada directed policy-making activities accordingly. Nevertheless, the policy environment was not without conflict over private and public values both within and outside government. CPI was aware of the neo-liberal atmosphere but thought that it might modify the market agenda. Because CPI was not knowledgeable about the federal government, the group was not aware of the extent of conflicts or which actors were involved.

On top of the values conflict, CPI had to contend with the complexity of the policy process, which was further complicated by widespread government interest in the information highway issues. The information highway brought out departments that claimed partial ownership of the policy process, so that policy makers had to adjust the policy process from its traditional vertical single-department structure to a more horizontal structure to accommodate multiple stakeholders. For an inexperienced group like CPI, the policy process became even more obscure.
and impenetrable. Amongst all of the departments and individuals, who was making the decisions and whom should CPI lobby? This proliferation of stakeholders could have weakened Industry Canada’s position and left an opening for public interest groups. However, Industry Canada and the private sector held the “market agenda card” and were much more advanced in their plans for the information highway than any other stakeholders.

The information highway policy process also began at a time when the Canadian government was encouraging consultation between government and industry. This approach arose both from budget constraints and the government’s perception that it was the appropriate role in a competitive environment. Industry Canada used this situation to its advantage. It narrowed the information highway discussion to two public forums, IHAC and the CRTC, rather than initiating a more costly royal commission, which might have made the process more accessible to public interest groups like CPI. CPI soon learned that its consultative role would be limited. Discussions in both venues were dominated by private sector interests.

The creation of CPI was a natural reaction to the events of the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The purpose of CPI, in the minds of the library community and its allies, was to balance the discussions about the information highway and maintain the spirit of the public good in new policy. Public interest groups like CPI challenged the private sector’s promotion of market values over public goods. However, the political environment did not favour the public interest groups. When it tried to participate, CPI confronted a complex and conflictive policy community, whose institutions were not particularly sympathetic to inexperienced public interest groups.
CHAPTER 5

CPI AND THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY POLICY COMMUNITY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 establishes the existence of a policy community, identifies members of the policy community, and describes the relationships amongst the actors. Familiarity with the policy community further clarifies Canada’s Coalition for Public Information’s (CPI) potential for influencing policy makers in the community. CPI is identified as a member of the attentive public and, therefore, outside the circle of policy makers in the sub-government. Chapter 5 also evaluates CPI’s institutional characteristics, which are additional elements that contribute to an understanding of CPI’s capacity to influence the community. These findings are supported by the policy community and interest group theories of Coleman and Skogstad and of Pross.

5.2 POLICY COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

5.2.1 Members of the Policy Community

As previously noted, a policy community is defined as "a group of actors or potential actors... whose community membership is defined by a common policy focus" (Wilks and Wright 1987, p. 299). In the case of the information highway policy process, the policy community, brought

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1Respondents independently made similar identifications of policy community actors. This chapter identifies actors considered to be central to the activities, and therefore the description is not intended to be all-inclusive in relation to participation (for example, the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) Information Highway Convergence Hearing received more than 1,000 written comments). However, the study does provide an indication of whom others saw as significant (or not) in the discussions and activities.
together by issues of convergence inherent in the development of information highway policy, represented a new community configuration of members from the federal government, telecommunications, and broadcasting, as well as nongovernmental organizations. The information policy issues also attracted public interest groups who aspired to be accepted into the policy-making process.

Participating organizations could be broken into three predominant groupings: the federal government, the private sector, and public interest groups. Additional groups of note that advised the government but did not participate directly in policy community activities were nongovernment organizations at both the national and international level. Within the government, the ministers, Industry Canada, and Cabinet were the ultimate decision makers but many other departments and agencies played a role at varying points in the process. Thirty-two departments and agencies signed the Memorandum to Cabinet. The lead department, Industry Canada, did not behave as a monolith but rather as a composite of groupings with different agendas on the questions at hand, although the most prominent actors were those in favour of a market- and technology-oriented agenda.

Industry Canada branches most involved included those from the Spectrum, Information Technologies and Telecommunications Sector (SITT), such as Telecommunications Policy. Industry Canada had the major responsibility for the Information Highway Advisory Council (IHAC) and its secretariat. Individual actors from Industry Canada who figured prominently included John Manley, Minister of Industry, and Michael Binder, Assistant Deputy of SITT. In addition, CPI respondents identified Doug Hull, Director General of the Science Promotion and Academic Affairs Branch, and Jon Gerrard, Secretary of State for Science, Research and Development. The CRTC played a major role in implementing deregulation and competition policy as well as running the Information Highway Convergence Hearing.

Canadian Heritage, although expected to play a large role because of its broadcasting and cultural responsibilities, was noticeable by its frequent absence from the scene. Other ministries
became involved in time to provide input to the government response to IHAC, *Building the Information Society*, commonly referred to at Industry Canada as the “burgundy book”\(^2\) (Canada, Government of Canada 1996). In particular the Human Resources Development Corporation, Health Canada, Status of Women, Agriculture Canada, Finance, Justice, and the Treasury Board had a say in the policy outcome. Additional departments and agencies included the Competition Bureau, the Office of Consumer Affairs, the Prime Minister’s Office, and the Privy Council. The Economic Development Policy Committee and the Social Policy Committee who report to Cabinet also participated in final decisions.

The Stentor Alliance, representing the major Canadian telephone companies, led the private sector as the most significant participant. This prominence rested in part on the fact that the telephone companies represented by Stentor had held a monopoly over telephone services in Canada until 1992. During the events surrounding the information highway debate, Stentor still retained the greatest presence before the federal government. The individual telephone companies also had their own lobbyists in Ottawa. Stentor’s primary interest was in maintaining its position in the telecommunications industry and gaining whatever it could with the opening of the cable market.

Other industry actors included Unitel; members of the international telephone industry (e.g., AT&T); manufacturers such as IBM, Newbridge Switches, and ATM Switches; and broadcasting, cable, and wireless companies such as Rogers, Western International Communications Ltd. (WIC), the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, and the Canadian Cable Television Association. These companies were concerned with issues of competition and the division of resources related to convergence and deregulation. As far as many of them were concerned, their fight was with Stentor.

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\(^2\)The cover of the report was red. The legend at Industry Canada was that the report was dubbed “the burgundy book” because it could not be called “the red book.” That moniker already belonged to the Liberal Party’s earlier election platform document. Many allusions were intended by both names.
Non-government organizations advised the government from the beginning of the process. Advice came from groups such as the International Development Research Council, the Fraser Institute, and the Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry and Education (CANARIE) as well as individual academics. Guidelines and treaty terms that came to bear on policy making originated from international organizations such as the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the G7, the European Union (E.U.), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Their advice and regulation favoured economic considerations and a market-oriented outlook on policy.

The last sector, public interest groups, included organizations such as CPI, the Canadian Library Association (CLA), and the Information Highway Working Group (IHWG) composed of academics and information professions, as well as others such as the National Anti-poverty Organization (NAPO), the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC), and Fédération nationale des associations de consommateurs du Québec (FNACQ), Telecommunities Canada (TC), and the Public Information Highway Advisory Committee (P-IHAC). These groups were worried about the economic, social, and cultural issues that were not being addressed to their satisfaction.

5.2.2 The policy community model

The policy community that formed around the issues of the information highway encompassed many federal government departments and agencies, the information and communications sector, nongovernment organizations, public interest groups, international organizations, and interested individuals (e.g., those who responded to the CRTC Convergence Hearing). The makeup of the community was strikingly similar to the model proposed by Coleman and Skogstad and by Pross (Figure 5-1).
Figure 5-1  The Information Highway Policy Community

Pross has observed that a policy community can usually be divided into two segments: the sub-government and the attentive public. The sub-government represents the policy-making body of the policy community and includes a small group from the ministry or agency that has primary responsibility for the area, senior officials with overlapping responsibility in the same policy area, and representatives of a few institutionalized interest groups. The attentive public includes a melange of government agencies, interest groups, private institutions, and individuals such as academics, who attempt to influence policy but do not regularly participate in policy making.

Actors in the information policy community arranged themselves into a sub-government and an attentive public. The most visible participants in the sub-government included the minister responsible for Industry Canada and a number of departments in Industry Canada, the CRTC, IHAC and its secretariat, the Cabinet, and a few institutionalized private sector groups, among which the Stentor Alliance figured prominently. Cabinet, as the final decision maker, was at the centre of the policy community.

As the IHAC process progressed, more federal government departments became involved and eventually collaborated in preparing the government response to IHAC. CANARIE, a non-government organization, had an informal role in policy making, mainly by virtue of the fact that many of CANARIE’s members participated in IHAC, either as council members or as working group members. Many private sector groups were automatically included in activities related to policy discussions, such as IHAC, and also had other less formal avenues of access. The latter included frequent interactions, in their capacity as advisors and lobbyists, with policy makers, and many opportunities for socializing with policy makers. Public interest groups such as CPI, PIAC, and IHWG remained in the attentive public with other non-government organizations and academics.

At Industry Canada, some sectors had more influence than others and were included in the process. Sectors that were particularly oriented to technology- and market-oriented plans for the information highway, such as the SITT, had the ear of the minister and were recognized as
playing a major role in setting the direction of IHAC.

5.2.3 Government Responsibilities in the Policy Community

Among its roles, the federal government had a major responsibility for making policy. In the early 1990s, an era of fiscal restraint, the government was also expected to balance the interests of the various groups coming to it seeking assistance or benefits. The market philosophy encouraged the government to become a facilitator amongst private sector interests, and between private and public interests. The federal government also worked with international organizations and governments through its politicians and bureaucrats.

Ministries responded to requests from their client groups. Industry Canada’s mandate was to promote industry objectives at all levels of government as well as outside government. In this study, the principal sectors of Industry Canada concentrated on advancing the interests of the telecommunications industry. As a respondent from CANARIE stated, the ministry can end up promoting its clients’ viewpoints so that “departments reflect the clients” (R161203). The CRTC implemented telecommunications and broadcasting policy and oversaw industry compliance with that policy. Responsibility for the two technologies, telecommunications and broadcasting, was split respectively between Industry Canada and Heritage Canada. Industry Canada’s creation, IHAC, was responsible for bringing recommendations to the government for new policy related to the information highway.

5.2.4 Major Actors

Industry Canada took the lead in policy development for the information highway. In fact, it was Michael Binder, Assistant Deputy Minister of SITT, who approached John Manley, the minister, with the proposal for IHAC. On convincing the government of its worth, Industry Canada was
given the greater responsibility (between it and Heritage Canada) for the IHAC process (R161205). According to a respondent in the department, IHAC was to be used as:

a way of building some degree of momentum within Canada generally, certainly within the business community and most definitely in the federal government: the two-edged sword. You start leveraging other departments as we did, and eventually got the work plan out of it. You make it all interesting and challenging for the public. You can see as you’re going along, “wow, we’ve got a neat form of wireless telecom.” We’ve never had that before. It’s a new way of getting television signals, or a new way of accessing the Internet. It's a combination of a marketing ploy and “let’s get somewhere.” (R161205)

The CRTC also played a major advisory role along with IHAC. The CRTC was simultaneously making rulings on deregulation and competition in the telecommunications and broadcasting areas. Heritage Canada played a secondary role.\(^3\) Seven ministers were involved in final approval of the IHAC proposal before it went to Cabinet as a Memorandum to Cabinet.

IHAC had a particularly visible role in the policy community. The CRTC and IHAC provided the formal venues for policy option discussions for all of the sectors. However, the government and public interest groups were at odds as to the value the government placed on IHAC. Government respondents were unanimous in stating that IHAC was a valuable exercise that helped them to develop the final government proposal, _Building the Information Society_ (Canada, Government of Canada 1996). Some Industry Canada respondents pointed out that their assistant deputy minister lobbied to create IHAC and then was responsible for its outcome as an indication of the importance attributed to IHAC at Industry Canada. Furthermore, government respondents reported that IHAC was a success. Public interest groups, on the other hand, felt that the real decision making was occurring behind the scenes between the government and private sectors. For the public interest groups, IHAC was but “window dressing.”

\(^3\)As witnessed by the letter in the preface of the IHAC final report (phase 1) which is addressed to Minister Manley but thanks Minister Dupuy for Heritage Canada’s “leadership” and “interest” (Canada, Government of Canada 1996).
As previously noted, private sector companies played a major role. The Stentor Alliance was the most prominent private actor. Stentor presented proposals to the government both officially through the CRTC and IHAC and unofficially in interactions with government officials and groups outside of government. With a human resources base of 85,000 employees and substantial contributions to the country's tax base, Stentor was a major force.

The Stentor Alliance represented all of the employees of the Bell phone companies as well as subsidiaries such as Northern Telecom. As the leader in Canadian telecommunications, it also had strategic importance. Among its employees were experts in the field of telecommunications and law who were in charge of developing policy proposals to the government, and advising and educating government officials. Besides a wealth of human resources, Stentor had the funds to launch major lobbying and media efforts in order to promote a favourable policy outcome.

Stentor had a well-developed value system around its corporate goals that was not out of step with government goals. Stentor was able to establish agreements amongst its member phone companies, mobilize policy activities, and maintain ongoing contact and cooperation with government agencies. All of these characteristics increased the probability of effectiveness in carrying through initiatives, from hearing member-company demands to bringing those demands to government. Many of the demands came to the government in the form of CRTC regulatory requests—a routine practice for Stentor and the phone companies.

As part of the information highway discussion, Stentor produced reports for the government and the public including its "vision statement," which was described in The Information Highway: Canada's Road to Economic and Social Renewal (Stentor Alliance 1993) and The Beacon Initiative (Stentor Alliance 1994). These documents were focused on the potential of the information highway as an information and communications medium that would be universally available. Stentor recommended a policy, tax, and regulatory environment that would facilitate the information highway’s timely development, streamlined regulation, private sector cooperation, a competitive environment, and government leadership as a user of electronic
services (Stentor Alliance 1993, p. 4). The Information Highway also devoted a section to the roles of industry and government, as if those would be the only interested actors. The Beacon Initiative concentrated on the benefits such development would bring to different sectors of society (e.g., small business, education, retail, insurance providers, consumers). Culture and the Information Highway was Stentor’s argument, presented to the cultural community, for its entry into the broadcasting market (Ellis 1994).

Stentor was effective in developing its policy goals and was supported by Stentor Telecom Policy Inc., whose role was to organize and carry out lobbying activities. Stentor was extremely knowledgeable about the technical and economic issues before the government, as well as about government processes. This expertise had developed from its routine and widespread interactions with government officials. Stentor’s organization and attention to routine lobbying increased its ability to influence government.

These major actors were similar to the actors identified as members of the sub-government by Coleman and Skogstad and by Pross. Cabinet sat at the centre of the information policy community and made the final policy decisions. Just as Pross states, outside interests had little access to Cabinet and had to bring their concerns to ministers. This was the route that most groups tried to follow; however, only Stentor had that kind of access on a regular basis. Therefore, Stentor had a role in the sub-government along with Industry Canada, the CRTC, IHAC, and Heritage Canada. When it came time for the government to create its policy and the Memorandum to Cabinet, a number of other government departments participated in the sub-government as well.

5.2.5 Other Actors

Public interest groups, nongovernmental organizations, and international organizations played a less visible role. Each took on a different function. The public interest groups tried to influence
policy by actively attempting to enter into the process, be it via presentations at IHAC, before the CRTC, through the press, or with reports and surveys. Nongovernmental organizations advised the government before and during the process. Recommendations from international organizations such as the OECD and provisions of treaties such as NAFTA were regarded as international guidelines for national policies, and in some cases bound the government to decisions taken in international treaties. Although the public interest groups and the nongovernmental groups had some representation on IHAC, they were not seen as part of the core policy makers in the policy community.

Members of the attentive public included groups like CPI and academics such as the members of IHWG. These groups offered their advice and services to the government, submitted comments to the CRTC, organized conferences and workshops, and sometimes were invited to present their proposals to IHAC or to government officials. They also attempted to use the media to further their cause. However, they had fewer resources, and such activities were not enough to establish the same strong ties with policy makers that private sector actors had.

Because public interest groups promoted ideas about universal access and the more social aspects of information highway policy that were no longer complementary with the direction that the sub-government wished to take, access for the public interest groups was even less possible. As Pross has pointed out, groups in the attentive public do not have access to policy makers, particularly if they oppose the prevailing trends. This led groups like CPI to look for other means of furthering their goals, such as participation in planning the Community Access Program (CAP)⁴ with the Science Promotion and Academic Affairs Branch of Industry Canada.

National and international organizations and foreign governments also had a place in the policy community. They did not actively participate in policy making for the information highway,

⁴The Community Access Program was initiated by Industry Canada to provide program funding for setting up community internet access centres in rural communities as well as providing internet training facilities for the local community.
but their presence was felt. Some respondents felt that the international sector accounted for the
direction that the policy decisions followed, and therefore was within the sub-government. Others
mentioned international activities as a constant and pervasive influence but did not believe that
these actors were part of the sub-government. Although most corporate representatives had
international ties of one sort or another, international organizations were not perceived as being
part of the sub-government.  

5.2.6 Network of Participants

The information policy community, while encompassing a large number of companies,
organizations, and government departments, was a rather closely knit group during the
discussions for information highway policy. Bureaucrats from Industry Canada and the private
sector (i.e., Stentor representatives) had open access to each other. The relationship between the
government and the private sector was further enhanced by private sector involvement in
CANARIE and IHAC. A respondent representing CANARIE indicated that half its board
members were from industry (R161203). Seven or eight of these board members were IHAC
members and "several more" CANARIE board members participated in the IHAC working
groups (R161203). The majority of IHAC participants were, in fact, from industry. Members of
CANARIE and IHAC also participated in developing CAP, overseen by the Science Promotion
and Academic Affairs Department.

A director from the Science Promotion and Academic Affairs Branch who was responsible
for CAP and SchoolNet6 stated that his branch had many outside connections and partnerships

5The international community, which sits on the outer orbit of the attentive public in
Pross's policy community model, probably constitutes a third dimension in the policy model, as

6SchoolNet was intended to facilitate linking up schools and public libraries across Canada
to the internet and to provide educational services and resources. It was a joint effort of the
that preceded IHAC, and that they had the opportunity to promote their views at intra- and inter-departmental working groups:

We were highly connected with people on IHAC, before they even got to IHAC. So we were talking to various groups on the public access side, on the university side, in the telecommunications industry. They're partners in Schoolnet. Schoolnet preceded IHAC and so did the Community Access Program as a matter of fact... So we are plugged into a lot of different channels because of the coincidence of the kind of files we were managing. (R161206)

After the agenda was set for IHAC, Industry Canada continued to have a close relationship with IHAC. The majority of members of the IHAC secretariat, which provided advisory and administrative services to IHAC, were staff from Industry Canada, and the secretariat office was located within Industry Canada. Industry Canada branches provided information for IHAC, and on occasion representatives attended IHAC meetings to make presentations, to "strut their stuff" (R161205). Some of this Industry Canada/IHAC interaction eventually prompted informal complaints from Industry Canada staff that "they [IHAC] ask us, take our work and recommend it back to us." The Industry Canada director reporting this comment gave the situation a positive spin, stating that "it's quite an opportunity if you already know the way you want to go, right?" (R261204).

