

**Is There a Distinctive Pattern of Values  
Associated with Giving and Volunteering?  
The Canadian Case**

by

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This is an enlarged version of a chapter, "Do People Who Volunteer Have a Distinctive Ethos?:  
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## Introduction

In the mid-1940s, Le Chambon was an unremarkable village of 3000 souls in the mountains of south-east France, midway between Geneva and Marseille. During the four years of World War II when much of France was under the control of its German occupiers, a handful of Le Chambon's residents performed an exceptional act: they secretly sheltered and provided safe passage for nearly five thousand Jews who would otherwise have been rounded up and sent to the camps in Germany and Poland, most to their deaths. The residents of Le Chambon who participated in this sustained act of courage did so at great risk to their own lives and without thought for personal advantage. This historical event prompts for many the question, why did they do it? What was it about these few people, and not the many others around them, that energized such behaviour? As Philip Hallie has recounted it in Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed (1979), a significant part of the answer can be found in the particular set of moral precepts and values they held in common as members of a small Protestant church congregation.

There is no direct modern-day equivalent of Le Chambon, but there is a modest parallel in a much more miniature and mundane form: the corps of individuals in numerous contemporary societies who make significant contributions, temporal and perhaps financial as well, to charitable and community activities and organizations with no expectation of benefit for themselves. This study addresses the question of what might be the diffuse value set or ethos of volunteers, the ethos charitable donors, and that of those who do both.

We begin with volunteering. Volunteering in Canada cannot be considered extensive; the general participation rate of 27 percent (measured by a large national survey in 2000) belies the fact that about half of all volunteer time is contributed by fewer than 10 percent of Canada's adults, and the majority of individuals who volunteer contribute only a handful of hours over the span of a year. This means that active volunteering is the practice of a very modest subpopulation of Canadians. In addition, the falling rate of volunteering is approaching the national level of 20 years ago — around 25 percent, and could well go even lower.

Active volunteers differ from their fellow citizens by virtue of engaging in contributory behaviour; do they differ in other ways as well, ways that help explain why they contribute through cooperative effort to a collective good, in a cultural context that strongly favours competitive individualism and maximizing the private good?

We have shown (Reed and Selbee, 2000) that the subpopulation of active volunteers in Canada — those whose total time volunteered annually is above the median — displays a small set of social and demographic characteristics that are different from those of non-volunteers. Active volunteers differ by being much more involved in civic activities generally, having had more exposure to volunteer experiences during their youth, having a university education, having higher-status and higher-income occupations, having certain religious characteristics (primarily actively practising Protestants), and having dependent children living at home. A significant lacuna is the lack of information on the values and beliefs, especially the distinctive ones, that characterize volunteers. By values and beliefs we mean the enduring principles, ideals and assumptions that together constitute an ethos and worldview held by individuals and which underlie their preferences and guide their decision-making and behaviour.

The literature on values and beliefs prevalent among volunteers is both scarce and limited in scope. None gives a general picture of the broad set of values or the worldview of volunteers. David Horton Smith's 1994 review of the literature on determinants of voluntary association participation and volunteering identified only two studies in which values were explicit variables. The study by Hougland and Christenson (1982) in North Carolina in 1973, for example, found that fourteen "dominant American values" were "never very strong" in their overall association with volunteering. Sundeen and Roskoff (1995) studied the link between selected goals and values, and involvement in volunteer activity by teenagers 12-17 years old; they found no clear pattern of values characterizing youth volunteers, although they concluded their research "confirm(ed) that values comprise an important set of determinants of participation in voluntary association participation and volunteering" (1995:354).

Beyond the several studies pertaining specifically to the possible presence of certain values among people who volunteer, there is a handful of observers who have remarked in a

more diffuse way on the distribution of prosocial values in American society. Bellah *et al.* (1985) suggest that American mores fall into two quite different categories that constitute two different worldviews or frameworks of meaning and interpretation, which they label the “culture of separation” and the “culture of coherence”. In the former, the individual is viewed as a social atom, free or separated from the social, political and civic institutions of society and energized largely by self-interest. In contrast, the culture of coherence acknowledges the intimate connection of the individual to others in society, precisely because they are part of the institutions that make up a society. This worldview has its roots in the biblical and republican traditions that typify a significant portion of U.S. history.

Among the distinguishing elements of the culture of coherence are values and beliefs that embrace an integrated societal community rather than separation and individualism; a language of mutual responsibility and practices of commitment to the public good; the explicit acknowledgement of interconnectedness and a broader conception of what one’s “community” is, i.e., more than just one’s geographic locale; the maintenance of public institutions that are more tolerant of diversity and that nurture common standards of justice and civility.

Others have similarly identified the link between a particular set of values and beliefs and general contributory or prosocial behaviours. Wuthnow (1995) speaks of frameworks of understanding that entail a positive view of “caring”. Wilson and Musick (1997) refer to a “culture of benevolence” that generates attitudes and values which are supportive of helping behaviour. And Schervish and Havens (1997) speak of “frameworks of consciousness”, or patterned ways of thinking, that contain “mobilizing beliefs” (an admixture of fundamental orientations, general values, and specific concerns) and induce commitment to a cause. None of these observers suggests directly that people who are volunteers will have values distinct from those of non-volunteers, but their commentaries imply the likelihood of systematic difference.

An important unresolved issue is the form that value differences take. While some research has suggested that volunteers differ from non-volunteers less in the substantive content of values and beliefs than in the strength of values held in common, Janoski *et. al.*, (1998) found large volunteer-nonvolunteer differences in terms of values concerning prosociality.

So whether there is a distinctive set of values associated with volunteering clearly stands as a matter for empirical investigation. Values and beliefs, whether narrowly or broadly conceived, that are embraced by individuals who engage in such contributory behaviours as volunteer activity and charitable giving constitute an unmapped area.

The present study is distinctive by virtue of (i) examining a large number of values, perceptions and beliefs from a nationwide survey in Canada in order to identify those that are especially associated with volunteering and with charitable giving, (ii) assessing the relative importance of values and beliefs in comparison with an ensemble of social and economic variables, and (iii) comparing the extent and nature of the distinctive value complex of volunteers with that of charitable givers.

## **Data and Analysis Strategy**

The data on which this study is based were created in 1997 in face-to-face, in-home interviews with a nationally representative sample of more than 2000 individuals across Canada. The questionnaire contained 144 questions in 9 sections, of which five were broadly concerned with a wide range of values, perceptions, and beliefs pertaining to selected aspects of Canadian society and the requirements for a good society. A subset of questions addressed selected respondent behaviours including volunteering and charitable giving, and one section contained a range of standard socio-economic variables such as occupation, education, income, place of birth, etc. This national survey was conducted under the auspices of the project, “Individuals, Institutions, and the Social Contract in Canada”, initiated by one of the present authors (Reed).

Data from ninety-two of the questions concerned with values, perceptions and beliefs have been used in this study, the responses to many of which took the form of 4-point ordinal (i.e., Likert) scales (see Appendix for a list of these questions). There were three dimensions to the dependent variables in the analysis of volunteers: the first was the respondent having volunteered during the 12 months preceding the interview, i.e., “helping some organization or group by doing such things as canvassing, organizing activities, coaching, providing care, delivering food, doing clerical or administrative work, or other kinds of activities”. The second

was the frequency of formal volunteering, varying from “more than once a week” to “less frequently than once or twice a month”. The third dimension was the respondent having helped others outside their household directly “on their own, not through an organization or group .... in the past twelve months .... [in such ways] as cooking, shopping, babysitting, writing letters, shovelling snow, mowing the lawn”, etc. Together, these three questions permit comparisons in pair-wise combinations between people in the categories of formal volunteering, direct or informal helping, volunteering of different magnitudes (frequency), and non-volunteering. This set of categories, in comparisons, permits considerable choice, without a priori judgement, as to which form or measure of contributing to the wellbeing of others is most strongly associated with a particular ethos. In the analysis of giving, two dependent variables were used: the first compares all those who made a charitable contribution to an organization or cause over the past year with those who made no contributions. The second compares active givers, those who made a donation at least once a month with non-givers, those who made no charitable donations. In a later section of the study, we will present the results of analyzing combinations of volunteers and givers together.

