

The Atlantic School of Business: A Critical History, 1980 to 1990

By
Darryn Steeves

A Major Research Project Submitted to
Saint Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Executive Masters of Business Administration

March 2015

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Approved: Dr. Albert Mills
Supervisor

Approved: Dr. Wendy Carroll
Examiner

Date: April 13, 2015

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Abstract

The Atlantic School of Business (ASB), initiated in 1970 have become a unique and long lasting organization. One that persevered despite having no formal organization itself for 35 years. This lack of formal organization has created a situation where little to no formal textual evidence relating to the ASB conference's history exists. This evidentiary vacuum has left an opportunity for historians to now create the history of the ASB conference. Doing so has the potential to lend light to the organizational dynamic of not only the ASB conferences themselves, but also to the Universities that necessarily support the organization.

First and foremost, this paper establishes the details (who, what, when and where) of the ASB conferences during this period. The question of why, an elusive and historically contextual question, is addressed insofar as this historian dares, and is ultimately of less importance to this paper. This paper does not presume to create a definitive history of the ASB or the conferences that it organized.. The intent herein is to examine one small time period (1980 to 1990) so as to shed light on previously unexamined material, assisting future researchers to delve into an ever deeper understanding of management knowledge dissemination and what role the ASB may have played. Some material from earlier time periods are interrogated, yet only so as to establish context. The actual foundation event of the ASB conferences and the implications thereof elude the scope of this undertaking.

Insight may be gained herein into the proliferation and dissemination of management theory in Atlantic Canada, in the period of time examined within this thesis. Of secondary importance is the analysis of what primary and secondary source materials are germane and bringing those details to light. Future historians would be encouraged to build upon and around this paper.

March, 2015

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
METHODOLOGY	6
Historic Turn – Intents and Motivations	7
Data Collection Process	9
Types of Data	10
Categorization of Data	11
Historical Context.....	12
DISCUSSION	15
ASB Early Years	15
The Proceedings: an analysis	18
University Participation.....	18
Faculty Attendance by Institution.....	20
Functional Areas	22
Themes	26
Gross Participation Levels	27
Geographic Representation.....	28
Presenters.....	30
Gender.....	36
CONCLUSION	38
APPENDICES.....	40
REFERENCES	52

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Atlantic School of Business (ASB) conference was initiated in 1970. (Mills, 2005). Time has hereto obscured any known, explicit, declaration of the motivation of those who founded the ASB. This presents an opportunity for theorizing and the historian to paint the context within which the organization and its conferences emerged and existed. The ASB conference's annual existence since 1970 has made it one of the longest running organizations of its type in North America. Hosting duties for this conference have been rotated throughout Atlantic Canada, with the conference being traditionally held in the fall of each year. Perhaps most interestingly however, the organization has been operating without a formal structure for most of its history (Mills, 2005). It was only in 2005 that an executive committee for the ASB conference was created (Barragan, 2008).

This paper is only one very small component of a larger project examining management knowledge distribution in Canada¹. Academic conferences are typical forums within which management knowledge is actively disseminated and provide a unique opportunity to catalogue and analyze the development of management theory and research. The fact that ASB conferences have been in operation since the early 1970s provides a useful timeline for historical analysis.

The undocumented and somewhat nebulous nature of the ASB conference is well characterized by the fact that records regarding most of the conference's first years (1971 to 1979) are currently unavailable. There is no formal record of the ASB conference's early years. (Haddon & Mills. 2008). The length of the ASB conference's existence is surpassed only by the

¹ For example, much of the archival material was collected by a Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)-funded research team that initially consisted of Albert J. Mills and Jean Helms Mills and later by an extended team that includes Gabrielle Durepos, Amy Thurlow, Trish McLaren, Terrance Weatherbee, and Kristene Collier.

Administrative Sciences Association of Canada (ASAC) which was founded in 1957 and in the US by the Academy of Management, founded in 1936. (Mills, 2005). From 1971 to 2005, a remarkable duration, the ASB operated without a formal structure. (Mills, 2005). While this morphology of the ASB is a subject ripe for examination, the historical period that this paper is concerned with is the 1980s. This period was chosen for a) the lack of archival materials available prior to 1980s, b) the existence of a fair amount of material for the period 1980-1990, and c) the distance between 1990 and today (2015) provides us with the possibility to studying the organization over time.

Further adding to the complexity of this endeavour, a 'main-stream' history (Durepos & Mills, 2012) of the ASB does not currently exist. This gap is to be narrowed with this research but will not be filled. A comprehensive history would allow future researchers a basis for examination of the role of the ASB in its historical milieu while applying different, illuminating critical methods.

The lack of a formal organization and an executive committee for the first 35 years of its existence may help to explain why there has naturally been very little documentation about the ASB conference's own history, especially prior to 1980. Nonetheless, previous research efforts have managed to unearth a number of documents (primarily proceedings) and the conduct of a number of interviews (see footnote 1 above). What this unique confluence of circumstances allows for (i.e, the establishment and running of ASB conferences over a period of over 40 years), is an opportunity to apply a historical perspective to the organization, the conference and the broad socio-economic and political environment within which it operated. This creates an important opportunity to better understand not only the organization but also the era within which it operated. Individuals are known to make sense of their actions retrospectively (Weick,

1995) and it is in that theme that this paper endeavours to make sense of the 'non-organization' of ASB conference retrospectively as well, appropriately contextualized.

There has been a call in academic literature for a historical turn in management research (Clark and Rowlinson, 2004; Booth and Rowlinson, 2006). As time has progressed, memories fade and the opportunity to not only preserve but to also understand, as best one can from the vantage point of passed time, the ASB conference is getting harder. This paper endeavours to look back through archival textual evidence, and document the ASB conferences through the years 1980 to 1990. Placing these conferences into the broad socio-political and economic contexts in which they occurred will allow one to attempt to understand the ASB conference during the time. This is understood to be an unavoidable yet artificial construct of history. The very act of writing a history, necessarily inserts the author, their personal biases and the implications which this entails into the history itself. The interpretation of existing organizational structures are not best determined by interpreting their existing by-laws, but rather as the result of discussion of their past choices (Keiser, 1994).

A variety of categories were examined in order to try examine the past of the ASB conferences; participation by universities and individuals, geographic representation, functional areas, thematic trends, as well as gender and language issues. It is believed that the examination of these areas will sufficiently illuminate the cultural and historical elements of the ASB conference. The methodology employed throughout this paper is intentionally selected to best examine these categories whilst providing the basis for a critical and qualitative discourse for future researchers.

METHODOLOGY

Keith Jenkins (1991/2010) contends that at its core, doing history is quintessentially and fundamentally about how one can read and make sense of the past. The issue at hand then, is distilled down to addressing the question of 'how' to read and make sense of the past in terms of the context and performance of ASB conferences. As the earliest years of the ASB do not currently offer any textual evidence for consideration, the lack of a concrete 'foundation mythos' for the ASB denies any researcher this traditional cornerstone upon which to build a narrative. As foundation myths have become an accepted artefact of corporate culture and corporate storytelling (Rippin & Fleming 2006) the relative lack of knowledge of any foundational activities of ASB proves to be a complication in definitively determining the intended 'culture' of the ASB. The motivations of those involved in the conference before 1980 will be deduced and inferred where they can in order to lend context to the basic narrative while accepting the limitations therein.

In the spirit of reflexivity, it is noted that the meaning that is to be ascribed to the history of the ASB within this paper is inherently one that is given to it by the author through the course of this research and the inherent prejudices and biases brought to bear. It is understood and acknowledged that the meanings ascribed to the ASB conferences in this paper might be seen as foreign to participants and organizers from that time. These meanings are currently being given, at this particular and unique point in time, by this particular researcher and are not intrinsic meanings in the past (Jenkins, 1991/2010).

"Epistemology shows that we can never really know the past; that the gap between the past and history is an ontological one, that is, is the very nature of

things such that no amount of epistemological effort can bridge it.” (Jenkins, 1991/2010)

Knowing and understanding this gap in meaning, in no way diminishes the value of examining any organization, such as the ASB conferences, in a historical light. It consequently demands that one acknowledge and be aware of the inherent gap in meaning and avoid imposing those meanings upon events in the past. Broadly speaking, a postpostivist approach is employed in this thesis. The primary implication resulting from this approach is that no assumption of absolute truth or unassailable fact will be held resulting from the data that was uncovered throughout the research.

