# INTRODUCTION

Addressing the unique social, political, and economic context for universities and academia in Vancouver, British Columbia, this publication is part of Muntadas' residency through the Audain Visual Artist in Residence Program at the School for Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University and is realized in partnership with *Line* magazine and the Audain Gallery. *About Academia (Case Study: Simon Fraser University, Vancouver BC)* adds to the work initiated by Muntadas' original project, *About Academia*, which was produced through the Art Forum program at the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies at Harvard University in 2011. The two panel discussions reproduced here were organized to locate Muntadas' project in Vancouver and further essays from students, academics, and activists were commissioned to negotiate the site-specific context and history of academia and the university at Simon Fraser University and beyond.

# ABOUT ACADEMIA VANCOUVER

**Ian Angus, Glen Coulthard, Serge Guilbaut,**
**Antoni Muntadas, and Geraldine Pratt**
**Moderator: Kirsten McAllister**

**Sabine Bitter:** Hello everyone. First of all, I would like to acknowledge that we are on unceded Coast Salish Territories. I am Sabine Bitter, I am a faculty member of the Visual Art area here in the School for the Contemporary Arts: I would like to welcome you all to this panel discussion with a quotation from Antoni Muntadas, who is is our current artist in residence.

*[Warning: Perception Requires Involvement, (Antoni Muntadas) on screen]*

This is part of Muntadas's series *On Translation* yet it is a phrase which characterizes all of his work. Hopefully you all have seen the exhibition downstairs entitled *About Academia*—it is an investigation into the relationship between the university and academia. Muntadas worked on *About Academia* for over three years and he emphasizes three main topics within the project: privatization, corporatization, and gentrification.

*About Academia* has been located in and focused on the university system in the U.S., however, I think this project and its three focal points are really relevant and crucial for the context of Vancouver as well. Especially if we think of the new location and the context for the School of Contemporary Arts here, located in the Woodward's complex in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and named the Goldcorp Centre for the Arts.

Muntadas' presence in the art world is remarkable and, personally, I have known his work for decades through a network of students, collaborators, and institutions. So, Antoni, it's an honour to work with you on this project.

Kirsten McAllister will introduce the panelists—Geraldine Pratt, Ian Angus, Glen Coulthard, and Serge Guilbaut—and I have the pleasure to introduce Kirsten before I hand over the panel to her. Kirsten is an associate professor in the School of Communication here at SFU. Her research focuses on memory and political violence and her publications, exemplified by the book, *Terrain of Memory: A Japanese-Canadian Memorial Project*, include studies of how memories of World War II Japanese-Canadian internment camps circulate in the present.

She also co-edited *Located Memory: Photographic Acts* with Annette Kuhn and has published numerous articles and interviews on photography and memory, the cultural tactics of marginalized groups as well as popular representations of displacement and loss. Kirsten is also a co-director of the Centre for Policy Studies on Culture and Communities at SFU. Last year I was pleased to be on a panel, which Kirsten put

together, with Enda Brophy, Catherine Murray, and Colin Browne, entitled "The Neoliberal University and Globalization: a discussion on the fate or future of the arts, humanities, and social science as critical and creative forces." So this panel tonight continues an ongoing discussion. Many people also in the audience are deeply invested in these issues. So, just before I hand it over to Kirsten, I would like frame our discussion with a quotation from the publication that accompanies *About Academia* it's from an interview with Muntadas and Ute Meta Bauer, and she says, "There are turning points in our society, usually related to politics, and these are the moments when the divisions between academia and university becomes obvious. This is when you stand up for academic values, versus the apparatus that hosts you, which usually is related to the power that constitutes and finances this machinery."[1]

Thanks and enjoy the panel. I will welcome Kirsten now.

*[clapping]*

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thanks so much, Sabine, for that introduction. I actually want to start by thanking Sabine for bringing Antoni Muntadas to Simon Fraser University and setting up his residency at SFU's Audain Gallery. It's an immense honour and opportunity to have Muntadas as SFU's artist in residence here in Vancouver. Since Sabine has arrived in Vancouver at SFU, this is just one of many art projects she's instigated—collaboratively interfacing the landscapes of this city and, in fact, this region with critical and generative networks of artistic action in Europe, across the Americas and into the economic South. So her collaboration here, with Muntadas, is yet another project of experimental exploration and revisioning of the spaces of production and potentiality. Here and across the rhizomic structures of power. So thank you, Sabine, for everything you've done to transform the space here. I'll now introduce Antoni Muntadas. He was born in Barcelona and lives and has worked in New York since 1971. His works have been exhibited in major art venues such as the Venice Biennale, documenta in Kassel, the Whitney Biennale, and museums ranging from the MOMA New York to the Museo Nacional Reina Sofia in Madrid. He's professor of practice at ACT (that's art, culture, and technology) in the Department of Architecture at MIT. And he's a visiting professor at IUAV in Venice, Italy and has also been teaching at numerous other institutions including the San Francisco Art

[1] "Ute Meta Bauer", *About Academia (the transcriptions: an internal document),* (Cambridge, MA: no publisher, 2011) p127.

Institute and the Cooper Union in New York City. So we welcome you to present here.

*[clapping]*

Antoni Muntadas: Thank you. I will do a very short introduction to why the project *About Academia* started. I feel that, since the installation is downstairs, I will not describe the installation or talk about it, and actually I would like to slowly remove myself from this panel because I think that the importance of the panel is the debate about issues of the university and academia here in Vancouver. After Sabine contacted me in New York, a conversation between Daina Augiatus [curator at The Vancouver Art Gallery] and Sabine began about the possibility of my doing this work here in Vancouver. I was concerned about contextualization, I was concerned that issues of academia and the university in the American context are very different from the Canadian, and very different from Europe, and my main concern was to see how we could present this work and also have a kind of debate. I always consider that the work I'm doing tries to or hopes to be an artifact to activate discussion and thinking. This is a dynamic I am grateful for: you, Sabine, put together this panel in order to discuss these issues and so it reflects your ideas too. I also think that when you do a project there's always private or personal reasons, as well as public reasons. In *About Academia*, originally, my personal reason is the many years of teaching at MIT and other schools, and the public reason is my perception of how academia functions. In 2009, I received an invitation from Harvard to develop a project and I decided that it was a good occasion to analyze and explore a school town—Cambridge, where MIT and Harvard are, as well as other universities—where the debate in the academic world is very evident. I decided that through the two universities I could access a lot of information and experience through the people teaching there. I started to do a series of interviews with people who had been working at MIT or Harvard for many years. In the beginning, I concentrated on Cambridge, but then through the work—I think a project starts one way but always evolves—I incorporated more interviews with other people in relationship to the issues that started to emerge. So the project started by exploring issues of the creation of knowledge that I think are part of what the university is, but I was also interested to analyze the exercise of power by the people who are involved in academia. I think the interview is one tool that is important in sociology and anthropology, and sometimes we forget its importance

in other disciplines as field work. The questions were: university versus academia; values, private versus public; institution versus corporation; alumni, donors and trustees as a network; space, city, and self-criticism. When I started to think about the space, the place, where the development of the university is, I started to think about architecture and about city planning and I started to see, obviously, what universities these days are involved in—in a word, expansion. And expansion is connected with gentrification and I think this is something that people like David Harvey and Mark Wigley are talking about, and they were really the last people I interviewed because I think the issuesbegan to be strongly apparent. Anyway, I just want to say then, that *About Academia* came out of a kind of mix between personal reasons and public reasons. I think particularly the issues of public and private are present in universities around the world, and in Canada too, though it may play out in very different ways compared to other places. I will leave it there—I think that is about five minutes.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Yes, very good.

**Antoni Muntadas:** I know we are concerned here that nobody exceeds five minutes.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Yes. We hear you. Thank you. Thank you very much. I'd like to next introduce Serge Guilbaut. He's a professor of art history at the University of British Columbia. His books include, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom and the Cold War.* There's the book, *Voir, Ne pas Voir, Faut Voir: Essais sur la Perception et la Non Perception des Oeuvres* and also *Los Espejismos de la Imagen*. So please.

**Serge Guilbault:** So thank you very much. Thank you very much for inviting me too. Like you [Muntadas] I moved from one continent to another—I moved from France to California, for a PhD, and then to Vancouver. Through these moves, I could see the differences between the art worlds, but also between universities. When my career started—a long time ago—I was an artist, then I was a photographer, then I was an art critic, and I was writing criticism of cinema for a newspaper in France. However, at the time that I wanted to study and write about modern art, it was very difficult to do in France because the French professors thought we had to wait fifty years in order to work on an artist. *[laughter]*. So with a Fulbright grant I went to the States, to UCLA, which was a lot more interesting than in France, particularly in the way professors related to students. I was also

lucky because I arrived in the late 70s when the field of art history was exploding and it was no longer in the hands of connoisseurship.

When I came to Vancouver, I was finishing *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art* and I was struck by two things. First of all, the way the universities were built here. It was not like in France where the university is in the middle of the city—for instance in Bordeaux where the university is in the centre of the city and next to the fantastic Bar New York where we gathered after class with a few professors for a coffee and a beer. In Vancouver, this was difficult. At both of the universities (UBC and SFU), we were literally in a tower, in an ivory tower. The wonderful city is in the middle, but we had UBC on edge of the city, on the beach and SFU at the other edge, on a mountain. It was an extraordinary situation in the placement of the universities—and what was interesting was not that we were protected, but that the city was protected from us intellectuals by a large forest *[laughter]*. I always thought this was quite symbolic and I realized what the university was about.

In preparing for the panel tonight, I thought of Bill Readings' book from the 1990s, *The University in Ruins* [1996]. A lot of the issues we are discussing here have been touched upon in the 1990s. The world—I mean the Western world—has changed since the late 1980s with the economic boom and transformation and then the economic disaster. We have seen the rise in the importance of marketing. And I wanted to show what I mean by this through the example of *Artforum*, now. When I started to read *Artforum* it was thinner, and it discussed interesting issues, had fights over theoretical issues, and was very interesting. Now we have *this*—I weighed it today, it's almost two kilos, four pounds of ads that you have to fight your way through in order to find a text. And sometimes those texts are sharp, I'm not necessarily criticizing the content... but to me this is a major danger not only in relation to reading, but also in relation to universities. And maybe this is one thing we're going to talk about tonight.

*[laughter]*

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thank you. Thank you. Thank you so much. So next we have Geraldine Pratt. She's a professor of geography at the University of British Columbia. She is the author of *Working Feminism, and Families Apart: Migrant Mothers and the Conflicts of Labor and Love* and she's also the co-author of *Gender, Work and Space*.

**Geraldine Pratt:** Thank you Kirsten. I am in the geography department at UBC but I'm also the Associate Dean of Faculty and Equity in the Faculty of Arts. When I began as Associate Dean two years ago, I really loved the fact that I was also the departmental faculty rep for the union—the faculty association—and in the Dean's office. There's something pleasurable and I think quite important to hold our contradictions together, to actually embody them and really own them. But then the faculty association didn't feel very comfortable holding that contradiction, not because of me but more generally, and turfed the Associate Deans out of the collective bargaining unit. So now I am solidly in management, really in the belly of this beast that we're talking about. And in that context I've been really interested to watch, get a front row seat to watch some of the shenanigans that go on in the central administration. But also to think about the opportunities that exist to change the institution or to at least hold it accountable in some way. Watching the university from the Dean's office, there are some very interesting contradictions. On the one hand, at the moment at UBC there's a huge investment in moving the university away from a flexible and casualized faculty labour force, which is quite unusual, I think. So, at a significant cost to the university, sessional positions are being replaced and made into permanent positions. But at the same time the financial well-being of the university is increasingly contingent on attracting international students who pay differential fees. So by 2020 it's projected that a third of the students in the faculty of arts will be paying international fees. That's a huge transformation in the university and really could be seen as a way of quasi-privatizing the public university. It's certainly going to change the class composition of our student body; it'll be increasingly elite. These "global citizens" are going to have a particular class positioning.

We can see the internationalization of the university in the infrastructure of the university as well, and rather than (or alongside) gentrification, what's more apparent on the UBC campus, out in the woods, is the Haussmann-ization of the campus. There's this construction, this kind of crazy construction right now of a clearly articulated network of arterial pedestrian pathways with a great gushing fountain at the intersection. Unlike Haussmann's Paris, I'm kind of hoping this has less to do with the securitization or militarization of space than it has to do with recruiting international students and ratcheting up UBC's ranking in the Shanghai Index and that kind of thing.

In terms of my research, much of my research for the last sixteen or

so years has been in collaboration with a number of Filipino-Canadian community organizations; in particular, the Philippine Women Centre of BC. Most of our research has been around labour issues; in our case, temporary work migration. The Philippine Women Centre has a very long history of working with academics. They've thought very carefully about the progressive possibilities that emerge from that kind of alliance. And they've thought very carefully about the conditions under which that is more or less likely to happen. So I've learned a great deal from them about how to do that kind of solidarity work. I've also been thinking about the university in community through my teaching. I've taught this so-called community service learning course for the last six years through a research and methods class and because I've been in the Dean's office, my PhD student and now teaching post-doc is carrying on. And we've put some really interesting longstanding collaborations in place. We've collaborated with Crabtree Corner, in this neighbourhood, for the last six years, doing research projects that they've defined and that they've found incredibly useful. We have a different kind of collaboration going on in that class with Western Front and with some folks at SFU, Barry Truax and some of his PhD students in the World Soundscape Project. So we've collaborated around making and performing Urban Soundscapes—we've performed them at Western Front once a year. D.B. Boyko has been pretty enthusiastic about this collaboration as well. At the same time I've been a little skeptical about the way in which the university has latched on to this notion of community service learning as an unqualified good and as evidence of the university's goodness. I'm also concerned about the fact that within my faculty it's definitely women and racialized men that have taken on the labour of moving the university into different communities, in sometimes very promising ways.

Finally, what I'd add to these preliminary remarks is that I don't see the university as having a coherent set of values and I think that this is a really good thing. So what I do in the classroom and what I do as a researcher is what a lot of my colleagues do, lots and lots of colleagues do. So for example my colleague, Juanita Sundberg, also in geography, teaches a course on problematizing solidarity across the global north and global south and she always does that in collaboration with a community group from the Global South, and it's a profound kind of collaboration within that class. Last year the focus was on extracting the truth about Canadian mining in the Americas, which is of course an incredibly important issue for us to think about in our universities. After all, the reason we're sitting

here in this particular space is because of the generosity of the Canadian mining industry. Her values are my values and I would really like to claim those as the University's values, my university's values. And I think there's a really important political point here. We have to think of whose values we normalize when we talk about the university. Certainly we have a really important role to play in critiquing the university. But I think we also have a really important role in bringing into visibility the kinds of—other kinds of values and projects that are underway. And if you keep telling the same old stories, narrativizing the neoliberal, corporate university in the same old ways, I think we're not fulfilling that second strand of our responsibility, which is to tell narratives about the values that are already in play in our universities. Thanks.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thanks very much. Next we'll have Glen Coulthard. He's an Assistant Professor in the First Nations Studies Program and the Department of Political Science at the University of British Columbia. His most recent work on Frantz Fanon and the politics of recognition won *Contemporary Political Theory*'s Annual Award for the best article of the year. He is Yellowknife Dené.

**Glen Coulthard:** Thank you. First I'd like to acknowledge that we are on the unceded, traditional and occupied territories of the Coast Salish peoples. I'd also like to give a nod out to the more than 133 cities across the globe, where indigenous peoples and their supporters took to the streets today to express their resistance and refusal to ongoing colonial rule in Canada and elsewhere under the banner Idle No More. I'm not an administrator, I teach. I write some stuff and I'm just going to run through some of the research that I do and I'll leave it for the conversation afterwards to kind of place it in the context of the power relations of universities and the alternative practices that I engage in pedagogically as a teacher and educator. So my research engages a multiplicity of diverse anti-colonial traditions and practices to challenge the increasingly commonplace idea that the settler-colonial relationship between indigenous peoples and the Canadian state can be adequately transformed by a politics of recognition. So this requires two definitions: what I mean by settler-colonialism and what I mean by politics of recognition. The settler-colonial relationship is one that is characterized by ongoing domination. It is a relationship where power, in this case interrelated material and non-material facets of economic, gendered, racial and state power has been structured into a relatively secure and immobile set of

hierarchical social relationships that continue to facilitate the dispossession of indigenous peoples of our lands and of our self-determining authority. In this respect Canada is no different than any other settler-colonial power. In the Canadian context, colonial domination continues to be structurally oriented around the state's commitment to maintain through force, fraud, and most recently so-called negotiations over land and self-government, the ongoing access to the land and resources that contradictorily provide the material and spiritual sustenance of our societies on the one hand, and the foundation of colonial state formation, settlement, and capitalist development on the other. I take politics of recognition to refer to the now expansive range of recognition based models of liberal pluralism that seek to reconcile indigenous assertions of nationhood with settler-state sovereignty via the accommodation of indigenous identity claims in some form of renewed legal and political relationship with the state. Although these models tend to vary in both theory and practice, most call for the delegation of land, capital, and political power from the state to indigenous peoples through a combination of land claim settlements, economic development initiatives, and self-government agreements. Counter to the emancipatory claims of the politics of recognition, my research demonstrates that instead of ushering in an era of peaceful co-existence grounded on the idea of mutual recognition or equality between peoples, the politics of recognition in its contemporary form promises to reproduce the very configurations of colonialist, racist, patriarchal power that indigenous people's struggles for recognition have always rendered problematic. So to demonstrate this claim in my work I theoretically and empirically map the contours of what I consider to be a divisive or decisive shift in the operation of colonial power following the recognition, or the emergence of the recognition paradigm following the release of the federal government' s infamous White Paper in 1969. In the two centuries leading to this historic policy proposal, which essentially called for the blanket assimilation of the status Indian population by unilaterally removing all institutionally enshrined aspects of legal and political differentiation that differed us from Canadians. The reproduction of the colonial relationship between indigenous peoples was geared around genocidal practices of forced exclusion and marginalization. It was overt. Any cursory examination into the character of Canadian-Indian policy during this period will attest to this fact. For example, this era witnessed Canada's repeated attempts to uproot and destroy the autonomy of our modes of life through institutions such as residential schools, through

the imposition of settler-state policies aimed at explicitly undercutting indigenous political economies and relations to and with land, through the violent dispossession of first nations women's rights to land and community membership under sexist provisions of the Indian Act, through the theft of aboriginal children via racist child welfare policies and through the near wholesale dispossession of indigenous people's territories and modes of traditional governance in exchange of delegated administrative powers to be exercised over relatively miniscule reserve lands. All of these policies sought to marginalize indigenous peoples and communities with the ultimate goal being our elimination, if not physically then as cultural, political and legal peoples distinguishable from the rest of Canadian society. These initiatives reflect the more or less unconcealed, unilateral and coercive nature of colonial rule during most of the 19th and 20th centuries. So, to get at precisely how colonial rule made this transition from a more or less unconcealed structure of domination to a mode of colonial governance mentality that works through the limited freedoms afforded by state recognition and accommodation, my work significantly but not exclusively relies on—or engages with the work of anti colonial theorist, physchiatrist, and revolutionary Frantz Fanon. *Black Skin, White Masks,* for example, offers a ground-breaking critical analysis of the affirmative relationship drawn between recognition and freedom in the master-slave dialectic of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*; a critique which I claim is equally applicable to contemporary liberal recognition-based approaches to indigenous self determination in Canada. Fanon's analysis suggests that in a context where colonial hegemony requires the—or in context where colonial relationship is not reproduced through force or violence alone, the maintenance of settler-state hegemony requires the production of what he liked to call colonized subjects; namely the production of the specific modes of thought, colonial thought, desire, and behavior, which implicitly or explicitly commit the colonized to the types of practices and subject positions that are required for our ongoing domination. However, unlike the liberalized appropriation of Hegel that continues to inform many contemporary theorists of identity politics, in Fanon recognition is not posited as a source of freedom for the colonized but rather as the field of power through which colonial relationships are maintained and upheld. This is the form of recognition, Fanon writes, that Hegel never described. And this is the form of recognition that I seek to interrogate in my own work when looking at Canadian-Indian policy post 1969. *Mahsi Cho*.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thank you very much. It'll be really interesting to hear you talk more later on, as you said, about doing that work within the institution and some of the transformations at UBC and the possibilities and also the challenges. We next have Ian Angus. Ian Angus is a Professor of Humanities at Simon Fraser University. His recent books include *Identity and Justice* and also the book *Love the Questions: University Education and Enlightenment.*

**Ian Angus:** Thanks very much to Sabine Bitter and the other organizers for asking me to contribute today. I've entitled my prepared remarks for today "Restless subjectivity and the question of the university."

The university has come into question.[2] The social role of the university has so changed within the last three decades that those within it, and many outside it, have been forced to wonder what it has become and what of its future may be discerned or created.

What was the university? Each social form contains a desire for knowledge that is appropriate to that social form and concentrates that desire in a certain institution. Ancient Greek society produced philosophical schools, feudal society produced monasteries, tribal societies institutionalize the wisdom of elders. The modern university is the concentrated site of the desire for scientific knowledge and the consequent necessity to educate students into its practice.[3] Since the founding of the University of Berlin in 1810 and the subsequent near-universal spread of its model, the interpenetration of research and teaching within a scientific paradigm has defined the purpose of the university.[4] Moreover, the state has played a crucial role from the beginning in regulating, as well as often funding, modern universities.

Research, and the induction of students into the activity of research, is oriented to discovery. Discovery supposes that a significant piece of knowledge is as yet unknown. The modern university thus proceeds from what is already known toward what is not yet known. Ideally, in the

[2] While it has always been possible to question the purpose of the university, if one was so inclined, for professional, personal or political reasons, this question has now become both widespread and insistent for the reasons discussed briefly here.

[3] These historical remarks on the role of the university are based on my *Love the Questions: University Education and Enlightenment* (Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Press, 2009).

[4] Which immediately makes one wonder whether the spread of teaching-only positions at contemporary universities, and the design of teaching-only institutions supposedly at the university level, augurs a significant change in the social role of the scientific paradigm.

scientific mode, what becomes known can be fitted smoothly into what is already known so that the process of searching for new knowledge can be continuously repeated. The university not only tolerates, but requires, this uncertainty—that the total available knowledge is not sufficient. A certain restlessness that requires living with uncertainty thus inhabits the process of scientific research and structures inquiry in the modern university.

In its more recent incarnation after the Second World War, another task was layered over the scientific paradigm—the creation of an educated citizenry. Democracy—which we may define quickly as the active participation in citizenship by the greatest possible number—was taken to require widespread higher education, both because we live in a technological-bureaucratic society that requires some sophistication to understand and evaluate but also because individual advancement was seen as part of the democratic promise. The compromise between these three goals was the basis for the growth of higher education in the second half of the 20th century: scientific research, citizenship, and individual advancement. The dismantling of the welfare state in more recent years has pulled apart this compromise and made it unclear at what goals the university is now supposed to aim.

During the era of this compromise, the uncertainty that inhabits scientific research was brought into relation with another, deeper, uncertainty that I want to call "restless subjectivity."[5] The citizenship role of the university meant that not only science but also the circulation of social meaning became important to higher education. University education involved the induction, understanding, and criticism of social meaning and therefore needed to expand from a simply scientific model of knowledge to one including social cohesion and participation. This brought traditionally humanistic forms of knowledge closer to the core goals of the modern university. Uncertainty was no longer confined to the process of scientific research aiming to terminate in new knowledge but expanded to the restless subjectivity that inhabits the circulation of social meaning. Thus the arts and humanities in their traditional defence of restless subjectivity through personal quest not expected to become completed in solid knowledge, moved toward the centre of higher education. The current questioning is provoked by a global capitalist order in which state regulation and funding

[5] What I am calling "restless subjectivity" here, and its relation to the "uncertainty" inherent in scientific research, is an explication of what is called "enlightenment" in *Love the Questions*. The current text is an attempt to explicate in greater detail the subjective aspect of the concept of enlightenment upon which that text relies.

has decreased drastically such that the university's role in the circulation of social meaning is shrinking to the production of profit in a manner comparable to that to which science and technology long ago submitted. Education is amputated to become training.

When I say "restless subjectivity," I am thinking of Hegel's unhappy consciousness, the existential necessity to create meaning, Marx's theory of alienation, the artistic search indicated by Rainer Maria Rilke's phrase that "a creator must be a world for himself",[6] and so on. Restless subjectivity is more at home in the arts and humanities because the texts on which these disciplines focus are "creative" in the sense that they express the subjectivity of the writer—or, in more contemporary terms, deploy a linguistic-imagistic usage which constructs a singular textual formation. Restless subjectivity may dream of a resolution, a coming home toward uncomplicated belonging, but it is itself constructed such that this can never be its own achievement. In this it remains distinct from scientific research. Even past achievement does not count as definitively known.

By "restless subjectivity" I mean a subjectivity that aims in the first place at a singular textual formation rather than an inter-subjectively shared acquisition, where any given singular text produced will be inadequate to the continued questioning undertaken by that subjectivity.[7] Of course, such a singular expression can later begin to affect the social, shared world. Such a movement from restless subjectivity, through singular text, toward inter-subjective affectivity is characteristic of the arts and humanities.

I won't try to define subjectivity itself, other than to say that it shouldn't be thought of in an ontological sense as "person" or "individual," but rather in terms of a difference, or non-identity, produced by the intersection of circuits of communication. The restlessness of such a subjectivity becomes a source, in the sense of an origination within its field, for new interactions not reducible to prior circuits. What we might today associate with what used to be called artistic creativity is such an origination in which the restlessness of restless subjectivity outreaches any institution or any final destination.

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[6] Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*, trans. M. D. Herter Norton (Norton and Co.: New York, 1993) p. 21.

[7] But even so the study of these texts can be seen to take a scientific form or to terminate in a scientific knowledge and so the defence of restless subjectivity is not guaranteed by being a study of the arts or humanities. Indeed, the reduction of the creative and evaluative aspects of the arts and humanities to a scientific form is one of the tendencies brought forth by the modern university.

Restless subjectivity therefore necessarily has a difficult relation to the university, indeed to any institution, but it nevertheless requires knowledge at its beginning and constant engagement, and thus is drawn to the university even while its restless character draws it away. Similarly, the university as institution is always uncomfortable with restless subjectivity but, to the extent that it still plays a role in the circulation of social meaning, cannot do without it. The question of the university today is about the extent to which it can remain a site that harbours restless subjectivity or whether it has capitulated to become training for definite tasks.

Restless subjectivity in this sense is both perennially, necessarily, produced within emergent culture and systemically repressed by it. This contradiction between ubiquitous organization through the exchange-hierarchy nexus of contemporary production and emergent self-organization is the immanent tension that constitutes our time.[8] It is not reducible to the university, but the university as an institution is caught up in this contradiction.

Those of us for whom restless subjectivity is a fate or a destiny, who cannot ignore that of ourselves that will not sit comfortably within training for definite tasks, seek an institution within which such questioning is understood and encouraged. Over time, the coffee house, the art gallery, meetings in private homes, the street corner, have served as sites for the concentration of questioning energy. The site changes in relation to the possibilities created and excluded by surrounding forces. The question is whether the university any longer can be a place for the encouragement of restless subjectivity.

Thank you.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thank you very much. So as all of you were speaking, I was thinking about the key theme: the university's transformation. And there's a lot of hope in what many of you addressed in your presentations. So I'm wondering if you could, in different ways—Geraldine for example you talked about UBC—I'm wondering if the other panelists could talk specifically about Vancouver, UBC, Simon Fraser; and I want to draw out especially what Geraldine was saying about the contradictions and what it's like to be in the university producing in this very contradictory space of corporatization, gentrification, occupation. One of the questions that

[8] This is not to say that these two are actual social possibilities. It remains to be determined the relation between these two poles and actual social possibilities. This is the space of a new creative politics.

Antoni, you had mentioned, you were interested in, was "the alternative." Because the critique of the neoliberal university in some ways has become an industry, and so critique must be taken up by other means. So Serge, you talked about your own work inside and outside of the university and your own observations about the ways in which the universities in Vancouver in fact were built at either end of the city—and the dynamics this created for questioning the ivory tower. So I wonder if each of you could address specifically the university as a contradictory place of being and Glen, especially with the work that you've done and the possibilities at UBC, given that UBC is on Musqueam territory. There are a lot of interesting contradictions and possibilities. So in terms of alternative models, could each of you take up that theme in a little more detail. Starting with Serge, thank you.

**Serge Guilbault:** Thanks. What is interesting to me is the transformation at the university over the last twenty years or twenty-five years. When I first arrived in my department, art historians were made fun of, because society doesn't really need us. To the point that, Muntadas, when you did a show at le CAPC de Bordeaux, you interviewed all kinds of people—art critics, sociologists, and so forth—but not an art historian. So I am very happy that for this project you saw the bright light *[laughter]*. Actually I understand art historians to be part of the discourse of power through images. And as images are now the most important thing in our culture, to be able to deconstruct this discourse is quite crucial—and to do the job of deconstruction is more and more complicated.

But when I arrived also, I was surprised and impressed by Canadian institutions. I wanted to do all kinds of ambitious and strange things. In France when I proposed those things, the reaction was always, "Oh very interesting but it's too complicated," or "We do not have time," or "You are not old enough". When I came here, the first reaction of the Dean's office, for example, was "Oh great, how can we help you?" But, this, I'm sorry, this has now disappeared. The individual does not have the possibility to do this anymore: now we have to be on a team, in cooperation, we have to be attached to the project like a bunch of horses to pull the damn thing and find funding, to make money. So the atmosphere is very very different. What the university administration does not understand is that if you do a project, you have to have a certain shared understanding or amount of common feeling. You cannot mix simply because you work on 19th century culture.

