

# Vancouver Centre of Excellence



## Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis

Commentary Series

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**RIIM Summary of Activities: 2000-2001  
Knowledge Breakthroughs, New Partnerships and Renewal**

**Don J. DeVoretz  
Co-Director RIIM**

**20 March 2001**

## RIIM

### Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis

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Views expressed in this manuscript are those of the author(s) alone. For more information, contact the Co-directors of the Centre, Dr. Don DeVoretz, Department of Economics, SFU (e-mail: [devoretz@sfu.ca](mailto:devoretz@sfu.ca)) or Dr. David Ley, Department of Geography, UBC (e-mail: [dley@geog.ubc.ca](mailto:dley@geog.ubc.ca)).

**RIIM Summary of Activities: 2000-2001**  
**Knowledge Breakthroughs, New Partnerships and Renewal**

by

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March 2001

**Introduction:**

The themes of the 2000-2001 RIIM summary of activities are renewal, knowledge breakthroughs and new international partnerships. We will explore these themes in a summary fashion in the introductory section of this report to provide perspective to RIIM's many activities for the fiscal year 2000-2001.

The second half of this report will report in detail on the research activities of each of RIIM's four domains, the training of graduate students, and RIIM's outreach activities to the policy, research, and immigrant communities as well as the general Canadian public. Finally, I will summarize the areas of strength and suggest policies to improve the limited weaknesses found in RIIM.

*Renewal*

The Metropolis mandate and therefore RIIM's original mandate was for six years, covering the period 1996-2002. At the end of fiscal year 1999-2000 a tripartite discussion began on the feasibility of seeking the renewal beyond 2002 for the four centres which constitute Metropolis. The three main partners in the renewal process were the Metropolis Secretariat, the four research centres including RIIM and our nine federal partners. A process to petition for renewal was set in place which outlined a specific strategy. First, renewal by RIIM's two major financial and intellectual partners, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) was to be sought.

To meet this initial goal in the renewal process, two critical meetings, which RIIM played a key role in, were held before approaching these two key partners. In June 2000 a meeting was convened in Edmonton by the four centres and the Metropolis Secretariat to outline both the financial requirements and changing visions under a presumed four – six year renewal period. Significant specific recommendations or conditions for renewal emerged. Both the Prairie Centre and RIIM strongly argued that their centres were under funded in two key areas, domain leader compensation and administrative overhead, which had to be addressed before a successful renewal could be contemplated.

This June meeting also brought forward a series of new ideas to correct strategic weaknesses in the original Metropolis research structure and to address new and emerging research questions. RIIM in conjunction with the Montreal centre identified a general lack of Pan Canadian research themes, which in turn all four centres felt had to be addressed in 2002 and beyond. RIIM and the Montreal centre agreed to initiate some experiments in fiscal 2000-2002 to both test the feasibility of these Pan Canadian initiatives and to signal the sincerity of the four centres to carry forward vigorously in a Pan Canadian framework in any renewal period. The suggested three initiatives are: a Pan Canadian graduate internship program, a Pan-Canadian lecture series and block funding for Pan-Canadian large research efforts. I briefly outline the purpose of each program below and the presumed gap that is filled by the particular program.

The internship program would allow graduate students at the thesis writing stage to work at one of the other centres with a renowned scholar in their field. Initially, the exchange of graduate students was to be made between the Montreal centre and any other centre to facilitate the Pan Canadian aspect of the proposal. It should be noted that this program is underway with RIIM and the Montreal centre allocating funds and making a call for candidates in 2000-2001.

The intent of the second initiative, or the Pan Canadian Lecture series, was to have RIIM organize guest lectures in each of the Metropolis centres. Each city would provide a host institution, provide private funding and help decide on an immigration issue related to the city. To date two lectures have been given with another planned.

Finally, given that most research is city centered, bloc multi-year funding was suggested in the renewal period to foster Pan Canadian research. The core of the concept is to set aside a significant amount of money, perhaps \$250,000 to allow a team of researchers from two or more centres to conduct a Canada wide immigration theme over the four years of renewal. Suggested Pan Canadian themes included FSL or ESL second language acquisition across Canada, the brain drain, the efficacy of the “points system,” and initiatives to support greater regional diversity of immigrant settlement patterns.

The June meeting concluded with a summary letter (see Appendix A) drafted by the four centres to meet these concerns. This letter was, then forwarded to SSHRC in September 2000 prior to their October 2000 board of Governors meetings, which considered Metropolis’ renewal.

In sum, all this effort has culminated in for renewal by RIIM’s two main partners, Social Science and Humanities Research Council and Immigration and Citizenship.

### *Research Breakthroughs*

On August 24, 2000, RIIM along with other Metropolis centre, met at the invitation of the Metropolis Evaluation Committee to consider renewal. The four centres met to discuss a number of critical issues such as objectives and benefits of the Centres, governance of the Metropolis Project, and lessons learned. The centres reiterated the positions outlined in the attached letter in Appendix A and produced at the request of the Social Science and Humanities Research Council representative a research breakthrough statement for each centre. RIIM’s statement is attached in Appendix B and reflects the major outcomes both in fiscal 2000-01 and more critically the cumulative effect of four years of consistent policy-related research output. I summarize these breakthrough findings to simply highlight a few areas of excellence and to again place the RIIM research effort into a wider perspective.