On the other hand, the IHAC council member from CPI argued that the Council "felt that during that period of time their energies were being put towards the points of view that the Council wanted to make to the government, not what the government wanted to hear" (R161021). In response to this objection, evidence of the constant interaction Industry Canada had with IHAC as its administrator and advisor, of the IHAC secretariat's ability to act as a gate-keeper to the IHAC members, and ultimately of the stance taken in the recommendations points to significant influence on the part of Industry Canada.

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Federal and provincial governments. The governments did not finance equipment or connections, but worked to make them affordable.
Both the government and the private sector had interacted with public interest groups such as PIAC, CPI, NAPO and FNACQ in previous activities, most often at the CRTC. PIAC in particular was singled out as a public interest group that was well known to the government and private sectors alike. One representative from PIAC, who was previously employed by Industry Canada, still had contact with his former colleagues and was perhaps one of two members of public interest groups who had relatively easy access to the major actors. The second was the chair of CPI who was on the boards of IHAC, CANARIE and CAP. Generally speaking, the three sectors had been involved together with issues related to information technology (for example, the Summit on Information Policy) since the beginning of the 1990s (R161021).

The public interest groups, limited in resources, were in constant contact with each other and relied on each other throughout the CRTC hearings and the IHAC policy discussions. In the fall of 1995 groups including CPI, PIAC, FNACQ, IHWG, TC, NAPO, P-IHAC, the Telecommunications Workers Union, and the Council of Canadians formed a loosely organized association, the Alliance for a Connected Canada, to react to government policy proposals in a unified manner. The Alliance, with no funding, had a difficult time operating. It was not able to meet, except electronically by e-mail and by the occasional conference-call meeting. Furthermore, the variety of opinions that were held by members of the Alliance made consensus difficult.

5.2.7 Lobbying Strategies

The distribution of resources greatly favoured the private sector over public interest groups. The types of strategies used by different groups and the frequency with which they were able to carry them out varied. Stentor's most prominent strategy was constant contact with stakeholders and policy makers. Contact increased the probability of convincing the policy community of Stentor's position and the ways in which its proposal would benefit other stakeholders. In order to do that, lobbyists "worked" the government, the investment community, customers, suppliers, public interest groups and the media. (R361204) As previously mentioned, contact included all levels
of government, both formally and via the "back room."

The purpose of such contact, especially with the government, was to update officials on industry activities, provide information to others about Stentor Alliance proposals, give suggestions, convey the company's position, and keep Stentor Alliance members informed about policy directions the government was considering. Stentor was also prepared to make deals in order to have proposals accepted, for example offering money to cultural groups for their support in securing entry to the cable business (R161204, R170114). In a formal capacity, Stentor regularly made applications to the CRTC for regulatory changes. The company was also well represented in committees such as IHAC, CANARIE, and CAP.

Stentor's lobbying activities extended to public interest groups. They solicited opinions on some proposals and shared information about Stentor activities. They also offered advice on occasion. One Stentor respondent recounted how he counseled CPI to follow some of Stentor's own strategies: "Get yourself organized and get yourself into the loop, at the table where the decisions will be made" (R361204).

The public interest groups employed as many strategies as they could manage, albeit with less frequency and at a lesser proximity to policy makers than the private sector. They wrote briefing notes, reports, responses to reports, and letters. CPI produced its information highway "vision," Future-Knowledge, just in time for presentation at IHAC (Skrzeszewski and Cubberley 1995a). PIAC also produced proposals and responses to IHAC proposals such as Sharing the Road (Reddick 1995a). The Telecommunications Workers Union of British Columbia submitted its proposal report to the CRTC Convergence Hearing (Goss Gilroy Inc. 1994). The PIAC respondent recognized the value of constantly repeating an idea to soften up policy makers to a different idea. He commented that "what really works is the fact that you have a number of people saying the same thing over and over again. It becomes a mantra" (R161213).

Public interest groups made presentations to IHAC and interventions at the CRTC. They
also worked to improve public awareness of the issues. CPI held public consultations both to bring more attention to social and economic issues around the information highway and to build some credibility in the policy community. CPI and the CLA each organized a conference around the issues of the information highway. All of the public interest groups tried to take advantage of any media opportunity that presented itself. For example, CPI made its presentation to the CRTC Convergence Hearing by chance on the opening day of the Hearing and thus profited from the presence of the media, who were there in force.

Groups attempted to get some of their members on committees where policy recommendations were being developed. CPI managed to convince the government to include its chair as a member of IHAC, and she subsequently was asked to be a board member of CANARIE and CAP. The chair was then in a position to observe and participate in the policy process while taking advantage of the contacts she was making with other board members and government officials. She could carry out the day-to-day lobbying that was necessary, although much of this took place from afar (Toronto). However, she could reach stakeholders by phone and lobby policy makers at meetings. Her participation would eventually help CPI to better understand the policy process and the appropriate individuals to approach about an issue, as well as to develop better timing when lobbying.

Yet another lobbying approach was to arrange meetings with government officials. Although this was a routine matter for private sector actors such as Stentor, it was another matter for public interest groups like CPI. The response to most of CPI’s requests were either polite refusals or meetings with lower-ranked individuals at Industry Canada or the CRTC. Another problem that plagued CPI emerged from the group’s inexperience. Because CPI did not know the government or its processes particularly well, it was not always certain whom it should approach to make its appeals. CPI’s CEO confided that “from the outside you never really know who’s making the decisions. You can spend a lot of time lobbying the wrong group. We’ve done that” (R161009).
Because of their relative lack of resources, a number of the public interest groups worked together on as many issues as possible. This allowed them to share resources such as issue and process expertise and legal advice. Presenting a common front built credibility by virtue of the aggregate size of the membership. It also meant that groups such as CPI that were not in Ottawa could rely on Ottawa-based groups to keep them informed and represent their positions before officials. This was the only way they could participate on a regular basis and as a part of a larger constituency.

The government had its own strategies as well. First it chose Industry Canada and the CRTC as the base agencies for policy discussions. Then it used IHAC to increase involvement, excitement, and support. Industry Canada passed its ideas to IHAC. Industry Canada also used the lobby groups as a source for ideas. CPI was one such group, providing input to CAP and to public libraries as public access points.

5.3 CPI's INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

According to Pross, a group's institutional characteristics indicate its potential for influence (1992, pp. 100-102). Group characteristics such as membership, resources, organizational structure, and outputs (e.g., newsletters, briefs, delegations) help explain the difficulties CPI experienced in the face of well-financed, institutionalized opposition from the private sector. An analysis of CPI's institutional characteristics begins to bring its strengths and weaknesses to light.

5.3.1 CPI Membership

On the occasion of its first annual report in 1995, CPI claimed a “paid-up” membership of 136 individual members and 50 organizational members (CPI 1995a). Organizational members included the OLA with 4,000 members, other libraries throughout Canada, organizations and
associations such as Telecommunities Canada, the Community Information Centres of Metropolitan Toronto, Micromedia Ltd., and the Information Technology Association of Canada. CPI also reported support from “more than 500 individuals and institutions” (CPI 1995b). Both members and supporters could be described generally as mainstream professional individuals and organizations.

CPI had links with a number of organizations through joint lobbying efforts, committee membership, and projects. CPI worked closely with other groups such as TC, PIAC, the McLuhan Program in Culture and Technology, and the CLA when responding to CRTC hearings and other more general lobbying efforts. Additional links, particularly to private sector companies, were built through the CPI chair’s membership on IHAC and CANARIE. Collaborative projects were instrumental in helping CPI to forge links with Industry Canada, CANARIE, l'Association pour l'avancement des sciences et des techniques de la documentation (ASTED), and the Canadian Teachers’ Federation.

In 1994, whenever an opportunity presented itself, such as a public meeting or workshop in which the CPI steering committee was involved, the steering committee invited those in attendance to become members of CPI. The urgency of events in the policy process and the lack of resources prevented a more concerted effort at member recruitment. The fact that CPI had little time to invest in increasing the membership was an ongoing source of anxiety. However, the steering committee had decided that it must react to the political situation first and try to solicit new members at some future point when the steering committee’s situation was less hectic.

Aside from the steering committee, the CPI membership was not particularly involved in the group’s activities. As one member of the CPI steering committee stated:

We don’t hear from a lot of the members except when they buy memberships. Occasionally we get a message from one of them. What we find too is that when we put out a request specifically for feedback we don’t get an awful lot. (R161009)
He concluded that the lack of involvement of the general membership was because people did not have the time and because the issues were so complicated that people did not feel sufficiently knowledgeable to contribute. However, this led to a significant burden for a few people in the organization.

The CPI membership was respectable in size, professional and middle class in background, and linked with a number of other associations. Nevertheless, in the information policy community these attributes required measurement in relative terms. CPI’s membership characteristics were favourable but were not in the league of a major employer like the Stentor Alliance. A larger membership would have brought more strength to CPI, both in actual and perceptual terms, but the greater size alone would not have made a significant difference.

5.3.2 CPI Resources

To better understand the situation in which CPI found itself, a comparison between Stentor and CPI resources offers a distinctive contrast. The availability of resources disproportionately favoured the private sector over public interest groups. The resources disparity between the private and public interest organizations was obvious to the actors from the outset. Bell Canada Enterprises (BCE), the Stentor Alliance’s parent company, was the major private sector actor and not only possessed substantial resources but was in the habit of using them to lobby to its advantage. Operating revenues for the Stentor Alliance in 1993 were $13.5 billion (Canada, Industry Canada 1994b). Thus finding funding for lobbying was not an issue. The Stentor Alliance had a lobbying organization, Stentor Telecom Policy Inc., and many other resources that it could employ according to the situation. The comment “money” was the prevalent explanation for understanding Stentor’s fundamental effectiveness.

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7 As an Industry Canada director stated, “BCE is the largest capitalized company in Canada—16% of the TSE [Toronto Stock Exchange]” (R261204).
The most-cited illustration of Stentor’s resource capacity was its well-developed and pervasive network of contacts within the federal government. Stentor Telecom Policy Inc. employed upwards of 70 individuals in its lobbying organization.⁸ A respondent from the Stentor Alliance stated that lobbyists covered the various levels of bureaucrats and politicians (R161204). A respondent from the IHAC secretariat reinforced that claim: “Well, if I’m getting calls from Stentor and I’ve got one policy area, I mean the guys in Telecom Policy just must get inundated with it” (R161205).

Whereas departments such as Heritage Canada would advocate for members of their less affluent client community to compensate for their clients’ limited resources, Industry Canada respondents stated that they did not advocate for the telecommunications companies who had the resources to lobby for themselves throughout the government. “We don’t feel we have to go to the Department of Finance to make the telco’s [telecommunications companies] case on a tax issue because we know that they’re there anyway” (R261204). Relatively unlimited resources allowed Stentor contact inside government on an ongoing basis. Stentor’s access was not uncommon for industry:

Most industries are geared up to do this. They have whole departments geared up. They have lots of money; they have lobbyists. They’re doing this every day. Literally every day there are people in there talking. They’re working the back rooms, and they’re there because they’ve got money essentially. (R161213)

A CRTC commissioner stated that “of course, just in the routine day-to-day affairs of the Commission you will meet various industry actors just to be kept informed of issues that are going on” (R170106). Furthermore, the private sector had the means to hire “high-powered lawyers” to represent them at the CRTC and the advertising money to lobby the government and the public alike (R161206).

⁸According to Stentor Alliance Office Manager.
Public interest groups were also acutely aware of the private sector’s privileged position and resources. One respondent stated that:

I see it and I know that some of the industry players have better access. We just know their views are getting through better, whether it’s direct access as a lobby or because they have enough staff that they can hit bureaucrats at all levels. They can hit all the working groups at the policy officer level, they can hit the directors, the directors-general, the assistant deputies, the inter-working groups and the ministers. They’ve got the staff and resources so they can do this. They’ve also got the public agenda. They can influence reports and studies; they can work behind the scenes, for example at dinners. There are a lot of different levels. Same with the CRTC. They’re always over there, these guys are always over there. (R161213)

Public interest groups pointed to another manifestation of the private sector’s financial advantage in travel, hotel, and entertainment budgets (R161021). All of this activity was undertaken in order that “decisions makers within the government know in great detail the positive reasons why government should be finding in their favour” (R161021). Another important advantage for organizations such as Stentor was their location. Situated in Ottawa, they were in the centre of action: they were close to participants and could react to events quickly.

5.3.2.1 CPI Finances

Resources, particularly financial, of the public interest groups were meagre compared to those of the private sector. One CPI steering committee member stated that there was “no comparison” between the private sector situation to that of CPI (R161021). During its first two years, CPI depended upon the assistance of the OLA, who provided office space and administrative services. Outside funding in 1994 came in the form of a $49,600 grant from the Ontario government’s Jobs Ontario Community Action. This money covered one-third of the cost of supporting the CEO, the deputy CEO, and the research assistant. CPI also targetted the money for the development of public policy documents, public awareness initiatives, and the membership.
In January 1995, CPI received $10,000 from Industry Canada for a study of public libraries as internet public-access sites.\(^9\) A three-year grant of $197,000 from the Trillium Foundation in December 1995 provided sustaining funds. CPI salaries and operating costs were covered for September and October 1995 by funds from Industry Canada for consultation on the CAP project. Membership fees augmented these funds by $3,200 in 1995.

From such resource bases, the extravagance of travel or entertainment budgets was out of the question. The possibility of having an office in Ottawa to have more opportunities to be seriously involved in activities was nonexistent. CPI relied upon groups situated in Ottawa, such as PIAC and the CLA, and their own chair when she attended meetings in Ottawa, to find out what was going on and to bring proposals to government officials. Whatever resources were left after salaries went into researching and developing proposals.\(^{10}\)

For CPI, fewer resources meant more time spent trying to raise funds and fewer opportunities to research issues, consult the public, lobby officials, or spend the time to grasp thoroughly the complexities of the government policy process. Members of the private sector and government were aware of the limits within which public interest groups were operating. One Stentor respondent stated that the most successful group, PIAC, was basically limited to CRTC hearings because that was all it could afford to do. He elaborated that limited resources translated into public interest groups’ being able to target a small number of “core” issues and pointed out that public interest groups did not have funding for travel, research, or legal expenses, among others (R161204)

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\(^9\)The report was entitled *Canada’s Public Libraries and the Information Highway: A Report Prepared for Industry Canada* (Skrzeszewski 1995a).

\(^{10}\)Such limited financial resources did not apply to CPI alone. In one stark example, a respondent recounted the difficulty the Alliance for a Connected Canada had trying to work together. The Alliance did not even have enough funds amongst the groups to finance more than the very occasional teleconference.
A second Stentor respondent suggested that public interest groups such as CPI should seek funding from the private sector. In his opinion, “it is possible to be funded by business while not being influenced by business, but there doesn’t seem to be much of an appetite for that in Canada” (R361204). The CRTC Commissioner’s reaction to the fact that public interest groups such as CPI could not afford travel to Ottawa for hearings was that groups could send in their proposals because “we just want to hear what you have to say about a given issue and we’ll take your views seriously” (R170106). Perhaps views were taken seriously by the CRTC, but there was no evidence that such letters had an influence on policy outcomes. Public interest groups, and particularly CPI, had little appetite for taking funding from the private sector to mount lobbying campaigns. CPI was concerned that such action would be perceived as compromising its position and that the group would no longer be seen as acting independently. Although CPI continued to write letters as the Commissioner recommended, the steering committee had a well-founded lack of faith in letter writing as an effective means of lobbying.

5.3.2.2 CPI Voluntary Support

With very little funding, CPI operated mainly with volunteer labour. Members gave first priority to their personal work responsibilities, not to CPI. As a member of another public interest group stated, public interest group members who did devote more time were generally “not funded, ...doing it in their spare time, ...doing it in the middle of the night over and on top of their regular jobs” (R161202). Only three people were employed at CPI, and that was on a part-time basis (i.e., 1 1/4 days per week for the CEO and deputy CEO, and half time for the research assistant). Most tasks at CPI were undertaken by its executive and the chair, with varying degrees of assistance from members of the steering committee. The steering committee consisted of 18 volunteers and the three executive members. CPI chose not to create subcommittees, having decided that it could react more quickly without the bureaucracy inherent in a more extensively organized institution. The decision may have been detrimental to the organization because it left very few people to do an enormous amount of work and cover a number of bases at the same
Leadership at CPI was a positive, albeit severely limited, resource. As previously mentioned, most of the responsibility in CPI fell to the executive: the chair, the CEO, and the deputy CEO, with help from the research assistant. All three members of the executive were experienced in library community issues and activities. They took part in developing the OLA's strategic plan *One Place to Look* (OLA 1990) and *A Proposal for an Information Policy for Ontario* (OLA 1992). The chair had been the chair of the Board of a large public library system. The CEO had been president of the OLA and the deputy CEO was employed by the OLA as a deputy director. All three had been on the provincial committees and task forces concerned with information and telecommunications issues, and they had many contacts at the provincial level. CPI's chair's list of contacts at the national level increased greatly with her membership on IHAC, CANARIE, and CAP. The fact that the chair was part of these committees and in regular contact with the other members, for the most part from the private sector and federal government, meant that she acted as a conduit for information between the outside groups and CPI.

The executive was respected both by other members of CPI and by those outside the organization. The chair was invited to sit on IHAC, and that recognition led to membership on the boards of CANARIE and CAP. She stated that in most instances the policy community preferred to identify her first with her position at a major university and to a lesser degree with her affiliation with CPI. The chair became the most knowledgeable CPI member in relation to the federal government policy-making process and the activities surrounding it. Recognition of the expertise of CPI's executive in local community issues was also demonstrated by the fact that the Science Promotion and Academic Affairs Branch of Industry Canada contracted CPI on two occasions to carry out consultations for them.
Other members of the steering committee had high profiles in their respective communities. They represented the spectrum of information professions and were on publishing councils, community network boards, and professional association boards. They transmitted information from their communities to the CPI steering committee and back. Besides regular meetings, some of these members assisted the executive by representing CPI at functions and meetings, helping to write proposals and briefs, making phone calls, and providing support services (e.g., designing and publishing Future-Knowledge).

