

University of Alberta

**Life, Learning and Work Patterns of Contingent Community College
Faculty in the Face of Neoliberalism**

by



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Abstract

The employment of contingent faculty in post-secondary education in Canada has increased to levels that have been unseen historically. Contingent faculty is a broadly representative term that includes those university and college teachers who do not have permanent and ongoing employment relationships with their employers. These may include such groups as graduate teaching assistants, adjuncts, part-time continuing education instructors and full-time faculty who are employed by the college or university to work on a temporary basis.

Within higher education, these faculty members represent a separate class of instructors in that they are often paid lower wages for their work, are provided fewer benefits, given fewer opportunities for professional development, and enjoy less professional prestige for their work. This growing phenomenon can be linked to neoliberal, global trends that are resulting in the commoditization of education as another product or service found in the market-driven economy. The economic, market-driven need for efficiency and cost containment are having a profound impact on academic policy making and are largely at the root of the proliferation in contingent members in the academy.

Focusing on community college faculty in Canada and embedded in a critical social theoretical framework, the research approach that is used for this dissertation is that of semi-structured interviews. There has been very little written about the lives of contingent faculty and, in particular, descriptions of lived experiences that come directly from contingent faculty themselves. Semi-structured interviews have afforded the opportunity to better present those

experiences, through contingent faculty's own words, in a richer and more meaningful way.

This dissertation creates an understanding of the lived experience of contingent community college faculty in the face of neoliberal trends in higher education. With an understanding of this experience in place, the dissertation makes recommendations for policy change leading to more inclusive and just models for the engagement of contingent faculty in our institutions of higher education.

Dedication

This work is lovingly dedicated to my family: my Father, David Zabudsky; my Wife, Leanne Zabudsky; my daughters, Avery, Alison and Olivia Zabudsky; and to the memory of my late Grandfather, John Zabudsky, who passed away during my PhD studies but who, nonetheless, inspired me to completion.

Acknowledgements

I do believe this dissertation took longer than average to complete. While I expect part of this was due to my own inertia at times, I think I also owe this to my choice not to take a sabbatical at any point during my research. Rather, I chose to weave my research life into my professional life. In retrospect, I would have it no other way as I found great fulfillment in the intense interplay of scholarship and practice over the last few years of my life. I will miss it.

As I will miss my research supervisor, Dr. André Grace. André, you provided the right mix of coaching, mentoring and just enough gentle chiding to keep me moving forward. I think we made a great team and I thank you for helping me make it across the line.

Thanks, also, to my committee members, each of whom offered valuable contributions that vastly improved my final draft. Special thanks to Dr. Margaret Haughey, who I had come to know and respect through a previous professional association but whose standards of excellence in scholarship were fully revealed to me as her student.

Finally, thank you to my family. To my daughters Avery, Alison, and Olivia, thank you for your patience with me. To Leanne, thank you for your support. Through all of this, I am humbled by what you have accomplished in your own right.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

THE CONTINGENT FACULTY DILEMMA AND THE CASE FOR A CRITICAL SOCIAL RESPONSE

Statement of Focus

The employment of contingent faculty in post-secondary education in Canada has increased to levels that have been unseen historically. Contingent faculty is a broadly representative term that includes those university and college teachers who do not have permanent and ongoing employment relationships with their employers. Such groups as graduate teaching assistants, adjuncts, and full-time faculty who are employed by the college or university to work on a temporary basis are included in the definition of the contingent academic labor workforce (National Education Association, 2006). Within higher education, these faculty members represent a separate class of instructors in that they are paid lower wages for their work, are provided fewer benefits, given fewer opportunities for professional development and enjoy less professional prestige for their work. This growing phenomenon can be linked to neoliberal, global trends that are resulting in the commoditization of education as another product or service found in the market-driven economy.

Community colleges in Canada have always walked a line between the world of academic freedom that is found as a hallmark of the university sector and the more pragmatic needs of government that often views colleges as tools of public policy implementation. However, in recent years that balance has been tilting increasingly toward meeting the pragmatic economic development needs of government (Puplampu, 2004; Rajagopal, 2002). Historically, Canadian

community colleges, while always maintaining a vocational focus, have predominantly been institutions of access focusing on the individual learning needs of students who have encountered barriers to post-secondary education. More recently, however, they have been asked to take on the role of engines of economic development moving college mandates away from the needs of individuals and toward the needs of governments and industrial and business sectors. It is interesting to note that this shift in mandates in community colleges has not occurred to the same extent in the United States as it has in Canada. In the US, community colleges predominantly remain access institutions that often serve as junior colleges offering the first two years of four-year baccalaureate degrees (Vaughan, 2006).

Both above shifts in focus as well as the economic, market-driven need for efficiency and cost containment are having a profound impact on academic policymaking and, I will argue, are largely at the root of the proliferation in contingent members in the academy. These neoliberal pressures will change our view of the role of the academy as a place where citizens develop, where intellectual freedom prevails and where activism finds a home. An analysis of the experiences of contingent faculty in today's Canadian neoliberal college serves an important purpose to reflect on the future face of our post-secondary system in the twenty-first century.

Personal Motivation

In my role as a senior administrator in the Canadian community college system, I have had the opportunity to view the growth of the contingent instructional ranks but, more importantly, I have come to know the many stories being told by contingent faculty. Positively, I have heard them tell how they appreciate being given the opportunity to give back to their professions by taking on teaching roles in the college. Contingent teachers often see it as their responsibility to spend some time in the academy as a form of repayment to their chosen discipline. However, many negative stories are being told as well. Isolation, lack of access to professional development, limited collegiality, and criticism by their full-time peers for their lack of availability to students all form themes that are part of the contingent faculty's negative experiences.

I am concerned that the employment of contingent faculty has largely become a response to neoliberal pressures that have, in turn, marginalized contingent faculty. By viewing their circumstances through a critical social lens, I believe we can find a new view of contingent faculty, one that recognizes that theirs is a worthy struggle against neoliberal pressures that threaten the democratic future of post-secondary education.

Justification for Research

The justification for this research is two-fold. First, very little literature explores the lived experiences of contingent faculty. While a body of research exists that reviews the rate of growth of contingent faculty (Cox, 2000; Rajagopal,

2002; Tirelli, 1998), the development of taxonomies of contingent faculty types (Gappa and Leslie, 1993; Gappa and Leslie, 2002; Rajagopal, 2002) and pedagogical and organizational issues related to contingent faculty (Avakian, 1995; Benjet & Loweth, 1989; Bolge, 1995; Burgess and Samuels, 1999; Cline 1993; Lundy and Warne, 1989), there is a void in the research when it comes to describing the personal experiences of contingent faculty. More specifically, there has been little research interest in giving voice to contingent faculty. This silencing of the contingent faculty's voice should be a concern to educational scholars because contingent faculty play such a prominent role today in our institutions of higher education. That these voices are not reflected in the scholarship of higher education means that an important perspective is missing from the general discourse.

Contingent faculty are numerous and serve in a range of roles in post-secondary institutions that include teachers, curriculum developers, employees, advisory committee members, and key liaison representatives to the field of practice. To the extent that their voices are ignored, a true understanding of how our systems of higher education are being transformed by neoliberalism is not obtainable. To secure a better understanding of the impact of the proliferation of contingent academic employment in the academy, it was the intent of this research to reflect on the views of contingent faculty themselves.

The second justification for this research stems from the fact that the existing literature does not connect the lived experience of the contingent faculty with the systemic proliferation of neoliberalism within higher education.

Neoliberalism is an ideology that views the free-market as the most effective means of satisfying people's needs (Stromquist, 2002) and an ideology actively supported by most governments in the developed world today (Apple, 2004/2001; McLaren, 2003). I contend that the circumstances in which contingent faculty find themselves are directly linked to the rise of neoliberalism in the world of public, post-secondary education.

While the concepts of "quality," "return on investment," "efficiency," and "students as customers" curry the favour of proponents who seek to advance neoliberalism in higher education, these same concepts have real-world implications on the lives of those contingent faculty who toil in our public institutions of higher education. However, in general, as some critical social authors have pointed out, a mass complacency has set in that is supporting hegemonic change in our public post-secondary systems (Hill, 1999; Rikowski, 2004), and theorists have not adequately problematized these profound changes. Even academic unions have failed to address these issues in a meaningful way. Labour literature (Aronowitz, 1998; NEA, 1988; Rajagopal, 2002; Tirelli, 1998; Vaughn, 1998) does address issues of interest to contingent faculty and full-timers in isolation, but fails to consider the emerging dynamics between these two increasing solitudes. Aronowitz (1998) notes that academic unionism has not responded to the restructuring of higher education in keeping with global capitalism. He writes that "academic labour has not yet devised a collective strategy to address its own future" (p. 220). The labour literature, as it is, speaks largely to the interests of full-time faculty, sometimes contingent faculty, but

rarely considers the role of market capitalism in the creation of a stratification of labour in the academy.

I argue here that a more ground-level understanding of the working lives of contingent faculty will pragmatically enrich the discourse. Who better than those most directly affected by these trends to speak to their experience?

Research Question

As already indicated, the proposed research will be ground-level and will draw original source data from contingent faculty. It pays particular attention to the life experiences of contingent faculty and reflects upon those experiences in the context of larger neo-liberal trends in higher education. It will also explore documentation such as collective agreements and institutional policies that so centrally govern the lives of contingent faculty. For those reasons, the research was approached within the framework of the following research question:

How have life, learning, and work patterns of contingent faculty been affected by the rise of neoliberalism in higher education? To explore this question more deeply I will expand upon each of the themes of *life, learning, and work patterns* contained within the larger question.

Life

Life, in this context, is multi-faceted and includes a range of dimensions that interact with contingent faculty work roles. These include family circumstances; physical, mental and emotional well-being; the ability to maintain a work-life balance; and the achievement of life goals. This dimension also

includes a review of issues of ethnicity, age, and ability, and considers interconnections within work roles.

Learning

Learning will consider both informal and nonformal types of learning. Nonformal learning includes such things as the provision of professional upgrading and development that may be provided to the contingent faculty that may assist them in the development of their discipline speciality or in improving their pedagogical practice. The question will explore whether these learning opportunities, or the lack thereof, are likely to affect job security or advances in salary. Informal learning will consider those types of interactions that take place in the work context that assist an individual not only to improve practice, but also to “make their way” through the bureaucracy of the workplace. This informal learning could include such things as a full understanding of the rights of an employee, where to go for assistance, how to ensure an extension to a term contract and how to develop a feel for the culture of the organization.

Work patterns

Work patterns look at the nature of the employment contract, including such things as the hours of work, contingent faculty expectation of ongoing employment, who gets to teach what courses within the organization, the impact of employment by multiple employers and the level of work-related activity that may be non-compensated.

The research question as posed above provides a holistic perspective that allows a rich depiction of the experience of contingent faculty to emerge. This richness is particularly important in dealing with a discussion of the impact of neoliberalism since neoliberalism proliferates by way of a passive acceptance of the sterile jargon of the free market. Such economic concepts as *the free-market*, *globalization*, and *efficiency* go uncontested, leaving the real impacts on real people concealed from view. In the next section, I provide an overview of each of the chapters in the study.

Review of Dissertation Chapters

Chapter 2

This introductory chapter is followed by chapter two, my review of literature. I have titled the chapter: *Where Contingent Faculty Confront the Neoliberal Norm: Prospects for a Critical Future*. This title captures the various themes of my research and is evocative of contingent faculty's struggle against the hegemony of neoliberalism. However, it also speaks of a possible, brighter future offered by critical social theory, which is a theory that presents alternatives to neoliberalism. The review of literature is divided into three sections. The first section reviews the recent literature on critical social theory, which serves as the theoretical framework for this paper. I review the multiple perspectives within the literature that make up a broad view of critical social theory. These include the early underpinnings of critical social theory found in the Frankfurt School, reflections on the Habermasian "pragmatic turn" and today's more multi-perspective approach that focuses on aspects of culture (Rehg & Bohman, 2001; Peters, Lankshear & Olssen, 2003). Along the way I review McLaren's (2003) and Cole's (2003) calls for a renewed focus on Marxism and contrast this with Olssen's (2006) review of Foucault's conception of *governmentality* whereby educational and economic practices adapt to each other. I close the first section of the literature review by presenting a meeting place for diverse social theorists that is seen in the work of Lather (1998) who describes a praxis of "not being so sure" (p. 488) and Fraser (1997, 2003) whose *perspectival dualism* provides the opportunity to see interconnections between the cultural and the economic.

In the second part of the chapter I review the broad literature that explores the rise of neoliberalism as the predominant economic ideology in the developed world today, and then move to explore what has been written about the impact of neoliberalism on education. For example, I turn to Hayek (1973) and Gamble (1988) to review the differences between classic *laissez-faire* liberalism of the mid-nineteenth century and contemporary neoliberalism. Finally, I focus more specifically on the literature that explores the role of neoliberalism in education (Levin, 2003; Giroux, 2005; Grace, 2004, 2005; Olssen, 2006).

In the final section of my literature review I explore what has been written about contingent faculty in post-secondary college and university environments. In this section, I rely heavily on the work of Gappa and Leslie (1993) whose research into part-time faculty is among the most respected and regularly cited in the literature. Gappa and Leslie have constructed a typology of contingent faculty that I rely on later in this study in the data section. Next I review the Canadian literature (Mysyk, 2001; Pocklington & Tupper, 2002) of contingent faculty and find a neoliberal state complicity described in the work of Puplampu, (2004), Rajapogal, (2002), and Axelrod, (1982) who reflect upon impact on the hiring practices of colleges and universities as a result of major funding cuts that began in the 1970s. Then I demonstrate that the growth of contingent faculty is viewed as a global imperative as seen in a 1988 World Bank report. Following the introduction to the literature of contingent faculty, I review in more detail the typologies of contingent faculty as identified in the work of Mullens (2001),

Pocklington and Tupper (2002), Puplampu, (2004), Tuckman (1978), and, as previously noted, Gappa and Leslie (1993/2002).

In this section of my introductory chapter I have provided an overview of Chapter 2 of this dissertation; a chapter that reviews the literature in three areas of scholarship: 1) critical social theory, 2) neoliberalism and 3) contingent faculty. In the next section I provide a similar overview of Chapter 3, a chapter that describes the research design for this study.

Chapter 3

The title of chapter three of this dissertation is *Respecting Difference and Advocating Justice: A Critical Social Method*. This chapter title was carefully chosen as it reflects the delicate balance I am seeking to achieve in bringing together various schools of critical social theory that I take up as the theoretical lens through which I view the experiences of contingent faculty within higher education. I will argue in this study that critical social theory is an appropriate framework for challenging neoliberalism and, in so doing, offers new approaches to addressing the needs of both colleges and contingent faculty within our colleges. The phrase *respecting difference* embraces the multi-perspective views of the post-structural critical theorist who recognizes that culture and individual narratives make a relevant contribution towards the construction of truth. The phrase *advocating justice* in the title of this chapter respects the history of critical social theory; a history that has sought emancipation through group consciousness and empowerment leading to a just and democratic society. Bringing these two

concepts together allows me to address the needs of contingent faculty both at the group and the individual level.

I begin this chapter with a brief history of critical social theory. I then introduce the concept of critical pedagogy as framed by McLaren (2003, 1998) and Giroux (1992) to better the link critical social theory to the real educational experiences of my contingent faculty research participants. I then provide a justification, through the work of Cunningham (1978), Puplampu (2004) and McLaren (2003) for my use of the critical theoretical lens by demonstrating how its Marxist economic theoretical roots create a relevant response to neoliberal economic theory. I then move to a post-Marxist view of critical social theory that draws multiperspectively on Foucault's concept of *governmentality* (1991) and is consistent with Giroux's (1998) focus on the importance of individual perspectives and the importance of respecting the standpoint of research participants.

In the next section of chapter three I describe my research approach that is grounded in the work of Fontana and Frey (2000). First, I explain that I carry out a set of semi-structured interviews that are modeled on Fontana and Frey's (2000) unstructured approach. Briefly, features of the Fontana and Frey (2000) approach include gaining access to the participants' setting, understanding the language and culture of the participants, deciding how to present oneself, gaining trust, and establishing rapport. All these techniques are designed to enhance authenticity in conducting research with participants in order to describe their circumstances in more cogent and complete terms.

In the next section of chapter three I describe how I have ensured that my research is trustworthy. My approach to trustworthiness is informed by the work of Egon Guba (1981) who describes naturalist, as opposed to rationalist, perspectives of trust. Guba's checks against trustworthiness include the concepts of credibility, transferability and confirmability. In this section, I explain the differences between naturalist and rationalist approaches and describe how I incorporated checks of trustworthiness at each step of the way throughout my research.

In the final section of chapter three I describe the construction and utilization of my interview questions. For my research I developed a set of questions that served to begin a dialogue between myself and my respondents. My goal was to come to understand the life, learning and work patterns of contingent faculty in the face of neoliberalism; hence, my questions were designed to elicit understanding rather than simply explanation. This section of chapter three describes the techniques I employed to ensure I obtained that understanding.

In this section of my introductory chapter I have provided an overview of Chapter 3 of this dissertation; a chapter that describes my research methodology. That methodology includes a semi-structured interview process that is fashioned after Fontana and Frey's (2000) unstructured approach, a method for ensuring trustworthiness and a description of my approach to my interview questions. That approach was designed to, at every turn, *respect difference* and *advocate justice*, principles that reflect the critical social underpinnings of my research. In the next section I provide an overview of my data collection activity.

Chapter 4

Chapter four of my dissertation is the results and discussion chapter and is titled, *From Amanda to Oliver: Listening to Voices of Contingent Faculty*. This title evokes the approach I have taken to my research that is to personally empower each participant by allowing him or her to speak in an as unencumbered manner as possible through a semi-structured interview approach. As I will demonstrate in this dissertation, the voices of contingent faculty have been effectively silenced within our colleges. Similarly, these voices have yet to be heard within the context of a qualitative and critical post-structural analysis. Thus, this research fills a void in the scholarship of the contingent faculty experience.

The chapter begins by describing the chronological approach that I have taken to presenting the research that allows the reader to view my own journey as a researcher. In that my interviews were unstructured, I was free to probe new areas of inquiry in each interview as my knowledge base grew. In this manner, my participants were more actively involved in the actual structure of my methodology. I then provide an overview of the three college research sites that I visited in three different Canadian provinces, distinguishing among them in terms of such attributes as student population, budget and geographic (ie. rural or urban) location. Next I presented my research findings in the form of fifteen different stories. For each interview I attempted to set the stage by providing some “colour” commentary describing such things as our meeting place, unique characteristics of the discussion as well as some of my own perceptions and feelings. I found that while each discussion began as more of an interview, the semi-structured

approach allowed for the development of a free-flowing conversation, where at any given time either participant might take leadership of the discussion direction. In fact, this process tended to level the playing field and diminish the power imbalance that exists between the researcher and the researched. On a number of occasions, the research participant felt comfortable enough to ask me questions about my own perceptions and experiences. Within the context of each story I returned to my literature review to ground my data gathering in the literature of critical social theory, neoliberalism and contingent faculty. By doing so, I set the stage to construct the practical yet theoretically credible recommendations that form the final chapter of this dissertation. I concluded this chapter by describing some of the transformation that I saw in myself and my own preconceptions as I journeyed through these fifteen different and inspiring stories.

In this section of this introductory dissertation chapter, I provided an overview of chapter four that presents the results and analysis of my data gathering. With the literature review, my research method and my results chapter introduced, I now turn to an introduction of the final chapter of my dissertation that offers me the opportunity to make some recommendations and provide advice on areas for further research.

Chapter 5

I now turn to an overview of the final chapter of my dissertation. This chapter presents recommendations that are intended to improve – as the dissertation title says – life, learning and work patterns of contingent community

college faculty in the face of neoliberalism. The chosen title of chapter five is: *A New Praxis for the Employment of Contingent Faculty in Canada's Community Colleges*. This title is intended to infuse a sense of optimism into the discourse related to contingent faculty. While there is much to be concerned about in regard to the growth of contingent faculty ranks, and more importantly the treatment of them by our colleges and universities, there are also brighter prospects for our contingent faculty and our colleges if we consider a critical social response to the neoliberal forces that drive the growth of contingent faculty. The title also reflects the pragmatism seen in some of the more recent scholarship in critical social theory; for example, in the work of Peters, Lankshear & Olssen (2003). They argue that “[I]f we are to pluralize the possibilities of critical theory in the postmodern condition, clearly the pragmatist version of critical theory has to be one of the major alternatives” (p. 13). By bringing together a conciliatory form of critical social theory with a pluralistic research approach that respects the wisdom contained within individual and the local narratives, I have worked to meet the criteria necessary to propose workable solutions that will improve circumstances for contingent faculty in the face of neoliberalism.

I begin chapter five by reviewing my own journey through doctoral study and I also reflect upon my changing conceptions of truth. I then situate myself within my own particular research by presenting my current professional circumstances within a community college in Canada. I do this because my recommendations will flow not only from the knowledge I have gained in exploring the literature on contingent faculty or from the understanding that I now

have, resulting from my discussions with faculty, but also from my own experience and knowledge that have come from working within the community college system for many years. As outlined above, my critical post-structural research approach requires me to consider my own unavoidable centrality as an actor within this discourse. Next I present three broad policy recommendations for colleges that, I believe, will improve circumstances for both contingent faculty as well as colleges themselves. Within these broader recommendations are contained more operational tactical suggestions that may help lead to the realization of the larger objective. I also present some of my personal views from my vantage point within the college system on the *workability* of these recommendations and where barriers may stand in the way of their successful implementation. Finally, I conclude chapter five by offering some suggested areas for further research on contingent faculty.

In this final section of the introductory chapter, I have provided an overview of chapter five – the results and recommendations chapter – of this study and, as I have noted, the recommendations are presented optimistically. This optimism springs from my belief that colleges largely have the power to implement the recommendations either by themselves or with reasonable assistance from public policymakers in government. The case is often made that our colleges and universities are victims of budget constraints that flow from neoliberal market forces beyond their control. Standing in contrast to this fatalistic view, my research shows that colleges are more greatly empowered to confront these neoliberal forces than they give themselves credit for. It is to the full display

of this research that I now turn. In the next chapter I present the literature that supports this research and its recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

WHERE CONTINGENT FACULTY CONFRONT THE NEOLIBERAL NORM – PROSPECTS FOR A CRITICAL FUTURE

This review of literature is divided into three sections. First, I review the recent literature on critical social theory, which I have previously noted serves as the core theoretical framework for this dissertation. Second, I review the broad literature that explores the rise of neoliberalism as the predominant economic ideology in the contemporary developed world. In particular, I focus on the literature that looks at the impact of neoliberalism on education. Finally, and most comprehensively, I review what has been written about contingent faculty and the role that they play in today's higher education system. While each of these above themes stands alone and brings with it a discrete literature, I also use this review of literature as an opportunity to explore interconnections between each of the theme areas.

Critical Social Theory

There are multiple theoretical approaches considered by their proponents to fall into the category of critical social theory and, indeed, as William Rehg and James Bohman (2001) write in their introduction to the text, *Pluralism and the Pragmatic Turn*, “[a] wide range of current theoretical approaches might plausibly claim the title of ‘critical social theory’” (p. 1). Perhaps most prominent amongst these critical approaches is the approach to critical social theory that has

arisen from the Frankfurt School, which was also known as the Institute for Social Research of the University of Frankfurt, founded in 1923. The work of the Frankfurt school had Marxist roots and originally sought to provide a Marxist critique of capitalist society. Critical theory subsequently broadened through the influence of theorists such as Nietzsche, Weber, Heidegger, and Hegel, and began to focus on challenging the traditions of modernity (Peters, Lankshear, & Olssen, 2003). Hence, critical social theory has evolved from its Marxist beginnings (Rehg & Bohman, 2001), to the Frankfurt School, to the Habermasian “pragmatic turn,” and currently has many adherents whose critical analyses takes a multi-perspective approach that includes, for example, the cultural aspects of race and gender as a response to the rise of neoconservatism.

In the context of the above evolution of critical social theory, some theorists such as Peter McLaren (2003) are calling for a return to the Marxist beginnings of critical social theory as an appropriate response to the forces of globalization and the growth and current prevalence of neoliberal economic theory. McLaren is concerned that leftist discourse rests “almost entirely on an understanding of asymmetrical gender and ethnic relations” (p. 71). While he agrees that critical theory needs this cultural focus, he is concerned that class struggle is “perilously viewed as an outdated issue.” (p. 71). As well, numerous theorists, while strongly critical of capitalism, argue that the global market economy is inevitable (Bohman, 2001; Habermas, 1988; Habermas and Derrida, 2003; McCarthy, 2001). McCarthy (2001) states that “we have to learn to live

with markets....[T]he task is to domesticate them, to get as much democratic control over them as we can” (p. 422).

