SOCIAL JUSTICE GRANTMAKING:

FINDING COMMON LANGUAGE

(Report I)

A paper written by the
Centre for Voluntary Sector Research and Development
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> This debate is about whether community foundations are social change agents, have a distinctive competence in building civil society and whether the accumulation of unrestricted assets over time is a necessary condition to fulfill this mission.
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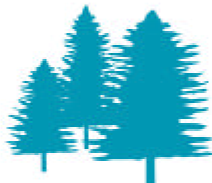
[1] Emmett Carson, "Community Foundations at the Crossroads: Social Change Agents or Charitable Bankers?" Presentation to Community Foundations of Canada National Conference, Kelowna, BC, May 2002.



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Many Canadian foundations have expressed a keen interest in applying more than Band-Aids to community problems. They are seeking ways to provide funding that addresses root causes of social problems rather than merely treating the symptoms. They are attempting to build capacity in communities to articulate strengths and mobilize leadership that will enable communities to help themselves. By listening to diverse voices, they are responding to directions that come from the broader community. Some foundations are already actively engaged in this kind of work, often without a label for what they are doing. Others are still struggling with where to begin and how to make their boards and donors comfortable with a role in facilitating social change.

One term that is used to describe such activity is **social justice** grantmaking. A survey of Canadian community foundations conducted in 2001 revealed a “strong appetite for exploring and supporting social justice activities.”[2] Indeed, the pursuit of social justice is a goal that few would dispute. The survey also found, however, that there are a wide variety of interpretations as to what social justice means as well as concerns about the effect that using the language of social justice could have on donor relations and a foundation’s reputation. While 40 percent of the community foundations surveyed declared that social justice is part of their mandate, most said that “we don’t use the words ‘social justice’ but it is implied”.[3]

This problem is not unique to community foundations. As one scholar notes, “The term social justice has come to mean many things. To some, the notion involves equality and the redistribution of power and resources.... To others, social justice is framed on principles of deserving, fairness, entitlement, rights, equity, ethics, and/or morality."[4] For example, some understand social justice in terms of freedom, others in terms of equality. At the same time, the idea can be interpreted in terms of redistribution that addresses income inequality, and in terms of recognition that respects and protects cultural, religious, and sexual diversity. The potentially vast scope of social justice work can result in a wide variety of approaches in the fight against social injustice: some will give priority to issues like unemployment, others to racial discrimination.

If foundations are to truly engage the debate about whether and how they should be active agents of social change, we need some agreement on common language to describe such activity. Is social justice grantmaking a suitable basis for such a dialogue? What does the language of social justice convey to most people? Can we find enough common ground in the term “social justice” for it to be adopted comfortably by community and other foundations to advance an agenda of social change?

The purpose of this paper is to survey the various approaches to the concept of social justice and identify common elements that emerge from its historical roots in different

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[2] Sheila Brown, “Foundations and Social Justice: Survey Findings,” Report prepared for Community Foundations of Canada, December 2001, p. 6.

[3] The results are reported in Community Foundations of Canada, Moving *Beyond the Traditional Charitable Roles.* Ottawa, 2002, p. 20

[4] Anita Parhar, "Social Justice and the Canadian Context: A Review of the Literature," University of British Columbia, Unpublished paper, February 1999.

philosophical and political traditions. It is important to note that this overview focuses on the Western, and in particular English, academic literature and traditions that inform the Canadian context of social justice. It does not aim to be an exhaustive overview of social justice as it is seen from all cultural perspectives. In this paper, we first look at the two main theoretical formulations of social justice, which view it as redistribution and as recognition of diverse cultures. Because the notion of social justice is rooted in several political traditions, it is difficult to offer a single, precise definition of the concept. It is possible, however, to articulate the key elements that constitute an understanding of the concept of social justice. If social justice is to be widely used, we also need to know how it stacks up against alternative concepts. In the second part of the paper, we consider whether other ideas that are currently popular — notably social capital, social cohesion, social inclusion, social change, and social economy — would be equivalent or perhaps better language than that of social justice. Next, we explore how widely the concept of social justice is currently used, and consider, if adopted by community and other foundations, whether it could gain legitimacy and acceptance among a wider public. The paper concludes with thoughts on the next steps for advancing a research and action agenda centred around social justice.