The CPI steering committee took a very professional approach to its activities on behalf of the group. Although CPI represented a more socially and culturally oriented perspective on the policy issues at hand than the private sector actors, the actions of the steering committee were professional and conservative. The steering committee operated by consensus and in most instances could find common ground, even with the diversity of professional perspectives. As one of the executive put it, the steering committee had “a certain consistency of opinion” (R161009). Together they responded to CRTC hearings; created an information highway policy proposal and other related proposals; assisted like-minded groups; consulted, made presentations, and presented their positions to other groups; and organized a conference; “Digital Knowledge,” around information highway issues.

5.3.3 CPI Organizational Structure

According to Pross, the value of a strong organizational structure is that it enhances the ability of a group to carry out the tasks at hand. Working from a strong organizational structure increases the group’s potential for political influence. Pross cites five characteristics that indicate organizational strength: aggregative capacity, articulative capacity, strategic capacity, mobilization capacity, and coalitional capacity. Articulative and aggregative capacities indicate respectively the ability to establish internal agreement and the ability to communicate with others. Strategic capacity considers the ability of the group to forecast and plan ahead. Mobilization
capacity derives from the routine activities of a group. The greater the amount of routine activity, the more likely it is that the group will be successful at pressuring the government. Finally, groups that have regular contact and joint projects with other groups develop their coalitional capacity (Pross 1992, p. 105).

5.3.3.1 CPI Aggregative Capacity

CPI's ability to build internal agreement was strong. The steering committee built agreements through consultations with its members, through public consultations, and particularly through the steering committee itself. Communication with the general membership was primarily through CPI's listserv. The executive sent out notices and drafts of proposals when it wanted to address formally a policy issue on the public agenda. For example, the executive sent out a listserv request for input to its submission to the CRTC for the Convergence Hearing. That request was followed by a request for comments on the draft submission. When the steering committee was putting together Future-Knowledge they used the same process. In addition, the steering committee organized public consultations and developed a package to help the various groups to gather ideas. Thereafter the steering committee and other volunteers worked together to draft and edit the document.

The cohesion of the steering committee was critical to the success of CPI's activities. All proposals and submissions were vetted by the steering committee. Decisions were made either at monthly meetings or by telephone or e-mail. The decision-making process was consensual and instances of divisiveness were infrequent.

5.3.3.2 CPI Articulative Capacity

CPI spent a great deal of time trying to learn how to communicate effectively with the private and
public sectors. The group first became familiar with official communications at the CRTC when it took part in the Convergence Hearing. The executive also made a presentation before the Access and Social Impact Working Group of IHAC. CPI presented IHAC with copies of *Future-Knowledge* and also responded to various working groups' requests for input to proposals such as the copyright report (e-mail 95/02/27). CPI's chair was a member of other committees related to the information highway that provided additional avenues for communication with others outside the group both formally and informally.

Other communication strategies were less effective. The steering committee wrote letters to ministers and assistant deputy ministers that were answered by lesser officials. Attempts to meet with politicians and senior bureaucrats also ended with encounters with representatives who were outside the decision-making loop. In one instance, the executive spent time cultivating the Secretary of State for Science, Research and Development only to find that he was not one of the policy makers. This, they realized, was why he was accessible to them. Individual members of the steering committee communicated with members of IHAC and the government to both gather and pass on information. When members of the executive did contracting work for Industry Canada they used the occasion to communicate CPI's position. CPI's ability to communicate with others was limited by its resources and especially its location at a distance from Ottawa.

5.3.3.3 CPI Strategic Capacity

While CPI had little difficulty forecasting the direction of policy discussions, planning ahead was more complicated. The political environment was well established and CPI knew that all signs indicated policy decisions favouring the private sector. CPI set its objectives on changing the outcome as much as possible to include more social and cultural benefits for the public. Right from the beginning, CPI established its goals and objectives from ideas gathered at public meetings and from listserv input. Thereafter, the steering committee began to plan for its policy proposal document as CPI's tool for convincing the government and others to adopt a more
socially oriented policy approach. Other than the goals and objectives stated in *Future-Knowledge* which recommended more public input to the policy process and a continuation of democratic principles related to information, especially universal access, CPI’s strategy was reduced to reacting to the events of the day.

When calls for input to the CRTC Convergence Hearing were announced, the executive at first decided not to respond. The executive did not feel that the Convergence Hearing was as important as developing the policy proposal and administering public consultations, to which they were devoting all of their resources. CPI realized that the hearing was indeed a significant event only days before the submission deadline. That and the short lead time for the hearing, at least in the opinion of many public interest groups including CPI, forced the CPI steering committee to present a preliminary version of its policy document before the CRTC.

At about the same time, the IHAC Working Group on Copyright was requesting input. At a steering committee meeting, a CPI member who was also a member of the Copyright Working Group suggested that CPI make a submission. The discussion that followed revolved around the fact that CPI neither had a position prepared on copyright, nor had the time to develop one. In the end, the steering committee decided to submit “motherhood” statements just to “get on the record” (C50222). By its 1995 Annual Report, the steering committee included a section on “next steps,” most of which were the continuation of current projects such as a response to the IHAC report and confirmation of the chair’s ongoing membership on a number of boards.

For the first two years, CPI spent most of its time keeping up with events. CPI was a fledgling group at the point that the policy activities intensified. At the outset, most of the group did not understand the process into which they were entering. This lessened their capacity to plan ahead and to predict the path of events. In the spring of 1996 the steering committee finally found the time to hold strategic planning sessions and create a three-year plan. CPI was in the process of “disentangling” itself from the OLA, and redefining, organizing, and incorporating itself, in order to meet the terms of the Trillium grant that demanded fiscal accountability. However, by
1996, the major input to policy formulation for the information highway was over.

5.3.3.4 CPI Mobilization Capacity

Depending upon the level of activity, CPI displayed a dichotomy in its ability to mobilize internally. At the level of its general membership, CPI depended upon the internet, for the most part, for communicating its messages and requesting support, with minimal success. Often CPI received few responses for requests for constructive input to proposals or discussion papers. Institutional members assisted from time to time, but only a few were actively involved, either through staff who were on the steering committee or by offering supplies and services.

At the steering committee level, activity was frequent and more involved. The steering committee met on a regular basis, usually monthly. The steering committee members were able to draft and comment on telecommunication and information highway reports, attend various related functions, work with other groups, and mount a conference. Whenever CPI tried to mobilize to pressure government, the responsibility fell on the steering committee. This small group was able to react to CRTC hearings and to contact politicians, government officials, private sector actors, the press, and other public interest groups when required. These phone calls, letters, and informal discussions were neither regular nor frequent in comparison to the activities in the private sector.

The executive were the most involved of CPI's members. The chair, CEO, deputy CEO and Research Assistant accepted responsibility for most activities and wrote drafts of reports, proposals, CRTC submissions, and information communications for reactions from the steering committee. They would have been well served by the creation of more ad hoc committees to involve more members. In any case, they were always caught up in events, busy reacting to the latest crisis. They shouldered the bulk of the tasks, which left them with no time for developing a more supportive backup system. The executive stated that they preferred to work outside the
committee structure and to call for additional help when needed, because they could react more quickly. The cost to the executive and the steering committee was that they could neither share the burden nor cover the issues as thoroughly.

5.3.3.5 CPI Coalitional Capacity

CPI was adept at developing and maintaining links with other public interest groups. Like most of these groups, CPI felt that a cohesive front amongst the groups strengthened their position before policy makers. In a practical sense, such links helped to circulate information and to compensate for the lack of resources. CPI encouraged the growth of other groups even though the steering committee expressed some disappointment when new groups preferred not to join CPI. Each group wanted to develop its own variation on what was important and how to approach policy makers. CPI took the position that it was better to cooperate with new groups than to pressure them to be part of CPI.

CPI worked with the OLA, the CLA, PIAC, FNACQ, NAPO, IHWG, Forevergreen Productions, and unions, among others. CPI was an active member of the Alliance for a Connected Canada and also participated in the Information Policy Research Program workshops, which included many of that Alliance’s members as well as government, Stentor, and union representatives. These workshops provided an additional venue for presenting positions and spending informal time building rapport and making connections with government and private sector representatives.

CPI collaborated with other public interest groups on responses to IHAC proposals and endorsed the proposals of these groups. The various groups discussed positions and strategies and tried to develop common positions and coordinated strategies. CPI also depended heavily on PIAC for its expertise and its legal counsel in dealing with government and the private sector. CPI’s chair was a member of IHWG and regularly attended its meetings. From time to time, CPI
also considered coalitional strategies with the private sector. In the instance when Stentor requested changes to regulation to allow it to enter into the cable business, Stentor asked a number of groups to support it against the cable companies. CPI was very concerned with taking money from Stentor and eventually decided that taking such funding could compromise the group both in its freedom of action and in public perceptions. Later, CPI did collaborate with Stentor to promote preferential phone rates for educational and health organizations.

5.3.4 CPI Outputs

The outputs of a group are important in that they can strengthen the group and its lobbying activities (Pross 1992, p. 111). CPI produced a newsletter that assisted in disseminating ideas and policy positions and in keeping the general membership up-to-date on activities. The CPI listserv served a similar purpose but was more useful because of its immediacy. The executive’s provision of consulting services to the government (e.g., the CAP consultations) brought some revenue to CPI to help cover salaries. The consulting placed CPI in a closer position to actors in the policy process. This involvement increased the potential for gleaning more information about policy activities, alerting the group to the direction the policy process was taking, and giving CPI an avenue to regular interaction with government officials. Public meetings and conference presentations provided CPI with opportunities for attracting new members. CPI chose not to initiate any protest activities such as demonstrations, petitions, or letter-writing campaigns.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Strong institutional group characteristics contributed to the position actors held in the policy community. The most influential interest group, the Stentor Alliance, exhibited a significant potential for influencing policy outcomes. Groups like CPI were less developed. While Stentor was accepted into the sub-government (a position it had traditionally maintained), CPI remained
in the realm of the attentive public and had comparatively little input in the policy process. Where the Stentor Alliance operated a sophisticated and resource-rich lobbying organization, CPI was resource-poor, much less experienced, and too new to be considered institutionally stable.

CPI was effective in identifying, articulating and agreeing upon goals and the means of attaining them. The steering committee was knowledgeable in library and local community issues. CPI did not have the level of technical expertise that Stentor had but was sufficiently knowledgeable to offer advice and present proposals. Although CPI was congratulated for its work on *Future-Knowledge*, it was also criticized for not preparing a more pragmatic proposal. CPI’s ability to mobilize resources and bring pressure to bear was hampered by a number of factors: its late entry into the policy community, its limited resources, its lack of knowledge about the federal government policy process, and its position on the information policy issues.
CHAPTER 6

CPI IN THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY POLICY PROCESS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 6 describes the chronology of events that led to a policy for the information highway in Canada. The evaluation of these events reveals a discernible pattern that is supported by John Kingdon's policy process theory. Evidence gleaned by applying Kingdon's framework further explicates the problems Canada's Coalition for Public Information (CPI) encountered in attempting to participate meaningfully in the policy process. Chapter 6 also discusses the manner in which the principal actors conducted the process of policy making by creating a sub-government policy network that limited opportunities for input from groups such as CPI.

6.1.1 Stoking the Information Highway Fire

In February of 1994, the Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC) sponsored a major information industry conference, "Powering Up North America." Held in Toronto, the conference was attended by nine hundred individuals, attracted mainly from the business and government sectors with some representation from public interest groups (ITAC 1994). The conference was a major promotion of ITAC's vision of the future of the information and communications technology business in Canada and beyond. This vision depended upon the successful marketing and development of an information infrastructure, already being promoted as the "information highway."

Presentations and discussions at the conference revolved around financial opportunities, the primacy of information technology, and the projected benefits of the information highway. U.S. corporate and government representatives promoted that country's free market model and
recommended that Canadian business and government follow the U.S. lead and deregulate. Above all, speaker after speaker emphasized the urgency of getting on track, making quick decisions, and establishing the infrastructure to keep up with their competition. Immediate action was required or the moment would be lost; any individual or institution, entrepreneur, government official, corporation, nation, that did not react expeditiously would be in peril.

While such a conference may have been an inspiration to private sector participants, advocates for public concerns were critical of this effort to inculcate the business community, the government, and the public at large to industry's free market vision of the information highway. Public interest groups such as CPI and the Fédération nationale des associations de consommateurs du Québec (FNACQ) were disturbed by information industry representatives who, in presentation after presentation, argued for the primacy of the industry perspective in the development and control of the information highway.

The "Powering Up North America" conference presented a snapshot of the policy community forming around the development of the information highway in Canada. The Minister of Industry, John Manley, addressed the conference via videoconference; Secretary of State (Science, Research and Development) Jon Gerrard announced plans for an advisory council and the objectives for that council. Representatives from across the information technology industry made presentations and convened sessions. The message from the private sector and government alike was "compete, deregulate and let the market set the terms for the information society." A minor amount of presentation time was devoted to public interest organizations, who expressed their concerns about the lack of consideration being given to public interests. There were no presentations allotted to public interests during the plenary or other high-profile sessions. Coffee breaks became the optimum time for public interest groups to "work the room" and try and introduce their position to private sector and government officials.

This conference did not introduce information highway discussions. Previous activities
related to the information highway date back to the 1970s.\textsuperscript{1} However, it was in the early 1990s that knowledge of the internet and recognition of converging information technologies became more widespread. A significant impetus for policy action in Canada was the U.S. release of the \textit{National Information Infrastructure: Agenda for Action}, a plan to ensure future U.S. competitiveness in information technology and services (United States, Information Infrastructure Task Force 1993).

\textbf{6.2 CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS 1994-1996 (Figures 6-1 - 6-3)}\textsuperscript{2}

In the fall of 1993, the Stentor Alliance\textsuperscript{3} issued its first formal proposal for the information highway, \textit{The Information Highway: Canada’s Road to Economic and Social Renewal} (1993). Stentor envisioned increased policy collaboration between the government and the private sector that would lead to a more competitive marketplace. This document was followed by \textit{The Beacon Initiative} (Stentor Alliance 1994), in which Stentor committed to investing $8 billion in upgrading its local and long-distance networks. The document described the internet as “poised to become a major commercial service” and Stentor pitched the possibilities of the information highway to the private sector. CPI’s reaction to this document was clear in an e-mail message sent from one of its executive:

> I think that the key element to note here is the size of the projected investment which is pushing $9 to $10 billion. Compare that with the $26 million dedicated to CANARIE and $100 million in the ONIP grant program in Ontario, and it leaves no question as to who are the major players on the information highway…it is not any government…Stentor is a major voice. (R161009, 1994)

\textsuperscript{1}See McDowell and Buchwald (1997).

\textsuperscript{2}For a list of activities by month see Appendix I.

\textsuperscript{3}The Stentor Alliance was created in 1992.
### Figure 6-1 1994 Information Highway Policy Activities

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<th>SECTOR</th>
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<th>MAY-AUG</th>
<th>SEPT-DEC</th>
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<td><strong>FED GOVT</strong></td>
<td>Speech from the Throne</td>
<td>Angus Reid study</td>
<td>CRCT decision re regulatory framework (94-19)</td>
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<td>IC staff's secretariat, appoints IHAC members</td>
<td>IHAC meetings begin</td>
<td>IHAC asks government for CRTC Convergence Hearing</td>
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<td>IHAC discussion paper-privacy</td>
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<td>Cabinet directs CRTC to conduct Convergence Hearing</td>
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<td>IHAC progress report</td>
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<td><strong>CPI</strong></td>
<td>1st public meeting</td>
<td>Drafting Future-Knowledge</td>
<td>Receives Jobs Ontario grant</td>
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<td>Buys membership in CANARIE</td>
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<td>Makes presentation to IHAC Access and Social Impact Committee</td>
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<td>Lobbies for representative on IHAC</td>
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<td><strong>PRIVATE SECTOR</strong></td>
<td>ITAC Conference</td>
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<td>Goss Gilroy report</td>
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<td>Stentor announces Beacon Initiative</td>
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<td>Stentor- Culture and the Information Highway report</td>
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<td>GOVT</td>
<td>.IHAC access report</td>
<td>.IHAC labour issues sent to bridging committee</td>
<td>.IHAC final report</td>
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<td>.IHAC copyright report</td>
<td>.Ind Can- presentation to Cabinet</td>
<td>.Dept. committees review recommendations (6 mos.)</td>
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<td>.CRTC convergence hearings</td>
<td>.Departments establish working groups</td>
<td>.CRTC decision (95-21 long dist rate reduction)</td>
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<td>.IHAC economic report</td>
<td>.Dept. pass recommendations to ADMs for review</td>
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<td>CPI</td>
<td>.4th public meeting</td>
<td>.Requests member input on NAB, public space</td>
<td>.IHAC secretariat circulates draft MC</td>
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<td>.Response to copyright and content proposal</td>
<td>.Responds to CRTC and IHAC reports</td>
<td>.CRTC hearing notice (95-49 local service pricing options)</td>
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<td>.Presentation to CRTC</td>
<td>.Letter to CRTC re funding</td>
<td>.Industry Can CAP grants announced</td>
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<td>.access proposal</td>
<td>.Letter to Min. of Justice re access to info act</td>
<td>.IHAC learning and training, content and culture reports</td>
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<td>.Library report</td>
<td>.Agreement with Forevergreen</td>
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<td>.5th public meeting</td>
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<td>.PIAC- Sharing the Road report</td>
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<td>.Reacts to IHAC report</td>
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<td>INTEREST GROUPS</td>
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<td>PRIVATE</td>
<td>.Bell files tariff notice re access banding (5471)</td>
<td>.Bell files CRTC tariff notice re local measured service (5506)</td>
<td>.Interrogatory to Stentor re education and health services</td>
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<td>.Bell withdraws access banding/measured service proposals</td>
<td>.Receives Trillium grant</td>
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<td>.Final response to IHAC</td>
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<td>SECTOR</td>
<td>JAN-APR</td>
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| GOVT             | Industry Can preparing *Building the Information Society*  
|                  | .CRTC price cap reg hearing notice (96-8)   | .*Building the Information Society* released  
|                  | .Cabinet signs MC                            | .G of C convergence policy statement         | .CRTC approves preferential rates for health and education sectors (96-9)  
|                  |                                              |                                              | .CRTC decision re local service pricing options (96-10) |
| CPI              | .Begins incorporation process               | .Reaction to *Building the Information Society* |                                              |
|                  | .Submits local services pricing proposal (95-49) to CRTC  
|                  | .Digital Knowledge conference               |                                              |                                              |
|                  | .Responds to CRTC 95-49 decision            |                                              |                                              |
|                  | .Letter to Min Copps re CRTC                |                                              |                                              |
| OTHER PUB        | .IHWG- Universal Access workshop            | .Reaction to *Building the Information Society* |                                              |
| INTEREST GROUPS  |                                              |                                              |                                              |
| PRIVATE          |                                              | .Reaction to *Building the Information Society* |                                              |
Activities related to information highway policy went into high gear from the moment of the government’s January 1994 Speech from the Throne promising to “implement a Canadian strategy for an information highway” (Canada. Governor General 1994). By March 1994, Industry Canada had staffed the Information Highway Advisory Council (IHAC) secretariat and appointed David Johnston, former principal and vice chancellor of McGill University, as the chair of IHAC.

