

Pastoral Power in the Age of Partnership

Health Canada and the Jr. Jays Club

PHILIP RYAN
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION,
CARLETON UNIVERSITY

In the spring of 1994, visitors to McDonald's received a copy of *Jr. Jays Magazine*. On the front cover, Ronald McDonald and various other colonizers of children's fantasy life picnic in front of a rustic McDonald's cottage, beside which stands a hamburger-shaped tank, ready to defend the sacred arches. A blanket is laden with junk food and a space creature arrives with more of the same. The sun is reaching out, trying to grab the space creature's food. The whole of creation is subject to a yearning for fries and a Big Mac.

While the front cover is predictable, the back cover is not: there alongside the golden arches one finds the logo of Health Canada. The booklet is the product of the "Junior Jays Digest and Kids Club," formed by Health Canada to "promote the concepts of a positive, healthy lifestyle" to seven-to-twelve year olds (Community Programs Group, 1994). The promotion of "healthy lifestyles" through the marketing of junk food is rather startling, but it teaches us something about the operation of the state's "pastoral power" in this age of "reinvented" government.

This paper seeks both to explore some of the risks of public-private partnerships, and to present a fruitful way of using Michel Foucault's (1988) concept of pastoral power. The first section will offer a brief overview of that concept, and of social marketing and partnership. After describing the Jr. Jays' message, I will argue that the program was made possible both by the multiple objectives pursued by government social marketing, and by a general orientation towards "stakeholders" and partnership. I will conclude by reviewing some insights suggested by the case.

Pastoral Power, Social Marketing, and Partnership

The Jr. Jays case stands at the intersection of three types of practices: pastoral power, social marketing, and partnership. I will begin with an overview of Foucault's (1988) concept of pastoral power before adding some brief comments on social marketing and partnership. Pastoral power seeks "to constantly ensure, sustain, and improve the lives of each and every one," with the condition that this "development also fosters that of the strength of the state" (Foucault, 1988, pp. 67, 82). The concept is drawn from the Biblical image of the shepherd, and its institutionalized interpretation. Using a recurrent Old Testament metaphor, the Gospel of John presents Jesus as the good shepherd, who knows his sheep and "lays down his life" for them. The Church institutionalized a particular interpretation of the image. To guard the flock required the latter's "absolute obedience," and knowing the flock entailed each person's making herself known to the pastor: the pastor "teaches truth," but must also know the truth of "what occurs in each soul." This pastoral power is individualized, exercised on people "taken one by one" (Foucault, 1994, vol. 3, pp. 562-64). So alongside the "discontinuous" and rather gross power of the pre-modern state, the Church was developing, particularly in its monasteries and convents, a fine-grain control (vol. 4, p. 190; vol. 3, p. 563).

For Foucault (1975), the modern age brings the diffusion of techniques for the formation and control of individuals from monastery and convent to barracks, factory, prison, and school (p. 166ff). Similarly, the confessional practices by which the pastor comes to know each member of the flock "break out" from the confines of religious life, permeating judicial proceedings, prisons, the mass media, etc. (Foucault, 1994, vol. 3, pp. 412-13). The history of the modern state is often portrayed as a slow development of liberalism, in which citizens win recognition of a sphere of private autonomy beyond the reach of the state, and of democracy, in which the state is brought under the control of its citizens. But Foucault shows that the modern state also develops a secular version of pastoral power. We live a paradoxical conjunction between a legal state that recognizes citizen autonomy and "the development of power techniques oriented towards individuals and intended to rule them in a continuous and permanent way" (1988, p. 60).

Four observations are in order here. First, though Foucault (1994, vol. 4) often wrote as if pastoral power is inherently negative, I believe that his writing on pastoral power aims less at an unambiguous condemnation than to remind us that it *is* power. Like power in general, it is neither good nor bad in itself, but "perilous" (p. 694).

Second, pastoral power can reflect a variety of motives. Thrasymachus commented in Plato's *Republic* (1968) that the shepherd's ultimate concern is not the well-being of the sheep, who only exist in order to be eaten (343b). Indeed,

Foucault (1994) noted that the modern state's concern for individual welfare intensified along with the viciousness of warfare (vol. 4, p. 815). Each soldier or potential soldier becomes more valuable as war becomes more intensive. But even if the state established public medical care, for example, to meet the needs of the military or of capitalist industry (Foucault, 1994, vol. 3, p. 18), it must staff medical institutions with people who may care little for the reasons of state to which they owe their jobs. Over time, medical personnel and citizen pressures developed additional tasks for those institutions, tasks quite different from those that led to their creation.

