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Trends. Double Bind in Quebec and in the World

Editor

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With the resignation of Quebec's premier, Lucien Bouchard, and his seemingly incipient succession by Bernard Landry, the quest to make Quebec an independent nation-state still burns bright in the souls of True Believers. However, there is a double-bind phenomenon affecting political and economic dynamics that may present a significant impediment to this desired status.

As described by New York Times reporter James Brooke, the separatist movement in Quebec has usually subsided when the economy rises. On the other hand, in times of significant economic problems, opponents of the separatist movement can strongly make the case that an independent Quebec would not be a viable enterprise. Separatist leaders are then left either with the position that an independent Quebec could well be viable but with less political support for separatism or that an independent Quebec might well not be viable but with much more political support for separatism.

Although double-bind as construct was popularized in describing schizophrenogenic family dynamics, it can be applied, as well, not only to events in Quebec but many other psycho-social configurations. For example, Ingram and Hutchinson (2000) have described HIV-positive women who are socialized to have children but who find childbearing is condemned. McNeal (1999) has described the double-bind of gay self-hood comprising conflict among masculine and feminine self-representations. And in the context of theories of psychosis, Zuk & Zuk (1998) describe points of convergence among the constructs of projection, double-bind, and demonic possession.

Again, the double-bind dilemma faced by separatists in Quebec is--in the abstract--faced by many people in various psychosocial configurations. Unfortunately, behavioral science research has been far more prolific in identifying examples than methods to resolve them. (See Brooke, J. (January 26, 2001). In Premier's job, where Quebec lost an orator, it prepares to gain an accountant. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Ingram, D., & Hutchinson, S. A. (2000). Double binds and the reproductive and mothering experiences of HIV-positive women. *Qualitative Health Research*, 10, 117-132; McNeal, K. E. (1999). Behind the make-up: Gender ambivalence and the double-bind of gay selfhood in drag performance. *Ethos*, 27, 344-378; Zuk, G. H., & Zuk, C. V. (1998). Projection, double bind and demonic possession: Some common elements in three theories of psychosis. *Contemporary Family Therapy: An International Journal*, 20, 15-23.) (Keywords: Canada, Double-Bind Dilemma, Independence, Quebec, Separatist Movement.)