Still, other critical theorists (McLaren, 2003; Cole, 2003; Cole 1998) argue the more traditional economic Marxist view: that the market economy will inevitably fail and capitalist forms of society will be replaced with Marxist forms. What both of these schools have in common is the agreement that Marxist economic theory has a role to play in contemporary critical social discourse. McCarthy (2001) calls this “a new tradition of critical political economy” (p. 421). He further believes that we can draw from Marxism a “refocusing of theoretical energies on the workings of the global economy.” A pragmatic form of critical theory is also called for by Peters, Lankshear and Olssen (2003) who argue, “[I]f we are to pluralize the possibilities of critical theory in the postmodern condition, clearly the pragmatist version of critical theory has to be one of the major alternatives” (p. 13). This strand of critical social theory, one that recalls and refocuses a Marxist discourse to challenge neoliberalism, is one that I will regularly turn to in this study.

Because many theorists speak to the interconnections between neoliberalism and neoconservatism, it is important to draw a distinction between these two ideologies. Neoconservatism is largely concerned with cultural and social attributes of society. Neoconservatives want less State interference and desire a return to traditional notions of such things as the nuclear family, race relationships and the role of women in society. Many neoconservatives espouse a fundamentalist, Christian religious orientation, at least in the North American

context. A scholarly response to the rise of neoconservative trends in society has taken shape in the form of culturally-based post-modernist research.

Postmodernist researchers are concerned with themes such as multiple perspectives and layers of truth, recognition of complexity in society and social relationships, and the celebration of difference – things that are anathema to the black and white world of neoconservatives and the “rightness” of their cause.

Whereas many postmodernist theorists engage a culturally-based discourse in response to neoconservatism, many critical theorists are most concerned about the class-based economic relations in society. It is useful to summarize the history of critical theory to better understand the particular form that I turn to in my research. Critical social theory finds its roots in Marxist theory and explores themes of democracy, social justice and the empowerment of disenfranchised groups. Critical theorists’ views differ from the cultural postmodernist school in that they focus on systems of social structures in critical theory whereas the individual and the local is more prominent in post-modern discourses. Peters, Lankshear and Olssen (2003) write about Foucault’s and Lyotard’s poststructural perspectives as:

focusing instead on the contingent, local and particular nature of discursive phenomena rather than the universal. By this they mean, on the one hand, that there is no single theory of the real, as for instance exists in Marxism, or positivist or empiricist science, that can encapsulate the real and do justice to it... (p. 9)

Similarly, Foucault's concept of contingency is reflected in his concept of *governmentality* that helps us to understand

[H]ow educational and economic practices mutually condition and adapt to each other while avoiding the excesses that plagued Marxist analyses in the later 20th century, which presented such processes as the outcome of a necessary determination. (Olssen, 2006, p. 213)

Whereas the postmodernist sees individual self-awareness as the point of departure for the cause of social change, the critical theorist views group action and social systems as the starting point for change. In Marxist parlance, the working class develops a group awareness that leads to revolution in the class structure leading to social change. Critical theory provides the basis for the development of critical pedagogy in which humans find their emancipation through, and within, the exercise of learning. Through a formal process of learning and group self-awareness, learners come to see their exploitation by the capitalist system and take action to overthrow existing systems of power.

Critical theorists endeavor to assist citizens to overcome the "collective forgetfulness – the unimagining of the lived realities of the labour-capital relation" (Banfield, 2003, p. 15). Rikowski (2003) argues that this forgetfulness is what sustains the capitalist system:

[Capitalism] will seek to destroy any forms of pedagogy that attempt to educate students regarding their real predicament – to create an awareness of themselves as future labour-powers and to underpin this awareness with

critical insight that seeks to undermine the smooth running of the social production of labour-power. (Rikowski in Hill, 2003, p. 4)

In contrast to this class analysis, theorists such as Bates (1983) and Brown (1978) have attempted to link postmodern phenomenological views of reality as a social construction to Marxism's more empirical view of structures of reality by "scaling Marxism down to the level of organizational practice, and scaling micro sociologies up to the level of organizational structure" (Brown, 1978, p. 372). In other words, these scholars are looking for an analytical middle ground that may rest between the exclusive focus on interpersonal forms of oppression and a focus on oppression arising from structures of economic and social organization.

The overarching theoretical framework that will inform my dissertation is this more conciliatory approach that seeks to bring together a cultural discourse focusing on race and gender-based explanations of social relations with the more economic discourse that revisits the importance of class-based explanations. Peter McLaren (2003) is one of the strongest voices calling for a renewed focus on class as an important dynamic in the development of social relations. In fact, McLaren and others have been critical of some forms of critical pedagogy that have "drifted dangerously toward the cultural terrain of identity politics in which class is reduced to an effect rather than understood as cause" (McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2001, p. 136). Peters (2002) agrees and suggests that the "error" of twentieth century critical theory has been a preoccupation with *culture* to the exclusion of *economics*. Similarly, McCarthy (in Rehg & Bohman, 2001) states that "'iron laws' of political economy are emerging again as a central issue, this time at a

global level...This presents enormous problems of social dislocation, cultural degradation, political disempowerment, and just plain misery” (p. 420). McCarthy then argues that the rise of these iron laws calls for a renewed Marxism that has the theoretical economic underpinnings necessary to respond to the neoliberal advance.

However, there are critical social theorists from the cultural school, responding to neo-Marxists, who argue that there is a place for cultural postmodernism in the discourse of activist social change. In a 2002 manuscript titled *The Responsible Anarchist: Postmodernism and Social Change*, Elizabeth Atkinson responds directly to critics who argue that cultural postmodernism lacks an agenda for social change. She offers a view of postmodernism as “a powerful force for social change, through the acceptance of uncertainty, the acknowledgement of diversity and the refusal to see concepts such as justice or society as fixed, or as governed by unassailable truths” (p. 73). Similarly, Lather (1998) argues for “a praxis of not being so sure, of working the ruins of critical pedagogy toward an enabling violation of its disciplining effects” (p. 488). In an attempt to bring together both arguments, Fraser (1997, 2003) develops the term perspectival dualism to describe a dialogic process that allows us to see the interconnections between the cultural and the economic.

I turn to both the cultural and economic strands of critical theory to provide a theoretical framework for my research. The cultural post-modern strand of critical social theory allows us to focus on oppression at the level of the individual that arises from gender and race relations while the economic strand

allows the reconsideration of class-based analysis to challenge the economic doctrine of neoliberal hegemony. It is to this hegemony that this literature review now turns.

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism has taken hold as the predominant economic theory behind the current rise of globalization. I argue that this predominance is, at least in part, the result of the lack of understanding of exactly what it is that constitutes neoliberalism. It is a benign sounding term, especially for progressives who have generally understood that to be *liberal* is to be concerned with advancing a public policy agenda to protect those who may be harmed by unfettered private interests in the free-market. However, Giroux (2005) reminds us that there is a conservative orientation within neoliberalism. It is manifest as a more “ruthless” form of economic liberalism that is conservative in that it seeks to roll-back seventy years of New Deal progress towards the development of a social contract. Neoliberalism, thus understood, attempts to move social responsibility from the public to the private domain. However, unlike the response to neoconservatism that became a rallying point for activists in the Reagan and Thatcher era of the 1980s, the rise of economic neoliberalism, in particular its presence in our systems of education, has resulted in little response from a seemingly anaesthetized public. One exception to this ambivalence is found in the anti-globalization movement that has taken a strong stance in opposition to the neoliberal ideology that underpins globalization. However, this movement has yet to awaken the majority of citizens to the implications of spreading neoliberalism.

One finds the roots of today's neoliberalism in classical economic theory. Neo-liberalism or "new" liberalism grows out of classical or "old" liberalism. Classical liberalism was spawned by the world of enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke. It was given its economic orientation by Adam Smith who wrote *The Wealth of Nations* in 1776. Classical liberal economics was later developed by thinkers such as Thomas Malthus and David Ricardo. Classical economic liberalism espouses the unfettered market as an appropriate means of distributing wealth.

Over time in countries like Canada, economic systems have evolved to include a mixed approach to economic theory that sees a role for government in moderating the free-market. However, theorists such as Hayek (1944) and Gamble (1988) have drawn an important distinction between classic *laissez-faire* liberalism of the mid-nineteenth century and contemporary neoliberalism. These theorists see a requirement for a strong state to promote capitalist interests, especially in the field of education in order to produce "an ideologically compliant, technically skilled workforce" (Hill, 2003, p. 7). In other words, in a neoliberal system, the state plays a prominent role in perpetuating the economic status quo. Olssen (1996) writes of the requirement for state complicity in order for neoliberalism to prevail:

Neoliberalism has come to represent a positive conception of the state's role in creating the appropriate market by providing the conditions, laws and institutions necessary for its operation. In classical liberalism, the individual is characterised as having an autonomous human nature and can

practice freedom. In neo-liberalism the state seeks to create an individual who is an enterprising and competitive entrepreneur. (Olssen 1996, p. 340, in Apple 2001)

Consistent with this view of government's role, Hirst (2000) writes

What is supposed to be an inevitable market-driven global process is actually substantially a product of public policy [...] It was influential economic policy elites and state officials in advanced states that shaped the deregulatory free-market vision of world trade. (p. 179)

Nelly Stromquist (2002) has described neoliberalism as “an economic doctrine that sees the market as the most effective way of determining production and satisfying people's needs” (p. 25). In the same vein, Michael Apple (2004) criticizes the manner in which neoliberalism has depoliticized the market by promoting the view that markets are “natural and neutral” and are governed by “effort and merit” so that those who oppose them oppose effort and merit (p. 413). There is a notion that, on its own, the market works a form of *magic* that will bring a natural and appropriate social order.

McLaren and Farahmandpur (2001) have argued against the view that capitalist structures are “powered by the transcendental metaphysic” of the free-market. Instead, they view capitalism as “a social relation overburdened by exploitation, accumulation, endless growth, and class conflict” (p. 138). Apple (2001) has termed the free-market “that eloquent fiction” (p. 410). In a similar vein, McLaren (2003) more bluntly calls neoliberalism “socialism for the rich” where the state supports capitalist interests by “lowering taxes on the wealthy,

scrapping environmental regulations and dismantling public education and social welfare programs” (p. 70).

Thus, the central point of conflict between critical social theory and neoliberalism is bound up in differing views of the essence of democracy. Neoliberalism espouses a simplistic, anti-intellectual pragmatism that equates the free-market with democracy. Conversely, critical social theorists view democracy as a complex web that includes themes of equality, justice and freedom; a site of “intense struggle over matters of representation, participation and shared power” (Giroux, 2005, p. 15). While at one level, neoliberalism seeks to reduce the definition of democracy as the rule of the free-market, this reduction has far reaching cultural impacts. In this regard, neoliberalism is not simply an economic theory but a political and cultural movement that “cannot be abstracted from race and gender relations, or other cultural aspects of the body politic. Its legitimating discourse, social relations and ideology are saturated with race, with gender, with sex, with religion, with ethnicity, and nationality” (Duggan, 2003, xvi). Similarly, Olssen (2006) writes that

In this model, the social and political spheres become redefined as economic market principles and mechanisms. Thus the economic covers all of society and society is theorised as a form of the economic. (p. 219)

Neoliberalism in Education

In the previous section I identified prominent attributes of neoliberalism including 1) the movement of social responsibility from the public to private sector, 2) the role of the state in reinforcing capitalist interests, 3) the view of individuals as enterprising and competitive entrepreneurs within the marketplace, 4) the pre-eminence of the market as the most appropriate and neutral mechanism for the distribution of wealth on the basis of effort and merit and 5) the redefinition of social and political spheres by economic market principles and mechanism. In this section I will demonstrate how these attributes of neoliberalism are present in systems of post-secondary education today.

The most obvious example of the movement of social responsibility from the public to the private sector is the increasing expectation that students will pay their own way in the form of higher tuition fees. For example, increases in tuition at four-year colleges have been over 47 percent during the past decade in the United States (Giroux, 2005, p. 7). In Canada, average undergraduate university tuition has increased by 185% in the years 1990/91 to 2003/04. Translated into dollar terms, average tuition has increased from \$1,464 to \$4,172 from 1990/91 to 2003/04 (Statistics Canada, 2004). Further, this user pay view is seen in important educational policy discussions of the type undertaken in 2004 and 2005 by Bob Rae, a former Premier of Ontario who conducted a review of the Ontario post-secondary system. In the final report entitled *Ontario: A Leader in Learning*, there is a recommendation that tuition be deregulated and allowed to increase, in part, as an acknowledgement that students derive a “private” benefit (in the form of a

job) from post-secondary education and, hence, they should shoulder an increasing proportion of the cost. Another growing example of the increased role of the private sector in public institutions is the reliance on private sector fundraising for such things as capital campaigns and research chairs.

The state's role in supporting capitalist interests in the educational context is seen in the move to ensure post-secondary institutions become drivers of economic development. In the case of community colleges in Canada their original mandate and philosophy was oriented towards that of providing greater access for more students. Over the past two decades, however, they have been viewed by governments as agents for the furtherance of economic development agendas. Some community colleges have become polytechnics with a specific mandate to drive economic growth and innovation. Grace's (2004 & 2005) work in the area of lifelong learning points to the complicity of (mostly Western) governments in the development of this instrumental view of learning that exclusively serves economic rather than social needs.

The view of individuals as enterprising and competitive entrepreneurs centres on the role of students within the learning marketplace as both *consumers* as well as a *commodity* to be sold (Levin, 2003). As already noted, students are playing a more prominent consumer role through proportionately higher tuition and ancillary fees but (or possibly as a result of) they are also presenting themselves as consumers with much higher customer service expectations (Alford, 2002). Conversely, students are a *commodity* in the sense that they are

prepared and then sold to the marketplace with skills that allow new growth and wealth generation for business and industry.

The “elegant fiction” of the market view is that in the context of market neutrality, effort and merit will be rewarded. In viewing the historical changes in Canadian community college system one finds this neoliberal theme at work as colleges have been moving away from the original mandate to provide access for all. Dennison and Levin (1988) have written about the evolution of community colleges in Canada and describe the early years from roughly 1955 to 1975 as a period

characterized by autonomy, diversity of curriculum, and virtually unbridled expansion. Government support, particularly in the fiscal arena, was generous. Democratization of opportunity, accessibility and responsiveness to community needs, and curricular experimentation and comprehensiveness became the themes which characterized the new institutions (p. 24).

The clear themes of democratization of learning and accessibility from those early days are have become less evident over time as

provincial college systems experienced increasing control by provincial governments, and with these controls, a considerable reduction in new program development, an inability to supply sufficient services to meet the demand, and the imposition of constraints upon student access by restricted admission to particular programs (p. 25).

The neoliberal pressure to redefine social and political spheres in terms of economic market principles and mechanisms is seen in the changing goals of community colleges. Dennison and Levin (1988) identified that one essential goal of colleges in the 1970s and 1980s was to be an “educational and sociocultural resource for the community” (p. 28). This view has shifted drastically in some jurisdictions. For example, in the province of Ontario a new college charter was introduced in 2002 that largely did away with local geographic catchment areas and allowed colleges the freedom to look beyond the needs of their local communities and towards their role in the larger marketplace. Arvast (2006) writes about this shift and how government is creating a new playing field that ensures that colleges have the freedom to respond to niche specialization opportunities required by the larger provincial economy:

Central to this charter was the belief that college education was more than skilled training and that a two-tier system in higher education with designated catchment areas for the colleges was no longer appropriate for the neo-liberal perception of the marketplace of the new millennium. As a rational response to perceived economic problems and the need for Canada to more fully engage in knowledge economies, the Ministry brought out the new charter, contextualizing it in the spirit that colleges could and should be able to operate more autonomously in a free market system – to a large extent identifying what their products would be, how they would deliver services, and ultimately linking the choice of citizens

for their education with the ability of individual institutions to respond in the market. (p. 3).

In this section, I have identified five prominent attributes of neoliberalism and provided examples of how these attributes are at play in our public systems of education.

These attributes demonstrate that neoliberalism takes on many faces within our post-secondary education system that go beyond merely that of reduced public funding for public institutions. Granted, as competition for scarce dollars (especially between health and education) has grown, provinces have cut funding to post-secondary education and this has caused post-secondary institutions to increase their dependence on “cheap and controllable labour (sessional lecturers)” (Mysyk, 2001). However, the full impact of neoliberalism in public education becomes apparent when it is reasonably argued that *increasing* funding to today’s colleges wouldn’t automatically cause them to move back to their pre-neoliberal condition. Such is the hegemony of neoliberalism in today’s colleges that the past has been obliterated and the only future that can be envisioned is a neoliberal one. I will now turn to a full review of literature related to contingent faculty in higher education, the growth of which I will argue flows directly from the global proliferation of neoliberal ideology.

Contingent faculty

This section of my review of literature will explore what has been written about contingent faculty in post-secondary college and university environments. Who are contingent faculty? Are there consistent demographic and life patterns

that distinguish contingent from full-time faculty? How are contingent faculty viewed by their post-secondary employers, by their communities, by their families and by themselves?

Who are contingent faculty in post-secondary environments?

There is considerable literature that explores a wide range of issues associated with contingent faculty. First, there is a body of work that seeks to explore who, exactly, contingent or part-time faculty are. Their very title sparks interest, because if we acknowledge that they are part one thing they must be part something else. The mystery of their “other life” is the point of departure for much of the literature. The work of Gappa and Leslie (1993) stands as some of the most respected and widely-cited scholarship on contingent faculty. In their publication, *The Invisible Faculty*, the authors review both the demographics and existing typologies of contingent faculty in a range of post-secondary institutions in North America. At the time of their research in the late 1980s and the early 1990s, and using data abstracted from the U. S. National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty, Gappa and Leslie found that contingent faculty were younger than full-time faculty. Just over half (51.9%) of the contingent faculty constituency in the United States fell into the 30-44 year age category, and the second largest group (31.9%) was found in the 45-59 year age category. By comparison, the largest group of full-time faculty (45.9%) were found in the 45-59 year old category, and the second largest group (38.9%) were found in the 30-44 year old age category. In this 1988 NSOPF survey, Gappa and Leslie found that racial and ethnic

minorities made up only 9.2 percent of all contingent faculty, which was slightly lower than the 10.7 percent found for full-time faculty. The researchers were surprised by this figure since they had surmised that contingent positions seemed an appropriate means of introducing diversity into faculty populations. Finally, Gappa and Leslie found that 58 percent of contingent faculty were men and 42 percent were women. This differed significantly from the full-time population where 73 percent of full-time faculty were male and 27 percent were female. Hence, at the time of their research, Gappa and Leslie found that the population of contingent faculty in post-secondary institutions in the United States was proportionally younger and more female than the population of full-time faculty.

More recent work by Gappa and Leslie (2002) draws on more up-to-date and community college-focussed data from the 1993 NSOPF and from a 2000 survey of community college faculty conducted by the Centre for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC). The researchers point out that, in fact, contingent faculty are both younger and older than full-time faculty. "Variance of age is greater among contingent faculty, with over twice as many (proportionately) in the over 65 bracket and nearly twice as many in the 25-34 bracket as full-time faculty" (Gappa and Leslie, 2002, p. 60).

Literature focused on the Canadian context demonstrates that these trends towards increased use of contingent faculty in the United States are mirrored in Canada (Mysyk, 2001; Pocklington & Tupper, 2002; Puplampu, 2004; Rajapogal, 2002). Rajapogal has provided some of the most comprehensive research on contingent faculty in Canada. In her 2002 book, *Hidden Academics: Contract*

Faculty in Canadian Universities, she points to public funding cuts in the 1970s as the key factor that began the trend towards the entrenchment of contingent faculty. Puplampu (2004) demonstrates that those cuts that began in the 1970s continued into the 1990s and the new millennium, with funding in 2000/01 for post-secondary education in all provinces falling 27 percent behind 1992/93 levels.

The contingent phenomenon is not limited to North America. In fact, at the global level the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have called for a restructuring of higher education in a manner that will minimize the role of the state and increase opportunities for the private sector and market forces (Puplampu, 2004). A 1998 World Bank report, which is entitled *The Financing and Management of Higher Education: A Status Report on Worldwide Reforms*, presents higher education restructuring as

either fewer and/or different faculty, professional staff, and support workers. This means lay-offs, forced early retirements, or major retraining and reassignment, as in: the closure of inefficient, or ineffective institutions; the merger of quality institutions that merely lack the critical mass of operations to make them cost-effective; and the radical alteration of the mission and production function of an institution – which means radically altering who the faculty are, how they behave, the way they are organized, and the way they work and are compensated. (p. 22)

Typology of contingent faculty

The complexity of the population of contingent faculty cannot be satisfactorily described through demographic features alone. For this reason, a number of researchers have sought to build a typology that reflects such things as academic background, employment history, and motivations to better reflect the reality of contingent faculty.

Mullens (2001) and Pocklington and Tupper (2002) identified three distinct groups of contingent instructors. These include professionals who hold full-time positions outside the academy, new or impending doctoral graduates who are teaching to gain experience while looking for permanent work, and those doctoral graduates who do not obtain full-time positions and remain on a cycle of contingent work. This final group may be known as sessional, term, permanent contingent or adjuncts (Puplampu, 2004). The terms and conditions of employment distinguish the full-timers from the contingent faculty. Full-timers teach, conduct research, are engaged in their academic community through committee work, and generally enjoy a range of employment related benefits. Whereas, contingent faculty only teach and may enjoy some limited fringe benefits.

Previously, Gappa and Leslie (1993) constructed a detailed typology built on earlier work by Howard Tuckman (1978). Tuckman presented contingent faculty through the following taxonomy based on his survey of 3,763 contingent faculty members.

1. Semiretireds: formally full-time academics or professionals who were less concerned with future job prospects (2.8 percent);

2. Graduate students: teaching to gain experience and augment income (21.2 percent);
3. Hopeful full-timers: individuals who hoped to obtain full-time positions but could not secure one (16.6 percent);
4. Full-mooners: individuals who held other primary jobs of at least 35 hours per week (27.6 percent);
5. Homeworkers: worked contingent because of a need to care for children or other relatives (6.4 percent);
6. Part-mooners: held other jobs of fewer than 35 hours per week elsewhere (13.6 percent); and
7. Part-unknowners: reasons for working contingent were unknown (11.8).

The above taxonomy is important because it reflects a variety of motivations for working as a contingent faculty member. Gappa and Leslie extended the Tuckman taxonomy by interviewing 240 contingent faculty and came away with a typology that consisted of four loose categories. These categories consisted of the career-enders; specialists, experts and professionals; aspiring academics; and freelancers.

Career-enders are those individuals who choose to teach on a contingent basis as a means of transitioning into full retirement. They may be individuals who are ending a full-time career in academe or they may have come from careers outside of academe. Gappa and Leslie found that these contingent faculty are

motivated by the challenge of doing something new, or to maintain some structure in life, or because they are unwilling to give up something they love to do (teaching).

Specialists, experts, and professionals are individuals who, as with the career enders, generally teach contingent as a matter of choice and have other forms of employment. The 1988 NSOPF data found that over half of contingent faculty in all institutions (52.5 percent) had other employment outside of academe. This other employment was typically as managers, professionals, and researchers with advanced training in virtually all disciplines. Their motivations, Gappa and Leslie found, were rarely economic since they often had relatively high-paying positions in the private or public sector. Some suggested that teaching allowed them to remain fresh in their discipline. Others stated that they enjoyed teaching but preferred to limit their activities in other realms of academe such as research or the committee work that is part of a full-time faculty member's life. In some cases, these individuals were researchers in their main professional role and used contingent teaching as a means of transferring that new knowledge to students. This sentiment was reflected by senior academic administrators who viewed such contingent faculty as valuable in bringing real-world and up-to-date industry and business knowledge into the classroom. The constant theme that was seen in this group of contingent faculty was the simple joy of teaching that they articulated. Many found that teaching represented a means of relieving the stress associated with their main jobs and as a welcome

form of stability in the context of main jobs where change and disruption were ever present.

One might argue that the category of aspiring academics is the category that gives rise to the negative stereotypes associated with contingent faculty. Those stereotypes suggest that contingent faculty are an over-worked sub-class that aspires to full-time status and whose aspirations are constantly foiled. While there is certainly some foundation for such stereotypes within this category, Gappa and Leslie found the picture is not so bleak as it might seem. For example, some of the individuals within this group include ABD doctoral students who, while aspiring to full-time academic careers, are moving through a process of growth and development as they build a base of experience in the classroom while pursuing their research. That said, many aspiring academics have faced a series of frustrating barriers to full-time academic status. In some cases, Ph.D. prepared academic aspirants have invested many years teaching in an institution across a series of departments, only to find that a lack of research and limited departmental committee activities have limited their prospects for tenure-track positions. Their need to maintain a large teaching load in order to simply survive has left little time for them to pursue the traditional activities that would normally prepare them for full-time positions. As one of these contingent faculty noted, “[O]ur experience is a mile wide but an inch deep” (Gappa and Leslie, 1993, p. 57). In some cases these faculty have needed to work in more than one institution in order to survive, and this has also stood as a barrier to building a relationship with an institution and faculty department.

The freelancers category of contingent faculty consists of a variety of individuals who may be home-makers, primary care-givers, or artists who may hold a variety of contingent jobs, academic or otherwise, to support themselves and who participate because of other forms of value that they derive from teaching. Gappa and Leslie found that this group does not aspire to full-time employment in the academy and finds value and meaning in a working life with multiple roles in multiple environments.

