A Gendered Perspective of Learning and Representation in Forest Management Advisory Committees in Canada

by

Kristyn Richardson

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Abstract

It is now widely accepted that public participation is a critical component of sustainable forest management. However, achieving meaningful public participation continues to be a challenge. In an effort to obtain more active involvement from the public, forest product companies have been using an advisory committee approach. However, the absence of women from multi-stakeholder participatory processes is an indicator of the failure to meet the criteria of social sustainability within sustainable forest management. The lack of female representation limits the degree of influence women have on forest management policies and decision-making.

To date there are few empirical studies that have evaluated these forest management advisory committees from a gendered perspective in terms of representation and learning outcomes. This study will help to fill the gaps in the literature. The purpose of the study was to assess the effectiveness of participation in the forest management advisory committee process in Canada from a gendered perspective. The specific objectives were to: 1) determine key reasons why women are underrepresented on forest management advisory committees; 2) consider whether levels of satisfaction with the current advisory committee process vary according to gender; 3) explore if the learning outcomes of advisory committees differ by gender; and 5) develop recommendations to increase the involvement of women in the advisory committee process to enhance the learning outcomes of such processes.

The study focussed on two forest product companies that hold forest management licences in Canada: Tembec, which is located in Pine Falls, Manitoba and NewPage, which is located in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia. A case study approach within the qualitative research paradigm was used to address the objectives of the research. The methods of data used included literature and document review, participant observation, field notes, and semi-structured
interviews with facilitators, company employees, selected members of the two advisory committees, former committee members, and non-committee members who were involved in the forestry industry. NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software program, assisted with the data analysis.

Results established several key reasons why women are not joining forest management advisory committees. Respondents identified: 1) traditional male roles within the forestry industry and resource sectors; 2) interest; 3) awareness and opportunity; and 4) personal constraints. Results also established key reasons why women are not actively participating in discussions at committee meetings. Respondents identified: 1) comfort level; 2) education and experience; 3) lack of other women present at meetings; 4) degree of influence; 5) personality; and 6) sexist attitudes and behaviours. In terms of satisfaction with the advisory committee process, the results indicated that both men and women felt that the committees were effective. The only notable difference between the two genders was in regards to female representation, most male respondents did not view the underrepresentation as a flaw with the advisory committee process while all of the female respondents felt more women should be represented on the committees. The data regarding learning outcomes experienced by the participants showed that both men and women were experiencing instrumental learning, or learning about the forest product companies and the forestry industry. However, only female respondents reported experiencing communicative learning, or learning from the values, perspectives, and opinions of other participants. In addition, very few transformative learning outcomes were reported by the respondents, female or male.

The results of this research show that men and women are different players in and hold different values about forest management. Proponents and participants should make a concerted
effort to increase the female representation on forest management advisory committees in order to enhance the participant satisfaction with and learning outcomes of such processes.
Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank all the committee members who so generously lent their time to share their knowledge and experiences with me. Without your participation this study would not have been possible. I would also like to extend my appreciation to Tembec and NewPage for allowing me to study their advisory committee processes.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Forests are of fundamental importance to Canadian society. Forests are considered to be the ideal spot for outdoor recreational and leisure activities, including hunting, camping, and wildlife observation. The forest industry is an essential component of the Canadian national economy (Boyd 2003). In 2006, the forestry industry contributed 2.7% to Canada’s gross domestic product (NRCan 2006). It employs 822 400 people – 294 100 in direct jobs, which is 1.7% of Canada’s total employment (NRCan 2006). As well, both forests and the forest industry have played important roles in defining Canadian culture. Of the legally defined forested area in Canada, 94% is governed in the interests of the public by the provincial and federal governments (NRCan 2006). However, most decisions regarding Canadian forests have been made between the forest product companies and provincial governments to the exclusion of the public (Tanz and Howard 1991; Higgelke and Duinker 1993; Blouin 1998; Parkins 2002). This has resulted in an increased dissatisfaction with the sustained yield paradigm because forest product companies have determined the values to be incorporated into planning and decision-making processes (Tanz and Howard 1991).

Due to the high proportion of forest management taking place on public lands and the dependency of many communities on forest resources, the public had become critical of planning and forest management in Canada (Beckley et al. 2006). The public voiced concerns over decisions that had been made without the involvement of the public and demanded more opportunities for better public participation (Higgelke and Duinker 1993). The desire of the public for a democratized forest decision-making process was the driving force behind the paradigmatic shift to sustainable forest management (Robinson et al. 2001). Sustainable forest management is “management that maintains and enhances the long-term health of forest
ecosystems for the benefit of all living things, while providing environmental, economic, social and cultural opportunities for present and future generations” (NRCan 2001). Effective public participation is one of the indicators of sustainable forest management in virtually all of the definitions (e.g. National Forest Strategy, Canadian Council of Forest Ministers Criteria and Indicators).

Forest product companies have used multi-stakeholder processes in an attempt to engage the public in sustainable forest management. The most commonly utilized technique for ongoing multi-stakeholder public participation is an advisory committee, which gathers input about forest planning and facilitates the sharing of local concerns regarding forestry practices (Lynn and Busenberg 1995; Parkins 2002; Beckley et al. 2006). An advisory committee can be defined as a “relatively small group of people who are convened by a sponsor for an extended period of time to represent the ideas and attitudes of various groups and/or communities for the purpose of examining a proposal, issue, or set of issues” (Lynn and Busenberg 1995, p. 148). Most of these advisory committees act only in an advice-giving capacity with the final decision-making power continuing to reside with the forest products companies.

Scholars have begun to consider in some detail advisory committees as a form of public participation (Lynn and Busenberg 1995; Parkins 2002; McGurk et al. 2006; Parkins et al. 2006). While studying advisory committee processes McGurk (2003) noted that communication, learning, and reflection are important aspects of the advisory committee discussions. It was also observed that learning is brought about through dialogue, written materials, site visits, and presentations (McGurk 2003). An element of fair and effective public participation is the learning that occurs during the involvement process; learning is also an important outcome of effective public participation (Fitzpatrick and Sinclair 2003). The theory of transformative
learning considers the connection between adult learning and empowerment leading to social change. Essential to this individual transformation are praxis and dialogue. The idea of learning is a relatively new dimension to public participation and only within the last ten years has the concept of transformative learning been discussed as an objective of public participation (Sinclair and Diduck 2001).

Gender is also important to meaningful public participation in forest management and decision-making but this idea has rarely been examined. Data provided by members of advisory committees suggest that women and men have different interests in sustainable forest planning and management (Reed and Varghese 2007). These gender differences have been observed in values towards forest management, access to advisory committees, and experiences with the advisory committee process. Women are underrepresented on advisory committees according to a national survey; when the National Survey on Forest Sector Advisory Committees was conducted in 2004, only 19% of committee members were women (Parkins et al. 2006). The absence of women from the advisory committee process is considered a serious weakness in meeting the criteria associated with sustainable forest management, most relevant being to ensure that all views of the public are considered in forest management planning and decision-making processes (CCFM 2003). Improved knowledge about these issues could lead to increased gender sensitivity and address inequalities in the forest management advisory committee process. Women and men do not appear to be identical actors in participatory processes and gender balance should be considered when forming advisory committees. Research has shown that women and men tend to hold different values about forests and attitudes toward forest management (Mohai 1992; Davidson and Freudenburg 1996; Parkins et al. 2006).
Since an individual’s values and attitudes are the underpinnings of transformative learning (Mezirow 1981), it is possible that gender may play a role in learning outcomes experienced.

1.1 Purpose and objectives

The purpose of this research is to assess the effectiveness of participation in the forest management advisory committee process in Canada from a gendered perspective. The specific objectives of the study are:

1. Determine key reasons why women are underrepresented on forest management advisory committees.
2. Consider whether levels of satisfaction with the current advisory committee process vary according to gender.
3. Explore if the learning outcomes of advisory committees differ by gender.
4. Develop recommendations to increase the involvement of women in the advisory committee process to enhance the learning outcomes of such processes.

1.2 Case studies

The case studies chosen for this research were two forest management advisory committees. The first was associated with Tembec, which holds a forest management license in Manitoba and is located in Pine Falls. The second was associated with NewPage, which holds a forest management license on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia and is located in Port Hawkesbury. The two forest product companies use their respective committees to varying degrees in their decision-making activities, and both have had differing success in obtaining input from the advisory committee members.
1.3 Methods

This research utilized a qualitative paradigm, which included case study and participatory approaches to meet the research purpose and objectives. The data collection methods used in this research consisted of three components. First, data were obtained by reviewing the relevant literature on the thesis topic and through examination of the minutes of previous meetings for the two committees studied. Second, participant observation was employed since I attended committee meetings; one of NewPage’s meetings and three of Tembec’s meetings. Third, in-depth interviews were conducted with facilitators, company employees, selected members of both the advisory committees, former committee members, and non-committee members who were involved in the forestry industry. The interviews were conducted either by phone or during site-visits to the region where each of the committees operates: Pine Falls, Manitoba and Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia. The total number of interviews conducted was 25, six of these were completed over the phone and the other 19 were done in person.

1.4 Organization

This thesis is organized into six chapters. Chapter 1 provides a context for the research, states the purpose and objectives of the study, and briefly outlines the research methods. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature relevant to the research. Chapter 3 discusses in detail the methodological framework and the research techniques utilized to carry out the research objectives. In chapter 4, the results and discussion regarding the first two study objectives are presented. This is followed in chapter 5 by the results and discussion regarding the third study objective. The final chapter contains conclusions and recommendations related to the objectives of the research.
Chapter 2: Public participation in forest management

2.1 Defining public participation

Numerous definitions of public participation are presented in the literature. Praxis (1988) defines public participation as “a means by which public concerns, needs, and values are identified prior to decisions, so that the public can contribute to the decision-making process”. The International Association for Public Participation (2003) defines public participation as “any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and that uses public input to make better decisions”. Alternatively, the Canadian Standards Association (2002) defines it as “the process through which people who will be affected by or interested in a decision, and who have a stake in the outcome, get a chance to influence its content before it is made”. One of the key differences among these, and the many other definitions of public participation, is the degree to which the public is able to influence and control the decision-making (Roberts 1995).

The tendency to use the terms public involvement, consultation, and public participation interchangeably has further complicated the definition of public participation (Roberts 1995). Roberts (1995), in an attempt to simplify the confusion surrounding the definition of public participation, provides concise definitions for the three different terms. Consultation includes “education, information sharing, and negotiation” with the goal being better decision making by the organization consulting the public whereas public participation “actually brings the public into the decision-making process” (Roberts 1995, pg.4). According to Roberts (1995, pg. 4), public involvement is the “process for involving the public in the decision-making process of an organization” through the use of both consultation and public participation. The implication of public involvement is that the public has gained a voice in the matters that both affect and interest them.
According to the literature it is important to remember that there is no single public; the public instead should be viewed as shifting affiliations and alliances that group in response to the issues and informal structures (e.g., Roberts 1995). Following this a public participation program is not attempting to engage a single population, but rather a variety of heterogeneous publics. These groups are not necessarily organized and can emerge at any time during the process depending on their particular concerns and the issues involved in the process. It is essential to identify and engage all the interested and impacted publics for a public participation program to be effective. A related idea is the distinction between the active public and the inactive public, the inactive public is comprised of the silent majority of the general public (Mitchell 2002). The active public can make important contributions to environmental management; however, the inactive public must also be engaged for participatory approaches to be successful. Engaging the inactive public may require identifying the barriers to participation, which include lack of opportunity, inadequate notice, incomplete or inaccessible information, insufficient resources, and lack of impact on decisions (Diduck and Sinclair 2002). Another important consideration is that members of the inactive public may simply not have the time to participate.

Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of citizen participation is regarded as an early interpretation of the participation/consultation discussion. Arnstein argued that varying degrees of involvement could be identified based on the extent to which the organization and public share decision-making power. As shown in Figure 1, Arnstein presented a model that contained eight rungs, which represented the levels of public participation, and the associated degrees of power sharing.
Figure 1: The ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein 1969).

Non-participation is the characteristic of the two bottom rungs, manipulation and therapy. These two levels of public participation are intended to educate the participants in order to simply gain their support. The middle three rungs are degrees of tokenism and include informing, consultation, and placation. Informing involves the one-way flow of information to the public from the organization. Consultation and placation allows the public an opportunity to provide input but with no assurance that the information will be used to advise the decisions. Citizen power is characteristic of the top three rungs, which are partnership, delegated power, and citizen control. Negotiations between the power holders and citizens have redistributed the power to form partnerships that result in shared decision-making responsibilities. The top two levels,
delegated power and citizen control, take the formed partnerships further so that citizens have the majority of the control and the decision-making power. According to Arnstein (1969) meaningful public participation requires power redistribution in favour of the citizens and the lower rungs of the ladder of citizen participation do not adequately provide this redistribution.

Many variations of Arnstein’s ladder have been produced. The International Association for Public Participation has developed a public participation spectrum with five increasing levels of public impact. The lowest levels of the spectrum are informing and consulting, continuing on to involvement, and finishing with collaborating and empowering (IAP2 2003). In this model, each level of the participation spectrum can be appropriate depending on the issues and the goals of the public participation program. Contrary to Arnstein’s belief that only the top rungs of the ladder result in meaningful public participation, in the participation spectrum the lower levels are equally important as the higher levels. Both informing and consulting can be used as onramps in encouraging more effective dialogue (Sinclair and Diduck 2001).

Considering this problematic issue regarding terminology, this research will make use of the term public participation and the meaning attached to it by the International Association for Public Participation (2003). This definition is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process and the contribution from the public should influence the decision. Public participation promotes fair decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants. Effective public participation programs seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.

Interest in evaluating public participation to determine success is widespread; participants want evaluations that can meet their personal goals, facilitators and proponents want guidelines
that identify which approaches are appropriate in different circumstances, and policymakers want informed evaluations that help to formulate rules and regulations (Conley and Moote 2003). Evaluation will inform understanding of both the potential and the limits of public participation programs. Evaluations of effective public participation examine a variety of factors; typically focus is either on characteristics of the process or on the outcomes (Conley and Moote 2003). Table 1 outlines some typical evaluation criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Evaluation criteria for effective public participation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Process criteria</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clear, feasible goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diverse, inclusive participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>linkages to individuals and groups beyond primary participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>open, accessible and transparent process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consensus-based decision-making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome criteria</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changed land management practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>relationships built or strengthened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>increased trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participants gained knowledge and understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improved capacity for conflict resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changes in existing institutions or creation of new institutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, the criteria relevant to a given evaluation will always vary with the reasons for the evaluation, the values and perspectives of the individual doing the evaluation, and the context of the public participation process (Conley and Moote 2003). Outcome evaluations typically involve comparing actual program outcomes with the desired outcomes. Process evaluations are more difficult to accomplish and usually involve in-depth interview with the participants and/or participant observation. In order for comparisons to be made amongst various evaluations, the motives for the evaluation, criteria, weightings and methods used must be made clear.

Ultimately, developing truly objective means of evaluating public participation processes is impossible; however, comparisons amongst various programs and techniques will be a helpful
tool toward finding answers to the many questions being asked about public participation efforts (Conley and Moote 2003).

2.2 Benefits of public participation

The participatory view of democracy is based on the premise that people whose lives are affected by a decision should participate in the decision-making process (Knopp and Caldbeck 1990). As noted earlier, the criteria for defining the effectiveness of a public participation program are not universally agreed upon (Conley and Moote 2003). However, there are numerous benefits of effective public participation that have been extensively documented throughout the literature including the ones discussed below.

2.2.1. Knowledge and ideas

The public is an important source of knowledge and information that should be taken advantage of by the proponent of any participatory program. Effective public participation can provide invaluable local knowledge and experience to the planning and decision-making process that would otherwise not be acquired (Blouin 1998). Public participation is an important mechanism for capturing the public’s values, goals, concerns, preferences, and priorities; this element is considered to be extremely important for the planning and decision-making process to be effective (Robinson et al. 2001). Public participation can enrich debate surrounding the issues and can ultimately provide alternatives that enhance the quality of decisions (Praxis 1988). Creative solutions to problems can be formulated when making use of the expertise and additional knowledge attained through the participation of the public. In addition, a broad public participation program can supply refreshing ideas and differing opinions than those obtained from individuals directly affected by the issues (Kidd and Sinclair 2007).
2.2.2 Effective decision-making

Effective public participation is integral to both fair and effective decision-making (Hunt and Haider 2001). By increasing public participation, decision-making processes and outcomes may be perceived by the public as successful and reasonable. However, public participation is simply not enough to ensure a fair and effective decision-making process; the timing of the participation in the planning and decision-making process will also determine whether the decision-making process is perceived as fair by the public. Engaging the public at the normative level rather than the operational level of planning and decision-making will improve the chances that public participation is fair and effective (Hunt and Haider 2001).

2.2.3 Credibility

The transparency of the planning and decision-making process, as well as the credibility of the outcomes and those facilitating the process is increased by the involvement of the public (Blouin 1998). This can be done by seeking input from participants about the design of the public participation program. Also, communicating to participants how their input affected the decision will also increase the credibility of the program. This increase in credibility results in greater support from the public for the proposed program, plan or policy, which helps to build stronger relationships amongst the interested and affected citizens, and the proponent.

2.2.4 Reduction in conflict

Public participation can create open and honest two-way communication that can prevent or at the least reduce confrontation and conflict (Blouin 1998). Public participation can identify concerns early in the process and help prevent them from escalating into much larger problems (Roberts 1995). Effective dialogue between conflicting parties can help them to recognize mutual interests and advocate for compromises that create win-win situations for all involved.
Also, discourse amongst the public can address misconceptions held about specific groups and individuals to promote more effective and open channels of communication. Collaborative decision-making is much more likely to result in lasting and more satisfying decisions that prevent conflicts in the long-term (McGurk et al. 2006).

2.2.5. Education and learning

Public participation has an educational component that fosters human development and growth (Keen et al. 2005; Keen and Mahanty 2006). Social learning is an emerging perspective in resource and environmental management. Social learning involves the combination of personal learning, collaboration with relevant professionals and interest groups, community engagement, and partnerships with the organizations providing the resources (Keen et al. 2005). Participatory approaches are central to learning by the social collectives because safe and open forums are provided that stimulate reflection on baseline conditions (Fitzpatrick and Sinclair 2003). The key conditions for learning are: accessible and understandable information; early and ongoing participation; high degrees of involvement; and deliberative participatory mechanisms, or mechanisms that promote discussion and deliberation (Diduck 2004). Both individual and social learning are considered to be indicators of social sustainability (Sinclair and Diduck 2001).

2.2.6. Reduction in money and time spent

Despite the numerous benefits, two persistent concerns about public participation are often raised. First, public participation can be an expensive undertaking. Second, effective public participation can be very lengthy and time-consuming. Regardless of these shortcomings, the literature indicates that public participation is a long-term investment that reduces future costs and delays associated with public controversy that arise from public frustration and distrust as a direct result of the lack of public participation (Mitchell 2002). The costs from the arising
controversy almost always surpass the initial investment of time and money required to involve the public in a participation program.

2.3 Elements of effective public participation

2.3.1. Timing of participation

The point at which the public is brought into planning and decision-making processes is termed the timing of involvement. Smith (1982) identified three levels at which public participation could occur: normative (what ought to be done); strategic (what can be done); and operational (what will be done). To date, most public participation has occurred in the operational stage, which is late in the planning and decision-making process. However, Smith (1982) argues that the public needs to be involved at the normative and strategic stages otherwise it may seem that participation was mere tokenism and that the sponsor was not at all committed to meaningful public participation. Early participation is crucial for ensuring the public has an opportunity to influence big-picture decisions with long-term implications (Diduck 2004). The timing of public participation can be a barrier to meaningful public participation when citizens choose not to participate because they view the decision as already made (Diduck and Sinclair 2002). If people arrive at a public hearing or meeting with different expectations as to what type of issues are being discussed there can be a high level of frustration created. In addition, excessive costs and delays can be generated when people show up at public hearings or meetings wanting to discuss issues that have already been resolved by the sponsor (Mitchell 2002). Public participation must occur earlier in the planning and decision-making process so that opportunities exist for the public to influence normative decisions, such as objective setting and designing means to obtain goals (Sinclair and Diduck 2005).
2.3.2. Access to information

Information must be provided to the public about the issues for meaningful participation. This must not only be the information that is convenient for the sponsor to supply, but also the information that the public desires and requests (Mitchell 2002). A systematic process that provides information to the public in a timely manner becomes a credible partnership function between the public and the sponsor (Sinclair and Doelle 2003; Sinclair and Diduck 2005; Stewart and Sinclair 2007). Attention is required not only to the content of the information but also to the form in which the information is provided to the public. After the information is delivered to the public, opportunity must be provided for the general public to provide its perspective. The sponsor must clearly outline what type of information is desired and how it will be used. As well, fair notice and time should be given to the public when delivering the information and when obtaining input from the public (Sinclair and Doelle 2003; Stewart and Sinclair 2007). In public participation programs, the sponsor must also be willing to be flexible with deadlines in order to gain the most valuable quality of public input. Communication mechanisms are needed to facilitate the exchange of ideas internally among the participants and externally between the broader public and the sponsor.