IHAC monthly meetings began in May 1994 and continued for the next 13 months. The 29-member Council was charged with responding to 15 issues (see Appendix J), “ranging from competition to culture, from access to learning and research and development” (Canada, Information Highway Advisory Council 1995b, pp. vii-viii). Although the issues appeared to be balanced between economic and socio-cultural, the actual discussions were directed to economic concerns. The government expected IHAC recommendations to respond to its three objectives:

- Creating jobs through innovation and investment in Canada
- Reinforcing Canadian sovereignty and cultural identity
- Ensuring universal access at reasonable cost

(p vii)

4 Members of the original council included Neil Baker, Regina Economic Development Authority; André Bureau, Astral Broadcasting Group Inc; André Chagnon, Le Groupe Vidéotron Ltée; Bob David, EDTEL; Mary Dykstra, Dalhousie University; Bill Etherington, IBM Canada Ltd.; Francis Fox, Rogers Cantel; John Gray, writer and composer; George Harvey, Unitel Communications Inc.; Brian Hewat, Bell-Northern Research Ltd.; Elizabeth Hoffman, University of Toronto and Coalition for Public Information; Douglas Holtby, WIC Western International Communications Ltd.; David Johnston, McGill University; Rosemary Kuptana, Inuit Circumpolar Conference; Veronica Lacey, Board of Education of the City of North York; John MacDonald, Bell Canada; Terry Matthews, Newbridge Networks Corp.; John McLennan, Bell Canada; Gerry Miller, University of Manitoba; Reginald Noseworthy, Porak Enterprises Inc.; Jean-Claude Parrot, Canadian Labour Congress; Anna Porter, Key Porter Books Ltd.; Derrick Rowe, NewEast Wireless Technologies Inc.; Guy Savard, Midland Walwyn Inc.; Irene Seiferling, Consumers’ Association of Canada; Gerri Sinclair, Simon Fraser University; Charles Sirois, Teleglobe Inc.; David Sutherland, Carleton University and National Capital FreeNet; Gerry Turcotte, Ottawa-Carleton Research Institute; Mamoru Watanabe, University of Calgary; Colin Watson, Rogers Cablesystems Ltd.
Five principles accompanied the objectives:

- An interconnected and interoperable network of networks
- Collaborative public and private sector development
- Competition in facilities, products and services
- Privacy protection and network security
- Lifelong learning as a key design element of Canada's Information Highway

From April until year's end, IHAC received a variety of reports that provided more input to policy discussions. Sources of the reports included Industry Canada, Stentor Telecom Policy Inc., the European Commission, IHAC consultants, and the Telecommunications Workers Union. Some of these documents were requested as background information for members of IHAC; others, such as those released by Stentor and the Telecommunications Workers Union, were intended to suggest policy alternatives to the government.

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) released its *Review of Regulatory Framework* (94-19) in September 1994. The *Review* was a major decision emanating from an ongoing series of CRTC hearings on communications competition and provided added direction to IHAC in the form of a deregulation- and competition-oriented regulatory framework for the telecommunications industry. The *Review* summary stated that:

The Commission intends to place greater reliance on market forces and, accordingly, has taken initiatives to increase flexibility for the telephone companies on the one hand, while removing barriers to entry and adopting

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conditions to safeguard competition on the other. (CRTC 1994)

The reform package also ruled that long distance subsidies to local service would be reduced substantially. The phone companies intended to decrease long distances costs by increasing monthly local tariffs. Besides the added cost to people of limited means, and people in rural and remote regions, higher local charges would increase the cost of using the internet. Public interest groups were also concerned that every successful long distance and local rate review brought the phone companies closer to winning approval for local metered service (paying according to usage). Local metered service would increase the cost of access to the information highway and would inhibit its use. Because the information highway was expected to be the major vehicle for information access and communication, the threat of ever-increasing costs to the public was alarming.

Furthermore, in September 1994, IHAC asked Industry Canada and Heritage Canada to instruct the CRTC to hold a public hearing on the issue of convergence, in lieu of convening a larger public forum such as a royal commission. An Industry Canada respondent also commented that there was a second reason for calling on the CRTC: IHAC members did not have the expertise to handle the technical complexity of the issues. In October, Cabinet directed the CRTC to conduct the hearing (Order in Council P.C. 1994-1689) and the CRTC announced a call for interventions for the hearing to be held early in 1995. The public and private sector responses to this call were enormous: the CRTC received over 1,000 written submissions in the two rounds leading to the public hearing.

In April and May 1995, Bell Canada filed two tariff notices with the CRTC: 5471 related to access banding and 5506 for business exchange measured service. Both of these notices provoked interventions to the CRTC from public interest groups, who saw the proposals as increasing costs and therefore a direct challenge to the principle of universal access. These proposals raised so much opposition from the small business community and public interest groups that Bell Canada withdrew its requests to the CRTC in July.
A number of reports from IHAC and responses to reports continued to be released in the first half of 1995. In May, the CRTC presented its convergence report, *Competition and Culture on Canada's Information Highway* (CRTC 1995a), to IHAC, Industry Canada, and Heritage Canada. In its convergence policy statement, the CRTC reinforced its previous decisions with a policy that permitted cable and telephone companies to compete in each other's traditionally protected markets, with a goal of promoting greater competition and more choice for consumers.

The convergence report made a series of recommendations based on the need to build a more competitive communications model. The CRTC proposed "mechanisms to remove barriers to competition resulting from the dominant position of telephone and cable companies" (p. 1). Furthermore, the CRTC concluded that universal access could be attained "through various means, including market forces, subsidies and cooperation" (p. 3). While market forces would account for most of the development of universal access, some benefits, such as education and health services, might require preferential tariffs.

In June 1995, IHAC was forced to send labour issues to a bridging committee due to a lack of agreement on the recommendations to be included in the final report. By this point, IHAC participants were aware of the possibility of a minority report on these issues because the Canadian Labour Congress representative on IHAC, Jean-Claude Parrot, felt that too few recommendations considering employment and workplace issues related to information technology were being included in the report (C50627). This sparsity stemmed, in his opinion, in his opinion,

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6Reports included *Access, Affordability and Universal Service on the Canadian Information Highway* (Canada. IHAC 1995a) in January; a CPI response to a copyright and content proposal from IHAC (C50222, e-mail document from CPI 95/02/22) in February; *Copyright and the Information Highway* (Canada. IHAC 1995c), an access proposal document from CPI (C50222), CPI's report for Industry Canada, *Canada's Public Libraries and the Information Highway* (Skrzeszewski 1995b), and PIAC's proposal document, *Sharing the Road* (Reddick 1995a) in March; CPI's *Future-Knowledge* in April; a consultant's report, *Affordability and Equitable Access to the Information Highway* (Gilbert 1995) in May; and *The Economic Impacts of the Information Highway: An Overview* (Canada. IHAC 1995d) in July.
from the government’s agenda to interfere as little as possible in information highway development and operation, which would eventually render workers vulnerable to the whims of the marketplace (Canada. IHAC 1995b, pp. 215-27).

At this point (June 1995), Minister of Industry John Manley made a presentation to Cabinet on the significance of the information highway to Canadians, preparing the way for IHAC’s final report. This was also the moment when departments across the government established their own official steering committees and working groups to review the IHAC draft recommendations and develop their own policy recommendations, a process that would continue until the signing of the Memorandum to Cabinet ten months later.

IHAC released its phase 1 report, Connect Community Content (Canada. IHAC 1995b), in September, prompting mixed reactions from members of the policy community. The report’s recommendations were not unlike those handed over in the CRTC’s Convergence Hearing report. Although IHAC espoused publicly oriented principles such as universal, affordable, and equitable access and the promotion of Canadian culture, most of its recommendations demonstrated a preference for addressing the economic needs of the private sector. IHAC’s proposal for a national access strategy stated four principles: universal, affordable and equitable access, consumer choice and diversity of information, competency and citizens’ participation, and open and interactive networks. According to IHAC, all of these principles would be guaranteed by the competitive market. Like the CRTC, IHAC referred back to the government’s decision that “services will largely be determined by a competitive environment” (Canada. IHAC 1995b, p. 42). IHAC recommended that the government be given responsibility for setting the ground rules, while the private sector would assume major responsibility for the information highway development and operation.

In the report, IHAC recognized that “market forces occasionally fail” (p. 42) but that services should be made universal through means other than cross-subsidies (of local and long distance telephone rates), which IHAC considered no longer viable in a competitive environment.
The report also recommended maintaining funding support for public networks in educational institutions.

Public proposals supporting universal access were answered with recommendations for "reasonable cost" access and services. No definition of reasonable cost was provided. In addition, IHAC recommended that consumer demand should determine the definition of "essential services" and concluded that few services would be identified as essential. As Parrot had reacted to the lack of protection for workers, so too did public interest groups, including CPI, to the lack of guaranteed universal access. The Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) documented their misgivings in a report entitled *The Information Superhighway: Will Some Canadians Be Left on the Side of the Road?* (Reddick 1995b).

Public interest groups such as CPI, PIAC, the National Anti-poverty Organization (NAPO) and FNACQ were not happy to learn in October that the CRTC, in its scheme to implement rate rebalancing, had granted final approval to the phone companies to reduce long distance rates and increase local rates (Decision 95-21). Public interest groups felt that this change would not benefit the public, particularly those with low incomes and those in rural and remote locations. Furthermore, increasing local rates would affect many small businesses who relied on low flat-rate local service for their business communications. Groups projected that charging more for local services would eventually make the cost of using the information highway much higher, if not prohibitive for some. Coincidentally that month, members of a number of public interest groups agreed to organize the Alliance for a Connected Canada to increase the credibility of public interest groups and to react as a more united front to information policy decisions made by government and the private sector.

In November 1995, government departments passed their information highway policy proposals to their assistant deputy ministers for review, and the IHAC secretariat conferred with individual actors in the departments and prepared a draft Memorandum to Cabinet which the secretariat began to circulate for comment. In this same period, the CRTC issued a
telecommunications notice for local service pricing options (95-49, later became 95-56), another attempt to institute local metered service.

For the first three months of 1996, the IHAC secretariat and Industry Canada, with input from other government ministries and agencies, continued preparing the information highway policy document, Building the Information Society (Canada. Government of Canada 1996) and the Memorandum to Cabinet. Cabinet signed the Memorandum to Cabinet in April 1996 and Building the Information Society, the "burgundy book," was published in May 1996.

Building the Information Society was based on the decision taken before information highway policy discussions had begun to open telecommunications and cable in Canada to the forces of competition. The government had not changed its position since the beginning of the process. The private sector would be responsible for investment in the information highway, "bearing risks and reaping benefits." The government’s efforts would continue to be focused on creating a more competitive environment (Canada. Government of Canada 1996, p. 5).

In keeping with the other documents, the government agreed that "the growing market for information products and services should work to ensure affordable access to essential Information Highway services in a competitive environment" (p. 23). Where doubts existed that the market would create universal access, the report stated that a "national strategy for access to essential services" would be developed in the next year to ensure access if the market failed to do so (p. 24).

The CRTC approved preferential (i.e., reduced) rates for the health and education sectors in the fall of 1996 (CRTC 1996a). This was a triumph for public interest groups. On the other hand, the CRTC determined that local services were currently available to the majority of Canadian households and therefore did not necessitate a budget or optional plan to make local phone service affordable to low income households (CRTC 1996b).
6.2.1 CPI Activities

The newly-minted CPI became publicly involved in the information highway debate at the beginning of 1994. As Industry Canada organized IHAC throughout January, CPI held its first public meeting and began to set its agenda through input from public consultations.

The steering committee followed up the recommendations it received at this first meeting with an ambitious set of priorities, including: purchasing a membership in the Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry and Education (CANARIE) so as to have a voice in national network development; encouraging and developing public input to the Ontario Information Infrastructure Program; developing public campaigns; working with the cable-TV industry to expand "Canadian Cable in the Classroom" into libraries and other public information institutions; working with the telephone industry to ensure equitable, affordable access; ensuring that access to information for the public good would be part of the "500 channel universe;" using public consultation to develop guiding principles for the information highway development; and mounting education and public awareness campaigns (CPI 1994a). In fundraising and membership flyers distributed early in 1994, CPI identified as its primary goal "to ensure that the developing information infrastructure in Canada serves the public interest, focuses on human communication and provides universal access to information" (CPI 1994b).

Pursuant to the announcement of IHAC, CPI actively lobbied the government for a position on the IHAC council, which was awarded to CPI's chair in April 1994. CPI held its second public meeting in April to coincide with the Information Rights Week organized by the CLA, which focused on access issues (CLA 1994; CPI 1994b). At the meeting, the CPI interim steering committee indicated that CPI would attempt to attract organizations and individuals from across Canada who were interested in contributing to the discussion of public policy related to information. Ideally, CPI would become.
a national coalition of organizations, public interest groups and individuals whose goal is to foster broad access to affordable, useable information and communication services and technology. CPI [would provide] an effective grassroots voice for equitable and affordable access to the benefits of telecomputing technology in the Information Age. (CPI, 1994b)

By April 1994, CPI had a listserv in operation and was consulting with its members and other public interest groups on positions CPI would take in responding to the studies and proposals emanating from the private and government sectors. CPI directed its comments and suggestions related to the documents to Industry Canada, IHAC, and Stentor. In particular, CPI responded, albeit belatedly, to the CRTC call for participation in its Convergence Hearing. CPI was also busy coordinating its community consultations in order to develop public recommendations for a public policy framework for the information highway (Skrzeszewski and Cubberley 1995a, p. 3). A third public meeting, in conjunction with the consultations, was held in November 1994.

Late in 1994, CPI was awarded a Jobs Ontario grant of $49,630 which provided funding for its three part-time administrators. CPI also made its first presentation in Ottawa before the IHAC Access and Social Impact Committee.

January 1995 marked the fourth public meeting for CPI and the receipt of an Industry Canada grant for $10,000 to study public libraries as access points to the internet. Also during this period, CPI, along with 77 other interveners, was notified of an appearance date before the CRTC Convergence Hearing. CPI made its presentation on the first day of the hearing in March and presented the CRTC with a draft of its soon-to-be-released position statement.

CPI stressed the need for a national vision based on a commitment to universal access and participation at the CRTC hearing (CRTC 1995b, p. 92). The group also discussed its conception of a national access board and the continuing need for regulation to guarantee universal access. Throughout its presentation, CPI emphasized its opinion that representatives of the public should
be involved in the policy process.

In its later position paper on a national access board, CPI reiterated the position that it presented before the CRTC and added that it was "very pleased to note that the CRTC also focused on public lanes in their report," which the CRTC referred to as "an approach to affordable public access" (Skrzeszewski 1995b). This was interpreted as a positive comment towards the CRTC on the part of CPI, in the hopes that such encouragement might motivate the CRTC to consider the idea more seriously.

At CPI's fifth public meeting in April, the steering committee released its position document, Future-Knowledge: The Report (Skrzeszewski and Cubberley 1995a), the culmination of a public consultation process of both its community meetings and listserv discussions. Future-Knowledge was intended as an alternative to government and industry proposals. CPI presented its national vision expressing a public perspective on the principles of universal access and ubiquity; on freedom of expression, pluralism, and intellectual freedom; on the right to privacy; on intellectual property and copyright; and on employment and the quality of work. CPI clearly indicated that although much of the infrastructure dialogue had revolved around economic benefits, there were social benefits to be considered that "have the power and the potential to enhance the quality of life for all Canadians" (p. 5). To implement its public agenda, CPI recommended that the federal government use traditional policy-making tools such as legislation, regulation, and grants.

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7 CPI held a number of public consultations across Canada during 1994 and 1995. These included a meeting on universal access in Thunder Bay, Ontario, on April 12, 1994; on special libraries and information services in Toronto on November 22, 1994; a "grassroots" consultation in Toronto on November 24, 1995; on the Ontario Federation of Labour's technology adjustment research program in Toronto on November 29, 1994; on the future of libraries in Hamilton, Ontario, on December 6, 1994; on the commercialization of networks in Winnipeg, Manitoba on December 13, 1994; a people's consultation in London, Ontario, on January 25, 1995; on copyright in book publishing in Toronto on January 26, 1995; a public discussion "More than Movies on Demand" in Toronto on January 30, 1995; a meeting in Red Deer, Alberta, on March 2, 1995, and in Regina, Saskatchewan, on March 6, 1995.
The positions outlined in *Future-Knowledge* related to access remained constant throughout the policy process and were reflected in CPI’s presentations to IHAC, before the CRTC, and in position papers and public pronouncements. CPI was most concerned about four issues: that the government commit to a national vision that encompassed universal access and public participation; that the government legislate terms for universal access; that the information highway discussion include the perspective of the public; and that the government create a national access board to ensure the development and maintenance of the information highway as a universally accessible and participatory system. In addition, CPI made a number of suggestions related to ensuring universal access. These included tax policies for the development of technology, applications, and services for public programs such as health services and education; network development for non-urban locations; and pilot studies using publicly funded information providers such as libraries.

CPI’s proposal for universal access stated that access to basic services should be “affordable to all” (p. 8) and the “public lane” should be “accessible to everyone” (p. 9) so that costs would not prohibit access for particular segments of the public such as persons with disabilities or people in remote geographic locations. Furthermore, CPI called for stable, flat-rate pricing for publicly funded information providers along with government funding support. Information providers would provide free access points to the public.

