

# Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny

YOCOM PROFILE



## Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny

Montréal, Québec

### Introductory Note

*This profile, published in tribute to the exceptional career of Mrs. Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny (1934–2025), a leading figure in the history of Canadian and international public relations, was undertaken to preserve the memory of her achievements and commitment to communication within the professional community.*

*It was prepared through the analysis and editorial synthesis of numerous documents detailing her accomplishments in Canada and internationally.*

*This dossier could not have been completed without the invaluable collaboration of Mr. Alain Modoux, co-founder of ORBICOM—the International Network of UNESCO Chairs in Communication established in 1994; Mr. Claude-Yves Charron, who succeeded her as Secretary-General; and Ms. Monic Houde, who was closely associated with the creation of the UNESCO-Bell Chair in Communication.*

*I also extend my thanks to Ms. Odile Sévigny, daughter of Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny, for reviewing the entire dossier and generously authorizing its publication, as well as to Ms. Magda Fusaro, Secretary-General of ORBICOM, for her support in this undertaking.*

*Solange Tremblay*

A visionary communicator and diplomat, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny—truly a pioneer of international communication in the service of development, intercultural dialogue, and peace—stands as an emblematic figure in public relations and communication diplomacy. A sociologist by training, she shaped Canadian and global communications history through an exemplary career at the crossroads of public affairs, media, academia, and the United Nations, consistently

demonstrating that communication—guided by ethics, responsibility, and hope—can become a powerful force for peace and social transformation.

The first Canadian and the first woman to hold the position of Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information at the United Nations, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny broke new ground in public communication, press freedom, and international dialogue. She successfully integrated communication, ethics, democracy, and international cooperation at a time when these issues were acquiring global significance. Her career reflects a sustained commitment to innovation, accountability, and a global vision of contemporary challenges.

In 1994, she co-founded ORBICOM, the International Network of UNESCO Chairs in Communication, an innovative initiative designed to bring together academics, researchers, and professionals around ethical and responsible communication in service of human development. Through her leadership from the outset, ORBICOM established itself as a leading international network, now bringing together more than 65 Chairs and 275 members worldwide—clear testimony to the visionary scope of her original commitment.

Sharing her expertise internationally, across Canada and in Québec, she contributed actively to the work of the International Public Relations Association (IPRA), the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS), and the *Société des relations publiques du Québec* (SRQ), where she was frequently invited as a keynote speaker. Highly sought after, she spoke in numerous countries across several continents, promoting a humanistic and exacting vision of the profession grounded in transparency and service to the public good, while contributing significantly to the training of new generations of communicators.

Her career was marked by numerous prestigious distinctions, reflecting both the international impact of her work and the coherence of her commitment: positioning communication as a tool for empowerment, ethics, and development, while fostering dialogue among peoples and defending freedom of expression.

Her legacy reflects a profound conviction: communication, guided by inclusion, integrity, and responsibility, constitutes one of the most powerful levers for building trust, mutual understanding, and sustainable development in a complex and interconnected world.

## **Main Positions Held**

- Vice-President, Communications, Société Radio-Canada / CBC, Ottawa (1983–1987).
- Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information, United Nations (1987–1992).
- Co-founder and first Secretary-General of ORBICOM – International Network of UNESCO Chairs in Communication (1994–1998).
- Professor, researcher, and practitioner in public and international

communication, Université du Québec à Montréal (1993–1999).

## Early Career in Public Relations

Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny began her career in 1952 as a journalist at La Tribune (Sherbrooke, Québec), where she developed a strong interest in the human dynamics at the heart of public information. Her path subsequently led her into commercial and social marketing and public relations, notably with BCP Publicité Limitée, then the largest agency in Québec. She established herself there as an innovative strategist, quickly rising through the ranks to become Vice-President and later President of the organization (1969–1983).

## Overview of Her Career

Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny's career unfolded across the professional sphere, the diplomatic arena, international organizations, and academia.

After holding various positions between 1957 and 1969 (publicist, Director of Client Research, consultant), her tenure at the helm of BCP (1969–1983) marked a turning point for the profession. She helped advance strategic planning practices and strengthen recognition of the societal and ethical role of communication in Québec. Drawing on her training in sociology, her approach combined analytical rigour, creativity, and a strong sense of public responsibility—a rare combination that inspired several generations of practitioners and scholars.