Historic Turn – Intents and Motivations

The original intent of this thesis was to blend the scholarly tradition of critical hermeneutics with the post-structuralistic/deconstructionist lens that is wielded more readily, while acknowledging Prasad’s (2005) warning that the blending of various traditions requires careful attention to the assumptions undergirding the traditions themselves. One can argue however that as qualitative research methods have largely grown out of one another, the acknowledgement that employing a singular lens upon any qualitative research is both somewhat limiting and perhaps even unnatural. There is a cohesion in both critical hermeneutics and deconstructionism that lend themselves to this duality of employment. In his work on developing a ‘history’ of Disney, Boje explains how the deconstructionist methodology he employed emphasized the analysis of the duality of stories (Boje, 1995). This examination of positive and negative, central and marginal themes lends itself to an illuminating analysis of the research material available in the specific context of the ASB conference proceedings. Deconstruction’s link to analyzing text is particularly applicable to this undertaking. This

becomes an extension of Jacques Derrida's attempt to extend the literary turn into other intellectual realms (Prasad, 2005), such as history and management. It can be best stated then that this thesis derives methodological inspiration from these traditions, however remains itself broadly in the postpostivist tradition. This is an intentional state that, considering the historical contextualization of the material being interrogated allows for the historian to examine and uncover evidence without drawing indefensible or biased conclusions. Any absolutes posited after examining qualitative documentation would inescapably bear the biases of the historian and their time. An informed postpostivist application cannot wholly avoid this mark, however being cognizant of this throughout the process of generating this thesis does help the historian to at least identify the possibility of bias upfront, possibly mitigating its impact and informing the reader.

The call for a 'historic turn' in academic management and organizational studies (Clark and Rowlinson, 2004) is, in part, a motivation for this research. Jacques (1996) convincingly argued that an historical perspective will be 'invaluable' if organization studies, such as the study of the ASB, are expected to provide a critically reflective vision of society or inform debate between alternative visions of that society. Moreover, deconstruction is a philosophy, more than a methodology which one applies to work with texts in order to reconstitute them (Lemert, 1997 from Prasad, 2005) while decentering belief systems and examining texts, in this case the ASB proceedings, in a manner that produces multiple and layered meaning (Prasad, 2005) with no prevailing tautology. This decentering perspective on historical analysis is further espoused by Jenkins. This would suggest then, amongst other points, that the examination of the ASB proceedings herein must consciously avoid any presumption that the ASB is or was a forgone teleological end, for any particular motivation, for the academic community in Atlantic Canada.

Data Collection Process

The collection of data for this paper was largely conducted through a group of researchers working on independent projects examining the dissemination of management knowledge in Canada, including a focus on the ASB conference (see footnote 1). The ASB proceedings that have been collected came from a variety of sources that included individual academics who had attended previous conferences, university libraries, and university archives - often former host institutions. The great majority of these (collected) documents were housed at the PhD Reading Room of Saint Mary's University, with other materials currently being held at Mount Saint Vincent University. These were found and compiled by other researchers to whom much thanks is owed. The proceedings that remain uncollected within the years being examined (1980 to 1990) are 1981 and 1982.

Furthermore, past attendees were solicited to share proceedings that they had fortuitously held onto over the years. These proceedings have been assembled, electronically captured and shared for the benefit of researchers examining the history of this singular academic organization, largely prior to my involvement in this project².

In order to work within the scope of this specific project, a very limited time period was selected for further examination viz. the 1980s. As stated above, this was due to the availability (or lack thereof) of proceedings upon which to base research and examination. The 1980s constituted the second decade of ASB existence, its organizational adolescence so to speak, and has proven more 'available' to historical analysis given the amount of material available.

² The assembled materials collected by the SSHRC-funded researchers (see footnote 1) have been scanned and housed on a Dropbox archive that is available to other researchers.

This paper benefited greatly from the previously acknowledged archival research of others. The contribution of this research to the overall project should be found in a deeper understanding of the ASB in the 1980s. The relevant proceedings were broken down into great detail in an attempt to elicit details and insights regarding the key actors involved, participation levels, regional representation and the overall efficacy and evolution of the ASB in this time period.

Importantly, this piece of research is only one of a broader project dedicated to looking at the ASB historically. Further research, will hopefully uncover earlier documentation that will help produce not only a more comprehensive chronological history of the ASB, but also a deeper understanding of the ASBs role in disseminating managerial knowledge within Atlantic Canada and the broader academic community.

Types of Data

Although mostly published sources are cited throughout, the primary sources of research data employed, nearly to the point of exclusivity, were the ASB proceedings and programs for the years 1980 to 1990 inclusively. These were previously acknowledged as being largely assembled by other members of the research team examining the ASB. Currently, there is no central, public source where these proceedings can be accessed (see footnote 2).

It is important to acknowledge that a bevy of ASB conference history papers were also read to lend context and serve as a starting point to an understanding of the ASB conferences. As these papers were foundational to my own exposure to the ASB, many have been referenced and employed for this project although some may remain unpublished. Nonetheless, these were felt to add to the overall discourse and quality.

The content of the papers submitted at each conference were not reviewed in any detail. This examination focused primarily on the nature of the papers as an aggregate, rather than the specific research being presented. Finally, it must be acknowledged early on that the absence of interviews with early participants would have served to lend colour and perspective to in the absence of proceedings. While this remains a viable path, it accepted as being outside the limitations of time and scope for this particular effort.

Categorization of Data

The data that was interrogated, primarily the ASB Conference proceedings, was organized so as to primarily compare and contrast the ASB conferences themselves from one year the next. By examining the changes in participation, themes and many other variables highlighted, it may be possible to glean trends over time. Furthermore, changes and variables can grant an insight into what the ASB felt was primarily important in different years and times. This is by no means a presumption of 'evolution'. Changes in the ASB over time may be considered trends, but these are by no means considered to be inevitable or evolutionary, merely a means of comparing and contrasting one conference to the other or one year to another.

The constructs that were felt to be most illuminating and were therefore primarily utilized were to break the conferences out in terms of the people, institutions and themes that made up each conference. Examining the individuals involved provides insight into who was contributing to the ASB, the frequency of their contributions and the breadth of unique contributors. The institutions that provided support, both in terms of hosting and faculty representation may demonstrate the scope of buy-in as well as provide context to the varying degrees of management knowledge dissemination occurring from universities during the time

period. Finally, the themes that were explicitly and implicitly on display are an illuminating window into the issues that researchers found important and popular at the time. Contrasting these with world events and macro-socio, economic and political trends identified both within Canada and the broader global stage lends further insight into the relevance of management knowledge generation within the region.

Historical Context

Through the analysis conducted in the above methodology section, it is understood that there is an unconscious yet unavoidable effect of the personal prism through which the historian views their subject matter (Jenkins, 1991/2010). This inexorably impacts and becomes part of the written history itself. Upon acknowledging this bias, it may be useful to identify some of the historical context which occurred around the era under examination. Attempting to explain direct impacts these events may have had upon any aspects of the ASB Conferences would be fruitless. Yet context may nonetheless aid the historian, beyond simply adding colour to the story.

The 1980s was an eventful decade in virtually all socio-economic realms. A high-level list of important formative world events may be found in Appendix 1. The decade began with an economic hangover from the second OPEC oil crisis, which started in 1979. This largely stemmed from the decline in oil production following the Iranian Revolution. Coincidentally, the US moved to a floating exchange rate in 1979, devaluing the Canadian dollar against the US dollar. With the Canadian unemployment rate peaking at 12% in 1983 (Statistics Canada, 2014), 1981 and 1982 saw a global recession emerge.

The political realm of Western nations, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom, moved mostly in unison throughout this period of time. More conservatively minded political parties came to the forefront as their respective economies moved out of recession. For example, UK politics was dominated by Margaret Thatcher, leader of the Conservative party from 1979 to 1990. The “Iron Lady” focused on privatization and deregulation with a zeal that earned her program the eponymous title of “Thatcherism”, similar to the philosophies of Ronald Regan and his “Reganomics”. A list of world leaders throughout this period is identified in Appendix 2. These leaders and their respective programs enshrined a laissez faire, neoliberal economic revival (lower taxes, deregulation) and preceded the economic recovery of their national economies from the 1981/82 recession. Donald Trump and Michael Milken personified the economic successes to be had during the decade. Politically within Canada, a similar trend can be seen with the 1984 election of the Progressive Conservative Party and Brian Mulroney as Prime Minister.