The breakthroughs for the Housing and neighborhood domain were in the following areas:

- It was found that in the late 1980s, suburbs became the principal destination for new immigrants, a substantial shift from earlier periods. As a result, suburbs in Canada’s largest metropolitan centres are now as culturally diverse as inner city neighborhoods, a fact that has major implications for our understanding of contemporary urban society, and how we plan transportation systems, set zoning parameters, and deliver services.
- A research project on the land investments of Overseas Chinese entrepreneurs in Vancouver has illuminated the circuits of capital that connect the two sides of the Pacific Rim.
- RIIM researchers identified the barriers presented by the socio-economic circumstances of business immigrants in their neighborhood setting. This work identified the problems faced by business immigrants as they try to adapt practices learned in their pre-migration cultural/regulatory environment to a radically different one in Canada.

In the economics domain the following breakthroughs were achieved:

- RIIM scholars were the first in Canada to identify the “brain drain” in its newest trilateral form.
- RIIM studies also were the first in the world to both identify and measure the universal economic importance of immigrant official second language acquisition across a variety of immigrant-receiving countries (Canada, Germany, Norway, United States).
- A RIIM-developed general equilibrium model will measure the economic impact of various numbers and types of immigrant arrivals to Vancouver over a ten-year time horizon. This model predicts changes in commodity prices (housing, food, health, transportation), wages, employment rates, taxes and the use of public services.

Social domain breakthroughs included:

- A comprehensive study has shown that the debate over an urban immigrant underclass—so prevalent in the US and many European countries—is largely irrelevant in Canada.
- Studies concerning the management of immigrant health and illness, and access to health care, have gone beyond traditional interpretations based on difficulties in cross-cultural communication and differing conceptions of health and illness, to show that these are basic issues of social and political entitlement.
- The effect of funding cuts on multicultural service organizations has led RIIM researchers to conclude from their studies that these organizations have adjusted by ‘returning to their roots,’ with their early advocacy roles thus changing the political landscape of immigration politics.

Finally the education domain had two breakthroughs:

- The study of children of immigrant families enrolled in French Immersion programs reveals the central role of parental values and language practices in shaping their children’s perceptions of language learning and multilingualism.
- Research in two projects has illuminated important relationships between culture, language, and education. An extensive study of a Punjabi Sikh school found that, in comparison to documented racism experienced in public schools, this cultural/religious-specific setting offers children opportunities for learning English without compromising their cultural/ linguistic/or religious identities. Further, in contrast to the isolation hypothesis, their families maintain economic and social connections to the wider non-Punjabi community

*International Partnerships: Australia, China and Germany*

The year 2000-2001 also saw RIIM consolidate international partnerships in Germany, Australia and China. In the case of China, the ultimate outcome of several RIIM activities in 2000-01 was the signing of a RIIM-SFU agreement with the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences (SASS) during the Team Canada tour of China in February 2001. The purpose of this agreement is to formalize the exchange of students and scholars at the two institutions to study immigration and other issues. To facilitate this scholarly exchange, two SASS-RIIM conferences were planned.

The first session was a roundtable in June 2000 in Shanghai, which explored common immigration issues in the Canadian-China context. Two specific outputs appeared as a consequence of this roundtable. A second RIIM-SASS conference is planned to discuss specific issues (globalization and the brain drain) of mutual concern to both China and Canada for May 2001 in Vancouver. In addition, RIIM will sponsor a Chinese scholar, Dr. Li Minghuan, for May-September 2001. She will continue her comparative work on the challenges faced by Fujian refugees who settle in Canada's cities.

The Chinese-RIIM partnership was extended to the Hong Kong or the SAR of China. At the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology a study of the brain exchange on a tri-regional basis (Hong Kong, China and North America) has begun using the research facilities at RIIM, SASS and HKUST over the next two years. In order to meet the research needs of these Chinese partnerships RIIM has collaborated at length and received financial support from the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada. In addition, RIIM has secured the research talents of a former SASS officer and several Chinese speaking graduate students at SFU.

RIIM's partnership with the German research institute IZA flourished during the 2000-2001 research period with several visits by RIIM researchers to IZA concentrating on comparative research on the immigrant labour market and second language acquisition in both countries. RIIM and IZA researchers are actively involved in the planning or implementation stage of the linguistic requirements for Germany's Citizenship Act of 2000. This language-based work will continue during the 2001-02 research period.

In sum, the themes of renewal, research milestones and international outreach formed the overarching accomplishments of the RIIM researchers in 2000-01 period. I next turn to the individual research activities, which underlie these broader-based accomplishments and form the foundation for successful renewal.