A third observation is that the "frontiers" of pastoral power do not fully overlap with those of the state. On the one hand, the modern state continues to be shaped by other forms of power. The state does not tailor all its actions to the individual: it will continue to formulate laws for citizens in general, and to design economic policy without reference to the welfare of concrete people. On the other hand, pastoral power is also wielded outside the state. Much organization theory, for example, stresses the need for managers to know their workers' inner motivations, to relate to them as unique individuals, and so on.

Fourth and last, various dimensions of pastoral power can be farmed out to different state institutions. Various agencies at all levels of government are responsible for health and safety regulations. Much of the individualized care of the "flock" is in the hands of provincial governments (eg., health care), and even municipal ones (eg., day care). Detailed knowledge of the individual members of the flock can also be decentralized (eg., health and education records), though this distribution of knowledge is by no means fixed.¹

The case examined in this paper touches on one pastoral function in particular: exhortation. The religious pastor encourages the flock on the path to salvation, while the secular pastor exhorts us to look after our health and safety. The Jr. Jays case is thus but one manifestation of pastoral power. It is also one manifestation of "social marketing." Like modern pastoral power, social marketing arises from the transfer of techniques from one context to another. One typical definition sees social marketing as the "introduction of social change using proven marketing skills to change attitudes, not sell products" (Summerfield, 1993). The concept is clear enough, though one caveat is in order: the "attitudes" that a particular instance of social marketing seeks to change are not always apparent in the surface message. When a tobacco company runs an advertisement encouraging teens not to smoke, it is probably safe to assume that the social marketing is seeking to change attitudes, not towards teen smoking, but towards the company itself. Clearly, then, not all social marketing is "pastoral" in character. It can also be used to legitimate private or public institutions, to increase compliance with a particular law, etc.

Finally, the Jr. Jays case is also a manifestation of public-private partnership.

Alti Rodal and Nick Mulder's (1993) definition of partnership is typical: "an arrangement between two or more parties who have agreed to work cooperatively toward shared and/or compatible objectives" (p. 28). Again, a caveat is in order: Herbert Simon (1965) points out that action is usually part of a "means-end chain": we do one thing as a means to another, which is a means to something else. Any particular action "may be a member of more than one means-end chain" (p. 75). In the case of partnership: the objective shared by two partners may itself be a means to quite different ends.² Since the shared objective may not serve those different ends equally well, one should expect attempts to bend the partnership's work in one direction or another. We should thus view partnership as both a cooperative and strategic relation, in which the balance of influence may shift depending on who best plays the partnership game.

Partnerships can take place in a variety of ideological contexts. In recent years, governments have pursued partnerships under the influence of the discourse of "reinventing government." David Osborne and Ted Gaebler's (1992) call to make government more "entrepreneurial" was influential enough for a book "authored" by Al Gore (1993) to refer to the "Osborne-Gaebler-Gore-Clinton approach" (p. x). I will argue below that the discourse of reinvention may have impeded the ability of government actors to play the partnership game prudently.

To summarize: the Jr. Jays program stands at the intersection of pastoral power, social marketing, and partnership, and is a "sub-set" of all three practices.

The Jr. Jays Partnership

Health Canada launched the Jr. Jays program in 1992.³ Once the Toronto Blue Jays baseball club had signed on, Health Canada recruited other major sponsors. By mid-1995, a total of 6.6 million copies of Jr. Jays material had been published, YTV (a television channel aimed at youth) had shown a series of Jr. Jays shows, and the Club claimed over 100,000 members.

The Jr. Jays magazines feature cartoon stories starring "Dr. Jay" and various child characters, developed after "a great deal of research" to represent "grassroots Canadian children from Halifax to Victoria" (Community Programs Group, 1994).⁴ The Jr. Jays publications contain some "positive lifestyle" elements, encouraging for example the use of seat-belts and warning of the dangers of tobacco and beer. But the magazines are first and foremost commercial media, offering advertisers access to children. The advertisers most interested in such access, unsurprisingly, are marketing children's movies, Super Nintendo, YTV, snacks, fast foods, and so on.

In the period under study, the magazines made heavy use of "product placement" advertising, those ads that come "sidling toward us dressed up as non-advertising ... as anything and everything but advertising" (Miller, 1990, p. 43).

One of the characters is named after a chocolate bar. Characters will wear shirts with the Warner Brothers logo; children will exclaim "I gotta put this disk in my **Apple Mac** Computer"; or "Let's go for lunch at McDonald's, Krystal"; or "**Let's play Nintendo on the Big Screen!**"⁵ Dr. Jay, designed as the cartoon's "role model, because of his technical knowledge" (Mietkiewicz, 1994), exclaims "**Wow! This is Great!**" as he tries out a Nintendo Game Boy.