2.3.3. Participation techniques

Many mechanisms exist for involving the public and choosing the proper participation technique or mix of techniques is only one component of meaningful participation. There is a common misunderstanding by the proponents of public participation that all involvement techniques operate in the same manner and can achieve the same goals. However, no single public participation approach can be used successfully in all participatory situations. The challenge in choosing involvement techniques lies in meeting the specific conditions and needs
of each public participation situation. The choice of techniques relies on the situation and the issue, the amount of dialogue desired, the number of participants, the funds and time available, and so on (Praxis 1998). Stewart and Sinclair (2007) observed that meaningful participatory processes include techniques that promote fair and open dialogue, the exchange of ideas, and problem solving. There is value in using different techniques at different stages to engage the public in participatory processes because it helps to capture the full range of interested and impacted publics (Praxis 1998). Financial and technical support may need to be provided so that participants can be involved fully (Sinclair and Diduck 2005). The type and amount of support needed tends to vary in each circumstance so it is necessary for the sponsor to understand the needs and abilities of the key participants. Allowing the public a fair amount of time to increase its understanding to an adequate level is also necessary for effective participation, and promotes the process of learning (Diduck and Sinclair 2002).

2.3.4. Representation

Equitable representation is another important component of a successful public participation program (Knopp and Caldbeck 1990; Tanz and Howard 1991). Who is part of the participatory process is central to its success. Most often, the desirable representation in a public participation program is one in which the values, socio-economic characteristics, and attitudes of the participants correspond to those of the general public (Wellstead et al. 2003). Many public participation processes are flawed because they do not necessarily reflect the broader public values; many natural resource issues are rural in nature and participation programs do not always incorporate the values of the majority of citizens living in the urban centres (Kidd and Sinclair 2007). Power imbalances within natural resources management planning and decision-making processes have resulted in the marginalization and exclusion of disempowered groups (Reed
2003; Reed and McIlveen 2006). The absence of these voices within the participatory process has frequently resulted in a lack of adequate attention needed to address the social impacts of all interested and affected individuals in land use decisions (Reed 2003; Reed and McIlveen 2006). Therefore, as advocated by many (e.g. Wellstead et al. 2003; Reed and McIlveen 2006), assessments of effective representation should move beyond simple descriptive comparisons.

Three major types of representation have been described by Wellstead et al. (2003); descriptive representation; the representation of subjective interests; and the representation of unattached objects. In a study of advisory committees conducted by Wellstead et al. (2003), substantial socio-demographic differences between the committee members and the Alberta general public were found. In terms of descriptive representation, the advisory committees studied were ineffective in reflecting the beliefs, values, and demographics of the general public. The same situation was noted by Reed and McIlveen (2006) where the individuals selected to represent the diversity of the community all had formal or informal forestry experience, formal business experience and/or held official leadership positions. In this case, as is true for many public participation programs, decision-making effectiveness, as defined in a business-driven model, becomes more important than broad public representation (Reed and McIlveen 2006).

Unfortunately, descriptive representation is the weakest form of representation because it limits the type of input provided by the participants to their demographic characteristics. However, against popular belief, representation can exist despite wide differences in the socio-economic background and values of the participants when compared to the broader general public. This happens if the participants understand representation as an activity instead of as providing a series of static characteristics. Within this framework then, the representation of subjective interests becomes the behaviour of acting for somebody else and the representation of
unattached objects is the behaviour of acting for something that could not represent itself, such as an ecosystem, a particular species or a specific way of life (Wellstead et al. 2003).

2.4 Learning and public participation

Conflict and uncertainty are central themes in natural resources management (Mitchell 2002). To achieve the goal of sustainability there have been a range of attempts to engage the public in managing natural resources with an increasing emphasis on the roles and rights of local communities. Participatory approaches that involve learning are pertinent to resolving complex, uncertain, and conflict-ridden resource and environmental problems (Diduck 2004). The participation of multiple stakeholders in environmental management is the basis of collaborative management, and the foundation for learning within the participatory process (Keen and Mahanty 2005). A fair and effective public participation program requires that learning occur continuously throughout the participatory process; learning is also considered to be an outcome of effective public participation (Fitzpatrick and Sinclair 2003). While there is now a considerable amount of research concerning the individual and social learning outcomes of participation in resource and environmental management, the focus here is on individual learning because it is easier to monitor and measure. In this regard, transformative learning theory has now been applied and tested through a number of participatory resource and environmental management situations including the environmental assessment process (Sinclair and Diduck 2001; Fitzpatrick and Sinclair 2003) and the stakeholder advisory committee process (Parkins 2002; McGurk et al. 2006).

Transformative learning is the process of changing behaviour in a meaningful way through the acquisition of knowledge. Moreover, transformative learning involves becoming more reflective and critical, being open to the perspectives of others, and being more accepting
of new ideas. It involves questioning assumptions, beliefs and values, as well as considering multiple points of view (Mezirow 1991). Transformative learning develops autonomous thinking rather than behaviour that acts on the purposes, beliefs, judgments, and feelings of others.

Jack Mezirow developed the theory of transformative learning while conducting research on adults returning to university (Mezirow 1981). There are two key kinds of learning involved in the theory; instrumental learning and communicative learning. Instrumental learning provides competence in coping with the external world through technical understanding and includes task-oriented problem solving (Mezirow 1995). Communicative learning pertains to an individual’s social interactions and involves constructing meaning through the communication of values, opinions and normative concepts (Mezirow 1995). Both critical reflection and rational discourse are common themes throughout Mezirow’s theory of transformative learning. Rational discourse allows one to reflect both on their own views and on the views of others in order to develop and accept new perspectives (Mezirow 1981). Whereas, critical reflection is the process of becoming more aware of how and why assumptions have come to constrain the way the world is perceived and understood (Mezirow 1981). To change meaning structures, which includes values and attitudes, individuals must engage in critical reflection of their experiences; which in turn leads to a transformation of perspective. Mezirow stated that “transformation theory is an expression of democratic culture; it demands we become aware of how we come to our knowledge and about the values that lead us to our meaning perspectives” (Mezirow 1995, p. 69). Reflective action is the vehicle for social action in a democratic society, and is a result of critical assessment in the transformative learning process (Mezirow 1981).
Although Jack Mezirow developed transformative learning theory, he relied heavily on the thinking and writing of Paulo Freire. Paulo Freire’s contribution to transformative learning emerged through his work teaching literacy skills to the poor in Brazil. Unlike Mezirow’s theory of personal transformation, Freire was concerned with a social transformation through the awakening of the critical consciousness of the oppressed (Freire 1972). Freire adopted a dialogical methodology based on a liberating educational experience that moves beyond the simple transfer of information and that promotes a safe educational atmosphere that is built upon mutual trust between the dialoguers. The transformative framework places a high value on situations where individuals are involved in activities that encourage learners to share their experiences, engage in dialogue and, in doing so be exposed to alternative perspectives (Marschke and Sinclair 2007). This was the main tenet of his work adopted in transformative learning theory. The conscientization process emphasized by Freire (1972) is focused on perceiving and exposing social and political contradictions, and it includes taking action against oppressive elements in one’s life as part of the process. Like Mezirow, Freire saw critical reflection as central to the transformation of perspectives; however, Freire believes the more critically aware learners become, the more they are able to transform society and subsequently their own reality (Freire 1972). The participatory processes used in natural resources management facilitate the empowerment of both individuals and local communities to take greater control of resource use planning and decisions (Sinclair et al. 2007).

2.4.1 Values and learning

Values and attitudes are important components to the learning process within the forums appropriate for public participation, such as forest management advisory committees. This is because values are seen to be antecedents of behaviour. Therefore, held forest values are
hypothesized to influence more specific attitudes such as forest management preferences and ideas on forest management practices, which ultimately leads to the shaping of specific behaviours (McFarlane and Boxall 2000). The level of factual knowledge an individual holds has been identified as an external variable that can provide a strong link between a person’s values, attitudes and behaviour. This notion helps to explain why learning is such an important component of public participation. Learning from involvement in participatory programs can shape a person’s values, understanding, attitudes and behaviours (Sinclair et al. 2007).

Critical thinking and reflection, both important elements of transformative learning, are not value neutral, but rather the act of questioning attitudes and values plays a significant role in the transformation of perspective. Consequently, reflecting on personal values and learning about the values of others can facilitate a shift in behaviour. Therefore, ultimately, transformative learning has the potential to transform an individual’s behaviour (Mezirow 1995). Taking into account the value-attitude relationship and the large role learning can play, forest management advisory committees appear to provide a valuable environment for facilitating learning about the other participants and their concerns, values and perspectives (McGurk 2003).

Figure 2 presents a conceptual representation of the cognitive hierarchy model outlined by McFarlane and Boxall (2000). This conceptual framework has been very helpful in guiding the research by providing an understanding of the interrelationships between knowledge and learning, values, attitudes and behaviours.
Basic values are few in number and represent fundamental social and biological needs. The influence of basic values is primarily indirect through their influence on higher order cognitions such as general beliefs (McFarlane and Boxall 2000). A value is thought to be an enduring belief of the good and there are generally considered to be two types, held and assigned (Rokeach 1973). Held values are manners of conduct, end-states or qualities while assigned values refer to the relative worth or importance of an object (Tarrant and Cordell 2002). These two value types are not independent; a person’s assigned values most likely reflect their held
Values. In the context of forest management, an individual’s general beliefs are represented by held forest values, which describe an individual’s perspective on the importance and worth of forest resources.

Values provide an important basis for understanding, maintaining and/or influencing people’s attitudes towards relevant objects, therefore predisposing attitudes (Tarrant and Cordell 2002). An attitude is a learned bias toward some object as either positive or negative (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975). It is important to understand these value-attitude relationships and the factors influencing values and attitudes because ultimately attitudes are likely to affect consumer behaviour and political action, which most likely will impact forest policy and management (Tarrant and Cordell 2002).

In the literature two common categories of forest values have been distinguished; anthropocentric and biocentric (McFarlane and Boxall 2000). Anthropocentric refers to the values associated with the utilization of forests for products and services that satisfy human wants and needs. Biocentric values refer to the worth of something as an end in itself, regardless of its usefulness to humans. These two types of forest values have been associated with specific attitudes that reflect forest management and policy preferences. Biocentric-oriented individuals are much more likely to support protection-focused management strategies while anthropocentric-oriented individuals are more likely to support traditional timber management (McFarlane and Boxall 2000). The National Survey of Forest Sector Advisory Committees found that the forest values held by women tended to be more biocentric in nature (Parkins et al. 2006). Women were more inclined to privilege natural processes over human interventions and human use values (Parkins et al. 2006). As well, variation in forest values and attitudes may be influenced by a variety of antecedent factors including socioeconomic variables and social
influences. By subscribing to organizational philosophies, joining leisure activities and/or working in certain environments, individuals are subjected to social norms that may have an impact on their values and attitudes (McFarlane and Boxall 2000). This corresponds to one of the discoveries from the National Survey on Forest Sector Advisory Committees where those dependent on the timber industry for their economic livelihood held a more anthropocentric forest value orientation (Parkins et al. 2006).

2.5 Public participation in forest management

Canada has 10% of the world’s forest cover, which includes approximately 25% of the world’s primary and intact forests and roughly 30% of the world’s boreal forest (NRCan 2006). In Canada roughly 94% of this forested land is publicly owned (NRCan 2006). The jurisdiction over publicly owned forests is vested in the provincial governments, which act as representatives for the citizens of Canada. Humans cannot manage forest ecosystems, but the behaviour that impacts and is impacted by forests that humans interact with, can be managed. Currently, the state of forest management is the subject of an ongoing and highly charged debate in Canada. The tension among the environmental, the social and the economic values of forests is at the heart of this controversy (Boyd 2003). Since the 1970’s the public has been calling for meaningful opportunities to influence issues and decisions through increased decision-making power and the devolution of management control by democratizing forest policy processes (Robinson et al. 2001). This requires a movement away from the traditional resource extraction paradigm towards a sustainable forest management model that combines socioeconomic health with ecological sustainability (Beckley et al. 2005). Sustainable forest management is defined in the Canadian National Forest Strategy as “maintaining and enhancing the long-term health of forest ecosystems, for the benefit of all living things both nationally and globally, while
providing economic, social, ecological, and cultural opportunities for the benefit of present and future generations” (CCFM 2003).

Public participation in forest management should occur at a variety of participation levels using the various public engagement techniques. The types of participation can be grouped into three main categories and the choice of a level depends on a variety of considerations (Robinson et al. 2001). The first type, an agency driven top-down approach, has dominated the processes of public participation in forest management across Canada. It usually involves an agency, such as the government or the forest products company, consulting with the public but ultimately retaining the power to make decisions internally; this level does not ensure the public input will be incorporated into the final decision (Robinson et al. 2001). It most often results in the agency persuading, educating, or informing the public and has caused much dissatisfaction with citizens, who are now loudly demanding a higher level of participation (Tanz and Howard 1991). The second level of participation involves the exchange of ideas and opinions from the public with the agency being committed to integrating the input into the final decision; however, the agency retains discretionary power over the decision (Robinson et al. 2001). This type of public participation is now being used with some success in Canadian forest management; the development of land use plans for forested landscapes in both Ontario and Manitoba utilized this level of participation (Sinclair and Kidd 2007). The third level of public participation goes beyond the simple exchange of ideas and opinions by involving the communities in the entire decision-making process. In this instance, the agency relinquishes the majority of the decision-making power over to the citizens (Robinson et al. 2001). This level of participation equates to Arnstein’s (1969) highest rungs of delegated power and citizen control. Rarely has this level of public participation been used in Canadian forest management due to existing tenure agreements.
that favour the large-scale logging corporations; however, community forests are the exception.

A nationwide survey of community forestry initiatives on public land found over 100 community forests, mainly in Ontario, Quebec, and British Columbia (Teitlebaum et al. 2006). Community forests are defined as a public forest area, Crown land or municipal land, managed by the community, more than 50% decision-making by the community, a working forest with timber harvesting as one of the activities, and for the benefit of the community (Teitlebaum et al. 2006). The survey found that the bulk of the community forests are small-scale and relatively young; however, the authors see promise in the community forestry model in bridging the gap between sustainable livelihoods and healthy forest (Teitlebaum et al. 2006).

In Canada there are not yet any nationally recognized guidelines for public participation and decision-making in sustainable forest management (Beckley et al. 2005). The National Forest Strategy has committed forest organizations to maintain an open policy for public participation in the various stages of forestry planning in order to incorporate a wider range of forest uses and interests (CCFM 2003). The establishment of model forests in Canada has brought people together in partnerships to develop, test and share solutions to local challenges in sustainable forest management; however they hold no regulatory powers. The main challenge facing the forestry institutions is the need to integrate both science and human values in forest management policy, planning, and decision-making (Shindler et al. 2003). Many provincial governments have legislated public participation as a key component to their forest management licensing procedures (Parkins 2002). In addition, market-based certifications, such as the Canadian Standards Association and the Forest Stewardship Council, require ongoing public consultation on forest planning and monitoring as a condition for certification (Parkins et al. 2006). Public participation is not only critical to sustainable forest management, but is also an
essential step to rebuilding the public’s trust in the government and forest management agencies (Shindler et al. 2003). Effective public participation in forest management requires an understanding of the various values associated with the forest, the relevant stakeholders, and the effect of management decisions on the public (Parkins 2002). To date, the effectiveness of public participation in forest management has most often been determined based on the number of people who show up at a public consultation meeting or provide input concerning a proposed land use plan. However, valuable public participation in sustainable forest management requires more than simply attendance; trust, communication, opportunity, and flexibility are all vital elements of a successful public participation program (Mitchell 2002).

2.6 Advisory committees

The primary mechanism now being used by forest product companies in Canada for ongoing public participation in forest planning processes is an advisory committee (Parkins 2002; Beckley et al. 2005; Parkins et al. 2006). Numerous names have been given to advisory committees in the literature: citizen advisory committees (CACs), stakeholder advisory committees (SACs), and public resource advisory groups (PRAGs). Regardless of the name given, an advisory committee can be defined as a “relatively small group of people who are convened by a sponsor for an extended period of time to represent the ideas and attitudes of various groups and/or communities for the purpose of examining a proposal, issue, or set of issues” (Lynn and Busenberg 1995). An advisory committee can be distinguished from other public participation techniques because of its characteristic of detailed interaction between citizens and representatives of the sponsor. Most committees act only in an advisory capacity and are not traditionally given the final decision-making power. The primary role of a
committee in forest management is to provide public advice to the forest company regarding their planning processes and operations (Wellstead et al. 2003).

There are numerous benefits that an advisory committee can offer an agency including a sampling of public views and concerns, an opportunity to inform citizens about the issues, promoting the development of personal relationships, a communications link back to the groups the members represent, and building consensus among conflicting groups (Praxis 1988). Advisory committees can be viewed as a gathering of many competing subjective and objective interests that represent both the broader and the uninterested public. According to the view of representation as behaviour, advisory committees are useful in representing the views of the general public, including the uninterested citizens and the majority of the public residing in urban centers (Wellstead et al. 2003). Also, there are numerous benefits that an advisory committee can offer its members such as capacity building, social learning, conflict resolution, and networking (Beierle 2002). There are potential drawbacks to an advisory committee however; including the risk that the public will not support the opinions of the committee and that the views of the committee will not adequately reflect the views of the broader public (Lynn and Busenberg 1995). Smith (1982) views an advisory committee, if effectively implemented, as one of the few participation techniques that can engage the public at the normative level.

The success of an advisory committee is dependent on the sponsor establishing clear reasons for assembling the committee. The purpose of the committee must be plainly outlined and the roles of the members must be defined before a committee is convened. The procedures for selecting members must be carefully considered in order to create credibility and support. The decisions regarding how the committee operates, such as who sets the agenda, who facilitates the meetings, and the mechanism for providing feedback to suggestions, all reflect the
intentions of the sponsor and the degree of influence intended for the committee (Lynn and Busenberg 1995). The success of an advisory committee is linked to the purpose of the committee outlined at the beginning, and can include implementation of recommendations, the adequate representation of the public, the involvement of participants in decision-making, and enhanced communication between involved groups. The success can depend on various factors including the selection of members, the use of a neutral facilitator, a clear definition of tasks and expectations, mechanisms of accountability to the broader public, the use of sources for information other than the sponsor, and the degree of independence from the sponsor (Lynn and Busenberg 1995). While there are examples of advisory committees being formed solely to fulfill legal mandates or to serve as vehicles of persuasion, there are also examples where the committees have had significant impacts on policy. Generally, the goals and outcomes of advisory committees have been the basis for determining success but an effective process can also be a strong determinant of committee success.

McGurk (2003) reviewed three stakeholder advisory committees in Manitoba from the perspectives of both process and outcomes. Through interviews and observations a list of broad strengths and weaknesses was compiled. Table 2 outlines the findings:
Table 2: Strengths and weaknesses of stakeholder advisory committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extent of involvement</td>
<td>Extent of involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of Aboriginal involvement</td>
<td>Lack of Aboriginal involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor attendance</td>
<td>Poor attendance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor attendance</td>
<td>Poor attendance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Representation problems</td>
<td>Representation problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Changes in membership</td>
<td>Changes in membership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complexity of language</td>
<td>Complexity of language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrequent meetings</td>
<td>Infrequent meetings</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>Time issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member’s optimism about advisory committee processes</td>
<td>Inadequate involvement in forest management and planning decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship building</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to influence site-specific forest management and planning decisions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from McGurk (2003).

Canadian studies that consider the learning outcomes of participatory processes have shown that learning is occurring on stakeholder advisory committees at both the instrumental and communicative levels (Parkins 2002; Parkins et al. 2006; McGurk et al. 2006). McGurk (2003) reported two main themes concerning what committee members learned through the advisory process: 1) the concerns, perspectives, values and local knowledge of committee members; and 2) the forestry operations, forest management and planning activities. In a national survey of forest advisory committees the majority of members (94%) agreed that other perspectives on forest management were being learned (Parkins et al. 2006). In addition, almost all members surveyed stated that there is a need to incorporate many different perspectives in forest management processes (Parkins et al. 2006). Learning of committee members is facilitated through the advisory process due to the continual exchange of opinions and information. The most common sources of information were the forest industry and government agencies; however, research scientists were perceived as the most accurate source of information (Parkins...
et al. 2006). Limitations to learning of committee members were also present. These restrictions included a narrow scope of information presented, the use of complex forestry terminology, and a limited use of local knowledge (McGurk 2003). The use of scientific language and complex jargon is a commonly noted obstacle in the literature to meaningful public participation and advisory committees do not seem to provide a solution to this problem. Members reported having difficulty following discussions and providing input due to the use of forestry terminology (McGurk 2003). Members also felt that the sponsors were not providing enough adequate opportunities to share the wealth of local knowledge and experience that existed around the table.