The work of Gappa and Leslie and the earlier foundational work of Tuckman is important because it reflects the variety of motivations and backgrounds that make up the contingent faculty experience. The above analysis demonstrates that contingent faculty are not a monolithic group that can be broadly characterized as an instructional underclass whose aspirations for full-time status are foiled by an oppressive and exploitive academic system. Neither is there any doubt that many contingent faculty are frustrated by barriers to the fulfillment of career goals associated with full-time and tenured status. Having explored the characteristics of contingent faculty and provided some categories for analysis, I will now turn to review what the literature has to say about the advantages and the disadvantages of contingent faculty.

Advantages of Contingent Faculty

Cost and Efficiency Issues

Whatever motivation a faculty member might have for teaching contingently, clearly there is an inherent bottom-line complicity between college

and university administrations and the trend towards increased use of contingent faculty. The public arguments favouring contingent faculty made by administrators are often couched in terms of currency of instruction through linkages with business and industry, benefits to the professions, and scheduling flexibility. However, the reality is that institutions face the fiscal pressure of diminished public funding that gives rise to a need for cost containment and efficiency. These pressures should not be underestimated as a driving force behind the call for increased use of contingent staff.

These financial drivers are not a new phenomenon that colleges and universities confront at the beginning of the 21st century. The relative decline in public funding for post-secondary education in North America is longstanding and has its roots in the 1970s. This decline followed decades of growth in public funding from the end of the Second World War through to the 1960s (Axelrod, 1982; Rajagopal & Farr, 1989). Naturally enough, coincident with this increase in funding was an extraordinary increase in both student and faculty numbers. For example, in Ontario, university full-time student enrolment rose from 32,000 in 1960 to 120,000 in 1970, while full-time faculty numbers rose from 2,555 to 9,335 in the same time period (Neatby, 1985). However, while enrolments continued to grow into the mid-1970s, public funding levelled off or was cut. The true realization that the heady days of growing public funding were over, set in during the 1980s. The entrenchment of a new long-term fiscal environment is encapsulated by Lundy and Warne as they write in 1989 that “the

accommodation to fiscal restraint appears to be becoming a long-term one” (p. 74).

In this fiscal context the increase in the use of contingent faculty took hold. While there may remain a great deal of ambiguity regarding the advantages and disadvantages of employing contingent faculty, one area in which there appears to be near universal consensus is associated with the lower dollar costs of employing contingent faculty (Avakian, 1995; Monroe & Denman, 1991; Osborn, 1990; Selvadurai, 1990). This is only natural since contingent faculty are paid approximately one-third of what full-time faculty cost, are not automatically entitled to yearly raises, and are not on a track for promotion to more highly compensated positions (Twigg, 1998). They also have limited access to sick leave, pension, and health-care insurance (Mangan, 1991).

The employment of contingent faculty also provides greater efficiencies for institutions in terms of workload scheduling in response to the uncontrollable vagaries in the learning marketplace in any given year (Lankard, 1993; McGuire, 1993; Osborn, 1990). Whereas the costs associated with a full-time instructor remain, even in the absence of offsetting enrolment revenue, the costs associated with a contingent instructor can be eliminated in the face of such a downturn.

In fact, the structure of many current funding models for post-secondary institutions often drives the increased use of contingent faculty. For example, Ontario community colleges are funded through what is known as the three-year average, one-year slip model. What this means is that in any given year, the funding provided to a college is based on averaged enrolment rates from four,

three, and two years past. This model does not provide the yearly budgeted wherewithal to respond to “in-year” enrolment increases. For instance, if enrolment rates go up by ten percent in a given September, there is no commensurate increase in government funding to offset this increase. This revenue and expenditure gap encourages colleges to look at means of cutting costs and this often includes increasing its use of contingent faculty.

Finally, the above discussion narrowly focuses on cost savings associated with actual salary and benefit dollars paid to contingent versus full-time faculty. This doesn't take into account such things as the administrative costs of constant hiring, the extra load on full-time faculty who are often relieved of teaching duties to take on coordination functions, and the impact on students of less available faculty.

Currency and Real-World Experience

Another argument made in support of employing contingent faculty has to do with their closer association with the working world outside of academe. This feature is particularly important in the context of community colleges whose mandate is to provide learning that is more practical and real-world oriented. Thus, the linkages between contingent instructional staff and their vocation beyond the classroom are looked upon as an advantage (Cline, 1993; Cohen, 1992; Littrell, 1990). Phelan (1986) suggests that contingent faculty with an employment link to the professions become a source of “norms, values, and information” for the development of curriculum (p. 8). Banachowski (1996) found

that students perceived greater competency in faculty with a “presumed familiarity with the ‘real world’” (p. 79). She further suggests that there has not been enough research done on the value of “non-academic scholarship,” meaning that there may be an argument for “job experience as a substitute for academic training” (p 59).

Disadvantages of Contingent Faculty

Quality of Instruction

A number of issues consistently appear in the literature as disadvantages of using contingent faculty. First, a concern for the quality of instruction is ever present within the discourse of contingent faculty employment. When reviewing research on the quality of instruction, it is important to consider that instruction occurs both formally in a classroom and informally outside the classroom through various forms of instructor/student interaction, some of which are increasingly mediated through new communications technologies. Some researchers have challenged the increase in the numbers of contingent faculty on the grounds that there is a threat to the quality of instruction (Boyer, 1987; Franklin, Laurence, & Denham, 1988). With respect to quality in the classroom, some have argued that the employment of contingent faculty leads to inconsistency in teaching services provided to students (Samuel, 1989; Thompson, 1992). This inconsistency is reflected in the pedagogical practices employed by contingent faculty. Some researchers have found that contingent faculty are less likely to incorporate new methods of teaching into their classroom practice (Digranes & Digranes, 1995;

Gappa & Leslie, 2002). These researchers suggest that the reliance on traditional methods may put students at a disadvantage when compared to students who are receiving instruction from full-time faculty who are more inclined to use a variety of teaching methods. This argument is consistent with work that suggests that 93% of contingent faculty used a traditional lecture method while full-time faculty were more likely to integrate a variety of pedagogical strategies (Kelly, 1990).

However, the discussion of differences in pedagogical strategies deployed by full-time and contingent faculty is far from conclusive. Where opportunities for professional development have been provided to contingent faculty, it is found that contingent faculty will use the same methods as full-time faculty (Impara, Hoerner, Clowes & Alkins, 1991; Kelly, 1992; Rhodes, 1991). While professional development may have a positive impact on contingent faculty's utilization of a variety of teaching methodologies, there is a large gap in the availability of such opportunities for contingent faculty in relation to those available to their full-time colleagues. For example, an American survey found that while 81% of responding community colleges provided a formal orientation for full-time faculty, 48% of these rarely offered this same orientation to contingent faculty (Hoerner, 1991).

The concern for quality is also reflected in research associated with the out of class accessibility of contingent faculty to students. Abel (1984) and Boyer (1987) have argued that the absence of contingent staff from the campus environment outside of classroom contact hours has a deleterious impact on their informal contact with students and, ultimately, has a negative impact on students.

Lundy and Warne (1989) found that some students perceived faculty availability to be an important feature of their success. This impact in quality might come in the form of direct interactions between students and faculty or through indirect impacts related to contingent faculty availability for functions such as student advising, participation in policymaking, and general involvement in intellectual discourse on campus (Bowen and Schuster, 1986). However, while informal contact is seen to be important for and by students, some research demonstrates no clear relationship between student academic performance and the extensiveness of contact with faculty (Bean & Kuh, 1984).

There is also research that looks at the quality of instruction from the perspective of outcomes in student performance. Some of this research has found that students taught by contingent faculty do not perform as well as students taught by full-time faculty (Spangler, 1990; Burgess & Samuels, 1999; Schibik & Harrington, 2000). A complicating factor regarding student performance relates to the suggested propensity of contingent faculty to award higher grades. Some researchers argue that contingent faculty, perhaps as a result of their tenuous employment relationship with their institutions, inflate grades leading to learning challenges when those same students are later taught by full-time faculty (Burgess & Samuels, 1999). Burgess & Samuels (1999) undertook a large-scale study to demonstrate the impact of full-time versus contingent instructor status on college student retention and academic performance in sequential courses. Their data, drawn in some cases from a sample of in excess of 20,000 students, show that there is a tendency for students not to persist or to perform at a lower level in

scenarios where their first course is taught by a part-timer and their second course in the same discipline is taught by a full-timer. They conclude that because of quality issues and grade inflation, students taught by contingent faculty are under-prepared to perform at an acceptable standard. Other research by Schibik & Harrington (2000) has shown that first-year students who took courses primarily taught by contingent faculty did not return for second year at rates higher than for students whose first-year courses were taught primarily by full-time faculty.

Faculty unions have made clear their discomfort with the increased use of contingent faculty. In 1988 the National Education Association released a report titled *Report and Recommendations on Contingent, Temporary, and Nontenure Track Appointments* (NEA, 1988). In this report the NEA states that “excessive use” of contingent faculty threatens the quality of education and argues that such employment is largely the result of cost reduction and administrative flexibility motivations (NEA, 1988, p. 11). Still, such reports have been criticized. For example, Gappa and Leslie (1993) take issue with the U. S. National Institute of Education’s Study Group on the conditions of Excellence in American Higher Education. The report concludes that “one full-time faculty member is a better investment than three contingent faculty, largely because the full-time faculty member contributes to the institutional environment in ways that go beyond teaching courses” (p. 36). One of the report’s major recommendations states: “Academic administrators should consolidate as many contingent teaching lines into as many full-time positions as possible” (p. 36). Although there is perhaps a sound theoretical rationale behind this point of view, namely, that students’

growth and development is enhanced when faculty are intensely involved in the undergraduate experience, we continue to underscore the point that there is no reason why contingent faculty cannot be very effective in this role.

The report seems to us uninformed because it does not acknowledge the potential for positive involvement of contingent faculty. At the institutions we visited, there were obvious situations in which contingent faculty were making highly substantive and extremely effective contributions to the quality of programs. (Gappa and Leslie, 1993, p. 89)

Because of concerns related to the quality of teaching, some jurisdictions have taken significant policy and legal action. For example, in 1988 California passed a law that required the diversion of a certain envelope of program improvement funding into support for full-time faculty if levels of full-time faculty employment fell below 75 percent of overall faculty utilization (California Education Code, 2005).

Contingent Faculty and Issues of Power

Along with discussions of advantages and disadvantages of using contingent faculty, some scholars are focussing on the social relationships that emerge in institutional environments as a result of the creation of two discrete groups of faculty. Rajagopal and Farr (1989) have introduced issues of power in their exploration of the relationship between contingent and full-time faculty in the university environment. They argue an underclass of contingent faculty are denied the rights afforded to full-time faculty. They have even gone so far as to

suggest that “full-time faculty adopt a decidedly non-collegial, managerial stance toward contingent academic employees” (p. 268). In their analysis these authors use a political economy model that integrates four major theoretical models of higher education. Briefly, the four models include:

- The market model that views contingent faculty as a readily available labour pool for the institution;
- The corporate model that identifies growth of higher education as meeting the needs of the private and public sectors to meet corporate needs;
- The professional development model that demonstrates that contingent faculty are employed outside the university but teach for “professional enrichment and intellectual satisfaction” (p. 271); and, finally;
- The political economy model used by Rajagopal and Farr that “analyzes the nature of the relationship between full-timers and contingent faculty in the context of the university’s power dynamics and political economy structures” (p. 271).

Conclusion

In summary, the current research on the efficacy of contingent faculty in post-secondary settings is a site of great debate and deliberation. A number of studies have found no significant difference in either the form or the quality of instruction delivered by contingent or full-time faculty (Bolge, 1995; California Community Colleges, 1987; Iadevaia, 1991; Sworder, 1987). Lundy and Warne (1989) write:

previous researchers have argued that a high proportion of contingent faculty must have deleterious consequences for students, given the disadvantages with which contingent faculty have to contend, and the administrative burden which their presence places on full-time faculty. Our study of students' perceptions of contingent faculty and their experiences with this group has yielded no evidence of major costs to the student clientele. (p. 83)

Banachowski (1996) writes that very little effort has been undertaken to examine positive attributes of contingent faculty. In fact, her review of literature of contingent faculty has uncovered all manner of negative euphemism. She writes:

They are referred to as "the academic underclass" (Benjet & Loweth, 1989), "a corps of un-regulated personnel" (The National Education Association in McGuire, 1993), "hopeful full-timers" (Tuckman, 1978), "anchorless street-corner men" (Franklin, Laurence, & Denham, 1988), "M.I.A.'s" (Heinzelman, 1986), "gypsy scholars" (Reed, 1985), "roads scholars" (Tillyer, 2005), and "invisible and expendable" (Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Wallace, 1984). Additionally, the use of contingent faculty in community colleges is described as a "necessary evil," "cheap fix," "dangerous addiction," and an "exploitation of the worse kind" (McGuire, 1993).

The emotionally charged language of the above is striking when one considers that contingent faculty make up the majority (by head-count) of academic staff in a number of post-secondary systems across North America.

More recent work by Gappa & Leslie (2002) has found little difference between full-time and contingent faculty on characteristics that may contribute to instructional quality. In reviewing such characteristics as teaching experience, academic preparation, professional development as measured by currency with disciplinary journals and ability to “keep up” with their field, general satisfaction with their jobs, and overall morale, they determined that there was no significant difference between full-time and contingent faculty. Gappa and Leslie (2002) found only two significant differences that might contribute to variances in the quality of instruction: contingent faculty were more comfortable with conventional teaching practices and they were less likely to have won outstanding teaching awards.

In conclusion, while there exists an extensive body of literature that seeks to define and debate the efficacy of contingent faculty, little or no literature attempts to explore the actual lived experience of contingent faculty. The following chapter provides the means for contingent faculty to open a window upon their lives, learning and their work patterns.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESEARCH DESIGN

RESPECTING DIFFERENCE AND ADVOCATING JUSTICE: A CRITICAL SOCIAL METHOD

Theoretical Framework

I take up the discourse of critical social theory as a theoretical lens through which to view the experiences of contingent faculty in higher education. My research explores the impact of neoliberalism on colleges and these faculty by considering aspects of class struggle as well as other relationships of power in developing appropriate explanations for, and responses to, neoliberal hegemony in postsecondary education. There are many examples within the contingent faculty experience in community colleges of unhealthy power relationships that can be compared to forms of class-based discrimination. Contingent faculty are generally paid lower wages for their work, provided fewer benefits, given fewer opportunities for professional development, enjoy less professional prestige for their work than their permanent counterparts and are offered less opportunity to provide meaningful input into the governance of the college. I will argue that this growth of the contingent faculty is both coincident with and a direct result of neoliberal, global trends that are leading to the view of education as a commodity within a market-driven economy. Critical social theory is concerned with themes of justice, democracy and emancipation and through its evolution it has also challenged the economic status quo of the market economy. In the same manner as critical social theory challenges the social and economic status quo, this

research challenges the often unjust status quo of the contingent faculty in community colleges in Canada today.

Critical social theory has its roots in Marxism and concentrates on themes of social justice, ethics, freedom, class and power relations and democracy viewed as a collective (rather than an individual) good. Importantly, critical social theory informs activism by its very nature and seeks to promote change in the status quo in relation to oppression and exclusion. Prominent critical social theorists include Peter McLaren, Nancy Fraser, Paula Allman, Henry Giroux, Colin Lankshear, Michael Peters, Mark Olssen, Michael Apple, Jurgen Habermas and Stanley Aronowitz .

The above theorists, while not entirely in agreement on all aspects of critical social theory, form an eclectic school of contemporary critical thought in which some focus on culture and relationships of power, while others focus on revitalizing the importance of society's class-based dimensions. Two leaders in critical educational thought, McLaren (2003) and Giroux (1992), insert critical perspectives within a broader multi-perspective theoretical analysis that explores the tensions between critical theory and "post" discourses. Giroux (1992) highlights how power relationships work in our educational system whereby they are "either privileging certain groups of elites who become managers of society or narrowing the scope of education so severely that schools become mere factories to train the work force" (p. 11). Giroux's critical perspective on the privileged elites is a theme that recurs throughout my research within the context of the social, hierarchical dynamic that exists in the staffing environment at colleges. I

found a clear power delineation between fulltime permanent faculty and contingent faculty that, while usually not overtly obvious was, nonetheless, systemically evident in such things as the structure of professional development activities that discriminated against contingent faculty, their lack of voice in college governance and policy-making and their more limited access to infrastructure support such as a private office (or in some cases any office) and administrative services. Moreover, Giroux's "factory to train the workforce view" is, in fact, what often drives the employment of part-time faculty who bring with them a current and intimate connection to the world of work as opposed to a predominant lifelong commitment to teaching and scholarship.

McLaren (1998) describes a critical pedagogy that is "equipped to provide both intellectual and moral resistance to oppression, one that extends the concept of pedagogy beyond the mere transmission of knowledge and skills and the concept of morality beyond interpersonal relations" (p. 29). McLaren's view is strikingly at odds with what I generally found in the relationship between contingent faculty members and the college. This relationship often centred on an unstated complicity – a complicity that limited the role of part-timers to the transmission of skills and knowledge that were valued in the neoliberal marketplace. In fact, I often perceived that contingent faculty members were being used as a foil against the influence of the fulltime faculty whose more "theoretical" approaches were seen to need the complement of the more "applied" or "practical" approaches of contingent faculty. In this context, and through my own experiences in the college system, I have found that the term theoretical is

used pejoratively to mean disconnected from the real world or, in neoliberal terms, the world of work, as if it is the only world that should matter for a college educator. My view is that at least part of the allure of the part-timer to the college administrator is that they tend not to challenge systems and ask the “why” questions with the same regularity as more “theoretical” fulltime faculty.

Why the Critical Social Lens?

Critical social theory is a suitable theoretical framework for my research for three key reasons. First, critical social theory arises from Marxist economic theory; hence, it is well-positioned historically to undergird an analysis of the economic stance that forms the basis of neoliberalism. Second, the choice of critical social theory to explore the experience of contingent faculty in the neoliberal college creates important tensions. At every turn, critical social theory transgresses the underpinnings of neoliberalism. Where neoliberalism espouses privatization and the rule of a free-marketplace, critical social theory proposes the management of the market by the state. Where neoliberalism argues for individual self-direction and responsibility, critical social theory celebrates the strength of the collective. Where neoliberalism argues for the maintenance of the dominant status quo, critical social theory agitates for change that favors equity and inclusion. This polarity will allow my research to call into question higher education’s head-long embrace of neoliberalism. As I will argue later in this study, the hegemony of globalization has fostered an environment of

complacency. Critical social theory offers a valid framework through which this complacency is challenged.

In addition to these reasons, I provide a third reason for using a critical social lens in this research: the fact that the recurrent themes of critical social theory speak directly to the mediation of the real experiences of subordinated or marginalized people by listening to their voices. Giroux writes that:

[V]oices forged in opposition and struggle provide the crucial conditions by which subordinated individuals and groups can reclaim their own memories, stories, and histories as part of an ongoing collective struggle to challenge those power structures that attempt to silence them. (Giroux, 1992, p. 170).

The growth of neoliberalism and the *bottom-line* financial imperatives in education have led to a greater degree of casual and contingent employment. Contingent faculty find themselves paid less for their labour than fulltime faculty. While couched in the neoliberal jargon of efficiency and flexibility, this payment gap speaks to the critical social concept of the exploitation of labour and the theory of surplus value that has its foundations in Marxist discourse. In simple terms, the theory of surplus value means that the employer pays less for labour power than the labourer produces in commodity value (Cunningham, 1978). In Marxist theory, this uncompensated labour allows the capitalist to earn revenue to pay to themselves and others (shareholders) who did not actually undertake the labour.

An analogy can be drawn in postsecondary education where Puplampu (2004) provides evidence of the surplus value at work in relation to contingent faculty. He points out that, in many universities, contingent faculty teach in lower-level courses with larger classes while fulltime faculty may teach in higher-level courses with smaller class sizes. In this case, since in most situations all students pay the same tuition, the larger class size earns more revenue for the university while the smaller class size earns less. The result is that the surplus value produced by the work of the contingent workforce is used to subsidize the work of full-timers. Similarly, Rajagopal's Canadian (2002) research identified that, in Ontario, university contingent salaries represented 7.6 percent of the total cost of faculty salaries, although contingent faculty represented 32.4 percent of the total faculty members. As well, their teaching load constituted 20 percent of the total system teaching load.

In postsecondary education, the relationship between the institution and the contingent faculty member is evocative of Marxist depictions of the capital owner and the worker. McLaren (2003) states

capitalism is given ballast, or bolstered by a corrupt morality, or by a set of ideologies that perpetuates the false notion that relations between capitalists and workers is one of free and equal exchange, that what in fact workers receive in terms of wages is equal to their contribution to production...All of capitalist society is a theft of the surplus value of workers (p. 31).

In postsecondary institutions, contingent faculty earn less money for teaching than do fulltime faculty. The excess value that results from underpaying contingent faculty allows the institution to carry out other activities that add to the prestige of the institution (such as scholarly research).

My own research found evidence to support the positions of Puplamu (2004), Rajagopal (2002) and McLaren (2003). All the participants in my study were paid less for work similar to that done by their fulltime counterparts; they also had less access to support and development opportunities. As an example, one participant indicated that each hour of compensated instruction resulted in three hours of uncompensated preparation and marking time. This surplus value generated by the part-timer then flows to the college to be redistributed toward such things as enhanced compensation of fulltime faculty, college administration, institutional expansion and, at a macro-level, a lower public tax burden.

The themes of democracy, equality, justice, activism, and emancipation are all core themes within critical social theory. We can draw parallels between the experience of contingent faculty and these key critical social themes. The literature demonstrates that contingent faculty lacks access to a *democratic* course of action in the decision-making process because they are often left off committees. Contingent faculty have no group *equality* rights in that they are denied collective bargaining rights in many institutions. There is a lack of *justice* in how contingent faculty members are treated (hours of work, choice of course to teach, office space) in comparison to their fulltime peers. All the above circumstances call for appropriation of critical social theory's *activism* and

emancipatory focus to address the plight of contingent faculty in the academy today.

My research found that the activism and emancipation reflected in critical social theory were at different stages of development across my participants, their colleges, and their larger provincial college systems. For example, from a college specific perspective, at one of my research sites part-time faculty were included within the collective agreement. The benefits of this inclusion were higher salaries relative to non-bargaining unit peers in other colleges, increased access to benefits, and a generally stronger employer/employee relationship. It is important to note that inclusion in the collective agreement did not entirely overcome the power imbalance. However, while there was some sense of continuing exclusion, there were also definite demonstrable examples of emancipation and empowerment that came with collective action and organized representation.

From an individual contingent faculty member's perspective, there were examples of activism and an appetite for emancipation when certain conditions held. The first of these conditions was the longevity of the relationship. The longer contingent faculty members had been associated with an organization, the more willing they were to talk about any dissatisfaction they felt for their employer. In the case of the large metropolitan college, this dissatisfaction and sense of exclusion were motivating some part-timers to agitate for inclusion within the collective agreement and, in some cases, support the development of a separate union to represent their unique interests. The second condition I found that led to greater activist tendencies among individuals was the particular

employment motivations of those individuals. When part-timers were interested in establishing a fulltime relationship with their employer, they were much more likely to voice negative statements about their employers. When individuals voiced no interest in increasing their hours of work or their status with their employer, they were less likely to challenge their employer's practices. They may have indicated ways that the employer could improve their circumstances, but those statements were more dispassionate than what I heard from those aspiring to fulltime positions. Those seeking the fulltime relationship with the employer were more critically engaged and knowledgeable about employee rights (or the lack thereof), and more likely to challenge the status quo.

Olssen (2006) moves beyond McLaren's view to a more post-Marxist approach that draws on Foucault's concept of *governmentality*. Olssen positions governmentality as a:

[S]uperstructural sociology that provides a means of understanding how educational and economic practices mutually condition and adapt to each other while avoiding the excesses that plagued Marxist analyses in the later 20th century, which represented such processes as the outcome of a necessary determination (p. 213-214).

In summary, critical social theory is a framework that allows us to view the experience of contingent faculty in a richly-layered and contextual manner, and then use the experiences of this group to critique and challenge the neoliberal status quo in our colleges and universities. Following upon the cultural neoconservatism of the Reagan and Thatcher era, an economic neoliberalism has

taken hold in almost all areas of public policy in the developed world. In education, such things as the advent of key performance indicators, financial accountability, public/private partnerships, increasing tuition and other costs to students, a proliferation of private institutions, and the deterioration of public institution infrastructure are all indicative of a systematic retrenchment on the part of government from the delivery of education (Grace, 2004 & 2005). This public retrenchment has left a vacuum in which private interests and private sector business practices have taken hold. This development has been startling in its scale and scope. Disturbingly, there has been insufficient public debate on this fundamental change in public-policy approaches to education. In the same manner that the free-market mindset has found its way into most public sectors of our society, there has been an inexorable, hegemonic slide towards neoliberalism in education. Grace (2004) writes of a blurring effect where “learning that is valued in an economic context is construed as synonymous with learning that is valued in a social context” (p. 399). The silence with which this fundamental change to our public system of education has been met speaks to the furtive hegemony that underpins the change. Olssen (2006) holds out the prospect that critical social theory can assist in moving beyond this dominant economic mode

The prospects for moving beyond it depend, I will claim, on whether the structures of learning created can be harnessed for other ends; that is whether embryonic within the discursive programme of lifelong learning is the possibility of linking the discourse to a progressive emancipatory project based upon egalitarian politics and social justice. (p. 214)

Research Methodology

This section on research methodology is divided into three sections. First, I present a section entitled *Research Approaches*, which outlines how I carried out my data gathering through a semi-structured interview process that is informed by the work of Fontana and Frey (2000). Second, I demonstrate how I have ensured the *trustworthiness* of my qualitative research by following a method developed by Guba (1981) for ensuring trustworthiness in naturalistic inquiries. Finally, in a section entitled *Sample Interview Questions*, I identify some examples of the questions that I asked in the course of my interviews. Because the interviews were semi-structured, these questions were treated as a starting point for exploration that elicited further questions. Sometimes follow-up questions were unique to an individual interview depending on the varied richness of each discussion.