So the role of a prof, it seems to me, is to make a radical critique, to

be against the ideology you are confronted with. And the students should be given space to interrogate, to discuss, and to contradict. That's very important. In the university now you really have to fit in and there is no real place, it seems to me now, for the type of discussion that I've always been interested in because of this type of professionalization and the transformation of the university.

*[laughter]*

**Kirsten McAllister:** That's perfect. I think you've really pointed out the ways in which subjects and spaces have been disciplined to the point of—even to the point where criticism itself is now professionalized. And we have very compliant types of criticism.

One of the issues that comes up regarding this talk and this event here at Woodwards is SFU's role in the gentrification of this neighbourhood. We were discussing UBC's model where the expansion is quite different than the model here in terms of gentrification and the university. Glen actually I'm kind of keen to hear what you're doing and teaching, but also if you had some ideas about gentrification too.

**Glen Coulthard:** I'll try to make what I said here relevant to the university. So if you think of, if you think instead of the colonial kind of foundation of the state and you now focus more narrowly on the colonial foundation of educational institutions in reproducing this mess that we're in, through residential schools and these sorts of things, I think that problem: the colonial character; its exclusions; its role in genocide and so on, by educational institutions, has been responded to, over the last thirty or so years, in the same way that I speak of the relationship to the state. So it's been an emerging—a demand that that history and its traces that still structure the university in the present has been put to account through a demand for recognition. So it's a recognition of more aboriginal programming, it's a recognition of more aboriginal bodies, it's a recognition or a demand for recognition that different modalities of thought be incorporated and inform the institution of universities. Now my concern is that on the one hand that serves to let the university off the hook in relationship to critiques of its ongoing coloniality and practices of racist exclusion and marginalization. So you offer a gesture of recognition by saying, well now we've included you but we've included you under very constrained—in a very constrained form of recognition that doesn't actually go about restructuring the power imbalances that are kind of

core to it. So it lets the sort of institutional thing off the hook. But my concern is that when you are entering into the institutional and discursive formation of the university with the hope or assumption that you're going to enter into it with your bodies and your own kind of modalities of thought and pedagogy—you're in a war with two profoundly asymmetrical sorts of knowledge-power conflict. So the concern is that integrative approaches to attempt to incorporate indigenous knowledge, for example in the community, are more likely going to transform those indigenous knowledges in ways that do ontological or epistemic violence to them. So I actually think that it's a very risky game, as the politics of recognition in the relationship to the state is a very risky game for the subjects who are engaging in that, i.e. Indigenous peoples. However, that politics of recognition has enabled me as a professor and an educator to enter into this game and to carve out spaces of autonomy, which I think are important for community members and students as well. So I don't think that I totally want to discredit it. But for both discursive and institutional sort of transformations I would, and I have, looked elsewhere. To establishing sites and programs that are more appropriate to the types of knowledge and education that I want to be a part of. So I helped establish, or helped work with this program. It's accredited, and there's a host of problems with that, an accredited program where we re-embed indigenous and non-indigenous students in the social relations that are embodied by indigenous, and in my case Dené, notions of land. So the land-based practices and sources of knowledge that we use and articulate in our critique of power institutions, economy, and so on. That cannot happen in a university. That has to happen and be embodied in a practice-based pedagogy, which has to be in relationship to community expertise that are appropriate to that knowledge in relationship to the land. And even in trying to get this programming and these forms of knowledge and research and knowledge acknowledged by the university, you all of a sudden have to go through a number of hoops that really compromise what you're attempting to do. It's like, what are you reading and what are the students writing and these sorts of things, when we're trying to do something far more profound and different.

**Kirsten McAllister:** So there's a lot of surveillance, by the sounds of it, in the activities you're partaking in.

**Glen Coulthard:** Well it's strange, because on the one hand there's demand for recognition that these are valid forms of knowledge and

approaches. But there's also a structural incapacity to be able to recognize what the hell you're doing. Then it's a—we have to lock in on this and retranslate it into grades and papers and these sorts of things, which does violence to the type of education that we're trying to facilitate.

**Geraldine Pratt:** Maybe there's something really positive about the idea of the university in ruins. We leave it as this shell and move some of its work sideways or elsewhere. I think there's actually a lot of potential to just take your teaching elsewhere. Like my friend Juanita Sundberg: they do their class presentations at the Rhizome Café, you know, in a public space. Or in terms of my research methods class, the class presentations take place at Western Front. I'm also interested in thinking about how to bring this work back to transform the university.

**Glen Coulthard:** Again, it's just being vigilant in attending to the risks, is my point. I'm not going to abandon demanding that indigenous knowledges and practices be recognized as legitimate forms within an institutional setting like a university, but I'm also going to be very cognizant of the risks associated with that attempt to interpellate a much more powerful field both institutionally and discursively. Because the end effect might be our interpellation into that apparatus.

**Geraldine Pratt:** But there are some interesting examples in terms of what I deal with in the Dean's office: faculty promotions and that stuff. I'm really interested in the research protocol that the university has developed with the Musqueam peoples. Researchers can't make some of the research public in the usual way. That's just part of the protocol. And it's fascinating to present cases to the senior appointments committee and they go, "Uhhh, the researcher can't publish publicly? How can the research then be reviewed and judged by academic peers?" And it's like "No, that would violate the university's protocol with the Musqueam peoples." And there's this reaction of "What?!" But the university is shifting; I mean it has to. This is a really interesting moment where the university has already shifted. The audience for the research has shifted, along with assumptions about who the knowledge is produced for and how.

**Glen Coulthard:** That's an interesting point but I would stress this point coming from the side of the researcher. That's a relationship between a community and an institution, which has been ethically making some breakthroughs in terms of the dissemination of knowledge and what

can and can't be published. But me going up for tenure under those arrangements, especially in the context of collaboratively published community-based project, which have these restrictions on dissemination and so on, that the university has been very stubborn in being able to accommodate for indigenous faculty and researchers. So we're still held accountable to a certain understanding of knowledge production and dissemination and publication and so on, which just means that it's a double burden, which I'm fine with. I have to be able to do what you all do and be competitive at that but I also have to be able to have my feet grounded in different systems in order to maintain the integrity of being a native community member and scholar in the university.

**Kirsten McAllister:** UBC is a really interesting case in particular but I wonder if we could shift to Ian and come back to the points and the issues you raised. Especially in terms of the restless subjectivity that you talked about and in terms of SFU and the work you've done, if you could address how the restless subjectivity might take form, and also the disturbances it causes around these disciplined subjects, capital, and the structures of power.

**Ian Angus:** Yeah, well, thanks for the previous discussion because it reminded me of a point I wanted to make. I did want to end not just with how everything is going to the dogs because of neoliberalism. I wanted to end on the note that we're actually living in, I think; a time where there is a contradiction between a reorganization of things in a less hierarchical and more horizontally market-based form of domination due to neoliberalism. I do think it's important to understand that well. But that's going on at the same time as we have all sorts of forms of emergent self-organization going on that are changing the social environment, restructuring the university, etc. In particular, it's having the effect of restructuring the boundary between the university and the surrounding community. That means that a number of things mean different things now than they did a number of years ago. So it would seem to me one thing, for example, that I would want to do—and here I think I'm agreeing with Serge—is defend traditional scholarship: this is an important thing to do nowadays and it's not so traditional to do it now because it allows for the autonomy of the researcher to choose his or her own problems, which is now in the middle of a climate that is pushing us towards work applicable to the "community." And we know who the "community" is; it's not you or me; it's the corporate community. So the fact that one can

stand on one's traditional academic rights to choose one's own problems allows a little space to move, and I think that's important. Then the other problem is how to involve oneself with forms of emergent or, indeed, persistent self-organization that exist outside of the university and to engage with them in different and new ways which you [Glen] have been talking about. That requires a lot of creative thinking obviously, which you're obviously engaged in. So I think there's a shift going on. Now how does it pertain to SFU? Well, I can't invent a complete analysis of SFU off the cuff but the most important thing that's happened, which was referred to in Sabine's opening remarks, is the Goldcorp donation of ten million dollars for the finishing of this building and for various community programs, and the controversial nature of those programs in the Downtown East Side which surrounds this institution. This is the biggest thing that has happened to SFU along these lines in a long time. And it means a number of things, which are hard to deal with all at once. But I'll say it really quickly and directly. Canada is a haven for international mining companies: 70% of the mining companies in the world are registered in Canada because Canada has the most friendly regime to the production of surplus value from that sector. The reason for this is the governments we've had, and the history we've had, of resource extraction in this country for many years. So the whole country is becoming a one-company town, basically. Now, why do they give money to institutions like this? Because of the fact that so many of these companies are based here in Canada and this is the public regime that governs them around the world, whether they started in Canada or not. It's important that the Canadian public be kept ignorant. Every once and a while there's a bit of a development of some thought about this matter and what it means. Now that is bad from their point of view, so giving money to public institutions like the universities is a way of proving that they are good corporate citizens, that will come in, if you ask them, to talk, and talk endlessly, really endlessly, about corporate-social responsibility and things like that. And if you say things, as some of the graduate students in a group opposing this at SFU did, if you say things that talk about the actual cruel practices that they are practicing in other parts of the world, they threaten to sue you and they try to shut you down with SLAPP suits. So the role of SFU in this, is that we are one part of a larger reorganization of things that's going on in a country in which universities are being pushed to the side of being white-washers of cruel practices, which are destroying people's lives and are destroying the environment around the world. We

have to wake up to this situation and that's why I think talking about the structure of neoliberalism and how it works is a very important thing to do and it's by no means *passé*. On the other hand, to talk about it just in such a way that it seems we're all victims, and so on and there's nothing we can do about it, that's a problem too. So this brings a number of things into a new formation. One of the things is many of the people who are suffering from these things, both in Canada and in other places of the world, are aboriginal people. So there's a new kind of connection I think possible, only possible, not for sure by any means, but *possible* between the Canadian public and the traditional demands, and the new demands, of aboriginal people, and we're seeing that on the streets now. Of increasing disillusionment with the kind of government we've had for a long time here. And what's the role of the university in this? We have to struggle all we can against that structural ignorance. Because we have to play our roles as global citizens and it's a big task, big big task, which I know a lot of people here at our university and at other universities across the country are doing their damnest to play, do a bit for.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thanks very much. I'd like to now open up the discussion to the floor. So in doing this, I'd like to just go over some of the key thematics in the work and the discussions that we've had on this panel right now. So again there's the thematic of academia and university, the bodies of people and thought versus the bureaucratic structure. There's values and power, the other set of thematics are public-private; there's alumni, donors, trustees; there's institution corporation. Then there are three sets of themes: space, city, self-criticism. And in particular, what's happening here in Vancouver on, as Glen said, unceded territory, and the possibilities that are happening out of universities—all the really frightening developments. I know there's a lot of knowledge in the room, there's a lot of experience in the room, so I encourage all of you and welcome all of you to either stand up and make a point or ask a question. I will ask our panelists to address your questions and points. This is a great opportunity that Antoni Muntadas has offered—for us to come together and to engage in these issues around these formulations. When you do speak, please put up your hand and introduce yourselves. I believe there's a mike. So I'll stand up so I can see, 'cause I can't see you when I'm sitting down. Yes. Please introduce yourself...

**Mohammad Salemy:** My name is Mohammad Salemy. I'm an independent curator who lives in Vancouver. My first question has to do

with another category that could be discussed and that is the category of digitization and how the category of digital is making a huge impact on the way educational systems, particularly humanities, are moving into this changing world. And particularly digital humanities and how this is going to fit into the neoliberal model and how much resistance or how much room does it offer for working within. How much it's sort of risky and dangerous. And the other thing that I think is important to address is—and there was a major *New York Times* article about it about a few weeks ago, it was eight or nine pages—very deep sociological research about how education in America that traditionally used to be like a field in which class difference could be level, now it's actually used, or it's being used, to further divide classes through student loans and how, with the shortage of funding, how students with a background that can't afford things, end up lower than they were after their degree. So it's like schools are actually creating more class division rather than helping. So I thought maybe we could discuss these two.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thanks very much. Panelists if you could, if you'd like to address some of the questions around digital technology, forms of knowledge and relationship to neoliberalism, and the ways in which universities now actually increase the class divide. What does this look like on the ground here or in comparison to elsewhere?

**Ian Angus:** Well, about this digitization of the humanities thing. This has interested me a lot these days. And it seems to mean at least two different things. One of the things, when you do the searches and you see what people mean by the digitization of the humanities, it essentially means applying digital means to the humanities. So that it's now easy to know how many times Shakespeare said "whoremonger," or something like that, in the entire works of Shakespeare. Or you can be aware of the times where Plato referred to friendship or something like this. It actually can be kind of handy. But what it tends to do is produce more extensive works that are less deep. You know you've got more to discuss but you don't necessarily have anything deeper to discuss. There's a big push towards this. There seems to be a lot of money for it, precisely because it seems to require a lot of techie, computer techie, type people to help people like me who don't want anything to do with it. That, I think, is really uninteresting theoretically and politically but it's the major thrust of the whole thing. And it goes along with the general ideology that "the more technology, the better" and all that kind of stuff. So that's not the way to go.

On the other hand, the internet, digitization, and all of that is a phenomenon of our time and it is changing a lot of the practical things we do. And if it's our job to understand the way we are human, and the practical things through which we reaffirm that to ourselves, we need to think about this. Now it turns out that it's a lot harder to get support to think about it in this way than it is to digitize some works or something like that. So, again, this is a field which has got all sorts of tension in it. And if a person is really smart, they might be able to get some research money under the first heading and use it for the second. I would recommend that as a strategy because for the second you have to find people who really understand or a few other academics or critics who have a similar background to yourself. It's an entry into interesting work, potentially I think.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thanks. Other responses to either the digital technology or class divides, or growing disparities between groups. Panel?

**Serge Guilbault:** The class divide is what we were talking about before, right. The transformation of the university is more acute in the States. It's also the role of the state that is important. When we, in Canada, cut the funding of universities and you need money to survive, of course people are going to look for money where it is and they're going to take it from wherever it is. The problem, of course, is that we have to deal with this. Technically it sounds great to have all kinds of art galleries, museums, and even classrooms with the name of a donor and so on. So then we enter into the American tradition of—it's not the rights of something, but what is it called when you give something to somebody—charities. It's charities. Charity for me is not very interesting. Rights are very interesting, it's important. So I prefer rights, rather than charity. But this is what we are entering into. And the issue at every university, in each department, is how do we deal with that type of thing. You have to do certain things to have that money and it's given to some parts of a department, not the entire department, to do specific things. I have always fought against this, but of course I lose. Technology is one thing, but technology is only something to do something with and I'm more interested in the issues that are defined and that we should be able to discuss them freely. That's why I think the university is not over; it might be in ruins, but it is not over, because it's a space that allows for, still, some discussion, some disagreement. And also it depends—we didn't mention this, but when we were talking about the dean's office—on who runs the university.

Sometimes you have some very interesting people who understand all that we are talking about and they produce some very good products, right. Some others—as we had some examples in the past—were a total disaster. Not for the university, but for us—a disaster. So once you are aware of this I think the alternative is there. I use the alternative as well: I do also work outside the university and in different countries and so on. But I think it is important to say that the university is still a space where we can do a lot, a lot of things, a lot of thinking, a lot of transforming with students and so on. It's a fantastic atmosphere, but we have to shape it, knowing all the difficulties that you [Mohammad Salemy] are mentioning.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thank you. Antoni, you had a comment.

**Antoni Muntadas:** I want to bring up two moments that I think are important to the relationship of the university. One is the 1968 and early 70s student revolts, mainly in Europe, but also elsewhere, when the rights of students become connected to the rights of other workers and other people in revolt. And the second moment is 1984, when the Reagan administration in the United States increased the privatization of the university and encouraged "fundraising". This is when both the universities and individual departments started to search for more money. I think this moment in universities collapsed some departments that were based more on research because of the inability to fundraise compared to other departments where people with more corporate experience began to be introduced as leaders in these departments. A clear example is the formation and development of the Media Lab at MIT which is a department that appears in 1984. Nicholas Negroponte has a knack for fundraising and he joined with other forces at MIT to find funding for research, but for research that is quite beneficial to the military. So that contradiction you mentioned in terms of technology appears.

I think that research doesn't necessarily need to have an immediate application. At the Media Lab, for example, no project is built there if it does not have an immediate application.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thank you. And SFU has SIAT and is expanding; there's a lot of technological expansion. So I think we have some work to do at SFU to figure out what's happening. There are three questions, there's professor Jerry Zaslove, and then the gentleman here, and then another gentleman there, so Jerry.

**Jerry Zaslove:** Thank you. For someone like me who's been around

from zero hour, 1965 in Simon Fraser, I was interested in the fact that there are turning points in the institution, your quote "turning points". And listening to Serge, I'm interested to know where you think were the turning points—and I could even paraphrase Serge's book—how the university stole the idea of academy, of the academic.

**Serge Guilbault:** Right on.

*[laughter]*

**Jerry Zaslove:** The idea that there are turning points that one could recognize historically seems to me very important to talk about. The speed of change and the scope of change as you've just pointed out is the dominant hegemonic reality that academics don't count, really, in terms of the centralizing and monopolizing of the financial spirit—if you like, the Geist, the spirit of change—which happened pretty much in the 1980s in Vancouver, when there was an important transformation of universities. Having made that point around the deinstitutionalization of academia, the *academic*—as Ian has pointed out and maybe you could address this—is a spiritual vocation or a cultural, or a creative, or critical vocation of the individual intellectual. So what seems interesting to me about this particular intervention of Antoni's is that there is a contradiction of the university and the academic. There's a deep contradiction. When you deinstitutionalize the academic, the academic has no place to go except back into the institution for protection and preservation of its academic values. There's no place to go in the public sphere. This is a comment rather than a direct observation to what anyone has said. Chomsky in 1969 had already written *American Power and the New Mandarins* and Paul Goodman [*Growing Up Absurd or Compulsory Mis-education*] even wrote a book about the school as a box with the seats facing forward, like we're looking at here. So the critique of higher education began a long, long time before this zero hour—as you pointed out—between 1968 and the 1980s, in this particular location. So that's just a comment Kirsten, and thank you.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thank you Jerry. Does anyone have a response?

**Serge Guilbault:** My experience with the French institution is that they didn't really have a year zero. But you can see an attempt under Giscard—Giscard d'Estaing, the French president [1974-1981]—he's the one who wanted to cut something because we always have problems with money. Hence, the two departments he wanted to cut in the French university were philosophy and religious studies, the two bases of French culture in

a sense, right? He tried to do that, and then you had an eruption. People were not agreeing, it was a very tense moment for several months. People fought back, and so we still have philosophy and religious studies now. But that was a moment when the public understood that something was at stake here, and that it was very, very dangerous if we start doing this. But there was more money for law schools and business and so on. It was kind of shocking to visit the campus of San Diego, for example, in the early 90s, and a scholar told me to come with him to visit the Department of Economics; and before, it was called the Economic Department and now it was called with a big sign, Bank of America Department of Economics. And nobody's ashamed of doing that so that's why I'm surprised… Sometimes I say, what?

**Kirsten McAllister:** So there are interesting things going on, especially with affective investment and subjectivity. I think especially the work that feminist and aboriginal scholars are doing around subjectivity that really bring those to the fore in terms of the type of investments and why populations can't shift or academics can't shift. …But we do have a question here, I believe.

**Trevor Boddy:** Hi, my name is Trevor Boddy and I'm an art and architecture critic and urbanist. I'd like to go back to Muntadas' *défit* in bringing us a work that he prepared in Boston and New York and asking us, through Sabine, what is different about Vancouver—how would things, how would power roll out differently in Vancouver's academe? And I think there's one term really missing in the debate so far and it's not so much that the gender and class and racial and corporatist analysis we have heard so far are wrong, but that the particular operative fact in this city is the unusual and hugely distorted role that real estate plays in every aspect of the city. Serge, maybe as you say, at one time the UBC Endowment Lands or Burnaby Mountain served as a firewall from Vancouver's downtown real estate ethos, which founded the city with a land deal with CPR, which structured civic decisions at every stage and has made it the world's second most expensive city. Maybe the universities resisted that ethos at one point, but that's long gone. Our universities are now hugely into the real estate game. They've come to rely on real estate dollars for bare operations, for their basic functional health. At UBC, Muntadas, if you went out there, every front lawn, every parking lot, every piece of land has long been given away to developers who have then made the money on it, and it is they who have received

the 'land lift', or the subsequent rise in property value. If the UBC Board of Governors ran Harvard, Harvard Yard would long ago have have been sold off to house a tower, a podium, and a few bungalows. Now there is a level of intensification and privatization of the academic spaces or of BC's campuses, unheard of in any American University. So I'm just wondering, if real estate is the master narrative of this city, and I really believe it is—more than anything else—the single lens through which you can understand everything in Vancouver. I'm just wondering if any of the panelists would like to shift your analysis back to talk about real estate as a factor.

**Kirsten McAllister:** So we have a request from the floor [laughter].

**Serge Guilbault:** If we say yes, it's the end of the discussion...

*[laughter]*

**Kirsten McAllister:** No, no, no, let's get someone else this time.

*[laughter]*

**Ian Angus:** There is one difference it seems to me. I think you're on to something there and one of the differences between this situation in the US and the situation here, which I think that everyone knows about, is the influence of private universities and it seems that private elite universities formed the basis from which you started, Antoni. So they play a different role in the system and they produce graduates who go to very powerful places and make huge amounts of money that goes into their endowment and so they don't have to pave over Harvard Yard. Whereas here, our graduates are not, on the whole, going to do that for us. In fact, that was not what we were designed to do. We're supposed to teach the population here in BC and we were supposed to have something to do with public education across the board. However, that's history.

**Trevor Boddy:** We can't get that much in real estate.

*[laughter]*

**Geraldine Pratt:** I agree with you absolutely. But I'm not one for singular analysis. I do think at UBC the international students are another important source of revenue right now. The university endowment has been a very significant source of revenue but I think there's something else new you need to add to your analysis, along with real estate.

**Trevor Boddy:** Well just wait for a second, the next campus buildings will be paid for by rental accommodation, which are priced only for an international market.

**Geraldine Pratt:** Absolutely.

**Trevor Boddy:** You need the international students to pay the inflated rents to pay for the next wave of faculty buildings. So in other words, our universities' internationalization of their student bodies is driven by real estate considerations.

**Geraldine Pratt:** I don't know about that.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Or there's an intersection of flows, global flows in real estate, which are very... Especially in the space here, as a colonial space on this particular land. I think there are layers of analysis at play here.

**Glen Coulthard:** I don't think you can understand even your analysis without placing it in the context of settler-colonial dispossession. So I think—that you can't separate it or render *a priori* to questions of race and these issues. So I would still stand by colonial analysis of these issues.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Yeah, and the reconfigurations of the city and transformations around aboriginal movements and successful claims as well. It'll be really interesting in the future to see where this takes us as real estate plays itself out with those global flows. There was a question here... or a point here.

**Unidentified:** Hi there. I think it's actually sort of funny that...

**Kirsten McAllister:** Please introduce yourself.

**Unidentified:** Yes, you know in fact, I'm going to do that. I was having a discussion with my partner who's had to leave but we were noting different oversights or things that we saw about the panel. She's a scientist and she said, "Oh there's no scientists on this panel," so I perhaps wanted to ask the panel to speculate how science, maybe we assume that science is being done in the same way as all of you humanities people. And since I'm supposed to introduce myself, I happen to be a sessional teacher both at an American university here in Vancouver and at SFU and there hasn't been much discussion about sessionals so I am obviously, in introducing myself, I am a product of the modern university and contemplating the fact that my life—I might be a sessional forever. And once upon a time, being a sessional was kind of a part-time bridge on the way to becoming

a tenure track faculty member. And I'm not probably going to have that chance. So I thought that maybe we might bring that in as well.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Excellent. So are you teaching in science?

**Unidentified:** I teach English, but I have a partner who's a scientist. And who was sort of noting that there are no scientists on this panel.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Yes that would be a very interesting iteration to do this panel around, bringing in science. Panelists, thoughts on science, and not just the applied science but there's a huge variety of different types of science at play. And then we also have a sessional labour force.

**Ian Angus:** Let me just say a few quick words about science because I do think it's an interesting case and I think that the trouble is that the corporatization process happened with sciences way, way before it happened with the arts and humanities. So I think that you would have to go back in time to see people being concerned about it, most of the people that I've met are saying "well, this is just reality and it's been this way since I got here." If you look at a book called *Academic Callings*, which Claire Polster and Janice Newson edited recently, it got a lot of people talking about their life in academia and the problems that they feel are there now. The scientists, they don't really talk about this. They talk about other things because this is just the water they swim in. I think that's the reason. There are of course a number of outstanding scientists who have stepped beyond that but I think there are very few fish in the sea there.

**Geraldine Pratt:** In terms of sessionals, I think, as in my introductory remarks I noted, there's a weird thing happening at UBC. The pressure certainly came from the union but the university is also committed to reducing the sessional labour force and making more positions for twelve-month lecturers, possibly even extending the twelve-month lecturer to a five-year contract. So there's a weird swimming-against-the-trend-towards-flexibilization at UBC in this respect. Which comes back to my point about also telling stories about progressive possibilities within the university. Actual and already existing progressive possibilities.

**Kirsten McAllister:** So I'm going to stand up because there's a bias happening here. I'm sitting so I only see the front section. So there might be questions in the back. Yes, please introduce yourself.

**Kate:** Hi, I'm Kate. I work in the neighbourhood a couple blocks from here and basically on a daily basis I'll walk under that Stan Douglas photo

in the atrium [of SFU Woodwards] and I was just curious to hear your thoughts on the artwork and its placement here and what that means.

**Serge Guilbault:** Well, I'm very interested in that work myself.[9] I usually don't write about artworks, contemporary artworks, because once you get into this you become an art critic and I'm kind of against them. But in this particular case I wrote about the work because it is in a public place and articulates a very interesting series of issues for Vancouver that also extend to the issues that we are discussing here. That work is about the memory of the city and an event that happened in the 1970s which still has an incredible echo today in terms of freedom, democracy, confrontation and political manipulation. It creates something that is very attractive, but at the same time something extremely demanding—as a photograph, it is structured around an empty centre and it avoids an easy reading due to this centrifugal effect. The photograph talks about politics, it talks about site—it talks about gentrification and drugs and the violence of the police as well. But it also talks about the Hollywood image, and it rethinks contemporary photography and the intellectual following post-modernism. It is a kind of a return, but a return to the present. So that's why I think it's quite an interesting piece.

**Ian Angus:** I think the subtext of that is that the university should stop trying to raise money by selling condos and getting international students and should get into the dope business, which is where the money really is.

*[laughter]*

**Kirsten McAllister:** Ok Ian. Antoni, you had a comment.

**Antoni Muntadas:** The position of the artist in relation to public space is always difficult, and how the work itself can intervene in the public realm or how the work could be integrated in a way so that it has a community function, in the city etc. I don't know much about the work or enough about the area where it is located, but just from observing it, I think it kind of divides between private and public space. On the one hand, it is part of this institution, office, and organization so that becomes privatized. On the other hand, or from viewing it from the other side, it's in a place that is much more public and not closed at night, integrated into the city. It plays with accessibility, and the two sides of the image signal and

[9] Serge Guilbault, "Lightning from the Past: Police, Pot, Public and Stan Douglas's Abbott & Cordova", Stan Douglas: *Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971*. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.

divide this kind of private and public space. I don't know about Stan Douglas's process, but I'm sure he's aware of this because I think he is a very reflexive and thoughtful person. But in a way, after seeing the work, I think it draws a kind of border, and this is related to what Serge mentioned about the way that the image is configured. But I think what is interesting is that it brings out a bit of the struggle of the building in relation to the neighbourhood too.

**Kirsten McAllister:** So I think there's a really interesting discussion and investigation of art and reimagining and breaking up boundaries in public spaces that's at play here. There's a question here with the gentleman. Oh sorry, we have to go first to the other gentleman... so not quite yet... I have you on my list.

**Oliver:** Ok great, thank you. My name's Oliver. I'm a filmmaker. I just wanted to comment and question the makeup of the panel as well because for me, recently I read that aesthetics... the prehistory of the word "aesthetic" comes from idea of improving upon reality. And for me that's what the university is about, to improve upon what is possible, to question always. So when I see this, when I come here, and I only hear from people from the humanities I'm kind of depressed because I do think that there are people within other areas that should be interested in public interest and the idea of public discourse as the reason for their paycheck, if you will. And so my question I guess is to you, is to know whether or not this is really the case here in Vancouver, that it is so isolated, that the different discourses are so isolated from one another that there is no dialogue between the complex sciences and the discourses of the humanities.

**Antoni Muntadas:** I think that maybe Sabine could answer that specifically. But what I wanted to say is that, in the same way that About Academia is specific to the United States, I always thought that there would be other parts. And I think this debate shows many things that could be focused on. For example, it could be about the sciences. However, what about students? So many students are sitting here. I think this is a very important aspect of the university. And I think this is something that should be a debate, another part of these debates, where the students could say what they have to say.

**Oliver:** I don't think it's really a debate but a sharing of knowledge. You know when I hear people just discussing it in these particular areas of

studies it—that those areas couldn't inform this debate, that's kind of shocking to me.

**Geraldine Pratt:** I just want to say I'm a geographer and part of the Geography Department where there's physical scientists, geomorphologists, climatologists. So the idea of being in dialogue with scientists is just part of what I breathe. I'm also a geographer who wrote a play. So I actually think there's all sorts of crossovers, interesting crossovers and conversations that do happen. I suppose whether they have happened on this panel is another issue. I agree that there are some really fascinating debates happening across the humanities and sciences right now, under the rubric of new materialism.

