PUBLIC POLICY AND THE STRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT

OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, CANADA,

1960 - 2015

by

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Abstract

This study examined the structural development since 1960 of the entire postsecondary education system – that is, post-compulsory, formal education for adults – in Canada's westernmost province, British Columbia. I synthesized changes across teaching and research universities, public colleges, private career colleges, apprenticeship, faith-based institutions, Aboriginal-governed institutions, and continuing education activities. My focus was on sectors, not individual institutions, and I considered the consequences of federal government actions along with those of the provincial government.

I divided the era into three periods, from which I analyzed five significant historical moments. After considering the proximate causes of changes during these moments, I assessed the extent to which developments in each moment were consistent with three enduring public policy rationales for postsecondary education in British Columbia.

The first policy rationale concerned a set of concepts about fairness that emerged cumulatively to constitute a fulsome understanding of social justice: access to educational opportunity for individuals, compensatory justice, cultural recognition and promotion, and spatial adaptation. The second propelling rationale, economic in nature, emerged from the literature on human capital formation and found expression in both generic and occupationally-specific forms. The third rationale concerned a means perceived to foster effective and efficient educational administration, namely a neoliberal, market-oriented approach that I explicated using some concepts from institutional theory and new public management.

All three policy rationales proved helpful in interpreting the historical record, but none was present in all five historical moments. I commented about aspects of these policy rationales

that might be useful to consider regarding future postsecondary development. I also made two observations, one about historical themes and the other about the language used to describe postsecondary education, that are relevant regardless of the approach taken when examining the postsecondary history of British Columbia.

I offered recommendations concerning the social stratification implications of a growing vertical differentiation among institutions, the role of continuing education, information about the private sectors, a more current usage of human capital theory, attention to sub-baccalaureate education, the implications of international enrolment, open data, terminology, and systems thinking.

Preface

This dissertation is original, unpublished, independent work by the author.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

BC   British Columbia

CE   Continuing Education

CJS   Canadian Jobs Strategy

EQA   Educational Quality Assurance designation

ESL   English as a Second Language

FTE   Full-Time Equivalent enrolment

K – 12   Kindergarten to Grade 12

NPM   New Public Management

OECD   Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OLA   Open Learning Agency

PCTIA   Private Career Training Institutions Agency

SFU   Simon Fraser University

TRAC   Training Access program

UBC   University of British Columbia

Acknowledgements

My supervisory committee – Lesley Andres (chair), Jason Ellis and Alison Taylor, all from the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia – was a delight. These individuals provided plenty of space for me to blaze my own trail but were dependably present at critical junctures to guide and support me.

Most importantly, I quickly came to trust that however perplexed I might be in the short run, or whatever obstacles I might encounter, I would simply need to persevere because I would eventually come to appreciate the wisdom of the comments from my committee members, as well as to see a way forward from the strategies and options they suggested. The ability to instill such well-founded confidence is a hallmark of fine educators.

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the University of British Columbia supported me financially to a greater extent than I expected or needed. Although I appreciated the funding and the intent with which it was granted, I became disillusioned with the culture and processes that are now associated with these awards: rather mechanistic and inflexible, a tendency to breed conceit and a sense of entitlement, and assuming that more money is always better. My experiences led me to wonder whether there might be healthier ways to use these public funds to foster a community of emerging scholars.

For the Two Bugs

Author's Note

Around 2010 I realized that I was hearing qualitatively different conversations about potential new programs than when I had started working at my British Columbia college two decades prior. The original tone had been "Some adults in our surrounding community have some particular educational needs. Do we have the resources to respond to them?" A subtle shift had occurred since then, and while the actual words were seldom as blatant as appear here, the new sentiment was more, "If we were to meet those needs, how might the college benefit?" We were still attending to the community, but the focus was now on using the community rather than on serving it.

In fact, now that the college had limited authority to grant four-year baccalaureate degrees, it no longer even described itself as a community college. In seeking to shed the connotations of the junior, university-transfer aspect of the community college philosophy (although that was still a main activity of our comprehensive institution), we were also losing the egalitarian, progressive approach that had differentiated us from both universities and technical schools. Rather than emphasizing pedagogy and honest appraisals of our strengths and weaknesses, image cultivation and self-promotion were becoming the new priorities. Despite being a publicly funded institution of higher learning in a freedom of information era, we were increasingly reluctant to disclose data that might portray us in a poor light.

Of course, new winds were also blowing on neighbouring postsecondary institutions. Not only had the public postsecondary system in BC become more complex, the sectors and subsectors were fragmenting. Research universities distanced themselves from teaching-intensive universities. Urban colleges bickered with rural colleges about the priorities to present

to government. New advocacy groups sprang up and others folded. Clearly the ethos of postsecondary education in BC was changing.

I knew that change and adaptation to shifting environments are essential for the survival of both biological and social entities, but I wondered how aware busy decision-makers were of the long-term, cumulative implications of their day-to-day decisions. The original architects and pioneers of BC postsecondary education had long since retired and many of their replacements, coming from elsewhere, had little idea of the distinctive strengths and peculiarities of the BC postsecondary environment. I did not mind the new guard making changes, but I thought they should at least know what they were changing and not blindly imitate other jurisdictions.

In 2007, I had decided to use some of my professional development time – I was an administrator on the non-instructional, services side of the college – to assemble a short, accessible history of BC postsecondary education that could be part of the orientation of new administrators in institutions and government. As I turned to colleagues around the province for help in filling the inevitable gaps, I was taken back at both how little some knew of the history of their own institution and how difficult it could be for some to uncover it. I decided to add an appendix to my report with a few paragraphs of history about each individual public institution – a fateful precedent for the disappearance of far too many of my evenings and weekends in subsequent years.

My history completed, the BC Council of Post Secondary Library Directors surprised me some months later by asking me to present that history in the hour-long professional development session with which they began each of their business meetings. A week after the presentation, one of the directors sent me a couple of books that piqued my curiosity, prompting me to write a second history, this time about the neglected faith-based sector in BC. In the

process, I became hooked on writing local, postsecondary history – nothing grand, just a first step in describing what had happened.

Six subsequent histories emerged, the last written in 2013. Issues arising in my regular work prompted many of the topics. Why, for example, was continuing education bedeviling efforts to report enrolments comparably across institutions? How could we be respectful of Aboriginal perspectives when I had not even heard of the Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association? Some historical background seemed to me to be essential briefing, but if I wanted it, it fell to me to gather it.

As I prepared those histories, I was struck with how the character of the times had changed: university Arts professors originally arguing against having to conduct research in favour of protecting their teaching function, college personnel described as having a missionary zeal, a vocational school viewing itself as an elite institution, and so on. I could describe some of the changed ethos since earlier times, but I could not explain how the changes had come about, even though I was curious about their origins.

I am a generalist and synthesizer by temperament. My employment history often put me in situations where I had to look at the postsecondary system as a whole, rather than from the perspective of a single institution or even a sector. It seemed natural to me that I should want to see the historical pieces assembled into a comprehensive picture across all postsecondary sectors – a different approach than the segmented way in which higher education is typically studied, but the way in which students experience postsecondary education across their life courses and the way in which government views it when setting such policy as student financial aid.

I also wanted, as much as possible, to identify the interactions among sectors. Having worked in a transfer college, I was only too aware of how contradictory curricular changes in the

university sector could send college faculty into a tizzy as they struggled to maintain course transferability to as many universities as possible. I saw how the vacillations of university admission thresholds (high one year "to enroll the brightest and the best", low another year "to serve all qualified applicants") could affect college enrolment demand. My histories had described how, for example, a federal funding change in the mid 1980s was simultaneously bad news for public colleges and good news for private career colleges. Sectorially-based studies can miss these important interdependencies and interactions, as well as such specifics as how student dropouts may simply be mobile students who graduate from another institution.

I suspected I could put together some sort of a comprehensive history on my own, but I was haunted by the unexplained qualitative changes that I was observing. I lacked the theoretical background to address these changes, and so I wound up back in graduate school in an attempt to gain tools to help me interpret the shifts. (Graduate students often choose a theoretical framework and then collect data. I was doing it the other way around.)

So here was my situation when it came time to choose a dissertation topic: I wanted to synthesize across all postsecondary sectors (big task) in a way that would begin to explain qualitative changes in the postsecondary ethos (vague task), drawing upon theory that might only provide partial interpretations. Not the most auspicious of situations.

To give myself something concrete and manageable with which to work, I quickly latched on to structural change as the vehicle for my analysis. I do not think I could have resolved the challenges of the theoretical dimension, though, without the patient prodding of my supervisory committee. Finally it dawned on me that I did not need to impose my own theoretical lens on the historical record. Rather, as described in the literature review that follows, I could examine several theories implicitly drawn upon by policy actors themselves to begin to

understand the changing postsecondary ethos. This approach would just be an initial step towards

identifying and interpreting qualitative change in BC postsecondary education, but it struck me

as a practical and helpful one. I was eager to get started and find out where the journey might

lead.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Two goals, one synthetic and the other analytic, have shaped this dissertation. The synthesis goal was to examine the development of the *entire* postsecondary system in the province of British Columbia (BC), Canada: from the more extensively studied public universities and colleges, through the shadowy worlds of apprenticeship and private career colleges, to the almost invisible, albeit small, Aboriginal-governed and faith-based sectors. My purpose was less to discover new information, although some of this did occur, than to assemble existing knowledge in new and revealing ways. It concerned seeing the postsecondary world in a different way than the segmented manner in which it is usually researched, a different manner that acknowledges relationships and interactions among components, using the structures of the various postsecondary sectors as the vehicle for beginning to do so.

This approach draws upon systems thinking (Cabrera, Colosi & Lobdell, 2008; Mella, 2012) and falls firmly within Boyer's (1990) formulation of the scholarship of integration: that is, the giving of meaning to isolated facts, of putting them in perspective, and of interpreting past research within larger intellectual patterns. The approach is perhaps more readily explained through two examples.

Public colleges in BC can and have been studied as a distinct sector of their own (for example, Dennison & Gallagher, 1986; Gaber, 2002), but with their extensive university transfer component and more recent, limited authority to grant baccalaureate degrees, they also maintain strong relationships with universities. They provide some, but not all, of the classroom components of apprenticeship training, a quite separate sector in British Columbia. They partner regularly with Aboriginal-governed institutions, sometimes for the purposes of awarding

credentials but also to deliver programs and even to channel government funding to Aboriginal clienteles. At times, reflecting government funding incentives, they have cooperated with private career colleges in some program areas while competing with them for students in other areas. The ways in which the college sector has developed have thus been affected by the characteristics and trends in other postsecondary sectors.

Using universities as a second example, the failure of private and out-of-province universities to thrive when new legislation in 2002 made it much easier for them to operate in British Columbia is better understood against the backdrop of the BC government's significant expansion of student spaces in its public institutions, and its introduction of applied bachelor's and master's degrees in selected public institutions other than universities. Even the seemingly very separate, faith-based sector has been affected by relationships with the decidedly secular public universities, relationships that have ranged through land leases and shared libraries in a theological precinct at the University of British Columbia to formal transfer arrangements for students.

However well integrated and synthesized it may be, though, a descriptive historical narrative is somewhat inert and of limited value for policymakers as they wrestle with decisions that will shape the future of postsecondary institutions. It is when data are given meaning and put into context that they become transformed into actionable information and knowledge (Teodorescu, 2006). Therefore, having constructed an historical synthesis about the development of postsecondary institutions in BC, my attention turned to analyzing it, using five historical moments as case studies.

I chose the moments based on the way I identified periods to organize change over time, a fundamental task of historical study. Choices regarding periodization depend, of course, on the

topic one is examining and the point of view adopted for doing so. I decided to interpret the structural development of the postsecondary system from the perspective of governments as they sought to achieve some high level and long standing educational policy goals.

Notwithstanding all the distinctive local and short-term circumstances that have shaped the particular structure of postsecondary education in British Columbia, a small number of general policy goals in the North American postsecondary educational literature seemed to me to have been repeatedly relevant to British Columbia as I researched the postsecondary history of the province. I decided to examine in a more systematic and rigorous manner the extent and ways that these policy forces actually did manifest in BC, using my literature review to understand the concepts in greater depth and then three analytical chapters to assess their relevance to British Columbia.

The choice of what events are historically significant (Seixas & Morton, 2013), and what theories are the most powerful in interpreting those events, inevitably involves some subjective decisions. This study therefore represents just one contribution to the ongoing historical discussion through which a consensus gradually emerges as to a plausible present meaning, and the current relevance, of events from the past (Fulbrook, 2002; Iggers, 1997).

The above considerations led to my formulation of the specific research question for this study, namely, **"What theoretical perspectives help explain the public policy rationales, implicit as well as explicit, that were used to justify the establishment of BC postsecondary institutions and to propel their structural development since 1960?"** Building on Fisher, Rubenson, Lee, Clift, MacIvor and Meredith (2014), addressing this question entailed preparing a long-term, holistic look at all BC postsecondary sectors simultaneously, facilitating analysis of impacts and interactions across sectors. It involved using theory in a cumulative, complementary

manner rather than as independent or competing explanations. Finally, the study sought to foster policy analysis that considers the full range of causes and impacts, not only those pertaining to the immediate issue or sector.

Research Design

This literature-based study began with synthesis and concluded with analysis. For each of three periods, it first traced the development of the postsecondary system in BC as a whole by looking systematically across all sectors and identifying significant changes over time. It then assessed how some enduring, high level aspirations for the system, as reflected in government actions regarding the structure and roles of institutions in particular historical moments, fluctuated in importance. Finally, the *Discussion* chapter integrated findings across the three periods.

Along with providing a comprehensive overview that drew together a number of sectorially-based literatures on the history of postsecondary education in BC, the study provided another type of synthesis by using some literature prepared for professional audiences to round out the literature prepared for scholarly purposes. Supplementing the small scholarly literature on the history of BC postsecondary system are eight historical reports that I completed since 2007 for professional audiences (Cowin, 2007; Cowin, 2009; Cowin, 2010; Cowin, 2011; Cowin, 2012a; Cowin, 2012b; Cowin, 2013a; Cowin, 2013b). Preparation of these historical reports involved collecting numerous documents and conducting some interviews: reading monographs, journals, newspaper articles, government reports and press releases, Hansard excerpts of parliamentary debates, and local postsecondary histories, and consulting with colleagues and retired educators. I vetted each draft report with two or three knowledgeable people who had

worked in the field described in the report, and then circulated the final version within the BC

postsecondary system. Response was positive, evidence that the reports did in fact provide for a

more complete overview of the contemporary BC postsecondary system.

In addition to synthesizing across all postsecondary sectors and combining sources from

academic and professional literatures, a third way in which this dissertation sought a more

holistic gaze was by drawing upon more than one theoretical perspective for the analytical

portion of the study. This was the aspect of the study that required the most subjective judgment,

namely to select a small number of theories – too many theories could diffuse the focus to the

point of becoming meaningless – that could be used in a complementary and cumulative manner.

Whether the three theoretical clusters I selected as the basis for my analysis proved fruitful in

interpreting the historical record is assessed in the *Discussion* chapter.

Definitions

The same words can have different nuances, and even different meanings, for different

audiences. I am increasingly coming to appreciate the importance of defining terminology

explicitly. Some of the postsecondary terminology I use simply reflects my personal preferences,

but much arises from the specific usage in British Columbia. For example, a bachelor's degree in

BC is always the equivalent of at least four years of study beyond secondary school, regardless

of whether a general or, much less frequently, an honours degree is awarded.

Postsecondary Education

I use **postsecondary** education in the most encompassing manner possible, namely all

forms of formal, post-compulsory education for adults that is offered by organizations whose

primary purpose is educational. (Training branches of other types of organizations and informal learning are thus beyond its scope.) Other terms, such as *tertiary* education, may exclude some types of vocational and secondary school equivalent education for adults.

In North America, *higher education* is sometimes used in the same sense as postsecondary is used here. However, in such countries as Australia and England, higher education is often taken to mean baccalaureate and post-graduate education, as distinct from the sub-baccalaureate education for adults known as further education or technical/vocational education. Because of the variation and exclusions in the definitions of tertiary and higher education, I prefer the term postsecondary.

A note of caution is that even the meaning of postsecondary education can vary in the postsecondary literature. Dennison (1992) commented that the term is often used in western Canada to typify the status of the learner, that is, students who have left secondary or compulsory education, whereas in Ontario the term reflects the content of the program (that is, the curriculum is beyond that offered in secondary schools). Jones (2009) provides a Canadian example of using the term in the Ontario sense, whereas I focus on the learner by using the BC approach.

My programmatic frame of reference is the same as that of Sheffield (1982) in his study of systems of higher education in Canada, namely everything from adult basic education and the various forms of vocational education through to graduate education. Continuing education, some of which does not involve formal evaluation of student learning, is the most problematic program area to define (Cowin, 2010). In the interest of simplicity and because greater refinement provides no substantial benefit for my purposes here, all offerings that BC colleges and universities provide under the continuing education rubric, regardless of whether they carry academic credit, fall within the scope of this study.

System

I concur with Sheffield's (1982) use of the term **postsecondary system** to describe structures, relationships and interactions among individual institutions, even where formal governance and coordination is weak or nonexistent.

British Columbia's postsecondary educational system exists not so much in the formal sense of centralized and coordinated administration but more informally in terms of interaction and interdependence, wherein students move among institutions and the actions of one sector or institution affect others. Dennison (1997) argued that BC had more of a postsecondary system than elsewhere in Canada, with the exception of Quebec and perhaps Alberta. Many of its components, such as research universities, are traditional forms found across North America. Other aspects have been more innovative or distinctive.

Institution

Institution is used here in the typical postsecondary sense to refer to a formal organization, such as a college or university, that enrolls students and provides instruction. When institution is used in the sociological sense of generalized norms and ways of seeing and organizing aspects of the social world (see the section on *institutional* theory in the literature review), the term is italicized to distinguish it from postsecondary usage.

Organization

Organization is sometimes used here in a specialized sense, although drawing upon the everyday meaning of a group of people who intentionally come together to achieve a purpose. Whereas an institution enrolls students, an organization in my specialized sense consists of a

group of educators who meet formally on an ongoing basis regarding a postsecondary topic – such as facilitating the acquisition of information technology or to advocate for funding – but the organization does not enroll students. In British Columbia, when government creates such organizations to perform tasks delegated or assigned by government, they are known generically as **agencies** even though their name might include such terms as Council (Cowin, 2012a).

Sector and Institutional Type

Until 2002, a publicly funded **college**, **regional college or community college** in BC were synonyms for an open admissions, comprehensive, teaching institution offering up to two years of university transferable courses as well as an extensive set of preparatory and applied programs (sometimes incorporating some university transferable courses) of six months to three years' duration leading directly into the labour market. Since 2002, colleges have offered a limited number of baccalaureate degree programs.

A **junior college** offers only the first two years of baccalaureate studies (that is, university transferable courses) rather than comprehensive programming that includes applied and preparatory programs. Junior colleges have had only a small presence in British Columbia, entirely outside the public system.

Unlike most Canadian provinces, BC adopted an American comprehensive community college model and developed the university transfer function to become as robust as any in the world (Bahram, 2004), resulting in up to 60% as many college transfer students admitted annually to BC research universities as came directly from BC secondary schools (Cowin, 2004).

Outside the public sector, a college in BC could mean almost anything: an institution offering programs at the sub-baccalaureate, baccalaureate or graduate level and which, in a few

cases, required faculty to conduct research in addition to their instructional duties. With the use of the term university restricted by BC legislation, college became the default label for many institutions.

Beginning in 1989, a handful of public colleges were granted the authority to offer some third and fourth year university programming, with bachelor's degrees originally conferred under the auspices of a partner university and subsequently in the college's own name. These **university colleges** had all become teaching universities by 2008, although they continued to offer their original comprehensive range of college programs.

Public **special purpose** or **teaching universities** all originated as community colleges. They retain an open access admissions philosophy – open access to the institution, not necessarily to individual programs and courses – and offer a small number of employment-oriented master's programs, but they are not funded for faculty to conduct research as part of their regular duties.

Doctoral programs are offered at **research universities**. Faculty are expected to conduct research as part of the tenure process and the universities' operating grant from the provincial government supports some of this research.

In the public sector, an **institute** has a province-wide, rather than regional, mandate to offer instruction to a particular type of student or in particular fields of studies (that is, they do not offer a comprehensive curriculum). They originally offered only sub-baccalaureate programs, and this remains their emphasis today. Aboriginal-governed, private institutions often refer to themselves as institutes, a more generic usage of the term institute than in the public sector *College and Institute Act*. The Aboriginal community sometimes avoids using the word

institution because of its connotations of the historic institutionalization of Aboriginal children in residential schools, a school system seen by some as an attempted cultural genocide.

Vocational schools in this dissertation refer to public postsecondary institutions that were merged with public community colleges in the 1970s. They are distinct from the **private career colleges** that lie outside the public system, but which are regulated by government, and from vocational secondary schools.

Private institutions operate under different legislation than do public universities, colleges, and institutes. They may or may not be for-profit; faith-based and Aboriginal-governed institutions are not profit seeking, while many, but not all, career colleges are businesses that seek to make a profit. With the occasional, small-scale exception, private institutions do not receive operating grants from government. However, subject to some accreditation and other requirements, students at private institutions may be eligible for government student financial assistance in the form of loans and grants.

In contrast to the more coordinated, planned and school-based models of northern Europe, British Columbia's **apprenticeship** system falls firmly in the market-oriented Anglo tradition where individual employers give priority to their immediate labour market needs over the educational needs of society. Apprentices, often individuals who are in their 20s, typically spend four weeks per year in classroom settings, but most of their learning occurs on the job.

I would prefer to avoid using some popular but imprecisely defined descriptions of educational sectors, but this frequently does not prove possible without resorting to long or clumsy nomenclature. These popular descriptions include **vocational** programs (implies programs of less than a year's duration where the focus is on practical application and skills acquisition rather than on theory and cognitive development), **technical** programs (implies

programs of two, and sometimes three, years' duration that do not lead to a bachelor's degree), and **academic** programs (implies university-level programs). My preference when describing programs of study is to follow current practice in at least some branches of the BC Ministry of Advanced Education: **arts and science**, **developmental programs** (includes adult basic education, adult special education, and English as a Second Language), and **applied programs** (everything else). These three categories can then be segmented by level of study (preparatory, lower and upper division undergraduate, and graduate), field of study, duration, and type of credential awarded (certificate, diploma, bachelor, post-baccalaureate certificate or diploma, master's and doctoral).

Legislation has consistently required BC public institutions to offer **continuing education**, but the term remains undefined, so that anything and everything could potentially be considered continuing education. The common threads in the widely varying continuing education units in public institutions seem to be that course offerings are contingent on short-term enrolment demand and cost-recovery financing, and that instructors have short-term, course-specific contracts that are subject to a minimum level of enrolment being met for the course to proceed. Instructors and institutions typically have no further obligations to each other beyond the specific course. Continuing education is sometimes called adult education.

As is elaborated in the *Discussion* chapter, such terms as *academic, skills* and *training* are used in multiple ways that can be not only imprecise and confusing but which also serve to perpetuate misleading stereotypes. Tackling this problem, however, would be a dissertation in its own right, and so I have chosen to make do with vocabulary that, while problematic, is common throughout North America.

Inventory of Public Institutions

The public sector enrolls the most students in BC and is especially important outside the large cities of Vancouver and Victoria. Although sectors and not individual institutions are the focus of this dissertation, individual institutions are frequently mentioned but not described. Table 1 provides an inventory of public institutions in BC, classified by region and type, as a general orientation for readers less familiar with the BC landscape. Summaries of their history are available in the appendix of Cowin (2007).

Table 1: BC Public Postsecondary Institutions, 2015

Region and Type	Name	Opened	Notes
VANCOUVER			
Research University	U. of British Columbia	1915	Predecessor affiliated with McGill University
	Simon Fraser University	1965	
	Technical U. of BC	1999	Merged into SFU to become Surrey campus
Teaching University	Capilano University	1968	Originally Capilano College
	Emily Carr University	1933	Originally Vancouver School of Art, then Emily Carr College of Art and Design, then Institute
	University of the Fraser Valley	1974	Originally Fraser Valley College, then University College of the Fraser Valley
	Kwantlen Polytechnic University	1981	Originally part of Douglas College, then Kwantlen College and Kwantlen University College
College	Douglas College	1970	
	Langara College	1994	Originally part of Vancouver Community College
	Vancouver Community College	1965	Originally Vancouver City College
Institute	BC Institute of Technology	1964	
	Institute of Indigenous Government	1995	Absorbed by the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology
	Justice Institute	1978	
	Open Learning Agency	1978	Originally Open Learning Institute. Merged into Thompson Rivers University.
	Pacific Marine Training Institute	1938	Originally Vancouver Navigational School. Merged into BC Institute of Technology.
	Pacific Vocational Institute	1960	Originally part of BC Vocational School. Merged in BC Institute of Technology.
	Vancouver Vocational Institute	1949	Merged into Vancouver Community College
VANCOUVER ISLAND			
Research University	University of Victoria	1963	Predecessor was Victoria College
Teaching University	Royal Roads University	1995	
	Vancouver Island University	1969	Originally Malaspina College, then Malaspina University-College.
College	Camosun College	1971	
	North Island College	1975	
SOUTH INTERIOR			
Research University	U. of British Columbia - Okanagan	2004	Originally part of Okanagan University College
Teaching University	Thompson Rivers University	1970	Originally Cariboo College, then University College of the Cariboo
College	College of the Rockies	1975	Originally East Kootenay Community College
	Okanagan College	1968	Okanagan University College for a period
	Selkirk College	1966	
Institute	Nicola Valley Institute of Technology	1983	Private institution became public in 1995
NORTH			
Research University	University of Northern BC	1994	
College	College of New Caledonia	1969	
	Northwest College	1975	
	Northern Lights College	1975	
MULTI CAMPUS			
	BC Vocational School	1960	Campuses across the province. After 1970, merged into colleges and BCIT.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The first section of this three-part chapter reviews the historical literature about BC postsecondary education that provided my empirical data. The second section situates my usage of the terms policy and theory among the numerous, contested and often vague understandings that appear in scholarly literature, explaining why it is appropriate to attribute particular theories as propelling forces in the policy deliberations of politicians and officials who might not even have been aware of the existence of such theory. In the final section, I draw upon several literatures to identify the particular theoretical concepts that make a significant contribution towards understanding some enduring public policy stances about postsecondary education in BC.

Historiography of BC Postsecondary Education

This section maps and assesses the historical literature about the structure of the contemporary BC postsecondary system, that is, the literature about institutional developments since 1960. The focus is on postsecondary institutions and sectors, rather than on changes within institutions. Departmental histories, biographies, and social and intellectual histories are thus beyond its scope. The review evaluates the extent to which the histories of the various sectors have been documented and critiques the focus of those documents.

Public Institutions

Histories of individual public institutions have tended to be written by people other than scholars of higher education, whereas the majority of authors who have studied groups of public

institutions, such as colleges and university colleges, have been associated with the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia. In both instances, the authors were predominantly white males. The literature is richest with respect to beginnings, namely the establishment of institutions or points of significant transformation. Less attention has been devoted to detecting trends and patterns in subsequent institutional and sectorial development, or to interactions within and across organizational fields.

Sheehan (1985) and Axelrod (1979, 1982, 2002) commented that historians have shown little interest in Canadian universities, and neither of these two scholars discussed the even scarcer attention paid to the history of the rest of Canadian postsecondary education. They reported that until the 1970s, most histories of Canadian universities were in-house, one-sided documents chronicling a series of events with little sense of themes or even narrative flow. Tending to be uncritical and only superficially acknowledging external forces, struggles and crises were indeed examined but these were described as temporary obstacles that were eventually resolved, enabling the institution to continue on a path of progress and success.

The situation today regarding the history of BC universities is no longer as dire, but the general thrust of the critiques by Sheehan and Axelrod still resonates. Histories of individual BC universities have tended to focus internally with scant attention to the interactions among BC universities and with other sectors.

The most scholarly of the histories of BC universities is Johnston's (2005) volume on Simon Fraser University, although he said little about the development of the university in its second and subsequent decades. It provided extensive background regarding a seminal plan for academic education in BC, the Macdonald Report (Macdonald, 1962), and contextualized the issues at SFU according to developments in higher education elsewhere in Canada and the world.

Rounding out Johnson's book are a thesis on the radical early days of SFU (Rossi, 2003), a fiftieth anniversary compilation of reminiscences and anecdotes of former SFU faculty and support staff (Gibbons, Long, & Piovesan, 2016), and an article about the creation of additional campuses of SFU and of a new hybrid institution, Fraser International College, which provides pre-admission instruction for ESL students (Brophy & Tucker-Abramson, 2012).

Damer and Rosengarten's (2009) book is the only recent history of by far the largest and dominant postsecondary institution in BC, the University of British Columbia. Although the analyses, generalizations and contextualizations that are woven into a rather celebratory description of programs and people constitute but a small proportion of the text, the total amount of text is substantial. Whitely, Aguiar and Marten's (2008) article concerned a specific episode in UBC's history, namely the acquisition by UBC of the North Kelowna campus of the former Okanagan University College to become UBC Okanagan.

Macpherson (2012) wrote a fiftieth anniversary commemorative volume of the University of Victoria in which he explicitly stated that his book did not purport to tell the full story and was not a history as historians usually think about their work. An earlier volume about the University of Victoria (Smith, 1993), also cautioning that it was a not a critical study, dealt mainly with the predecessor of the university, Victoria College. Other minor sources about the University of Victoria include Neering and Liscombe (1988) and an account of the physical development of the campus (Smith & Segger, 1988).

McCaffray (1995) chronicled the crusade of the local community for a northern university, stopping at implementation planning and before the opening of the resulting University of Northern British Columbia. A recent master's thesis (Anderson, 2014) concluded that the university really had not lived up to the aspirations and rationales advanced in the late

1980s for a distinctively northern university. Trueman (2005) presented a descriptive history of the short-lived Technical University of BC and then analyzed the arguments advanced by government to justify closing the university and transferring its assets to Simon Fraser University.

In contrast to the research universities, what are now BC's teaching intensive universities are largely undocumented in terms of individual institutional histories. The few histories that do exist concern their origins as community colleges: as Capilano College (Brown, 1973) in the case of Capilano University, as Fraser Valley College (Woodroff, 1983) for the University of the Fraser Valley, and as Malaspina College (Schmidt, 1993) for Vancouver Island University. The relevant historical literature about BC's teaching universities lies not as individual institutions but as collective histories of the period when most of them existed as university colleges.

Some histories exist of individual colleges and institutes, but the record is spotty and not recent. Scholarly examinations of BC colleges have tended to be about the sector as a whole, rather than of individual institutions. Colleges for which individual histories exist include Douglas College (Douglas College, 1990; Graham, 1992; Della Mattia, 2010), Okanagan College (Freake, 2005), Northern Lights College (Dampier & Wytenbroek, 2000), and three short monographs about the College of New Caledonia (Howard, 1988a; Howard, 1988b; MacKinlay, 1985).

A memoir about the Vancouver Vocational Institute (Rerup, 1993), by then absorbed into Vancouver Community College, conveyed an ethos about vocational education that no longer exists. Another institutional history that provided an insider's perception of vocational education was about the tiny BC Mining School in southeastern BC, a public organization that existed only

from 1971 to 1981 (Lefevre, 1993). The most recent history of a provincial institute, a coffee table anniversary book, was about the Justice Institute (Rossiter, Budgen, & Grescoe, 2008.)

In the remaining references about individual institutes, the historical components appeared in support of documents written for other purposes. McArthur's (1997) chapter on the history of the BC Institute of Technology appeared in a dissertation about the creation of a Bachelor of Technology degree. Moran's (1992) social history of the Open Learning Agency was embedded in a dissertation that, like McArthur, addressed questions of legitimacy. A subsequent journal article (Moran, 1993) was more explicitly focused on the genesis of the Open Learning Agency. A program evaluation of the now defunct Institute of Indigenous Government, (Human Resources Development Canada, 1998) provided some historical information by way of background.

Turning now from individual institutions to the histories of postsecondary sectors, histories of the BC university sector are yet to be written. Community colleges and a subsequent subsector that evolved from them, the university colleges, represent the postsecondary sector that, as a collective, has received by far the most historical attention. However, the history of the college sector has become a much less frequent topic of study since 1995.

The early histories of the college sector were written mainly by individuals who participated in that history. Soles' (1968) master's thesis was hardly a history in that the BC college system was just getting launched. His perspective and values were significant, nonetheless, in that he was the principal of the second college to open in BC, Selkirk College, and then became the senior provincial government official responsible for the college system.

Beinder (1983; 1986) wrote as the executive director of the BC Association of Colleges, the provincial organization for BC college boards. As well as providing chronologies, he

articulated the liberal values of many of the early proponents throughout the province of what is

sometimes described as the community college mission or philosophy (Dennison, 1979a;

Vaughan, 2006). In analyzing the discourse concerning the establishment of the first eight

community colleges in BC, Workman (1975) drew attention to precursors of the Macdonald

Report (Macdonald, 1962). Of particular relevance was an early master's thesis (Knott, 1932).

with strong parallels to Macdonald's report.

Dennison was the preeminent scholar of BC colleges. Of import for this dissertation was

an article (1979a) that described some briefs that led to the Macdonald report, a study (1986) of

three policy changes that gave the BC government more control over colleges and modified their

missions, and a book on Canadian colleges co-authored with a Vancouver college president

(Dennison & Gallagher, 1986) that concluded BC colleges had been at the forefront of

postsecondary innovation in Canada. Dennison's chapter in another book on colleges in Canada,

this time an edited volume under Dennison's direction, recounted BC college history from 1980

to 1993 (Dennison, 1995).

One of Dennison's doctoral students and subsequent colleague, Levin (1994), surveyed

the BC policy community to identify what they considered to have been the five most important

developments for BC colleges in the 1980s and then to determine who had driven those changes.

Gaber's (2002) dissertation examined levels of centralization and coordination, voluntary or

otherwise, in the BC public college, university college and institute system

Several articles assessed the implications of the limited degree-granting authority,

introduced through a variety of mechanisms since 1990, in institutions that had formerly been

two-year community colleges and institutes. To varying extents, the literature provided historical

perspectives in analyzing the new complexities of what had originally been a clearly demarcated, binary postsecondary system in terms of the authority to confer baccalaureate degrees.

Poole (1994) examined the perceptions of key decision-makers in government and colleges who were involved in the decision to create university colleges. In a similar vein, Levin (2003) wrote less a history than a socio-cultural analysis, but the article did provide some helpful historical context.

University colleges and applied degrees figured in a paper by Dennison and Schuetze (2004) in response to BC's Degree Authorization Act of 2002. Two years later, Dennison (2006) assessed the evolution of university colleges, up to and including the transformation of one into a special purpose (teaching) university, Thompson Rivers University. He situated the creation of UBC Okanagan in terms of university and community college traditions, noting that BC colleges had succeeded beyond some people's expectations and that they did indeed provide geographical access.

Fleming and Lee (2009) considered academic and mission drift as they concluded that a consortium formed by university college presidents essentially created a tripartite public postsecondary system. Fleming's (2010) summary of the history of BC public colleges and universities added little to the existing literature, but his dissertation is distinctive in that it did not merely acknowledge the importance of the California college model for BC but actually examined the California master plan and explicitly considered its implications for BC. Barnsley and Sparks (2009) examined questions of autonomy and governance in a former university college that became Thompson Rivers University, illustrating the types of questions and ambiguities that arose as new institutional forms were introduced to the BC postsecondary system.

20

Private Institutions

The historical literature about private postsecondary institutions in BC, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, is thin. These institutions include some that are Aboriginal-governed institutions and some that are faith-based, as well as private career colleges and private universities.

The only treatment of the faith-based sector as a whole (Cowin, 2009) began with historical descriptions of each individual institution and then shifted to commentary about the characteristics of the sector. Burkinshaw's (1995) study of conservative Protestantism in BC from 1917 to 1981 provided a few passages about the history of faith-based postsecondary institutions.

Several histories have been written about individual faith-based institutions: Carey Hall (Anderson, 2006), Columbia Bible College (Born, 1992), Regent College (Botton, 2004), Trinity Western University (Hanson, 1977; Tome & Trinity Western University, 2002), Vancouver School of Theology (Taylor, 1993), and the long defunct Notre Dame University (portions of an evaluation report by the Universities Council of British Columbia, 1976). While this is a rich literature relative to the small number of students enrolled, the literature is almost entirely decontextualized from other parts of BC postsecondary education, including other faith-based institutions in the province.

An even smaller not-for-profit, private postsecondary sector consists of Aboriginal-governed institutions. Cowin (2011) made the first attempt to fill a void in the literature, a study that spanned both private institutions and aspects of Aboriginal programming in public institutions. Since then, a dissertation on BC Aboriginal postsecondary educational policy

development contained a few sections with historical description of Aboriginal-governed institutions (MacIvor, 2012).

Apart from a few paragraphs in passing, most scholars of BC postsecondary education have not examined the medium-sized, rather fluid, private career college sector. Culos' (2005) thesis was therefore all the more welcome, albeit that it examined only the decade when the Private Post-Secondary Education Commission existed – a period during which all private postsecondary institutions, and not only private career colleges, came under the purview of a single regulator. Cowin (2013b) was another comprehensive first attempt to fill a void in the literature, written from the point of view of an outsider, whereas Culos provided the perspective an insider to an industry that had expected legislative changes in 1991 to become a means of enhancing the legitimacy of career colleges as a sector.

Cleveland (1995) wrote a largely theoretical thesis about the implications of using market mechanisms for private and public providers of vocational education. Of limited historical value, it nevertheless has a chapter describing how federal and BC governments had intervened in the market through such means as student financial aid, tax expenditures and the purchase of training from private providers.

Cowin's (2013a) report on post-baccalaureate programs contains a few pages of history about a dozen private universities that have offered graduate degree programs in BC. The information is minimal and could be viewed as inconsequential were it not the only place where this historical information is available in one publication.

Boundary Spanning and Multiple Sectors

Among histories that have examined the evolution of more than one postsecondary sector since 1960, Dennison was the principal author until 2000. Thereafter, Fisher and his collaborators became the leading authors, writing with particular attention to government policy. The most accessible summary was Cowin's (2007) description of the public postsecondary system, providing an overview of the system's development and an appendix with very brief histories of each individual institution.

Dennison's (1979b) discussion paper emphasized public universities and colleges, but touched upon some private academic institutions and the intermediary body for government, the Universities Council of BC. His chapter (1997) on BC surveyed 1945 through 1995, mentioning not only the establishment of institutions, but also touching on associated organizations and agencies. It considered government intentions and policy, insofar has they could be deduced from actions because expressed policy was, in the view of Dennison, sometimes incoherent.

The 2006 book by Fisher and his collaborators (Fisher et al., 2006) was national, not provincial, in scope but it provided valuable background about federal government forces that affected the development of postsecondary education in BC. Fisher, Rubenson, Jones, and Shanahan (2009) considered BC in the context of two other provinces, focusing on the priorities of government as expressed in policy documents. They concluded that the dominant theme since the mid-1980s has been a desire to create more access for students.

Fisher et al.'s (2014) long chapter is a key source for BC developments since 1990, contextualizing changes in terms of the overall orientation of the provincial government and not only its position on postsecondary education. Modifying the conclusion in Fisher et al. (2009), an

observation in 2014 was that since the mid 1980s, education as a wealth creator has dominated government policy discussion on education.

Technical (classroom) training for apprentices is delivered by both private and public institutions. Like most of vocational education in BC, it has received scant historical attention and documentation. Rather, most of the literature on apprenticeship has addressed the issues of the day rather than change over time.

A number of government reports have briefly mentioned past developments (for example, Goard, 1977; McDonald, 2014; Provincial Apprenticeship Board, 1984) but actual histories are rare. Haddow (2000) analyzed the short-lived BC Labour Force Development Board. Dwyer's (1983) review of the impact in BC of federal policies for adult occupational training began in the 19th century but had a chapter on developments since 1960. Cowin (2012a) started to fill the historical gap regarding apprenticeship, including a short section on the postsecondary vocational schools that are occasionally merely mentioned in other histories.

Strictly speaking, continuing education is not a sector in that it is always a component of some other public postsecondary institution. Nevertheless, the function differs significantly from base or ongoing activity, and continuing education units often behave as if they were independent organizations. To ignore continuing education as a pseudo-sector would be to miss some key structural changes in the evolution of the BC postsecondary system.

Continuing education has a robust literature that includes many historical works. In British Columbia, most of the historical papers concern offerings by universities or trace the development of community-based offerings outside formal education organizations. Selman (1975), Devlin (1984), Selman (1988), Damer (2000), and Mclean and Damer (2012) are good entry points to this part of the literature.

A key document for the college and institute sector is an analysis conducted by Schuetze and Day that identified shifting program emphases and levels of activity in the 1980s (British Columbia and Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, 1992). Bigsby (1977) examined the early continuing education activities of three colleges in the Vancouver region.

A synthesis of the historical literature on continuing education offered by BC postsecondary institutions appeared in Cowin (2010), one of the infrequent instances where discussion of such offerings across multiple postsecondary sectors appeared in a single document.

Miscellaneous

This subsection presents some specific literature that complements the more historically comprehensive literature discussed above.

The few pages Campbell (1982) wrote on BC since 1900 succinctly set the stage for this dissertation: chronic delay, a quarter century in a moribund state and then feverish growth. The spatial distribution lens that Metcalfe (2009) employed rounds out the discussion of geographic access found in other references. Schuetze and Day (2001) considered a single decade, 1989 – 1998, finding BC to be the most differentiated province but also the most integrated, and that the college and university sectors were growing more alike. Bullen (1991) documented his experiences and perspectives as chair of the Provincial Access Committee.

The structure of a postsecondary system includes the governing, facilitating and advisory groups that affect the operation of the system. They are mentioned in several histories, but Cowin (2012b) devoted an entire report to them. Calder (1984) sought lessons from the college

councils that existed from 1977 to 1983. Kulich (1986) considered only adult education associations.

Unlike the eight provinces to the east of Alberta, transfer is an important structural feature of the BC postsecondary system. The BC Council on Admissions and Transfer has published or sponsored a number of works about student mobility in BC, with three historically oriented ones being Andres and Dawson (1998), Gaber (2010), and McQuarrie (2014).

Policy and Theory

This section reviews two topics that influenced how I approached my research, namely the characteristics of policy and theory as abstract constructs. These constructs are regularly invoked in varying ways in educational literature, but often with little attention devoted to explaining how they are being used and what they might actually mean.

Policy

Bobrow and Dryzek (1987) were extreme in describing policy studies as a babel of tongues in which participants are apt to talk past, rather than to, one another, but their point that policy is a nebulous and varyingly understood construct is well taken. Public policy has been described as a vague concept (United Nations, 2014) and "maddeningly difficult to define precisely" (Smith & Larimer, 2013, p.3). Nevertheless, some sort of a working definition of policy is needed to distinguish it from related concepts such as strategy, planning, goals, decisions, procedures and practices.

Policies are often described as statements of intent or goals (Blakemore & Warwick-Booth, 2013; Cheung, 2011). Some authors go further to include indications of the structure or

means by which the actions will be implemented, that is, policies encompass both ends and means (May, 2003; United Nations, 2014). Under this approach, though, policies may not differ from plans. To distinguish policy development from planning, it seems that a definition of policy also requires that something resembling the intended actions to have actually occurred (Anderson, 1997), or at least to have been attempted. Furthermore, policy is intended to endure and not simply be updated or replaced in the next decision-making cycle.

Policies are usually seen as a course of actions, a stance towards a particular topic, rather than a single decision. Mintrom and Williams (2013) emphasized the predetermined character of responses to specified circumstances.

Policy setting involves values and is not merely a technical exercise. Simons, Olssen and Peters (2009) concur with Prunty's (1984) definition of policy as the authoritative allocation of values. The legitimation of a set of values is always a political process and these authors, along with Codd (1988), discuss policy as the exercise of political power, and of the language to legitimate that process, to select goals, define values or allocate resources.

Some authors encourage an expansive definition of policy to include consideration of what topics get excluded from the policy agenda (Cheung, 2011) and consideration of whether inaction and not making a decision represent forms of policy (Simons, Olssen, & Peters, 2009). Explicit, formal policy is the easiest to identify and analyze, but implicit policies, perhaps never acknowledged much less documented, can be equally or more important (United Nations, 2014).

In the absence of a widely accepted definition of policy, I have chosen the following criteria for identifying policies:

- Sets of decisions of intent concerning large topics, in contrast to decisions about isolated or specific matters;

- Intentions that were at some point actualized, whether successfully or not, and which did not exist only as plans or aspirations;

- Decisions that were intended to be enduring and which were more than short-term expediency. (Cumulatively, though, a consistent series of short-term decisions might constitute policy.);

- Underpinned by a values orientation and not decisions that can be reached on a technical basis alone;

- Substantive rather than procedural. (An example of procedural policy would be a process for approving new instructional programs that includes a commitment to consult all stakeholders prior to making a decision.);

- Either implicit or explicit.

Scholars have also taken a variety of approaches to defining public policy as a subset of policy in general (Hill & Hupe, 2002). I have selected a simple definition, namely that public policy consists of those policies adopted by governmental bodies and officials to address the needs of stakeholders.

Theory

Before reviewing the literature about the nature of theory, I first explain a connection between policymaking and the use of theory by public officials. It is because of this connection that theory needs explicit attention in this chapter.

At the most general level, the aspirations of BC policymakers over the past two generations for postsecondary education reflected thinking in other parts of North America, namely to find fair ways to improve the economic circumstances of individuals and the broader society while simultaneously enhancing the social wellbeing and personal development of all groups in society. As postsecondary participation patterns progressed from elite through mass and into universal stages (Trow, 1972), and as the economy cycled through strong and weak

periods, questions of affordability and financial sustainability reflected growing attention to efficient and effective educational management.

Although the educational policy goals of economic and social development, fair access, and a sound allocation of scarce resources may have been implicitly adopted with little thought or controversy, the means for accomplishing them were more contentious. Decision-makers differed as to what might be the best ways to achieve the goals, as well as in the extent to which they made explicit the logic or mechanisms that they associated with each means. Nevertheless, decision-makers operated on the basis of some *if-then* logic that provided rationales for the policy approaches that they preferred: if we do such and such, then we are more likely to achieve a particular goal for postsecondary education. In other words, decision-makers held some sort of theoretical understanding of the nature of social life and believed that if they intervened in certain ways, then certain outcomes could be predicted in at least a general sense. The specifics of these theoretical understandings were myriad, but the understandings regarding postsecondary education clustered into a relatively small number of categories or perspectives.