The sample of 2014 respondents had the following composition: individuals involved in formal volunteering: 1051 (52.2%); active volunteers (i.e., those whose annual time volunteered was above the median): 365 (18.1%); in both formal and direct helping: 1637 (82.5%); those who were not formal volunteers: 932 (46.3%). For the analysis of giving the composition was: individuals involved in charitable giving: 1525 (75.7%); active givers (i.e., those who made a donation monthly or more frequently) 540 (26.8%); non-givers 436 (21.7%).

## **Volunteers**

Our analytical strategy in examining volunteers’ values consisted of two steps: the first was to compare a variety of these categories in terms of the ninety-two values, perceptions, and beliefs, to ascertain the extent and content of differences between the various pairs of categories. The second step involved logistic regression modelling to identify the extent to which values, perceptions, and beliefs were strongly correlated with, and possibly influential on, volunteering, and thereafter whether it was the values set or socio-demographic factors that predominated in

differentiating (i) all volunteers from non-volunteers, (ii) active (i.e., weekly or more frequent) volunteers from non-volunteers, and (iii) both formal and direct helping volunteers from individuals who were neither.

We undertook a series of 7 pair-wise comparisons of variously defined groups of individuals on the 92 values, perceptions and beliefs. For each comparison of two categories of individuals, the degree of association between categories and responses to each of the 92 value and belief items was measured using a  $X^2$  test. A significant level of association (at the 5% level of alpha) indicated that the two groups under consideration were statistically different in their response patterns. Typically this meant that one group more strongly agreed or disagreed with a particular statement than did the other. Examination of each item where there was significant association revealed that in most cases the difference in response patterns was a matter of degree, rather than indicative of opposing views. For example, for Question 38n: “I don’t see how my taxes benefit me, or society”, 53% of volunteers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement while 62% of non-volunteers agreed or strongly agreed. The difference between these two groups was a matter of degree; non-volunteers were statistically more likely to agree with this item, although the majority of both groups did agree with the item. On some items, in contrast, not only was the response pattern different, it reflected an opposition of views between the two groups. For example, for Question 38m: “These days I am so hard pressed to take care of my own needs that I worry less about the needs of others”, the majority of volunteers (62%) disagreed with the item while the majority of non-volunteers (55%) agreed. We have designated the items where two groups generally express opposing views as the principal differentiating questions.

The results for the seven pairings showing the number of significantly different values are presented in Table 1. Not surprisingly, the largest number of differences occurred between (i) individuals who were both formal volunteers and informal direct helpers, and individuals who were neither (different on 69 of 92 value variables); (ii) all formal volunteers versus non-volunteers (different on 66 of 92); and followed closely by (iii) direct helping individuals and non-volunteers (63 of 92). At the other end of the spectrum, comparisons within overall

categories yielded small differences: formal-only volunteers versus direct helping: only 19 of 92, and individuals volunteering weekly or more versus less than weekly: only 16 of 92.

Table 1. Result of Pairwise Comparisons on 92 Values and Beliefs, Volunteers and Non-volunteers

| Groups being compared   | Number of Significantly Different Values <sup>a</sup> |
|---|---|
| 1. (a) All formal volunteers vs. all non-volunteers           | 66/92   |
| (b) More than weekly volunteers vs. non-volunteers            | 49/92   |
| (c) Weekly or more volunteers vs. non-volunteers              | 53/92   |
| (d) Weekly or more volunteers vs. less than weekly volunteers | 16/92   |
| 2. Formal plus direct helping volunteers vs. neither          | 69/92   |
| 3. Direct helping individuals only vs. non-volunteers         | 63/92   |
| 4. Formal-only volunteers vs. direct helping only individuals | 19/92   |

a.  $\chi^2$  is significant at the 0.05 level or better

The results support several conclusions. First, the differences in values, perceptions and beliefs lie fundamentally between individuals who volunteer or help in some way, regardless of whether it is done through an organization or directly and personally (or if the former, done weekly or less frequently) and individuals who do not volunteer. Second, the statistically significant differences are extensive, occurring on 68 to 75 percent of the measured values. Third, while the differences are generally moderate for the majority of questions, they are especially strong for a small subset of eight. These strong, principal differentiating questions are the following:

Q8 a) The best way to be a good member of the community is to mind your own business and not bother other people. (Volunteers disagreed, non-volunteers agreed.)

Q8 b) Individuals cannot be expected to join or support organizations that promote interests other than their own. (Volunteers disagreed, non-volunteers agreed.)

Q8 h) There is nothing wrong with giving advantages to people from the same ethnic, cultural or racial group as yourself. (Volunteers disagreed, non-volunteers agreed.)

Q8 n) Immigrants cannot expect to be considered as fully Canadian as those who were born and raised here. (Volunteers disagreed, non-volunteers agreed.)

Q30 d) How much do you trust businessmen not to take advantage of you? (Volunteers were trusting, non-volunteers were not.)

Q38 j) The needs of individuals are the responsibility of themselves and their families and not of the community. (Volunteers disagreed, non-volunteers agreed.)

Q38 l) As long as one pays one's taxes, it is not necessary to support community organizations and activities. (Volunteers disagreed, non-volunteers agreed.)

Q38 m) These days I am so hard-pressed to take care of my own needs that I worry less about the needs of others. (Volunteers disagreed, non-volunteers agreed.)

We have, then, evidence in these bivariate relationships that volunteers, however characterized, exhibit a set of values, perceptions, and beliefs that are different from those of non-volunteers. These comparisons, however, do not take into account differences in values, perceptions, and beliefs that may simply reflect different social contexts and social backgrounds, nor the degree of correlation that exists between the value questions.

The questions on values, perceptions, and beliefs were designed in thematic clusters dealing with related issues. As a result, the responses tend to be modestly correlated but not enough to form reliable additive scales. The questions comprising section 8, for example, all refer to broad norms of behaviour. Among the 120 pair-wise combinations of these sixteen questions, there are 81 significant correlations, but only six are greater than 0.3 and none are greater than 0.4. So although these questions are related, they are not merely indicators of a single underlying construct. (This is also evident in a reliability (alpha) of only 0.65 for a simple additive scale of these questions, and in the fact that the first component of a principal components analysis accounted for only 20% of total variance.)

Because the items are correlated, the bivariate results may mislead in a way that suggests that a question distinguishes between two groups to some extent when in fact it is simply acting as a proxy for a related question that more strongly differentiates the two groups. In order to eliminate these possibilities, we conducted logistic regression analyses to assess which values,

perceptions, and beliefs, and which background characteristics, when taken together, differentiate between volunteers (of any sort) and non-volunteers. These are not meant to be formal causal models but rather to estimate how well the independent variables distinguish between any two groups under consideration.

To identify which values, perceptions, and beliefs most clearly distinguish between the pairs of groups we have already examined, we estimated logistic regression models for groups 1a, 1c, and 2 identified in Table 1. Table 2 presents the models that compare all formal volunteers with non-volunteers, Table 3 presents a comparison of active formal volunteers with non-volunteers, and Table 4 presents a comparison of formal and direct helping volunteers with those who did neither formal volunteering nor direct helping. Our strategy in developing the models for each comparison was to take all the values variables (questions) that were found to be significantly associated with being a volunteer in the first section of the analysis above, and estimate a logistic regression model predicting membership of each respondent in the volunteer and non-volunteer categories. The variables with the highest probability of not having an effect on the dependent variable were progressively eliminated from the model until only those that had a statistically significant effect remained. These are presented as model 1 in each of Tables 2, 3 and 4. The next step was to enter a set of social and demographic variables and then progressively eliminate those that had no influence on the likelihood of being a volunteer, along any of the values variables from model 1 that were no longer significant, once socio-demographic variables were controlled for. The results of this procedure are shown in model 2 in each of Tables 2, 3 and 4.

