the strategic choice hypothesis. His discussion of "indices" and "signals" that alert justices and their clerks to look more closely at petitions includes not only such jurisprudential matters as circuit conflict but elements from the litigant resource hypothesis such as the identities of the litigants or their counsel (Perry 1991, 113-139). Setting these issues aside, clearly a comprehensive understanding of agenda setting in courts of final appeal requires consideration of all four perspectives.

At present, comparable social science research on agenda setting in Canada's Supreme Court does not exist. Reviews of the leave to appeal process first appeared in Canada's *Supreme Court Law Review* in 1982 (Bushnell 1982) and have continued annually since then (see Bushnell, Crane and Brown, and Brown and Crane, various dates). These articles are primarily "practice notes" for the legal profession with discussions of the cases the Court accepted for appeal. They provide some statistical information but the data are descriptive and confined to breakdowns of the legal subject matter of the applications, the court and province of origin, and the proportions of applications granted leave by these categories.

The objective of this project is to replicate in the Canadian context the research on the certiorari process in the U. S. Supreme Court. Replication of this research will generate several benefits. First, it opens up a new line of empirical inquiry on Canada's Supreme Court that so far has been ignored. Second, a better understanding of agenda setting in Canada will help determine whether the American literature reflects the institutional features of the U.S. Supreme Court. For example, there may be little support for the strategic choice perspective in Canada because the Court's institutional arrangements do not foster the conditions needed to create a "leave to appeal game." Similarly, the absence of interest group involvement in the leave to appeal process weakens expectations that this aspect of the litigant resources perspective will be supported. Other aspects of this perspective, however, may be relevant to the Canadian court. For example, McCormick (1993) found a long term relationship between success in Canada's Supreme Court and high status or high resource litigants in decisions on the merits. In light of Atkin's (1991) findings for the English Court of Appeal, a further test of this perpective for Canada's leave process would represent a valuable addition to this body of literature. On the other hand, the Court's agenda has undergone a shift in priorities and kinds of cases it selects that reflects the Court's discretion in picking cases of "public importance" and the impact of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.