**Research Domains:**

*Household and Neighborhoods*

This domain was extremely productive this fiscal year initiating a series of special projects, producing derivative work from previously funded research, whilst maintaining its research schedule from the original RFP. I briefly review these successes below.

Dan Heibert was very productive participating in two joint projects and one freestanding effort. His solo effort—a Community Studies survey—concentrated on developing its survey instrument. Further, a data analysis project in conjunction with D. Ley produced 3 research papers (2 referred) and 2 conference papers, one at the Association of American Geographers under the general research topic entitled Housing and Neighborhood data analysis. This latter project employed both

masters and postdoctoral students. The final Hiebert project in conjunction with Creese was a community-based study of east Vancouver. This project produced 3 RIIM working papers (1 by Winders and 2 by Heibert) and two additional pieces by Heibert in a journal and book. Two MA students were additionally employed and seminars were presented in Vancouver, Warwick and Leeds by Heibert.

D. Ley's project on business immigration to Vancouver's west side was equally prolific producing 9 seminars, 5 conference presentations and three RIIM working papers. Three additional publications appeared in 2 journals and a book. It is important to note the diversity of this team which produced this output with a substantial number of co-authors (Murphy, Tutchner) and in addition several stand alone authors (Ley, Waters twice and Rose). Finally, two Ph.D. dissertations are being supported by this project as well as two MA theses. In sum, this project is an excellent example of RIIM's ability to engage graduate students and researchers outside the main partner Universities.

Several more focussed projects, unusually initiated by one researcher contributed to the strong performance of this domain. I note these briefly below *ad seriatim*.

David Edgington's project on Multiculturalism and Local Government resulted in two paper presentations at the Per Wall Institute and the 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference. In addition a joint publication on Urban Governance is in press.

Noel Dyck's project on Amateur Sport and Immigration Integration is in the data-gathering stage with preliminary results reported at the Social Anthropology Meeting in Poland and the 5<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference.

The Dyck-McLaren study on immigration integration in the northeast Vancouver suburbs is also at the data-gathering stage with two master's students employed.

Gillian Creese's study on East Vancouver has advanced to the writing stage with one RIIM working series paper and two workshop presentations in Toronto and Vancouver. Two graduate students were employed in the interviewing segment of the project.

Geraldine Pratt's work in Surrey, England has resulted in several publications in the RIIM series, book chapter and an additional paper published by the University of Reading in its occasional paper series. One Ph.D student conducted in-depth interviews, which contributed to this student's thesis. In addition, several workshop presentations were made by Pratt in Reading, Glasgow, and Edinburgh and at the Association of American Geographers meeting in New York.

David Lai continued his work on suburban Chinatowns with a series of seminars in Shanghai, Toronto, and Taiwan as well as a series of presentations at the University of Victoria in 2000-001.

Margaret Walton-Roberts a Ph.d. candidate received an independent grant from RIIM in 2000-01 (first of its kind) on transnational flows between Vancouver and the Punjab to support her graduate thesis. This work resulted in a presentation at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference.

Alison Mountz, also a graduate student at UBC, continued her work on her dissertation on Narratives of Border Management, which resulted in two presentations at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference and the Association of American Geographers.

Helen Allen's work on citizen sponsorship of refugees is at the data-gathering stage and employs two masters' level students resulting in a presentation at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference on the literature review in this area.

Deidre McKay and L. Alcitias-Imperial, whilst working on Filipina identities, produced 3 related publications (in press). This impressive total of co-related work will be complemented by a RIIM working paper on the actual project in the next fiscal year.

Finally, K. Olds produced a book based on his 1996 RIIM grant in this fiscal year as well as presenting the contents of that book at the 5<sup>th</sup> International metropolis conference.

In sum, the Housing and Neighborhood domain had an outstanding year, well on-target with a good inventory of work still in progress.

### *Economics*

In the economics domain, the major research effort focussed on the continued construction of an empirical model to measure the public and private economic impact of the arrival of a large number of immigrants to Vancouver. The impact model for the public sector (taxes and expenditures) was completed in fiscal year 1999–2000 and in this year the domain focussed on the impact of immigrant arrivals in the private retail expenditure sector. Food, housing, transportation, personal and health care expenditures were identified as key retail sectors to investigate in 2000-2001. Each sector was assigned a graduate student at the thesis-writing stage. Thus, four graduate students researched these areas throughout 2000-01 resulting in two complete MA thesis projects and four RIIM working papers. In total 60 per cent of the retail sector analysis was completed in 2000-2001 with the remaining sectors to be completed in 2001-02. The team consisted of principal investigator: DeVoretz; student researchers, Christiane Werner, Galina Didukh, Sharokh Shahabi-Azad and Lin Wang.