The logistic regression coefficients in these tables are presented as the percentage change in the odds of being a volunteer. This is a straightforward way of showing the effect of an independent variable on the likelihood of being a volunteer, and allows for a direct comparison of the relative strength of the various value, perception and belief variables (since all were measured on the same 4-point scale). These coefficients indicate the percent change in the odds of being a volunteer that would occur given a one-unit change (from agree to strongly agree, for example) in the relevant independent variable (see Menard, 1995:49). The interpretation of the  $R^2$  for each model is analogous to its use in ordinary regression analysis: it shows the proportion

of total variability in the dependent variable that is accounted for by the model. The larger the  $R^2$ , the better the model was able to differentiate between the two groups being compared.<sup>1</sup>

Table 2. Logistic Regression Models Comparing All Volunteers With Non-Volunteers

| Values                            |   | Model 1<br>Values only                    | Model 2<br>Values and Background |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| Question Number                   | Respondent agrees with the statement:         | % Change in the odds of being a volunteer |                                  |
| Q8a                               | Should mind own business                      | -14.6 *                                   | ns                               |
| Q8i                               | Laws should always be respected               | 25.8 **                                   | 26.9 **                          |
| Q8o                               | People should stay attached to ethnic group   | -17.3 *                                   | -17.7 **                         |
| Q9b                               | Standard of living is declining               | -18.7 **                                  | -18.7 **                         |
| Q14                               | Fewer job opportunities for my gender         | 24.1 **                                   | 23.2 **                          |
| Q29                               | Should be careful trusting others             | -21.6 **                                  | -19.8 **                         |
| Q31                               | Have much control over your Life              | 20.9 *                                    | 18.4 *                           |
| Q38h                              | Canada better off if less government          | 19.2 **                                   | 18.9 **                          |
| Q38l                              | If pay taxes, that's enough community support | -18.6 **                                  | -19.1 **                         |
| Q38m                              | So hard-pressed I don't worry about others    | -29.6 **                                  | -31.7 **                         |
| Q52                               | Very concerned about my city                  | 33.5 **                                   | 33.7 **                          |
| Socio-demographic Characteristics |   |   |                                  |
| RURAL                             | Lives in a rural community                    |   | 38.9 **                          |
| EDYRS                             | Education in years of schooling               |   | 9.4 **                           |
|                                   | Constant:                                     | -2.12 **                                  | -3.03 **                         |
| $R^2$                             |   | 0.110                                     | 0.121                            |

\*p less than or equal to 0.05, \*\*p less than or equal to 0.01, ns = p greater than 0.05.

Note. All values variables are coded in such a way that high scores reflect strong agreement with the statement.

### All Volunteers versus Non-Volunteers

Model 1 in Table 2 shows the eleven questions that significantly differentiated between volunteers and non-volunteers. This model accounts for 11% ( $R^2=0.11$ ) of the variation in the probability of being a volunteer. In model 2, two socio-demographic factors are added to the first model containing only values: education, and living in a rural area. The effect of one value question (Q8a) drops out of the model when education is controlled. The second model accounts

<sup>1</sup> The  $R^2$  for the two models in each table should not be compared in order to assess the relative contribution to the  $R^2$  due to values and socio-demographics separately. In general, the latter are causally prior to the former — the

for 12% of the variation in volunteering. In both models, the explained variation is small, indicating that the value factors, even with the socio-demographic variables taken into account, are not very effective in predicting who will be volunteers and non-volunteers. In other words, when comparing individuals who had been volunteers at any time over the 12 months preceding the survey with those who had not, there is very little difference in their values and beliefs. On this basis, the value set of volunteers as a whole is shown to be not very different from non-volunteers. However, comparing all volunteers to non-volunteers may not be the most appropriate way to determine whether or not there is a distinctive set of values associated with being a volunteer. For some individuals, volunteering is an intermittent and casual kind of activity — helping out every once in a while. For others it entails a much more intensive commitment of time and energy. In Canada in 2000, for example, a mere 6% of Canadians accounted for 42% of hours volunteered (Reed and Selbee, 2001:766).

As a group, then, volunteers include individuals who give several hundred hours of their time during the year, and others who give very few hours. Thirty-six percent of volunteers in our sample reported doing volunteer work less frequently than once a month, while 35% reported volunteering once a week or more often. For the first group, volunteering may be incidental to their values and beliefs while for the second group, whom we have labelled as active volunteers, the substantially greater commitment of time and effort may be a strong expression of their values, perceptions and beliefs. In order to identify a distinctive set of values among volunteers, it may be more appropriate to compare only significantly active volunteers with non-volunteers.

### **Active Volunteers versus Non-Volunteers**

Model 1 in Table 3 estimates the probability of being an active volunteer versus being a non-volunteer on the basis of the value questions alone. This model accounts for 18% of the variation in the data, a clear improvement over the previous two models that compared all volunteers with non-volunteers. When the socio-demographic factors are added, the variance accounted for (model 2) rises to one quarter ( $R^2=0.24$ ). While these are still modest levels of variation accounted for, it is significant that just seven values questions and four socio-

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relative contribution of each is given in the text.

demographic factors actually do so well in predicting who will be an active volunteer. In addition, the importance of the questions on values, perceptions, and beliefs is apparent in the fact that when the explained variation is apportioned between the two sets of variables, the 7 values questions account for 16% while the 5 background variables account for only 8%. In this comparison, the values set as a group are substantially more important than the background characteristics in differentiating active volunteers from non-volunteers.

Table 3. Logistic Regression Models Comparing Active Volunteers with Non-Volunteers

| Values                            |  | Model 1<br>Values only                    | Model 2<br>Values and Background |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Question Number                   | Respondent agrees with the statement:                      | % Change in the odds of being a volunteer |                                  |
| Q8i                               | Laws should always be respected                            | 21.2 *                                    | 22.8 *                           |
| Q8o                               | People should stay attached to ethnic group                | -23.0 *                                   | -20.8 *                          |
| Q14                               | Fewer job opportunities for my gender                      | 33.9 **                                   | 28.5 **                          |
| Q29                               | Should be careful trusting others                          | -16.9 *                                   | ns                               |
| Q34                               | Feel very at home in my community                          | 42.8 **                                   | 33.6 *                           |
| Q38j                              | Needs are responsibility of individual/family, not society | -21.8 **                                  | -20.6 *                          |
| Q38l                              | If pay taxes, that's enough community support              | -22.9 *                                   | ns                               |
| Q38m                              | So hard-pressed I don't worry about others                 | -37.4 **                                  | -42.2 **                         |
| Q52                               | Very concerned about my city                               | 44.7 **                                   | 44.9 **                          |
| Socio-demographic Characteristics |  |   |                                  |
| RURAL                             | Lives in a rural community                                 |   | 53.1 **                          |
| PRAIRIES                          | Lives in the Prairies                                      |   | 77.3 **                          |
| B.C.                              | Lives in British Columbia                                  |   | 126.4 **                         |
| RELIGIOSITY                       | How religious are you                                      |   | 36.5 **                          |
| EDYRS                             | Education in years of schooling                            |   | 14.4 **                          |
|                                   | Constant:  | -3.814 **                                 | -5.621 **                        |
| R <sup>2</sup>                    |  | 0.182                                     | 0.237                            |

\*p less than or equal to 0.05, \*\*p less than or equal to 0.01, ns = p greater than 0.05.

Note. All values variables are coded in such a way that high scores reflect strong agreement with the statement.