The Quebec independence movement, which had culminated in violence perpetrated by the Front de libération du Quebec (FLQ) in the 1970s took a different, less violent, tact in this period. The social appetite for violence to facilitate independence waned at the beginning of the 1980s. In fact, 1980 saw a significant political move with a referendum contemplating separation. Only two years later, the partition of the Canadian constitution further exasperated the cultural and language divisions within Canada. Therefore, although violence was not the modus operandi during the 80s of the independence movement, the issue was current. The politics of separation were prominent throughout the decade and certainly would have been top of mind for most academics.

As the decade closed, world events were a harbinger of fundamental changes in societies around the world. Terrorist activities grabbed headlines around the globe as Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie Scotland signalled a new era of violence and fear. However, contrasting the fear and anger evoked from this bombing, the Berlin Wall fell signalling a new era of freedom and optimism, eventually leading to the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The 1980s also saw the Japanese economy blossoming, still years before the period of stagflation that has plagued the country in the subsequent decades. Concurrently globalization was a dominant business and social trend throughout in the decade, both in terms of transatlantic and transpacific trade. Within Canada, this globalization trend culminated in the, then controversial, signing of the Canada-United States Free Trade Agreement signed in 1989. This was a predecessor to the eventual 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

These events and trends shaped the time, culture and likely lives of those people that will be discussed herein. To presume that one can grasp a comprehensive understanding of how and why would be anachronistic and academically blasphemous. However, at minimum a cursory reflection upon these events that characterized the world, Canada and Atlantic Canada during this period, does provide a degree of context that increases the likelihood of empathizing and allows the historian and reader to start approaching comprehension.

DISCUSSION

ASB Early Years

There is no neat and clean progression of events which would satisfy researchers uncritical of a pure scientific approach to an examination of this subject matter. However, one may look at some of the early documentation that, thanks to the efforts of ASB researcher Dr. Gabrielle Durepos, has been gratefully unearthed and shared from the personal desk collection of papers of Dr. Johnny Sears at Saint Francis Xavier University. Dr. Sears was employed at Saint Francis Xavier University during the era under examination in the business administration faculty. His desk contents were archived at the University and now lend a unique perspective into this subject.

First and foremost, Dr. Sears' papers identify the shortfall in academic research and rigor in Atlantic Canadian professors at the time. One paper, jointly prepared with Professor Henry Knight from Saint Mary's University, titled *Submission To The Commission To Study The Rationalization Of University Research In Canada* (Sears & Knight, 1972) specifically identifies that less than half of business professors in Canada had ever published an article as of 1968. Sears and Knight argue that, for a variety of reasons, Atlantic Canadian professors are inherently disadvantaged in conducting research. Although not explicitly stated, one can reasonably surmise that the establishment of a regional academic forum, such as the ASB, was intended to mollify some of the problems identified herein.

Aside from examining Dr. Sears' own submissions, other documentary evidence of earlier regional cooperation can be found. A letter to Dr. Sears from a Professor E. D. Maher from The University of New Brunswick (Maher, 1960A) speaks to a meeting held in Fredericton, NB for the 1960 Atlantic Regional Meeting – Business and Commerce Faculties. The agenda for

this meeting does indicate that this session was intended to share research and administrative planning opportunities across Universities in the Atlantic region. Aside from the \$6 hotel rates, the implied intent of the cooperative meeting is recognizable in the ASB today. Further communication on this meeting (Maher, 1960B) does show that invitations for this event were extended to Universities that did not have business programs themselves as well as schools beyond the Atlantic Canadian region in Quebec and Maine.

A letter dated nearly a decade later, December 29, 1969 gives an indication that very little has changed throughout the 60's in terms of the structure. This correspondence from Dr. Sears desk is titled as an "Invitation to One-Day Seminar", and was sent from Professor C.R. Brookbank and R. L. Bowes (Brookbank & Bowes, 1969). Professor Brookbank was the Director of the MBA program at Dalhousie University at this time, as well as the Chairman of the Department of Commerce, whilst R. L. Bowes is listed as the President of the Dalhousie Commerce Society. Interestingly, the gender situation within the University culture at this time is somewhat revealed. This generic invitation letter is presumptively addressed simply "Dear Sir:". This certainly leads one to surmise that the gender composition of Atlantic Canadian University professors was almost exclusively male. Aside from the gender-based language within the letter, this one day seminar, based in Halifax at Dalhousie University, seems to have been similarly structured to the aforementioned 1960 seminar in Fredericton. A single identified theme, in this instance "Tax Reform" prompts attendees to present thoughts and engage in debate. Also a period of time is set aside in order to discuss and share thoughts on administrative or teaching issues. This format is largely disparate from the eventual ASB format soliciting academic papers across subject areas, and a multi-day format.

Much of the correspondence found within Dr. Sears desk sheds light upon the evolution of regional conferences within Atlantic Canada. Dr. Sears received and kept invitations from reoccurring conferences (Beazley, 1961; Cadieux, 1962). However as one reads through his correspondence over time, it becomes apparent that there was no static body. A fluid list of titles and acronyms of the various organizational bodies that seem to have formed over time grants one the perspective that, despite some attempts at formalization (Sears, 1971) an unstructured culture existed throughout the 1960s and 1970s amongst the University faculties.

At the very least, there seems to have been a long term goal of cooperation and coordination yet there was no agreed upon, optimal format to achieve this end. A variety of councils, and organizations are cited throughout the early correspondence found. A list of these early organizations can be found in Appendix 3. These are by no means intended to establish an evolutionary nature to these groups culminating in today's ASB Conference. To the contrary, these groups seem to have had limited interconnectivity through some shared membership yet their various efforts appear largely heterogeneous. For example, the minutes Dr. Sears had in his desk for the Atlantic Schools of Business council in 1971 detail a variety of subjects discussed going beyond academic research and even into a discussion of whether four year bachelor programs should be offered in business schools in Atlantic Canada (Sears, 1971). This 1971 council was more intended to coordinate administrative affairs than research. Whereas 'Regional Meetings' did appear to have an annual academic theme.

Much of the correspondence found in Dr. Sears' desk dated to 1972 indicates that there was in fact much work towards the consolidation of a variety of institutions (Hudson, 1972). Although these 1970s organizations are not necessarily reflective of a proto-ASB, these organizations may show that there was an understanding that cooperation across Atlantic

Canadian Universities and academics may prove beneficial. The genesis of the ASB may be at most tangentially connected to the various organizations identified throughout Dr. Sears' early documentation yet a spirit of regional cooperation for advancement can be reasonably inferred.

The Proceedings: an analysis

Examining the ASB during the 1980s requires one to break the conference and period into components that can be more easily digested. The levels of participation, both in gross terms and broken down by University will help to elucidate the subject. The geographic distribution of participation will be useful to examine as well. The further afield from which participants travel in order to attend the conference could be considered a viable gauge of the interest amongst researchers and academics in the conference itself.

Some other areas may provide contextualized insight into the interests and culture of the region and time. Participation in various research fields should convey the level of interest in these areas from the time. The defined themes for each conference may provide insight into what the organizers felt were the important issues for researchers and academics of the day. These factors amongst others will be examined herein, providing the best possible contemporary understanding of the ASB Conferences held within the 1980s.

University Participation

There are effectively two ways in which Atlantic Canadian Universities are represented in their support and involvement of the ASB Conference. Hosting duties for the ASB Conference lend support, with the host University's own faculty largely being responsible for organizing and 'refereeing' the event. Secondly, the participation levels of researchers and faculty themselves lend credence to the University's support of the ASB Conference as a worthy organization.

With regards to the host institution each year, there is no evidence in the Proceedings as to the mechanism with which each host is chosen or nominated. However, the even distribution across Universities and Provinces would suggest an attempt to achieve an equitable and even ‘rotation’ of hosting responsibilities. Table 1 below identifies where each ASB Conference was held throughout the time period being examined. There is no duplication of hosting responsibilities, bar the University of New Brunswick utilizing both the Fredericton and Saint John campuses, all Atlantic Provinces are represented and both large and small business schools are involved.