I. SOCIAL JUSTICE: HISTORICAL ROOTS

To understand what social justice means, it is important to briefly explain how the term has been used in the past. It has been a little more that a century and a half since the term social justice was coined. The term was first used in the 1840s by a Sicilian priest, Luigi Taparelli de'Azeglio who believed that all members of society should have equal access to the benefits and opportunities of their society, regardless of their position or station in life.[5]

Surprisingly, at the beginning of the 20th century, the term social justice was more readily embraced by liberals than by socialists.[6] Nevertheless, the arrival of socialist movements in the early 20th century as serious contenders for political power was pivotal to the development of ideas about social justice. It was the socialist challenge that forced liberals to look more critically at land ownership, private ownership of industry and other issues concerning the distribution of wealth. Liberal definitions of social justice embraced a defence of the market economy in which some existing property rights were criticised and others vindicated, and the state was charged with enacting those reformist policies that would lead to a just distribution of social resources. In 1925, the idea of social justice was officially endorsed in papal encyclicals.[7]

Social Justice as Fairness

The term gradually evolved and is now closer to how it was understood when it was first used by Taparelli de'Azeglio. Rather than a justification of the market system, social justice is now a call for state action in alleviating the negative outcomes of the

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[5] D. Miller, *Principles of Social* Justice. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999, pp. 2, 245.
[6] Miller, *Principles of Social Justice,* p. 3.
[7] Miller, *Principles of Social Justice*, p. 3.

functioning of capitalism. The publication of John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* in 1971 provided room for introducing notions of distribution as a route to diminishing inequality within a liberal framework which makes freedom a priority. Rawls describes a just society as one whose basic structure allows the most extensive basic liberty and at the same time takes care of differences. While distributive justice places a strong emphasis on the individual's merits, or ***deserts***, the rewards must also take into consideration other principles, notably ***equality*** and ***needs***. Thus, unequal distribution of wealth in society could be considered legitimate as long as it is based on the relative attributes and actions of individuals and is bounded by the need to prevent extremes of inequality.

Most liberals would stress that individuals are responsible for the matters over which they have direct control and would argue that no society can afford to provide complete equality of circumstance. The work of Armartya Sen tries to find a middle ground between ignoring and equalizing such circumstances. He argues that because people have inherently different capabilities, arising from natural or social differences, they cannot take up equality of opportunities to the same degree.[8] In essence, Sen reminds us to think about individual and community capacity building as a pre-condition to reducing human suffering that results from the inability of some to satisfy their own needs.

Together, these principles have been held up as guides toward making substantial changes in our institutions and practices. As Miller notes: "To achieve social justice we must have a political community in which citizens are treated as equals in an across-the-board way, in which public policy is geared toward meeting the intrinsic needs of every member, and in which the economy is framed and constrained in such a way that the income and other work-related benefits people receive correspond to their respective deserts."[9] The liberal tradition also makes the case that institutions are important and may work for the advantage of some or the disadvantage of many. This view has important consequences for the relationship between justice and grantmaking. As Will Kymlicka argues, the main goal of liberal theory is to identify the appropriate set of institutions for distributing resources.[10] This carries with it a responsibility for the public at large to press for just institutions.

The 'Keynesian' welfare state was the response most industrialised countries adopted to tackle issues of distribution and poverty during the post-war period. The policies created under this model became the Canadian social safety net, in which the state assumed the leading and proactive role vis-à-vis social issues. The 1980s, however, witnessed elections of governments in the USA, UK and Canada with clear neoliberal tendencies. The priorities for these governments were both economic and ideological, focussing on

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[8] Amartya Sen, *Inequality Reexamined*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1992, pp. 39-55; *Development as Freedom*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.
[9] D. Miller, *Principles of Social Justice*, p. 250.
[10] Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship*. London: Oxford University Press. See also Will Kymlicka, "Altruism in Philosophical and Ethical Traditions: Two Views," in Jim Phillips, Bruce Chapman and David Stevens, eds., *Between State and Market: Essays on Charities Law and Policy in Canada*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001, p. 88.

the reduction of inflation, national debts and the size of the state. This blueprint can be better seen in the countries of the South under the pledge of Structural Adjustment programs required by the 'Washington Consensus' institutions, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

This period gave rise to growing economic and social inequities within populations, including those of wealthy nations such as Canada, and to greater political and public acceptance that such inequities are simply a fact of life. For example, during four years of unsurpassed economic growth in the 1990s, while Canada was being judged by the United Nations to be at the top of the Human Development Index, the poorest 10 percent of Canadian families have seen their after-tax incomes drop by $690. During this same period, those at the top of the income ladder have an average of over $11,000 more in their pockets.[11] It seems apparent that the increased reliance on the market (and a lessening of the role of governments) has resulted in greater inequality in Canada. Recessions hit poor people with a tremendous blow that is only marginally felt by the rich, while during recoveries those at the top of the income ladder receive wildly disproportionate benefits from market improvements. During the 1989-1993 recession, for instance, the poorest 10 percent of the population shouldered an unbearable 86 percent reduction in earnings.[12] And, with any recovery period, the top thirty percent take home over half of the market improvements. This poses a considerable threat to notions of equality and social justice in Canada where unacceptable inequalities persist.