**Oliver:** I just find it interesting that those crossovers are probably the only vehicle for increasing knowledge. Only in those spaces, in the spaces between disciplines, is the possibility that new knowledge can be developed. And unfortunately because otherwise it just circles around itself and it just becomes a rhetorical stream and that rhetorical stream becomes very boring for other people. Beause it needs to be dynamic and informed by numerous other voices.

**Kirsten McAllister:** I think one of the things at play here—we do have social scientists and people from the humanities in this room—is that while we critique and discuss universities we're making a public forum to begin that. So what you're asking for, and a couple of people have mentioned this, is a call for the expansion of the current iteration and I think that's very important to do. So one of the elements of being an academic is actually isolation and fragmentation. And Antoni, you were talking about how we're all rushing around saying, "we're coming from teaching, we're coming from teaching, we're coming from meetings and all of this administration." So the very types of work we do, we don't have a lot time to squeeze out and get together to get into dialogues and do the type of work we're doing in this room now. But yes, while this is one iteration, there's a call, and I think it's an interesting call, to engage people say from biology or chemistry. That said, there are different ways each of the disciplines have been colonized. So the discussions we have been having with people from different units already is quite interesting. So we appreciate your comment very much. That's a great step we can take. I believe there's someone with a comment in the back.

**Am Johal:** Thanks, I just had a couple of comments. My name is Am

Johal and I work in community engagement out of this building and I've been here for about two years or so, and it's been really hard. And, sorry, to be more specific, it's been really fucking hard. I've seen some of the challenges and contradictions in the university itself, and watched over a long period of time. You know when I was a student my first job at university was working in fundraising at UBC, managing the phone room making fourteen bucks an hour and having most of the staff be international students making minimum wage and seeing the kind of complications of that. In terms of a building like this, I think that the comments that Ian was making are really important, about trying to maintain those spaces of academic integrity and public conversation and those parts of the university that are really important and critical to maintaining a kind of publicness. And even though there has been private money come into this building, there's been over 50 million dollars in public money that's gone into this building and that's a really important principle to maintain. Are those firewalls in place to allow those things to happen? And were it not for the problematic politics of this building, of this space and all of the issues people have talked about, in some sense this space, for at least a period of time is where many people, faculty, staff, other people are fighting to maintain a space of public conversation. And in addition to that, even when a public building like this comes to be physically—you know the first year that this building was open the front doors on the Hastings Street side were closed to the public. So there's a whole level of apparatuses beyond the private that are even within the institution itself that reflect in, I think, a very problematic way about how open an institution actually is. And I think that those, and where people have chosen, you know I have many, many friends who have boycotted this building, for example, or sometimes people have booked the space to have those really critical conversations about mining in Canada and I respect the way people kind of navigate and orient those kinds of politics. But even when people evacuate those spaces to go somewhere else, to have those conversations, they'll go to Harbour Centre to be at the Fletcher Challenge Theatre or they'll go to the Carnegie Centre and so no matter how we navigate these places, they're purely problematic and we're all in these spaces of trying to think of what the right thing to do is. And for many of us, we don't have tenure as faculty members to speak out in quite the same way. And so I think, how to maintain a repetition and perpetuation of this notion of what publicness is, is essentially what's at stake and has to be kept as part of the conversation.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thanks. The gentleman in the front here. In the second from the… yeah here we….

**Ali:** Hi everyone. I'm Ali. I think my question is somehow a continuation of Ian's question. Having heard all this conversation about what has happened to the university, or university wants to do this, university is going to do that, makes me feel like the university is something external to at least people sitting in this panel and, you know it's an external phenomenon sitting somewhere and there is an invisible apparatus behind it (however, that's true as well). But when I'm looking at the catalogue, looking at the themes that Antoni has mentioned in the catalogue, I think we're all familiar with university versus academy, institution versus corporation and I don't see anything special that has happened to the university and has not happened to anything else in our era. Our sandwiches not having the quality, I don't know, that they had fifteen years ago, our cars, everything. Everything has changed and the university is not an exception to that. But a word that makes me so curious is "space" and it makes me think, where is this space of knowledge? Or in those two moments Antoni was mentioning, '68 and '84, that, like sparkling moments that, taking the words of David Harvey, because you have it in the interviews, about keyword "space," that we have absolute spaces and relative and eventually relational spaces. I think what has happened to the academy or university is the laws and lack of accountibility to the public, and sessional, suffering situations is part of that. Our tenures, I mean, the tenure position' instead of becoming something to give security and immunity to the faculty to keep researching, is just a stopping point, so you're immune and don't do anything more. I've never heard that the Dean's office went on a strike because of that thing or because of this complaint or...

**Geraldine Pratt:** I got booted out of my union. I can't go on strike!

**Ali:** Pardon me?

**Geraldine Pratt:** Sorry. [*laughing*] I'm still resentful that I got booted out of the union so I can't go on strike! No, no I get your point.

**Ali:** You know we never have a call to the public that hey, this is the real estate, the condo-making that UBC is doing. It's doing this, it's doing that, you know, giving call to the public to participate. I don't see any special specifics about the symptoms that are going towards the university and it's not going toward anything else and I just don't see any relationality between

this place of knowledge and the very body of the society.

**Kirsten McAllister:** I don't know if anyone wants to address that because we have one more question after this and then we're going to have to wrap up. Or two short ones. But did anyone want to address this gentleman's comments here?

**Ian Angus:** I'd like to say something. I'll try to keep it real short but this relates to what Jerry Zaslove was bringing up earlier—if we just say "68" as indicating a whole bunch of stuff quickly. There were critics of the university predating that by a long way but I think what happened in '68 is that you had the critics of the university overlapping with a widely shared feeling that was critical of the society as a whole. And this is, I think, the issue you were on to. And this was basically, again to say it all quickly, the Vietnam War. So: the militarization of universities, Canadian complicity in the Vietnam War, the making of arms. The only thing that I know that came close to that later was, in the 1980s, the cruise missile. So this is partly why I was talking about the resource sector and mining and that kind of stuff because I think that what you're looking for only happens when there is a generally widely felt social concern. It only happens in universities when there is a widely shared social concern that overlaps with the critics of the university. Otherwise, we're critics of the university but we also have to defend the university because we think there's a lot of good about it as well, and we're caught in this back and forth. And it's valid, that's where I am. But it becomes socially important and goes wider when there's something structural that is bugging lots of people. And who knows when that's really going to come on. Things are really diffuse now. There are lots of really important things. There's aboriginal sovereignty and the relationship to the government, to the state. It's a very, very deep rooted and important thing and I absolutely agree with what Glen had to say about that but—and then there's also the question, you know, how does it galvanize? I don't know. I wish I did.

**Kirsten McAllister:** So we definitely don't want to become sandwiches, starting, as you mentioned in the beginning of your discussion. Yeah, so this is a distinction we're all trying to avoid. So there was someone at the very back, but I'm not sure if that person is still there...

**Nicholas Perrin:** Hi, my name is Nicholas Perrin, I'm a grad student here. Just a couple of quick comments I guess. One of them being, when you talk about corporatization of the university as a process, it's sort

of a messy metaphor because I think the university is structuring itself like a bad corporation, a corporation in the '80s in terms of management models and centralization and everything. So that's, for people who do managerial studies, that's something to think through in terms of describing the culture of the university. It's not as flexible at all as a contemporary corporate environment would be. And the other thing would be something to think about just in terms of the building and what Ian and Trevor were saying; I was involved in some of the organizing of the pushback against Goldcorp when it was first announced that the school was going to be named after it and the money came from them. And we begin to kind of understand what it meant for a university to be built in a partnership with private corporations and development and everything. This space that we're in, the foyer, the courtyards, the atrium where the Stan Douglas photo is, it's qualitatively different from other university spaces because it's not open to student use at all. You can't have clubs set up outside. You can't have a political rally out there, it's actually illegal. And so just in terms of the way that the university itself, and I believe this is true of Robson Square as well, and so just something to tie a couple of the comments together I guess.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Thank you very much.

**Geraldine Pratt:** Well in fact UBC's not a public space. That's just—I mean it's not just this space at issue. When the TAs went on strike at UBC years ago, one of the moves that the university wanted to try to make was to, you know, stop the capacity to strike by declaring it's not a public space. So yeah, the whole debate around public space and the university is a really complicated one. It's more obvious here at least. At UBC you think it's a public space and it's not necessarily.

**Kirsten McAllister:** So Antoni is going to make a final comment and then we'll bring it to...

**Antoni Muntadas:** No, it's not final.

**Kirsten McAllister:** Oh right, it's never final.

*[laughter]*

**Antoni Muntadas:** Not final. It's a comment about public space. I think we live in a situation where public space is disappearing, because of privatization and because of how surveillance and control functions. I think we are losing public space. Not only here, but in all parts of the

world. One thing that was interesting in the events that happened in Europe and in Egypt is the recovery of public space. The square, the plaza, the agora. All the manifestations of *Indignados* in Madrid. In all of these situations it was about the public space. And besides the politics, the fact that everything was happening in the street was a recovery of public space and I think it was very important. Because I think we live in a moment where the private sector occupies the public space and we also live under so many systems of control and surveillance—so we are living under two forces that are causing public spaces to disappear.

**Kirsten McAllister:** So thank you, yes.

**Glen Coulthard:** Just one comment. I think it's important, and this gets back at the real estate perspective, I think it's also important too. We cannot speak about public spaces, common spaces, or whatever, in a decontextualized, ahistorical way because you could conceivably fix a public space or real estate issues through state regulation or through various sort of, reclamation projects, which would continue the originary violence that structures the present of the original enclosure of indigenous peoples and dispossessions. So to think of public spaces and to think of these strategies, these alternatives, the anti-gentrification struggle for commons has to be placed in that context or else you're just, you're part of the problem. So these things have to be navigated with that originary, ongoing dispossession enclosure in mind or else we're just replicating it in the present.

**Kirsten McAllister:** So we have to continue to challenge the structures of power and strategies of resistance and open them up, especially around territory and land and violence. I'd like to thank the panelists, first of all I'd like to thank very much Antoni Muntadas for making this possible, bringing us together, bringing everyone together and for his fantastic work.

*[clapping]*

**Kirsten McAllister:** I'd like to thank Sabine and her crew for making this possible and I'd like to thank...

*[clapping]*

**Kirsten McAllister:** ...the panelists, and everyone in the audience, who came and participated in the discussion, thank you very much and I'm suspecting there's going to be more iterations, given the calls from the

floor. So we thank you all for that.

# WHAT KIND OF UNIVERSITY DO WE WANT?

**Jerry Zaslove, Didier Morelli, Andrea Creamer,**
**Nicholas Perrin, and Natalie Knight**
**Moderator: Am Johal**

**Am Johal:** Hi, welcome everybody to the discussion this evening with Jerry Zaslove. First I'd like to acknowledge that we're on the unceded territories of the Coast Salish people.

It's a really great honour to have Jerry with us this evening. Jerry was part of the founding faculty at SFU in 1965. He's currently the Simons Chair of Graduate Liberal Studies at SFU and formerly the founding director of the Institute for the Humanities.

Following Jerry's talk, he'll be joined by four panelists who are all SFU students: Natalie Knight, Andrea Creamer, Didier Morelli, and Nicholas Perrin. I'd like to ask you to join me in welcoming Jerry Zaslove.

**Jerry Zaslove:** Thanks Am, and thank you for coming out to listen to this talk. I have a lot of material, as usual, but I'm going to try to not use it all so we can have commentary from our friends. It's true what Am says, that I've been around a long time. I've written about the university and academic freedom and been part of it for such a long time that when I was reading this working paper, that I'm trying to put into a book, I began to think that after all these years—reading about Simon Fraser and the past—I'm starting to believe what I'm writing and I thought that's a sign of old age or nostalgia.

Before I begin, let me just put three themes on the table that I want to weave in and out of my conversation with you today. One is about public intellectuals; the second is about the ambiguous fiction of SFU as a utopic and radical historic reality, a project that may have failed, we don't know yet, but that's part of my theme; the third is human rights as a working out of the unfinished project of the student's role in the critique of the university as the high point of bourgeois cultural capital. I'm going to begin in a few minutes not with Herbert Marcuse—whose letter you're reading—or other public intellectuals, but I'm going to begin with a statement by a public intellectual, the former president of Simon Fraser, Michael Stevenson. I'm going to be primarily doing a cultural history. I do not go into the economic history of the university. That's part of the real estate history, the corporate giveaways that I'm going to leave to the future of the school, Jeff Derksen, who will do it better than I can. But that's the world of the Marathon Development lands and development today on the Bentall/Trizek waterfront: the development of costly housing. Housing that could be called, in an urban core: Manhattanism. Or what I like to call Goliathism or, following Breugel, "big fish eating little fish." Unfortunately, if you look down in the right corner, you'll see—one of my

themes is schooling—you'll see the old professor pointing out to the young student what's going on: "big fish eating little fish." It's one of the great anti-feudal, anti-capitalist images that we have. But what I call Goliathism is based on fast growth, migration of people into the area, the need for pools of labour, inter-locking ownership of holding companies in banking, railroads, shipping, newspapers, TV, and communications industry. These are the areas that lie behind what I'm saying but today I'm going to talk mainly about cultural history. The letter from Herbert Marcuse to me was a bit of a fluke because I had supervised a dissertation that was involved with his work. Herbert Marcuse came here in 1967, invited by the political science and anthropology (PSA) department to speak. He spoke to large crowds in the lecture theatres that were doubled—they had two lecture theatres to listen to him. I don't suppose that the large crowds would bring a university president into view but let me begin with Michael Stevenson's review of a book called *Leadership Under Fire: The Challenging Role of the Canadian University President*. He's referring to the author, Ross Paul's, account of the changes and underlying tensions in Canadian university life, touching all the obvious but vitally important issues. I'm quoting him: "The pressure for growth and accessibility coupled to declining real per capita grant funding for enrolment; the anonymity, bureaucratization and managerialism that size, complexity and unsustainable financing entail; and the increasingly instrumental interests of government and business in the university's contribution to labour supply," and to paraphrase, the pressures of external and internal stakeholders for transparency and accountability in the uses of public money. Add to these: the tensions around academic freedom produced by the increasing social diversity of the academic community and by the increasing corporatization of the university; the undermining of collegial relations and the souring of labour relations in such an environment; the never-ending demand for and cost of new technologies; the demands for institutional differentiation, internal structural, and this is president speak, "internal structural adjustment and retrenchment; and the pressures to increase tuition fees, research overheads and external fundraising and the increasingly competitive environment for such funding." What strikes me now about this analysis is, as a public intellectual does he tell the public this or is it buried in an obscure review in a CAUT journal, raising the question about what is a public intellectual? What is most interesting about that comment, that review of his, is that he doesn't mention students, he doesn't mention the labour force (except obliquely), he doesn't mention TAs, he doesn't

mention much about the pressures on intellectual life that comes by living in a modern university. So briefly, what is a public intellectual, Stevenson or Marcuse? Why is the question important and what does it have to do with academic freedom? It has to do with the carrying out—the extension, the stretching—of the social and ethical morality of academic freedom into the world that may or may not like to hear criticism from those who have been trained to understand power and to criticize power and authority when it cannot be reformed for the public good. One of my themes is the loss of public in terms of the modern university, or the attempt to reach the public, which is a better way to put it, and the public constantly retreating from that dialogue because of what I'm calling conflicting publics. I'll mention that in a few minutes. In a world of performance indicators and the money economy dictating the organization of the university's resources, knowledge is a resource that becomes a commodity when understood as property and that the control of property is the new universal exchange. The new world order came at the end of the cold war when intellectuals on both sides of the Iron Curtain were watched, and their political values became enemy values. The wave of prosperity that found a home in the 60s, after the second world war, became a home in the 90s again when the third world and even second world actors and the immigration movements that came into Vancouver after the 70s, began to change the landscape of the urban. For a long time no one mentioned race, but the signs are there, although this is an open university frightened by its own freedom. I think that's one of the insights that one can draw from his comment. It's frightened about its role in the public sphere. It cannot afford to offend public intellectuals, like for example, the David Noble case that happened at the beginning of the 2000s. Noble was denied an appointment as J.S. Woodsworth research chair at Simon Fraser University because he is a public intellectual. It was not only what he said but that he was saying it in public, however rightly or wrongly his opinions were assessed. It was not only what he said or what his research was or what its implications were for use in the community or for teaching; it is because he did not remain silent. It is because he left academia—he treated academia as a calling in Max Weber's sense, that is, he performed rightly or wrongly the drama of speaking to power. In an age when teaching is assigned to part-time faculty usually graduate students, when the average term—this is ironic—for college presidents was not too long ago 3.9 years, not as long as an undergraduate program, while the university downsizes somewhere, adopts emergency planning elsewhere, expands into the suburbs where

property is affordable, humanities grads continue to decline, as a proportion of all undergraduate degrees. These are figures from the 90s; I'm not sure what they are now. What did increase by five or ten fold in the US was computer and information services, protective surveillance services, and transportation. By 1994 Business had a four-fold advantage over English. In 1971, 78% more degrees were granted in business than in English. Now the preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) indicates a 9% interest in English. The lowest salaries are in the humanities and there are no consulting fees, secondary jobs, or outside incomes. Teaching loads are high for sessionals. The universities are in a perpetual crisis and they are in a state of denial. The proletarianization of what I call the cadre of brain workers as distinct from intellectuals is an inevitable result of the situation where one does not rock the boat or come to conferences run by students because there is no interest in it for one's CV. The promise of money, knowledge of money, the study of money, finding a source for money, grants for research, to enhance the capacity of the university to adapt to the money culture, is a booming industry, if the size of administrative middle management is any indication. One does not draw attention to one's self in public except by doing what is required. The public intellectual was public not because he or she speaks in public but because the intellectual challenges the power of the national identity that determines one's fate. What is not understood about the 60s, and I'm using this in a broad sense. I'm actually a child of the 50s, who came into the 60s through the side door, not the front door. What is not understood about the 60s is that although the counter-culture was the rhetorical and ideological expression of a transition from one stage of the welfare state to another that played out in education, music, and literature, the bearers of this transitional phase were not public intellectuals on the way to national power, but public intellectuals who were critics of the system of power. It was a Canadian movement as well as an international one because it spoke of rights and new Canadian institutions were on the agenda. Simon Fraser was one of those new Canadian institutions, and what you will find here, what interests me, is the mimicry, speaking aesthetically now of how the architecture at Simon Fraser re-creates the illusion of Roman and Greek Pantheons and what is wonderful about this picture is, like the Bruegel picture, down in the right hand corner you have the lonely artist trying to represent the field of forces of the historical project of the university. But this is the kind of—since I'm talking about schooling and schooling against power, and power and schooling was very much a part of the so called

Simon Fraser revolution—of for example student teaching assistants who participated in a strike at a local high school, Templeton High School, and were immediately deprived of their position by president McTaggart-Cowan. That's not the president of Templeton High School but the president of SFU. I happened to have been with Tom Bottomore, the well-known Marxian, who was head of the department of PSA at the time, on a university ethics committee listening to the cause for dismissal of these TAs.

I thought you'd like to see a kind of school that some of you and I went to. Some of these are my own pictures of schools. This is an interesting picture of children learning. Whether they're learning about the revolution or learning about playing the revolution, or what it is they're learning I don't know, but I like the picture because of the way in which they are looking and being part of a carnivalesque scene. Here's another picture of a school that's one of my favourite schooling pictures. Paul Goodman, who I'll refer to in a little while, called the school: "a box with the seats facing front." This is a wonderful representation and depiction of that. But if you look in the back, I'm not quite sure what this is doing. At first I thought it was a mirror, but now I know it's not a mirror but it shows the teacher in the back with another class, I think, so it must be a double class. This is Lonsdale School, some pictures of mine, in the process of being torn down, and now it's been replaced by a school for disabilities in the modernist architectural style. Here's a rally on the Simon Fraser mall where some anarchist wag or fascist wag, I don't know which, put up a Nazi swastika. And here's Herbert Marcuse speaking to the masses at Simon Fraser. Let me continue with my prepared comments.

What was going on at the time in the 60s was that the market model university had not yet arrived. The utilitarian nature of the social agenda that always defined universities, social and cultural capital, was on the agenda in British Columbia, especially in a new urban university in Vancouver. The utilitarian function of the university in a marketplace economy and the inevitable decline of global feudalism inspired the modernization of universities in British Columbia in the post-colonial period. In regard to the university human or the subject, the individual in Kantian terms, the goal was the autonomous individual, the educated individual. Here's a picture of Walter Benjamin's class with Gustav Wyneken, who was a free thinking, free school kind of guy, a precursor of the Summerhill movement, which was active in the 1960s, the alternative school movement. Walter is down at the bottom there but we don't see

him in this picture. That's that school (Lonsdale with the monster tree) that is now torn down, but the tree is still there. The basic foundation of the colonial Kantian, Arnoldian trajectory of education was tutelage as the basic foundation of student and professorial consensus. Habermas following Humboldt and others, including the great Kant, assumed that the state would become the ground, the mediator, and the patron of a cultural nation based on the autonomous individual. The state in culture and science became the utopian heart of a knowledge that is both permanent and future oriented, that now and will never compete with—will not now and will never finish the unfinished project of the enlightenment. On the one hand however, the apolitical project, that emerged in the 60s—I'm talking about the colonial educational project—is the defensive aspect it took on in order to build a professional administration and practice that would not jeopardize the primary function of the autonomous individual. To serve in ultimately the culture of the state culture, the unity of teaching and research, but the primary value is research not teaching, which was typically embedded in an authoritarian form of the bourgeois project. Cultural integration, socialization, and tradition were paramount in creating social and cultural capital. That's the background if you want to look at it that way, the ideological shadow, that fell over the older universities in Canada, until Simon Fraser came on the scene with its modernist rationality. Before this new type of university emerged both Europe, particularly England and the Americas, were full of these countervailing and difficult contradictions when the market society and the training institutions collided, intellectuals versus brainworkers. This decline of the inner directed university needs to be traced and the legacy of this rise and decline needs to be understood, in my view, as the social and cultural capital with the ideological and instrumental nature both of academic freedom on the one hand and on the other, the social demand for accountability and legitimization of those like president Stevenson. On the one hand the inwardness of the culture-project Mandarins, the professoriat, on the other hand the expectation... in other words, what I'm saying is that we as academics are privileged. We're Mandarins, in an idealized sense. The society of these Mandarins would be apolitical, internally autonomous and full of the educational neo-humanist literature of its philosophical faculties. Within this struggle, however, there was another inner logic and an incommensurable warm stream of anarchical, communal, and sometimes Marxist utopic understanding that was founded on the heretical dissident, with critical potential

embedded in the subject matter that we were teaching. It's experiential, incommensurable, immeasurable, non-normative, and open to interpretive values including the poetry that Steve mentioned. The hermeneutical sciences evolved officially in the early period of these intellectual movements and they became the next great movement, the Foucauldian movements and so forth and so on.

My next point is, which were the movements influenced by the frequency of the connection of this knowledge of social movements and so called revolutionary forces? The reform movements that came after the 60s were in literacy, critical criticism of the instrumental economy, cross cultural and inter-cultural forces and women's movements that emerged in the 70s and 80s. The rise of new genres and the elimination of forces of colonization as the shadow that followed the rise of universities, that under the rubric of tutelage brought the colonized and the merchants and managers outside and inside into conflict with the missionary course and military powers of the cultural state. Now what I'm saying is that, internal to the universities are contradictions, such as between the brainworkers, the management, the administration, that represented one aspect of the history of the Canadian universities, and the other aspect which was the lecture hall, the seminar, the learning space, the tutelage model, and the form of co-operative learning that was experimental and not just personnel-based and hierarchically organized. The walls of the university, in other words, were a microcosm of the society. A social utopia for unequal citizens who were bound together by an oath of objectivity; competence that was unthreatened from adversaries from without, that is to say, academic freedom. We made our own rules and we would have the security of tenure that carried with it certain responsibilities of self-government and an obligation to objectivity that were pre-conditions for our work. That is: intellectual work was no longer to be confused with manual labour. That's a very important point. But intellectual labour was a human rights based kind of labour that required us to turn to the public sphere and join with social movements on the outside. So what were some of the influences in that 60s period? The military-industrial complex was, by then, very well known to Canadians and Americans. That was the term used by Dwight Eisenhower in 1956. Also the Vietnam War, Quebec separatism, mass education and the founding of new colleges and universities.

Mass counter culture outside of the university as an agent of change, Paris 1968, the organization then, all of these themes influenced the

movements in the 60s. The open border, McLuhanism, Trudeauism, urban modernism, the Kennedy assassination, the rise of an anarchical Marxist, anti-traditional labour movement among student groups, new coalitions outside and within anti-establishmentarian values in the universities that looked for further reform of the new universities and the older ones, whose disciplinary arrangements seemed to be outdated. The Frankfurt School was coming on the scene. Roland Barthes, Goddard College, Black Mountain Poetry gave playfulness and a demonic quality to the most serious attempts to challenge the entrenched. In some way, what I'm saying is that we had this double aura of the university performing itself in public, and it was a public movement, that in some ways, corporate ownership of banks, transportation, mining, newspapers, and of course behind all this the cultural memory of smaller colonial nations, like Canada, were faced with the growing hegemony of large states, the rebuilding of Europe which formed by the way, new universities in Britain, for example, Chinese and Russian expansionism and the Cold War as the ultimate arbiter of political change. Colonial expansion continued through the racialization of the cities of America, determining the way one thought of urban and municipal politics. All this was on the agenda either implicitly or explicitly in the 60s already, in other words, the fate of the community in exile. The liberal humanist alliance that marked the Diefenbaker, Pearson, Trudeau, Stanfield, Tommy Douglas, and the CCF/NDP, and the UN Declaration of Human Rights were part of the shadow reality, naming the interest in not only human rights but also academic freedom. The key events in that period of time were the dialectics of complicity and accommodation - specifically the accommodation to violence and the beginning of an image of globalization as a political form of modern society. This is Angela Davis, a poster that just came in the mail a few weeks ago, who was a student of Marcuse's and she's still talking about the old days.

The violence that underscored the contradictions of commodity capitalism and wage labour and the ensuing revolution of globalization—what was called a traumatic war neurosis might now be called an unending war neurosis that led to cynicism, despair, and violence at the thought of a life of unending accommodation and complicity. At the Dialectics of Liberation conference in London in 1967, Stokely Carmichael, Ginsberg, Marcuse, Paul Goodman, attended along with Davis. The 50s McCarthyism was in the background in America and also in Canada, the expansion of the US Empire in Latin America - I'm filling in the

background that was so important in that period. The realization of the role of technology in violence and the atrophy of utopian socialism, the Oppenheimer trials, the Rosenberg trials, Alger Hiss, the Korean War, the growth of the Atomic Bomb, the Cold War, and the Canadian complicity in building the bomb, which we heard about from John O'Brian, the art historian at UBC who's written a book about it. The wildcat strikes in Detroit, labour union accommodation, and the utopic wish for a student and labour collaboration, the underground anarchism that saw unions against revolution and Daniel Bell's work continues this study of men on the assembly line as well as Harvey Swados' "the myth of the happy worker," which I've adapted for my talk, *The Myth of the Happy University*. The complicity of American industry and fascist realms during the war, which was coming out in the 50s and 60s, what's behind the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) movement and its parallels and the silence of Hollywood in the media that implicated itself as socializing agents after WWI. Figures that were on the scene and were taught even though they were taught somewhat surreptitiously in some of our programs: Hannah Arendt, Bruno Bettelheim, Stanley Milgram, Chomsky, Goodman, psychoanalysis for the human face, Erich Fromm, and Norman O. Brown; these are names that some of you will remember but most of these folks are not really taught regularly now. The free school movement in Canada, *This Magazine is About Schools*, *Liberation Magazine*, Wilhelm Reich and class-consciousness, sexual freethinking, the anti-psychiatry movements and so forth. The existential turn of Sartre and others around phenomenological experientiality, friendliness towards maladies of the mind that, of course, later showed up in the work of R.D. Laing and Kubler-Ross, and feminism trails this result, these social and cultural movements. Translations of Bertolt Brecht, the films of Godard, the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the formation and the struggle that's integral to the SDS with the Weather Underground, and recently, of course, in the last eight or nine years I think, or maybe more recently, we've had the auto-biographies of the people including Bernadine Dohrn, who's a law professor now, that have come out, rehashing the sixties and trying to come to terms with their own role in it. What one could conclude maybe about that is that at that point, revolution, whether it was cultural revolution or political or not, seemed to be in retrospect a moral choice, an ethical choice, not a strategic plan. Not something that would align itself with—I don't know if the name Carl Oglesby is familiar to you, he became a folk singer, went to Vietnam, wrote a book about it and later became

President of the SDS. In the 1950s he was a close friend of mine and we sat on back porches in small towns in Ohio talking about these kinds of things. And I went off somewhere else, and he went off to see Ezra Pound in Washington, I don't know what effect it all had on him.

