

**Leadership Debate 2011:**  
**[Tentatively] Positioning the NDP's Education Agenda**

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*I. Introduction -*

As British Columbia's political establishment shifts regimes the topography of educational reform shifts too. In recent years the Premier's Technology Council has drawn on the rhetoric of '21st-century education' to frame discussions of educational policy and reform in BC (Premier's Technology Council, 2010). This policy narrative appears likely to retain its privileged status under Christy Clark's leadership (see, for e.g., Steffenhaggen, 2011). However, if Liberals cannot maintain an electoral majority the scope and character of educational reform in BC could shift registers: in contrast with the market-driven policies enacted by Liberals, the New Democrat Party (NDP), for instance, has a legacy of valorizing education as a public good. Nevertheless, the NDP's agenda for educational reform has been marginalized and fragmented under a decade of Liberal leadership and as a result party members have acknowledged the need for revisiting their vision for BC's schools.

The NDP's 2011 leadership debate tour provided an opportunity to critically assess the contours of the party's educational reform agenda. In 'debates'<sup>1</sup> which were open to the public and held across the province, five candidates jockeying for leadership of the party discussed various aspects of BC's political policies - past, present, and future.<sup>2</sup> By launching this series with a debate on education, leadership candidates signaled their shared commitment to make

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<sup>1</sup> Although described as a 'debate', the event in Surrey was less a debate than a campaign stoop: candidates did not directly debate or critique each other. Instead, the 'debate' was more so aimed at contesting the leadership of the Liberal party. Sadly, neither the Liberals nor any of BC's other parties were invited to the NDP's 'debate' on education.

<sup>2</sup> Each debate focused on a different theme: Education, March 20 (Surrey); Justice, March 21 (Kelowna); Poverty, March 22 (Kamloops); Families, March 24 (Nelson); Healthcare, March 29 (Qualicum); Youth, March 31 (Victoria); Environmental Sustainability, April 2 (Vancouver); Energy, April 4 (Prince George); Jobs, April 6 (Terrace). For more details, see BC NDP LeadershipX2011 (n.d).

education reform a priority. Even still, locating candidates' dispositions towards education policy required sustained critical engagement and empirical analysis.

To map the preferred subjectivities, lines of power, and horizons of desire in the candidates' agendas, I applied Bamberg's (1997) three-leveled positioning analysis to a transcript of the BC NDP leadership debate on education. By that I mean that I assessed transcript data by asking how characters were positioned in relation to one another, how speakers position themselves in relation to the audience, and how speakers position themselves in relation to themselves (Bamberg, 1997, p. 337).

## *II. Analytic Justification -*

Positioning analysis provides an ideal methodological framework for inquiries of this nature, as it offers a means of theorizing and analyzing "how it is that people do being a person" (Davies & Harré, 1990). Following Korobov & Bamberg (2007), "positions" can be said to "emerge as the identity-relevant effects of the way speakers order conversational devices and discursive activities" (cited in Slocum-Bradley, 2009, p. 88). This means that "speakers position themselves vis-à-vis the world out there and the social world here and now" (Barkhuizen, 2009), and these positionings can provide the grounding for empirical analysis.

In democratic countries politicians are said to 'represent' the interests of the people who elect them. As a result, political candidates' positionings of agents - the (non)voting public, teachers, students, etc. - implicate preferred realities and futures. More explicitly, by giving voice to and privileging certain possibilities, political candidates shape the field of educational policy and constitute themselves and the public in certain ways. It follows, then, that positioning

analysis can offer insight into discursive subtexts and contribute to the maintenance of an informed electorate.

Positioning analysis considers all the characters and storylines invoked through utterances as discursive productions, and over the course of a typical conversation dozens of characters may be cited and positioned. In order to narrow the scope of my inquiry, I focused on how BC NDP leadership candidates positioned: (i) education within their political agenda; (ii) their party; (iii) the public. In delimiting the focus of my study in this way I hope to distill and clarify the leadership candidates' visions for BC's public schools.

### *III. Method -*

Before any formal analysis could begin transcripts needed to be generated. Thus, it was helpful that the NDP recorded each of the debates and posted mp3 recordings on their website (BC NDP LeadershipX2011, n.d.).

Once an audio recording of the leadership debate on education had been secured, data selection began. By that I mean that the debate - which spanned nearly two hours and included candidates' responses to pre-determined, educationally-themed questions; questions from the audience; and a question submitted via the Internet<sup>3</sup> - provided a hyper-abundance of analytic data. Given that the discussion encompassed various aspects of British Columbia's political identity, an attempt was made to delimit my study by focusing on the candidates' positionings of educational policy.

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<sup>3</sup> Although the leadership debate focused on education, it doubled as a political rally and only the pre-determined questions directly addressed education. See Appendix B.