2.7 Gender in forest management decision-making

For the interests of this research gender refers to the different social roles that women and men perform, as well as the power relations between them. Men and women have always interacted differently with the environment, but ecological feminism, or ecofeminism, was the first attempt to theorize these interactions in the mid-1970s (Banerjee and Bell, 2007). As MacGregor (2006) explained, ecofeminism has a history of deliberating such difficult questions: Are women more naturally connected to nature than men? Do women’s gendered roles and experiences given them unique insight into human-nature relationships? Why is it that women seem to demonstrate relatively more concern for the quality of their environment than men? Agarwal (1992) defined ecofeminism using four different arguments: (1) there is a connection between the domination and oppression of women and the domination and exploitation of nature; (2) in patriarchal thought, women are identified as being closer to nature and men as being closer to culture and since nature is seen as inferior to culture, women are seen as inferior to men; (3) because the domination of women and the domination of nature have occurred simultaneously,
women have a particular stake in ending the domination of nature; and (4) the feminist movement and the environmental movement have a good deal in common and need to work together to evolve a common perspective, theory, and practice. In summary, ecofeminism argues that a strong parallel exists between the male oppression and subordination of women in families and society and the degradation of nature by similar masculine attitudes and methods (Cudworth 2005). Ecofeminism establishes links between women and nature or women and environmental knowledge by focusing on the material conditions and types of work that are part of women’s socially prescribed roles in society (MacGregor 2006). This position maintains that environmental problems are more quickly noticed by women and affect women’s subsistence work more seriously and is accompanied by claims that women’s knowledge and sense of moral responsibility about the environment are required to move in a more sustainable direction (MacGregor 2006). The most significant contribution of ecofeminism to the literature is the understanding of multiple kinds of social domination, of exclusion and inclusion based on varieties of difference in addition to gender that shape environment-society relations in important ways (Cudworth 2005). Ecofeminism believes that in order to obtain equality, it calls upon both women and men to reconceptualize themselves, and their relationships to one another and to the nonhuman world, in nonhierarchical ways.

Moving beyond the ecofeminism ideological construct of the gender-environment relationship is feminist political ecology, which examines gender in terms of socially differentiated resource access, use and control (Bunerjee and Bell 2007). Feminist political ecology argues that not only is environmental knowledge shaped by social, political and economic contexts, but that these contexts themselves are gendered. This foundation helps to ask important questions about whether women’s relationship with the environment is distinct
from men’s and how this in turn shapes women’s involvement in environmental conservation. Many have argued that feminist political ecology provides a platform for a more fruitful engagement of women within natural resources use and decision-making processes (Seager 1996; Bunerjee and Bell 2007). The numerous studies that draw on feminist political ecology provide an invitation to examine through the lens of gender analysis the power relationships that shape the environment (e.g., Seager 1996; Lidestav and Ekstrom 2000).

Within natural resources management, women are poorly represented in decision-making bodies. This lack of representation limits the degree of influence women have over natural resources management policies and decision-making (Mohai 1992). Public participation is intended to encourage a wide range of issues, produce alternative management strategies, lead to greater satisfaction by participants and improve compliance and equity of associated decisions and management practices. However, public participation in natural resource management does not always guarantee gender inequalities are extinguished and power imbalances based on social differences may continue to exist (Reed and Varghese 2007). Ignoring gender in public participation programs assumes men and women are equal and that their roles are the same, which does not take into account any division of labour and differences based on gender (Davidson and Freudenburg 1996). The two genders can be affected differently by resource management decisions and use due to place-specific circumstances in their environment. Men and women have a varying knowledge of, access to, and control over natural resources, in addition to different opportunities to participate in decisions regarding natural resource use. The literature has consistently shown that women generally express a greater concern for the environment than men, but that men are more actively involved with environmental issues
(Mohai 1992; Davidson and Freudenburg 1996). The absence of women from multi-stakeholder participatory processes is an indicator of the failure to meet the criteria of social sustainability.

Public participation processes within the field of forest management, such as forest management advisory committees, can be considerably affected by gender biases that are inconspicuous and discreet. These prejudices can emerge in all areas including the selection process, the identification of relevant data, the time and location of meetings, the payments for attendance, and support from the sponsors for the participation process (Reed and Varghese 2007). Gender should be an important consideration of representation within a public participation program. Without consideration of gender, the constraints affecting women’s access to and effectiveness in decision-making processes will not be identified. Unfortunately, there is no assurance that having women present for the discussions at forest management advisory committee meetings would ensure their gender specific issues were addressed, but the absence of women guarantees the omission of the issues (Reed and Varghese 2007).

Even though women were significantly underrepresented on forest management advisory committees, only a few national survey respondents acknowledged that this was the case; Reed and Varghese (2007) provided five possible reasons to explain it. The first explanation is that forestry and forest management are gender-neutral activities. This has been opposed by research that presents distinctive gender roles in forestry activities (Reed 2003; Reed 2007). The second explanation is that women’s interests are presented on the advisory committees due to effective representation from other members. The third explanation is that the members and sponsors of the advisory committees do not consider gender issues important. The fourth explanation is based on the assumption that advisory committees normally operate within male dominated institutions and therefore social relations based on gender are unacknowledged. The last
explanation is based on research by Dahlerup (1988), which states that there is a critical mass where women become a significant minority and feel comfortable to participate; advisory committees in Canada lack this critical mass.

Reed and Varghese (2007) considered gender differences relating to three aspects of the advisory committee process: access to committees, values towards forest management, and experiences within the committees. Gender discrepancies were found across all three categories. Opportunities to participate in advisory committees were not equally provided for women and men; women were underrepresented in all advisory committees surveyed (Parkins et al. 2006). No compensation was provided for childcare expenses; women expressed travel distances and costs as barriers for participation on advisory committees. The study also showed that women held stronger intrinsic and environmentally sensitive orientations whereas men held more human-centred or utilitarian orientations on forest ecosystem management issues (Parkins et al. 2006; Reed and Varghese 2007). Women and men rated their experiences with the advisory committees differently; the most significant difference being that women were more likely to feel time was poorly spent in the process (Parkins et al. 2006; Reed and Varghese 2007). The increase in women’s participation would not only benefit women by more accurately representing their specific interests, but would also help advisory committees meet the goal of adequate broad public representation and support socially and ecologically sustainable forest management.

However, only targeting changes in the gender ratio on forest management advisory committees may not be sufficient to increase female participation since affirmative action policies do not directly address the attitudes or circumstances that are causing the gender imbalance (Claringbould and Knoppers 2008). This gender ratio or the composition of a group
of people, such as a forest management advisory committee, is a structural determinant of
gendered organizational behaviour (Kanter 1977). Therefore, numerical gender inequality in the
organization of a group influences the behaviour of men and women (Claringbould and
Knoppers 2008). The greater the skewness of the group in terms of gender ratio, the greater the
visibility of the minority and the greater the emphasis on gender differences (Kanter 1977). In
contrast, a balanced group in terms of gender is one in which the ratio ranges between 40 and 60%
(Claringbould and Knoppers 2008). In gender balanced groups the use of stereotypes tends to be
less than when the gender ratio is skewed. However, other researchers have concluded that in
addition to structure, gendered meanings also play a role in sustaining gender skewness within an
organization (Ott 1989). In other words, the image of who is appropriate for specific jobs is
gender loaded and therefore influences member selection (Claringbould and Knoppers 2008).
Previous research of gender representation in organizations has shown that token women assign
themselves skills or engage in behaviour typically associated with men (Claringbould and
Knoppers 2008). Along with this, gender differences can be reinforced when stereotypes are
used and sex-typed behaviour is engaged in during social interactions; in this sense gender
meanings produce skewed structures. Gender meanings need to be identified and undone in
traditionally male-dominated organizations in an attempt to encourage more female participation.
Men can also play an important role in the deconstruction of gender meanings given to
behaviours; men in high-ranked positions can use their power to bring about change in the ways
organizations make sense of gender (Claringbould and Knoppers 2008). Little is known about
how forest management advisory committee members give meaning to gender and consequently
how these meanings serve as mechanisms of inclusion or exclusion.
2.8 Summary

Public participation in planning and decision-making processes is part of a shift towards sustainable forest management. The Canadian public, who has a vital interest in the way our forests are managed, has an even more important voice in expressing environmental, economic, social and cultural goals for forest management. As public values change over time, forest land-use planning must be responsive to the new perspectives in order to ensure that management activities continue to reflect the values of the public. The key to effective public participation is the development of better models for public input, with processes and mechanisms that are clearly defined, fair and open, and involve deadlines for decisions and review of results that will ensure the credibility of those involved. A two-way flow of information is required to incorporate invaluable traditional and local knowledge into management planning. The priority of gender balance in public participation programs is also important for the sustainable forest management paradigm because it takes a step toward ensuring that all views of the public are considered in forest management planning and decision-making processes. In accepting a role in forest management, the public assumes responsibility and seeks to be knowledgeable and informed. This means accurate information must be presented that is easy to understand and must be made accessible to the public in a timely manner. Increasing the awareness and knowledge of citizens with an interest or stake in the forest resource will encourage informed discussion in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding. The benefits of an effective public participation program to both the public and the sponsor in planning and decision-making processes are numerous and unique.

Advisory committees are now the most common public participation technique utilized by the timber companies. Advisory committees are also an important platform to learn about
multiple values and approaches to sustainable forest management. McGurk et al. (2006) found that learning is occurring within the advisory committee process at both the instrumental and communicative level; learning is an important element as well as an important outcome of effective public participation. However, the advisory committee technique has traditionally been a male dominated decision-making process which may be impacting the type and direction of learning outcomes. Advisory committees can offer opportunities for gender based learning since men and women both bring different values and experiences to the table, if the voices of women are heard at the table (Reed and Varghese 2007).
Chapter 3: Methods

3.1 Overview

The purpose of this research is to assess the effectiveness of participation in the forest management advisory committee process in Canada from a gendered perspective. Several data collection methods within the qualitative paradigm were used. Secondary data were obtained through reviewing the relevant literature on public participation and gender analysis. Documents, such as the meeting minutes and terms of reference, were considered in relation to the operations of the two committees studied. Primary data were largely acquired through semi-structured interviews with facilitators, company employees, selected members of both the committees, former committee members, and non-committee members who were involved in the forestry industry. I was also a participant observer at one of NewPage’s committee meetings and three of Tembec’s committee meetings. A qualitative data analysis software program, NVivo, assisted with the data analysis.

3.2 Research approach

This research followed the qualitative research paradigm. A case study approach was employed and a variety of data collection instruments were used.

The intent of qualitative research is to understand a particular social phenomenon; this is done by entering the world of the participants and through interaction, obtaining information about the values and perspectives of the informants (Creswell 2003).

This research utilized a case study framework as its main strategy of inquiry. A case study is defined as an empirical investigation that focuses on “how” and “why” questions to explore a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin 1989). The questions of “how” and “why” are more explanatory in nature and deal with the operational links traced over
a period of time (Yin 1989). The purposes of using a case study approach include the comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon being studied, and the development of theoretical statements regarding the observed patterns (Yin 1989). The stated objectives for this research parallel the purposes and intent of case studies. Forest management advisory committees were chosen to serve as the case to be studied because it is the most commonly used technique for public participation in forest management. There is also a large amount of previous research that has been conducted on advisory committees (e.g., Lynn and Busenberg 1995; Parkins 2002; McGurk et al. 2006), which helped to guide this research and inform the methods of data collection. Case studies take advantage of many data collection methods, but do not define specific methods or manner of analysis that must be used.

A qualitative approach was chosen since it was the most suitable paradigm to guide this research. This is because the research purpose and objectives are strongly linked to the context of the advisory committee, in terms of both the dialogue and the nature of learning that occurs within the committee environment. The data collection methods generated subjective information such as perspectives and opinions of the participants. The research can also be considered as emergent because the research objectives, as well as the methods of data collection were modified over the course of the research based on the input of the participants. A case study approach was appropriate to use because it allowed for a more in-depth exploration of the role of women and how gender works in the public participation context of forest management advisory committees.

3.3 Study sites

The study sites chosen for this research included the head office location of Tembec in Pine Falls, Manitoba and the office location of NewPage in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia.
These sub cases were chosen based on the following characteristics: an adequate number of committee members who are willing to participate in the research, committees that have been active for at least five years, meet on a regular basis and have a relatively large number of women committee members. The relatively large number of women members was a necessary characteristic because it ensured that the perspectives of both male and female committee members would be obtained.

3.3.1 Tembec – Pine Falls, Manitoba

Tembec is one of the three forest product companies that hold a forest management licence in Manitoba. Tembec’s Pine Falls operation is Manitoba’s only newsprint mill, and it is Manitoba’s largest recycler of newspapers and magazines. The forest management advisory committee was established in 1997 as part of a licencing requirement pursuant to the Manitoba Environment Act. The Terms of Reference for the committee states that the purpose of the committee is to provide organized and regular input into the company’s forest management planning and operations.

The advisory committee has been active for almost twelve years, and has 35 members (including alternates) that represent 25 different stakeholder groups. Of the total 35 committee members, only four are female and of the four women, only two have been active participants on the committee. On average, between ten and fifteen members are present at each committee meeting. The committee meets roughly four times per year, one of those meetings being the annual tour. Meetings were originally chaired by a company representative but after many problems, the committee moved to hiring an independent facilitator in 1999. The company also hires an external person to do the secretarial activities, which is the role I have been fulfilling with the committee for the past year and a half. The activities of the secretary for the committee
include organizing meeting dates and contacting committee members to confirm attendance, attending meetings to document happenings, and preparing official meeting minutes that are sent out to the committee members and posted on the website for the viewing of the general public.

Table 3 provides a list of all the organizations represented on the committee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Black River First Nation</th>
<th>Shining Waters Heritage Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba Lodges &amp; Outfitters Association</td>
<td>Wildlife Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brokenhead Ojibway Nation</td>
<td>Sagkeeng First Nation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Powerview/Pine Falls</td>
<td>Manitoba Model Forest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Manitoba Tourism Association</td>
<td>Resource Conservation Manitoba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Town of Bissett</td>
<td>Manitoba Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollow Water First Nation</td>
<td>R.M. of Lac du Bonnet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time to Respect Earth’s Ecosystem</td>
<td>Paddle Manitoba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollow Water Traditional Area Advisory Committee</td>
<td>R.M. of Alexander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seymourville Community Council</td>
<td>Manitoba Trappers Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manigotagan</td>
<td>Harvesting Contractor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South-East Forest Products</td>
<td>Powerview Metis Federation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba Association of Cottage Owners</td>
<td>Tembec – Pine Falls</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 3: List of organizations represented on Tembec’s committee

#### 3.3.2 NewPage – Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia

The system for forest management in Nova Scotia is much different than it is in Manitoba. This is because the majority of forested land in Manitoba is Crown land but only about half of the forested land in Nova Scotia is Crown land with the remainder privately owned. Forest product companies in Nova Scotia buy lumber from privately owned woodlots (either individuals or smaller companies), manage their own privately owned woodlots, and some of the larger companies also hold management licences to Crown land. NewPage holds a forest management licence to most of the Crown land in the seven Eastern counties of Nova Scotia, which includes all of Cape Breton Island. NewPage is headquartered in Miamisburg, Ohio and is the largest manufacturer of coated paper in North America. The NewPage division in Port Hawkesbury produces newsprint and supercalendered paper. The forest management advisory
committee was established in 2000 as a requirement for the Canadian Standards Association forest certification process. The Basic Operating Procedures for the committee states that its purpose is to provide ongoing and interactive opportunities for meaningful public participation in forest management decisions within the defined forest area.

The advisory committee has been active for eight years, and has 23 members (including alternates) that represent 16 different sectors. Of the total 23 committee members, five are female and three of these women are active participants. Attendance at committee meetings is extremely high; on average between 15 and 18 members are present at each meeting. The committee meets roughly nine times a year, one of the meetings being for the annual tour. An elected committee member chairs meetings and secretarial activities are taken care of by a company employee. The committee was initially organized by an external consultant and is extremely proud of continuing to be an arms-length affiliate of the forest products company. All of the members with the advisory committee at NewPage were extremely eager to participate in the study, since this is the first opportunity most of them have had to contribute to research outside of the company and they felt participating in research was an important component of being a committee member. Table 4 provides a list of all the sectors represented on the committee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department of Natural Resources Community</th>
<th>Environmental/Cultural Forestry Education Youth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NewPage – Port Hawkesbury</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodlot Owner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Industry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development (Mainland)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic – Secondary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development (Cape Breton)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Table 4: List of sectors represented on NewPage’s committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.4 Methods of data collection

3.4.1 Literature and document review

A review of the literature concerning public participation, public participation in forest management and planning, gender-based participation, and advisory committees was the first step of the research process. The ongoing review considered issues including the benefits of public participation, the elements of effective public participation, a background on public participation in forest management, an understanding of the advisory committee process, and a gender analysis of representation. The literature review also helped with informing the development of the interview schedule and the analysis of the results.

In terms of documents, a review of both the advisory committees’ terms of reference, annual operation plans, and meeting minutes provided a more detailed understanding of the context of the committees and activities of the meetings. In addition to the meeting minutes, the contact lists of committee members for both the committees were helpful when selecting members to be interviewed.

3.4.2 Participant observation

The aim of participant observation is to gain a close and intimate familiarity with a given group of individuals and their practices through intensive involvement with the people in their natural environment (Bernard 2002). It enables data to emerge from participants in a manner that is both direct and informal. It is possible to record the information as it is revealed during observation since the role as the researcher should be known to the participants (Bernard 2002). Participant observation often results in the discovery of hidden details that otherwise would not have been produced during interviews; this could be due to the sensitive nature of some issues or simply because the details did not emerge during the discussion.
Observation of advisory committee meetings provided a personal experience with group dynamics, interactions among committee members, and experiential knowledge of the advisory process (Bernard 2002; Creswell 2003). It was used to provide a first-hand observation of the role of women members in the progression of committee meetings and the degree of input by the women to the topics of discussion and the ongoing dialogue. The personal observation of committee meetings distinguished the types of information contributed by the various members and the associated outcomes in an attempt to determine the learning process of the committee and its individual members at the meetings attended. All of these observations contributed to and helped with the triangulation of the data collected using other methods. Observing the committees at meetings also helped to determine both the differences and similarities between the two committees, which was extremely helpful during data analysis. Attendance at meetings for both of the committees was only for observation; I did not participate in or contribute any of my opinions to the discussions, except to describe my research to the committee members.

3.4.3 Field notes

Field notes have been called the meat and potatoes of fieldwork because they form the foundation of research (Bernard 2002). Field notes are a data collection technique that involves recording observed and procedural information throughout the research process. Field notes are generally broken down into two categories: descriptive and methodological recordings (Bernard 2002). Methodological field notes describe the technique of data collection as well as the growth of the researcher as an instrument of data collection. These notes have to do with the conduct of field inquiry itself. Descriptive field notes constitute the majority of a researcher’s field notes. They discuss what is seen and heard by the researcher throughout the research process (Bernard 2002). In this way, field notes were important in accurately recording information collected
through the few informal conversations that occasionally occurred and the participant observation events at meetings that would otherwise not have been documented over the course of the research.

3.4.4 Semi-structured interviews

Primary data were collected largely through the use of semi-structured interviews. A semi-structured interview combines a structured agenda with the built in flexibility to ask subsequent questions (Creswell 2003). Relevant topics are initially identified and the possible relationship between these topics and the issues of interest become the basis for more specific questions. The key objective of the interviews was to collect data using research questions that were related to the research objectives. The topics of these questions included representation of women on committees, access to information, learning outcomes of the advisory committee process with regards to the gender bias, gendered perceptions of the advisory committee context, and overall satisfaction with the process.

A national survey of advisory committees (Parkins et al. 2006) and all relevant literature, as well as the initial observations from committee meetings informed and helped to design interview questions that addressed the research objectives. For the most part the interviews were conducted in the communities where each of the advisory committee members resided, and were done at a location that was selected by, and convenient for, each participant. Interviews were conducted with facilitators, company employees, selected members of both the committees, former committee members, and non-committee members who were involved in the forestry industry. The majority of interviews (19) were conducted in person. However, six of the interviews had to be conducted over the phone due to travel constraints. Comparability between the phone and the in-person interviews is not a concern since the same script of questions was
used for both types. A non-random sampling technique was employed; women committee members were the first sought for interviewing, although male committee members were also interviewed. In total 25 committee members were interviewed; 13 from NewPage and 12 from Tembec. The lengths of the interviews varied. The shortest interview took approximately 35 minutes, while the longest interview took about 2 hours and 15 minutes. During the first few interviews, the interview schedule was pretested. Participants were asked to discuss what aspects of the schedule needed to be altered or what topics they felt should be included, with suggestions being included in subsequent interview schedules.

The participants were informed that their answers were being tape recorded and permission from all participants was obtained; the confidentiality of responses has been ensured when using quotes throughout this thesis.

3.5 Selection process

An initial email was sent to the forest product company’s representatives on both of the advisory committees to inform them of my current research activities. Both companies agreed to participate in the research. For the Tembec committee, I attended my first committee meeting as an observer, presented the objectives of my research, obtained the permission of the committee to conduct the research, and informed the members that some of them would be contacted to participate in an interview. For the NewPage committee, a generic email was sent out to all of the members describing my research and objectives in order to obtain permission from the committee to conduct the research. I then attended my first meeting as a participant observer and presented my research in greater detail to the committee. Contact lists were obtained from both the committees so that gender and represented stakeholder group/sector could be determined for all of the active members and alternates. First, using the contact lists provided, all women
members, including alternates, from both the committees were contacted and those who responded were interviewed. Nine of the 25 participants were female. Following that, male members that represented the heterogeneity of stakeholder groups/sectors on the two advisory committees were contacted and those who responded were interviewed. The men to be interviewed were chosen based on their participation record for the past three meetings; this was determined using attendance lists within meeting minutes. Both company employees affiliated with the two committees were asked to be interviewed, as well as the facilitator for the Tembec committee. Some respondents also provided the names of women who had been former committee members and these individuals were contacted and asked to be participants of the research. One respondent provided the names of a few women who were not involved with the advisory committee process but were active in the forestry industry, and one of these women was contacted. In addition, a former secretary for one of the committees was also interviewed. Only one of the individuals contacted to be interviewed declined. A goal of the interview process was to interview between ten and fifteen individuals per committee, with as many being female as possible. The participants interviewed in this research included ten individuals on the Tembec committee, eleven individuals on the NewPage committee, two individuals actively involved within the forestry industry in Manitoba and two former members of the NewPage committee, for a total of 25 respondents.