Model 2 shows that active volunteers have a stronger sense of belonging to their community (Q34) and are more concerned about conditions in their city (Q52). They care more about others (Q38m) and are less ethnocentric (Q8o). They believe that society has some responsibility to help the needy (Q38j), and that laws (i.e., legitimate authority) should be respected (Q8i). And finally, active volunteers are more likely to believe that individuals of their

gender have fewer opportunities for jobs and promotions than do their opposites. Together, these views suggest that active volunteers manifest a heightened sense of social responsibility and involvement, tempered by a sense of imperfections in their social milieu. This finding fits with previous research indicating that volunteers tend to be more “other-directed” than non-volunteers. But beyond this, the fact that most of the value questions are not present in the models suggests that contrasts representing liberal-conservative, or left-right political and social philosophies in general, are not dimensions of significant difference between active volunteers and non-volunteers.

### **Both Formal and Direct Helping Volunteers versus Those Who Were Neither**

The final part of the multivariate analysis of volunteers compares individuals who were both formal volunteers and direct helpers, with individuals who were neither. These groups stand in sharp contrast. On one side are people who have helped others in the preceding 12 months, both through an organization as a formal volunteer and by lending assistance directly to strangers, friends, neighbours, or non-household relatives. On the other side are those who were neither formal volunteers nor direct helpers. The first group is actively involved in their community in various ways while the second is minimally or not involved at all. If there is a generalized ethos of prosociality or benevolence that underpins helping behaviours, it should be most clearly evident in the comparison of these two extremely different types of individuals.

Model 1 in Table 4 supports this contention. Nine value and belief questions by themselves account for 23% of the variation in being a helper. With controls for socio-demographic background factors (Model 2), this rises to 31% . In both models, there are marked differences between these groups in their values, perceptions and beliefs.

From Model 2 in Table 4, it is evident that those who help others show more concern about others (Q38m) and about their community (Q52). They believe in equality of opportunity (Q37) and the value of hard work (Q7e), and have a less narrowly circumscribed sense of community (Q7d and Q8n). They also believe that individuals must do more for others in society than simply being responsible taxpayers (Q38l). Together, these items show that active

and broad-spectrum helping behaviour is underpinned by a broad concern for their community, coupled with a basic sense of fairness as an organizing principle in society.

Table 4. Logistic Regression Models Comparing Respondents Who Were Both Formal and Direct Helping Volunteers With Those Who Were Neither

| Values                            |   | Model 1<br>Values only                    | Model 2<br>Values and Background |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| Question Number                   | Respondent agrees with the statement:         | % Change in the odds of being a volunteer |                                  |
| Q6d                               | Feel strong obligation to my ethnic group     | -20.4 **                                  | ns                               |
| Q7c                               | Children should learn to cooperate            | 64.0 **                                   | ns                               |
| Q7d                               | Children should learn loyalty to ethnic group | -25.4 **                                  | -22.0 **                         |
| Q7e                               | Children should learn to work hard            | 53.2 **                                   | 46.7 *                           |
| Q8n                               | Immigrants are not as Canadian as native-born | -19.9 **                                  | -20.5 **                         |
| Q37                               | Equal chances at education and jobs           | 67.3 **                                   | 56.4 **                          |
| Q38l                              | If pay taxes, that's enough community support | -25.6 **                                  | -28.6 **                         |
| Q38m                              | So hard-pressed I don't worry about others    | -45.0 **                                  | -42.1 **                         |
| Q52                               | Very concerned about my city                  | 32.1 **                                   | 28.3 *                           |
| Socio-demographic Characteristics |   |   |                                  |
| MID-URB                           | Lives in mid-size town                        |   | 341.5 **                         |
| SM-URB                            | Lives in small town                           |   | 219.7 **                         |
| RURAL                             | Lives in a rural community                    |   | 307.0 **                         |
| EDYRS                             | Education in years of schooling               |   | 16.6 **                          |
| B.C.                              | Lives in British Columbia                     |   | 142.7 **                         |
|                                   | Constant:                                     | -1.15 **                                  | -2.52 *                          |
|                                   | R <sup>2</sup>                                | 0.225                                     | 0.311                            |

\*p less than or equal to 0.05, \*\*p less than or equal to 0.01, ns = p greater than 0.05.

Note. All values variables are coded in such a way that high scores reflect strong agreement with the statement.

## Charitable Givers

In similar fashion to our procedure in examining volunteers, we ascertained which categories of charitable givers compared most sharply with non-givers on 91 questions involving values, beliefs, and perceptions. Charitable givers were individuals who reported having made a financial contribution to a charitable or community organization at least once during the 12 months preceding the survey.

In contrast to the small number of empirical studies of the effects of values, perceptions, and beliefs on volunteering, there has been less research on the ethos of charitable givers. Perhaps this stems from the fact that the majority of individuals in society typically make some sort of charitable donation to charity each year, however infrequently or small, so the question of how givers differ from non-givers is less pertinent. Two studies that have directly examined the impact of values on charitable giving both reach the same conclusion: values, perceptions, and beliefs do not significantly affect giving if measures of community participation are included in the analysis. Schervish and Havens (1997) examined several clusters of variables thought to influence giving, including a set of values, perceptions, and beliefs that reflect what they define as frameworks of consciousness, and another set, representing formal and informal social networks, that they define as communities of participation (1997: 240-241). When each of these clusters was used separately to predict giving behaviour, both had a significant impact, although the communities of participation cluster had a larger impact in terms of the explained variation in giving (1997: 245-246). However, when the two clusters were combined in a single predictive model, along with some basic demographic information, only variables in the communities of participation cluster remained significant: the frameworks of consciousness variables had no effect on giving behaviour.

A similar finding comes from Sokolowski's 1998 study of giving. When variables representing both values and social participation were used in combination to predict giving behaviour, only the participation variables were significant. The attitude variables (values, perceptions, and beliefs) did not have a significant independent effect (1998: 271).

The findings in both studies would suggest that values, perceptions, and beliefs are relatively unimportant for charitable giving. However, as Schervish and Havens themselves point out (1997: 256), these results do not necessarily mean that values, perceptions, and beliefs have no effect on giving. Rather, the finding that values, perceptions, and beliefs affect giving when analysed separately from participation variables, but do not directly affect giving when used in combination with participation variables, may mean that the latter mediate the relationship between the former and giving behaviour. In other words, the causal model in this case is one where values, perceptions, and beliefs directly affect participation, which in turn directly affects

giving. So while values, perceptions, and beliefs may not have a direct effect on giving that is independent of their effect on participation, it remains appropriate to ask whether or not the values, perceptions, and beliefs held by givers are substantially different from those held by non-givers. The assumption here is that differences in giving are due to differences in participation which in turn are (partly) due to differences in values, perceptions, and beliefs.

The findings from these studies are limited not only by their inability to model the appropriate causal connections, but also because both use as their dependent variable measures that confound the decision to give with the decision about how much to give. Schervish and Havens use donations as a percent of household income (1997: 243), while Sokolowski uses the dollar value of contribution (1998: 265). As some have found, the factors that affect the decision to give are different from, and operate in a different way than do factors that affect the decision about how much to give (Smith, Kehoe, and Cremer, 1995: 124).

Our analysis is based on the proposition that there may be a worldview or ethos that distinguishes givers from non-givers (perhaps through differences in participation) and focuses mainly on the decision to give itself.

Table 5. Results of Pairwise Comparisons of Charitable Givers and Non-Givers on 91 Values, Beliefs, and Perceptions.

| Groups Compared                    | Number of Significantly Different Questions <sup>a</sup> | Number of Opposing Questions |
|------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| 1. Givers versus All Non-givers    | 58/91  | 6                            |
| 2. Active Givers versus Non-givers | 63/91  | 8                            |

a.  $X^2$  is significant at the 0.05 level or better.