CPI also stated that representatives of the public should be included in policy discussions related to the information highway. In particular, public input should be an integral part of its proposed national access board. The national access board, with responsibilities for developing strategies to achieve universal access and participation, and with guiding and evaluating progress, would be composed of government, private sector, and public interest group representatives. In *Future-Knowledge*, CPI concluded:

It is critical that the public be engaged in public policy discussions. The public must have the opportunity to gain greater understanding of the impact, and greater awareness of the potential of the information highway, if an informed
discussion is to take place. (Skrzeszewski and Cubberley 1995a, p. 10)

By June 1995, CPI was responding to the CRTC and IHAC reports. The steering committee was also requesting input from its membership on the issues of a national access board and public space on the internet, which would eventually be developed into a position paper. In July, CPI sent off a letter to the CRTC expressing its displeasure with the lack of funding available for groups wishing to make presentations before the CRTC. After its experience appearing at the Convergence Hearing, partly at personal expense, CPI members wanted to convince the CRTC to make appearances at hearings more affordable for public interest groups and individuals but the government was not open to their suggestions. CPI also forwarded a letter to the Minister of Justice in support of reform to the Access to Information Act.

CPI was busy in the second half of 1995 with a number of activities unrelated to IHAC and the CRTC. During the month of August, CPI announced an agreement with Forevergreen Television and Film Production. CPI agreed to assist in the production of an educational series to build public awareness of issues related to the information highway, although, like CPI, Forevergreen had very little funding and it was months before the project could go ahead. In September 1995, Industry Canada contracted CPI to work with rural communities on applications for the Community Access Program (CAP).

A $197,000 Trillium grant awarded in December came as a relief to CPI; it would help to pay administrative costs for the next three years and meant no less than that CPI could continue to exist. The Ontario Library Association (OLA) could no longer afford to subsidize the group and the Jobs Ontario grant was exhausted. However, one condition of the Trillium grant was that CPI incorporate and become accountable as an entity independent of the OLA. The steering committee began to prepare for incorporation. Among its final activities for 1995, CPI responded positively to a Stentor proposal to the CRTC that suggested preferential rates for education and health services. CPI also forwarded its response to the IHAC final report.

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CPI’s response to the IHAC report, *Connection Community Content* (1995b), was mixed (Skrzeszewski and Cubberley 1995b). The group’s first concern was that the report’s major interest was in economic issues and was weighted in favour of a market approach to development. CPI did not agree that market forces would ensure universality and reiterated the need for intervention via government policies. The group was also disappointed that “reasonable cost” and “affordability” had not been addressed directly. CPI was discouraged further by the exclusion of any recommendation for a national access board and no mention of a national vision. On the other hand, CPI agreed with the opening of the telecommunications and cable markets, the federal/provincial/territorial coordination of information highway activities, and IHAC’s recommendation for a national access strategy. However, CPI stated that “Industry Canada by itself does not represent a central focal point for the many issues of social, political and economic transformation that the Information Highway evokes” (Skrzeszewski and Cubberley 1995b).

During the first three months of 1996, CPI was engaged in incorporating itself; organizing its first conference, "Digital Knowledge;" and preparing a written argument for the CRTC hearing in March on local services pricing options requested by the Stentor Alliance (CRTC 95-49/95-56). CPI argued that the movement to full competition in local and long-distance services, as implied in this request, would make telecommunication services less affordable. CPI called for the continuation of flat-rate local service over budget service and targeted subsidies. In this particular instance, the opposition from the small business community and public interest groups was so vocal that Stentor withdrew its request. At its next steering committee meeting, members were of the opinion that dropping the request was but a stalling tactic until Stentor could redesign its proposal to make it more palatable.

During this period, CPI also sent another letter to the heritage minister, Sheila Copps, recommending improvements to the CRTC to better meet the needs of the public, based on CPI’s experiences in interventions.
6.3 EXAMINING THE INFORMATION HIGHWAY POLICY PROCESS (Figure 6-4)

Kingdon's policy process theory not only provides a framework for organizing policy events but also supports the existence of a complex series of events coming together and leading to policy for the information highway. According to Kingdon's observations, a group such as CPI, a newcomer and outsider to the process, would be at a disadvantage in comparison with actors who were well established in the policy community. The best CPI could do was to adapt as quickly as possible to keep up with policy activities. The possibility of being proactive, a position CPI would have preferred, was not attainable. CPI had too much to learn and was too far behind in lobbying activities to play catch-up when the policy window opened.

This section uses Kingdon's model to analyze policy events so as to understand CPI's effectiveness in relation to the procedural and temporal elements of the policy process. The case is organized according to Kingdon's three streams (i.e., political, problem, and policy) to follow events from the opening of the policy window, through policy-making activities as part of the government agenda, and on to the decision agenda with the presentation of the Memorandum to Cabinet and the release of the government's information policy document, *Building the Information Society*.

6.3.1 The Information Highway on the Government Agenda

By January 1994 policy activities were well under way. The issue of defining the policy rules for the information highway was already on the government agenda, officially with the Speech from the Throne (Canada, Governor General 1994). Private sector pressure to gain control of the economic potential of the internet, international telecommunications mergers, telecommunications deregulation, and the U.S. National Information Infrastructure (NII) agenda announcement helped to put the information highway on the government agenda. In the case of the information highway, the government saw a policy discussion as an opportunity for a positive initiative, a
Politics
- deregulation
- competition
- globalization

Problems
- domestic and international information highway competition

Policies
- proposals to CRTC, Industry Canada

Coupling in government agenda

Policy window opens
- NII
- IHAC

Decision agenda
- government committees
- Memorandum to Cabinet

good news event. Thus, the pro-market national mood and the need for a competitive policy for the information highway came together with the appointment of members to IHAC.

Interest groups gathered with their proposals, some more developed than others. Stentor had already set the stage for the government with proposals (e.g., its vision statement, *The Beacon Initiative*, rate rebalancing) that were part of an ongoing stream of problems and proposals that it was bringing to Industry Canada and to the CRTC. Industry Canada had a well-developed agenda at the implementation of IHAC, built on continuous international work and industry liaison. Industry Canada kept the debate narrow by using the CRTC and IHAC as the venues for policy discussions and by vetting proposals submitted to IHAC.

As Kingdon states, a linear description of the process does not adequately describe the complex reality of the situation. For example, other theories do not account for Kingdon's observation that policy proposals usually exist before a problem is recognized by the government. In the information highway policy process, the fact that the private sector was prepared with policy proposals when the NII was released and that the government announced its plan for IHAC soon after, posed a major problem for CPI. When the policy window opened in January 1994, CPI was not advanced enough in its work or politically aware enough to realize that it should have had a completed, detailed proposal already floating in the policy community. Not until 1995 when CPI appeared before IHAC did it have its proposal, *Future-Knowledge*, completed.

6.3.1.1 The Policy Window

When the U.S. NII proposal opened the policy window in Canada, the communications industry jumped in with its definitions of the problem and its proposals. The telecommunications and cable industries were already in the midst of hearings at the CRTC over competition and convergence between the two industries. The community had also participated in changes to the telecommunications act and the ongoing deregulation of the industry. So release of the NII
provided an opening in Canada for further policy definition, an additional cycle where the agenda was set by industry and the federal government and handed over to IHAC and the CRTC for recommendations.

Kingdon and Pal (1992, p. 119) agree that one cannot truly pinpoint the beginning of the policy process. This was certainly the case for the information highway policy process. When the window opened with the release of the NII, the three streams of activity were all under way. The neo-liberal political direction had been set in telecommunications and other areas. The private sector was actively involved with the government in deregulation activities and wanted to continue those policy approaches in policy for the information highway. When the U.S. government released its NII proposal, it provided the private sector and sympathetic politicians (in particular Minister Manley) with the catalyst "competition problem" for policy action in Canada.

Economic, technical, and social issues were on the government agenda from the start of this project, evident both in the statement of intent in the Speech from the Throne and the public announcement of IHAC one month later. The streams coupled, the window opened, and the activities of floating, revising, and suggesting alternatives continued at IHAC, Industry Canada, and the CRTC. Activities culminated with the IHAC report, which moved the process from the government agenda to the decision agenda. After further discussion within government departments, the information highway policy was on its way to Cabinet for the ultimate decision.

6.3.1.2 The Three Streams

6.3.1.2.1 The Political Stream

The political stream of the information highway policy process did not experience any radical changes in direction during the policy debate. The issues were not affected by a change in the
government; the neo-liberal political climate remained constant. Political forces were organized to support a market approach to the information highway, but within that context there was disagreement between and within industry sectors (telecommunications and cable) as to how the market should be shared. Those in the sub-government assured the public that market competition would ensure universal access. That was the sub-government’s most significant response to public concern over the government’s continuing withdrawal from its role as the public “watchdog.”

The market perspective was prevalent specifically in the more influential departments of Industry Canada, where resources had been cut back and bureaucrats were expected to develop projects in partnership with the private sector. Costly royal commissions were out of favour, and consulting with a smaller section of the community deemed acceptable—hence one rationale for IHAC and the CRTC Convergence Hearing.

Industry Canada experienced internal conflict between technology and market agenda supporters on the one hand, and those who were somewhat sympathetic to the public interest position on the other. Although this difference of opinion existed, it was of little significance to the overall promotion of the market imperative in the department.

Industry Canada and Heritage Canada had a fractious relationship. In ideological terms they represented two different sets of values: Industry Canada, the private sector view of competition and the market; Heritage Canada, the socio-economic view of culture and community. For Industry Canada, the information highway problem and solution were technological and economic in nature. For Heritage Canada, they were socioeconomic and cultural. Industry Canada’s perspective was in keeping with the prevailing national mood.

In this atmosphere, CPI was fighting against the tide. Moreover, the information highway policy issues were not the kind of issues that would arouse the public to protest. CPI was aware that the odds were against it in the policy process and from the start looked for additional means for meeting its goals outside of lobbying.
6.3.1.2.2 The Problem Stream

At the beginning of IHAC, the information highway problem was defined by industry and government. Very little attention was given to recognizing public interest issues around the information highway. Only a few public interest groups were lobbying government with their proposals related to telecommunications deregulation (e.g., FNAQ, NAPO, PIAC), and they would soon enter the information highway debate. However, the problem definition was already out of the control of public interest groups through the efforts of the private sector and its interest in turning the information highway into a commercial enterprise. The neo-liberal mood, concern over the market demand to be able to compete internationally, and the desire to extend the established deregulation and competition agenda with few regulatory impediments were obvious openers for a problem definition related to the need for expedience in preparing Canada to compete internationally in information highway services. The economic aspect held centre stage. The private sector and Industry Canada defined the original problem. Industry Canada provided the terms of reference for IHAC, and then the alternatives began to arrive at IHAC’s doorstep, either from research done at its request or from groups who wanted their proposals to be considered.

Comments from the private sector indicated hostility toward Heritage Canada, which obviously represented a potential roadblock to industry’s definition of the problem. However, Heritage Canada, the most natural ally for public interest groups, did not intervene effectively in problem definition. That left public interest groups without an ally within government to counterbalance Industry Canada.

CPI tried to redefine the problem to make public interest considerations more central. The group took advantage of whatever forum it found to stress its concerns about the potential threat to access to the information highway. CPI also supported the efforts of other groups who were interested in the public good. Members met with private sector participants and with whichever government officials agreed to see them. Nevertheless, policy makers managed to keep the
problem definition narrow. In addition, according to a respondent from CPI, the private sector acted as a barrier to government policy makers, keeping the public interest groups at a distance (R161009).

6.3.1.2.3 The Policy Stream

The policy stream was dominated by the private sector, and Stentor was deeply involved in policy proposals around telecommunications well before discussions of the information highway began. Not long after the announcement of IHAC, Stentor published its Beacon Initiative, introduced with a passage from its October 1993 information highway vision statement proposing:

> a national information highway that is capable of carrying voice, text, data, graphics and video services to and from all Canadians, and that provides virtually all Canadians with access to basic and advanced communications and information services through a network of many networks, owned and operated by different service providers. (Stentor Alliance 1994, p. 3)

This was a public document that described Stentor's policy proposal for the information highway. Stentor was also preparing further proposals to take before the CRTC, one of which was its proposal for the convergence of telecommunications and cable. Public interest groups such as CPI realized that they must prepare formal proposals supporting their positions to take to the government. CPI, however was not prepared to present a proposal at the beginning of the process in 1994. The best the group could do was to "float" the draft proposals it had managed to prepare so far. From 1994 until it had completed its final version of Future-Knowledge in April 1995, CPI prepared documents and letters and gave oral presentations before the CRTC and IHAC, mostly in reaction to events.

CPI was just building steam and making its position known for the first time. While Stentor's policy entrepreneurs (i.e., lobbyists) at Stentor Telecom Policy Inc. were working full
time to make sure that policy makers were sympathetic to its position and did not waver in their support, CPI had to rely on its chair to act as its policy entrepreneur when she was in Ottawa for IHAC meetings, and on lobbying via long distance phone conversations.

Industry Canada used the CRTC as its public forum for gathering proposals both from the private sector and the public. The CRTC narrowed the proposals to those it considered feasible—that is, those that fit budgetary and technical constraints, that fit with the national mood, and that would gain political support. Those recommendations went to IHAC. IHAC was floating its own policy proposals in the form of working committee reports, partly based upon the suggestions solicited from consultants and groups such as CPI. IHAC further narrowed the list of acceptable proposals, and those remaining became the basis of IHAC’s final report to the government.

Kingdon’s model of policy process streams supports observations of floated and revised proposals. The different hearings at the CRTC and the IHAC reports and presentations constituted interrelated cycles in which a number of policy decisions were being made that would eventually accumulate to make a more complete, ideologically coherent body of policies.

6.3.2 The Information Highway on the Decision Agenda

As a respondent at Industry Canada commented, the policy process consists of taking apart the issues and then coming up with a solution, while keeping in mind activities elsewhere so that all the pieces can be put together again at the end. In the instance of the information highway policy process, a number of proposals were floated through submissions to the CRTC, submissions to IHAC, and consultants’ reports to IHAC. From these came CRTC decisions such as the September 1994 establishment of the new regulatory framework, the CRTC Convergence Hearing report, and the IHAC report. When IHAC presented its final report to Industry Canada and Heritage Canada in September 1995, the information highway issue officially moved from the government agenda to the decision agenda, and lobbying activities subsided considerably. For the
next six months, the government continued its work on the final policy. The Memorandum to Cabinet was signed by Cabinet in April 1996, creating an official policy for the information highway.

All evidence from respondents corroborated the suggestion that the public policy process was far from clear or formalized. The process was described as chaotic, complex, loose at best. It happened often that describing the process seemed to be beyond the grasp of respondents, as if they were not aware that there was a process. Yet Industry Canada clearly controlled the information highway policy agenda and was not deterred from its path. In the end, one document, the Memorandum to Cabinet, needed to be produced for Cabinet, and seven departments had to come to consensus to sign it. Industry Canada managed to find consensus without much alteration to its proposal.

6.4 CPI AND THE POLICY NETWORK

As Coleman and Skogstad have pointed out, the composition of the policy-making body, or subgovernment, can vary according to the relative power of the actors in the policy community. During the process of deregulating telecommunications and opening the market to competition, the sub-government tended toward a corporatist policy network, where the government mediated between the conflicting telecommunications and cable industries. Industry Canada promoted the information highway concept in Cabinet and was given responsibility for developing a policy.

In the early stages, indications were that Industry Canada expected IHAC to be a consultative process between Industry Canada and the information and communications industry. The private sector was looking to government to be an arbitrator in the division of resources and the resetting of regulatory boundaries. The government portrayed itself as a partner and facilitator in the discussions. In this sense, the government attempted to set up a closed corporatist network. This is not exactly how the situation developed.
Both Industry Canada and the private sector were surprised to find that other parties wished to participate in the information highway policy process. As Industry Canada respondents commented, consultation became more widespread (i.e., outside of Industry Canada) than in the past. This additional participation eventually gave rise to a more pluralistic network encompassing a number of government departments and agencies and the telecommunications and cable industries. All of these actors wanted to have a voice in the direction of information highway policy. Heritage Canada played a less defined role and was not considered to be a major actor, although a respondent from Heritage Canada claimed to have attempted to play a decisive role in the process. Other departments entered into the discussions to represent client groups as diverse as the farming community and women’s groups. Most of these groups were interested in access issues.

CPI found itself in a situation not unlike that described by Howlett and Rayner with respect to British Columbia environmental groups (1995). The policy network was virtually closed to public interest groups. Like the environmentalists confronting the forestry sector in Howlett and Rayner’s study, CPI’s proposals were described as too vague. In both cases, this complaint concealed the fact that the public interest group had little to offer that was relevant to the members of the network. Public interest groups could not bring much to the bargaining table beyond their ideas about equality and democracy. They were not in the same position as the Stentor Alliance, whose representatives could offer tangible returns and could demonstrate in grand terms to the government and the public “what’s in it for them” if they accepted Stentor’s proposals (R361204).

Both the government and the private sector had something concrete to trade. The government controlled the legal and regulatory tools to determine the rules for the distribution of resources and hoped to profit politically from a good news story. The private sector looked forward to financial gains from private sector development of the information highway and promised to provide economic and social benefits from such development. Public interest groups came with demands and visions founded in democratic principles and publicly oriented values but...
had little of substance to trade with other actors. None of the public interest groups was in a financial position to make promises about what it could contribute to information highway development. Public interest group proposals did not attract much support from those in the policy network.

6.5 CONCLUSION

The discussion in Chapter 6 served to describe the information highway policy process and how CPI situated itself in the process. Within this context, policy activities were identified and analyzed to establish whether a policy process pattern could be found. A pattern of three streams was evident: neo-liberal politics, opposing proposals, and problems defined by the private sector. These streams came together with the release of the U.S. NII when a "window" of opportunity for policy development opened. The window was open for about one year. When the opportunity presented itself, the private sector was prepared with proposals. CPI was not and was left playing catch-up. CPI and other public interest groups never succeeded in altering the problem definition or in having their vision accepted.