Research Approaches

I used semi-structured interviews to gather data for this research. As already mentioned, little has been written about the lives of contingent faculty in colleges. In particular, few descriptions of lived experiences come directly from contingent faculty themselves. Semi-structured interviews afforded me the opportunity to present those experiences in a richer and more meaningful way, using contingent faculty members' own words. Fontana and Frey (2000) distinguish between structured and unstructured interviews by stating that the former are intended to *explain* while the latter are designed to *understand*. This desire to understand the circumstances of contingent faculty in the face of an increasingly neoliberal system of higher education drives my research.

As noted previously, neoliberalism thrives as a result of its ability to mask its negative effect on individuals and groups successfully. Neoliberal hegemony trumpets the measures of efficiency, return on investment, and key performance indicators. The predominant emphases of these macro-level outcomes diminish the voices of human beings whose lives are directly impacted. Semi-structured interviews allowed me to hear these voices and helped me to understand their circumstances. Features of the Fontana and Frey (2000) approach include gaining access to the participants' setting, understanding the language and culture of the participants, deciding how to present oneself, gaining trust, and establishing rapport. All these techniques are designed to enhance authenticity in conducting research with participants in order to describe their circumstances in more cogent and complete terms.

Semi-structured interviews provide the opportunity for the development of free-flowing dialogue between the participant and the researcher. In effect, rather than engage in a sterile set of questions and answers, the researcher ideally seeks to develop a relationship, albeit temporary, in which the participant feels safe, comfortable and at ease to the point that they are willing to open up to reveal an authentic representation of their lives and experiences. I believe I was successful in forming this relationship with my participants for reasons that I will fully describe later. However, first I will describe the process I followed to gain access to my participants.

My goal was to carry out fifteen conversations with different contingent faculty members at three different research sites or colleges. I was successful in

obtaining fifteen interview participants: three from a small rural community college in western Canada; four from a mid-sized college in a mid-sized city, again in western Canada; and eight from a very large metropolitan college in a large city in eastern Canada. I selected the three research sites specifically because they represented three differently-sized institutions drawn from three different provincial college systems in Canada.

Fontana and Frey (2000) discuss the need to obtain an individual who is “an insider, a member of the group studied, who is willing to be an informant and act as a guide and a translator of cultural mores and, at times, jargon or language” (p. 655). In fact, I viewed all participants in my research as informants who fulfilled the role described above because each story was important in and of itself and each allowed me to further reflect the broad range of experiences and motivations that make up the collective story of the contingent faculty. I came to select my participants through a generally consistent process at each of my research sites, with some variation dictated by the ethics review requirements at each institution.

In each case, I was required to go through an ethics review process. In the case of the small rural and the mid-sized college, the ethics process was relatively simple in that the college administrator responsible for intra-college research reviewed my ethics review documentation from the University of Alberta (Appendix A) and granted me the necessary approvals to conduct my research. In the case of the large metropolitan college, I was required to follow a much more rigorous process of ethics approval before I was allowed to proceed. This process

was similar to the process that I followed at the University of Alberta, but it was necessary for me to reformat my ethics proposal and answer a few different questions (Appendix C). I believe the large institution required this more comprehensive process because of the more frequent requests they receive to carry out research within their organization. Furthermore, because the college itself has begun to carry out its own research as part of its evolving mandate, it has established a definitive ethics review process in order to be eligible for federal research funds.

The process by which I came to select my participants at the small and mid-sized colleges was exactly the same, but at the large college I followed a somewhat different process. At the small and mid-sized institutions, I was provided with a randomly selected list of names and email addresses of part-time faculty by the college's human resources department. This list included seven names for the small institution and fifteen names for the mid-sized institution. From this point, there was no further facilitation role played by the host institution. I then sent my letter of invitation to participate (Appendix B) to each of these individuals and received three positive responses from two female and one male participant at the small institution, and two female and two male participants at the mid-sized institution.

It was a different process at the large college where a more mature ethics process required me to follow its own particular research ethics approach. The process began with brief synopsis of my research project and an invitation to participate that was included as one item in a weekly news roundup email to all

staff (Appendix D). Staff members were invited to contact me directly at my personal email address to request a letter of invitation to participate. That modified letter of invitation that fit with the large institution's process is attached as Appendix E. From this point, no further role was played by the college in facilitating my research. I received fifteen email requests for a letter of invitation and received back nine signed waiver forms. Ultimately, I interviewed eight participants because I was not able to coordinate my schedule with one person who had agreed to be interviewed. My participants at the large college included six female participants and two male participants, as well as one visible minority female and one visible minority male.

Keeping with my need to establish a relaxed environment for my discussion with my participants, I made it a requirement to meet face-to-face rather than carry out conversations over the telephone or through electronic correspondence. This necessitated that I arrange a visit to each community. The small rural-college community was a two-hour drive from my hometown and the mid-sized college community was a full day's drive. The distance to the large-college community required that I travel by air. The sequence of interviews began with one interview in the small rural college community, a subsequent two-day visit to the mid-sized college community for the full four interviews, my travel by air to the large-sized college city for the full eight interviews, and a subsequent day trip to conclude the final two interviews in the small college community. To summarize, I carried out interviews with ten female participants and five male participants in three different communities over a period of five months.

Although each discussion occurred in the participants' hometowns, the physical site for the discussion was not necessarily their place of work. In fact, in the majority of instances this was not the case. On eight occasions our discussions took place in coffee shops and restaurants, twice they took place in my participants' homes, once the discussion occurred in my participant's place of fulltime (non-college) employment, and in four cases the interviews took place at the college work site. In all cases, the choice of meeting place was left entirely in the hands of the participant.

The choice of location actually proved to be a complicating factor for me – something that I recognized later in the process. Coffee shops and restaurants tend to be busy and noisy places, and while this general cacophony provided a level of privacy for our conversation, it posed a significant problem for the transcribers I hired to transcribe the audio tapes of my interviews. Where specific words could not be deciphered, the transcriber left a symbol that indicated that some words were missing. Because I knew the context of the discussion, in virtually all cases I was able to decipher the missing words but it did result in greater delays that required me to work both with the printed transcript and the original audio recordings. In retrospect, I believe this actually enhanced my research because it forced me to attend to the emotion in my participants' voices – emotion that is lost on the printed page. So, while more cumbersome, I would recommend that any researcher use the audio versions extensively in such research to uncover the unstated truths that may be discovered in the nuance of human voice. Finally, with regard to the technicalities of my interview process, as

already noted my interviews were recorded on a micro-cassette audio recorder. It was an unobtrusive piece of equipment and was highly useful in assisting me in establishing rapport with my interview participants because I dispensed with note-taking and was able to maintain eye contact throughout. In no case did the participant refuse my request to record the interview, nor did the or she appear in any way nervous about my use of the device.

My qualitative research is meant to expand the understanding of the real-life implications of contingent work in the neoliberal college, thus I focussed on deeper level discussions with a few participants rather than develop a larger sample size whose purpose would be to find representative commonalities. Going into this research I was less interested in the consistencies across the experiences of contingent faculty, and more interested in differences that flowed from the very personal impacts that their experiences in the higher education system have on their work and home lives. I followed the framework described by Fontana and Frey (2000) as the basis for my semi-structured interviews as closely as possible.

As a senior college administrator, my research task might be considered relatively simple with regard to Fontana and Frey's (2000) notion of *access the setting* in which part-time faculty work. In my role, I see contingent faculty almost every day, and I have many occasions to ask them about their work and about broad college issues. However, as I found throughout my research process, my discussions with part-time faculty in my role as an administrator bear little resemblance to those that I engaged in as a researcher. I knew going into this research that as a college administrator, there was a danger that my role may

introduce a power dynamic that is incongruent with the development of authentic communication. I just did not realize how much that role could impact the dialogue.

What I heard as a researcher was a different, richer, and more complex depiction than the stories that I had previously heard as an administrator. As an administrator I have found that contingent faculty readily express their gratitude for the opportunity to teach and give back to their field of practice. Sometimes they will explicitly state that their goal is to someday find a fulltime instructional position within the college. What they do not do is make negative statements about the college. I cannot recall in my role as an administrator a single instance in my dozens of informal discussions with part-timers where a part-time instructor raised concerns with me about negative attributes of their role.

Given that throughout my research I sought to limit the disruptive effect of my professional role, I paid special attention to Fontana and Frey's (2000) discussion on *presenting oneself*, in *gaining trust* and in *establishing rapport*. I believe the fact that I heard different stories as a researcher from the ones I heard as an administrator demonstrates that I was successful in positioning myself as a researcher. I did a number of things to limit this influence of my administrative role. First, my own college was excluded as a site for my research. Second, in my email correspondence with each participant that I used to coordinate interview locations and times, I maintained a respectful but relaxed writing style and spoke about myself as PhD researcher. Third, at the start of my discussion, I was upfront with participants about my professional role, but I also talked about how I viewed

my dissertation research as a personal goal that was separate from my working life. I also reiterated verbally to my participants that they were always free to back out of the interview or not answer any questions that made them uncomfortable. Finally, I did my best to create a relaxed atmosphere by dressing simply, buying the coffee, and easing into the more formal interview process by allowing some time at the outset for some informal discussion. I found that many participants were keen to know a bit about me personally, and I was happy to offer this information. Similarly, participants often offered unprompted information about themselves, and I found that this exchange provided a natural and comfortable segue into the interview process.

In the end, I believe that by using the various techniques described above, I was successful in gaining access to the participants' setting. While not always physically present at their place of work, I was face-to-face with them in their communities and I did not perceive any differences in the quality and richness of the dialogue between faculty that I met on their campus and those that I met off campus. I also found that, for contingent faculty, their place of work was often wherever they found themselves, as they sometimes did not have access to a permanent work space on campus. My meetings in coffee shops were often a familiar setting for them, as they often carried out meetings with their students in such spaces. As well, the interview process was free-flowing. While I did carry a set of questions with me, I also felt free to depart from them to allow my participants to carry the conversation where they chose to take it. Throughout my

research, I found that the choice of topic by participants was as important to consider as what they chose to say about the topic.

In moving to a discussion of how I considered the *language and culture* elements discussed in Fontana and Frey's (2000) framework, I recall a meeting I once had with a group of faculty where an incident occurred that provides some valuable insight into the importance of understanding the culture of respondents. In the meeting we were discussing the goals and vision of a particular academic department and, quite naturally, we were also reviewing challenges and barriers standing in the way of those goals. The discussion turned to a consideration of the appropriate levels of contingent academic staffing in the department. Immediately, the demeanour of a number of individual faculty members in the room changed. One full-time faculty member cast some considerable aspersions on the efficacy of contingent faculty within the department. As an outsider I took this to be an insult to the individuals in the room who were hired as contingent faculty on a contract basis. However, as I discovered later through discussion with the Chair of the department, the strong opinions expressed were not intended as a slight on individuals but, rather, as a challenge to the system in place at the college that drove the increased employment of contingent faculty. The culture of the department was such that challenges to contingent faculty were understood as challenges to the college system, and not to the individuals in the department hired on a contingent basis. In other words, it was a common cultural understanding within the department that the system did not serve the needs of contingent faculty by way of providing them with such things as time for

preparation and student consultation and that, as a result, these individuals could not perform at the level of full-time faculty.

With the above in mind, throughout my discussions, I listened carefully for examples of the unique language and culture surrounding contingent faculty. What I found in my original research, as might have been expected given what I found in my literature review, is that contingent faculty represent a broad group of people with a wide range of interests and motivations for teaching. That said, I did find some cultural attributes whose consistency is worth noting and I provide one as an example here. Contingent faculty generally have a more disconnected employee/employer relationship. Those who expressed dissatisfaction with this disconnection were faculty seeking to forge a more permanent employment relationship. Other faculty framed this disconnection in a more positive light, as providing them with a degree of employment autonomy. Not surprisingly, these faculty members tended to be those for whom a permanent employment relationship had less immediate appeal. The above example of a cultural attribute only revealed itself over time as my interviews progressed and I had the opportunity to probe the issue further in ensuing interviews.

Finally, Fontana and Frey's (2000) framework discusses the inclusion of *empirical materials* in the unstructured interview process. For my research, the key materials were the transcribed interviews that were captured from the original audio recording. This printed record was important in ensuring that I accurately captured the discussion with my participants, and it also provided an important tool for my member checking process. As I previously noted, I used both the

printed version and the audio tapes through my writing process as the audiotapes not only allowed me to correct errors in transcription, but they also let me collect useful information flowing from emotions and verbal cues that are not revealed in the printed version.

Other important empirical material that I used in my study included the collective agreements of each of the colleges, as these documents often explicitly described the terms of employment of contingent faculty. Finally, in today's community college, websites are being increasingly used for all manner of communication with both external communities and internal communities. As information such as vision and mission statements and policy documents are placed on these websites, they become more helpful tools that assist the researcher in assessing the culture of an organization. In light of the above, I made extensive use of college websites to help me get a better picture of the organization and its relationship to its contingent faculty.

In this section of my research design chapter I reviewed my semi-structured interview data gathering method that was informed by Fontana and Frey's (2000) unstructured interview approach. I now turn to a discussion of the way in which I endeavoured to ensure the trustworthiness of my research.

Trustworthiness

My approach to trustworthiness is informed by the work of Egon Guba (1981) who describes naturalist, as opposed to rationalist, perspectives of trust. Guba's checks against trustworthiness include the concepts of credibility,

transferability and confirmability. In the following section I explain the differences in naturalist and rationalist approaches and describe how I incorporated checks of trustworthiness into my research.

Credibility

The concept of credibility, or truth value, in the context of naturalistic inquiry seeks to preserve the wholeness of the situation that is being studied. Whereas rationalists will single out variables to limit the confounding influence of other variables, the naturalist acknowledges that other confounding variables exist in the situation and attempts to identify and then to explain the impact of this influence. To carry out this naturalistic approach to assuring credibility, I used a number of techniques both during and after the data gathering was concluded; techniques that I will now outline.

Generally, a naturalistic researcher will attempt to remain on a site for a longer period of time to ensure that the researcher's presence is not distorting the data and to allow for the researcher's pre-existing biases to come to light over an extended period of time. I began the dialogue with my participants though email that in some cases simply consisted of making arrangements for our meeting time and place and in other cases, when requested, offered clarification on terminology in my letter of invitation. In addition, following my face-to-face discussions, I maintained contact, through email, with my participants as I welcomed feedback on interview transcripts and my descriptions of them. So while, as previously noted, my physical presence at a work-site may have been brief or non-existent, the relationship with my participants consisted of an ongoing dialogue with each

of my respondents that allowed for the prolonged engagement of which Guba (1981) speaks.

During each of my visits, I looked for “pervasive qualities as well as atypical characteristics” (Guba, 1981, p. 85) to understand how unique aspects of each workplace setting might have influenced what faculty might say in our discussions. Being vigilant in seeking out these consistencies and inconsistencies allowed me to identify emergent patterns. For example, the “roads scholar” contingent faculty experience, whereby one instructor might teach at multiple learning institutions, was unique to the large metropolitan centre I visited and sometimes strongly influenced the nature of contingent faculty work and the organization of their lives. This persistent observation also allowed me to identify differences across provincial community college systems. For example, through attentiveness to system differences, I was able to draw some conclusions about union representation of contingent faculty. Thus, my approach to persistent observation extended beyond individuals and individual colleges to include “pervasive qualities” and “atypical characteristics” across colleges and provincial college systems.

As my data gathering evolved, I increasingly turned to my research participants as co-researchers for clarity as I identified consistencies and anomalies within and across different respondent working environments. For example, although some faculty felt union representation was an important goal for contingent faculty, others expressed strong opinions against such a development. My semi-structured interview approach allowed me to pursue this

theme in further interviews through a process consistent with Guba's process of peer debriefing. Through this process I discovered fear on the part of some faculty that union representation would harm their autonomy and stand in the way of the more flexible and individually negotiated work environment that they had been able to establish with their employer.

Interviews with individual faculty formed the main means of data gathering in my study; however, as consistent themes began to emerge through my discussions, I looked for other data that allowed me to perform crosschecks or triangulation as described by Guba. For example, if an instructor spoke about a lack of access to professional development, it led me to review the transcripts of discussion with other faculty from the same college to look for similar information; or to review the collective agreement language related to professional development for contingent faculty; or to explore the human resources sections of college websites for further information on professional development.

Similar to the approach to triangulation, I looked for other documentary data that would help to support or more richly explain the data I gathered in my interviews. This aligns with Guba's approach to the collection of referential adequacy materials. For example, in situations where I was present on location at the work site for an interview, where possible, I observed the working environment of my participants. I paid particular attention to the office circumstances. Were offices private or shared? How many individuals shared an office? Was the participant at ease in the office environment or did they appear to

be asking for permission, for instance, for access to a room to carry out our discussion? As well, I scoured the human resources sections of college websites as well as collective agreements for information that would help me understand the rights and responsibilities of contingent faculty.

To those whom I interviewed, I provided with a copy of both the direct transcript of the interview as well as my interpretation of the substance of our dialogue that I used in the results section of the final dissertation. This served as my process of member checking that is recommended in Guba's method. Fontana and Frey (2002) have cautioned that interviews are not neutral "but active interactions between two (or more) people leading to negotiated, contextually based results" (p. 646). I communicated with each participant through email asking them to follow-up with me on any elements of my interpretation that they felt did not accurately characterize their circumstances and motivations.

Guba speaks of the importance of establishing structural corroboration or coherence within the naturalistic inquiry process. However, the more I explored the contingent experience with my participants the more that I found that I was dealing with not only fifteen different individuals but fifteen entirely different experiences with contingent teaching. This study has presented the existing literature on contingent faculty and that literature largely attempts to categorize these faculty. As I spoke to my participants, I found that the differences in their experiences, their motivations and their perceptions defied the neat categorization seen in the literature. For this reason, I wanted to be careful not to impose cohesiveness and corroboration onto the stories that I heard. Rather, the approach

I took was to use examples of a lack of cohesion and corroboration in the stories to ask more “why” questions. For example, part-timers that I encountered who actively sought ways to distance themselves from the bureaucracy of the college were, in some ways, an anomaly when viewed in the context of the literature as well as in my own research. These instances of a lack of cohesion allowed me to go beyond the existing knowledge to ask further questions about the motivations and goals of such faculty.

In writing the story, there is often the potential for that story to take on a life of its own. To ensure that the story remained grounded, I regularly revisited my raw data from both interviews and other referential materials to ensure that the process of interpretation did not cause the final story to be an inaccurate reflection of the data upon which it was built. This, I believe, satisfied the Guba recommendation to establish referential adequacy.

The above section has reviewed the alignment of my research methods with Guba’s approach to ensuring credibility within the naturalistic method. I turn now to transferability; the second of Guba’s three attributes of naturalistic research.

Transferability

Transferability is the naturalistic term used to describe the aspect of applicability that is resident within the overall requirement of trustworthiness. In the rationalistic research world, the associated terms are generalizability or external validity. Given that the holistic context and the complexities of the social

world are so important to the naturalist researcher, methods to account for these complexities, while maintaining research rigour, are called for. This section presents the techniques that I used in my research to ensure transferability of the research.

The purpose of my research was to explore faculty experiences of contingent teaching as richly as possible while not limiting the data in order to identify “representative” faculty perceptions. I was open throughout my dialogue to emerging insights, which allowed me to broaden my analysis as I progressed. In this manner, I followed Guba’s recommendations to carry out theoretical and purposive sampling. Although I found it was simpler to look for similarities across the stories, I constantly challenged myself to be open and accepting of differences. Naturalistically designed research provides the opportunity to “transfer” knowledge across a range of different contexts, but only when the data allow a rich and detailed description of the particular context in which they reside. Guba calls this thick descriptive data. The semi-structured interview approach I used allowed me to gather this descriptive data, because I was not confined to a limited list of questions where the goal was to reduce data into simple patterns. The rich data I was able to gather about not only the experiences of contingent faculty but also their motivations, allowed the research to be more valuably applied in other post-secondary research activities. For the same reasons that I gathered descriptive data, I have interpreted and presented my results in rich description that incorporates such elements of the research context as setting, participant background and personal attributes, and my own thoughts and

emotions as the researcher. This rich description allowed me to make judgments about how data gathered in the context of one college or individual might be useful in other individual or college contexts.

Authenticity is the term that naturalist researchers use to describe the consistency component of trustworthiness. For rationalist researchers, the analogous term is *validity*. In considering authenticity, the researcher recognizes that differences will occur across research contexts but acknowledges that they can be expected, described and tracked. At the level of each research participant, I recognized that each participant came from his/her own racial, cultural, and gendered experience and that differences in experience of the workplace would result from this interplay between personal dynamics and interactions with the workplace.

While the semi-structured interview was my primary data gathering method, I made limited use of other complementary methods, or overlap methods as Guba refers to them, to ensure the stability of my data. First, I kept a journal throughout the process of data gathering that describes such things as the interview setting and my own state of mind. I also used a form of document analysis by incorporating a review of collective agreements and human resources department documents that have a bearing on the employment of contingent faculty. As previously noted, I maintained copies of all recorded materials and resulting transcripts. Any supplementary documentation such as College collective agreements were printed off and I continued to review these throughout the research process. Further, I maintained all of my electronic communications

with my research participants both before and after my face-to-face interviews. To allow for a dependability audit, I included many of the materials described above within the appendices of this dissertation. My method has also included the requirement for me to share interview transcripts and my interpretations of the interviews with each of my interview participants and I have done so.

Confirmability

Confirmability is used by naturalist researchers to describe the concept of neutrality whereas the rationalist researcher will use the term objectivity. Confirmability shifts the burden of neutrality from the investigator to the data wherein the investigator is not certified “objective”, but the data are certified as confirmable in different contexts. The techniques I used to ensure confirmability are described in the following section.

I introduced a process of triangulation to confirm my findings by eliciting feedback from my research participants on the interpretations I made. I also looked for information that would confirm my findings in supplementary materials found in College collective agreements and in human resources documents. I practiced reflexivity in my research by regularly reviewing my assumptions about the contingent faculty experiences and holding those assumptions up against what faculty were actually saying. As an example, I assumed that contingent faculty were always interested in establishing a stronger relationship with their employer, even if that stronger relationship did not bring with it increased hours of work or more employment permanence. By exploring

more deeply the motivations of faculty, I found that some of my participants were not interested in strengthening the bureaucratic relationship with the organization. I found that the ongoing development of this reflexivity became a key feature of my research approach. Based on typologies found in the existing literature of contingent faculty, I believed my original research would lead me to some simple policy recommendations. I did not realize that, by being reflexive, I would find a far more complex contingent faculty experience than that which was revealed in the existing literature, leading to more multi-faceted recommendations.

I found Guba's (1981) criteria for assessing trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiry to be a method complementary to my research. My post-structural approach has 1) viewed truth to be something found in multiple realities; 2) considered the importance of my own perspectives, biases, and effects throughout the research project; and 3) recognized that research is not context free and thus should focus on differences at least as much as on similarities. Guba's naturalistic method allowed me to move beyond the constraints of the rationalistic method and better understand the diversity and richness of the contingent faculty experiences.

Delimitations

In selecting my research participants, I was reliant on those individuals who were prepared to commit to providing an initial one-hour block of interview time as well as subsequent time to review transcripts and answer further email or telephone queries for the purposes of clarification. This time commitment restricted the number of participants available to me and, as a result, my

participant pool was delimited to those who volunteered rather than on a larger pool of participants from which I could then draw. What this meant was that I was not able to establish an entirely representative sample of individuals on the basis of gender or ethnicity. However, I did have participation by both women (ten) and men (five) representing a range of different ethnicities, both Canadian-born and immigrant.

Interview Questions

For my research I developed a set of questions that served to begin a dialogue between myself and my respondents (Appendix F). My goal was to come to understand the life, learning and work patterns of contingent faculty in the face of neoliberalism; hence, my questions were designed to elicit understanding rather than simply explanation. What I sought to do in all cases, was to downplay the use of a set list of questions and for this reason, I committed my initial questions to memory so that I was able to avoid the disruption of constantly turning back to my questions. I found that this approach not only created an easier dialogue, it also allowed me as the researcher to be a more active participant in the discussion.