3.6 Data analysis

Once the interviews were completed, each interview was transcribed verbatim into a separate word processing file. The documents were then imported into a computer assisted qualitative data analysis software program, NVivo, which was developed by Qualitative Software Research. As well, all field notes were imported into the data analysis program. The
Software helped to organize the data in a manner that allowed for easy documentation of the results, and aided in the analysis of complex relationships within the data (Welsh 2002). Compared to conventional manual methods, NVivo accelerated the coding process and made discovering themes within the research data easier; these identified themes in the data were the basis of the analysis. Each time I went through the data using the software program, emergent themes were refined further. NVivo is considered to be an improvement over other qualitative data analysis software packages because it allows for the use of visual models, has increased flexibility for a range of analytical approaches, the ability to retain text formatting when importing files, and enhanced linking abilities with different file types (Welsh 2002).

It is important to be aware of the limitations of analysis tools when making the selection of which device to use and, if necessary, defending that choice. It has been argued by critics of computer assisted qualitative data analysis programs that the software manipulates the data or that the software will conduct the analysis in an artificial intelligence manner (Welsh 2002). However, these qualitative data analysis programs are simply one tool that facilitates efficient management of research data. I initiated all actions that were to be run in the software, and I developed all the codes and themes that emerged throughout my personal analysis of the data during transcription. As well, throughout both the transcription phase and the coding phase there were many opportunities for me to become extremely intimate with the data. NVivo removed many of the manual tasks associated with analysis, like classifying, sorting and arranging information; this provided me more time to analyze the data and discover patterns, identify themes, gain insight and develop meaningful conclusions.
3.7 Trustworthiness of data

Credibility is achieved through strategies including prolonged engagement, triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checks. Prolonged engagement ensures that the researcher is sufficiently involved in order to establish trust with the research participants and is able to detect distortion in research findings, either introduced by the researcher or the participants.

Undertaking the secretarial activities for one of the committees used as a case study allowed me to be present at numerous meetings throughout the research. This permitted frequent interaction with the staff of the forest products company and the committee members, which helped to build a stable rapport with the committee. This regular attendance at committee meetings was not a part of the work with the other case, however I was present for one meeting of the NewPage committee and as much time as possible was spent meeting with both the committee members and the company staff.

Triangulation implies that the obtained information is confirmed by multiple sources or multiple methods. Data obtained from the interviews was combined with the participant observation experiences, and was compared to the results from the advisory committee national survey (Parkins et al. 2006) to expose similarities. The idea behind peer debriefing is to analytically review the research process with a group of impartial peers. This activity is encouraged at the Natural Resources Institute through forums, class discussion, and informal meetings. In this research it was done for both the methods and data analysis processes, as well as for the research results.

Member checks require testing data with the participants in the research; this can be done informally or formally and should be done continuously throughout the research process. The first few interviews provided the opportunity to pretest the interview schedule; participants were
asked to provide information concerning areas that needed to be revised and topics that should be included. Attending committee meetings also presented the occasion to discuss the development of the research with the advisory committees. This allowed the committee members to contemplate and discuss the emerging themes within the data and provide opinions on the resulting conclusions.

Dependability is defined as the extent to which, if the inquiry were replicated with similar respondents in a similar context, its findings would be repeated (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Dependability is achieved through a dependability audit, which includes the construction and maintenance of an archive that facilitates access to all documentation as well as an account of the process of inquiry. This was achieved through the documentation of every aspect of the research process in the form of field notes.
Chapter 4: A gendered perspective of participation in forest management advisory committees

4.1 Overview

Public participation in forest management is vital to sustainable forestry policies. However, women’s involvement in the formulation, planning and execution of policy regarding forestry remains low at the forest management advisory committee level (Reed and Varghese 2007). The Tembec advisory committee currently only has one women member participating and the NewPage committee currently has five women members participating, three of whom are alternates and one is the company representative. Since its inception, the Tembec committee has seen infrequent and inconsistent participation from its few female members, most of whom are no longer active members. The NewPage committee has seen more frequent participation from its female members, however since most of the women are alternates their attendance has not been consistent. The objective of this chapter is to identify and discuss the common themes in the data that respondents perceived to be the key reasons why women are underrepresented on forest management advisory committees. The key reasons derived from each respondent’s perception of their own participation and the participation of others can be divided into two core themes as summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Constraints to women’s participation on advisory committees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Joining a FMAC</th>
<th>Around the Table</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional roles</td>
<td>Comfort level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>Experience and education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness and opportunity</td>
<td>Lack of other women at meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal constraints</td>
<td>Degree of influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sexist Attitudes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Getting women to join a forest management advisory committee

The first theme involves finding women to join forest management advisory committees and to actively attend the meetings. As identified in Table 5 four sub-themes were extracted from the data including traditional roles, interest, awareness and opportunity, and personal constraints. These four types of constraints preventing women from getting to advisory committee meetings are identified and explored in greater detail in the following discussion.

4.2.1 Traditional roles

Both men and women involved in forestry commonly described the industry as an “old boys club” and many respondents felt the underrepresentation of women on forest management advisory committees is simply a reflection of the prevailing roles in the forest sector.

I’m not sure but I think it’s because it’s representative of the industry and because we don’t have a lot of women in the industry we don’t naturally gravitate towards thinking about or suggesting women to be on the committee (Respondent #16).

I would say the advisory committee is more symptomatic of the larger issues about women in forestry so I’m not sure it’s you get the process just right and suddenly women will appear (Respondent #5).

In addition to the lack of women involved in the forestry industry, there is also a lack of women playing a role in the organizations that are being represented on forest management advisory committees. This is because most of the representation on these advisory committees is concentrated around the land use sectors and generally those associations tend to have more of a male focused membership.

...by and large in the outdoor community there are very few women playing an active role, whether it is with game and fish or whatever the case is (Respondent #7).

I suppose there is a bit of an inherent bias to the extent that part of the committee includes the resource sector and those will clearly have more of a male focus to them (Respondent #4).
Examples of the resource sector stakeholder groups represented on the two forest management advisory committees where female membership is minimal include cottage owners, outfitters, hunting and fishing federations, recreational groups such as All Terrain Vehicle drivers and boaters, trapping organizations, and wildlife associations. Numerous respondents expressed possible explanations as to why there was such low membership by women in the multiple land use groups represented on the advisory committees.

*I think women on average use the forest differently than men; women don’t seem to be utilizing the resource as much (Respondent #19).*

*I guess looking at the broader scope, women tend to be more urbanized, more domestic, don’t get me wrong I am not stereotyping but it’s known as somewhat of a tendency in today’s society which is so greatly urbanized now...(Respondent #6).*

In other situations the person representing a stakeholder group on the committee depends solely on who is in the proper position. This is most often the case with government agencies or local municipalities. However, these types of jobs have been shown to be highly gendered as well, with a large majority of the positions being occupied by men (e.g. Kanter 1977; Seager 1996; Reed 2003).

Almost all of the respondents felt the advisory committees would be better served by having more representation of women. However, due to the male biased nature of the forestry industry and the stakeholder groups from the land use sector, many respondents thought finding women to participate on the committee would be an extremely difficult task. When asked to describe the member selection process and the underrepresentation of women on the advisory committees, three of the respondents replied:

*I think there is a significant chunk of the committee composition that actually just by default you’d expect to get those spots filled by males, so I think that’s a big part of it (Respondent #25).*
We do try to look around but most times it’s a man you’re going to end up with (Respondent #18).

It’s kind of like a random grab bag, if you reached your hand in to pull one out, you’d probably get a male to fill that role (Respondent #19).

Employment within the forestry industry has traditionally been dominated by males and although this is changing and more women are becoming involved in the industry, it continues to still be heavily biased towards men (Reed 2003). The same can be said of the other resource sectors that have a stake in forest management, such as trapping organizations and outfitting businesses. The traditional roles both in the forest sector and in other land use sectors has most likely attributed to the underrepresentation of women on forest management advisory committees. It is conceivable that women are not entering forestry because it is perceived as a profession for men. As well, women most likely feel that gender discrimination will affect them in the workplace and suspect that women do not have the same opportunities as men in the forestry industry.

There’s probably exclusion within the industry because it’s not a traditional route for a woman to take and therefore there would be all kinds of barriers put into a young woman’s way that prevent her from getting into that sector (Respondent #16).

If you walk through the mill everybody on the floor is probably going to be a man so it’s just a male dominated industry that isn’t appealing to women (Respondent #8).

I think in terms of the forestry industry it’s probably still very much heavily biased towards men, I mean you think about who works out in the woods, it’s probably quite rare to have females on a crew, and you probably see a bias when it comes to things like administrative duties, so within [the company] I suspect there are biases in regards to gender within the different aspects of the way their business is structured (Respondent #19).

The nature of forestry work has been pigeonholed as heavy manual labour and the “lumberjack” image is what most people still seem to picture when envisioning the forestry industry. In fact, a few of the participants noted that this stereotype of the forestry industry is likely to be
particularly unattractive to women and is quite possibly acting as a deterrent for women entering the forestry industry.

…I can’t imagine many parents encouraging their daughters to go out and learn how to use heavy equipment, or to get involved in an industry that probably has a reputation as being a man’s industry between heavy labour and hard toiling in the mills and a lot of machinery and mechanical abilities involved (Respondent #3).

I think a lot of people, especially women, view working in the woods as really tough stuff and don’t realize there’s a refinement to it (Respondent #10).

There aren’t many women in forestry, it has always been perceived as one of those men things, and that’s changing but it’s a tough role for women (Respondent #7).

Women traditionally have not been attracted to the forestry profession and instead have pursued other careers that are viewed as more conservation oriented or environmentally friendly (Reed 2003). Most of the women who have entered the forestry industry have pursued careers in administrative, personnel, or fiscal management work (Reed 2003). The general lack of awareness about what forestry entails has almost certainly impacted on the career choices made by women since the industry often is not suggested or recognized as an option for young girls (Reed 2003). The underrepresentation of women on forest management advisory committees is simply a reflection of the low numbers of women who are actively involved in the forestry industry and the resource sector.

4.2.2 Interest

Respondents noted that having a personal interest in the forests is necessary for wanting to join the forest management advisory committees. Interest in sustainably managing the forests was mentioned by every respondent as one of their key reasons for participating on these committees. This includes a concern for what is happening on the local landscape and a desire to
obtain information about what is occurring from a direct source; most often this request is directed at the forest company.

*I am participating on the committee because of my connection to the local landscape and my interest in seeing what’s going on, I like to receive this information directly from [the company] (Respondent #22).*

*The activities of [the company] have probably the greatest impact on the forests in the region and to have an opportunity to gather information about woodland activities and forest policy from the biggest show in town is something very important (Respondent #9).*

*From a more selfish point of view, through participating on the committee I have access to really great information from [the company] and I receive quality, up to date information about forestry issues in [the region] (Respondent #14).*

Based on the lack of women both in the forestry industry and on stakeholder groups in the resource sector, many respondents suggested it is possible that the majority of women do not have a personal interest in how forests are managed and little interest in the work of the forest management advisory committee.

*I think in general it’s not something that women think about every day, not that men do either but to participate on the committee you have to have an interest, if you’re not interested you’re not going to be there... (Respondent #11).*

*It might be the demographics and by that I mean the people that are most involved in the whole process right now tend to be the baby boomers and that group, a bit older even, and I don’t feel that the time when those guys were going through school that the women were involved in the sciences and engineering type studies so they don’t have the interest. I think that’s probably it more than anything (Respondent #7).*

Respondents felt that when committee members have a vested interest in the process and its results, they become motivated to participate on the advisory committee and strive to make the process successful. Most of the women currently participating on the two forest management advisory committees are doing so because the issues surrounding forest management personally impacts them and is relevant to their daily lives.
I have a personal interest in the region as well so that’s an extra encouragement for me to participate (Respondent #13).

I am participating because [the company] controls most of the woodlands that our resource for our company comes from (Respondent #10).

As one respondent put forward, women tend to become more involved with community-related activities and committees because it relates much more directly to their own personal interests.

She left because she was just so busy with the activities in her community that this committee wasn’t a high enough priority for her (Respondent #4).

Other barriers affecting women from participating on forest management advisory committees, such as experience or awareness, may be leading to the lack of interest shown by women. Many of the respondents felt that women do not have a desire to participate on forest management advisory committees because they do not have a personal interest in the topic. The numerous definitions of public participation all include involving those individuals interested in the issue or a decision (CSA 2002; IAP2 2003) and without having a personal interest in the topic many individuals are simply not going to participate in the process (Diduck and Sinclair 2002; Stewart and Sinclair 2007).

4.2.3 Awareness and opportunity

Almost all of the respondents pointed out that they only learned about the process and its purpose when they were approached and requested to consider becoming a member on the advisory committee.

Most people really don’t know about the committee and what it does, unless you’ve been at it for a while or you’re familiar with the concept of certification and public input (Respondent #12).

I mean the members know about the committee, but I don’t think there is a broad awareness of it in the communities (Respondent #14).
In order for individuals to take full advantage of a participatory process, they need to be fully aware of the opportunity provided (Sinclair and Doelle 2003). Inadequate knowledge about forest management advisory committees can leave potential members unaware of the opportunity to participate in planning and forest management (Diduck and Sinclair 2002). It is then likely to assume that for the most part women, even possibly more so than men, are unaware of the opportunity to participate in forest management through the advisory committee process. This lack of knowledge about the existence of forest management advisory committees would be due to the low number of women both involved on stakeholder groups in the resource sector and within the forestry industry. Very few women are participating in the organizations that have been approached to send representatives to these advisory committees.

_I think its women not putting themselves out there to be involved in these things that would give them an opportunity to participate on these committees (Respondent #1)._  

Having a constituency to represent on the committee and having a mechanism to help members report back to their constituency about discussions at committee meetings is important at two levels. First, by reporting to a constituency, the knowledge about the existence and activities of a forest management advisory committee would extend to potential female committee members. Second, communicating with the represented constituency would bring the voice of more women into the discussions at committee meetings. Tembec’s Terms of Reference addresses the issue of communicating the committee’s activities to represented stakeholder groups by stating representatives are expected to inform the organization they represent about the advisory committee meetings they attend. Unfortunately, as McGurk (2003) discovered, the majority of committee members were not always being vigilant in conversing about the issues being discussed at meetings with their represented constituents.
In contrast to the situation with the Tembec committee, the advisory committee at NewPage is not made up of representation from stakeholder groups, but rather membership is formed from “areas of interest” such as youth, small industry, and academia. These two different methods of membership selection made use of by the two committees demonstrate the two ways of selecting interests to represented. Currently, there is no mechanism in place to help committee members report back to their constituencies, since members are not representing a specific group, nor is reporting to a constituency a requirement of the committee members. However, suggestions are being considered as to whether a mechanism should be put into place so that members can both take concerns from the committee back to their constituency and bring concerns from their constituency to the attention of the committee. Some of the members on the NewPage committee would need to define their constituency before they could even begin the process of reporting back. Since most members on both committees are not reporting back to their constituency, and since the majority of members on the NewPage do not even have a defined constituency, the opportunity for potential committee members, including women, to hear about and get interested in the activities of the advisory committees is being limited. Ultimately, this could limit the opportunity for participation of women on forest management advisory committees.

*I think outreach could be improved and I suggested that they maybe hold more public open houses where FAC members are present (Respondent #9).*

If outreach to the represented constituencies were improved as mentioned in the above quote, it is possible that more women would become interested in the activities of the committee and would want to become committee members.

In the case of both advisory committees, the lack of a mechanism to assist members in reporting back to represented stakeholder groups is extinguishing one of the few opportunities
the small number of women involved in the resource sector may be able to utilize in order to contribute their opinions and interests to the advisory committee. Even though women are not directly involved on these advisory committees, their concerns about forest management could still be brought to the committee through the representative of their organization or community. This is also limiting the number of female voices heard in discussions at advisory committee meetings.

4.2.4 Personal constraints

Meetings are held in the evening on a weekday for both of the committees. Tembec’s committee meetings commence at 6:00 p.m. and NewPage’s committee meetings begin at 4:00 p.m. with the meetings of both committees running for the duration of roughly four hours. As all of the female respondents pointed out, if you have children the time period when the meetings are held is always extremely busy because it is the time when children are getting home from school and getting ready for after-school activities, when dinner needs to be prepared, when homework needs to be done, and when the bedtime routine needs to be accomplished. While this is not always the case in every family, it is often the woman of the household who is responsible for these activities.

All of our meetings were 4 until 8, over supper time, and they were very good at providing supper but there were times when that would conflict with my family and a woman tends to be the one that gets supper ready and organizes the kids after supper and makes sure the homework is done and that type of thing and it’s still that way in families (Respondent #16).

As all of the women respondents also pointed out, if you also factor in the travel time to and from meetings, many of the members would arrive home from meetings after their children were already asleep, and if they had left for the committee meeting directly from work, as most of them normally do, it would leave no opportunity for them to see their children at all. For a single
mother, attending the committee meetings in most circumstances would simply not be an option, especially with the high cost of daycare. As some of the women respondents suggested, compensation for daycare costs or even providing daycare services during the meetings may provide an incentive for more women to participate on the advisory committees.

*The meetings, plus travel time is a long time to be away from your family. It’s an hour from here to the meeting location and my home is another 45 minutes on the other side of here; I would be gone when I left for work at ten minutes after 7 in the morning and I wouldn’t get home until 10 at night so that I could participate in this initiative. That would be easier, in my opinion, for a man to do (Respondent #16).*

This shows that the traditional household roles of women are conflicting with their ability to participate on forest management advisory committees.

Many members participating on the two committees were either self-employed or retired and, therefore had more free time to participate on the committee. The majority of members that were employed had employment schedules that were flexible enough to work around meeting times or they were participating on the forest management advisory committees as part of a job requirement. A few respondents suggested the competing pressure between meeting times and a conflicting work schedule would undoubtedly act as a barrier for many potential committee members; this would especially be the case with interested young people. Many people would simply not be able to get the time off work and, considering the travel time faced by many of the participants, would be unable to attend meetings.

*...just because of the way the committee meetings are structured, it may be hard to attract someone and hold someone, most of those guys that go either their bosses are tolerant and want them to be there, or they’re self employed, actually most of them are self employed, so they have the flexibility whereas a young person, especially if they are working or going to school, would find it much harder (Respondent #9).*

*Everybody is young and they just don’t have the time and who’s going to take 3 or 4 hours off work to be on this committee (Respondent #18).*
Participants on forest management advisory committees must be given fair and adequate notice of meetings in order for participation to be successful (Fitzpatrick and Sinclair 2003; Sinclair and Diduck 2005). A committee member’s ability to participate meaningfully can be hindered if sufficient notice of the dates and times for upcoming meetings, as well as a list of topics to be discussed, is not provided. The proponents of both advisory committees do try to take into consideration the amount of notice they are giving to the committee members when setting dates for meetings; however, the inflexibility of the times the meetings are held may be a factor in why women are not participating on forest management advisory committees.

In addition to the four-hour meetings, many participants on these advisory committees are also facing lengthy travel distances; some members have drives as long as two hours in one direction to get to meetings. Some respondents also mentioned that some women tend to be hesitant to drive long distances, especially alone in poor weather conditions or at night. The majority of members from both committees live in rural areas and driving long distances is simply an everyday reality. It was noted that women might be reluctant to become committee members because of the long drive they must undertake, the majority of which is done at night, in order to attend the meetings, regardless of the compensation for mileage.

In the winter time women are hesitant about getting out on the road, and these are the realities of life, unfortunately it seems that to go and drive 100 kilometres there and back by yourself at night in winter conditions is not really what some women want to do, and it is a fact of life because we live in a rural area (Respondent #11).

Another personal constraint faced by women is related to the fact that numerous advisory committees are vigorously pursuing the small number of women actively involved in the forestry industry and on stakeholder groups within the resource sector. One women respondent said she simply did not have the time, energy, or inclination to participate in every process that had
approached her so she had prioritized her concerns and based on that information had made the decision which processes would be most beneficial for her.

*I don’t think that forestry is high on the priority list for most women and that comes into play when choosing what committees you want to be on (Respondent #17).*

*The consultant that set up the committee was definitely looking for a gender balance and she couldn’t get it because the women she petitioned, one was environmental and one was small saw mill, were just too busy or too involved in other committees and at some point, because we are in a lot of demand because everybody wants that gender focus, you have to make a choice of what is the most important committee for you to be on for your own resource needs (Respondent #10).*

### 4.3 Getting women to participate around the table

This section will identify and explore the numerous constraints that are affecting both the current and potential women members from meaningfully participating in discussions and decisions at the advisory committee meetings, which may be deterring them from joining as well. As identified in Table 5, six sub-themes were extracted from the data including comfort level, experience and education, lack of other women at meetings, degree of influence, personality and sexist attitudes. In addition, this section will also discuss the various reasons given to explain why both committees have had female members leave throughout the years that the two committees have been active.