Upon her induction into the Hall of Fame of the Association des agences de communication créative (A2C) in 2021, Yves Gougoux, Chairman of the Board of Publicis Canada, highlighted:

**“Thérèse was a trailblazer, a pioneer on so many levels... She brought strategic thinking and strategic planning into agency practice. With her strength in sociology [...], she was at the origin of major campaigns grounded in deep knowledge. And we must remember that in 1980, visible women leaders—women presidents of companies like BCP—were truly rare... She paved the way for the new generation of women who now lead their companies.”**

She was subsequently appointed Vice-President, Communications at Société Radio-Canada / CBC in Ottawa (1983–1987), becoming one of the first women to hold a senior executive position at that level within a major Canadian Crown corporation. In that role, she contributed to the modernization of internal and external communications, supported the public broadcaster's technological and

cultural transition, and strengthened the coherence of its institutional image.

These cumulative experiences shaped her distinctive expertise in strategic planning, organizational communication, and ethical leadership—expertise that would underpin her subsequent engagement on the international stage.

## **At the United Nations**

### **Making Communication an Instrument of Dialogue and Peace**

In 1987, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny was appointed Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, in charge of the Department of Public Information at the Organization’s headquarters in New York—a position she held until 1992. As the first woman and first Canadian to lead this major international structure, she promoted a modern, open, and ethical vision of international communication.

Within a multilateral system undergoing profound transformation, these years reinforced her conviction that communication should not be confined to the dissemination of institutional messages but rather serve as a vital vehicle for mutual understanding, dialogue, and peace—particularly in times of crisis and transition.

She articulated this forward-looking and optimistic vision in 1991 when delivering the keynote address at the First Conference on a More Democratic United Nations (CAMDUN). A faithful summary appears in her chapter in [Building a More Democratic United Nations](#):<sup>1</sup>

**“The effect of the change in Soviet–US relations has already been felt in the United Nations. The change in the climate of international relations has propelled the Organization to the centre of the efforts in countering a completely new set of urgent problems and overriding concerns. The Organization can draw strength from the widening peace constituency which exists in all countries and whose concerns are so well articulated by non-governmental organizations, especially in the fields of disarmament, human rights, development and environment.”**

Under her leadership, the Department of Public Information strengthened ties between the United Nations, the media, and citizens, promoting institutional transparency, freedom of expression, and intercultural dialogue as the foundations of sustainable peace.

<sup>1</sup> Edited volume by Frank Barnaby, published in 1991 by Routledge.

This vision of communication as a lever for dialogue and peace found concrete expression in two emblematic initiatives to which she gave decisive support: the adoption of the Windhoek Declaration and the establishment of World Press Freedom Day.

## **The Windhoek Declaration**

In 1987, during a visit to the United Nations Office in Geneva, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny met Alain Modoux, then responsible for communications at the International Committee of the Red Cross. She showed particular interest in the ICRC's initiatives aimed at protecting journalists in conflict zones, including the hotline set up to assist reporters on dangerous assignments.

This meeting marked the beginning of a strong professional and personal relationship, further reinforced at the 1988 World Congress of the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) in Melbourne, where Alain Modoux served as President. When he joined UNESCO in Paris in 1989, shortly before the fall of the Berlin Wall, this connection facilitated close collaboration between their respective teams in Paris and New York.

In a period of profound ideological renewal, UNESCO adopted a New Communication Strategy, moving away from the controversial New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) toward an approach grounded in freedom of expression and the free flow of ideas.

At the request of UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor, Alain Modoux was tasked with designing an ambitious program to promote and defend press freedom. He sought Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny's support to ensure United Nations engagement and institutional backing.

This decisive collaboration led to the organization, in May 1991, of the Seminar for the Promotion of an Independent and Pluralistic African Press, held in Windhoek, Namibia, under the joint auspices of UNESCO and the United Nations. The seminar brought together independent journalists from across the African continent and resulted in the adoption of the Windhoek Declaration—a foundational text that became the international benchmark for press freedom.

## **World Press Freedom Day**

Following the Windhoek Declaration and upon recommendation of all UNESCO Member States, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed World Press Freedom Day in December 1993. Jointly observed by UNESCO and the United Nations, the Day is celebrated annually on May 3, the anniversary of the Windhoek Declaration.

