

on the air. Moreover, it creates jobs for Canadians. Only quality, insofar as it involves the performance and judgment of media professionals, is primarily in the realm of media policy. The expectation is that, all other things being equal, Canadians will choose Canadian material if it is available. Many things are involved in all other things being equal, but quality is a paramount consideration. No one argues that Canadians would prefer poor Canadian productions to high quality foreign productions. I consider the three in this order.

In practice, the subject matter criterion for Canadian content has two facets. One pertains to the "Canadianness" of material, the other to whether it is acceptable for broadcasting in Canada.¹¹ A naive view would be that the regulation addresses only the first, but several cases in which public reactions to programming get the attention of regulators (e.g., "Power Rangers," pornographic films) indicate that the second is equally important. More is required than "Canadianness." If so, the regulation is intended to encourage not any portrayal of Canadian culture but acceptable portrayals of Canadian culture. This raises several questions. Does the policy, as implemented, condone and permit manipulation from above by high ranking government administrators and/or an elite segment of the public that can express itself forcefully? In as much as a prohibition can be considered censorship, it is also a free speech issue that raises a question as to whether ends justify means in Canadian culture. And spanning both facets of the subject matter criterion is that basic question that bedevils Canada and needs to be answered if there is to be Canadian content in more than a perfunctory sense. Is there a Canadian culture that programs should reflect -- if so, what is it? These are issues for cultural policy that cannot be resolved through media policy. Attempts to do so involve the questionable assumptions about the nature of culture and effects of the media that have already been elaborated. At a minimum, multiculturalism as policy needs to be reexamined.¹² It neither automatically implies nor facilitates or supports a Canadian culture, but it can hamper one. Canadian culture, considered either from the perspective of its consonance with multiculturalism (cf. Bissoondath) or its uniqueness in contrast to U.S. culture (cf. Nevitte, Maule and Atkinson, and others), is a questionable justification in cultural terms for Canadian content regulations -- or other media policies of a more general nature -- at best.

To the extent that the goal is primarily to direct more Canadian personnel and money into production, then Canadian content regulations clearly relate to economic and industrial policy. Would Canadian communication officials be happy if a large number of high quality programs about Canada shown in Canada were produced in the U.S. without any Canadian participation? The FTA and NAFTA leave no doubt that Canadian policymakers want Canadian entrepreneurs and workers to produce Canadian material. Canadian production makes jobs for Canadian workers. Jobs are an issue in an economy with high unemployment, particularly if the skills required by media industries cannot be used in another industry or retraining is not feasible. Jobs also are an issue if they require rare expertise that could be needed in Canada and the people who have the skills are leaving for more attractive employment elsewhere. Addressing these issues involves job creation, salaries, working conditions, and the like. In addition to creating jobs that serve the domestic market, there is an interest in maintaining Canada's position in the international telecommunications market. This requires decisions about how Canada's comparative advantages can be exploited in a world economy. All these are familiar labor and trade policy issues and not unique to the media.

The quality of Canadian content is an issue for media policy. Production values reflect artistic merit and are affected by the quality and capacity of production, distribution, and reception equipment and facilities and how they are used. Equipment development and acquisition may require subsidies. Canadian firms have been active in development and may need government help to continue to compete. Depending on where one stands on Babe's view that Canada is overly dependent on technology for integration, this could also be an economic matter. If, however, there is merit to the argument that all Canadians have a right to high quality programs, then, matters of "Canadianness" or culture aside, it is an issue of media policy. It is hard to believe, however, that the Canadian content regulations are intended to make Canadians consume only