Year	Host Institution	Location
1980	College of Cape Breton	Sydney, NS
1981	University of New Brunswick (SJ)	Saint John, NB
1982	Mount Allison	Sackville, NB
1983	St. Francis Xavier	Antigonish, NS
1984	Mount Saint Vincent	Halifax, NS
1985	Acadia University	Wolfville, NS
1986	University of New Brunswick	Fredericton, NB
1987	Memorial University	St. John’s, NFL
1988	Universite de Moncton	Moncton, NB
1989	Dalhousie University	Halifax, NS
1990	University of Prince Edward Island	Charlottetown, PE

Table: 1 – ASB Conference Locations

This may indicate a cooperative, democratic culture likely existed, at least amongst those in charge of site selection, likely a planning committee of sorts. Further examination of how this ‘organization’ structured the selection of future host sites, including correspondence on the matter, would likely provide great clarity as to the culture that was intended to be created as well as the ASB Conference culture that may have actually existed. The organization’s process in replicating itself, ensuring its existence and future integrity would be a primal drive, therefore revealing much about the organization itself. The characteristics that are

inferred with the information that is available are superficial observations at best, limited by lack of context, direct communication and the impact of the interpretive bias of the observer.

Faculty Attendance by Institution

The representation of Atlantic Universities as measured by faculty submissions, is apparently not so evenly distributed. Results are calculated by counting the names on every paper included in the proceedings, therefore individuals who submitted multiple papers are counted every time their name appears. Although this does not account for unique instances of participation, this was the most appropriate indication of the aggregate involvement of each participant. For further edification, a list of aggregate attendance numbers across the time period in question can be found in Appendix 7.

By a wide margin, attendance was dominated by representatives of five Atlantic Universities. The three Halifax based Universities, Dalhousie University, Saint Mary's University and Mount Saint Vincent are all found in the top five for overall participation. The University of New Brunswick (both Saint John and Fredericton campuses counted together) and Memorial ranked second and fourth respectively. The dominance in attendance of these five institutions is further underscored by the fact that the next most frequently represented University is not in Atlantic Canada but is Queen's University, located in Kingston Ontario.

It is possible that perhaps the rotational hosting duties were further intended to create a feeling of involvement or belonging to the organization, on the part of the Atlantic Canadian Universities that were not submitting as many papers for presentation. Despite the fact that a faculty member representing the University of Prince Edward Island had not submitted a paper since 1980, the institution hosted the conference in 1990. Drs. Robert and Margaret (Bateman) Ellison from UPEI, presented a paper in 1980 that may have been an early (early to ASB)

example of an analysis of the social responsibility of corporations to promote a conservation ethic, in the marketing field. Dr. Robert Ellison's participation in the conference continued throughout the decade. However it would seem that he had made a move off of Prince Edward Island as he resurfaces in the proceedings in 1983 with Dalhousie University. Interestingly enough, the paper coming from UPEI in 1990 also was presented within the Marketing field, and also dealt with sustainable marketing initiatives. This was presented by Dr. Tim Carroll, specifically addressing agricultural products this time.

The College of Cape Breton, bookended UPEI's 1990 hosting duties hosting the Conference in 1980 in Sydney. Throughout the decade, College of Cape Breton faculty participation was also minimal, only sending three delegates throughout the 1980s. Two in 1984 and a single delegate in 1988. It was this 1980 conference that was formative, as some early routines were established. The first conference proceedings were published from this year, a disproportionate record of international participation may be noted and a subtle example of a different name to the conference. (Unknown, 1980). Frank W. Renwick, the conference chairman explicitly states in the "Editor's Note" of the 1980 Proceedings that the publication of the proceedings and the extension of invitations further afield demonstrated that the organizers had "broken with tradition". (Unknown, 1980). One out of three participants were from the United States and the United Kingdom, representing 10 different US states as far away as Utah State University. The publication of proceedings as well as the international flavour are explicitly referenced in the Editor's remarks of the 1980s Proceedings as having "broken with tradition". (Unknown, 1980)

Functional Areas

Coincidental to the 1987 ASB Conference in Newfoundland, held October 22-24 that year, was the so-called Black Monday (October 19, 1987) stock market crash. The crash started only three days before the ASB Conference, and eliminated just over 22% of the value of both the Toronto and New York Stock Exchanges. As the conference was only days removed from this major financial event, it likely would have only made for interesting conversation amongst the attendees that year. Yet, one may have expected to see some submissions in 1988 that touched upon this singular event. All the more ironically as the 1987 theme – In Search of Relevance – provokes some questions about the organizations own self-confidence. However, this does not seem to have been the case. As there are no papers in 1988 that seem, even in a cursory fashion, to examine any element of the Black Monday crash. It should be noted that, perhaps taking longer to have an effect, 1989 and 1990 show a marked increased percentage of papers at the ASB Conference in the Finance discipline. Approximately one quarter of all papers presented in both years were Finance related, having increased from a low of around 5% back in 1980.

Whether connected to the Black Monday crash or not, this seems to be indicative of a broader movement in papers submitted over the decade in questions trending away from Marketing and Organizational Behaviour dominance, towards a more quantitative Finance and Accounting disposition. Appendix 5 details the research fields noted in each year of the conference.

Marketing, Accounting and Finance were the only fields that remained consistently represented and named throughout the period in question. Appendix 10 represents the levels at which these fields were represented. Yet participation levels in these three fields varied

throughout the period, both in terms to total papers and percentage of all submissions, participation in the field of Finance increases throughout the years. Why this is the case is not explicitly identified. Whether this is due to an increase in the relative importance of Finance as a field throughout the 1980s or just an increase in its relative importance within Atlantic Canada is unknown. Marketing involvement seems to gradually decrease in terms of its proportional representation of all papers, with the notable exception of 1990, whereas Accounting remains relatively consistent and stable throughout.

Organizational Behaviour (OB) is identified as a field in all but one year, 1984, and its relative importance to Atlantic Canadian academics can be surmised throughout the time period by examining the manner in which it is named and identified. OB is first identified as a stand-alone category in 1981 and three subsequent years, 1982, 1983 and 1985. OB's significance in the earlier half of the decade is contrasted starkly with its diminished importance in the second half. The field of OB is subsequently lumped with other areas of academic interest, such as Human Resources and Management Policy. It is not unreasonable to assume that this lack of singular identification indicates a move in the later half of the decade towards OB being perceived in academia as more complimentary to the field of Human Resources, than a significant stand-alone field.

A singular field, identified as a Special Session examined International Business in 1986. The concurrence of this introspective on the globalization of business with the advent of the NAFTA agreement between Mexico, the United States of America and Canada is not likely coincidental. At no other time in the period is international business identified as a significant area of research. This lack of global perspective in terms of academic business research is significant for the period and perhaps also representative of the lack of global perspective that

Atlantic Canadian businesses are often accused of having. The globalization of business markets and globalization of supply chains was a major factor on businesses in Atlantic Canada and around the world. The apparent lack of attention to this at the ASB Conferences would be important to compare to the historical development of research in this field in other parts of Canada and the USA.

The earliest evidence of interest in computers and information systems at the ASB Conference, appears in 1983 when the theme for the conference was 'Information: A Keyboard Away.' There were three papers submitted that seem to have been directly inspired by the theme. The papers were submitted under the research field of Management Science/O.R.

The following year, 1984, the conference at Mount Saint Vincent introduced a new field of research, Management Information Systems and Computers. In every subsequent year under examination, there was a category for Information Systems. Information Systems eventually was also included with a new category, Operations Management in 1986, 1987 and then again in 1989. The pairing of Information Systems to Operations Management is itself interesting as it may be demonstrative of a normalization of information systems within business operations at this time. A potential overlap in research opportunities between Operations Management and Information Systems is likely why these two fields were linked at the outset.

Quantitatively, the level of research activity being presented at the ASB Conference in these specific fields was quite low. Only a handful of papers were presented annually on this emerging field of import. The resident expertise in Atlantic Canadian institutions, both to produce research in these fields and to afterwards review it for the conference, may have been minimal. In 1989 for instance, only one paper relating to the Operations Management and Information Systems category was submitted. This paper was co-authored by academics from

Queen's University and the Royal Military College, both in Ontario. Perhaps it is anachronistic to infer that subsequent import of this category to business and academics could have been grasped at this time. Only hindsight informs us of the subsequent importance of these fields to business. Yet it is interesting, if not explicitly informative that Atlantic Canadian institutions were not overly productive with research in these fields, during this era. While the computerization of business systems was to be a driving force in business efficiency and competitiveness throughout the late 80s and 90s, the main areas of research being presented at the ASB Conference consistently remained Marketing, Accounting and Finance.