Health Canada declares that it seeks to "promote disease prevention and enhance healthy living for all Canadians" (Health Canada, 1999). The Jr. Jays program undermined that mission. It encouraged, first, "commerciogenic malnutrition," malnutrition caused by marketing (Jelliffe, 1972). In response to my questioning the appropriateness of a partnership with Canada's largest seller of junk food, a Health Canada official insisted that "You *can* go to McDonald's and order a salad and milk," and that, in any case, the latest *Canada Food Guide* holds that there is nothing wrong with eating hamburgers and fries, so long as one's diet is balanced. But the nutritional thrust of the Jr. Jays program did not contribute to such balance: Canadian children are not suffering from a deficit in hamburger and french fry consumption.

The Jr. Jays program's intensive marketing of electronic pastimes also encouraged physical passivity. Indeed, the ubiquity of such advertising in the Jr. Jays magazines suggests the very inconceivability of a lifestyle in which one is not immersed in electronic entertainment: one article refers to a time "before TV, radio, or even electricity. (Imagine. No Nintendo!)."

Apart from its direct impact on physical health, the program had several disturbing implications for broader "lifestyle" issues. It consciously manipulated children's "need to identify and belong" (Community Programs Group, 1994): "Be the first to own the hottest collectible action figures this summer!"; "It seems like everyone is getting in on in-line fun." Like all advertising to children, the program could affect family relations. Marketers are aware of children's capacity to be "very successful naggers" (United States Federal Trade Commission, 1978, p. 17). A recent study focused on three to eight-year-olds claims that "nagging children get their way more often than adults like to admit, inducing between 21 and 40 per cent of all sales of jeans, hamburgers and other products," and that "only 31 per cent of parents are immune" to nagging (Schoolman, 1998). But there is a demonstrated relation between exposure to advertising and the level of parent-child conflict (Ward, 1979; Robertson, 1980; Robertson, Ward & Gatignon, 1989; Goldberg and Gorn, 1978). Finally, though the Jr. Jays magazines at times encouraged non-violent conflict resolution, they also marketed violent movies and television shows. *After* the Canadian Broadcast Standards Council had ordered its member television stations to remove the "Mighty Morphin Power Rangers" show from the air due to its excessive violence (Austen, 1994), the Jr. Jays promoted the Power Rangers.

The Many Objectives of Social Marketing

How did a health ministry come to be involved in the marketing of junk food, virtual violence, and a couch-potato lifestyle? A key part of the explanation is that Canadian government social marketing has always pursued multiple objectives. It is thus easy enough for the specifically pastoral objective to be short-changed.

We can begin the tale with Trudeau's arrival in power, since this marked a take-off point in the government's marketing efforts. One symptom of this: federal government advertising spending rose over seven-fold in real terms from 1968 to the early 1990s, making the government the country's largest single advertiser (Ryan, 1995, p. 279).⁶ In contrast, the federal government in the United States was only the 40th largest advertiser in 1995 (Advertising Age, 1996). The rationale for this intensification of state marketing was provided by the 1969 Task Force on Government Information which declared that "among huge minorities in the western countries, there is a new, profound and wide-spread disaffection with the pretensions of government." This disaffection left many citizens "ripe for the blandishments of a demagogue" (1969, vol. 1, pp. 1-2).

Such a reading of the signs of the times was by no means unique to Canada. It parallels the discourse of "ungovernability," a central element of international neo-conservatism (Offe, 1984). But the "wide-spread disaffection" with government that the Task Force believed to exist also had specifically Canadian dimensions. One, of course, was Quebec nationalism. A second aspect—not unrelated to the first—were the fiscal arrangements that had arisen along with modern pastoral power: citizens were conscious of paying the bulk of their taxes to Ottawa, while the government programs they valued most—education and health care—were delivered by the provincial governments. While politicians generally seek to trumpet the benefits of their policies and hide the costs, Canada's fiscal arrangements left the federal government in precisely the contrary position. Thus for Trudeau the Task Force was a means to the goal of Canadians being "better informed of the work of their Government and the services it renders to them" (Firestone, 1970, p. 2).

The Task Force urged the Canadian government to "acquire the power to speak persuasively and continuously, on many subjects and at many levels of comprehension" (1969, vol.1, p. 1). In particular, it recommended more extensive government advertising for "increasing the understanding of government legislative programmes and policies" and—with an eye to Quebec—to promote "a stronger sense of national identity." The Task Force also pointed to pastoral uses of government advertising such as "warnings on the handling of pesticides, [and] campaigns to improve dietary habits" (1969, vol. 2, pp. 331-3).