But what I want to talk about here now in this part of the talk is tracing the lines of a cultural history proposing that the 60s were a cultural war by other means. The question is did the 60s, as a movement, as a period, as a historical concept, produce continuity with protest traditions now. And one of the generational dyslexic aspects of thinking back is that the political conditions in the 60s for hundreds of thousands of people now who live in tent cities or are crossing borders as we speak or the subject of surveillance, policing, immigration, residency requirements that have changed drastically since the Vietnam war, at that time it was easy to come to Canada. The characters, in *Pulp Fiction*, *The Deer Hunter, The Big Lebowski,* whose brutality is conditioned by wars in Asia, far from America or Canada, do not think about flight, refuge, asylum, exile, or resettlement in a foreign country like Canada: they tough it out. In *The Big Lebowski* as well as *Pulp Fiction* we are watching losers in the male con game. Con artists, drifters, crypto-fascists, or drop-outs whose relationship to protest has been broken by forces that do not have a political name but function nonetheless as an effective American or Maverick American movement. The United States at that time witnessed an exodus like the flight, exile, refuge, sanctuary, asylum, and ultimately citizenship or landed immigrant status of Americans who left because of the war. If one doesn't understand that, one doesn't understand the ferment that was going on at the time. This included deserters, draft-dodgers, ex-patriots. Most knew it was against the law and they would be prosecuted. The morality of the war, patriotism, political innocence, and in some cases political understanding, were the motives. Sheer fear was another: amnesty or pardon was not in view given the tenor of the times. The fugitives came from many different backgrounds, although one could say they were mainly middle class. Some were well educated, some were dropouts, some were variously employed. Not since pre-revolutionary times, when 80,000 Tories fled from the revolutionary war, or one might say since the civil war, when underground railroads led the black slaves north, was there such an exodus or trans-migration. So one of the themes here  on the historical stage was this question of exile, transmigration, as it is now. The figures vary from 60,000 to 100,000 American draft evaders. There were many Canadian civil society human rights organizations that helped, with counselors in

many cities and border towns. These organizations were monitored by the FBI, Police, and the RCMP, but it was a truly mutual aid anarchical communitarian network of people and groups. The border guards checked the national crime information centre, and the Bellingham draft board was very active. Many Americans (10,000) stayed underground, their choice was Sweden or Canada. When Canada was at war from 1939 to 1941, Canadian deserters were welcome in the US. Another kind of exodus was the brain drain that was part of the whole drama of the time, the worry that Simon Fraser would become an American or a British university and not truly Canadian. It was a very tormented time around that question of national identity. The folklore at the time was that Canada welcomed foreigners into a racialized society. Japanese internment was hardly known, also little known was the prisoner of war culture of Germans, Italians, and Ukrainians. This was a colonial society with deep roots in British jurisprudence. I'm going try to come to an end here. French Canadian universalism was based on a catholic worldview. Trudeauism, Montrealism, and the socialization of Trudeau followed Lester B. Pearson's liberalism but not in the broadband NDP kind of social democracy. The point system, in order to come to Canada there was a point system, less educated and lower skilled had more problems, but you could marry a Canadian citizen and a lot of draft evaders married Canadian women. In 1972 there was a 90-day amnesty for illegal immigrants. 1,200 signed up for residency. In Sweden, the refugees had international status as international refugees. According to one study, most of the 210,000 named and accused draft resistors remained home and faced the law. One sixth hid maybe. The great memorable Spiro Agnew—Nixon's Vice President—Spiro Agnew's nephew was in exile. Nixon took a moral position that it was treason, before changing his mind as the body bags started to come in from Vietnam. Nixon aids, namely Pat Buchanan, labeled them the worst of the generation—malingerers, opportunists, criminals, cowards, victims of character deficiency, in other words a psychopathological profile. Malcontents, radicals, incendiaries, civil disobedience, "Yippies, Hippies, Yahoos, Black Panthers, lions and tigers alike," this was the wild rhetoric of Spiro Agnew, and he says, "I would swap the whole damn zoo for the kind of young Americans I saw in Vietnam." Well, the reason this is laughable now but not so laughable, is that it was a conflicted public sphere here too. The press looked at these draft-dodgers and the people and students at Simon Fraser in a cynical way.

In the summer of 1967, July 15 to July 30, at the Dialectics of

Liberation congress that I mentioned which was organized by Dr. Joseph Berke, David Cooper, R.D. Laing, Leon Redler of the institute of phenomenological studies in London. This gathering of psychiatrists, or what you might call utopic pedagogs, represented all parts of the world, including Vietnam, Nigeria, Cuba, there was Julian Beck of Living Theatre, Allen Ginsberg, Emmett Grogan of the Diggers, and contingents from the new experimental schools and colleges. The Pantheon also lies deep in the foliage and ruins of the time. Others who were at that congress included Marcuse, Carmichael, Goodman, Bateson, and others. On the agenda was class analysis, the critique of schooling, with the assumption that this congress could be part of a coming radical pedagogy. Although the absence of women in the congress would be noticed immediately, soon the turn in the 70s to professions and economic recharging of the batteries, which would become the white-washing project of the 60s by Simon Fraser's administration throughout the 70s and 80s. By now it's in a memory hole or it can be trotted out as a kind of sign of memorabilia. The turn in the 70s to professions and academic recharging of the batteries of the institution would move the classroom into a veritable training ground for careers. One of my themes here is that the revolution, the educational, pedagogic, didactic revolution was carried out in the classroom and a lot of the literature of the time, which I won't mention to you, was not about the mark of a model university but about what you could do in the classroom. Against this background, the university transformed itself. Migration, immigration, diaspora, the Vietnamization of the urban world of draft and war resisters, as well as the emergence at this time—if you look at the architectural history of Vancouver from the 50s to the 60s—of a cosmopolitan modernist architecture that challenged the modernism of establishment Canada. This came through new artistic movements, a residual nostalgia for the social democratic and liberal humanist alliance that marked the Diefenbaker, Pearson, Trudeau, and Stanfield era that embodied the welfare state in the anticipation of the future of a resource and colonial based economy. So what I'm saying is, and I know others in the room here have also written about this, that the modernist architecture that we see outside now is the history of the destruction of the old Vancouver in the name of what I'm calling the liberal humanist alliance as reflected in the architecture. Like a natural history of destruction, this conservative era has disappeared as a norm against which one measures cultural work and access to a rights-based radical pedagogy for conflicting publics, which is what I think Am's work is doing, and by extension the

Goldbrick [Goldcorp] money is part of that legacy. And I could go into the specific institutions, for example the prison education reform that I was involved in for many years with colleague Steve Duguid.

Let me just finish here with a few references: Noam Chomsky's *American Power and the New Mandarins* (1967); Maxine Greene's *The Public School and the Private Vision* (1965); *The New Left Reader* edited by Carl Oglesby (1969); *Revolutionary Non-Violence* by David Dellinger; *The Lives of Children* by George Dennison. Recently my friend and student Bozhin Traykov, who's sitting in the audience, pointed out that his school friend recently set himself on fire in Bulgaria as a martyr to the corruption and the force of economic law that was crushing some of the former Soviet colonies. Martyrdom was also on the agenda in the 1960s but it took a different form. One knew from de Tocqueville, Linus Pauling, Daniel Boorstin's *The Image*, C. Wright Mills, McLuhan, not to forget that *Time* magazine in 1966 exploited the image of the hippy and yippy SDS and the Chicago generation by making them the man of the year. The new Left discovered what the older generation had known all along, that the United States was becoming a system of professional managers, manipulating public opinion about the Vietnam war. Journals like *Telos, New Generation* and *Freedom Press* and others were seriously attempting to link European thought to a new politics and there were important European immigres and exiles that spoke from the heart of history. Most importantly, Herbert Marcuse whose essay, "The Problem of Violence and the Radical Opposition," in 1970 already sounded the death knell of the new Left because of its inability to have an organization like the old Left, that he had left as an exile, that would address the non-technological needs of the unprivileged. To recall this today is like reciting the names of old jalopies, in the slow lanes of the educational freeway. These names give experiential weight to the often-termed radicalism of the counter-culture, especially when the counter-culture disappeared, to be reformed at other iterations. The point is that class analysis, the critique of schooling as a mass of disciplines, those issues become instead a tension in the growth patterns of the "multiversity," hindering the finding of ways to recycle the 60s and to protest and to eventually oppose the market model university. I want to end on the theme of conflicted publics around student movements. When Jürgen Habermas wrote about the student movement in 1967 he admitted:

> *We sociologists have not reckoned with the possibility that students could play a political role in developed industrial societies. The values of*

*status mobile and socially climbing middle class families accord with the universalist values of the university tradition. Students were threatened and frightened that they were being reconstructed by the university.*

So it was a psychological as well as a political and social change into a middle class training ground that would reinforce the economy of scale with all those expeditionary forces pitted against poor countries. The barrier against the full exploitation of cultural capital, the barrier against it was the student. The essence of these classrooms, however, cannot be explained through pedagogy, they were places of particular experiences that were fleeting and transient that might be described as the proto-incommensurable community whose measure of value could not be taken with certainty because in the long run these experiences were not easily transportable to other social circumstances or politics. They were made up of the ambiguity of the Vietnam War as the image of state complicity allying with the extremes of capitalism and a society that really needed a new name. Military industrial complex, administrative society, corporate America, one-dimensional society (that's Marcuse's), often the war was carried into the classroom, the fear that the individual professor was complicit with the system. I don't know whether that fear comes into the classroom now. This concreteness and particularity, this experience of war, gave the illusion that the past could be mastered by mastering the university, which was itself a product of the unmastered past of economic reduction translated into cultural production. At the time, one tried to grasp the cultural depth of the contradictions. "Utopia is a historical concept," Herbert Marcuse declared in a 1967 talk that I showed you at the beginning. "It refers to projects for social change that are considered impossible. Impossible for what reasons?" At the time Marcuse said: "the students were the insipid intelligentsia." But when the Vietnam War ended, the student movement ended as well. Colonial liberation struggle emerged throughout the world of the poor but also helped to open up this world to the overwhelming spread of capitalism and the new state nation powers, including the Canadian small nation version. One response to this crisis was to rebuild the university as bastions and citadels of modern learning, which is exactly what happened at Simon Fraser in the 1970s. Thus the culture of extremes and the Cold War was lived out in both the desire for a radical pedagogical term and a desire to open the doors of the university to more and more students. The critique of the university danced in tandem with economic necessities to broaden the university

to include more students, more of everything, the Walmart model, the extremes of mass culture, and the knowledge industry.

Thank you.

**Am Johal:** I'm just going to ask our panelists to join us up here. While they're coming up here I'll introduce them if I can find the right piece of paper. One moment. Joining us is Natalie Knight who is a PhD student in English at SFU; next to her is Andrea Creamer, who's a fourth year visual arts student here at SFU; next to her is Didier Morelli who's an MFA in visual arts here in this building; and next to him is Nicholas Perrin. So I'm just going to pass it on to the four of you to respond.

**Natalie Knight:** Thank you very much Jerry, for that grounding and opening up of many of the contradictions between radical pedagogy and the spaces we have to negotiate to practice it. I think the problem of space and its injustices has serious effects on how we both imagine and materially reproduce our social selves, how we're able to find ground among various hegemonic knowledges - in places of higher education and in the world at large. So it's really an honor to be a part of this panel and discussion about our pleasantly controversial and radically corporate university, descriptives that widely characterize North American post-secondary institutions as much as they apply to where we are right now - on unceded Coast Salish Territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

But this necessary acknowledgement of the layers of place and displacement is provisional, basic, crude even, as if the rhetoric of speaking to colonization might touch some of the history that we've inherited, might roughly brush the cheeks of these institutional monstrosities, and leave an affective trace that could linger a little while. At the same time though, acknowledging the contradictions and misrepresentations of "where we are" does make more visible how the university embodies the rhetorical and material practices of a 21st century neocolonial neoliberalism. And I do think this plays out on the level of visibility more often than not, so that we are baited into building strategies to make visible the structures that foreclose our self-determination of these very institutions, spaces, and social relationships we've inherited and those we actively construct.

In other words, the university participates in a wider social, cultural, and highly economic program that squeezes our politics into issues of representation. I mean that it uses policies of legibility and visibility, on the one hand, and erasure and opacity, on the other, to capitalize on the

work we do to literally change the way we move through the institution and the world, at the level of the space we use and the social relations we constantly make and revise. Representation is a smart trick that still works, making something visible in order to contextualize it, depoliticizing it at the very moment it seems to gain a platform. Context of course is most often capital, and whoever provides the context also makes the capital gain. This plays out in rather blunt ways on the level of space.

Here's an example: In 2007, Simon Fraser University was one of 24 public post-secondary institutions in British Columbia to receive $600,000 as part of the provincial government's "Aboriginal Post-Secondary Educational Strategy." The money was mandated to build a self-determined indigenous student gathering space at each of the universities. The funds came out of the "New Relationship" heralded by the Transformative Change Accord, signed by the provincial and federal governments as well as the BC Assembly of First Nations, the First Nations Summit, and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs in 2005. In other words, this was Truth and Reconciliation money, which coming from the United States, I like to think of as Recognition and Representation money, some version of reparative affirmative action that pumps the colonized and seemingly "invisible" subject with a little capital, rendering her hyper-visible in a soft economic restructuring that, though incredibly problematic, seems laughably inconceivable south of the colonial border.

So at the same time that SFU received these funds, they were in the process of building Saywell Hall, a glassy and eco award-winning structure that abuts the Academic Quadrangle on the Burnaby campus. Without consultation with the First Nations Student Association, the administration appropriated the $600,000 to build a wide open Atrium that connects Saywell Hall with the AQ. It's worth repeating that the administration did not consult indigenous students at all, meaning that the notion of a self-determined space was foreclosed as soon as the money changed hands, from the right hand of the government to the left hand of the administration. In order to use the so-called self-determined gathering space, indigenous students have to contact space services to book time, and are given no preference over any other group who wishes to access the space. Campus space services also charges rent to use the Atrium, allowing the university to profit on a space whose construction has already been paid for by the benevolence of Truth and Reconciliation.

Dispossession and displacement occur doubly in this alarmingly easy example: at the same time that SFU "makes visible" their Native student

body through the publicized construction of a space, they appropriate more than half a million dollars to fund part of a structure they were already in the process of building. And now that the Atrium is built, they continue a legacy of erasure by giving no priority to Native students in the use of the space.

In 2010, a letter was drafted by the First Nations Student Association to SFU President Andrew Petter, detailing the ways in which the funds were appropriated and misused. Since then, the administration has agreed to build a new gathering space in the AQ, to be accessed beginning fall 2013, a full eight years after the initial dispersal of funds. Unlike other universities that constructed stand-alone facilities, like Emily Carr, SFU's indigenous gathering space is being repurposed out of existing classrooms, with a wall knocked out here and added there, a pretty great metaphor for the realities of reconciliation overall.

It's no surprise that SFU botched its attempt at supporting indigenous self-determination. Self-determination, as a broad political and ethical imperative battered back by the collusion of private funding and the bear of the state, might be another way to frame the seeming impasses of the present. And right now, any attempt at recouping the radicalness of the university is exactly the project that the university hopes we participate in because it enacts a bit of erasure on the three-way corporate-state-university marriage that most of us in this room are probably rather intimate with.

In this situation, I want a return to the crude, or a revitalization of a politics of the crude—the jalopy as Jerry was calling it—that insists on a materialism that cares less about how it thinks through its structures of being, its institutional divisions, cooptations, mutations and flailings, as it does the immediate effects of bodies in the discrete spaces we negotiate. I think if we pay a little attention, we can feel neoliberalism as a hum that sends our spaces into particular vibrations. I wonder how we might make something out of this hum, on a crude stage that articulates both sophistication and noise with pleasure. To strike a pose of participation, and maybe even reconciliation, within our institutions while organizing elsewhere in ways that, quite consciously, contradict the rhetoric we perform and the reformist measures we might sincerely promote within the university.

The history of the Saywell Hall Atrium that I've outlined above was researched as a short report for a non-academic research group that myself and a few of you in the audience began in January. We began the

group in frustration and response to the material, institutional, and social contradictions of radical knowledge production that this evening in so many ways reveals. I think turning to self-organizing within, between, and beyond the university, with a nod to our abilities to perform visibility while manipulating what exactly gets seen, is one way to articulate "what we should do" now.

**Andrea Creamer:** Thanks Jerry. Thanks Natalie. So what kind of University do we want? I have asked myself this question over and over since I began to think about this panel, but I think this question has actually been following me since I started pursuing post-secondary education, first at Langara College and now here at SFU. I have attended three separate campuses over the last eight years and all have been under some form of construction. Not unlike the rest of Vancouver, they have been expanding, creating more densely built environments and adding more bums in seats. Like units in a new condominium development it seems more is better, and as a student this is an everyday reality you become acutely aware of. In a narrow business sense, our presence is tied to the economic growth of the university, which is probably also why class sizes have increased and services have decreased. But the growth of the university is also increasingly tied to the growth of other commercial spaces such as malls or mix-used reality developments, transforming students—now seen as potential shoppers and renters—into amenities for private interest. Pursuing these kinds of development strategies, Simon Fraser University has built multiple campuses without designating sufficient free spaces for students.

It's in my opinion that this is a continuing and materially embedded practice that I relate to the idea of spatial injustice. Without spaces that are truly free for students to use, it is harder for us to come together, to organize, to occupy the campuses we attend and to find collective power. While such organization can and does happen elsewhere, it also will often struggle to find a real sense of ownership of the university. By being offered complicated leases, regulated rights, and potentially unstable conditions, we are left to rent the spaces we inhabit in the university. And when university campuses are offered as resources for corporations and other organizations, for private conferences and events, our physical presence as students, both en masse and individually, seems only to mess up the beautiful architectural spaces and scenic views.

I would argue, however, that spatial justice, the simple right to be

and become in a space, is as important as the education being given to the bums in the seats at the University. The University is a place to learn and express ideas, but this proves potentially difficult when every area has been "bought and claimed," with every classroom demarcated by signage, a gift from some wealthy benefactor. As a result, the subjective experience of students is not only complicated and compromised by the politics and business practices of the university, but also the politics and business practices of whichever patron's lounge we are vying to find a seat in, if we are lucky enough.

I don't bring this up to sound ungrateful or entitled or jaded. If anything I have enjoyed my time at SFU profoundly and my own self-awareness of these issues have come from attending the School for Contemporary Art's studios at 611 Alexander, which is located about a dozen blocks east of here. That place is everything that this campus is not. It is messy and busy and full of students. Our presence there is a visual experience through art and posters and ramshackle furniture. The space is continually reimagined and used as needed and is not defined by prescriptive architecture. I feel privileged to have been a part of that as a student and to have had the freedom to be and become in a space. No one there mops the floor behind every step I take, and the only reception I might accidentally intrude upon is the one that I'm always invited to, hosted by other students. As remarkable as the studios at 611 are, however, they aren't particularly accessible to the public, which is the real limitation.

I recently began researching the precursor to the studios at 611 Alexander, the Perel building and later Gallery, which was located across the street from Woodward's at 112 Hastings Street. From the late 1970s to the early 1990s the space transitioned from a studio space for SFU faculty, to a teaching space, and then to a collectively run gallery space facilitated by faculty and students from SFU's School for Contemporary Arts but which was also inclusive of faculty and students from UBC and Emily Carr. As I understand the history of the older space, it was a lot of work to run and maybe too much and too big of an undertaking for such a small group of people. But despite its challenges, however, it ran under the radar, was self-organized and experimental and fostered community, and it helped produce and support successful artists.

At this moment in time and especially in this part of the city, that kind of space, organized and run the way that it was, as part of the university while also somehow autonomous from it, seems sadly impossible. Squashed between the inflated price of property and

university bureaucracy, too much has changed since then for us, as students as much as citizens. Despite everything of course, students are resilient and inventive. And when we can, we should learn from the past; we shouldn't get caught up in the nostalgia or overcome by our growing disappointment in the present. Struggle for good and bad is an ongoing process. The truth is, if we have to leave the university to do the things we want to do, to experiment, or to organize, or to find freedom, and to occupy a space of our own, it will be at the university's loss and not ours. If notions of fairness and justice are not persuasive enough to change the values and priorities of the university alone, maybe the dumbness of economics might. At the end of the day it is our bums in their seats and we can always sit elsewhere.

**Didier Morelli:** Thank you to the organizers of this panel for inviting me to be part of it, and special thanks to Jerry Zaslove for sharing his views on universities with us, in hopes of further opening dialogue on pedagogy and pedagogical models in North American, and more specifically, Canadian institutions of higher learning.

In light of Dr. Zaslove's historical grounding, I'd like to state that I am the son of two 60s parents who were the first university graduates of their families. One an immigrant family, the other a Québécois de souche for whom education represented an idealist form of social empowerment rooted in social critique and cultural activism. I was asked to be part of this panel because I have, throughout my short time at SFU's School for Contemporary Arts, voiced my concern and frustration that the institution I call home is not the space of open and dynamic exchange, growth, and creation I had hoped it would be. The university, or in my case the art school institution, no longer promotes the principles it once did. Far are we from the university of Bologna's 1158 charter, the *Constitutio Habita*, which provided scholars from all over Europe the safety to gain access, legal protection, and travel rights for the purpose of study.

Perhaps this may seem irrelevant to us today. However, the notion of academic freedom in medieval Europe placed the university as an unparalleled groundbreaking and avant-garde institution. Today, the university continues to foster ideas of freedom of speech, open and flexible pedagogy, and the furthering of knowledge and research. However, it also grapples with the increasing pressure placed upon it to survive within a capitalist economy and a neoliberal ideology that values product over process, results over experience, and order over chaos.

And so, as a student of three major Canadian universities over the past three years - Concordia University in Montreal; the University of Toronto in Toronto; and Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, I find myself asking why? Why continue to feed and perpetuate the university economy that no longer fosters thought, creation, and collective living but instead looks to manufacture success, solidify hierarchy, and impose proper social behaviour? More to the point, why do art programs today concentrate on reproducing existing artistic models, training students to copy and emulate art history, mimicking styles and signature of established masterpieces in order to repeat, rehabilitate, and at best reenact the past? Frankly I don't know why. The only answer I can fathom is, unfortunately, because it still remains the best place to be.

While studying at Concordia, Toronto, and SFU, I have observed similarities in how these institutions can no longer function with as much freedom as they once did. Mostly these schools are operated as private enterprises, which prioritizes the creation of objects rather than process. Pressure is exerted on developing functional and profitable research, thus instating heavily divided and segmented parts of the university that function unevenly, are funded unevenly, and develop unevenly. This formulaic and instrumentalized space follows a strict hierarchy, deepening the divide between direction, faculty, and student body.

In Quebec, where I took part in the printemps érable of 2012, the outcry was against the resulting alienation, inaccessibility, and frustration that has developed from the new direction and recent governance of the university. Although much of the English public press that reported on the protest emphasized the neoliberal government's intended 75% tuition increase over a period of five years from 2012 to 2017, the uprising that took place and developed into mass civil disobedience, nonviolent protest, violent protest, and picketing, was the result of a university system that no longer provides academic freedom. Dealing with ex-university presidents who were let go within the first year of their mandate and thus still being paid their full half million dollar wages; with universities seeking to establish a strong research reputation by creating satellite buildings that they could not pay for themselves; with these same universities seeking any kind of financial support and allowing companies like Pepsi Cola to advertise, lobby, and run promotional centres within the schools, the students were left with a full arsenal of reasons to take to the streets. If indignation and a sense of urgency characterized the Occupy movements of the past year around the world, a very similar sentiment mobilized

students faced with a certain future of debt and unemployment.

Seven weeks ago, in a room across the hall, I took part in a panel organized around Antonio Muntadas' About Academia. While the panel was formed of highly reputable faculty and community members from the SFU and UBC communities, including Serge Guilbaut, I was surprised, worried, and ultimately saddened to see that out of the sixty or so people in the audience, approximately ten were students. The rest were mostly professionals in the arts, education, or somehow involved in the immediate SFU Woodward's community. Can this kind of event even be relevant, when students, who are directly engaged in and affected by the changes in the university, are not present? Are five professors discussing their views, opinions, and research on universities in crisis a good way to address this issue? Is speaking out enough? Where is my generation? Where is the generation that will suffer from these changes? Uninterested? Uninterested in pure speculative talk? Or maybe disillusioned and cynical.

I'm intrigued by the central place education is commanding in recent art theory, critical thinking, and our own Vancouver proliferation of lectures, book launches, panels, and visiting artist talks on the subject over the past six months. Consider that visual art has only been part of the academic university institution in Canada since the 1960s, and that most of the ideas and individuals that drove these radical art programs are now retiring, disillusioned, and nostalgic. That more than ever the challenge of art's very form, funding, and purpose is up in the air. I ask where are we going? Why are we seeing such a resurgence of 60s aesthetics in young practices? Why does art seem more and more entrenched in commodity exchange and why do art schools encourage it by celebrating and educating art stars? Can art still effect change? Can art still produce knowledge? Are we living the total implosion of a total democratic dream based on accessible education and experimental making? Is this the result of one generation's inability to pass on and recognize the emergence of a new generation? Or is this the victory of the right wing conservative politics?

I am no expert on academia, pedagogy, or the state of the university. I am a student. A student who dreamt all of his life to one day give back through teaching. And who no longer thinks that this will be possible, manageable, or even desirable. I would like to close with two questions. By a show of hands, how many here are graduate students enrolled in a university program? And how many here are undergraduate students enrolled in a university undergraduate program? Thank you.

**Nicholas Perrin:** I also want to thank Am and Sabine for organizing this panel and say that it's an honor to be responding to Jerry's talk, both in the sense that he has quite a stake in what we're talking about here and that I, a lot of us probably, see him as a role model. The free form way Jerry allows his research and articulation to be fueled by passion and political concern is a practice a lot of academics have given up. The shifting of scale between the personal and public that comes out through Jerry's work is a model I try to follow. That said... I'm going to start my contribution to the discussion by addressing the recent history of "the state" as it pertains to what the panel has presented here, and then get to pedagogy later.

One of the huge differences between the 1960s and now is obviously the transformation that's taken place with "the state" in terms of its mediating relationship to "the market" and capital. We broadly call it neoliberalism.

In terms of how this corresponds to the university, the neoliberal state is best characterized as an end to previous (real and imaginary) state functions of "social craft." At least in the United States (where I was born), you can mark the end of the state's actual concern for crafting society with the end of the Johnson presidency and his "Great Society" project. This is crucial for universities: in terms of being "public" institutions (even if merely in mandate), this ideological shift has a revolutionary impact on how it is that they're being conceived and what they're being organized to do both as broader social engines and for individual "clients." This phenomenon is probably a little more recent in Canada. And I apologize, as I don't really don't know so much about the uptake of neoliberalism on the national level here.

But regardless, ideologically what is at stake when you let loose the state from its conceptual role as a sort of rational planning instrument for society, and this is kind of playing off of a Hegelian under-current in Jerry's thinking, is that the pressure to register coherence is removed from the level of society and larger structural metaphors of totality, and offloaded onto the level of the individual. i.e.: because no one is planning where the hell we're all headed, the social and psychological needs expressed by clear rational bottom lines and an articulated sense of coherence about what's actually more broadly going on are displaced to the level of individuality, as responsibilities of "the subject." It's not that the individualism of neoliberalism is some sort of a lack or moral deficiency within us, it's something that's happened to us… that has been encoded into the very options we have to build life as a sort of pseudo-

cosmology. The university (a uniquely self-actualized site of encoding options) has, at least in my life, been the space where these forces and their effects on the people I love have been made most legible.

So, nothing really new as far as the basic structural concerns of anti-colonial and capitalist critique, but certainly a different set of tensions amidst which we all must assess who we are and organize accordingly. And this is the environment in which we're teaching now. There's not really a lot we can do in the sense that within a social crisis of upward mobility, I think most of us are trying to make it emotionally tenable for our students to understand themselves as on the losing side of capital, while still trying to imbue them with some kind of sense of agency.

And so there's a real—just in the problems of upward mobility at the foundation of the students' motivation a real disjoint between what it is I have to give pedagogically, the certain analysis I'm passing off, and the receptivity of the students in front of me. And I think in a school like SFU, largely serving a community of more recent immigrants, where some families have been working for generations to get their students into this situation, sacrificing so that they can be successful, my particular brand of left-oriented critique, hard positioning—the whole world is unethical—is very unpalatable and hard for them to figure out what to do with. So let's just put that out there at the beginning.

The next layer of this is when Jerry begins to talk about a separation of intellectual work from manual labour. I think he did a good job of characterizing the way this turn to intellectual work led intellectuals to become more public, and that the separation of intellectual work from manual labour led towards a more self-actualized consideration of publicness generally. At this point historically we've transformed again from emphasis on intellectual work to service work. But this hasn't done away with the problem of publicness. In the construction of what's happening (the disillusionment of the state, social craft, and everything like that), and this move from intellectual work to service work, the way in which the public is charged has also shifted. It's not rational in the same way.

The theorist in the 60s who was most famous for his historical model and political theories around rational publicness was Jürgen Habermas. I think, its broad relevance aside, this theory has functioned as the dominant model intellectuals have had to account for in terms of how they're supposed to work and how it is that they are to be public: a certain quality of what we are putting forward, a type of rational positionality, that

establishes a certain type of hierarchy around how ideas are going to get worked through and how decisions are going to get made.

However, in the service economy/society this process is actually way more affectively charged now. And again this isn't something we can choose. Its something that's happened to us. So rather than publicness being rationally dominated or established qualitatively, it's probably more affectively dominated at this point. Which has unfortunately done little-to-nothing to gear more gender equal processes of publicness.

So that's my attempt at an update to what Jerry has put forward. In order to give this some kind of framework that's usable for approaching how we function in the university I lean towards this art sociologist, Pascal Gielen. He now identifies the university as being under "the catering regime". And I think when Jerry refers to Walmart, and Natalie critiques the absurd way in which we rent different spaces from the university, that they're adding dimension to the territory of this general critique.

So keep thinking about the catering regime, and then jump back to the analysis of the state I put forward and there is what Jerry put forward as President Stevenson's idea of the university. If there's "an open university frightened by its own freedom," this is because it's breathing the air of a more general social problem. That quote is exactly what neoliberalism is. The project puts forward "freedom" as its main objective, its main ideal, and social project. But governmentality and management anxiety have characterized the structural response of our political systems and economy. The catering regime is the neoliberal affective framework for how we establish specific options and then kind of try and manage them while putting forward a friendly, happy face in order to disguise the insincerity. "The Happy University," as Jerry calls it.

