

## Does the Canadian system work for class mobility?

Paul TE Cusack<sup>a\*</sup>

### Abstract

This paper is a short letter contemplating whether, for all the effort, whether class mobility is possible. Education is the key. It should be accessible to all social classes at the university level especially.

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**Author Affiliation:** <sup>a</sup> Research Scholar, BScE, DULE, 23 Park Ave, Saint John, NB E2J 1R2, Canada.

**Corresponding Author:** Paul TE Cusack. Department of BScE, DULE, 23 Park Ave, Saint John, NB E2J 1R2, Canada.

**Email:** St-michael@hotmail.com

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

The short answer to this question is: Yes it does. In this brief paper we consider one family and how they worked to improve their lot in society. The key measure is education. Free public schools and cheap university allow advancement between the generations. We will outline a few families to show how much they gained.

A lot of researchers claim that despite all the effort, there is little class movement. Although it is true that there is a component of cronyism in getting a good paying job, it is possible to improve one's lot in life - to move up class - through education. Governments should lower the costs of education as an investment in the society. Besides the fact that it is desirable just to know, it also improves the economy for almost everyone. Today, it costs \$68,000 for tuition alone to get a university degree from the local university. It is \$about \$1000 for a stand alone course for enrichment. That is too much. It should be half that as a reasonable figure to invest in one's future earnings. Who would pay \$68,000 for an Arts degree? No wonder Arts programs are in decline.

The first family we consider are the LeClair's. The grandfather b 1905 and KIA in WWII was illiterate. He went on to sire 5 children all of whom married and realised kids of their own. The first family was the Cusack's. The mother had graduated from High School in the vocational program. Although she dreamed of becoming a nurse, funds were not available for her to attend university. He two sisters who also graduated high school worked in Banks and their brother became a Chartered Managerial Accountant: a professional. The youngest son went to university where he made ends meet by selling peanut

butter sandwiches to house mates. He hitchhiked to the neighbouring province. He had started out working as a n English teacher. Now he is retired and lives in the wealthiest neighbourhood in the province. His father was illiterate.

The grandchildren did well too. The Levesque's had 5 children tow of whom graduated from university- one as the valedictorian. Another was a successful entrepreneur. The other two graduated from community college. The eldest son built his own mansion.

The grandchild of the LeClair has two daughters both of whom graduated from university. One got a master's in business administration. She went on to run for provincial political office unsuccessfully.

The Cusack's had two kids. The son is a researcher. He was the first professional male in the Cusack family although a serious mental illness prevented him from marrying and working. His siter graduated from High school and married a man who has an MBA. They went on to build their own house on the water. Now they live in a second house on the water. They had two children who graduated from private school. The both graduated from university and have university level positions.

Another branch od the Cusack family are 4 in number. The three boys and one girl went on to graduate from community college. They all have houses of their own. One of the boys has his own business. Their grandparents raised 10 children in a shanty town. Their father was a truck driver. The daughter purchased equipment for the local regional

hospital. The other two boys work in a high-income job in a union.

As for friends, I was close to a group that went on to improve themselves. Jack's father was a janitor. He went on to get a university degree in Business Administration. Another Scoot came from a low-income neighbourhood. He father was in prison, but he went on to graduate from university in Business and he now works as the head of a union. He has a house in a upper income neighbourhood. Tim's father was a janitor too. He went on to graduate from Business paid for by his employer.

There are many other anecdotal stories that indicate that the Canadian system, although not perfect, is working. The only one who failed to improve himself was me although my father didn't graduate from High School but I graduated from a professional degree.

I enjoy watch a local construction company run by Lebanese Canadian trained Engineers -masters level from Canada's second ranked university -build a business up from scratch in a city that people moan cannot spawn entrepreneurs because of the billionaire Irving family. They are competing and winning against the Irving's who operate in the same businesses. It can and is being done. To be a successful engineer, you need to be entrepreneurial, or lucky.

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