As with any authentic conversation, I was carried along in the dialogue. I began to ask questions as they naturally occurred to me rather than disrupt the flow of the conversation and turn back to my previously manufactured list. I came to realize that this technique allowed me to better respect each individual and his or her story as well as to respect the importance of *difference* that is so central to post-structural research. In the end, I also believe that this approach allowed me to

develop a better sense of rapport with my participants and ultimately a stronger engagement; engagement that facilitated my member checking activities in the final stages of the research.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

FROM AMANDA TO OLIVER: LISTENING TO VOICES OF CONTINGENT FACULTY

In this chapter I present the results of my conversations with contingent faculty with the presentation occurring in the order in which the conversations were carried out. I am choosing to present the information in such a fashion for deliberate reasons that keep with the spirit of my research methodology. To explain, I have used semi-structured interviews as my primary source of data. In each of these interviews I start with a set of questions but, as with any authentic conversation, I was not constrained by these questions. As the researcher, I learned something new in each conversation that allowed me to uncover new features of the lives of contingent faculty.

In the same manner, as I learned within each interview, I also learned across each interview. Each conversation built on the conversation that occurred before, as I grew as a researcher and discovered new areas for analysis. By choosing to present the interviews in a chronological fashion, I believe a more accurate picture emerges for the reader of my own growth as a researcher. In other words, I am a different person in my final conversation than I was in my first conversation. The chronological approach respects that difference and more honestly invites you, the reader, to join me in the journey. As a tool that might assist the reader in following this chronology, each participant is known by a first-name only pseudonym that starts at the letter A and goes to the letter O, from Amanda to Oliver.

Before I begin a presentation of results, I provide a context of the college environments in which each participant worked as contingent faculty. I used three research sites for this study that are based in three separate Canadian provinces. One site is a small, rural college in western Canada and has approximately 11,000 full and part-time students and a budget of \$30 million. The second site is also in western Canada, but based in a mid-sized prairie city. It has approximately 41,000 full and part-time students and a budget of \$138 million. The third site is a very large college in a large metropolitan centre in central Canada, and it has approximately 107,000 full and part-time students and a budget of \$237 million. All three colleges are members of the Association for Canadian Community Colleges and have similar management and governance structures. For ease of identification, I refer to these three colleges throughout this study as the small, mid-sized, and large colleges.

Research Results

Amanda

Perhaps apropos of a research study carried out in the context of the community college system in Canada, my first conversation took place in a prairie town just off the trans-Canada highway in a Tim Horton's coffee shop. After initial email correspondence to set the time and location of our meeting, I met Amanda face to face at "Tim's," as these ubiquitous establishments have become more colloquially known. I had to drive some distance to get to the interview site, but I arrived there first. Once I found a table, it struck me that I hadn't considered

asking Amanda, through email, what she looked like so that I could quickly identify her. In fact, it turned out not to be a difficult task in that, upon entering, the person who turned out to be Amanda did not make an immediate run for the coffee line and was obviously casting about the room. I stood and introduced myself, and we made our way to the table I had staked out as far from the noisy line-up that I could find where my small recording device was at the ready. After securing two coffees and exchanging pleasantries, we sat down to begin our conversation.

I began by asking Amanda about her teaching background. She told me that she had been teaching at her current college for about five years on a series of recurring term contracts. Prior to working at her current college, she had done some teaching at another college on a term basis, and she had also been a term and permanent instructor at yet a third college in the same province. She commented that at that third institution she had been an instructor for eleven years. However, for pension and seniority purposes, she was recognized for only five of those eleven years because for six years she had worked on a contract that was not recognized as “real work.” As she put it:

They just recognized the full-time permanent work that I actually did. So I always thought that that was really kind of disappointing because I had put in a lot of years of work there. It’s just nice to be recognized for the actual number of years that you’ve been there, not just particular ones that they really think are important. It kind of makes you think contract [work] is not that important.

While she had a permanent position at this previous college, she left for personal reasons to live in another part of the province.

At her current college, Amanda is working full-time in the Early Childhood Education department on a two-year term contract. However, she is keen to become a permanent instructor at her current college. I asked Amanda to talk about the experience of being a term instructor over her career and she spoke of some of the impacts from both a professional and personal perspective. Professionally, she talked about never being able to finish a term contract and see her students graduate because, as a term end was coming up, she would be on the lookout for another job. If a job came up at another college she would take it “because it will just take me further into the future.” As the only wage earner in the family she could not be without work and couldn’t risk a gap in employment. As a result, she said she would often not get a chance to see her students graduate. More personally, she spoke of the impact on her family.

In terms of the personal, it means we’re always moving. So I spent about ten years of my career forever moving from one little place to the other just going from contract to contract. And so that really had a big impact on my family and my kids and personally making friends and getting to know the community. Although you move to a community and it’s a really nice community, you don’t often get to stay there because there isn’t employment there. So that for me was really difficult.

Amanda is eager to obtain a permanent teaching position with her current employer. This desire largely flows from the disruption that the lack of

permanence causes to her personal life, and has little to do with how she is treated as an employee within the college. Put another way, she is most concerned about her contingent status as it impacts her life pattern as opposed to her learning and work patterns. This is seen in her view of the relationship that she has with her employer. In most respects she feels she has equal access to administrative support, professional development, comparable levels of pay and benefits, and opportunities to be part of departmental camaraderie. The only area within the workplace where Amanda feels she does not have the same benefit as permanent staff is in the time available for preparation. Because of the length of the hiring process, she does not necessarily know what she will be teaching from term to term and, by the time the teaching load is confirmed, there is very little time for preparation. Amanda describes her first experience with her current employer.

There is never enough up-front time. The hiring process is far too long. The hiring process took from May until August. And they wanted someone to start in August. So I didn't start until September and I moved to my new community on a Saturday and Monday was a long weekend and I started classes on Tuesday at one o'clock. So that was the shortest amount of prep-time I've ever had. And it wasn't really prep time because I was getting my kids involved in school on the Tuesday morning. So I really had no prep time whatsoever. I understand how it works and you have to have someone and for classes, but I really I don't think that's acceptable. And with all my experiences with term positions, it's always

been a really unacceptable amount of prep time. Very rarely do you get more than just a couple of weeks.

Amanda also talked about the personal toll inadequate preparation time can have. She also discussed the impact it can have on students.

I would spend most of my evenings prepping my courses because I was teaching four hours a day at the beginning so most of my evenings and weekends for the first three months of the year were all dedicated to work which was really, really tough. I was really burnt out by the time Christmas rolled around. And I don't feel I did the best job I could with the students, and I don't even remember what I taught them the first couple of months. For the second half of the year I have a good picture of what I was teaching the student because I had a little more prep time and my course load wasn't quite so high. I really don't think the students got what they could have got and I think that's too bad. I think they really lose out.

I sensed an air of resignation from Amanda as I talked with her about her experiences as a term instructor in the college system. She bore little ill will towards her employers for the lack of permanency, often acknowledging that the colleges were placed in this situation by financial circumstances beyond their control. In only a few instances did she speak about ways the college could improve its dealings with her. As already noted, she suggested there needed to be a more effective hiring process that would allow for an appropriate amount of preparation, but she also talked about her desire to see her employer help her,

through a process of career planning and counselling, to build a more permanent relationship with the organization. As she said:

It would be nice if they would meet with their term employees and help them with some kind of transition. Because there probably are some other kinds of positions available in the college or that may be coming up that I might be suited for. Or to give you tips. I have a little bit more than one year left on my contract so what courses could I take for professional development that might make me more marketable or that might help me get into this job that they know is coming up because someone is going on sabbatical for instance. Those kinds of things would probably help; just a little bit of career planning.

Aside from the above modest suggestions, Amanda had positive things to say about her employer. While she was unhappy with her lack of permanence, she did not place the blame for this on the college. In fact, the sense of equality, camaraderie, and satisfaction that she derives from her work drives her desire for a long-term permanent relationship with her employer:

There's no difference there really based on your employment status in terms of interactions. Within my office I have a fairly good amount of time to get to know people and build up those relationships. I really find that the college I'm at now is excellent in terms of working with their staff. My immediate supervisor will come to me and ask me, "I know you really have a heavy workload. Is there anything I can do to help?" Or if I took a sick day one day she asked if there was something that she could

do, if I needed anything photocopied for the next day, you know that kind of thing.

From the point of view of the literature reviewed in this study, Amanda best fits within the category of Tuckman's (1978) "hopeful full-timers" or Gappa and Leslie's (1993) "aspiring academics." Her long-term career goal is to build a full-time career as an instructor in a community college and, while she is at times frustrated by some characteristics of her contingent status, she has confidence that the investment that she is making in her current role in her current college will lead to a full-time position in the not-too-distant future. In other words, Amanda has a generally positive outlook about both her academic practice and her current employment circumstances, all the while aspiring, patiently, for a permanent instructional role.

Brian

My second conversation was with someone who was at an entirely different life-stage from Amanda. Brian is a part-time instructor who works in the western Canadian mid-sized college that is part of this study. He is not a career teacher, but someone who came to teaching as a second career after retiring from industry. I met with Brian at his office in his college on a summer day when very few people were on campus. It seemed that Brian was the only person from his department in the office on that day, so we had the chance for a leisurely and relaxed discussion as well as the opportunity for him to tour me around his work space.

As a retiree from the telecommunications industry it was obvious to me that Brian was proud to show me the telecommunications laboratory environment he had helped to develop on campus to provide a hands-on learning environment for his students. Our conversation started in his office, where he began by telling me how he transitioned from a thirty-two year career at a telecommunications company into a teaching role at the college. Brian had had a connection with the college previously as a member of an industry program advisory committee and, when a faculty member passed away, he was called and asked if he would like to teach. While he had only retired the previous month from the telecommunications company, Brian agreed to give it a try since the teaching involved working with a technology with which he was very familiar as a result of his industry experience. Now six years later, after retiring from his first career, Brian teaches one or two courses each term, which generally means that he works half a day over the entire week.

Brian's motivation for teaching is multifaceted and those factors are at times explicitly and, at other times, more implicitly stated. Most explicitly, he talked about the need to keep himself busy after retiring from his first career in the telecommunications industry.

I just found after a month of retirement I was really bored, just twiddling my thumbs. In the summertime, I can volunteer at a local club that I belong to, but in the wintertime, there's really nothing to do. Without this work I think I'd drive my wife crazy and after a time she'd drive me crazy.

While teaching fulfills Brian's need to stay occupied, I perceived a more implicit motivation that surrounds what I can best describe as his role as a champion of his industry. He views teaching as his way of contributing to an industry and career that served him so well; thus he helps to prepare new skilled workers for the future. He also recognizes that his time is short. That same industry is changing and a time will come soon when he is not in a position to pass along relevant knowledge to his students. As he states:

It's getting to the point pretty soon that another few years and I won't know how the telephone system works anymore, so I'll have to retire.

This commitment to his industry is not only seen in his decision to teach his craft, but also in the extracurricular effort that he makes to use his industry connections to acquire technologies that will create a more real-world industrial environment in his laboratories.

You need somebody from that industry to provide expertise and you need somebody that knows the personnel in the industry because those connections lead to equipment donations. Just two weeks ago, I went over to my former employer's warehouse to get some freebies from them and I walked away with an important piece of instructional technology that my students can use.

Another example of Brian's strong connection to industry is found in his view of teaching and in his observations about students. I asked Brian about his thoughts about teaching and to discuss what things he most enjoys about teaching. In fact, for him, the actual practice of teaching is never described as a passion, as

is the case with many instructors with whom I spoke. Rather, Brian views teaching more as something he feels called to do because of the currency he can bring from industry and the connections he can make for the college in securing relevant technological donations. When I asked Brian about his experiences with students, he talked little about the nature of his classroom interactions, and but spoke very candidly about his observations of student characteristics.

I'm at an advantage because I get the better students because they have to pass the basic technician course before they can take mine. I find that students are either really smart or they're really hard workers. Sometimes they are both. Some of them are extremely lazy but really smart, so they pick it up good enough and some of them are really hard workers and they get through and some are both. But any of the real deadwood, they get drummed out in basic electronics because there's a lot of math. So I'm fairly lucky.

The above quote signifies a view of the instructor as the gate-keeper to industry, a role I have heard about many times before in my own years of administration in the community college system. In community colleges, the focus of much of the learning is vocationally-based, so there is an emphasis on curriculum designed to meet the needs of the workplace. While this vocational focus has always been in place in colleges, the current neoliberal influences upon public education systems are bringing this into even greater prominence. Given this reality, a debate emerges about who the colleges' "customer" is. Is the college's goal to serve the

student or to serve the needs of specific industries? This tension is captured in the work of Peter Elbow (1983), where he writes:

we can spend part of our teaching time saying in some fashion or other, “Now I’m being a tough-minded gatekeeper, standing up for high critical standards in my loyalty to what I teach”; and part of our time giving a contrary message: “Now my attention is wholeheartedly on trying to be your ally and to help you learn, and I am not worrying about the purity of standards or grades or the need of society or institutions” (p. 339).

Given Brian’s strong and current connections to industry, it is to be expected that he would view his role as one of guardian of the needs of that industry. This is by no means to infer that Brian does not care about the success of his students, but rather he demonstrates success in his students by ensuring that they progress through to industry only if they have the required entry level skills to succeed in that industry.

When I asked Brian if there was anything his employer could do to improve his experience as an employee, he had no recommendations to make. Clearly his expectations as an employee are being met, as are his current career goals. He pointed out that, as a part-timer, he is represented by his union. He receives partial health benefits, and he has access to professional development, although to this point he has not taken advantage of the development opportunity. Indeed, Brian seemed altogether unconcerned about his specific employment circumstances. Instead, he was fully-occupied with his laboratory, the technology

therein and the various innovations he had introduced to create a rich learning environment for his students.

My discussion with Brian was delightful, and I couldn't help leaving his office being inspired by the passion he had for his work. Still, I also initially viewed it to be one of the most frustrating discussions that I have had because it yielded very little information about the nature of the employer/employee relationship. Upon reflection, however, I realized Brian's silence on these issues spoke volumes and that his experience was reflected well within the literature as a *semitretired* (Tuckman, 1978) or *career-ender* (Gappa and Leslie, 1993) in that he is teaching as a means of transitioning into retirement. His commitment to his discipline is also evident in the Gappa and Leslie category of *specialists, experts, and professionals*: teaching allows him to bring his up-to-date technical, industrial knowledge into the classroom. Because the people who fit within these categorizations do not tend to be those whose motivation is to create a permanent employment relationship, their focus on employment-related topics is less intense. I would see other contingent faculty who viewed themselves as apart from the college bureaucratic life or as autonomous actors within the college again in future discussions.

Carl

Through the course of my discussions with participants, I found that the majority of my meetings were held in coffee shops. On a few occasions, they were held in the workplace, and on only two occasions they were held in the participant's own home. That was the case with Carl who is also an employee at

the western-Canadian, mid-sized college that is part of this study. Carl graciously opened his home for our discussion, and I found this created a more relaxed and unhurried environment that may have had something to do with the more reflective tenor of this discussion. Carl was the first person I talked to who really opened up to me about his personal motivation for teaching. Carl's experiences as a teacher had been in adult basic education in a prison, an adult education centre and now a community college. His motivation for teaching in these contexts is evident in the following passage:

The adults that I have always worked with in the prison and in the adult education centre where I worked in Vancouver plus where I am now have been disadvantaged in some way and I think that's a big part of how I see myself as a teacher. I believe in trying to improve situations for people and I think that's part of what I do.

As I carried out my interviews, I noted that, at times, some reticence on the part of my participants to open up and express their concerns about their employer. As contingent faculty who may aspire to permanent status, they are often in a tenuous position, in that both their immediate and longer-term futures are in somebody else's hands. I tried my best to address this filtering by reiterating to my participants that they would remain anonymous in my research findings and that they should not fear any repercussions on the part of their employer. Carl was one participant who opened up, albeit cautiously, about some basic issues around the fair distribution of work to contingent faculty.

In a sense I'm competing with other people in my position for part-time work and there is a protocol that's supposed to be followed because it's a unionized environment. That protocol describes who gets called for what job and there have been times when I'm not sure whether I'm actually being called in for what I'm supposed to be called in for.

While the collective agreement in place in his college provides a protocol for the distribution of work to contingent faculty, Carl is not entirely sure that this protocol is always being followed. Yet although his rights as a part-timer are protected in the collective agreement, he is still not inclined to take this issue to the union.

On a couple of occasions, full-time staff who are involved in the union have come to me and said you know, this is something you can take to the union if you want. That wasn't something I was going to do. I mean, you don't want to make waves in a place when you're new, especially when you feel like it's a place you really want to work long term. So, I've just sort of let them go.

Even with the protection of the collective agreement, as a part-timer Carl does not want to "make waves". This silencing of the part-timer's voice is a reflection of the insidious power dynamics that are often at work in the employer/employee relationship. Even when the rules are explicitly set out in the collective agreement – rules that are intended to protect the contingent faculties' rights – the implicit rules that govern the relationship hold more sway. Those implicit rules suggest

that contingent faculty should not rock the boat if they are to have a hope of securing permanent work with their employer.

As is the case with Carl, while the goal of many contingent faculty is to secure a permanent full-time teaching position there is a more near-term goal as well. That goal, that they seek while biding their time waiting for permanent work, is to establish some ongoing, consistent pattern of part-time work. Often, the work pattern for contingent faculty changes from semester to semester and the actual workload might increase or decrease or be differently organized. These changes make it difficult for these faculty members to take on other work outside of the college or to maintain some consistent order in their personal lives including the ability to do personal budget planning:

There's a big difference in my mind between consistent part-time and inconsistent part-time, and I guess I want consistent part-time. This past year has been really ideal in the sense that I knew every day that I was going to have a consistent income, that I had consistent schedule; I knew in advance who my students would be each day. Full time for a week and then nothing for two weeks is a lot more difficult to handle.

Another challenge that confronts the contingent faculty is seen in the degree to which the organization of daily activity is planned to accommodate the needs of the permanent faculty, with little consideration given to the schedules of the part-timers. The consistent pattern for contingent faculty is the expectation that they will bend to accommodate the needs of the organization rather than the other way

around. Carl found this phenomenon at play in regard to the scheduling of staff meetings.

I had to attend staff meetings which were scheduled in the afternoon, and I only worked mornings. So I'd always have to go back to the campus to be involved in the staff meetings. I didn't resent that, but I was certainly aware that it was happening. There were meetings scheduled as well during afternoon work time that I wouldn't be paid for, that other people would be paid for.

This need to subsidize college-related activities with one's own time is a common expectation placed upon contingent faculty. The same sometimes also holds for the professional development activities of contingent faculty. Through my conversations, I generally found that colleges were quite open to having part-timers participate in on-campus professional development activities. However, they were often planned at inconvenient times for part-timers. Colleges were less inclined to support part-timer professional development requests that took place off-campus and/or incurred extra costs, as Carl found.

I wanted to go to a conference this year but there was no funding for me because I'm on probation for a particular amount of time. I could have paid out of my own pocket but I didn't. I actually chose to stay and fill in for people who were leaving to earn some income rather than spend it on a conference.

Although Carl raised some concerns about inequitable treatment between himself and the permanent faculty, he has a generally positive outlook on his employer, his colleagues, and his prospects for the future.

I emphasize that my experience has been a positive one, not perfect, but it's been good. My supervisor actually went well out of his way when I moved to the college. I don't have a permanent teaching certificate in this province and you have to go through a bunch of hoops in order to get one. But my employer here, one person in particular, went out of his way to make sure that I was able to get a permanent teaching certificate so that I'd be able to stay on staff. So I suppose they're looking out for part-time people since there will be a lot of people retiring and they are probably looking ahead to encourage people to stay.

Carl offers the interesting observation that he believes the college is doing its best to treat him well as a means of ensuring he is available to them when the time comes to replace other retiring permanent faculty. This important observation speaks to the very real shift in the workforce today whereby retirements of the baby boom generation are creating worker shortages across all sectors, including academia.

Carl fits into Tuckman's (1978) "hopeful full-timers" or Gappa and Leslie's (1993) "aspiring academics" categories in different ways. First, the pragmatic issue of full-time employment and the permanence that this brings is definitely an important concern. However, he also views teaching as a transformative process that that allows him to "improve situations for people."

This new perspective Carl has brought to my study recognizes that the aspiring academic is not just searching for employment but also views teaching as a calling that brings about positive change in peoples' lives.

Danielle

I met Danielle at a busy Vietnamese restaurant in the midst of a busy weekday lunch-time. Over a bowl of steaming Pho, a traditional Vietnamese soup, and a plate of noodles, she offered unique perspectives about the experience of contingent faculty that I had previously not heard. Danielle works as a part-time faculty member at the western Canadian, mid-sized college. Her path to teaching in the college began as a teacher in the school system. Having taken two years off as a schoolteacher, she made the decision that teaching adults was her career goal. She has been teaching at her college for less than a year and views her part-time work as a pathway to a full-time job at the college. The new observations that Danielle brought to my research related to her perspectives on the role that the union plays in colleges. She finds the principle of seniority objectionable in an academic institution where she would like to see more emphasis placed on job candidates' qualifications and experience.

They don't hire based on who they think would do the best job; they hire the most senior qualified. So basically in order to get a full-time position, I have to take contracts and part-time and sub and all that kind of thing to build up my seniority before I have enough to have a good chance at a

full-time permanent position. There was one gentleman; he was there for 18 years before he finally got a permanent full-time position.

When I got my job in the regular [school] system, other people had applied for the job that had many more years experience than I did, but the people who interviewed me felt that I was the most qualified. That's how I feel, I think you should be able to hire people based on their ability and how they would fit in and not whether they are 20 years more senior that I am.

Union representation of part-time faculty in community colleges differs from province to province in Canada. Currently, in Ontario, there is no representation of faculty who teach less than seven contact hours per week. Faculty who teach from seven to twelve hours per week are classified as "partial load" and are covered by the collective agreement. Faculty who teach from thirteen to 18 hours per week are classed as full-time. In Ontario, a move is afoot to have part-time faculty represented by the existing union, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. However, some part-time faculty believe their interests would be best met by organizing themselves outside of the existing union. In other provinces, part-time faculty are already represented by the union. Often, the goal of contingent faculty in organizing themselves is to derive better pay, benefits and working conditions that are on par with permanent faculty. Danielle, however, views the role of the union, and in particular the seniority provisions of the collective agreement, as a barrier to her progress within her college.

While a relative newcomer to the college, Danielle has a strong desire to teach on a permanent basis, and as such falls into the category of “hopeful full-timer.” She has established a good working rapport with her colleagues, and has been asked by her supervisor to take on some research for her department. She says that her bosses have been open about employment opportunities that are coming up, and she feels they are genuinely doing their best to help her obtain more work. She also says that she feels plugged in to what is going on as a result of the college-wide email communication that is used.

As communication goes, it’s been great. I’ve been put on a master e-mail list and so anything that’s coming up I know about. Many of our basic education students are First Nation and so we have a lot of cultural things happening at the college. Aboriginal Day happened back in June so I got e-mailed with everyone else letting me know about all the special events, when staff meetings are going to be and that sort of thing.

Danielle sees some good opportunities for herself on the horizon at her college, and, aside from general concerns she has with the union, she has a positive outlook on the college. Like many of her contingent faculty colleagues, she is looking for some consistency and stability in her relationship with the college.

Consistency would be nice. I think we all tend to be creatures who don’t like to change and who like consistency. But I realize that that’s the nature of this beast, and so if I want to be here I’m going to have to go through it.

This need for consistency is a common thread found in the stories of many of my participants. Often, however, those faculty will see this aspect of their work life as something that “comes with the territory” or is the “nature of the beast.”

Consequently, they rarely challenge this aspect of the status quo.

Elizabeth

I met with Elizabeth over a cup of tea at another busy Vietnamese restaurant and was quickly struck by the similarities between her story and Brian’s. Both are older individuals teaching in the later stages of their careers. Elizabeth’s situation has differences though, as she remains employed full-time in her field of professional practice and teaches part-time at the college. She says that she is about six years away from retiring from full-time employment.

The similarities between Elizabeth and Brian were most closely related to their emotional state of mind, as it related to their college roles. Both enjoyed their roles immensely, but I also perceived that there was no urgency associated with the job, in that they had no financial or pressing career need to pursue the work. Rather, they were at a stage in their careers where the decision to work part-time was utterly their choice.

Elizabeth has found an almost seamless balance between her work in professional practice as a dental hygienist and as a part-time clinical dental-hygiene instructor at her college. The balance appeared so seamless that, at times, it was difficult to discern whether she was talking about her full-time or her part-time job as she jumped from place to place over the course of our discussion.

I'm very comfortable where I am. I love my patients, I have a huge clientele and I really like what I do. I call [my teaching periods] my outings – I think that they're very good outings at the college. It's very, very stimulating for me. It keeps me motivated, it keeps me excited about my work. I think if I only stayed in my practice it wouldn't be that way anymore because you're working with certain students that are complementary to you because they've learned a lot.

Elizabeth has taught at the college in a part-time capacity for sixteen years, a role that has seen her teach approximately fifty hours a year over a period of about six to eight weeks a year. She teaches in a clinical environment at the college, which means that she provides hands-on instruction to dental hygiene students in a college laboratory environment.