Although Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny had left her UN functions at the beginning of

1992, she was personally invited by Federico Mayor to participate in the Alma-Ata Seminar on the Promotion of Independent and Pluralistic Asian Media in October 1992, in recognition of her decisive contribution to Windhoek's success. On the margins of the meeting, she also played a facilitating role by offering Canadian expertise to support the establishment of an independent public broadcasting service in Kazakhstan—once again illustrating her commitment to linking principles, institutions, and concrete action.

Throughout her years within the United Nations system, and faithful to her sociological training, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny developed a deeply humanistic conception of communication. Far from reducing it to an instrument of persuasion, she conceived it as a vector of mutual understanding, intercultural dialogue, and social transformation—anticipating contemporary approaches to communication for development and intercultural dialogue.

## The Academic World

### ORBICOM and the UNESCO-Bell Chair in Communication and International Development

Returning to Canada in 1993, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny joined the Department of Communication at the Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) as a professor until 1999. Drawing on her United Nations experience, she played a driving role in positioning communication as a strategic field for human and social development, aligning communication research with major international issues of democracy, development, and cooperation, and helping structure Québec's first social and international communication programs.

In this capacity, she became an advocate for the responsibilities of communication and public relations professionals, explaining in *Publics* magazine in 1991:

“***We must have a global vision, because there are almost no issues today that are not international by nature. Consider the environment, women's issues, poverty, human rights (...) we must invest time in professional development to ensure we are never out of step with contemporary challenges.***” (p.16)

Now fully engaged in teaching, she was informed that UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor—who had not forgotten the decisive role she played in the Windhoek seminar—had decided to grant her a UNESCO Chair in Communication. This initiative, part of the UNITWIN program launched in 1992, was exceptional in that it originated directly from the highest level of UNESCO.

Typically, proposals for UNESCO Chairs are initiated at the national level, most often by a higher education or research institution collaborating with UNESCO. The

proposal is first submitted to the National Commission for UNESCO and ultimately formalized through an agreement between the UNESCO Director-General and the head of the host institution, usually the rector.

Deeply honoured, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny accepted the proposal under three structuring conditions:

- That the Chair be integrated into an international network of communication chairs.
- That the network be open to communication professionals from both the public and private sectors, fostering productive dialogue between research and practice.
- That it be supported by a permanent secretariat to ensure long-term viability.

With the support of Alain Modoux, representing the UNESCO Director-General, she engaged in discussions with UQAM Rector Claude Corbo to secure the project's international institutional anchoring in Montréal and ensure sustainable conditions for its development.

She thus championed an unprecedented model of international cooperation, designed to become a lasting platform for collaboration among academics, practitioners, and institutions around ethical and responsible communication in the service of human development.

These efforts culminated in June 1994 with the signing of a memorandum of understanding between UNESCO and UQAM, officially creating the International Network of UNESCO Chairs in Communication.

Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny and Alain Modoux then established the legal, administrative, and conceptual foundations of this innovative network.



ORBICOM Foundation – June 1994: Claude Corbo, Rector of UQAM, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny, and Alain Modoux.

With the assistance of a specialized Canadian firm, they gave it a distinctive name: ORBICOM.

At the same time, she founded and directed the UNESCO-Bell Chair in Communication and International Development, focused on access to information, North-South cooperation, and strengthening local communication capacities.

Reflecting on this period, Alain Modoux later stated: “It was thanks to the determination and dynamism of Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny that the ORBICOM

network was born and that the foundations for its sustainable development were established at UQAM.”

Under her leadership, ORBICOM became one of the most dynamic networks within UNESCO’s UNITWIN program, launched in 1992, laying the groundwork for enduring cooperation between academic and professional communities. Today, the network brings together more than 65 Chairs and 275 members worldwide, reflecting the visionary scope of her original commitment.

## **Most Significant Achievement**

Several major accomplishments marked the career of Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny, but two stand out as her greatest achievements—true hallmarks of distinction in communication—and are closely interconnected.

### **1. Her Mandate at the United Nations (1987–1992)**

As Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations responsible for Public Information—the first woman worldwide to hold such a role—she defended press freedom and supported the work that led to the Windhoek Seminar (1991), the starting point of the process that culminated, in 1993, in the creation of World Press Freedom Day, now observed annually on May 3.