The analysis of the values of charitable givers begins by looking at the bivariate relationships for two categories of respondents — all givers versus non-givers, and active givers (those who give monthly or more often) versus non-givers. Table 5 shows that in the first comparison, there were differences for 58 of 91 values/beliefs/perceptions questions, of which 6

were principal differentiating questions (i.e., the two compared groups expressed opposing views rather than merely different magnitudes of the same response); the equivalent numbers for active givers were 63 significantly different questions and 8 principal differentiating questions. These results immediately reveal that givers also show a distinctive set of values, but slightly less distinctively than broad-spectrum, active volunteers. Not surprisingly, the majority of values/beliefs/perceptions questions that were distinctive to volunteers were also the ones that distinguished charitable donors, and especially active charitable donors, from non-givers. We say “not surprisingly” because one of the core common elements in both volunteering and charitable giving is a concern for the wellbeing of others and perhaps a sense of personal responsibility to contribute to a common good of some kind.

### **All Givers versus Non-Givers**

We subsequently undertook two logistic regression analyses of the full set of values and beliefs that differentiated givers from non-givers, in concert with socio-demographic variables; their results are presented in Tables 6 and 7, where each table contains two models, one containing values questions only and a second containing both values and background or socio-demographic variables.

In the comparison of all givers with non-givers (Table 6) model 1 shows that 12 value questions significantly differentiate givers from non-givers. The low explanatory power of the model ( $R^2 = 0.12$ ), however, suggests that the value differences between the two groups are not very consistent. The values, perceptions, and beliefs held by givers overlap considerably with those held by non-givers. When socio-demographic variables are entered as controls, the explained variation goes up a little ( $R^2 = 0.17$ ) but six of the values variables drop out of the model. Since it is likely that most individuals' values are in some measure a product rather than a cause of their background characteristics, this implies that for half the value differences seen in model 1, the association between values and giving behaviour arises because both are a consequence of differences in background characteristics. The relative importance of social characteristics is evident in that those characteristics account for 0.11 points of the  $0.17^2$ , while values account for 0.06 points.

Table 6. Logistic Regression Models Comparing Givers with Non-givers

|                                   |  | Model 1                               | Model 2               |
|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
|                                   |  | Values only                           | Values and Background |
| Values                            |  | % change in the odds of being a giver |                       |
| Q.1(2)                            | Most important for society: become common people<br>(Reference group is answers 1,3,4 to Q1) | -41.9 **                              | ns                    |
| Respondent strongly agrees with:  |  |                                       |                       |
| Q7e                               | Children should be encouraged to work hard   | 57.1 **                               | 61.5 **               |
| Q8b                               | Don't need to support interests other than my own  | -16.1 *                               | ns                    |
| Q10f                              | Two sets of rules: one for the rich and one for all else                                     | -21.6 *                               | -17.8 *               |
| Q12                               | You are treated very fairly  | 55.4 **                               | 59.2 **               |
| Q18                               | Satisfied with financial situation   | 48.6 **                               | 42.0 **               |
| Q21                               | Economic prospects of the young are very good  | -22.4 *                               | ns                    |
| Q23                               | Satisfied with recognition of my ethnic group  | 30.6 *                                | ns                    |
| Q38e                              | It is acceptable to be gay or lesbian  | -16.7 *                               | ns                    |
| Q38f                              | Ethnic groups should blend into society  | 51.4 **                               | ns                    |
| Q38l                              | Paying taxes is enough support for community organizæ  | -32.6 **                              | -25.3 **              |
| Q51                               | Very concerned with my province  | 49.5 **                               | 24.4 *                |
| Socio-demographic Characteristics |  |                                       |                       |
| Age                               | Age  |                                       | 3.1 **                |
| Quebec                            | Quebec   |                                       | -39.1 **              |
| Rural                             | Rural  |                                       | 45.7 *                |
| Gender                            | Gender (Female=1)  |                                       | 54.1 **               |
| No Job                            | Not employed   |                                       | -43.7 **              |
| Education                         | Education  |                                       | 12.5 **               |
| Single                            | Single   |                                       | -51.7 **              |
| Constant                          |  | -0.87                                 | -0.27 ns              |
| R square                          |  | 0.12                                  | 0.17                  |

\*p less than or equal to 0.05, \*\*p less than or equal to 0.01, ns = p greater than 0.05.

Note. All values variables are coded in such a way that high scores reflect strong agreement with the statement.

Because a substantial amount of giving may be incidental, to identify the ethos that underlies more intentional or committed charitable giving may benefit from a more restricted comparison between those who give consistently over the year and those who do not give at all.

### Active Givers versus Non-Givers

In Table 7 we compare those who give monthly or more often with non-givers. Here values, perceptions, and beliefs have a much stronger effect in discriminating between active

givers and non-givers. Model 1 accounts for 34% of the variation in the data, and 11 values questions significantly distinguish between givers and non-givers. As is the case in the comparison of all givers with non-givers in Table 6, the value differences in model 1 of Table 7 are largely due to differences in social background (model 2). When these characteristics are introduced as controls, the explained variation rises to 48% but the background variables are responsible for three times as much of the explained variation as are the values variables (37% versus 11%)

Table 7. Logistic Regression Models Comparing Active Givers with Non-givers

| Values   |   | Model 1                                   | Model 2               |
|--|---|---|-----------------------|
|  |   | Values only                               | Values and Background |
|  |   | % change in odds of being an active giver |                       |
| Respondent's main obligation in society is:      |   |   |                       |
| QDUM1  | Pursue own goals and aspirations                          | 105.2 ns                                  | ns                    |
| Q4DUM2   | Consider the common good in decisions                     | 132.5 *                                   | ns                    |
| Q4DUM3   | Uphold basic human and moral values                       | 262.0 **                                  | ns                    |
| (Reference group: Maintain distinctive identity) |   |   |                       |
| Respondent agrees with the statement:            |   |   |                       |
| Q6e  | Obligated to help any one in need                         | 48.9 **                                   | 43.6 *                |
| Q7e  | Children should be encouraged to work hard                | 103.6 **                                  | 76.7 *                |
| Q7f  | Children should desire to get ahead in life               | -48.9 **                                  | ns                    |
| Q8c  | Every one owes society, should give back                  | 60.7 **                                   | 49.2 **               |
| Q18f   | Satisfied with financial situation                        | 133.6 **                                  | 103.4 **              |
| Q29  | Should be careful trusting                                | -27.9 **                                  | ns                    |
| Q38e   | It is acceptable to be gay or lesbian                     | -20.4 *                                   | ns                    |
| Q38f   | Ethnic groups should blend into society                   | 32.1 *                                    | ns                    |
| Q38l   | Paying taxes is enough support for community organization | -31.3 **                                  | -28.1 *               |
| Q52  | Concerned with my city                                    | 70.3 **                                   | ns                    |
| Socio-demographic Characteristics                |   |   |                       |
| AGE2   | Age in years  |   | 5.0 **                |
| QUE  | Quebec  |   | -71.1 **              |
| RURAL  | Rural   |   | 80.9 **               |
| SEX  | Gender (Female=1)   |   | 66.6 *                |
| NOJOB  | Not employed  |   | -55.2 **              |
| RELIGIOS   | Religiosity   |   | 57.6 **               |
| EDYRS  | Education   |   | 14.3 **               |
| INCOM6   | Income group  |   | 1.4 **                |
|  | Constant  | -6.2 **                                   | -10.70 **             |
|  | R square  | 0.341                                     | 0.48                  |

\*p less than or equal to 0.05, \*\*p less than or equal to 0.01, ns = p greater than 0.05.

Note. All values variables are coded in such a way that high scores reflect strong agreement with the statement.