If the passage through all of that still makes sense, then I can pose the question: in this environment, what is it that I do with my politics? Why am I here? If the notion of crafting better citizens, let's say, has been lost with Johnson, when the state was forming a society, then what is my response to the catering regime? What am I doing if I'm not training citizens, educating productive workers, or performing the register required for academia's take on consumption-based development; if I don't think the students are coming to me and carrying information away in the way I've been taught they are supposed to; if the kind of information I'm giving them goes against most everything that they've learned previously, and is a bit hard to hold because it leans on a different era of idea-making; if really grappling with the things I have to teach brings about some sense of

personal crisis and defensiveness?

What I feel I can most usefully put forward to counter "the Happy University," and this is a hard realization, is a certain type of affective positioning around incoherence. I try to help students develop the endurance it takes to model a particular understanding of the word criticality, in that criticality affirms the moment of not knowing in the process of knowing. If I'm going to have the pretense to impose seemingly impossible political and economic issues, I have to stifle the posture and assumptions of autonomy about the classroom and university spaces that have affectively fueled left theory, and take into account new pressures put on myself and the students in our classrooms. It's a contradiction, but we almost have to let ourselves off the hook to make our problems inescapable.

**Am Johal:** Thank you all for your responses. We'll move to questions shortly, but I want to reference something that Jerry was talking about. Some of the people in the 60s and 70s that were involved in the radical projects you mentioned include Stokely Carmichael, R.D. Laing, and Herbert Marcuse. And just last week Jakob Jakobson (who's involved with the Copenhagen Free University) was in Vancouver to speak at UBC for a seminar. He circulated a few bits and pieces of his anti-historical research on the anti-university of London, and it documents some of these projects and many of the people who were working within the university at the time. It's quite a fascinating document and I'm going to circulate this around so people can take a look.

Jerry, would you like to respond to any of the comments that were made to begin?

**Jerry Zaslove:** Well it's not a response, it's an unfree ramble. Or what did you say? Free form ramble. Acutally, I didn't feel it was a ramble so much as it was constructing a narrative around naming where one has been. I wanted to say something about what Am has pointed out. The free university movement, it was here in the 60s, relevant and alternative high schools were started. That's why I showed one of the high schools there, in my collection of schooling. The schooling of society, Paolo Friere, whose work was important—he was anti-hospital, anti-psychiatry, anti-schooling. I remember a talk Paulo Friere gave and there was a room of about sixty people. And I'll always remember this day, by the way, as we have a new pope don't we? But you watch and see on the web how much information will be passed around about human rights, about the new pope's history

in Argentina and it will be very interesting to see that. And why do I say that? I say it only to emphasize the theme of conflicted publics that I think this is where we are now historically, with a fragmented labour movement, with universities who are frightened. The reason I showed Breugel's great picture was not just to show fish eating fish but institutions eating children, and that's why he's pointing out to the child what you're in store for. So it's the Hobbesian Leviathan of the monopoly of liberal globalization that we're talking about as you pointed out. And if I didn't use the words it was implicit everywhere, in what I would call the new feudalization of the public sphere. That's what liberal capitalism is good at, is fragmenting and breaking things apart. But on the question of Am's work, we need to emphasize that the model of education that was on the agenda, and it still is in radical spaces, whether it's in theatre, whether it's in elementary school art school, negative space in the movement of post conceptual art and so forth, has to do with creating negative space, creating an incommensurable space, what you were talking about I think. Where one knows it's in process but you may feel like you don't quite belong there, but that's the challenge to the framing of space that insists that it is what it is and nothing more than it is. Occupying space says something about negative space. It says we're taking over space that doesn't belong to us and we know it doesn't belong to us but it's going to challenge the real estate space. Now educationally what's going on here is what I would call the deficiency model of negative space. All of a sudden throughout the 60s and 70s we started to think that you could teach people, if it moves you can teach it, the prison education program, Commercial Drive alternative university and so forth and so on and what that means is that you approach the artist, the student, not as if they are deficient and need to have the history of art shoved down their throat, they have to know what beauty is and what good art is for sure but you also have to know where you're coming from. Not that you're deficient but who are you, where are you, and what have you experienced, and that's the anti-deficiency model of education, does that make any sense? In Am's work, it's finding different communities. I don't even like that word community, I don't know; it doesn't work for me; it doesn't speak to me. Communities are groups of people who form together based on certain natural tendencies to think, talk, and change things. Sometimes they can do it and sometimes they can't. So in other words the university is selling what I call the crisis or adversity model of organization. They're not only afraid but they're in crisis constantly and they don't tell us in public what

really that crisis is all about. They're not honest. So that goes back to what you're saying, that they project this fear onto the public. And those of us in this room who know what that's about, the best thing we can do is to challenge the fear and make sure that people are not afraid and have power. Not everybody is inadequate. The needs model of neglect, poverty, work problems, that people bring to the table, in a Hegelian sense, is something that needs to be cultivated.

**Audience:** Jerry, early on you alluded to SFU's self-mythologizing tendencies, and it seemed to me that you were pointing in the direction of the administration's tendency to co-opt its probably undeserving progressive reputation. Could you elaborate on that a bit?

**Jerry Zaslove:** I meant that something very specific historically as well as capitalizing on nostalgia. In some respects the book about the desk drawer history radical campus, which became the, more or less, official history. In terms of scholarship it's very poor because it didn't even interview the people who—maybe they wouldn't have wanted to be interviewed—the people who created that in part fiction and in part reality of that radicality. But what I meant specifically in terms of 'historical': the NDP government in 1972 was very unhappy with Simon Fraser and Eileen Daily, who was the minister of education was—and this is poor David Barrett—a book has been written about David Barrett, who's a very interesting figure. They didn't like what was going on at SFU, the social democrats or the NDP, so in other words, throughout the 70s maybe up to, maybe the financial exigency period in the 80s again, recycling financial exigency. I shared a department in 1979 and 1986, which went from fifty people, including lecturers, down to 32. Just cut. So my point is that through that period it was a mandate of the president, whether it was Pauline Jewett or Bill Saywell, to ensure public confidence in the university financials and so forth. One has to bear in mind—and I left this out of my talk—that the first board of governors of 1965 consisted of eight businessmen and, one from Vancouver, moguls right, and one New Westminster businessman. It's pretty much the same now. So the white-washing was on the agenda to ensure reliability, competence, management and so forth. And speaking in terms of public sphere, poor Pauline Jewett, who was the first woman president, the only one really, we've had women chairs on the board of governors, she was simply cannibalized by the whole system. She tried to make peace with the turmoil. So yes, to answer your question, it's a long winded answer but it's a historical answer that if you live through it you

know that agenda was to make sure that public accountability was on the agenda and that of course new faculties, social sciences and so forth, and new endowments. The humanities don't get $25,000,000 the way the business faculty does. Goldcorp mining, as Steve Collis—a brilliant analyst who knows the ethics and politics of that—fills out the picture a bit.

**Audience:** My question is posed to the very foundations of the university: is it possible that even the concept or idea of the university is opposed to producing accessible spaces of learning? Learning is confined to a physical building and structure that is deeply invested in creating professions based on hierarchies and elitism in terms of knowledge and information, separating those who know from those who don't know and standardizing the information. So the university perpetuates a way of engaging where it's understood that there are those who get access and there are those who don't.

**Nicholas Perrin:** I'm not sure there's any way around what you're describing. As soon as we begin to create institutions, they need money and there are struggles over what they're supposed to do. I think that the original project of what the Western university is supposed to be about is completely tied up with what you articulate—that problem has been there forever, and maybe it will always be there. Unfortunately, the university has always been a place that has served power and has had a discourse inside of it that was against power.

**Audience:** In connection to that last question, I have some lingering thoughts about the idea of public intellectualism within the private sphere of the university and also self-organization within the university. I automatically assume that the university is an institution, but maybe we have different understandings of what the university actually is. I see it completely as a place that sells agency instead of creating agency. So maybe we can talk about that a little bit more?

**Natalie Knight:** I do see the university as an institution, absolutely. And I think we're engaged in multiple institutions all the time, whether we're totally aware of it or not. It's the negotiation of those contradictions and really problematic relationships with institutions that causes friction. How you manage this friction also translates into how much money you have and what spaces of education you can access, and most of the time this ability to manage is more about class than it is your talents and desires. We're never outside of dealing with this. But we still have agency, always,

as co-opted as we may feel - we just may have to realize it in other spaces. Maybe we need to stop asking the university to help us realize what we already have.

**Audience:** Thank you. My understanding of the meaning of "university" in Latin is that it's essentially the proper word for corporation. Since corporations are basically fictitious and don't exist except in the minds of those who use them, how much of this crisis or incoherence in the university is structural and systemic and impossible to get rid of? And in terms of undergraduate students, well, what are they doing? They're buying a franchise in a corporation essentially, something that may not have any actual substance. I tend to assume that most people are materialists, at least when interacting with one another in public. They don't really use theological conceptions to ground themselves in public discourse. So how much of the lack of coherence is simply structural and systemic?

**Nicholas Perrin:** That might be another talk. No I mean entirely. I don't know if that's so much a question as an open question. I think what you raise in terms of expectations today is students coming in looking for competencies, and I think that you might be right about the theological grounding of some of us that have made it into grad school. I've actually kind of said that I came to my PhD program looking for a religion. And there's a frustration with the contradiction between the two. I think you're right, but I don't know.

**Didier Morelli:** I would definitely follow up with that. My frustrations are exactly with the contradiction because it still remains the best place for me to be, the place that funds me, and the place that allows me to meet the most interesting people to have this discussion with. In no way do I turn my back on that and brush that away. But when I sit down and think about it, and when I'm faced with it, the daily issues and problematics within it, I do also realize that maybe stepping out is a possibility. Abandoning the word "university" is a possibility. Maybe creating an opposition and challenging it from the inside isn't enough and so attacking the root of the word or going back to the root of the word might be it. I have thought about not using anti-university, but just abolishing it entirely and not using free university but moving beyond that. And what would that mean? Would we actually be able to separate ourselves from all the paradigms and problematics that have been established through time?

But no, in no way do I think that I can separate myself from it at this current moment and in no way am I ungrateful for what it has given me. I'm only upset with the fact that, as much as it gives, it likes to take, and you don't always know where it's taking from. Often, you find out too late what was taken away from who in order for you to have something.

**Jerry Zaslove:** Just quickly, really quickly: I think the question about building, if I understand, it is the place where you are socialized in a performative space. But when you're talking about the idea of a university, not so much the experience of it, you're talking about it in an ideological construct and that is to say, to link a couple of questions, in the 1970s and the 1980s, the university, and more so now than before, has coopted the idea of relevance. That was a concept that came as political, cultural, the university as a social movement in the 60s, but now relevance is a Walmart concept, it can mean anything to whatever clientele you that you feel you're appealing to. So you can have multiple programs, multiple identities, and so forth. So we're talking then about the reification of the idea of the university around very particular examinable ideological constructs that can be looked at and named in terms of their monetary value and their surplus value. For example, the digitization of the university, there's a very good book derived from Paul Virilio and Barthes published by Semiotext(e) by an Italian writer. He just talks about the digital cultural surplus that one has to deal with. And the university loves this, they love the cultural surplus that's performed in the digital and positive space, it's no longer negative, it's positive space. Or in another way, thinking about it, it's dead space that is animated by the client who is active in that negotiation, but it's not a social contract. A contract between your people that you deal with and the one who wants to make some kind of communal relationship, it should be a social contract, that's freely negotiated and entered into with the people that - I think this has something to do with what you were saying.

**Audience:** I'm thinking about a return to the model of the free university or the anti-university that has been brought up a few times. Didier just touched on this with a desire to move past even those models to something that is more in the realm of the yet to be discovered or the possible. But I wonder, and perhaps it goes back to looking at the *printemps érable*, whether that movement in Didier's characterization (which is also partially a move to reclaim academic freedom) can also be something that strives towards a free university and a universalization of the possibilities

of the university against the particularization and the drive towards surplus that Jerry has just articulated.

And I think this is an especially pertinent question given that two weeks ago in Quebec, you have the move towards the decision that tuition fees are going to be raised in an indefinite and continuous way, by something like 3%, but not capped at that. Tuition's going to be indexed, decided year-by-year by the average disposable income on the provincial level. And those talks were boycotted by the largest student organization, because from the beginning the talks disallowed the possibility of even bringing up the free university. And I think this drives back to the question that Marion brought up, in terms of the established hierarchies of the university. How are we hoping to break those hierarchies apart? I take Nicholas's point that the university is a place that has hierarchies and that hierarchies aren't something that are going to disappear overnight. It's a problem that's coming from a long long history, but I don't think that this should deaden our horizon. I'm curious about what the possibilities we see being mobilized currently are.

**Nicholas Perrin:** I personally hope for a new wave of accreditations at community universities. I think that it is the scale and the corporatism of a lot of universities that keep us from functioning as educators in the way that we want to. It's difficult to figure out when I'm researching totality, what that has to do with my neighborhood, and it's hard to make those articulations. We should also have universities that function and are more closely contextualized within specific communities in order to generate knowledge as an honest and specified assessment of economic conditions and social potentials that might make people's actual lives better. I imagine a differently scaled university that maybe I would one day like to work in.

**Didier Morelli:** In terms of Quebec and the tuition increase, I have no solutions for long-term planning for universities and how to break the hierarchies. The interesting thing in Quebec is that, sure there is this wavering 3% increase, which will move throughout the years, but the student movement as a whole overthrew a government that had been solidly in place for many, many years. There was no horizon for that government to be brought down, so the movement really accelerated that process. And beyond that it created, from the sense that I get from going back and speaking with friends, a deep divide and also unsettlement in the community. A sense of student power, of the ability for people to merge together on the streets, to insist on change whether it be a change of the

government or a change of the institution.

So I find it amazing how it's allowed for an emergence in local explorations of students feeling empowered, of no longer feeling alienated, of wearing the red square beyond the summer and using that as a symbol of identity. I don't plan on wearing the red square everyday, but I do wear it at times and it's this moment of identifying with a movement, with a generation—with generations plural—because it wasn't necessarily one generation versus another. And so just that unsettling, that shake at the bottom, I think is enough for the time being. And as we saw last year in Quebec, things can move rapidly. Things can degenerate and collapse and then rebuild.

**Stephen Collis:** I appreciate the sentiment you were on there at the very end Didier, and I appreciate everyone's comments here. The things we're talking about here—fear, precarity, downward mobility, diminishing returns—aren't problems unique to the university, they're problems that characterize crisis capitalism at-large at this stage in history. Therefore, it's not surprising they're at the university. It might be disappointing because we have some, however watered down, idealized notions of what the university could be, might be. So our argument isn't actually with the university—our argument is with capitalism. That's what we need to fight. And maybe the university is one place where we fight it because that may be the place where we are for a period of our lives. We work there, we study there, whatever. It's where we are; it's where we can fight.

To pick up on another thing that was said about the future and changes in the institution. What most people suggest is going to happen now is that there will be a few elite universities, research universities that are very expensive to go to, that only elite people will be able to attend. And then there will be a whole lot of what people call community colleges that most people will teach at. It will be temporary work, badly paid. This is a bleak picture that a lot of people are painting these days, but in some ways it does open up a lot of opportunities for the kinds of free schools we're talking about. There are going to be a lot of people who want to learn, and we will have to create that and organize it ourselves because the already existing spaces are going to be very limiting.

**Andrea Creamer:** Does the dissatisfaction we have about the university only come from being in the university though? What happens if everyone just jumps ship from the university to the free school or another proposed model? I've been trying to figure out how to say this: what happens when

everybody, even the administrators and whoever, they all get tired or are fed up and want change and just shift to something else. Do our problems and dissatisfactions just get duplicated elsewhere, the same thing with a new name? How would it really work?

**Jeff Derksen:** I have a comment for Nicholas, and then a question for Natalie and Andrea. Nicholas, I found the narrative that you developed very compelling, where the shift from state-craft has led to the taking apart of the project of the national citizen. And to bring that into the present, that kind of state craft was reformed into a form of biopolitics and revanchism as we moved from the 70s model of the national citizen—from the neoliberal state to the neoliberal, automatized individual. I think what was really compelling for me in parts of what Jerry was talking about was exactly this pinpointing of this moment in the late 60s and 70s of the national project of education within Canada, by pinpointing the movement that Trudeau initiated where life gave way to lifestyle. This movement to develop the national citizen precisely split where manual labour was devalued, pushed aside, and politics and the citizen based on lifestyle took its place. That moment might have seemed as if it was very productive in terms of producing a new democratic national citizen who was open to education. But it was also an intermediary stage that leads to this new form of state craft, where the national symbol is not so much the flag but an aerial drone, let's say.

Then the question that I want to pose for Natalie and Andrea is around the impossibility of the university. Maybe we can respatialize the university to repoliticize the university. And I want to pick up on what Jerry mentioned, that the idea of the coming radical pedagogy would be in the classroom, if not the university proper. That rescaling to me seems really optimistic and productive. So I'm wondering if in the kernel of both of your comments, there's a respatialization that can actually do away with the university. That can call to the foreground the impossibility of the university and to think of knowledge production existing in multiple scales simultaneously rather than having to always and continually be caught between a model of inside or outside the university. So maybe the utopian outside can be the free university, but what if we actually rescaled that and repoliticized it. In seminar last week, we were talking about the hallways as productive spaces for knowledge and we can also rethink the classroom, so that we don't always work on this inside-outside binding. That's actually a question.

**Andrea Creamer:** I think inside and outside of the classroom isn't just where the tensions are. By even entering a building like this or like SFU Burnaby where there are different types of learning happening, in the hallways or in other spaces, we still constantly have to renegotiate the space or are actually asked to move along. This happened to Didier yesterday—he was escorted away, from what I understand, by security, for just being in the foyer at Woodward's. So what I see is a lack of free gathering space. I'm not even sure if this kind of surveillance is contained to classrooms or hallways anymore, I think it is just becoming impossible to use spaces that used to be somewhat public, or imagined themselves as public. Maybe it has become too corporatized or just too planned out for us as students. And maybe it is about taking it to the streets or to a new location. That idea keeps on getting tossed around.

**Natalie Knight:** The first thing that comes to mind, Jeff, is that I meet a lot of people in the university, who are either there as my peers, as grad students, or are students who I'm supposedly teaching, in addition to staff members. All are people I'm learning from, imposed hierarchies aside. One thing that's been fantastic is tutoring students outside of the classroom. It seems sort of mundane to talk about it, but there is something very unique about the experience every time it happens, I think both for the student that I'm tutoring and myself. It's not a one-way relationship of knowledge sharing in the slightest. They are undergrad students, usually in their first or second year, but that distinction—that hierarchy—doesn't seem to carry outside of the university classroom, whether we happen to meet on-campus or downtown.

I guess what I'm saying is—not to recoup the university after all this!—is that there's still agency and relationships that happen even within the university. I do seriously love the idea of getting outside the large scale of it, but I don't want to write off the resources that we've fought to have access to (in all senses of that— human, material, financial, etc). These are resources that might help us realize new self-determined spaces, and we should take them while they last. Before the state steals them back from us.

**Andrea Creamer:** I've also had a similar situation that Natalie mentions with a TA that I think was actually due to cutbacks in the department. The TA didn't have an office for two semesters in a row and so she was forced to hold her office hours outside of the institution. I think it was actually the most productive kind of exchange that we could have—she would just go and sit in a coffee shop or a restaurant and let you know where

she was going to hang out that week and then you could go and find her. Sometimes it was near the campus and sometimes it wasn't, she would be downtown and the class was on Burnaby. I think that those places aren't necessarily neutral and they have their own problems or their own tensions, but maybe they can also work as an alternative.

**Am Johal:** If each of you would like to close with any last thoughts, I'll start at the far end. Jerry gets the last word of course.

**Nicholas Perrin:** To add a problem to the discussion, here's something that I've been carrying with me for a few years and the reason why I pulled the sort of ramble that I did. There was a paper titled, "On the Perpetuation of Ignorance: System Dependence, System Justification, and the Motivated Avoidance of Sociopolitical Information" put on by researchers in the psychology departments at the University of Waterloo and Duke. They basically studied undergraduate students to gauge their knowledge about large global issues, their concern for large global issues, their trust in the people in power to take care of those large global issues, and then how those three axes relate with one another. Frighteningly, the findings were the opposite of what you want to hear. If a person feels like they don't know anything about environmental change or the economic collapse, and they are highly concerned about these issues, they will be less likely to feel compelled to learn more about the problems and more likely to believe that someone in power is going to take care of them. This clarifies the contours of the pedagogical challenge we face within the dynamics I laid out around state restructuring pretty well. It is why I say the biggest thing that I can give to my students now when I'm in the classroom is to let them know that it's ok to be incoherent, and that while the problems of the world cannot be reconciled on the level of individual will and responsibility, we desperately need to be honest about what's happening.

**Didier Morelli:** To respond to Jeff's comments, I've been recently looking at pedagogy and reading a lot of 70s literature around it, specifically John Dewey and Robert Filliou's work focused on the arts. And what really strikes me about it is the word "environment." They come back to this word environment, but they never define that environment in a very practical or structural way. They never give a floor plan, they never tell you which environment you're using. So I think the question of space is fundamental, especially in the newer universities, and I'm talking in relation to Canada. New universities have sprung up in urban centres and

leave very little space for a good environment or the creation of a good environment. This is related to what Jerry had to say about the idea of a school as a box with seats facing forward. How do we challenge that? How do we push that?

Some schools, like Arthur Erickson's building at SFU, actually allow for congregation. There is an open agora. There is a space for students to join. But the new universities, like this one (Simon Fraser University at Woodward's) do not have that. They completely squeeze that out and so the tactics have changed. And I think that poor pedagogy and alienation are, at the root, a space problem. Can you create an environment where people feel they can get along, an environment where they feel they can take agency? Can you create an environment where the division between faculty and students is not so clear and evident, where it is allowed to mold, to change? And that's something that has just disappeared and needs to be brought back.

**Andrea Creamer:** Recently I've been reading a book that's about pedagogy and education, and it follows a brief history of how artists, poets, thinkers, and critics are constantly trying to redesign or redevelop a new school. I'm wondering if this is because they all went to school for too long and now need to reimagine it in some way. It's become a constant state of focus, and so they feel like they need to reinvent the arts school or reinvent the philosophy of the university. I just think that's an interesting thought to leave on. And thank you again for letting me be a part of this panel.

**Natalie Knight:** I think I've got a better response to that last question, which is that the practice of radical pedagogy might be somewhat simple—less obstructed than we're making it out to be tonight—if we just stop focusing so much on the designated space of learning in the university and view every moment of social relations as an instance of change and knowledge production. That in itself is a decolonizing act, an anti-capitalist act, and ultimately the practice of radical pedagogy.

**Jerry Zaslove:** Just three points. I had to think about the architecture and living with Erickson's architecture since 1965, and the thought that occurred to me apropos of Jeff's intervention was: where egotistical architecture is, there shall repression be. That's a paraphrase of Freud's "where ego, there shall autonomy be." In other words, it disguises class conflict, it disguises the materials around its illusory construction and recapturing the idea of a modernizing past. Ok now what am I saying

with that? My disillusionment with the panel about Muntadas' show was that I had hoped that in the argument between the academy and the university, which was something I tried to get at in my comments that seemed loose, but they weren't loose there was a story there. But to take it back to my own experience and my own turning point, that universities are places both for faculty, students, and unfortunately not administrators, until they retire and write lies. But that they are turning points and they are experiential and that is informed by material space. I think what Jeff has pointed out, insightfully, is that universities are not just ideas, they're material space. And material space is ideological space and it's by definition conflicted space, made up of many different kinds of publics. So if we just translate all that into community without recognizing the roots of different kinds of publics, historically, that come into the university then we've just done everything that the melting pot concept wants us to do without making really clear discriminations about where the ideological positions are and sometimes they're class, sometimes they're not. So I wanted to say that. Thank you. Thanks Am and everyone that's come here.

**Am Johal:** Thanks so much to the panel and thank you very much Jerry.

# SFU, NEO-BOHEMIA AND THE CREATIVE CITY MACHINE

**Catherine Murray**

While city branding under the Vision party in Vancouver has shifted from the Creative City (1986-2008) to the Greenest City (2011-2020), there is no question that SFU has been closely tied to the creative city urban machine. Creative cities attract talent and economic development in a diversified arts, heritage and cultural sector that spans music and the visual and performing arts, museums and festivals, the screen industries and video games, publishing, architecture, fashion design and public institutions like libraries and universities (Kong and Lewis, 2009.) The presence of a research-driven public university is often a key predictor of immigration settlement and inward migration, and linked in complex ways to the spatial agglomeration of businesses and employment. Yet the classic Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) models of the University, focusing on patents, commercialization and the transfer to industry are ill suited to the emerging creative economy (Florida, 2006) and must pay new attention to the capacity of regional urban economies to absorb their innovations and translate them into global gain.

Shallow creative economy talk mostly uses a human capital lens

to situate the university as a key portal in skills, entrepreneurship and continuing professional development of job growth in a creative city embedded in the global creative economy, but there is more to it.

The intent of this article is to examine three roles universities in general and SFU in particular can play in an effort to challenge both depth and ends of creative economy thinking in the context of the city machine. The first addresses the university's role as institutional actor in the local economy, shaping urban placemaking. The second is in the production of creative economy labour, attuned to the rampant risk of the neoliberal era of job markets and changing creative practices. The third is academia's role as cultural animateur: in mediating, producing, exhibiting, and performing cultural content.

Universities as institutional urban actors can influence the design, urban cluster development, transit, and other spatial practices of placemaking. BC has not the experience of the centrally located ivy-league universities (U. of Toronto, McGill) or the new city powerhouses like Ryerson University remaking the entire urban core east of Yonge Street in downtown Toronto. Nonetheless, there are other signs of growing city-making influence, despite the suburban banishment to endowment lands of the 60s.

After 40 years, SFU has grown to over 30,000 students, with campuses in two suburbs (Burnaby and Surrey) in addition to the Vancouver city core where it is the acknowledged leading university presence. These sites have been central in the process of speeded up urban regeneration in the past twenty years, with all of its attendant problems with displacement. SFU has been the first university to have all its campuses joined by skytrain stops at or reasonably near most of its major sites, sign of its central node-orientation. SFU was one of the first public institutions to hire private security in the vanguard of development, about the time they emerged in Chinatown. It was also key in driving high-speed internet infrastructure further north in the City, indirectly enabling the many design and video game start-ups to locate in Gastown. Many premium professional and graduate programs (which have differential fees) are now located in SFU Vancouver, and the branded rooms, tight security presence above a retail and food concourse began the partnership with commercial retail that continued in the development of Surrey City Centre. But that development has more of an aesthetic edge: a Bing Thom-inspired haunting cedar ship prow mounted over a prosaic shopping concourse.

A study produced for its external lobbying estimated SFU's direct

economic impacts at $1.8 billion in 2009-2010, rising to $ 3.6 billion, if net educational "premiums" on alumni earnings attained, SFU research value, student and direct spending are all included. The study noted its "tourist" mandate for conference or other events that attract about 110,000 visitors annually (with sizeable additional estimated spending). Of SFU's 70 company spin-offs, 40 are in IT, poster children of the new economy.

Since universities are pluralistic players, their faculty members, research centres and life long learning departments can advance or challenge creative thinking which actively produces the "buzz" or ideascapes of the city. SFU holds public dialogues on placemaking and salons among the urban planners, developers, citizens and not-for-profit agencies negotiating the public right to the city, and advances public discourse on topics as wide as the need for electoral reform, new trends in cultural development, community belonging, gentrification or affordable public housing. Universities, then, are central to the production of symbolic discourses of place, a critical vocation for academia.

While the relationship of the academy to the creative economy and society as a whole must be continually contested to remain healthy, universities in many countries and especially Australia and the UK recently are under increasing pressure to realign with the purpose of providing the skills necessary to generate sustainable economic growth. Employability and entrepreneurship are seen as growing areas of focus for higher education. This signals quite a different problematic than the old skills agenda pressing at the threshold of post-secondary education of the 90s.

Although the idea of academics as cogs in a machine of urban labour production is distasteful to many of us drawn to the vocation of teaching (Araya, 2010, Laing and Brabazon, 2007) universities today provide more than just space for personal self-development and the learning of social values. Universities produce the talent for the creative class or creative industries so central to creative city aspirations. This is the aesthetic and sociological gatekeeper role, which sets and enforces the standards and content of "professional" training and skill development or tests it by boundary spanning. The problem is in the relatively weak level of professionalization present in many of the creative industries, calling for a continual reinvention of boundaries, or abject surrender to the "pro-am" (professional amateur) movement in a fit of cultural democracy. Liberal or creative arts, communication, interactive digital arts, professional writing and publishing programs, all present at SFU, produce workers

in the flexible creative production value chain, and in turn, develop links to the creative industries (the museums, publishers, screen or visual arts institutions) in maintaining the flow in supply of labour. Since most entry-level creative workers tend to end up in self-employment or small enterprises, experience with new venture development through the use of startup labs, studios or other enterprise assistance is also increasingly important. The new slogan for the School for Contemporary Arts at SFU is "Taking Risks," and the School for Interactive Arts and Design's is "Creating Innovative Futures:" both speak to the zeitgeist of the times. University arts grads from SFU have a lively local ecosystem of artist run centres, alternative social enterprise, and small design businesses in which to live and subsidize their work, but we know little about their artistic lifecycles, or geospatial movements or the capacity of the local urban creative ecosystem to keep them. Arguably, the role of the University in establishing and protecting a creative commons, or devolving ownership of copyright to its members, has one of the most profound structural impacts on the learning economy today, with unknown regional production impacts.