Her commitment to press freedom, the protection of journalists, and the public’s right to information remains strikingly relevant at a time when these rights continue to be threatened in many regions of the world.

### **2. The Creation of ORBICOM – The International Network of UNESCO Chairs in Communication (1993–1994)**

Co-founded with Alain Modoux, Director of UNESCO’s Communication Department, and formalized in May 1994 through a protocol signed by Federico Mayor, Director-General of UNESCO, and Claude Corbo, Rector of UQAM, ORBICOM—the International Network of UNESCO Chairs in Communication—brought together scholars, practitioners, and decision-makers to align research and professional practice in international communication: an unprecedented model within UNESCO’s UNITWIN program.

Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny played a decisive role in persuading UQAM to host the permanent secretariat and structure the network, which, five years later, already comprised 25 Chairs across all continents.

She also founded and directed the UNESCO–Bell Chair in International Communication (1994–2002), dedicated to North–South cooperation and the democratization of access to information.

These two accomplishments embody the convergence of sustainable structures for

research and cooperation, and the embedding of freedom of expression at the heart of international policy frameworks.

## Most Challenging Experience

Leading the United Nations Department of Public Information represented one of the most demanding challenges of her career.

In 1987, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny was appointed Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, in charge of the Department of Public Information at the organization's headquarters in New York. She was the first Canadian and the first woman worldwide to direct this major international structure, where she promoted a modern, open, and ethical vision of international communication until 1992.

Her mandate unfolded within a turbulent geopolitical context, just prior to the end of the Cold War, at a time when the UN sought to redefine its relationship with civil society and position communication as a tool of diplomacy and social cohesion. Managing a department of such scale and political sensitivity required diplomacy, rigour, constant vigilance, and impartiality.

Undeniably, being the first woman to occupy a position of this rank within the UN Secretariat added further pressure, particularly at a time when many Member States still held restrictive views regarding women's leadership roles.

In a 1991 interview with *Publics* magazine, she described the challenges of serving the 159 UN Member States:

“**One must serve each of the 159 Member States equally objectively and without displeasing any of the others. [...] A department such as Public Information at the United Nations is so diverse that it is very difficult to manage. [...] One must also remember that these positions are always coveted by the 158 other countries and each believes it can do the job better than we can.**

***Being a woman was an additional challenge because as you might imagine female representation takes time to establish itself at the UN especially at the senior levels.***

— *Publics*, Vol. XVII, no. 6, p. 13, November 1991

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Her mandate required navigating ideological tensions and multiple expectations. Yet, despite the intensity of those years, they strengthened her conviction that communication remains an essential tool for mutual understanding and peace—even, and especially, in times of crisis.



Publics, SRQ magazine, November 1991

## **Selected Observations on the Practice of Public Relations**

### **Strategic Communication Planning**

Since the early decades of Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny's career in the 1950s and 1960s, strategic communication planning has evolved from a primarily institutional exercise into an integrated, participatory process grounded in social realities. It is now founded on transparency, accountability, and coherence between discourse, action, and values.

This evolution has brought heightened demands for credibility and public engagement, redefining the communicator's role as a social and ethical actor rather than merely an image manager.

Her leadership at BCP (1969–1983) played a significant role in this transformation. She contributed to the advancement of strategic planning in agencies and strengthened recognition of communication's societal and ethical role in Québec. Combining analytical rigor with creativity and public responsibility, the agency developed major campaigns grounded in nuanced understandings of social dynamics.

### **Media Relations; Media Enterprises and Journalism**

Media concentration and digital disruption have profoundly transformed the production and circulation of information. Speed and fragmentation now require heightened competencies in analysis, verification, and contextualization.

### **Internal Communications**

Internal communication has become a strategic lever of cohesion, particularly within international organizations and large public institutions.

## **Shareholder, Investor, and Stakeholder Relations**

Stakeholder relations have expanded significantly, now resting on transparency, social and environmental engagement, and responsible issue management.

## **Research and Issue Management**

Data-driven approaches, evaluative research, and structured issue management have become indispensable components of professional practice.

## **Skills and Qualities of Today's Professionals**

The profession has diversified through specialized profiles and now requires a stronger interdisciplinary foundation, combining ethics, analytical capacity, and critical thinking.