After repeated listenings the moderator's questions were transcribed (see Appendix B) and each candidates' arguments were outlined. This provided a conceptual sketch of the candidates' agendas, which I then compiled into a thematically comprehensive outline. From this outline I noted how candidates' utterances (i.e., responses to questions, petitions to the audience, etc.) overlapped and reinforced one another. Candidates' responses were not discrete units, but porous and complimentary. In other words, locating the candidates' educational agendas would require sustained empirical analysis. However, for an initial analysis of the candidates' positionings, generating a transcript of the entire debate seemed unnecessary. Rather, transcribing each candidate's introductory statement offered sufficient detail for a preliminary analysis into the candidates' approaches to educational policy in BC.

Using Jeffersonian convention (Wooffitt, 2001), transcripts were generated for each of the candidates' three-minute introductory statements (see Appendix A, Extracts 1a - e). In pursuit of analytic depth, an attempt was made to identify extra-linguistic details - e.g., emphasis, tone, rhythm. As well, since the audience's participation insinuated its affective stance (Ochs, 1996) in relation to the candidates' suggestions, this interactional data was included too. Finally, after coding transcripts for linguistic, extra-linguistic, and participatory details, the candidates' positionings became accessible.

Bamberg's (1997) three-leveled approach to positioning analysis provided a methodological structure for locating candidates' preferences and desires.

- First, transcripts were examined and each candidates' preferred cast of characters was compiled. In this way, each candidate could be said to have produced a collaborative vision - or script - for education in BC. The actors invoked and positioned at this level included political parties, the (non)voting public, teachers, etc.
- Second, transcripts were studied in order to highlight the candidates' positionings of the audience. At this level of analysis it became possible to theorize candidates' interactional dispositions. Some politicians, for instance, produce themselves as '*above*' the public. Through this normalization of asymmetrical access to power, politicians can easily fall victim to microfascisms (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) and become hegemonic. However, politicians may also attempt to distance themselves from social hierarchies and position themselves as '*agents of*' the public. In so doing, politicians can attempt to democratize access to political agency and empower the public. From this it should be clear that how candidates' positioned themselves in relation to the audience may be suggestive of their relationship with power.
- Third, transcripts were assessed for candidates' positionings of themselves. At this level of analysis candidates' identities were seen as ephemeral and 'under-construction'.

By mapping these three levels of positioning, it became possible to make tentative interpretations about candidates' preferred subjectivities, understandings of power, and expressions of desire.

*IV. Analysis -*

In this section I apply Bamberg's (1997) three levels of positioning to candidates' introductory statements in order to outline the NDP's vision for BC's schools. An emphasis will be given to the role of the public and teachers so that candidates' attitudes towards agency can be foregrounded. Finally, tentative conclusions will be discussed and delimited.

Extract 1a (see Appendix A) entextualizes the introductory statement of NDP leadership candidate John Horgan (JH). At the first level of analysis JH's positionings of the NDP and the public appear pregnant with meaning. For instance, in lines 14-19 the public is described as sharing the NDP's "mainstream" values and commitments. This positioning is expanded in lines 43-46 where JH suggests that the public is 'already NDP, whether they know it or not'. From here JH positions the public as vital co-participants in the NDP's attempt to return to power (lines 23-25, 39-48). The electoral context of the debate accounts for the emphasis on democratic participation. However, it is interesting to note that aside from a single mention on lines 30-31, JH's introductory statement did not stress the positions of the NDP or public in relation to education.

At the second level of analysis JH can be seen to position the audience as 'doers' acting in solidarity to oppose BC's Liberal leadership. After 10 years of Liberal government, it is notable, for example, on line 13 where JH emphasizes a desire to "change this province forever". This suggests the current political leadership of BC needs to be replaced, and that the audience - as doers - can be the agents who produce a change in regimes. Nevertheless, by strategic use of pronouns JH conflates himself with the audience and the audience with the (voting) public. For example, on lines 23-32 JH suggests the audience = 'we', the public = 'we', the NDP = 'we', and

the NDP leadership = 'we'. However, earlier in the extract (lines 4-5) JH creates a distinction between himself (agent who wants to be elected) and the audience (agents who have the power to elect). In this way, the boundaries of influence become blurred and positionings become problematic. Without a clear and consistent positioning of the audience as self-determining agents, JH's introductory statement can be seen as instructional: JH knows what needs to be done and it is the audience's/public's role to enable his vision.

At the third level of analysis JH's positioning of himself in relation to himself can be seen as performatively producing his identity as a candidate for leadership of the NDP. Throughout his introductory statement JH positions himself as a critic of Liberal leadership (lines 12-14, 26, 50-51) with progressive (lines 27-32), "mainstream values" (lines 14-19, 43-44). Moreover, JH privileges a 'positive' (lines 23-24, 27-28, 48-49), 'forward-looking' (line 51-52) political orientation. From this it becomes possible to locate JH's positioning of himself as a progressive, forward-looking, and viable candidate.