BC decision-makers may not have always been able to articulate, much less label, the theoretical understandings upon which they based their policy rationales, but the scholarly literature explicitly addresses theory in the study of postsecondary education. Drawing from this literature, three categories of theory (discussed in the next section) seem to have undergirded the specific justifications used in distinctive situations for establishing or changing the structure of postsecondary education in BC. My examination of how policymakers drew upon these theories does not explain every nuance or individual development, but collectively examining the application of these theories helps in interpreting change over time. Just how helpful they might

be in interpreting the historical record, and how their relative importance has fluctuated over time, will be considered in subsequent chapters.

With the foregoing as rationale, I now review the literature on the nature of theory, an even more confusing and contentious construct than policy (Corly & Gioai, 2011; Corvellec, 2013; Sutton & Staw, 1995). Not only is the definition of theory debated across the natural and social sciences, but also within each of these two domains of inquiry (Czarniawska, 2013; Stewart, Harte, & Sambrook, 2011). Authors differ, for example, as to the role of prediction, the importance of falsifiability (Popper, 1959), and the distinction of theory from models, philosophy and systematic description. Hammersley (2004) claimed that few terms in the social sciences are as vague and diversely used as theory.

The most expansive notion of theory may mean little more than a systematic way of understanding (Glanz, n.d.), a set of descriptions providing order (Pedersen, 2007) or a coherent description or explanation of observed phenomenon (Gioia & Pitre, 1990). The emphasis in this approach is on a well-reasoned way of thinking, preferably based on adequate experience, with far reaching application (Liedman, 2013). In other words, theories are repositories of general knowledge that go beyond the ability of common sense to explain the world (Markovsky, 2005).

What is described as theory may include holistic assumptions, perspectives or worldviews that illuminate or encourage a deeper understanding of phenomena (Hallberg, 2013). Whatever the merits of this broad notion of theory for generating knowledge that helps with understanding and interpreting the world, it does not provide the robust sense of causality and prediction that policymakers seek to help them reach decisions. For theory to inform actions, something more than systematic and insightful description is needed.

Social sciences literature generally distinguishes description from theory in that the latter incorporates explanation of observed phenomena (Kaplan, 1964; Whetten & Rodgers, 2013). Explanation addresses the question of why something has come about, fostering understanding (Biesta, 2013), in contrast to description that simply notes what has occurred. At a minimum, explanation involves a set of concepts, definitions or propositions that are interrelated or connected in some logical manner to show how or why phenomena occur (Jasso, 2006; Corely & Gioai, 2011). Markovsky (2005) described logical connections as arguments leading to conclusions from series of assumptions or observations. Arguments concern causation, as distinct from relationships based on correlation or probability (Liedman, 2013).

A desirable attribute of theory is that it be parsimonious in terms of the number of interconnections and postulates (that is, that theory be simple) yet applicable to a large number of circumstances (that is, generalizable). It should explain not just a particular instance of something but all instances so that it has general, and perhaps universal, application (Stewart et al., 2011). The attempt to be simple and summary yet to generalize is part of the reason why theory is abstract. In actual practice, the goal of generalizability may be achieved to varying degrees, leading to the difference between mid range and general theory.

Mid range theories, common in the social sciences, apply only in a limited range of settings, for example, to a particular culture or social class. Because mid range theories apply to only certain sets of phenomena, they can be more specific and less abstract than general social theory (Ougaard, 2013).

Mid range theories may be developed incrementally, continually modified in light of new empirical evidence. In contrast, general theories are less compatible with ongoing testing and improvement because if every application of a general theory could lead to its potential

31

modification, it would lose its utility as a common reference (Whetten & Rodgers, 2013). General theory sets the stage for development of mid range theory, and a set of mid range theories may, in turn, eventually lead to the formulation of a general theory.

Some of the theory discussed below, such as that pertaining to social justice, falls towards the general theory end of the spectrum. Other theory in this dissertation, such as human capital formation and regional economic development, is usually applied in ways that are mid range.

The role of individual cases is relevant to the understanding of falsifiability as an attribute of theory. Although empirical observations that do not concur with theoretical understandings may suggest that the theory is invalid, Kuhn (1962) pointed out that non-complying observations are sometimes simply interpreted as meaning the theory needs refinement, not that it is invalid. What constitutes falsification is especially intractable in the social sciences (Joas, Knöbl, & Skinner, 2009).

The social sciences can say little about individual cases that are apparent anomalies to a theory because the number of relevant factors is usually so large than there may be more than one valid explanation (Streeck, 2010). Furthermore, most cases in the social world come about as the unique result of a one-of-a-kind situation (Streeck, 2010).

Although the literature may differ about the importance and characteristics of falsification, the growing consensus is that theory always provides only a partial explanation (English, 2013), is provisional (Liedman, 2013), and represents a progressive approximation (Kuhn, 1962). Thus the test of theory becomes not so much whether it is completely true as whether it is useful for the purpose at hand. In a similar vein, even though social theory may be general and abstract, not able to fully explain each individual case, it may nevertheless lead to

conclusions or recommendations about how to respond to an individual situation that are particular and concrete (Jasso, 2006).

The final consideration in this brief review of theory concerns prediction, an attribute more frequently seen as essential aspect of theory in the natural sciences and sometimes not seen as even possible in certain types of social science. Social theory may indicate only a general direction and suggest some keys to interpretation (Liedman, 2013), or provide only a list of possible explanatory factors for a situation that gives some initial guidance in the search for explanations (Ougarrd, 2013). Some theories are good at either prediction or explanation, but not the other (Anonymous, 2008). The goal in theory formulation, though, is to develop theory that is good at both.

BC Policymakers and Theory

Turning now to the understanding of theory that I am using in this dissertation, the following is my interpretation of how BC policymakers have implicitly thought about and used theory when making decisions about postsecondary education. Note that I am not saying whether this definition and usage is the same as my personal view of theory. Rather, I am claiming that the following interpretation is consistent with the empirical evidence of how people behaved, regardless of the philosophical merits of this understanding of theory.

My starting point is Coreil's (2009) definition of theory as a set of interrelated concepts that present a systematic view for the purpose of explaining and predicting. The interconnections may be vague and poorly understood, based as much on strong correlation as a logical or causal argument, but there is sufficient linkage that particular antecedents can be anticipated to lead to predetermined outcomes. For example, the if-then logic might be that if a group of unemployed

forestry workers are given at least six weeks of retraining in their local college, then their employment prospects will be significantly improved because they will have acquired new skills and knowledge that employers value. Prediction, in what may be a very loose sense, is important in the use policymakers make of theory.

The explanatory logic on which predictions are based may be thin and high level, but there has to be sufficient explanation to justify predictions and indicate how to bring about desired change. Expressed in more abstract language, policymakers seek clearer understandings of the world, connecting what may appear unrelated phenomena, to illuminate possible ways to achieve particular goals (Czarniawska, 2013; Markovsky, 2005).

Generalizability is also important. At the provincial level, decision-makers lack the information and ability to deal with a host of specific situations. They seek solutions that will work for the majority of those affected, perhaps simply hoping that any resulting disadvantage to outliers will be minimal.

The tendency of policymakers is thus to take mid range theory and to treat it as general theory. Management at senior levels often involves making critical decisions with too little information and too little time to digest the information that is available. In these circumstances, it becomes convenient, perhaps even necessary at times, to identify theories that work well in particular circumstances and apply them broadly.

Once having made a decision, policymakers do not necessarily acknowledge, much less welcome, data suggesting that their decision was a poor one. Thus the tendency is to downplay falsifiability and to treat noncompliant cases as anomalies that can be explained by factors other than deficiencies in the original theory. Furthermore, the political process itself, with its use of

slogans and emotional appeals, may exert pressure to transform theory into an ideology, an article of faith, which discourages attention to falsifiability.

Theories Propelling Postsecondary Policy in BC

The remainder of this chapter presents the theoretical underpinnings of three sets of policy rationales that public officials in BC seem to have embraced for postsecondary education and which serve as the analytical lenses for this study. Each set of rationales is separately considered using theory from one or more literatures.

The first theoretical cluster concerns fair access to postsecondary education, drawing upon evolving and multiple notions of social justice. I present the different meanings of social justice as complementary, not contradictory, and I draw upon all of them in the subsequent chapters that analyze BC postsecondary policy rationales.

The second theoretical cluster focuses on human capital formation as the primary way policymakers in BC have thought about the contribution of postsecondary education to the economic development of the province. Regional economic development theory also considers the importance of a skilled workforce and of education as a quality of life consideration for retaining qualified labour. Thus the connection between human capital theory and certain aspects of regional economic development theory is reviewed.

The third theoretical cluster concerns theories that help in interpreting marketization in postsecondary education as an attempt to achieve the efficient and effective allocation of resources. Neoliberal theory accounts for the global trend towards marketization, but to understand how neoliberalism has been implemented in postsecondary education, the literature about new public management is helpful. Finally, to round out the marketization discussion,

some specific aspects of *institutional* theory illuminating competition and imitation among postsecondary institutions are noted.

Fairness and Social Justice

A significant portion of postsecondary policy discourse and scholarly literature in BC has concerned the enrolment-related topic of access, the *Access for All* initiative (British Columbia, 1988) being a prime example. Because schooling provides a major route for social mobility, serving as an equalizing force that provides opportunities for the disadvantaged (Davies & Guppy, 2010), postsecondary institutions have been seen to perform important gatekeeping and enabling functions.

Clark (1960) itemized some educational opportunity goals that influenced policymakers across North America. Sometimes the postsecondary literature has examined access in terms of inputs such as admissions (for example, Karabel, 2007), student mobility among institutions (for example, Student Transitions Project, 2012) and the role of student financial aid in enabling students to enroll (for example, Junor & Usher, 2007). At other times, attention has been devoted to the outcomes of postsecondary education, such as graduation rates (for example, Education Source, 2006), and on ways for improving those outcomes under the banner of student success (for example, Kramer, 2007), to determine if access policies have been effective.

Federal and provincial policies to ensure that the population has appropriate access to postsecondary education have implicitly been informed by theoretical literature about justice in general and, more specifically, about social justice. The foundation of social justice lies in determining a fair way to allocate benefits and burdens among individuals and groups in society.

Social justice is yet another of the elastic and evolving constructs prevalent in the social sciences (Soho, Merchant & Lugg, 2011). Over the past three decades, the construct has expanded beyond the fair treatment of individuals to include consideration of how to represent, recognize, and promote the cultures of groups within society. Thus social justice has become a multi-faceted construct and one that is therefore invoked today in more varied ways than several decades ago. Currently in education, though, it is often used in only one of its senses, focusing on how people use power, especially with the goal of countering such forces as sexism, racism, and exclusion based on social class (Davis & Harrison, 2013).

In this discussion, I draw on a broad conception of social justice, a conception with four components (using my own terminology for each component in the absence of a standard taxonomy):

- Individual justice - fair and equal treatment of individuals (often expressed in postsecondary education as ensuring everyone has equal opportunity to be admitted to an institution or program of study);

- Compensatory justice - Unequal treatment of groups to achieve equitable outcomes for individuals in the group (often expressed as providing a level playing field for marginalized or disadvantaged populations);

- Cultural recognition - fostering and accommodating distinctive group identities (often embedded in discussions of what are sometimes called identity politics and in challenges to existing knowledge as reflected in curriculum and program structures);

- Spatial adaptation - Fair and appropriate treatment of individuals and groups in the hinterland.

The first three components appeared in BC postsecondary education in a sequential and cumulative manner, with spatial adaptation running on a parallel track since 1960.

Given that social justice is used in various ways as a value-laden and poorly defined construct (Brennan & Naidoo, 2008; Sturman, 1997; Zajada, Knöbl, & Skinner, 2006), the

following discussion reflects my own way of using the literature in order to advance the purposes of this study. Some observers might take a different approach and some, such as Hayek (1973), have even argued that social justice is so vague that it should simply be discarded. Nevertheless, I find that the following concepts about fairness and social justice help in interpreting why access goals, and their various nuances, have been so important in BC postsecondary education.

Definitions

Social justice is sometimes defined as the effort to ensure that all individuals and groups enjoy fair access to what is beneficial and valued, as well as equitably sharing burdens (Furlong & Cartmel, 2009; Singh, 2011). Fairness, a "good" society, and access are key concepts for social justice (Blackmore, 2013; Craven, 2012). Fairness, however, does not necessarily mean an equal or identical distribution of benefits and burdens, and thus questions of equity for diverse groups enter the discussion.

In some recent definitions of social justice, the outcome of nominally fair (and potentially unequal) access and burdens might not be sufficient. Bell (2007), for example, took a stance that also considered the process for achieving social justice, namely that all groups in society should participate fully and equally in mutually shaping a society that meets all their needs. In such a society, resources would be distributed equitably and all individuals would be physically and psychologically safe.

Over the past generation, social justice has increasingly been viewed as addressing the topics of respect, dignity and inclusion in order to foster a just society. For Lowen and Pollard (2010), dignity is at the heart of social justice, based on human rights and the equality of all people. Zajada et al. (2006) argued that most conceptions of social justice refer to an egalitarian

society with a sense of solidarity that echoes the cry of the French Revolution for liberty, equality and fraternity.

Although some authors focus on the justice aspect of social justice (see, for example, the discussion of Rawls below), Novak (2000) commented on the social aspect. He drew attention to two social considerations: (a) cooperating and working with others to achieve some type of justice that (b) has as its primary focus the good of others. He contended that focusing on the social, rather than attempting to define justice, has the advantage of being ideologically neutral, enabling the concept to be used in an uncontested manner across the political spectrum from the right to the political left. Zajada et al. (2006) saw true social justice as attained only through the harmonious cooperative effort of the citizens who, in their own self-interest, accept the current norms of morality as the price of membership in the community.

Distributive Justice

In the 1960s and 1970s, social justice was often framed as the pursuit of distributive justice, that is, of a fair distribution of social goods among individuals. A widespread belief in the benefits of opportunity, individual freedom and choice, and rewards based on merit undergirded this liberal regime of social cohesion (Green & Janmaat, 2011). Some of the associated issues concerned unequal rewards and the extent to which such rewards should be redistributed.

Sandel (2009) summarized the discourse as to whether a society is just as essentially asking how a society should distribute the things it prizes: income and wealth, duties and rights, powers and opportunities, offices and honours. From this perspective, Rawls' (1971) *A Theory of Justice* has been especially noteworthy (Zajada et al., 2006).

While critiquing Rawls and developing a different line of reasoning, Sen (2009) acknowledged the huge contribution that Rawls made to reviving philosophical interest in the subject of justice and in serving as a reference point for subsequent analyses of the concept. Rawls' foundational idea, in the view of Sen, was that justice has to be seen in terms of the demands of fairness: "a demand to avoid bias in our evaluations, taking note of the interests and concerns of others…a demand for impartiality" (p.54). Along with a principle about liberty, Rawls argued for equality of opportunity (individuals should not gain advantages simply because of birth or membership in a socially privileged group) and that inequality can only be justified if it can somehow make the least advantaged members of society better off than they would otherwise have been.

With respect to rewards and benefits, Rawls contended that the random distribution of talents and abilities across individuals no more justified an unequal distribution of rewards that did the contingencies of history and the accidents of birth into privileged groups. Thus Rawls undermined meritocracy based on natural talents, claiming it was no more morally justified than successes arising from social or economic advantages (Sandel, 2009). However, in Rawls' view, once the principles of social cooperation have been established, people are entitled to the benefits they attain within these parameters.

Social justice is not just about opportunities and inputs. It also concerns outcomes, such as who benefits and who pays in the long run (Brennan & Naidoo, 2008). As seen in Rawls' work, social justice does not necessarily mean the same outcomes for all. It can be about providing equal opportunities to access an unequal reward structure (Furlong & Cartmel, 2009).

Unit of Analysis

Some theories of justice focus on individuals, examining their rights and rewards within a free market economy, while others focus on group injustices and needs, which the state may be able to address only in more interventionist ways (Sturman, 1997). Anisef, Okihiro, and James, (1982), for example, argued that the ethical principle of individualism in education became a primary mechanism in legitimizing inequalities within a capitalist system in that successes and failures were seen as the result of the actions of the affected individual. When the spotlight turned from individuals to groups, a social democratic emphasis tended to emerge (Sturman, 1997).

Earlier conceptions of social justice focused on the individual. Although the landmark Truman Commission on higher education in the United States (Zook, 1947) explicitly sought to rectify group barriers of race, religion and curriculum to postsecondary enrolment, its emphasis was nevertheless on ensuring qualified individuals did not encounter insuperable economic barriers. It was only in later years that the pioneering commentary in the report on group barriers would come to be viewed as a component of social justice (Thelin, 2011).

Some scholars have associated social justice not with individuals or even groups, but to entire social systems (Zajada et al., 2006) that arise from social structures – social structures defined as patterns of behaviour that have become so entrenched that they are no longer truly voluntary (Reiman, 1990). This conception of social justice is reflected in analyses of systemic discrimination.

Power and Marginalized Groups

Issues of power and identity have become increasingly prominent in the social justice literature (Gereluk, 2008). This is reflected in critical perspectives on education in which the fundamental purpose of education is seen as improving social justice (McArthur, 2010). In discussing the identity aspects of social justice – race, gender, sexuality and so on – North (2008) started from the premise that dignity, not rights and privileges, is usually what is at stake in human relationships.

Young (1990, 1992) argued that social justice should be viewed as rectifying oppression and domination by majority groups that marginalize other groups, especially in the context of cultural justice and imperialism. She advocated a conception of justice that goes beyond the possession of goods to a wider context about the means to make decisions and to exercise capacities. Mills (2013) examined cultural domination using the example of a minority group having to subjugate its cultural ways of being and communicating to the often hostile norms of the dominant culture.

Fraser (1997) and Fraser and Honneth (2003) noted that cultural groups frequently want recognition and acceptance of difference – calls for gay pride being an example of such a difference – whereas distributive notions of social justice usually seek a reduction in difference, such as a more equal distribution of wealth and power. Fraser was formative in efforts to develop a theory of justice that incorporated consideration of both distribution and recognition, rather than treating them as separate understandings of social justice (Mills, 2013).

Alternative Taxonomies

As a transition from the foregoing sketch of social justice theory in general to the ways in which social justice has figured in policy rationales in education, some works from the 1980s provide a useful, if jargon laden, restatement of the discussion thus far.

Burbules and Lord (1981) described the concept of identical opportunities for all, emphasizing merit and assuming most individuals are capable of making their own way in life, as *formalism*. *Compensatory actualism* acknowledges that people start from different places in life and encounter various barriers in accessing opportunities. It therefore seeks to bring everyone to the same starting point to ensure a fair competition. *Alternative actualism* does not provide alternative or compensatory routes to the same goal but rather provides different routes of access to different end points. The varying goals are viewed as equally valuable, but groups and individuals should be allowed to choose among them. Formalism arises from a liberal/individualist tradition and the two versions of actualism are associated with social democratic traditions (Sturman, 1997).

Smith (1985) used a different vocabulary to analyze the varying conceptions of social justice. The *marginal* (formalist) conception leaves both the beginning state of individuals and of society untouched. The *compensatory* conception adjusts for differing beginning states of individuals but leaves social structures untouched. *Redistributive* social justice changes the beginning state of individuals and modifies social structures and rewards.

These summaries of social justice from the 1980s underplay the concept of social justice as cultural promotion and entirely miss the notion of spatial adaptation as more than compensatory adjustments or cultural promotion. A spatial version of social justice is introduced in a subsequent section.

Social Justice in Education

Access for all individuals to equal forms of education has frequently been seen as integral to a fair and democratic society (Blackmore, 2013). Liberal and democratic philosophies stress the importance of providing abundant opportunities, such as through education, for individuals to improve themselves and better their circumstances (Anisef et al., 1982). Thus a Canadian government report on postsecondary education concluded that the goal of equal access to postsecondary education had helped propel the dramatic expansion of education throughout the western world (Lelanc & Canada, 1987).

Burbules and Lord (1981) saw formalism as the earliest application of social justice to educational analysis, with the implicit or explicit expectation that it was equal opportunity to compete for unequal rewards (Porter, 1979). A meritocratic elaboration of the formalist view was that only a portion of the population has the academic ability to succeed in certain types of education (Furlong & Cartmel, 2009). Streaming and other mechanisms that enabled advantaged social groups to reproduce their privilege in their offspring thus managed to co-exist with what was seen as socially-just, equal educational opportunity.

Studies in the 1960s began to question the efficacy of formal education in reducing societal inequities. As the scholarly gaze broadened from equality of initial opportunity to encompass the results of education, schooling came to be seen as both a sorting mechanism and a means to foster equality of condition (Anisef et al., 1982). In other words, education could be both a tool for social control and a means of emancipation. Against this backdrop, compensatory actualism became the new orthodoxy with respect to social justice in education. The argument was that an open door philosophy to admissions was insufficient for students who faced barriers in passing through that door (Burbules & Lord, 1981). In practice, however, remedial

educational policies still emphasized equality of access and participation, rather than equality of outcomes in the long-term social and economic conditions of former students (Blackmore, 2013; Sturman, 1997).

Gradually, equal access came to be understood as helping the disadvantaged overcome barriers so that they truly had equal access. For example, student financial aid was introduced to help overcome financial barriers. Special programs emerged to encourage the enrolment of under-represented groups, such as women in trades and engineering.

Government policy in Canada used the language of ensuring postsecondary education was available on an equitable basis to all Canadians who were qualified and wanted to study (Andres, 1992). The caveats regarding qualification and desire provided space for a differentiated postsecondary system under the rubric of equity. Thus, a provincial report (Alberta Advanced Education, 1984) asserted that equal opportunity to access postsecondary education meant that different students should be offered different types and levels of education with varying starting points and outcomes.

Policy discussion of what constituted a socially just postsecondary education system tended to stop at this point, namely fair access using compensatory mechanisms. Other components of social justice theory entered public policy discourse less frequently. Brennan and Naidoo (2008) argued that the typical discussion of educational access in terms of participation and whether certain groups were under-represented (a focus on the private benefits of education) begged the question as to who in society ultimately benefits and who pays for postsecondary education (public benefits).

Social justice in terms of identity and cultural recognition – of valuing and fostering distinctive subcultures in contrast to including more individuals from minority groups in the

dominant educational culture – has garnered substantial attention over the past two decades in both the scholarly literature on education and within the curriculum and operating procedures of postsecondary institutions (for example, accommodation of the holy days of religious minorities and Indigenization). It has been less common, however, to find governments explicitly addressing the cultural identity aspect of social justice in public postsecondary policy, although the advancement of Aboriginal cultures has strengthened since the 1990s. One noteworthy exception concerns the longstanding recognition of rural communities in such countries as Canada, the United States and Australia where vast physical distances, and not only social and economic characteristics, distinguish rural communities from urban centres.

Rural Recognition through Spatial Adaptation

The educational literature discusses the special challenges facing rural communities, but not necessarily in terms of social justice. Nevertheless, the needs of rural communities from a social justice perspective were at least an implicit policy rationale in BC postsecondary education. Some portions of the community development literature help elucidate what social justice in far flung rural communities, or what I have called spatial adaptation, might mean.

The concept of community has multiple meanings. My emphasis here is on the older notion of a geographically bounded place in which a group of people shares a common interest (Garbovich, 2011). Community differs from the geographical concept of place in that an essential attribute of community is the social relationships that bond people. When, as frequently occurs, community is defined independently of physical space to refer to a common identity, a shared set of values and norms that are reflected in social relationships, community provides the foundation for the social justice concept of cultural recognition. My usage with respect to rural

communities, however, remains anchored in physical space and does not decouple it from geography (Bradshaw, 2013). When discussing faith-based institutions and Aboriginal-governed institutions, my usage of community shifts to a decoupled definition.

Chaskin (2013) argued that there are three lenses for viewing community: social, spatial and political. In the explicit policy of the BC government for public postsecondary institutions, the emphasis has been strongly on the spatial dimension. Nonetheless, the origins of policies leading to postsecondary structural change often lay in political communities. Social communities were factors in the emergence of the faith-based and Aboriginal-governed institutions.

Development can be defined as planned change intended to benefit the community, at least in some predefined way and in the eyes of some people (Garkovich, 2011). In the context of the community development literature, development has the connotations of capacity building, and of empowering individuals and groups to bring about changes that enhance their circumstances or make their communities more resilient (Ife, 2002; Ne, Hill, & Binns, 1997; Reisch, Ife, & Weil 2013). Hustedde and Ganowicz (2013) emphasize solidarity (a deeply shared identity and code of conduct) and agency (the capacity to intervene effectively) in their definition of community development. The focus on empowerment, agency and capacity building, in contrast to the delivery of goods and services to a passive citizenry, distinguishes community development from some other types of distributive justice initiatives.

Rural communities by themselves do not always have the capacity to bring about change and may therefore look to their local postsecondary institution, perhaps the largest organization in the community, for assistance as partners or leaders (Thompson, 2014). The institutions are seen not only as providers of educational services and brokers with other components of the

education system (Robinson, 2012), but as mechanisms for improving the local quality of life; Miller and Kissinger (2007) used the term social engine to describe this type of capacity building. College and university activities that facilitate local community development include comprehensive continuing education offerings of a general as well as a professional nature, business development services, a wide array of cultural activities and broad access to library, fitness and other facilities (Garza & Eller, 1998).

In reviewing models of lifelong learning, Schuetze (2008) concluded that the earliest of the four models of lifelong learning, one that was supported by UNESCO and the OECD into the early 1970s, was primarily a social justice and emancipatory proposition, with a strong emphasis on the advancement of an equitable society. A second model, a cultural one, aimed at fostering the life fulfillment and self-realization of the individual. Both these philosophies are reflected in policy rationales for rural community development.

Spatial adaptation involves elements of all three of the other forms of social justice in education: individual justice (as equal access to education as possible, given the constraints of critical mass, regardless of where one lives), compensatory justice (making allowances such as extra funding per student and providing special services to achieve equity) and cultural recognition (fostering a desired style of community life). The way in which all three are invoked concurrently and then expressed spatially makes for a distinctive manifestation of efforts to achieve social justice.

Human Capital Formation

With only universities having a mandate for research and knowledge creation, the primary way in which public policymakers have viewed postsecondary education as contributing

to the economic wellbeing of society has been in preparing students to enter the labour force. Since the late 1950s, understandings of this job preparation role have been informed by theory about human capital formation. In particular, human capital theory provided a strong justification for devoting public funds to education and, to a lesser extent, another reason in addition to such rationales as consumer protection for the state to be interested in private education.

Human capital, a more concrete and bounded construct than that of social justice, refers to any knowledge, skill or ability that increases the productivity of a worker and, by extension, that of the surrounding society (Cox, 2006; Scott & Marshall, 2009). It augments the classical economic understanding of the three factors of production: land (including all types of natural resources and raw materials), labour (human effort), and capital (expenditures used to provide means, such as factories, for producing goods and services).

If social justice is concerned with ensuring that everyone receives a fair share of the societal pie, then human capital theory focuses on increasing the size of the pie. Whether everyone benefits equitably from the incremental growth of the pie is not seen as particularly important; what matters is that everyone receives a larger slice than they would otherwise have received (consistent with Rawls' notion of justice).

As will be evident in the following chapters, theory about human capital formation has continually informed federal Canadian postsecondary policy since 1960. Its role and meaning in BC government educational policy has been more variable, both over time and across fields of study.

Policymakers and the public alike are well aware of the wide range of benefits[1] arising from increased levels of postsecondary education, benefits that range from generic skills (such as critical thinking) through cultural and quality of life considerations, to economic benefits. Among the numerous rationales for the state's interest and support of postsecondary education, one set of benefits, namely the economic, has persisted in the expressed policy rationales for devoting public resources to postsecondary education and to regulating it even when it is privately funded. Grubb and Lazerson (2004) argued that the evolution of the economic purposes for schooling was the single most important educational development of the twentieth century in North America.

Two theoretical literatures undergird the economic rationales for state expenditure and regulation in BC postsecondary education: a general one about human capital formation that is applicable throughout developed countries, and regional economic development literature that concerns the wellbeing of smaller and remote communities (Dawkins, 2003; Stimson, Stough, & Roberts, 2006). Regional economics is concerned with more than just education and the characteristics of workers, but enhancing the capacity and stability of the labour force for economic purposes is one argument that has been used to justify postsecondary development throughout the province.

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[1] Examples of statements about the range of benefits include "research that drives economic growth and addresses pressing social problems" (Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, 2014, p.1); "to provide British Columbians with post-secondary education and training to improve the quality of life and citizenship experience in the province and to enhance current and future job prospects" (British Columbia, Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, 1996, p. 2); "to nurture active citizenship and community engagement" (Plant, 2007, p.12); "provide an opportunity for students to obtain a broad general education that will develop their capacities and creative talents and enable them to grow as human beings and good citizens of their community in aesthetic and/or applied pursuits" (Douglas College, 2015); and "to develop skills and knowledge…to participate fully in the economic, social and cultural life of the province" (British Columbia, Ministry of Advanced Education, 2005, p.8).

As will be described later, human capital theory in BC postsecondary policy has appeared in two forms: a generic usage about a well-educated workforce in a knowledge economy and, especially in vocational education, a usage that is more occupationally-specific. These two variations arise as much from the ways in which governments have used human capital theory as from the theory itself.

Origins

Although the associated concepts have a longer history, the term human capital was introduced only in the 1950s and then developed by economists from the Chicago school, such as Schultz and Becker, in the early 1960s (Mincer, 1958; Tan, 2014). Even though it concerned the development of skills and abilities in people – that is, in labour – the use of the term capital drew attention to the investment that individuals and organizations make in people by providing learning opportunities to increase future rewards or returns. The concept of human capital shifted attention away from the accumulation of physical capital as a factor of production and towards the development of the labour force (Savvides & Stengos, 2009).

Schultz (1961) critiqued the classical economic notion of labour as fostering a notion of manual work in which workers resemble each other and are therefore relatively interchangeable. Instead, Schultz noted the role of specialized or innovative knowledge and skill in economic development. Since then, economists have increasingly seen entrepreneurship, or enterprise, as a fourth factor of production, with human capital falling within this fourth category. Notions of human capital and the knowledge-based economy have become mainstream in economic and public policy discourse (De la Fuente & Ciccone, 2003; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2004).

Schultz (1960, 1961) identified human capital formation exclusively in terms of formal education, an attribute that is easy to measure and which frequently appears as a proxy for more encompassing ways of forming human capital. Becker (1964) broadened the scope to include both general and specific on-the-job training, informal learning, and other investments that improve the wellbeing of employed persons, such as in support of physical and mental health.

The idea of human capital was initially viewed with suspicion, not because of the validity of the idea itself but because of potentially unwelcome implications. In his presidential address to the American Economics Association, Schultz (1961) acknowledged that some people found it offensive to think of investing in human beings:

> Our values and beliefs inhibit us from looking upon human beings as capital goods, except in slavery, and this we abhor…Hence, to treat human beings as wealth that can be augmented by investment runs counter to deeply held values. It seems akin to reducing man once again to a mere material component, to something akin to property. (p. 2)

In recognizing the often bitter attacks on research into human capital formation arising from fear that important cultural values would suffer, Becker (1964) said that a full assessment of the social rate of return on college education would include cultural and civic considerations, but that they were beyond the scope of his study. He did comment that because liberal education can be identified with flexible education, an important economic argument for liberal education can be made in addition to those based on intellectual and cultural considerations.

Adoption

The contribution of such researchers as Mincer (1958), Denison (1962), and Becker (1964) was to change the way in which education was viewed. Rather than being seen as an expenditure or a form of consumption, education came to be seen as a long-term investment that

benefitted individuals through increased earnings and society through increased productivity and innovation (Russell, 2013).

In an influential report in the United States, Denison (1962) reported that not only were increased levels of education among the largest sources of past and prospective economic growth for the nation, but schooling was one of the most amenable factors to government influence in the macro economic equation. Within a few years, human capital theory had attracted the attention of Canadian policymakers, championed by the Economic Council of Canada.

In its first annual report, the Economic Council of Canada (1964) concluded that the future prosperity of Canada would depend in large measure on an adequate supply of professional, technical, managerial and other highly skilled manpower (in the terminology of the day). The following year, it made a stronger statement:

> Education is a crucially important factor contributing to economic growth and to rising living standards…we would not wish to detract in any way from the basic view that education is a means of enlarging man's understanding, stimulating his creative talents, enabling his aspirations, and enriching human experience. But education also has economic aspects…[addressing a] vital need for creating and maintaining an adequate supply of professional, technical, managerial and other highly skilled manpower as a basis for future growth of the Canadian economy. (Economic Council of Canada, 1965, p. 71)

The Council then substantiated these claims with a staff report that explored human capital formation in detail (Bertram, 1966). The report touched on the accumulating evidence that education was a basic element contributing to the earnings of people and also to the economy or society as a whole. It said that the social (or public) rate of return on a university education in the United States had been estimated at between 8 and 11% annually, while Canadian estimates of the private returns of university education were in the range of 15 to 20% annually. Finally, it concluded with the policy recommendation that not only is education "a significant factor in

raising productivity and living standards, but also that a relative increase in expenditure on education would contribute to an efficient allocation of resources" (p. 64).

From the United States and Canada, the first countries to introduce mass higher education, human capital theory spread around the world in the 1980s as a rationale for expanding postsecondary education. The perceived importance of human capital as a determining factor of economic success prompted numerous countries to invest heavily in education and training (Brown, 1999). More recently, Metcalfe and Fenwick (2009) observed that the Canadian federal government has continued to follow encouragement from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to develop policies that promote the capacity of the citizenry to learn, adopt technology, and to embrace informal learning as an accompaniment to formal learning.

Human capital formation, along with innovation theory and attention to the role of information and communication technology, has been an important component of the discourse concerning the knowledge economy (Jorgenson, 2012). Drucker (1969) popularized the term knowledge economy, with writers such as Porter (1971) and Bell (1973) further promoting post-industrial theory. This school of thought argued that an implication of a shift in western economies from materials handling to the processing of information was that much of the labour force would be converted into knowledge workers, and that such workers would need to pursue lifelong learning to meet the growing knowledge demands of their jobs (Livingstone & Guile, 2012).

By the 1980s, though, economists increasingly realized that the connection between research/knowledge production and social and economic development was complicated (Sorlin, Vessuri, & Teknik,, 2007). Despite lacklustre empirical evidence at the societal, as opposed to

the individual, level, advocates of the knowledge economy continued to assert the importance of scientific knowledge and a well-educated workforce in post-industrial societies (Livingstone, 2012). Powell and Snellman (2004) contended that the worldwide transformation of many polytechnics into universities was part of an upgrading movement to signal membership in the knowledge economy, even though substantive measurement of the knowledge economy remained elusive.

Concepts

A key concept in human capital theory is that of the differing private and public returns to investments in people. Individuals spend money and forego income to acquire learning that they hope will result in higher future incomes. The comparison between the initial investment and future income of those individuals represents the private rate of return. While the technical details of empirically estimating private returns may be complex, this task is less challenging and controversial than the literature regarding public returns.

The notion of public returns rests on the proposition that a higher skill level in the workforce increases production capacity and the ability to gain a competitive advantage through innovation (Lindahl & Canton, 2007). Thus investment in human resources is not only crucial for individuals but is claimed to be the key to economic success of regions and nations in the contemporary world (Tan, 2014). While the logic is that human capital accumulation will make a country richer in the longer run, theoretical and empirical verification of this logic has been difficult and inconsistent (Savvides & Stengos, 2009).

Empirical evidence about public and private returns is discussed below, but the application of human capital theory to public educational policy was well entrenched by the end

of the 1960s. This embracing of human capital formation as a rationale for the state's expansion of postsecondary education persisted throughout, and sometimes despite, the emerging empirical studies.

The economic literature refers to the non-economic benefits of human capital formation – that is, the social, cultural, intellectual and aesthetic benefits – as positive externalities (Tan, 2014). These externalities seem especially likely to be mentioned when economists attempt to estimate the social or public returns to human capital investment. Thus, for example, De la Fuente and Ciccone (2003) concluded that education becomes an attractive investment for society, and not only for the individual, when non-market returns such as social cohesion are brought into the calculation.

Critiques

Although at the most general level, human capital theory has persisted and become increasingly influential, its significance has fluctuated over time and the academic discourse about it has been considerably more nuanced and skeptical than the popular discourse in at least North America.

The early proponents of human capital theory explicitly acknowledged the lack of empirical studies to either confirm or refute their ideas. In speculating on what he thought might be a valuable role for general education in enhancing economic productivity, Schultz (1961) stressed that the state of knowledge on that issue was woefully meager. A few years later, Becker (1964) indicated that while the empirical basis was improving, a tremendous amount of the evidence was circumstantial.

Two considerations seem to have constrained the empirical basis of human capital theory. One is that several aspects of human capital formation are difficult to measure. The most frequent measure of human capital in international comparative studies is the level of formal education (Savvides & Stengos, 2009), a relatively robust and easily obtained measure. However, the quality of that formal education and other ways of developing the skill level of labour – such as on-the-job training, the role of informal education, and even the general health of the working population – tend to be ignored because it is challenging to obtain reliable, much less comparable, data on those topics.

The second research challenge is that both theoretical and empirical studies of human capital are often very technical and not accessible to those who seek policy applications of the resulting insights (Hartog & Maassen van den Brink, 2007). So although the theory is straightforward at the general level, and the theoretical foundations have not changed much since the 1960s (Tarique, 2013), systematic research on how best to incorporate human capital in theories of economic growth really only started in the late 1980s (Lindahl & Canton, 2007).

One of the factors stimulating research on human capital was the emergence of endogenous growth and related theory that emphasized the importance of ideas and human capital in economic development (Mankiw, Romer, & Weil, 1992; Romer, 1990, 1993; Savvides & Stengos, 2009). Endogenous growth theory held that a skilled labour force, knowledge and innovation are significant drivers of economic growth – factors that are within the internal control of an economy, in contrast to external growth stimulants such as foreign trade and business developments in other regions or countries. Although the private sector can conduct research and development, it draws upon a skilled labour force that only the public sector can

provide. Growth theory is silent, however, as to what exactly the state might do to best foster technical progress (Cox, 2006).

Research has confirmed robust private returns to individuals for their investment in education, but findings about macro returns to the public at large have at best been inconclusive (Lindahl & Canton, 2007; Russell, 2013; Tan, 2014). The optimism of early human capital theorists waned as massive increases in educational expenditures failed to rectify the slow economic growth of the late 1970s and early 1980s (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1989).

Although policymakers realized by 1980 that while an educated workforce was an important contributor to economic prosperity, human capital was no longer seen as necessarily the key component in the new understandings of economic development (Stager, 1982). The report of a Canadian parliamentary task force, *Work for Tomorrow* (Allmand, 1981), illustrated the changing viewpoint. The task force was charged with examining the dilemma of simultaneous high unemployment and shortages of skilled workers. It concluded that what were then termed manpower training programs were not achieving their objectives.

The OECD found that investment in human capital seemed to be effective only when made in conjunction with other policies as part of an overall strategy that included establishing an appropriate social context, as well as restructuring and modernizing the economy (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1989). The challenge the OECD saw in 1989 was not to determine whether education and training are factors in economic performance but rather to identify the means, directions and the responsibilities of the various parties to improve their provision. Nevertheless, the OECD (2012) continued to assert that

investment in human capital was the single most effective way of promoting not just economic growth but also of distributing its benefits more fairly.

Other critiques of human capital theory have noted the assumption that while the state may seek to foster and shape certain types of human capital formation, ultimately the decision to engage in learning is taken by individuals seeking to maximize their interests (Tan, 2014). In this respect, the theory is a form of rational choice theory to which the sociological critiques of individualistic explanations of behaviour apply (Scott & Marshall, 2009).

Human capital theory operates according to supply and demand, leaving it to employers to decide how to reward people for acquiring learning (Davies & Guppy, 2010). Brown (1999) argued that it either ignores interpersonal, teamwork and creative skills or defines them in technical ways that see them as individual competencies that can be taught through formal education.

Regional Economic Development

Many theories have been proposed since the mid 1950s to explain why regions vary in their amount and types of economic growth[2] (Dawkins, 2003; Szajnowska-Wysocka, 2009). Most of these theories are not relevant to the educational policy rationales being examined in the present study. Nevertheless, a certain aspect of regional economic development concerns labour force skills, touching on social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977; Coleman, 1990), and brings a spatial dimension to human capital theory.

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[2] Theories of regional economic growth include basic product theory, demand driven/export theory, supply side theory, clustering and cumulative causation, growth poles, networks, core and periphery models, and innovative environments.

Spatially oriented theory is more relevant in BC postsecondary education than in a number of other jurisdictions. Unlike some regions, spatial considerations, often expressed in terms of providing better geographical access for students, have constituted a key theme in the history of BC postsecondary education – a reflection of the vast distances in the province and the existence of only two urban centers with a population over 150,000. Questions of geography and skill formation overlap in BC, furnishing a link between the human capital discussion above and the regional economic development discussion below.

Some recent position papers from the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (now Colleges and Institutes Canada) illustrate how regional considerations have entered policy discourse about human capital formation. The Association described colleges and institutes in rural and remote communities as being the hub of community response and local socio-economic wellbeing, mandated to anticipate and meet the changing knowledge and skill needs of their regions (Association of Canadian Community Colleges, 2007). It noted that small and medium-sized enterprises, especially in smaller centres, regularly turn to their local postsecondary institution for help with innovation, research and development (Association of Canadian Community Colleges, 2010). It claimed that the key to economic and social development in remote communities lay in the knowledge and skill base of human capital (Association of Canadian Community Colleges, 2010).

The trend in regional economic theory has been to be supplement attention to attracting employers to regions with consideration of how to foster skilled, entrepreneurial populations, and of how to otherwise enhance the quality of life in the region (Blakely, 1994). Especially with the ascendency since the late 1980s of endogenous growth theory (Mankiw, Romer, & Weil,1992; Romer, 1990, 1993) and the recognition of knowledge-based economies, "soft" or "smart"

60

infrastructure such as information, education, amenities, environmental quality, entertainment, venture capital and flexible institutions have been emphasized (Stimson, Stough, & Roberts, 2006). Topics ignored by classical economics – the quality of life in a region, a diversity of employment opportunities, greater social and financial equity, and sustainable development – have entered the literature of regional economic development.

Nijkamp and Abreu (2009) concluded that regional development policy has moved increasingly towards knowledge and innovation policy, with leadership and institutional qualities having a great impact on regional welfare. They said that the spatial distribution of knowledge is accepted as an important success factor for regional development in an open competitive economic system, and that a remaining debate in endogenous growth theory is simply whether the relationship between knowledge and development is unidirectional or circular.

Marketization

My rationale for grouping several topics from diverse literatures about neoliberalism, public administration, and *institutional* theory into a marketization category is that they all help explain how a market approach has permeated the means, and even the taken-for-granted expectations, by which postsecondary institutions garner resources to operate. Competition is the theme throughout the disparate discussion: intentionally fostered or otherwise, for tangible items such as money and students as well as for intangibles such as prestige and legitimacy, and whether directly induced or the consequence of some other action. When considering competition for intangibles, the following discussion sometimes turns from what governments have done to the behaviour of postsecondary institutions to help with interpreting the impact of government actions.

The policy goals throughout this section are efficiency (maximizing output relative to inputs) and effectiveness (actually achieving goals). Whereas social justice and human capital rationales embody notions of what is desirable to accomplish, and despite the values embedded in market approaches, this section primarily addresses questions of means rather than ends (how to achieve social goals, rather than what those goals should be.)

Returning to the metaphor of a societal pie in which social justice is concerned with dividing the pie fairly, and human capital formation helps to increase the size of the pie, marketization seeks to provide a sharp knife and well-shaped lifter to obtain precise slices of pie.

This discussion of marketization is presented in three sections. The first, about neoliberalism, presents more theoretical concepts. Neoliberalism as an ideology, however, has to be operationalized in some way in order to affect postsecondary institutions. The second section thus explores how states have implemented neoliberal tenets through the use of a body of public administration theory known as new public management.

While I find much about neoliberal analyses to be compelling with respect to research universities, they do not illuminate as much as I would like about the growth of market forces, such as increased competition and efforts to enhance institutional prestige (Blackmore, 2016), in other postsecondary sectors. Moving beyond the mainstream literature about academic capitalism and neoliberalism in higher education (Chan & Fisher, 2008; Marginson, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004), the third section presents selected concepts drawn from *institutional* theory – *institution* in the sociological sense of norms of social life and worldviews, as distinct from institutions as educational organizations – to complete the marketization discussion.

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is one of the most significant social developments of the past century (Ward, 2012), an overarching worldview in which other ideas about social and cultural life exist (Roberts & Peters, 2008). Based on principles that see the free market as the best way of preserving the rights of individuals, neoliberal thinking has become so pervasive that alternative ideologies have diminished or disappeared from general public discourse (Boas & Gans-Morse, 2009). In contemporary postsecondary discourse, it is frequently associated with discussions of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004), globalization (for example, Levin, 2001), commodification (for example, Ball, 2012), the knowledge economy (for example, Roberts & Peters, 2008) and managerialism (for example, Marginson & Considine, 2000).

The many variations of neoliberalism, differing especially in the ways and extents to which neoliberalism has been implemented, share the ideological principle of preferring the market (understood as a non-political, non-cultural machine) as the way to organize political and economic life (Mudge, 2008). The market is seen as not only efficient on a technical level, but also as a morally superior way of expressing the desires of individuals and resolving divergent opinions (Peters, n.d.).

Larner (2000) proposed that five values underpin neoliberalism: the sanctity of the individual, freedom of choice, market security, a laissez faire economy, and minimal government. Harvey (2007) concurred with this list, but claimed that if just one had to be chosen as the cardinal virtue, it would be that individual freedoms are best guaranteed by the freedom of markets and trade. This approach draws upon notions of human dignity and individual freedom as foundational, rather than on social or collective considerations.

Individuals, in the neoliberal view, are rational and self-interested. Every social transaction is seen as an entrepreneurial activity for personal gain. Competitiveness is viewed as a mechanism for quality and efficiency, governments should rule from a distance, services should be privatized as much as possible, and the economy should be open (Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill, 2004).