## **Reputation Management**

Reputation management has shifted from image control to trust-building. Reputation is now rooted in consistency between values, behaviour, and authentic commitments. Digital networks amplify public scrutiny, making transparency and accountability essential elements of any communication strategy.

## **Large National and International Firms vs. Specialized Agencies**

Large firms benefit from global expertise and considerable resources, particularly valuable in international contexts. However, smaller agencies and specialized groups often retain agility and contextual sensitivity that provide strategic advantages.

For Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny, effectiveness in communication depends less on organizational size than on human and cultural understanding of audiences.

## **Transformations in Ethics, Diversity, and the Role of Women**

Throughout her career, she both witnessed and shaped profound changes in public relations, particularly regarding ethics, inclusion, and gender equity. She highlighted persistent North–South imbalances in knowledge and resource flows and advocated equitable dialogue. Ethically, she consistently emphasized that truth and social responsibility must precede influence strategies.

Without overlooking that, through her leadership at the United Nations and later through the creation of ORBICOM alongside Alain Modoux, she worked tirelessly to broaden the human, cultural, and ethical horizons of the profession.

Moreover, from the very beginning of her career in journalism in the 1950s, and later during her transition into communications in the 1960s — at a time when few women held senior management or leadership positions — she forged a path

defined by courage, curiosity, and conviction. In this regard, while the field remained largely male-dominated in 1991, she conveyed a message of encouragement to women in an interview about her role as Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, published in *Publics* — then the magazine of the Société des relationnistes du Québec (SRQ). Her testimony offered a grounded perspective on the progress that was then beginning to emerge:

“**Women are establishing themselves strongly in public relations in many countries and regions of the world. This is evident at international public relations congresses, where they are now present in very large numbers. You are fortunate here, since Canada is recognized around the world, along with the Nordic countries, as having a somewhat more egalitarian attitude toward women.**”

— *Publics*, Vol. XVII, no. 6, p. 10, November 1991

For her, however, inclusion extended beyond gender. It also meant fostering closer ties between the Global North and South, so that communication could serve as a vehicle for cooperation, mutual understanding, and social justice.

This vision reflected her belief that the profession needed not only to evolve technically, but also to be firmly anchored in values of equity, openness, and social responsibility. That conviction guided her in founding ORBICOM and the UNESCO-Bell Chair in Communication and International Development, both conceived as spaces for dialogue across cultures, disciplines, and professions.

For Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny, ethics lay at the very heart of public relations — a profession she did not view as an instrument of persuasion, but as a vehicle for mutual understanding and social transformation, a civic responsibility grounded in respect for truth, transparency, and diversity of perspectives. She often reminded her students and colleagues that communicators’ credibility rests on their ability to speak the truth with discernment, to listen across cultures, and to act as mediators between institutions and citizens.

Her legacy reflects a profound conviction: communication — guided by inclusion and integrity — is one of the most powerful instruments for building trust, understanding, and sustainable development in a complex and interconnected world.

## **Evolution of Social and Environmental Values; Climate Issues; Organizational Responsibility**

For her, communication was inseparable from the ethical, social, and democratic responsibilities of institutions. She viewed responsible communication as a vehicle for cultural and political transformation, essential to global mobilization in response to environmental and social crises. Well before communication for sustainable

development became an established professional paradigm, she encouraged practitioners and scholars to critically assess the impact of their work on collective development and human dignity. In *Communication et développement international* (Presses de l'Université du Québec, 1996), she wrote:

**“There is no question, however, of refraining from examining our discipline and its practices as instruments and conditions of sustainable development, in the North, the East, and the South, nor of underscoring the importance of research follow-up and international cooperation as a guarantee of the continuity of History.” (p. 5)**

She also warned of the fragility of freedoms in an increasingly technologized and mediated world—even in long-standing democracies:

**“Wherever we may be, from whatever place we speak, freedoms, access, participation and pluralism, the free circulation of information, are never entirely guaranteed and may even be increasingly at risk in this universe where the smallest communicative acts are mediated: from distance learning to voice mail, from residential intercoms to everyday purchases and transactions through interactive systems.” (p. 4)**

Yet her vision remained fundamentally optimistic. She believed that communication, grounded in freedom, cultural diversity, and technological inclusion, could serve as a universal language for sustainable coexistence:

**“In 1996, freedom of opinion and expression, individual responsibility, the democratization of daily life, human rights, cultural diversity, and technological transfers are at the heart of global concerns, as drivers of a future to be conquered, and operate as the universal matrix of a primary official language.” (p. 4)**

Through this lens, her thought anticipated many of today’s debates on artificial intelligence ethics, digital inclusion, climate communication, and sustainability.