Examining the specific value questions in model 2 of Table 7 that differentiate active givers from non-givers is informative. The strongest effect is actually associated with an attitude question (Q18) and shows that being satisfied with one's financial position more than doubles the

odds of being an active giver. This is followed closely by the belief that children should learn to work hard (Q7e). Together these dimensions suggest that active givers value self-sufficiency but are not caught up in a never-ending struggle to increase their wealth — they are satisfied with what they have. (Being satisfied with one's financial situation is not equivalent to being rich — income is one of the significant background variables in this model so givers are satisfied with their financial situation regardless of their level of real income.) The remaining three significant values questions directly reflect a concern for others in general (Q6e) and a sense of obligation to contribute to the welfare of society, the common good (Q8c), beyond that required of all citizens by paying taxes (Q38l). The ethos of active givers is thus characterised by the values of self-sufficiency along with an acknowledgement of a significant obligation to society.

Overall, the impression of the ethos characterizing givers is slightly different from that of volunteers. As in the comparison of all volunteers with non-volunteers, there are only small value differences between all givers and non-givers. Whether by themselves or in concert with socio-demographic factors, values do not strongly differentiate these two groups. Between active givers and non-givers, there are substantial differences as shown by the large proportion of variation explained in model 2, Table 7. These differences, however, are attributable more to socio-demographic differences than to value differences since the explained variation due to values is one-third that of the socio-demographics. But despite these findings, values still make a non-trivial contribution to group value differences in both comparisons.

Combining the results for givers and active givers, the central components of the ethos of givers include a belief in the value of self-sufficiency (Q7e), a belief that society is fair (Q10f and Q12), feeling financially secure (Q18), and a belief that everyone has a significant obligation to society (Q6e and (Q8c) that is not discharged simply by paying taxes (Q38l).

| Table 8. Summary of Statistically Significant Value, Belief and Perception Questions from Logistic Regression Model 2 in Tables 2 to 4 and 6 to 8.* |                                  |   |  |                          |                                 |   |
|---|----------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Respondent agrees with the statement:   | Volunteers                       |   |  | Givers                   |                                 | Both                                    |
|   | Volunteers versus Non-volunteers | Active Volunteers versus Non-volunteers | Formal and Direct Helping Volunteers versus Non-volunteers | Givers versus Non-givers | Active Givers versus Non-givers | Both Volunteer and Giver versus Neither |
|   | Table 2                          | Table 3                                 | Table 4  | Table 6                  | Table 7                         | Table 8                                 |
| Q1c Widespread commitment to common goals is important  |                                  |   |  |                          |                                 | +                                       |
| Q6e Obligated to help any one in need   |                                  |   |  |                          | +                               |   |
| Q7d Children should learn loyalty to ethnic group   |                                  |   | -  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q7e Children should learn to work hard  |                                  |   | +  | +                        | +                               |   |
| Q8c Every one owes society, should give back  |                                  |   |  |                          | +                               | +                                       |
| Q8i Laws should always be respected   | +                                | +                                       |  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q8n Immigrants are not as Canadian as native-born   |                                  |   | -  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q8o People should stay attached to ethnic group   | -                                | -                                       |  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q9b Standard of living is declining   | -                                |   |  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q10f Two sets of rules: one for the rich and one for all else   |                                  |   |  | -                        |                                 | -                                       |
| Q12 You are treated very fairly   |                                  |   |  | +                        |                                 | +                                       |
| Q14 Fewer job opportunities for my gender   | +                                | +                                       |  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q18 Satisfied with financial situation  |                                  |   |  | +                        | +                               |   |
| Q29 Should be careful trusting others   | -                                |   |  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q31 Have much control over your Life  | +                                |   |  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q34 Feel very at home in my community   |                                  | +                                       |  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q37 Equal chances at education and jobs   |                                  |   | +  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q38h Canada better off if less government   | +                                |   |  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q38j Needs are responsibility of individual/family, not society   |                                  | -                                       |  |                          |                                 |   |
| Q38l Paying taxes is enough support for community organizations   | -                                |   | -  | -                        | -                               | -                                       |
| Q38m So hard-pressed I don't worry about others   | -                                | -                                       | -  |                          |                                 | -                                       |
| Q51 Very concerned with my province   |                                  |   |  | +                        |                                 |   |
| Q52 Very concerned about my city  | +                                | +                                       | +  |                          |                                 |   |
| % Explained Variation, R <sup>2</sup> components due to:  |                                  |   |  |                          |                                 |   |
| Values, beliefs and perceptions:  | 8.6                              | 15.9                                    | 16.4   | 6                        | 10.6                            | 19.3                                    |
| Socio-demographics:   | 3.5                              | 7.8                                     | 14.7   | 11                       | 37                              | 20                                      |
| Both Values and Socio-demographics:   | 12.1                             | 23.7                                    | 31.1   | 17                       | 47.6                            | 39.3                                    |

\* Statistically significant questions are indicated with a + or - to show whether the coefficient increases or decreases the likelihood of being a volunteer, giver or both, as the model specifies. The ellipses indicate values that occur for both givers and volunteers; the rectangles indicate values that occur uniquely in all models for either volunteers or givers.

The ethos that underlies giving is comparable but not identical to that which underpins volunteering: there is little overlap in the specific values, beliefs and perceptions that distinguish volunteers and those that distinguish givers (Table 8). When we compare the values that occur in

model 2 of Tables 2, 3 and 4 (the volunteers) with those in Tables 6 and 7 (the givers), there are only two areas of direct overlap (the ellipses in Table 8). Both volunteers and givers believe that children should be taught to work hard (Q7e, Table 8), and that simply paying taxes is not sufficient support for community organizations (Q38l, Table 8). Beyond these, there are specific questions that are not identical but the sentiments they reflect are quite similar. Givers, for example, recognize an obligation to those in need, and to society as a whole (Q6e, Q8c) while volunteers believe that satisfying needs is partially a societal responsibility (Q38j) and that one's own interests must not entirely supercede one's social obligations (Q38m). Thus, not surprisingly, there is a degree of consistency between the values, beliefs and perceptions of givers and those of volunteers.

### **People Who Both Volunteer and Give versus Those Who Do Neither**

The final step in our analytical procedure was designed to address the question of whether people who are both volunteers and givers show a distinctive ethos more strongly than people who neither volunteer nor give. People who were both volunteers and givers (42% of the sample) differed from people who were neither (13% of the sample) on 64 of 91 value questions, and manifested 6 principal differentiating questions: Q8a, Q8b, Q8h, Q18, Q30e and Q38m. Table 9 displays the logistic regression models for those who were both volunteers and givers as compared with those who were neither. By themselves, the values questions in model 1 account for about 30% of the variation in the data. When social background factors are controlled, the explained variation rises to a respectable 49%, and only three of the original 10 values questions become insignificant. In this model, values account for as much variation as do the background variables, about 20% respectively. Taken together, this indicates that there are important value, perception, and belief differences between those who take part in both forms of contributory behaviour and those who don't. The core traits of this value set are a commitment to others in society (Q1dum3, Q8c, Q38l, Q38m and Q52), in other words commitment to a common good, and a belief that society is basically just (Q12, Q10f).

Table 9. Logistic Regression Models Comparing Individuals Who Were Both Formal Volunteers and Givers to Those Who Were Neither.

| Values                               |  | Model 1                                     | Model 2               |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------|
|                                      |  | Values only                                 | Values and Background |
|                                      |  | % change in odds of being a volunteer-giver |                       |
| Q1DUM3                               | Commitment to common values most important for society<br>(Reference group is answers 1,2,4 in Q1) | 86.6 **                                     | 107.35 **             |
| Respondent agrees with the statement |  |   |                       |
| Q6a                                  | Strong obligation to family  | 87.1 **                                     | ns                    |
| Q8c                                  | Every one owes society, should give back   | 53.5 **                                     | 60.9 **               |
| Q10f                                 | Two sets of rules: one for the rich and one for all else   | -33.7 **                                    | -32.0 **              |
| Q12                                  | You are treated fairly   | 51.3 **                                     | 52.9 **               |
| Q14                                  | Your gender is treated fairly  | -24.3 **                                    | ns                    |
| Q31                                  | Much control over life   | 43.8 **                                     | ns                    |
| Q38l                                 | Paying taxes is enough support for community organizations   | -35.1 **                                    | -37.0 **              |
| Q38m                                 | So hard pressed, can't worry about others  | -39.8 **                                    | -49.4 **              |
| Q52                                  | Concerned with my city   | 51.1 **                                     | 45.2 **               |
| Socio-demographic Characteristics    |  |   |                       |
| SEX                                  | Gender   |   | 99.0 **               |
| BLUECOL                              | Blue Collar  |   | -64.4 **              |
| NOJOB                                | Not employed   |   | -61.5 **              |
| INCOM6                               | Income group   |   | 1.6 **                |
| MIDURBAN                             | Mid-sized urban  |   | 171.6 **              |
| SMURBAN                              | Small urban  |   | 94.3 *                |
| RURAL                                | Rural residence  |   | 316.6 **              |
| Constant                             |  | -2.50 *                                     | -0.1 ns               |
| R square                             |  | 0.297                                       | 0.397                 |

\*p less than or equal to 0.05, \*\*p less than or equal to 0.01, ns = p greater than 0.05.