The primacy of Policy as a field of research within the ASB Conferences also merits consideration. Business within Atlantic Canada has a long history of reliance upon government involvement and support. The merits of this relationship are a subject best left to other research. However, the relationship is brought to light when examining both the research fields and annual themes for ASB Conferences. Research on government policy and its impact upon business is ubiquitous in the later half of the decade, nonetheless the naming of the field very gradually changes. Until 1985 Management Policy is its own category. In 1986 and 1987 we can see the change to a field titled Management – Policy – Society & Business. For one year in 1988, conference organizers elected to create a field of Management Policy – IR – OB. Then in 1989 the research field is identified simply as Policy. Although the shift is gradual, examining the titles of the papers submitted under these headings does show an increased interest in researching government policy and government policies towards management rather than the management policies of businesses aimed at increasing business efficacy and competitiveness. The regional import of Policy, and the governmental ties that are implied is also evident in an examination of the themes that were selected to influence each Conference.

Themes

Perhaps no other element of the ASB Conference Proceedings may lend as much insight to the state and culture of the ASB Conference as the themes that are identified in most years. It is reasonable to assume that the theme is a deliberate and intentional choice, meant to convey meaning and message by the actors involved in the selection. The theme crafted by the organizers of any given conference is also presumably intended to be the most relevant and important theme possible each year. One would expect that themes should influence the nature of research submissions each year, possibly nudging research submissions towards coherence across papers. Although the sample sizes are too small to speak with statistical certainty, it is not apparent that the themes had any measurably influence upon the nature of submissions. Annual themes are itemized in Appendix 11.

Examining stated themes of all years at a macro level, one can pull two overarching commonalities. These may be generally characterized as; the role of government in business in Atlantic Canada and a self-reflective inquiry into the relevance of Atlantic Canadian universities and their research.

Government involvement or oversight of business was also identified in the examination of research fields. The themes put forth in 1984, 1986 and 1990 all speak to examining the role of government in Atlantic Canadian business and industries. Most overtly the theme in 1986 was 'The Role of Government in Regional Business Development'. Either through good fortune or more likely a reflection of the mood in the region at the time, the very next year, 1987, saw the formation of the most visible of federal economic agencies to intervene in regional business development, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA). (Wikipedia, 2015)

The other common thread that can be teased from an inquiry of the identified themes across all the years is the perception of a 'crisis of confidence' amongst Atlantic Canadian academics and their respective business schools. The language used in crafting themes in 1985 and 1987 are unambiguous in conveying a sense of concern. Furthermore, there is some small irony that the theme, as written in the 1988 Conference Proceedings, which invites researchers to question the state of research in the region, actually contains an embarrassing spelling mistake, 'The State of Research in the Atlanctic [sic] Business Schools' (Unknown, 1988). How relevant can any organization be really considered when such little care has been taken to even ask the question regarding the state of its own research?

The foundation of the ASB was addressed earlier. There is merit to the consideration that the rationale for the foundation of the ASB Conference may also contribute to this search for relevance only a decade later. As the foundation of the ASB conference was partially intended to provide a forum for Atlantic Canadian researchers, having been 'marginalized' by larger Universities in Ontario and elsewhere, perhaps a pervasive self-doubt or lack of confidence carries forth and influences thematic direction. This self-consciousness may have penetrated the culture of the ASB Conferences throughout this period. Perhaps this raises doubt regarding the efficacy of the ASB Conference as a means to remedy this issue.

Gross Participation Levels

Excluding the two years for which only partial proceedings are available, the participation levels in terms of attendees and papers was relatively stable throughout the decade. Each year saw roughly 38 papers presented on average, with anomalous peaks in 1986 (49 papers) and 1990 (50 papers). One possibility for the lower level of participation in 1987 (29 papers) could be the host location. Memorial University in Newfoundland may have proven a

more difficult logistical trip for many potential participants, especially considering the time of year in which the conference is held.

Geographic Representation

At a very basic and intuitive level, the degree of travel and geographic diversity represented amongst ASB Conference attendees may be considered reflective of the relative merit and value of the Conference in any given year. Especially considering that the ASB Conference is, by its very nature a regional academic affair, outside interest should demonstrate the interest generated by the conference, its theme or location. The further afield from which presenters come, the more prestigious or valued the conference could be considered. Details pertaining to the annual geographic distribution of participants can be found in Appendix 6.

The Editor's notes included in the 1980 Proceedings indicate that, while breaking with tradition, the conference was to be opened up to potential delegates from business schools across the Continent. The 1980 conference, hosted in Sydney, Nova Scotia, stands apart of all other conferences in this time period as this is the year, in which US and International participation was at its highest. That year nearly a third of all delegates come from the United States. Ranging from border-states such as Maine, all the way to Utah State University receiving representation. There was also attendance from the UK in 1980. The anomaly of this geographic distribution is put in stark contrast by the fact that in no other year would international, including American, representation at the conference surpass 8% of delegates (1989).

As it has been posited that the ASB Conference was organized with the intent of increasing Atlantic Canadian academic representation and opportunities, it should be of no surprise that the University representation throughout the decade is overwhelmingly from

Atlantic Canadian Universities. The aforementioned anomalous year of 1980 saw the lowest representation from Atlantic Canada at 42% of all attendees. Outside of 1980, the lowest level of Atlantic Canadian representation was approximately 60% of attendees in 1986 and 1987. 1988 tipped the scale at the other end with 84% of attendees representing universities in Atlantic Canada.

Within Atlantic Canada, the provincial distribution of delegates should of no surprise. Nova Scotia's Universities tended to supply approximately half of the delegates most years. As Nova Scotia contains six of the twelve Atlantic Canadian universities that sent delegates throughout the period in question, as well as some of the most active ASB participant universities, namely Saint Mary's, Dalhousie and Mount Saint Vincent, this should be expected. New Brunswick's participation started in earnest in 1982 sending approximately 25% of all attendees from that year onward. Memorial University, as the sole university in Newfoundland, and presumably the most difficult location for travel logistics, managed to maintain approximately 10% of representatives. Finally, as was identified earlier the University of Prince Edward Island had delegates at the conference only in 1980 and 1990.

Outside of Atlantic Canada, Ontario universities consistently had delegates at the ASB Conference every year. Attendance from outside regions other than Ontario was very low. In fact, Western Canadian scholars attended the conference even less than American academics. Quebec's representation was also minimal. On some levels this may be expected, although participation from Quebec does not appear to correlate with the conference being hosted in bilingual cities and institutions, as one may intuitively suspect. French or bilingual hosts, L'Universite de Moncton and the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton, hosted the

conference in 1986 and 1988 respectively. Yet Quebec delegates were only around 5% of everyone involved.

Yet, not all submissions to the conference were in English. One paper in 1980, 1986, 1989 and two papers in 1988 were submitted in French. As was noted earlier, the conference was hosted in bilingual institutions in 1986 and 1988. Yet it seems noteworthy that there were indeed French language submissions, at two English language institutions (1980 Sydney and 1989 Dalhousie). Considering that New Brunswick is an officially bilingual province, the prominent role of New Brunswick in the ASB and finally the fact that New Brunswick has a French language university, it is perhaps surprising that there were not more French language submissions during this time. It is understood to be an age old philosophical conundrum to prove the definite non-existence of something. Therefore, perhaps it is simply best to state that as there is no evidence in the proceedings that there was any political bent or motivation by ASB to be involved or provide implicit commentary upon political issues of the day.

Presenters

Even with sparse documentation in the troublesome years of 1981 and 1982, there is an impressive number of individuals that have contributed papers, and presumably attended the ASB Conferences between 1980 and 1990. There are 558 names of individuals that have either had first, second or third listing on the 354 distinct papers presented. Annual participation levels are detailed in Appendices 8 & 9. A discussion of everyone, or even a majority of those listed would be an exercise in futility. Therefore only certain individuals will be highlighted herein, understanding that the mere selection of these individuals requires that the author impose a bias and importance upon some people and their respective contributions, at the inevitable exclusion of others. While this is unfortunate as the contributions of all participants

are uniquely what create the whole of the ASB history, certain parameters will be imposed and future researchers are invited to place importance and focus on the people involved.

There are a great many participants who were at the ASB conference multiple times within the bookended period being investigated. After examining the Proceedings throughout all of these years, there were 322 different individuals that participated in the ASB Conferences, the years in which the proceedings have only been partially discovered (1981 and 1982) withstanding. Furthermore, it seems that a great number of those participants were involved in multiple years. By examining the roster of contributors throughout this period, 109 of the 322 participants were involved on more than one occasion.