In light of the reduction in the services being offered by governments, the voluntary sector is increasingly being asked to be more active in filling the void. At the same time, demand for these services is growing due to increased poverty levels. Thus social justice activities of foundations, therefore, need to go beyond provision of these services and question the economic structures that have created such need in the first place. The failure to address the underlying causes of these problems may undermine grantmaking practices in several ways.[13] Without attention to these underlying issues, those providing services may use their resources in less than effective ways. "Moreover, by ignoring and failing to address these underlying causal factors, these charitable activities may unwittingly treat these conditions as being in some ways unproblematic and thereby legitimate."[14]

Social Justice as Recognition

While economic conditions are certainly important, social justice must also reflect other benefits and opportunities of society that relate to acceptance of diversity. Injustice also appears in the guise of cultural domination, disrespect and non-recognition. Thus, social justice will involve 'demands for recognition.'[15] From the late 1960s onward, various social

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[11] Centre for Social Justice, *When the Market Fails People: Exploring the widening gap between rich and poor in Canada.* Toronto, 2001.
[12] Centre for Social Justice, *When the Market Fails People.*
[13] Frederick Bird, 2002, "Community Foundations, The Practice of Charity, and Pursuit of Social Justice".
[14] Ibid, p.7.
[15] Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991.

movements (for example, the women's, environmental, and peace movements), minority communities and Aboriginal Peoples have pressed for recognition and space in the political system as legitimate voices of important parts of civil society. As a result, social justice has come to be understood as including both economic redistribution *and* social and political recognition.

Nancy Fraser introduces the concept of *parity of participation*, as a principle that can encompass both claims for redistribution and for recognition, without diminishing either.[16] According to this principle, justice requires social arrangements that permit all (adult) members of society to interact with one another as peers. For participatory parity to be possible, at least two conditions must be satisfied: First, the distribution of material resources must be such as to ensure participants independence and 'voice'; and, second, institutions must express equal respect for all participants and ensure equal opportunity for voice as part of their own cultural values and procedures.

The cultural dimension of social justice responds to many areas of subordination, including gender, 'race', ethnicity, sexuality, religion, and nationality. One remedy is to increase the value placed on the identities and cultures of discriminated groups. This requires as a first step the recognition and affirmation of diversity. It places an onus on governments to acknowledge these differences and to ensure that public policy reflects the best for society as a whole. The Canadian government has, at least in principle, accepted recognition of diversity. As the 2002 Speech from the Throne notes, "Canada has a unique model of citizenship, based simultaneously on diversity and mutual responsibility."[17] Various legislation has been enacted over the years to promote multiculturalism and cultural diversity and protect minority rights, including: *Canadian Citizenship Act* (1947), *Canadian Bill of Rights* (1960), *Multiculturalism Policy* (1971), *Official Language Act* (1969), the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982), the *Employment Equity Act* (1986) and the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1988).

The broadening of the concept of social justice to include cultural recognition along with distributive aims has important consequences for grantmaking and community foundations as well. Not only does recognition entail dialogue with and responsiveness to a broad spectrum of the community, but it also implies that foundations embody such diversity within their own processes and structures. Few foundations are themselves fully representative of the diversity within their communities, however, as they have naturally sought and attracted those in prominent positions to their boards of directors. As Carson notes in the context of the United States, 90 percent of the governing boards and 84 percent of the professional staff of foundations consist of white Americans.[18] He suggests that this accounts, in part, for the relatively low proportion of monies directed to

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[16] Nancy Fraser, "Social Justice in the Knowledge Sector: Redistribution, Recognition and Participation", http://www.wissensgesellschaft.org/orientierung/socialjustice.pdf, 2001.
[17] Government of Canada, *The Canada We Want: Speech from the Throne*. September 30, 2002, p. 12.
[18] Emmett D. Carson, "The Roles of Indigenous and Institutional Philanthropy in Advancing Social Justice," in Charles T. Clotfelter and Thomas Ehrlich, eds., *Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector in a Changing America.* Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999.

racial and ethnic groups or to social justice advocacy. In Canada the situation does not look much better. Although there are foundations in Canada supporting social justice work (including the Atkinson, Maytree, Laidlaw, Canadian Women's Foundation and Tides Canada foundations, as well as many faith communities), they are by no means in the majority. Indeed, very little is known publicly about such activity at all — from the perspective of either the funded organisations or the funder. For instance, in a study of the role of ethnocultural associations in Canadian public policy, Audrey Kobayashi observes that there is very limited knowledge about enthnocultural organisations in this country.[19] We can add that still less is documented about foundation support to these organisations.[20]