Extract 1b derives from the introductory statement of Adrian Dix (AD). At the first level of analysis it was determined that the main characters in his performance were teachers, the NDP, and capitalists. Teachers, for instance, were positioned as defenders of students who have been unjustly disempowered by the restriction or removal of collective bargaining rights (lines 28-29). In so doing, AD simultaneously positioned teachers as champions of students and students as resources dependent on teachers (and politicians) for management. Similarly, AD positioned the NDP as a protector of public interest and the public as reliant on the NDP for the realization of equity. One strong example of this asymmetrical positioning comes on lines 32-37, when AD suggested BC eliminate the Foundational Skills Assessment on the grounds that it

“doesn’t work” and is an “insult to the public school system”. This top-down approach to resisting standardized assessments positions teachers and students as victims of poor policies.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, AD positions Liberals and capitalists as the sources of these indignities (lines 42-50). In positioning capitalism in this way, AD problematizes the byproducts of capitalism - e.g., low incomes, high unemployment - and reifies the NDP as a crusader for the interests of the public.

At the second level of analysis AD can be found to use lexico-grammatic tactics to effectively position the audience as interested and sympathetic and AD as someone who has something meaningful to say. Specifically, like JH, AD uses pronouns to produce solidarity between himself, the audience, the NDP, and the public. In lines 14-15, for example, AD uses the pronoun ‘we’ to position the audience as instrumental to the NDP’s previous electoral successes. Similarly, on lines 42, 47, and 50-54 AD uses pronouns to position himself as on equal footing with the audience and the NDP. By conflating roles and responsibilities in this way AD constructs a discursive frame in which he and the NDP are substantiated as ambassadors for the interests of the people.

When extract 1a was examined for AD’s positioning of himself in relation to himself it was found that he produced a political identity in harmony with social democratic principles.<sup>5</sup> Two of the clearest examples of this positioning come on lines 25 and 38. By positioning himself as someone who knows what is important (e.g., “saving schools”) and is ‘worth voting for’, AD

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<sup>4</sup> John Gatto’s (2010) *Bartleby Project*, in contrast, affirms students’ right to resist participating in standardized assessments. Whereas both Gatto and AD are critical of standardized tests, it may be interesting to consider how divergent approaches to agency might have an impact on attitudes towards participation in state-mandated curricula.

<sup>5</sup> To clarify, according to Eduard Bernstein - one of the founders of social democracy - political reformists “should neither expect nor desire the imminent collapse of the existing economic system ... What social democracy should be doing, and doing for a long time to come, is organize the working class politically, train it for democracy, and fight for any and all reforms in the state which are designed to raise the working class and make the state more democratic” (Steger, 1997, p. 80).

constructs an identity of himself as defender of the disadvantaged, champion of teachers and students, and agent of change.

Nicholas Simons' (NS) introductory statement was designated as Extract 1c. At the first level of analysis NS was found to have produced identities for the NDP, the public, and BC's current political leadership. The "forefathers" of the NDP, for example, are positioned as unapologetically principled (lines 38-40) "fighters" for the "public interest" (lines 29-30), and the NDP is produced as "united", "strong", and open to "vigorous debate" (lines 33-34). These positionings insinuate a vision of society in which governments are invested with the responsibility to serve the "public interest" (lines 22-23). The public, meanwhile, is positioned as victims of poor policies (lines 15-19), and constructed as disengaged with provincial politics (lines 25-26, 30-31). Finally, BC's current political leadership is explicitly positioned as failing to meet the needs of the public (lines 15-19, 26-28).

At the second level of analysis NS was found to have positioned himself as knowledgeable of and sympathetic to the audience's needs. For example, lines 7-19 consist of an account in which NS positions himself as an experienced knower and the audience as interested listeners. Moreover, in common with JH and AD, NS used pronouns to position himself as solidary with the audience. Beginning on line 31 and stretching through line 39, NS conflates himself, the NDP, the audience, and the public as 'we'. In this case NS's positioning strongly suggests an 'us vs. them' diad which is typical of identity-based politics. Additional warrant for this claim can be found on line 5, where NS asserts that he and the other leadership candidates are "on the same team".

At positioning level three NS was found to have produced himself as a compassionate critic of neoliberalism. The account of the death of a child (lines 7-19), for instance, serves to position NS as a concerned advocate for the public interest. Likewise, the emphasis NS places on ‘death’ and ‘child’ in line 13 is structurally linked with his claim that BC’s Liberals “put their [short-term economic] priority ahead of the priorities of the children in this province”. Taken in conjunction, NS emerges as a vigilant protector of the “most vulnerable citizens” of BC. In addition, NS’s disavowal of “privatizing” and “contracting out” (line 28) had the effect of positioning him as a critic of neoliberalism while further reifying his identity as ‘man of the people’.