Note. All values variables are coded in such a way that high scores reflect strong agreement with the statement.

## Concluding Commentary

The combination of several key elements in this study — the large number of questions on values, perceptions, and beliefs; the measures of both formal volunteering and direct personal helping; the measure of frequency of volunteering; engaging in charitable giving separately from volunteering; and people who do both — have enabled us to respond affirmatively to the initial question, Do people who volunteer have a distinctive ethos? Yes, some do but not all, as is also the case with charitable givers. It is those who practise each with considerable frequency, and therefore probably commitment, who are most strongly characterized by the ethos. Bringing together the findings from the analyses of both volunteering and giving, the components of this ethos can be identified. These, we would argue, reflect a coherent and interrelated set of values, perceptions and beliefs and thus constitute an ethos that is distinctive to active volunteers and givers. The elements in this ethos are:

1. Recognition of the existence and importance of a civic or communal good of some kind.
2. Belief that individuals have a responsibility to support and contribute to the common good, over and above the standard obligations of citizenship, and regardless of the responsibilities regarding the common good that might be delegated to organizations or institutions such as governments or churches.
3. A worldview that is notably (a) rather more universalistic or cosmopolitan than particularistic, (b) inclusive, (c) trusting, and (d) more prosocial than individualistic.
4. A worldview that sees individuals and their social milieu as interconnected rather than separated.
5. A basic belief in the importance, and the present existence, of social justice.

Our analysis indicates that (i) the full ethos of both volunteers and givers consists of both a limited set of strongly differentiating values and beliefs and a large number of mildly differentiating values, but that (ii) this ethos characterized principally people who manifested a higher or more generalized level of prosociality. While little difference in values was found between volunteers and non-volunteers, or givers and non-givers, substantial differences were found between active (i.e., frequent) contributors (volunteers and givers) and non-contributors, and between formal and direct helping volunteers, and people who were neither. In addition, even when socio-demographic variables were accounted for in the logit models, values continued to have clear and significant effects in differentiating contributors from non-contributors. Arguably, the presence of this ethos among individuals who are higher-frequency (i.e., more strongly committed) contributors and who also engage in direct personal acts of caring and helping is indicative of something more than just prosociality — of a syndrome of generosity mixed with civic engagement and concern for the common good.

These clear and consistent findings may be to some degree a product of the 92 particular values, perceptions and beliefs on which we compared volunteers and givers of various kinds with non-volunteers and non-givers in the national survey. A different or larger set of questions could reasonably be expected to yield different results; this will only be ascertained by further

empirical probing. What is clear, though, is that values, perceptions and beliefs, broadly identified, occupy a significant, perhaps key place in the panoply of factors that distinguish people who manifest a strong “helping and caring” syndrome. This syndrome holds true consistently, and more or less equally strongly, for people who are active volunteers, active givers, or both combined; differences among them are small.

Active volunteering, along with active giving, is distinctive — we might even say anomalous (recall Le Chambon) — in several ways in Canadian society. (We have noted in another study how they have a strong tendency to co-occur. See Reed and Selbee, 2001.) It has a modest incidence as a general social phenomenon but an elevated incidence in some social environments and among individuals with certain characteristics. Being cooperative action directed toward providing a collective good of some kind, active volunteering and giving run counter to such dominant elements of contemporary North American culture as possessive individualism and the competitive maximizing of self-advantage. As with all anomalies, it begs to be understood. Efforts to construct a more effective grasp of the correlates of, and the social dynamics that give rise to, active volunteering and giving will have to take account not only of contextual (macrosocial) and personality (microsocial) factors but the presence of a distinctive set of values and beliefs, perhaps even a worldview, among those volunteers and givers. That a particular ethos characterizes active volunteers and givers coincides with our finding from other research (Reed and Selbee, 2000) that three of the most strongly correlated characteristics of such individuals are particular family background and early life experience features, particular religious beliefs (which are often transmitted from parents to children), and the presence or absence of a university education (i.e., in binary form — having it or not — rather than the conventional monotonic ‘level of education’). These three factors all entail social learning and social reproduction and likely play influential roles in creating the ethos that underlies volunteering and giving — contributing to general welfare and the common good. There will be significant payoff for theory-building when we are able to understand the influence of the ethos factor relative to other categories of variables, and even more so when we understand the societal processes by which the distinctive ethos of active volunteers and givers is selectively generated and transmitted.

## APPENDIX

### *Questionnaire Items Identifying Values, Perceptions, and Beliefs*

The 92 value, perception, and belief items used in the analysis are taken from the questions below. Each item is identified by its question number and by a lower case letter identifying the sub-section of the question involved. The section headings in the questionnaire are included here in order to clarify the intent and of the question clusters. We indicate with an asterisk the 53 questions where active volunteers (weekly or more often) were significantly different from non-volunteers.

#### I - CONCEPTION OF THE 'GOOD' SOCIETY

1. Which of the following do you think is the most important for a society to function well?
  - a) That people give up some of their personal advantages for the common good
  - b) That all people put aside their different backgrounds and become a common people
  - c) \* That there is a widespread commitment to a set of common values
  - d) That individuals independently pursue their own goals
  
2. Which of them do you consider the least important?
  - a) That people give up some of their personal advantages for the common good
  - b) That all people put aside their different backgrounds and become a common people
  - c) \* That there is a widespread commitment to a set of common values
  - d) That individuals independently pursue their own goals
  
3. Whom do you admire more?
  - a) People who go their own way without worrying about what others think; or
  - b) People who learn to fit in and get along with others?

#### II - REQUIREMENTS OF MEMBERSHIP

Nature of obligations

4. People have different ideas about their main obligations as a member of society. Which of the following do you consider your most important obligation
  - a) To pursue your own goals and aspirations to the best of your abilities
  - b) To always consider the common good in your decisions and actions
  - c) \* To uphold basic human and moral values in all circumstances
  - d) To maintain the distinctive identity and heritage of our society
  
5. And which do you consider your least important obligation?
  - a) \* To pursue your own goals and aspirations to the best of your abilities
  - b) To always consider the common good in your decisions and actions
  - c) To uphold basic human and moral values in all circumstances
  - d) To maintain the distinctive identity and heritage of our society

### Social boundaries of obligation

6. How strong an obligation do you feel towards helping the following kinds of people: Very strong, moderately strong, not too strong, or not strong at all?
- a) Family
  - b) \* Close friends
  - c) People in the same boat as I am in life
  - d) \* People from my ethnic, cultural or racial group
  - e) \* Any person in society who needs help

### III - REQUIRED INDIVIDUAL QUALITIES AND PRINCIPLES OF BEHAVIOUR

#### Individual qualities

7. Please tell me how important you think it is that children be encouraged to learn each of the following at home: very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?
- a) \* To be concerned for the needs of others
  - b) \* To stick to your principles even if it is not easy or popular
  - c) \* The ability to cooperate with others
  - d) Loyalty to the traditions of your ethnic, cultural or racial group
  - e) Motivation to work hard
  - f) The desire to get ahead in life