An interesting feature to Elizabeth's story is that her experience as a teacher and her contact with her peers with advanced credentials inspired her to acquire a degree in vocational education. Her intentions within about six years are to retire from full-time private practice and then continue to teach about fifty hours per year just to keep her hand in. She points to her decision to obtain her bachelor's degree as a step towards this future. Complementing this formal education, the up-to-date technology and procedures in the college environment have provided Elizabeth with informal learning opportunities where she has learned how to do new things that she has then applied to her professional practice as a dental hygienist.

Elizabeth is clearly pleased with the working environment at the College. Unlike many colleges in Canada, her college pays its part-time faculty an amount intended to represent non-contact time in order to support preparation time as well as support to students outside of the classroom. She also notes that, as a part-time instructor, she is eligible for some pension benefits; a luxury she does not have in her private practice. She is also offered the opportunity of support to attend professional development conferences. From a day-to-day support perspective, I asked Elizabeth how much support she received relative to that provided to her full-time colleagues:

Everything. We even have our name on the door. There's a part-time room and there are four of us who have our name on the door and there's everything. There's the computers, in fact we're getting new computers, new desks, and _____ is the secretary and anything you want she will do for you.

The only difference in benefits treatment that Elizabeth identified was that she did not receive health and dental benefits because she did not work enough days in the year.

In writing about the experiences of other participants, I have noted that one common concern on the part of part-time faculty is that they have very little notice time about the courses they will be asked to teach during a given term. That is not the case with Elizabeth, since the department at her college provides a timetable well in advance of the start date of her courses. This has led to the interesting benefit of reviewing other part-timers who are scheduled in with an

eye to ensuring that she gets work she is entitled to under the provisions of the collective agreement.

The timetable is drawn up between one and two months before the start of the semester so I know what is expected of me in September and so I book myself out of my practice in order to be at the college. So they give us a lot of notice of what days we're going to be working and whether it will be part-time or full-time. So therefore we get a right to look at that timetable and if I see one of the instructors names on there that has less seniority, then I have the right to say that should be my day.

This advanced notice and the resulting opportunity to review workloads to ensure that they are in keeping with her rights under the collective agreement is something that Elizabeth has recognized is her right. Recall that Carl, whom I spoke about earlier, chose not to raise the issue of distribution of workload – which he sometimes observed might be unfairly done -- because he did not want to be seen to be rocking the boat. This is so, even though Carl works in the same college as Elizabeth and would have the same rights under the collective agreement. I saw this as an example of Elizabeth's experience and longevity with the college providing her with a level of confidence that newer employee, Carl, had yet to develop.

Just as in Brian's story, I view Elizabeth's experience fitting two categories in the typology I am using. She is a *semitretired* (Tuckman, 1978) or *career-ender* (Gappa and Leslie, 1993) in that she has identified a horizon for her full-time career. However, she has prepared herself through further education and

through her maintenance of an ongoing employment relationship for a very limited teaching role once she retires. She also fits the Gappa and Leslie category of *specialists, experts, and professionals*, but with a variation. She has identified that her full-time role provides her with skills that she can give back to students, but she also uses the classroom environment for her own professional development and consequently improves her currency in her own professional practice.

Francine

I met Francine in a coffee shop in one of Canada's largest cities. Francine was the first person I spoke with at the site of the large metropolitan college in my study. She is a professional journalist and has worked for large broadcast news organizations and as a free-lance writer. Her first exposure to teaching was as a teaching assistant in her fourth year of undergraduate study. After working in the media, she left Canada to go to Uganda where she taught television and radio. Upon returning to Canada, she taught English as a Second Language in Montreal before settling in Toronto where she has found part-time teaching work in the community college system. Francine's teaching load is currently nine-hours per week.

Interestingly, in the Ontario community college system this would normally place her in the category of "Partial Load". Partial Load instructors have course loads between seven to twelve hours and are covered by the collective agreement. As a result, pay and benefits are considerably better than for "part-time" instructors who work up to a maximum of six hours per week and are

not covered by the collective agreement. As a result, they have lower pay and benefit provisions. The interesting aspect of Francine's experience is that she teaches her nine hours per week over two different colleges, so does not qualify for partial load status. Instead, she is considered part-time at each institution. Francine suggests that this strategy of getting your foot in the door is common for people whose goal is to find full-time employment as a college instructor. She describes how she learned about this strategy from others who had used it.

I had an interesting situation that happened where I was at this place where I used to go and have lunch. And I met this guy who was just sitting there having a drink and staring off into space. We got to talking and he told me what he does is he works for a whole bunch of different schools with his car just travelling around. At first, I was thinking "that's crazy, why would he do that." And he said, "I can't get full-time hours in any one place and so this is my way of getting my foot in the door in a lot of different places so any time something full-time comes up, then I've already got my foot in the door to try and get that." So I thought, "Gee, well maybe I could do that" so that's what actually got me into it. And I've met other professors as well that do the same thing.

The literature speaks in less than complimentary terms about these "Roads Scholars" (Tillyer, 2005) or part-time faculty, largely in metropolitan areas, who will travel from college to college to cobble together a full-time workload to pay their bills. They also seek to build a relationship with colleges in order to be in a position to obtain full-time work when it becomes available. The literature does

note that sometimes this fragmented approach can work against the part-timer because they do not have the non-contact time available to them to foster relationships within any one institution -- relationships, that when fully developed, often lead to offers of full-time employment (Gappa and Leslie, 1993).

Francine speaks of the reasons that it is important for her to obtain a permanent position:

At least if I'm permanent then I know that I've got a secure job -- as secure as any job is nowadays. I would have benefits covered because I have medications I take so it would be nice to have those things covered. It would be nice to be able to go to the dentist and have that covered. You know those cushy types of things. And it would be nice to have that security of the unions that exist right now. Fulltime professors can only teach a certain number of courses, you have your office hours, and you have your office. At one college I teach at I don't even have an office. I'm supposed to be having one-on-one consultations with students and I end up using the classroom and taking up class time to do it. I think it would make my teaching better to a certain extent to be able to be in one place. Job security is basically what I've been searching for.

I asked Francine if she felt she was treated differently by students because of her status as a part-time instructor.

I find sometimes the students notice when you're a part-timer. I had one student say to me at one point, "Yeah, but you're part time." That gave me a little bit of an indication of how some students are aware of those things.

It didn't hurt me, necessarily, but I was kind of like, "Yea, but I still count."

Francine represents the sentiment of many contingent faculty who strive for opportunities to improve their own teaching practice. In community colleges in Canada, many teachers enter colleges in a part-time capacity from different fields of practice. They do not have experience or education as teachers so are always on the look out for professional development opportunities that help them to assess their abilities and then to improve their own teaching approach.

The first professional development that I was involved with was the teaching approaches seminar that took place at my college. It was fantastic and taught me so many things. It just completely opened up my mind to different teaching styles that I had not been flexible to before. After that I tried to implement a lot of the teaching styles into what I do. Things like allowing the students some time to come up to the front of the class and teach for a bit. And because it was a professional development seminar, not only are you learning from the professionals at the head of the class but you're also learning from your other co-teachers and your colleagues. So that was really good.

As I noted, Francine was the first instructor I spoke to from the large metropolitan college. Although she had a very positive overall impression of her experience in the various colleges that she worked in, and while as a *hopeful full-timer*, she was keen on establishing herself in one college in order to secure a full-time position, I also sensed a thread of cynicism. That was a sentiment I was

about to encounter with other instructors I would speak to in this larger centre. While most contingent faculty did not overtly state that they were treated as second class, those whose motivation was to secure full-time work were embittered by the struggle to obtain permanent status. I explore that phenomenon more deeply as I work through my other discussions.

Grace

Grace teaches library technology courses for six hour per week at the large college in my study. We met at a coffee shop in a bookstore in a suburban area of this large metropolitan centre. Grace's motivations for teaching part-time differ from Francine's in that she has no interest in a full-time teaching position and, for family reasons, enjoys her limited instructional role. This desire on the part of a part-timer to limit instructional hours was not new to me. However, what I found entirely unique about Grace was her strong desire for independence in her role as instructor. Not only was she interested in limiting her hours, she also sought to limit as much as possible her bureaucratic and administrative interactions with her college. When I asked Grace to tell me about the best aspects of her job, she spoke about the independence that comes from being a part-timer. Far from seeking out greater connection to the organization, Grace enjoyed the distance from the employer that her role allowed.

I like my independence; coming in and directing my own time. In my previous library life, I worked fulltime at the CBC with all that very bureaucratic and union stuff that gets very tedious. I find I work much

better as an independent contractor type. It works absolutely well for our family because my program coordinator is very accommodating of our family personal life. I'm professionally challenged but the time commitment is perfect for us. The financial outcome is a bonus.

Also, of unique interest in Grace's story is her frank statement that the joy of teaching is not what inspires her. This contrasts with the more common story I heard time and time again throughout my discussions. Part-time faculty told me that they loved teaching and often saw teaching as something of a calling.

I don't enjoy it as much as I thought I would enjoy it actually. I like the control over my time and when I do the work and except for the scheduled classroom time, I don't have to be there at certain times. So I have flexibility and can do a lot of work at home.

Grace talked about how, for her, teaching was a process that allowed her to test and assess her own knowledge of the material rather than only a process of teaching others. In fact, she expresses some frustration about the lack of response she sometimes receives from students. She then talked about how she derives her own personal satisfaction from the teaching process.

There's not as much feedback, either positive or negative, as I would have thought. You often don't know if you are reaching students. Are you not reaching students? Are they learning something? I don't get enough of that feedback. I like the fact that teaching makes me really think about my ideas and my roles. You have to really be concrete in your understanding of those ideas in order to articulate and teach them. I like that it makes me

stop and really think about an idea before I stand up in front of a classroom.

Some perspectives that Grace offered above were new to me in the sense that, unlike many of her peers, she enjoyed the autonomy that came with part-time teaching and she did not view teaching as a calling. However, Grace also talked about more familiar challenges facing contingent faculty such as the difficulty in providing out of class assistance to students in the absence of regular office hours or a permanent office space.

There are six desks and you grab whichever one's empty. But if a student wants to talk, you can't really discuss things in that communal office. So discussing things with students is very difficult from a part-time point of view. You do a lot by email and a lot on the fly as they are coming in and out of class. After class it's very difficult because there's another class coming in so there's a lack of privacy in discussing assignments, or marks on an assignment. That type of thing I find very difficult.

Grace also spoke of the now familiar lack of notice provided to contingent faculty about the teaching schedule. She had these remarks as the new term was one month away.

It's often last minute notice and I don't know why that is. I've been told that I will be teaching in January and what I'll be teaching, but I don't know my days or times as of yet. I thought I would know by the first of December but I don't know; but then for the fall term, it was the middle of August. I don't like it because I'm scrambling at the last minute to put

everything together. By nature I'm an organized person; I like things planned and organized, so that puts a lot of stress on me and then I find I'm scrambling for the first month of the term because I've had such late notice. Knowing in advance what I'll be teaching and when I'll be teaching would be beneficial to me and my students so that I can prepare more thoroughly. They're very accommodating in other ways so I don't see why they can't address this situation.

As with many of my participants, Grace related the now familiar story of a lack of start up support when she began teaching for the first time.

My very first time teaching I was given nothing. I got a previous course outline, the syllabus and I was told to go to it. That was when I was teaching in Continuing Education, but I cobbled together something; I don't know how I did it. But now I'm teaching in the day time, fulltime program and I got a bit more including the previous instructor's handwritten weekly outline notes. But I still had to update, get readings, and develop the PowerPoint. I was given no pedagogical guidelines on how to teach.

While consistent themes emerged as I progressed through my interview process – themes such as workload uncertainty, limited start-up time and ongoing professional development support and difficulty providing out of class assistance to students – each new story offered a new angle that derived from the unique perspectives and motivations of each instructor. This was most prominently seen in Grace's story. Her very honest observation that not all interactions with

students were satisfying, though while perhaps not unfamiliar to other contingent faculty, was terrain that others chose not discuss. I can speculate that many contingent faculty, who are always seeking to put their best foot forward in the hopes that permanency is just around the corner, deliberately underplay such stories – even with a disinterested researcher. Also unique was Grace’s description of how the opportunity for self-development and growing within her discipline was a goal in her teaching. To that point, participants tended to underplay their own development except where it directly impacted students.

I was particularly pleased that I encountered Grace because of the new and entirely unexpected insight her observations provided to me. She challenged me not to overlook the fact teaching is a job. I often heard faculty speak of teaching as a calling or an opportunity to give back to a discipline. Grace helped me turn my attention to a more simple, transactional view of teaching as a job – a job that she enjoyed, not so much in and of itself, but for the flexibility it provided her to pursue other life interests and for its ability to become more personally confident and knowledgeable about her discipline.

As well, Grace challenged the critical themes of this research. She is deriving what she seeks from her employment as an independent contractor and, as such, her story is not one of struggle against injustice in her workplace. The concept of the entrepreneurial employee is discussed in the critical literature by Olssen (2006) who states that “each person is now an autonomous entrepreneur responsible ontologically for their own selves and their own progress and position” (p. 219).

In Grace's case, the autonomy and entrepreneurship is an appealing aspect to her job. Unlike many of the faculty I spoke with for whom a lack of an office and limited notice of schedules related to the college's second class treatment of them, Grace viewed these aspects of her work as annoyances rather than as fundamental injustices in the workplace. She demonstrated again the importance of perspective and motivation in the contingent experience. Although her actual experience with her employer mirrored that of other contingent faculty, she came at the experience from a different frame of reference and did not exhibit the frustration and bitterness that I sometimes saw in other contingent faculty.

Helen

Helen was the first contingent faculty member I spoke to at her worksite in the large College in this study. In fact, Helen had just heard that she had been hired as a permanent, full-time faculty member at her college, but this was after three years as a contingent instructor and she had much to say about her experience. Helen began teaching part-time in her current College at a difficult time in her life. Originally from an eastern European county, she first settled in a smaller urban centre in Canada but subsequently moved to this major metropolitan centre because the work prospects were better. She explains that the move was difficult for her.

I was desperate, very frustrated and very depressed and my whole life was upside down. The whole situation for me was as bad as my original immigration to Canada. I did not want to move from _____ which was a

more family-oriented community and easier to live in but there were more job prospects in _____ so we moved here.

Helen's first year at her current college was as a part-time instructor in continuing education and her most recent two years had been as a partial-load instructor. In Helen's college system, part-time instructors teach less than six hours per week and are not covered by the collective agreement. Partial-load instructors teach seven to twelve hours per week and permanent instructors teach over twelve hours per week. Both partial-load and full-time instructors are covered by the collective agreement. Unlike many contingent faculty I spoke to who were not familiar with their particular status as it related to the collective agreement, Helen was aware and up-to-date on her employment status and her rights under the collective agreement. Over her two years as a partial-load instructor, Helen had been pursuing a full-time position and on her third competition she had recently obtained a full-time position that she was to begin within the next two months. I asked her how she felt about obtaining permanent, full-time status.

You know it's a complex question because when you think about it the economics are clear. You want to be on a salary, you don't always want to be worrying about the number of hours you can obtain in order to make ends meet. On a more personal level what I've been feeling, and what I felt all along, is that I'm as professional as them. I'm better than some of them because it took me so much more to become who I am because it's my second language. I'm teaching literature and it took so much hard

work to become indistinguishable from other instructors and nobody appreciates it. So that's what's going through your head over and over and over again but you can't show it to anybody, you just have to smile. But that pressure builds inside you. And it's not just me because I heard this same story from other partial load instructors when we were sharing an office.

Helen was the first instructor I spoke to who expressed clearly the frustration associated with contingent status, especially for those whose goal is to obtain a permanent position. These instructors can have as many as twelve hours of class contact per week, yet are still part of a separate instructor classification. As I heard in Helen's voice, the frustration grows as the contingent faculty come to see that they are viewed as an underclass, and to see the injustice of their circumstances even when they recognize that their teaching, their effort and their commitment to students is equivalent or better than that of their permanent counterparts. I asked Helen if this frustration played out in the interactions between the contingent and permanent faculty.

I interact well with everybody, whether it's a fulltime, a partial load or a part-time instructor. I just interact with them as a human being. I've had friends among full-timers and part-timers, and partial load instructors. I've never felt that I was discriminated against by the people themselves. I saw that I was discriminated against by the system. Not even my bosses because my bosses were very, very good to me personally if I needed special arrangements. As well, I feel that my boss really wants to have

full-time instructors working in the department but she can't for financial reasons and she has to save money probably because the college is not funded properly. In my personal opinion, I think it's going to stay like this not because the bosses are bad and malicious but because of the funding. As long as the bottom-line is everything and the government thinks that this is how the colleges and universities have to be funded, it's going to stay this way.

As seen in her words above, Helen did not blame her frustration on the people around her rather she viewed the system as unfair. Even her warm references to her supervisors demonstrated that she drew a very clear distinction between the people that she interacted with and the system in which she worked. This perspective on a system that unjustly treats its members as a result of larger state economic policy measures provides an example of how neoliberalism negatively influences the lives and work of individual faculty. Another example of this neoliberal influence at work in Helen's life is the psychological pressure that she feels to contribute a greater portion of her labour to her employer than she is actually paid for to better position her for a permanency.

I work like a horse. I've developed two courses but I was never paid for them and I remember I was preparing one of those courses and my husband told me, "Is there any minute in your life when you're not typing?" But I saw it as my investment in my future as a fulltime instructor, because any partial load instructor who wants to kind of become fulltime, can't really say no to anything.

This employer ability to secure greater labour value than is actually paid for is known as the theory of surplus value in Marxist theory. In Helen's case, the anticipated future reward of permanent employment allowed the employer to derive the surplus value. Helen went on to speak about how moving out of the contingent faculty ranks will change her personal circumstances.

Certainly as a partial load instructor you don't have security. That's a major concern. As soon as I got my fulltime we purchased a new house. Even though my husband was employed full-time, we couldn't risk purchasing a new home while I was partial load. In other aspects I don't feel there is much difference because when I became a fulltime instructor I didn't become a better instructor. I'm the same. It's just the financial stability that I acquired and I don't have to worry so much about how many hours I will get.

Helen was the first person that I spoke to who explicitly saw and spoke about the connection between the employment practices in her organization and the larger public policy decisions made at the State level. In my discussions prior to Helen's, participants had expressed unhappiness with their contingent status, but they generally viewed these employment practices as a part of the college itself and not as the result of larger neoliberal economic practices. From a critical perspective, when people become aware of their circumstances, they can begin to work toward emancipation.

Ivan

As with Helen, I spoke with Ivan on the campus of the large metropolitan college in my study. Ivan did not have a private office but after some discussion with an administrative assistant, Ivan was able to find a small meeting room for us to use. Ivan had been with his college for just over five years when we met and through that time had been a contingent faculty member teaching as a partial-load instructor, which, as previously noted, is a category in which an instructor is limited to a maximum of twelve hours of teaching per week. Ivan's is at the maximum twelve hours and he noted that some of his peers who are classed as full-time faculty are only scheduled for as little as two hours more than him but yet find themselves in the more preferred full-time category. He was somewhat non-committal when I asked him about his future with the college.

If there is an opportunity to teach full-time by all means I would take that.

It just so happens that I recently went through a competition for a full-time position but I was not the successful candidate. One of the other things I'm trying to do is run my own business so that I'm not necessarily tied to the college. So if there are opportunities here to grow and benefit I will stick around but if something much more interesting comes along I would say goodbye to the college.

While Ivan seems somewhat ambivalent about his future with the college, he has taken steps to obtain full-time status by undergoing a job competition. In this respect he represents a hopeful full-timer by Gappa and Leslie's definition. I asked him to speak about what he viewed as the benefits of full-time, permanent status in the college.

Job security is one benefit as well as better fringe benefits and an increase to salary. But there are also advantages in terms of the type of courses that you're going to be teaching. Often partial load instructors are required to teach the courses that the full-timers don't want. Sometimes part-timers are taken advantage of because they are often asked to do extra work-related tasks for which they are not compensated. An example of that are the professional development courses where we take them on our own time whereas full-timers have access to paid time to take the courses.

I found this story time and time again, where contingent faculty are regularly expected to do work for which they are not compensated. Interestingly, it is never an explicit directive to take on this extra task. However, there is an implicit understanding that it should be done because not doing so will potentially impact one's progress within the organization. This phenomenon was seen again in Ivan's description of contingent faculty and their experiences with college committees.

There's an understanding by partial load faculty that they should be doing committee work because it looks good and it is one way to stand out from all other candidates when you are seeking a full-time position. But to do this activity you are actually donating your time, whereas the full-timers are allocated paid time to work on such committees or projects.

Ivan speaks of the unspoken rules of the organization that effectively require the contingent faculty member to donate time to the organization in order to have any hope of further promotion to full-time status. The cruel irony is that these non-

teaching activities often conflict with the part-timers' teaching schedule, a schedule painstakingly structured to ensure maximum contact hours, given that compensation is based entirely on hours of class contact. Throughout my discussion with Ivan, I noted other circumstances where unwritten rules and assumptions governed the work of contingent faculty. One assumption related to the different treatment of full-timers and part-timers in regards to class scheduling.

The scheduling of classes is obviously beneficial for the full-timers. From a scheduling perspective, once the full-timers are taken care of, then the partial load faculty schedules are addressed. Of course, associated with that is the fact that you could be scheduled during the middle of the day, five days a week. So from a class scheduling standpoint, I don't see the college looking at the interests of the partial load faculty.

Those same assumptions regarding the relative importance of contingent faculty extend into the views and practices of the faculty union as well. Although a partial load instructor is covered by the collective agreement, Ivan noted that, during a recent labour disruption in his college system, the substantive bargaining issues focused on the interests of full-time rather than part-time faculty. This led to some discussion among part-timers that they need their own union representation that is distinct from the bargaining agent for the full-time faculty.

One of the thoughts has been to actually have a complete separate union for the partial loads and the part timers. I think that would work more effectively than under the current union because even though we're paying

dues and we're members they're not necessarily concentrating or focusing on us. In terms of the settlement that occurred it was to the advantage of the full timer. I've had the opportunity to work with partial load faculty who have just become full-timers within the past year so they have a very good understanding of the amount of work that we put in and one of these individuals told me that moving to full-time status was like night and day. So in terms of the amount of work, we're basically being taken advantage of.

There is a rising sentiment within the part-time ranks of Ivan's college system that the contingent faculties' interests are not on the radar of management nor are they being taken into consideration by the faculty union. This has given rise to a movement to split off from the current union and seek a separate bargaining agent and collective agreement that might better represent the interests of part-timers. While neoliberalism has driven the rise in the numbers of contingent faculty, Aronowitz (1998) has written that academic unionism has not responded to the restructuring of higher education in the face of global capitalism. He notes that "academic labour has not yet devised a collective strategy to address its own future" (p. 220). My discussion with Ivan highlighted how contingent faculty are coming to recognize the limited voice that they have both within the administrative structure of their colleges as well as within that of their unions. This lack of voice and an identification of an unjust and undemocratic employment conditions is leading to the collective call for organized representation by a growing number of contingent faculty.

Jennifer

As I met Jennifer, I began to recognize a pattern related to where I met with my participants and their view of themselves as staff members in their respective colleges. Jennifer is a contingent faculty member teaching public relations at the large metropolitan college in my study. We met at a busy downtown coffee shop. In all cases, I left the choice of meeting place to my participants and I believe it is noteworthy that those who chose to meet on their college campus generally more strongly saw their futures as eventually involving full-time employment with their college. Aspiring full-timers used the College as a home-base to a greater extent than those contingent faculty who were satisfied, for the moment, to remain in a part-time role.

Jennifer was someone who, at this point in her career, was pleased with the casual nature of her relationship with her employer and focussed her comments on the value that she could bring to students by maintaining her connection to her industry.

I was a student at the college and I appreciated the applied hands-on learning that I received as a student, and I decided that I would like to come back some day as an industry professional to teach full-time and provide the same experience to students as I received. I'm still contemplating whether I would be interested in teaching fulltime down the road. I just know that at this point in time I'm of greater value to the students because I'm still plugged in. I can bring back relevant content as well as a relevant approach to doing public relations.

Jennifer's view of the value that her connection to industry brings to her students is echoed in the literature of contingent faculty (Cline, 1993; Cohen, 1992; Littrell, 1990). Phelan (1986) speaks of this link to the professions as a source of "norms, values, and information" for the development of curriculum (p. 8). Conversely, the literature also challenges the value of such an industry connection as a smoke-screen that hides the real motivation of college administration; that is, to use contingent faculty as a source of "cheap and controllable labour" (Mysyk, 2001). I asked Jennifer to reflect upon both the advantages and disadvantages of this connection to employment outside of academe.

I consistently get feedback from students that they enjoy the class because I am also plugged into a workplace and can give them relevant information. On the other hand I get a lot of feedback that concerns my availability. I go out of my way to make sure that we find a mode that's easy for them to ask questions and get responses. It's mutually agreed that email is a great way to start. As well, we use the in-between one class to the next class period so they do get out of class assistance from me. But they still compare this to the availability of fulltime staff where they can walk in and find a professor and ask questions whenever they want. So they transfer their expectations of walking in a speaking with full-time faculty to part-time faculty who need to follow a more structured, scheduled approach.