The fourth candidate to introduce himself was Mike Farnworth (Extract 1d). At the first positioning level MF invoked the NDP as well as families and communities across BC. Together with the other candidates, MF positioned the NDP as fixated on issues of common relevance. On lines 20-25, for example, MF characterizes ‘every community in the province’ as facing challenges with health care, education, and social issues. Inasmuch as this positioned the NDP as a ‘speaker of relevant issues’, it also insinuated the Liberals were complicit in the perpetuation of these ‘challenges’. At the same time, families and communities across BC were positioned as ‘wanting change’ (lines 27-28) and dependent on the government for ‘solutions’ to challenges (lines 31-36). By and large, MF constructs a vision of the public as victimized by Liberal leadership.

In the second level of analysis MF was found to have followed familiar patterns of constructing knowingness and unity. The first clear example of MF’s positioning of himself as knowing the mind of the audience comes in lines 3-5. In suggesting that he ‘knows everyone in

the room wants the NDP to win the election’, MF positions himself as understanding the thoughts and desires of the audience. By the same token, on lines 29-41 MF further reifies his identity as a ‘knower of solutions’ while positioning the audience as having stereotypical desires. Equally important, MF uses pronouns to discursively construct an impression of collectivity and solidarity. On lines 28 and 30, for instance, MF cites the desires of the public (‘they’) in relation to ‘us’. For this reason, MF can be said to have produced a field of consensus and unity between himself, the audience, and the public.

According to Bamberg (1997), analyses of positioning at the third level focus on the narrator in order to “construct a (local) answer to the question: ‘Who am I?’” (p. 337). With this in mind, at positioning level three MF can be found to situate himself in relation to himself as a champion of the people with an unyieldingly positive agenda. In using the pronoun ‘we’ in his account of what needs to change (lines 29-45), MF positions himself as an agent of the people. Likewise, on lines 49-50 MF constructs an identity for himself as “positive” leader who can ‘get people excited’ about politics.

Dana Larson was the last of the candidates to provide an introductory statement (Extract 1e). At the first level of analysis the two identities most emphasized in DL’s introduction were political parties: the NDP and the Liberals. While other candidates took pains to situate the NDP in relation to the Liberals, DL was more explicit in his renunciation of Liberal policy than any of the other candidates. For instance, on lines 33-36 DL positioned the Liberals as socially negligent and complicit in BC’s budget deficit. The NDP, in contrast, was positioned as a gatekeeper of capitalism unapologetically engaged in advocating for social justice and the redistribution of wealth (lines 38-40). According to DL one of the primary beneficiaries of this

redistribution of wealth is to be BC's k-12 public education system (line 45). By positioning BC's education system as in dire need of funding, DL further implicated BC's Liberals as socially destructive. In addition, DL positioned the Liberals as reckless and irresponsible for expanding BC's penal system (lines 46-48), and reified the NDP as a champion of BC's homeless population, drug addicts, and the socially marginal (line 50-52).

At the second level of analysis "we seek to analyze the linguistic means that are characteristic for the particular discourse mode that is being employed" (Bamberg, 1997, p. 337). In DL's introduction he uses pronouns to produce the audience as supportive of the NDP's agenda. For example, DL invokes "our own party" (line 11), "our next election campaign" (line 24), "our budget" (line 36), "we would increase" (line 39), "our deficit" (line 43), "make us safer" (lines 49-50), etc. In so doing, DL positions himself, the audience, and the public as embedded in the same narrative of struggle.

Much like the other candidates, at level three DL positioned himself as a viable contender for leadership of the party. However, unlike the other candidates DL produced an identity of himself as "idealistic" (line 4), "passionate" (line 5), and "socialist" (line 55). In claiming these positions for himself, DL situates himself as a reform-oriented candidate with revolutionary values.

#### *V. (Contra-)Conclusion -*

Although it must be stressed that a comprehensive positioning analysis of the BC NDP leadership debate should include analysis of the candidates' introductions, responses to questions, and closing statements, this study can make tentative interpretations of the candidates'

education agendas. Of the five candidates jockeying for leadership of the NDP, Adrian Dix and Dana Larson appeared most committed to improving education in BC. While John Horgan, Nicholas Simons, and Mike Farnworth situated themselves as defenders of the public good, they were less explicit in making education a central aspect of their candidacies. On this basis, British Columbians interested in education may see warrant in pushing candidates to further clarify the contours of their politics.