Ultimately, social justice is an idea that is central to the politics of contemporary democracies. It has always been, and must always be, a critical idea – one that challenges us to reform our institutions and practices in the name of greater fairness. It should not be simply utopian, however. Nor should it become detached from questions of political feasibility. As Miller puts it: "there has to be a culture of social justice that not only permeates the major social institutions but also constrains people's behaviour even when they are not formally occupying an institutional role."[21]

Summarising the debate on social justice, it is evident that there is no single, precise definition of the concept. The idea has roots in several philosophical traditions and has changed historically according to prevalent ideas of what constitutes social justice. That being said, it is clear that several key elements are common to the concept of social justice as it would be understood in the 21st century. Moreover, the broadening of the concept over time and the repositioning of responsibility for achieving it – from being that of governments alone to being shared with society at large – suggests that there is enormous room for grantmaking in the area of social justice. In the next section, we outline the key elements that constitute a framework for social justice grantmaking.

II. SOCIAL JUSTICE GRANTMAKING: TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

"The term social justice refers to the view that society should be organised in a way that allows equal opportunity for all its members. [Social justice grantmaking refers to] work directed at social change, seeking solutions to social, economic, and political injustice by addressing root causes, not just symptoms."[22] Social justice, and therefore, social

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[19] Audrey Kobayashi, "Advocacy from the Margins: The Role of Minority Ethnocultural Associations in Affecting Public Policy in Canada," in Keith G. Banting, ed., *The Nonprofit Sector in Canada: Roles and Responsibilities*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000, p. 229-61.

[20] This theme is explored in more depth in the companion paper, *The Potential and Limitations of Social Justice Grantmaking*. Paper prepared for Community Foundations of Canada by the Centre for Voluntary Sector Research and Development.

[21] Miller, *Principles of Social Justice*, p. 13.

[22] Community Foundations of Canada, *Moving Beyond the Traditional Charitable Roles*, Toronto, Ontario, January 18, 2002.

justice grantmaking, will have two main elements: redistribution and recognition. These elements are complementary, for as long as groups are discriminated against culturally they cannot be expected to be receiving the opportunities in society that they deserve.

The **redistribution** component is targeted toward making institutions work for the benefit of the more disadvantaged sectors of the population. The notions of 'equality of opportunity' and 'equality of condition' are central to evaluate how fair institutions actually are. Equality of opportunity asks that individuals have an 'equal' chance in competing for positions in the labour market and also in the educational or health systems. Equality of condition calls for an improvement in the situation of the least advantaged. There are at least four potential roles for social justice grantmaking in this area: action, innovation, advocacy, and capacity building.

Action: It is obvious to say that social justice grantmaking necessitates action or intervention. The more interesting question is: what kind of action? Grantmakers are regularly faced with requests to provide support for projects that help people meet their immediate economic and social needs – such as the provision of shelter, food and care – but that do so in a temporary, short term way. Of course, it is difficult to ignore immediate needs and, according to the principle of justice, essential goods should be available to all. However, it is also the obligation of the state to ensure that citizens enjoy a minimum standard of living. This means that grantmakers and voluntary organizations working within a social justice framework need to do more than simply fill in the gaps of a shrinking state. Rather, they need to engage the debate about the role of the voluntary sector relative to the state and the market in meeting basic human needs, and to think in long term rather than temporary solutions and action. Social justice action necessarily involves a transformational element aimed at improving the 'capacity' of individuals and communities to compete fairly and to exert their own choice. Such transformations are seldom achieved by a single intervention made in a reactive way. In contrast, social justice grantmaking normally requires the development of *plans of action* that involve a variety of types of intervention, that think in long-term time horizons and that address root causes of social and economic problems, rather than merely responding to the symptoms of injustice. As we will see below, how and with whose participation such plans of action are established is also an important consideration.

Innovation: Because institutions are key to achieving equality of opportunities, a distinctive role for grantmakers is the design of organizational alternatives so that institutions are more effective in the struggle against poverty and discrimination. This involves working beyond the status quo. In the discussion with panel members during the consultation on foundations and social justice, the role of grantmaking in this regard was expressed well: "foundations can and should play roles distinct from and complementary with government. These would include such things as building agency and sector capacity, inspiring debate, giving voice to marginalized people, knitting together communities and grass roots organizations. Foundations can bring long-term vision and flexibility, and creativity to the table, which goes a long way to building

capacity."[23] A grant's continuity through time allows for innovation and an accumulation of knowledge.

Some of the potential areas of involvement for social justice grantmaking include:[24] improvement of the provision of public goods, the enhancement of institutional trust; the increase of institutional efficiency and flexibility; the maintenance of pluralism and diversity; the furtherance of social change and innovation; the provision of social capital and the construction of civil society. The mechanisms of social innovation are not material donations but the strengthening of institutions to improve technical capacities and the management of social organizations.