Arthur Sweetman (Queens) had an active research period in several dimensions. He continued to revise his work on immigrant earnings and age of arrival for a journal (CJE) submission while writing a RIIM-related paper on immigrants and Employment Insurance. Arthur also continues to do further work using the TIMSS data set to look at educational outcomes of immigrant children. This work employed two graduate students: Desmond Sackey, Carleton University, and Phoebe Shair, Queen's University. Arthur also participated in a Metropolis events; the conversation series and the Canada/UK colloquium on immigration issues organized by the Metropolis and IPPR.

Dominique Gross (I.L.O.) and Nicolas Schmitt continue their association with RIIM by producing a theoretical paper on herding instincts of immigrants. This paper was presented at a seminar at IZA- a RIIM partner in Germany and resulted in a RIIM working paper.

Carl Mosk's (UVIC) research activities centered on his comparison of the social and demographic integration of the Japanese in Seattle and Vancouver. This is a unique study for RIIM since it is the only study to explicitly investigate a Canadian-USA question of integration. Carl's output on this project has ranged from a RIIM working paper entitled "Asian Immigrants to the Pacific Northwest: Canadian and American Experiences Compared" to participation at a related conference. He continues his work with the aid of one graduate student in 2001-02.

Don DeVoretz (SFU) was engaged in a variety of research tasks. First he oversaw the completion of the five aforementioned expenditure-related studies on health and personal care, food, transportation and the housing and household operations. All these studies were all presented in RIIM's economic

workshop under his direction. In addition, the health care study (by G. Didukh) was presented at the Metropolis Graduate Colloquium (5<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference).

Don DeVoretz has also investigated the “Brain Exchange” problem from the point of view of what holds highly educated Canadians in Canada. This study has resulted in one RIIM paper, a forthcoming piece in Policy Options and a journal article under review. In addition, this paper has been presented at St. Mary’s University (Halifax), University of Illinois, Carleton University (Ottawa), Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (SAR, China), IZA (Germany), and at an inter-ministerial seminar hosted by Industry Canada. A broader study on the “brain exchange” between Hong-Kong/China, Canada and the USA was also initiated with the SFU/RIIM agreement with SASS. This is at the data-collection stage.

Next, Christiane Werner and Don DeVoretz completed two language-economics studies published by both RIIM and IZA. The first paper presents a theoretical model of the economic incentives for second language acquisition and was presented at an IZA workshop. The second major piece (with Holger Hinte of IZA) is a comparative study of immigrant second language acquisition in Canada and Germany. This latter study will form the basis of the IZA submission to the June, 2001 German government-sponsored hearings on language legislation. As part of this language-based series of studies, Dr. Diane Coulombe produced a research piece derived from her Ph.D. thesis on French second language acquisition by allophone immigrants attending SFU. This paper was presented at a RIIM workshop and is a forthcoming working paper.

J. Atsu Amegashie, a current Ph.D. student, and John Hayfron, post-doctoral fellow, conducted a seminar and produced a theoretical paper on Canadian perceptions of immigrant economic performance. This is the first paper in a series of theoretical constructs to be initiated by the empirical heavy economics domain unit. It is currently under revision for submission to an academic journal.

Finally, two special research series were produced by the Economics domain. Five background papers were produced as a product of the Immigration Roundtable in Shanghai China and four more papers were produced by the 5<sup>th</sup> International Conferences workshop on temporary migration. The latter papers form a special series in the RIIM working paper series. Both these projects were initiated by DeVoretz.

### *Education*

The education domain remains productive with several continuing projects emerging from the education domain and with new cross-disciplinary studies appearing in 2000-2001. This cross-disciplinary research arose as economists entered the education domain as planned in this fiscal year. First, Don DeVoretz and Chieko Tanimura conducted a research project on economic and linguistic conditioners, which fashion the educational attainment of immigrants. A unique feature of this study is the construction of a linguistic distance variable to test if the immigrant’s home country language helps or hinders the immigrant’s educational attainment after arrival in Canada. In a separate cross over study Arthur Sweetman also an economist continued his work on TIMSS data to look at educational outcomes of immigrant children.

Finally, two renowned economists, Barry Chiswick in collaboration with Paul Miller, produced two RIIM working papers on language acquisition and immigrant earnings under the educational domain. These papers are currently out to review. In addition, while visiting as an SFU foreign scholar, Dr. Chiswick presented a paper during the summer in the RIIM “brown bag series” and worked extensively with Chieko Tanimura on her project of language and educational attainment.

More mainstream members of the educational domain were also productive. Diane Dagenais pursued her project, “Cultural values regarding language and literacy education among immigrant families” in 2000-2001. She and her graduate student co-author, Marianne Jaquet produced two papers during this period, one published and a second under review. In addition, they presented a third paper on this topic at the MERF forum in Alberta in May 2000. Finally a book chapter is in preparation for July 2001 which caps this outstanding output.

Kelleen Toohey (RIIM) and Tracey Derwing (Prairie Centre) continued their research project on ESL high school completion rates which complements the earlier reported work of DeVoretz and Tanimura. One Ph.D. graduate student was employed at the data-gathering stage in this project. In addition, Toohey produced two peer reviewed published papers from last year’s grant and presented a paper at 5<sup>th</sup> international Metropolis conference.