#### *VI. Reflexivity -*

This study compliments my ongoing inquiry into educational policy in British Columbia. While the Liberals have referenced ‘21st-century education’ and ‘personalized learning’ as the future of the province’s schools (Premier’s Technology Council, 2010), a change in political leadership could instigate a reconsideration of the character of educational reform in BC. Owing to the fact that the NDP is generally considered to be among Canada’s most progressive political parties, I was curious about how their vision for BC’s schools contrasted with the Liberal’s preference for ‘21st-century education’. The current study, therefore, can only be understood in relation to the province’s precarious political identity. For this reason, it is important to acknowledge that polls conducted by BC’s Teachers’ Federation (2011) suggest that a majority of British Columbians are displeased with the Liberal’s educational policies. If this ‘statistical displeasure’ translates into electoral action BC’s public education system could undergo significant change. This initial, rudimentary positioning analysis attempts to tentatively map the horizons of what that change might look like if the NDP achieves electoral success.

In full disclosure, this study was not grounded in party affinity but in uncertainty. As a recently emigrated ‘permanent resident’ I cannot claim any special understanding of BC’s education system. However, working as a chronically underemployed on-call substitute teacher for the Vancouver School District has motivated me to look more deeply into the policies that shape the field of public education in BC. With that said, it must be emphasized that I am less interested in political parties than public education in BC. The current study, combined with my ongoing inquiry into ‘21st-century education’ (see, for e.g., Steeves, 2011), attempts to underscore the importance of explicitly conceptualizing the process(es) of subjection in education policies. More generally, I hope to highlight the need for sustained critical engagement with educational policies in BC.

### *VII. Discussion -*

In the course of investigating NDP leadership candidates’ positions on education, additional questions for study came into view. For example, insofar as educational policy, how do BC’s other political parties compare with the Liberals and NDP? If a change in regimes does occur, how might this impact the adoption of ‘21st-century education’ in BC? What role should BC’s schools play in relation to capitalism? How might schools and educators resist being positioned as dependent on the government to effect meaningful change? Clearly, educational policy studies have an ongoing role to play in developing maps for the future of BC’s schools.

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## Appendix A:

## Transcript conventions (Korobov &amp; Bamberg, 2004) -

- (.) short pause; less than 1 second
- (2) timed pause in seconds
- [ ] overlapping speech
- ↑ rising intonation
- ↓ falling intonation
- underlined speaker's emphasis
- >faster< encloses talk that is faster than the surrounding talk
- <slower> encloses talk that is slower than the surrounding talk
- (( )) encloses audience participation
- We:::ll elongation of the prior sound
- . stop in intonation
- = immediate latching of successive utterances

## Extract 1a:

01 JH My name is John Horgan (.) and I want to be leader of the BC NDP  
 02 (.) and if you had told me 28 years ago when I was standing on  
 03 the lawn of the legislature with 20,000 other people (.) that I  
 04 would be in Surrey in 2011 (.) appealing to you to allow me to be  
 05 the leader of our proud party (.) I would not have believed a  
 06 word of it (.) but yet here we are (.)  
 07 Isn't life funny.  
 08 A [((1s laughter))]  
 09 JH It takes us in different places ladies and gentlemen, it takes us  
 10 up hills, it takes us into valleys (.) and the New Democratic  
 11 Party has seen many ↑hills (1) and it's seen many ↓valleys (1) I  
 12 believe we are perched on a moment in history where we can  
 13 <change this province for:ever> and we'll change it for the  
 14 better (.) I believe (.) that the New Democratic Party values are  
 15 mainstream values (.) we are not a marginal group of people (.)  
 16 we care about our communities (.) we care about our environment  
 17 (.) we care about the economy and those who are being left behind  
 18 (.) by economic prosperity here in British Columbia (.) those are  
 19 mainstream values (.) those are the things that brought us to  
 20 this building today .h those are the things that have five  
 21 gentlemen standing=sitting (.) on uh sturdy chairs before you  
 22 this afternoon .h those values are what brought us all (.) to the  
 23 BC NDP .h and I believe if we're going to win the next election  
 24 (.) we have to reach out in a positive way (.) to British  
 25 Columbians in every corner of this province (.) not with an  
 26 agenda that says vote for us we're not them (.) but an agenda  
 27 that says (1) vote for us (.) because we want to change the world  
 28 (.) for the better (.) we want to institute progressive policies  
 29 (.) we want to focus on the ↑environment (.) we want to focus on  
 30 the economy and ↑social justice (.) we want to focus on education  
 31 for all, and that's the foundation of our discussion today (.)

32 and lastly (.) we want to focus on integrity in government (1) we  
 33 are losing people at the ballot box not because they are  
 34 indifferent to our ↑point of view (.) not because they are  
 35 indifferent to politics but they are indifferent to the people  
 36 that are standing for election (.) I am proud to be standing or  
 37 sitting on these on these sturdy chairs (.) with four uh  
 38 colleagues=three colleagues and now a good friend in Dana .h  
 39 <trying to bring us back to power> (.) it's my ↑view that if we  
 40 are going to win the next ↓election (1) we have to reach out as  
 41 never before (.) we have to broaden our tent (.) we have to make  
 42 the coalition that Mike had in 1991 .h we have to go around and  
 43 find British Columbians (.) and <let them know> (.) that their  
 44 values are our values (.) it's my view that the leader of the  
 45 NDP .h has to go to British Columbians and say (.) you've been a  
 46 New Democrat all your life <you just didn't know it yet> (.) we  
 47 need four or five percent of the voting public to shift to our  
 48 banner (.) <we will not achieve that by being negative (.) we  
 49 will not achieve that> by denigrating and diminishing the BC  
 50 Liberals (.) my list of grievances is as long as everyone else in  
 51 this room (.) we <don't have to recount the bad decade (.) we  
 52 have to talk about the next decade> (.) I have fifteen seconds  
 53 left (.) I'll say it again (.) my name is John Horgan (.) and I  
 54 want to be leader of the BC NDP.  
 55 A [((9s applause ))]