Although neoliberalism is strongly associated with marketization, the free market is seen as merely the means of protecting individual liberty and of fostering individual and collective initiative (Lilley, 2006). With this sort of freedom, according to the neoliberal argument, not only are society's resources allocated efficiently but the creative potential of humans is released, resulting in innovations and gains that ultimately benefit everyone (Thorensen & Lie, 2006).

The intellectual roots of neoliberalism are often traced back to Friedrich von Hayek (1944), but it was Milton Friedman (1962) who became the main scholarly proponent from the 1960s to the 1980s (Steger & Roy, 2010; Ward, 2012). With neoliberal ideology driving some profound economic reforms in Latin American countries such as Chile, developments that were often authoritarian and seen as socially unjust, neoliberalism shifted during the 1980s from being a moderate form of liberalism to acquire a radical connotation (Boas & Gans-Morse, 2009).

Because of the negative aspects of the imposition of neoliberal reforms in less developed countries as a condition of financial aid by supranational organizations such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and reflecting critiques of the consequences of neoliberal policies in more developed countries (see below), Thorsen and Lie (2006) observed that sometimes the term neoliberal has come to be used to denigrate almost any recent economic or political development that is deemed to be undesirable, stripping the term of meaning. Brown's (2003) assessment of why the term became pejorative arises from instances where it has

deepened local poverty, enabled some wealthier nations to dominate less developed countries, and has been compatible with authoritarian and even corrupt regimes. As a result, few if any proponents of neoliberal ideas self-identify as neoliberal (Boas & Gans-Morse, 2009).

Neoconservatism and classical liberalism share with neoliberalism the economic presuppositions of rational, self-interested individuals, the allocative efficiency and effectiveness of markets, laissez-faire, and a commitment to free trade (Olssen & Peters, 2005). Neoliberalism differs, though, from the other two ideologies in the relation of the state to the individual; neoliberalism provides a distinct social-political analysis (Brown, 2003) despite its vague and contested variations (Thorensen & Lie, 2006).

While classical liberalism seeks to protect the individual from the state (Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill, 2004), it simultaneously seeks to do so on an egalitarian basis that ensures basic human and civil rights for all (Brown, 2003; Thorensen & Lie, 2006). It envisions an activist state that redistributes wealth and power to foster a more equitable society.

Neoliberalism rejects the notion of an activist or welfare state. Rather, it sees the state's role as simply ensuring the laws and other conditions are present for markets to operate efficiently (Olssen & Peters, 2005). The market is assumed in the long run to bring about optimal social and economic equity.

The distinguishing feature of neoconservatism concerns personal and collective morality, a rejection of the moral permissiveness than can flow from individualism. Harvey (2007) claims that neoconservatives share the tolerance of neoliberals of dominant class power, but that they attempt to legitimize that power through a climate of consent around a coherent set of moral values. Without morality, neoconservatives fear that unbridled individualism can undermine the

65

market and create ungovernable situations. Lilley (2006) quoted Harvey in an interview where he described neoconservatives as control freaks sitting on a neoliberal agenda.

In contrast, neoliberalism eliminates the distinction between market and non-market activities, embedding and permeating market thinking and values into all social activities (Brown, 2003; Ward, 2012). The image is of people either operating as consumers (of health services, for example) or investors (in education, for example), making private choices in a game-structure controlled by government but with providers from around the world competing to provide the best and cheapest service (Marginson, 1997).

Neoliberals do not see markets as arising naturally or flourishing on their own (Brown, 2003), and thus the distinction between government and governance (Larner, 2000) becomes important. Direct regulation may be reduced, but central government sets the rules as to what can and cannot be done, governing or steering from a distance (Marginson, 1997; Ward, 2012). The result is that the neoliberal state leads and controls citizens without feeling responsible for their wellbeing (Lemke, 2001). Government workers shift from seeing themselves as public servants, entrusted with furthering the public good, to becoming responsive to market conditions and contributing to the success of government enterprises (Steger & Roy, 2010). More discussion of the role of public employees and of public administration under a neoliberal regime appears in the following section on new public management.

A substantial literature critiques neoliberalism, often seeking not so much to refine concepts or to present alternative formulations as simply to inventory perceived deficiencies and to halt its implementation. One area of critique concerns values with respect to social connections and responsibilities. Bourdieu (1988) argued that neoliberalism leads to a destruction of universal values and a suspicion of collective structures. Ward (2012) expressed

these ideas as people being conceptualized less as socially-connected citizens and moral members of a culture, and more as self-interested competitors, self-actualizing entrepreneurs and rational consumers. Brown (2003) claimed that the weakening of non-market morality erodes the foundations of democracy. The cult of the winner sees life as a struggle for everything (Bourdieu, 1998) in which the weak – those with lower incomes and less social and cultural capital – are disadvantaged (Rhoades & Slaughter, 2004).

Setting aside values and the desirability of democracy, Harvey's (2007) assessment at a technical level was that neoliberals favour governance by experts and elites, relying on the judiciary more than parliament, and insulating key organizations such as central banks from democratic pressures. In this respect, individuals may be free to choose, but they are not supposed to construct strong collective organizations or to resist class power and governance by expert elites. Harvey also noted that the market premise that all participants have equal and sufficient access to information is often not met, with better-informed and more powerful actors therefore having a self-reinforcing advantage.

After two decades of hegemony, some commentators have suggested a post neoliberal period may be emerging (Hunter, 2013), drawing upon such evidence as Craig and Porter's (2003) term "inclusive liberalism" and the United Kingdom's "third way" politics (Giddens, 1999). The argument is not that neoliberal economic ideology is being abandoned but rather that a balance is now being sought between right wing economics and left wing social policy. The view of Peters (2008) was that by the late 1990s, the dogmatism of the neoliberal right was being questioned as a serious threat to social justice, national cohesion, effective public administration and even democracy itself.

Public Choice Theory

Public choice theory, especially the portions of that literature dealing with bureaucracy, helps explain the receptivity of governments in North America to using neoliberalism in the administration of postsecondary education – not hitherto a particularly problematic or contentious aspect of public administration.

Public choice theory uses economic methods and concepts to analyze the political process with respect to the workings of politicians and bureaucrats. It concludes that government is inherently inefficient and that free riding and the strategic concealment of individual preferences undermine the legitimacy of democracy (Mueller, 2004). Although public choice theory examines how political decision-making can lead to results that do not seem to be what the electorate wants, the emphasis in this review is on the subfield that studies bureaucracy and the public officials who either provide or regulate postsecondary education.

The seminal works on public choice emerged in the 1960s. Subsequent literature tended to build on those foundations, rather than to shift them. It did not seek empirical verification of its theoretical conclusions, at least not in the early years (Devine, 2004). Buchanan and Tullock (1962) became the leading proponents (Butler, 2012), concluding that the public interest cannot be derived from the aggregation of individual preferences, and that any coherent social welfare approach will always involve some groups imposing their will on others (Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill, 2004).

Tullock (1965) and Downs (1967) portrayed bureaucracy as shaped by employees acting in their self-interest, a sharp departure from the way rational choice had previously been applied to organizations (Moe, 1997). However, it was the work of Niskanen (1971) on bureaucratic growth and budget maximization that became the most influential (Moe, 1997). Stigler (1971)

concluded that regulated groups have incentives to co-opt their regulators. The stage was set for the adoption of new public management techniques based on the conclusions that regulation does not work very well, bureaucrats are self-serving, and special interest groups dominate politics.

Scruton (2007) encapsulated the negative attitude towards the public sector evident in many public choice articles:

> By adopting an ideology which favors the needy, the minorities, and the powerless, the bureaucrat legitimizes the transfer of funds to his own profession, and makes available to himself and his colleagues the means to live comfortably at public expense while enjoying enhanced social status as a purveyor of official charity. (p. 568)

With public choice theory providing respectability to skepticism about the efficiency and effectiveness of bureaucracies, and with Keynesian economics withering under global recessions and neoliberal critiques, governments across the western world became increasingly receptive in the 1990s to ways of reforming public administration. The approaches that emerged came to be known collectively as new public management.

New Public Management

Neoliberalism is an ideology involving many concepts and principles that need to be operationalized. Political rhetoric and official policy rationales may espouse a neoliberal philosophy, but these do not guarantee that what is implemented is consistent with neoliberal tenets. Conversely, neoliberal actions can be quietly taken with no accompanying verbiage. The resulting question concerns the markers that can be used to identify neoliberal actions with respect to postsecondary policy, regardless of what is or is not being said. My answer is that although new public management (NPM) is not a direct outcome of neoliberalism, and although proponents of other political and economic approaches can use many of its techniques, NPM has

been a primary means by which western governments have expressed neoliberalism in the public sector (Marginson, 2012).

New public management, a term popularized by Hood (1991), is both an ideology that brings neoliberal ideas about marketization and the state into the public sector and a set of practices and techniques (Christensen, 2008; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). The ideological aspect of new public management seeks to foster half a dozen behaviours:

- a focus on outputs, performance and results rather than inputs, effort and procedural compliance;

- attention to customer-service and a user-orientation;

- cutting costs and red tape to increase efficiency;

- promoting the benefits of competition and quasi markets;

- empowering employees to be problem solvers and to find innovative ways of achieving goals;

- taking a business-oriented approach to government.

(Christensen, 2008; Gultekin, 2011; Lynn, 2006; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011; Tolofari, 2005).

Several techniques are viewed as especially helpful for achieving the above goals:

- deregulation and privatization;

- decentralization and detaching policy formulation from policy execution;

- creation of small, single-purpose organizations that do not overlap with other organizations;

- contracting and the use of principal-agent arrangements, with the monitoring of performance targets;

- competition for funding;

- performance pay.

(Lynn, 2006; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011; Tolofari, 2005).

Table 2, excerpted and paraphrased from Roberts (1999), highlights some of the differences between new public management and previous, Weberian conceptions of public administration.

Table 2: Public Administration Principles

Dimension	Traditional Model	New Public Management
Agency	Laws and political processes	Competitive markets, individualistic self-interest, customer orientation
Key Success	Equity, responsiveness, political appropriateness	Efficiency, effectiveness, customer satisfaction
Values	Public interest, consistency of bureaucracy with the electorate	Service quality, accountability, valuing of the private sector
Structure	Hierarchy	Networks of self-organizing teams
Jobs	Standardized, formalized	Multi-tasked, outcomes oriented
Techniques	Routinized, sequential	Customized, cooperation with private sector
Rewards	Rule based	Incentive based
Culture	Follow rules, minimize risk, stability	Manage risks, solve problems, improvements

Hood and Peter's (2004) assessment of NPM reformers was that they were selective, casual and uncritical in the type of administrative theory and evidence they employed. From this viewpoint, the NPM movement was essentially ideological, consistent with an implementation driven from the top by politicians (Tolofari, 2005). NPM seems to have been adopted in some countries partly just to participate in an international trend, and was used in those countries to address issues from the perspectives of practitioners rather than theorists (Lynn, 2006).

The federal government in Canada, after making some pragmatic reforms and mild efforts to downsize government, was lukewarm to NPM. Haligan (2011) called Canada the most enigmatic of the Anglophone countries with respect to NPM in that Canada was the first to explore management reforms but slow to adopt them. He saw public service in Canada as remaining unmanagerialized in several respects. (Managerialism in this context is the belief that organizations function best when power, control and decision-making are centralized among professionally trained and supposedly objective managers (Ward, 2012).)

Lorenz (2012), writing about NPM in universities, claimed that neoliberalism in the public sector was characterized by just two features: free market rhetoric and intensive managerial control practices. His view was that NPM promoted the takeover by distant managers of activities that were formerly run by professionals in accordance with their own standards, resulting in a loss of autonomy. As something of a counterpoint to Lorenz's perspective, Christensen (2008) found that, worldwide, the decentralizing management techniques of NPM, by which managers were empowered to choose the appropriate way of meeting government goals, have been more prevalent than centralizing ones.

In reviewing the literature about the effects of NPM on public sector efficiency, Andrews (2011) concluded that despite the many claims and counter-claims, there remained a dearth of compelling evidence to support any position about the effects of NPM. A theme in studies by political scientists has been that NPM undermines political control as the distance to subordinate units increases, as services become fragmented and therefore become challenging to coordinate, and as administration becomes dominated by judicial processes (Christensen, 2008). The vertical separation of policy-making and implementation, and the horizontal splitting of agencies into single purpose agencies, has made cooperation across organizational boundaries more

difficult (Christensen & Laegreid, 2007; Lynn, 2006). Thus post-NPM concepts such as joined-up-government and whole-government have emerged (Bogdanor, 2005).

Institutional Theory

Neoliberalism creates competitive, uncertain environments for public postsecondary institutions in which little can be taken for granted and self-interest is rewarded. If postsecondary institutions have experienced such environments, then one would expect to find examples of them engaging in competitive, quasi market-like behaviours.

Institutional theory helps explain change and stability in institutions by examining their relationship with other *institutions* and the broader environment. It also helps explain why competition and market behaviours do not necessarily focus on increasing efficiency in organizations. Among its many concepts, three are useful for my purposes in understanding competitive behaviour in educational organizations: attempts to enhance organizational reputation (external legitimacy), the copying of high status competitors that results in organizations looking similar (mimetic isomorphism), and the adoption of high level goals that have little impact at the frontlines (loose coupling).

This section begins by briefly situating *institutional* theory and, of particular relevance for this study, neoinstitutional theory. It then elaborates only the above three concepts because the analyses in subsequent chapters draws selectively on *institutional* theory.

An *institution* is a sociological concept concerning sets of norms that are generalized across a group of people as a common way of acting, thinking and feeling, and which entail power relationships that help entrench them (Scott, 2007). Examples include private property, marriage, democracy, and professionalism. Lincoln (1995) emphasized that *institutions* acquire

meaning and stability in their own right rather than as means to an end. They are widely followed without debate and are long lasting (Tolbert & Zucker, 1983); indeed, the understandings may be so taken for granted that alternative ways of seeing the world are unthinkable (Zucker, 1983).

Political science, economics, and sociology have all developed large literatures with different emphases and analyses of *institutions*. It is from the sociological stream, particularly as it interacts with organizational studies within administrative science, that the following material is drawn. Selznick (1949), especially, brought *institutionalism* into organizational studies through his study of the Tennessee River Valley Authority (Gray, 2008).

Organizations sometime behave in ways that defy economic logic or which seem irrational; *institutional* theory offers a way of making sense of these situations (Suddaby, 2010). Such theory provides intermediate level explanation, more than simple description or isolated case studies but less than universal generalization (Scott, 2014). Increasingly, under the rubric of neoinstitutionalism, scholars seek to contextualize their analyses, situating the organizations under study in their wider environment and social context, using an open systems approach (Pedersen & Dobbin, 2006; Scott, 2014).

According to Gray (2008), the term neoinstitutional was introduced in the mid 1990s, shifting attention from what happens within an organization to also consider the broader environment in which it operates. The defining characteristic of neoinstitutionalism in the view of Powell and Colyvas (2008) is a focus on the organizational field (defined by Scott (2014) as a collection of diverse, interdependent organizations that participate in a common meaning system), taking into account both competitive and cooperative pressures that shape organizations. Thus Gray (2008) saw the old *institutionalism* more as a theory of stability, whereas neoinstitutionalism incorporates attention to change.

Neoinstitutionalism considers questions of the legitimacy of an organization within its relevant organizational field. Carter and Clegg (2011) proposed that legitimacy is the master concept of neoinstitutionalism, with the goal of neoinstitutionalism being to understand the ways by which the socially constructed external world comes to shape how people and organizations structure their categories of thought and resulting actions. The repertoire of possible options in an organization is bound by the rules, norms, and beliefs of the multiple organizational fields in which it operates (Scott, 2014).

Legitimacy is the first concept I draw from *institutional* theory. In addition to material resources and technical information, organizations require social acceptability and creditability in order to survive (Scott, 2001). Organizational legitimacy helps in accessing resources and markets easily, especially as some stakeholders will only engage with organizations they view as legitimate (Brown, 1998). Meyer and Scott (1983) described a completely legitimate organization as one about which no questions could be raised. In a similar vein, Suchman (1995) defined legitimacy as a generalized perception that actions are desirable, proper or appropriate.

Legitimacy is the basis on which prestige, a favourable (and often culturally conservative) social evaluation, emerges. In contrast, reputation (a generalized expectation about future performance) and status (a competitive ranking) may concern organizations that are not viewed as especially legitimate (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008).

Meyer and Rowan (1977) provide a linkage between legitimacy and organizational form: sometimes innovations are adopted not because they are seen as improving performance but because they enhance the reputation of the organization as a progressive, responsive entity. When the best means of producing desired outputs are ambiguous, as is the case in education, then signaling credibility and legitimacy to key stakeholders become important considerations

(Morphew & Huisman, 2002). Organizational structure and nomenclature are means of sending such signals, which leads to the second concept I use from *institutional* theory, namely mimetic isomorphism.

Isomorphism is a similarity in form or structure, sometimes with the implication that the corresponding entities may have had different origins. In *institutional* theory, this type of conformity among organizations can arise from external cues in the organizational field about effective ways to enhance legitimacy and compete for resources. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) identified three mechanisms leading to isomorphism: coercive (requirements from regulatory bodies, such as legislation establishing the governance structure of universities), normative (such as professional standards and expectations arising from the shared formal education of workers), and mimetic (imitative). DiMaggio and Powell (1983) proposed that mimetic responses usually result from standard responses to uncertainty, especially where goals are ambitious (Levy, 2006) and the means to achieve them are unclear; if an organization is uncertain what to do, it may opt to copy a high-status peer. Also, an organization that looks similar to others is more likely to get a positive evaluation based on improved comprehensibility (Karlsson, 2008).

Despite efforts to foster legitimacy by adopting recognizable forms, organizations may simultaneously maintain some distinctive characters to gain a competitive advantage through differentiation and as the culture of the organization evolves (Pedersen & Dobbin, 2006). In an article about academic drift – the tendency among postsecondary institutions towards the structures and norms typical of prestigious universities – Morphew and Huisman (2002) consider the countervailing forces of homogenization and heterogenization from the point of view of *institutional* theory. More recently, Tight (2015) and Holmberg and Hallonsten (2015) have drawn upon concepts of legitimacy and isomorphism in neoinstitutional theory to help explain

academic drift, including the related concepts of vertical extension (for example, Schultz &

Stickler, 1965) and mission creep (for example, Gonzales 2012).

Loose coupling is the third concept from *institutional* theory. Another tension within

organizations is that the technical activities to achieve goals may vary from the expectations of

policymakers and external stakeholders, so that actual practices do not match official positions

(Parsons, 1960; Weick, 1976). Meyer and Rowan (1977) provided several explanations as to

why the structural elements of organizations may be loosely linked, rules ignored, decisions

weakly implemented and evaluation systems feeble. Burch (2007) posited that loose coupling is

one of the core constructs in analyzing educational reform.

Loosely coupled organizations may nevertheless perform well and may represent a

functional compromise when change is externally imposed, rather than internally accepted, and

where there are high symbolic or legitimacy gains to acceding to external pressures but which

also involve high costs to implement them (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

My use of *institutional* and neoinstitutional literature helps to explain the responses of

particular postsecondary institutions and groups of institutions to competitive pressures,

responses that may include increased efforts to cultivate prestigious images through such means

as membership in high status postsecondary organizations and strategies to improve rankings in

national and international league tables. The theory suggests postsecondary institutions will be

apt to copy the forms and terminology of other institutions in their current sector, and of other

sectors into which they aspire to move. As inconsistencies emerge between market pressures and

the technical and values bases of educators, instances of strategic decoupling will become more

commonplace.

Conclusion

Even after this expansive literature review – encompassing the historiography of BC postsecondary education, the nature of policy and theory, and the underpinnings of three sets of public policy rationales for postsecondary education – one more preliminary matter needs consideration before the historical narrative and analysis can begin. Because it is not propelled by the literature, it appears separately in the following chapter.

Chapter 3: Periodization

This brief chapter presents the rationale for having begun this study in 1960 and then dividing the following years into three periods, from which I selected a total of five historical moments for in-depth examination. It ends with a description of British Columbia's postsecondary system as it existed in 1960 to set the stage for the historical narratives and analyses that appear in the following three chapters.

Starting Year

The most important document in the history of British Columbia postsecondary education (Dennison, 1992; Soles, 1968) is *Higher Education in British Columbia and a Plan for the Future* (Macdonald, 1962). The report led to the immediate establishment of the second and third universities in BC and to the development of an entire community college system across the province over the ensuing dozen years (Dennison, 1997). Partly a response to the baby boom and rising educational aspirations of the population, the Macdonald Report tapped into some unmet expectations of the previous decade.

A good case can therefore be made that the contemporary BC postsecondary era emerged with the Macdonald Report in 1962, or shortly thereafter with the first actions taken by the BC government in response to it. I have chosen, however, to begin a couple of years earlier, using the passage of the federal *Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act* of 1960 as the starting point. This earlier date is consistent with viewing the resulting public, postsecondary vocational school system as largely a manifestation of a new stage of postsecondary

development in BC, even though it, like academic education, had antecedents dating back decades.

Periods

The system of public postsecondary institutions that began emerging in the early 1960s developed along a consistent trajectory for two decades, a period when the intentions of the provincial government regarding postsecondary education were clear and widely shared. Then, in the 1980s, the original assumptions and certainties about the system began to fade, first with respect to non-academic education and then in the academic sphere. The 1990s became a complex and sometimes perplexing decade.

The first period, when intentions were clear and the structures of the various postsecondary sectors (except for trades training) were relatively simple, lasted until at least 1979. It is difficult to pinpoint the ending of the period because different postsecondary sectors experienced significant changes at different times in the early 1980s. An economic downturn, in full swing by 1981 and resulting in a financial restraint program by the BC government in 1982, could be seen as the end of the period. By 1985, the structural changes to the college system arising from the federal Canadian Jobs Strategy made a new period in BC postsecondary education unambiguously evident.

Given the inherent fuzziness of many social changes and historical processes, and in the interests of simplicity and memorability, I have chosen to use full decades to bracket periods, ending the first period in 1979. The transitional years of the early 1980s thus become part of the second period when prevailing assumptions were challenged.

This second period from 1980 to 1999, when the assumptions about the structure of the postsecondary system were challenged and intentions for the continued development of the system became less clear, could be viewed as extending to 2000 in that the election of a new provincial government in 2001 led to a number of changes in postsecondary education. Such precision in this type of historical analysis, however, is illusory. It took a year before the new government began implementing significant changes, and some examples of new public management had started to appear at the end of the previous government's mandate, so once again it is difficult to be precise or to identify an entirely defensible date for the beginning of the third period. As before, I have chosen to include the ambiguous, transitional years in the subsequent period.

By 2010, the new era seemed to be losing momentum and, in the past few years, it seems that the pendulum may be swinging back towards policies from the past. Nevertheless, many of the reforms and developments of the previous decade, that is, since the early 2000s, have endured. For my purposes, and again in the interest of simplicity, it is sufficient to view changes since 2010 as constituting modifications within a period, rather than to divide the years since 2000 into two periods.

Historical Moments

To keep the scope of this dissertation manageable, I chose not to analyze every significant development since 1960 according to the three policy rationales. Instead, I selected just five historical moments from across the three periods for in-depth analysis. The moments mark transitions between and within the periods described above: the genesis of the contemporary postsecondary system in the early 1960s, two shifts that began in the 1980s to

reshape the system, the new operating assumptions that arrived in the new millennium, and finally the recent, partial reversion towards older worldviews about postsecondary education.

For my purposes, an historical moment involves at least two postsecondary sectors and not only individual institutions. It differs from an *event* in that a moment spans more than a single point in time. It is a temporal concept that more closely resembles a period, but differs from a period in at least two important ways. The first difference from a period is that a moment is shorter, measured in no more than years, whereas my periodization is based on decades. Multiple moments can be embedded within a single period and, in this respect, are more akin to sub-periods. The second difference from a period is that whereas my periods demarcate changes that in some way affected how the majority of students viewed their postsecondary options, the developments during a moment affected a much smaller number of students.

My criterion for identifying and choosing what turned out to be five historical moments reflected my search for keys to interpreting the periods in which they were situated. While it would have been too much of a burden to seek moments that illuminated all significant aspects of a period, it seemed reasonable to ask, "What multi-sector developments which, if not understood in a fairly comprehensive and satisfactory manner, will leave other cause-and-effect relationships during the period somewhat inscrutable?" In other words, the concept of historical significance is central to the identification of moments.

In identifying historical moments to analyze, I chose not to be tightly restricted by date ranges, and especially not to seek perfect temporal consistency across sectors. Although there was often an important precipitating event, I did not want to exclude consideration of other noteworthy, related developments that occurred at other times during the period. Thus my usage of moments is somewhat fuzzy, yet may sometimes impose slightly more structure to the period

than the historical record justifies. Moments are nonetheless a useful analytical tool. The caveat is that, like theory itself and historical analysis in general, moments are useful for particular purposes and do not purport to address every nuance or issue that may arise.

The three periods and five historical moments that appear in the next three chapters are as follows:

1960 – 1979: Clear Intentions
      (a) Macdonald Era: early 1960s

1980 – 1999: Assumptions Challenged
      (b) Continuing Education and the Canadian Jobs Strategy: early and mid 1980s
      (c) Access for All: late 1980s and early 1990s

2000 – 2015: Cynicism
      (d) New Era: early to mid 2000s
      (e) Post-Neoliberalism: 2010 to 2015

Analytical Framework

After describing each of the historical moments and commenting on what seem to have been the proximate causes of events associated with each moment, I step back and consider the extent and the ways in which the three enduring policy rationales presented in the literature review – fairness and social justice, human capital formation, and marketization – are consistent with what actually happened in British Columbia in each of the historical moments. Cause and effect relationships are thus considered on two levels: the numerous, surface reasons why institutions were established or transformed, and the contribution of the underlying, enduring policy rationales to bringing about these changes.

Each of the policy rationales has been individually employed in the literature to interpret and explain a variety of specific postsecondary developments throughout North America. My goal is to assess how illuminating they might be when used in conjunction with one another

83

across a set of diverse postsecondary institutions in a single jurisdiction over a period of decades. The policy rationales are explored separately in each of the next three historical chapters as standalone analyses, setting the stage for an integrated commentary in the *Discussion* chapter.

Whereas I emphasize structural changes that were directly observable to construct a narrative about periods and historical moments, more indirect evidence is used in the policy rationale analyses to infer what helped bring about those structural changes. In the analyses, I seek to identify not only changes – whether fluctuations, trends, beginnings or endings – in the relevance of the rationales but also continuity in the presence of rationales across moments. The themes of change and continuity sometimes co-exist in that the rationales have themselves evolved, as was especially evident in the earlier discussion about the meaning of social justice over time.

I am especially interested in determining whether any of the policy rationales persisted across all the historical moments. If a rationale did not endure in this way, then the question is whether it strengthened, weakened or simply fluctuated with time. Although my conclusions are likely to be complex and qualified because a rationale might be evident in some aspects of a moment but not in others, my aspirations are nonetheless straightforward.

BC Postsecondary Education in 1960

British Columbia, the westernmost province in Canada, had a population of 1.6 million in 1960 – roughly equivalent to today's population of metropolitan Marseille, but distributed across an area the size of France and Italy combined. Half this small population was clustered in the southwest corner of the province on less than 5% of the landmass, with the remaining population widely dispersed in clusters fragmented by mountains and vast forested plateaus. (Today, the

population of BC approaches 5 million but is still concentrated in the southwest.) The challenge of providing geographical access to postsecondary education for a small and scattered population in the hinterland is a theme in the postsecondary history of the province.

In terms of the academic component of the postsecondary system as represented by baccalaureate and higher levels of instruction, British Columbia had but one university in 1960, the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, and an affiliated college in another city, Victoria College, that was aspiring to become a degree-granting institution in its own right. A handful of tiny theological institutions, some affiliated with UBC, conferred bachelor's and graduate degrees in religion (Cowin, 2009; Macdonald, 1962).

Half a century old, UBC had just made the transition from a teaching institution towards becoming a full-fledged research university, awarding its first PhDs in Science in 1950 and its first PhD in Arts in 1960 (Damer & Rosengarten, 2009). Federal funding for research was instrumental in fostering this transition (Cameron, 1991; Fisher et al., 2006). The role of federal grants and subsidies in shaping aspects of the BC postsecondary system, a field in which the federal government lacks constitutional jurisdiction to govern directly, is another historical theme.

Finally, some secondary schools offered Grade 13, known as senior matriculation, for university-bound students. The *Royal Commission on Education* (Chant, 1960) had recommended expanding Grade 13 throughout the province, but the opposite occurred in the mid 1960s with the start of the community college system.

Other academic institutions in the private and not-for-profit sector, such as Notre Dame University College in Nelson, were very small. The growth of private education is yet another

theme, but this growth did not occur until the 1980s, first in non-academic fields and two decades later in degree-level education.

Turning now to sub-baccalaureate education, the control of apprenticeship and the regulation of about one hundred small, private trade schools (a term which in 1960 also encompassed correspondence education and business schools) came under the jurisdiction of the BC Department of Labour. Even though apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship training has often involved instruction delivered by public institutions, its oversight has rarely been by the same government department responsible for the rest of postsecondary education (Cowin, 2012a). The apprenticeship component of vocational education has been viewed from a policy perspective as serving primarily to meet the needs of employers rather than of students.

Federal funding to secondary schools for vocational education, that is, non-apprenticeship forms of vocational education that the federal government viewed as falling under its constitutional authority for economic and labour market affairs, ended following the passage of the *Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act* in 1960. The new act provided a means for federal capital funding to be directed to provinces. It spurred the construction of a network of postsecondary vocational schools across BC throughout the 1960s, as well as the opening of the diploma-level BC Institute of Technology in 1964. Only three publicly funded vocational schools had previously operated in BC: Nanaimo (established in 1936), Vancouver (1949), and, as of 1958, the BC Vocational School in Burnaby (which held its first classes in buildings of the Pacific National Exhibition until its own campus adjacent to the future BC Institute of Technology was completed a few years later.)

The Vancouver school board, an organization that over the decades has been an important supporter and midwife for several postsecondary institutions, had established the thriving

Vancouver Vocational Institute in 1949. It was this school board that had established an affiliation with McGill University around 1905, a precursor to the University of British Columbia. Along with its vocational institute, the Vancouver school board launched what are now the Emily Carr University of Art + Design, Langara College and Vancouver Community College. As described in the next section, school districts were initially the vehicle by which the BC community college sector was created (Dennison, 1997). Since the late 1970s, however, the strong interest and involvement of school districts in the education of adults has declined precipitously.

In 1960, continuing education programs in school districts still provided robust programs of vocational and other training in the evening for adults. The extension program of the University of British Columbia was at its zenith, with a national reputation (Selman, 1975).

Despite a temporary surge in university enrolment following World War II and plenty of indications in the late 1950s that more educational opportunities for adults in both academic and technical fields were needed, British Columbia's postsecondary system in 1960 remained modest in size and scope. The province's heritage as a resource-based, frontier society, one which relied heavily on other jurisdictions for postsecondary education, was very evident. Significant changes were about to occur.

Chapter 4: Clear Intentions (1960 – 1979)

The three periods I have used to depict the contemporary history of postsecondary education in British Columbia are examined in this and the following two chapters. Each chapter begins with a period overview to set the stage for the scrutiny of one or two significant historical moments within the period. The overviews also provide a vehicle for highlighting developments in the smaller postsecondary sectors that figure less prominently in the historical moments and which have received little attention in the literature.

Following the period overview, the structure of these historical chapters is for each historical moment to be identified, depicted in detail and then analyzed from the perspectives of each of the three policy rationales: fairness and social justice, human capital formation, and marketization. The results of the analyses are consolidated and assessed in the *Discussion* chapter.

Period Overview

Although it was not evident in 1960 what the future scope and size of BC's postsecondary system would be, a few important decisions by the BC government, such as its response to the Macdonald Report of 1962 and its decision in 1971 to meld postsecondary vocational schools with community colleges, resulted in an unambiguous and shared vision that endured until the early 1980s. These decisions provided the foundation for the postsecondary system in BC as it exists today.

The massive expansion of university and college education after the Macdonald Report of 1962 occurred as the response of the BC government to growing public pressure for better access

to postsecondary education. In contrast, it was the federal government that took the lead in initiating the expansion of the vocational school system, with the BC government again in a responsive mode (the default position of the BC government with respect to postsecondary education.)

For fifteen years following the Macdonald Report, the public system grew significantly. While it diversified, the diversity was along a fairly consistent trajectory that saw gaps filled more than new directions taken. Although smaller, the private sector has nevertheless played a significant role in BC. It, however, was fairly stable from 1960 to 1980 and was concentrated in the southwest, whereas public postsecondary education expanded across the province.

Public Sectors

Dennison and Gallagher (1986) described the 1960s as a golden age for public education in Canada. In British Columbia, the Macdonald Report (Macdonald, 1962) ushered in both an expansion and a new structure for the postsecondary system of the province. Macdonald recommended expanding undergraduate education through the creation of two four-year colleges in the metropolitan southwest of BC and the formation of comprehensive, two-year community colleges throughout the province. Influenced by the tiered and coordinated system in California (Johnston, 2005), the proposal for a university-transfer component in the community colleges was an American feature that was emulated in only one other Canadian province, Alberta.

The provincial government responded favourably and rapidly to the Macdonald Report, but not entirely as recommended. Whereas the government launched new universities, its legislation for the two-year college sector was merely enabling, providing a mechanism by which one or more school districts could establish regional colleges. The result of a lack of provincial

government leadership, and of a dependence on the formation of regional coalitions to create colleges, was that it took over a dozen years to complete a system of 15 colleges. In contrast, the system of three research universities was established within three years (Cowin, 2007).

Colleges eventually became separate legal entities from school districts under the *Colleges and Institutes Act* of 1977. By 1983, the presence of school trustees on college boards had ended (Beinder, 1986) and the divide between K – 12 and postsecondary sectors became more complete.

Institutes under the *Colleges and Institutes Act* were sub-baccalaureate institutions with a province-wide mandate to focus on particular applied fields (for example, the Pacific Marine Training Institute), distinctive delivery methods (for example, the Open Learning Institute) or specific student populations (for example, the Institute of Indigenous Government). Four were continuations or modifications of previous institutions[3] and two were created in 1978[4].

It is difficult to categorize the provincial institutes, which reached a maximum number of seven in the early 1980s. The institutes emerged over a period of more than half a century in an unsystematic, opportunistic manner. They did not fit within the planned structure of the public postsecondary system that emerged in the early 1960s, but rather co-existed with that structure. Nevertheless, the policy convention eventually became to treat colleges and institutes as comprising a single sector, especially with respect to funding.

As new universities and colleges were being created in the 1960s, a parallel expansion was occurring in vocational education due to the federal *Technical and Vocational Training*

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[3] These four were the BC Institute of Technology, the Emily Carr Institute (now University) of Art, the Pacific Vocational Institute, and the Pacific Marine Training Institute.

[4] The Justice Institute became the first institution in North America to train fire, police and paramedic personnel in a single organization dedicated to public safety. The Open Learning Institute was created to provide distance education from certificate through baccalaureate levels.

Assistance Act of 1960 (Cowin, 2012a). BC drew upon federal funding for capital facilities to expand the rudimentary system in BC of postsecondary vocational schools. By 1970, the system of vocational schools consisted of the Vancouver Vocational Institute, operated by the Vancouver school district, and eight campuses across the province of the Department of Education's BC Vocational School (Cowin, 2012a). Two planned campuses of the BC Vocational School were never opened, cancelled by a new provincial government in 1972 in favour of community colleges in those regions instead.

The BC Vocational School was a highly centralized organization, with campuses administered directly by the Department of Education in Victoria. Whereas vocational and trades training in British Columbia has been tightly controlled, universities have been as independent as any public postsecondary institutions in the western world (see Skolnik & Jones, 1992, for a comparison of Canada and the USA). Colleges have occupied an intermediate position in terms of centralization, with provincial government influences fluctuating over the decades (Gaber, 2002).

Between 1971 and 1976, the BC government melded the vocational schools with their neighbouring community colleges, providing a boost for the colleges[5]. The official rationale for the mergers was to reduce the status gap between academic and vocational studies by co-locating them and to provide better opportunities for introducing general education into job training. Dennison (1997) observed that the policy was also partly prompted by the unwillingness of voters to pass referenda to build permanent facilities for colleges.

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[5] One school, in Burnaby, was renamed the Pacific Vocational Institute and was not merged until 1986. It was then absorbed by the adjacent BC Institute of Technology, rather than by a college.

Some instructors in both vocational and academic/technical programs resented the

mergers (Goard, 1977). Despite occasional government pronouncements about the need for

trades training, and regular anxieties expressed by academics about growing perceptions of

vocationalism in higher education, indicators such as funding for equipment replacement,

enrolment patterns, and scholarly and professional publications would suggest that vocational

education has in fact become a less significant component of the postsecondary system over the

past fifty years[6]. Whereas vocational education peaked in terms of health and status in the late

1960s, university education continually thrived and was less complicated than the other

postsecondary sectors until the late 1980s.

In the apprenticeship world, where several years of on-the-job training are interspersed

with short classroom components in public or private institutions, the federal *Apprenticeship

Training Agreement* in 1964[7] provided funding to expand apprenticeship training across the

country. Partly as a result of technological change, though, the BC Department of Labour, the

branch of government that administered apprenticeship, said in its 1971 annual report that

technical training[8] (the classroom component of apprenticeship) was in a state of flux. The Goard

Report on vocational education (1977) noted a profound lack of coordination among a

multiplicity of competing agencies (public and private, federal and provincial) involved in

vocational, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training. Reflecting ongoing uncertainty about

direction, the Provincial Apprenticeship Board, an advisory body, issued a report in 1984 on the

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[6] The Canadian Apprenticeship Forum (2004), mentioned negative perceptions and a low level of support for apprenticeship training as barriers. Sharp and Gibson (2005) reported that, nationally, the postsecondary education system has an academic bias.

[7] Updated in 1967 by the federal *Adult Occupational Training Act*.

[8] Technical "training" as distinct from two-year technical "education," a distinction that had as much to do with administrative jurisdiction as pedagogy or curricula.

future of apprenticeship but little resolution was achieved (Provincial Apprenticeship Board, 1984).

By the end of the 1970s, BC had a three-pronged strategy for bringing postsecondary education to the far-flung regions of the province. The foundation was a network of comprehensive, two-year colleges offering university transfer courses, career preparation programs, and developmental (secondary level upgrading) offerings. The Open University in England influenced the educational philosophy of the second prong (Moran, 1993), namely the new Open Learning Institute[9] that offered distance education. The third prong for serving the hinterland consisted of special funding from the province to universities to provide upper level courses, sometimes leading to degree completion, in communities outside the urban southwest. This non-metropolitan programs initiative involved the continuing education departments of universities, a component of the BC public postsecondary system that merits separate mention.

Continuing education offerings in public institutions have been extensive, but good enrolment data has been elusive and the activities have tended to be on the margins of institutions. As a result, continuing education has been characterized an invisible giant (Selman, 1988). Except for a period in the 1970s when the Ministry of Education established a continuing education branch, the attitude of the provincial government has been one of benign neglect.

Selman (2005) categorized postsecondary continuing education across Canada into three periods: a social movement from the 1920s to 1950s, professionalization and institutionalization in the 1960s and 1970s, and commercialization and competition since the 1980s. Different BC institutions have moved through the phases at various times and rates, with the rural institutions

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[9] The Open Learning Institute merged in 1988 with the public educational television station, the Knowledge Network of the West of 1979, to become the Open Learning Agency.

the most resistant to losing a social and community development mandate in favour of marketization.

Private Sectors

The for-profit, private career college sector was relatively stable until the early 1980s, despite the number of registered schools growing gradually from 100 in 1963 to 165 in 1980. The first enrolment reports for the sector did not emerge until 1978, at which time 19,000 students were reported (Cowin, 2013b). The trade schools section of BC's new *Apprenticeship and Training Development Act* of 1977 allowed regulations to be made by the Minister of Labour, rather than requiring cabinet approval.

Postsecondary education in BC for Aboriginal students has two streams that span the public and private sectors: the larger-scale programs and services within public institutions and the small-scale offerings of the not-for-profit, Aboriginal-governed institutions (Cowin, 2011). Until 1970, Aboriginal students as a group were largely invisible in BC postsecondary education. A few isolated initiatives had started, for example, the private Native Education Centre (now College) in Vancouver in 1967 and UBC's Native Indian Teacher Education Program in 1974, but it was the 1980s that saw the beginnings of broader scale activity (Cowin, 2011).

As with education for Aboriginal students, faith-based education is driven by cultural and other values. Both sectors have faced financial challenges, but those challenges differed in that faith-based postsecondary institutions have received no public operating or capital funding and

are therefore very sensitive to tuition fee and enrolment levels[10]. A major financial challenge facing Aboriginal institutions, on the other hand, is that while funding has often been public, from both federal and provincial governments, it has tended to be short-term or project-based rather than ongoing.

The faith-based sector in British Columbia occupies an awkward space where provincial policy seems to be to have no shared principles or guidelines – a more extreme case of the situation experienced by provincial institutes. Decisions were made on an ad hoc basis as situations arose, and the sector developed largely on a separate track with only a few points of convergence or overlap with the public system. Federal postsecondary policy was relevant only with respect to student financial aid and, rarely, institutional eligibility for research grants.

The BC attitude to faith-based institutions can be traced back to at least the 1908 act that established the University of British Columbia as a strictly non-sectarian institution (although the following clause in the act made provision for affiliated theological schools to grant a post-baccalaureate Bachelor of Divinity degree and land was set aside on the UBC campus for a theological precinct.) The background to this part of the act was that churches had established a number of denominational colleges in central and eastern Canada, and these institutions had proven challenging for provincial governments, especially when it came to questions of public funding for university education (see Jones, 1997, and Christie, 1997, for the flavour of these challenges in Ontario and Nova Scotia respectively; Harris, 1976, for details). BC succeeded in avoiding similar challenges but never did articulate the basis on which it would permit faith-

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[10] There have been a few minor grants from public sources, such as to UBC's affiliated theological schools in the 1980s, but faith-based postsecondary institutions in BC have essentially not received government funding.

based institutions to operate. The practice emerged of conferring degree-granting authority to individual institutions through specific acts introduced as private member's bills.

In the faith-based sector, a handful of Bible schools for lay people and seminaries for training clergy, Notre Dame University College, and Trinity Junior College existed at the time of the Macdonald Report in 1962. In 1963, the BC legislature passed the *Notre Dame University of Nelson Act* and Notre Dame became the first private university in the province with the authority to grant baccalaureate degrees. The legislation for Trinity Junior College was amended in 1971 to rename it Trinity Western College and then again in 1979 to permit it to grant bachelor's degrees. Whereas Trinity Western flourished and is now a university that grants master's degrees, Notre Dame struggled and closed[11] in 1977 (Universities Council of BC, 1976).

Several small theological schools opened during the 1960s and 1970s. The most interesting was Regent College in 1968, the first graduate school of theology in North America to focus on the education of the laity. It quickly established a world reputation, albeit in a small field (Cowin, 2009).

Summary

Table 3 summarizes the dramatic change and growth over two decades in BC's postsecondary system.

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[11] The BC government provided a $310,000 grant in 1967/68, which rose to $1.8 million in 1975/76. Notre Dame's facilities were then sold to the province for a nominal sum so that Selkirk College and the University of Victoria could jointly re-open the campus in 1977 as the David Thompson University Centre. Despite strong local support politically for the Centre, the government closed the Centre in 1984 for budgetary reasons (Cowin, 2009).

Table 3: BC Postsecondary System, 1960 and 1979

Sector	1960	1979
Public Universities	UBC	UBC, SFU, Univ. of Victoria

Public colleges and institutes	3 vocational schools
	Continuing education through
	    school districts
	Grade 13
		15 community colleges
		 6 institutes
		Continuing education at all
		    institutions and some
		    school districts

Private academic (small institutions)	Notre Dame University College	Trinity Western College
		Some external institutions
		    beginning to deliver niche
		    instruction in BC
		Some high school completion
		    and ESL colleges

Private career colleges (small)	100 registered colleges	137 registered colleges
Aboriginal-governed (small)	--	Several, with a combined enrolment less than 1,000
Faith-based (small)	About a dozen, although some were residential at UBC and not instructional	Mergers, closures and openings resulted in a net increase of half a dozen
Apprenticeship	3,000 apprentices	13,800 apprentices

Historical Moment: The Macdonald Era

The historical moment that is the focus of the following discussion extended from 1960 to about 1964. A fair amount of historical background is considered to help explain why events unfolded as they did in the early 1960s. A few subsequent developments are mentioned to bring closure to certain topics.

Although there is no doubt that the Macdonald Report of 1962 was seminal for BC, and is a convenient shorthand explanation for the emergence of the contemporary postsecondary system, the forces propelling educational change were rather more complex than a single report and emerged over a period of many years. The report was silent about several postsecondary sectors and its existence does not account for developments in those sectors. Furthermore, the issues raised by Macdonald were not unique to BC and were in fact being considered in other jurisdictions. Macdonald's genius lay not so much in coming up with new insights and ideas as

in drawing together the work and discussions of the previous years and then assembling them in a package that encapsulated an emerging consensus in BC.

What I am calling the Macdonald Era was the source of a societal accord that endured throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s about the character and desirable development of the province's postsecondary institutions. Although never articulated in a comprehensive and systematic manner across all sectors, the vision was firmly established in the early 1960s and served as a touchstone for two decades regarding decisions about the expansion of the system.

Macdonald Report

The Macdonald Report of 1962, initiated by the new president, John Macdonald, of the University of British Columbia (UBC) and not commissioned by government, marked a substantial departure from the approach of the previous president of UBC, Norman MacKenzie (Johnston, 2005). The report's background lies in the late 1950s, although some commentators have contended that the seeds were planted decades earlier. Thirty years prior to Macdonald, a UBC graduate completed a master's thesis at Stanford University (Knott, 1932) that argued that developments in the junior college concept in California and Texas presented a model that BC should consider adopting, using Victoria College, BC's two normal (teacher training) schools, and Grade 13 senior matriculation as the nucleus from which to launch a college system[12]. He discussed future enrolment demand and proposed seven centres in the hinterland of the province where colleges might best be located. Three decades later, Macdonald also used the California

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[12] Knott's optimistic vision is remarkable in that UBC had in 1932 endured a 20% reduction in provincial government funding as a result of the Great Depression. A group of business people appointed by the provincial government to review the province's finances had proposed saving money by closing UBC altogether and instead giving scholarships for students to pursue degrees in universities in other provinces (Waite, 1987).

master plan for higher education as a model for BC, recommended the establishment of community colleges, argued for enrolment growth based on demographic data and proposed locations for colleges and universities arising from geographic considerations.