The government embraced such recommendations with enthusiasm, and its social marketing grew rapidly. A major component of this marketing effort was state self-promotion, so that "Canadians know the worth of national government," as

one cabinet minister put it (Regan, 1982, p. 39). The government also undertook extensive advertising on themes such as fitness, mental health, alcohol, and nutrition. But the pastoral goals of such campaigns were always wedded to other needs, such as state legitimization, federal government visibility, and national unity. From 1980 on, for example, all government advertisements included the federal government logo, despite evidence that such official symbols can undermine the effectiveness of the ads' surface message (Mehr, 1980; Sutter, 1994). This supported the federal government's efforts to maximize the number of Canadian flags displayed in Quebec in particular. One consequence of the variety of goals pursued was that government marketing generally sought to avoid antagonizing anyone, even at the cost of campaign effectiveness. A campaign on domestic violence, for example, relied on empty slogans like "Violence makes victims of us all but we can make a difference together" (Gessell, 1994).

Social marketing was saddled with an additional task as fiscal problems intensified in the 1980s. Even the Mulroney Conservatives, who claimed fiscal prudence as a defining virtue, were caught between the opposition of business and many Canadians to tax increases, and the demand from most voters not to weaken key social programs such as health care.⁷ One attempted solution was to use social marketing as a substitute for more concrete measures, a strategy that recalls Thomas Carlyle's "Hatter in the Strand of London," who "has not attempted to *make* better hats," but whose "whole industry is turned to *persuade* us that he has made such (Carlyle, 1912). Thus, after it reneged on its promise of a national day care program, the Conservative government launched an expensive advertising campaign stressing "the importance of the quality of relationships between parents and children" (Chiasson, 1987). The strategy was continued by the Chrétien Liberals. Instead of the promised national day care program, Canadians were treated to an advertising campaign urging us to "eat together, talk together, grow together" at breakfast (Messer, 1994), and to fridge magnets on which a balloon-wielding teddy bear, complete with federal government logo on its tummy, is accompanied by the words: "Child Care Programs: Health and Welfare Canada."

To summarize: even when the surface message of the government's social marketing was about nutrition or fitness, that marketing was always about something else as well. Showing the flag, showing that the government cares about the problems that affect us, showing that we should speak of the state in the first-person plural: such goals were always at least as important as specifically pastoral objectives. But this proliferation of goals was not the only root of the Jr. Jays program.

Health Canada and Partnership

As already noted, demands for tax relief, combined with continued public support for most government programs, present contemporary governments with a di-

lemma. This challenge has given great appeal to various promises that we can have our cake and eat it too, such as Reagan's claim that Americans could enjoy tax cuts and lower deficits by eliminating "waste, fraud and abuse" from government, or the analogous claim that "reinventing government" would yield "more performance for less money" (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992, p. 2).

Partnerships have repeatedly been advocated as one means by which government can "do more with less." But partnerships promise another benefit in tough times. Any liberal democratic government faces the task of maintaining democratic legitimacy and support without antagonizing the corporate sector. This becomes more difficult as resources become scarce, and as capital becomes more mobile.

The task of sustaining support from both citizens and business is particularly acute in a ministry such as Health Canada. On the one hand, significant corporate interests are at stake in its decisions regarding drug approvals, food additives, the labeling of genetically modified foods, and so on. On the other hand, most citizens would prefer that the government give their health priority over corporate interests. Thus, if health is to be sacrificed to other objectives, political expediency dictates that the sacrifice be out of the public eye to the extent possible. The task of balancing citizen and corporate pressures thus favours a strategy of "stakeholder" consultation and cooperation. The draft Food Guide, for example, was sent privately to various lobby groups, and some recommendations of Health Canada's nutritional experts were watered down in response to private lobbying ("Food Guide Changed After Complaints, Papers Show," 1993).⁸ This is far more expedient than forcing private interests to make their case in public hearings, where their claims can be countered by government experts and citizen groups.

It is not surprising, then, that Health Canada (1994) lists as one of its partnership objectives "reduced public conflict," and a reduced "need for public dissent." It is argued that partnerships can promote the "involvement of various stakeholders" (Rodal and Mulder, 1993, p. 30), but being open to stakeholders is quite compatible with being closed to the public in general.⁹ "Partnership" can thus be a manifestation of neo-corporatism, a common response to perceived crises of "ungovernability" (Habermas, 1989, p. 61).

Whatever the general objectives guiding an organization's pursuit of partnerships, it must be remembered that partnerships must be negotiated by individuals with particular incentives, perceived pressures, and personal motivations. A key determinant of the effects of such arrangements is the extent to which the official objectives of each organization guide the actual practices of those who represent the organization in its external relations. On the private side of the relation, matters are relatively simple: the organization is structured to pursue profit, and its partnership negotiators will seek to ensure that some plausible connection exists between their work and that central objective. With the Jr. Jays partnership,

private companies found a way to have their messages reach children, and to give their wares the apparent endorsement of Health Canada.