Advocacy*:* In a democracy people have an obligation to press for just institutions. This implies advocacy for responsive government in ensuring that individuals are treated equally and that public policy is directed to improve the conditions of the least advantaged sector of the population. The implication is that advocacy needs to be viewed by governments and other institutions as a legitimate activity and that such institutions are proactive in providing mechanisms for sustained dialogue among a diversity of voices.

Some of the methods used to advance social justice include support for rights-based legal and political strategies, political and economic empowerment and public policy advocacy.[25] This again reminds us that the work of foundations in social justice is not confined to grantmaking. Rather, foundations play other key roles such as convening diverse communities, sharing information and providing leadership by connecting the business community and governments with voluntary sector organizations.

Foundations have a long history in such work. 'Organising for equality' by women, Hispanic, black and Asian communities was an important activity in the United States during 1970s and 1980s, contributing to an 'advocacy explosion.'[26] Foundation grants, especially start-up funds, were an important source for financing these types of organisations. A well-known example is the Ford Foundation's channelling of funds to civil rights and public interest advocacy groups in the 1960s.

Capacity Building: The social justice literature points to the need to give individuals and communities the capacity or capability, in Sen's language, to participate as active citizens and to have the resources necessary to take advantage of the opportunities offered by institutions to engage in long-term social change. Projects within this

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[23] Community Foundations of Canada, *Consultations on Foundations and Social Justice*. Ottawa, 2002.
[24] Taken from James Allen Smith (1999) "The Evolving Role of American Foundations" in Charles T. Clotfelter and Thomas Ehrlich, *Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector in a Changing America* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press), pg. 42
[25] Theda Skocpol, "Advocates without Members: The Recent Transformation of American Civic Life," in Theda Skocpol and Morris P. Fiorina, eds., *Civic Engagement in American* Democracy. Washington, DC and New York: Brookings Institution Press and Russell Sage Foundation, 1999, p. 492.
[26] Debra Minkoff *Organizing for Equality: The Evolution of Women's and Racial-Ethnic Organizations in America 1955-1985.* Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995, p. 17.

category might include those aimed at improving bargaining power, correcting inequalities within the family, improving self-respect, and improving access to information. The principles of social justice also suggest that the priorities for capacity building be determined by communities themselves, rather than imposed by funders without consultation. As Tim Brodhead from the McConnell Foundation states, foundations should move in the direction of 'asset-based' funding, meaning "a shift from a focus on people's needs, problem and deficiencies, to build on their assets, strengths and capacities. People, in short, are not 'clients' they are citizens".[27]

The **recognition** component of social justice builds on the redistribution component. It adds important elements to the pursuit of social justice in grantmaking. The advocacy role is extended to support the groups whose aim is to overcome subordination and inequality based on their cultural status. The view of justice as recognition also adds a 'civil dimension'[28] by focusing on the networks of solidarity and intermediate organisations (for example, community groups, faith organisations, advocacy groups, and immigrant communities) engaged in the fight against exclusion. Thematically, it adds the incorporation of rights to cultural diversity as a legitimate field of action. Politically, it adds a participatory component by calling for sustained discussion and a voice for all within a sphere of decision-making.

In short, a social justice framework for grantmaking necessarily involves attention to three things: what, how and who. The principle of fair and full distribution of benefits and opportunities requires grantmakers to take into account the nature of *what* they are achieving through their actions. The attention to advocacy and innovation urges grantmakers to consider *how* they go about the grantmaking process and how their own institutions operate. Finally, the element of recognition impels grantmakers to take into account *who* is benefiting and participating, and the extent to which this is representative of their communities.

All of these elements of a social justice grantmaking framework are compatible with the goals and principles that community foundations have already set for themselves. Indeed, when we compare these elements to the principles outlined in the second edition of *Explorations: Principles for Community Foundations* that are intended to guide the work of community foundations, we see a very close fit.[29]

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[27] Tim Brodhead, "New Directions in Foundation Giving", Presentation given at the Ketchum Breakfast Forum, Montreal, February 16, 1999.
[28] Pierre Joseph Ulysse, no date, "Social Justice, exclusion and citizenship: the Ethnic Minorities in Canada- A review of literature", CEETUM-PRRD.
[29] Community Foundations of Canada, *Explorations: Principles for Community Foundations, 2nd ed.* Ottawa, November 2001.