## Extract 1b:

01 AD I'm Adrian Dix (.) I'm the MLA for Vancouver Kingsway and (.)  
 02 like ↑John (.) I want to be leader of the BC ↓NDP (.) it's  
 03 really important (.) that we are debating public education (.) in  
 04 Surrey today (.) as all of you know who are from Surrey (.) eight  
 05 thousand students (.) are going to be learning in portables next  
 06 year (.) in Surrey (.) because we have a government that doesn't  
 07 ↑care (.) about public education (.) and didn't plan for the  
 08 people in this community (.) and the people around British  
 09 Columbia (1) now in this debate I want you think of two (.) very  
 10 important numbers (.) one is seven hundred ↑thousand (.) and the  
 11 other is one point four million (.) seven hundred thousand is the  
 12 number of new non voters (.) who-d have whose ↑new non voters (.)  
 13 seven hundred thousand more people (.) than v-voted the last time  
 14 than didn't vote the last time we won (.) in 1996 (.) we've added  
 15 seven hundred thousand non voters (.) and one point four  
 16 million .h to be ↑exact (.) <one million> four hundred and thirty  
 17 three thousand voters (1) who didn't vote in the last general  
 18 election (.) now some people would argue (.) that what we have to  
 19 do to win an election (.) is to just get a little closer to the  
 20 BC Liberals (.) side along over (.) and not bother people too  
 21 much (.) but think of those people=those one point four  
 22 million=who are they? they're disproportionately low income (.)  
 23 disproportionately out of the labour force (.) disproportionately  
 24 living in high unemployment neighborhoods (.) they should be

25 voting NDP (.) and I'm in this race to give them something to  
 26 vote for (.) in public education-

27 A [(5s applause )]]

28 AD in public education (.) that means giving teachers the right to  
 29 bargain again (.) bargain class size and composition on behalf of

30 A [(4s applause  
 31 )]]

32 AD students (.) in public education, it means getting rid of a  
 33 Foundation Skills Assessment system that doesn't ↑work,  
 34 is an insult to the public school system and should be gotten

35 A [(3s applause  
 36 )]]

37 AD rid of (.) it means ↑opening schools in Surrey (.) and saving  
 38 schools around BC=that's what ↑I'm about (.) Christy Clark as all  
 39 of you know (.) closed a hundred and twenty schools  
 40 in BC (.) a hundred and twenty (.) most of them (.)

41 A [(3s boos from audience)]]

42 AD in rural BC (1.5) now, how do we get there? (.) well I've argued  
 43 (.) that we need to (.) roll back (.) ↑roll back three tax cuts  
 44 (.) that corporations big business have got (.) in the  
 45 last three years (.) and to use that money to pay for more

46 A [(8s applause  
 47 )]]

47 AD teacher librarians=because we don't have enough (.) more  
 48 aboriginal education, more ESL (.) teachers (.) and have a real

49 A [(9s applause  
 50 )]]

50 AD anti-poverty plan (.) that works (1) in short (.) if we give  
 51 people something to vote for on public education (.) as we will  
 52 on the ec-economy (.) on the environment (.) on healthcare (.) we  
 53 will (.) search out and find new voters across British Columbia  
 54 (.) it's why I'm in this race (.) it's how we're going to win the  
 55 next election (.) thank you very much I look forward to your  
 56 questions.

57 A [(9s applause )]]

## Extract 1c:

01 NS Good afternoon everyone my name is Nicholas Simons=I'm the MLA  
 02 for Powell River, Sunshine Coast (.) it's a pleasure to see you  
 03 all here (1) I'd like to just start by saying I've agreed with  
 04 both of my colleagues and I'm going to agree with my other two  
 05 afterwords so (.) we're all on the same team (3)

06 A [(4s laughter )]]

07 NS in 2003 I was working on reserve (1) taking care of a program  
 08 that administered programs in justice and in alcohol and drugs  
 09 (.) health (.) child welfare (1) and income assistance (2) it was  
 10 a (.) preoccupying job that didn't give me a lot of time to pay  
 11 attention to provincial politics ↑until I got a call ↓one day (2)  
 12 from (.) a member of the Ministry for Children and Families who  
 13 asked me to ↑investigate the death of a child (1) uh from  
 14 Vancouver Island (2) it was at that point (.) after doing a  
 15 review (1) I realized (.) that government had (1) <put their  
 16 priority> ahead of the priorities of children in this province