But what guides partnership practice on the public side? Over against the clarity and simplicity of the profit motive, we have: "Health Canada provides national leadership to develop health policy, enforce health regulations, promote disease prevention and enhance healthy living for all Canadians" (Health Canada, 1999). As Herbert Simon (1965) argued, such lofty objectives provide "little guide for action because it is difficult to measure the degree of their attainment, and because it is difficult to measure the effects of concrete actions upon them" (p. xxxvi). Not surprisingly, I have been unable to find any evidence that Health Canada has attempted to evaluate the impact of the Jr. Jays program on its core objectives. Indeed, the only document I received in response to my Access to Information request asking Health Canada for "any evaluations" of the Jr. Jays program was primarily oriented to the concerns of the program's private partners, asking Jr. Jays readers questions such as "What are your 3 most favorite chocolate bars?" and "Have you ever heard of Nestlé Crunch?"

There is a tremendous irony in this: David Osborne and Ted Gaebler (1992) argue that the "entrepreneurial" government they advocate would allow public officials to focus on "outcomes, the *results*," freeing them from a slavish adherence to rules (p. 14). But it is quite easy for one misguided focus to be traded for another, for a practice like partnership to be turned into a new objective to be pursued uncritically, as public managers seek to demonstrate that they are "forward-thinking," not "traditionalists," and so on. Osborne and Gaebler's own rhetoric encourages this. They tend to portray all sources of resistance to their vision as irrational or corrupt, the product of an "outdated mind-set" that can "stifle" us (p. 43), or of a "shortage of trust" (p. 136). They thus evoke one of the recurring themes of modernity: change is good, change is rational, those who oppose change are less than rational, child-like, hobbled by tradition. Public sector managers report pressures to embrace "flavour of the month initiatives" (May, 1997): given the ideological mood fostered by the discourse of reinvention, it is hardly surprising that managers will often bow to these pressures, even against their better judgment.

This helps explain the Jr. Jays case in particular. It is not, after all, obvious that public health objectives can be promoted in partnership with companies seeking access to children for commercial purposes. As James McNeal (1987) notes, "it is uncommon to see children-oriented ads for clothing, books, green beans, school supplies, or personal hygiene products" (p. 72). A United States Federal Trade Commission (FTC) study (1978) is instructive in this regard. The FTC examined television ads for the first nine months of 1975, during weekend daytime hours when a high proportion of viewers are children. Out of about 7,200 ads, nearly 4,000 were for breakfast cereals (generally those with high sugar content),¹⁰ another 1,627 were for candy and gum, and 841 promoted cookies and crackers. On

the other hand, meat, vegetables, cheese, milk, butter, eggs, vegetable juices accounted for just *four* ads between them (p. 56).

It is striking that in 1976 a planned lifestyle-modification campaign to be run in conjunction with private companies never got off the ground, as Canadian officials wanted to avoid getting “into bed with the wrong people” (Dunlop, 1977). Such concerns have since been cast aside, after years of fiscal restraint, pressures to be sensitive to corporate “stakeholders,” and calls for a more “entrepreneurial” approach to government. A common pattern has emerged, in which Health Canada is allied with private interests, sometimes publicly, sometimes not, often in opposition to other sectors of the state, and often pursuing actions that cannot be reconciled with its official mandate. As one Health Canada researcher commented to the Senate committee investigating Health Canada’s handling of the Bovine Growth Hormone approval process: “The department is saying all over the place that the client ... is now the industry and we have to serve the client” (cited in McIlroy, 1998).

Suggestions of the Study

How much can one expect to prove on the basis of a single case study, examining one partnership launched by a minor bureau in a relatively marginal government ministry? But if this paper proves little, I hope that it suggests much. Rather than listing the paper’s “findings,” then, I will note some key points that the story suggests we would do well to keep in mind. I will organize these around three questions:

Why should we be interested in Foucault’s concept of pastoral power?
Did the government intend to encourage children to adopt unhealthy habits, or was this outcome accidental? How should we deal with partnerships?

On pastoral power. Of what use is the concept of pastoral power? It appears to designate many of the same phenomena as “welfare state,” so should we not be content with the latter, more familiar concept? One can use most concepts in a wide variety of ways, but some concepts may lend themselves more than others to fruitful insights, or on the contrary to serious errors. “Welfare state” evokes a particular “type” of state, one that emerges at a certain point in history, perhaps with certain sub-types, perhaps giving way eventually to some other type. The danger is of misplaced concreteness: one cannot say that a particular state simply *is* a welfare state. The modern state is simultaneously a welfare state, capitalist state, democratic state, and so on. Each of these concepts highlights particular state practices and objectives, and should not be reified. As Foucault (1988) repeatedly insisted

that power is a relation rather than a thing, “pastoral power” lends itself less easily to reification. Pastoral power can be exercised by the state, but it is only one type of power running through the state. The concept thus reminds us that the state is traversed by a variety of forms of power, and simultaneously pursues many objectives, which are never fully compatible with one another. One arm of the state urges us not to smoke and to drink less, another works to develop tobacco with higher nicotine content (Rinaldo, 1997), and a third sets a minimum alcohol content for Canadian whisky (MacKinnon, 2001).