A Social Justice Framework	Principles Articulated in *Explorations*
Advocacy	Understanding the Changing Nature of Our Communities Creating Opportunities for Dialogue
Innovation Action	Establishing an Effective and Imaginative Grants Program
Innovation Capacity Building	Building Community Capacity Developing Partnerships
Recognition	Reflecting Diversity and Fostering Renewal

Although a social justice framework maps well onto the principles which community foundations have already established to guide their grantmaking activities, it is important to assess whether the language of social justice is the best way to describe this work. In the next section, we examine alternative concepts and explore how widely and in what contexts the language of social justice is used today with a view to determining whether it is likely to win broad public acceptance as a term to describe the activities of social change aimed at fair distribution and recognition.

III. ALTERNATIVES AND APPLICATION

Alternative Concepts

Because of the range of meaning attached to the term "social justice" and the inherently political nature of most social justice activity, some have suggested that it may be easier for foundations to move in the direction of grantmaking that is aimed at addressing the root causes of social problems by using alternative language which may be more comfortable and less political. This section of the paper considers some of these alternatives and the extent to which they encompass the elements of grantmaking described above.

Social Capital

One alternative concept popularised by international institutions such as the World Bank is social capital. Robert Putnam defines social capital as the networks, norms and trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit.[30] What creates social capital is voluntary participation in civic associations, be they soccer clubs, choral societies or co-operatives. Putnam contends that the creation of trust networks that are

[30] R.D. Putnam, "Tuning In, Tuning Out: The strange disappearance of Social Capital in America", en *PS: Political Science and Politics*, (December 1995), 664. See also John Helliwell, "Social Capital", *Isuma: Canadian Journal of Policy Research*, vol.2, no.1, Spring 2001.

the by-product of voluntary, collective action not only encourages further participation, but enhances trust in government and promotes its effectiveness.

Social capital has serious limitations as an alternative to social justice. In fact, it describes only one small part of a social justice framework, that of the value of participation. From a social capital perspective, few differentiations are made among types of associations and no consideration is given to distribution of benefits. In his critique of the concept, Peter Hall argues that social capital can, under some circumstances, be considered an exclusive good. Those within the network of contacts, which is the concrete form of this capital, often do not want to extend the privilege of access to the point where it risks diluting the benefits provided by the network.[31] In addition, social capital theory has not yet established how increasing social capital reduces poverty or inequality. While low levels of social capital in a community will make efforts to confront poverty and vulnerability more difficult, high levels of social capital do not guarantee that poverty reduction or the amelioration of social conditions will be successful or that these activities will be attempted at all. While building social capital is an asset in itself "that can be called upon in crisis, enjoyed for its own sake and/or leveraged for material gain," and may be an important tool for social justice, it does not in itself constitute social justice.[32]

Social Cohesion

Social Cohesion focuses on relations among the members of a group, be it a collective, class or society, and refers to the processes through which civil society is integrated.[33] In an important sense, social cohesion involves the construction of social capital, but has a broader focus on cultural and social values and on the institutions that reinforce these. "Social cohesion involves building shared values and communities of interpretation, reducing disparities in wealth and income, and generally enabling people to have a sense that they are engaged in a common enterprise, facing shared challenges, and that they are members of the same community."[34] It is not necessarily the case, however, that a highly cohesive community is also highly inclusive. On the contrary, Vraken argues that a high degree of social cohesion within a group or community could make the inclusion of other groups or individuals more difficult, as is often the case within ethnically or religiously homogenous societies.[35]

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[31] Peter Hall, "Social Capital in Britain", *British Journal of Political Science*, vol.29, 1999.
[32] M. Wolcock, "The Place of Social Capital in Understanding Social and Economic Outcomes", *Isuma: Canadian Journal of Policy Research*, vol.2, no.1, Spring 2001.
[33] C. Beauvais and J. Jenson, *Social Cohesion: Updating the State of the Research*, CPRN Discussion Paper F22. Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks, 2002.
[34] J. Maxwell, "Social Dimensions of Economic Growth", *Eric John Hanson Commemorative Conference*, vol. VIII, University of Alberta, Edmonton 1996.
[35] J. Vraken, "No Social Cohesion Without Social Exclusion", *Research Unit on Poverty, Social Exclusion and the City*, University of Antwerp, Antwerp, 2001.