Knott felt that echoes of the Putnam-Weir Report (1926) about the BC school system had been evident in discussions about the potential for junior colleges in BC. Beinder (1983) perceived precedents for college development in two subsequent commissions of inquiry into the BC elementary and secondary school system. The Cameron Report (1945) on educational finance was, in Beinder's view, concerned about inequalities in educational opportunity in rural communities, a concern that emanated from grassroots citizens around the province rather than from the government's educational officials. In a similar vein, Beinder noted that the Chant Commission (1960) recommended equalizing educational opportunity around the province.

The more immediate precursors to the Macdonald Report, both internal and external to UBC, emerged in the mid to late 1950s. Internally, enrolment at UBC had soared after World War II with an influx of returning veterans and then dropped in the early 1950s as the veterans completed their studies (Figure 1). Enrolment recovered by the mid 1950s and, with a postwar baby boom and rising postsecondary participation rates, some faculty and administrators at UBC were becoming concerned that the university was about to face unprecedented and overwhelming enrolment demand (Johnston, 2005). Their concern proved to be well founded.
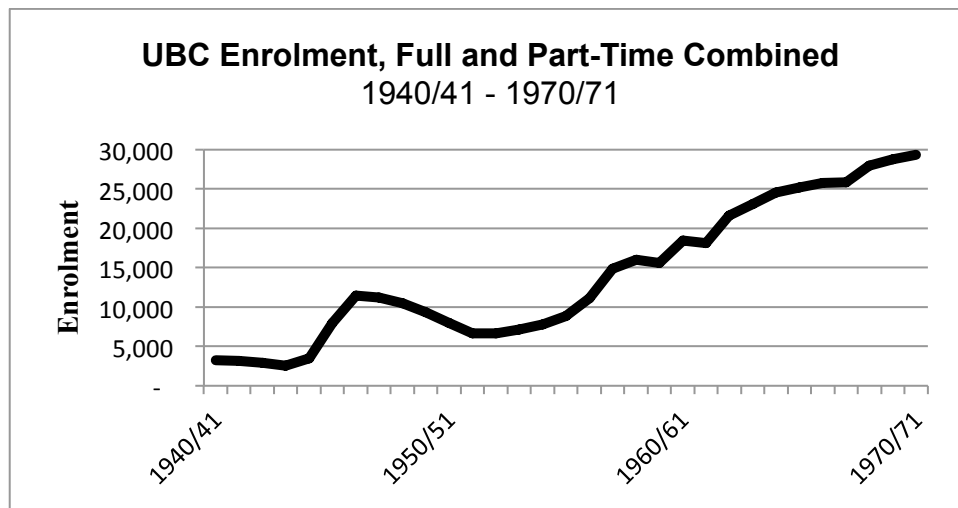
Source: www.library.ubc.ca/archives/enrolmnt.html

Macdonald's predecessor, Norman (Larry) MacKenzie, had put considerable effort into advocating for more funding for universities nationally and for UBC provincially. He had been concerned that any new academic institutions in BC could further restrict provincial grants available to UBC, and thus he wanted any additional institutions to be affiliated and tributary to UBC. Waite (1987) bluntly described this approach as the "UBC empire principle" (p. 186), contrasting it with the position taken by Victoria College that the college should be come a full-fledged university in its own right. MacKenzie's position seemed to be endorsed initially in that an amendment to the *Public Schools Act* in 1958 enabled school boards to establish colleges on the condition that they were affiliated with UBC. The amendments reflected a concern for equitable educational opportunity across the province (Beinder, 1983) but the requirement that colleges be affiliated with UBC was unappealing and no action ensued.

The lack of action did not reflect a lack of interest by school districts in forming colleges, but rather unease about the conditions under which they should operate. The BC School Trustees

Association had struck a committee in 1961 to consider their responsibility for continuing education, given growing enrolments in Grade 13 and in upgrading and applied courses for adults in night school (Beinder, 1986). In their brief to Macdonald, the school trustees were clear that they thought that colleges should be extensions of the school system and that they were dismayed by the existence of public vocational schools that were separate from the school system (Dennison, 1979a). Macdonald reflected their wishes in his recommendations, decoupling the proposed colleges from UBC and instead calling for a province-wide academic board to guarantee educational standards. Something of a parallel development occurred in Alberta, where the *Public Junior Colleges Act* of 1958 was amended in the early 1960s to give colleges more independence from the University of Alberta (Berghofer & Vladicka, 1980).

If a single event were to be selected as marking the prelude to the Macdonald Report, then a national Canadian university enrolment projection made in the mid 1950s (Sheffield, 1955) is a strong candidate. The projected dramatic increase in enrolment over the ensuing decade was seen as credible and spurred university presidents, who were already preparing an advocacy campaign for increased federal funding, into planning for a massive expansion of academic education in Canada (Cameron, 1991).

UBC was thus not alone in anticipating large enrolment demand in the coming years and seeing the need for a system-wide plan. In the United Kingdom, for example, the Robbins Committee had been established in 1961 to examine such topics as access to higher education and the competitive advantages of an educated workforce (Great Britain, 1963).

In Canada, 1961 was also proving to be a significant year for postsecondary planning. In Quebec, the highly influential Parent Commission was launched that year, issuing five volumes between 1963 and 1965 (Royal Commission, 1965). Its recommendation, accepted by

government, to the demands for democratization of education and for mass education, was to

create a distinctive college system, the Colleges d'enseignement general et professionnel

(Cegeps). In New Brunswick, a royal commission on higher education, chaired by John Deutsch,

was also established to study issues of funding and access (Royal Commission in New

Brunswick, 1962). Alberta established an advisory committee, the Survey Committee on Higher

Education, in existence from 1961 to 1965, to assess future enrolment demand and recommend

responses (Cameron, 1991). One of the first actions of Ontario's Advisory Committee on

University Affairs, formed by the government in 1961, was to prepare some enrolment

projections. The response to the projections, the Deutsch Report of 1962 for the university

presidents of Ontario (Committee of Presidents, 1963), became the blueprint over the next

decade for expanding universities in Ontario (Cameron, 1991).

Against that national and international backdrop, Johnston (2005) described some of the

planning that UBC faculty had done for BC system expansion in the years prior to Macdonald's

arrival in 1962. Walter Hardwick, for example, was a geographer who had prepared a report that

he took to the UBC senate about a location for a second university campus in the Vancouver

area. He had also been promoting the American community college model as desirable for BC

following his exposure to such colleges during his year's study in Wisconsin. Macdonald, who

had been the nominee for president of the UBC Faculty Association, incorporated the prior work

of such faculty into his report.

Response to the Macdonald Report

The Macdonald Report was well received and led to a shared vision for college and

university education in BC, but the vision the government enacted was not identical to what

Macdonald had proposed. With respect to universities, Macdonald had recommended that (a) Victoria College, which by then was offering some four-year programs leading to a degree conferred by UBC, be given the option of determining whether it wished to become an independent, degree-granting undergraduate college, and (b) that a new four-year degree-granting college be created in the western Fraser Valley area of Greater Vancouver. In other words, expensive professional programs (such as engineering), graduate education, and research should, in the view of Macdonald, all remain the exclusive purview of UBC. Rejecting the notion that UBC should be the flagship university in BC, the government instead created the University of Victoria (as an extension of the former Victoria College, it was able to open quickly in 1963) and Simon Fraser University (an "instant university" that opened in 1965) as full-fledged research universities that could offer masters and doctoral programs and which, in principle, were identical to UBC.

With respect to two-year regional colleges, Macdonald had proposed that the first three should be located in Kelowna (southern interior), Castlegar (southern interior) and Greater Vancouver, with four additional colleges to be established by 1971. Macdonald explicitly expected that Kelowna would become a four-year college by 1970. The provincial government accepted the American comprehensive community college model, with its university transfer component, but remained silent about any of them ever becoming four-year, degree-granting colleges.

The BC government endorsed the concept of community colleges providing both geographical and social access, and retained the 1958 concept of close association with school districts that Macdonald had also endorsed. Amendments to the *Public Schools Act* enabled school districts to hold plebiscites (approval in principle) and referenda (authorization for capital

construction) to form colleges (Dennison, 1979). The college boards consisted of representatives from locally-elected school boards and half the operating funds of colleges came from local property taxes and tuition fees. Whereas the universities were independent institutions with province-wide mandates and provincial funding, colleges were regionally controlled and only partially funded by the provincial government.

Beinder (1986) described the approach of the province to the new college sector as unbelievably casual with little evidence of any sort of planning. Provincial politicians seem to have vaguely expected that colleges would easily share secondary school facilities and equipment, a weak assumption. The first community college, Vancouver City (now Community) College, opened in 1965. Nine additional colleges, some with multiple campuses, had been launched by 1974[13]. The Ministry of Education's *Task Force on the Community College* (1974) then considered the needs of isolated communities. It resulted in the establishment of the final four colleges[14], serving the rural areas farthest from the southwest, directly by government and without the use of local plebiscites.

Macdonald's planning concerned higher education, which, while not explicitly defined in his report, essentially meant university education. Colleges, with their "unique character" (p. 51), fell within the scope of his study in that they would have a university transfer component. In recommending that colleges provide technical, career, and adult education (continuing education) programming, he did not elaborate what this might mean nor the implications for the postsecondary system as a whole. He briefly mentioned one vocational school (in Kelowna) and

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[13] Selkirk in 1966, Capilano and Okanagan in 1968, Malaspina (now Vancouver Island University) and New Caledonia in 1969, Douglas and Cariboo (now Thompson Rivers University) in 1970, Camosun in 1971 and Fraser Valley in 1974. Kwantlen split from Douglas in 1981, and Langara from Vancouver in1994.
[14] Northwest, North Island, Northern Lights and East Kootenay (now College of the Rockies).

the BC Institute of Technology simply in the context of locational considerations for new

colleges, but did not comment on the existing or future vocational and apprenticeship

components of the public postsecondary system of the province. His emphasis set the tone for

historical scholarship on BC postsecondary education since then.

Public Vocational Schools and Technical Institutes

Although vocational institutions were established over a longer period than the five or so

years that I have designated the Macdonald Era, the early 1960s were a critical period for this

sector with the creation of the BC Vocational School and the opening of the first few of its

permanent campuses by 1964. It was also during this historical moment that the BC Institute of

Technology, now the third or fourth largest postsecondary institution in BC depending on the

treatment of international enrolment and students funded by the Industry Training Authority,

came into being.

Whereas the impetus for expanding universities and establishing college education in BC

came from within the province in the form of the Macdonald Report, the evolution of the

postsecondary vocational school system, a system that reached its highpoint around 1970 and

which did not entirely disappear until 1986 (with the amalgamation of the Pacific Vocational

Institute into the adjacent BC Institute of Technology), was in large measure spurred by federal

government priorities.

The interest of the federal government in postsecondary education, a provincial

responsibility, arose from the importance of education to the economic performance of the

nation. The federal government presented its direct funding not as in support of *education* but

either as *training* for adults who were already in the labour force (Sheffield, Campbell, Holmes,

Kymlicka, & Whitelaw, 1982), the fostering of research, financial assistance to students, or contract training purchased for its clients (often unemployed individuals or those facing barriers to employment). The evidence of federal educational policy has always been financial, supplemented by any related verbiage in legislation, official documents and public relations material (Desai Trilokekar et al., 2013).

Federal legislation in support of vocational and apprenticeship training dates back to 1913 (Cowin, 2012a), but it is the *Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act* of 1960 that is the most germane for the Macdonald Era in BC. This act was the means by which the federal government assumed a major role in occupational training, in response to national unemployment and a growing awareness of job obsolescence. At least three quarters of the funding under the act was devoted to capital funding for provincial training facilities.

Prior to the mid 1950s, a variety of private institutions and school district night courses for adults provided the bulk of vocational and apprenticeship technical training in BC. A small public, postsecondary facility, the Dominion-Provincial Youth Training Centre, had opened in Nanaimo in 1936. In 1949, the Vancouver School Board opened what quickly became the centre of vocational training in BC for the following decade, the Vancouver Vocational Institute.

Because of the urgent need for vocational training in the late 1950s – there eventually came to be double shifts and even around-the-clock training in a few instances at the Vancouver Vocational Institute (Rerup, 1993) – a temporary campus of the Federal-Provincial Trades and Technical Institute in Burnaby opened in 1958 with a permanent campus announced in 1959, to open officially in 1960. This school, first known locally as the Burnaby Vocational School and later renamed the Pacific Vocational Institute, became the largest, and in some ways the flagship, campus of the network of BC Vocational School campuses across the province.

Several other campuses of the new BC Vocational School opened in 1963, taking advantage of federal funding under the *Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act* for 50% of the capital costs. They were sometimes situated on former military land owned by the federal government. The last campuses opened in Dawson Creek in 1966, Terrace in 1968, and Kamloops in 1971 (Cowin, 2012a). Centrally administered by the Department of Education in Victoria, their governance contrasted with the local and independent control enjoyed by colleges and universities.

At the height of their enrolment in 1970, just prior to the decision of the BC government to begin merging them with community colleges, the BC Vocational School and the Vancouver Vocational Institute enrolled a joint total of about 26,000 students (BC Department of Education Annual Report, 1970-71). To put this number in context, the University of British Columbia, by far the largest of the three universities in the province, reported 29,000 students that same year.

The origins of the British Columbia Institute of Technology are most clearly seen in a needs assessment, the Bridge/White Survey, conducted in 1959 for the provincial government with assistance from the federal government (McArthur, 1997). With the introduction of federal funds for the capital construction of technical and vocational schools, planning for the new institute began in 1961, and the first students enrolled in 1964.

Apprenticeship

The fourth of the public postsecondary sectors of the 1960s (in addition to universities, colleges and institutes, and the vocational schools) was the apprenticeship system. It too fell outside Macdonald's postsecondary vision. In fact, apprenticeship has been something of a stepchild in the BC public postsecondary system, displaying a different lineage and

107

characteristics than the other three sectors. As with other forms of vocational education, federal funding was more visible and directive than for academic education.

BC's first *Apprenticeship Act* in 1935 was intended not to promote apprenticeship but rather to regulate and curb abuses in apprenticeship training through such means as ensuring wage increments, limiting the duration of apprenticeships, and specifying ratios of supervising journeymen to apprentices (Cowin, 2012a). Within a few years of the federal *Vocational Training Co-ordination Act* of 1942, BC began using some of the resulting federal funding to establish classes that enabled apprentices to obtain coordinated theoretical instruction in classrooms throughout the entire period of their apprenticeship. The BC Department of Labour, which administered the apprenticeship system independently from the Department of Education, was at that time contemplating some pre-apprenticeship training to shorten apprenticeships. It was not until 1957, however, that pre-apprenticeship classes, ranging in duration from five to ten months, were introduced.

The federal – provincial *Apprenticeship Training Agreement* of 1964 was intended to expand apprenticeship. Figure 2 shows that registrations did in fact increase greatly in subsequent years. (The number of registered apprentices plateaued during the quarter century after 1975, growing only from 13,000 in 1975 to 16,000 in 2000. Pre-apprenticeship enrolment, on the other hand, grew from 2,200 to 6,200 over the same period.)

Figure 2: Registered Apprentices and Pre-Apprenticeship Enrolment

Registered Apprentices and Pre-Apprenticeship Enrolment
1945 -1975
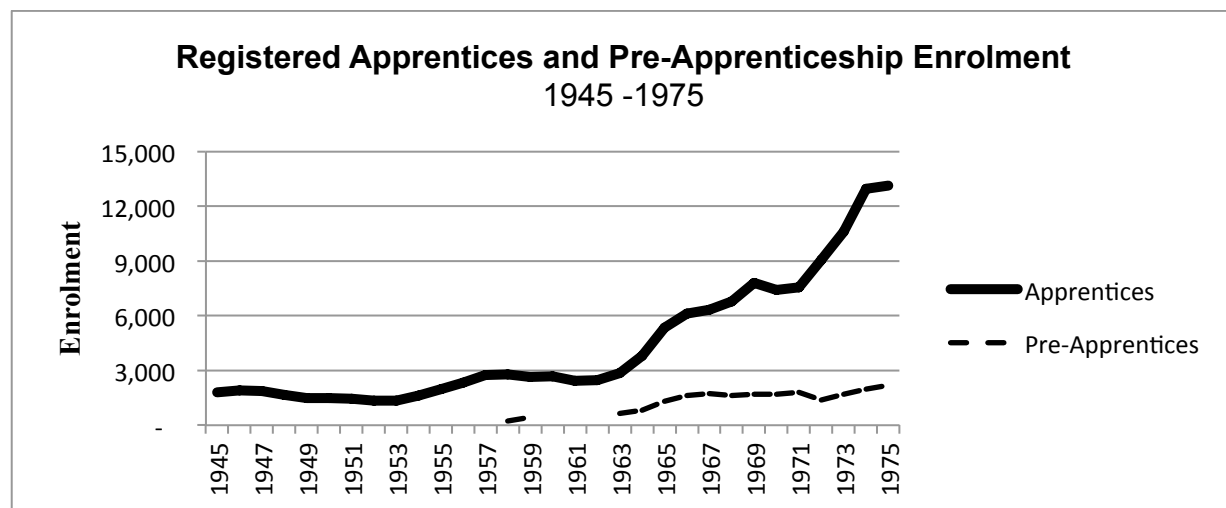
Source: BC Department of Labour annual reports

The BC *Apprenticeship Act* was amended at much the same time as the 1964 federal-provincial *Apprenticeship Training Agreement* came into effect, broadening provisions for the optional examination of apprentices. The primary method of ensuring educational standards remained inspections of worksites by BC government officials.

Despite receiving large amounts of federal funding, BC was dissatisfied with several aspects of federal involvement with apprenticeship (Cowin, 2012a). The province complained that the 1967 federal *Adult Occupational Training Act* neglected coordination at the national level and that it treated apprenticeship as an afterthought. BC argued that the federal government should pay training allowances to all, not just some, apprentices. (By 1973, all apprentices in BC received either federal or provincial funding, depending on who was sponsoring them.)

The apprenticeship system grew and became increasingly complex during the Macdonald era. The federal presence was large and sometimes at odds with BC government priorities. Technical classroom instruction was delivered by a variety of public and private educational

109

institutions, some optional pre-apprenticeship training was introduced, employers and unions influenced the availability of apprenticeships, and coordination became increasingly difficult across the BC departments of Labour and of Education, especially with respect to pre-apprenticeship training where the Department of Labour did not have exclusive jurisdiction. Whereas public universities and colleges enjoyed operating under a clear vision in the 1960s and 1970s, apprenticeship became increasingly complicated and difficult for any part of government to steer during that period. Its boundaries were well defined and accepted, however, even if what occurred within the sector seemed chaotic at times.

Private Sectors

Private postsecondary education in BC has served a modest number of students dispersed among a large number of generally small institutions. During the 1960s and 1970s, it consisted of two sectors: the not-for-profit, faith-based institutions (which offered certificate and diploma programs, and only theological degrees at institutions other than Notre Dame University) and occupationally-oriented career colleges (which were generally profit seeking and which offered certificate and diploma programs.)

The changes arising from the Macdonald Report and from federal postsecondary policy in the 1960s had little, if any, direct impact on the private career college sector. The career colleges had to wait another two decades for a policy change that approached the significance for them as Macdonald had for the public college sector. In the meantime, they followed a steady path of slow net growth as institutions opened and closed, operating uncontested in parallel to the public system.

When BC passed the *Trades School Regulation Act* in 1936, the first such legislation in Canada, the number of registered institutions, including business and correspondence schools, was about 70. The sector grew slowly and it took until the early 1960s before there were 100 institutions. In 1967, the total had reached 107 schools (Ministry of Labour annual reports).

The faith-based sector developed independently of the periods identified in this dissertation (Cowin, 2009), and yet a case can be made that Macdonald helped increase the legitimacy of this small sector. In surveying the higher education landscape in BC, Macdonald included Trinity Junior College, even though it had just opened that year, 1962, with a mere 17 students, and treated it with the same respect as Notre Dame University College (then affiliated with St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia to offer degree programs in Arts and Science.) Likewise, Prince George College was mentioned, although it never did really get beyond offering some Grade 13 classes. Immediately after describing these institutions, Macdonald noted "some of the greatest universities in the world are private. They have become great because they are free to meet the special demands and beliefs of their founders and supporters" (p. 45). Whatever subsequent controversies arose on other matters, Trinity quickly became a credible member of the BC transfer system and its academic rigour was not questioned by the universities that received its transfer students.

Analysis: Macdonald Era

Having set the general context of the period from 1960 to 1979, and then elaborated on developments in the early years of the period, my attention now turns to assessing the relevance of each of the three policy rationales to the Macdonald Era of the early 1960s.

Social Justice

As analysts in the 1950s and 1960s examined demographic trends and postsecondary participation rates, it was taken for granted that all people who were motivated and could benefit from an academic education should be able to access it. The question was not so much whether to accommodate enrolment demand but the means for doing so. It was, in part, a matter of fairness, that is, of distributive justice, that there should be sufficient spaces for all, and that those spaces should be as close to the homes of students as possible.

In structuring colleges in BC as a way to respond to growing enrolment pressure, the early proponents were apt to view colleges as special types of institutions designed to meet the needs of students, rather than the needs of the economy, government, or educational personnel. Beinder waxed eloquent in describing BC community colleges as a "social invention," the "crystallization of a dream of service to people" (1983, p.1). Assistant deputy minister, Andrew Soles (n.d.), concurred in the early 1970s with the community service mission, "Their dedication must be, as it is, to improve in every way they can, the quality of life in their region" (p. 4) and that the college, "would open the door to all who can benefit from it…it takes away the exclusiveness – the mystery – the snobbery – the retrograde and obscurantist ways of higher education" (p. 9).

Universities, in contrast, were less likely to think of access in egalitarian and universal terms, viewing it instead in terms of meritocracy and access to the type of institution commensurate with the abilities and aptitudes of students. Macdonald (1962) bemoaned the number of unsuccessful students at UBC who were "neither suited for nor interested in university education" (p. 50). In commending the California Master Plan, he was endorsing a plan in which the community college was seen by at least one influential California university president as the

112

first line of defense for protecting elite education from the masses (Kerr, 1978). Whether elite and stratified postsecondary education (sometimes framed as the pursuit of educational excellence and access for qualified students) ultimately promotes or hinders social justice remains contested, but proponents of both positions claim they are seeking to serve students and society in the most appropriate and best ways possible[15].

Exactly what benefits were expected to accrue to society as a whole from college or a university education were less clearly spelled out in much of the BC postsecondary discourse in the 1960s. With a backdrop of ideas as to how human capital formation could benefit the economy and increase the earning power of individuals, and optimism about the role of education in promoting a democratic and civil society, it did not seem essential to enumerate in any detail the benefits of expanding the BC postsecondary system. Rather, what seemed to propel postsecondary development was simply a perceived need for more student spaces and that they be geographically accessible.

This conception of social justice was framed in individualistic terms. The closest it came to recognizing the aspirations of special groups concerned access for people living outside the metropolitan southwest. Even in this discourse, and it was a powerful one, the goals were more to replicate the opportunities of metropolitan populations as much as possible rather than to cultivate distinctive experiences that would foster particular non-metropolitan subcultures – although the latter was not precluded, just not advocated.

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[15] Brint and Karabel's (1989) work on community colleges provides a good entry to this literature. A note of caution, though, is that the college and university environment in BC differs from that of the USA. Some of the research conducted by the BC Council of Admissions and Transfer documents BC conditions and serves to caution against the uncritical application to BC of findings from the USA. See Cowin (2013c) for a summary compendium of the Council's research.

One area where social justice conceived as recognizing and respecting cultural groups was evident in the Macdonald Era was with respect to faith-based institutions. The provincial government did not seem to be able to articulate a position or policy about this sector, but neither was it prepared to stand in its way. The government acknowledged the special interests of religious groups and continued to use the backdoor route of private member's bills to charter degree-granting institutions and to allow sub-baccalaureate schools to incorporate as non-profit societies.

In the apprenticeship world, Weiermair (1984) indicated that it was only in the late 1970s that apprenticeship and industrial training came to be seen nationally as important to industrial productivity, as opposed to social policy for the economically disadvantaged. This suggests that apprenticeship policy in BC shifted from more of a social justice orientation in the Macdonald moment towards today's entrenched emphasis on human capital formation.

The provincial government did not articulate its views about private career colleges. Such institutions were neither encouraged nor discouraged, but simply allowed to exist (provided they followed basic rules). It is not clear why they were permitted to exist, but one possibility is that they were seen to meet needs that the public system was not serving. (In the growing economy of the 1960s when postsecondary participation rates remained modest, the use of private providers as a cost saving measure for government does not seem a likely explanation.) If career colleges were viewed as complementing the public system, then perhaps they could be taken as another example of a social justice interest in ensuring that everyone in society had access to the type of postsecondary education they desired.

If social justice concerns propelled the development of the vocational school system, then documentary evidence is lacking. The presence of these schools, however, may have contributed

114

to the strong liberal education orientation of BC colleges – a contrast to the vocational orientation of colleges in some other jurisdictions. With a vocational sector already well established, the new colleges had the freedom to address other needs such as supporting disadvantaged students across the curriculum rather than relegating them to particular programs.

Human Capital Formation

By the mid 1950s, universities were coming to be seen by government and the public as a dependable route to economic growth and individual prosperity (Cameron, 1991). The Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects (Gordon, 1957), for example, recommended strengthening and expanding universities as a core strategy for economic development in Canada. The launch of Sputnik by the Soviet Union and the resulting frenzy in the USA to strengthen scientific capabilities reinforced the notion that high levels of postsecondary education were essential to the competitive economic position of a nation. It took several years more years, however, until theoretical articles such as Schultz (1960, 1961) and Becker (1964) encapsulated the emerging orthodoxy.

Johnston (2005) claimed that Canadian university presidents were quick to adopt human capital perspectives as they promoted their institutions in the late 1950s:

> In selling universities to a federal government and a Canadian public that in the past had been largely indifferent, university presidents, with striking ease and assurance, adopted the argument of utility. They encouraged parents and young people to see a university education as a route to better-paying jobs and more security. And they promoted the idea of the modern university as an engine of economic growth. (p. 16)

Macdonald (1962) echoed this theme, beginning his report with a human capital argument that warned that an inadequately educated citizenry would lead to "a nation doomed to economic distress at best, and economic disaster at worst" (p. 6).

Human capital formation became the fertile ground in which the seeds of change, namely concern about access for a growing number of students seeking education, could blossom into an expanded public university and college system. To switch metaphors from a societal pie, a social justice concern with access was the spark but human capital theory provided the fuel. The justification human capital theory provided for state investment in public education also fostered social justice.

Despite the importance of human capital formation, it does not seem that a particular aspect, namely the role of colleges in fostering regional economic development in the hinterland through a skilled workforce, was an especially important argument in favour of the creation of colleges. The resource economy in BC was still strong in the 1960s and rural populations, at least males, could earn good incomes and maintain a secure life with minimal levels of education. It was only since the 1980s, as employment in the resource economy declined, that interest grew in the linkage between human capital formation and regional economic growth in non-metropolitan BC. In the 1960s, the emphasis seemed to be on regional access for quality of life considerations and on the vocational education of workers rather than on what were then flourishing, regional economies.

Whereas social justice themes intertwined BC government postsecondary policy, human capital arguments have been the driver for federal government initiatives. This has been evident in federal vocational and apprenticeship legislation, not only in the Macdonald era but also in the decades leading up to it:

1913   Agricultural Instruction Act
1919   Technical Education Act
1939   Youth Training Act
1940   War Emergency Training Act
1942   Vocational Training Co-ordination Act
1945   Vocational Schools Assistance agreement
1960   Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act
1967   Adult Occupational Training Act

The importance of non-academic postsecondary education in the development of Canada's human capital can be seen in educational attainment statistics: in 1965, 48% of the nation's adult population age 25 years and over had only an elementary school education or less. The situation was improving, though, and the proportion of Canadian 20 – 24 year olds in 1965 who had not progressed beyond elementary school had dropped to 24% (Whittingham, 1969). These data notwithstanding, Canadians generally followed the British tradition of valuing academic education and had been resistant to vocational education for the first half of the twentieth century, with some exceptions such as during World War I (Bell, 2004; Lyons, Randhawa, & Paulson, N., 1991).

The federal role in occupational training prior to the Macdonald Era had mainly consisted of minor conditional grants (McBride, 1998). With the federal government's overhaul of unemployment insurance in 1955 (Pal, 1988) and rising unemployment in the late 1950s, the federal government had begun by 1960 to take a more active interest in retraining its unemployed clients for stable, long-term employment in technological fields (Bell, 2004). This active interest in education in support of labour market strategies manifested structurally in funding for new vocational and technical facilities in BC and other provinces, and figured prominently in the next historical moment to be analyzed about the Canadian Jobs Strategy.

Marketization

The least explicit of the three policy rationales in the Macdonald Era, elements of a competitive market philosophy were nevertheless present in this Keynesian age that preceded the shift in the western world in the 1980s towards neoliberalism. Marketization was certainly emerging in the 1960s in the internal culture of universities as competitive research grants from the federal government, starting in the sciences, moved the emphasis from undergraduate teaching towards graduate education and knowledge generation. By the end of the 1960s, the publish or perish ethos was well established in the universities of British Columbia, despite voices at the beginning of the decade that had cautioned against the dominance of research (Johnston, 2005; Damer & Rosengarten, 2009; Macpherson, 2012).

The expression of a market philosophy in the structure of the postsecondary system was subtler. In arguing against a centralized or unified higher education system, Macdonald (1962) claimed that institutional competition was desirable for educational excellence, "Free enterprise here, as much or more than elsewhere in society, is the essential key to progress" (p.23). Although he wanted UBC to maintain a monopoly on graduate and professional education, Macdonald also sought institutional autonomy.

In making the two new universities, SFU and the University of Victoria, full research universities rather than undergraduate teaching colleges, the BC government reflected its uneasy relationship with UBC by providing UBC with competitors, not feeder institutions. Giles (1983) quoted the Minister of Education, Leslie Peterson, as subsequently explaining that he had visited California and had concluded that competition was desirable. Macdonald (2000) himself acknowledged Premier W.A.C. Bennett's "desire to establish competition for UBC which to some degree he mistrusted" (p.88).

118

The literature often frames the mechanism chosen by government for establishing public colleges in terms of local control (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986; Gaber, 2002), but it can also be viewed as a form of laissez-faire, with colleges to be established only once the local market demonstrated sufficient demand. The funding arrangement until 1977 was that local taxpayers had to contribute half the operating and capital costs (Dennison 1979a), allowing for variation in the resources available to deliver the same service, depending on the local tax base and priority placed on college education. For their first decade, the provincial government maintained a hands-off approach to colleges with no central planning or coordination – much the same approach as it took to universities, and in stark contrast to its administration of vocational schools.

The colleges, described from their inception as a unique educational setting in the Canadian context (Academic Board, 1965), faced challenges in the academic marketplace of status and prestige in establishing their legitimacy for funding and student recruitment purposes. The elitist, restrictive advice to colleges from the university-dominated Academic Board for Higher Education (Perry, 1969) – advice which in this case the colleges ignored – was that "those who advocate an open-door policy[16] fail to understand the primary purposes of colleges and the educational standards they must maintain…or [which enroll] too large a number of older students, will invariably interfere with the instruction of the students for whom the college is primarily intended" (Academic Board, 1966, pp.18-19). Both the types of students served and

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[16] The Macdonald Report noted that the minimal admission standard to UBC in 1962 was simply high school graduation. The meaning in BC of an open-door admissions policy has changed from lack of graduation to low marks regardless of graduation status.

the educational philosophy of colleges meant that academic programs in colleges had to strive to establish and maintain their credibility with universities and the public.

With tight central control by the provincial government over the campuses of the BC Vocational School, and even the separate Vancouver Vocational Institute being gradually brought more within the ambit of the provincial government, it is hard to find evidence of a market philosophy in the vocational school sector. Certainly the curriculum was sensitive to employer preferences, and enrolment demand reflected labour market conditions, but the structure and operations of the vocational schools were controlled by the state, not by the market.

By definition, the private postsecondary sector – composed of faith-based institutions and career colleges at this time – operates in a market environment. The public policy issues are how tightly government chooses to regulate the institutions, whether students are eligible for government financial aid, and whether government generally encourages or discourages their existence. During the Macdonald era, the default position of government seemed to be one of benign neglect of private postsecondary education. Students were not funded, no attempt was made to foster growth in the two sectors, and the policy seemed to be to provide as little government oversight as was consistent with preventing problems for government from emerging. This again was a laissez-faire approach.

Apprenticeship is difficult to classify. It was tied to the market in that the availability of apprenticeships was dependent on employer interest and in that employers had a great deal of freedom in how they chose to deploy apprentices. On the other hand, apprenticeship was strongly regulated in certain respects such as wages and journeyman supervision. Its character was shaped by the interactions of four provincial interest groups – employers, unions, government and educators – and not by local forces. With the availability of funding for living and travel

expenses during the classroom portion of training each year, Department of Education or Labour officials sometimes assigned apprentices to vocational schools or colleges anywhere in the province depending which institutions had unused seats, rather than on student preference or other market forces.

Chapter 5: Assumptions Challenged (1980 – 1999)

The postsecondary system in British Columbia was dynamic and growing in the 1960s and 1970s, but evolving in systematic ways that were easy for citizens and educators to comprehend. Beginning in the 1980s, some of the certainties and confidences about the future began to fade. In a number of areas, the ground rules for the system altered and the postsecondary landscape became more complex.

Two historical moments are examined in this chapter, the first being unwelcomed by public institutions and the second applauded by them. The first moment involved a contraction in the early 1980s in public education and a shift in vocational education in the mid 1980s from public institutions towards the private sector. The second historical moment, at the end of the 1980s, introduced a new type of postsecondary institution to British Columbia and brought about an expansion of academic education in the public sector.

Period Overview

The change most commented upon in the scholarly literature on BC postsecondary education history from 1980 to 1999 was the transformation of five community colleges into a new institutional type, the university college. Although the change was not quantitatively significant, affecting relatively few programs and students, it blurred boundaries and changed perceptions of what had previously been a clear, binary public system. The introduction of degree granting authority to two provincial institutes was lower profile.

Even notions of the essential characteristics of a university were mildly challenged during this period by the establishment of two specialized, non-traditional universities, Royal Roads

University and the Technical University of BC. The role of a faith-based university, Trinity Western, in liberal and professional education became controversial.

As federal training dollars shifted from public to private institutions, the career college sector blossomed while apprenticeship remained in the doldrums. The provincial government chose to move the oversight of both sectors to arm's length organizations outside of government proper.

Continuing education moved closer to the market and emphasized cost-recovery operations, in some cases competing directly with the private sector. Postsecondary education for Aboriginal students became an explicit priority in public policy.

Public Sectors

An economic recession in the early 1980s resulted in both across-the-board and targeted cuts in public institutions, marking the end of the previous expansionary period. It was in the continuing education departments of colleges, though, that it first became evident that changing policy orientations, and not simply questions of affordability, were now at play.

Over a two-year period beginning in 1982, the provincial government eliminated its designated funding to colleges in support of *general interest* continuing education, a term that encompassed all personal and community development courses that were not directly job-related. A further shock to colleges came in 1985 when the federal government announced its new Canadian Jobs Strategy (CJS), explicitly promoting training by the private and voluntary sectors instead of by public colleges. This strategy resulted in a halving from 1986 to 1991 in the purchase of vocational training in public colleges by the federal government (Witter, n.d.).

123

One type of public college response to the Canadian Jobs Strategy was to use continuing education departments to subcontract the delivery of training on behalf of private and non-profit organizations that were receiving CJS funds. The colleges increasingly bid on projects in partnership with private trainers and voluntary organizations (see the following section on private career colleges).

The Centre for Policy Studies in Education at UBC concluded that three distinct changes in continuing education at BC colleges had occurred in less than a decade: (a) services to community organizations declined while those to employers increased; (b) programming to assist disadvantaged people declined; and (c) priorities shifted from enfranchisement to training (British Columbia & Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, 1992). This finding was consistent with the case made by Cruikshank (1990) that across Canada, notions of adult education as a vehicle for social change and development were being replaced by a focus on individual clients in which educators competed as businesses in educational markets.

At the end of the period, in 2000, the BC government withdrew funding for *part-time vocational* offerings (that is, college continuing education courses and programs that were directly linked to the labour market.) Thus the public college sector faced a double funding blow from 1985 to 2000, one federal and one provincial (Cowin, 2010). This funding disappeared permanently, in contrast to the temporary reductions from the recession in the early 1980s. Some colleges and institutes chose to subsidize continuing education from other operations, some made it fully cost-recovery, and some greatly reduced or eliminated it.

Developments in the university sector were mainly cyclical in the 1980s and 1990s, involving first contraction and then expansion, whereas colleges experienced both cyclical and structural change. When the small University of Northern British Columbia opened in Prince

George in 1994 – more the result of local lobbying to support the economic and community development needs of the region than an attempt to meet the educational needs of individuals – its innovations such as thematic graduate programming and aspirations (only partially realized) for collaboration with local colleges were still well within the bounds of the conventional research university paradigm. It was not until the formation of Royal Roads University in 1995, followed by the Technical University of BC in 1997, that taken-for-granted notions of the nature of BC universities were unsettled (Cowin, 2007).

The establishment of Royal Roads University was opportunistic, taking advantage of a beautiful military college site that the federal government had recently vacated. It was a small, niche institution, serving adult learners using mixed mode delivery[17]. It had no bicameral governance system and only a small core of permanent faculty – something of a continuing education model. The Technical University was assigned a specific mission but lasted only half a dozen years, barely enrolling any students before a new government had it absorbed by Simon Fraser University. It too had an unusual governance structure, one that was challenged by the Canadian Association of University Teachers[18]. Subsequent changes to governance at other BC universities turned out to be traditional, not following the precedents set by Royal Roads and the Technical University, but governance structures could no longer be taken for granted.

A development in the public college sector, namely the creation of university colleges, captured the attention of postsecondary scholars such as Dennison (2004, 2006), Levin (1994, 2003) and Fleming (2009). Whereas developments in the university sector were more variations

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[17] Students typically alternated short, intense sessions of face-to-face instruction with distance education.

[18] An 8-month boycott by the Canadian Association of University Teachers was lifted before the university enrolled any students when the university's board agreed to delegate academic planning to a senate-like body (Ward, 1998).

on traditional structures, five community colleges were transformed into an entirely new type of institution, the university college. Unlike some other jurisdictions in Canada and around the world, university colleges in BC were autonomous and also offered a full range of non-university programs.

The provincial government had struck an Access Committee in the late 1980s, when the economy was again expanding. The committee concluded that BC needed significantly more student spaces to meet the national average for postsecondary participation, noting that access was particularly difficult for those living in remote areas and for selected groups such as Aboriginal students (British Columbia & Provincial Access Committee, 1988). The committee recommended that upper-level (3rd and 4th year) programming be added to some larger community colleges outside the southwest.

In 1989, the province designated Okanagan, Cariboo and Malaspina[19] colleges as university colleges. Bachelor degrees were initially conferred at these institutions in partnership with a university and then in the own name of the university college within a few years. In 1990 and 1995 respectively, Fraser Valley and Kwantlen colleges in the suburbs of Vancouver (but located across a large river that made their regions less accessible to UBC and Simon Fraser University) were also designated as university colleges, to their mild surprise.

The university college model was largely unfamiliar to Canadians. Questions arose about the acceptance by the public and graduate schools of the quality of university college degrees, the status of preparatory and vocational programs in these institutions, and the workload and scholarly expectations for upper-division instructors. BC's authorization in 1994 for the BC

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[19] Cariboo is now Thompson Rivers University and Malaspina became Vancouver Island University.

Institute of Technology to offer a new credential, the Bachelor of Technology degree, and for the Emily Carr Institute of Art + Design to grant conventional degrees, went largely unremarked.

Instruction Spanning the Public and Private Sectors

A cluster of small, Aboriginal-governed institutions began emerging in non-metropolitan areas in the early 1980s: for example, the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (public since 1983), the Chemainus Native College, and En'owkin Centre. Public institutions began to develop custom programs and services in the 1980s. Then in the 1990s, programming for Aboriginal students began to build momentum, as reflected in the creation of the province's *Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Policy Framework* in 1995 (Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, 1996). Another initiative in 1995, the public Institute of Indigenous Government, did not thrive and closed in 2007.

Elsewhere in the public sector, it was in the smaller institutions in rural locations that the presence of Aboriginal students was the most noticeable. Adult Basic Education, First Nations Studies, and programs up to two years in duration were popular (Cowin, 2011). Several more private, not-for-profit Aboriginal colleges were established, bringing the total to over a dozen. Lacking authority to grant credentials, they frequently partnered with public institutions and often served as a bridge for students into public institutions.

Apprenticeship in Canada resembles British and American models in that it is embedded in the market, with apprentices sponsored and laid off partly in response to the economic prospects of employers. The number of apprentices in BC had peaked at 19,000 in 1981 but fell back to 10,000 during the economic recession of the early to mid 1980s. The number did not return to the peak of 19,000 until 2004 (Cowin, 2012a).

127

In the 1960s, the Department of Education came to fund a parallel stream of trades training, known as pre-employment training, for students who were not eligible for apprenticeship (they were too old, for example) or who did not want to follow the Department of Labour's apprenticeship route. As administrative tensions among the parties grew throughout the 1970s, and complaints voiced that employers were not providing a sufficient amount of training through apprenticeship, provincial politicians decided in 1982 simply to terminate pre-apprenticeship and pre-employment training offered by either Department (Thompson, 1983).

Aghast at this decision, government bureaucrats convinced the politicians to embark on a major reform instead. The result, the Training Access program (TRAC), was a self-paced, competency-based, modularized program that began with a common curricular core and allowed students to gradually specialize (Dwyer, 1983). Innovative and progressive, TRAC was so hastily implemented in 1983 with so little support from instructors or employers that it faded away within a few years as the former system resurfaced. In the meantime, the political crisis that had begun developing in the 1970s had passed.

The federal government's 1989 *Labour Force Development Strategy* was an unsuccessful attempt to import a more collaborative, north European model of apprenticeship (Haddow, 2000). It led to the establishment in 1994 of an advisory BC Labour Force Development Board, but the Board lasted only until 1996.

In 1995/96, the BC Department of Labour (then named the Ministry of Labour, Citizens' Services and Open Government) began consultations that resulted in the February 1997 report, *Revitalizing Apprenticeship: A Strategic Framework for British Columbia's Apprenticeship Training System*. At much the same time, in late 1996, the ministries of Labour and of Education jointly struck a committee on *Entry Level Trades Training and Apprenticeship*. The outcome of

these studies was to move the oversight of apprenticeship out of government in 1997 to an arm's length body, the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission.

Private Sectors

The implementation of the federal Canadian Jobs Strategy may have harmed public institutions but it led to a major expansion of private sub-baccalaureate institutions. Government was concluding that private institutions were both cheaper and more flexible than public ones (Culos, 2005). Entrepreneurs seized the opportunity as the federal government announced it would direct more of its funding for seat purchases to private institutions, and the number of career colleges registered under the BC *Apprenticeship Act* doubled from 250 in 1984/85 to 500 in 1990/91 (BC Ministry of Labour annual reports). Although enrolment statistics for this sector have not been especially reliable, it appears that enrolment was around 35,000 in 1983/84, just prior to the Continuing Education and Canadian Jobs Strategy historical moment.

Responsibility for the *Apprenticeship Act* shifted in 1986/87 from the BC Ministry of Labour to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training. Despite the dramatic growth of the career college sector in the late eighties, Advanced Education devoted few resources to this new aspect of its mandate. This period was arguably the least transparent and accountable period for private career colleges (Cowin, 2013b).

Following some adverse publicity about a few problematic career colleges, the province moved the regulation of career colleges out of the government bureaucracy in 1992. The new Private Post-Secondary Education Commission became responsible for all private institutions, not simply those providing career training. Close to 1,000 institutions had achieved their required

registration by 1996, and the total stabilized at 1,100 shortly thereafter (Private Post-Secondary Education Commission annual reports)[20].

The legislation creating the Commission also provided for voluntary accreditation of private institutions (compulsory registration by this time was little more than consumer protection for prepaid tuition fees). Little happened with respect to accreditation until the late 1990s when both levels of government indicated that accreditation would soon become a requirement for an institution's students to remain eligible for such government supports as student financial aid (Cowin, 2013b).

In the faith-based sector, the authorization of Trinity Western College to grant bachelor's degrees in any subject was extended by the BC government in 1985 to include graduate degrees (at which time it was renamed to become a university). It had become a member of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, but this membership was controversial. Trinity Western subsequently endured other accreditation controversies and legal challenges based on its Christian worldview as it introduced new programs, but the university prevailed in each instance[21].

Roman Catholics opened two tiny, liberal education colleges in 1999. Corpus Christi College affiliated with the secular UBC and Redeemer Pacific College affiliated with the Protestant Trinity Western University.

The Associated Canadian Theological Schools (ACTS) formed in 1987 as a partnership of what now consists of six seminaries, with graduate degrees awarded jointly by Trinity

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[20] A cautionary note about private institutions data is that sometimes branch campuses were counted as separate institutions and sometimes they were excluded, with only the head office counted.

[21] In 2016, Trinity Western University has gone to court to challenge the refusal of law societies in three provinces to accredit graduates of its proposed new law school.

Western University and each of the seminaries. This was a different arrangement than had occurred on the UBC campus in 1970 with the formation of the Vancouver School of Theology in that UBC did not jointly confer degrees (Cowin, 2009).

Organizations and Agencies

Although the structure of the BC postsecondary system was not determined by the advisory and coordinating organizations and agencies associated with it, these bodies influenced its development. They are not the focus of this study, but their existence merits noting.

During the 1970s, the provincial government had created several intermediary bodies to help guide the young public system. The three councils for colleges and institutes lasted only from 1977 to 1983, but the Universities Council existed from 1974 to 1987. Other groups (for students, for faculty, to forecast enrolment, to conduct institutional evaluation, and so on) formed as the system matured (Cowin, 2012b).