June Beynon’s Minority teacher project was extremely active. Three journal articles were produced, 2 accepted and one under submission during the period 2000-01. In addition, 3 graduate students—2 Ph.Ds and 1 Masters— either used their research efforts as a basis for their thesis (Hirji) or were co-authors in the aforementioned journal articles. In the oral traditional, Beynon’s team was also very active, including one presentation at the Metropolis National Conference and two at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference. Finally, a separate project on Minority teacher recredentialling was initiated. It has obtained ethical approval and is at the data- gathering and interviewing stage.

In sum, education continues to produce fine mainstream work, which complements its growing multi-disciplinary efforts.

#### *Social Infrastructure*

Parin Dossa’s mental health project investigated two Vancouver communities, Iranian and Afghani, during the 2000-01 period. The results of this research were presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference, at a graduate seminar at SFU in sociology department and at a Women’s Studies conference in Vancouver. A RIIM working paper is currently being produced.

A traditional healing research project engaging a team of researchers( Paranjpe, Dyck , Chiu and Dossa) is at the data-gathering stage and employs 4 undergraduates. The preliminary reports on this project has been presented in two venues (UBC and 5<sup>th</sup> International Metropolis Conference).

Data-gathering and the preliminary analysis of the project Women, Children and Schools have been completed by McLaren and Dyck. This project employed two MA graduate students and produced one conference paper presented at the Association of American Geographers.

In sum, limited but interesting efforts were produced by this domain.

#### *Administrative infrastructure*

The internal administrative structure is characterized by a smoothly running operation in its fifth year of existence. The two able project managers, Linda Sheldon (SFU-full-time) and Priscilla Wei (UBC part-time) insured the timely submissions for renewal, well-planned board meetings along with the skillful handling of RIIM visitors. The first full year of UBC as lead institution has proved efficient with none of the backlogs characterized under the SFU leadership regime. The administration of the research domains was largely effective with some strong independent activity by some domain leaders. Examples of successful domain initiatives are the Sydney-Vancouver project (Housing

domain) and the Shanghai (SASS)-RIIM conference and subsequent exchange agreement. However, it must be noted that these initiatives, while progressive, are done in isolation and reflect the need for more collaborative efforts across domains in the future. The physical division of the four domains—economics and education at SFU and Housing and the Social domains at UBC—has also led to a lack of information sharing on the interim progress of the respective domains activities. Clearly, this information exchange is an area of concern, which must be addressed after renewal with funds allocated for a mid year retreat of all domain participants.

The second and more contentious layer of administration is RIIM's relationship with Metropolis-Ottawa. The Ottawa project management team is primarily responsible for tending to federal partner relations, international conferences, overseeing the website and initiating the occasional conversation series and other cross centre meetings. Many of the activities were very successful. Ottawa's efforts at renewal have been strong and the international Metropolis conferences are now world class and on everyone's agenda. The more modest Conversation Series, which are one-day roundtables between federal partners and key researchers, are outstanding. However, for the most part RIIM is largely isolated from the decision-making process related to any of these activities. The international conferences, whilst a huge success in Vancouver this year, had no input at the plenary level from RIIM even though RIIM sought it. This paucity of RIIM input is due to an inactive international planning committee, which was developed to voice centre interests. Repeated RIIM and centre-based requests to revive this committee in area have gone unnoticed.

More serious, administration problems exist over the website relations between RIIM and Ottawa Metropolis. RIIM initiated the website in 1996 and the merging of the sites under an Ottawa Metropolis initiative in 1997 has brought continued consternation and inefficiencies to RIIM. Simple matters such as the development of a virtual library and the reconfiguration of the home page have been largely determined by Metropolis-Ottawa to the detriment of each centre webpage. RIIM initially supported strongly an experiment in the virtual library and decided to join only after a RIIM-assessed cost analysis. Initially the virtual library seemed only mildly labour intensive, since then it has turned into a major project, exhausting RIIM's minor webmaster budget. Without supplemental funding from Metropolis Ottawa these Ottawa-driven initiatives must be curtailed. The lack of activity of the web boards (technical and strategic) also makes it difficult to understand new directions and to introduce new centre-directed initiatives.

### *Dissemination*

RIIM has once again proved to be an authoritative voice on immigration research in Vancouver, Canada and now to a worldwide constituency. Most funded RIIM researchers of course presented their work in traditional academic outlets, seminars and world congresses to gain the crucial peer approval of their work. In addition, several RIIM researchers have reached into the Vancouver community to work with immigrant service agencies and research institutes based in Vancouver (Laurier and Asia Pacific Foundation). Vancouver media exposure of RIIM's research activities remains strong but less so than in the past given the less dramatic immigration environment of 2000-01. National dissemination to federal partners and the national media continues to be a major RIIM activity. RIIM researchers are very well represented in the Conversation Series, which introduces research perspectives to policy makers on a selected core question. Moreover, RIIM graduates continued to be employed by federal partners in their immigration policy and research units. These two interactions with the federal partners, plus occasional cross-ministerial workshops (Brain Drain) have widen RIIM's reputation and brought RIIM research to the attention of potential new partners (Industry Canada and Finance).

