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**Statistics Canada International
Symposium Series - Proceedings**

**Symposium 2006 :
Methodological Issues in
Measuring Population Health**

2006



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Closing Remarks

Don Royce¹

Now that we have come to the end of a day of workshops plus two very full days of sessions, I have the very pleasant task of offering a few closing remarks and, more importantly, of recognizing the efforts of those who have contributed to the success of this year's symposium. And it has clearly been a success.

As François Maranda noted in his Opening Remarks, this was our twenty-third International Methodology Symposium. For what we considered to be one of our "small" symposia, focusing on a somewhat specialized topic, there was certainly no shortage of participation. We had some 400 registrants in total; in fact registration would have been even higher but for limitations of space. Altogether some 11 countries were represented, making it truly an international event. In addition to the key-note address and the Waksberg address, we had 12 sessions containing 15 invited and 33 contributed talks, as well as three poster sessions containing some 13 posters – a total of 63 presentations in all over the two days. Some 33 of these papers and posters came from presenters from outside of Canada. The response to our two workshops on Wednesday was also extremely positive, with about 130 people registering.

Even though the topic was more specialized than in some of our previous symposia, there was a wide variety of the sessions in the symposium this year, making it almost impossible for me to comment on favourite sessions. I am sure that we each have our own, and I am sure that you regret, as I do, that it was impossible to go to all the talks that we would have liked to. However I do want to single out the Keynote Address of Graham Kalton, and the Waksberg Address by Alastair Scott, as highlights of the two days that we all enjoyed. These two sessions alone would have made for a very satisfying conference. But there was so much more.

The theme of this year's Symposium was "Methodological Issues in Measuring Population Health." Having sat through two days of very stimulating sessions, I was struck by how important and pervasive a topic this really has become. Certainly the need to provide statistical information about population health has never been stronger. As Graham Kalton mentioned in his keynote address, health is becoming an important component of virtually all social enquiries. I was also struck by the many challenges in measuring population health, and by the ingenuity required to address them. I hope that this year's symposium has gone some way towards stimulating your own ideas about how to meet these challenges.

I would now like to turn to my more important task, that of thanking all of those who contributed to the success of the symposium. First, I would like to thank all of the presenters, discussants, organizers, chairs of the sessions and leaders of the workshops for the efforts they put into sharing their knowledge and experience with us. For those from Statistics Canada, I know that many of you contributed on top of your regular duties. You have our thanks.

For those of you from outside Statistics Canada, I would like to say how much we appreciate your willingness to respond to our invitation. Many of you have traveled a long way to be here with us this week. Thank you very much.

I wish to offer my sincerest thanks to all the people responsible for the accommodations who helped with the smooth running of the Symposium. The personnel of the Relais Chateau Cartier, the personnel responsible for the audiovisual equipment and those in charge of simultaneous translation all deserve our recognition. Given the large number of participants and the specific accent of each presenter over the course of an international meeting of this scale, the interpreters have earned a special mention.

I would also like to highlight the work of the dozen volunteers who were instrumental in the success of this event. These volunteers have worked extremely hard over the last few weeks to ensure that we would be comfortable and

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that we would get the most out of this Symposium. There are so many people to be mentioned, and I don't want to forget anyone, so we warmly thank all of you for your hard work. I would really like to focus on the work of Alain Lucas and Denis Lemire, our two volunteer co-organizers. I must unfortunately point out that this Symposium may be Denis' last, since he is thinking of retiring soon. Thank you very much Denis.

Last, and most importantly, I want to thank the Organizing Committee, which has been hard at work on this event for over a year. It includes Chris Mohl, Colin Babyak, Yves Béland, Marie Beaudet, and Carolyn Zirbser, under the leadership of Milorad Kovacevic. Please join me in showing them our sincere appreciation for bringing us such an excellent symposium.

As my final duty, I would like to remind you that rather than having a symposium in 2007, Statistics Canada is participating, along with several other organizations, in the organization of the Third International Conference on Establishment Surveys. It will be held from June 18th to the 21st, 2007, in Montréal. We will resume our regular symposium series in 2008. As well, Statistics Canada and the Canadian Institute for Health Information are organizing the Health Statistics Data Users Conference from September 23rd to 25th in Ottawa. For further information about these two conferences, please see the information in your conference kit.

So this brings the conference to a close. I thank all of the participants, and to those of you from out of town, I wish you a safe journey home.