The policy network that evolved also excluded CPI from participation. While the network became more pluralistic, the sub-government never included public interest groups. However limited the input was for public interest groups, it was probably more than they would have received otherwise. The pluralist network, with somewhat diffuse alignments of power, may have been more open to suggestions from the attentive public than a corporatist network, but the variance was not perceptible in this case.
Chapter 7 brings the thesis to its conclusion. This chapter summarizes Canada’s Coalition for Public Information’s (CPI) capacity to influence the information highway policy process by referring to the results of the analysis of group characteristics, policy capacity, and the policy process. The factors proposed by Coleman, Skogstad, Pross, and Kingdon were all instrumental in making the assessment. The summary of CPI’s capacity to influence policy outcomes leads to an appraisal of CPI’s ability to reach its goals for universal access, set out in Future-Knowledge and reiterated throughout the policy process. Thus, the assessment draws upon both perceptions of CPI in the policy community and a comparison of CPI’s goals to policy outcomes. The section concludes with suggestions for public interest groups, drawn from the lessons of CPI.

The second part of the chapter is dedicated to reflections on the naturalistic approach and the public policy theories used in this research. The methodology and theories complemented each other and provided a positive influence in the research process. Chapter 7 concludes with a discussion of proposals for future research.

7.2 SUMMARY OF CPI’S CAPACITY TO INFLUENCE POLICY

7.2.1 CPI Strengths and Weaknesses

The analysis of CPI as a public interest group in the information highway policy community and as a participant in the policy process identified a number of CPI’s strengths and weaknesses.
Among CPI's greatest strengths was the commitment of the most active members to CPI's goals and objectives. Their commitment drove the group and partially compensated for its insufficient resources (R161021). In addition, CPI represented librarians and information professionals who were well-respected members of the community. Other strengths included CPI's expertise in the areas of libraries and local communities, and its forethought in conducting public consultations for information highway policy. CPI respondents felt that their consultations provided the public with greater understanding and comfort in approaching the technical issues of the information highway. The consultations also brought people together and created a sense of strength among the participating groups and individuals. CPI was the only group that could claim to have consulted the public and to have developed a proposal on the public's behalf. The positions that CPI developed during the consultation process gave policy makers an alternative perspective to consider in their deliberations (R161021, R161009).

CPI persistently pursued its goals in a manner consistent with Kingdon's description of policy entrepreneurs. Evidence of its persistence included CPI's ongoing consultations, presentations, position papers, letter-writing, and appearances before the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). CPI did the best that it could with its lobbying resources, its level of experience, and the time available.

CPI's weaknesses were more damaging to its potential for success. As a lobby group, CPI had very little experience with the federal government public policy process and had to develop skills as it participated in the process. Being a neophyte in the federal policy process meant that CPI had to become familiar with the policy community, how it went about its business, and who had influence in the community. Although CPI was created just before the Information Highway Advisory Council (IHAC) was announced, the principal actors had been involved in information policy activities at the provincial level for some time. Yet that experience did not prepare them enough to realize that they should have CPI's policy ready to float in the policy community when they took on the information highway issue at the federal level.
Another problem linked to CPI's inexperience was that CPI entered into the process too late and missed the opportunity for reaching policy makers with its position before the policy window opened. The advantage belonged to private sector interests like the Stentor Alliance, which knew where the power lay and already had spent considerable time softening up the government to its market agenda.

CPI had insufficient funding and thus a minimum of paid staff. The steering committee and executive acted as CPI's researchers and lobbyists. The limited funding also meant that the group had to choose between undertaking activities related to the issues and strengthening the organization. CPI opted for confronting the immediate needs created by the imperative of the issues. Thus the organization did not grow as much as it could have and fewer people were involved actively.

Another significant weakness, caused by insufficient funds, was CPI's inability to afford an office or staff in Ottawa. To truly participate in the community required a constant presence in the federal government milieu. CPI compensated by collaborating with groups that did have offices in Ottawa and by sending input via the group's chair when she attended meetings in Ottawa. However, neither of these measures counterbalanced the need for a constant physical presence.

When CPI presented its proposals to the policy community, Industry Canada found the proposals too vague to be useful. This quite possibly was an excuse on the government's part for not considering the proposal seriously; but at the same time, CPI did not recognize the extent to which the government was depending upon outside groups to help it in its work of developing policy. Government respondents criticized CPI for not providing a pragmatic proposal that could be implemented. The government's desire for prescriptive proposals was probably one of the least understood lobbying demands for some of the newer public interest groups, including CPI. CPI could claim legitimately that its scant funding limited its ability to conduct research and develop proposals, but its position in the policy community was weakened nonetheless. The lack of a
detailed proposal accounted for the primary government criticism of CPI in the IHAC process.

In addition to these conditions, CPI was out of step with the national mood. The group advanced positions that were contrary to the values of the prominent members of the policy community. The fact that Industry Canada was selected as the lead department in the IHAC process was an important indication that the telecommunications industry would be instrumental in defining the problem and that the market agenda would continue to prevail. The market concepts of less regulation and more competition were well received by the political system, which had adopted a neo-liberal agenda; CPI's notions of a national access board and universal access were not.

Many in public interest groups felt that the policy outcome would have been different if the former Department of Communications had continued to exist. There was a persistent belief at CPI that the department (which previously had contained a significant number of sectors from Industry Canada and Heritage Canada) would have been more concerned with the social and cultural aspects of information highway policy. However, that fact that the DOC no longer existed was another indication of the national mood.¹

Heritage Canada might have been a natural ally within government for public interest groups like CPI, but Heritage appeared to be suffering from its own political problems. A former Heritage Canada official felt that one of the possible reasons that Heritage Canada played such a minor role was that it was still experiencing internal problems from the reorganization of the Department of Communications. This distraction prevented it from taking a greater role in discussions. Heritage was also responsible for broadcasting and perhaps did not recognize the significance of convergence, which had its roots in the telecommunications community, as quickly as Industry Canada had.

¹In 1997, CPI produced a position paper, Should We Bring Back the Department of Communications? (Skrzeszewski 1997), calling for the creation of a DOC-like department to replace Industry Canada and Heritage Canada.
7.3 CPI's LIMITED INFLUENCE

CPI put a great deal of effort into changing the direction of the information highway policy debate. Ultimately, the group had relatively little influence in the community and over the policy process. This conclusion is based on a combination of the policy community's and CPI's perceptions of CPI's role in the community and an evaluation of CPI's goals for access versus the actual policy outcome. Perceptions were considered because they play a considerable part in the political realm related to the degree of credibility that members confer on each other. As Howlett and Ramish (1995) have stated, "perception is just as real as reality itself in the policy process" (p. 124). On the other hand, the comparison of CPI's stated goals to the actual outcomes—official policy, regulation, and government programs—provides a more concrete evaluation.

7.3.1 Perceptions of CPI Influence

CPI's influence was affected by the perceptions that the policy community held about public interest groups in general and CPI in particular. The comments of respondents clearly showed that they perceived a vast difference in degrees of influence between the telecommunications industry and public interest groups. CPI often was not mentioned without prompting during interviews.2 Both verbal accounts and interview diagrams of the policy community indicated that CPI played a minor role and was not a group that most respondents knew well (or sometimes at all).

In one instance, a Commissioner from the CRTC commented that the phone and cable companies exerted the most influence. He described members of the telecommunications industry as the "have" and the software industry as the "have nots." In his opinion, the software industry was not given enough consideration in the convergence discussions. His recollection of participants in the policy process did not extend to public interest groups until he was prompted

2It was most often the case that government representatives had to be asked directly about public interest groups in order to elicit information about CPI.
A senior analyst from Industry Canada stated that public interest groups “try to tell government” that it should be considering “the average person” (R261202). That she described these parties as “trying” implied a presumption that the efforts of groups like CPI would meet with little success. In fact, in the opinion of a respondent from Telecommunities Canada, an association of community networks and a member of CPI, its attempts to influence IHAC “just went nowhere” (R261205).

Along with these problems, a rather subjective element was also identified: whether or not officials at Industry Canada liked a group or conversely perceived it as harbouring “crackpots and radicals.” There were public interest groups who were not looked upon kindly (R161205, R161206). Such groups were seen as not worthy of attention or of serious consideration for their proposals. Government departments did not listen to them because “they don’t like them” (R261203). While CPI did not fall into this category, it suffered more from a lack of recognition. In comparison with the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC), which had established a positive profile in Ottawa and was often called upon as an example of an effective public interest group, most officials in government were only vaguely aware of CPI.

Private sector respondents were not threatened by CPI. On the contrary, they often described themselves as giving helpful advice or offering financial assistance. If they had seen CPI as an adversary with real potential to disrupt their agenda, they would not have been so generous.

CPI’s own impressions of its effectiveness were mixed. Members of the group often expressed disappointment with the poor results of their efforts. However, they were hopeful that their proposals would have more influence over time. Because the group had presented proposals to government and to private sector companies that were alternatives to the market perspective, CPI felt that their ideas would take much longer to be considered and integrated into the thinking of policy makers. The CPI chair was confident that the proposals would make a difference in “the long run” (R161021). Her opinion concurs with Kingdon’s theory that policy makers prefer to maintain the status quo and that change is possible when policy entrepreneurs have the time to
float proposals and convince policy makers. The chair’s comment about the strategy was appropriate, but CPI began too late in relation to the opening of the policy window to be effective in changing opinions through lobbying.

7.3.2 CPI’s Goals for Universal Access and Policy Process Outcomes

In its policy proposal, Future-Knowledge, CPI laid out its goals for universal access and participation. First and foremost, CPI called for the development of a national vision for the information highway that considered the rights and needs of Canadian citizens. The goals which CPI continued to promote throughout the policy process included affordability; a public lane (toll-free) for public institutions, accessible to everyone; free public access points through public libraries; access for people in rural and remote areas; a national access board to evaluate progress and develop strategies for achieving universal access and participation; consideration of the community network experience in assessing private sector plans to meet public needs; a training, development, and research foundation; and sensitivity to issues of gender and disabilities in all aspects of development. Another goal that CPI constantly pursued, along with other public interest groups, was the opening of the policy process to public input. CPI did not attain most of its goals.

Pressure from public interest groups, including CPI, for more public input to the process was constant and none of the groups was satisfied that the public perspective was sufficiently represented in discussions. Although CPI experienced difficulty gaining access to policy makers, it did manage to bring its proposals to key groups. CPI had some access to IHAC, the CRTC, and CANARIE in official capacities such as making presentations. Members were able to meet with government and private sector representatives from time to time. CPI succeeded in getting its chair on high-profile committees such as IHAC, CAP, and CANARIE.

While never put to the test, the CPI steering committee members differed in opinion as
to whether they would have been able to meet with key officials, such as Cabinet ministers, particularly Minister Manley, or Assistant Deputy Minister Binder, to lobby for their position. CPI often relied on PIAC, which was in Ottawa and had better contacts, to communicate proposals to Industry Canada (R161021). CPI’s chair was the group’s main entrée to the policy makers. Aside from the chair, CPI had little in the way of access to any of the policy makers. In comparison with the access available to the Stentor Alliance, it can be concluded that CPI managed to insert a minimum of public input into the government process.

The issue of affordability was answered in policy documents by statements that market competition would make the information highway universally accessible. The government did not accept CPI’s proposal for government intervention, beyond promising to address problems if market forces failed to provide access. The competitive position was upheld within Industry Canada, at the CRTC, at IHAC, and in the government’s Building the Information Society. The government’s tenacity in focusing on the economic aspects of the information highway was a major defeat for CPI and other public interest groups.

No mention of the idea of a national vision was made in IHAC or government information highway policy documents. CPI discussed the idea of a national access board at the CRTC Convergence Hearing but it did not receive a positive reaction. In fact, Commissioner Scott described the idea as “highly interventionist” (CRTC 1995b, p. 119). Throughout the process (and to this day), the government refused to entertain the idea of a board with more public participation. No mention of a national access board appears in policy documents.

CPI did feel that it had affected the outcome of decisions for the Community Access Program (CAP), for public libraries as public access points, and for special telecommunications rates for schools and libraries. These activities played to CPI’s strengths and increasing policy process experience. In the case of preferential rates for educational and health institutions, CPI was confronted with a specific issue about libraries, the type of issue that the group was experienced in fighting. The preferential rates proposal also came up for discussion after CPI had
had two years of experience dealing with IHAC and the CRTC. In addition, public interest groups, including CPI, had spent those two years educating and softening up the Stentor Alliance to the role and needs of public institutions such as schools, libraries, and hospitals. A CPI respondent described CPI's role in the telecommunications rates decision:

Let's take, for example, the information that has just come out of the CRTC as far as the financing for connections for schools and libraries. The different rates, the fact that libraries are included in that, and that it's more than just schools was certainly something that we talked to Stentor about. It doesn't hurt when you are putting together your position, that you have also convinced private sector companies that the position is a good position, and that they are also going forward with your position. And they did. They in fact moved quite a lot in their position in going forward. (R161021)

The CPI executive also had the opportunity to input ideas in its consulting work on public libraries as public access points and CAP at the Science Promotion and Academic Affairs Branch of Industry Canada. The Director General had confidence that CPI could advise him on the readiness of public libraries to support public access and relied, in part, on members of the CPI executive to help communities organize and prepare CAP applications. The Science Promotion and Academic Affairs Branch considered CPI's project proposals to be focused and detailed; by contrast, at IHAC some Industry Canada respondents described CPI's proposals as vague and lacking in detail.

CPI forged a more constructive relationship with the Science Promotion and Academic Affairs Branch. This could be attributed to two factors: CPI's objectives were generally compatible with the objectives of the branch; and CPI had something to offer—its expertise in communicating with local communities—something that Industry Canada was finding difficult to accomplish. CPI would look back on CAP and preferential rates as two of its most significant successes.

While policy makers did react favourably to the idea of public access points in libraries
and community centres, they did not accept the proposal for a public lane. The needs of rural and remote communities were expected to be met by a combination of market competition and community programs such as CAP. CPI had been effective in supporting public access points through libraries and CAP, and in collaborating with other public interest groups in defeating the Stentor Alliance's proposals to meter local telephone service. However, CPI was not effective in advocating a policy that would guarantee universal access for those in rural and remote communities.

Convincing policy makers to consider the experiences of community networks in their discussions was also impossible for CPI. Information highway policy makers were not at all open to input from community network operators. Only the CAP initiative gave community network organizations and CPI an opportunity to help shape its program.

Training in the form of lifelong learning was considered by IHAC’s Learning and Training Working Group. Because education is a provincial responsibility, the federal government was committed to collaborating with the provinces. The federal government also noted that it was already in the process of connecting Canada’s schools to the information highway through its Schoolnet program. Finally, Building the Information Society stated that the Human Resources Department Office of Learning Technologies would work with partners to “expand innovative learning opportunities” (Canada, Government of Canada 1996, p. 22). These commitments answered some of CPI’s concerns.

In the IHAC report, recommendations for research related to both gender and people with disabilities were made. Building the Information Society did not mention gender issues. The issues related to people with disabilities were to be determined by an office that Industry Canada had set up. Neither of these reactions satisfied CPI's goals.

Finally, the government promised to address more fully the issues of access in a national strategy for access that was to be completed in 1997. It was to detail the means for ensuring
affordable access, and define essential services and how they would be delivered. As 1998 comes to a close, the national access strategy remains outstanding.

One must ultimately conclude that CPI had a minor influence on the information policy process. In their reflections on their involvement in the process, CPI members came to the same conclusion. One steering committee member commented that the group had not met its lobbying goals. “The bottom line, have we really accomplished as much as we would like? The answer is no. Have we turned things around? No” (R161009). What CPI did do was to help bring a perspective other than the market agenda to the public, to the policy community, and to policy makers. CPI contributed by educating the public, the government, and the private sector to access and other public issues but changed policy decisions very little.

7.4 CPI’s CONTINUING EVOLUTION

In its struggle to speak for many sectors of the Canadian public, CPI gained a great deal of experience that it could offer to other groups and that it could put to good use as new issues come to the forefront. CPI has almost five years of experience in dealing with members of the information highway policy community, has developed contacts at the federal level, and has accumulated expertise through involvement with a variety of information and communications issues. However, CPI still suffers from its lack of resources, from its distance from the centre of the policy community (in Ottawa), and from being out of step with a neo-liberal political environment.

As 1998 comes to a close, the CPI executive has had an opportunity for reflection on its current position and the future of the organization. CPI activities have continued much as in the past, with interventions at the CRTC and involvement in other information highway issues such as domain name ownership. However, executive members feel that CPI must change in order to survive. According to CPI’s CEO, the group cannot continue as an organization relying upon
part-time volunteers. In order to be proactive and deal with the complexity of the issues, CPI must have a full complement of professional staff. CPI is now engaged in fundraising, including soliciting funds from the private sector—a significant change from the past.

CPI's goals have also evolved. Rather than focusing on building awareness and arguing for "theoretical" goals, CPI intends to pursue practical, pragmatic policies at the application level, programs that pertain to "real lives." CPI has also accepted that, at the grassroots level, business interests must be balanced with public and social issues, that everything is interdependent.

7.5 IMPLICATIONS FOR OTHER PUBLIC INTEREST GROUPS

As public policy theorists have pointed out, public interest groups suffer many hardships. They have difficulties recruiting active members and acquiring sufficient funding. They must expend a great deal of energy to organize themselves. Their positions are often in opposition to prevailing attitudes. All of these problems applied to CPI. In addition, new public interest groups often lack knowledge of the political and bureaucratic processes with which they must deal. If they do not have the credibility that comes, for example, with a large or powerful membership or considerable resources they will have further problems accessing policy makers.

Many roadblocks may be removed by understanding the issues and particularly by understanding the process and knowing the policy actors. Groups who want to make an impact must anticipate policy window opportunities by preparing proposals in advance. A knowledge of the policy process must include being attentive to what the government expects to find in a proposal (e.g., practical, substantive ideas) so that proposals present the ideas of the group while addressing the format that meets government requirements. Proposals need to be communicated constantly and persuasively before policy windows open. Groups should also forge beneficial alliances with other groups in order to build credibility and to share resources. If at all possible, groups should consider what they have to offer that would be of value to members of the policy
network, such as special expertise with the issues or desirable group resources. Finding an attribute that is attractive to others may not always be possible but should at least be explored as an avenue for gaining entrée to policy makers.

7.6 REFLECTIONS ON THE METHODOLOGY

Lincoln and Guba's naturalistic inquiry paradigm proved to be very effective as a perspective from which to study a phenomenon such as CPI and the information highway policy process. As Lincoln and Guba claim, their qualitative methodology caused little disruption to the study's natural setting and allowed for the analysis of the policy process and for the exploration of the relationships within the policy community over an extended period of time.