Our web-based initiatives, however, continue to be focal point of RIIM's dissemination efforts. I list the research output, are very popular commentary and working paper series, in Appendix C. The camera-ready quality of these pieces are owing to the superb copy-editing and web services of Ms. Sydney Preston. RIIM has gone beyond these traditional web based publication series with two new experimental efforts. Dan Hiebert's Atlas and the audio streaming of the Pan Canadian speeches are examples of new RIIM instruments produced with few resources. In sum, RIIM continues a very strong dissemination program with substantial academic output in journals and books, electronic media while producing unique web based dissemination tools.

### *Conclusions*

Year five has been an outstanding success for RIIM. Carefully crafted research produced in 2000-01 allowed RIIM to remain on its initial schedule especially in the housing and neighbourhood and economic domains. Moreover, the continued strong performance of all domains facilitated the renewal process. In short, I am proud to have directed RIIM's research effort in 2000-01.

Appendix A

Director's Renewal Letter to Dr. Marc Renaud, President  
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

October 1, 2000

Dr. Marc Renaud, President  
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council  
350 Alberta Street  
P.O. Box 1610  
Ottawa, Ontario  
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Dear Dr. Renaud:

We write in strong support of the proposal to extend the life of the four Metropolis Centres of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration for another term starting April 1, 2002. As Centre Directors, we are delighted that serious consideration is being given to extending this strategic research initiative to a second round of funding. We eagerly await a formal signal from you confirming the extension of Metropolis to a second phase.

Such a signal would provide us with the opportunity to enter into discussions with our respective institutions to ensure continued institutional good will and concrete support for our Centres. Our institutions have been very generous in their support of the Centres thus far, and they will require ample lead time in order to determine the level of priority they will assign these Centres and, hence, the level of financial commitments for a possible second round of Metropolis. Moreover, the universities will want to know how much money the federal partners and SSHRC will commit to the second round.

We wish to inform you that, on our own initiative, we met in Edmonton on June 2, 2000, to discuss our vision for the future of our Centres and the Metropolis program in general. More recently, we met in Toronto on August 24, 2000, at the invitation of the Metropolis Evaluation Committee, to discuss a number of critical issues such as objectives and benefits of the Centres, governance of the Metropolis Project, and lessons learned.

Through these meetings, and individually, we have given serious thought and attention to lessons learned and to new initiatives that, in our judgment, would strengthen our research mandate and the goals of the Metropolis program in general. We wish to share our thoughts with you, in the hope that our input will be taken into account in the current round of discussions with regard to the extension and future funding of Metropolis.

Our vision for Phase II of Metropolis includes the following:

1. In the current phase of our project we have been guided by the original intent of the centres: to study immigrant settlement and integration at the metropolitan scale. We have made significant progress toward this goal and have built an impressive body of research on the key immigrant-receiving urban centres of Canada. We have also committed important resources to begin pan-Canadian, or bi- and tri-lateral research projects, which have been slow to develop in part because of the complex nature of comparative research generally, but also due to the lack of specific support for these types of initiatives in the original framework agreement. In the next phase of the project, we intend to continue building on the rich base of metropolitan-level research under way, and to intensify pan-Canadian research. This greater emphasis on inter-urban comparisons and national-scale research would occur within the same partnership arrangement with a variety of stakeholders that we already enjoy. It would also require additional financial support from SSHRC as well as from our federal partners.
2. We seek to develop a “Metropolis Junior Scholars Exchange Program” whereby graduate student exchanges between and among the participating universities are formalized, and costs shared equally amongst the sending institution, receiving institution, and the Metropolis Project Team. Adding an international component to the exchange program would bring a valuable dimension to it. Funding for the proposed international component could be sought collectively by all four Centres through a special grant, e.g., from Human Resources Development Canada.
3. We have noted the significance of face-to-face communication between centre directors and seek to enhance this in the next phase. In particular, it is essential for regular meetings to encourage and find ways and means of funding more cross-centre, policy relevant research initiatives. We are keenly aware that, as Centre Directors, we should take a more proactive role in influencing policy development.
4. The degree of communication between the Centres/Metropolis researchers on the one hand, and federal policy-makers on the other has grown during the first phase, but more could be accomplished in this crucial area. We acknowledge that each Centre needs to continue to develop stronger and more regular contact with federal partners. However, more effort needs to come from the federal policy-makers themselves as well. For example, it would be helpful to receive more detailed feedback from policy makers on the research reports generated by the centres.
5. In terms of the overall governance of the project, we seek more input into the activities of the Project Team, in order to become full partners in all aspects of decision making that affect our centres. If the present structure is maintained, this could be accomplished by having at least two centre directors attend meetings of the Metropolis Interdepartmental Committee, partly to keep abreast of issues of concern to federal partners and partly to present the Centres’ perspectives on various issues.
6. During the past two years, we have begun to build new international coalitions that will lead to comparative research projects. We hope to find ways to encourage more of this work in the next phase of the project. We emphasize that international comparative research is time-consuming as well as costly, and that it would be bolstered by special new funds earmarked for this purpose.
7. We are interested in developing new credential/degree programs in immigration studies, at least in some of the participating universities.