During the period 1985 to 2000, new organizations tended to be specialized. The BC Council on Admissions and Transfer (established in 1989) made a large contribution to supporting student mobility among institutions and emerged as a principal source of research about public colleges and universities in the province. The Advanced Education Council of BC (established in1990) included all public institutions except the universities. It started to fragment as the new university colleges sought to stake their own territory and it disbanded in 2001 (Cowin, 2012b).

By and large, the universities were wary of participating in BC system organizations. They tended to cooperate among themselves and not be part of such organizations as the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology (1996 – 2003) or the Centre for Education Information

131

Standards and Services (also 1996 – 2003). The Electronic Library Network (1989) is one of the exceptions to this generalization.

Historical Moment: Continuing Education and the Canadian Jobs Strategy

Unlike the Macdonald Era that preceded this historical moment and the Access for All moment that followed it, the Continuing Education and Canadian Jobs Strategy (CE and CJS) moment does not have single document to mark a decisive turn in BC postsecondary education. Rather, changes emerged gradually following an economic downturn in the early 1980s, with the exact nature and implications of new provincial and federal policies becoming evident only after several years. It was a moment characterized by financial restraint and attention to labour market strategies.

The policy changes in this historical moment, ones that did not directly alter the sectorial structure of the postsecondary system but which had indirect consequences for its scope and balance, affected only two postsecondary sectors: public community colleges and private career colleges, with the latter benefiting at the expense of the former. Linking the sectors, and complicating the narrative, were continuing education offerings, both credit and non-credit, in the public colleges. Although continuing education was formally a component of the public college sector, its distinctive operational style and structures made it, for practical purposes, a quasi-sector.

The outcomes of the CE and CJS moment were (a) modified internal structures and emphases in public colleges, especially regarding non-credit programming, that significantly reduced their service to non-traditional clienteles in terms of geographical and social reach, and (b) a dramatic expansion in the number of private colleges. Some temporary overlap between

public and private colleges also developed as public continuing education departments partnered with private institutions to access federal funding. The credit programs in public colleges that were affected by federal actions were (a) preparatory or academic upgrading of secondary level education (developmental or adult basic education in postsecondary parlance) and (b) non-academic, applied programs.

The backdrop to the *CE and CJS* historical moment was a worldwide recession ending the economic boom that had supported public sector expansion in BC throughout the 1970s. In the early 1980s, the recession had become the deepest since the 1930s and BC, with its dependence on commodities, was affected worse than other provinces (Fisher et al., 2014). As a result of this severe recession, BC public colleges and institutes experienced a midyear reduction in their provincial operating grant in1982. For the 1984/85 fiscal year, they received a 5% reduction and advance notice that a similar cut was possible the following year (Beinder, 1986). The BC economy began to improve in 1985, however, and was again growing by 1986.

The federal government had concluded that the recession was more than a cyclical downturn. Due to structural changes in the economy, it was realizing that some of jobs that had been lost were not going to return, and that new approaches for stimulating the economy were needed. The government commissioned several studies, such as the Allmand parliamentary task force report, *Work for Tomorrow* (Allmand, 1981), to examine, among other topics, the dilemma of simultaneous high unemployment and shortages of skilled workers. The task force determined that what were then termed manpower training programs were not achieving their objectives. Likewise, the federal Nielsen Task Force on Program Review (Prince & Rice, 1989; Task Force, 1986) called for better training of the long-term unemployed and a better matching of skills with the needs of the economy.

Government thus faced two problems: a short-term decline in revenues due to the recession and a long-term shift in the character of the labour market. These pressures in and of themselves may not have been sufficient to cause changes in public educational policies, but they were a strong incentive for any government that was inclined to consider making changes – and governments were indeed disposed to do just that.

Both BC and the nation had recently elected right-wing governments. Promising a regime of fiscal restraint, the BC Social Credit party was re-elected in 1983 and immediately introduced a harsh restraint budget that sought (unsuccessfully) to reduce the provincial public sector by a quarter through dismissals, privatization, and reorganization (Fisher et al., 2014). Federally, the first Conservative majority government in over two decades was elected in 1984 with a promise to lower the deficit.

Indications that policy changes were under consideration had been evident during the mandates of each government's predecessor. At that time, the BC Ministry of Labour was responsible for regulating private career colleges. In its 1981 annual report (British Columbia, 1981), the Ministry hinted that the private vocational sector could be a viable complement to the public system. It also reported that a modest number of grants (325 grants of up $500 each) had been made available to students in private colleges by way of financial assistance. Then in its 1984/85 annual report, it explicitly said that a further expansion in the number of private training institutions was foreseen and that students from all parts of the province were increasingly finding individualized instruction at private colleges to be a major attraction.

Federally, concern about Canadian labour market policy (McBride, 1998) had led to three major assessments in rapid succession: Allmand (1981), Dodge (Canada & Dodge, 1981), and the Economic Council of Canada (1982). The emerging consensus was that Canadian

occupational training programs were unable to provide training in the middle and high skill areas (Witter, n.d.), that labour demand and supply were disconnected, and that institutional training needed to be more aligned with high demand occupations to rectify or prevent skills shortages (Fisher et al., 2006).

With the above economic and governmental considerations as context, attention will now turn to specific provincial policy changes regarding continuing education and then to the introduction of the federal Canadian Jobs Strategy. Finally, the overlap and interactions between the two will be discussed.

A shift in the approach of the BC government to continuing education was the first alteration to appear in this historical moment. It represented an abandonment of its short-lived interest in policy development for the field, as well as a simple withdrawal of a certain type of funding over a two-year period. The federal initiative that followed was more a redirection of funding from the public sector to the private sector, with the repackaging of programs and grants making it difficult to know if funding levels actually remained the same.

Continuing education has been a complex term in BC with each postsecondary institution defining and structuring its continuing education operations according to its own vision and circumstances. It had been seen as serving two basic purposes: (a) technical empowerment and (b) access to basic education as a civic right (British Columbia, 1992). Its association with volunteerism and learner autonomy linked it with entrepreneurial activity, while its social activism connected it with equity and compensatory education (British Columbia, 1992).

For the purposes of this analysis, the only distinction that needs be noted about the continuing education activities of the various institutions was the difference in the late 1970s and early 1980s between continuing education in the university sector compared to the public

colleges and institutes sector. This difference explains why the forces described below did not affect universities (in the long run, though, dissimilar dynamics have brought the college and university sectors to a similar entrepreneurial, cost-recovery orientation for continuing education).

Universities did not receive targeted funding from government for continuing education, and so changes to their continuing education operations arose from causes other than financial exigency. UBC reorganized its continuing education operations several times, with tensions surfacing about the role of liberal education versus cost-recovery operations[22]. The UBC Senate modified its definition of a diploma program in 1994 so that continuing education could offer and credential post-baccalaureate programs. Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria used continuing education as a vehicle for opening facilities in the central business districts of their respective cities, and, especially in the case of the University of Victoria, to provide leadership in the provision of postsecondary distance education for the province.

In the mid 1970s, both federal and provincial governments began to fund adult (continuing) education in school districts, colleges and institutes (British Columbia, 1992). The provincial grants to BC colleges in support of continuing education were unrestricted, provided that the courses and activities fell within the vague category of continuing education. Colleges used some of this funding for technical and professional development courses, but much was allocated to general interest and personal and community development purposes where registrants may have had less ability to pay the full costs of tuition (British Columbia, 1992).

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[22] The lack of consensus at UBC about continuing education was reflected in a 1981 report, *Looking Beyond* (Kulich, Taylor, Tetlow, & University of British Columbia, 1981). In its preface, UBC president Douglas Kenny stated that the university needed a comprehensive, long-range policy on continuing education.

Community colleges took seriously the emancipatory and democratic function of continuing education, ranging from basic literacy through community development courses and activities. Universities at that time also had personnel who embraced a popular and social justice conception of continuing education, but with no earmarked funding from government, continuing education at universities differed qualitatively from college offerings.

The introduction of continuing education funding for colleges and institutes led to a new continuing education division in the Ministry of Education, formed in 1976, to provide leadership and coordination for the colleges and institutes (Cowin, 2010). By 1982/83, BC colleges and school districts were serving almost 400,000 students[23] annually, an increase of 53% in seven years (British Columbia, 1992). A Statistics Canada study of adult education participation in Canada found that community colleges were the largest providers of continuing education in BC, followed by voluntary organizations, employers and school boards, and then other organizations, in that order (Deveraux, 1984).

With the onset of financial restraint in the early eighties, the provincial government trimmed postsecondary budgets across the board. Along with this undifferentiated quantitative reduction, it made some more severe, targeted cuts that qualitatively changed public colleges.

According to Beinder (1986), Ministry of Education officials felt that the college system was overextended. They therefore clamped down on funding for facility leases in 1983 to encourage greater utilization of large campuses and to foster distance education. With *minor leases* (facilities that were located away from a main campus in areas with small populations) no

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[23] The enrolment data were reported as students, but it is unclear whether this represents unduplicated headcounts or course registrations. Given the size of the figure and the technical challenges of producing unduplicated counts, I suspect the measure was course registrations and that students were duplicated.

longer funded, many storefront operations in small towns and on First Nations reserves that were operated by college continuing education departments could no longer afford to remain open. The geographic reach of colleges was sharply curtailed, although the number of students affected was small. Colleges argued, unsuccessfully, that many of their storefront classrooms served at-risk populations who were less likely to come to a distant, larger campus or to succeed in distance learning environments.

A more profound change to college continuing education came in 1981 when a new Minister of Education (and subsequently Premier), Bill Vander Zalm, called a halt to the provincial policy development process for continuing education, and then eventually dismantled the continuing education division and publicly announced the intention of the Ministry to discontinue providing leadership in the field (Selman, 1988). In addition, over a two-year period beginning in 1982, funding for general interest continuing education was eliminated. The only BC government funding for continuing education that remained was for job-related courses, known as part-time vocational training.

Colleges responded in different ways to the continuing education funding cuts, in several cases drawing upon other revenue sources to varying degrees to maintain at least a skeleton of general education offerings. By the late 1980s, when the economy was healthier, all colleges were again providing some non-government-funded continuing education programs and services. In aggregate, they then served a little over 5,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) students, where one FTE represented between 600 and 800 hours of instruction, depending on the nature of the instruction (British Columbia, 1992). This volume of instruction was similar to that delivered by a medium-sized college but involved many more students because most registrants were enrolled in very short courses.

Turning now to the national scene, the federal government had introduced the Canada Manpower Training Programme under the *Adult Occupational Training Act* of 1967, and then replaced it with the National Training Programme in 1982 (McBride, 1998). These programs enabled the federal government to purchase training, mainly from provincial community colleges, of a vocational nature as well as English as a Second Language and Adult Basic Education instruction. The original emphasis was on public providers of training because the government feared that on-the-job training could easily become just a subsidy to industry (Dupre, 1973).

By the mid 1980s, the federal government had come to perceive public colleges as slow both to respond to new labour market demands and to wind down programs for which demand had declined (McBride, 1998). Furthermore, an inordinate amount of the training was, in their eyes, being devoted to the Basic Training for Skill Development (BTSD) program, an upgrading of basic academic skills that federal officials viewed as simply rectifying deficiencies in provincial secondary education (Rubenson & Gaskell, 1987). The federal government was also seeking to shift funding from lower-level to higher-level skills training (Fisher et al., 2006).

The new Conservative government of 1984 introduced the Canadian Jobs Strategy in 1985, with full implementation coming in mid 1986. The strategy replaced all former training employment programs and represented the largest reform in labour market policy since the introduction of employment training programs in the 1960s (Prince & Rice, 1989). It consisted of a set of programs targeted to specific clienteles, such as Aboriginal persons and the long-term unemployed. The implication was, according to Prince and Rice (1989), that all previous job creation programs were perceived by the current government as short-term, ad hoc, make-work schemes.

139

The Canadian Jobs Strategy explicitly promoted training by the private and voluntary sectors, reflecting the skepticism of the federal government about the cost effectiveness and responsiveness public colleges (Cowin, 2010). This fostered dramatic growth in private career colleges as public training funds were redirected to such institutions (Auld, 2005; Sweet & Gallagher, 1999). In the five years following 1986, direct federal purchase of training in public colleges halved, destabilizing their vocational programs, especially in the first few years of the new regime (Witter, n.d.). In the private sector, in contrast, BC Ministry of Labour annual reports indicated that the number of registered private career colleges in BC tripled in a decade, from 165 in 1980 to 500 in 1990/91 (Cowin, 2013b).

Along with reducing and refocusing their programming, one of the responses of BC colleges to the Canadian Jobs Strategy was to use their continuing education departments to serve as subcontractors to deliver training on behalf of private and non-profit organizations that were receiving Canadian Jobs Strategy funds. Public colleges also increasingly bid in partnership with private trainers and voluntary organizations; lacking educational expertise and capacity, these other organizations fronted bids but turned to public institutions to actually deliver significant portions of the contracts that they were awarded (Cowin, 2010).

Vocational instructors in BC community colleges were dismayed by the change in federal policy, claiming it had deprived, betrayed and devalued the public postsecondary vocational education system (Vocational Instructors Association of BC, 1991). Other criticisms of the Canadian Jobs Strategy were that it reduced the absolute amount of funding for training, weakened quality assurance (audits by the federal government concerned financial propriety, not educational standards and outcomes), and increased the possibility of duplication of services across providers (McBride, 1998; Witter, n.d.).

Analysis: Continuing Education and the Canadian Jobs Strategy Moment

Social Justice

It is difficult to find evidence that any concern for social justice influenced the actions of the BC government in reducing public expenditures, especially with respect to continuing education, in the early 1980s. The government seems to have sacrificed portions of the emancipatory and democratization mission of community colleges in light of financial exigencies. Nevertheless, a couple of considerations temper this stark conclusion slightly.

While causing the closure of many storefront college facilities through a refusal to continue funding minor leases, the government claimed that affected students had an alternative, namely to make greater use of the relatively new Open Learning Institute and the Knowledge Network of the West educational television service. When educators responded that distance education was not especially viable because the students who accessed storefront centres were typically not the successful, confident students who seem to perform adequately in less social, distance education settings, the advice of educators was suspect in that they had a vested interest in keeping the storefronts open – they and their colleagues were employed there. Regardless of the sincerity of either government or college personnel, or even the soundness of their arguments, the point is that the government felt it had to offer a substitute means of accessing postsecondary education for the vulnerable students who would be affected by storefront closures.

The withdrawal by the BC government of funding for non-vocational continuing education greatly reduced the ability of colleges to equip and empower marginalized populations. Possibly reinforcing other factors leading to this decision was a perception in government that some continuing education activities were becoming more political than

141

educational. This perception was exacerbated by the belief of the Ministry's executive director for continuing education, Ron Faris, that school districts and colleges were not making sufficient effort to serve disadvantaged persons (Selman, 1988). His continuing education division attempted to change institutional priorities and, in some instances, was perceived by field personnel as interfering with local programs and priorities. Receiving mixed messages from constituents around the province about the accomplishments of general continuing education and knowing that he had to make financial cuts somewhere, a new Minister of Education, Bill Vander Zalm, was not predisposed to protect this particular budget item.

The picture at the federal level was more complex, and it is too facile to conclude that a transfer of funds from the public to the private postsecondary system automatically meant that the welfare of needy or vulnerable citizens was unimportant to government. Perhaps the bigger concern is the inconclusively documented suspicion that the Canadian Jobs Strategy ultimately reduced overall training funds across all sectors, but it is difficult to unwind the budgetary strands to confirm this.

When the Mulroney government came to power in 1984, it explicitly established social justice as one of the four overarching priorities to govern its decisions for the next few years (Prince & Rice, 1989). The government did not necessarily agree with its political opponents as to what constituted social justice, but it nevertheless felt that its conception of social justice was worthy and important.

Under the Canadian Jobs Strategy, a right-wing government, which might have been expected to be concerned with promoting individual rights, chose to define social justice and equity in terms of groups of disadvantaged people for whom compensatory efforts were needed: the Canadian Jobs Strategy explicitly focused on women re-entering the work force, youth, the

long-term unemployed, Native Peoples, disabled persons, visible minorities and social assistance recipients. In contrast to the emphasis in BC on social justice during the Macdonald era as access to education for individuals, the federal emphasis in the Canadian Jobs Strategy was on compensatory programs for groups of people. Whether the federal goals were ever actually achieved is irrelevant to the policy intent that ultimately propelled the reshaping of the private career college sector in BC.

Human Capital Formation

In response to an economic recession that had come to be viewed as heralding a structural change in the economy and not merely a cyclical downturn, efforts to improve the skill level of the workforce and to help displaced workers retrain for participation in the new economy became key policy goals for both the BC and the federal governments. The provincial concern for human capital formation was evident in its decision to continue funding the part-time vocational component of continuing education offerings in public colleges and institutes, despite rapidly phasing out all other types of continuing education funding as a cost-saving measure. The priority accorded labour force development over other educational purposes was clear.

The involvement of the federal government in postsecondary education has been driven by economic and labour market considerations, but its actions during the Continuing Education and Canadian Jobs Strategy historical moment were more nuanced than those of the BC government. Rather than providing general funding for vocational programs as the province had done, leaving individual colleges free to choose whatever specific programs to offer for whatever reasons they thought important, the federal government attempted to target its funding. In addition to targeting certain groups that were disadvantaged in the labour market, as discussed

above, the federal government abandoned temporary, make-work programs and attempted to invest in medium and long-term skills.

The shift of the federal government in the mid 1980s from a focus on public postsecondary institutions to private institutions and the workplace marked the beginning of a turn from previous notions of human capital formation as both a public and a private good, reorienting policy from public investment in education towards individual investment (Haddow, 1998; Stewart & Kerr, 2010). By the early 1990s, the federal government was backing even further away from a national role in skill development as it began decentralizing administrative control of federal expenditures through Labour Market Development Agreements negotiated on a province-by-province basis.

Reflecting on the mid 1980s from a college perspective a decade later, Knowles (1995) claimed that postsecondary resource allocations in Canada had increasingly come to be determined by perceived demands for vocational and occupational training. She noted that for most colleges, their initial forays into the contract training market (a subset of cost-recovery continuing education where a third party funder determines which students are eligible to enroll in the course) had emerged in the 1980s, often beginning with computer and technology training.

In short, notions of human capital formation were important in the Continuing Education and Canadian Jobs Strategy moment, but they seemed to be taking on new meanings in terms of the role of the federal state.

Marketization

Marketization was also a significant theme in the Continuing Education and Canadian Jobs Strategy historical moment, but it may be that it was less of an ideological driver of

144

educational policy than a pragmatic response to a changing international environment and an

opportunity to save money. At the same time as the federal government sought a new job

training strategy that would lead to more relevant curriculum to help the Canadian economy

adjust to a changing global economy, an important intended beneficiary was also government

itself as the funding body: it hoped it would get the instruction it wanted in a more responsive

and cheaper manner.

By the mid 1970s, global economic problems such as stagflation (persistent

unemployment during high inflation) had made it clear that Keynesian policies were not working

(Harvey, 2007). The first wave of neoliberalism in the English-speaking world had been prefaced

in Australia under Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser in 1975, but it was the election of Margaret

Thatcher in Britain in 1979 and Ronald Reagan in the USA in 1980 that brought this ideology to

the forefront. The election of Brian Mulroney in 1984 resulted in a campaign in Canada to end

Keynesian-style "big government" (Steger & Roy, 2010). By the mid 1980s, neoliberalism had

arrived in Canada as a powerful political ideology.

In British Columbia, the 1983 Speech from the Throne (British Columbia, 1983)

announced the government's intention to downsize government by eliminating some activities

and by transferring other activities to the private sector. It declared that the government believed

the road to economic recovery lay in the private sector. The brief mention of education in the

throne speech said that any initiatives would occur in the context of fiscal restraint and enhanced

productivity.

Despite the privatization rhetoric, BC public colleges experienced mainly financial

restraint – funding cutbacks that forced continuing education, for example, to become more

entrepreneurial and cost-recovery, emulating the private sector – with only a few programs, such

145

as customer relations training for taxi drivers and hairdressing programs, actually transferred to the private sector (Beinder, 1986). It remained for the federal government, a few years later, to start a large scale shift of instructional funds – that is, designated funding that was separate from transfer payments to the provinces for education (Leblanc & Canada, 1987) – from public to private colleges.

The BC government reduced its grants to public colleges, quit collecting continuing education data, stopped providing leadership in that field, and stood back to observe the consequences. It let colleges and institutes do whatever they wanted with respect to general continuing education and storefront campuses; the institutions just would not receive government funding for these purposes.

Continuing education had always operated in something of a market environment in that a significant portion of instructional costs were offset by tuition revenue, with government grants used more for infrastructure and to subsidize specific courses. With the loss of government grants, institutions reduced or eliminated offerings that were not cost-recovery and generally treated continuing education even more a market commodity than as a public service (British Columbia, 1992). The long-term structural impacts were to create (a) a pseudo private sector divisions within public sector institutions and (b) depending on the bidding rules of various training contracts that have come and gone over the years, some overlap between public and private sectors to develop programs in partnership, with continuing education personnel serving as the bridge between the two sectors.

The federal government was ideologically sympathetic to neoliberal approaches and its practical experience was that provincial education systems were neither responsive, flexible, nor informed about the skills that were actually used in the workplace (Witter, n.d.). It wanted to

introduce competition in adult training to address these perceived shortcomings. In doing so
under the new and sweeping Canadian Jobs Strategy, it not only shook up public colleges, and
prompted some cooperation between private and public institutions, but it led to the tripling of
the number of private career colleges in BC. Marketization was an important component of this
labour market and educational policy.

Historical Moment: Access for All

As this chapter returns from analysis to recounting an historical narrative, the timeframe
shifts from the early and mid 1980s to the late 1980s and early 1990s. This second historical
moment in the Assumptions Challenged period concerns two postsecondary sectors, namely
public universities and colleges. A new form of institution, the university college, emerged from
these two sectors. Some commentators have suggested university colleges came to constitute a
distinct sector of their own.

Like the Macdonald Report of 1962, the *Access for All* report and strategy of 1988/89
appeared to arrive suddenly from nowhere, involving extensive but quick community
consultations, receiving broad endorsement, and (moderately) changing the size and structure of
the public postsecondary system. However, it too was actually the culmination of years of work
and advocacy efforts. Once again, the primary beneficiary was academic education.

Unlike the Macdonald Report, though, *Access for All* was a government initiative – one
of the infrequent occasions when the BC government has shown systematic leadership in
postsecondary education. Also unlike the Macdonald Era, politics took an unwelcome twist from
the point of view of Ministry of Advanced Education officials: with the establishment of the
University of Northern British Columbia, officials feared this departure from the government

147

plan in a region with a small population would doom the new university to low enrolments and high costs[24].

Two streams of complementary advocacy in the prior decade provide the backdrop for the *Access for All* moment. One concerned the performance of British Columbia in postsecondary education relative to the Canadian average. The other reflected community aspirations in the interior of the province for a local university.

Around 1980, the institutional research office at the University of Victoria began analyzing per-capita degree and enrolment rates in BC relative to other Canadian provinces and to the national average, including consideration of university transfer enrolment and what was then called career/technical education in colleges. (Vocational education, a separate data set at Statistics Canada that used different measures, was excluded from the analysis.) The results showed that BC was not keeping pace with other provinces.

In 1981, the intermediary body for BC universities, the Universities Council of British Columbia, funded the University of Victoria to publish a report, *A Widening Gap*, to present interprovincial participation and credential data (Gallagher & Merner, 1981). While the absolute numbers of students and credentials awarded in BC were rising, the per-capita measures showed that BC had been "steadily declining over the last fifteen years. Currently the Province is at or near the bottom of the national ranking in almost every comparison" (Gallagher & Merner, 1981, p.1).

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[24] This concern was an accurate forecast. In 2013/14, the University of Northern British Columbia enrolled 2,853 fulltime equivalent (FTE) students (which was only 82% of the target enrolment set by the Ministry of Advanced Education), compared to 16,649 FTE (100% of target) at the University of Victoria. With operating grants of $49.3 million and $190.4 million respectively, the grant per FTE student at UNBC was $17,400 compared to $11,400 at the University of Victoria. Sources: Annual audited financial statements and Institutional Accountability Plans and Reports submitted to the BC government.

Moreover, participation rates in the outlying regions of the province were below even the BC average. Although geographic access was thought to be an important explanatory factor for the low rural rates, the report cautioned that it fell short of a complete account of the situation.

With an economic recession in full force in the early 1980s, the timing to rectify the "widening gap" was inopportune; the public finances were simply not available. Nevertheless, the Universities Council continued to advance variations of this theme in periodic submissions to the BC government until the government disbanded the Council (for other reasons) in 1987. When Ministry officials began preparing background analyses in 1988 as part of the accessibility initiative of the BC government, the bureaucrats were thus familiar with participation rate and credentialing arguments as well as with the data available to make them.

The other prior stream of advocacy efforts, concerning aspirations for universities in the interior of the province, extended over a longer period and was more diffuse. The precedent was the private Notre Dame University of Nelson, in the southeast region of the province (Cowin, 2009). Closing in 1977 after years of financial struggle, it had garnered such strong local support that the BC government reopened the campus in 1979 as the David Thompson University Centre. When the government closed the campus again in 1984 dues to budgetary restraint and high costs per student, the local community was again upset.

In Prince George, in the central north of the province, the Catholic Church opened the tiny Prince George College in 1962 and offered Grade 13, drawing in part on federal funding for Aboriginal students. The aspiration of Bishop Fergus O'Grady was to eventually offer four years of university and the young college did go so far as to have three small cohorts of students complete two years of university transfer studies (McCaffray, 1995). When the College of New

Caledonia opened in 1964 with public funding, the Catholic college decided to withdraw from postsecondary education and to operate as a secondary school instead.

Not all Prince George residents supported the establishment of the College of New Caledonia, given that the city already had a postsecondary vocational school. Along with questions about the cost of the college (under BC legislation at that time, local residents were responsible for half of the operating costs), some residents feared that a new college would jeopardize the chance of the city ever having a full university (McCaffray, 1995). In 1978, the dean of university programs at the College of New Caledonia, Frank Gelin, argued for the college to become Prince George University (McCaffray, 1995). Prince George thus had a long history of wanting a university of its own.

In the Okanagan valley, in the southern interior of BC, the three main cities pushed for a postsecondary institution in the late 1950s and early 1960s, each vying for the right to become a college or university town (Freake, 2005). Vernon had already purchased one hundred acres of property and the mayor of Kelowna had hired a consultant in 1959 to do a feasibility study for a junior college. John Macdonald had recommended in his report (Macdonald, 1962) that a four-year college be established at Kelowna within eight years, emerging from a two-year college that should open immediately. This did not occur, but the dream of a degree-granting institution in the Okanagan did not die.

Against this backdrop of longstanding regional aspirations for interior universities in Nelson, Prince George and the Okanagan, and more recent concern that BC was not keeping up with national postsecondary developments, the *Access for All* historical moment began at a political convention in 1986 at which the governing BC party, the Social Credit party, chose a new leader to replace premier William Bennett. Delegates were concerned about public

complaints of overcrowding and lack of access to postsecondary institutions, fee increases and inadequate student aid (Bullen, 1991). Institutions were complaining about the financial cutbacks they had endured in the earlier eighties.

The newly chosen premier, William Vander Zalm gave his new minister for postsecondary education, Stanley Hagen, two tasks: to improve student financial assistance and to increase access to postsecondary education (Bullen, 1991). Sweeping changes to financial aid, to be implemented over three years, were announced in March 1987.

The process for enhancing student access proceeded more slowly. A former assistant deputy minister (and former president of Camosun College), Grant Fisher had returned from a medical leave into a position as head of the policy and planning branch of the Ministry. His task was to establish a base of information about postsecondary access and university transfer in BC (Bullen, 1991). Working with a small team of Ministry staff and consultants, Fisher produced a dozen papers, some of which picked up themes from the University of Victoria's work mentioned above on participation and credential rates.

With the Ministry uncharacteristically well briefed and proceeding in a well orchestrated manner, the next step occurred in February 1988 when Minister Hagen struck one provincial and eight regional access committees (a government-wide regionalization plan was concurrently launched, mainly for economic development purposes) to garner public input and to prepare a report. The goal was to complete the postsecondary report by the summer so that it would coordinate with the government-wide planning initiative. The Provincial Access Committee met this deadline, issuing its report in June 1988.

At the same time, two groups independently advocated for the establishment of interior universities. The report from Kelowna, in the view of the chair of the Provincial Access

Committee, Les Bullen, envisaged a natural growth from the existing college and harmonized well with the report of the Access Committee (Bullen, 1991).

The Prince George initiative, on the other hand, did not harmonize either in process or substance with the Provincial Access Committee. In fact, the Prince George group came to view government officials as producing slanted briefings that steered priorities to southern regions of the province (McCaffray, 1995). The Interior University Society in Prince George, incorporated in the autumn of 1987, therefore chose to interact directly with provincial politicians, making an end run around the Provincial Access process.

In March 1988, soon after the launch of the Provincial Access Committee, community members from Prince George met directly with selected cabinet ministers to lobby for what was no longer framed as a Prince George university but rather as a university for the entire north. This regional approach increased the demographic base to over 300,000 people, although spread over vast distances. It also provided a way to differentiate this university proposal from other proposals in non-metropolitan BC by emphasizing the distinctive needs and character of northern regions. Drawing upon the work of a Swedish consultant, Urban Dahloff, a network university using a mix of face-to-face and distance delivery methods, working closing with the three northern community colleges, was proposed (McCaffray, 1995).

The Provincial Access Committee made many recommendations, with the key structural change to the public postsecondary system being a proposal to create university colleges: the offering of third and fourth year courses by community colleges in midsize interior communities under the educational auspices of BC's existing universities. This would bring degree-level programs to the hinterland without the attendant financial overhead of the research mandate of universities. The Committee explicitly left the door open for university colleges to continue

operating in partnership with universities, to develop into comprehensive degree-granting regional colleges, or to eventually become autonomous universities[25] (British Columbia & Provincial Access Committee, 1988). The provincial government accepted this recommendation, announcing three university colleges in 1989 and later adding two more.

After receiving the report of the Provincial Access Committee, Minister Hagen agreed to a university in Prince George and struck an implementation planning committee in 1989. He and some of his staff visited Scandinavia and other parts of Canada with small, remote universities, coming to the conclusion that a centralized university model, such as at Lakehead University in Ontario, was more appropriate for BC than Scandinavian models that worked in a different educational milieu (Bullen, 1991). The University of Northern British Columbia was thus established as a rather traditional, North American university, to the chagrin of the Interior University Society (McCaffray, 1995).

The access work culminated in March 1989 when the provincial government announced the *Access for All* strategy (Hagen, 1989). Along with the creation of university colleges and the promise of a university in Prince George, 15,000 student spaces would be added to university programs in colleges and universities across the province. Three thousand of these spaces were to be added in the first twelve months. In contrast to the expansion of academic education, only 1,000 spaces would be added immediately to non-university programs and no promises were made for expanding non-university programs in the following years.

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[25] Poole (1994) found that, privately, government officials were in full agreement that the new institutions should not become universities, but that they felt the movement to university status would probably occur anyway due to political pressures, especially in the Okanagan.

Under the *Access for All* strategy, a special partnership would be explored by which the Open Learning Agency would grant degrees for the Emily Carr College of Art and Design (as it was then named). Among the other initiatives the government embarked upon, committees were formed to promote adult literacy and postsecondary education for Aboriginal students. A council on admissions and transfers was formed to facilitate student mobility among institutions. The Minister reminded his audience at the *Access for All* news conference that the government had recently committed some additional funding for adult special education, students with disabilities, and general student support services.

The creation of university colleges attracted a fair amount of scholarly attention because they represented a new institutional type that complicated binary models of postsecondary education and which changed the internal operations and culture of institutions (Dennison, 2006; Dennison & Schuetze, 2004; Fleming & Lee, 2009; Gaber, 2002; Levin, 1994; Levin, 2003; Schuetze & Day, 2001; Skolnik, 2012). Whereas scholars focused on the implications of the university college model for educational providers – that is, for postsecondary institutions and sectors – and how distinctions among institutional types were blurring and becoming complicated, the documents cited above from committees and government officials focused instead on beneficiaries, that is, on students and communities. The goals of public servants and politicians were to find pragmatic ways of responding to educational needs, keeping costs manageable, and leaving the door open to further institutional evolution. The resulting ambiguity of institutional purpose and identity, and the development of an increasingly differentiated postsecondary system, were not prominent concerns for politicians nor Ministry staff.

Once the simple model of three types of public postsecondary institutions in two sectors – universities in one sector and colleges and institutes in another sector – had been complicated in

154

BC by the introduction of university colleges, other variations followed. The openings of Royal

Roads University in 1995 and the short-lived Technical University of British Columbia in 1999,

and of two small Aboriginal-governed but publicly funded institutes in 1995, the Nicola Valley

Institute of Technology and the Institute of Indigenous Government, all introduced non-

traditional components of governance and mission to the public system. The ambiguities

associated with the university college model kept the door open to lobbying for a local university

in the interior communities of Kelowna and Kamloops, lobbying that eventually resulted in the

transformation of the two university colleges in those cities into a campus of the University of

British Columbia and into a "special purpose" university, Thompson Rivers University (as

discussed in the next historical moment).

Analysis: Access for All Moment

Social Justice

Social justice considerations undergirded the work of the Provincial Access Committee,

whereas the concurrent lobbying in Prince George and in the Okanagan region was driven more

by human capital considerations. Nevertheless, lobbyists for a university advanced fairness

arguments, especially in Prince George.

The unmet enrolment demand for postsecondary education, and the desire that access be

equitably distributed throughout the province, resembled the situation in the Macdonald era,

namely that this was an issue of basic fairness for individuals. In this respect, the *Access for All*

initiative can be seen as an effort to maintain the existing social contract.

The report of the Provincial Access Committee not only asserted economic benefits, but

also claimed that investment in education had social and cultural benefits (Provincial Access

Committee, 1988). Furthermore, the Committee said it was a social imperative to increase accessibility to all types of education, including personal enrichment, "for all who demonstrate the necessary competence, motivation and maturity to benefit from further education" (p.10). In other words, postsecondary education was viewed as something of a human right. The Minister spoke of education as a strong force in breaking the cycle of poverty and of social malaise, as fundamental to the democratic process, and to preserving the balance between human values and the technological world (Hagen, 1989).

A new aspect of social justice in the discourse of the provincial government on postsecondary education was the Access Committee's focus on under-represented groups (enumerated as people in small, remote communities; "Native Indians"; disabled students; and the prison population) and those needing literacy upgrading - a theme that was subsequently echoed in the announcement by the government about its strategy in response to the access report (Hagen, 1989). How much was actually achieved for equity groups over the succeeding years is in some ways irrelevant from the perspective of policy intent; what mattered was that these groups were viewed as important and deserving of special attention from government.

The emphasis of the BC government on social justice was a marked contrast to its absence in the Continuing Education and Canadian Jobs Strategy (CE and CJS) historical moment a few years earlier. Not only had the economic recession ended and provincial revenues were rising, but a new premier and a new minister of advanced education were now in charge – a different environment with different actors that provided an opportunity for the postsecondary educational policy pendulum to swing back towards its historical balance among the various policy rationales.

A different way of framing social justice considerations in BC postsecondary education was forcefully articulated during this time and arose from geographical considerations. The perspective was not new in itself, but distinctive in finally succeeding in catching the attention of politicians in the seat of government, ultimately persuading them of its merit.

The issue concerned differing values that could not be resolved on technical grounds, and therefore appropriately belonged in the political arena. The particular political process ran independently and parallel to the *Access for All* initiative, which, depending on one's perspective, was either unfortunate or inevitable.

Government officials, whose duty was to ensure public funds were expended efficiently and effectively, saw that government could provide a certain sum of money to expand costly postsecondary capacity in rural areas, knowing that the additional capacity would likely not be fully utilized. That same amount of money expended in the more populated southwest would provide a greater number places, all of which were likely to be used. It was difficult for them to justify not meeting a proven educational demand in metropolitan areas in order to fund more costly seats in non-metropolitan regions, some of which might not even be used. Their focus was on students, not on the students' communities, and they seem to have viewed all students as needing to be treated as equally as possible.

The question about "getting the most bang for the buck" was seen differently in the north. It was not a technical question about the efficient allocation of public resources, but one of values. For many northern residents, the fairness issue was not how to get the most output in terms of graduates from the least input of money, but rather concerned who benefitted from the wealth generated in the north: northerners or southerners. The mayor of Prince George in the late

1980s, John Blackhouse, described the situation as "we were tired of being treated like a colony, sick of exporting our resources, including our children" (McCaffray, 1995, p. 249).

Northerners felt it was only fair that they should have the same quality of life as in the south, including local access to postsecondary education for their children and skilled labour that viewed northern communities as more than either temporary springboards for their careers or locales to be avoided altogether. If revenue from their region could fund local postsecondary spaces, resulting in a comparable quality of life to that in the south, then they considered it irrelevant whether those spaces were more expensive than in the south.

The University Advisory Council, a short-lived advisory group established by the BC government following its abolishment of the Universities Council of BC, articulated the divide in southern and northern perspectives by framing it in educational versus economic terms: "While recognizing that there are economic benefits which will accrue to a region in which a university is located, the Council feels that the educational need, not the economic benefit, should be the basis upon which university programing decisions are made" (Bullen, 1991, p. 27). A body based in the south, the Council recommended against establishing a separate interior university at that time.

By the time the Provincial Access Committee was writing its report, the northern university advocacy campaign was showing signs of success with provincial politicians. The Access Committee was not about to embarrass its political masters. The committee said that although it had not been presented with justification for a new university based on enrolment demand, it was fully aware that the justification "may rest on much broader grounds" (p. 18). The government eventually accepted this broader justification, saying it was prepared to pay a

northern premium for a new university in recognition of the long-term nature of investment in education (Hagen, 1989).

Human Capital Formation

Both the Provincial Access Committee and the Minister in his subsequent announcement of the *Access for All* strategy articulated a comprehensive understanding of the purposes of postsecondary education, ranging from civic/democratic justifications through social and cultural to economic considerations. With respect to labour market contributions, the Provincial Access Committee said:

> Previous analyses, however, done in Canada and elsewhere, suggest that additional investment in advanced education and job training will have high pay-off value in terms of future economic, social and cultural benefits….The relationship between levels of education and unemployment…is particularly telling….It seems clear that countries with a well-educated labour force will have competitive edge in the emerging world economy. (p .6)

Although not the only argument advanced by the Provincial Access Committee for expanding postsecondary education, human capital formation was certainly an important consideration.

The provincial government adopted a similar stance. Although the Minister explicitly stated in the press conference to announce the *Access for All* strategy that postsecondary education was important for reasons other than economic ones, he nevertheless opened the press conference by referencing a consensus that the future prosperity of BC would depend on investments made in people, "Indeed, if we are to continue to prosper in an increasingly complex world, British Columbians must have access to relevant post-secondary education" (Hagen, 1989, p.4).

Whereas the provincial government took a balanced view of the purposes of postsecondary education, the advocacy groups for interior universities were much more focused on economic and labour market considerations. In fact, it was the Chamber of Commerce that spearheaded the Kelowna effort. Its report noted that as well as better access for students and enhancing the quality of life in the community, a university would nicely benefit a seasonal economy; the quieter summer in the academic school year would complement the employment cycles of the agricultural and tourist industries (Bullen, 1991).

The Prince George community was well aware that not only did it have a cyclical, resource-based economy, but that the economy was changing structurally and the jobs lost during the recession of the early 1980s were likely permanent losses. The Regional Development Corporation saw a university as the single most important initiative towards stabilizing and growing the region's economy (McCaffray, 1995). Similarly, Prince George Mayor Blackhouse, reflecting back on the successful campaign for a northern university, commented, " a university would be a way to diversify the economy, changing the social fabric…Indeed when I lobbied for the university, I rarely mentioned education – usually only economics, social change, retention of young people" (McCaffray, 1995, p. 249).

In assessing the *Access for All* policies, Fisher et al. (2014) identified two distinct but related sentiments at play: recognition of the instrumental benefits of education and a commitment to educational access as a democratic right. They concluded that the issue of social inclusion was not addressed by direct redistributive means but rather by investing in public postsecondary education as a spur to economic growth and general prosperity. Furthermore, they argued, this approach was in line with the human resource theory of the day. My view is that although this conclusion is a little too narrow an interpretation, one that does not adequately

acknowledge the comprehensive purposes articulated for education nor the explicit attention to under-represented groups in the *Access for All* historical moment, it nevertheless does draw attention to the implicit policy assumption that all segments of society would benefit from a well educated labour force and efforts to raise postsecondary participation rates generally.

Marketization

Given the importance of the private sector in the federal Canadian Jobs Strategy of 1985, that the party in power in BC in 1989 (Social Credit) was the same one as had announced in its 1983 Throne Speech that it intended to downsize government and rely more on the private sector, and given the recent abandonment by the provincial government of continuing education (except part-time vocational courses) to cost-recovery market forces, the absence of these forces in the *Access for All* moment just a few years later is striking. A healthier economy and different politicians – the BC government was now led by Bill Vander Zalm rather than Bill Bennett – do not seem the full explanation for their absence. I suspect that differing societal views regarding academic and non-academic education – the former being the emphasis of *Access for All* – are also part of the explanation, but this hypothesis would require a study of its own to confirm or refute.

The ways in which marketization is relevant to the *Access for All* historical moment is subtler, long-term, and not directly linked to money. It has to do with the development of an institutional prestige economy in the public postsecondary system in which institutions and sectors competed with one another in different ways than the usual jockeying that is inherent in public sector budgeting.

The 15,000 seat expansion and the introduction of upper level instruction in university colleges had the potential for introducing competition for students among institutions, but this did not really occur because enrolment demand was so strong. Neither does the encouragement of such competition, a neoliberal strategy, seem to have been a policy intent.

What seems to have been on the mind of government, though, was a question of legitimacy: would the degree programs delivered at university colleges be seen as credible and equivalent to those at universities? Its strategy for ensuring the legitimacy of these degrees was to have existing universities oversee the academic aspects of these programs and to award their own degrees to university college graduates, at least in the initial years. Whether colleges that had been successfully offering the first two years of a bachelor's degree for a decade or two actually lacked the expertise to expand into upper division programming is moot, but the provision of the university quality assurance mechanism forestalled any potential debate. The new BC Council of Admissions and Transfer was given a mandate to address a variety of issues, one of which was to provide a confidential, neutral place where any issues of academic credibility among institutions could be discussed and potentially resolved before they escalated publicly.

Despite these proactive steps by the government, Fleming and Lee (2009) found that "the university colleges legitimately engage in isomorphic behavior – emulating aspects of traditional university programming, faculty workload, and governance – to ensure their recognition and credibility as degree-granting institutions and in deference to professional practice norms supportive of quality programs" (p. 96). In small and subtle ways, the university colleges were drawn into the zero-sum prestige economy of university education (Levin, 2003), leading first to

the formation of their own advocacy group (which contributed to the dissolution of the Advanced Education Council of BC in 2001) and a campaign of their own for university status.

Throughout the early 1990s, status issues were an ongoing source of debate and conflict within institutions. Dennison (1995) concluded that university colleges were reinforcing the latent academic drift among other BC colleges and institutes, that is, aspirations for degree-granting status. The scholarly interest noted above in institutional differentiation and the abandonment of a clear binary model is further indication of the beginning of reputational jockeying that emerged more fully in the next historical moment to be analyzed. The evidence does not suggest, however, that reputational jockeying was a policy intent of *Access for All*; rather, it seemed more of a consequence.

Chapter 6: Cynicism (2000 – 2015)

Idealism, bolstered by a strong economy, about the contribution of education to the betterment of society characterized the 1960s and 1970s. Beinder (1983), for example, described the BC college movement in the 1960s:

> a unique social phenomenon bringing people together, creating a more tightly knit and understanding society…there was truly an element of missionary concern in what they did. They were clearly concerned about the life chances of people. That's missionary business. (pp. 19-21)

As assumptions about the postsecondary system were challenged in the 1980s and 1990s, the world had changed by 2000. In the years that followed, competitive and market-like behaviours in an uncertain environment became more evident in BC postsecondary education.

Policymakers in the BC government and in educational institutions have continued since 2000 to seek better ways of serving the residents of BC, both individual residents and society as a whole. Paralleling this ongoing educational mission, however, has been a growing awareness that the survival of their organization, at least in its current form, could not be taken for granted. Attention to organizational self-interest intensified as funding and sources of student enrolment became more vulnerable in the globalized world of neoliberalism.

The environment came to be perceived as one that provided incentives for public relations messages to displace balanced reports[26], for institutions to pay greater attention to enhancing their status, and for game-playing to emerge in such aspects of public administration as the creation and reporting of key performance indicators. The cooperative working

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[26] For example, a number of rating questions in the 2016 administration of the Canadian Graduate and Professional Student Survey had three positive options (excellent, very good, and good), one neutral option (fair) but just one negative option (poor). This positively skewed scale ensured that not a single respondent would report to the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies of having had a bad or very poor experience at a Canadian university.

relationships of the 1990s between institutional personnel and government officials weakened

and suspicions grew as to what the hidden agendas of the other might be. None of this was

explicitly acknowledged, but official announcements and expressed postsecondary policy

rationales became harder to take at face value.

It is on this basis that I have chosen to label the period since 2000 as one of cynicism.

Rather than openly debating the merits of alternative policy options for postsecondary education,

decisions were increasingly taken behind closed doors and the official explanations viewed with

skepticism by at least some stakeholder groups. Collaboration across public universities and

colleges declined in favour of strategic alliances among subsets of institutions, all claiming to

have student and societal interests at heart. Information and policy analyses about postsecondary

institutions were held more tightly in order to maintain competitive advantage. Institutions

dutifully repackaged their public plans and reports to reference the changing slogans of the

provincial government[27]. I do not believe that this ethos was intentionally inculcated, but it

developed nevertheless and stands in marked contrast to the heady, and in some ways innocent,

days of the Macdonald Era.