It is likely in fact that the actual number and percentage may be higher. Considering that no proceedings were published previous to 1980 and only partial information exists for 1981 and 1982, the opportunities for more repeat visits is high. Furthermore, consider that many individuals that would go on to be prolific contributors to the ASB Conference (for example Dr. Cathy Driscoll) were only beginning their academic involvement with ASB in the later part of this artificial block of time (MacNeil & Mills, 2015). It would be outside the scope of this paper to examine how this level of participation and repeat-participation rate compares to other comparative academic conferences. A comparison would lend qualitative substance and insight to the ASBs perceived quality, academic value and ability to draw participants during this period.

With approximately one third of participants submitting on more than one occasion to the ASB, some contributors obviously submit more often than others. The distinction of most prolific presenter at this conference between the years in question, may be presumed to be held by, Dr. Muhammad Rashid. It would appear that Dr. Rashid presented seven (7) papers at the

ASB conferences after joining the UNB faculty in 1985, up to and including 1990. Interestingly enough, both the 1980 and 1984 ASB Conferences may have seen Dr. Rashid present two additional papers prior to his UNB faculty appointment. In 1980, Muhammad Rashid is listed in the proceedings, as authoring a Finance paper, Dr. Rashid's subsequent field of expertise at UNB. However, the 1980 paper explicitly lists this Muhammad Rashid as being an Assistant Professor at Acadia University, something that the later Dr. Rashid's bio does not mention (University of New Brunswick, 2015). The 1984 reference to a M. Rashid, references someone working outside of academia with the Department of Finance. The aforementioned UNB biography does state: "Prior to joining the Faculty of Business Administration, Dr. Rashid was a financial analysis [sic] with the Government of Canada's Department of Finance." (University of New Brunswick, 2015) So although the 1984 paper is likely safe to add to the seven subsequent papers, the 1980 paper seems to be of dubious association with the later Dr. M. Rashid.

Dr. Rashid's involvement with ASB in the 1980's went further with his having been a co-chair, reviewing Finance papers during the 1986 conference, held at UNB. Dr. Rashid did have one of his ASB papers presented and published at this 1986 conference, while co-chair with his papers co-author, Dr. Ben Amoako-Adu.

Dr. Amoako-Adu was himself a frequent participant to the ASB during this period. He had six (6) papers published, between 1986 and 1990. According to his CV, Dr. Amoako-Adu had also joined UNB in 1985, co-chaired the Finance division of the ASB in 1986 while publishing with Dr. Rashid, and then left for Wilfred Laurier University after 1987 (Laurier, 2015). He remained involved with the ASB even after his relocation to Laurier in Ontario. The year 1986 seems to have been an important, yet early period in what eventually became long and

productive careers for both Dr. Rashid and Dr. Amoako-Adu. They co-authored papers repeatedly through to 1990.

There were two other individuals that spanned the entire period in question with publications in 1980, 1990 and many years in between. Dr. Robert A. Ellison presented five times between 1980 and 1990 inclusive, while Dr. Andre deCarufel managed six presentations in this same period.

Dr. deCarufel is an example to call attention to due to his lack of an obvious connection to Atlantic Canada. His CV shows that Dr. deCarufel has been consistently employed in Ontario (University of Ottawa in the 1980s and 90s and Schulich School of Business since 2001), as well as having completed his education outside Atlantic Canada (Schulich, 2013). Aside from a witty reference to speaking “Academic Jargon” as third language, Dr. deCarufel does not appear to have any personal or professional ties to Atlantic Canada. He has never held an academic post in Atlantic Canada, earned his Bachelor degree in Ottawa and subsequent Masters and PhD. In North Carolina, yet returned frequently to be involved in the ASB Conference.

It is possible that there were personal reasons for Dr. deCarufel to return to Atlantic Canada for this conference so consistently during this time. There were no connections through any particular co-author, as he changed collaborators throughout the decade. Yet the fact remains that Dr. deCarufel made the trip from Ottawa to the ASB repeatedly during this period. One must surmise that there was a perceived professional value that Dr. deCarufel saw in the ASB Conferences. The fact that individuals such as Dr. deCarufel frequented this conference from institutions outside Atlantic Canada, demonstrates to some degree that the dissemination of business knowledge presented at the ASB held a certain extra-territorial influence. This is

both in terms of knowledge flowing out of the region as well as knowledge and collaboration flowing into the region.

Dr. T. K. Clarke was involved in the presentation of 8 papers between 1986 and 1990, frequently collaborating with a former colleague, Dr. F. G. Crane. This places Dr. Clarke at a level of output equal to Dr. Rashid's aforementioned high levels. Dr. Clarke's individual involvement is an interesting note. Having been employed at Dalhousie University between 1980 and 1987, he began his involvement with ASB only in 1986. (T.K. Clarke, 2015) The following year, he found employment at Sonoma State University in California, which heralded a prodigious output of contributions to ASB. It is interesting speculation as to whether there was more personal motivations for Dr. Clarke to publish, prolifically, at ASB only after having relocated to California. Yet while it was more or less in his backyard, he was mostly uninvolved. Presumably the academic credibility of the conference did not change in 1987. Academics are human beings with a variety of motivations that are ambiguous and impossible to adequately understand through the lens of history and time. The motivations for involvement in the ASB of individuals are likewise shrouded and can only be surmised and speculated upon.

Dr. Alex Faseruk (8 papers), Dr. F. G. Crane (8 papers) and Dr. Raafat Roubi (7 papers) were also notable contributors. Dr. Crane's involvement was from 1984 through to 1990, often in collaboration with the aforementioned Dr. Clarke. Drs. Faseruk and Roubi both were with Memorial University during this period, also both producing their high volume of papers in only the last three years being examined, 1988 to 1990.

Aside from high quantities of presentations, there are others for which it may be noteworthy to highlight their involvement. Dr. J. Colin Dodds, current President of Saint Mary's University, presented four papers, in each of 1983, 1984, 1985 and then again in 1990. His 1990

paper was possibly anomalous for Dr. Dodds, having been presented within the Marketing discipline instead of his traditional area of expertise, Finance. This 1990 paper was produced jointly with two other professors, both from the University of Bradford in West Yorkshire, England, as a comparative study of export effects between Canada and the UK.

Others have gone on to continue involvement with ASB in later years, creating something of a virtuous circle of involvement, both presenting and then maintaining the organization. Dr. Ann MacGillivray and Dr. Basu Sharma presented papers in the period, 1988 and 1987 respectively, and later held executive roles with the ASB Conference. Dr. MacGillivray, representing Mount Saint Vincent, also was integral to the 1984 conference as a co-chair with Dr. Plinius from Memorial. As Dr. MacGillivray's started working at Mount Saint Vincent in 1978 her involvement with the ASB Conference went back even further than 1984. Considering that she was the chair of the ASB Conference again in 2003 and 2004, her personal involvement has spanned at least twenty years, an impressive tenure by any measurement.

Dr. Cathy Driscoll has been cited as a later prolific contributor to the ASB Conference as well (McLeod, 2006) and (MacNeil & Mills, 2012). Her involvement started with her first ASB Conference paper in 1990, with submission titled, "Stretching A Concept Too Far: A Critique of Applying Marketing to Religion."

Having been deemed an organization without any organization the continued involvement of these individuals is what seems to have kept the ASB Conference continuing (Mills, 2005). The importance of the involvement and contribution of this 1980s cohort of presenters, over 25 years later, should not be understated for perpetuating the ASB Conference entity.

Gender

Examining the role of gender in the ASB Conferences throughout the 1980s can be approached more than one way. First of all, a count and examination of the number of male and female participants provides some insight into the participation levels found, in ASB Conferences at this time. Of the 322 unique presenters identified, 223 can be reasonably identified as being male based on their names, while only 48 are female. The remaining 51 names cannot be gender identified. Primarily, many names are given with only initials for first and second names. Basic internet research was done to attempt to identify many ambiguous identifications, correlating the University that they were noted to represent and the year of the conference.

The individuals for whom gender could be identified demonstrate the preponderance of male dominance within ASB Conference participation. With well over 80% of participants throughout the period being reasonably identified as male, it can be safely assumed that this would have an impact on the culture and structure of the organization. As themes were selected for each year, there likely is a gendered influence upon the thematic tone of each conference.