8. Finally, the role of domain coordinators has expanded during the first phase of the project. While domain coordinators perform somewhat different functions at each centre, in general they act in a 'middle management' capacity that is vital. To encourage the best people to take these jobs, we need in the next phase to bolster the role of domain coordinators through incentives such as course release, using SSHRC/CIC funds. It should be noted that course release is not equally available in the participating universities, and that in the next round of funding for Metropolis SSHRC should be permissive in this regard.

We are gratified to note that the Metropolis Project Team is approaching new federal departments to encourage their involvement in the next round of Metropolis. This is all the more important in view of the fact that, by our modest estimation, the Metropolis Centres would need about 33% increase in funding above the current level; this figure includes an adjustment for inflation and would enable us to improve the administration of the centres and take on several new responsibilities (e.g., items 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 above). However, we add that collaborative research (items 1 and 6), especially when conducted across international borders, is particularly expensive, and would require funding beyond this level. For these efforts, we would work with federal partners through the Project Team to develop realistic budget estimates.

We would be happy to meet with you in person to elaborate on the contents of this letter and to answer any questions you might have.

We look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
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Cc: Mr. Meyer Burstein, Executive Head  
Metropolis Project

\* Dr. Beiser left for Africa before the final draft of this letter was completed, and has been out of communication during the revision process.

## Knowledge Breakthroughs at RIIM

### **The Centre of Excellence for Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis (RIIM)**

#### **Report on significant findings, 1996-2000**

September 2000

Don DeVoretz (SFU Economics and Co-Director, RIIM) and  
Daniel Hiebert (UBC Geography and Acting Co-Director, RIIM)

At a meeting of Metropolis directors in August, we were asked to provide a brief list of our most significant research achievements during the first four years of the Metropolis project. This is a difficult exercise, since we must represent the results of some 100 Working Papers in just two or three pages. Please note that we have chosen to emphasize only those projects with the most far-reaching findings. These, of course, demonstrate the value of our centre. However, they represent only a part of that value; the significance of RIIM (and each of the other centres) is in the ensemble of projects and findings, not in a selected set of key results—impressive as they are. The larger picture of RIIM's accomplishments is detailed in our midterm review documents. In this memo, we have decided to outline a few key 'breakthroughs' in each of our research domains.

#### **Economic Domain**

- RIIM scholars were the first in Canada to identify the “brain drain” in its newest form. In particular this RIIM based research led to the insight that Canada participates in a “brain exchange”. In other words, highly skilled resident Canadians now leave for the United States (or Hong Kong). In turn these emigrants are replaced by highly skilled inflows from China and India, as well as other countries, to complete the exchange. This initial work has led to a host of derivative projects in the last 2 years. For example, RIIM researchers have presented a cogent theory to explain why most highly skilled Canadians remain in Canada. Based on the concept of risk, this conceptual framework for understanding who moves vs. stays is the first of its kind, anywhere. RIIM scholars have recently begun to use these insights to study the brain drain processes in Asia, especially China and Hong Kong. (DeVoretz, Iturralde, Laryea)
- Several comparative studies (Canadian, German and Norwegian) conducted by researchers at RIIM have set benchmarks worldwide for the employment and earnings impacts derived from immigrant second language acquisition. In particular RIIM studies have identified not only the universal economic importance of immigrant official second language acquisition but also its economic magnitude across various countries. A unique extension of these findings was RIIM based research on immigrant third language acquisition and subsequent immigrant economic performance. (Hayfron on Norway; Chiswick And Miller on Canada; Werner, Hinte and DeVoretz on Germany)

- Next, and this is central to the mandate of Metropolis, are RIIM researchers' findings on the economic impact of immigrants on Vancouver's economy. Significantly, this work examines these impacts on both the private and public sectors of the economy. RIIM has developed a general equilibrium model, which can measure the impact of a set number (e.g., 100,000) of immigrants arriving in Vancouver over a ten-year time horizon. This model can predict changes on crucial commodity prices (housing, food, health, transportation), wages, employment rates, taxes and the use of public services. This model is unique in the world and will have important consequences on Canadian immigrant policy. (DeVoretz, Laryea, Iturralde)