Jennifer talked about the relatively good rapport she had with full-time faculty, in part, because she knew them previously as a student. However, she found

meaningful interactions and sharing related college work with both full-timers and other part-timers to be very difficult organize.

I'm on campus one day a week for an afternoon so the interaction is very limited. The course I teach has multiple sections that are taught by other part-timers so it is very difficult to create a continuous flow of information to do things such as lesson planning or trouble-shooting together simply because we're not in the same space at the same time.

I asked Jennifer to tell me if she felt her needs as a part-timer might better be addressed through a union. I had previously seen some faculty who saw benefit in a union, others who felt that they needed union representation of part-time faculty only, and others who saw little value in unions in the academic environment.

Jennifer was definitely in this latter camp.

I have zero faith in the ability of a union to represent my interest.

Categorically. In terms of the college setting I think that my needs are being addressed and if they are not, I feel that there are enough venues for me to turn to without going to the union. I've watched closely how they've organized themselves and I couldn't care less.

Jennifer's experience of part-time teaching has been largely positive and she had little to say that could be characterized as negative. She did offer that she felt there should be a more collective approach to course planning to meet the needs of students. She returned to this theme a few times. She recognized that, as a part-timer, she acted independently and, while this independence came with the terrain of part-time teaching, she felt a need to do some better coordination.

I think it would be beneficial if they could dedicate time for course planning – time where collectively we could look at what are the needs of students. Beginning and end of term meetings do occur but they are not paid so you have to volunteer your time and they are not always scheduled in a way that allows part-time faculty to be there.

The expectation placed upon contingent faculty that they show up for unpaid work and that they will do so at times that meet the need of full-timers is a concern that is consistently raised. Even Jennifer, as satisfied as she is with her employment relationship, raised this issue.

My discussion with Jennifer got me thinking about a continuum I began to see emerging – a continuum of teaching motivation. Conceptually speaking, on one extreme some faculty who are teaching part-time find satisfaction and meaning in what they do and do not aspire to change the nature of their employment relationship. Further along this continuum are those teaching part-time who may be interested in a permanent teaching role at some point. I believe there is a large component who tend to understate their interest in permanent teaching. In other words, they are less ambivalent than they state and that, if a full-time position became available, they would take the position. Furthest along this continuum are contingent faculty actively seeking a move into the permanent faculty ranks. This conceptual image of a continuum is important in describing the lives of part-time faculty because it reflects the tendency for people's motivations and circumstances to change over time and also shows the development of an increasing loyalty to the organization. While the Gappa and

Leslie typology is useful, it tends to portray a snapshot in time of a collection of faculty, whereas the continuum view reflects the faculty more as individuals whose lives and motivations change over time. The continuum view is also consistent with my critical approach that respects, as Peters, Lankshear & Olssen (2003) describe it, the “local and particular nature of discursive phenomena rather than the universal” (p. 9) or Hoy & McCarthy’s (1994) view that plays up the “roles of contingency, locality, and identity in struggles against oppression” (p. 13). This more post-structural approach is rooted in such work as Atkinson (2002), who allows for the “acceptance of uncertainty” (p. 73); Lather (1998), who proposes a “praxis of not being so sure” (p. 492); and Fraser (1997, 2003), whose *perspectival dualism* describes a dialogic process. All the above post-structural approaches allow us to see the different nuances of faculty experience that are not captured by the broader and more universal categorizations in Gappa and Leslie.

Karen

I met Karen at yet another coffee shop in a suburb of the metropolitan centre where my large college is located. Karen made a conscious career change by taking a Bachelor of Education degree after having experienced a taste of teaching in a training role in her former private sector job in the financial services industry. She has always viewed part-time teaching as a means to eventually find herself in a permanent position. However, there is less urgency in Karen’s story than in that of other hopeful full-timers because, for personal reasons, the part-time work suited her life demands.

I'd like to teach fulltime at my college. That's been my goal all along. My mother passed away and through her illness she needed someone to take care of her and I was the oldest so the responsibility fell to me. But now that she has passed away, fulltime is where I'd like to go.

I asked Karen about her relationships with other faculty at her college and she offered some interesting new perspectives on the differences in her interactions with part-time faculty in continuing education and those with full-time faculty in the day program.

I do know some of my part-time teaching colleagues. I got to know them through a special program that we have implemented to assist new students with their English skills. Before I got involved with that program there was very little interaction. I would go into the office and the only person I would ever talk to was the coordinator or their assistant. You get your stuff out of your in-basket, get what you need, do your sign-in, go to your class and that's it. There was never any real interaction. With this new program, though, we have a fair number of opportunities for teachers to interact so I get to meet a lot of the staff. Now that's on the Continuing Education side. On the full-time side, you really don't get to meet them a lot and there's not a lot of mix and mingle. I feel that there is this view amongst full-time faculty that in Continuing Education there is no control over who's teaching, or an understanding of their background, or no consistency in teaching or they might be here one semester and next semester they're gone. But by the same token I find personally there

seems to be very little accountability for the fulltime staff. Let's face it, when you're a fulltime teacher after your two years probation, the union protects you and you have to do something extraordinary to be fired.

This view that part-time faculty are held to a higher level of scrutiny than their full-time counterparts had not come up in my interviews prior to Karen. Although there is a clear differential treatment of the two groups in terms of such things as compensation and benefits, preparation time, professional development and involvement in policymaking, this was the first time I heard a part-timer who held the perception that regular program faculty viewed part-timers in a negative light. While the literature (largely written by full-time faculty) is replete with negative characterizations of contingent faculty (Benjet & Loweth, 1989; McGuire, 1993; Tuckman, 1978; Franklin, Laurence, & Denham, 1988; Heinzelman, 1986; Reed, 1985; Tillyer, 2005; Gappa & Leslie, 1993; Wallace, 1984) when I spoke to part-time faculty they did not often state that they felt that they were viewed negatively by their full-time peers. The part-timers I spoke to generally felt that they had a good working relationship with all staff at their institutions.

As we continued our discussion, I asked Karen about her access to professional development and, while she was pleased with the access she had to ongoing development, the divide she drew my attention to above emerged again in our discussion of professional development.

I find a lot of that professional development is aimed at strategies of teaching and learning and when you get there you find that you're in with a group of people who are fulltime and you're the part timer. There are

times when you feel like your opinion doesn't count as much because you only do this in a part-time basis and "we do this all the time so we know more".

This sense of a divide between the full-timer and the part-timer continued as I asked Karen to tell me her thoughts about how the union represents her interests as a part-timer.

The union sets all the rules to favour the full-time faculty so that for the part-time faculty there is no representation. The money we're paid for what we do is peanuts. You only get paid for in-class time, you get no prep time, no marking time, nothing. And when you're teaching courses like I am that are all English the marking is phenomenal. I left a high paying job to teach so I'm not in it for the money, but the lower pay for part-timers really reflects how they are viewed by the college.

The word *underclass* continued to come to mind as I thought about how contingent faculty were describing their experiences. Benjet and Loweth (1989) use the term in their study looking at English teachers in two-year colleges. As Karen and others have noted, contingent faculty sometimes feel they are looked down upon by full-time peers, by College management and even by their union. But even beyond a form of overt mistreatment, an underclass more often becomes so because its needs are overlooked and its contribution to the organization is taken for granted. This blindness to the needs of part-timers is surprising, given that the community college systems in both Canada and the United States have come to rely heavily on contingent faculty. In fact, the numbers of part-time

faculty far outweigh full-time faculty in our community colleges. Their mistreatment represents neoliberal hegemony in action as bottom-line market influences frame the employer/employee relationship, rather than goals that underpin what Ferrer Llop (2005) refers to as the “social commitment” of the university. Llop is the Rector of the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya and the President of the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI). GUNI arose from the World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE) held in Paris in 1998 and is supported by UNESCO. Llop challenges universities to make social commitment a cornerstone of their policy, in the face of globalization and neoliberalism. This social commitment is not entirely externally focussed, as Llop writes that one attribute of that social commitment is the promotion of a *caring institution* that will “stimulate dialogue, consensus and participation and not treat each other as cheap labour” (p. 3).

Larry

I spoke with Larry on a Saturday morning in his mid-town office at a large insurance company where he works full-time in the communications department. Larry also teaches part-time in the large metropolitan college in my study. I asked him to talk about motivations for teaching and I was struck by his eloquence in connecting his view of teaching to his previous career as a journalist. As I have noted previously, full-time faculty and less often part-timers speak of a mission driven motivation for teaching. Larry definitely had a mission driven approach to teaching.

What happened that first night is that I realized that teaching really fulfilled something that I'd always wanted to do. As a journalist, one of the motivations inside me was to influence people. To seek the truth through journalism and to have the greatest influence that I could in terms of helping people to understand what was going on in the world around them. And after teaching, I realized that that's what I'm really doing. Perhaps not as broad as being in journalism but it's one person at a time. And it's working with people, helping them along, and sharing what I know.

One concern raised regularly by contingent faculty is the lack of opportunity they have to interact with other teachers because their work patterns have them dropping in and out of campus. Larry's department has partly addressed this issue with an end of semester get together for part-time faculty.

All of the part time teachers get together at the end of each semester with their marks and their final exams and it's a chance for the college to interact with you in terms of how are things going? Are there any issues on a broad sort of level everybody would be interested in knowing about such as any harassment issues, plagiarism, and those kinds of things? And then we talk about any questionable grades that we have. There may be some students who are borderline that need a mark or two to pass and we will discuss whether we would like them to write a supplementary exam in order to have that chance to pass. And if we have any failures we generally discuss why and ensure that they are a clear failure. So you get

to talk to the part time teachers. And you tend to find those teachers who are teaching the same courses that you are and share your experiences with them because we have a dinner first for about an hour. It's very casual.

As much as it was clear to me that Larry had blossomed in his newly-found teaching role, as with many part-timers his teaching career started with little support from his college. I asked him to describe the orientation program he was provided when he first started his part-time teaching role.

There's an orientation session that is a couple of hours but for me it was on my first night of teaching so I had to run off to teach my class without the full benefit of it. I wouldn't say it was too much oriented to teaching as a profession so much as "here's _____ College, here's our rules, here's where to get resources, here's how the library works, here's how to get AV equipment", and those sort of tactical kinds of things. They do run a lot of courses for the teachers; the type that are more oriented to teaching as a profession. But a lot of them are during the day and I have a fulltime job here so I can't go.

Larry talked further about his experiences as a first-time teacher.

I had the previous teacher's syllabus and I had to create my own before the class started so I kind of winged it. The first course I taught was a verbal communication course and there was no textbook or exams for that course. There were a couple of formal presentations and an assignment that I graded and that was the basis of the mark. So it was a good place to start because it was kind of flexible and not very regimented and it allowed me

to get my feet wet. But I was scared to death before that first class. “How do I be a teacher?” I asked myself. “There must be some way to be a teacher”. So for about the first half hour of the class I was doing whatever act I thought was a teacher act and I suddenly started feeling very uncomfortable. People were sitting there staring at me blankly. I said to myself, “OK, this isn’t working so maybe just be myself.” And that worked.

As he noted, Larry has full-time job, but manages to teach two, three-hour evening courses per week at the college. He describes how he manages his time.

For two nights a week I scoot up to the college directly from work and I’m there until 10 o’clock at night. There are always students who want to talk afterwards so I’m there usually until 10:30, maybe 11 o’clock. Then I head home. Plus we have to prepare for each class. I originally thought that I would do my modules for each of the 14 weeks and then I’d be laughing. I thought that the next time I teach it I would just follow those modules. But I found that every class is different and there’s always preparation before each class. And the writing and the marking in the writing course is heavy. They have in the fourteen weeks, seven marked items, including assignments, a project, a presentation, and a term exam and a final exam. So I’m spending most of the rest of the week each evening doing a little bit of marking and class prep.

Larry views his current teaching role as preparing him for a second career in teaching once he retires from his full-time job in communications. But he doesn't believe he would like to teach full-time and he describes why.

I don't think fulltime. One of the things that I've noticed is that a lot of the students I have come from full-time day programs. My writing course is a kind of completer course for a number of finance, business and accounting programs. Those students are not writers nor do they want to be a writer. They don't even really want to be in that class but they have to take the course and they have to pass the course to get their Certified General Accounting designation or whatever program they're in. So what I get exposed to is their view of their regular fulltime teachers and typically it's not always good. But I'm not blaming the teachers. I think there's a difference between somebody who has a couple of classes a week and then goes away. The way they commit themselves to the students is a little bit different than someone who's doing it eight hours a day plus going home and doing all the prep and marking and so on. The luxury that I have right now is that if a student says to me, "I have to be out of town on the night of the mid-term exam, can I write it another night?" I'll say "sure I'll meet you at the college on Thursday night if you're free." I'll go into the library with them with a book and I'll sit there and I'll read for three hours while they're doing their exam. As a part-timer I have that kind of flexibility to do things like that. But maybe as a full-time teacher I would not have. I'd be so consumed with the regular routines of the day and the night time

activities that I'd have no energy left to do that kind of thing. So I think it would be part-time to allow me to continue to teach the way I want to teach.

Larry offered some interesting feedback about what he viewed as the positive aspects of employing contingent faculty as well as some ideas to improve that experience. It is a message that I have heard before, that contingent faculty bring important expertise from the world of work to the classroom. However, their colleges do not fully embrace them by investing in their ongoing development as teachers.

I think that the college should offer courses that are available for teachers that are more focused on teaching as a profession. How to handle certain classroom situations, students' differences in learning ability, how to structure class discussions in the most effective way. The things that you kind of make up as you go along and you never know quite know whether it's effective or not. And I think that they need to start making those courses available to me, either online or on evenings or weekends as a rule. When I go through the PD calendar, it's almost always during the week. And so that really rules out the majority of part-time teachers who work fulltime.

Finally, Larry offered his thoughts on the value of part-time teachers in colleges.

I think it's something that should be encouraged and remain because it is a great asset, both for the students to have somebody who's currently in the world of business that they're going into and it's a wonderful experience

for people like me who not only get to share our profession and what we have learned over the years, but we get to do something that has some inside fulfillment that has nothing to do with our profession. And that's a wonderful experience. Wonderful experience.

I came away from my discussion with Larry impressed with his contemplative and sincere appraisal of teaching in today's college. He was the first contingent faculty member I spoke to who raised concerns about the teaching load of full-timers who often did not have time to do the things they would like to do for their students. While my research focuses on the neoliberal impacts of the experiences of contingent faculty, Larry helped me recognize that the neoliberal forces confronting our colleges are affecting all staff and I am cautioned that there is a danger in viewing staff groups in isolation as economic pressures affecting one group will have rippling impacts on other staff groups throughout the organization. As an example, the employment of part-time faculty can result in inconsistent teaching approaches (Samuel, 1989; Thompson, 1992) that may lead to challenges for full-time faculty who may then encounter these students in upper level courses. Similarly, part-time faculty may not have had appropriate access to professional development and may not be familiar with new pedagogical practices that are being planned for implementation within a department (Digranes & Digranes, 1995; Gappa & Leslie, 2002; Kelly, 1990). The result is that the employment of part-time faculty may actually lead to more work for full-time faculty and result in tension between the two groups.

Margaret

I can't think of any two words that are a more befitting description of Margaret than the words "a character." I met Margaret in her own apartment in a building in the uptown area of the large metropolitan city in my study. I knew that I was in for a different discussion when she began asking well-informed questions about my own background as she had "googled" me prior to my arrival. It was also the first discussion that included my introduction to a pet – a friendly cat that planted itself on my lap for the duration of our discussion. I politely explained away the symptoms of my cat allergy as a slight cold that was coming on.

Most importantly, Margaret was the most difficult interview of the entire group that I conducted. Up to this point, I have described my interviews as discussions, because I attempted in every case to create a back and forth dialogue of the type that one finds in an authentic discussion. I consider that I was most successful in creating this type of dialogue in my discussion with Margaret, because we largely set aside the question and answer sequencing because she really had little interest in answering questions – she simply wanted to talk. And talk she did. While initially I was not quite sure how to address this circumventing of my process, I eventually just set my questions aside, sat back and let Margaret drive the discussion where she wanted. I am glad I did, because I learned more about Margaret's experience by letting her lead than I ever could have by sticking to my, by now, somewhat travel-worn process.

Margaret has lived alone (with apologies to Fluffy the cat) since her husband passed away suddenly a number of years ago. This information is

relevant, as Margaret related to me the story of how, at the time of her husband's death, the president of her college had made arrangements for her family and guests who were arriving in town for the funeral to stay at the college's residence. This story represents how entrenched she has become within the college organization and culture. Through her career at the college she has made it a priority to become involved in committees, get to know the executive leadership including the college President, and generally be plugged into the college culture, including the friendly gossip that is part of every organization. Margaret's connection to the college is all the more remarkable when one considers that her workload has never exceeded the teaching of two courses at any one time or summer-time sessional work. Through her thirty years of part-time work, she has built a close and intense relationship with the College unlike any I had seen in my other discussions. In the course of our time together she talked about college cleanliness, security, staff morale, comparisons to other colleges and her favourite presidents. I asked Margaret to tell me what inspired her long career of part-time teaching.

I love to watch the students stretch and grow. While they were writing an exam today, I was marking some assignments and I was thinking, "Oh my God, look at the difference between this grade and the first grade." I love when I see that they are getting it, just getting the whole concept. That's what I love. It just makes you feel good.

When I asked Margaret to describe ways circumstances could be improved for contingent faculty her answers ranged from the specific to the broadly

organizational. She told me that the College should not turn down the heat on weekends because there are still continuing education classes occurring. She also told me that the bad evening lighting on campus forced her to stop teaching in the evenings because it was becoming difficult to manoeuvre her walker in the darker night-time hours. In the next breath she talked about what leadership attributes in a college president are important for the health of the overall organization. The differences in printing services offered to part-timers and full-timers was a good example of her focus on a specific issue.

My students had their exam today but they weren't printed, they weren't ready. So then I had to sign my life away to go up and get photocopies of it. That is darn well annoying but it's the way that things are. They [full-timers] have their own copy cards. We have to wait for somebody on the desk on the weekend to be free to do the photocopying for us. And I should have known better. I should have made my own copies here at home since I have my own photocopier, and then brought the darn things in. Would of, should of, could of.

More broadly speaking Margaret then naturally moved to offer some advice for college presidents on how they could improve morale in an organization.

I think it's very important for the president of a college to be visible. I mean that person has got a very big job. They're very, very busy and I understand that. But it is important to be visible.

I asked Margaret whether she felt that representation in a union would improve circumstances for part-time faculty in her college. As always, she was direct in her response.

I was asked to head up a union at this college. I said, "No." I said, "I will not head up a union simply because you're all bitching too much. And I'm not interested in bitching. If you can come forward with some positive things you want to do as a union, I said, I'll look at it."

My discussion with Margaret led me to wonder how she managed to become so deeply interested and engaged in the organization and culture of her college. Others I talked to who had such a limited workload had very little connection to the college itself. Of course, her longevity with the college may have had something to do with this connection, as might her own life circumstances. She was retired from her full-time employment and thus her college employer benefitted from her full attention. But beyond these aspects of her experience with the college, I believe another defining characteristic of her experience allowed her to connect with the college: Margaret's college has a college-wide committee that is known as *Academic Council* and a seat is set aside on this council for a part-time faculty member. Margaret was a council member for a time and I saw the impact of this experience throughout my conversation with her, as she referred back to her time on the Council on many occasions. I could tell that this experience was defining in the manner in which it helped her establish a more concrete relationship with the college. Her involvement in

college governance and bureaucracy provided her with a voice and has allowed her to make a contribution to the life of the college beyond the classroom.

Giving voice to those who are usually silenced is an important theme in critical social theory. However, often the voices of contingent faculty have been marginalized within the academy, so much so that Gappa and Leslie actually title their 1993 book about contingent teachers, *The Invisible Faculty*. The literature speaks of the increase in the reliance on contingent faculty as having a marginalizing effect on both the contingent and permanent faculty, especially as it impacts upon the shared governance model in academic institutions. Buck (2002) has called the “overuse and abuse of contingent faculty, especially of poorly paid and marginalized part-time adjuncts and lecturers” a “major threat to academic freedom and shared governance” (p. 1). Hall and Wagner (2005) write that “the system of shared governance seems under attack as well, since contract faculty are often either barred or marginalized from governance activities” (p. 7). Curtis and Jacobe (2006) speak about a “corporate organizational model, in which faculty are increasingly marginalized in institutional decision-making and faculty work is increasingly ‘unbundled’ into isolated tasks” (p. 15).

In the face of this marginalization, Giroux (1988) speaks of creating critical spaces where alternative voices can come together “to struggle together within social relations that strengthen rather than weaken possibilities for active citizenship” (p. 201). McCarthy (2001) acknowledges the power of neoliberalism and its expression in the global market-based economies, but argues that the task is to gain “democratic control over them” (p. 422). Margaret provides a good

example of contingent faculty citizenship in the face of neoliberalism within her college. Through her active committee participation she has had a voice in college governance and a broader engagement with the college community.

Nora

My final two discussions were held with contingent faculty from the small rural college in my study. I met Nora at a satellite learning centre of her College. Nora teaches Early Childhood Education on a term contract in a smaller community a few hours drive from the main campus community. Nora provides a good example of a contingent faculty who teaches full-time, but whose employment with her college is tenuous because it is contingent on a contract between a government funding agency and the college being continued. This contracted type of program is becoming increasingly prominent in Canada's community college system and is a direct result of the neoliberal pressures to address market demand. In many communities, only when there is significant enough market demand are colleges able to offer programs, and then only on a one-time basis. This leaves many faculty living from contract to contract without any guarantees of ongoing work.

In terms of workload, Nora is in the classroom fourteen hours per week, a period consistent with many other permanent faculty members in her college. Nora exhibits great enthusiasm for her teaching as well as a strong connection to the needs of her students. In particular she recognizes their need to have education provided in their home communities.

I love it. I started out teaching children but over the last few years I've started teaching adults. I was very intimidated at first, but now I really enjoy it and I find it really rewarding. Because I've lived in small communities I know what it's like to try and get an education. I myself had to move to be able to go get my education, which was great because I was young, I didn't have a family and I could do that. But about half of my students have families or other commitments such as jobs, so community-based education is ideal for them.

As a contingent faculty member whose employment is never guaranteed, it is challenging enough for Nora to feel part of the college community. However, she faces a special challenge because she is physically separated from her peers at the main college campus. Nora talks about how she keeps a connection to the college:

We use teleconferencing quite a bit. My immediate supervisor is in contact with me every second day. We generally talk about course materials and just chat about how things are going. Then about two or three times a year I go to the [main college campus] for a visit. I do find it would be very remote at times all by myself.

The absence of close colleagues leaves Nora with little opportunity informally to learn about new teaching techniques that will help her deal with classroom challenges. However, she has demonstrated a keen interest in student success and has endeavoured to be innovative in her approaches to meet the special needs of many of her students.

Many of my students have not been students for a long time, so it can be a struggle for them. I've tried to be understanding and tried to think of different ways of reaching out to them. We had one student that did so well and I knew she knew all the material, but as an Aboriginal student there was a language barrier that was a special challenge for her. I found that she had a hard time actually writing things down. So we made some exceptions for her in such things as tests and we did more verbal work. Rather than require her to write things down all the time we would tape record her answers to ensure that she had mastered the material. So in that way I would call myself a flexible teacher who tries to focus on the needs of the students.

I found Nora's story interesting for what it said about the potential of contingent faculty to develop pedagogical innovation outside of the formal structure of the college. Nora was rooted in her community and had a strong personal and community interest in ensuring that her students were successful. Her distance from the main campus allowed her some freedom to try new approaches that might not be immediately acceptable on the main campus, but that worked for her and her students in their own cultural context.

This critiquing of traditional pedagogical practice and the post-modern respect for cultural context should be viewed as an area of opportunity for contingent faculty to contribute to growth and vitality in our traditional academic institutions. In fact, because contingent faculty often do not carry a research workload and focus on teaching only, there may be an opportunity for contingent

faculty to be involved in explorations of the scholarship of teaching (Kreber, 2003). Such research might include developing a better understanding of the appropriate balance between academic training and field of practice experience as preparation for teaching (Banachowski, 1989). There may also be ways to structure contingent faculty work in such a manner that they may engage in traditional research. In fact, some contingent faculty unions have started to negotiate research funding and leaves (albeit without pay) within their collective agreements (CUPE local 3903).

My discussion with Nora demonstrates that contingent faculty bring new perspectives to teaching that are often informed by the pragmatism that is part of fields of practice. While some literature finds that contingent faculty (Digranes & Digranes, 1995; Gappa & Leslie, 2002; Kelly, 1990) are less likely than permanent faculty to introduce innovation into their teaching practice, there is also literature that finds that, given the opportunities for professional development, contingent faculty are just as likely to consider new pedagogical practices (Impara, Hoerner, Clowes & Alkins, 1991; Kelly, 1992; Rhodes, 1991).