#### 4.3.1 Comfort level

Many respondents suggested that women might not feel comfortable sitting on a committee dealing with forest management. While respondents felt reasons for this low comfort level experienced by women can be quite varied, the basic premise was with an understanding of the context of the forest management advisory committee and the content of discussions at the meetings. In addition, some felt that many women do not feel empowered enough to take on a
leadership role and to join these forest management committees, particularly due to the rural nature of the many communities encompassed by the managed forest areas. Finally, the low female representation on these committees also presents an uncomfortable atmosphere for women who are not used to being in situations with only men.

I attended one meeting with the NewPage advisory committee and three meetings with the Tembec advisory committee, and the first personal observation made when walking into any of the meetings was how few women were present. At the NewPage committee meeting there was one women member present as well as one female company employee; at the three Tembec committee meetings attended I once saw one women committee member and at one meeting there was a female guest speaker. I was completely conscious of the low number of female members sitting around the table while I was present at the committee meetings and the situation did make me feel slightly uncomfortable, so I can completely understand what women members must experience every time they attend a meeting. A few of the respondents had this to say:

...if there is always a group of males sitting around the table at meetings that can be imposing for some people, especially women, to try and break into (Respondent #22).

It’s hard to be a woman around a table with a bunch of men and feel comfortable enough to take control (Respondent #18).

I can only surmise that it would be difficult for a woman to present her views in a group full of men, I’m sure most women would feel extremely uncomfortable in that situation (Respondent #12).

The forestry industry is quite an exclusive sector anyway, almost everything I’ve ever done on the committee has involved a woman or two in a sea of men so you have to be used to that, and some women just aren’t comfortable with it (Respondent #10).

Many respondents were also of the opinion that because of the disconnect between women and the forestry industry, women possibly felt they did not have enough of a grasp of the issues surrounding forest management to participate meaningfully in committee discussions.
The majority of the women that did show up came out and thought it was too deep, and they didn’t really understand the whole process and some of the big fancy words being used, and there again comes the male-female thing: the lady who doesn’t understand the fancy words thinks ‘well I don’t really understand what’s going on so I’m not going to come back’ while the man who doesn’t understand the words nods his head and thinks ‘if I sit here with a silly grin on my face it will make everyone think I know what’s going on’ and he’ll keep coming back (Respondent #6).

Lacking such confidence would greatly impact a person’s comfort level and ultimately the desire to participate in discussions as noted by Reed (2003).

Overwhelmed was a word constantly used by both female and male respondents to describe their feelings when first joining their respective advisory committee and attempting to undertake the background reading in order to be caught up to the other committee members. On both of the advisory committees, some women attended a few of the meetings and then left the committee. Some respondents speculated that these women also felt overwhelmed when first joining the advisory committee and because of this decided to not return.

There was a lady that came for a few meetings, but I would be willing to say that possibly, and only possibly, her understanding of the forestry industry was a little on the short side; I think overwhelmed would be a good word to use to describe her feelings about her time with the committee (Respondent #24).

I think what is happening is that these women are coming and sitting in at a few meetings and they don’t think they know enough about what we’re talking about so they leave and don’t come back (Respondent #18).

...there was one woman who was on the committee but left because she just wasn’t feeling like she could contribute and she didn’t feel that she understood the forestry industry enough (Respondent #8).

One of the respondents had left their committee some years back stating their lack of understanding and comfort with the content as the main reason.

For me, the reason I left had to do with all the stuff being talked about that I didn’t understand. When it came to a topic that I knew about or was familiar with I felt the most comfortable. But that was mostly because I had recently joined the committee and behind everyone else (Respondent #17).
The same respondent said their initial experience with the advisory committee might have been more stress-free if they had been with the committee right from ground zero because then they would have understood everything better and felt much more comfortable with the subject matter being discussed.

This is in no way suggesting that the male members of these two committees are deliberately creating an unfavourable environment for women. However, this lack of comfort felt by the female members on forest management advisory committees is most likely an indirect result of the male dominated nature of the forestry industry (Reed 2003).

4.3.2 Education and experience

Respondents mentioned that the reluctance shown by many women to participate actively in the discussions at committee meetings may have to do with their education level and experience. Some of the respondents felt that many women do not consider themselves properly educated in forest management issues and feel they lack the proper experience with the forestry industry to competently serve on an advisory committee dealing with forest management.

*I think low education levels are a big part of why women are not participating on the committee and related to that, how much technical background the woman has. This is important because women view the work of the committee as a series of technical issues* (Respondent #5).

*I don’t think some of the women who have come to the meetings in the past have felt they were capable of being there because of their lack of experience in the forestry industry* (Respondent #24).

Neither advisory committee requires their members to have any previous knowledge about forest ecosystems or forest management issues when they first join the committee. The proponents provide all of the necessary information to the committee members and members are provided with any further information that is requested. Also, assistance from outside experts is provided
to the committee when determined to be required by members or the proponents. Because of the necessary material being provided to educate new members, it is believed by the sponsor that being formally educated or having extensive knowledge about the forestry industry is neither a requirement nor expected of any potential committee member, including women. However, realistically this is not always the case. As stated earlier many respondents felt overwhelmed when first joining the committee because of their lack of experience with the industry and with the issues. As one former female member stated, her frustration with her lack of understanding on the topics being discussed was her reason for leaving the committee. One respondent had this to say about the reading material provided,

*I don’t have the time to read every piece of paperwork given to me by any means or even the time to read all the reference material because it’s a slow read for me because I am grasping all the new terms. It’s a specialized industry and I have no experience or education with it* (Respondent #3).

Therefore, while it is true that no prerequisite is expected of new members in order to participate, members do require some background on the topics to be discussed. In order for the provided information to successfully educate all of the committee members the language in the documents must be kept as simple and straightforward as possible. Definitions that are easy for everyone to understand should be provided for all of the forestry concepts and scientific terminology used throughout the documents. In addition, field tours are beneficial at supplying committee members with real-life examples and should be taken advantage of whenever possible (McGurk 2004).

Respondents also felt that women may think that men are more knowledgeable when it comes to forestry issues and assume when a woman does provide an opinion at an advisory committee meeting that she will not be listened to or respected by the male members.
I think women just aren’t comfortable sitting on a committee that deals with the forestry industry because it is dominated by men, and they don’t feel like they have enough education, and because of their lack of experience they might even wonder if their opinion would be valued by the men at the meeting (Respondent #8).

Many women might feel intimidated to participate because they don’t think the men will give their opinions as much respect as the men will give to the other men (Respondent #22).

That’s the big difference between men and women, the men will get involved with very little experience but they’re sitting at the table getting as much respect as the man next to him who has been involved in the industry for 50 years, whereas the opinions of the woman with no experience will not receive as much respect from the men (Respondent #1).

For many women, participating in discussions at committee meetings would require challenging their own personal perceptions regarding the value of a woman’s opinion as well as potentially risking public humiliation (Reed 2003). This type of environment, whether perceived or authentic, is simply not a situation in which many women are voluntarily going to place themselves.

The discussion at these meetings is focused on the forest, a topic with which many women in the broader public have an ample amount of valuable practical experience. In order to erase this preconceived belief by women that formal education and experience in the forestry industry is needed to be a participant on forest management advisory committees, women need to become aware of the numerous opportunities and be empowered to become involved. None of the male respondents expressed an adverse attitude toward having women as advisory committee members and in fact expressed a desire for more female participation on the committee. Respondents felt that showing women their input is both desired and respected will help in getting more female members to feel comfortable providing opinions and participating in discussions at the committee meetings. For women to feel empowered, almost all of the female
respondents suggested that women need to be made to feel that their concerns and opinions are valuable in order to improve their self esteem, and that this would likely be easier for younger women. As one respondent pointed out, educating women about the opportunities goes a long way to encouraging women to become involved.

_I think the best strategy is to encourage young women but this has to start when they’re in school, and you can’t wait until they are 25 or 30 years old and try to change somebody’s opinions at that point. We need to start bringing a new way for them to think in elementary school and start empowering and encouraging them to take on leadership roles because they don’t think that it is theirs to take and not everyone wants to be a leader and that’s fine but there are so many more women that could take on that role and do an absolutely wonderful job and if they have the ability it should be nurtured and encouraged and mentored (Respondent #1)._ 

_I think in the schools they should be trying to give young women a voice; the voice at the end of this process that will be heard will be the voice but first women have to have the voice (Respondent #9)._ 

Some of the women committee members questioned for this research are also employed within the forestry industry and ranked the role of a mentor as the most important influence on their career, and subsequently their participation on the advisory committee. One respondent praised their mentor as someone to look up to and emulate; the respondent was continuously encouraged by their mentor and took comfort knowing that if their mentor could be successful in the industry and accomplish things, then the respondent would also be able to do the same thing.

_My mentor was a woman that took over the sawmill when her husband died and she was always somebody to kind of look at and say “well if you’re doing this job in an industry full of men, than I can do it too”. It is important for young women to end up with role models that can help you through it (Respondent #10)._ 

Not surprisingly, the majority of the female respondents that benefited from having a mentor themselves have tried to continue the tradition by making an effort to be a solid role model for and providing encouragement to any and all of the new women committee members with the hopes of providing a more comfortable environment for them. As two respondents said,
I watch the young women starting out in the industry and the young women who have joined the committee and I do try to support them because I know how difficult it can be to work in an industry full of men (Respondent #10).

We also need young people in forestry, because when you look around the table you see a lot of gray hairs, and it's the same with all our other primary industries, so you need good role models and mentors for the young people wanting to get involved in the industry and on the committee (Respondent #16).

The female respondents said they provided mentorship to the young women starting out on the committee by listening to their opinions and thoughts, by providing them with examples of their own struggles in the industry and by encouraging them to continue when they feel dejected. However, this mentorship has not been extended to women that might potentially join the forest management advisory committees.

Many individuals living in the communities encompassed by the forest management areas are likely to possess extremely useful knowledge about their local forest, some may even make use of the forest as a supplementary food source (for example gathering goods such as mushrooms or berries and hunting). Also, in the case of Nova Scotia, where the percentage of privately owned forested land is much higher than in Manitoba, the individuals living in remote communities throughout the forest management area are more likely to own forested land and because of that would have useful knowledge about alternative forest management practices.

Because of spending a lot of time in the forest, my experience, although not through a university education but I would say a fairly broad knowledge of wildlife and how it functions in the ecosystem, allows me the ability to act as an advisor, albeit not a technical advisor, in some of the forest management planning (Respondent #7).

This type of knowledge is as equally important as formal education and needs to be represented around the table at forest management advisory committee meetings (Blouin 1998).

Unfortunately because of the underrepresentation of women on forest management advisory
committees, the unique, alternative knowledge potentially possessed by many of the local women is not being obtained.

4.3.3 Lack of other women at committee meetings

The two forest management advisory committees lack a critical mass of women. The male respondents could only guess as to whether the lack of other women at committee meetings would make it more difficult for an individual woman to join the committee or participate in the discussions and present her concerns. However, many drew on their own personal experiences of being in the reverse situation to surmise that a woman would most likely feel intimidated or uncomfortable walking into a meeting that consisted of all male members.

I would say that if I’m the only lady in the room I would naturally wonder what everyone is going to think. I think the low male-female ratio could be subliminally inhibiting (Respondent #6).

I can see some women being intimidated by that or not being comfortable. I mean I’ve been in the reverse situation and it partly depends on the person themselves and the other people in the room (Respondent #14).

Some women have the experience of participating in an almost predominantly male organization and hold their own very well, but I imagine there would be a certain intimidation factor. I mean I know if I were to join a group that was virtually all women, there might be some hesitation on my part. There is always comfort in numbers (Respondent #23).

Kanter (1977) wrote about the increasing ability of minorities, for example women, to influence the dominant culture of an organization when their numbers reached above a certain minimum, indicated as roughly 35%. Below that ratio the minority tended to become a token because they were consciously aware of their differences from the numerical dominants. Following Kanter’s work, Dahlerup (1988) observed numerous noteworthy changes when Scandinavian women politicians became a significant minority, which is defined as passing a
threshold of 30% of the seats in the local Parliament. These modifications included an increase in the empowerment of women, changes in the reaction of men to the input from the women, a greater performance and efficiency from the women, changes in the social climate such as a greater accommodation of family obligations when setting meeting times, and a change in the policy direction that includes the concerns of women (Dahlerup 1988). Therefore, the premise is that when women are represented in sufficient numbers they will contribute more often because they feel comfortable and their participation will be more effective.

All of the women respondents did acknowledge that when they were the only female member present at a committee meeting they were very cognisant of the lack of other women in attendance. Many of the female respondents felt this situation resulted in their being quieter and participating less in discussions, especially when the women did not feel knowledgeable enough about the topic being discussed.

*Sometimes, when you went to a committee meeting and other women weren’t there, it was awkward and you definitely felt awkward and you most likely would not have participated as much as you would have when there were other women in attendance (Respondent #16).*

*If we had more women on the committee I think there would be more verbal participation from them (Respondent #8).*

Even though women were made to feel welcome at the meetings and none of the female respondents mentioned ever seeing obvious behaviours or attitudes meant to be intimidating, all of the women did comment that it was extremely encouraging to see another woman committee member present at a meeting. Starting a few years ago, the secretarial services at the NewPage advisory committee meetings has been the responsibility of a female company employee, and many of the women respondents from that committee said they felt more comfortable about attending meetings knowing that she would also be present. As a large portion of the women
respondents alleged, even seeing one other female in the meeting rooms goes great distances to help elevate that uncomfortable feeling of being an observable minority.

    *It was always nice to see another woman at a meeting because no matter how you look at it, it’s definitely a man’s world* (Respondent #22).

    One of the respondents felt that the lack of women represented on the forest management advisory committee was one of the few deficiencies of the committee. Given the heavily male biased nature of the forestry industry the respondent felt that female representation had not been exhaustively sought when the committee was being formed. One of the respondents suggested that if a requirement had been used, such as the critical mass number, to dictate the percentage of women making up the total membership amount, it would have at least compelled the individuals responsible for forming the committee to look harder for female representation and possibly would have resulted in a greater number of women committee members.

    *I think certainly if there had been a guideline like minimum 30% of the members have to be women, there would have been a much stronger effort to look for someone to fit the criteria* (Respondent #9).

All of the respondents did feel that gender representation was an important issue to consider in the forest management advisory committee process. Not all respondents felt that implementing a stipulation on membership selection was the route the committee should pursue. Many were worried that implementing rules regarding the number of women to be represented on forest management advisory committees would not be successful and would only produce results damaging to the process. The general feeling by these respondents was that no purpose is served by making special rules intended to bring women to the committee because it will not bring people to the committee for the right reasons and it may actually cause the other committee members to be less accepting. If special rules were to be put into practice that dictate the number of women members to be represented on the advisory committees, it could no longer be assumed
that women were always being true to their own personal interests because they may simply be physically filling a seat.

_There’s no good outcome to that because the other members will be upset with special rules and the people that are going there aren’t going there for the purpose that they should be going there (Respondent #1)._  

_I think the only way you could draw more women in is to make it a stipulation that there be ‘x’ number of women involved but I don’t see that as a positive way to create involvement (Respondent #3)._  

_It serves no purpose to anyone to make special rules to bring specific people to the advisory committee for the wrong reasons (Respondent #24)._  

This type of structural provision regarding the participation of women, specifically a 30% minimum quota for representation of women, is a strategy that has been employed in the joint forest management system of local governance in India, but the success of the stipulation is arguable (Ogra 2000). Undoubtedly an increase in women members on forest management advisory committees would improve the effectiveness of participation by women, but it is necessary to ensure that the women are attending the meetings for the appropriate reasons. Many of the respondents felt that the only way for women to become more effective and valued members of forest management advisory committees is for the necessary initiative to come from the women themselves. As one of the female respondents commented,

_We can all agree that when a group of women get together, they are more comfortable with each other but that’s not what we have to change, we have to change it so that women become comfortable no matter who is sitting around the table (Respondent #1)._  

A few respondents also felt that if more women were participating on forest management advisory committees then the structure and processes of the committee meetings might be different because they were being designed with the input of women. This would help in getting more women to join the committee and participate in discussions at meetings. The number of
people displaying the characteristics of a particular social group may affect how the representative body operates (Dahlerup 1998). As mentioned in a previous section, the timeframe when meetings are held may be constraining the ability of some women to participate on the committee because of their household responsibilities. If the suggestions of these women regarding meeting times were being presented, the committee might alter the times when the meetings are held and then more women would be able to attend meetings and participate. As one respondent put it,

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\text{I think it needs to start off where it’s the rule that women need to be there so then the committee would have to accommodate themselves to that reality and probably make changes in the way in which the meetings are conducted (Respondent #23).}
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4.3.4 Degree of influence

Some of the respondents felt that women members may not have enough influence on the committee to have even a small amount of bearing on the decisions being made, especially because of the low number of women participating on forest management advisory committees.

\[
\text{Women do not have enough influence to participate meaningfully in the work of the committee because we are so underrepresented; it is sad (Respondent #1).}
\]

Many of the respondents felt that personal experience and knowledge produce the influence that is largely respected by the majority of the other committee members, and these same respondents felt this type of influence would not be possessed by a woman not directly involved in the forestry industry. All of the female respondents felt that the influence they did have on their advisory committee did not come from the fact that they were a woman, but rather came from their educational background and their experience with the forestry industry.

\[
\text{For influence I lean on my background plus my personal experience, although I might feel differently if I was a female teacher sitting on the panel when compared to all these husky men that come into meetings with greasy fingers because they’ve just been out at their woodlot. I feel I have to be gender neutral when going into the}
\]
committee meetings and I think that may be a very different perspective from a female on the committee who doesn’t feel the same way that I do going into these meetings (Respondent #19).

Experience and knowledge is precisely what should determine an individual’s influence on the advisory committee, whether that individual be female or male; however, not all potential female members would have the knowledge and experience deemed necessary to gain the adequate influence, as summarized in the quotation above.

A small number of the male respondents and almost all of the female respondents felt a strategy needed to be implemented by the advisory committees to create more influence for the women who are participating. The same respondents also felt a strategy would help to encourage more women to join these committees and participate in discussions at meetings. However, none of the respondents who felt women needed more influence could suggest what this proposed strategy should be, although the majority of them felt it would definitely involve increasing the representation of women on forest management advisory committees.

Many of the respondents mentioned their ability to influence forest management plans and decisions as another one of their top reasons for participating on the two advisory committees. As one respondent explained,

...if you don’t feel you are being affected by the decisions made or you don’t feel you are having an effect on the decisions being made at forest management advisory committee meetings, then it is extremely likely that you are not going to continue to come to the meetings and participate in the discussions and the decision-making process (Respondent #22).

This scenario is probably going to be the reality for more women than men, because most women are not involved in the forestry industry and therefore would not feel affected by the decisions being made regarding forest management.
I think the sectors that would be most attractive to women, such as community and education and tourism, really don’t feel affected by the decisions that get made at the meetings because the advisory committee is so resource-oriented (Respondent #22).

4.3.5 Personality

One of the barriers suggested by some of the respondents was personality, and how it can either inhibit or facilitate women becoming actively involved not only in the forestry industry but also with the forest management advisory committee process. The majority of female respondents felt that only a certain type of woman would want to become involved in a resource specific industry that is more or less exclusively male dominated. Many respondents felt the women who are becoming involved in the forestry industry and on forest management advisory committees were the ones who displayed personality characteristics that have typically been attributed to men, rather than possessing the traditional female associated traits. This barrier speaks to the larger constraints imposed on the two genders because it reproduces norms of behaviour.

What I find is that the women that are participating on these forest management advisory committees tend to be like myself: exceptionally strong, outspoken women that have the confidence to step into these roles, especially when they are so greatly outnumbered (Respondent #1).

I find all of the women who come into meetings are very assertive, they don’t take anything from anybody and I think that’s the way it has to be. It’s no good for a woman to come in shy, it doesn’t get you anywhere and it does the committee no good either (Respondent #18).

The women that are participating on forest management advisory committees either do possess the personality traits that are predominately attributed to men or are mimicking the traits in order to blend in among the men; however, no matter what the circumstances are it still seems that women must portray the traditionally masculine qualities to successfully participate on the advisory committees.
Personality can also influence your effectiveness as an advisory committee member. One male respondent who was of the opinion that many women tend to approach forest management from an emotional basis and are incredibly sensitive about forestry issues demonstrated this idea. The respondent felt that the emotional approach to forest management was simply not going to be successful when dealing with a group of men.

*The emotional approach I have trouble dealing with and I think most guys do when it gets too emotional and it’s an emotional argument, as opposed to a rational, science-based as I call it, argument, because it tends to lose credibility in the business. It’s a man’s business and we don’t really want to hear that stuff* (Respondent #7).

In this context the emotional approach to forest management involves the formation of opinions based on personal feelings rather than on rational thinking. Many of the female respondents did agree that women do tend to bring an emotional approach to forest management. They did not feel that this thinking would necessarily be disastrous or unproductive to the advisory committee process. The emotional perspective potentially brought to the discussions at advisory committee meetings by women would merely provide an alternative opinion around the table about forest management, which is an important reason for forming these forest management advisory committees in the first place.

*I feel that women think about the educational aspects maybe more, the emotional aspects maybe more, and getting other people involved a little more whereas men are very much in tune with the potential of the forest and maybe not so much with how you share it* (Respondent #10).