It may or may not be that the idealism of the 1960s served society better than the

pragmatism of the past two decades in British Columbia. I am not recommending that BC should

return to the past. Rather, my argument is simply that the nature of educational policy discourse

has shifted from, to use Beinder's term, missionary zeal to a tone that is more multilayered, and

which perhaps has less savory layers that some actors recognize but acknowledge only to

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[27] In 2007, the BC Ministry of Advanced Education's *Service Plan* listed five government-wide "Great Goals," one of which was to make BC the most literate and best-educated jurisdiction in North America. In 2012, other governmental priorities replaced the Great Goals: jobs and the economy; families first; and open government and citizenship engagement. In 2015, families had disappeared and jobs had top billing, followed by taxpayer accountability principles (British Columbia. Ministry of Advanced Education, 2015).

selected audiences. The "Who ultimately benefits?" question at the heart of critical theory

(Bohman, 2015) thus seems more germane today in terms of policy intent than half a century

ago. (I am not arguing that the question has changed in importance in terms of policy outcomes.)

Period Overview

A new right-wing BC government in 2001 introduced some significant changes, a few of

which resembled developments in Alberta and Ontario, to the postsecondary system over the

following few years. One change opened the door wider for private and out-of-province

universities to operate in BC. A second set of changes completed the redefinition of the degree-

granting sectors, eliminating some institutions, transforming university colleges into a new form

of teaching university, and granting public colleges and institutes some authority to grant certain

types of baccalaureate degrees. A third set of changes altered the oversight of the apprenticeship

system and private career colleges, and deregulated English as a Second Language training

schools.

The changes during the period since 2000 occurred with little planning. The new

provincial government of 2001 had abandoned the previous administration's *Charting a New*

Course strategic plan of 1996 for the college, institute and university college sector. Only after

expanding degree-granting authority, and changing apprenticeship and the regulation of private

career colleges, did the BC government retain one of its former cabinet ministers, Geoff Plant, to

prepare a new strategic plan for the entire postsecondary system, public and private. The

resulting *Campus 2020* (Plant, 2007) report did not sit well with the government. While

government ministers made mildly supportive comments about the importance of the plan and

acted on a key recommendation that probably would have been implemented in any event,

166

namely the transformation of university colleges into teaching universities, the majority of the recommendations were quietly ignored.

As these alterations occurred, government leadership of public institutions and its accountability requirements, were complicated by the sometimes contradictory actions on the part of the BC government (Fisher et al., 2014), making it harder to assess which changes were significant and which were superficial. Public institutions were granted more freedom to determine their own enrolment and program mixes, yet at times the provincial degree approval processes and tuition caps imposed by government, along with central bargaining controlled by government, hamstrung institutions as they attempted to exercise this greater freedom. Annual performance targets were set for each institution by government, but the consequences of failing to meet targets were generally negligible. The messages from government have been mixed, often seeming more concerned with image than substance and exacerbated by a revolving door for ministers, deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers, some of whom had no background in educational administration (Cowin, 2012b).

Reliable enrolment data for institutions outside the public system are difficult to obtain and are not comparable across sectors (Plant, 2007). The survey of the BC postsecondary system in Table 4 may be crude and uneven, but it is the best as is currently available and does succeed in portraying the general contours of the system. Refinements to the table are an essential next step towards a better understanding of the system as a whole.

Table 4: BC Postsecondary System, 2012/13

Sector	Enrolment	Notes
Public institutions (25): Colleges (11) Institutes (3) Teaching universities (7) Research universities (4)	188,000 FTE: 44,000 FTE 16,000 FTE 40,000 FTE 88,000 FTE	Serving 440,000 individuals who took at least one course of any duration during the year Includes sub-baccalaureate enrolment *Source: Ministry of Advanced Education*
Apprenticeship	35,000 Active Apprentices	As of March 2013 *Source: Industry Training Authority*
Private career colleges (330 registered in 2011)	51,000 Individuals	Took at least one course of any duration during the year *Source: PCTIA enrolment report, 2011*
Faith-based institutions (24)	5,000 FTE (estimated)	Actively delivering instruction, estimated *Source: Author's estimate*
Aboriginal-governed institutions (35 in 2011)	1,500 FTE (estimated)	Of which 500 were at NVIT *Sources: Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association, Ministry of Advanced Education, and Author's estimate*
Other private and out-of-province degree-granting institutions	3,000 FTE (estimated)	Operating in BC. Includes such institutions as Quest University, Columbia College, City University, and Adler Institute *Source: Author's estimate*
English language training schools	Unknown	Approximately 40 institutions on the Languages Canada website, excluding public institutions and institutions potentially included in the private career colleges total above. Not all schools are listed on this website.

Baccalaureate Education

The *Degree Authorization Act* of 2002 opened the door for new private universities based

in BC, and for external universities such as City University and the University of Phoenix to

confer degrees in BC, but the government retained a gatekeeping function under the associated

degree quality assessment arrangements. Although the *Degree Authorization Act* initially caused some consternation among public institutions and a flurry of activity among potential private universities, the impact to date of private and external universities has been modest.

Following the lead of Ontario and Alberta, but unexpectedly as far as many BC educators were concerned, the 2002 *Degree Authorization Act* also signaled that all BC public colleges would be empowered to grant applied degrees. Although these colleges now resemble the former university colleges, this later transformation resulted in far less discussion in either public or academic circles. The number of baccalaureate programs in colleges remains small but is growing.

With only two colleges (Vancouver and Northwest) using the word *community* in their names and a few other colleges downplaying the traditional community college philosophy in favour of positioning themselves more as baccalaureate colleges, the desirable ethos of public colleges became contested. Something of a parallel shift occurred in the rebranding of the national organization, the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, as Colleges and Institutes Canada[28] in 2014.

Responding to local advocacy, the BC government transferred the north campus of Okanagan University College in Kelowna to UBC in 2004. The University College of the Cariboo in Kamloops was designated as special purpose university, and renamed to become Thompson Rivers University, the following year. Then in 2008, with little consultation and almost no implementation planning, the premier of the province, Gordon Campbell, announced

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[28] The new name is arguably more accurate in that colleges in most provinces have provided little or no university transfer, that is, they never were community colleges in the same sense as BC, Alberta and many American states. A counterargument is that they all have been characterized by an open access philosophy and that *college* and *community college* have different connotations in the USA than in Canada.

over a period of weeks that each of the four remaining university colleges, one college

(Capilano), and one institute (Emily Carr) would receive university status, albeit as teaching

universities that would receive no additional funding to support research or different teaching

arrangements. The university sector thus expanded dramatically, but now consisted of two

classes of universities: teaching and research (with Royal Roads and Thompson Rivers

universities in some ways spanning the boundary, even though they are not research intensive).

Throughout the period from 2000, competitive federal funding for research was

recovering from the cutbacks of the 1990s. New types of funding, such as for research

infrastructure and endowed chairs, were also introduced. A clear policy priority had emerged in

the federal government to promote the commercialization of academic science and linkages with

industry (Fisher et al., 2006). These changes blurred the boundaries of public institutions as they

partnered with private organizations.

Sub-Baccalaureate Education

Not only did baccalaureate education change dramatically in BC since 2000, but so too

did apprenticeship. The provincial government replaced the Industry Training and

Apprenticeship Commission in 2004 with the Industry Training Authority, an industry-

dominated agency at which the voices of unions and educators were greatly diminished. The new

Authority was mandated to bring about several reforms, including competency-based (that is, not

time-based) qualifications and the modularization of certification known as progressive

credentialing. These proposed changes were controversial, leading to claims that they would

result in deskilling, and relationships in the sector remained prickly[29]. Implementation was slow and not all reforms have been achieved (Cowin, 2012a).

The BC government reviewed the Industry Training Authority in 2013 and announced some changes to it in 2014 that made the Authority more closely resemble its predecessor, the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission. Organized labour was again to be represented on the board and the functions delegated to seven Industry Training Organizations over the previous few years would be returned to the parent Authority.

The marginalization of trades and vocational education generally, and the persistent under-representation of certain populations such as women and immigrants, have been themes in the apprenticeship literature since the 1970s (Canadian Apprenticeship Forum, 2004). This disregard for sub-baccalaureate education from both policy and societal perspectives may help explain the laissez-faire approach taken to the private career college sector until 2014.

The Private Post-Secondary Education Commission maintained a lean staff, but was perceived by some in the industry as bureaucratic and unnecessarily treating the majority of private institutions in the same manner as problematic ones (Culos, 2005). In 2004, the BC government switched from public regulation of the sector to industry self-regulation when it replaced the commission with the Private Career Training Institutions Agency. The new agency originally consisted entirely of representatives from industry, with some limited representation from students and public institutions eventually added (Cowin, 2013b). The new legislation exempted the now substantial English language training sector from any type of regulation.

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[29] For example, the Trades Training Consortium was formed by public institutions to present a united front in response to Industry Training Authority actions that affected those institutions.

Oversight of private academic institutions switched to mechanisms specified in the *Degree Authorization Act* of 2002.

Private career colleges and English language schools continued to attract controversy, with some institutions perceived as providing high quality education and as good corporate citizens, while a few were seen as rogue operators that tarnished the reputation of the entire sector (a particular problem for international marketing). In 2014, the BC government announced that the Private Career Training Institutions Agency would be dissolved and its functions transferred to the Ministry of Advanced Education. Like the recent changes to the Industry Training Authority for apprentices, this change suggests that the transfer of regulatory authority a decade ago to the private sector did not achieve what had been envisaged.

Other Developments

The Indigenous Adult and Higher Learning Association, the third generation institutional consortium, formed in 2003, partly due to a perception in the Aboriginal community that the public institutions with which Aboriginal-governed institutions were partnering were charging excessive amounts for programming. Today, the Association has about three dozen members, one of which (Nicola Valley Institute of Technology) is public. The Association lacks complete enrolment information, but the available data suggest that member institutions enroll a combined total of around 3,000 students each year. (In 2005, three quarters of the institutions enrolled 100 or fewer students.)

The province began in 2000 to make some short-term, project-based funding to support Aboriginal education available to public institutions. Around 5% (20,000 headcount students) of BC public postsecondary enrolment has at some point in their educational career self-identified

as Aboriginal, although many of these students would not see their Aboriginal heritage as a primary identity.

The Aboriginal Post-Secondary Education and Training Partners group formed in 2005. Including representatives from federal and BC governments, First Nations and Metis groups, and college and university presidents, the Partners group was the first forum of its kind in Canada and meets a few times each year (Cowin, 2011).

The structure of the faith-based sector has been stable over the past 15 years. Although evangelical Protestants, a group not known historically for a commitment to higher education, are just a small portion of the BC population, they provide the majority of students enrolled in the faith-based sector (Cowin, 2009).

The character and extent of continuing education – the most market-responsive aspect of public postsecondary education – varied considerably across institutions during this period, for example, in the amount of contract training[30] conducted for the private sector and government. Beginning in 2006, colleges and institutes were allowed to count most continuing education enrolment towards achievement of their FTE enrolment targets set by government (which, not coincidentally, were rising as the result of the additional 25,000 FTE spaces for the public system announced in 2004 but which were proving difficult to fill).

Unlike the 1990s, BC currently lacks province-wide groups with independent legal status that provide educational leadership or which focus on improving the teaching and learning environment. Likewise, the list of groups that are collaborative across the entire public system

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[30] Contract training is cost-recovery, or profit-making, instruction wherein a third party funder, and not the institution, specifies both the curricular goals and which students are eligible to enroll (typically clients or employees of the funder).

and which focus on the student experience, such as the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer and the BCcampus[31] online organization, is short (Cowin, 2012b). The types of organizations that seem to have thrived are special or self-interest groups: constituency-based, advocacy groups of institutions, labour relations groups and so on. These tend to be groups seeking to enhance access to resources or, like the BCNet information technology group, seeking to save money.

Historical Moment: New Era

Two historical moments are discussed in this chapter. The emphasis is on the first moment because the second is so recent that events are still unfolding.

A right-leaning Liberal government replaced the left-leaning New Democrats in the BC election of May 2001. Campaigning on a New Era platform – that is, "a new era of hope, prosperity and public service" – the Liberals promised "an unflagging commitment to the principles and values that underpin our free enterprise society," vowing to "to initiate a number of specific changes within 90 days of being sworn into office" (British Columbia, 2001). Fisher et al. (2014) viewed the initial agenda as the most radical shift in postsecondary policy in both substance and philosophical orientation by any BC government in 40 years.

The tenets of new public management were already making inroads in the British Columbia government: one of the last acts of the New Democrats in 2000 had been to enact the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act* that, among other things, required government to prepare performance plans, measures and reports. The Liberals raised the stakes with the

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[31] "BCcampus" is the formal name, spelled as one word.

Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act of 2001. This new act immediately prohibited deficit budgets and implemented a 20% salary holdback for ministers who did not meet their performance targets.

The new government promptly established a task force of its legislators to conduct a Core Services Review to evaluate the entire public sector, promising public input. By the end of August, just a few months later, Premier Gordon Campbell had taken the chair and the review was proceeding entirely behind closed doors (Palmer, 2001). Educators were nervous and uncertain about the outcome.

The first change to the structure of BC's postsecondary system came with the passage of the *Degree Authorization Act* in May 2002. Several other significant changes came in subsequent years, ending with amendments to the *University Act* in April 2008 that transformed three university colleges, a college and an institute into special purpose and teaching universities. The New Era historical moment thus encompassed changes to public and private postsecondary education over a six-year period, 2002 to 2008.

As with the Access for All historical moment, federal postsecondary developments are not discussed in this analysis of the New Era moment. Although federal initiatives with respect to research, innovation and student financial aid were significant (Fisher et al., 2006), they affected the internal characteristics of institutions rather than the structure of the postsecondary system. Thus the discussion in this section focuses on the BC government.

Baccalaureate Education

The following sections describe three major changes to baccalaureate education in BC. Although the impact to date of a greater number and range of institutions authorized since 2002

175

to grant bachelor's degrees, and the transformation of five public institutions into teaching universities in 2008, has been modest, the academic postsecondary system has nevertheless been restructured and presented with the option of a significantly different path of development. The institutions affected turned out to be, for the most part, already in existence. Whereas the manner in which structural changes were made to baccalaureate education were rather revolutionary, growth and shifts in degree-level enrolment have been more evolutionary.

Applied Degrees

One thrust of the *Degree Authorization Act* was to increase the degree-granting capacity of public BC institutions through two new credentials, the applied baccalaureate at colleges and applied master's degrees at university colleges. This change was ultimately reflected in the *College and Institute Act* through the consequential amendments section of the *Degree Authorization Act.*

The introduction of applied degrees, a significant expansion of the college mandate, occurred with remarkably little public discussion or implementation planning. It nevertheless proceeded smoothly, with the gradual introduction of a small number of applied degrees over the following decade. Some clues as to the rationale of government can be gleaned from public comments made by the Minister of Advanced Education in the legislature, namely increasing access, offering students more choice, and finding innovative ways of doing so (Bond, 2002). The applied degrees policy framework of the Ministry of Advanced Education subsequently added the rationales of responding to increasing certification requirements in many occupations, the greater likelihood of learners remaining in the communities where they were trained (the

retention of a skilled labour force being an important factor for rural communities), and enabling public colleges to remain relevant and competitive (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2015).

Despite the government having said that no additional funding was anticipated to institutions to offer applied degrees (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2015), implying that implementation would therefore necessarily be slow, the lack of attention that the applied degree initiative garnered is curious. Granted, there was some precedent with the earlier transformation of some colleges into degree-granting university colleges and with the introduction of a new credential, the Bachelor of Technology, at the British Columbia Institute of Technology in 1995. Nevertheless, some important stories may yet emerge as to what happened behind closed doors in discussions that institutional presidents and others had with government officials.

The mild controversy that did initially arise about applied degrees concerned neither the policy intent nor their merit, but rather their definition. Although there was a consensus that they were not general arts or science degrees, and that the credential had to be employment oriented, it was not initially clear whether the BC government envisaged the Alberta or the Ontario model. The Alberta model, introduced in a demonstration project in 1994, consisted of three years (six semesters) of academic studies followed by at least two semesters of related paid, supervised work experience (Alberta Learning Information Services, 2015). The Alberta model received little support from BC colleges. Within months, the model that Ontario had introduced in 2000 (Panacci, 2014) was the understood definition of applied degrees in BC, namely traditional four-year bachelor's degrees in applied subjects (with the definition of applied subjects remaining vague).

Private and External Universities

The other thrust of the *Degree Authorization Act*, in addition to applied degrees, was to make it easier for private and external universities to operate in BC. Prior to 2002, universities outside the BC public system either had to (a) obtain special BC legislation to confer degrees (for example, the BC-based Quest University, originally Sea to Sky University), (b) teach in BC but to confer degrees from outside BC (City University, for example), or (c) partner with an existing BC university or university college for the BC partner to confer the degree (the least frequently, if ever, used of the three options).

The *Degree Authorization Act* opened the regulatory door for private and external institutions should they desire to avail themselves of the opportunity. It provided for proposals for degree programs from institutions other than BC public universities to be reviewed by an independent Degree Quality Assessment Board and a recommendation made to the Minister of Advanced Education as to whether the proposed program met the expected standards of educational quality. The minister could then authorize delivery of the degree program by regulation, rather than through legislation. At the same time, the minister remained a gatekeeper; the minister would not automatically approve educationally sound proposals.

The act initially resulted in a flurry on inquiries, with the Degree Quality Assessment Board reviewing 53 degree program applications in its first four years from private and out-of-province institutions (Degree Quality Assessment Board annual reports, various years). Since then, a few institutions have come and gone, a few that were previously operating in the fringes[32] have gained a way to legitimize themselves. Most provided small, niche programming in

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[32] For example, some external universities offered instruction in BC in such fields as education and business to cohorts of BC students but awarded degrees from campuses outside the province.

professional fields (for example, MBA programs or the Adler School of Professional Psychology) or served a degree-completion market (for example, the University of Phoenix tended to enroll students with some previous postsecondary credits). Trinity Western University, the largest and most comprehensive of the private institutions in BC, was unaffected because it was already operating under its own BC legislation.

Part of the reason why private and external universities have had less of a presence in BC than many anticipated when the *Degree Authorization Act* was passed lies in competitive enrolment pressure from the public postsecondary sector. In addition to public colleges recruiting and retaining students in new applied degree programs, the government funded public institutions to increase enrolments by 25,000 FTEs (on a base of 150,000 FTEs) over the six years from 2004 to 2010. This expansion in capacity started just as enrolment demand was weakening. Almost every public institution nevertheless received a portion of the funding, even those that already had excess capacity. Students now founded it easier to enroll in the much less expensive public institutions.

Teaching Universities

Beginning in 2004 and 2005 with the transformation of two public institutions, followed with five more transformations in 2008, the BC government created a new postsecondary sector, the teaching university. Despite the name change, the degree-granting powers of these new universities were only modestly greater than in their previous incarnation. They remained non-doctoral institutions that continued to offer a comprehensive range of adult basic education, trades, and diploma level programming along with bachelor degrees.

A curious artifact of the teaching university category, reflecting their origins as community colleges, is that BC now has five universities[33] that offer trades training and other programs comprised of few if any academic courses, while two of the colleges, Douglas and Langara, offer some bachelor's degrees but no trades programming. University and college nomenclature now provides but a weak indication of the program mix in BC institutions.

The background to these developments dates back to 1998 when the presidents of the five university colleges retained the recently retired president of the University of Victoria, Howard Petch, to evaluate the success of their baccalaureate programs (Church, 2002). Petch found university college degrees to be academically strong and discussed expanding the mandate of university colleges to include graduate studies and research (Petch, 1998).

Consistent with, but not solely due to, a more competitive environment, university colleges began lobbying for a name change from the poorly understood university college to university, especially as the *Degree Authorization Act* had allowed them to offer applied master's degrees (a vague concept but subject to approval by a new Degree Quality Assessment Board). Later in 2002, the university college presidents formed their own advocacy organization, the University Colleges of British Columbia[34]. Fleming and Lee (2009), administrators at what had formerly been a university college, maintained that the new consortium effectively created a tripartite public postsecondary system.

Community aspirations for a local university in the southern interior had not been extinguished by the creation of university colleges. The Society for Okanagan University

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[33] Capilano, Fraser Valley, Kwantlen Polytechnic, Thompson Rivers and Vancouver Island universities.

[34] The two degree-granting institutes, the British Columbia Institute of Technology and the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, were excluded.

Legislation formed in 1999, leading to a new community group, University 2000, to lobby for a full-status university. By 2000, the Kelowna Chamber of Commerce had taken up the cause (Freake, 2005).

In the spring of 2001, both Okanagan University College and the University College of the Cariboo publicly proclaimed their desire to come under the University Act (Gaber, 2002). The university college consortium prepared a position paper at that time calling for all university colleges to become regional comprehensive universities (Church, 2002). In its reply to the government's Core Review, the consortium argued in 2001 for separate legislation and the ability to grant graduate degrees (Gaber, 2002).

The first action, as opposed to talk, taken towards achieving university status was decidedly unsuccessful: the government dismissed the board of Okanagan University College for agreeing to a university-style contract with its faculty that introduced faculty ranks and differentiated salary levels (Fleming & Lee, 2009). Ministry officials communicated to other university colleges that, as budgets were tight, overtures about university status would be unwelcome for the next few years (Church, 2002). Nevertheless, lobbying continued despite the renunciation of Okanagan's contract. Levin (2003) concluded that all university colleges had begun adopting a university ethos with their emphasis on research and scholarship, academic rank, and desire to join the national university association, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

In March 2003, the BC government acceded to the Okanagan's lobbying for a university, but not at all in the way that some had envisaged. Rather than transforming Okanagan University College into a university, its north campus in Kelowna was split off in 2004 and given to the University of British Columbia. Whitely, Aguiar, and Marten (2008) described the UBC

takeover as resembling a third world coup d'état in their examination of a set of forces in the

Okanagan arising from the adoption of a particular strategy of regional economic development

by the business community of the region. The remaining components of the former university

college reverted to being Okanagan College again, a comprehensive public college which now,

as did all public colleges, had the ability to grant applied degrees and which maintained a

university transfer function.

Lobbying by the Friends of the University College of the Cariboo for a name change to

university continued in Kamloops, also in the interior of the province and something of a

competitor with Kelowna. Two years later, in 2005, the government acceded by designating the

university college as a special purpose university,under the *Thompson Rivers University Act*.

Lacking the convenient two-campus configuration of Kelowna with only baccalaureate

programs located on one campus, the Kamloops initiative involved transforming the entire

University College of the Cariboo into a university that was to emphasize teaching, retain its

comprehensive set of sub-baccalaureate programming, add master's degrees, and pursue research

and scholarly activity. This mandate resulted in a broader curriculum than those of institutions in

England and Australia that had also been granted university status (Dennison, 2006). Adding to

the complexity of the new university was its inheritance of the Open University, a distance

learning entity that had been part of the disbanded Open Learning Agency

Finally, in a series of five announcements spread over the month of April 2008, the

premier proclaimed that the three remaining university colleges, Capilano College and the Emily

Carr Institute of Art and Design would all be designated as special purpose teaching universities

(Ministry of Advanced Education, 2008, April 29), joining Thompson Rivers University as a

new form of university in BC that encompassed non-academic programming and which did not

require permanent faculty to conduct research. The initiative was described in government press releases as arising from the recommendations of the *Campus 2020* report (Plant, 2007), but given the long history of advocacy for more universities and the government's general lack of enthusiasm for the Plant report, this seemed a convenient rationale for politically driven decisions and a way of politely acknowledging an otherwise unwelcomed report.

Whatever discussions may have been occurring in cabinet and the premier's office in 2008, postsecondary policy directions and plans had not been made publicly available. Fleming (2010) characterized developments as piecemeal expansion. This final New Era development, the 2008 transformation of five institutions into teaching universities, occurred with no implementation planning nor explicit vision for the public postsecondary system. With no extra funding to support the transformed institutions, it was not immediately clear to personnel in the new universities what steps would be needed or possible beyond creating new letterhead and changing academic governance from education councils to senates.

The previous BC universities promptly distanced themselves from the new universities, renaming their advocacy organization from The University Presidents' Council to the Research Universities' Council of BC in 2008. Thompson Rivers and Royal Roads universities lost their membership, but were readmitted in 2011 given their limited research mandates under their respective legislation. In January 2010, the remaining (new) universities formed the BC Association of Institutes and Universities with a staff of two (Cowin, 2012b).

Sub-Baccalaureate Education

While the above changes in the authority to grant degrees seemed to occur mainly for pragmatic reasons, increasing the degree capacity of the province at minimal cost to the public

purse, new policy for sub-baccalaureate education seems to have been more ideologically driven. These latter changes were made to the governance structures affecting entire sectors, changing the character of the sectors, rather than modifications made directly to the constituent institutions. The specific changes involved the regulatory bodies for apprenticeship and private career colleges, as well as the deregulation of English as a Second Language schools.

Apprenticeship

In a 2002 discussion paper, the Ministry of Advanced Education served notice that it considered the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission had failed to implement the sweeping changes that government viewed as necessary (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2002). The *Industry Training Authority Act* of 2003 replaced the Commission with the Industry Training Authority.

Apprenticeship was vigorously promoted and the 14,000 registered apprentices in 2003/04 rose to a peak of 35,000 in 2008/09, dropping back to 30,000 in 2011/12. Completion rates, however, fell to historic lows: 40% of apprentices completed within six years of first registration, compared to 75% in previous decades. Meredith (2012) concluded that the controlling interests, namely employers, were quite content to have the apprenticeship system serve as a high volume source of lower wage, entry-level and semi-skilled labour.

On the surface, some of the apprenticeship reforms the government was seeking fell well within the scope of normal educational discourse and reflected developments internationally in vocational education in such countries as Australia (Robinson, 2000): competency-based certification to replace time-based training, modularized training and certification, more involvement of employers in determining curriculum, and transferability of previous learning

towards certification in another trade (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2003; Sharpe & Gibson, 2005). These proposals, however, were controversial and quickly became politicized (Cowin, 2012a). Some saw modularization as likely to lead to de-skilling in the trades and to hindering inter-provincial mobility. Quality assurance mechanisms were claimed to be at risk. Undergirding the alarm was the change in governance that saw organized labour removed from the new Authority, whereas unions had been one of four constituencies (along with business, government and education) in the previous Commission.

The structure of the new Industry Training Authority had been influenced by open-shop, non-unionized employers (Coalition of BC Businesses, 2001; Fisher et al., 2014). The new legislation was silent as to the responsibilities of employers in workforce training, and restricted the Authority to defining performance standards for trades certification and to distributing funds. The government hoped that the new Authority would expand the amount of training from 24,000 trainees (16,000 apprentices plus 8,000 in entry-level trades training at public institutions) to 30,000 within three years (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2003).

Following its start-up period, the Industry Training Authority made two noteworthy changes to the training system. In 2005/06, it established the first of seven principal-agent arrangements whereby separate not-for-profit legal entities, Industry Training Organizations, came by 2011 to manage 95% of apprentices under delegated authority (Industry Training Authority, 2012). Each Organization represented a distinct industry sector, such as residential construction and automotive, and was governed by industry organizations.

The second change reflected the call in the Ministry's 2002 discussion paper for a transformation of the Entry Level program that was then consuming two thirds of the budget of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2002).

185

In 2006, the Industry Training Authority replaced the pre-apprenticeship Entry Level Trades

Training program in public institutions with the Foundation Program. The new Foundation

program altered some registration and credentialing practices, but perhaps the most significant

development was the introduction of standardized, centralized curriculum (curriculum in terms

of learning outcomes, not necessarily lesson plans and instructional materials) that allowed

program success measures to be tracked on a province-wide basis. Whereas apprenticeship itself

was less centralized than in the recent past, pre-apprenticeship training had become more

centralized. Meredith (2012) argued that overall impact of the changes since 2003 under the

Industry Training Authority was a retention of the terminology and institutional trappings

associated with apprenticeship but the loss of the essential components for a well-functioning

system.

Private Career Colleges

A parallel, but more extreme, development in sub-baccalaureate education occurred in

the governance of the private career college sector. When the *Private Post-Secondary Education

Act* had been passed in 1991, it brought all private institutions – and not just career colleges –

under the purview of a single regulatory body, the Private Post-Secondary Education

Commission. By 2001, the Commission was registering 1,100 institutions (Private Post-

Secondary Education Commission, 2002).

The provincial legislation and associated regulations did not enable the Commission to

generate sufficient revenue to cover its costs and some institutions were complaining that the

Commission was excessively bureaucratic. They argued that the Commission trapped legitimate

colleges in regulations that were developed in response to the worst institutions (Cowin, 2013b).

In evaluating the Private Post-Secondary Education Commission, Culos (2005) concluded that half measures and ambiguity from the outset had hampered a policy environment that was intended to not only protect consumers but also to legitimize and foster the growth of the career college sector.

In addition to scrutiny under the government's 2001 Core Services Review, a parallel Administrative Justice Review by the government examined the Private Post-Secondary Education Commission. It was the Attorney General for BC, not an education or labour minister, who announced early in 2002 that the Commission would be replaced by a self-regulating industry board (Cowin, 2013b).

The 2004 press release announcing the formation of the Private Career Training Institutions Agency framed the issue in terms of tuition protection for students (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2004, October 25), but it was really the reduced scope and new form of governance of the Agency that were newsworthy. Private and out-of-province universities were excluded from the purview of the Agency because they now fell under the Degree Quality Assessment Board. More startling was the complete deregulation of schools that provided only English as a Second Language instruction, a growing component of the private postsecondary sector and one that was frequently the first contact international students had with British Columbia. Although the deregulation was controversial, the government did not articulate its policy rationale, other than to note that BC had previously regulated far more private institutions than did Alberta and Ontario (Bond, 2004). The decision to establish thresholds in terms of program duration and tuition fees for regulation of the remaining career colleges is more readily understood.

In addition to requiring the Private Career Training Institutions Agency to be cost-recovery from fees charged to the colleges it regulated, its board was composed entirely of industry representatives. In other words, the sector had been transformed from a publicly regulated one to a smaller, self-regulated set of institutions that the government expected to be more efficient and which would rely extensively on market mechanisms to ensure quality.

Deregulated institutions had the option of voluntarily choosing to register with the Agency. Furthermore, for institutions to have their students eligible for government financial aid, the institutions had to take the additional step of becoming accredited by the Agency. Thus, when only the money of students was at risk, quality assurance mechanisms were minimal. When government money for students was at risk, a higher standard of quality assurance was invoked.

Several mergers of career colleges have occurred since 2006, partly accounting for the reduction of 400 registered schools in 2008 to 320 in 2012. In 2012, 60% of the 51,000 students were in the 160 accredited institutions (Private Career Training Institutions Agency enrolment reports). Large interprovincial and international corporations acquired some local schools in an effort to achieve horizontal and vertical integration in the industry, as well as to export BC curriculum abroad.

The Private Career Training Institutions Agency estimated in 2006 that 30% of enrolment in career colleges was international (Private Career Training Institutions Agency, 2008). This reputational risk for BC as a destination for international students prompted the BC government to introduce its own Educational Quality Assurance trademark in 2009 for qualified public and private institutions that chose to pursue it. In 2011, the definition of career training was broadened to again include English as a Second Language instruction, where tuition or duration

exceeded a certain amount. Once again, an increasingly important economic subsector in BC, namely international language students, was receiving little regulatory oversight.

Closures

Several changes during the New Era moment could be viewed as tweaking the existing system in that they were individually made for pragmatic reasons. Cumulatively, though, the fact that they were all closures could be taken as indications of new policy directions.

In 2001/02, the first year of its mandate, the BC government announced its intention to dissolve the Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology and the Centre for Education Information Standards and Services. These were province-wide agencies that mainly served the public college and institute sector but which also had some connections with the universities. Some of the functions of these agencies were simply reallocated to other bodies, but services in support of teaching and learning suffered (Cowin, 2012b). Fisher et al. (2014) described the government as eliminating or radically transforming most of the system-wide agencies and support structures that had been created over the previous fifteen years.

The Ministry of Advanced Education also announced in February 2002 that the Technical University of British Columbia, established in 1997, would be closed. The full story about the closure has yet to be told. Trueman (2005) wrote:

> Many saw the creation of TechBC and the construction of its landmark urban campus in north Surrey as political monument-building …How does one evaluate the claim that TechBC was shut down entirely for partisan political reasons? The fact this view is widely held does not make it provable…It also tends to obscure the many other challenges the fledgling university faced. (pp. 2-3)

The government invited other institutions to submit proposals to inherit the students and assets of the Technical University. Simon Fraser University was the successful proponent, leading to the establishment of the Surrey campus of SFU.

The Open Learning Agency received extra scrutiny from government. The nature of government's concerns was not clear, but the Agency was disbanded in 2005, with most of its functions redistributed to other institutions (Cowin, 2007).

The Institute of Indigenous Government, a public institution created in 1995, was especially problematic and politically sensitive. Hastily launched with inadequate planning (Human Resources Development Canada, 1998), very low enrolment and management issues led to its closure in 2007 (Cowin, 2011). Its assets were transferred to another Aboriginal-governed public institution, the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology.

Analysis: New Era Moment

Social Justice

At best, the BC government paid lip service to social justice concerns during the New Era historical moment, mentioning access to postsecondary education in some of its public announcements but not really demonstrating that any deeply held desire for greater social justice had actually propelled policy development. Nevertheless, the fact that government even mentioned access indicates the power of this enduring goal in educational discourse in British Columbia.

Taking government pronouncements at face value, the 25,000 seat expansion announced in 2004 was explicitly about increasing access to postsecondary education. In contrast to the careful planning in 1989 for a 15,000 seat capacity increase under the *Access for All* initiative,

though, it is hard to find evidence in the New Era moment that fair access for populations with low participation rates was really much of a priority given the basis on which funding was allocated throughout the province, namely providing some money to every institution with only little regard to relative enrolment demand and supply.

The conclusion of the Auditor General about the distribution of funding was that the expansion program was in a roundabout way to address some of the problems arising from an inadequate funding system, enabling the government to direct more funding to postsecondary institutions while claiming it was holding down the per student cost through the funding formula (Van Iersel, 2006). In other words, the expansion was used for financial and managerial purposes rather than as a tool of social policy. Nevertheless, however muddled the New Era expansion program might have been, it did increase the number of seats available in public postsecondary institutions and admission requirements in a number of programs became less restrictive.

Similarly, government press releases in 2008 concerning the establishment of five new teaching universities explicitly invoked the goal of access: "British Columbians want to access university degree programs in all regions of the province," Advanced Education minister Coell said. "With a new university…students will be able to access degree programs closer to home." (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2008, April 21). While this sentiment may have played well in the local press, the new university initiative actually made little difference to the availability of degree programs in that university colleges could, and were, already granting bachelor degrees in any subject and a few master's degrees in applied subjects. Furthermore, public colleges across the province could already grant baccalaureate degrees in applied subjects. The main difference for students was that a more geographically dispersed and wider range of master's degrees would be available.

Whatever the rationales and merits of creating a new sector of teaching universities, it is hard to find compelling evidence that social justice for individual students or under-represented groups was a driving force. Perhaps a case could be made in support of the spatial adaptation version of social justice in that more cities beyond or on the fringe of metropolitan areas now could share in the benefits, whatever they might be for teaching institutions, of a university presence.

Like the Macdonald Era and Access for All historical moments, the New Era moment brought about a significant restructuring of the public postsecondary sectors. Unlike the other moments, much of the public commentary in the legislature and media during the New Era moment regarding the social justice implications of changes to non-academic education was critical or unsupportive. Rather than seeing developments as increasing opportunities or the life chances of individual citizens, as were the general perceptions of the Macdonald and Access for All reports, a number of commentators in the New Era moment, especially from labour, were questioning whether the needs of employers and businesses under a neoliberal agenda were taking precedence (Fisher et al, 2014; Meredith, 2012). In non-academic programming, social justice was claimed, in at least some quarters, to be diminishing.

Human Capital Formation

Human capital considerations were important in the New Era moment. Each of the two approaches to developing human capital, the more general one about a well educated workforce and the more occupationally-specific one, were invoked but in different postsecondary sectors. In addition, the role of highly qualified personnel in regional economic development was acknowledged.

When the government announced the formation of the Industry Training Authority (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2003), it explicitly referenced occupational supply and demand, saying that employers' needs for skilled workers were not being met and that demand was projected to increase rapidly for many highly skilled occupations. The examples it provided of industries where demand exceeded the domestic supply of qualified tradespeople, according to the Conference Board of Canada and not from the government's own analyses, were in the building, automotive, and aerospace sectors.

In contrast to the occupational projection approach that has been regularly used mainly with respect to sub-baccalaureate education (and less prominent in baccalaureate education, except for such regulated professions as in health care), references to the generic, or soft, employability skills[35] itemized by the Conference Board of Canada (Bloom & Kitagawa, 1999) have been common in discourse about all sectors of BC public postsecondary education. Applied degrees, both bachelor's and masters, may seem at first to be primarily an occupationally-oriented approach to human capital formation, but the lack of any sort of strategy, needs assessment or planning for the introduction of applied degrees suggest that the policy was driven more by the general approach to human capital formation, namely to have a workforce with a higher overall level of formal education.

The applied degree framework (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2015) reflected a particular understanding of what highly skilled workers might mean in the context of human capital formation. It stated that the priority in applied degree programs was to prepare graduates for employment, and that preparation for further studies at a more advanced level was not an

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[35] Arguably more traits than skills, but skills is the term used by the Conference Board and the federal government.

essential feature. The vision of applied degrees as largely terminal credentials implies a focus on what some might consider still to be mid level skills. However, another guiding principle in the framework was to address the need for a highly skilled workforce, especially in light of anticipated labour shortages. It would seem that the definition of a highly skilled workforce was still open to interpretation: terminal, baccalaureate education may or may not be seen as high level training in the context of the current and anticipated knowledge economy.

Nevertheless, the existence of applied degrees indicated the acceptance by government of the argument that innovation and economic growth were dependent on a level of problem-solving and creativity that cannot be adequately fostered in students during programs that are only two or fewer years in duration. The essential skills terminology of the federal government (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2015) might not have been explicitly referenced in the curricula for applied degrees, but skills such as thinking, working with others and continuous learning were embedded in understandings of what needed to constitute an applied degree.

Applied degrees also figured in the government's view of the contribution education could make to regional economic and social development. The applied degree framework noted the contention that learners were more likely to remain in communities where they were trained, thus making the province-wide authorization to grant applied degrees a strategy for reducing labour market recruitment and retention challenges in the hinterland.

Universities have over the years been a component of British Columbia's strategies for attempting to diversify its resource-based economy into knowledge-dependent industries. From the BC government's establishment of Discovery Parks in the early1980s to serve as incubators for the commercialization of research (City of Burnaby, 2015; Discovery Parks, 2015) through to

the innovation strategies of the federal government today (Fisher et al., 2006), the considerable social and cultural capital of universities for attracting research and philanthropic dollars seems to have influenced, for example, the decision to have UBC, and not Okanagan University College, bring a university presence to the Okanagan.

When Thompson Rivers University was established, the Ministry of Advanced Education (2005) claimed that the new university would bring an estimated $100 million annually to Kamloops and surrounding regions. Some of this benefit would arise from the simple expedient of increasing the payroll at the new university by relocating the Open University from the Open Learning Agency in Vancouver to Kamloops. Other components of this economic growth, however, would presumably come from having faculty conduct research and attracting research funding.

Marketization

The new government's first speech from the throne in 2001 proclaimed that a new era of marketization had arrived, stating that "British Columbians are well positioned to show the world what we can do when we unleash the power of free enterprise" (British Columbia, 2001). Although public administration over the past two decades had become more sensitive to market approaches, and right wing political parties in BC ever since Macdonald had presented themselves as champions of free enterprise, the Liberals in 2001 were the first BC government to actually embrace markets enthusiastically (Fisher, Rubenson, & House, 2003). The New Era reforms in postsecondary education did not entail the articulation of a new vision for postsecondary education in terms of purposes so much as desire to achieve existing goals in new, and presumably better, ways.

The policy shift in favour of marketization came not so much in response to developments in the external environment as for ideological reasons (Fisher et al., 2014). This ideology manifested in postsecondary education primarily through efforts to open postsecondary education to the private sector (Dennison & Schuetze, 2004) and the implementation, superficially in some instances and more profoundly in others, of a number of the techniques of new public management.

In the academic sphere, marketization took the form of increased competition, sometimes competition for students and sometimes simply for institutional legitimacy. Sometimes this competition arose as the result of direct actions by government, but in other cases, it was an indirect consequence of decisions taken to achieve other goals (for example, of the 25,000 seat expansion in public institutions).

The invitation to private and external universities for a greater role in BC under the *Degree Authorization Act* was an early and obvious attempt of the government to challenge the public university system and to increase competition for students as a spur to innovation and efficiency in the delivery of academic programming. The introduction of applied degrees in public colleges did not initially appear as quite the same competitive threat to universities, seeming at first to be a rather different type of credential than the traditional bachelor's degree. However, as actual curriculum emerged in the new program approval process, it became clear that applied degrees in many instances resembled the traditional baccalaureate and just happened to be in disciplines other than arts and science, or in specialized or interdisciplinary niches where no degree had previously been offered in British Columbia. Business degrees, especially, proliferated and research universities positioned their offerings increasingly as selective admission, elite programs in contrast to the mass approach of their competitors.

196

The 2004 decision to expand the public system by 25,000 FTE seats over the next six years seems to have been made for reasons that had nothing to do with marketization. However, coming at a time when enrolment demand was beginning to lessen, and representing the main way that the province's grants to public institutions were likely to increase in the short-term, the capacity increase had the unintended effect of increasing student recruitment efforts. To some extent, these efforts brought new students into the system. In addition, however, some of the student recruiting expenditures were little more than institutions poaching each other's prospective students, a net zero gain in the postsecondary participation rate of the province. Institutional marketing departments thrived and students were invited to travel greater distances to enroll in programs that were supposedly better for them[36]. Whether society as whole benefited is an open question, but the thrust ran contrary to the closer to home rhetoric of past decades.

Even though student mobility among institutions has remained strong (Student Transitions Project, 2012) because the range of upper level offerings that smaller institutions can offer is necessarily limited, institutions that used to readily encourage their students to continue their studies elsewhere are increasingly contemplating how they might instead retain those students. An element of competition among transfer institutions for students has always been present, but it seems to have intensified over the past decade.

The university colleges had for some time felt that they operated at a competitive disadvantage with universities. In the absence of institutional (as distinct from program) accreditation in Canada to bolster the legitimacy of the degrees they conferred, several had

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[36] UBC Okanagan's lower GPA threshold for admission then at UBC Vancouver, numerous scholarships, and administrative barriers to transferring to the main Vancouver campus in its early years are good examples of the competitive tactics used by institutions as they endeavoured to meet enrolment targets.

instead sought and achieved membership in the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada as a proxy for accreditation: Cariboo was admitted in 1996, then Okanagan and Fraser Valley in 1997, and finally Malaspina in 2000. (Kwantlen had not initially sought membership (Church, 2002)). This membership helped to bolster the case the university colleges put forward publicly, beginning in 2001, that they should become regional universities to level the degree-granting playing field.

Marketization took a different form in non-academic postsecondary education. It consisted of changing the ground rules under which institutions operated, rather than directly inviting new institutions to operate in BC (as had occurred with the *Degree Authorization Act*) or new programs to be offered (as had occurred with applied degrees).

The self-regulation of career colleges under the Private Career Training Institutions Agency, essentially guaranteeing students only basic consumer protection for their tuition fees, is the most extreme example of marketization in the New Era. A government member of the legislative assembly explained the rationale of government for the new policy regarding career colleges: as with any business, a private educational institution relies on its reputation to stay in business; if its product and reputation were poor, the college would eventually close (Orr, 2003).

Along with giving business the dominant voice in the Industry Training Authority, 11 compulsory trades (accounting for about half of the apprentices in BC) were deregulated in 2003. This opened employment to others beyond certified journeymen and apprentices. It was justified as a way to remove barriers for workers receiving training that had previously been designated as part of another compulsory trade (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2003). It also meant that apprenticeship was no longer the only educational path to these occupations. The government asserted that the new *Safety Standards Act* would be sufficient to protect worker and public

safety in the newly deregulated trades (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2003).

Under the Industry Training Authority, the new public management approach of utilizing principal-agent, contractual arrangements led to the establishment of seven Industry Training Organizations. Government, which had directly overseen apprenticeship until the formation of the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission in 1997, was now two steps removed from apprenticeship education: it had delegated functions to the Industry Training Authority, which in turn had delegated functions to the Industry Training Organizations.

Historical Moment: Post-Neoliberalism

In 2011, the premier of British Columbia, Gordon Campbell, resigned and was replaced by Christy Clark. The Liberal party again won the 2013 provincial election, but many of the members of Clark's cabinet were different than during the New Era under Gordon Campbell.

Changes in postsecondary education from 2011 to 2014, especially in 2014, suggest that the adherence of the provincial government to a marketization agenda is weakening, or at least becoming more complex. As with more recent thinking about new public management, such as the concept of joined-up government, marketization has not been repudiated or abandoned. Rather, the steadfast adherence to marketization principles is being complemented by other approaches in specific areas where markets have not achieved the anticipated or desired outcomes, especially in the more vocational postsecondary sectors. Despite the four postsecondary changes described below that suggest the ideological pendulum may be reversing towards stances taken prior to the New Era historical moment, markets are still embedded in many aspects of the current BC postsecondary environment.

199

Because the developments analyzed in this section are so recent, the full consequences of the policy changes are not yet known. Furthermore, other significant developments may still be occurring. Nevertheless, even if all the ramifications are not yet known, the changes from 2011 to 2014 were sufficiently significant to constitute a historical moment.

The first visible indication that not all the New Era reforms were achieving their public policy goals came in 2007 when the government commissioned one of its former assistant deputy ministers of Advanced Education, and more recently former president of the BC Institute of Technology, John Watson, to review the *Private Career Training Institutions Act*. In addition to a number of minor recommendations, Watson called for private English as a Second Language schools to again be regulated (Watson, 2008). He noted that the estimated 150 to 200 language schools were not required to meet any educational or quality standards, and that their approximately 100,000[37] students (some of whom were in programs of only a few weeks' duration) were unprotected.

The government initially chose not to act on the recommendation to regulate language schools, even though others shared Watson's concern. *BC Business* magazine, for example, had run an article about the "motley, squabbling, government-neglected ESL industry" (Howard, 2006, p. 61) and even the industry-dominated board of the Private Career Training Institutes Agency had itself recommended re-regulation in the *Campus 2020* hearings of 2007 (Cowin, 2013b).