### **Education Domain**

- The school organization project reveals the crucial role of administrators' values in shaping school policies and practices. When learning is assumed to depend on fluency in English, policy initiatives focus on English language instruction, proficiency testing, hiring ESL teachers, etc.; and children's use of heritage language at school and home is seen as problematic. When school leaders value diversity, then policy initiatives support learning in all subject areas, as well as in English, and focus on involving families and community agencies using heritage languages as necessary (Linda LaRocque). Moreover, the cultural mix of teachers is important. Our work has shown those teachers of Punjabi Sikh and Chinese ancestry serve as linguistic and cultural interpreters for parents, children and colleagues and create anti-racist classrooms. These roles are vital to the functioning of schools (June Beynon).
- The study of children of immigrant families enrolled in French Immersion programs reveals the central role of parental values and language practices in shaping their children's perceptions of language learning and multilingualism. In particular, a positive atmosphere is created when parents emphasize the potential value of multilingualism in a national context and within a global economy, and the value of language contacts at home and abroad as well as in school (Diane Dagenais).
- Research in two projects has illuminated important relationships between culture, language, and education. Commentators have often suggested that schools established by cultural communities are associated with cultural isolation. However, in an extensive study of a Punjabi Sikh school, we found that, in comparison to documented racism experienced in public schools, this cultural/religious-specific setting offers children opportunities for learning English without compromising their cultural/linguistic/or religious identities. Further, in contrast to the isolation hypothesis, their families maintain economic and social connections to the wider non-Punjabi community (Kelleen Toohey). A second study has revealed important limitations in attempts to combine language education with non-academic objectives. Research on an ESL Coop program showed that where ESL instruction was combined with work experience for immigrant teenagers, these students were not able to access the

course work needed to graduate from academic programs. Students and parents perceived that students would be better served if integrated into mainstream classes and if allowed, as necessary, to remain in school past the normative school leaving age of 19 (June Beynon, Kelleen Toohey, Linda LaRocque).

### **Housing and neighbourhood domain**

- A detailed study of the changing social geography of immigrant settlement has shown the intricate processes of neighbourhood formation. We have been aware for some time that traditional models of urban social structure are no longer appropriate, but this work goes much further in specifying the contours of the emerging urban landscape. In the late 1980s, suburbs became the principal destination for new immigrants, a substantial shift from earlier periods. As a result suburbs in Canada's largest metropolitan centres are now as culturally diverse as inner city neighbourhoods, a fact that has major implications for our understanding of contemporary urban society, and how we plan transportation systems, set zoning parameters, and deliver services. Similar changes have occurred in Sydney, Australia, and a project comparing the two cities has emerged (Daniel Hiebert, Gillian Creese, Isabel Dyck, David Edgington, David Ley, Arlene McLaren, Geraldine Pratt).
- An ambitious project on the investment of Overseas Chinese entrepreneurs in Vancouver's land market has illuminated the circuits of capital that connect the two sides of the Pacific Rim. This work has shown that Hong Kong capitalists see Canadian multiculturalism as a key advantage, one that has encouraged both short- and long-term investment in Vancouver. Important links have also been investigated between trans-Pacific immigration, investment in Vancouver, and the local urban planning process. These latter findings illustrate, in fine detail, deepening connections between local and global processes (Kris Olds).
- Since the early 1990s, scholars have been skeptical about the success of Canada's business immigration program. RIIM researchers shared this concern, but took a new approach by examining the socio-economic circumstances of business immigrants in their neighbourhood setting. This work has enabled researchers to obtain a more immediate portrait of the problems faced by business immigrants as they try to adapt practices learned in their pre-migration cultural/regulatory environment to a radically different one in Canada. These findings have been praised as "highly policy relevant" by the Senior Policy Advisor in the BC Ministry of Multiculturalism and Immigration. They also have pressing theoretical significance: they show limitations in the portability of economic success, and that we must reconsider the more facile theories of globalization that assume 'business is business' regardless of local circumstances (David Ley, Daniel Hiebert).

### **Social Domain**

- A comprehensive theoretical analysis and empirical study has shown that the debate over an urban underclass—so prevalent in the US and many European

countries—is largely irrelevant in Canada. While Canada certainly has poor neighbourhoods, the overlapping dimensions of deprivation, and the inter-generation transmission of deprivation, are much less present in the Canadian context (David Ley, Heather Smith).

- Studies concerning the management of health and illness, and access to health care, have gone beyond traditional interpretations based on difficulties in cross-cultural communication and differing conceptions of health and illness, to show that these are basic issues of social and political entitlement. This reconceptualization of health and illness has significant implications for both policy and the conduct of academic research (Joan Anderson, Parin Dossa, Anand Paranjpe, Randall Tonks).
- The effect of funding cuts on multicultural service organizations has been carefully investigated. These organizations were first established to provide services to immigrants and, significantly, provide a voice for their concerns. The second of these functions dissipated as NGOs became more fully integrated in the system of government-funded service provision. However, as funding has become more unpredictable. RIIM researchers have shown that these organizations have adjusted by ‘returning to their roots’—and their early advocacy roles (Gillian Creese).

## Commentary Series

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00-02F	Don J. DeVoretz	Un modèle canadien d'évaluation de l'immigration des travailleurs temporaires non qualifiés. (Aperçu)	06/00
02-01	Don J. DeVoretz	RIIM Summary of Activities 2000-2001	03/02

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