## **Her Vision of the Profession and Its Overall Direction**

Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny viewed communication as a lever of collective responsibility, not merely a technological or media tool. She called for placing people back at the heart of communication systems, believing that progress is meaningful only if it contributes to individual empowerment and democratic participation.

From this perspective, she saw the profession evolving toward a systemic approach—ethical, participatory, and data-informed. For her, the upheaval within the communications field, globalization, and the rise of technologies that would profoundly disrupt the traditional boundaries of communication disciplines at the dawn of the new millennium represented both promises and vulnerabilities. They invited communicators to combine innovation with ethical vigilance and imposed a renewed duty of discernment in the face of artificial intelligence, automation, and information overload. Very aptly, she expressed both concerns and new hopes on April 29, 2019, during ORBICOM's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary:

**“Today, technologies shape our ways of thinking, our ways of expressing ourselves, our ways of living... They permeate political, industrial, commercial and social communication and shape all forms of artistic expression, everywhere in the world. Today, academics as well as communication practitioners focus, on the one hand, on Truth and Fake News, the digital serving creativity, the influence of social media and robotized interactions in our lives, and on the other hand on the dictatorship of transparency... and on the great advances—promising and fragile—of artificial intelligence...”**

Even more, as early as the mid-1990s, her approach already anticipated the need for sustainable development grounded in the equitable circulation of knowledge and the informational sovereignty of peoples—requiring communicators to embody human credibility for organizations, communities, and society.

## **Advice to a Young Person Considering a Career in Public Relations**

The guidance she prioritized above all was unquestionably:

- Cultivate curiosity, rigour, and a sense of the public interest. Love people.
- Never forget that communication is a service to society.
- Always respect this requirement: understand before persuading.

More specifically, Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny centered her advice on the importance

of relationships, on fostering genuine dialogue, and on cultivating a global, never narrow, perspective:

***“As for the qualities of a good public relations practitioner, I believe a very important quality is to like people; one must genuinely like people and enjoy teamwork. One must be curious. We must also have a global vision, because there are almost no issues today that are not international by nature. Let us look at the environment, women’s issues, poverty, human rights. We can no longer manage things locally, parochially, nationally. We must look at things from an international point of view. Moreover, we must invest time in professional development to ensure we are never ‘out of the loop’ in the face of contemporary challenges.”***

— (Interview, *Publics*, p. 16, 1991)

## **Distinctions, Recognitions, Contributions**

### **Awards and Recognitions**

- Excellence Award, Association de la recherche en communication du Québec (1990).
- Alcan Freedom Award, Cercle des femmes journalistes du Québec (1990)
- Honorary doctorates:
  - Bishop’s University (1991)
  - Université de Sherbrooke (1991)
  - University of Ottawa (1992)
- Medal of Honour, United Nations Association in Canada (1995).
- Marie Curie Medal, UNESCO – exceptional recognition of her commitment to the Organization’s ideals in communication, information, and freedom of expression (1998).
- Women of Distinction Awards (YWCA), Communication category (2000).
- Prix Phare – Hall of Fame, Association des agences de communication créative (2021).

### **Leadership, Governance, and Influence**

- Chair of the Jury, Michener Award for Investigative Journalism (1983–1987).
- Chair, Centre d’études et de coopération internationale (CECI) (1998–2000).
- Chair, National Consultation on Language Industries in Canada (federal Department of Industry and Commerce), contributing to the sector’s strategic recognition within the knowledge economy (2002).
- Board member of several organizations:
  - Rights & Democracy
  - World Radio and Television Council

- United Nations Association in Canada
- Centraide of Greater Montréal
- Théâtre du Nouveau Monde

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- Claude-Yves Charron, immediate successor as ORBICOM Secretary-General.
- Monic Houde, closely associated with the creation of the UNESCO-Bell Chair in Communication, at the same time as ORBICOM.
- Odile Sévigny, daughter of Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny.

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- Video portrait of Thérèse Paquet-Sévigny (Phare profile) | Hall of Fame 2021, Association des agences de communication créative:  
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