The decision to consider relevant theories at the beginning and throughout the process, as suggested by Strauss and Corbin and by Burawoy, was invaluable in organizing and maintaining intellectual control of the research situation. Qualitative situations are complex and multi-faceted; data are unstructured and messy. From the outset, the theories were instrumental for devising the conceptual framework, a working set of research questions, and the boundaries of the study.

While referring very little to the theories at the height of data gathering and organizing activities, the general framework acted as a base point and kept the research on track. The theories did not inhibit the exploration of the data as it unfolded. The researcher was on the lookout for surprises. Surprises included the participation of a significant number of government departments and agencies in the process. This led to a horizontal process that did not follow the normal policy activity pattern of moving proposals vertically through a single department to Cabinet.

Referring to the two theories kept the scope of the research from expanding to an
unmanageable size. Early in the analysis, the researcher attempted to work with the data without using any predefined categories. The possibilities for assigning categories were endless and the researcher quickly came to the conclusion that it would be possible to go off in any number of directions, many of which were not of import to the study. At that point, the researcher decided that, as a novice investigator, she would fare much better if she could provide herself with enough structure to organize herself at the beginning. That structure came from the policy community and policy process theories as well as CPI agenda items and the research questions. The researcher remained sensitive to the delicate balance between being led by theory and keeping the investigation open to findings outside the theoretical framework.

Using a qualitative approach also opened the research to a number of techniques for gathering, organizing, and analyzing the data. Gathering data via participant observation and unstructured interviews had both positive and negative aspects. Participant observation was less effective than expected. First, for the study of one group as a member of a community, the researcher was more interested in group decisions and actions than in individual interactions. Secondly, most observations took place at CPI steering committee meetings. Members came in time for the lunch-hour meetings and usually left immediately after. The meetings were formal. Thus, there was much less to observe than had the participants been interacting in an office setting or around a dinner table. The observations were useful for verifying comments in interviews that contributed to an understanding of the group dynamics: that the group was cohesive, worked well together, was generally in agreement about issues, and had experience related to a number of the issues. It was also clear from observations that the leaders could lead and that they put considerable effort into making the group a success.

Transcripts from steering committee meetings and respondent interviews provided the bulk of the information used in the study. Meeting tapes were helpful for tracking CPI activities from month to month and following the development of strategies. The committee meeting transcripts provided the majority of the data on CPI's group characteristics and policy capacity. Meeting transcripts were an accurate reflection of the activities that actually occupied CPI during
the 2 ½ year period and could be verified against what respondents recounted in interviews. Agenda item headings were also useful as preliminary categories in data organization.

Interviews were critical because they allowed the researcher to follow up on observations and discussions at the steering committee meetings and at events in the greater policy community. By the time the interviewing began, after more than a year of involvement with CPI, the questions could be directed to explore specific issues in more depth, while being open to the discovery of information that was not available from CPI respondents. Interviews with government and private sector respondents provided an entirely different perspective from that of CPI. The interviews helped to explain the reasons for some of CPI's problems and were important in developing a sense of the policy community, filling in the background for some of the events, confirming impressions that the CPI steering committee expressed, providing an alternative view of CPI, and assessing CPI's influence in the community. Follow-up interviews would have been useful to fill in some of the gaps that appeared during data analysis, but there was no opportunity; however, the researcher concluded that the lacunae were related to points that were not critical to this particular investigation.

Some problems were encountered organizing interviews with government personnel. In one instance, an appointment was set with a senior government official who canceled at the last moment and redirected the interview to a director in his department, who could not provide as much specific information as the researcher was seeking. In another instance, a government official had left the government and was not available to be interviewed. Although most people responded positively to requests for interviews, some participants with whom the researcher would have liked to talk did not respond at all. During the interviews, respondents provided their personal account of events, not what was expected of them. Their comments on relevant events were verified through the comments of others who did not necessarily share a point of view.

Use of the snowball technique for identifying interview respondents provided a purposive sample. Most of the respondents were knowledgeable about some aspect of the policy situation.
The researcher was confident that she talked with the most knowledgeable participants in the process from within the three sectors. Those outside of CPI were particularly valuable in filling in the background for some of the events, confirming impressions that the CPI steering committee expressed, and providing an alternative view of CPI.

Documents acted as an official voice in the process and provided a means of comparison for CPI's goals. Because the research was in progress as events were happening, it was quite simple to obtain relevant documentation.

Most of the above approaches are recommended in the grounded theory methodology, which provides guidelines for dealing with unstructured textual data. The prospect of making sense of the data, once they were gathered, was daunting. Glaser and Strauss's direction that data collection and analysis should be simultaneous and iterative is advisable in that it makes the process more manageable. The iterative process provides the opportunity to redirect the line of questioning according to the analysis of comments of recent respondents. However, the process of observing/interviewing, expanding field notes, transcribing, organizing, analyzing, and writing is extremely time-consuming and assumes that no other activities are running in parallel. This was not the case in this study, and the data were collected but not thoroughly analyzed until later.

The NUD*IST software greatly supported the grounded theory methodology in practice. First, it provided text and graphic formats of the data organization of the indexing system. This made it easier to visualize the data organization and find data quickly. Secondly, the software offered considerable flexibility. Text units could be coded for any number of categories, then added, deleted, or changed. As the analytical process progressed, data categories could be moved and reorganized, comparisons of categories could be made, and relationships constructed. The software provided the facility for memo-writing and then converting these memos to conceptual categories within the indexing system. References for original sources of text could be incorporated into comments about conceptual ideas, thus maintaining the connection between descriptive and conceptual data. All of these functions helped bring order to the process and made
it easier to work through ideas and hunches.

NUD*IST’s drawbacks included a lengthy learning curve for understanding both the mechanics of the software and its conceptual underpinnings, and some functions that were not particularly elegant and made organizing and analytic operations cumbersome.

From the beginning, the researcher was concerned about issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research, often the targets of criticism from the positivist school. However, she became confident that the depth and breadth of the investigation, time-wise and source-wise, ensured a significant degree of trustworthiness/validity. The researcher finally accepted the weakness of qualitative research related to reliability. Phenomena such as that investigated in this thesis cannot be replicated. The situation is not controlled and could not be repeated. However, the researcher believes that because of the richness of the description, parallels can be drawn and inferences made in similar situations.

7.7 REFLECTIONS ON THE THEORY

The two theories chosen to build a framework for this study, Coleman and Skogstad’s and Pross’s work on policy communities, and Kingdon’s model of the policy process, complemented each other, and in a sense offered another means of triangulation. Both theories compared the various aspects of the same phenomenon. Policy community theory considered the phenomenon from a relational point of view, policy process theory considered the phenomenon from its temporal and procedural aspects. Together they provided a means of constructing the context for the phenomenon that would help to explain activities, outcomes, and CPI’s situation.

Observing the phenomenon from the institutional level made it possible to draw conclusions that went beyond the mechanics of the process into the more qualitative human and political elements of the process. Thus it was possible to analyze how different groups addressed
their demands and vied for favour in the policy community. The theories helped to determine why one group could be more successful than another.

The theories also made it possible to look at a number of variables that had a potential for affecting the outcome. At the same time the theories brought with them an appreciation of the complexity and uncertainty of the policy process. Kingdon points out that the policy process really has no beginning or end. In policy research, the researcher picks up the trail at some juncture and attempts to explain a phenomenon along the continuum. Nothing is guaranteed; no two situations will be the same. Expertise, preparation, timing, and luck coupled with sufficient resources to follow through accounted for different groups’ levels of success in this study, and, in particular, CPI’s limited effectiveness.

Each of the theories had weaknesses when applied to the research situation. Many of the policy process models, including Kingdon’s, are designed to fit the American political organization and therefore must be carefully considered to account for differences in the Canadian system such as the central roles of Cabinet and the federal bureaucracy. The policy community model was weak in explaining the position of the international community in the Canadian information highway policy community. The model situates the international governments and organization in the outer perimeters of the attentive public. Yet this community’s role is much more significant to policy decisions. Although not formally at the table during policy making, the international community’s presence and opinions weighed heavily on decisions. The policy community model needs a way of representing the impact of this indirect influence.

7.8 FUTURE RESEARCH

The possibilities for future research suggested by this study are various. One possibility that came directly from the policy community model would be a study of the role of the international community in determining information highway policy. There is a great deal of work being done
throughout the world both by individual nations and by the world community through international organizations representing governments, the private sector, and public interest groups. This study would lead to a more accurate placement of the international community in Pross's policy community model.

A second direction would be a study of the information policy proposals that are prepared for consideration by the Canadian federal government. Since vagueness was a major criticism levelled against CPI, it would be informative to compare proposals that are created by public interest groups with those that are written by private sector organizations to determine the level of specificity and the degree of practicality of the proposals. If public interest group proposals indeed proved to be vague, such a study would be of value to groups for future reference in preparing proposals.

A study focused on the policy role of the library community as it deals with information technology and societal changes presents a third possibility. The study would address questions that are both practical and critical to its future. Is the library community prepared to meet the policy challenges that will come? If not, what do libraries need to do to organize themselves and effectively lobby for their positions?

Finally, an investigation of the activities and output of predominant private sector actors related to information highway policy over the past ten years would answer questions about the role these actors have played in policy development. Such research could be designed to determine the private sector's position related to issues of information and communication as public goods, and whether or not the private sector's position has evolved during that period.

7.9 CONCLUSION

In this study, the researcher attempted to provide a balanced account of the role that a public
interest group can take in the realm of public policy for information and communications issues. The study focused on the issue that most concerned CPI: universal access. The goal was to describe and analyze CPI’s part in the information highway policy process phenomenon as completely as possible in order to understand more fully the potential for influence of a public interest group in the information policy process. Like most situations in the political world, the conclusions were complex and not absolute. The odds were against CPI, and the group did not exercise the influence for which it strove. While CPI learned a great deal that it could use to its advantage in the future, the group remains within an institutional structure that does not favour public interest groups. Nevertheless, a group such as CPI—if it secured adequate resources and continued to increase its expertise through exposure to the policy process—could play a valuable role as a public interest watchdog in the information policy community.
APPENDICES
Appendix A

96/11/26

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR GOVERNMENT INTERVIEWEES

BACKGROUND:

What would you identify as the major information infrastructure issues in the last 3 years? (possible issues- access, copyright, employment, library, content, intell prop, privacy, input to policy process)

(EXTERNAL INFLUENCES:)
Could you outline your involvement in/knowledge of information infrastructure decision-making?
- what has your role been in this process
- what are your department’s/group’s responsibilities and goals
- what are your responsibilities as ‘deputy minister’
- what are your major achievements
- what sources do you use to familiarize yourself with a policy issue
  - any outside organization

POLITICAL PROCESS:

What factors lead to the establishment of IHAC?

How do bodies such as IHAC, the CRTC, Industry Canada fit into the decision-making process?

Could you outline the process that lead to policy recommendations/decisions?
- for IHAC, CRTC, Industry Canada/Cabinet
- who determined the agenda
- how were decisions made
- who made the decisions
- what happened next
- is this process typical of most decision-making

POLITICAL CONTEXT:

**DRAW MODEL
Who has been involved in discussions, recommendations and decisions?
-to what degree
-what groups are attempting to influence policy regarding the information highway
-if put primary decision-makers in centre of activities, where would you place other players in decision-making in relation to the decision-makers and each other
   -include government, private sector, public interest groups etc.

-what groups or corporate entities are particularly influential
   -how would you account for their success/influence
      -ie what factors do they have in their favour

-if CPI is not mentioned, ask if person is aware of group or members of steering ctee
   -if not, why might that be
      what interests is he/she familiar with

CPI CHARACTERISTICS:

How would you describe CPI?
   -size
   -membership
   -finances
   -expertise with issues
   -degree of influence

CPI STRATEGIES:

Could you describe your relationship with members of CPI?
   -in what context do you come in contact with members
   -how did you become aware of CPI
   -how much contact do you have with CPI
   -about what issues
   -at what point in policy discussions did CPI become involved

OUTCOME:

What did you do with the information/request/proposal brought to your attention by CPI
   -are any of CPI’s proposals reflected in policy recommendations or decisions
   -in your opinion how significant has CPI’s role been in the policy process

Looking ahead, what role do you think groups like CPI will play in the future?
   -what do you think that CPI could do to be more effective
   -do you think that the role CPI has played marks a change in the policy process at the federal level
WRAP-UP.

Is there anything that you would like to add?
Who would you suggest that I talk to in order to gain a full appreciation of factors and groups influencing policy in this area?
Are there any documents I would find relevant?
May I contact you if I have further questions?
Appendix A

96/11/26

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PUBLIC INTEREST GROUP AND PRIVATE SECTOR

BACKGROUND:

What would you identify as the major information infrastructure issues in the last 3 years? (possible issues- access, copyright, employment, library, content, intell prop, privacy, input to policy process)

(EXTERNAL INFLUENCES:)
Could you outline your involvement in/knowledge of information infrastructure decision-making?
- what has your role been in this process
- what are your group’s responsibilities and goals
- what are your responsibilities as ‘member’
- what are your group’s major achievements
- what sources do you use to familiarize yourself with a policy issue
  - any outside organization

POLITICAL PROCESS:

How do bodies such as IHAC, the CRTC, Industry Canada fit into the decision-making process?

Could you outline the process that lead to policy recommendations/decisions?
- for IHAC, CRTC, Industry Canada/Cabinet
- who determined the agenda
- how were decisions made
- who made the decisions
- what happened next
- in your experience, is this process typical of most decision-making
- as far as you are able to discern, has the government had its own set of goals or objectives in terms of what type of information policy it would like to see

POLITICAL CONTEXT:

**DRAW MODEL
Who has been involved in discussions, recommendations and decisions?
- to what degree
- what groups are attempting to influence policy regarding the information highway
- if put primary decision-makers in centre of activities, where would you place other
players in decision-making in relation to influence on the decision-makers and each other
-include government, private sector, public interest groups etc.
-what groups or corporate entities are particularly influential
  -how would you account for their success/influence
  -ie what factors do they have in their favour

-if CPI is not mentioned, ask if person is aware of group or members of steering ctte
  -if not, why might that be
  -what interests is he/she familiar with

CPI CHARACTERISTICS:

How would you describe CPI?
-expertise with issues
-degree of influence

CPI STRATEGIES:

Could you describe your relationship with members of CPI?
-in what context do you come in contact with members
-how did you become aware of CPI
-how much contact do you have with CPI
-about what issues
-at what point in policy discussions did CPI become involved
-are you aware of any strategies that CPI has used to influence decision-makers
  -which ones were more successful
  -why
  -how much influence does CPI have with decision-makers
  -give examples

OUTCOME.

Has CPI had any influence upon your group, your decisions?

Are any of CPI’s proposals reflected in policy recommendations or decisions?
  -in your opinion how significant has CPI’s role been in the policy process

Looking ahead, what role do you think groups like CPI will play in the future?
-what do you think that CPI could do to be more effective
-do you think that the role CPI has played marks a change in the policy process at the federal level

WRAP-UP:

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Is there anything that you would like to add?

Who would you suggest that I talk to in order to gain a full appreciation of factors and groups influencing policy in this area?

Are there any documents I would find relevant?

May I contact you if I have further questions?
*NAB
CEO: Another thing to remember is that, we have to wonder whether we want to promote CA-Net, because our position for a while has been, and in our latest statement of it, is the letter to Sheila Copps, and then looking at the CRTC -- what we really want is a National Access Board, that looks after a range of issues. And one of those issues could be, what do you do about those areas that the market doesn't serve. I mean, the National Access Board would have a range of things, including content issues, and connectivity issues. A major part of the National Access Board that it be a representative body, which CA-Net isn't.

(Text unit was coded for national access board, strategy, CEO, steering committee meeting date.)
Appendix C  Data Structure - Tree

Q.S.R. NUD.IST Power version, revision 4.0.

PROJECT: POLCOM, User cheryl buchwald
(1)  /casedata
    case data by sector/group
(1 1)  /casedata/private
        transcripts, documents from private sector groups
(1 1 1)  /casedata/private/stentor
        transcripts, documents from stentor
(1 1 2)  /casedata/private/bell
        transcripts, documents from bell participants
(1 2)  /casedata/govmt
        transcripts, documents from government sector agencies
(1 2 1)  /casedata/govmt/indcan
        interview transcripts, documents from industry canada
(1 2 2)  /casedata/govmt/ihac
        interview transcripts, documents from information highway advisory council
(1 2 3)  /casedata/govmt/crtc
        interview transcript, documents from the CRTC
(1 2 4)  /casedata/govmt/heritage
        interview transcript and documentation from heritage canada
(1 2 5)  /casedata/govmt/canarie
        interview transcript, documents from CANARIE
(1 3)  /casedata/nonprof
        non profit sector groups
(1 3 1)  /casedata/nonprof/cpi
        interview transcripts, meeting transcripts, documents from CPI
(1 3 2)  /casedata/nonprof/tc
        interview transcript from telecommunities canada
(1 3 3)  /casedata/nonprof/piac
        interview transcript and documentation from the public interest advocacy centre
(1 3 4)  /casedata/nonprof/p-ihac
        interview transcript and documentation from public information highway advisory council, comments about p-ihac
(1 3 5)  /casedata/nonprof/ciia
        text from/about canadian library association
(2)  /docdata
    includes all documents for project
cpi committee meeting transcripts

meeting transcript divided by agenda item

agenda item 'alliance'

agenda item 'annual report'

agenda item 'canarie'

agenda item 'cap' (community access program)

agenda item 'conference' (digital knowledge)

agenda item 'consultation'

agenda item 'crtc'

agenda item 'fundraising'

agenda item 'future knowledge'

agenda item 'grant' (particularly trillium)

agenda item 'ihac'

agenda item 'local measured service'

agenda item 'membership'

agenda item 'misc' items eg listserv discussion, other discussions mentioned only once, periphery discussions

agenda item 'national access board'

agenda item 'cpi network'

agenda item 'cpi organization'

agenda item 'cpi strategic plan96'

agenda 'misc items eg listserv discussion, other discussions mentioned only once, periphery discussions'
(2121) /docdata/meet/date/cm50222
steering committee meeting Feb 22, 1995

(2122) /docdata/meet/date/cm50329
steering committee meeting March 29, 1995

(2123) /docdata/meet/date/cm50627
steering committee meeting June 27, 1995

(2124) /docdata/meet/date/cm50919
steering committee meeting Sept 19, 1995

(2125) /docdata/meet/date/cm51122
steering committee meeting Nov 22, 1995

(2126) /docdata/meet/date/cm60118
steering committee meeting Jan 18, 1996

(2127) /docdata/meet/date/cm60228
steering committee meeting Feb 28, 1996

(2128) /docdata/meet/date/fock6228
  guest discussion after steering committee meeting Feb 28, 1996 (see also cm60228)