Economic polarisation has clearly been seen as a major "fault line" which has the potential to undermine social cohesion by limiting opportunities and the values of reciprocity. While social cohesion is to some extent dependent upon objective social and economic conditions, it is more than just a manifestation of material conditions. In this sense, there is a fit with a social justice framework, although the later could be argued to be more encompassing because it considers material conditions as both a precondition and an outcome. In addition, while the state is often neglected in building social capital or cohesion, there is a strong advocacy role in social justice programs and an emphasis on the process by which desired outcomes are achieved. As one critique of social cohesion notes, "[t]he current insistence on social cohesion as a way to counterbalance neoliberalism often fails to address the issue of inequalities: the State is enjoined to promote consensus on values rather than resolve conflict of interest".[36]

Social Inclusion

Social inclusion can be thought of as a more proactive concept than social cohesion. It can be broadly defined as action to ensure that all are able to participate as valued, respected and contributing members of society.[37] It is about closing the physical, social and economic differences that separate people, rather than only about eliminating boundaries or barriers between *us* and *them*.[38]

Social inclusion recognises poverty and economic vulnerability as barriers to inclusion alongside racism, disability and gender. Extreme economic inequalities are clearly incompatible with social inclusion as they impose limitations on the ability of some to participate in the community and create disadvantages in terms of allocation of benefits and/or status. A social justice framework tends to go farther than that of social inclusion, however, with regard to stressing the importance of addressing underlying economic conditions and the systemic inequalities that have produced them.

Our assessment is that social justice both includes and goes beyond the concepts of social cohesion, social inclusion, and social capital. In this sense, all three elements can be useful as measures of social justice or as means to the broader goal of social justice.

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[36] P. Bernard, *Social Cohesion: A Critique*, Ottawa: Canadian Policy Research Networks, 2000.

[37] We note in particular the work of the Laidlaw Foundation in its research into social inclusion, and its use of this concept as a touchstone of its programs. The Laidlaw website provides an excellent definition and describes several cornerstones for its work on social inclusion including: human development; involvement and engagement; proximity; and material well being. See http://www.laidlawfdn.org.

[38] Michael Bach, 2001, "Social Inclusion as Solidarity: Rethinking the Child Rights Agenda", Perspectives on Social Inclusion Working Paper Series, Laidlaw Foundation.

Social Change

Social change is a very broad, general concept that is sometimes used interchangeably with social justice. "Generally the literature does not differentiate between the two; rather there is a tacit understanding that organisations working for change are engaged in effort to make the world a more just and democratic place."[39] Both concepts address questions of power: who has it, how those without can get it, how it is made consonant with democratic principles, and how it can be more equally distributed. The key difference between the two terms is that social justice is more precise and more definite about the desired goals for society.

Social economy

The idea of social economy is very strong in Québec, where it is used as a means to enhance community economic development. This idea "is centred around the provision of social and welfare services by the not-for-profit sector…. Social economy organisations are understood to represent a break from the binary choices of conventional socio-economic strategies that present market and state as mutually exclusive spheres of economic growth and social regeneration."[40] All activity is locally based which may build a sense of community or, under some circumstances, may reinforce boundaries between communities. An additional limitation is that the social economy model does not address political change. It "is not a terrain of democratic development, seeking to create permeable and responsive state institutions. Instead, it is simply another type of social and economic development requiring sectoral initiatives, often resembling existing policies."[41] Clearly, social economy is not equivalent to social justice. Moreover, it would be extremely difficult to talk about social economy grantmaking as it would narrow the focus unduly to social economy organisations as the recipients.

All of the possible alternatives to social justice are worthwhile pursuits and should not be discounted. Each works at alleviating some of the injustices present in society. However, none are equivalent to or as encompassing as the concept of social justice.

Use and Acceptance of the Language of Social Justice

Concepts, such as social justice, succeed when there is a general consensus that they are valid, justified, and appropriate in the contexts in which they are used. In this section, we explore how widely the language of social justice is used. Our premise is that the more widely the concept is used by institutions that are themselves known in the community and deemed to be prestigious and valued by society at large, the more

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[39] A. Shaw, "Social Change Philanthropy: An Overview" paper presented to the Synergos Institute, undated.
[40] A. Amin, A. Cameron and R. Hudson, "Welfare as Work? The Potential of the UK Social Economy?", *Environment and Planning* A, 13, 11, p.203
[41] P. Graefe, "Embedding Community Development: Which Institutions for the Social Economy? Paper presented to the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Quebec, 2001, p.7.

widely the language of social justice will be known and accepted. The more community foundations, and other diverse and respected organisations, use 'social justice' to guide their activities, the more legitimate social justice becomes for all members of the community.

It is sometimes assumed that the language of social justice is the preserve of the left. This is not the case. When we look at political parties in Canada, it is not surprising that only the New Democratic Party (NDP) explicitly uses the language of social justice to describe its mission, although the Liberal Party refers to a "just society." What is interesting, however, is the extent to which the federal government and several other important societal and political institutions have also used the term. In the Accord signed between the Government of Canada and the Voluntary Sector in December 2001, social justice is identified as one of the core values, along with democracy, active citizenship, equality, diversity and inclusion, shared by all Canadians. Social justice is defined in the Accord as "ensuring the full participation in the social, economic and political life of communities."[42] In the international context, one of the foremost proponents of social justice is the United Nations. A quick search of the United Nation's press releases archives shows 439 documents using the term social justice during the period 1995-2002.