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[37] The BC government's ombudsperson reported that in 2011/12, private language schools in British Columbia enrolled 47,300 international students (Carter, 2015). Although the 100,000 figure above would probably include some domestic students, good quality enrolment data is lacking for private language schools in BC.

Not until November, 2009 did the government choose to act, and even then it was a grudging step that had more to do with appearance than substance. The voluntary EQA (Educational Quality Assurance) designation was introduced as a trademark and not as an accreditation mechanism according to the Ministry of Advanced Education's website at that time. Finally, in 2011, an amendment to the Private Career Training Institutions Act broadened the definition of career training to include ESL instruction where tuition or duration exceeded a given amount. Such schools were required to administer a PCTIA approved, standardized test to students at the beginning and the end of the English language program. The EQA designation was also strengthened with respect to programs for international students.

Federal changes in June 2014 to its International Student Program required provinces to develop a list of educational institutions eligible to host international students on student permits (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2016, January 13). This became the catalyst for the BC government to require all institutions enrolling international students for more than six months to achieve the Educational Quality Assurance designation, a designation now described as concerning "government-recognized" quality assurance standards. The number of private and public EQA designated institutions increased from 125 to 220 over the 18-month transition period (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2016, January 13).

Another signal that the government was not entirely satisfied with previous neoliberal reforms in postsecondary education came from a review it commissioned, this time in 2013, of the Industry Training Authority. The author, Jessica McDonald, had been the province's top bureaucrat as deputy to the premier until her resignation in 2009. Among her recommendations were that unions be brought back to the board overseeing apprenticeship and that money be redirected to high demand occupations, especially in the skilled trades (McDonald, 2014).

It was in 2014 that substantive changes to sub-baccalaureate education emerged. The government announced that it would implement all 29 recommendations from McDonald's review on the Industry Training Authority, starting with the appointment of a new board of directors that included representation from labour, the Aboriginal community, and public postsecondary education (Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, 2014, May 5). The subsidiary Industry Training Organizations were wound down and all their functions transferred back into the Industry Training Authority by November 2014 (Industry Training Authority, 2015). Registrations for the 2014/15 fiscal year consisted of 35,000 adults, 4,500 youth and 4,000 students in Foundation (pre-apprenticeship) programs (Industry Training Authority, 2015, August 31). The completion rate, allowing six years for completion of an apprenticeship, stood at a dismal 33% (Industry Training Authority, 2015, August 31).

A second change in 2014 was the announcement that the Private Career Training Institutions Agency would be dissolved and responsibility for regulating private colleges providing more than 40 hours of instruction and tuition exceeding $1,000 would return to the Ministry of Advanced Education (Ministry of Energy and Mines and Responsible for Core Review, 2014). The official rationales in the government's news release (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2015, February 11) included raising quality standards and strengthening quality assurance for the sector, as well as reducing regulatory requirements for institutions with a history of good compliance. In order to obtain a more complete understanding of the pressures at play, though, an investigation conducted by province's ombudsperson at much the same time is helpful (Carter, 2015).

The ombudsperson found that compliance monitoring of the 320 private career colleges had been inconsistent, that the 47,000 students were inadequately informed on such matters as

their rights, and that problems were systemic. The investigative reported also noted the decline in the number of registered institutions, from 520 in 2006 to 310 in 2013, due to consolidation, voluntary de-registration, closure of institutions, and increased regulatory standards.

A public administrator promptly replaced the board of the Private Career Training Institutions Agency. New legislation was passed in March, 2015 with the expectation that it would come into force by regulation in the spring of 2016 (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2015, August 17). This oversight of institutions producing 38,000 graduates in 2013/14 would include what the government said were 50 private English as a Second Language Institutions.[38]

Whereas the above two changes in 2014, concerning private colleges and apprenticeship, were substantive ones that have the potential to change the character of the respective postsecondary sectors, the third change was an aspirational one predicated on the future development of a major liquefied natural gas industry in BC, a prospect that currently looks by no means certain. As events unfold, it seems that incentives may be developing for public postsecondary institutions to simply repackage existing activities in an effort to appear responsive to projected labour market needs that they may not even believe. Politics make it difficult at this early stage to know whether a radical change is really occurring.

The likelihood of a new industry emerging is not as important for the purposes of this dissertation as the change in government attitude that the new postsecondary initiative signals. The government was clearly expressing a lack of confidence in the educational market to meet the labour demand it projected and was instead adopting an interventionist approach.

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[38] In comparison, the 19 private and out-of-province public institutions with authority to grant degrees in BC enrolled only 13,000 students in 55 degree programs each year (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2015, August 17).

In April, 2014 the BC government announced a strategy, the *Skills for Jobs Blueprint*, to "re-engineer" secondary and postsecondary education to "profile skilled trades that will soon be in high demand" (Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, 2014, April 29). The strategy consisted of a series of policies, a key one being that postsecondary institutions were to reconfigure their programming over a period of years, so that by 2017/18 a minimum of one quarter of their budgets would be devoted to training for high demand occupations. Taken at face value, which I think unwise at this point, the Blueprint augured a major restructuring of the public postsecondary system in terms of program mix.

The identification of high demand occupations was not initially specified, even though the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training had significantly strengthened its labour market forecasting over the previous few years and was publishing 10-year occupational outlooks on a website entitled WorkBC (Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, 2014). Given the focus on apprenticeship training at the government's press conference, and given that the last major attempt to strengthen vocational education in BC had been back in the 1990s (Fisher et al., 2014), university personnel expressed polite concern that academic and liberal education was at risk; the Research Universities Council of BC (2014, April 29) immediately issued a press release in response to the *Skills for Jobs Blueprint* that reframed warnings of growing skills gaps in terms of the employment skills provided in universities.

When government officials did specify what were high demand occupations, they defined them not on the basis of shortfalls in labour supply but simply in terms of job openings, that is, the high demand occupations were simply the 60 largest occupations (Usher, 2015). This suggests that despite all the bold talk of re-engineering postsecondary education, much will be business as usual. In fact, the University of the Fraser Valley found that 85% of its programs

204

already matched with the top 60 in-demand occupation as listed in the labour market forecast made by the BC government (University of the Fraser Valley, 2015). Advanced Education minister Andrew Wilkinson conceded in 2015 that funding for general education, arts and science was not going to diminish (Fletcher, 2015).

The faith-based sector has experienced a few minor developments in the past couple of years. Due to financial challenges, the Vancouver School of Theology sold a major building, located on land it leases from UBC for 999 years, to UBC in 2014 (ironically, to serve as the home for UBC's School of Economics). The following year, Regent College began reducing staffing by 30%. However, 2015 also saw some expansion in the sector as Trinity Western University opened a storefront campus in Richmond to house its leadership and MBA programs.

Langara College and the Vancouver School Board formed a partnership in 2014 to merge their continuing education offerings. Ongoing budgetary challenges had reduced the school district's continuing education offerings over a number of years, and the district anticipated ongoing challenges. The new partnership represented another way of achieving operational efficiencies.

Although the federal influence in the amount and type of BC postsecondary instruction had largely disappeared, the federal government retained its dominant role in research funding and continued to make a significant contribution to student financial aid. It still provided modest funding for English as a Second Language instruction in BC, routed to public postsecondary institutions through the province. In 2014, though, a little over 20 million dollars of the language funding was withdrawn, with some indication that the federal language funds would shift away from postsecondary institutions to non-profit community organizations (Sherlock, 2014). This shift from public institutions resembled the approach taken under the federal Canadian Jobs

Strategy in 1985, but it did not directly or immediately benefit the for-profit sector. Also, the impact was especially severe at just one institution, Vancouver Community College, where almost half the language instruction occurred.

Analysis: Post-Neoliberalism Moment

Social Justice

Efforts to promote social justice seem largely absent in the Post-Neoliberal historical moment. Better protection for international ESL students and for students in private career colleges was precipitated by a desire to prevent damage to the BC brand internationally – that is, as a response to student complaints – rather than a positive effort to advance the welfare of students.

Although the preface to the *Skills for Jobs Blueprint* recognized that "some British Columbians such as at-risk-youth, Aboriginal people and persons with disabilities face unique challenges in finding their place in the workforce" (British Columbia et al., 2014, p. 3), the apparent concern for these populations seemed to be subject to the needs of the economy: for example, "Every person in British Columbia should be equipped so they can realize career opportunities most in demand by industry" (p.4) and Aboriginal youth described as a "huge pool of new talent" (p. 14). Furthermore, some of the funding to support targeted populations was to be drawn from existing federal-provincial agreements in support of these populations. Student needs and futures have been conspicuously absent from the discourse about skills gaps and apprenticeship; the focus has been on the short to medium term needs of employers and the economy.

The *Skills for Jobs Blueprint* nevertheless devoted significant attention to Aboriginal peoples, a marked change from what have often been little more than passing references in previous BC government documents on postsecondary education (as distinct from documents specifically about the education of Aboriginal peoples.) In this respect, the Blueprint is perhaps an example of the compensatory version of social justice, namely that serious attention is being devoted to a previously disadvantaged group. Whether it results in a fulsome expression of social justice efforts, especially in terms of cultural recognition, for this population remains to be seen.

In a similar vein, the inclusion of an Aboriginal representative on the latest board of the Industry Training Authority might be an example of compensatory or cultural social justice. On the other hand, it might simply be tokenism or an attempt to enhance the probability that the economic development efforts of the dominant society will be effective by including an Aboriginal stakeholder in the strategy-setting body. Once again, only time will tell if a new articulation of social justice is emerging in BC postsecondary education.

Human Capital Formation

Human capital formation has dominated the postsecondary policy agenda of the current BC government. The *Skills for Jobs Blueprint* has been its major postsecondary policy thrust, a component of what is arguably the government's top overall goal, namely the development of a liquefied natural gas industry in the province. The Blueprint's language was strong, talking of re-engineering secondary and postsecondary education, even though the mundane reality may eventually consist partially of repackaging existing activities. Regardless of how the policy ends up being implemented, human capital formation in support of the economy was the rationale propelling this major policy initiative.

At the heart of the Blueprint was a policy shift to re-allocate education funding towards programs that serve in-demand occupations, matching education with industry needs. The intention to rely on labour-market projections figured prominently in the policy document, along with the objective of strengthening the government's ability to produce reliable projections. With concern for high demand occupations and skill shortages central to the Blueprint, the policy reflected an occupationally-specific version of human capital theory rather than an attempt to foster an innovative, knowledge-based economy through a more high educated workforce in terms of generic or essential skills.

The *Skills for Jobs Blueprint* focused strongly on sub-baccalaureate education, especially trades training and apprenticeship. This contrasted with the highly qualified personnel approach (that is, individuals with a bachelor's degree or higher) that the federal government has viewed as vital for innovation and economic growth (for example, McKenzie, 2007). It also ran contrary to past Canadian immigration policy in that the Federal Skilled Workers Program had shifted by 2010 from an emphasis on skill shortages in specific occupations to using broader criteria to reflect the ability of a worker to change jobs as the labour market changed (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010)[39].

The Blueprint also reflected a narrower conception of human capital than some of the documentation available through the Research, Technology, and Innovation Division of the BC Ministry of Advanced Education in which the creation of personal and social well-being was considered along with economic development (Klingbeil, 2008). Despite the emphasis in the Blueprint on sub-baccalaureate education, private career colleges – even those that provide

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[39] Nationally, the share of immigrants with a university degree who had been admitted to Canada under the economic program rose from 31% in 1990 to 67% in 2011 (Picot, Hou, & Qiu, 2016).

technical training for apprentices – did not obviously figure in the intended re-engineering of the

postsecondary system to meet the labour shortages the government anticipated. However, these

colleges may have indirectly entered the calculus through related changes to student financial

aid.

The federal reduction in 2013 in English as a Second Language funding in public

institutions, coupled with an overall enrolment decline in the Developmental Education

category[40] of which ESL instruction is a component, reflected a concern for neither social justice

nor human capital formation. Immigrants with postsecondary education obtained in other

countries but who lack English language proficiency face substantial barriers to full participation

in both the economic and the social life of the province. The government asserted that other

providers of formal and informal education could address the needs arising from the ESL

cutbacks, but evidence is lacking at this time to determine if this is occurring.

The 2014 reforms to the governance structure of the Industry Training Authority, an

attempt to reshape apprenticeship education, were consistent with a concern for human capital

formation but the evidence is currently inconclusive as to whether human capital considerations

were actually the propelling force in this shift in policy direction, as opposed to a desire for

efficient and effective public administration. The review of the Authority (McDonald, 2013) that

precipitated the changes referenced anticipated labour shortages but it also called for optimizing

the training system to reach the province's full potential to plan and respond to labour needs – an

efficiency goal.

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[40] The 46,200 headcount students in Developmental Programs in the 2011/12 academic year had declined to 35,000 in 2014/15. Source: BC Post-Secondary Central Data Warehouse Standard Reports: By Program Area, October 2015 submission.

Marketization

The main developments with respect to marketization were largely a reversal of previous

trends in a few specific areas. The overall neoliberal philosophy was not repudiated, however.

The demise of the Industry Training Organizations, and the return of their functions to

the Industry Training Authority, was an abandonment of the new public management techniques

of single purpose organizations and principal-agent relationships. The return of organized labour

to the governance of apprenticeship represented an effort to use a more collaborative governance

model rather than a private sector approach involving only employers. Another step away from a

market-based approach to apprenticeship came in 2015 when the province required companies

bidding on large public infrastructure projects to employ a certain number of apprentices

(Penner, 2015).

The re-regulation of English language training schools and the dissolution of the Private

Career Training Institutions Agency were acknowledgements that markets do not always self-

regulate as well as a previous government had hoped. One of the reasons for market failure with

respect to private career colleges and for-profit degree-granting institutions is that prospective

students lack the necessary data on former student experiences and outcomes in BC's private

institutions to make informed decisions about where to enroll (Clift, 2016).

Another instance where the government has avoided the discipline of markets concerns

the rural public colleges and the northern university which have chronically failed to meet the

enrolment targets the BC government set for them. In 2013/14, for example, four of the five

northern colleges (each funded to enroll between 1500 and 3000 FTE students) achieved

between 55 and 90% of their targets, and the University of Northern British Columbia (funded

for 3500 FTE students) achieved less than 85% of its target (Ministry of Advanced Education,

2013/14). Successive governments of all political stripes, including the present government, have nevertheless allowed the situation to continue rather than to impose a more market-oriented discipline on the institutions. This would seem a tacit admission that the government has not seen its social policy goals for postsecondary education as entirely achievable through the techniques of new public management or neoliberalism.

An area where a market orientation has strengthened is in the recruiting of international students from across the globe. The 2012 strategy of the BC government to increase the number of international students in BC by 50% over four years in (Ministry of Advanced Education, 2012)[41] was essentially an economic development strategy and not an effort to internationalize pedagogy and the curriculum.

Developments at Simon Fraser University illustrate the efforts that all BC public postsecondary institutions have been making in recent years: international students at SFU grew from 9% of undergraduate fulltime equivalent enrolment in 2008/09 to 17% in 2013/14 (Simon Fraser University, 2014). The heavy reliance on revenue from international students is illustrated in the 2012/13 financial statements of Douglas College (subsequent publicly-available financial statements no longer showed international tuition fees separately): $13.6 million in international tuition fees, compared to $19.4 million from domestic students in credit courses (Douglas College, 2013).

The Educational Quality Assurance designation was originally seen primarily as an element that would help BC compete in the global market for international students. Since then,

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[41] The federal government had struck an advisory panel on international education in October 2011. This eventually led to a federal goal to double international student enrolment in Canada over a ten-year period (Minister of International Trade, 2014).

the EQA has shifted away from branding towards becoming more of an accreditation (but still with some marketing aspects). Rather than specifying a particular set of government standards, the policy language allows institutions to choose any set of standards that the government is willing to recognize. Although some aspects of marketization may have weakened within BC's borders, competitive behaviours of BC institutions in support of acquiring resources and prestige from beyond its borders show no signs of abating.

Chapter 7: Discussion

This chapter begins by assessing the relevance of the three policy rationales – social justice, human capital formation, and marketization – that I hypothesized undergirded many of the developments in the evolution of the contemporary postsecondary system in British Columbia. It determines that all three were indeed important, finding that one or two rationales were significant in each of the historical moments that I examined, but that none was a substantial force in all five moments.

Assuming that these policy rationales and associated educational goals have become institutionalized (in the sociological sense) and will continue to influence postsecondary education in the future, a strong assumption given their significance over the past half century, the next section of the chapter provides some commentary about aspects of these policy emphases that might be especially valuable to consider when planning or examining postsecondary development in BC in the coming years.

My understanding of the policy rationales was constructed from clusters of theory drawn from a variety of literatures. Although the particular set of theoretical lenses I chose for this study did prove helpful, these lenses nevertheless represent just one way of interpreting the history of BC postsecondary education. To conclude the chapter, I set my lenses aside and make two observations, one about historical themes and the other about the language used to describe postsecondary education, that are intended to be pertinent regardless of the approach taken when examining the development of the postsecondary education system in BC.

Relevance of the Policy Rationales

Each of the three policy rationales – social justice in terms of opportunity for individuals, compensation for initial disadvantage, cultural recognition, and spatial adaptation; human capital formation viewed as both a response to occupational forecasts identifying specific labour market shortages and to a general need to raise educational qualifications across broad groups of workers; and marketization involving competition for tangible resources as well as for such intangibles as legitimacy and prestige – proved relevant and informative in interpreting the historical record, albeit to varying extents and in varying ways at various times. Not only did the rationales provide a concise framework that helped in making sense of a diverse array of actions and developments, but the discipline of examining events from particular perspectives enabled me to reach interpretations that I would otherwise have missed. For example, past interpretations that framed the formation of community colleges in terms of local control – a significant and helpful observation – were so compelling that without the marketization lens, I would probably never have realized that the establishment of colleges could also be interpreted in another (complementary) way, namely as a laissez-faire approach to system development on the part of government.

Not surprisingly, using more than one lens helped make for a more balanced analysis; a single theoretical perspective could have resulted in a skewed picture that, while true, was sufficiently incomplete as to be misleading. Although valuable, using multiple lenses was nevertheless challenging. It required a breadth of knowledge and a grasp of several literatures that took time to develop.

Determining which, and how many, lenses to use, depending on the purpose of a study, is no small task. I selected theory for this study iteratively: first learning some BC history, then

214

reading theories that might be relevant, returning to the history to see which theories had face

validity in the BC context, choosing from among those theories a few that were sufficiently

different so as not to impinge on each other, reading about this smaller set of theories in more

depth, clustering the theories into three lenses, and finally applying the lenses to the historical

record in a systematic manner.

Each of the three policy rationales that I constructed proved to be an influential force at

various times in the history of the postsecondary system in BC over the past half-century. The

forces fluctuated in importance over time, however. Table 5 shows that at least one of the three

was always prominent in the five historical moments that I examined, but never more than two.

Table 5 also suggests that the three rationales provided a complementary, reasonably balanced

portrait in that the cells identifying prominent rationales are scattered throughout the table rather

than clustered.

Table 5: Relevance of Policy Rationales in each Historical Moment

Historical Moment	Social Justice	Human Capital Formation	Marketization
Macdonald Era *(Early 1960s)*	***Prominent.*** Individual and spatial adaptation versions. Some cultural recognition (faith-based).	***Prominent*** for vocational education. Backdrop for academic education.	Mild for public colleges (laissez faire) and university (competition). Indifferent to existence of for-profit colleges.
Continuing Education and Canadian Jobs Strategy *(Early and mid 1980s)*	Little attention by province. Federal: some compensatory.	***Prominent***: federal policy regarding vocational training.	***Prominent***: BC changed continuing education by withdrawing subsidies. Federal strategy to use private sector.
Access for All *(Late 1980s and early 1990s)*	***Prominent*** in academic education (individual and spatial adaptation). Mild attention to compensatory.	Medium: generic skills, not occupational. Regional economic development in interior university advocacy.	Little, except regarding legitimacy of university college degrees.
New Era *(Early to mid 2000s)*	BC government: superficial attention to access for individuals. Perhaps a reversal for non-academic education.	***Prominent.*** Mainly generic skills. Regional economic development.	***Prominent***. Both academic and non-academic education.
Post-Neoliberal *(2010 to present)*	Absent.	***Prominent***. Both versions. BC emphasized occupational and federal oriented to generic skills.	Mild reversal in non-academic education.

With the caveat that Table 5 is several steps removed from the historical realities that it purports to summarize (that is, the table is my summary of my analyses of a selection of historical moments that I defined and identified as significant), a key message from Table 5 is that human capital formation has been central to understanding the development of the contemporary postsecondary system in BC. Social justice considerations were especially significant in the earlier decades, while market oriented rationales strengthened in more recent decades.

Table 5 also suggests two related hypotheses which although speculative nevertheless provide points of departure in the search for social patterns and the development of mid range theory. Historical generalization is a risky business, and even when seemingly well justified, it at best provides rough rules of thumb (Gottschalk, 1963; Leuridan & Froeyman, 2012). Yet if history is to inform decision-making, summary accounts and simplified models are needed, even if they are not entirely accurate and reliable.

The gaps in each column of Table 5 suggest the hypothesis that although an *institutionalized* policy driver may be neglected for a while, it is likely to eventually reappear. Secondly, the two reversals in the table suggest the possibility that when a specific policy rationale has been emphasized, the tendency within a given societal paradigm is for it to subsequently weaken and revert to its historical level of significance. (Should such a reversal not occur, this might be evidence of a transition into a new historical period.)

With the foregoing as context, attention will now turn to each of the three policy rationales separately.

Social Justice

Social justice, frequently expressed in terms of access to educational opportunity for individuals, was a strong driver in the 1960s and resurfaced powerfully in the late 1980s. In each of these two historical moments, significant structural change occurred: public community colleges and two new universities were created in the 1960s, and then university colleges were formed two and a half decades later. Efforts to provide compensatory justice appeared later more as initiatives within established structures, such as special programs for women seeking to re-enter the workforce or for social assistance recipients. Similarly, cultural recognition efforts occurred more within established institutions, although the 1990s started to see more attention paid to special institutions for the Aboriginal population. The faith-based sector was permitted to exist, although not promoted, in recognition of other cultural subgroups.

The spatial adaptation form of social justice has been an ongoing force in BC public sector institutions since 1960, starting with the dispersal of vocational schools and colleges throughout the province, followed by the conversion of some community colleges into university colleges and the formation of the University of Northern British Columbia in the years around 1990, the makeover of two former university colleges into Thompson Rivers University and UBC Okanagan in the mid 1990s, the introduction of a degree-granting mandate to public colleges in 2002, and finally to the transformation in 2008 of a number of public institutions into teaching universities. Geographical considerations were important components of the rationales for all of these changes.

Social justice has been less of a policy driver since 2000, but at least nominal recognition continues to be paid to improving the accessibility of postsecondary education. For example, the invitation to private and external universities under the *Degree Authorization Act* to enter BC and

the announcements of new teaching universities were framed as improving access to degree-level education. The government's annual cap on the tuition fee increases in public institutions, lifted for only a few years in the early 2000s, is another artifact of a desire for equality of educational opportunity.

Social justice rationales, sometimes articulated as efforts to improve the life chances and the quality of life of citizens through the province, have been invoked most strongly with respect to academic and liberal education. They have appeared less frequently in vocational and non-academic discourse. On those occasions when social justice considerations did enter discussions of non-academic education, they typically appeared more as means for enhancing human capital formation rather than as ends in themselves. For example, although calls to increase the number of apprentices may have resulted in enhanced educational opportunity for individuals – most recently, a concerted effort to make apprenticeship attractive to Aboriginal people – the precipitating motivation was often a desire to avoid future labour shortages rather than a desire to allow more individuals to enjoy a certain way of life.

When social justice issues were raised in sub-baccalaureate education, they often took the form of compensatory social justice, namely to increase the participation rate of under-represented groups in certain fields of study, such as persons with disabilities or immigrants. Even here, though, the initiatives had an instrumental flavour rather than an effort to improve the circumstances of the under-represented groups overall. By and large, such compensatory initiatives were not the most successful aspects of BC postsecondary education, and, as across Canada, the under-represented groups frequently remained under-represented (Andres, 2015b).

The variation in the strength of social justice rationales across fields of study reflects societal views and values about non-academic students, especially when considered in the

218

context of the commodified, liberal welfare regime in Canada (Epsing-Andersen, 1990). Lyons et al. (1991) traced the development of what they called a prejudice against vocational education in Canada, situating Canadian viewpoints in a North American perception (in contrast to those of such countries as Germany with its conservative welfare regime) that vocational education prepared second-class citizens and was a form of social policy for those at the margins of society. More recently, Brennan (2014) wrote of Canadians viewing the technical and vocational education training system as second class, "for those not bright enough to make it to university, for those who would work with their hands in menial and dirty jobs" (p. 183). Taylor (2016) recounted the hierarchical valuing of fields of study in terms of a distinction between the mental and the manual, of mind versus body.

Human Capital Formation

Human capital formation has been another enduring and important policy rationale, although also varying in strength across time and sectors. Like social justice, it has persisted in the background as a central purpose for postsecondary education and has occasionally risen to the foreground for a brief period or in relation to a portion of the postsecondary system. For example, the Canadian Jobs Strategy affected only portions of public colleges, and spurred growth in the private career college sector that by and large had no impact on other postsecondary sectors beyond certain components of public colleges. Human capital considerations have been especially strong with respect to the trades, but enrolment in apprenticeship and the attention government has given to the health of the apprenticeship system have fluctuated considerably (in contrast to the steadier growth trajectory of degree-level

education). Despite the recent emphasis given to human capital in the *Skills for Jobs Blueprint*, the actual impact to date of this initiative has been modest.

Human capital formation has been a particular focus of the federal government. It was this government that initially made the expansion of vocational education, as well as a variety of short-term training programs for the unemployed and marginalized populations, a priority that lasted well into the 1980s. Its focus shifted in the 1990s towards highly qualified personnel that could further its research and innovation agenda, a shift that was important within BC postsecondary institutions but which did not have as significant implications for the structure of the postsecondary system as did the federal initiatives of the previous decades. The federal presence in this study therefore declined in the later historical moments that I examined.

Compared to the BC government, the federal government placed a greater and more consistent emphasis on human capital considerations since 1960. Federal policy did continually promote access through student financial aid and compensatory versions of social justice, but its emphasis on human capital was especially important for the structure of the BC postsecondary system from 1960 to 1990. Whereas the BC government emphasized the occupationally focused version of human capital formation, especially with respect to apprenticeship, the federal government drew upon both occupational and generic versions. The BC government seemed supportive of the generic version but tended not to use it to propel its educational policies, drawing upon social justice rationales instead and simply accepting gratefully that the resulting developments often had human capital benefits as well.

Production regime theory and the varieties of capitalism literature (Hall & Soskice, 2001) provide an avenue for considering a corollary of the generic versus occupational forecasting interpretations of human capital theory, namely a society's preference for general versus

industry-specific skills. The portability of general skills leaves workers less vulnerable to labour market fluctuations and therefore fewer social protections are needed to entice workers to invest in them (Estevez-Abe, Iversen & Soskice, 2001). Gallie (2011) argued that societies with greater social equality foster higher levels of both general and specific skills, especially among lower skilled workers. The broader implications of the different emphases on general skills across postsecondary sectors, between governments, and over time are germane to the stratification and social justice issues I subsequently discuss.

Marketization

Marketization was the most variable of the three policy rationales. It was evident in a small way in the 1960s with the creation of equal status universities, rather than ones that were subsidiary to UBC, and in the means for establishing regional public colleges. It then appeared strongly in the Canadian Jobs Strategy and Continuing Education moment in the 1980s, but affected only specific sectors and subsectors. It burst back on the scene in the early 2000s, this time affecting a broad range of sectors and with a strong ideological dimension that overshadowed pragmatic rationales for making market-oriented reforms. The enthusiasm of government for markets has waned, however, with a few reversals recently made of previous reforms.

Marketization has been a curious blend of visibility and invisibility in BC policy discourse. The long-term, overall trends seem not to have been perceived by the public, even though specific actions, such as those facilitating the operation of private universities or changing the governance of apprenticeship, were certainly noted and were sometimes controversial. With the passage of time, though, debates about specific initiatives subsided and

221

current students and new postsecondary employees may never realize that the situation ever differed from the present, much less that some of the changes were contested.

Marketization, in such forms as competition for research prestige and differential tuition fees across similar programs in different types of public institutions, has become part of the taken-for-granted ethos of postsecondary education in BC. The characterization of neoliberalism as a worldview in which other ideas about social and cultural life exist (Giroux, 2014; Roberts & Peters, 2008) is now an apt description of BC postsecondary education. Although the particular version of neoliberalism in BC postsecondary education is a gentle one, and seems now to be softening, the power of this ideology is substantial.

In the literature about neoliberalism, globalization, and marketization in postsecondary education (Chan & Fisher, 2008; Levin, 2001; Marginson, 1997; Metcalfe, 2010; Olssen & Peters, 2005; Ward, 2012), the tendency has been to present postsecondary institutions as the subjects, either passive or unsuccessfully resistant, of external forces, most commonly originating with certain economists and right wing politicians. Managers in postsecondary institutions are then portrayed as eventually coming to accept and expedite the marketization of education. The tone is often one of faculty, and the academy in general, under siege. Although this representation is valuable, it underplays the internal forces in postsecondary institutions that at least facilitate, if not promote, marketization. Slaughter and Rhoades (2004) saw the academy as sometimes embracing commercialization, rather than as being only the victim.

I had originally turned to a few concepts drawn from *institutional* theory as alternatives to neoliberal theory for explaining market-oriented and competitive behaviour in sectors other than research universities where some aspects of academic capitalism (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004) are not applicable. I came to realize, however, that such concepts as normative isomorphism –

that is, conformity among members of an organization arising from such sources as professional standards and a shared formal education (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) – and the striving for greater legitimacy can be used not only to supplement neoliberal theory but also for identifying some of the mechanisms within neoliberalism by which it is implemented. For example, normative isomorphism and prestige economies help explain how some people working in postsecondary education who are philosophically opposed to neoliberalism nevertheless act in manners consistent with it.

The explanatory power of a central concept in neoinstitutional theory, that of the organizational field (Scott, 2014), was more significant in the British Columbia postsecondary context than I had anticipated. Although not likely to lead to complete explanations, attending to cues from within the organizational field about such topics as prestige and legitimacy helps in interpreting how it was that BC postsecondary education came to engage more extensively in such entrepreneurial activities as the recruitment of international students, competitive research grants, the commercialization of research findings, and the development of new programs based not so much on societal need as anticipated short-term enrolment demand.

Future Considerations

My commentary about the three policy rationales now shifts from retrospection to identifying some ways in which related needs and issues could manifest in the future, regardless of whether policymakers choose to address them.

Social Justice

As in many other jurisdictions across North America, the social justice goal of equal access to some form of postsecondary education has largely been achieved in BC. Universal access is replacing mass postsecondary education.

In 2014/15, 84% of BC students who entered Grade 8 six years earlier had graduated from secondary school (Ministry of Education, 2015). Some of the non-graduates carried on with their studies despite having left high school early: 9% of all BC postsecondary registrants in 2013/14 consisted of such students (Student Transitions Project, 2015a), a figure reflecting the open door, second chance philosophy of colleges and institutes and their ability to prepare such students for both baccalaureate and sub-baccalaureate programs.

Of the 84% of students who did graduate from Grade 12, the pattern has been for more than three quarters (77% as of 2013/14, with females almost two percentage points above males) to enroll in a BC public postsecondary institution within ten years of graduation (Student Transitions Project, 2015a). The Student Transitions Project found in some of its previous research that at least 6% of Grade 12 graduates first enrolled in an institution outside BC or in a private BC institution, making for an overall transition rate from secondary school graduation to postsecondary education of at least 83%.

Such 10-year-out findings are consistent with Andres' (2009) progress report from an ongoing longitudinal study[42] of a sample of 1988 BC high school graduates. Although the sample size had declined considerably after 15 years, by 2003, only 6% of those graduates who Andres was able to contact had never started postsecondary studies and, of those who started,

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[42] See Andres (2015a) for a 22 year retrospective analysis.

only about 10% had failed to complete a credential of some sort. Half had begun their studies at an institution other than a university.

To further refine the understanding of what universal access to postsecondary education in BC currently means in terms of outcomes, the Student Transitions Project (2015a) found that nearly half (47%) of the Grade 12 graduates (or 60% of postsecondary entrants) had completed a postsecondary credential within 10 years of high school graduation. Half these credentials, awarded to 23% of all Grade 12 graduates, were bachelor's degrees.

With such high postsecondary participation rates, it could mean that social justice as a propelling force in the development of the postsecondary system is declining. However, it is also possible that other types of social justice goals will simply replace access for individuals on the educational policy agenda. One such future possibility is as follows.

Sociologists have long examined the role of education as a sorting and stratifying mechanism in society (for example, Durkeim, 1922/1956; Schudde & Goldrick-Rab, 2015; Shavit, Arum, Gamoran & Menahem, 2007). This ongoing concern about social stratification in and by postsecondary education is reflected in a 2016 series, entitled *Engine of Inequality,* in the American *Chronicle of Higher Education.* The goal of the series was to examine "how college itself plays a role in reinforcing and even widening the gap between haves and have-nots" (Fisher, 2016, p. 28). Writing about a very different college environment in the USA[43] – but a direction in which BC could drift as a result of such forces as a zero-sum competition for academic prestige and in the absence of a good grasp by decision-makers of the distinctive

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[43] The fundamental change in American colleges that Brint and Karabel identified, the transformation of community colleges from transfer-oriented institutions to emphasizing vocational training, is just the opposite of what has occurred in BC. Students in the USA are less consistently prepared academically than in BC due to variations in funding levels and educational standards in secondary schools. Also, the public college sector in the USA is proportionately smaller than in BC (OECD, 2016) and more racialized.

features of the BC postsecondary system – Brint and Karabel (1989) examined the role of colleges in "managing ambition in a society that generates far higher levels of aspiration for upward mobility than it can possibly satisfy" (p. 213) and came to entitle their book *The Diverted Dream*.

The Canadian literature has been less quick to identify Canadian postsecondary education as a cause of growing inequality. Rather, it is still assessing the situation and, at most, criticizing governments and institutions for not sufficiently rectifying existing inequality. Diallo, Trottier, and Doray (2009) provide an example of the former type of study. Andres (2015b) is an example of the latter, presenting the appraisal that almost all of the groups identified in Canada as disadvantaged by the late 1980s remained so well into the 21st century.

The ways in which postsecondary institutions can reinforce privilege can be illustrated by an undergraduate business program offered at a particular research university compared to that of a particular college, two programs at BC public institutions that have achieved international accreditation[44] and which charge tuition fees in the midrange by Canadian standards. The university program has a competitive admissions process into third year following two years of pre-business studies. It maintains a large international exchange program, with over three quarters of undergraduates (other than in the Accounting stream) spending a semester abroad in one of 40 countries. All domestic students share classes in Canada with foreign exchange students who are proficient in English. The university's compulsory cooperative education requirement means that students may lose money on their 12 months of work experience if their salary is low and living expenses high.

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[44] The university program is accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, whereas the college program is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs.

The college business program, in contrast, begins directly after secondary school, has less competitive entry, is more local in character and does not require students to participate in cooperative education. While nominally similar in terms of the formal curriculum, the two programs differ considerably in academic entry requirements and the pre-existing financial, cultural and social capital that students need to succeed in the program, as well as differing in the ways in which the cultural and social capital of students are developed during the program. The tacit, non-examinable skills and knowledge (Lam, 2000; Polanyi, 1967) possessed by graduates of the university differ from, and probably exceed, those of the college.

In addition to social justice implications for individuals and groups, any social stratification of enrolment has implications for postsecondary institutions and their respective sectors. Twenty-five years ago, Canadian public policy was to establish a network of institutions of approximately equivalent standards, with the result that universities in Canada, in contrast to the USA, were not hierarchically differentiated (Leslie, 1980; Skolnik & Jones, 1992). As recently as a decade ago, the university from which one graduated was seen as nowhere near as important in Canada as in the USA, with Canadian undergraduate student competition in higher education instead expressed in terms of admission to elite majors (Baker, 2014; Davies & Hammack, 2005). This egalitarian ethos among institutions could be weakening in the BC public postsecondary system as institutions vie to enhance their prestige, using their program offerings and admissions philosophies as some of the means for doing so.

Looking across Canada, Marginson (2016a) claimed that the university system is being stretched vertically, that is, the hierarchy is getting steeper (although social mobility remains higher in Canada than in other English-speaking countries). With the research finding that postsecondary institutions that begin from a position of advantage – advantage in terms of

227

resources and student selectivity – reinforce their position over time in unregulated market environments (Davies & Zarifa, 2012), Marginson argued that the most important question is no longer access but rather "access to what?" (p. 11) – by no means the first time this question has been posed in recent decades[45], but troubling that it is still being posed.

The three most prestigious universities in Canada[46] are large, public ones that already enroll 10 to 15% of the university students in the country (Heath, 2014). Given this situation, Usher (2014) argued that students will increasingly seek to enhance their postsecondary status not so much on the basis of the institution attended but on the acquisition of additional degrees – and hence the recent expansion of professional graduate degrees and prospects for further expansion in the future.

Graduate enrolment patterns and tuition fee trends in BC may thus well be useful leading indicators to monitor from sorting and social justice perspectives. With tuition for an executive MBA in health care costing over $60,000, compared to $20,000 to $30,000 (spread over four or more years) for a research doctoral degree, the range in tuition fees in graduate programs in BC public institutions would be unthinkable in BC at the undergraduate level. Nevertheless, the expression of concerns in BC about affordability and barriers to access have been distinctly muted at the post-baccalaureate level compared to the undergraduate level. The simple tracking of whether expensive graduate, professional, and post-baccalaureate diploma programs are expanding could be complemented by the more complex analysis of the composition of the student bodies in such programs and of the subsequent trajectories of their graduates. The

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[45] Andres (1992), for example, asked whether access to a community college is equal to access to a university.

[46] Heath (2014) and Usher (2014) claim these are Toronto, McGill and UBC. In 2016, these universities were the top Canadian universities in such international rankings as the Shangahi ARWU, QS, and Times Higher Education.

theoretical rationale for collecting this type of data reflects the marketing issues and motivations related to new program development that Rhoades and Slaughter (2004) developed.

If the level or highest credential earned is described as the vertical dimension of education, then the different types of education can be described as the horizontal dimension (Charles & Bradley, 2002). The examination by Gerber and Cheung (2008) of horizontal stratification in postsecondary education represents another aspect of stratification that merits further attention in the evolution of BC postsecondary education, that is, differential growth rates across the sectors and changes in the composition of the student body in each.

Clark's (1960) articulation of the *cooling-out* function of community colleges has not, to date, been a particularly good description of BC colleges (and less so, I suspect, in BC than elsewhere in North America. Grubb's foreword in Beach (2011) mentions statistical evidence showing that even in the USA, *warming up* has actually been more frequent than cooling out.) Nevertheless, the cooling of student aspirations and the diversion of capable students into terminal pathways could well become more common in BC in the future, depending on changes with respect to the social stratification of enrolment and the amplification of prestige hierarchies among institutions.

Whether a more hierarchical and differentiated postsecondary system would serve BC better is open to debate; the discussion takes on a different tenor when framed as the pursuit of excellence (Galinova, 2005; Singell & Tang, 2012; van Zanten, Ball & Darchy-Koechlin, 2015) rather than as social gatekeeping. My point is simply that a significant change from historical patterns, one which may have important social justice ramifications, could be occurring in the absence of explicit public policy to promote it. In fact, there may not even be implicit public policy to foster or merely allow this change to occur. The cumulative effect over time of many

decisions made for other reasons may be changing the character of postsecondary education in the province without any of the constantly changing set of decision-makers even realizing it (see Levin, 2003, for an example of this in the case of university colleges in BC).

In short, given the consequences of marketization trends over the past three decades in BC, if social justice in its various forms and emphases is to remain a primary consideration in BC postsecondary education, then the advantages, disadvantages and implications of a more hierarchical, socially-differentiated system need to be identified and assessed.

Human Capital Formation

An extensive discussion of public policy about human capital formation in BC would situate the topic in the context of related federal policy about research and innovation (Fisher et al., 2006; Smardon, 2014), showing how the notion of highly qualified personnel[47] has been partially subsumed by advocacy for more graduate education and greater financial support for research. For example, in writing about the knowledge economy, Klingbeil (2008) distinguished human capital based on *established* knowledge from research-based human capital wherein the skill people have in seeking *new* knowledge is developed. In a similar vein, in support of advanced study, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (2014) noted that the number of graduate students at Canadian universities had grown almost 90% since 2000 and argued that such students represented an unprecedented pool of talent on campuses across Canada.

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[47] Statistics Canada defines Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) as individuals with university degrees at the bachelor's level and above.

My purpose, however, is more specific than the broad topic of preparing people to participate effectively in the knowledge economy (Drucker, 1969; Powell & Snellman, 2004). Instead, I would like to focus on the need for policy on human capital formulation to be developed in a more holistic manner, one that pays greater attention to findings from existing empirical research and which explicitly considers the role of private institutions for both the baccalaureate and sub-baccalaureate labour market.

Although policy interest in human capital formation may fluctuate in the coming years, it seems likely that both the generic skills version and the more occupationally focused version will continue to be important considerations in government planning for postsecondary education. In the past, the two versions have been considered largely independently of each other in public policy affecting BC, and sometimes within the academy as a mutually exclusive choice between liberal and vocational education.

Rather than this either/or approach, it would seem more promising to seek ways in which both versions could be considered simultaneously and as complementary perspectives. As a starting point towards a more integrated approach, the various statements about employability skills (Conference Board of Canada, 2000) – or what the Canadian government calls essential skills (Office of Literacy and Essential Skills, 2016) – and expressions of different types of learning in qualifications frameworks (Adelman, Ewell, Gaston, Schneider, & Lumina Foundation for Education, 2014; Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2016) could be used as catalysts for the assorted postsecondary sectors and fields of study to identify shared understandings of their respective roles in the generic skills version of human capital formation.

Governments understandably find occupational forecasting a tempting objective – a good match between labour market demand and supply is clearly desirable – but the forecasting track

record has been at best lackluster (Hilton, 2008; Neugart & Schomann, 2003). Foot and Meltz (1992) briefly described the rise, fall, and then rise again of Canadian interest in occupational projection systems from 1960 to 1980, making cautionary observations as how to use the resulting scenarios sensibly rather than uncritically accepting their output. Bowen's (1974) commentary on popular misconceptions about the labour market helps to temper expectations as to what occupational forecasting could ever achieve, even if all of the technical limitations of forecasting models could be overcome. Rather than serving primarily as a tool for prediction, it may prove more productive to use occupational forecasts to elucidate current labour market patterns and trends, and only secondarily for scenario planning (everything else in the future holding constant).

My literature review described how human capital concepts from the 1960s were applied with little empirical validation until the 1980s. The data that eventually emerged did not seem to validate the theory until more sophisticated formulations were developed that took into account the other factors that need to be in place for human capital initiatives to be effective (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1989; Sorlin, Vessuri & Teknik, 2007). It would be helpful if these more nuanced understandings since the 1990s of the role of human capital in economic development were to enter postsecondary discourse, and if more effort were devoted to studying the actual impact of human capital initiatives rather than simply using the theory to advocate for more resources. Instead of a blind trust in human capital theory (for example, Olgilvie, Eggleton & Canada, 2011; Provincial Access Committee, 1988), the guiding questions should be more along the lines of identifying the circumstances under which investment in human capital development is most effective and the roles of different groups, such as educators and employers, in developing human capital.

Despite federal and provincial efforts over the years to provide better labour market information for both students and policymakers, such information remains underdeveloped (Drummond, 2014). Past efforts have too often resulted in rather more emphasis on job search and resume writing workshops than might have been intended – worthwhile activities but hardly sufficient to facilitate informed decision-making at the policy level. Analysis of results from BC outcomes surveys of former students as they transition into the labour force (BC Student Outcomes Research Forum, n.d.) has been poorly funded, data collected about the economy has tended to be classified by industry rather than by occupation, and the role of recurrent and lifelong education on career trajectories has been neither well conceptualized nor extensively studied. (Andres and Wyn (2010) and Andres (2015a) represent one of the few instances where a study of BC students has used a life course perspective with respect to labour market and other transitions.) Information about student labour market outcomes needs to expand beyond data on employment rates, salaries, and rates of underemployment.

Rather than so much debate about the nature, extent and desirability of vocationalism – sometimes vaguely defined – in, say, the humanities and social sciences (for example, Wright, 2007), it would seem more constructive to follow the approach of Peach (2010) in seeking more socially reflective inquiries into human capital formation. Such authors as Hurst (2013) provide an avenue for linking human capital considerations with social justice attention to stratification. Grubb and Lazerson (2004) put these issues into an even larger historical and educational perspective which, whether seen as a compelling argument or not, illustrates the larger issues concerning human capital formation and postsecondary education.

In short, although many questions about the functioning of the labour market and its relationship with postsecondary education remain unanswered, simply paying more attention to

refinements in human capital theory and the empirical research already available in the literature, some of which is far from new, could raise the level of policy discourse regarding human capital formation. Making better use of existing BC data would include recognizing the limitations inherent in occupational forecasting and taking into account the role of private institutions in labour force supply.

Marketization

My comments in this section are relevant regardless of one's views about the appropriateness of the current level of postsecondary marketization within the Canadian liberal welfare regime (Esping-Andersen, 1990), or in what Hall and Soskice (2001) described as a liberal market economy. I emphasize the need for abundant and open information but also mention values and the recruitment of international students.

Economic models of perfect competition assume buyers and sellers, or clients and suppliers, have ready access to complete information about all aspects of the market affecting their decisions whether to enter into a transaction (Rittenberg & Tregarthen, 2013). At the other end of the spectrum, where, postsecondary education is viewed as a non-market activity requiring government regulation to ensure the optimal allocation of public resources and to protect consumers, good information is also needed for the purposes of accountability and transparency (Doyle, 2008). Thus regardless of the position taken about educational markets, good information is vital to the interests of citizens and governments.

To the extent, however, that postsecondary institutions find themselves in an environment in which they have to compete for legitimacy and status, in addition to competing for money and students, pressures develop for institutions to withhold or to selectively release information so

that they might present themselves in the best possible light.[48] In a similar vein, marketization

intensifies forces that promote loose coupling – a concept frequently used in *institutional*

analyses of educational reform (Burch, 2007) – between the symbolic statements of upper

management and the actual operations of frontline employees in postsecondary institutions.