Another interesting aspect regarding the idea of personality traits associated with female representation on forest management advisory committees is the question of whether the women that are involved on these advisory committees accurately represent the concerns and opinions of the majority of women in the general public. Many of the women respondents did not feel that
they were similar to the majority of women in the general public, but rather felt their personality was much more comparable to the personalities of the male committee members.

Perhaps the women that are involved don’t really represent the opinions of the majority because we are far stronger than the others (Respondent #1).

I think I may be more of a “tom boy” than most females would be, like I said I think I’d rank myself closer in personality to the men that participate on the committee than most females in the general public (Respondent #19).

Since the women participating on these advisory committees believe that they differ in character from women in the general public, it is possible that their concerns and opinions on forest management also are different than those of women in the general public. Increasing the representation of women on forest management advisory committees would present a more heterogeneous gendered perspective on the part of the committee towards forest management issues and decision-making. Paying attention to the implications of forestry policies for different groups of women may be very important in improving the participation of women on forest management advisory committees in meaningful ways.

4.3.6 Sexist attitudes and behaviours

Every single one of the male respondents said they had never witnessed sexist attitudes or behaviours toward the women committee members from the men. Yet in spite of this, almost all of the female respondents said they had at one time or another experienced some form of sexist behaviours or attitudes. Many of the responses from male participants to the interview questions had sexist undertones supporting the experiences of the women respondents.

Fishing is a guy thing, cutting a tree down is a guy thing, reading the food column in the paper is a ladies thing, and they don’t care how the recipe got on the page just as long as it’s there every Wednesday (Respondent #6).
Sexism is a belief or attitude held by an individual that one gender is inferior to or of less value than the other gender. Sexism also refers to any and all broad differentiations based on the gender of a person, rather than based on their individual merits. The term sexism is commonly applied to the ill-treatment toward women from men and historically, especially in patriarchal societies, women were and continue to be viewed as the weaker gender. Sexism towards women has been prevalent within the forestry industry. This situation is most likely persistent due to the strong attachments between occupations in forestry and masculine identities (Reed 2003). The women who do make an attempt at entering nontraditional employment in the forestry industry directly challenge this philosophy about gender. Many of the women in the forestry industry that had been interviewed for previous research about the sexism they had experienced believed the comments were made by men who felt threatened by their presence (Martz et al. 2006).

Unfortunately this sexism has trickled over into the forest management advisory committee process; although a large portion of the male members may not even be aware that their behaviours are being interpreted by the women as sexist.

Most of the sexist attitudes reported by the female respondents were subtle in nature as opposed to being direct and upfront, but even if the sexism is subliminal it is still present. Regardless of how the comment or behaviour was intended, it was still perceived by the female committee members as sexist.

...there were little things said such as comments like “now don’t go painting your fingernails and blow drying your hair before this tour” (Respondent #16).

Oh, there’s definitely been an inappropriate joke now and then (Respondent #22).

It’s always there, the ‘what does she know she’s a woman’ kind of thing and sometimes it’s not spoken, and sometimes it’s an attitude or a non-inclusive type of a thing, blame it on the good old boys club (Respondent #1).
It is possible that some women are more sensitive to sexist attitudes, or perceive sexist behaviours in different ways than others. Two of the female respondents felt they did not have a typical opinion about sexism, one that would not parallel the opinion of many other women in the general public, because they had both evolved in a profession that was very masculine in nature and were used to always being extremely outnumbered.

*I think, to a certain degree, you develop a bit of a thick skin (Respondent #19).*

*...in my professional life it's normally always men that I deal with so I have become comfortable with that (Respondent #17).*

One of those same respondents also thought that some of the women experiencing sexist attitudes were feeling targeted against simply due to the male dominated environment in the forestry industry created by the low numbers of women. In addition, one respondent felt that it was possible that some women could have understood a behavior or attitude in a completely different manner than in the way that female respondents had perceived to be sexist. This paradox between the feelings of two women toward the same situation can be seen when female respondents were asked to describe their impressions about being the only women member present at a forest management advisory committee meeting.

*I felt like maybe when you're the only woman in the room at a meeting, the men tend to listen to you more (Respondent #17).*

*When you are the only women at a meeting and you’re trying to express an opinion they’ll talk over you or cut you off, not allow you to give your full opinion, because the men feel that whatever they have to say is far more important (Respondent #1).*

This same type of contradiction has also been observed by another researcher (Reed 2003) when two women being interviewed reflected upon their work experiences in the forestry industry and used the same expression to illustrate the prevalence of sexism and the absence of sexism at their respected work sites.
One female respondent actually believed that women committee members were, although in a very small way, contributing to the continuation of sexist attitudes by not doing anything to stop the behaviours. In the past, on several occasions, she pointed out to fellow male committee members that their behaviour was inappropriate and has asked them to refrain from making sexist comments in the future, because she feels that this is an important step forward in the elimination of sexist attitudes in the forest sector.

*I feel as women involved in the forestry industry, especially as professional women, we sometimes need to say “hey that’s not acceptable” when a man is making sexist remarks. I do always say it in a very nice way because I don’t want to fight with anybody but it’s done in a manner that gets across the point of next time don’t say something like that to me* (Respondent #16).

However, she does not feel that all women being affected by sexism are taking the same actions and unfortunately, unless women start standing up for themselves the sexist attitudes in the forestry industry will most likely persist. Despite the fact that it is unclear what the precise circumstances are, as long as the women members perceive the behaviours and comments as sexist attitudes than something within the forest management advisory committee process needs to be revolutionized so that women feel comfortable participating amid the numerous men in the discussions at meetings.

**4.4 Satisfaction with female representation**

The topic of female representation on forest management advisory committees was the only area regarding satisfaction with the advisory committee process that showed a difference in opinions between the two genders. While most of the male respondents acknowledged that women were heavily underrepresented on the advisory committees, they did not view this as a flaw within the forest management advisory committee process.
I don’t think it’s important really, I guess I wish it would be a little more represented by females but I don’t have a problem with the current situation (Respondent #20).

I would say it’s one of those things that it would be nice to have more women there but I wouldn’t say it should be a requirement for the committee that there were more women there (Respondent #2).

Whereas, almost all of the female respondents felt that their concern involving the low numbers of women represented on forest management advisory committees needed to be attended to in order to make the advisory committee process more effective and fair. Support for increased female representation was slightly higher from the male respondents participating on the Tembec advisory committee, although these male respondents still did not view the low number of women as an inadequacy with their advisory committee process.

Alternatively, almost all of the women respondents saw the lack of female representation as an enormous disadvantage to the forest management advisory committee process. This was the one major dissatisfaction with the advisory committee process observed in this research. In contrast to the reaction of the men toward the current situation, many of the female respondents were of the opinion that steps should be taken right away to increase the number of women participating on the advisory committees. They felt that it is important to strive for gender balance on these committees because there are a lot of women that have unique interests toward forests differing from those of men. As well, the female respondents felt that many women possess different concerns and opinions than men about forest management practices; this same observation has also been noted in previous research (Parkins et al. 2006; Reed and Varghese 2007). They felt that many women hold a diverse value set and have a dissimilar approach to situations than men.

I think gender is important to consider in most things where policy is being discussed, I think it’s important and I see it as one of the shortcomings of the committee the fact that there isn’t a better gender balance (Respondent #25).
I think that the lack of female representation is a huge deficiency of the committee and in order to have the forests managed in a way that’s beneficial to everybody, industry included, women need to become much more involved in determining the direction (Respondent #22).

This type of diversity between the two genders is important to incorporate in the forest management advisory committee process because it exemplifies an essential component of the sustainable forest management paradigm.

A few of the male respondents, all on the NewPage committee, mentioned that they had taken conscious steps to strive for gender balance by selecting a female alternate. Whether this effort has allowed for more women to actively participate in the work of the committee is debatable. Many of these female alternates still attended less than one-third of the meetings and when they did attend, they would spend the majority of their time at the meeting trying to catch up on the information from the last couple of meetings so that they could effectively follow the discussion. This means that they were not really participating to their full capacity and therefore, the committee was not necessarily obtaining meaningful input from all of the female members.

As one female respondent told me,

Sometimes when I attended a meeting I felt like I shouldn’t be there but it was mostly because I hadn’t been going to all of the meetings. There was sometimes no point in me just stepping in to the middle of the discussion on an issue and spending the majority of the meeting just getting caught up to speed, and then thinking I wish I would have said this when I get home but that was mostly because I was not there all the time (Respondent #17).

Many respondents, both male and female, also indicated that neither of the two advisory committees had ever considered the angle of gender when discussing both the represented groups or sectors and member selection.

I don’t recollect gender ever being brought up as an issue to consider when selecting new members (Respondent #20).
I don’t think the issue of gender is even talked about in terms of representation, in fact I think I am the only one who ever mentions it and everyone else kind of snickers and that’s it (Respondent #10).

This becomes a flaw with the process because the lack of representation on advisory committees limits the amount of influence women have over forest management policies and programs (Reed 2003). In regards to the situation improving one respondent stated,

I don’t think it’s going to happen unless it’s a resolution of the committee that we need to increase the female participation (Respondent #9).

4.5 Summary

As is consistent with the findings of other case studies (Mohai 1992; Reed and Varghese 2007), women have been poorly represented on a variety of decision-making bodies in natural resources sectors, including the forest management advisory committees used as the case studies in this research. This study found that one woman was actively participating on the Tembec committee and five women were participating on the NewPage committee, two actively and three in the role as alternates. Ignoring the issue of gender in public participation programs, such as forest management advisory committees, assumes that men and women are equal in their roles and that their values, concerns, and interests are the same (Lidestav and Ekstrom 2000), which has been shown by the data presented here to not be an accurate assumption. In short, there is a need for alternative strategies to involve women in planning and decision-making processes related to the forestry sector (Reed 2003) through increasing their participation on forest management advisory committees.

The data also revealed a variety of constraints that affected women’s ability to participate on forest management advisory committees. The traditional roles existing within the forestry industry and the resource use sectors, personal interest, awareness and opportunity, and personal
constraints were all key reasons provided by the respondents to explain why women were not joining forest management advisory committees. As well, comfort level, experience and education, lack of other women at meetings, sexist attitudes, degree of influence, and personality were all key reasons provided by the respondents to explain why women are reluctant to participate in discussions at committee meetings. Many on the constraints affecting female participation reported by the respondents in this study were also identified by a study of members on Dutch national sport governing boards (Claringbould and Knoppers 2008). As other studies have also speculated (Reed and Varghese 2007), the answer to why more women are not participating on forest management advisory committees is not an easy one; it is more likely a combination of all the factors summarized in this chapter.

In addition, satisfaction levels of the respondent were explored to note any differences between the two genders. For the most part, all of the respondents were satisfied with the two forest management advisory committees, and felt the committees were accomplishing what they had been established to do. The one difference between the male and female respondents in terms of satisfaction with the advisory committee process related to the underrepresentation of women. Most male respondents were satisfied with the current situation of female members, whereas all of the female respondents felt the underrepresentation of women on forest management advisory committees was a flaw with the process that needed to be addressed immediately. This is possibly because a skewed gender ratio in the forestry industry is a normal occurrence and therefore a forest management advisory committee with a skewed gender ratio would also be considered normal by the members (Claringbould and Knoppers 2008). Since all of the female respondents and only a few of the male respondents were dissatisfied with the
current situation of female representation, the lack of female representation was constructed as a women’s issue. This same situation was observed by Claringbould and Knoppers (2008).

Token participants, or in the case of this research the female committee members, are more successful as the minority when they emphasize their achievements and qualities, and/or minimize their differences from the majority (Kanter 1977). The women in this study used both methods; they behaved in ways that were perceived to be gender-neutral and used their education and experience as influence in discussions and decision-making. At the same time, the idea of gender was undone within the forest management advisory committee process when the women became members of an organization where they knew they would be the minority and by continuing to place a strong emphasis on the need to actively pursue and encourage other women to join the committees. As Claringbould and Knoppers (2008) point out, the female participants on the two committees made membership appropriate for them as women by joining a male dominated organization and consequently, their participation may have slightly altered gendered meanings assigned to membership of forest management advisory committees. In addition, even though many of the male respondents showed little desire to change the gender ratio on the two forest management advisory committees, they were part of processes of undoing the meaning of gender, even if they were minimal, because they had interactions with women who did not conform totally to the stereotypical expectations of women (Claringbould and Knoppers 2008).
Chapter 5: Values, learning and gender bias

5.1 Overview

It is well established in the literature that learning is an extremely important outcome of public participation (Clover 1995; Sinclair and Diduck 2001; Fitzpatrick and Sinclair 2003; Keen et al. 2005). This is because participatory processes can foster mutual education surrounding the differences in preferences, values and opinions that will ideally lead to creative and effective decisions. The type of learning focused upon in this study was transformative learning (Freire 1972; Mezirow 1981), as outlined in Chapter 2. Transformative learning is the process an individual undergoes to change in a meaningful way through the acquisition of knowledge. The objective of this chapter is to explore if there was any gender bias in the learning outcomes of these forest management advisory committees.

5.2 Forest values of men and women

Values are an important component of learning because personal values are the foundation for behaviour and the whole underpinning of transformative learning is behaviour change. Therefore, values and beliefs can be altered through the acquisition of knowledge, critical thinking and reflection (Mezirow 1995). Throughout the literature it has been well documented that individual characteristics, such as gender, are significant external factors influencing forest values (e.g. Bengston 1994). As outlined in Table 6, the National Survey of Forest Sector Advisory Committees found that in reference to a set of forest value agreement statements, women had higher agreement levels for intrinsic values whereas the men had more support for the utilitarian values (Parkins et al. 2006, Reed and Varghese 2007).
Table 6: Gender differences in level of agreement on forest values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intrinsic Value Statements</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humans should have more respect and admiration for the forests</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>1042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests rejuvenate the human spirit</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>1035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests should have the right to exist for their own sake, regardless of human concerns and uses</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>1027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests are sacred places</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests should be left to grow, develop, and succumb to natural forces without being managed by humans</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>1037</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Utilitarian Value Statements</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forests can be improved through management by humans</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>1035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The primary function of forest should be for products and services that are useful to humans</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests should exist mainly to serve human needs</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests that are not used for the benefit of humans are a waste of our natural resources</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>1040</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reported means of the scale, from 1 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree)
Adapted from Reed and Varghese 2007

In other words, women tended to value the forest for its own sake more than for its use while men tended to feel that management by humans was a necessary component for the improvement of the forests. Based on this it can be hypothesized that women are more likely to use the forest for non-extractive purposes (such as recreation) whereas men are more likely to use the forest through resource extraction (such as hunting).

As is consistent with these previous studies, this study found that female participants held different values than the male participants about forests and forest management. In this study respondents were asked why they were participating on the forest management advisory
committee and in the responses women tended to use more intrinsic-related words that involved either a concern for or a respect for the forest.

_The main reason I am participating on the committee is because I want to continue to live in this forest and I want my grandchildren to experience it. The old boys’ club had their chance with the forest and all they did was cut it down so I am hopeful that we’re moving away from simply exploiting the resource_ (Respondent #10).

_I understand that you have to cut a tree to make a buck but I am a conservationist. I want to be able to walk in the forest and I want to ensure that all future generations will also have the same opportunity I did to experience the forest, so that is why I am participating on the committee_ (Respondent #23).

In contrast, men generally gave more utilitarian-related answers that displayed their interest in working with or managing the resource.

_My participation on the committee lets me keep an eye on what [the company] is doing with the forest, and I can be kept up to date on how their management will affect [my sector]_ (Respondent #18).

_I have found being on the committee to be very educational, I have learned a lot from their management plans and have even be able to apply some of the information to my own woodlot. I have a personal interest in how [the company] is managing the resource because it affects me and my livelihood_ (Respondent #20).

Interestingly, when the participants were asked directly whether women and men hold different values about forests and forest management, many of the female respondents and only a few of the male respondents acknowledged that this was the case. Later on however in their interviews many of the men and women went on to describe the differences they had seen in the forest values held by the two genders, as described later in the chapter. Additionally, a comparison of the responses regarding the values and interests each individual member felt they represented on their advisory committee showed that the women were much more likely than the men to be of the opinion that they represented ecological and environmental forest values. Overall, the
majority of the female respondents exhibited higher biocentric values and lower anthropocentric values than their male counterparts.

...traditionally it has been a male bastion and so if you’re a man out there logging for a living by definition you hold a utilitarian focus (Respondent #5).

The women I have known on the committee have had a greater sense of caring about the environment and environmental issues, and caring about best management practices than the men (Respondent #15).

The women were typically raising community issues or issues about relevance in regards to the use of the resource, much different in scope than the issues being raised by the men on the committee (Respondent #23).

Women bring a different perspective to forest management based on a much different value set from the men (Respondent #2).

Some of the female respondents also expressed values that were more aligned with the anthropocentric-oriented values of the men. It was speculated that these women have had to modify their forest values in order to be successful in the male dominated forest sector or that their values relate directly to their personality. Nevertheless, the comments above do help to show that women do represent different interests and present other perspectives than men on forest management advisory committees and therefore are a necessary component to the participatory process. This is based on the assertion that learning is an important outcome of the advisory committee process and having people that hold different values and beliefs represented on the committees will enhance the learning outcomes. Exposing individuals to values different than their own provides a suitable environment for critical reflection and rational discourse, both important elements of transformative learning (Mezirow 1981).

One possible explanation for the observed differences in value orientations incorporates the social pressures facing young girls in today’s society, arguing that as women they are socialized to be in charge of all the caring functions within society and therefore they develop a
rationality of responsibility, while the rationality of men becomes technically and economically oriented (Lidestav and Ekström 2000). Another potential explanation involves the difference in careers women and men are choosing. Because of the divergent job paths men and women are taking they are gaining contradictory experiences and developing different beliefs (Tarrant and Cordell 2002). In terms of the respondents, I feel that the second explanation is more relevant since very few of the female participants are directly involved in the forestry industry and therefore, the women on the advisory committees are more likely to hold values that are different in nature than the majority of the male participants who were mostly involved with the forestry industry in some direct or indirect way. It would not be surprising then for someone who is involved in the forestry industry and who relies on resources from the forest for their source of revenue, as is the case for a large number of the male committee members, to hold a utilitarian value toward the forest. Nonetheless, whatever the reason for women to possess differing forest values than men, the data showed that female and male members are distinctive players in the forest management advisory committee process.

However, some respondents did point out that gender is not the only characteristic affecting what forest values are held by people. One respondent felt that an individual’s life experiences (an overall broader concept that includes gender) would have a greater amount of influence on the orientation of forest values held rather than just simply the narrow characteristic of gender. As the respondent said,

_I don’t think it’s always so much of a gender thing because it can be a class thing or an education thing or an experience thing or sometimes even a training thing_ (Respondent #13).

Another interesting idea suggested by a respondent involved the idea of role playing; the respondent thought that each committee member holds a wide range of forest values and
expresses each specific value depending on the topic of the discussion at the meeting or based upon what ideas the other members are contributing. If this idea is true, than it is possible that people can input other values into the discussions at committee meetings whether they actually hold the value or not. In addition, many respondents pointed out that even though they did not personally hold certain forest values, it did not always mean they dismissed the other values or ignored them. However, when participants were asked whether other members were raising the views and values of women at the table when they were not present at committee meetings, no examples were provided. As two of the respondents explained,

Because of the low numbers of women participating on the committee, we can’t know what their views and opinions are, and if we don’t know that then how can we know if they’re being considered while women are underrepresented (Respondent #7).

Depends on how loud their wives’ voices are in the back of their heads. The concerns of women may be being voiced at meetings because they happen to have similar concerns with a man, but whether that female perspective on how to address an issue is being brought to the table, I would be highly doubtful (Respondent #16).

5.3 Attitudes about forest management

It is highly probable that any individual holding biocentric forest values would also support the sustainable forest management paradigm (McFarlane and Boxall 2000). The respected elements of sustainable forest management include considering nontimber uses, employing harvest methods that are alternatives to clear cutting, promoting biodiversity, supplying protection for endangered species, and providing input from the public into forest management decisions (Shindler et al. 2003). Previous research on the subject of forest management has shown that in general men more often support pro-economic attitudes while women are more likely to advocate stronger pro-environmental positions (Mohai 1992; Davidson and Freudenburg 1996). Women are much more likely than men to have the attitude that the
forest is an integral part of the total ecosystem and subsequently believe that any damage to the forest will have a direct impact on the quality of their life. Many of the respondents felt that the female members bring to the forest management advisory committees a set of skills and attitudes that is very different from those of the male members, including a good ability to communicate, to work in teams, to resolve conflicts and to tackle problems in innovative and unconventional ways. In addition, many agreed that women bring a different attitude and approach to the topic of forest management on these advisory committees. In general the attitude women have about and the approach women take toward forest management was frequently described by the respondents as a good deal “softer” than a man’s and much more holistic.