While it has to be acknowledged that at present the language of social justice grantmaking is not widely used by American or Canadian philanthropic foundations to describe their missions, goals or programs, there are some notable exceptions.[43] The Ford Foundation is one and Program Officer, Christopher Harris, defines social justice as the achievement of universal rights across the population; the absence of discrimination in access to jobs, housing, services and other economic, social and political opportunities; and the promotion of peace and reconciliation. The term social justice grantmaking is preferred to social change philanthropy because it focuses on addressing injustice. Canada's Atkinson Foundation has long referred to social justice as a fundamental part of its work: " The mission of the Atkinson Charitable Foundation is to promote social and economic justice in the tradition of its founder, Joseph E. Atkinson."[44] Similarly, Tides Canada, a relatively new national public foundation, describes its work as enabling donors to "become part of an engaged community of individuals who align their giving with principles of social justice, broadly-shared economic opportunity, inclusive democratic process and farsighted environmental stewardship."[45] Others, such as the Maytree and Laidlaw Foundations, clearly outline all of the elements of a social justice grantmaking framework in their missions, even if they do not use the language of social justice.[46]

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[42] Government of Canada and Voluntary Sector, *An Accord Between the Government of Canada and the Voluntary Sector*. Ottawa: Voluntary Sector Initiative, 2001, p .7.
[43] The websites of most of the major Canadian and American foundations were examined to see how, if at all, the term was used.
[44] See http://www.atkinsonfdn.on.ca for a description of the foundation and its mission.
[45] See the Tides Canada website at http://www.tidescanada.org.
[46] The Maytree is a private Canadian charitable foundation, established in 1982, that is "committed to reducing poverty and inequality in Canada and to building strong civic communities. The Foundation seeks to accomplish

It is also important to mention the work being done by faith communities in the pursuit of social justice. For example, the Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiative KAIROS is dedicated to the promotion of human rights, justice and peace, viable human development and universal solidarity.[47] Finally, as noted above, community foundations have also described most the elements of a social justice framework as part of their defining principles.

Although use of the term, social justice, is not yet widespread among North American foundations to describe their grantmaking activities, it appears to be used sufficiently frequently by large and prestigious foundations that it can begin to develop a claim on how we think about grantmaking.

CONCLUSIONS

A review of the literature on the concept of social justice suggests that it has been a contested concept. Rather than invalidating the concept, this contestation has added important elements to the original conception of the idea. Drawing on original liberal perspectives, the concept embraces a shared commitment to the elimination of inequalities and a respect for choice and responsibility for individual's actions. There is a consensus about the need for stronger institutions, both within the state and civil society, to correct inequities particularly for disadvantaged sectors of the population. The visibility of injustices associated with gender, race, religious or ethnic status has broadened the concept of social justice to include cultural as well as economic issues.

In comparing alternative concepts to that of social justice, there appear to be no direct substitutes. Although other concepts such as social cohesion, social inclusion, and social capital are powerful in their own right, they do not capture or convey all of the elements of a social justice framework. Our conclusion is that it would be preferable to use and expand the understanding and acceptance of the language of social justice, rather than turning to a different concept that may feel more comfortable, but does not adequately incorporate all of the principles which Canadian community foundations have set for themselves.

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its objectives by identifying, supporting and funding ideas, leaders and leading organizations that have the capacity to make change and advance the common good." For a description of the work of the Maytree Foundations, see http://www.maytree.com.

[47] This partnership brings together the Aboriginal Rights Coalition, the Canada Asia Working Group, the Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice, the Inter-Church Action for Development, Relief and Justice, the Inter-Church Coalition on Africa, the Inter-Church Committee for Human Rights in Latin America, the Inter-Church Committee for Refugees, PLURA, the Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility and TEN DAYS for Global Justice. Their website (www.kairoscanada.org) describes various campaigns promoting social justice; from the environment to the First Nations their causes cover a broader spectrum. This is but one example from a long tradition of deep social concerns within the faith communities.

While this overview has enabled us to propose a framework that outlines the main elements of what would be involved in social justice grantmaking, it also highlights the fact that very little is known about the practices of social justice grantmaking. Although it is evident that there is already some very innovative work in social justice grantmaking taking place in Canada, its role and potential are not widely understood nor the subject of much research. There are a number of key questions that would benefit from further research. These include: What is the role for grantmaking in social justice in Canada? How much are grantmakers contributing to social justice? Who is contributing, and why are some contributing more than others? What is working, and why is it working? What impact does social justice grantmaking have on the well being of individuals and their communities, and how could it be improved?