The concept of pastoral power also draws our attention to the power dimension of “welfare” relations. The analogy with ecclesial pastoral practices reminds us that even the most “humane” state practices can be accompanied by authoritarianism, an erosion of personal autonomy and privacy, and a desire to mould individuals to a “norm.”

Accident or design? One can always provoke a lively debate by asking whether a particular social phenomenon came about deliberately or as the unforeseen result of a multitude of factors. Foucault’s own work seems to send us madly off in both directions in this respect. On the one hand, Foucault (1994) stressed the plurality and contradictions of power. Complex, mobile, and reversible power relations exist between man and woman, parent and child, and so on, giving rise to innumerable “micro-struggles,” and ensuring that there are no “completely triumphant” powers relations (vol. 3, pp. 406-07). Yet the same Foucault painted a world in which all manner of phenomena served the cause of domination. Prisons have not failed, they on the contrary produce a “useful criminal, useful for the system” (vol. 3, p. 393). The education system is designed to “keep a certain social class in power” (vol. 2, p. 496). There was a “veritable policy of organized alcoholism” in French working-class milieux (vol. 4, p. 380).

Foucault (1994) thus appears as both a philosopher of fluid “micro-power” and as a hyper-functionalist, portraying a grim world in which there is “no grain of sand in the machine” (vol. 3, p. 395). But there is a way of reading Foucault that reconciles the surface contradiction between fluidity and functionalism. A project may be launched for a certain purpose, and utterly fail in relation to that purpose. Yet it may turn out to have unforeseen consequences deemed useful by those who control the project, and may thus be continued, despite its surface “failure” (vol. 4, p. 639). Thus Foucault (1975) argued that the modern prison had never fulfilled its promise to rehabilitate, yet had turned out to serve the objective of social order in various ways, for example by destroying the romance of criminality (p. 323). Accident or design? Both: the project’s original outcome was accidental, the preservation of that project and its outcome was intended.

I believe that the Jr. Jays case should be understood in this fashion. I do not believe that a department that—when all is said and done—does exhort Canadians to live healthy lives, consciously intended to encourage children to do the opposite.

But officials were encouraged to be entrepreneurial and partnership-oriented, and sensitive to “stakeholders.” When this unexpectedly led to a situation that threatened the official objectives of the department, individual officials had to muddle through, guided by their reading of various implicit signals from above. And if the end product did not promote health, it did serve other purposes: it exposed children, even in Quebec, to more Canadian flags, and it further encouraged corporations to view Health Canada as their friend and partner.

On partnerships. As with power, we should view partnerships as neither good nor bad in general, but as perilous. As with most dangers, one’s first protection is to identify them. Such identification has been impeded by a discourse that emphasises the cooperative dimension of partnerships and ignores their strategic aspect. One typical advocate writes that “an effective partnership requires that all parties have a common focus on and commitment to the ultimate objective of the arrangement” (Armstrong, 1992, p. 21). But this is precisely what “all parties” never have, and to play the partnership game well one must identify the private goals of one’s partners.

This counsel applies to the officials directly involved in partnerships. What about the rest of us? The first line of defence is to increase the transparency of government departments and their partnerships. The resulting “publicness” (Kant, 1991, p. 126) will intrude upon the calculations of departments that have drifted from their official mandate, encouraging the termination of partnerships that are not faithful to that mandate and greater prudence in entering into new partnerships.¹¹ We can say of public-private partnerships what Foucault (1994) said of prisons: they are “one of the hidden regions of our social system,” and “We have the right to know” what goes on inside them (vol. 2, p. 175).

The author thanks two anonymous reviewers for their constructive criticism and their open-mindedness.

Phil Ryan is Associate Professor in the School of Public Policy and Administration of Carleton University. He stumbled across the Health Canada Jr. Jays Program by reading a McDonald’s tray liner as his two-year-old devoured a Happy Meal.

Notes

1. The Ontario government, for one, has given itself the right to centralize detailed information on individual patients (Walters, 2001; Teshier, 1996).
2. Richard Steckel and Robin Simons (1992), enthusiastic proponents of partnerships, offer a useful overview of the purposes these can serve for corporations .
3. Background on the program is drawn from Health Promotion Directorate (1994) and Community Programs Group (1994; 1995).

4. The following content summary covers Jr. Jays publications issued between spring 1993 and summer 1995. The publications were examined in the offices of Health Canada, on July 17, 1995, in response to an Access to Information request.