*Women take a softer approach towards forest management; it’s not as aggressive and unpleasant in terms of getting the job done. They tend to pay more attention to the details and I think that they are the ones asking the forest companies a lot of the tough questions (Respondent #7).*

*I think generally speaking women’s contributions to forest management would have a much more holistic eye (Respondent #9).*

*...women have a softer approach to issues I find, they’re not as blunt and hard in their mannerisms, and whether it’s fair or not their life experiences are much different than a man’s, and when you’re talking forest management, especially the CSA indicators, you’re talking about a lot of “touchy feely” sort of things and men are not good when it comes to that sort of stuff (Respondent #11).*

*With men a lot of the approach is business, money, business, money, business, money but when you add a woman to the mix it becomes business, money, caring, business, money, caring and I’m not saying that men don’t care, but that’s my perception of adding a woman to the mix and I especially think women have a different perspective on how we should be managing our forests (Respondent #16).*

Participants were asked if other members were still raising women’s attitudes about forest management during discussions at committee meetings when women themselves were not present. In terms of whether women’s attitudes about forest management are represented at the table, one of the female respondents was certain that the attitudes of women were not being
included in discussions at committee meetings if female members were not present at meetings. However, she was confident that over time, assuming the male members were continuously exposed to women’s attitudes about forest management, the men would eventually begin to effortlessly incorporate the views of women in the advisory committee process, even if women were not actively participating on the committee at the time.

...sometimes your view is not considered if you’re not that there, if men are not looking at you they may not consider it, but even by you being there and them taking in your perspective over a period of time, men will start to change the way they approach forest management (Respondent #1).

Many of the female respondents felt that women bring different skills to the discussions at committee meetings, which sometimes results in a completely changed atmosphere. As well, as indicated above many of the female respondents hold different attitudes about forest management than most of the male respondents, so ensuring that women are active members on advisory committees makes certain that alternative perspectives are being presented and considered when making decisions about forest management policy.

5.4 Bias in learning outcomes

Like McGurk (2003), I also found that two main themes emerged from my data regarding what members had learned from their participation on their specific forest management advisory committee. The first area of learning was concerned with the forest management and planning activities of the company, which is related to instrumental learning. The second area of learning was connected to the perspectives, concerns, values and local knowledge of committee members, which is related to communicative learning. Contrasting learning between the two genders reveals the focus of the learning outcomes in these two broad areas.
5.4.1 Instrumental learning outcomes

Instrumental learning provides expertise in coping with the external world through improved technical understanding and focuses on improving performance through task-oriented problem solving (Mezirow 1995; Sinclair et al. 2007). All of the female respondents had commented that they had gathered ample information about the forestry industry, the forest management process and the practices of the applicable forest products company. Many of the female respondents commented on how surprised they were at the number of regulations the companies had to follow and the extent of planning the companies must complete before harvesting. The following comments illustrate the topics the female respondents learned about in regards to forest management and planning:

*What I have learned about is the processes that they need to undertake in order to get their licencing from the province, that they need to produce their plans, that they need to talk about the research they are doing, the types of equipment they are using, the sustainability of what they’re trying to do, but I think that’s the basic message [the company] is trying to educate everyone about (Respondent #1).*

*I think I’ve learned a lot more about [the company]’s needs and the pressures on them from all different aspects of civil society to share the resource that they’ve been leased to manage and I am shocked at how much legislation they actually have to follow, it must be stressful for them (Respondent #10).*

*It would be too overwhelming to starting listing everything I learned; we always had presentations from all different aspects and on all different perspectives of the forestry industry. I was pleasantly surprised to learn that forestry companies actually do care about the environment (Respondent #16).*

In conjunction with the responses from the female participants, male respondents had learned a great deal about the forestry industry, forest management processes and the practices of the forest products company from the information provided at committee meetings. Also like the female respondents, many of the male respondents were shocked with the number of regulations
imposed on the forestry companies in terms of their management strategies. Many of the male respondents also commented on learning about the certification processes both of the companies had undergone, and how they enjoyed being a part of that process. The following comments illustrate the topics learned about by the male respondents relating to forest management and planning:

*I guess a lot of what I have learned has to do with the ways that the company functions, and their efforts to become a better corporate citizen through FML certification and operations certification through FSC. The other thing that is fairly interesting in regards to the learning concept is the detail that is required of [the company] in their forest management planning (Respondent #6).*

*I have learned a lot, when you sit down and have to go through a 167 page, 100 year forest sustainability plan, you have to learn what the boreal forest is, the difference between tolerant and intolerant, and extensive forestry, and so it’s been a lot of learning the terminology (Respondent #12).*

*I guess I have a much better understanding now of sustainable forestry and I actually learned quite a bit about the Boreal forest that I didn’t know previously. I learned quite a bit about the disturbance regimes and forest fire patterns, return rates and all that kind of stuff they incorporate into their management plans (Respondent #1).*

*I’ve learned a lot, it’s far more involved that I ever expected as far as the responsibilities that [the company] aspire to, and the requirements set by the province also. I had heard ads about [the company] and that they’re socially responsible and that they’ve very caring about the environment, well now I’ve seen it firsthand and they really do take all aspects of the process seriously, from the business aspect to the various types and levels of input (Respondent #3).*

*Well I’ve learned lots of different things, some of the procedures of certification, I think [the company] has gone through three certifying bodies now, so that’s been a very interesting process to be involved with. Also, the role that conservation is playing in terms of defining the woodlands operations and long-term forest plan was something that really surprised me. The other thing was the incredible power that information technology possesses and some of the mapping software they are using was something very revealing to me (Respondent #9).*
In addition to the instrumental learning outcomes discussed previously, respondents also learned about both the forest management advisory committee process and public participation in general. Learning about the participatory process is also an important instrumental learning outcome because it focuses on improving effectiveness with the process (Parkins 2002; McGurk et al. 2006). The comments below exemplify the learning outcomes of respondents in relation to public participation and the advisory committee process:

I think I have learned that the day to day functions of the committee such as the facilitation of meetings is best handled by a third party, and I think that was evident right from the inception of the committee (Respondent #7).

I’ve learned a lot about public involvement itself and how different people interact with each other depending on their values and what their platform is when they come in to a meeting like that (Respondent #8).

The other thing I learned is that it’s not a good idea to have the proponent as the facilitator on the committee, it made a lot of difference to the committee to have an external facilitator and to let the proponent be there as participant dealing with the proponent’s issues and perspectives rather than trying to manage the activities of the process (Respondent #4).

This type of learning was also observed in the study of forest management advisory committees done by McGurk et al. (2006). These instrumental learning outcomes, such as learning to dialogue and problem solve in a group, are an important on-ramp to successful project implementation and to communicative learning outcomes (Sims and Sinclair 2008).

5.4.2 Communicative learning outcomes

Communicative learning emphasizes learning for interpersonal understanding and involves constructing meaning through communication of values, intentions, feelings, and concerns (Mezirow 1995; Sinclair et al. 2007). Almost all of the female respondents also commented that they had learned from the values, concerns, perspectives and knowledge presented by other members at the committee meetings. They felt that learning from other
committee members was an important component of the advisory committee process. The following comments illustrate what the female respondents learned about the opinions and concerns of others:

The greatest thing about the forest advisory committee that I found and learned from was that we had all the different perspectives: there was youth there, there was a biologist there, there was a pulp harvester there, economic development was there, there was a forest education professional there, and the woodlands team that managed the woodlands was there (Respondent #16).

I have also learned some things from my co-participants, and there’s always that during public participation, it’s a by-product I guess you’d call it, but you get to meet different people from different areas, some people I knew already but some people I didn’t and some people are in different areas and pursuits so it’s been good to interact with them, and vice versa (Respondent #22).

As far as being on the committee, with the large variety of interests and concerns from the other participants, it has been a real eye opener, I have learned a lot from the different perspectives around the table (Respondent #1).

As one female respondent summarized, “the perspectives and concerns contributed by the other members add an extra element to the discussions at committee meetings” (Respondent #22).

However, unlike the female respondents, when male respondents were asked whether they learned from the concerns, opinions and perspectives of the other committee members, many felt that “generally it’s the information given by [the company], rather than the information presented by other individuals that is changing perceptions” (Respondent #2). The following comments reflect what the male respondents learned from the opinions and concerns presented by the other committee members:

I think that trying to look at another person’s point of view is not easy; it is very easy to be so set in your ways that you don’t care what other people are thinking, and I think that happens with the members of the committee sometimes (Respondent #11).
I have known people in the past who have done the same jobs, like for example foresters, and I know why they feel the way they do, so most of what the members are saying at meetings isn’t new to me (Respondent #18).

Well hearing from the other committee members has been part of the experience but mostly what is has reinforced for me is that the differences in values are not that profound and it’s more the role of perspective and your niche in life that affects how someone addresses things (Respondent #5).

I have suspected that the other members haven’t appreciated my opinion from time to time but I didn’t lose any sleep over it. In fact, I think there were a couple of times where someone else had said something that I thought was pretty juvenile and inappropriate (Respondent #9).

Only one male respondent acknowledged learning from the concerns and opinions of the other members. “My knowledge has grown in regards to different people and different aspects of the industry, especially regarding the contractors and what they have to do and the way the business is conducted in the woods and all that sort of stuff” (Respondent #14). The data, as exemplified in the comments above, indicated that men gained the most knowledge in relation to the forest management and planning practices of the forest products companies. In other words, the male respondents only experienced instrumental learning outcomes.

5.4.3 Transformative learning outcomes

As discussed earlier, the data from this research revealed that all respondents had experienced instrumental learning in some form. Examples of instrumental outcomes include learning about the legislation affecting forest management, the forest management licencing processes, the terminology and equipment related to the forestry industry, the sustainable forest management certification bodies, and the forest management advisory committee process. Many of the respondents commented they were skeptical about the activities of the company sponsors when first joining the advisory committees. However, by learning about the different aspects
involved in forest management and planning, respondents now had an appreciation for the complexity involved in the forest management planning of the sponsors and a better understanding of the regulatory controls that govern the activities. As mentioned earlier, the reason many respondents were participating on the forest management advisory committees was to learn from the forest products companies about the forestry activities occurring on the local landscape.

As the literature suggests, one of the benefits of employing the advisory committee process is to facilitate learning about and from other participants, otherwise known as communicative learning (Jabbour and Balsillie 2003; McGurk et al. 2006). The main involvement technique utilized to facilitate learning about other members on the two forest management advisory committees was round table discussions. For those respondents, mostly the women, benefiting from communicative learning outcomes, the result was an improvement in understanding about other members’ interests and concerns, and for some even a realization that their individual goals and values were not necessarily incompatible with the rest of the group. A few of the respondents commented that communicative learning is a harder task to accomplish on forest management advisory committees. They speculated that the reason for this is due mainly to the fact that people first come to committee meetings expecting to be educated about the forestry industry and the forest management practices of the relevant company, so they are open to instrumental learning. However, the respondents felt that as the advisory committee progresses the learning outcomes of the members evolve once members have had sufficient time to get to know the other committee members on a more personal level.

*These advisory committees have brought people from all different view points to the table, and as time goes on you get to know the other members and you find more respect for each other’s comments and eventually you begin to learn something from them (Respondent #6).*
Transformative learning occurs when individuals improve their instrumental and communicative competence and develop more functional frames of reference (Mezirow 1995; Sinclair and Diduck 2001). In other words, the instrumental or communicative learning outcomes experienced by an individual induce a shift in their values, attitudes or behaviour. None of the male respondents reported a substantial change in their forest values or their attitudes about forest management because the male respondents experienced very little communicative learning. One of the female respondents did report a change in her forest values, which demonstrates the only transformative learning outcome reported by the respondents. The committee had gone on a tour of one of the contractor’s operations and the female respondent commented she had learned how sophisticated some of the equipment was, the skill set required by an individual to run some of the things and the capital investment needed to start a similar operation. After the experience, the female respondent felt her opinion of both the contractor and the operations had greatly changed, and her attitudes about forest management on private woodlots had shifted. The lack of communicative and transformative learning outcomes revealed by the data is most likely due to the three common reasons cited in the literature, lack of diversity, too much information out from the proponent, and little resulting discussion (Marschke and Sinclair 2007, Sims and Sinclair 2007).

An interesting thought offered by a respondent, based on her own personal observations at committee meetings, was that women who had been participating on the advisory committee for a longer period of time were likely to change their views so that they were more aligned with the opinions and perspectives of the male committee members; in other words the majority will of the committee. This is most likely a demonstration of a negative transformative learning
outcome. However, it is also a possibility that the few female members attending committee meetings are eventually influenced by the power of the male majority. As the respondent stated, 

*Once women do participate on the committee for a while then their views become similar to the views of the male members so I don’t think learning has anything to do with being male versus being female. The ability to learn is more about the opportunity to be a member on the committee, to participate in discussions at meetings, and to become educated on the relevant issues and as is evident by the membership on the committee, women do not have the same opportunity to learn as men [because they are not participating on the committees] (Respondent #1).*

Other researchers have noted a similar phenomenon, although not with the consideration of gender. One of the disadvantages with advisory committees noted in the literature has to do with members shifting their interests and becoming unrepresentative of their constituents. This happens when committee members have been exposed to other ideas and have become well educated on the issues of the sponsor (Lynn and Busenburg 1995; Smith 2001).

### 5.5 Committee obstacles to learning

The data revealed three main obstacles thought by the respondents to be getting in the way of learning within the forest management advisory committee process. First, there was a lack of diversity of values represented on the committees, in part because of the underrepresentation of women. Women, youth, and First Nations were the three stakeholder groups commonly mentioned by respondents as not being adequately represented on the two committees, as summarized by the quotes below.

*The committee is certainly not representative of women, and it’s certainly not representative of First Nations, and the committee is missing out on the perspective of youth, so I would say those are the affected groups not currently represented on the committee (Respondent #19).*

*The committee is mostly, but not quite, representative of all interested and potentially affected individuals or groups. To date, we’ve had little to no First Nations representation, and tourism is for some reason another sector we have not been able
to keep somebody from and obviously we don’t have a youth representative, and another one I will say is women, it is still very much a male dominated committee, and older men like myself (Respondent #14).

Second, the type of concerns and perspectives presented at committee meetings was directly related to which members chose to speak at meetings and participate in discussions. There were a few respondents who mentioned that the members asking questions at meetings tended to be predominantly men.

*I find that sometimes men have an easier time saying “I don’t know what’s going on” whereas sometimes I find women will just sit there when they are not understanding something and will not say anything at all, instead of speaking up and saying “I want to know more about this” (Respondent #20)."

*As a man I’m not afraid to ask because I know that’s how you learn and get up to speed on an issue and I never felt like I was chided or looked down upon by other members because I asked a question, but I don’t know if a woman would also be comfortable doing that (Respondent #23)."

An observation made by a number of the male respondents was that the existing size for both of the advisory committees was sufficient and membership should not be increased. The reason constantly mentioned by respondents to justify this was that it becomes progressively more and more challenging to put forward personal ideas into the discussions at the meetings as the size of the advisory committee continues to grow. These same respondents also felt that small groups are much more effective at getting business accomplished and that the majority of people are more comfortable presenting their opinions and concerns in front of a smaller number of peers.

*I would say the committee is at an adequate size; you don’t want this huge group because that’s when you get conflicts because this guy over here isn’t getting his 2 cents worth (Respondent #18)."

*A committee can take on a life of its own if it becomes too big, so you want enough people to discuss the issues but not enough people that is becomes unmanageable; you don’t want it too small so that you have a clique but you don’t want it too large so balancing the size of the committee with the ability to get the work done is extremely important.*
These same respondents wondered if the larger size of the committees was perhaps discouraging to women, and could possibly help to explain why women members do not always contribute and participate at committee meetings. In addition, a few respondents also mentioned that the majority of information being disseminated at meetings is from the forest company, and that not enough discussion and debate was occurring amongst the committee members. This observation has been found in other studies on forest management advisory committees (McGurk et al. 2006). Two of the respondents had this to say about the level of participation occurring on the advisory committee:

For the most part, the members are interested in a fairly limited amount of, shall we say, face time and I find that to be interesting because I had expected that they might have wanted to hold more of an engagement role than has actually been the case so far (Respondent #4).

I don’t find that there has been enough interaction amongst the committee members in a couple of the meetings in the last two years, I don’t know why but it seems like members have more of a ‘listen to what we’re being told and then ask a few polite questions of the company’ attitude now. This is much different from when the committee was first established, there were a few environmental groups that were represented that were asking some tough questions and were putting the company on the spot. I think we need more active participation on the part of the members (Respondent #7).

Without discussion amongst committee members, the interests, values and concerns of the individual committee members would not be exposed to the group. As one respondent summarized, “they are not getting the substantial value out of the dialogue and discussion that they should be, the committee members are missing out on learning what’s going on with the other members” (Respondent #4).

Third, the data showed that the manner in which committee meetings are facilitated influences how members are learning and what they learn. As mentioned earlier, during the interviews some of the respondents on Tembec’s committee articulated that the switch to an
independent facilitator had made a significant improvement in how meetings were run. The NewPage committee had opted when it was established to elect one of the committee members as the chair, and respondents felt this had resulted in successful facilitation of meetings. A study on forest management advisory committees concluded that not having a neutral individual facilitating the meetings limited the success of the process (Jabbour and Balsillie 2003).

Another idea mentioned by respondents that is an obstacle to learning has to do with the fact that many individuals are not utilizing the opportunity of the forest management advisory committees to become educated about forestry and forest management issues. Many respondents felt that since the majority of women are not participating on the stakeholder groups within the resource sector and therefore do not have the opportunity to participate on forest management advisory committees, their current opinions about forest management are uninformed. Therefore, the perceptions of women about the forest products companies and their forest management activities may be incorrect. Interestingly enough, one of the male respondents revealed that many of the real negative attacks against the forest company in his area had been launched by women and he really did not understand why that was, especially since he saw no women participating on the same committee as him. Because of this he felt that these women were not necessarily educating themselves about forest management issues adequately. This idea that women were not utilizing the opportunities to fully educate themselves on forest management issues was echoed by a few of the other respondents.

*I find that when women aren’t involved, they aren’t aware or aren’t educated [about forest management] and they tend to be more negative whereas if they get involved [with the advisory committee] and see what it’s about they will develop informed opinions that are more constructive (Respondent #23).*

*I think most of the very negative attention some of these women pay towards [the company] is mainly out of what I like to call sheer ignorance, it’s just a lack of having the facts (Respondent #3).*
There are a lot of women out there that don’t have an opportunity to access all this information presented at committee meetings or to go on a tour and obtain that type of hands-on information that is so valuable in forming an opinion (Respondent #1).

Poorly informed people are making lifestyle choices based on the lack of information or carrying anti-messages without being fully informed on the issues. I find it very interesting how often the [local newspaper] carries the environmentalist opinion, you know ban the clear cut and ban the logger; yet they seem to have forgotten what their media is printed on and where it is coming from (Respondent #6).

The National Survey on Forest Management Advisory Committees found that respondents ranked the media as the least accurate source of information and it was mentioned as one of the least accessed sources of information regarding forest management issues (Parkins et al. 2006). However, one of the male respondents felt that in the society of today, which is dominated to a great extent by urban values, women would be more prone to accept the images presented by the media about forestry and forest management, and this he blamed on the fact that women are, on average, more emotional than men.

I would think that women are probably a little more susceptible to propaganda, advertising, media or whatever word you want to insert in there, than what most men are, although there are exceptions in both directions. The emotions of a woman can be influenced easier by the propaganda about forest management (Respondent #6).

In conjunction with the suggestion of media, other respondents put forward the idea that women who are not participating in the forest management advisory committee process perhaps are being prejudiced by the opinions of someone else, most likely a spouse or another important male influence that is involved with the forestry industry.

Perhaps the women that aren’t attending committee meetings are being influenced by someone else’s opinion, for example their husband’s, because they’re not there to gather the necessary information for themselves and make a decision on their own (Respondent #1).
To thwart the misconceived perceptions of women a respondent suggested recruiting women from the local communities in the licensed forest management areas to at least participate on one of the tours that each forest management advisory committee holds annually.

On the annual tours that the committee puts on, I would at the very least certainly like to see more women come out, just so they can get an idea of what’s out in the bush, because I often wonder how someone can form an opinion on an issue if that person has never seen it first-hand (Respondent #23).

The respondent felt this would at the very least expose women that are affected by the local forestry to the fact that there is an advisory committee dealing with the issues surrounding forest management and would also provide the women who participate on the tour with an opportunity to educate themselves on what these issues are. The respondent also suggested it may end up being an effective incentive that facilitates more women joining these forest management advisory committees.

5.6 Summary

Learning should be occurring continuously throughout a meaningful public participatory process; learning is also considered to be an outcome of effective public participation (Clover 1995; Sinclair and Diduck 2001; Fitzpatrick and Sinclair 2003; Keen et al. 2005; Sinclair et al. 2007). Like other studies conducted on forest management advisory committees (Parkins 2002; McGurk et al. 2006), this research showed that learning is occurring on forest management advisory committees at the instrumental and communicative level. Both levels of learning are important components of transformative learning (Mezirow 1995; Sinclair et al. 2007), which was the type of learning considered in this research. Female respondents acknowledged that their perceptions were being altered by the concerns, values and interest of other members, so they were experiencing communicative learning outcomes. In contrast, the male respondents felt
that their perceptions were only being altered by the information provided by the forest products companies regarding forestry issues and forest management practices; therefore, the male respondents were only experiencing instrumental learning outcomes. Only one transformative learning outcome was observed; the lack of transformative learning is a common observation in studies concerned with learning (e.g. Marschke and Sinclair 2007; Sims and Sinclair 2008).

Three obstacles observed on the two forest management advisory committees were affecting learning outcomes; these included the lack in diversity of values mainly due to the underrepresentation of women, the members choosing to participate in and contribute to discussions at meetings, and the facilitation process being made use of at meetings.