For creative economy skeptics like Rosalind Gill and Andy Pratt, (2008) the production of creative labour is characterized by a number of troubling but persistent features including project-based temporary employment, long, unpredictable and flexible hours, and:

> *...the collapse or erasure of the boundaries between work and play; poor pay; high levels of mobility; passionate attachment to the work and to the identity of creative labourer (e.g. web designer, artist, fashion designer); an attitudinal mindset that is a blend of bohemianism and entrepreneurialism; informal work environments and distinctive forms of sociality; and profound experiences of insecurity and anxiety about finding work, earning enough money and 'keeping up' in rapidly changing fields.*
>
> *Gill and Pratt, 2008, p.14*

Perhaps the most vexed problem for the Academy is thus its complicity in the overproduction of cultural labour, contributing to a prolongation of youth job insecurity, serial free internships, and easy exit. Cultural wages in Canada have been increasing overall, but persistent cultural wage discounts compared to the general labour force, lack of access to benefits or pensions, and poverty "ghettoes" in certain disciplines like dance or the visual arts continue to dog cultural workers throughout their practice.

Hans Abbing's by turn acerbic, hilarious and haunting monograph *Why Artists are Poor* (2002) suggests that they are likely to remain so, in part due to the Post-Secondary inertia.

In response to these pressures, disciplinary realignments are emerging in the academy. It is generally accepted that the work practices of the creative industries (Oakley, 2009) now involve more interactivity, hybridization, new sites and forms of production, multiplatform delivery, promotional synergy, and more serial project entrepreneurship than cultural work in the past during the era of stable elite institutions and relatively generous public subsidy. Since the contemporary business schools have proven slow to adapt, other departments are now taking on the challenge of integrating business instruction with arts and humanities training on a need-to-know basis. Practical case studies of cultural entrepreneurship, contracts, copyright and cultural productions are burgeoning (see for example, the pending volume from Zoe Druick and Daniele Deveau of the *Canadian Journal of Communication*). New academic subfields are created (screen or visual studies or cultural tourism). New degrees are minted (for example, the new BA in Creative Economies at Ryerson University). And new professional programs (with certification in cultural planning available from UBC) are now emerging, though more slowly than in the UK and Australia, seeking to find a sustainable basis for self-financing. What all share is a widespread recognition that there is a mismatch between the skills needed in the new digital modes of production in the creative economy, and university supply. Such mismatches are leading to increases in reliance on foreign temporary workers in the ICT sector, with unprecedented increases since 2006 in Canada, and oversupply in others (as a recent study of the digital video game market in Ontario has found).

Regrettably, there is little public academic debate in Canada about the role of "practice-based" degrees (Laing and Brabazon, 2007), learning by doing or "engaged" community-based teaching, new doctorates, underemployment of doctorates and disciplinary silos in undergraduate education and their impacts on the creative city economy.

For humanities scholars, perhaps the most confounding question has to do with the actual role of academia in the production of cultural and creative works or contents. How well do universities, departments, or indeed individual professors curate, evaluate and communicate the collection of the works produced by themselves or their faculty members? We know that increasingly Departmental branding for recruitment to the

creative arts relies on a kind of celebrity hallmark (promoting the winners in the global creative economy or the not-for-profit saints) but the kind of meta-analysis of contribution to the forging of new genres of production, compelling creative practice, or gifting of cultural "memes" that find resonance across multiple platforms is weak. There is a great need for self-reflexive meta-research around academia and its role in innovation and exploration as well as application and development in cultural production, which is both theoretically and empirically based.

It should be easier to examine the role of SFU in directly animating arts, cultural or heritage programming, with artists-in-residence or other exchanges to remain responsive to the local and global community, and via its pricing and policies with respect to public access and public services, expanding audiences for new creative experiences. Its gallery can contribute to local artistic dialogue if they conceive of their audiences as broadly based. SFU's art gallery is not a well-known actor in local museum and gallery circles. Nor does it have a separate institutional voice on important urban matters in terms of visual urban arts development (or the relocation of the Vancouver Art Gallery, for example, and its impact on the local arts funding scene), and unlike the role of Michael Maranda at York University, is not visible in liaising with Visual Arts groups. Yet SFU has had two waves of curator/cultural performing arts programmers whose contributions are also often silenced in institutional history. In the 70s, Nini Baird, who went on to Chair the Board of TVO and the Telus New Media Fund, ran a complex range of cultural programming out of the SFU Theatre, and provided the site for an inaugural conference of artists which pressed the NDP for a provincial arts and cultural policy in the mid 90s. In the 2010s, Michael Boucher was brought on board to work with SFU Woodwards contemporary arts programming, and a full time community arts relations person located in the DTES hired with funding from local foundations and Van City. SFU's Woodwards campus is next door now to the cultural branch of the City of Vancouver. And SFU's Center for Publishing, under the Direction of Rowly Lorimer, helped animate a BC debate over a creative economy strategy in 2012—published as *Dreamcatcher*—but failed to attract any policy attention in the latest election from any party. SFU thus cannot be said to have chosen to compete with the branded "creative campus" at the University of Florida, or the one emerging at Ryerson, faithful to the marketing script of Richard Florida's vision of the role of the university in the creative economy.

In thinking through the future of SFU in the creative economy in

a way that deviates from and surmounts the usual scripts, important questions of philosophy and epistemology remain. How best can a space for the university as a relatively autonomous sphere for the development of cosmopolitan cultural democracy in urban space be advanced (Araya, 2010?) What systems, policies and structures are most conducive to the creation and development of new cultural forms in the Academy? And how can the special mode of educational address of the comprehensive university without law or medical research departments be channeled effectively against the legitimization of gentrification, the reserve cultural army of free labour, and the increasing gap between rich and poor? Any walk in Surrey City Centre or along Hastings cannot fail to find the avant-garde and the neo-bohemian presence of SFU's arts students, face-to-face, side-by-side or face averted to the anti-poverty activists protesting the upscale Pidgin restaurant in the Downtown Eastside. But in SFU they are also next door to the future MBAs as well. What role then do they and their university play in the particular form of neighbourhood in which they study? Neo-bohemians and SFU in the creative city machine may bring neither sustainable economic futures to themselves or a liveable urban future for many citizens in the Metro Vancouver region. But the surprising resilience of the sector in the last recession suggests that we need to know much more about sustainable cultural production, the city, and academia's role in it.

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# "THE UNIVERSITY DOES NOT THINK"

**Christopher Pavsek**

In "What is Called Thinking?" Heidegger famously said that "science does not think." I think we should rewrite this sentence as follows: "The university does not think."

There's a lot of talk about the university as a site for the "production of knowledge," something usually said as if it were obvious what the implications of such a statement are. The catchwords of critique come to the fore: "knowledge," of course, is "power," and so the university is a place in which power is "constituted" and "expressed," where education consists in the training of power's possessors. And so on. After a while this sounds rather trite and almost pointless to reiterate, as true as it might be. For one must ask: "what does one mean by 'power' when one speaks of the university as a site for its exercise? Is it really in knowledge where power lies?"

Keeping in mind my claim that the university does not think, I think we should instead conceive of the university not as a place where knowledge is produced but rather as a place where ignorance and stupidity are produced. And it is in this production that power is exercised, for the university today performs a remarkable trick: under the

guise of knowledge it produces ignorance; under the guise of expertise it produces people capable of the most restricted sets of actions; under the guise of skill sets it produces existential incompetence.

Following Heidegger, one can think of the claim that the university does not think as the mere statement that little goes on in the university any longer that prompts its knowledge workers (faculty) or its customers (students) to think about the ontological ground of the education they are "delivering" or "pursuing;" or, rather, in today's pathetic parlance, little prompts us to question the point about the education we are all "investing in." If my almost seven years at SFU have taught me one thing, it is this: the vast majority of people in higher education do not think about their work in the least. They do it. They write. They read. They produce research and they sometimes have arguments about the things they read and write and produce and do, but generally, I think it is not too much to say that very few of us actually think about what we do — think, of course, being meant in the particular sense I have just given it.

We encounter the concrete (a small pun for those who know the SFU campus) structures of the university—the departmental divisions, the funding structures, the administrative procedures, and the bureaucracy—and its more abstract structures—the very vocation of education, the pursuit of knowledge, the university's social role—mostly like a bear encounters trees in the forest: as natural givens, as objects that happen to be there and which constitute for us a seemingly inert—if sometimes annoying, like a hive of bees for the bear—environment in which we then pursue our activities. There is only the occasional sense that these structures are the product of human effort, that we have a hand at play in their maintenance and furthering. There is even more seldom any suspicion that we can change them.

Though sometimes there is and here we can find a trace of hope. Let me give an example. Last year, in 2012, it became known—the wording here is careful, for it appeared almost like a cloud forming in a clear sky, out of nowhere, created as if by meteorological forces even the most powerful of Environment Canada's computers would have been unable to forecast, though of course it was as inevitable as any bad weather—that the university would be adopting a thing that came to be known as the "learning outcomes and assessment framework." The language with which this proposal was discussed amongst faculty reinforced the sense of inevitability around the proposal. Things like this were said about it: "the big roll out will come in the fall"; "we might be able to tweak things,

but the administration is pushing this through;" "it's a *fait accompli*." Etc. etc. etc. Remarkably though, through a combination of chance and great effort, the faculty were able to stop this initiative and the proposal was essentially shelved. For now. But the sheer uniqueness of this success is telling: one colleague remarked that it was the first time in her 27 years at SFU that an administrative proposal had been defeated. But this was nonetheless a step; a step toward the university being able to think. For Kant, the essence of enlightenment was the capacity to think for oneself — Selbstdenken. This means not to think selfishly—to think only of oneself—but rather to think without direction by external authority; it means the rejection of heteronomy and the acceptance of responsibility for one's thinking and its consequent actions. In essence, actually, the principle of Selbstdenken, as Oskar Negt has put it, is that the only thinking that merits the name is Selbstdenken. Any other sort of thought is none. It strikes me that the first step toward a university that thinks would be for its faculty to begin to realize it must, and therefore can, think for itself.

Some will argue that my attitude is deeply disrespectful toward students, that there is an elitism that scorns those who want to go to school for practical reasons. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, I think the opposite is the case: people who advocate that universities become skills-training institutions; people who argue that we need to specify and measure "learning outcomes" in our programs; people who think that "students today" want a "guarantee on their investment;" people who think that the way to enrich "student experience" on campus is by providing better dining opportunities (though those would be a good thing) and higher-level sports to watch, are the ones who are cynics about what students can be. Those people think of students as customers who buy our services, and little else; those people think of students as robots to be trained; those people do not think of students as human beings capable of rich and nuanced thought. Those people do not think that students might be able to think for themselves.

But why should we expect any more than this from our leaders? Look at how they behave and at the words they choose to use and at the visions that they have. The big idea at SFU these days is "community engagement." The stated goal of our university is to become the "most community engaged" university in Canada. Of course, if you wish to be the most, you have to be able to measure what you are the most of, so the president of SFU can now speak about the need to "assess community engagement impact" without a hint of irony. Every single word in that

phrase is a brutally reified and stale catchword. (Recall what Ezra Pound once said, "Men living under the domination of catchwords live in a hell of their own making.")

A brief and partial parsing of this phrase can reveal a lot about the current state of the university.

What issues surrounding the reproduction and exertion of power does the very term "assess" condense and encapsulate? Assessment these days usually means some sort of quantitative measure, and it is now a truism—though one that is usually ignored by those who advocate and benefit from assessment, otherwise known as the "assessment community" (I kid you not)—that assessment regimes tend to measure only what can be measured and so, as a consequence, the things that can be measured tend to be favoured. So we end up teaching and researching things that lend themselves to clear and easy assessment. I take little encouragement from reassurances that the "intangibles" of education—those things that we all supposedly know are where the "real" learning happens—will still be important and that they will, of course, eventually be able to be assessed once we have developed the right tools to do so.

As Adorno and Horkheimer might put it: every vivisection is an autopsy.

And then: what about this term "community engagement?" If I had the space, I would comment on the term "community" on its own; I think, however, I have made it clear what my attitude is toward the term in my satirizing of the existence of an "assessment community," a community that exists alongside so many others in this tapestry we call Canada and the world. Just this week I have read about the "gun-control community" (frustrated with Obama's foot-dragging on gun control); the "second amendment community" (angered by Obama's aggressive threat to gun ownership); "the cycling community" (encouraged by plans to remove the Georgia Viaduct); the "driving community" (incensed by plans to remove the Georgia Viaduct); the "intelligence community" (upset by Edward Snowden); and the "international community" (really upset about the intelligence community's gathering of their data). I was thus understandably ambivalent to learn that my community, threatened by the "developer community" here in Vancouver, has referred to itself as, well, a community.

So just what is community engagement? Whatever its definition might be, first and foremost it is one of those magical terms that parades as an unquestioned and obvious good. It's like "full employment,"

"economic growth," "wellness," or "consumer choice." As Althusser has said, when we encounter something that is obvious, we encounter something at its most ideological.

That said, here is my definition: the promotion of community engagement is an attempt to satisfy the imagined demand that the University be accountable. (I say "imagined" because often times these demands have no origin in any easily localizable source.) In the vision of the modern "engaged university," what is the worst possible thing a university could be? It could be an "ivory tower," separated from the interests and necessities of the "real world." Never mind that the vision of the ivory tower included a protection for what we now call academic freedom: namely the insistence that truly objective and disinterested research and teaching go on without the meddling of outside influences (such as moneyed interests, political interests, and religious interests). One thing that happens when the barriers break down between the outside and inside is that that freedom begins to disappear. We see this everywhere in Canada today. Research funding councils, for example, demand more practical research, the most recent and perhaps notorious development along these lines in recent days being the announcement that the National Research Council will align itself with business interests. Its new motto is literally "open for business." But at a more local level, the demand for community engagement also compels researchers to leave behind what the sciences often call "basic research," that is, research unguided by immediate practical application. The folly behind this lies not only in the patent foolishness to think that such research does not eventually make itself felt in the world. (If only one could ask someone like Louis Pasteur if he ever imagined fully the impact of his discoveries in the world.) The real folly is that such research leaves behind that fundamental element of thinking for oneself: that one refuse the impositions of external authority.

Of course it's not a bad thing that there are faculty and departments and students at universities who are concerned about, and want to do something about, pressing issues in the real world. I am, actually, one of them, even though I tend to teach arcane topics like critical theory or experimental documentary cinema that don't necessarily lend themselves to immediate translation into what Marxists like to call "practice." But the problem is when the compulsion exists for everything to be practical, engaged, and useful.

"Community engagement" also reminds me of so many other deeply reified terms, terms we also hear constantly in the drone of

self-justification that is now impossible to blot out even with the most powerful of noise-cancelling headphones. My three favourites are "effecting change," "excellence," and "sustainability." Bill Readings has already said about everything that needs to be said about the hollowness of the term "excellence" in its uses within academia. And the same things could be said about "sustainability" and "effecting change," a term I find even more repulsive than excellence because it bastardizes an old notion that used to belong to the Left. When people talked about social change a few decades ago, it was clear what direction was meant. But now you can effect change for abortion rights and for the "right to life;" you can effect change against the security state or you can effect change to increase the safety and security of our citizenry. Michele Bachmann and Bernie Sanders, two US politicians from opposite ends of the political spectrum, are equally likely to speak that language. Similarly, we can engage community in so many directions and thereby arrogate to our self-conception that we are "effecting change" while really doing nothing. SFU, in particular, can be community-engaged as if it were continuing in the spirit of its leftist traditions that were celebrated during its 40th anniversary a few years ago, but really, it's out there engaging the community of entrepreneurs and global mining companies just as much as it's helping out the poor in the DTES with money from a massive mining company (Goldcorp, who, I hope, won't sue me for saying something unflattering about them. Talk about the right to academic freedom!) Speaking of mining: SFU and UBC now administer an institute for "sustainable mining." Sometimes no comment is necessary, as in this case, where none is required to point out that sustainability has lost all meaning. I will also point out that, if you look at the press release announcing the creation of this institute, you will find amongst the links to "related topics," the following terms: "research excellence," "sustainability," and, of course, "community engagement."

But let us lean further in, as they say, to the discussion of community engagement. If you agree that the notion of community engagement is essentially hollow, then ask yourself what it means that we are being asked to engage in it more and more (the redundancy of the term is intentional here). In this context, I cannot help but think about a comparison that Alexander Kluge and Oskar Negt have made between contemporary capitalism and German fascism. (I must emphasize here: in no way am I suggesting that the leaders of my university, or any in Canada, are fascists; Kluge and Negt are the last people to use the term

lightly, and I take their example to heart.) For Negt and Kluge, fascism was marked by a real contradiction: on the one hand, it wanted to exploit every aspect of the human being for the positive construction of its project. The ultimate example of this was its use of slave labour to the point where that labour died. But while that exploitation might seem to have had "productive" ends—the piling up of massive armaments stockpiles; the creation of massive construction projects and so on—it was also utterly unproductive. Slave labourers were compelled to do pointless tasks ad nauseum and in the most inefficient of manners (often, precisely, as a form of punishment or torture or murder). So on the other hand, the constant activity was utterly pointless. This applied to even those who were the "beneficiaries" of fascism—the German Volk, etc.—who were often compelled to engage in the most pointless of tasks on a recurrent basis. Günter Grass and Volker Schlöndorff have captured this beautifully. The pointlessness of such work, though usually without being done to the point of death or torture, also marks wage labour under capitalism.

Now of course I don't want to say that SFU or the contemporary university more broadly is fascist (though when thinking about the NRC's new mandate one should maybe keep in mind Mussolini's definition of fascism, which emphasized the deep integration of the state and industry) but it does let us think about the pointlessness of so much of what we are being asked to do on an increasing basis. We must ask: isn't this exactly what was wrong with the ivory tower model of the university, that its work was pointless, that it was utterly divorced from real, practical effect and use?

What we have here is thus a beautiful, simple, dialectical progression: the "Ivory Tower" is negated by the demand for social relevance. Yet that demand itself is negated—the negation of the negation—leaving us with the "Engaged University" (as the president of SFU likes to call it) that retains the fundamental essence of the Ivory Tower: its pointlessness. Of course, this is a rather dystopian progression, for the new Engaged University sheds what was really worthwhile in the Ivory Tower, namely the space and time for disinterested, unbiased, autonomous reflection, learning, and research, and instead replaces it with utterly empty and pointless activity that nonetheless meshes perfectly with the way of the world and follows its irresistible, heteronomous command: the dizzying, pointless and endless process work in the service of accumulating capital, generating value, and moving forward. Herein lies the ultimate truth of the University as the site of the production of ignorance. And herein lies

its ultimate impact, one for which the university will never permit itself to develop an adequate "assessment tool."

I would like to end on a positive note. But I cannot. For if you think the phrase "assess community engagement impact" is bad enough, look through the newspaper to find a recent comment by Christy Clark, the recently re-elected Premier of British Columbia. She wants the Ministry of Education to map for every child in the province a "seamless path... from kindergarten to work." Where to begin to think about that?

# COMPLICITY

**Dara Culhane**

## COMPLICITY

*Projected onto wall behind the stage as audience enters and takes seats:*

**Complicity** \kəmˇplis-ət-ē

1. association or participation in or as if in a wrongful act.

—*Webster's New Collegial Dictionary* (1981), Toronto: Thomas Allen and Son Ltd., p. 228

**related words:** chicanery, collaboration, collusion, connivance, double-dealing, duplicity, foul play, intrigue, plot, sculduggery, scheme, set up

**Act 1**

*Narrator wearing academic robes enters and stands at centre stage.*
**Narrator:** You've likely heard of Downtown Eastside Vancouver? The 60 or more "Missing and Murdered Women of the Downtown Eastside?" The 2007 conviction of Robert Pickton—"Canada's most notorious serial killer"—for the murder of six of them? The media clips depicting emaciated people injecting heroin, and smoking crack cocaine on street corners?

"Canada's poorest postal code" was declared a public health emergency zone in 1997 when epidemiologists discovered the "highest rates of HIV+ infection in the developed world" here, and the Downtown Eastside entered the global imaginary as an internationally renowned centre for research on HIV+/AIDS and addiction.

Like most everywhere else in the "developed world," impoverished persons who live here piece together basic subsistence incomes through laboring in the lowest echelons of mutually interdependent economies as: (i) recipients of welfare allowances, disability benefits and pensions provided by the state; (ii) part-time minimum wage employees of local businesses; (iii) subsidized volunteers in community service organizations; (iv) workers in the transnational illicit drugs, survival sex, and petty crime industries; (v) subjects in medical research such as clinical trials of experimental drugs funded by pharmaceutical corporations and philanthrocapitalist organizations like the Clinton Foundation. Tsunamis of epidemiological data mined from the bodies of the poor pour out of the Downtown Eastside's "guinea pig" economy.

At the same time, Downtown Eastside Vancouver is being reconstructed as a heritage tourist destination, a rapidly gentrifying residential neighbourhood, and an arts district. Medical researchers have been joined by journalists, writers, community development advocates, scholars, artists, and scholar/artists—like myself. We are employed in creating and circulating representations of the neighbourhood, and engaging impoverished residents as (vi) collaborators and participants in social research and arts projects.

*Projection on back wall changes to:*

> **"…a productive acknowledgement of complicity may give us the power to proceed minus a clean bill of health…our work cannot…succeed if we always have a scapegoat."**
>
> Spivak, Gayatri C. (1999) *Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Towards a History of the Vanishing Present.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. xii

It's a February night in 2011 in Downtown Eastside Vancouver. Rain is running down the walls of brick and stone buildings, overflowing gutters on wooden clapboard houses, collecting between cement sidewalks and slick streets. Lined up in orderly formations stretching westward from Cambie Street to Stanley Park, and southward from Coal Harbour to False Creek, battalions of steel and glass skyscrapers mass on the western front of this urban frontier: a phalanx of troops preparing to advance on the Downtown Eastside. A gigantic red "W" announces the presence of a fifth column.

*Projection on back wall changes to an image of SFU/Woodwards campus.*

The $400 million Woodwards project towers 43 storeys at the corner of Abbott and Hastings Streets. Occupying three quarters of a city block, or 1,222,230 square feet. In September, 2010, Simon Fraser University relocated our School for Contemporary Arts to the new, redeveloped Woodwards complex that also includes market and social housing, stores, offices, and a public atrium.

*Narrator exits stage right.*

*Projection changes to film of a street corner at night. It is raining. Cars cruise by, following one another at regular intervals, taking 30 seconds each to enter, drive by, and exit.*

*A young woman enters stage left and stands at centre stage. She is wearing jeans and a short bomber jacket, and holding an opened, tattered umbrella.*

**Female voice (off stage):** I hate this part of it.

**Male voice (off stage):** Yeah, me too!

**Female voice (off stage):** I'm OK once I'm into it. But approaching and

asking always feels so creepy.

**Male voice (off stage):** Yeah, it does. Always.

**Female voice (off stage):** I'll introduce myself first.

**Male voice (off stage):** Yeah, sure.

**Female voice (off stage):** And if she isn't interested, we won't try to talk her into it or anything, right?

**Male voice (off stage):** Right.

**Female voice (off stage):** OK. Here goes.

*A couple enters stage right. They are wearing brightly-coloured Gortex rainsuits criss-crossed by luminous bands of yellow plastic fabric that glow when the lights of the cars projected on the back wall catch them, giving the two characters the appearance of stick figures, marionettes dancing on strings. The Gortex-clad couple walks purposefully towards the young woman. The young woman looks away from them and chants in a low, monotone voice.*

**Young woman:** Uppers? Downers? Rock? Smack? Weed? T'3's?

**Female Gortext figure:** No! No! Thanks.

**Young woman:** A date? A Threesome?

**Male Gortex figure:** No! We aren't looking for anything like that!

**Female Gortext figure:** Hi? I'm HESTIA? And this is JANUS?

**Young woman:** VESTA.

**Hestia:** Hi Vesta! We're students from Explorer's Engaged University? EEU? And we're taking a course on university-community research collaboration in the inner city and we're supposed to well we would like to if its ok with you interview talk to… with… you?

**Vesta:** You guys social workers? Cops? Church? Or what?

**Hestia:** We're researchers? Students?

**Vesta:** Oh yeah. Research. I've done that before. You want blood samples? Urine specimens?

**Hestia:** No! We're not medical researchers, we're arts students.

**Vesta:** You got a survey? A questionnaire?

**Hestia:** No. We don't do that kind of research. We're ethnographers? We want to… give YOU a voice? We want to create a space for YOU to tell your OWN story…

**Vesta:** Story about what?

**Hestia:** Whatever YOU want to say about… why… how… you ended up… here? Doing?… Being a?... What… you're doing?

**Vesta:** Why?

**Hestia:** Why?

**Vesta:** Yeah. Why do you want me to tell you stories?

**Hestia:** We want to do research and make art that will… that might… change things?… For you?... We want to educate the public and policy makers? About…

**Vesta:** Why?

**Hestia:** Because… its not right? That you should have to?... Do…what… you do? If you don't want to? But if its your choice?… But then you should be safe? And…

**Vesta:** Is this your job?

**Hestia:** Well sort of not really kinda I mean our professor has a grant? And yeah we are like her research assistants? And…

**Vesta:** How much?

**Hestia:** How much?

**Vesta:** Yeah. How much do you get paid for talking to…with…me?

**Hestia:** $12.00 an hour

**Vesta:** Are you going to get a degree? Are you going to write a book? Make a movie?

**Hestia:** No we're just undergrads so this is just… we get a course credit for our report and we give the transcripts and the film to our professor and she might write a book. I don't really know?…

**Vesta:** What's the honorarium?

**Hestia:** $20.00? And we'll buy you coffee and a snack?

**Vesta:** That's for half an hour, right?

**Hestia:** It's for the interview? We can stay and listen to you for as long as you want to talk to us.

**Vesta:** Less than half an hour?

**Hestia:** Well, our assignment says one hour? I don't think we'd get much in less than an hour? I mean we won't really get to know each other very well in less than an hour but if the interview becomes too stressful or traumatic for you we can stop whenever you say you can turn the tape recorder or the camera off any time you want to we'll show you how or just like say stop and we'll stop or…

**Vesta:** OK. Whatever. You wanna do it here? Or you gotta place? A car? A van? Or?

**Hestia:** We can go wherever you feel most comfortable but we thought maybe the Ovaltine Café might be?…

**Vesta:** OK, cool. Let's go.

**Janus** (*taking a video camera out of his back pack, aiming it at Vesta*): Great!

**Hestia:** Janus? Ethics? Remember?

**Janus:** But this is a documentary film project. I have to capture these first moments in our relationship when they happen. We'll ask Vesta to sign later. Would that be OK with you, Vesta?

**Hestia:** Janus! The ethics guidelines are really clear? She has to sign BEFORE!

Vesta, we won't record or film anything until we go over the Informed Consent for Human Subjects to Participate in Research Form with you. It explains what the research is for, what your rights are, and risks and benefits to you of participating, and where you can file complaints about us if you want to.

**Vesta:** Whatever. Are we going to do this now?

**Hestia:** Yes, if you have time?

**Vesta:** Let's go to the Ovaltine. Have you got the honorarium?

**Hestia:** Yes… but... after… the interview?

*Vesta, Hestia and Janus exit stage left.*

**"30 minutes later"** *is projected on the back screen.*

*Janus enters stage left, walking backwards. He is filming Vesta and Hestia who are smiling and chatting. Hestia holds a microphone in front of Vesta.*

**Vesta:** Do you want to talk to me again? I could tell you lots more…

**Hestia:** Umm… We have to transcribe this one and fill out our matrix?… We'll be in touch?

**Vesta:** So, when do you want to talk to me again?

**Hestia:** We can't say at the moment. We'll be in touch?

**Vesta:** But you will do more interviews with me, right?

**Hestia:** OH YES… probably… most likely?

**Vesta:** You got a card or something? What's your phone number? I'll put you in my cell.

**Hestia:** The phone number for the university is on your copy of the ethics form?

**Vesta:** The what form?

**Hestia:** The informed consent form? You signed it? Before the interview?

**Vesta:** Oh yeah. I thought it was a receipt for the honorarium. So, I can call you at the number that's on those forms?

**Hestia:** Well, you can call the university? And they will tell you where you can leave a message for me?

**Vesta:** Then you'll call me back? For an interview?

**Hestia:** Um… we only have to… we are only supposed to do one? But I could ask my professor? But FOR SURE we could talk. Anytime! Totally!

**Vesta:** Like a telephone interview?

**Hestia:** Well, no, not exactly. We could, you know, talk?...

**Vesta:** Do you think I could borrow $10.00 from you now? You can take it off the next honorarium. I'll do another interview anytime you want.

**Hestia:** No. Sorry, we can't do that.

**Vesta:** How about $5.00?

**Hestia:** No. Sorry. I did just give you $20.00?

**Vesta:** Yeah, thanks. But, I need $35.00 for a room for tonight. I'll pay you back. When you need it, just come and get it from me. You can always find

me. This is my corner. If I don't have it, I can always get it for you.

**Hestia:** Sorry. No. We can't do that?

**Vesta:** OK. Well, you know where to find me if you want to do more research.

**Hestia:** Thanks, Vesta…Take care? And, thanks… a lot… really?

**Vesta:** No problem.

**Janus:** Yeah, thanks Vesta. And, good luck, eh?

**Vesta:** Well, back to work. I've missed the busiest part of the night, now.

*Janus, still filming, walks backwards followed by Hestia who turns around and waves before the two exit, stage right.*

*Vesta remains standing centre stage.*

**Hestia's voice (off stage):** I hate this part. I'm OK when I'm into it. But paying and leaving always feels so creepy.