In the year after an earlier article I wrote on the program (Ryan, 1998), the Jr. Jays magazine was replaced by “The Magazine Not For Adults.” This magazine has less Health Canada involvement. In the Winter 1999 issue, for example, just two out of eighty pages are supplied by Health Canada. One page counsels children to wear appropriate equipment for winter sports. The other urges them to “check out these cool [web] sites,” the sites in question being devoted to Pokémon, Ebay, Teletoon, and Hockey Night in Canada.

The magazine web site’s short history of its publisher, the Community Programs Group, makes no mention of the Jr. Jays (www.themagazine.ca). Despite certain elements of continuity between the Jr. Jays magazine and “The Magazine Not For Adults,” then, I will speak of the Jr. Jays program in the past tense.
5. All emphases in original. The bold face appears to signal a hierarchy of sponsorship. Thus, “I could really go for a **McDonald’s Hamburger** right now” earns the reply “and I’d love some Eggo Waffles,” without emphasis.
6. Marketing is a broader concept than advertising. Indeed in some definitions marketing “encompasses the entire business” (Baker, 1991, p. 4). The very breadth of the concept makes it well nigh impossible to measure the resources devoted to it, hence the use here of advertising spending as a proxy.
7. A confidential 1990 poll showed that respondents: (i) were concerned by the size of the government deficit; (ii) did not want higher taxes; (iii) wanted spending increases in almost every area of government activity. Less than ten per cent supported the proposition that the deficit should be reduced by cutting transfers to the provinces for health and education (Decima Research, 1990).
8. “Private,” of course, is always a matter of more or less. Some aspects of the government’s relation to “stakeholders” may be unveiled by journalists or through Access to Information requests. Thus, in response to my Access to Information request for “any submissions related to the preparation and initial drafts of the latest *Canada’s Food Guide*” from any company “with which Health Canada is or has been involved in partnerships,” I received submissions to Health Canada from: Dairy Farmers of Canada, Monarch Fine Foods, Brewers Association of Canada, Dairy Bureau of Canada, Kellogg Canada, Kraft, and Nestlé. Armed with these lobbying documents and the final food guide, one can see for example that, after Nestlé commented that “the advice given to consume no more than four cups of coffee per day has been challenged by University of Toronto experts,” the Food Guide recommendation was changed to the less precise “Caffeine: Use in moderation.” Nevertheless, the diffusion of this information to a single researcher does not constrain Health Canada and its partners to the same degree as public hearings.
9. The Auditor General (1999) notes, for example, that “The provisions of the Access to Information Act that apply to the federal government may not extend to partnering organizations, limiting the information made available unless the arrangement specifically addresses the issue” (p. 5.86).

10. The study notes that “the sugar content of the most advertised cereal was 40.7 per cent, and very few low sugar cereals were advertised to children at all” (United States Federal Trade Commission, 1978, pp. 48-49).
11. Greater transparency would involve limits upon the privacy rights of partners. The Auditor General (1999) comments: “The principles supporting the intent of the Access to Information Act need to be recognized in setting up a collaborative arrangement. The responsible parties are pursuing a public purpose and therefore have a responsibility to be as open as possible about their decisions and actions” (p. 5.90).

References

- Advertising Age. (1996, September 30). 100 leaders by U.S. advertising spending. *Advertising Age*, S4.
- Armstrong, J. (1992). Innovation in public management: towards partnerships. *Optimum* 23 (1): 17-25.
- Auditor General of Canada. (1999). 1999 *Report of the auditor general of Canada*. Retrieved April 5, 2000: <http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/domino/reports.nsf/html/9905ce.html>
- Austen, I. (1994, Nov. 3). Rangers should be cut by all, CRTC says. *The Ottawa Citizen*, F7.
- Baker, M. (1991). *Marketing*. 5th ed. London: Macmillan.
- Carlyle, T. (1912). *Past and present*. London: J. M. Dent.
- Chiasson, G. (1987, June 1). Epp's anti-drug plan is an agency bonanza. *Marketing*, 1.
- Community Programs Group. (1994). *Jr. Jays Magazine and Kids Club: The background*. Toronto: Mimeographed.
- Community Programs Group. (1995, July 5). *Memorandum*. Toronto: Mimeographed.
- DecimaResearch. (1990). Decimanationwide survey: September 1990. n.p.: Mimeographed.
- Dunlop, J. (1977, February 14). The drawback of success. *Marketing*, 4.
- Firestone, O. J. (1970). *The public persuader: Government advertising*. Toronto: Methuen.
- Food guide changed after complaints, papers show. (1993, January 15). *Toronto Star*, A2.
- Foucault, M. (1975). *Surveiller et punir*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Foucault, M. (1988). *Politics, philosophy, culture: Interviews and other writings, 1977-1984*. Lawrence Kritzman (Ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1994). *Dits et écrits, 1954-1988*. 4 vols. Paris: Gallimard.
- Gessell, P. (1994, April 20). Anti-violence ads shield broadcasters from criticism. *Ottawa Citizen*, B5.
- Goldberg, M. and Gorn, G. (1978). Some unintended consequences of TV advertising to children. *Journal of Consumer Research* 5, 1, 22-29.
- Gore, A. (1993). *Creating a government that works better and costs less*. New York: Plume.
- Habermas, J. (1989). *The new conservatism*. Trans. S. Weber NicholSEN. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Health Canada. (1994). *Policy on partnerships*. Ottawa: Mimeographed.
- Health Canada. (1999). About Health Canada. Retrieved April 27, 2000: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/about.htm>