Forest values and attitudes about forest management play a significant role in learning on forest management advisory committees. As is consistent with the results from previous studies on forest management advisory committees (Parkins et al. 2006; Reed and Varghese 2007), this research showed that female and male participants in the forest management advisory committee process held different forest values. The female participants tended to exhibit more biocentric forest values, whereas the male participants tended to exhibit more anthropocentric values. The incorporation of the varying forest values and attitudes toward forest management held by men and women into the forest committee process would enrich the learning outcomes being experienced by committee members. None of the respondents reported a change in their forest values, attitudes about forest management or behaviours as a result of their participation with the forest management advisory committee process. This lack of a shift in values and attitudes is a direct result of the minimal communicative learning outcomes being experienced by participants.
Chapter 6: Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Overview

This research centred on assessing from a gendered perspective the effectiveness of participation in the forest management advisory committee process in Canada. The specific research objectives of the study were:

1. Determine key reasons why women are underrepresented on forest advisory committees.
2. Consider whether levels of satisfaction with the current advisory committee process vary according to gender.
3. Explore if the learning outcomes of advisory committees differ by gender.
4. Develop recommendations to increase the involvement of women in the advisory committee process to enhance the learning outcomes of such processes.

The objectives were addressed through the research process using a case study approach involving two forest management advisory committees including several data collection techniques such as document review (literature review and reviewing meeting minutes for both committees), participant observation, and semi-structured interviews.

In this final chapter I return to these objectives and draw conclusions that have come out of the analysis, and identify the implications and recommendations derived from this research.

6.2 Key reasons for underrepresentation of women

Women are underrepresented on the two forest management advisory committees used as case studies in this research. The Tembec committee only had one woman actively participating out of the total 35 members and the NewPage committee had five women members of the total 23 members, two actively participating and three inconsistently participating in the role of alternate. Many constraints influencing the participation of women on forest management
advisory committees were found in this study. These included the male dominated nature of the forestry industry and resource use sectors, personal interest, awareness and opportunity, and personal constraints. In addition, the constraints thought to be affecting women’s participation in discussions at committee meetings included comfort levels, education and experience, the lack of other women at committee meetings, degree of influence, personality, and sexist attitudes. Addressing why women are underrepresented on forest management advisory committees is not easy nor is it straightforward, but rather it is likely a combination of at least some or more probably all of the aforementioned constraints. The male dominated nature of the forestry industry and resources sectors is a constraint that has played a large role in the continued underrepresentation of women (Reed 2003). Disregarding the issue of gender representation in the forest management advisory committee process has ignored the differences in the roles of the two genders as well as the differences in their values, concerns and interests. It is possible that the committees currently do not know what they are missing out on due to the underrepresentation of women, but if more women were participating on the committees the current members might notice different values and different perspectives being brought to the discussions.

6.3 Gendered levels of satisfaction

The female and male respondents were in general agreement in their satisfaction that the committees were structured efficiently and that the advisory committee process is an effective method of providing input to the forest products companies. There was, however, an observable difference concerning the underrepresentation of women. The male respondents were satisfied with the current female representation situation and felt the low numbers of women members did not have a negative effect on the process. In contrast, the female respondents felt the
underrepresentation of women was a flaw in the forest management advisory committee process and should be addressed. These women felt there needed to be more women represented on the committee for it to be truly successful.

6.4 Learning outcomes and gender bias

This research found that the majority of female respondents held different forest values than the male respondents; the female respondents tended to exhibit more biocentric forest values, whereas the male respondents tended to exhibit more anthropocentric values. This observation is consistent with results from previous studies (Parkins et al. 2006; Reed and Varghese 2007). These values, as well as the attitudes of the respondents toward forest management, are important components of transformative learning, a process that has been found to be occurring on forest management advisory committees at both the instrumental and communicative levels (Parkins 2002; McGurk et al. 2006). Learning was occurring on the two committees used in this research. All respondents reported experienced instrumental learning outcomes such as learning about the legislation affecting forest management, the forest management licencing processes, the terminology and equipment related to the forestry industry, the sustainable forest management certification bodies, and the forest management advisory committee process. Communicative learning outcomes were experienced less frequently, likely due to the lack of opportunities for discussion at committee meetings. The male respondents tended not to experience communicative learning, whereas the female respondents did report experiencing communicative learning outcomes. There was a lack of diversity of values being presented at committee meetings due to the underrepresentation of women and other stakeholder groups, in addition to the fact that most members participating in discussions at meetings are male, restricted the learning outcomes experienced by the committee members. One respondent
demonstrated experiencing a transformative learning outcome, because only this respondent had reported a change in their values and attitudes as a result of their experienced instrumental and/or communicative learning outcomes. For these reasons, in addition to the evidence that women possess different values and attitudes about and approaches to forest management, steps should be taken to increase the amount of women participating on forest management advisory committees in order to enrich the learning outcomes being experienced by all committee members.

6.5 Recommendations

The findings of this research point to a number of recommendations regarding an increase in female representation, as well as specific recommendations for the forest management advisory committees.

1. Involve more women in planning and decision-making processes related to the forestry sector through increasing their participation on forest management advisory committees.

Unfortunately, unless the committee acknowledges that the underrepresentation of women is a flaw within the advisory committee process and makes it a resolution of the committee to increase female participation, an increase in women members is most likely not going to happen. Assessing the list of selected groups represented on these advisory committees and potentially adding new stakeholder groups that are likely to get more women participating could address the underrepresentation of women. Instead of trying to replace current members on the committee with more females, adding a few more seats to the membership of the advisory committee and choosing groups that come into contact with sectors of society which demographically would have more women in it may help to increase the representation of women on forest management advisory committees. For example,
...with the initiatives for better living maybe a medical doctor might be appropriate, I know they’re very busy but forestry does have some feedback towards human health and I know it’s a bit of a stretch but even asking a nurse practitioner or somebody in the health field to join to increase female representation (Respondent #19).

Also, the proponents of the forest management advisory committees could generate more awareness within the affected communities and stakeholder groups about the function and activities of the committee and the benefits of participating by advertising in the right forums that target women. This may create the opportunity for interested women to participate and by displaying a comfortable, respectful environment at committee meetings to potential members it may encourage other women in the general public to become involved. The increase in representation of women on forest management advisory committees may also increase the level of satisfaction by current female members.

An interesting topic that was repeatedly mentioned by many of the respondents in regards to increasing female participation on forest management advisory committees involved targeting youth to become involved. Many respondents felt that an increase in female participation on the committees was not going to come from older women, but rather from the younger generations; if the committees could get more of the younger population actively participating than by default the number of women members would also increase. Many of the respondents felt that by showing young girls that the forestry industry is not a male dominated environment and by giving them a chance to hear about opportunities for their employment would increase their interest in becoming involved within the industry and ultimately on forest management advisory committees. Many respondents suggested that the best way for the advisory committees to do this would be to hold tours directed at including local youths and through these tours show them the diverse aspects within forestry as well as the numerous technological refinements within the industry. As one respondent eloquently summarized,
...the idea of asking school groups or youth groups to join in on the annual tours or other additional tours could be a very effective way of raising awareness about the forestry industry and the committee with youth, especially the young women. I think another way this issue of increasing youth participation could be looked at is whether [the company] could create a youth community somehow by sponsoring clubs or some kind of a youth involvement endeavour, and I’m sure ideas could be brought up quickly by the committee on it, but I think it could be a good thing to do. It is also something that could be taken one step further to involve either the other industries or forms of employment related to the resource sector in the region, and it would be a way to keep people up there and interested in the various types of employment and how they’re community related. It would almost be like a local business interest group for youth and I think [the company] could partner with the local health authority and they could partner with some of the other groups to explore the jobs that both girls and guys could look towards, everything from guiding to eco-tourism. It would create interest and show people what [the company] is doing but it would also go one step further with natural resources and other groups that could create more awareness and interest with the youth (Respondent #3).

2. Further enhance the forest management advisory committee process through an improved handling of committee meetings.

The forest product companies could hold specific community meetings where both employees of the company and current committee members discuss with local residents the forest management issues directly affecting themselves and their community, as opposed to the current open house structure used by forest product companies to engage the broader public. The discussion of concerns directly faced by the local communities could help to encourage interest within the women who are already involved in community matters and may provide the incentive needed for them to join the forest management advisory committee.

Considering alternative times to hold the committee meetings may help both current and potential members attend meetings more frequently. Many of the female respondents commented that conducting committee meetings during the evening on a weeknight is not the most convenient time due to family responsibilities. However, scheduling meetings for a time
during the weekend, such as a Saturday morning, may help those members juggling family tasks and work more available to attend committee meetings.

A possible solution to alleviate some of the stress associated with the long drive to attend committee meetings is to rotate the location of the committee meetings throughout the communities participating on the committee, so that for all the members sometimes the drive is longer and sometimes it is shorter. In addition, carpooling is currently happening on both of the advisory committees, but is generally left to the members to arrange; the proponents could help facilitate carpools so that those members anxious about driving or relying on public transit would still have the option to attend committee meetings.

Also, when addressing the common issue of new members feeling overwhelmed by the learning curve when first joining the advisory committee, members at the NewPage meeting I attended suggested putting together a package of background information that specifically deals with forest management issues directly related to their personal sector of interest, rather than giving each new member all of the background information. Respondents thought that this may help any new committee members, especially women, from feeling overwhelmed with all the new information and assist them to feel comfortable with their understanding of the issues. However, as McGurk (2004) points out, whether the innovative information packages in addition to the original background material is read by new committee members will depend solely on the amount of time each member is willing to personally invest in prepping for meetings, which is almost entirely related to their personal interest in the topics being discussed.
3. Further enhance the forest management advisory committee process by including an objective for learning.

Both instrumental and communicative learning should be recognized as a potential outcome of the forest management advisory committee process. A greater emphasis on learning could encourage the committee members to look beyond what they already know. By acknowledging learning as an outcome for the forest management advisory committee process, a message would be sent to members that there is an expectation that all participants will engage in learning as part of the membership on the committee. The method of facilitation at committee meetings is critical to learning outcomes; it should be performed by a neutral, independent third-party and not be someone who has a stake in the outcome of decisions made, such as the proponent or a committee member. Active discussion should be encouraged of the committee members at meetings rather than the current situation of mostly a one-way flow of information out from the forest products companies. The engagement of committee members and promotion of active discussions would enhance the learning outcomes experienced by participants, especially by increasing the communicative learning outcomes.

6.6 Significance of the study

This research is one of very few studies that had considered the role of gender within natural resources management planning and decision-making processes in Canada. The results of this study will have benefits that exceed far beyond the recommendations provided for the two forest management advisory committees. In terms of both ecofeminism and feminist political ecology, this study is another example of research conducted through the lens of gender analysis. The results regarding value and attitude differences between the male and female respondents is a step towards answering why women seem to demonstrate more concern for the environment
than men. The gendered roles and experiences of women cause them to be different players than their male counterparts in the forest management advisory committee process, and therefore, power relationships strongly play a role in planning and decision-making outcomes. Using the results of this study will help to provide a platform for a more fruitful engagement of women on forest management advisory committees, which is the ultimate goal of feminist political ecology.

Also, the results build upon existing studies on both public participation and the advisory committee process because it analyzed the concept of gender within a participatory process from the perspectives of the participants. Based on the results, such as the male and female respondents possessing different values and attitudes about forests and forest management, gender ratio should be included on the list of criteria (e.g. Conley and Moote 2003) to be used as an evaluation tool for effective public participation. As suggested by Claringbould and Knoppers (2008), a balanced committee is one where the gender ratio lies between 40 and 60% so that neither gender is a minority within the organizational structure of the committee. The findings also add a new element to the current literature about learning that occurs during public participation activities. Based on the results, such as the difference in learning outcomes between female and male participants, gender ratio is an idea that should be considered when learning outcomes are an objective of the participatory process.

6.7 Limitations of the study

This thesis only provides a glimpse of the actual situation of female representation and gendered learning outcomes on forest management advisory committees in Canada. The national survey (Parkins et al. 2006) identified at least 196 active forest management advisory committees across Canada, and this research only studied two of them. Through my work as the secretary for the Tembec committee I had built a rapport with many of the members; however,
the same relationship was not present with the members of the NewPage committee because I only attended one meeting before conducting the interviews with the participants. This lack of trust between the members of the NewPage committee and me might have had an influence on the responses given by the participants. In addition, since the topic of the research was gender, the male respondents may not have been completely comfortable discussing some of the topics with a female interviewer and due to this may have held back in their responses. The respondents were promised confidentiality; however, the data may be influenced by social popularity and those interviewed may not have wanted to risk negative publicity and may have denied or minimized gender differences. Both advisory committees had a large number of members and time constraints did not allow me to interview them all, therefore research findings only reflect the perspectives and experiences of a segment of the committee members. However, triangulation activities were used to verify the results and to provide a wider breadth in the research findings.

6.8 Future research

A suggestion provided by a respondent for further research connected with the topic of underrepresentation of women on forest management advisory committees related to researching NGOs or community groups that have strong female participation. Through this type of study, the researcher could observe what is facilitating, encouraging or motivating the strong participation of women and compare it to the forest management advisory committee process. Ideally, the results from this research would provide differences between the two types of organizations and could ultimately identify what is absent from the forest management advisory committee process that is promoting high proportions of female activity in other participatory forums.
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Appendix 1
Consent Form

This consent form, a copy of which will be left for you, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Dear participant,

My name is Kristyn Richardson, and I am a graduate student at the Natural Resources Institute (NRI), University of Manitoba.

The purpose of the study is to assess the effectiveness of participation in the advisory committee process from a gendered perspective. The specific objectives of the study are to: 1) determine key reasons why women are underrepresented on forest advisory committees; 2) consider gendered levels of satisfaction with the current advisory committee process; 3) explore gender bias in the learning outcomes of advisory committees; and 4) develop recommendations to increase the involvement of women in the advisory committee process to enhance the learning outcomes of such processes.

Stakeholder advisory committees are an important component of public participation in forest management; therefore, there is a lot to be learned from these advisory committees. This in-depth research will aid in determining which explanation, if any, is causing the low number of women members in the forest management advisory committee process. The main benefit of this research is to improve the effectiveness of the advisory committee process by developing recommendations that will increase the involvement of women in order to enhance the learning outcomes of such processes. Minimal risk is anticipated.

The interview should take approximately one hour and will be tape recorded only with your permission. Your responses will be held in strict confidence and the results of this study will be reported with no reference to specific participants. Your mailing address will only be requested if you wish to receive the summary of research findings. No compensation will be provided for participating in this research.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. You are free to end the interview at any time, and/or refrain from answering individual questions. As well, the recording device may be turned off at any time and for any portion of the interview. These choices will not in any way affect your rights as a participant in this research.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kristyn Richardson
This research has been approved by the University of Manitoba Joint Faculty Ethics Review Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project, please contact Ms. Margaret Bowman, Human Ethics Secretariat at (204) 474-7122 or my thesis advisor Dr. John Sinclair, NRI at (204) 474-8374.

I give my consent for an interview:

______________________________________________________________________________
Participant Signature Date

I give my consent for the interview to be tape-recorded:

______________________________________________________________________________
Participant Signature Date

☐ Please check the box if you would like to receive a copy of the results of this research. If you are interested in receiving the results, in the space below please indicate how (email, mail) and to where you would like the results delivered.
Appendix 2
Interview Schedule for Female Participants

Views of Participants Regarding Representation and Participation on Forest Sector Advisory Committees

Background
1. What is your place of work and occupation? (If not already known)
2. How long have you been involved in forestry issues?
3. How long have you been involved in the advisory committee process?
4. How often do you usually attend meetings?
5. Why are you participating in the process?
6. When you heard about this committee and its focus, who did you think would be important participants?

Learning
7. What things have you learned from your participation with the advisory committee?
8. What is the most important thing you have learned?
9. Some research has shown that women possess different views and hold different values than men about forests and forest management. Based on your experience with the advisory committee, do you agree? Explain.
10. How do women contribute to the forestry industry? How do you think they should contribute?
11. Did the ideas presented by women lead to adjustments and modifications of the advisory committee process?
12. Were all committee members accepting of other members’ opinions, concerns, and values? If so, how?
13. Did your participation change the way you thought of any of the other participants?

Representation
14. What interests do you represent on the committee?
15. Do you feel the committee is representative of all interested and potentially affected individuals, even if not directly involved in the process? If yes, how so? If no, who is not represented? Why not?
16. (If question 9 was answered negatively, omit) In response to an earlier question you agreed women that women hold different values than men. If women are not present at committee meetings, are their perspectives represented? If so, how?
17. In terms of representation it is clear from the membership list that there is a serious gender imbalance. Why do you think that women are not better represented?
18. Are there general forms of exclusion that affect women from becoming committee members? If so, what?
19. Are there outside factors, such as family pressures, that may prevent women from becoming members?
20. Do you feel that there is anything that the committee could do to improve representation of women on the committee?

21. Does the selection process used by the company/committee for appropriate interest groups favour representation of some interests over others? If so, what might those interests be?

22. Do you know of women that have left the committee because they were dissatisfied? Please tell me about that. (Ask for name/contact information to follow up)

**Participation**

23. Do all committee members have the opportunity to equally participate and voice concerns during the meetings?

24. Have any procedures been built into your meeting processes to ensure that underrepresented groups feel comfortable presenting their views?

25. Do you think there are any barriers limiting women from participating in discussions at the meetings? If so, please describe. Are there barriers limiting other groups?

26. Have you experienced sexist attitudes from other members? If so, in what way?

27. Have any men expressed the opinion that women are not suited for making decisions about forestry issues?

28. Does the lack of other women members make it difficult to present your concerns at the committee meetings?

29. Do you have enough influence to participate meaningfully in the work of the committee?

30. Are there strategies that you think might help women to have more influence?

31. Would the organization of a sub-committee for women make presenting at meetings easier and participation in general more effective?

32. (If question 9 was answered negatively, omit) If women are not present at committee meetings, are their views/values on issues still raised at the table by other members? If so, how and by whom most often?

33. Are gender issues important in advisory committee decision making and in the advice the committee provides?

34. Have the contributions of women been recognized in the management plans?

35. Do you feel that there are any changes that could be made to change the level of participation of underrepresented groups in committee meetings/discussions?

36. Overall, are you satisfied with the level of participation of women and other underrepresented groups in discussion and decisions made at committee meetings?

Do you have any final comments on this survey or about the advisory committee that you participate on?

Would you like a copy of the results of my research? (If so – contact info on a separate page.)
Appendix 3
Interview Schedule for Male Participants

Views of Participants Regarding Representation and Participation on Forest Sector Advisory Committees

Background
1. What is your place of work and occupation? (If not already known)
2. How long have you been involved in forestry issues?
3. How long have you been involved in the advisory committee process?
4. How often do you usually attend meetings?
5. Why are you participating in the process?
6. When you heard about this committee and its focus, who did you think would be important participants?

Learning
7. What things have you learned from your participation with the advisory committee?
8. What is the most important thing you have learned?
9. Some research has shown that women possess different views and hold different values than men about forests and forest management. Based on your experience with the advisory committee, do you agree? Explain.
10. How do women contribute to the forestry industry? How do you think they should contribute?
11. Did the ideas presented by women lead to adjustments and modifications of the advisory committee process?
12. Were all committee members accepting of other members’ opinions, concerns, and values? If so, how?
13. Did your participation change the way you thought of any of the other participants?

Representation
14. What interests do you represent on the committee?
15. Do you feel the committee is representative of all interested and potentially affected individuals, even if not directly involved in the process? If yes, how so? If no, who is not represented? Why not?
16. (If question 9 was answered negatively, omit) In response to an earlier question you agreed women that women hold different values than men. If women are not present at committee meetings, are their perspectives represented? If so, how?
17. In terms of representation it is clear from the membership list that there is a serious gender imbalance. Why do you think that women are not better represented?
18. Are there general forms of exclusion that affect women from becoming committee members? If so, what?
19. Are there outside factors, such as family pressures, that may prevent women from becoming members?
20. Do you feel that there is anything that the committee could do to improve representation of women on the committee?

21. Does the selection process used by the company/committee for appropriate interest groups favour representation of some interests over others? If so, what might those interests be?

22. Do you know of women that have left the committee because they were dissatisfied? Please tell me about that. (Ask for name/contact information to follow up)

**Participation**

23. Do all committee members have the opportunity to equally participate and voice concerns during the meetings?

24. Have any procedures been built into your meeting processes to ensure that underrepresented groups feel comfortable presenting their views?

25. Do you think there are any barriers limiting women from participating in discussions at the meetings? If so, please describe. Are there barriers limiting other groups?

26. Have you witnessed sexist attitudes from other members? If so, in what way?

27. Have any men expressed the opinion that women are not suited for making decisions about forestry issues?

28. Do you think that the lack of other women members at the meetings makes it difficult for women to present their views? If not, why not?

29. If women are not present at committee meetings, are their views/values on issues still raised at the table by other members? If so, how and by whom most often?

30. Are gender issues important in advisory committee decision making and in the advice the committee provides?

31. Do you feel that there are any changes that could be made to change the level of participation of groups in committee meetings/discussions?

32. Should specific measures be taken to increase the number of groups on the advisory committee?

33. Should measures be taken to improve the quality of input from other groups?

34. Overall, are you satisfied with the level and quality of participation of by women in discussion and decisions made at committee meetings?

Do you have any final comments on this survey or about the advisory committee that you participate on?

Would you like a copy of the results of my research? (If so – contact info on a separate page.)