ASB Conference Organizers were also predominately male. Of the 11 years being examined, there were 13 different organizers. The conferences in 1984 and 1985 had co-organizers. These were the same two years in which a female was identified as an organizer. Although nothing can be definitively claimed, it is an intriguing observation that the only female organizers in the period were also the only two that had co-organizers. Gender issues with respect to the structure of the ASB itself have been examined more recently (Bell Crawford &

Mills, 2006; Sanderson & Mills, 2010). Appendix 12 identifies the organizers for each of the ASB conferences.

Gender issues are viable subjects for research in most business disciplines. A review of the research topics presented at the ASB Conference over this period does not indicate that any papers researched gender issues at all. Further research could delve further into whether this aligns with the emergence of gender based research conducted in other regions. Furthermore, an examination into the participation of female academics, during the 1980s, would provide important regional comparative data regarding an important gender issue.

CONCLUSION

Skepticism, brought forth through the critical approach to the material under examination herein, inherently suggests that the historian understands that plausibility is the end game rather than definite accuracy and conclusion (Weick, 1995). The ASB conference material available and nature of the undertaking furthered this need for plausibility versus certainty. Nonetheless, a plausible depiction of the events, people and context have been laid out for review.

The materials examined brought to light the individual participants throughout the 1980s, where they met to discuss their academic research. The topics that were presented at the ASB conferences provided an insight into the research subjects that academics felt important enough to research and present in the venue provided by the ASB conference. Furthermore, the themes that were identified provided a window into the thoughts of the organizers of the ASB conferences and what they felt were the most pertinent issues, in the context of what was their current socio-economic and political environment, to organize research and discussion around.

Future research can bring focus upon a more specific context within which the conference operated, whereas this research, intended as a corner-stone piece upon which future research can be laid, focused nearly entirely upon the broader context. Global or national macro-movements were considered and the more regional implications thereof, as opposed to uniquely regional trends.

Simply, yet importantly, future time periods can be examined and compared to the 1980s period considered herein. This comparison and the contrasts that will be inevitably

uncovered will be important for historians to create a holistic understanding of the organization, its participants, role and influence upon academic knowledge dissemination.

The prior, near total absence of material addressing this subject throughout the era necessarily dictated that the primary intent of this research be to bring the material to light. By providing the basis upon which future historians may base their examination of the organization and the period upon. These historians will impose their own unique lenses upon their own histories of the ASB conferences.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Selected World Events

1980s World Events

Year	World Event
1979	Iranian Revolution & Tehran Embassy hostage situation, Three Mile Island, 2 nd OPEC Oil Crisis
1980	CNN Established, Ronald Regan elected
1981	P.C. introduced by IBM, AIDS identified, First Female Supreme Court appointment
1982	Falkland Islands conflict, Canada formalizes constitutional separation from UK
1983	US Embassy bombed in Beirut, Star Wars defense plan announced
1984	Indira Gandhi assassinated, Soviet boycott of L.A. Olympics
1985	Perestroika and glasnost called for by Mikhail Gorbachev
1986	Chernobyl, Challenger explosion, Australia & New Zealand constitutionally separate from UK
1987	Black Monday; stocks plunge on NYSE
1988	Pan Am Flight 103 bombed over Lockerbie Scotland
1989	Berlin Wall Falls, Exxon Valdez crashes, Tiananmen Square protests
1990	Iraq invasion of Kuwait, Operation Desert Shield initiated, US enters major recession

Appendix 2

Political Leadership

Year	Canada	United States	United Kingdom
1979	Joe Clark (PC)	Jimmy Carter (D)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)
1980	Pierre Trudeau (Lib)	Jimmy Carter (D)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)
1981	Pierre Trudeau (Lib)	Ronald Regan (R)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)
1982	Pierre Trudeau (Lib)	Ronald Regan (R)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)
1983	Pierre Trudeau (Lib)	Ronald Regan (R)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)
1984	Brian Mulroney (PC)	Ronald Regan (R)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)
1985	Brian Mulroney (PC)	Ronald Regan (R)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)
1986	Brian Mulroney (PC)	Ronald Regan (R)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)
1987	Brian Mulroney (PC)	Ronald Regan (R)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)
1988	Brian Mulroney (PC)	Ronald Regan (R)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)
1989	Brian Mulroney (PC)	George H. W. Bush (R)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)
1990	Brian Mulroney (PC)	George H. W. Bush (R)	Margaret Thatcher (Con)

Appendix 3

Early University Coordination Organizations

References to University Coordination Organizations

Year	Title	Source
1960	Atlantic Regional Meeting – Business and Commerce Faculties	(Maher, 1960B)
1961	Atlantic Regional Meeting – Business and Commerce Faculties	(Beazley, 1961)
1962	Regional Conference of Schools of Commerce and Business Administration	(Cadieux, 1962)
1970	Meeting of Atlantic Universities Business Professors	(Unknown, 1970)
1971	Atlantic Schools of Business and Departments of Commerce	(Misener, 1971)
1971	Council of the Atlantic Schools of Business	(Sears, 1971)
1972	Association of Atlantic Schools of Business	(Hudson, 1972)
1972	Atlantic Management Centre	(Hudson, 1972)
1972	Council of the Atlantic Schools of Business	(Revell, 1972)
1981	Atlantic Business Deans	(Sears, 1981)

Appendix 4

Conference Titles (1980-1990)

Year	Conference Title	Source
1980	Atlantic Conference	(Unknown, 1980)
1981	Annual Conference of the Atlantic Schools of Business	(Unknown, 1981)
1982	Annual Conference of the Atlantic Schools of Business	(Unknown, 1982)
1983	Atlantic Schools of Business Conference	(Unknown, 1983)
1984	Atlantic Schools of Business Conference	(Unknown, 1984)
1985	Atlantic Schools of Business Conference	(Unknown, 1985)
1986	Atlantic Schools of Business Conference	(Unknown, 1986)
1987	Atlantic Schools of Business Conference	(Unknown, 1987)
1988	Atlantic Schools of Business Conference	(Unknown, 1988)
1989	Atlantic Schools of Business Conference	(Unknown, 1989)
1990	Atlantic Schools of Business Conference	(Unknown, 1990)

Appendix 5

% ASB Conference Research Fields

Percentage (%) of Papers Submitted In Various Research Fields

Categories	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985
Management Policy	13.9%				16.7%	19.4%
Operations Research and Quantitative Methods	11.1%					
O. B. & Development	22.2%					
Organizational Behaviour		100%	100%	16.1%		13.9%
Policy				32.3%		
Management Science/ M.I.S./ O. R.				9.7%		
MIS and Computer Systems					11.1%	13.9%
Human Resources Management					13.9%	

Categories	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Operations Management/Information Systems	6.1%	6.9%		2.6%	6.0%
O.B./H.R./I.R.	20.4%	20.7%		15.4%	14.0%
Management/Policy/Society & Business	10.2%				
Special Session on IM/IB	8.2%				
Management Policy		13.8%			
Management Policy / I.R. / O.B.			31.3%		
Information Systems			6.3%		
Policy				17.9%	16.0%
Innovative Teaching				10.3%	

Appendix 6

Geographic Distribution of Participants

Percentage (%) of Provincial & Regional Representation 1980 to 1990

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
NFLD	13	8	7	4	8	7	3	2	12	17	19
NS	22	54	40	52	58	52	32	29	52	40	41
NB	2	0	27	15	12	20	25	29	22	15	15
PEI	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
QC	4	0	0	4	2	11	5	11	5	5	6
ON	18	31	13	15	13	6	24	24	7	14	9
MN	0	0	7	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
SK	2	0	7	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
AB	0	0	0	4	2	0	3	0	0	2	0
BC	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Atlantic Prov.	42	62	73	72	77	80	59	60	86	72	76
US	31	0	0	4	2	2	3	2	2	6	5
Int.	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0