(2129) /docdata/meet/date/cm60327
steering committee meeting March 27, 1996

(2130) /docdata/meet/date/sp60427
strategic planning meeting Apr 27, 1996

(2131) /docdata/meet/discussion
Discussions in committee meetings related to different concepts (2131)
/docdata/meet/discussion/"strategies" data
  Data from CPI committee meetings where members discuss strategies for meeting
  their policy goals

(2132) /docdata/meet/discussion/"lobby"
  lobbying activities

(22) /docdata/interview
interview transcripts

(221) /docdata/interview/question
interview transcripts divided by question number (1-10)

(2211) /docdata/interview/question/q1
interview question 1

(2212) /docdata/interview/question/q2
interview question 2

(2213) /docdata/interview/question/q3
interview question 3

(2214) /docdata/interview/question/q4
interview question 4

(2215) /docdata/interview/question/q5
interview question 5

(2216) /docdata/interview/question/q6
interview question number 6
interview question 7
interview question 8
interview question 9
interview question 10
interview identified by respondent
interview with A
interview with B
interview with C
interview with D
interview with E
interview with F
interview with G
interview with G
interview with H
interview with I
interview with J
interview with K
interview with L
interview with M
interview with N
interview with O
interview with P
interview with P
(2 2 2 18) /docdata/interview/respond/Q
interview with Q
(2 2 2 19) /docdata/interview/respond/R
interview with R
(2 2 2 20) /docdata/interview/respond/S
interview with S
(2 2 2 21) /docdata/interview/respond/T
interview with T
(2 2 2 22) /docdata/interview/respond/U
interview with U
(2 2 2 23) /docdata/interview/respond/V
interview with V
(2 3) /docdata/propos
policy proposals to government- mixed on and off line
(2 3 1) /docdata/propos/org
proposals identified by author organization
(2 3 2) /docdata/propos/date
proposals identified by date
(2 4) /docdata/policy
government policy documents- mixed on and off line
(2 4 1) /docdata/policy/org
policy documents identified by author organization
(2 4 2) /docdata/policy/date
policy documents identified by date
(2 5) /docdata/notes
my notes for field observations and interview notes
(2 5 1) /docdata/notes/field
field notes
(2 5 2) /docdata/notes/inter
interview field notes
(2 5 3) /docdata/notes/memos
analysis memos
(2 5 3 1) /docdata/notes/memos/mq4
memos written for question 4 node
(2 5 3 2) /docdata/notes/memos/mq5
memos for question 5
(2 5 3 3) /docdata/notes/memos/mstate
memos discussing the policy environment overall, during and after IHAC phase 1
(2 5 4) /docdata/notes/diagrams
my notes describing question 6 diagram
(2 6) /docdata/corresp
correspondence- mostly to and from CPI
correspondence identified by author organization

correspondence identified by date

notes on theory to be compared with analysis

subject descriptor for article eg policy community theory

Policy procedure theory

Policy community theory

author of article

notes from bruce doern reading

notes on coleman and skogstad ed

notes from paul pross

notes from wilks and wright

notes on analysis of data using policy community theory

notes on analysis of policy process data related to theory

notes on theory

notes on policy process data related to theory

annotations
Appendix D  

Data Structure - Free Nodes

(F)  //Free Nodes
    free node analysis memos
(F 1)  //Free Nodes/ROLE
    role analysis
(F 2)  //Free Nodes/STATE
    state analysis
(F 2 1)  //Free Nodes/STATE/overall
    overall conditions early to mid 90s
(F 2 2)  //Free Nodes/STATE/pre
    conditions pre IHAC/CRTC processes
(F 2 3)  //Free Nodes/STATE/during
    conditions during IHAC/CRTC processes
(F 2 4)  //Free Nodes/STATE/post
    conditions post IHAC/CRTC processes
(F 3)  //Free Nodes/CHRON
    chronology
(F 4)  //Free Nodes/EVENT
    event chronology
(F 6)  //Free Nodes/procchange
    perception of changes to the generally-understood policy procedure
(F 7)  //Free Nodes/conflict
    Conflict among stakeholders- could be within government or generally in policy community
(F 8)  //Free Nodes/complex
    Complexity of policy process.
(F 9)  //Free Nodes/credibility
    Credibility attributed to a group.
(F 10)  //Free Nodes/interrelate
    Different groups working together to develop policy.
(F 11)  //Free Nodes/influence data
    Influence or power that particular groups/individuals possessed in policy process.
(F 12)  //Free Nodes/intl competition
    Competition argument driving policy decisions.
(F 13)  //Free Nodes/mktagenda
    Agenda for deregulation, competition of the telecom/broadcasting market.
(F 14)  //Free Nodes/consensus
    Demand for/efforts to reach consensus over policy.
(F 15)  //Free Nodes/consult
    Consultation with/among stakeholders in policy process.
(F 16)  //Free Nodes/process
Policy process.
(F 17) //Free Nodes/resource data
Financial, people etc. resources of groups, government
(F 18) //Free Nodes/govrole
Role/changing role of government in the policy process
(F 19) //Free Nodes.origi hac
Origins of IHAC.
(F 20) //Free Nodes/cpirole
Role of CPI and CPI members in policy process.
(F 21) //Free Nodes/key player data
Person/persons identified as having a significant role in information policy development
(F 22) //Free Nodes/ind perspective data
Groups/people expressing, or perceived as representing, the views of industry ie market agenda.
(F 23) //Free Nodes/network data
Current relationship of group member to other groups eg associations, employers, personal.
(F 24) //Free Nodes/other player data
Person/group identified as having less significant role in policy development.
(F 25) //Free Nodes/public perspective data
Groups/people expressing or perceived to represent public view in policy discussions.
(F 26) //Free Nodes/lobby data
Methods for exerting pressure on government
(F 27) //Free Nodes/subgov data
Policy-making body that includes government agencies and institutionalized interest groups.
(F 28) //Free Nodes/outcome
Results of policy process.
(F 29) //Free Nodes/values data
State/situation perceived as intrinsically desirable
(F 30) //Free Nodes/affiliation data
Connection related to previous association, employment, personal contact
(F 31) //Free Nodes/entree data
Having access to policy makers
(F 32) //Free Nodes/location data
Geographical location of group (in relation to lobby capacity).
(F 33) //Free Nodes/leader data
Key informants (CPI) and their characteristics, actions as leaders.
(F 34) //Free Nodes/client group data
Sector for which ministry is responsible
(F 35) //Free Nodes/expertise data
Knowledge, skills possessed by a group.
Tactic used to reach goal.

Qualities of CPI membership.

Included in policy discussions.

whether others know the group or have heard of the group

To have influence. See 'influence data'.

CPI weakness

public awareness

CPI strategies

CPI strength

alliances

policy community data

values in community

lobbying

resources

entree

process outcomes

group credibility

industry perspective on process

Memos for groups/persons identified as having major role in information highway development

Memos for persons/groups identified as having less significance in policy process.
public interest perspective on process
sub-government
participation in process
government department client group
group physical location
CPI group recognition
CPI expertise
memo on CPI institutional character
actor’s previous associations
actor’s current association
Collaboration of public interest groups
Data for role of government
CPI leadership
CPI weaknesses
CPI strengths
CPI position in community
Appendix E  Letter of Introduction

November 15, 1996

Dear

As a major player in the development of information policy in Canada, I would like to interview you with regard to my PhD dissertation research at the University of Toronto. My objective is to examine the decision-making process in formulating policy; the role that public and private sector interest groups play in that process; and the relationship that develops among the government, the private sector and public interest groups.

In the course of my interviews to date, some of the individuals interviewed have suggested you as someone I should speak to in government. I would like to meet with you to discuss the role of different groups in the formulation of information policy and the relationship that your ministry has with interest groups.

My research is supported financially by an Ontario Graduate Scholarship grant. It is also funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council strategic grant to the Information Policy Research Program at the Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto. As a condition of these grants, I follow ethical policies with regard to interviews: the content of the interview is strictly confidential, and I will present the results of my research so as to guarantee your anonymity.

To permit a careful consideration of your responses to my questions, and to minimize mistakes on my part, I hope that you will agree to permit me to tape record the interview. This is a standard practice in studies of this sort and I would be pleased to provide you with a copy of the transcript if you wish. Should you prefer to be interviewed without the tape recorder, however, I will certainly oblige.

I plan to visit Ottawa the week of December 2nd and should be able to arrange a time to meet at anytime during these days. I will telephone you to see whether you will be free for an interview during this period. Alternatively, you may contact me to arrange a time at 416-978-7099, by fax at 416-971-1399, or by email at buchwald@fis.utoronto.ca.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Cowan Buchwald
Appendix F  Consent Forms

Organization Consent Form

Cheryl Buchwald has explained to me her study of the influences on the policy-making process of the Coalition for Public Information which she is conducting for her doctoral dissertation in the Faculty of Information Studies. Her supervisor at the Faculty is Professor Joanne Marshall.

On behalf of Canada’s Coalition for Public Information, I agree that the organization will participate in this study. Participation will involve: permitting the investigator to observe CPI activities; making CPI documents available to the investigator; and taking part in interviews.

In the case of participant observation or interviews, I understand that consent from the individuals involved will be sought. I agree that data obtained from observation and interviews may be used in the preparation of her dissertation and subsequent derivative materials, such as scholarly papers intended for publication. I understand that CPI will have the opportunity to see such manuscripts one month in advance of submission for publication to correct factual errors.

Name________________________

Signature________________________ Date__________

Position________________________
Participant Observation and Interview Consent Form

Cheryl Buchwald has explained to me her study of the role of the government and interest groups in the information policy decision-making process for the information infrastructure which she is conducting for her doctoral dissertation in the Faculty of Information Studies. Her supervisor at the Faculty is Professor Joanne Marshall.

I consent to observation of my CPI activities and/or to being interviewed as part of this study. I agree that data obtained from observation and interviews may be used in the preparation of her dissertation and subsequent derivative materials, such as scholarly papers intended for publication. I may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

I understand that I will not be identified by my own name but that a pseudonym will be used along with a general indication of my role in CPI. I agree that my own name may be included in a full list of participants appended to the dissertation.

Name of respondent__________________________________________

Signature__________________________________________ Date__________________
Cheryl Buchwald has explained to me her study of the role of the government and interest groups in the information policy decision-making process for the information infrastructure which she is conducting for her doctoral dissertation in the Faculty of Information Studies. Her supervisor at the Faculty is Professor Joanne Marshall.

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Name of respondent______________________________

Signature______________________________ Date__________________
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Paul LeBlanc  
General Manager

Date Oct 13, 1995.
Appendix H  

Glossary of Participating Organizations

Bell Canada
Broadcasting Cultural Development and Heritage, Heritage Canada
Canadian Library Association (CLA)
Canadian Network for the Advancement of Research, Industry and Education (CANARIE)
Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)
Coalition for Public Information (CPI)
Information Highway Advisory Council
Information Highway Advisory Council (IHAC) Secretariat
Ontario Library Association (OLA)
Public-Information Highway Advisory Council (P-IHAC)
Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC)
Science Promotion and Academic Affairs, Industry Canada
Spectrum, Information Technologies and Telecommunications Sector, Industry Canada
  Communications Development, SITT, Industry Canada
  Industry Framework, Telecommunications Policy, SITT, Industry Canada
  Telecommunications Policy, SITT, Industry Canada
Stentor Alliance
Telecommunities Canada
Appendix I  Information Highway Activities by Month

1991-1993 (Background)

Intl/US/OECD productivity and growth studies, information economy, Brussels G7
June 91- OECD- Universal service and Rate Restructuring in Telecommunications
Mar 92- OECD- Convergence Between Communications Technologies: Case Studies from North America and Western Europe
Oct 92- OECD- Information Networks and New Technologies: Opportunities and Policy Implications for the 1990s
Oct 92- OECD- Telecommunications and Broadcasting: Convergence or Collision?
Jan 93- OECD- Usage Indicators: A New Foundation for Information Technology Policies
June 93- Can- Telecommunications Act 1993
Sept 93- US- National Information Infrastructure: Agenda for Action
Oct 93- Stentor- The Information Highway: Canada’s Road to Economic and Social Renewal

1994
Jan- G of C- Liberal Speech from the Throne
Jan- CPI- 1st public meeting
Feb- CPI- purchases CANARIE membership
Mar- IC- in process of staffing IHAC secretariat
Mar- CPI- lobbying to be represented on IHAC - CPI rep chosen
Mar- IC- appoints IHAC chair
Apr- IC- announces members of IHAC
Apr- CPI- public meeting
Apr- Stentor- The Beacon Initiative
Apr- CPI- email response to beacon initiative sent to cpi members
Apr- public interest groups- email comments back and forth re beacon initiative
Apr- IC- The Canadian Information Highway: Building Canada’s Information and Communications Infrastructure
May- Angus Reid- Canada’s Information Highway
May- IHAC monthly meetings for 13 mos.
- working groups meet, send recommendations to Council meetings
July- EC- Europe’s Way to the Information Society: An Action Plan
Sept- Stentor- Culture and the Information Highway
Sept- CRTC- decision 94-19- establishing regulatory framework
Sept- IHAC asks government (Ind Can and Heritage) to have CRTC investigate convergence issues
Oct- IHAC- Privacy and the Canadian Information Highway
Oct- Cabinet- gives directive to CRTC to conduct hearings and offer advice- Order in Council (P.C. 1994-1689)
Nov- CPI- received Jobs Ontario community action grant $49,630 from Ministry of Culture,
Tourism and Recreation

Nov- Goss Gilroy - Socio-economic Implications of a British Columbia Information Highway
Nov- IHAC - Providing New Dimensions for Learning, Creativity and Entrepreneurship
Dec- CPI- presentation to IHAC access and social impact working group

1995
Jan- CPI- 4th public meeting
Jan- CPI- receipt of $10,000 Industry Canada grant for public libraries as access points study
Jan- IHAC- Access, Affordability and Universal Service on the Canadian Information Highway
Feb- CPI- response to copyright and content proposal
Mar- CRTC- Convergence Hearing
Mar- CPI- presentation to CRTC Mar 6
Mar- CPI- access proposal document
Mar - CPI- Canada's Public Libraries and the Information Highway: A Report Prepared for Industry Canada
Mar- IHAC- Copyright and the Information Highway
Mar- PIAC- Sharing the Road
Apr- CPI- 5th public meeting Apr 12
Apr- CPI- Future-Knowledge
Apr- Bell Canada files Tariff Notice 5471 (access banding)
May- Bell Canada files Tariff Notice 5506 (business exchange measured service)
May- CRTC- Competition and culture on Canada's Information Highway: Managing the Realities of Transition
May- CRTC- Convergence Report to Industry Canada and Heritage Canada
May- CPI- request for input from members re NAB, public space
June- CPI- response to CRTC and IHAC reports
June- IHAC- labour issues (Parrot) sent to bridging committee
June- IC- Manley presentation to Cabinet on significance of IH to Canadians
Summer- govt departments establish steering committees/working groups for proposals
July- CPI- letter to CRTC requesting meeting to discuss funding public interest group participation in hearings
July- CPI- letter to Minister of Justice re reform of Access to Information Act

July- IHAC- The Economic Impacts of the Information Highway: An Overview
July- Bell- drops access banding/ local measured service
Aug- CPI- announces agreement with Forevergreen Television and Film Production
Sept- CPI- works with rural communities on CAP applications with $78.0 funding from Industry Canada
Sept- IHAC- Connection Community Content
Sept- nonprofit/private- react to IHAC report
-CLC does not endorse
Sept- IHAC- 4 government committees review 300 recommendations and draft response (6 mos)
Sept- PIAC- releases document The information highway...
Oct- Alliance- formation of Alliance for a Connected Canada
Oct- CRTC- decision 95-21- long distance rate reduction, local rate increases
Nov- govt department proposals passed up to ADM level for review
Nov- Secretariat conferred with individual players in departments re recommendations, circulated draft MC
Nov- CPI- interrogatory to Stentor re education and health services
Nov- CRTC- issues telecom public notice 95-49 (became 95-56, local service pricing options)
Dec- CPI- receives Trillium grant $197,000
Dec- CPI- final response to IHAC report
Dec- IC- Manley announces communities included in CAP program
Dec- IHAC- Report of the Canadian content and culture working group
Dec- IHWG- meets with IC officials

1996
Jan- IC- writing Building the Information Society
Jan- CPI- beginning incorporation process
Jan- EC- Building an information society
Feb- CPI- local services pricing proposal
Feb- CPI- Digital knowledge 96
Mar- CPI- response to CRTC 95-49 and 95-56
Mar- CPI- letter to Minister Copps re CRTC
Mar- CRTC- begins proceedings to establish price cap regulation (96-8)
Mar- Alliance, govt, academics- UA Workshop
Apr- Cabinet signs MC
May- IC- Building the Information Society
May- nonprofit/private- react to Building the Information Society
Aug- G of C- Convergence policy statement
Sept- CRTC- approval of preferential rates for health and education sectors (96-9)
Nov- CRTC- decision re local service pricing options (96-10)
Appendix J  

IHAC Issues

Connection community content: The challenge of the information highway
Information Highway Advisory Council: 15 public issues

1. How fast should the advanced network infrastructure be built? How will network improvements be financed?

2. What is the proper balance between competition and regulation?

3. Should requirements for Canadian ownership and control of communications networks be reviewed?

4. How quickly can Canadian industries move toward universal standards, and how should these standards be determined?

5. How can the federal government coordinate its activities with other governments?

6. How should copyright and intellectual property issues be addressed?

7. What measures are needed to support Canadian cultural and other content-based products and services?

8. What controls, if any, should be placed on the information that is put on the network?

9. How can the Information Highway be used to improve government services to the public?

10. How can personal privacy and security of information be protected?

11. How can we ensure that Canadian information industries take full advantage of the R&D and technological development opportunities presented by the Information Highway?

12. How can the Information Highway best be used to improve the growth and competitiveness of all Canadian businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, throughout Canada?

13. How can Canadians be assured of universal access to essential services at reasonable cost?

14. What consumer awareness and learning opportunities should be provided to enable Canadians to be effective users of the Information Highway?

15. What opportunities does the Information Highway present to improve government operations?
28 September 1998

Ms Cheryl Buchwald  
Faculty of Information Studies  
University of Toronto  
140 St George Street  
Toronto, ON  
M5S 3G6

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