17 (2) that they put their short term economic interests (.) ahead  
 18 of the wellbeing of the most vulnerable citizens of our province  
 19 (.) the children (.) children living at risk (.) and I thought  
 20 about it (.) and I realized that in fact they paid enough=as much  
 21 attention to that file as they did (.) to others (.) which  
 22 they've neglected (2) the responsibility of government (.) in my  
 23 opinion (.) is to protect the public interest (1) and when we get  
 24 distracted by slogans (3) and vanity projects (1) we're doing no  
 25 one any good (1) people are becoming more and more disenchanted  
 26 with politics (1) because the public interest is not (.) at the  
 27 highest (2) on the list (3) government made a lot of bad  
 28 decisions (.) they were privatizing (.) they were contracting out  
 29 (.) they were ↑essentially doing ↑everything to dismantle what  
 30 our forefathers have fought for in this province (3) it's time in  
 31 this province to get people more engaged in politics (.) and we  
 32 can only do that (.) by showing (.) the people of this province  
 33 (.) that we as a party (1) are ↑strong (1) are ↑united (1) are  
 34 ↑unafraid of vigorous debate (.) to incorporate divergent views  
 35 (1) that's what's going to appeal to the people of this province  
 36 (.) and that's what's going to get us electoral success (1)  
 37 integrity in politics (.) is not just something we can just hope  
 38 to have (.) we have to stand on every principle proudly (1) the  
 39 way the people who founded our party did (1) we have to do that  
 40 without apology (.) without regret (.) I'm seeking (.) the  
 41 leadership of the NDP (1) to help make the party stronger (.) and  
 42 to put us in a position to win (.) and I'll tell you (.) I'm  
 43 proud to stand here with my (.) perch here with my colleagues (.)  
 44 and offer what I can to the party (.) in that capacity (.) thank  
 45 you very much.  
 46 A [((9s applause ))]

Extract 1d:

01 MF My name is Mike Farnworth (.) and I'm the MLA for Port Coquitlam  
 02 (.) and like everyone up here (.) I want to be the leader of the  
 03 BC NDP (.) and I want to be the leader because I know (.) that  
 04 all of us in this room (.) <want to win the next  
 05 election>.  
 06 A [((5s applause ))]  
 07 MF Its great to be here in Surrey (2) I know the community really  
 08 well (.) I grew up just across the river in Port Coquitlam (.)  
 09 and every Saturday (.) my mom would load the five kids into the  
 10 back of the station wagon (.) and we would drive over the Port  
 11 Mann Bridge to go shopping at Guildford (.) it was a ↑big deal  
 12 ↓back then (.) but you know what? (.) when you come across that  
 13 bridge ↑today (.) and you see Surrey ↑today (.) you realize that  
 14 Surrey really is a big deal (.) that it's the future of British  
 15 Columbia (1) this community-  
 16 A [((4s applause ))]  
 17 MF like so many communities around British Columbia (.) is full of  
 18 potential (.) it is full of opportunity (.) it is full of  
 19 resources (.) it is full of talented people (.) who want to get

20 things done (.) but it's like ↑every other community in this  
 21 ↓province (.) it faces challenges (.) challenges with ↑health  
 22 care (.) Surrey Memorial Hospital is a classic example (.)  
 23 challenges in ↑education (.) the lack of school ↑construction (.)  
 24 the number of ↑portables (.) it faces challenges on ↑social  
 25 issues (.) just like every other community in this province (.)  
 26 and one of the things I've learned traveling around British  
 27 Columbia during this leadership campaign (.) is that people want  
 28 a change in government (.) they want us to win the next election  
 29 (.) and we can do that (.) if we broaden our base of support (.)  
 30 get people voting for us (.) who haven't voted for us (.) before  
 31 (.) and we can do it if we're relevant to them (.) we can do it  
 32 if we talk to them on the issues that matter to them each and  
 33 every day when they come home (.) the issues that matter to them  
 34 and their families (.) we have to be relevant on education (.) we  
 35 have to be relevant on healthcare (.) and on public safety, and  
 36 on the environment, and on jobs and the economy.

37 A [((5s applause ))]

38 MF and if we do that (.) in a ↑positive (2) agenda (.) that speaks  
 39 to the hopes and aspirations of British Columbians (.) we will  
 40 win the next election (.) and we will be more than an opposition  
 41 party, we will become a governing party in British  
 42 Columbia (.) because that's why I'm running for leader of the BC

43 A [((9s applause

44 ))]

45 MF NDP (6) I believe we have to chose a leader (.) who can appeal  
 46 (.) to the aspirations and the hopes of British Columbians (.)  
 47 and do it in a positive way (.) that gets people excited (.) I'm  
 48 looking forward to doing that (.) that's why I'm running (.)  
 49 that's why I ask you join me (.) and help me become leader on  
 50 April seventeenth=so that we can win (.) the next election (.)  
 51 thank you very much.