**Janus' voice (off stage):** Yeah, it does. Always.

**Hestia's voice (off stage):** That was an amazing interview, though, wasn't it? I think it's the best we've gotten so far. Such awful stories... but she was so articulate!

**Janus' voice (off stage):** Yeah! And so photogenic!

*Projection on back wall changes to:*

> "…the acknowledgement of complicity provides a crucial **starting point** from which to develop a more responsible intellectual practice."
>
> —Morton, Stephen (2003) *Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*. New York: Routledge, p. 41.

**END**

# LABOURING TO LEARN: LINEAMENTS OF THE CREATIVE-ACADEMIC COMPLEX IN VANCOUVER

**Enda Brophy**

In his 1970s study of education and class formation among male youths in industrial Britain, Paul Willis explored how labour power was prepared for application to factory work. In a cruel irony, the accomplishment of this passage from school to factory drew on youthful dissent and anti-authoritarian rejection of education. Within the context of Fordist industrial production, Willis described how highly gendered class relations were reproduced through proletarian youths refusing school in favour of the more masculine world of work, the factory and wages. Through this subjective transformation, the English working class was made (and remade) at the twilight of Fordism.

Four decades later, as economies across the world embrace the "creative industries" (a term that includes new media, video games, the arts, and fashion as well as the traditional mass media of film, television, radio, newspapers and publishing) the scenario has changed so dramatically as to make Willis' inquiry seem irretrievably anachronistic. Whereas Willis' account of the "lads'" rebellion and inexorable progression toward the drudgery of the factory highlights a sharp distinction between the world of education on the one hand and

the world of work on the other, against the backdrop of today's creative industries we might say that this separation tends to disintegrate almost entirely. While even in the final years of British Fordism the division between students and workers was relatively clear, today there is almost no functional distinction any longer between these two subjects.

What follows is a brief sketch of some of the ways the dissolution of the boundaries between work and education, creative industries and academia, is manifesting in Vancouver. These examples highlight an emergent condition of labour formation in which students no longer learn first in order to labour later, but where labour and learning have become so utterly intertwined as to have become virtually indistinguishable.

*Creative Industry and the Market for Education*

Eagerly circulated by policy makers spanning from municipal administrations all the way up to the United Nations, the hype surrounding creative industries celebrates these sectors as a source of urban development, economic growth, and employment opportunity. Joining the "creative class" and working in these industries, we are told, offers a possibility of passionate work, labour autonomy and workplaces without hierarchy. The reality of flexible labour in the contemporary communication and cultural industries is often quite markedly different however, characterized as it is by ruthless competitiveness, chronic overwork, systematic gender inequities, endemic unpaid labour, and rampant precarious employment. Within these broader conditions the growing overlap between labour and education is a prominent feature. We now need a new cultural study of subjectivity, education and labour formation for and in the creative industries, one that can supplement the picture provided by Willis at the end of the 1970s.

The university would be one of the key sites for such an inquiry, although as we shall see it is not nearly the pre-eminent location it once might have been. It is worthwhile to remember here that young people are active contributors to the creative industries long before they take their first course in college or collect their first paycheque at work. Providing content for web 2.0 companies through platforms ranging from YouTube, to Flickr, to the user review site Yelp, tending their personal profiles and blogs, and otherwise feeding content into the circuits of what Jodi Dean describes as communicative capitalism is a quotidian feature of contemporary youth subjectivity. As opposed to the lads in Willis' account, who, aside from the stories of friends and relatives did not know

the inside of the factory until it was too late, to be young today is to be an immediately productive subject. Production for the culture industries has expanded beyond the sites we traditionally associate with it (the movie studio, the recording studio, etc.), as creative content is delivered directly from basements, bedrooms and cell phones via a range of activities that Internet theorist Tiziana Terranova gathers under the rubric of free labour. This torrent of youthful collective intelligence feeding into the networks of social media capital primes the motor of creative economy accumulation, but also offers the raw material for emergent forms of learning occurring outside of formal education structures.

For those among what *the Globe and Mail* has dubbed "generation nixed" that are aiming to move up the ranks and score a rare paid position in the creative industries, the path is increasingly arduous. Pursuing post-secondary education is still seen as a necessary sacrifice for students aspiring to employment in these industries, and in the age of austerity tuition at public institutions in British Columbia has more than doubled since 2001. Investment in one's "human capital" doesn't come cheap, and working toward a degree often means taking on significant debt. Most students work during their time at university in order to mitigate the financial cost associated with pursuing academic accreditation. As a result the gap between a time in which one studies and a time in which one works is no longer measured in stages of life, or years, or seasons, but has been blurred so that the dominant tendency is for these two moments to coexist or overlap in the space of a day. Students work through the winter as they go to university, and take a few extra courses in the summer as they continue to work. There is no longer any division between the university and the so-called "real world" which conservative commentators claim students are somehow insulated from.

Public universities are far from the only choice in the expanding market for post-secondary education catering to aspiring creative class members in British Columbia. Vancouver is the site of proliferating language schools, photography institutes, film schools and other purveyors of commodified education. The line between the creative industries and education has been further blurred as the former branches out into the latter: established Vancouver sound recording studios such as Nimbus and Harbourside have ventured into the education sector by reinventing themselves as audio engineering schools. And large-scale private capital has rushed in to package a range of offerings that cater directly to the creative industries, with no questions asked of

labour conditions in these sectors. The Art Institute of Vancouver, which offers certification in design, fashion, media and the "culinary arts," is owned by the Education Management Corporation (EDMC), one of the largest providers of private post-secondary education in North America (and itself 41% owned by Goldman Sachs). EDMC is currently under investigation by the National Labor Relations Board in the United States as a result of charges that the company discriminated against employees for union organizing efforts, enforced illegal company policies, and engaged in a number of other unfair labour practices. In Vancouver, their purpose-built campus sits next to Renfrew Station on a Skytrain line that runs above film studios and is bookended on the one end by Simon Fraser University, and on the other by the new site of the Emily Carr University of Art and Design.

Political economy has a way of crystallizing in architecture and remaking cityscapes. Keen to insert itself into new markets, the neoliberalizing public academy has begun to adapt itself to the emergent global paradigm of creativity, remodelling the city of Vancouver in the process. In one of these efforts, Simon Fraser, the University of British Columbia, Emily Carr, and BCIT have combined forces to launch the Centre for Digital Media on Great Northern Way, an institution geared towards the high-tech and games industries that are by now firmly established in the Lower Mainland.

While the arts may be the poor cousin of these sectors, SFU's newest downtown building and home to the Contemporary Arts program opened its doors as part of the redeveloped Woodwards Centre in 2010. In this building the creative industries, the market for education, and builder-led urban development are made concrete. Within it, students in the arts work toward accreditation that promises to facilitate their trajectory through the world of work in the cultural industries. The powers, conflicts and tensions that produced the building are all inscribed in the environment it has produced however, with activists long decrying the structure's gentrifying effect on the Downtown East Side (DTES). Woodwards condos were marketed as "intellectual property," a nod to the quintessential commodity form of the creative industries. Meanwhile, the ground floor of the building's academic portion was designed without washrooms, and the doors onto Hastings Street remained closed for its first two years lest unwanted neighbourhood residents taint the corporate university.

The contested space of the new building nonetheless illuminates the complex urban politics of university and creative industry-led

development, as artists and students become both the trigger for, and the victims of, urban gentrification. Dwindling are the spaces for the arts in the DTES, as galleries close and studio spaces disappear in the face of condos and rising rents. Meanwhile there is simply no room for other residents of the "live-work-learn-play" neighbourhood model (so dear to Richard Florida) aspired to by developers and the city.

*Working to Learn (for Free)*

Even inside the university however, one is rarely outside the creative industries. In addition to their forced tenure in the low-wage service economy, young people increasingly feel they will need to complete a series of internships in the field of their choice if they want to have any chance of scoring a paid job. The growth of these labour arrangements, ones that are particularly prevalent within the creative industries, has been explosive alongside the neoliberalization of academia. Internships are presented as a kind of intermediate working arrangement, a blend of labour and learning intended to provide valuable experience to those seeking employment in a particular field and—for employers—the chance to test drive a potential job candidate. In practice what has been created is a swelling workforce toiling in a legal grey area. Toronto-based employment lawyer Andrew Langille estimates there are around 200,000 interns in Canada.

The internship is a typically post-Fordist labour condition in which young workers perform the low-paid or unpaid tasks that used to be done by entry-level employees, and companies exploit a flexible labour force that is structurally incentivized against dissent. Many of these internships are unpaid, including some that are promoted by the universities themselves (student interns at the Whitecaps, the BC Lions, and the Canucks sports teams, labour for free through the SFU co-op program). In the process, those from poorer backgrounds, women, First Nations and people of colour who cannot afford to work for free are pushed to the precarious margins of the labour market and increasingly excluded from paying jobs in the industries that produce our symbolic imaginary. Couched as a learning experience, internships are little more than a symptom of a balance of power skewed toward employers, a form of social selection in which the less privileged are filtered out of the few good positions available in the creative industries.

As the boundaries between the academy and the creative sector continue to dissolve, the student/worker becomes the key subject of

this transformation. On the one hand workers in the creative economy are expected to engage in endless retraining, upgrading and "lifelong learning"—with no guarantees. On the other students must work the dead-end, precarious jobs of service economy, perform unpaid internships while they go to school, and accumulate unprecedented debt—with no guarantees. Such is the formation of class in the academic/creative industries. The student-worker labours for little or for free, pays growing tuition, works precariously, and becomes indebted, a condition that, as Maurizio Lazzarato points out, both limits future possibilities and acts as an exemplary form of social control under neoliberalism.

*Creative Class Conflict*

While we are a long way from the red squares of the student strike in Quebec, there are signs however that the student-worker of the west coast is increasingly unhappy with the raw deal being offered by the creative-academic complex. In 2011, tired of the lack of pay and poor event organization at Vancouver Fashion Week, a group of anonymous interns launched the blog Vancouver Fashion Weak in order to "stop the producer of VFW from exploiting students and recent graduates for their well-meaning free labour, as well as exploiting emerging and established designers with sub par production." The blog gathered hundreds of comments, mainly from anonymous sources, depicting general disorganization and poor working conditions at the event.

The overflowing of anonymous anger against the exploitation of those labouring to learn has not been the only case however. In April of this year HootSuite, one of Vancouver's most fawned-over new media start-ups and "Best Company to Work for in BC" in 2012, vowed to end its practice of offering unpaid internships and to compensate all past unpaid interns after a storm of controversy was ignited on the social news site Reddit. A post there on April 5th had suggested that HootSuite's posting for unpaid internships (in which they detailed expectations of a Monday to Friday, nine to five commitment for three months) violated the BC Employment Standards Act. The post received more than 400 comments overnight, igniting a much broader discussion on the ethics of unpaid internships in cutting-edge industries. The Canadian Intern Association, founded in 2011 to fight exploitative internships, is waiting in the wings, and the academic/creative complex is ripe for a season of insubordination and dissent.

# "DO YOU WANT ME TO GRAB GLOVES AN' MEET YOU OVER THERE?" –A CARPENTER IN THE UNIVERSITY

**Julie Sawatsky**

*The university works because we do.*

What do people think when they see you working?

Visible and invisible. "Oh, it's just the janitor." "Get the workers to do it." "I was expecting a man." They don't really think anything about it, we're invisible behind the scenes. We're annoying, dirty, noisy, messy. If we fix things, they love us. If we take too long, they hate us.

What is it like to be in the trades at Simon Fraser University?

It's complicated, just a bit. There are over 100 trades people in the facilities department from labourers, carpenters, painters and stores, to mechanics, plumbers, electricians. And only three women. We are the workers at an institution devoted to higher learning. I have a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree; I don't tell my brothers. My husband is a professor, this makes them curious, suspicious, resentful. Working class? The trades get mad at, wonder at, rage at, the international students, who have different habits, customs, ways of being. They are conspicuous among the mostly white, mostly male, mostly suburban department. So on the one hand, anyone in the trades who's worked in the private sector knows that jobs

there can range from sketchy and dangerous (no safety regulations, bad tools and materials) to very well paid (the oil fields, etc), whereas at a big institution like SFU the benefits and conditions are pretty good (but we haven't had a contract for three years). And universities are all about status: students, profs, hierarchies. Then there's managers and office staff. And then there's the trades.

*Students & residence*

Some of SFU's student residence buildings are Arthur Erickson originals. One is condemned, one is waiting for private funding to save it from being a complete ghetto, one is being retrofitted by contractors. Tear it down, save it, it has heritage value. That's all it takes in BC, something 50 years old is heritage—or mid-century modern.

Carpenters each have a different part of the campus, a building or "satellite", in which to work. I work in the residences: young undergrads, families, graduate students. A reviewer on Google said they're slums: it's my job to keep them from getting that way. Things wear down, students break things, and I fix them, entering their domestic spaces, privy to their dramas and psychic interiority.

Families in the residence live here while one of the parents is doing undergrad or graduate degrees. One from Jordan has five kids. The new baby was born in Canada: their dad tells me he wants them to know the "good community of the university," and the "freedoms and life in Canada" that they won't have back in Jordan where life is restrictive and harder. I bring the daughter a bike my son has out grown, but then the younger brother wants a bike too. I feel bad for the dad then, who has to go and buy him one. They invite me for tea, black tea with a mint leaf floating in the cup. Any time I work for the Islamic families they give me cookies, tea, a chocolate, offering me hospitality, some of the Chinese kids too, one gave me a banana. I am grateful for their offers. It's different from North American customs where we resent the trades. (Although once, working on a leaky condo in Surrey, this one woman passed cappuccinos out the window to us workers on the scaffolding.)

One family is from Mongolia, and the oldest son draws pictures of their flag and sticks it up on their door. "We are the only ones from Mongolia," he says, and they put up a mini-yurt in the yard for a summer playhouse.

People might think students have it easy, partying and sleeping in. But there are lots of people in different circumstances. One single mom

seems to be losing it. She has all her furniture and belongings out on the deck getting soaked in the rain. She can't figure out how to get her storage locker open. Her small daughter's room is completely covered in toys, clothes, bedding, papers. You can't walk anywhere. Trying to be positive, I comment on her small pet cage, "Oh you have a hamster, that's nice." "It's dead, don't tell anyone, we're not supposed to have pets. I don't know what to do with it. And you know, she made a picture at school with her support family, and the hamster's in it." What can I do? Well, I fixed her sliding door.

*Everything needs a work order*

"Maintenance," I yell through the door. Or I gingerly open it, "Hello, Maintenance." I plan my work so I won't wake anyone up. Students sleep at all hours of the day. Entering their private spaces, I see first year students' experiments with living alone. Alcohol bottles displayed on the shelves. Or kicked-in walls. Vandalism feeds my family. Emergency: broken window, has to be boarded up until the glazier can come and fix it. Urgent—door broken off its hinges; it needs to be secured, it's Friday at 4:00. Do we get overtime? To pretty the university up for convocation - sure. For more everyday matters—not likely.

Exam time. Fist-sized holes in the drywall. Patch it up, call for a slip for the painters to patch, mud, tape and touch it up.

I step through piles of dirty laundry, clothes, books, food packages on the floor. Can I do my work with all this stuff in the way? Re-caulk the bathtub and toilet, call the janitorial to clean it first or I'm not touching it. The plumbers get dirty pay, but it's not in our collective agreement. Janitorial's a different union.

Raccoons feed my family. There is a torn screen on the eighth floor where the kits ripped a hole to get into the suite. They smell the food and climb up to get in. Repair the screen, replace it, wait for the slip to come through. I'm not doing the job until I get an "FM number"—the work order.

Last summer a basketball team came to stay and they were all too tall for their beds. So I made mini beds to go at the end of their beds as an extension. I work on screens, doors, caulking, ceiling tile, fences, decks, broken windows, handrails. I coordinate with the plumber, labourer, painter, mechanic. I get the welder to make some parts, pick up materials at stores. I get the women's bathroom, women's showers, women's change rooms. I don't work on asbestos-containing materials, I don't work on mould-containing materials.

# Work Order

**FM-542777**

**Simon Fraser University - Facilities Services**



**Location ID:** QUA-71W2
**Department:** Residences & Housing
**Facility:** Burnaby Campus
**Building:** Townhouse Qualicum
**Description:** Residence-Private Bathroom - 71W2
**Ph:**
**Requester:** Residences & Housing **Ph:** [redacted]
**Account:** 42-042118-6583
**Last Mod User:** LOTT **Printed On:** 2013/05/13 13:39
**Ref #:** 194092 **User Ref:**

**Scheduled**

**Work Type:** Service Request
**Priority:** High(2)
**Requested:** 2013/05/13 12:45
**Complete:** ✓
**Est. Start:** /
**Hours:**

**Task Code:** 11030 - Ceiling, Repair/Replace
**Supervisor:** [redacted]
**Trade:** Carpenter

**Action Requested**
QUA-71W2-WashRm;
Account: 42-042118-6583;
Priority: High;
Assign to: Carpenter;
Action Request: o - A leak in one of the fixtures in the third floor has caused water damage on the ceiling below. Please remove any damaged drywall from the ceiling in the second floor washroom, and replace it once the source of the leak has been identified and patched. Please inform residents once the areas exposed. Thanks, [redacted];
StarRez ID: 41538

| Line | Date | Technician | Time Type | Account # | Shift | Hours | Ext'd |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2013/05/14 | Sawatsky, Julie (501) | | | | | 0.00 |

| Hours | Labor | Parts | Rental/Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

**Signature:** JS, + GK **Authorized By:** _____
**Inspected By:** _____

**Tech Report:** Cut out small piece. Advised Res. plumber to check out. When its dry. replace.

83 may 13

ready to go back

ready for painters. = called Nav

followed up w/ Jackie

RECEIVED
MAY 13 2013
CARPENTER SHOP

**Work orders—an archive**

These are transcriptions of radio calls between facilities workers at SFU in the spring of 2013

Building 16 to Building 17.
17 by.
Trades.
Copy.
—
Painter 2 to Painter 5.
Not answering his radio.
Can't get, can't get a hold of him.
Called him on his cell and he's not answering that either.
Just coming through the door now.
10-4, so you guys got a ride.
10-4.
—
Electric 5, Electric 11.
Electric 5, Electric 11.
11 by.
P. do you want me to go to Chemistry and take out that heat detector?
Wasn't the heat detector taken out already?
Chemistry yea, but they're taken out permanently. Was that all then?
Yup.
K, 10-4.
Coulda been Electric 11 or something like that.
—
N. to plumber 10.
Plumber 10.
Hey J. could I get you to come to the Residence channel?
10-4.
—
Plumber 1 to Building 8.
J., did you receive a work order for town house 68 C for some water damage?
Yes, trades please.
—
683 to Plumber 6. We just got a call that there's a running sink in women's washroom by Tim Hortons.
Is that washroom 225?
Unfortunately they didn't give us a washroom #, but that it's a women's washroom by Tim Hortons and that it might start overflowing.
Ok, 10-4.

Thank you.
—
Mechanic 5 to Plumber 4. There's a gentleman from Latham's to meet you.
Ok, I'll be down shortly or someone will be down there shortly.
10-4.
-—
683 to Electric 16.
Go ahead.
We just have a request that there's no power in AQ 6157.
Ok, I'll go have a look.
Thank you.
—
Electric 16 to 683.
683 go ahead.
Ya, that room # just went in one ear and out the other. It was 61…? Again please.
Ya, 6157.
Ok thank you.
—
Now do you want me to grab gloves an' meet you over there?
No, let me check it out first. Thank you.
—
You guys just had a water tower suppressor panel at normal.
What was that?
Water tower suppressor panel at subnormal state. Sprinkler SWS. Have someone come by and check it out.
10-4. Thank you very much.
—
Plumber 4 to 683.
Go ahead B.
Slip for plumbers to check out water suppressor system at water tower building.
10-4.
—
Plumber 4 to Plumber 3.
Go ahead B.
I noticed at stores I couldn't find any urinal spouts.
Don't think we have any.
I believe V. scooped them all. We're going to have to order some more.
V. scooped them all?
Ya, we were in Blusson when they changed all those flushometers.
Ok, 10-4.
—
Do you have a small blaster in the satellite?

No, I've got a small blaster here, though.
10-4, does he have a hose?
10-4 he does.
Does he have an adaptor for the hose?
Is this the hose bib under the sink?
Ya, in the janitor's room there.
10-4, I'm on my way.
—
Electric 10 was that Electric 7 you were calling, and no it was Electric 17.
Go ahead, B.
I was just wondering if you were anywhere near AQ 2000?
Not really, I'm over at the other site. Is there something you need over there?
No, it's not urgent. There's just something I wanted to discuss with you.
K.
—
Plumber 4 to Plumber 6.
Go ahead.
Is it possible to take Corix over to West Mall to check that out?
Are those the ones in the parkade? We've got the BX, so we gave it to Corix.
I'm gonna be a few minutes before I can get down there. So, they're gonna hafta wait a few minutes.
Ya, ok.
—
You're welcome but actually it says check for water leak on floor from air conditioner. So is it HVAC Department?
Ok, 10-4, yes, that's what it would be.
Ok.
—
Stores to Mechanic 11.
Mechanic 11.
Ya, I got your stuff here from Carter GM.
10-4.
—
Building 11 to Mechanic 16.
16, go ahead H.
Ya, P. where's your location?
I'm in our shop.
10-4, I'm coming down. I need to ask you something.
10-4, I'll be here.
—
AC 4 to Plumber 3.
Go ahead, J.

You still using that light then?
No, negative. We're not using it here.
You're gonna have to move it.
J., do you have to go up there or are you on the same level? South east corner.
That's fine, go for it, no worries, just when I can get the labourers to do it.
No worries, I can move it from there.
—
Electric 2, AC 7.
AC 6 here.
Hey, D. I got an order for delivery of manlift to the East door, where you did last time. Did you receive that?
No, I didn't hear anything.
Ya, we're still using it in the AQ so as soon as we're finished we'll bring it down there.
—
683 to Building 7.
AQ 5182, West Concourse, second, AQ North ramp from the main level down to that.
Thank you M. and they have slips waiting for you here.
10-4.
—
Building 7 to Plumber 8.
Plumber 8.
Who's looking after AQ area?
Probably plumber 2.
Plumber 2 by.
D., on fourth AQ outside Math and Stats we have a drain that needs plungering or that. They're filling up, they're almost over flowing.
I know the one on the deck as you go up the stairs. We could drain that off but these ones are plugged alright. I'll go have a look.
Ok, thanks.
I'll put a slip in for ya.
Thanks.
You should get boots and a plunger.
Ok.
—
Building 7 to 683.
Can you put a slip in to Plumber 2 to unplug mains on 4000 AQ?
M., you're breaking up.
To unplug the drains in AQ. Yes in South East corner.
Thank you.
Thank you.

# I, BOURGEOIS? THE CONTRADICTIONS OF TENURED LIFE IN NEOLIBERALISM

**Geoff Mann**

When I was a graduate student at Berkeley in the late 1990s, I took a class with the institutional economist Oliver Williamson. It was an excellent course. Williamson (who won the Nobel prize in 2009) was a generous and accessible teacher, and the material fascinated me. The so-called 'new' institutional economics (NIE) with which Williamson is associated is basically a 'loose ends' sub-discipline. Its overall goal seems to be tying up all the loose ends that lie all over the place in mainstream economics' account of the world. NIE aims to discover the economic 'rationality' that supposedly lies hidden beneath dynamics we often take as evidence of that rationality's limits, to explain how things that seem so inefficient or non-optimal—the ridiculous lay-out of our computer keyboards, above-market wages for workers, even the existence of the capitalist firm itself—are, if you look hard enough, actually products of constrained optimization. The QWERTY keyboard is thus said to be a product of 'path dependency' in a context of inadequate property rights; a wage 'premium' is efficient because it retains good workers in whom time and money has already been invested; the firm's costly and rigid 'hierarchy' makes sense

because it can reduce 'information asymmetries' and 'transaction costs.'

One week of Williamson's seminar was dedicated to the economics of academic tenure. Now, on the surface at least, tenure appears incompatible with the market model of the world. The standard critique is that by limiting accountability and competitive pressure, it reduces incentives and innovation, locks in institutional inertia, and diminishes management's capacity to monitor and coordinate. Surely its existence can only be attributed to professorial resistance, 'radical' demands for academic freedom, and collusion, i.e. union (or union-like) monopoly over the labour supply. It all seems quite obvious. Indeed, I would wager that most professors take this explanation for granted. But no, say some institutional economists. Properly designed, tenure is in fact a rational response to the particularities of the academic labour market: it raises the cost of lax performance evaluation in non-profit settings, reduces long-term monitoring costs, and creates incentives for the time and cost of training.

As logical as that sounds, it is of course hard to forget McCarthyite purges, and to insist on a more political explanation emphasizing the struggle for academic freedom. But there is nevertheless something to the economic explanation. It might even appeal to many tenured academics, perhaps especially 'radicals,' since it presents a 'logical,' rather than self-interested, explanation for exceptional job security and autonomy. Indeed, the institutionalist view is basically that tenure is an innovative solution to a potential market failure, fully compatible with dynamics frequently described as the 'neoliberalization of the university.' In other words, it says that tenure is generated by the same market forces that justify, for example, SFU's introduction of internal competition for every morsel of the institution's diminishing resources, reshaping everything from the overall budget model, to the allocation of new appointments, to the distribution of graduate student support.

There can be no doubt about the ways this neoliberalization is unfolding at SFU and elsewhere. And yet I think it is fair to say that many tenured faculty would readily acknowledge that despite it, we continue to enjoy extraordinary job security and quality relative to that of the vast majority of working people (to say nothing of those who are not working but want to be). Acknowledging this, some of my colleagues have nevertheless told me that the problem is not the 'privilege' tenure affords, but rather that such 'privilege' is not ordinary. Everyone should be able to have something like tenure. In one way, I suppose, that is true enough.

But it also reminds me of the response a professor of mine, a prominent Marxist scholar, once gave me and my fellow students after a seminar. We were teasing him about the renovation of his well-appointed home in the Berkeley hills, and in particular his new marble kitchen counter-tops, to which he remarked, only half in jest: 'The problem is not that I have marble counter-tops, but that the workers do not.'

Again, setting aside the fact that marble counter-tops are ugly, that is true enough, I suppose. But I would argue that its truth is merely 'academic' (in the pejorative sense). Yes, it would be great if everyone could enjoy the security and autonomy of tenured faculty members. But they do not. Not even close. In fact, the very suggestion that this is the way in which the tenured professor's relative good fortune should be engaged is so removed from reality that it seems laughable at best, and probably to offensive. Whether or not we should be, tenured academics at modern universities are among the most fortunate of working people, and that good fortune must be examined relative to its political economic and social context.

None of which is to defend the increasingly doctrinaire status quo. Marketization is accelerating, and from an educational and ethical perspective—even, I would argue, from a cost and techno-innovation perspective—it is not good. But I do think this situation creates significant problems with the way in which neoliberalization is politicized in the university context, and I find myself reflecting on these problems—if not 'solving' them—very often these days. I realize that the position and responsibilities of faculty members differs across institutions, and that some places are better to work than others. But at SFU, and at many other 'research universities,' the practice of tenure alone—to say nothing of my wage and non-wage income—means that to make any claim that I, a tenured professor, am somehow a 'worker,' rolled over by neoliberalism like 'everyone else,' seem ridiculous to me. I am not. If I have days where I see myself as disadvantaged at present, it can only be because the object of comparison is not 'the' working class, but capitalist elites, relative to whom I might pose as undeservingly hard done by.

And yet I am a tenured political economist in the Marxian vein, paid to examine the dynamics of contemporary capitalism, especially its macroeconomic governance on the part of firms and the state. I have significant institutional and administrative responsibilities (I direct a centre and am graduate programs chair in my department), but I also enjoy an autonomy and flexibility of schedule that is the envy of almost

everyone I meet. I am often writing or emailing or reading students' work until 1:00 a.m., but if one of my children is ill, unless I am teaching I can almost always arrange to be home. I must publish, and frequently, to meet professional standards, but a significant portion of my salary pays me to think and write about what fascinates me. In a better world, everyone will have these opportunities, perhaps. But in the meantime—'in the world in which we actually live' (to borrow a favourite phrase of John Maynard Keynes)—I am unbelievably lucky.

Changes in the university are unquestionably necessary. It is absurd to assume that the institutional structures established in the past are well-suited to the present—even if in the case of SFU, the past is only forty years ago. It is true that the 'marketization' of the university, along with everything else, is getting worse; it is true that the competitive measures by which my colleagues and I are evaluated are more and more intense and controlling, and it is true that our situation is by no means assured over the long term. But right now, the critique of neoliberalism, at SFU or similar institutions, cannot be about me or my job.

I am aware that the specifics of my experience might inform my argument: white male social scientist in a discipline where a 'left' analysis is by no means peripheral. But to the extent that the university-as-work-place reproduces conservatism and racialized and gendered discrimination, these dynamics long-predated neoliberalism, and are not attributable in any particular way to it. Indeed, it would be hard to deny that on most of the race/gender/left front, things are much better today than they were back in the day of the welfare state and the well-funded public university—at least for faculty.

I write this with some anxiety, recognizing not only that I might be branded some sort of 'collaborationist,' but—even worse—that in some way I have not recognized, I have become one more product of the bourgeoisification machine. Actually, to be honest, in some ways I know I have—along with many other professors I know, however 'radical' they claim or are said to be. I know more than one 'left-wing' academic with a second home in 'cottage country' and a cabinet full of expensive red wine. The belief that this is compatible with a meaningfully anti-neoliberal politics is delusional. It is not. That does not mean I would not like a house on the Gulf Islands—but it is the part of me I struggle against, the casually fortunate bourgeois, that would convince me that is commensurable with a real commitment to progressive political economic change. Like the bourgeois everywhere, the tenured professor is often not interested in any

changes, neoliberal or not, that might really change things, and put an extraordinary, if paradoxical, position at risk. If you ever find me spending my weekends in a little colonial home on Mayne Island, which you might, know that I am not there because of, but rather despite, my anti-neoliberal politics.