#### Principles of behaviour

8. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements
- a) \* The best way to be a good member of the community is to mind your own business and not bother other people
  - b) Individuals cannot be expected to join or support organizations that promote interests other than their own
  - c) \* Everyone owes something to society and should try to give something back
  - d) \* Only agreements that are written and signed need to be honoured; verbal agreements don't matter
  - e) \* It's OK to try to get out of paying tax any way we can because everyone else is doing it
  - f) \* Being honest makes it more likely that you will not come out ahead
  - g) \* Promises are just made to get people to do things for you and don't always have to be kept
  - h) \* There is nothing wrong with giving advantages to people from the same ethnic, cultural or racial group as yourself

- i) \* Laws should be respected and obeyed regardless of your opinions about them
- j) \* Everything is relative, and there just aren't any definite rules to live by
- k) Each person can make real progress only when the groups to which they belong make progress

#### IV – ENTITLEMENTS

- l) People have a right to be able to do what they want to do with their lives
- m) \* Everyone is entitled to help from others when they are in serious need or face difficult situations
- n) \* Immigrants cannot expect to be considered as fully Canadian as those who were born and raised here
- o) \* People have to stay attached to their own ethnic, cultural or racial group because it is only there that they can count on being fully accepted
- p) \* A child molester is entitled to the same treatment by the police and the courts as any other individual

#### V - THREATS TO THE 'GOOD' SOCIETY

9. People have different views about the problems faced by our society today. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree that the trouble with our society is:
  - a) that there are too many people who expect to get something for nothing?
  - b) \* that the standard of living is declining?
  - c) that there are too many people preoccupied with what they can get out of the system rather than with what they can contribute to the common good?
  - d) that there is less willingness to help those in need?
  - e) that we encourage too much ethnic, cultural or racial diversity in the country?
  - f) that too many people will sacrifice their principles in order to get ahead economically
  
10. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:
  - a) Tolerance for people who are different from ourselves is declining in our society
  - b) Public trust is being weakened by the behaviour of people in positions of public responsibility and leadership
  - c) Public trust is being weakened by the behaviour of people who manage business corporations
  - d) There is too much concern for every group's fair share and not enough for the needs of the society as a whole
  - e) \* People today are less concerned with fairness and social justice than they were a few years ago
  - f) In our society, there are two sets of rules: one for those who have money and one for everyone else

## VI - EXPERIENTIAL VARIABLES

### A. Sense of Fairness

12. \* What about you personally: how fairly do you feel you are being treated in this society: very fairly, somewhat fairly, not too fairly, or not at all fairly?
13. Let me ask you about opportunities for jobs and promotions. Do you think that people of your own ethnic, cultural or racial background have more, the same, or fewer opportunities for jobs and promotions as people of other ethnic, cultural or racial backgrounds?
14. \* What about men and women: do you think that (MEN/WOMEN--ASK ABOUT GENDER OF RESPONDENT) have more, the same, or fewer opportunities for jobs and promotions than (MEN/WOMEN)?
16. \* How fairly would you say that the class you belong to is treated in our society today: very fairly, somewhat fairly, not too fairly, or not at all fairly?
17. I would like to ask you about federal government programs: Is the province you live in getting more than its fair share of these programs, about its fair share or less than its fair share?

### B. Assessment of economic situation and degree of security

We are also interested in finding out how people are getting along financially these days.

18. \* As far as you and your family are concerned, would you say you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied about the way you are getting along financially?
20. Do you think that a year from now you and your family will be better off, worse off, or about the same financially as you are now?
21. How would you assess the economic prospects for young people today? Do you think they are very good, good, poor, or very poor?
22. \* What about your own children or grandchildren? Do you think their prospects are very good, good, poor, or very poor?

### C. Assessment of status, recognition and status security

This country is made up of many different kinds of people. Although each one makes a contribution to our society, that contribution may not be recognized to the same degree.

23. I would like to ask you about the contribution to society of people of your own ethnic, cultural or racial background. How satisfied are you with the recognition people of your

background are receiving for their contribution to society: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

24. Would you say that people of your background are receiving more, less or about the same recognition for their contribution to society as they did a few years ago?
25. \* What about people with your level of education or training? How satisfied are you with the recognition that they are receiving for their contribution to society: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?
26. Do you feel that people with your level of education and training are receiving more, less or about the same recognition for their contribution to society as they were a few years ago?
27. And what about MEN/WOMEN? [ASK ABOUT GENDER OF RESPONDENT] How satisfied are you with the recognition that MEN/WOMEN are receiving for their contribution to society: very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?
28. \* Do you feel that MEN/WOMEN [ASK ABOUT GENDER OF RESPONDENT] are receiving more, less or about the same recognition for their contribution to society as they were a few years ago?

#### D. Trust

29. \* Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement: Individuals should be careful about trusting others since there are too many people who only seek to benefit themselves.
30. \* Some people place different amounts of trust in others; they may be concerned that others may take advantage of them. How much do you trust the following people to not take advantage of you: a lot, some, not very much or not at all?
  - b) \* your friends
  - c) people who have different political beliefs
  - d) politicians in the federal
  - e) \* businessmen
  - f) members of your ethnic, cultural or racial background
  - g) people who have different moral values
  - h) politicians in your province
  - j) your family
  - k) people who have different religious beliefs

#### E. Sense of control

31. \* Some people feel they have control over the way their lives turn out, and other people feel that what they themselves do has no real effect on what happens to them. What about you:

do you feel you have a great deal of control, some, not very much or none at all over the way your life turns out?

#### F. Degree of social integration

32. \* How satisfied are you with the number of good friends you have? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?
34. \* How much do you feel at home in the community where you live: very much, somewhat, a little, or not at all?
35. \* How much do you feel at home in this society as a whole: very much, somewhat, a little, or not at all?

### VII - CONSEQUENCE VARIABLES

#### A. Position on social justice issues

36. In our society, various sorts of programmes exist to help people in need. Do you think that such programmes should be funded mainly through voluntary contributions or mainly through taxes?
37. \* In your view, how important is it that everyone has the same chances at a good education and a good job as anyone else? Very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?
38. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:
- a) Places should be reserved for ethnic and racial minorities to ensure their adequate representation in the work place
  - b) There should be programmes for people disadvantaged in one way or another to make sure that they have the same chances as everyone else
  - c) Everyone in society has a right to a minimum income

#### B. Position on alternative life styles: Inclusion or exclusion

- d) I do not approve of people with ideas and lifestyles that differ significantly from what is generally accepted
- e) \* I find that to be gay or lesbian is acceptable

#### C. Position on cultural diversity

- f) Ethnic, cultural and racial groups should try as much as possible to blend into Canadian society
- g) \* The ideal society is one in which people are sufficiently similar to feel at home with one another

#### D. Importance/responsibility of public and private sectors

- h) The country would be better off if there were less government.

- i) \* Canada would be a better place to live if there were fewer laws and regulations
- j) \* The needs of individuals are the responsibility of themselves and their families and not of the community.
- k) Helping people in need should be the responsibility of volunteer and charitable organizations; governments should become involved only as a last resort
- l) \* As long as one pays one's taxes, it is not necessary to support community organizations and activities
- m) \* These days, I am so hard-pressed to take care of my own needs that I worry less about the needs of others
- n) \* I have trouble seeing how the taxes I pay benefit me or society

#### E. Social participation

People are mostly concerned about their families, their jobs and the demands of day-to-day living, but they may also be concerned about what happens in the community where they live and in the larger society.

- 50. \* How much are you concerned - a lot, a fair amount, not too much, or not at all with what happens in Canadian society as a whole?
- 51. How much are you concerned with what happens in your province?
- 52. \* And what about the city or town you live in?

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