52 A [((8s applause ))]

Extract 1e:

01 DL uh thank you to everybody for being here and giving up your sunny  
 02 Sunday afternoon to come and hear what we all have to say (.) my  
 03 name's Dana Larson (.) I've been an active member of the NDP for  
 04 eight ↑years (.) and I'm here today because I'm ↑idealistic (.)  
 05 because I'm passionate about the future of our party and our  
 06 province (.) and because I believe I have a set of policies and  
 07 priorities which will resonate with the members of our party (.)  
 08 and with the people of British Columbia (.) and I'm basing my  
 09 platform upon four pillars (.) ↑democracy (.) ↑sustainability (.)  
 10 social ↑justice (.) and smart on ↓crime (.) for ↑democracy (.) I  
 11 would begin with our own party (.) and as party leader, I would  
 12 make sure, that the members and constituency associations .h are  
 13 always fully informed .h and empowered to shape party policy on  
 14 an ongoing basis, and not simply once every two years (.) at a

15 A [((5s applause

16 ))]

17 DL delegating convention (3) for democracy in our province .h I  
18 would begin by strengthening the referendum and ballot initiative  
19 legislation first passed by the NDP in 1996 .h as Premier .h I  
20 would lower the threshold of signatures required .h to make it  
21 easier for the people of our province .h to have a direct say .h  
22 in the issues of the day .hh for ↑sustainability .h I would begin  
23 as party leader by making sure that sustainable BC .h was at the  
24 forefront of our next election campaign (2)

25 A [((1s applause ))]

26 DL and as Premier (.) I would put those ideas into practice .h by  
27 shifting our focus away from cars and roads .h and towards public  
28 transport .h and rail .h and as Premier .h I would work to  
29 maximize the use of the skytrain and public transit system .h by  
30 removing the fares, which too often simply act as a barrier to  
31 access (2) when we come to (.) social justice, I would begin by

32 A [((4s applause ))]

33 DL reforming our tax system .h as Premier .h I would roll back all  
34 of the Liberal corporate tax cuts from 2001 .h that have served  
35 not to bring more jobs and more employment .h but have only left  
36 a gaping hole in our budget (.) further .h I would

37 A [((2s applause ))]

38 DL add a new top tax bracket=if you're earning over more than a  
39 quarter of a million dollars a year .h we would increase your  
40 marginal tax rate by eleven percent .h these two tax changes (2)

41 A [((6s applause

42 ))]

43 DL these two tax changes would balance our deficit, and leave us  
44 with a half a billion dollar surplus in our first year .h money  
45 which I would entirely put .h into k-12 education (1) finally we  
46 come to being smart on crime .h as Premier .h I would stand up to  
47 Stephen Harper's expensive prison spending spree .h for which he  
48 wants the provinces to foot the bill (.) as a society we must  
49 recognize that more police and more prisons do not always make us  
50 safer .h and we must recognize that prison .h is not the solution  
51 for ↑homelessness .h for drug ↑addiction .h or for mental health  
52 ↓issues (5)

53 A [((6s applause ))]

54 DL I believe that our party and our province need bold (.)  
55 progressive socialist leadership .h that is what I wish to offer  
56 during my election campaign .h and that is what I would offer as  
57 party leader (.) thank you.

58 A [((8s applause ))]

## Appendix B:

The three pre-determined questions were:

- 1) “When accounting for inflation, per-student post-secondary funding is lower today than it was 10 years ago. As a result, tuition fees have gone through the roof, quality has been eroded, and class-sizes have ballooned. What should be done to insure that BC’s universities and colleges are able to provide the best possible public education and how would you make them more affordable for working families?”
- 2) “Many suggest that besides the inadequate funding levels, the current funding formula for the k-12 schools is broken. Some have proposed replacing it. Please elaborate on how you would fix the current funding mechanism. If you wish, you can comment on the funding levels as well.”
- 3) “In the k-12 public education system what is your opinion about class size limits, the current legislated standards guaranteeing class size and class composition levels, and the way that these standards are enforced?”

The four audience-submitted questions were:

- 1) “What are you willing to do about good paying jobs in BC going over to India and the Philippines?”
- 2) “What services would you fight for for families who’ve adopted children with mental health disabilities?”
- 3) “What do you feel is the most important item that you should do when first elected leader of the NDP?”
- 4) “Would you be willing to restore core funding to women’s centers in BC?”

The question submitted via the Internet was:

- 1) “To what level will you restore funding to the Ministry of Agriculture? What will you do for the farmers of BC?”