- Health Promotion Directorate [Health Canada]. (1994). *The Toronto Blue Jays Junior Jays Digest and kids club*. Ottawa: Mimeographed.
- Jelliffe, D.B. (1972). Commercogenic malnutrition? *Nutrition Reviews* 30, 199-205. Kant, I. (1991). *Political writings*. Ed. Hans Reiss. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- MacKinnon, M. (2001, January 15). To be called Canadian whisky, it has to pack a punch. *Globe and Mail*, A5.
- May, K. (1997, November 11). PS leaders put politics before public interest, report says. *Ottawa Citizen*, A3.
- McIlroy, A. (1998, November 18). Safety's tarnished stamp of approval. *Globe and Mail*, A1, A10.
- McNeal, J. (1987). *Children as consumers: Insights and implications*. Lexington: D.C. Heath.
- Mehr, M. (1980, May 17). Ottawa's media overlord will cut costs. *Financial Post*, 19. Messer, T. (1994, June 6). Kellogg and Health Canada promote breakfast time as family time. *Marketing*, 2.
- Mietkiewicz, H. (1994, May 22). Jr. Jays go big league. *Toronto Star*, F12.
- Miller, M. C. (1990, April). Hollywood: The ad. *The Atlantic Monthly*, 41-68.
- Offe, C. (1984). *Contradictions of the welfare state*. London: Hutchinson.
- Osborne, D. and Gaebler, T. (1992). *Reinventing government*. Reading: Addison-Wesley.
- Plato. (1968). *The republic*. Trans. A. Bloom. New York: Basic Books.
- Regan, G. (1982). A statement of the federal government's position. In D. McDowall (Ed.). *Advocacy Advertising: Propaganda or Democratic Right?*, Ottawa: Conference Board of Canada, pp. 37-42.
- Rinaldo, S. (1997, March 16). How Ottawa is breeding more potent tobacco : A CTV inquiry. CTV National News. Retrieved from WebSPIRS database (Canadian NewsDisc, CD-ROM, 2000 release).
- Robertson, T. (1980). Television advertising and parent-child relations. In R. Adler, G. Lesser, L. K. Meringoff, T. Robertson, J. Rossiter & S. Ward (Eds.). *The effects of television advertising on children: Review and recommendations* (pp. 195-212). Lexington: D.C. Heath.
- Robertson, T., Ward, S., Gatignon, H. (1989). Advertising and children: A cross-cultural study. *Communication Research* 16, (4), 459-85.
- Rodal, A. and Mulder, N. (1993). Partnerships, devolution and power-sharing: Issues and implications for management. *Optimum* 24, (3), 27-48. Ryan, P. (1995). Of miniature Mila and flying geese: Government advertising and Canadian democracy. In Susan Phillips (Ed.). *How Ottawa spends: Mid-life crises* (pp. 263-86). Ottawa: Carleton University Press.
- Ryan, P. (1998, July/August). Subverting government business. *The Canadian Forum* 77, 14-19.
- Schoolman, J. (1998, August 24). "Nag factor" plays role in what parents buy. *Toronto Star*, E3.
- Simon, H. (1965). *Administrative behavior*. 2nd ed. New York: Free Press. Steckel, R, and Simons, R. (1992). *Doing best by doing good*. New York: Dutton.
- Summerfield, P. (1993, July 27). Allying for the public good. *Strategy*, 10. Sutter, Stan. (1994, March 21). A lot of smoke and mirrors. *Marketing*, 8.

- Task Force on Government Information. (1969). *To know and be known*. 2 vols. Ottawa: Queen's Printer.
- Teshier, E. (1996, January 12). Delay this bill—we deserve better. *The Toronto Star*, A2.
- United States Federal Trade Commission. (1978). *Staff report on television advertising to children*. Washington: Mimeographed.
- Walters, J. (2001, July 9). Health care database spurs privacy fears. *Toronto Star*, A4.
- Ward, S. (1979). Researchers look at the “kid vid” rule: Overview of session. *Advances in Consumer Research* 6, 7-12.