Appendix 7

Aggregate Attendance Numbers by Institution

Aggregate Attendance Metrics from 1980 to 1990

University	Total	Average
Saint Mary's	97	8.8
UNB	78	7.1
Dalhousie	68	6.2
Memorial	55	5.0
Mount Saint Vincent	44	4.0
Queen's University	21	1.9
Acadia University	19	1.7
University of Ottawa	19	1.7
Universite de Moncton	12	1.1
Concordia University	11	1.0
University of Windsor	10	0.9
Laurier	9	0.8
Carleton University	8	0.7
Bishop's	7	0.6
Mount Allison University	7	0.6
Universite du Quebec	7	0.6
McGill University	4	0.4
Saint Francis Xavier	3	0.3
UCCB	3	0.3
University of Calgary	3	0.3
University of Saskatchewan	3	0.3
University of Western	3	0.3
UPEI	3	0.3
McMaster University	2	0.2
Trent University	2	0.2
Universite de Laval	2	0.2
University of Alberta	2	0.2
York	2	0.2
Brock University	1	0.1
Laurentian	1	0.1
Nipissing University College	1	0.1
RMC	1	0.1
Saint Thomas University	1	0.1
Simon Fraser	1	0.1
University of Lethbridge	1	0.1
University of Manitoba	1	0.1
University of Toronto	1	0.1
University of Victoria	1	0.1

Appendix 8

Annual Participation Levels (Presenters & Papers)

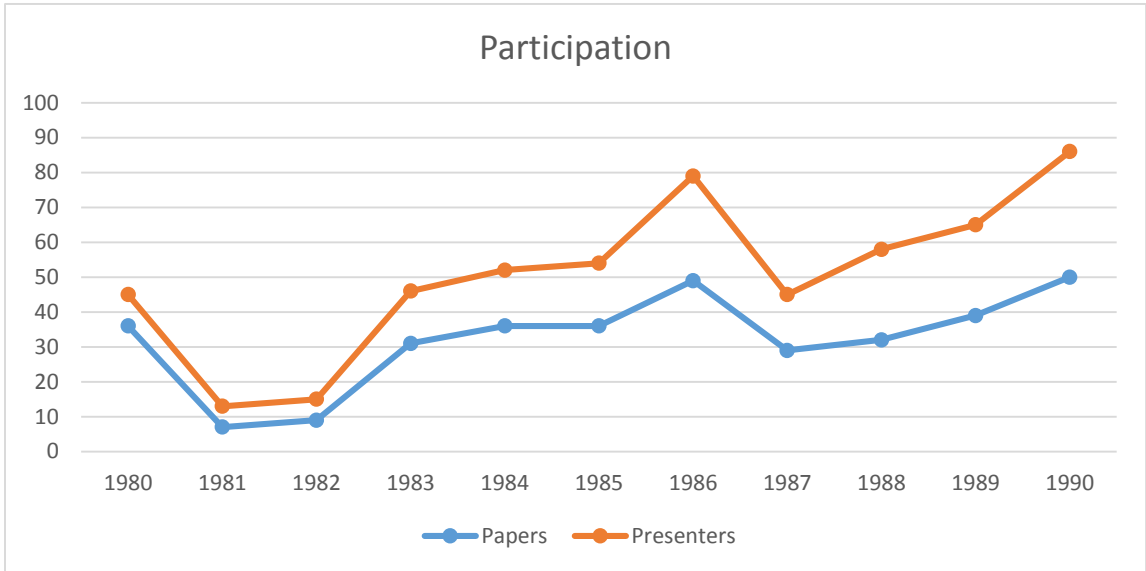
Quantity Participation Levels 1980 to 1990

Year	Presenters	Papers
1980	45	36
1981	13	7
1982	15	9
1983	46	31
1984	52	36
1985	54	36
1986	79	49
1987	45	29
1988	58	32
1989	65	39
1990	86	50

Appendix 9

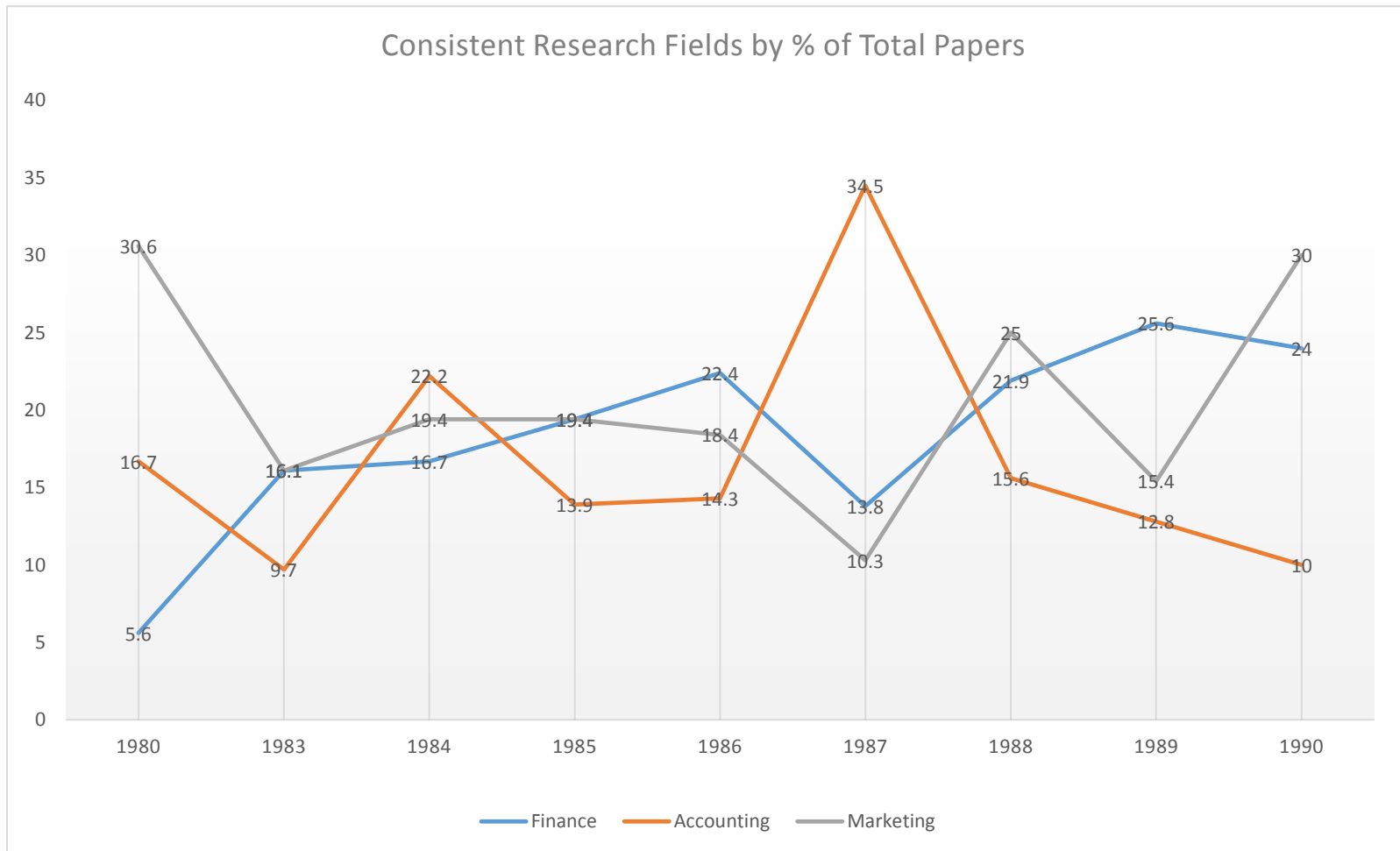
Annual Participation Levels (Presenters & Papers) Graphical

Participation Levels 1980 to 1990



Appendix 10

Finance, Accounting & Marketing Paper Participation Levels



Appendix 11

Annual ASB Conference Themes

Year	Theme
1980	The 80's: A Decade For Research
1981	
1982	
1983	Information: A Keyboard Away
1984	Atlantic Canada: Resources Management – Issues and Answers
1985	Issues and Challenges for Atlantic Business for the 1990s: How Can Business School Contribute?
1986	The Role of Government in Regional Business Development
1987	In Search of Relevance
1988	The State of Research in the Atlantic [sic] Business Schools
1989	Service Industries: Focusing on 80% of Atlantic Canada's Business
1990	Fostering Cooperation to Ensure Prosperity For Atlantic Canada: Business, Government, and the University

Appendix 12

ASB Conference Organizers

Year	Organizer	Co-Organizer
1980	Frank W. Renwick	
1981	David Ebert	
1982	Dan C. Partridge	
1983	Ian Spencer	
1984	Ann MacGillivray	John Pliniusen
1985	A. Marguerite Cassin	Paul L. Tom
1986	Hem C. Jain	
1987	Lessey Sooklal	
1988	Dr. Jean Cadieux	
1989	Tony Schellinck	
1990	J. Ronald Collins	

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