Although the Foucauldian notion of power/knowledge could usefully be invoked here (Foucault

& Gordon, 1980), it suffices to note that the ascendency of public relations[49] and the hiring of

lobbyists in postsecondary education come as natural consequences of marketization even

though they may run contrary to academic values (Merton, 1942) about knowledge creation and

dissemination.

There is widespread agreement about the deficiencies in the available data about BC

postsecondary education, although not about the best way to remedy this situation (Plant, 2007).

Compounding data problems within BC has been the diminishing range, timeliness, and

sometimes quality, of national postsecondary data collected by Statistics Canada.

The BC government's open data initiative in 2011 (DataBC, n.d.) seemed to herald

improvements in the availability of postsecondary information, but in actual practice, little new

data has appeared and the tables are not easy to find for users who are not already familiar with

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[48] UBC, for example, regularly asserts that it is one of the top 40 universities in the world, based on international rankings that are heavily weighted towards research (University of British Columbia, n.d.). It has been less forthcoming about feedback from undergraduates on such comparative data collections as the National Survey of Student Engagement that suggests its teaching and learning environment is lackluster (Planning and Institutional Research, 2008). To discourage potentially embarrassing comparisons, UBC has not even allowed its results from the BC Baccalaureate Graduates Survey to be posted on the same website, or in the same format, as those of the province's teaching universities and colleges (BC Student Outcomes Research Forum, n.d.).

[49] Douglas College, for example, ran an advertising campaign in 2016 that portrayed students and their occupational goals, but which remained silent as to whether the college even offered a program leading to each type of employment – hardly a strategy to help prospective students choose wisely among institutions.

existing data. The few public reports from the central data warehouse of the Ministry of Advanced Education, a dataset that does not include research universities or private institutions, have remained basic, with any changes over the years being mainly of a technical nature (Ministry of Advanced Education, n.d.). In the meantime, web pages through which data could be distributed are increasingly controlled by public relations personnel, not information specialists and librarians (Fullick, 2016). Senior officials at the Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario have described Canadian postsecondary education as having a culture of protective data ownership and anxiety about data imperfections (Hicks & Deller, 2016).

It seems ironic to call on postsecondary institutions and governments to practice what they preach with respect to knowledge generation and open data, but that is the need at present. Not only is more information needed about postsecondary institutions, and the information gathered in the past to be made more readily accessible (a particular problem when web pages are used to disseminate data and then simply replaced rather than archived), but information needs to be well organized, comparable and easy to navigate. It is harder to know what would be appropriate and effective consequences for organizations that present misleading or partial data, or that simply omit certain types of data, but these are problems that need to be rectified.

In addition to such technical considerations as information availability, marketization has implications for postsecondary organizational cultures (Berquist, 1992; Burgan, 2006). To the extent postsecondary institutions compete for non-tangibles such as legitimacy and reputation, their values systems become vulnerable to change. Low status but socially valuable activities, such as the teaching of compulsory first year courses, can be affected as faculty shift their efforts to higher status activities, such as research. (Depending on one's point of view, this may or may not be a problem in light of current curricular resources.)

The discussion of neoliberalism in the literature review touched on the particular set of values that have propelled marketization in the western world, values which also have the potential to modify postsecondary institutions in significant ways (for example, Ball, 2012; Marginson, 2006; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Questions of academic drift and institutional missions with respect to particular fields of study, such as the proportion of the budget devoted to preparatory or developmental programs, are in no small measure resolved based on values rather than on technical considerations. Assessments of changing value systems are needed that are more nuanced than simply framing developments as examples of commodification or commercialization to be hastily evaluated as desirable or not (Giroux, 2014, is emblematic of a strident position about neoliberalism).

As detailed above in the discussion of social justice, participation in postsecondary education in BC is already high. Furthermore, the enrolment demand from domestic students is not likely to replicate the strong growth of the 1960s. Government policy to increase the enrolment of international students as a revenue source equivalent to economic export activity, and institutional desire to increase revenues through tuition fees, are well aligned in this environment.

The global market for international students, however, is competitive and volatile, making international education both a risky and a lucrative strategy (Australia, 2008). Furthermore, overall institutional averages showing 20% or higher of enrolment consisting of international students mask the reality that international students tend to cluster in particular courses and programs (Institute of International Education, 2015). Once again, it may or may not be desirable to enroll so many international students as to change the characteristics and dynamics of particular classrooms (Redden, 2014) or for institutions to rely heavily on

potentially risky revenues, but these impacts, and those reflecting social justice considerations, should at least be acknowledged and explicitly discussed when formulating international education policy.

Interactions Among the Three Policy Rationales

Systems thinking (Cabrera, Colosi & Lobdell, 2008; Mella, 2012; Packham, 2014) helps not only with anticipating the impact of policy changes in one postsecondary sector on other sectors but also in choosing among potential policies in the first place. Sometimes one policy goal has to be compromised in order to achieve other goals; tradeoffs and finding the appropriate balance among goals is a value-laden exercise that is an inherent part of the political process Simons, Olssen & Peters, 2009) and indeed of economics (Cleaver, 2004). The pursuit of marketization, for example, could potentially undermine the achievement of a social justice goal. A policy about human capital formation that entails the use of labour market intervention bordering on social engineering might not be compatible with neoliberal or social justice policy.

It is difficult to know what actually gets considered in the messy and sometimes clandestine environments in which public policy is established (Howlett & Giest, 2013) but I did not encounter much evidence in my research that BC policymakers explicitly attended to the interactions of the three sets of policy rationales that I analyzed. It would seem that the inevitable tradeoffs came more as the consequence of independent decisions (that is, from the disjointed incrementalism that Lindblom (1979) addressed) than as part of a master strategy.

During a period of growth and expansion, focusing on just one rationale at a time might be sufficient in that subsequent opportunities to address the other rationales occur frequently. As the postsecondary system reaches a mature state of development and as its resources become

constrained, however, the meeting of particular needs may come less as additions to existing activities and more as their replacement. In this environment, a systems approach in choosing among alternatives is especially helpful. Given the current lack of an overall strategy or vision for the future development of the BC postsecondary system, the potential for special interest groups (Mitchell & Munger, 1991; Nownes, 2013) to have undue influence would seem to increase in the absence of a systems approach.

While my confidence is limited about the capacity of organizations to actually employ comprehensive viewpoints when setting policy, a greater attempt to do so would serve society well nevertheless. Comprehensive evaluations from multiple perspectives of the impact of the policies chosen could then further fill the gaps and foster systems thinking.

Other Considerations

Two considerations in the study of BC postsecondary education that are independent of theoretical lenses and policy goals, namely historical themes and terminology, are discussed in this final section of the chapter.

Historical Themes

However one might elect to interpret the development of the BC postsecondary system in its entirety, it seems likely that the following four themes would be relevant in some way.

Geographical Access

Spatial distribution and access issues figured prominently in the development of the province's public postsecondary system, in contrast to their much more variable, and overall

lesser, role among private sector institutions. The challenge of providing postsecondary opportunities to small and remote communities – often resource-based economies where males until the 1970s could easily live a secure and comfortable life without having completed secondary school – helped to prompt some of the more innovative aspects of the design of BC's postsecondary system[50].

The adoption of the American community college model with a strong university transfer component in the early 1960s, a departure from the Canadian norm, was a response to geographical distance as well as to a desire for better social access to education. Given Canada's flat institutional prestige hierarchy relative to the United States (Davies & Hammack, 2005; Skolnik & Jones, 1992), the stage was set for BC to develop a college sector that has enrolled students from probably as representative a cross section of social classes as any system in North America or Europe. Geographical considerations also figured prominently in the creation of the Open Learning Institute in 1978, the establishment of university colleges and the University of Northern British Columbia in the early 1990s, and in the subsequent transformation of several institutions into teaching universities.

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[50] In addition to the actual changes described in this dissertation, several reports explored a range of options for serving the hinterland: for example, Commission on University Programs in Non-Metropolitan Areas (1976), Distance Education Planning Group (1977), and Royal Commission on Post-Secondary Education in the Kootenay Region (1974).

Federal Government

Although operating in something of a piecemeal fashion over the decades and necessarily from the educational policy sidelines due to jurisdictional considerations[51], federal influence on BC postsecondary education has been significant. The explosion since the formation of Canada in 1867 of the social, educational and health services for which provinces are constitutionally responsible, but with no corresponding expansion in the provinces' powers of taxation, provided a financial lever for the federal government to influence postsecondary education to help achieve federal goals (Teliszewsky & Stoney, 2007). The use of direct grants and the introduction of federal transfer payments to the provinces following the Rowell-Sirois Commission (Canada, 1940) not only addressed the imbalance in provincial responsibilities and revenues but also provided a means for the federal government to sway provincial expenditures through conditions it placed on its funding.

In BC, federal actions were central to the building of most of the vocational schools in the 1960s, the transition of universities from a culture of teaching to one of graduate studies and research, the fostering of private institutions by providing student financial assistance, the provision of living allowances and tax breaks for apprentices, the expansion of private career colleges in the 1980s and 1990s through seat purchases and contracts for federal clients, funding for English as a Second Language instruction at colleges, and indirectly accelerating the shift in the scope and character of continuing education from a social development model to an entrepreneurial one.

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[51] The federal *Constitution Act* of 1982's "regulation of trade and commerce" and "unemployment insurance" have been broadly interpreted to refer to economic and labour market development. See Sheffield (1982) for a discussion of how the federal government has viewed its interest in postsecondary education with respect to these fields.

Private Sector and Entrepreneurship

Although the private postsecondary sector in BC has received little attention in the literature and has fluctuated in size, it nevertheless represents a significant, ancillary strand in the BC postsecondary narrative. Like the public sector, it has changed and evolved over time, with the trend in public policy since 1980 having been increasingly to support, if not expand, private postsecondary education. With the exception of short-term job-entry and English language programs, the private sector has been more of a complement to the public sector than a competitor.

The private sector is complex, providing a range of credentials almost as broad as the public sector; only doctoral degrees have not been awarded in BC by private institutions. A number of institutions, including all of the faith-based and Aboriginal-governed institutions, have been not-for-profit. Apprenticeship, straddling the public-private divide with classroom components publicly funded but on-the-job training provided by private employers, has arguably been the most complex and variable of the postsecondary sectors in BC. The religious presence in academic postsecondary education has been modest in BC compared some other parts of Canada and well below the American norm[52].

The past 15 years have seen more commercialization within public institutions, strengthening the connections of public institutions with the private sector. Federal research policy and funding now explicitly promote innovation and commercialization, not only discovery (Fisher et al., 2006). Public institutions have also become more entrepreneurial as they increased

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[52] The *Digest of Education Statistics, 1990* (National Centre for Education Statistics, US Department of Education) reported that 23% of the 3,340 institutions of higher education in the USA in 1985/86 were under either Roman Catholic or Protestant control. More recent editions of this publication do not provide this level of detail.

the number of cost-recovery program in continuing education, including post-baccalaureate programs. International students are now seen as an economic stimulus and an entrepreneurial activity.

Loss of a Shared Vision

The Macdonald Report of 1962 forged a consensus among the BC government, the public, and educators about a direction for universities and colleges in BC that lasted into the 1980s. Vocational education and apprenticeship, however, were not an explicit part of this vision, and private institutions were assumed to remain peripheral.

The first controversy regarding system design came in the early 1970s with the melding of the vocational schools into community colleges. Apprenticeship remained in a separate, sometimes contentious world. By the time of the 1988 report of the Access Committee, the provincial government was again reacting to community pressure rather than developing policy proactively.

The changes since the mid 1990s came more as incremental decisions than planned development. With the *Degree Authorization Act* of 2002 and the transformation of six institutions into special purpose or teaching universities a few years later, educators were left to infer the policy analyses and rationales for these changes – a situation consistent with the characterization of BC government postsecondary policy two decades earlier that Dennison (1997) said was erratic, unpredictable and often unreadable. He observed that it was extremely difficult to generalize about the intent of government policy.

Campus 2020 in 2007 attempted to forge a renewed and comprehensive vision for the postsecondary system, but it did not succeed. Advocacy, public relations and fundraising

personnel have increasingly territorialized the resulting vacuum. The way forward is not clear within many institutions, much less among institutions, and certainly not at the system level. An understanding of how the system reached its current state, and of the issues that were wrestled with along the way, may therefore help in envisioning a future for postsecondary education in BC.

Language that Obscures

The following commentary about the language used to describe postsecondary education in BC extends beyond issues of imprecise usage (such as vocational and diploma), clumsy terminology (such as the college, institute and university college sector), and words that have multiple meanings (such as academic and college) – weaknesses evident throughout this dissertation for want of better vocabulary. The more fundamental problem is that terminology and categories shape and limit what is perceived, sometimes serving to obscure rather than to reveal (Boroditsky, 2011).

The concept of an *institution* is frequently invoked to help explain forces that shape and control behaviour, but it can be taken further to consider the prior stage of how *institutions* influence perceptions of the social world in the first place. Sociology has a long tradition of searching for habits of mind and action that are largely unconscious because they are so deeply embedded and shared among the social group (for example, Bourdieu, 1977; Cooley, 1902/1956). More recently, Carter and Clegg (2011), in proposing that legitimacy is the master concept of neoinstitutionalism, saw the goal of neoinstitutionalism as being to understand the ways by which the socially constructed external world shapes categories of thought and resulting actions.

244

The difference between education and training illustrates the problematic nature of some

postsecondary terminology, an ambiguous distinction that has appeared occasionally even in the

name of the BC ministry responsible for postsecondary education[53]. The Oxford *Dictionary of*

Education acknowledged the awkward usage of the term training:

> Usually applied to vocational learning or learning of a practical rather than a theoretical
> nature. There are, however, anomalies in this regard, since it is usual to refer to "trainee
> teachers" and "trainee doctors," contexts in which a substantial body of theoretical
> learning is involved as well as practical skills. Perhaps the broadest distinction to be
> made between education and training is that the latter is instrumental in preparing the
> learner for a specific task, job, or profession, while education has a more general,
> developmental purpose as envisaged in the concept of liberal education. (Wallace, 2015,
> n.p.)

A significant proportion of university courses may actually fit the above definition of

training better than that of education. Conversely, sub-baccalaureate programs in colleges – in

allied health and the human services, for example – may include a considerable amount of theory

in the curriculum.

Over thirty years ago, in assessing the impact of federal adult occupational policies on

BC postsecondary education, Dwyer (1983) concluded it was sometimes dysfunctional to

attempt to distinguish between training and education. Nevertheless, a popular (mis)perception

persists that universities provide education and other postsecondary sectors are oriented towards

training – a significant factor, I suspect, in fostering academic drift in British Columbia and

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[53] During the 1990s, for example, the ministry was variously named Advanced Education, Training and
Technology; then Skills, Training and Labour; and finally Education, Skills and Training. Before and after the
decade, such names as Post-Secondary Education and Advanced Education were used. The scope of the Ministry's
mandate did indeed vary over time, but not in ways that corresponded to the inclusion and exclusion of the words
education and training.

elsewhere in that popular ways of defining education and training implicitly embed a hierarchy of status and values in their definition.

As an illustration of a reconceptualized vocabulary, a different way[54] of distinguishing between education and training is to pose the question, "Whose interests are being served when decisions about curriculum are being made?" If the answer is that the interests of the student take priority, then education is occurring. If the priority is on the interests of a third party (an employer or a profession, for example) then training is occurring. A different way of reconceptualization can be found in the European literature about hybrid qualifications that blurs the distinction between academic and vocational programs (Garrod & Macfarlane, 2009; Taylor, Watt-Malcolm, & Wimmer, 2013).

For over a generation, traditional categories such as academic, vocational, and skills training have not adequately described the components of BC postsecondary education (Jones, 2009; Pullman & Andres, 2015). Generating a more precise and functional lexicon for describing BC postsecondary education would not be an easy or quick task, but some precedents illustrate processes and frameworks that have been fruitful in other jurisdictions. The Canadian Council of Learning (2010) provided a helpful discussion of classification issues and some classification precedents.

In the United States, the Carnegie classification of institutions of higher education was first published in 1973 and then revised several times, substantially in 2005 (Carnegie Classification, n.d.). The European Qualifications Framework (Bologna Working Group, 2005) is another source of background information, illustrating the types of issues that need

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[54] I encountered this distinction many years ago, have not seen it since, and cannot recall the source.

considering. Related taxonomies in North America include the American degree qualifications

profile from the Lumina Foundation (Adelman et al., 2014) and the Ontario qualifications

framework (Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, 2016).

One categorization that has not worked well in British Columbia, and which reflects a

more traditional way thinking about postsecondary structures, is UNESCO's *International*

Standard Classification of Education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization, 2012). The hierarchical distinction between Level 4 (post-secondary, non-tertiary

education) and Level 5 (short-cycle, tertiary education) creates a divide that does not reflect the

integrated character of BC institutions that were established in the 1960s and 1970s as

community colleges.

Some efforts to reconceptualize the lexicon for describing postsecondary education began

in the 1990s in BC, made modest progress, and then stalled. The initiative arose as the

limitations of reporting BC college enrolments in the 1970s and 1980s in five categories –

university transfer, career/technical, vocational, preparatory and continuing education (Ministry

of Education, 1980-1996) – increasingly reinforced old mental models of college activities that

did not reflect the current reality. In the 1990s, a number of BC government officials and

institutional researchers in colleges and institutes, and eventually Statistics Canada, began to

adopt the *Classification of Instructional Programs* of the US Department of Education (Malitz,

1987). Other dimensions were then added to this taxonomy (such as credential type/duration and

level/entrance requirements). The new approach proved helpful and has been used ever since as

the framework for surveying former students under the auspices of the BC Student Outcomes

Project (BC Student Outcomes Research Forum, n.d.). Unfortunately, no further

reconceptualized postsecondary descriptors have been adopted since then in BC.

247

The challenges for analyzing postsecondary education that arise from imprecise and variable terminology in the social sciences and education has been a theme throughout this dissertation: from the definitions of higher and postsecondary education, through the nature of policy and theory, to the evolving meanings of social justice. As discussed in the literature review, neoliberalism went though a period wherein its meaning altered and the term was increasingly used as imprecise shorthand for any of a number of developments that the speaker found to be undesirable. However, writers such as Larner (2000) and Harvey (2007) helped to recover a specific, shared meaning for the term that facilitates scholarship – evidence that definitional rigour is possible even with controversial concepts.

Chapter 8: Conclusion and Recommendations

In this final chapter, I make recommendations stemming from the three policy rationales of social justice, human capital formation, and marketization that have undergirded the development and expansion of the postsecondary education system in BC. In addition, I provide three generic recommendations, resulting from the process of conducting this study, to facilitate the development of public policy for postsecondary education, regardless of the policy orientation of the government or the analyst.

Social Justice

The two recommendations in this section consider the type of society that could be fostered through postsecondary policy. They reflect the social justice premise that an egalitarian society, one in which education provides opportunities and social mobility for all rather than functioning in restrictive and stratifying ways, is a desirable goal.

John Macdonald began his 1962 report on higher education in BC by mentioning the role of education in "the preservation of those rights and privileges which we believe should be shared by all" (p. 4). Similar sentiments about the democratic function of education were expressed during the Access for All historical moment by both the Provincial Access Committee (1988) and the Minister of Advanced Education (Hagen, 1989). The following commentary leads to recommendations as to how policy makers today might assess and strengthen the capacity of BC postsecondary education to achieve these social justice goals.

Stratification

Further to the commentary about stratification in the social justice section of the previous *Discussion* chapter, differences in postsecondary participation patterns across social groups have been examined in Canada mainly in terms of the characteristics of students and their families (for example, Berger, Motte & Parkin, 2007; Finnie, 2008). Participation in terms of the characteristics of the postsecondary institutions and programs in which students enroll has been less conspicuous in the research agenda, and especially lacking are analyses of student demographics across institutions and programs within a single postsecondary sector.

Whether framed as arising from mimetic isomorphism that fosters academic mission creep or from a growing vertical stratification among postsecondary institutions, the democratizing ethos and attention to undergraduate teaching that characterized the BC postsecondary education system in the 1960s and 1970s has weakened. Institutional efforts to enhance their reputation and garner prestige through research, both pure and applied, and an increased emphasis on upper division and graduate programming have come to be taken for granted as invariably desirable for both the institution and the broader community (Blackmore, 2016).

Given that efforts to improve teaching and learning tend to occur in postsecondary education in ad hoc, localized ways rather than as a result of systemic attention to them (Grubb, 1999), one result of increased vertical differentiation can be that students who enter certain postsecondary institutions with some sort of disadvantage are more apt to be left behind. Compensatory social justice is put at risk as students, often with family assistance, unconsciously sort themselves into institutions in which they perceive they are likely to fit and comfortably

succeed, perhaps doing so without even considering other options (Baker, 2014; Bastedo & Flaster, 2014; Davies & Guppy, 1997).

The bleak conclusion Marginson (2016c) reached about the social justice impact of postsecondary education globally was, "at the level of overall social aggregates and averages, not only does higher education fail to compensate for prior social inequalities, it helps to confirm, legitimate, and reproduce those inequalities into the next generation" (p. 179). Nevertheless, Marginson argued that this has not always been the case. His analysis was based on the California master plan for higher education of 1960, a document that certainly influenced the initial structure of BC public postsecondary education and which Marginson claimed was influential internationally. He concluded that the plan was unquestionably effective in fostering both access and excellence during its first 20 years, but not since then. In short, the continued success of educational systems in promoting social justice should not be taken for granted.

Another consequence of the prestige economy, as reflected in a focus on graduate studies and research, is that that the sectorial composition, or the horizontal dimension, of the postsecondary system has shifted (Rosinger et al., 2016). Services and courses for vocational education and for the marginalized populations that enroll disproportionately in Adult Basic Education, English as a Second Language programs, and in some components of continuing education, have come to represent a smaller proportion of BC public postsecondary offerings in the past two decades.

Usher (2016, May 5), consistent with Marginson (2016b), contended that, in the absence of policy interventions, the massification of higher education around the world has been accompanied by a growing hierarchical stratification of institutions. A neoliberal response to this situation might be that the competition among institutions to gain prestige ultimately raises the

overall quality of education. As noted earlier, however, the empirical evidence has been that those institutions which start from a position of advantage simply reinforce their advantage – a broader spread across institutions does not necessarily raise the average (Davies & Zarifa, 2012).

An example of a policy intervention to lessen the risk of postsecondary education reinforcing social class distinctions based on the institutions attended is the lottery approach to admissions for qualified applicants in some programs in the Netherlands (Boyle, 2010; Ministerie van Onderwijs, 2016). Whether BC should adopt this or any other intervention remains an open question, but my prediction is that in the absence of explicit attention to stratification, the BC system will slowly move to increasingly resemble the vertically differentiated system of the United States.

Social justice was a weak or non-existent policy driver in BC in the two most recent of the five historical moments that I examined. Since the turn of the millennium, two classes of university – research and teaching – have become entrenched. Public colleges have weakened their historic commitment to the community college philosophy. Government has encouraged private institutions and more market-oriented behaviours within public institutions. Policy makers have articulated the rationales and intended benefits of these and other changes in the structure of the BC postsecondary education, but less attention has been devoted to evaluating their impact several years after implementation. In particular, their implications from a social justice perspective have not been assessed.

Recommendation: Determine the extent to which BC postsecondary institutions are becoming more vertically differentiated and then assess the implications with respect to social stratification and the reproduction of privilege.

Continuing Education

Continuing education, a quasi sector which does not fit neatly in traditional postsecondary structural categories, is especially relevant to the spatial adaptation version of social justice and is one of the vehicles for enhancing human capital in regions. Nevertheless, the community development mission of continuing education, which began eroding at the University of British Columbia in the 1960s and in public colleges in early 1980s, has largely disappeared today.

Similarly, the withdrawal of funding by the provincial government for general interest continuing education courses created a void that public institutions in BC have largely chosen not to fill by using other sources of revenue. Although such developments as distributed education and the vast amount of information widely available on the internet have changed the need for such courses, mere access to information is not the same as learning. Social constructivism argues that knowledge is created and acquired through interaction with others (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

At the same time as continuing education has become more narrowly focused on continuing professional education, contract training, and profit-making courses for the middle class, social service agencies and civic organizations are increasingly identifying loneliness and the lack of genuine community connections as emerging social problems in North America (Putnam, 2000; Vancouver Foundation, 2012). The question is how continuing education might take a proactive and capacity building role in the current fiscal environment to foster community social capital (English, 2009; Fragoso, Kurantowicz & Lucio-Villegas, 2011). My premise is that a preventative stance will place fewer demands on the public purse in the long run than remedial efforts after problems have emerged.

The legislation under which public universities and colleges operate has continually required them to provide programs of continuing education (Cowin, 2010). While those working in the field and studying it have maintained a vigorous dialogue as to what this might entail (for example, Holst, 2009; Nanton, 2016; Spencer, 2014), institution-wide and cross-institutional conversations have been lacking since the provincial government relinquished any sort of leadership for continuing education in 1981. The lack of policy attention to the broader social role of continuing education is a missed opportunity for the province.

Recommendation: Formulate policy to define the overall role of continuing education in the
public postsecondary system, the contributions different types of institutions should make
towards fulfilling that role, and the appropriate level of public funding for the various
types of continuing education.

Human Capital Formation

The federal government has regularly drawn on human capital rationales to justify its involvement in postsecondary education: from spurring the formation of vocational schools in BC in the 1960s, through its support in the 1980s for an expanded private career college sector under the Canadian Jobs Strategy, to its current funding for research and innovation (although these latter topics were beyond the scope of this dissertation). Provincially, human capital rationales were prominent in four of the five historical moments that I analyzed and were at least present in the fifth. The issue facing governments today is not whether they wish to maintain the priority they have historically accorded human capital goals – there has been no hint that they

have ever contemplated a lower priority, despite some academic challenges to the assumptions underpinning the theory – but rather how best to achieve the goals.

Before turning attention to a particular aspect of human capital formation, namely sub-baccalaureate education, I make a more general recommendation about the use of human capital theory. This general recommendation arises from the observations in the *Literature Review* and *Discussion* chapters that human capital theory has frequently been invoked in superficial ways simply to justify increased funding for postsecondary education. Increased levels of education, however, have sometimes failed to achieve the intended economic and social benefits. The reason emerging from the literature – which *institutional* theory helps explain – was that a number of concurrent changes needed to be made; an exclusive focus on formal education was insufficient if an appropriate social context and a modern economy were lacking.

Recommendation: Develop strategies to enhance human capital though postsecondary education that include consideration of the corequisite factors which the literature about human capital formation identifies.

Sub-Baccalaureate Education

Notwithstanding the periodic appeals to increase apprenticeship numbers, such as in the current *Skills for Jobs Blueprint*, the distinctive needs and characteristics of sub-baccalaureate education have received less attention in BC in the two decades following the Strand Report (British Columbia Task Force on Employment and Training, 1991) and the *Skills Now* initiative of 1993 to 1995 of the BC Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour (Dennison, 1995; Fisher et al, 2014). I am not arguing for specific changes to the programs, or in the mix of programs, that

issue certificate, diploma or Red Seal apprenticeship credentials, but rather that they regain their position in postsecondary discourse and research – especially given that headcount enrolment in apprenticeship, private career colleges, and applied certificate and diploma programs in public institutions meets or exceeds, depending on the year, that of baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate programs[55].

Researchers such as Grubb (1996) have shown that the sub-baccalaureate labour market differs from that for university graduates. For example, the sub-baccalaureate market places a higher premium on relevant job experience compared to formal schooling and educational credentials (except in licensed occupations). It is more local and fragmented, often hampered by weak labour market information that makes it more difficult for employers to find workers and vice versa. Furthermore, whereas considerations such as the role of education in fostering citizenship and in personal development have frequently appeared in baccalaureate discourse in British Columbia, these perspectives have become less visible in sub-baccalaureate education since the Macdonald Era of the 1960s.

Today, public policy affecting students in programs of up to two years in duration tends to be presented in instrumental terms, namely the contribution that education makes to the employability of students and to meeting the labour needs of the economy. The characteristics and aspirations of the such students is downplayed, although the occasional studies of women in trades (Volakovic, 2008) or of Aboriginal students who relocate to continue their education (a

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[55] Some of the apparent growth in baccalaureate enrolment over the past twenty years can be attributed to the administrative restructuring of "2+2" year programs in colleges and teaching universities into 4-year programs with an early exit option after two years. This change enabled institutions to count more first and second year students as being in degree programs (helpful in meeting the membership criteria of Universities Canada) even though it was unlikely that many of these students would ever complete a degree.

consideration in the current Aboriginal initiative, Aboriginal People in Trades Training, of the

BC Industry Training Authority) point the way to a more robust research agenda.

The inadequacies of an unregulated, caveat emptor approach to private career colleges

resulted in the 2014 decision of the BC government to dissolve the Private Career Training

Institutions Agency in favour of oversight directly by government. The other obviously

problematic component of sub-baccalaureate education is the apprenticeship system of the

province (Cowin, 2012a; McDonald, 2014).

Apprenticeship enrolment and employment has fluctuated considerably. Apprentices tend

to be treated as objects from a policy perspective. Instruction is provided by numerous small and

fragmented organizations, and the policy environment is a politicized and cantankerous one in

which ideology can trump empirical evidence. While attempts to import a more collaborative,

student-centred, model of apprenticeship from corporatist northern Europe are generally seen as

unlikely to succeed[56] (Dion, 2015; Haddow, 2000), discussion of different apprenticeship models

would seem desirable. Perhaps a helpful discussion starter would be to revisit the Training

Access (TRAC) reforms of 1982 (Dwyer, 1983; Thompson, 1983) to assess their strengths,

weaknesses and educational philosophy from the vantage point of today.

Recommendation: Devote greater attention to understanding sub-baccalaureate education in

    British Columbia, especially the aims, functioning, and effectiveness of apprenticeship

    and private career colleges.

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[56] Production regime theme theory (Hall & Soskice, 2001) describes differences in the *institutional* contexts of
countries that hinder the international migration of apprenticeship models.

Marketization

In recent decades, the higher education literature has abundantly noted and critiqued the effects of neoliberalism and globalization on postsecondary institutions. Market forces have appeared in BC in various forms over the decades. Sometimes, as with the formation of the University of Victoria and Simon Fraser University, government has sought structures that encourage competition among institutions. At other times, public policy has enabled a shift in the balance between public and private sectors in BC, as in the Continuing Education and the Canadian Jobs Strategy historical moment and in the New Era moment.

It is unlikely that market rationales will result in any further structural changes to the BC postsecondary system, at least not in the short-term. Nevertheless, market forces could change the ways in which the province perceives the missions and characters of existing institutions. In particular, the recent successful efforts to increase international enrolment in BC are broadening notions of the communities that public institutions are expected to serve. Also, the resumption of direct regulation of almost all private institutions by the BC government provides an additional tool for the government in reconceptualizing the role of private postsecondary education in the province if it so desires.

International Students

The growth in the number of international students in BC over the past decade has been large and rapid[57], encouraged by the BC government due to the economic benefits to institutions

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[57] The number of international students in BC public postsecondary institutions reached 37,000 in 2014, an increase of 85% from 2008. Two thirds of surveyed international students planned to stay in Canada after program completion, primarily to work but a smaller group also hoped to both work and study (Adamoski, 2015).

(fees that exceed costs) and to the communities in which the students live (comparable to revenue from tourism). The implications of the growth in the number of international students in BC and elsewhere has resulted in a substantial literature, led in Canada by such scholars as Knight (1995; 2013), with little evidence that policymakers in institutions and government have paid sufficient attention to this literature. The general public and popular press, however, are beginning to ask whether the consequences of more international students may be broader and more significant than they first appear (Bothwell, 2016 June 8; Todd, 2016 May 21; Todd, 2016 August 27).

Internationalization has reinforced prestige-seeking and public relations posturing by institutions because many international students, especially from Asia, come from cultures in which the ranking of postsecondary institutions is a deeply embedded value (Herman, 1994; Teichler, 1997). In the absence of firsthand knowledge of foreign institutions, such students rely on international rankings ("league tables" in European parlance) to assist them in choosing the "best" or most elite universities and colleges to which to apply.

More comprehensive attention to this topic is required. In the short-term, international education has more potential to change the character of BC postsecondary education, for better or worse, than any other force that the system is currently experiencing.

Recommendation: Identify the full range of implications within postsecondary education and for the broader community of a substantial and rapidly growing number of international students so that steps can be taken to mitigate potentially negative impacts for international and domestic students, institutions, and nations.

Private Postsecondary Education

Relatively little research has been conducted in BC by either government[58] or university scholars about private postsecondary institutions in the province, whether the institutions were for-profit or not-for-profit. Enrolments in the private sectors, however, have been substantial and millions of dollars of public student financial aid have been directed towards them. The private institutions have filled program gaps in the offerings of public institutions, as well as competing with public institutions in other program areas, although how well they have done so remains something of an unanswered question.

It seemed that the flurry of commentary about the implications of the *Degree Authorization Act* in the New Era historical moment might presage a reversal in the paucity of literature about private institutions, but interest in the topic waned and few studies have been conducted subsequently of the effects of the policy change. The private sectors (that is, private career colleges, private universities, faith-based institutions, Aboriginal-governed institutions, and, in some respects, apprenticeship and continuing education) are tremendously varied and individual institutions seem to differ substantially in the quality of education provided and in student outcomes (Cowin, 2009; Cowin, 2013b). At a minimum, these institutions are entitled to a more nuanced understanding of their characteristics.

Consistent with the lack of scholarly attention to private institutions, as well as with my own experience over the decades as a student and employee of BC postsecondary institutions, those working in the public sector have been a little too willing to paint entire private sectors

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[58] For half a dozen years from 1996, the BC and federal governments funded the Private Training Outcomes Survey, *On Track*, that collected up to 5,000 responses annually from a subset of BC institutions. The federal government funded the national *Survey of Canadian Career Students* in 2008.

with the same broad, slightly disdainful, brush. The limited consultation and availability of data prior to the formulation of policy positions about private education suggest that ideological rather than evidence-based decision making has characterized the process. Ideally, the province would develop more robust and coherent policies concerning the roles of the various private sectors in the overall postsecondary system.

Recommendation: Gather more data about private institutions so that more robust policy can be developed about their role and regulation in British Columbia.

Other Recommendations

This section presents two recommendations arising from barriers that I encountered in conducting this study, barriers that have become more significant over the past decade. In contrast to these two hindrances, the third recommendation about systems thinking concerns an approach that facilitated my study. These considerations were not distinctive to my research but are likely to be relevant, to varying degrees, for any study of the BC system of postsecondary education.

Terminology

The inadequacies of the current vocabulary used to describe postsecondary education in BC have already been considered in the *Discussion* chapter and will not be repeated here. Taylor (2016) makes a similar argument about the "mayhem over definitions" (p. 32) regarding the study of innovation.

I would like to emphasize that the policy formulation process would be improved if outdated mental models were dropped in favour of terminology that more closely reflects current realities, especially given the evolving roles of institutions following the introduction in BC of teaching universities and baccalaureate colleges. For example, those unfamiliar with BC colleges may not realize that underprepared students do not always have to take all their required Adult Basic Education courses prior to enrolling in other courses, or that university transfer courses represent a continuum in programs rather than a binary. A first step in addressing the problem of old, vague terminology is simply to ask what specifically is meant when a particular term such as academic or vocational is used.

Recommendation: Develop a new vocabulary and taxonomy to categorize BC postsecondary institutions and the broad types of programs that they offer.

Open Information

The *Discussion* chapter also identified the need for abundant information about postsecondary institutions to be routinely and easily available to the public unless a compelling case can be made why certain information should be withheld. This is the same standard as scholarly researchers use with respect to organizations other than their own. For postsecondary institutions to limit the availability of information about their own operations and impacts in the interest of trying to position themselves advantageously in the educational marketplace is contrary to the values about knowledge generation and social critique that they profess, and ultimately places quality enhancement at risk (Canadian Association of University Teachers, 2011; Universities Canada, 2011). Good policy is difficult to formulate in the absence of full and

balanced data from both government and institutions about current conditions and trends in postsecondary education.
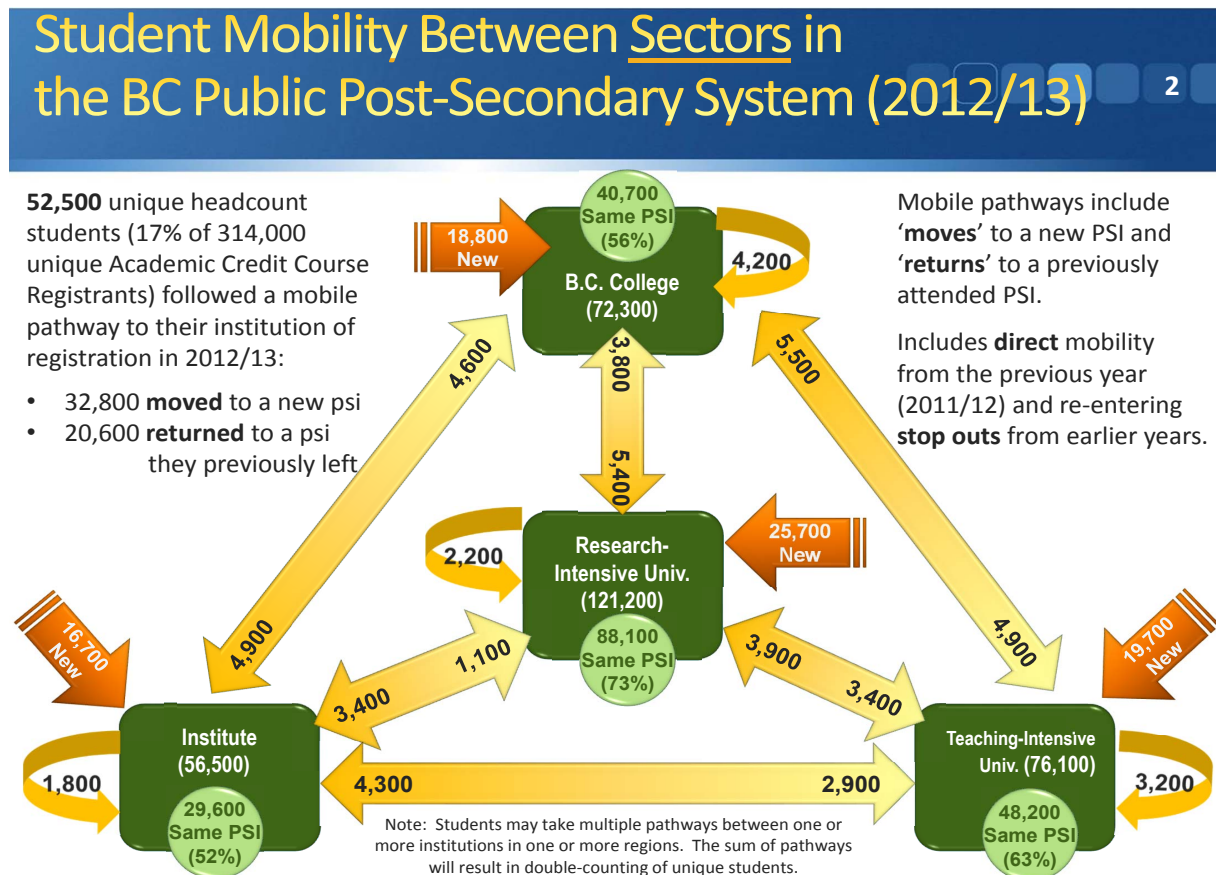
Recommendation: Provide comprehensive statistical data about postsecondary education in

> *British Columbia on governmental and institutional websites that can be easily accessed*
>
> *by the public.*

Systems Thinking

Reflecting the centrality in neoinstitutional theory of the organizational field, a policy orientation that I brought into this study was a proclivity to consider the postsecondary system as a whole rather than in isolated sectors and institutions. Despite balkanization in the public system since 2000 with the closure of such province-wide organizations as the Advanced Education Council of BC and the Centre for Education Information Standards and Services, two groups in BC that have productively brought a systems orientation to their work are the Student Transitions Project and the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer.

Although the Student Transitions Project was limited in the past by BC legislation regarding the extent to which it was permitted to collect data about students in private institutions, a situation that now seems to be changing, results from the project about public sector institutions illustrate the value of systems thinking. Figure 3 shows the magnitude of multi-directional student flows in credit courses across public sectors, including mobility within sectors (moves to a different institution of the same type), across sectors (moves to a different type of institution), stopouts, entrants and leavers.

263

Figure 3: Student Mobility Among Postsecondary Sectors

Student Mobility Between Sectors in the BC Public Post-Secondary System (2012/13)

52,500 unique headcount students (17% of 314,000 unique Academic Credit Course Registrants) followed a mobile pathway to their institution of registration in 2012/13:

- 32,800 **moved** to a new psi
- 20,600 **returned** to a psi they previously left

Mobile pathways include '**moves**' to a new PSI and '**returns**' to a previously attended PSI.

Includes **direct** mobility from the previous year (2011/12) and re-entering **stop outs** from earlier years.

B.C. College (72,300)
40,700 Same PSI (56%)
18,800 New
4,200

Research-Intensive Univ. (121,200)
88,100 Same PSI (73%)
25,700 New
2,200
4,600
3,800
5,400
5,500

Institute (56,500)
29,600 Same PSI (52%)
16,700 New
1,800
4,900
3,400
1,100

Teaching-Intensive Univ. (76,100)
48,200 Same PSI (63%)
19,700 New
3,200
4,900
3,900
3,400

4,300
2,900

Note: Students may take multiple pathways between one or more institutions in one or more regions. The sum of pathways will result in double-counting of unique students.

Source: BC Student Transitions Project. Model and diagram developed by Joanne Heslop.
http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/student_transitions/documents/Student_Mobility_Btwn_Sectors_Btwn_Regions_2015-02-11.pdf

The high degree of student mobility portrayed in Figure 3 is partly a reflection of students themselves and the type of society in which they live, but it is also partly the result of a public system that was intentionally designed to facilitate transfer, reverse transfer, concurrent enrolment in two or more institutions, and what has generally come to be known as "student swirl" (Clemetsen, Furbeck & Moore, 2013; De los Santos & Wright, 1990) and a seamless system (Plant, 2007). Yet despite this intentional design for the public system, the current level

of marketization and the need to meet high enrolment targets from government provide incentives for institutions to seek to retain students through curricular decisions that hinder the ability of their students to switch institutions – a short-term strategy for institutions that could ultimately discourage new students from enrolling if they think they will encounter transfer barriers.

Research conducted by the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer, and by the Student Transitions Project with which it partners, has shown that numerous students who initially appeared as drop-outs from the point of view of single institution in fact subsequently graduated elsewhere in the system: 45% of bachelor degree completers in 2013/14 had attended two or more institutions (Student Transitions Project, 2015b). It has also led to the reconceptualization of the transfer system, from one in which some institutions (colleges) were viewed as senders of students to other receiving institutions (universities). The new model views all institutions as both senders and receivers of students (British Columbia Council on Admissions and Transfer, 2006) – an example of both systems thinking and a way of improving the functioning of the postsecondary system for students.

Even the connections and interactions between private and public institutions in BC are stronger than might be suggested by the distinct policy environments in which they operate. Private degree-granting institutions in BC frequently serve mature students who began their studies at public institutions but who now find either the scheduling of courses or the availability of seats to be restrictive for their current life situation. Aboriginal-governed institutions routinely partner with public institutions. Some courses and programs from faith-based institutions and private career colleges are granted transfer credit by public institutions, and half a dozen faith-based institutions are affiliated with the University of British Columbia. Apprenticeship straddles

the public-private divide. A number of English as a Second Language schools are designed to prepare students for further education in both public and private systems.

Although not centrally coordinated or governed – potentially both a strength and a weakness – the constellation of postsecondary institutions in BC does in fact partially function as a system from the point of view of students. I am not arguing for policy to force more system interaction but simply for policy to be developed with recognition that there may be effects for students and institutions beyond those to which the policy applies.

Recommendation: Build on the strengths of the BC Council on Admissions and Transfer and of the Student Transitions Project to foster a systems approach in studying postsecondary education and to encourage collaboration among institutions.

Priorities

The two recommendations I see as most needing prompt attention are open data and internationalization: open data because it can be implemented rapidly and internationalization because, of all the powerful forces operating on postsecondary education, it seems the one with the most potential to rapidly change, for better or worse, the character of the postsecondary system. The other recommendations may be equally or more important, but they are less urgent and could be addressed at a regular pace.

Conclusion

The number of postsecondary institutions and students in BC grew rapidly in the 1960s and 1970s. Then in the 1980s, the system began reconfiguring, not across the board but in particular ways that continued in subsequent decades. Whether it has now reached a state of equilibrium or stasis is not clear, but few if any calls are currently being made for further structural change. The vast majority of students in baccalaureate and graduate programs have continued to enroll in public institutions, although the number of students choosing short programs in private institutions remains considerable.

Along with a wide variety of circumstances that prompted numerous specific and incremental changes to the structure of the BC postsecondary system, themes of fairness, economic success and competition to promote efficiency and effectiveness have persisted in the postsecondary policy of the provincial and federal governments. The strength of each of these policy rationales has fluctuated over time, but they collectively provide a useful framework for interpreting postsecondary developments.

Issues of geographical access – the spatial adaptation version of social justice – fostered several of the distinctive developments in BC such as the adoption of the California model of community colleges and the introduction of university colleges. The theoretical roots of the other policy rationales, especially regarding human capital formation and new public management, promoted postsecondary structures in BC that were more consistent with developments elsewhere in Canada.

Returning to the research question[59] for this dissertation, the theories I hypothesized would be relevant in the *Literature Review* did indeed prove to be useful: social justice, regional development, human capital, neoliberalism, new public management, and aspects of *institutionalism*. More significantly, when clustered into the three policy rationales of social justice, human capital formation, and marketization, they proved complementary, serving to illuminate postsecondary developments in BC rather than distracting from each other and making for an unfocused study. The challenges of using multiple perspectives simultaneously are considerable, ranging from the practical task of developing a familiarity with more than one literature to the more conceptual challenge of determining which combinations of perspectives are appropriate, but employed with care on suitable subject matter, this methodology can be a powerful interpretive tool.

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[59] What theoretical perspectives help explain the public policy rationales, implicit as well as explicit, that were used to justify the establishment of BC postsecondary institutions and to propel their structural development since 1960?

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