The question, then, is how might I (as university professor) engage with the critique of neoliberalism? I am sure there is no single 'correct' way. But I am convinced that I can be neither nostalgic nor uncritical of my own good fortune. Nostalgia is essentially conservative, and it is I think a fair characterization of almost all successful faculty mobilizations: when we get going, it is virtually always to oppose change. The silent assumption that my relative privilege is the only way an effective university can survive is, however, even less politically compelling than nostalgia. Tenured professors complaining about their jobs or railing against increases in their workload don't get much sympathy, and it is easy to see why. The academic critique of the neoliberalization of the university will always seem half-hearted, self-serving, and disconnected from broader anti-neoliberal struggles as long as our current exceptionalism is a political no-go zone.

One way to approach this, certainly, is to recognize my paradoxical subject-position as the fortunate among an increasingly unfortunate many. As someone convinced that paradox is an inescapable aspect of the human condition, this makes a lot of sense to me. But just as important is recognizing the fact that this subject-position is not merely paradoxical for those inhabiting it, but extremely relevant from a broader political perspective, i.e. to the capacity of 'tenured radicals' to link our politics with those operating in other fora, inside and outside the university. What I experience as paradoxical can justifiably seem 'ironic,' 'hypocritical,' or even 'arrogant' to others. I am often reminded of this in political conversations with people who do not understand themselves as 'left'—with my soccer team-mates, for example—and who take my arguments and my politics as possible only because of the little bubble in which I live and work, where I get paid to be a 'radical' by a system that is not only not radical, but funded to a significant extent by the taxes of people who, if they knew who I was, would probably take me for a left-wing loon.

This proposition does not make me change my analysis or arguments; indeed, it is essentially an unwitting demand that I produce not new insights or ideas, but knowledge that confirms what my employers already believe they know—a surprising demand given my

job description. As I have said, I am lucky enough to be paid to study the current situation, and I am convinced my analysis of the current situation and necessary changes, however flawed, is even at its worst, immeasurably more accurate than what stands for political common sense on either side of BC's two-party system. But I cannot deny that I am the not-at-all-poorly-off employee of a system which I believe to be fundamentally unjust, ill-conceived, ill-governed, and ecologically broken, potentially catastrophically so.

The question is what to do in this 'paradoxical subject-position,' and what to do about it? As 'an academic,' at least in its current 'university' form, I believe I must reject it while also embracing change. I must not only oppose, but also propose, substantial and radical changes, a politics explicitly willing to put my own status as labour aristocracy—for that is, at best, what I am—in question. This is the only way the struggle against the neoliberalization of the university will have any meaning within the wider struggle against neoliberalism. The defence of tenure, or any other feature of the 'traditional' university or its institutional structure, is not necessarily progressive just because it opposes neoliberalization. It might be, but there is no guarantee, and most of the time that is not the way it works. One might say it is almost always 'preferable' to the new model being imposed. Yet beyond its 'surplus' distribution aspects (and perhaps including them too) there is nothing about defending tenure, for example, that makes it beyond criticism, let alone radical. The case must be made. I believe it can be, but it is not self-evident. The idea that faculty self-interest and political progressivism are 'naturally' aligned is not tenable anymore, if it ever was. If tenure and the 'traditional' function of the university are ethically and politically defensible, it must be on political foundations that extend beyond the university itself. These are grounds we must help to build.

# ORGANIZING ON THE FRIENDLY CAMPUS: REFLECTIONS ON FAILURE

**Myka Tucker-Abramson and Mark Willson**

*Try again. Fail again. Fail better.*
Beckett

Looking back at the end of our PhD programs and our "careers" as student activists at two West Coast Canadian universities, we have both been struck by our overwhelming feelings of failure. Having been undergrads in the late 90s and early 2000s on campuses which often resembled a 1968 revival, we both came into grad school with visions of the militant organizing and social mobilization that we would become involved in. Instead, we found ourselves participating in a series of hard fought and largely lost battles against retrenching regimes of austerity. While there are many differences in our experiences of failure, one similarity we both kept returning to was a shared sense that much of our failure was a result of the university's uncanny ability to absorb our protests and critiques and even deploy them for their newest marketing campaigns as engaged, active, and friendly campuses. We wanted to spend some time here thinking through this problem of organizing on what we're terming the "friendly campus."

*What is the friendly campus?*

Since the economic crash of 2008, we have been inundated with stories

about rising police violence on campuses and crack-downs on student dissent. During the G20 protests in Pittsburgh in 2009, police attacked students with pepper spray and tear gas on the University of Pittsburgh campus while anti-austerity protests at UC campuses such as Berkeley and Davis and at the City University of New York in November 2011 resulted in mass deployments of police and state violence against students. In Canada too, we've witnessed a rise in the policing and penalization of campus struggles. The legal and educational arms of the state that came together to violently suppress the anti-tuition Quebec student strikes that began in February 2012 is just the most obvious. We also regularly hear from colleagues further east about restraints and threats from university administrators, legal and otherwise, simply for taking public stances on social justice issues.

This seems largely unimaginable at Simon Fraser University and the University of Victoria, the friendly West Coast campuses. It's not just that we rarely see or experience the policing and surveillance of protest and activism; it's also that the university has already branded itself as activist. In recent years, SFU and UVic have marketed themselves as socially and politically engaged campuses. From its new brand "SFU: The Engaged University," to its town hall meetings and public squares, and to the creation of a Sustainability Office and of the SFU Woodward's Vancity Office of Community Engagement in the downtown eastside, SFU has marketed itself as a "leading engaged university defined by... far-reaching community engagement"(Strategic Vision.) UVic's strategic vision and branding is strikingly similar and has gone so far as to ban industrial food franchises like Sodexho and even refuses to grant naming rights for buildings to corporate entities.

However, with such community-minded initiatives directed at increased engagement and sustainability taking place, it's hard to remember that university administrators are simultaneously cutting jobs, or contracting them out, actively courting corporate partnerships, and forcing more and more students into fewer and fewer classrooms. We know that the engaged university is a screen masking the transformation of the university from a public space of learning (or at least training) to a private space of capital generation.

But, the rhetoric of the engaged university is not just empty talk: the engaged university genuinely feels friendly. Instead of cease and desist orders, the university's media relation's office sends polite letters helpfully pointing to other resources (such as corporate web-sites); rather than

targeting students for wheat-pasting or postering violations, facilities management quietly and immediately removes the posters; rather than disciplining students for disrupting a Board of Governors meeting, the university absorbs the protest as part of a marketing strategy heralding its commitment to environmental issues, social justice, and community engagement. The heavy hand is not visible. We are all free here in this space of tranquility, safety, civility, cooperation: there is no antagonism.

For these reasons, the friendly campus appears to us as a model instance of the successful neoliberal university: a public university free from the 'constraints' of state funds and tied to the needs of the market, and a university where resistance isn't directly combated (which would directly display antagonisms within the university), but is dissipated, along with the very possibility of experiencing or feeling these antagonisms.

*Organizing on the Friendly Campus*

The biggest marker of success of this new neoliberal university is how difficult it is to organize on friendly campuses. Whether we have been trying to resist austerity budgets that increase class sizes, reduce hires, and often reduce student and faculty power, or whether we have been protesting university partnerships with alleged corporate human rights abusers such as Goldcorp, or whether we've been lobbying and taking job action to ensure a fair collective agreement, we have come up against the same struggle of trying to polarize and politicize a seemingly apathetic student body. While trying to engage and mobilize apathetic students is not new in and of itself, we suspect that the mode of apathy we face is a new beast indeed.

A brief detour to Slavoj Žižek's idea of fetishistic ideology might be useful here to help us understand this shift. Specifically, we want to suggest that what we are coming up against is the problem of how to organize in a world where the dominant mode of ideology has shifted from symptomatic to fetishistic. As Žižek explains, whereas symptomal ideology operates as a lie or an illusion that can be critiqued by identifying "the symptom [...that is] the exception which disturbs the surface of false appearance"(296), fetishistic ideology operates in the distance between knowledge and belief; the distance between the subject's claim not to believe the ideological fantasy and their actions that reinscribe (often hysterically) the fantasy or belief. So, what does this have to do with organizing students? Actually, quite a lot.

During the 2012 Teaching Support Staff Union and CUPE 3338 strike, a number of union members noted how students told them that, while they understood the union's issues and even agreed with the union, they still did not support job action. "Couldn't you just keep working anyways?" many of them asked. Similarly, when a group of us began organizing against the fraught Goldcorp donation to SFU in the fall of 2010, we spoke to many students and faculty who agreed that the donation was troubling, but they did not want to speak out and often, did not even want us to speak out. In both of these instances, we saw students and faculty (often) unwittingly articulating the same thing: "I know very well" that the university is selling itself off piecemeal to the highest bidder/being systematically defunded and privatized/becoming increasingly undemocratic, "but I choose to act as if the university is still a good community-engaged, public institution." In short, there is a stark disconnect between people's understanding of the situation and their actions. They know the image of the community-run and engaged University is bunk, they know that it's a thin veneer covering up the hollowing out, privatization, and often weaponization of the public university, but—because it feels so friendly—they still act as if this image were true.

What this means is that the problem is not exactly apathy, as we often think. In an earlier moment this might have been the case. And the response would have been, and indeed was, consciousness-raising. We would educate people about the structures of power they were embedded in, the truths lurking beneath the university's shiny veneers, and the ways that students were oppressed or oppressors, and then we would mobilize them. But here's the thing: consciousness raising no longer works. It no longer works because apathy is not a lack of caring or knowledge, but a deep ideological attachment to the veneer itself: "I need to believe I am part of an institution that is not implicated in various forms of violence (because I work full-time as a barista and simply don't have time for the call of responsibility that I would be forced to attend to otherwise), and the friendly university just makes it so easy to believe this."

So, the question then becomes (as always): what is to be done? How do we organize in this context of disavowal? While we don't have any solutions, we have some ideas, or at least some examples of times when we think we've failed better. Specifically, we want to turn to two examples: the fall 2012 TSSU/CUPE strike at SFU and the guerrilla garden at UVic.

In the case of SFU, the image of the friendly campus is intimately

interconnected with the university's expansion into the downtown eastside and into the market of glitzy high-capital arts and culture events. While SFU's urban expansion has implicated it in the ongoing processes of gentrification and displacement, its expansion also creates new points of weakness that we can put pressure on. Throughout the strike at SFU, many of us felt frustrated that the administration seemed largely unconcerned by the number of classes being cancelled and that it was still able to maintain the veneer of business as usual. On November 3rd 2012, the much-anticipated dance show, *Far Side of the Moon*, was scheduled to play at SFU Woodwards. The tech people who ran the theatre, though, were CUPE staff and were also engaged in job action. Bolstered by TSSU and community support, the picket lines shut down opening night and two other performances, generating a mix of concern, threats, and panic from community members, the theater company, and the administration. In this moment of confrontation, it became clear that as the university campus expands into the urban centre and becomes increasingly geared towards capital-intensive cultural events, campus unions are no longer limited to shutting down classrooms, but can now affect much more visible and costly events.

In addition to exploiting opportunities created by these new spaces, the other productive tactic we have seen is students forcing the university to abandon its friendly image and become antagonistic. This is different from consciousness-raising in that the goal is not to engage in conceptual unmasking, but to make the university act differently and disrupt its own image. At UVic, this occurred when students created a guerrilla garden in March 2010, which as the media coordinator for the guerilla gardening program, Matthew Christie, explains, was part of their campaign for "a sustainable agriculture program on 30 acres of unused land, and for communal food-growing areas on campus so students can grow and share food" (Christie qtd in. Oomen, 2010). First, the administration limited visible confrontation and antagonism by bulldozing the garden in the evening and early morning, when few students were around to object or to witness. Then when students rebuilt the garden, the administration issued cease and desist letters to nine students, threatening costly legal action and limiting the spaces these students could traverse while on campus. The administration's bulldozing of a sustainable green space that seemed so perfectly in line with its values, and its subsequent legal actions, created productive confusion in the minds of students and faculty: if the university was built on principles of sustainability and community

engagement, why would it bulldoze a community garden? And, what did this mean for what kind of community engagement and what kind of sustainability projects were appropriate?

While in both of these cases, the universities were able to achieve resolution—CUPE withdrew its picket of the performances after the opening weekend and the garden was fully dismantled—these moments of confrontation served to reveal the vulnerable points in this new neoliberal university, both physical and ideological. While these are only provisional examples, and were ultimately not successes (at least not by straightforward 'win' criteria), they offer useful starting points for future strategies, strategies that we hope will continue to fail better.

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# IN DEFENSE OF THE PUBLIC UNIVERSITY: INSTEAD OF PURITY, IS IT A TIME FOR 'DIRTY HANDS?'

**Am Johal**

> *How you cling to your purity, young man! How afraid you are to soil your hands! All right, stay pure! What good will it do? Why did you join us? Purity is an idea for a yogi or a monk. You intellectuals and bourgeois anarchists use it as a pretext for doing nothing. To do nothing, to remain motionless, arms at your sides, wearing kid gloves. Well, I have dirty hands. Right up to the elbows, I've plunged them in filth and blood. But what do you hope? Do you think you can govern innocently?*[1]
>
> Jean Paul Sartre, from the play 'Dirty Hands' (1948)

The questions about the university endure and reoccur in every age, from the early Greeks to Immanuel Kant's *Conflict of the Faculties* to the present. Does the university matter, and if so, what is its public role today? Where is it ossified and where does it deserve legitimate critique? What does it mean to get our hands dirty in its defense?

In the post-war environment, the role of the university in the second half of the 20th century was to act as the Great Equalizer. Encouraging accessibility to education and lowering barriers was largely viewed as an effective state investment which promoted social mobility, the development of a critical citizenry and acted as a key economic driver.

Here, in B.C., the seventies saw the expansion not only of university education, but of the community college system throughout the province with a vision to expand opportunities for people traditionally not able to access post-secondary education. The simultaneous expansion of immigration in the sixties and seventies meant opportunities for social mobility for second-generation students in the eighties and

[1] Alain Badiou. *Logics of Worlds: Being and Event II*. Trans. Alberto Toscano. London: Continuum, 2009, 405.

nineties through participation in higher education. But there was also, concurrently, the economic restructuring of the eighties, the federal cuts to provincial transfer payments in the nineties and the long term cuts and tuition deregulation of the past decade that have lowered accessibility, increased the costs of education through higher tuition and living costs and resulted in unsustainable rates of indebtedness for students.

As the *publicness* of the contemporary university has atrophied in this neoliberal age, strategies to defend its place in society have varied jurisdiction by jurisdiction, university by university and department by department. Narrow economic based arguments have been distorted and tragically implemented to deplete the university of its role and relevance in public life. In this period, the nihilistic cul-de-sac of neoliberalism has almost become a fully entrenched societal norm (even as it is forcefully challenged) and it has become easy to be discouraged by the facts and trends that often emerge, particularly the arguments which are made about the university after the economic collapse of 2008. But, despite the economic restructuring that has invaded every dimension of human life, the public university, at least in its better moments, has a responsibility to resist this abolition of future for a new generation of students.

The necessary question to pose today is whether a university education promotes social mobility, or rather exacerbates class divisions through high rates of indebtedness for those least able to afford it. Student loan policies have become increasingly regressive over time and the cost of living, especially housing, has become unaffordable.

> THE CRISIS CONSISTS PRECISELY IN THE FACT THAT THE OLD IS DYING AND THE NEW CANNOT BE BORN; IN THIS INTERREGNUM A GREAT VARIETY OF MORBID SYMPTOMS APPEAR.[2]

Alain Badiou proposes that the task of philosophy today is to destroy Aristotle and corrupt the young.[3] But for Badiou, there is also a tension between philosophy and the university: "Philosophy is always at risk of being betrayed by the Academies developed to transmit it."[4]

As Badiou's formulation illustrates, defending the academy and making its public interest case to society-at-large has proven difficult.

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[2] Antonio Gramsci. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Trans. Geoffrey N. Smith and Quintin Hoare. New York: International Publishers, 1971,.275-276

[3] Alain Badiou, Notes from Master Class at University of Amsterdam School of Cultural Analysis, March, 2013

[4] Alain Badiou, *Key Concepts*. Eds. A.J. Bartlett and Justin Clemens. Durham: Acumen Publishing, 2010, 6

Reacting to public criticism, and in their attempts to overcome historical ossification, universities have developed various institutional strategies for public relevance, many of which are controversial (such as 'Massive Open On-line Courses' [MOOCS]) as they could propose a challenge to a traditional university education and its financing model and at the same time promoting a gendered and elite notion of education and teaching. The proliferation of para-academic projects and the deschooling movement internationally—from community-based groups to artist initiatives—are also a micro-reaction and an intervention into this space.

The expansion of community engagement strategies at universities around North America in the past two decades is another attempt at reconnecting with communities outside the academy in an effort to restore the public mission of the university. But, community engagement, at its worst moments, can be limited to diplomacy and public relations for an institution. As a result, the proliferation and bureaucratization of community engagement also has the potential to reinforce the current neoliberal consensus.

In its better moments, community engagement can initiate both disruption and urgency within the institution and society at large—to open up new spaces, materially and theoretically, for the development and dissemination of ideas in the public sphere. Equally, community engagement can insist that community knowledge have an equal place alongside academic knowledge. There is a need for a greater porousness of institutions and a more open-minded approach to institutional rules to meet their stated objectives in community engagement. The so-called social justice potential of community engagement is dependent upon real long-term partnerships with social movement organizing and community based politics. The question is, when push comes to shove, is the university actually ready for that actuality?

The pressures for community engagement in higher education have historically come from within the institution and from communities. In its modern form, it began as a reform movement to restore the public mission of the university as a public good, rather than a private one. While it has roots that are linked to the social justice movements from the 1960's, there is much discussion about whether the cultures of higher educational institutions have neutralized or actively undermined the original intent of this movement.

If community engagement is going to help produce new public knowledges, it needs to maintain its disruptive potency both within

the institution and in society at large. In many ways, these tensions are irreconcilable and form the basis of the contemporary dissensus within institutions.

A philosophical problem raised in the political theory of 'Dirty Hands,' popularized by American political theorist Michael Walzer, is applicable to the context of universities: "Should political leaders violate the deepest constraints of morality in order to achieve great goods or avoid disasters for their communities?" Within the discussion of 'dirty hands' is the question of whether it can "be restricted wholly or principally to politics or does it speak equally to other areas of life?"[5]

To save the university from itself, should we be prepared to have 'Dirty Hands?' To defend the idea of the university is to defend its publicness and also to ask for new forms of publicness that respond to the present. In the areas of the contemporary university where its publicness is certainly at question, too many voices in the academy walk away from the places that most need defending. These are the very physical spaces and intellectual places of free inquiry where the stakes are highest and the ground should be defended. There is a desire to mount a more vigorous defense of the role of the university.

Deschooling theorist Ivan Illich came up with the concept of *counterproductivity* when institutions of modern society impede their stated aims. As a result of the challenge to the contemporary university, there is a need for what Cornel West calls 'critical organic catalysts' in higher education. With the scale of changes that have been brought about in the contemporary neoliberal university, there is a requisite need to scale up more creative responses and a new kind of subjectivity from within the university and in the community at large to challenge this *counterproductivity*.

The public university is still one of the few places left where critical voices have the space and resources to articulate a new public imaginary. Within the public university, the humanities have a particularly important task. The critical thinking required to open up these spaces to make the vital connection between thinking and acting out in the world, particularly for students, needs to be valued, nurtured and protected:

> *Philosophy's duty is clear: to reconstitute rationally the infinite reserve of the affirmative that every liberating project requires... philosophy is*

[5] C.A.J. Coady, "The Problem of Dirty Hands," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2011/entries/dirty-hands/>

*the attic where, in difficult times, one accumulates resources, lines up tools and sharpens knives.*[6]

As these languages and movements of organizational reform seep in to the institution, new challenges of relevancy and the ability to defend the publicness of institutions emerge. New rounds of crises and budget cutting add to the fear and force a retreat into the academic heart of the university. It is precisely in these moments that the defense of the idea of the university must take place more forcefully than ever.

[6] Alain Badiou. *Polemics.* Trans. Steve Corcoran. London: Verso, 2006. 35.

# ON THE POVERTY OF THE PROFESSORIATE, OR SAUSAGE AND POLITICS

**Carolyn Lesjak**

There can be no doubt that we are living in new times, if not end times, when it comes to the university. Neoliberalism has left no stone unturned—the university is no exception. It is far too easy to rattle off all the ways in which academia has been transformed: from the incursion of a market mentality into teaching and research regardless of discipline (in the sciences, research must couple with industry; in the humanities, teaching must produce measurable "deliverables") to the use of university-wide learning outcomes and assessment frameworks, to an increasing emphasis on skills training and intensified pressure from governments to prove the value of a university education in terms of business metrics, it would be hard to deny that the ivory tower, mythic or otherwise, no longer exists. In fact, these facts are so well known and so well-rehearsed that it feels hard to say anything new about the dire state of the university. Yet despite this full-scale assault on the university, there are aspects of university life that have the potential to counter the reign of "management's designer culture" (Bousquet), and the ongoing corporatization of universities here and abroad—namely, the idea of shared governance, which, along with

academic freedom and tenure, establish in theory a radically different work relationship within the academy. I say "in theory" because 1. this trio of structures and processes is on the chopping block and hence destined to be destroyed unless something is done and 2. it is only through faculty resistance and concerted political action that this "three-legged stool," as Cary Nelson terms it, can actually fulfill its potential in practice. The need for faculty to take responsibility for their own workplace is a tall order given the readily acknowledged non-revolutionary character of most faculty; nevertheless this is the only way forward.

*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*

In 1966, members of the Situationist International (SI) and students at Strasbourg University issued their now famous pamphlet "On the Poverty of Student Life," which decried the impoverished state of the university student, blithely living in a state of "protracted infancy," and tied this impoverishment to the "dominant reality of overdeveloped capitalism"(1). Refusing to recognize the changed nature of the university and their place in it, students instead embraced a false bohemianism in which they could pretend they had escaped the confines of commodity culture and their passive role as consumers of that culture. What was ignored was the fact that "[the student's] mechanical, specialized education is as profoundly degraded... as is his [*sic*] own intellectual level, because the modern economic system requires a mass production of uneducated students who have been rendered incapable of thinking. The university has become an institutional organization of ignorance"(3). An institutional organization of ignorance: as the SI pointed out, faculty participated in this "organization of ignorance" just as much as students did. As they wrote, "the pathetic bitterness of so many nostalgic professors stems from the fact that they have lost their former role as guard-dogs serving the future masters and have been reassigned to the considerably less noble function of sheep-dogs in charge of herding white-collar flocks to their respective factories and offices in accordance with the needs of the planned economy"(3). How much more so today!

Here's what it looks like on the ground. On the one hand, a spate of books usefully and powerfully detail the death of the university as we know it. These books include Bill Readings' *The University in Ruins*, Frank Donoghue's *The Last Professors*, Benjamin Ginsberg's *The Fall of the Faculty: The Rise of the All-Administrative University and Why it Matters*, Marc Bousquet's *How the University Works: Higher Education and the Low-*

*Wage Nation*, Jacques Derrida's *Eyes of the University* and Cary Nelson's *No University is an Island: Saving Academic Freedom*, to name just a small sampling. Notably, the landscape has changed dramatically enough in the last few decades that Donoghue can convincingly argue that those of us still in academia are literally the "last professors." Good riddance, some may say. But more than the loss of the species formerly known as "professors" is at stake. If the issue was only about saving ourselves and the privileges that used to come with the academic job but more and more often do not—with over 60% of faculty now contingent faculty in the US, and Canada following along the same path, but not yet quite there, the notion of faculty "privileges" and the ressentiment that accompanies them becomes rather misplaced—one could be excused for not shedding too many tears. And this, in fact, is one of the ways that the public does see the professoriate, helped in no small part by a culture of the bottom line, a global recession, and the general belief that the market should prevail in all areas of life, a sea change that, as David Harvey has compellingly shown, constitutes the project of neoliberalism *tout court*. The extent to which the terrain has changed is captured in Nelson and Stephen Watt's *Academic Keywords: A Devil's Dictionary for Higher Education*, which sees as its *raison d'être* the "need to redefine familiar terms... to rearticulate them to new conditions" and "to make unfamiliar terms and concepts central to our picture of the academy" (viii-ix). In the combined spirits of Raymond Williams' *Keywords* and Ambrose Bierce's *Devil's Dictionary*, Nelson and Watt aim to both unearth the meanings of old words and concepts now faced with new material conditions—words and concepts such as "faculty," "research," "tenure," and "academic freedom"—and to identify the nature of those changed material conditions and their impact on faculty and the university as a whole. Vocabulary is central insofar as it so often blocks a "willingness to admit those altered material conditions—and to recognize who has gained and lost as a result of them" (vii). Bierce's satirical approach comes into play as Nelson and Watt try "to speak the truth in an academic culture of self deception" (viii), at the heart of which is the refusal to see the university as a workplace, and those who work there—including the faculty—as workers.

This, then, is the other side of the equation: despite knowing just what is happening to the university as we know it, faculty for the most part seem unwilling to take action. Instead, in an economy of scarcity, most try merely to get as much as they can while they can; exemplars of Slavoj Žižek's analysis of how ideology functions today, "they know

what they are doing (but they do it anyway)." Here at Simon Fraser University, and reflective of the larger academic culture of self-deception, this stance translates into a discomfort with, if not a deep aversion to, the language of employment as the appropriate language for describing the faculty's relationship to the university. While the result of such an aversion is multivalent (be it the faculty's reticence to challenge administrative policies because they don't want to appear adversarial rather than collegial, or the fear that faculty will lose their cultural capital and be treated like "mere workers"), crucially it takes shape as a refusal to be considered an employee, which, in turn, contributes to anti-union sentiments, a set of responses very much in play today as the current SFU Faculty Association, directed by a faculty motion, considers unionization. After all, unionization forces faculty to see themselves as members of a collective bargaining unit made up of similarly situated workers in a clearly delineated structure of work relations best defined in terms of an employer-employee contract. This is nothing new when it comes to understanding the structure of universities and the work faculty do there. In *Capital, Volume 1*, Marx famously likens the work teachers perform in the "teaching factory" to that of workers in a sausage factory as a way of explaining the necessity of surplus-value to the self-valorization of capital regardless of the form of production: "a school master is a productive worker when, in addition to belabouring the heads of his pupils, he works himself into the ground to enrich the owner of the school. That the latter has laid out his capital in a teaching factory, instead of a sausage factory, makes no difference to the relation"(644). What is new, however, is the fact that without unionization, without collective resistance to the neoliberalization of the university, there will literally be no university left for the "last professors." Self-interest in this new state of affairs will only produce its dialectical other: the very destruction of a university within which to exercise one's self-interest. Then faculty truly will be free labourers in the double sense Marx described.

*Unionization or Bust!*

So what does shared governance, tenure and academic freedom mean in this context? First and foremost, it means still having some power in the university, some ability to share in university decision-making, whether by refusing to lower academic standards to increase class sizes, or by rejecting curricular change in the form of a learning outcomes and assessments framework (as was recently done through a concerted faculty

campaign at SFU), or by protecting the right of faculty to speak against the administration, against mainstream truisms, against the grain of received ideas, in the classroom and beyond. While these may seem like fairly insignificant actions in the face of the global transformations occurring, they nonetheless represent a real alternative to the culture of business. Academic freedom and tenure (the two are inseparably linked) protect faculty so that they can speak their minds to the very administrators who, in a business or political context, would simply fire them if they didn't like what was said. It is not primarily about "job security" in the sense of not having to continue to perform well beyond a certain point in one's career, as so many outside of academia like to suggest—but the animus toward tenure does point to the kind of precarity most feel in jobs without any security, a situation more and more workers find themselves in, if they are lucky enough to have a job. Shared governance, likewise, allows faculty important control over curricular and hiring decisions, and recognizes that the faculty and the administration have expertise in different areas of the university. Nelson, in *No University is an Island: Saving Academic Freedom*, says of shared governance that it "establishes the mechanisms through which faculty professional expertise becomes functional; it moves that expertise from a concept to an operative reality"(31). This is not, as he underscores, a radically democratic structure in any way: "Shared governance cannot install full democracy in a university. It is a negotiated strategy for sharing and adjudicating power and its application and effects"(37). But without shared governance, there is nothing to prevent the university from forcing all faculty into contingent contracts, from making commercial concerns trump all others, and from commodifying all forms of knowledge itself. Now, is shared governance enough? No, precisely because the mechanisms of shared governance are themselves under threat through attacks on academic freedom, the system of tenure, the distorted growth of university administrations in relation to the faculty, and the accompanying divide between administrative and faculty "cultures," as demonstrated by Bousquet—not to mention the lack of courage on the part of the faculty to speak up. Hence the need for unionization, not only to protect what is left of the alternative structures of governance within the university, but, most importantly, to see beneath the "culture of self-deception" the intimate and inextricable connections between the university and the wider politics of neoliberal globalization. For these are no longer simply university affairs, something Neil Smith captures when, drawing on Marx's analogy, he writes that the "local

branch of [the educational factory] serves as an excellent target for a little political agitation, but we also have to keep our sights focused on the larger sausage factory of global capitalism"(338). In short, the fight for the university is equally the fight for a radically new and fully democratic means of making something other than sausage.

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