Oliver

The final stop on my journey through the lives of contingent faculty took me to a small town coffee shop on a cold December evening. There I met Oliver, a part-time farmer and part-time instructor at his local community college. While I write *part-time* farmer, those who know farming say that it is never a part-time job. Oliver begins his day working on his farm for about an hour and then makes his way to his college where he works from 8 AM to 2:30. Then it's back to the

farm to work for the balance of the day. Oliver has a seventy-five percent workload at this college and in this role he is included in the collective agreement. It wasn't always so, however, as he was previously on contract and was not covered by the collective agreement. I asked him what changes came about as a result of his change in status.

I was able to join the pension plan and the health plan; benefits that I could not have as a contract employee. Also tax is deducted off my pay check, whereas previously I was treated as a business contractor and the tax was not deducted. Those are pretty much the only differences. In terms of how I was treated by the full-timers, my work often took me out on the road to teach courses and to supervise exams. What I found is that because I was out of the office a lot, you're not really treated like a real instructor if you're not there all the time.

I asked Oliver how he was treated differently as a part-time instructor

Now how can I word this politely? Courses that I would pick up at the college would be courses that the permanent instructors didn't like. Courses like customer service, human resources, or soft skill courses that do not directly involve agriculture. Also, when I first started as a part-timer it was quite a while before I was invited to faculty meetings. I was considered part-time. Therefore I could not contribute. So regular faculty would be invited, but part-time faculty would not be invited. I believe that had an impact on my students because a main topic of discussion at those meetings were students at risk, but because I and other part-timers weren't

attending we had no avenue at that time to say, "Look, I've got a student not attending very well and having problems. I don't know whether it's reading skills. I don't know what it is." So how do I express my concern and how do I hear whether other instructors have other things to say? We raised concerns and subsequently part-timers have been invited to meetings. Overall, as a part-timer you really don't feel part of the team. It's like you're parachuted in and bang, you do your fifty-five minutes and then disappear. I don't think you're a good instructor when you do that. You need to feel like you're part of something.

Oliver also felt that part-time faculty had more to offer his college than they were given credit for in terms of currency and a connection to their industry. He noted that part-timers had very little role to play in the curriculum planning process, an area where he felt they could make a valuable contribution.

Livestock was a perfect example in our college. The permanent instructors had no interest in livestock, and in reality livestock is an important part of the agricultural industry in our province. So, I thought that part-time instructors had something to contribute at the end of the year in terms of what worked, what didn't work and where do we go from here. But that opportunity to provide feedback just wasn't here.

I was pleased that serendipity led me to Oliver as the final participant in my cross-Canada journey through the lives and work of contingent faculty. I say this because Oliver's experience represented themes that I heard again and again. These themes included missed opportunities to fully utilize his experience,

wisdom and commitment to improve the College's service to students. Oliver wanted to more deeply engage in discussions of student success, but barriers were placed in his way – barriers that had traditionally separated the full-time and the part-time faculty. He also wanted to bring his experience in his field of practice to the college, but no process was in place to allow a part-timer to bring this experience into the curriculum development process. Oliver's story is reflected in the literature in a number of prominent ways. He was required to teach courses that permanent faculty preferred not to teach (Curtis & Jacobe, 2006), had difficulty finding the time and space to offer out-of-class counselling to students (Abel, 1984; Boyer, 1987; Curtis & Jacobe, 2006) and was marginalized from governance and curriculum development processes (Rajagopal & Farr, 1989; Gappa & Leslie, 2002; Banachowski, 1996; Bowen and Schuster, 1986).

Oliver's story represents a microcosm of what the literature has to say about the contingent faculty experience and is also reflective of many of the themes that I heard throughout my own discussions with contingent faculty. Before I move to make policy recommendations designed to improve the contingent faculty experience and strengthen colleges, I will conclude this section by reviewing what I heard in my fifteen discussions, drawing together consistencies in these stories and viewing these consistencies in the context of the literature.

Conclusion

While I began this chapter attempting to consider my research participants within Gappa and Leslie's (1993) typology of part-time faculty, I soon found that each life and each experience was too rich and too complex to so simply categorize. Differences in each individual, in each college and in each regional and provincial context together acted to create fifteen different stories. However, while I am unable to easily "type" each participant within the Gappa and Leslie framework, consistent themes emerged across the participants that were also tied into the literature. First, and almost universally, I heard that my participants were seeking a stronger relationship with their college employer. While not all participants were seeking permanent work or even a long-term relationship, they wanted to feel that they were more equitably embraced as employees within their colleges in whatever employment capacity they found themselves. For example, participants wanted more input into policy decisions being taken regarding curriculum and more dialogue regarding how to provide academic counselling services to students. Oliver stated that:

When I first started as a part-timer it was quite a while before I was invited to faculty meetings. I was considered part time. Therefore I could not contribute. So regular faculty would be invited, but part time faculty would not be invited. I believe that had an impact on my students because a main topic of discussion at those meetings were students at risk but because I and other part-timers weren't attending we had no avenue at that time to say, "Look, I've got a student not attending very well and having

problems. I don't know whether it's reading skills. I don't know what it is."

Karen spoke about how she felt when she sought to provide input on pedagogical matters in gatherings with her permanent faculty peers:

There are times when you feel like your opinion doesn't count as much because you only do this in a part-time basis and "we do this all the time so we know more."

Jennifer pointed out that even if the opportunity existed for contingent faculty to feed into the academic policy making process, the reality arose that they would need to volunteer their time for this purpose.

Beginning and end of term meetings do occur but they are not paid so you have to volunteer your time and they are not always scheduled in a way that allows part-time faculty to be there.

Carl had similar observations

I'd always have to go back to the campus to be involved in the staff meetings. I didn't resent that, but I was certainly aware that it was happening. There were meetings scheduled as well during afternoon work time that I wouldn't be paid for, that other people would be paid for.

This circumstance was echoed by Ivan

There's an understanding by partial load faculty that they should be doing committee work because it looks good and it is one way to stand out from all other candidates when you are seeking a full-time position. But to do

this activity you are actually donating your time whereas the full-timers are allocated paid time to work on such committees or projects.

Larry talked about the value of such dialogue that took place among the contingent faculty in his department.

All of the part time teachers get together at the end of each semester with their marks and their final exams and it's a chance for the college to interact with you in terms of how are things going? Are there any issues on a broad sort of level everybody would be interested in knowing about such as any harassment issues, plagiarism, and those kinds of things? ... So you get to talk to the part time teachers. And you tend to find those teachers who are teaching the same courses that you are and share your experiences with them because we have a dinner first for about an hour. It's very casual.

This need for dialogue and engagement within the organization allows us to consider a critical social response in which democracy is a guiding principle. Banfield (2003) writes about the need to overcome the "collective forgetfulness" (p. 14) that blinds marginalized groups to their real predicament. Hill (2003) argues that neoliberalism is allowed to flourish when it is unchallenged by an "ideologically compliant" (p. 6) workforce. Contingent faculty need to come to an awareness that the denial of their right to a voice within the policy making arena is antidemocratic and is also antithetical to the principle of academic freedom and shared governance (Hall & Wagner, 2005).

Another very prominent theme that arose in my discussion was the concern regarding a lack of consultation over the scheduling of work as well as the lack of continuity in employment. My participants regularly spoke of having little input into class schedule development and also of receiving very little lead-time when they did receive their schedules, as Amanda related:

With all my experiences with term positions, it's always been a really unacceptable amount of prep time. Very rarely do you get more than just a couple of weeks.

Grace talked about the impact that last minute scheduling had on her:

I don't like it because I'm scrambling at the last minute to put everything together. By nature I'm an organized person; I like things planned and organized, so that puts a lot of stress on me and then I find I'm scrambling for the first month of the term because I've had such late notice.

Ivan saw evidence in the scheduling process of a pattern of second-class treatment of contingent faculty:

The scheduling of classes is obviously beneficial for the full-timers. From a scheduling perspective, once the full-timers are taken care of, then the partial load faculty schedules are addressed...from a class scheduling standpoint, I don't see the college looking at the interests of the partial load faculty.

The imposition of class schedules with little or no consultation stands, for me, as the most blatant example of the second class treatment of contingent faculty by their employer. Permanent faculty will generally have some input into the

structure of their timetable and will not stand for an arbitrarily imposed approach. Yet the power dynamics within colleges related to the tenuous nature of contingent employment allows the practice to persist. In reality, contingent faculty have a great deal of collective power given the increasing reliance on them by post-secondary institutions. Rikowski (in Hill, 2003) has argued that a critical response to neoliberalism raises the awareness of groups as to the power of their labour and underpins this awareness “with critical insight that seeks to undermine the smooth running of the social production of labour-power” (p. 4).

A final prominent theme that I observed throughout my discussions was the desire for professional development on the part of contingent faculty. The stories told by many of their first experiences in the classroom were of being tossed in front of a class with little or no preparatory training in such things as lesson planning or classroom management. Likewise, they saw ongoing professional development as an important feature of academic life, yet something that they had access to more infrequently than their permanent faculty counterparts. Grace relates her very common first experience in the classroom:

My very first time teaching I was given nothing. I got a previous course outline, the syllabus and I was told to go to it.

Larry described his initial orientation training as quite limited with little focus on the practice of teaching.

There’s an orientation session that is a couple of hours but for me it was on my first night of teaching so I had to run off to teach my class without the full benefit of it. I wouldn’t say it was too much oriented to teaching as

a profession so much as “Here’s _____ College, here’s our rules, here’s where to get resources, here’s how the library works, here’s how to get AV equipment”, and those sort of tactical kinds of things.

When professional development was made available, contingent faculty tended to find it useful and something that allowed them to improve their practice. Francine provided an example of this:

The first professional development that I was involved with was the teaching approaches seminar that took place at my college. It was fantastic and taught me so many things. It just completely opened up my mind to different teaching styles that I had not been flexible to before.

The unwillingness of colleges to invest in professional development for their contingent faculty is connected to neoliberal pressures to keep costs low in the face of declining public investments in higher education. As “cheap and controllable labour” (Mysyk, 2001, p. 73.) contingent faculty are not viewed as warranting further investment in their development, because their employment is anticipated to be short-term and casual. Again, this treatment is antidemocratic when held up against a critical social definition of democracy that incorporates themes of equality, justice and freedom (Giroux, 2005). It is important to consider what the interest on the part of contingent faculty in professional development says about their view of themselves as college employees. While not all contingent faculty that I spoke with are presently interested in permanent teaching employment, their desire for professional development shows that they want to

improve their practice and position themselves for a more permanent relationship at some future time.

In this chapter I have presented the substance of my discussions with contingent faculty. I believe that, due in large part to the research method, this depiction has been richer and more complex than that previously revealed in the literature. This post-modernist approach to giving voice to individual faculty through my semi-structured interview process, now provides me an opportunity to articulate a new view of contingent faculty in today's colleges. In the next and final chapter of this study, I take what I have learned through my discussions with contingent faculty and construct critical social policy alternatives that will enrich both colleges and the work and lives of contingent faculty.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
**A NEW PRAXIS FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF CONTINGENT
FACULTY IN CANADA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES**

Very early on in my journey through PhD studies, I recall a casual conversation with a fellow student that centred on the “nature” of doctoral study. A requirement of doctoral study was, we agreed, to stretch ourselves beyond our ontological, epistemological and professional comfort zones in order to discover new, original insights. To be successful as doctoral researchers we needed to find a way to rise above our *everyday*. Therefore, when I first embarked on this journey my early research inclinations were to suppress my own biases about the nature of reality, my views on how knowledge develops and, perhaps most importantly, the interplay between my work-life and my research life. As with all journeys, however, I found that the journey itself was more important than the arrival at the destination. Rather than taking the initially planned route I found a personal “road less travelled” along the way and as a result my original views of doctoral study have changed considerably. Most importantly, my immersion in postmodern discourse has shown me that my history matters – my view of the world, my past as a learner and even what I have chosen to do for a living have all shaped me as a human being and consequently as a researcher. As a result of this new awareness of my own legitimacy within the research process, I have negotiated for myself a balanced approach that has allowed me to acknowledge the centrality of my personal history all the while adapting my understanding as I reflected upon the “otherness” that was revealed in the stories of my participants. My journey has taught me that my personal engagement in the research process

does not invalidate the voices of my research participants; rather, it magnifies those voices as we together construct a new praxis for contingent faculty in today's community colleges. It is to the construction of this new praxis that this chapter will turn. However, before moving to explore recommendations for the improved engagement of contingent faculty in the face of neoliberalism, and in light of my personal reflections presented above, I will take some time to position myself as an active player within this process.

In my working life I am currently the President and Chief Executive Officer of one of the larger community colleges in Canada. There are approximately one-hundred and fifty such institutions that are generally found in the membership of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges. The membership comprises the CEGEP institutions in the province of Quebec as well as a number of very large technical institutions throughout Canada. Canada's community colleges are, first and foremost, institutions of access. They have at their core the mandate to provide increased accessibility for Canadians, and, increasingly, international students, to post-secondary education. They have also traditionally served to provide bridging programs for adults who did not complete high school in order that they then might continue on in post-secondary education. This aspect of the community college system is something that inspires me and provides me with a great sense of professional accomplishment. In my role, I have the opportunity to see "first generation" students – those students who come from families with no history of post-secondary education – transform their lives through education and offer themselves as role models for their families and

communities. Very often, these first generation students come from marginalized communities such as those of Aboriginal peoples or visible minority new Canadians. To the extent that I play a small part in the success of such people, I view my professional role as being mission-driven and I take great personal and professional satisfaction from my work.

Community colleges in Canada also have also traditionally had another very clear mandate; that is, to provide education and training that is workforce related. Expressed another way, the community colleges have existed to provide students with the skills needed to find and succeed in a job. The above two traditional goals – to offer accessibility and to provide the skills necessary to obtain employment – are being challenged by an emerging new goal; that of anticipating and responding to the needs of the neoliberal market economy. Recall in chapter two I identified five attributes of neoliberalism and I then demonstrated how those attributes were manifested in today's post-secondary system. They were:

1. the movement of social responsibility from the public to private sector which has brought about a higher reliance on student tuition and fundraising in the private sector,
2. the role of the state in reinforcing capitalist interests is seen in government policy that recasts colleges as an arm of government that drives an economic development agenda,
3. the view of individuals as enterprising and competitive entrepreneurs within the marketplace is reflected in the dual role of students as

- consumers with higher customer service expectations and as a high-demand human resource commodity to be sold to business and industry,
4. the pre-eminence of the market as the most appropriate and neutral mechanism for the distribution of wealth on the basis of effort and merit has led colleges to stray from their original mandate to provide highly accessible learning opportunities and
 5. the redefinition of social and political spheres by economic market principles and mechanisms is seen in the movement of colleges away from their earlier mandates to meet the local needs of their communities.

These above neoliberal forces are leading to significant changes in the Canadian college system as represented by new college charters, the evolution of colleges into polytechnic institutions designed to assist governments to meet economic development agendas and an increased role prominence of the private sector in both the funding and the operations of colleges.

To close the introduction to this chapter, it is important that I review the intent of this research, that is to understand the impact that neoliberalism in higher education is having on the lives of contingent faculty. Recall my research question: *How have life, learning, and work patterns of contingent faculty been affected by the rise of the neoliberalism in higher education?* Through my literature review and my own interactions with contingent faculty I have found that neoliberalism's presence in higher education has led to a contingent class of faculty that is simultaneously embraced and rejected. They are embraced for their currency in their fields of practice, for their connections to the private sector and

for their often entrepreneurial ideas about the role that post-secondary education can play. Conversely, they are rejected (metaphorically speaking) as an underclass that is used to balance budgets, is subject to arbitrary lay-off and is denied generally accepted faculty rights such as accrual of seniority, the right to bargain, academic freedom and a voice in the collegial management of the faculty department. This denial of rights has created a growing faculty that is viewed as second tier and whose denial of rights threatens the academic principles of integrity, autonomy and democracy within our institutions of higher learning. Critical social theory is well-positioned to respond to this encroachment and offers a counter-balance to neoliberalism's growing hegemony in higher education. My focus on the real-life circumstances of contingent faculty has extended the discussion from the theoretical and typological discourses in the literature to a new praxis that is rooted in some concrete recommendations. It is to a presentation and discussion of those recommendations that I now turn.

As the president and CEO of a college in Canada, there are some things that I acknowledge that I have the power to achieve and there are other things that I recognize that I cannot accomplish in the face of the current economic and public policy reality. Before turning to these, it is important for me to describe the dual role that I fulfill within the college. A college president is the most senior-level operational person responsible for planning and day to day operations of the college. Distinct from this, the role of CEO describes a relationship to a governing body. In some organizations the roles of CEO and President are split between two people, with the CEO taking direction from a board of governors and the

president taking direction from the CEO. In my case the dual role of president and CEO means that I have senior operational responsibility for the operations of my college but I am also accountable at the governance level to a board of governors who are largely appointed by government. Thus, should I seek to bring about change in my organization, I need to consider operational realities such as budgets and human resource planning, but I also need to consider the goals of my board of governors and their focus on the larger public policy context. It is within this duality that I will now move to make recommendations for policy and practice in colleges that have the potential to improve the employer/contingent employee relationship. Further, it is one thing to make recommendations; it is quite another thing to move those recommendations to implementation.

I now turn to a presentation of three broad recommendations that I believe will improve circumstances for contingent faculty in community colleges if implemented in a policy context. Beyond improvements for individual faculty, however, I suggest that these recommendations will also help to address the individual versus systemic tension that is created in our workplaces by neoliberal forces. I will also offer an assessment of the extent to which I believe that these recommendations are workable in my own present college context.

Recommendation #1: Improve Hiring Practices

A theme that was raised regularly in my discussions with contingent faculty was the stress arising from the unknown that was associated with the impermanence of their employment. This played out in the form of personal life

stress as in the case of Amanda who was concerned about having to uproot her family to another community or for Helen whose impermanence had stood in the way of her family's ability to purchase their own home. The mystery surrounding the hiring process also led to stress *within* the workplace, as in the case of Carl who felt his seniority rights to work were being infringed. However, he did not feel empowered to speak out; or as in the case of Danielle who believed that filling positions in the college should be based on merit and competency rather than on seniority or employee classification. Of course, the ideal response to the above dilemma is that every employee who is hired and is seeking a permanent position is, in fact, hired on a full-time permanent basis, thus assuring continuity for the college and security for the employee. However, such an approach is unworkable in the current context, since from a budget planning perspective and because of legislative requirements for colleges to ensure a balanced budget, revenues associated with student enrolment must offset college expenditures – the majority of which are related to the staffing complement. However, while in today's context colleges would be unable to reclassify everyone as a permanent employee, I believe they could do a much better job of introducing a greater level of employee stability for those staff that are in the contingent category. For example, I view it as lazy human resource management to rest responsibility for a lay-off entirely on how many students show up in September. A hiring and retention model that respected the centrality of the employee's experience would force us to look at our human resource practices in a different light. Proactive contingency planning would, for example, require us to presume that student

enrolment in an upcoming academic year might be insufficient to retain a staff member, and to be ready with an alternative solution that would allow the staff member to remain in the college's employ. This proactive approach would involve creating a better understanding of the individual capabilities of each contingent faculty member in order to find a match in various academic program areas throughout the college. Often the knowledge of the abilities of individual contingent faculty members is confined within a single program and there is no college-wide contingency process in place to be proactive in ensuring that all employees find work on a recurring basis. In my experience in the college system in four different Canadian provinces, I have frequently observed that layoff notices are issued to faculty in the spring as a result of an anticipated lack of work and then a recall is issued at the last minute in the fall when work suddenly appears. This results in a great deal of stress for the individual employee as well as increased administration for the college. Moving away from a short-term horizon and implementing longer-range planning, in collaboration with employee groups, that sketches out full-year, or even multi-year, work plans for contingent faculty across the college would eliminate a good deal of the existing employment disruption. While I indicated that entirely eliminating the various contingent employment classifications in our colleges is not feasible in today's context, I do believe that over time, as the above approach became systematized, a new culture of hiring and retention of staff would emerge. Such a new culture would place our employee's job security at the forefront of our hiring policies and practices in

spite of neoliberal forces that favour contingency. Put another way, in the face of neoliberalism we would value human dignity and justice within our colleges.

Recommendation #2: Provide professional development and career planning

It is very clear in today's demographic context in Canada that there are going to be labour shortages in all sectors of the economy. The baby boomer generation is entering into retirement age and neither birth nor immigration rates are sufficient to maintain the necessary workforce. It is within this context that academic institutions have the shared challenge of preparing a workforce that will meet the increased demand for post-secondary education. I believe that this labour shortage will, as it already has, to some extent, force us to reconsider how we "staff-up" our colleges. As a college system we were previously able to recruit into our organizations through job advertisements and competitions that resulted in multiple qualified candidates. In my own practice I am seeing major shifts occurring, as fewer and fewer candidates are responding to more and more job opportunities. This is forcing us to look within our organizations to those individuals who can be nurtured and developed in order to better address those human resource challenges ahead. Contingent faculty are well positioned to take on these roles and, as we have often heard within this study, they stand ready to be considered for these opportunities. This makes a great deal of sense, since these employees have already established a relationship with our colleges and have developed some understanding of organizational culture and practice. However, while we have a potential solution (contingent faculty) to a problem

(labour shortage), we do not yet have a mechanism in place to allow such contingent faculty to become our permanent employees of the future. I will now argue that such a mechanism can be found by developing a robust system of professional development and career planning for our contingent faculty.

Throughout my discussions with contingent faculty I heard about the limited preparation that they received for their (often) first foray into a classroom. It is commonly the case that faculty in the Canadian community college system are drawn from a field of practice and are hired to teach as a result of their expertise in that practice. Because these faculty often have no teaching experience, most colleges have some form of development program that may range from a few weeks of teaching “boot-camp” in the summer prior to the beginning of a semester to a more comprehensive and credentialed program that is sometimes mandated in provincial legislation. While this form of teaching preparation is in place for those hired as permanent faculty, the same cannot be said for those who are hired on a contingent basis. As I heard throughout my discussion, it is a very common circumstance for contingent faculty to be thrust into a classroom with little or no preparation. They may sometimes be provided with course notes from another instructor, but they generally receive no pedagogical preparation. Most describe a “making it up as I go along” approach to the classroom. In light of my above depiction of the human resource needs of colleges, I believe we should be considering every new instructor as a potential permanent instructor and for that reason, I recommend that every faculty member, contingent or permanent, should be provided with the same introduction to

teaching program. Aside from the very real human resource needs that I have described, it is quite remarkable that such programs have not already been made mandatory from the standpoint of teaching quality and consistency. It is the case in many colleges that the courses taught by contingent faculty as part of either the regular day or continuing education program are ostensibly the same as those taught by permanent faculty from the standpoint of the course outline, the learning outcomes and the course credit value. It is thus internally inconsistent for colleges to require permanent faculty to go through a teaching development program but not require this of those contingent faculty who will teach those same courses. As I heard many times, it is not a lack of interest on the part of contingent faculty that precludes such development; rather, investment in this type of development for its contingent teaching ranks is viewed as a cost to be avoided. The same impermanence and instability that surrounds the terms of the contingent faculty members' employment contract is reflected again here in the colleges' treatment of its part-time employees learning needs. Colleges need to take a longer term view of the promise of the contingent faculty member and consider this investment in learning needs as an investment in the colleges' very future. While the neoliberal marketplace dictates notoriously short-term, year over year bottom line results, a college's longer term approach to the development of contingent faculty – one that respects the individual – is a critical social response that fosters a more just environment in the face of neoliberalism.

Another developmental feature that is missing from contingent faculty members' relationship with their employer is any dialogue related to career

planning. Faculty expressed to me quite regularly a willingness to move in different teaching directions as required by the college, but they were at a loss to know what future directions might be required. This circumstance is a good example of a lost opportunity for colleges. To explain, community colleges in Canada are always in the midst of change, given their mandate to address workforce needs that themselves are always changing as a result of technological innovation. However, rather than attempting to get “ahead of the curve” in regards to preparation of faculty for these changes, colleges usually consider staffing as the final component of curricular and program change. As often as not, the college will undertake an expensive search for new faculty competent to teach the new curriculum rather than prepare instructors who are already within the organization to teach in new or evolved program areas. Colleges will argue (as I have done myself) that there are no resources for this kind of professional development and upgrading for its faculty. This mindset flows from an “in-year” budget captivity that requires all activities to be budgeted for and completed within a single year. As well, as much as possible, colleges try and associate expenditure and revenue components to particular academic programs. This is a neoliberal tactic that is used to impose budget accountability upon individual budget managers within each academic program. The prevailing mantra then becomes “balance your budget, or else” and leaves no room for academic managers to think about their programs and their staff in anything other than one-year chunks of time. The challenge is that colleges need to plan for the long-term. Yet their budget environment allows only for short-term thinking. At a public

policy level, governments could play a key role in helping to address this short-term planning conundrum. While, of course, within the neoliberal context in which the State operates, provincial governments are constrained by the available resources that they have to transfer to post-secondary institutions. Within these constraints, however, governments do have the authority to institute multi-year funding agreements with colleges that could have a tremendous impact on the colleges' ability to address its needs for change and all the while better serve the needs of its contingent employees. Multi-year funding agreements with institutions would allow them to plan in longer term horizons. Such longer term planning allows institutions to be more efficient in the use of funds and provides for greater stability in its staffing models. In the same way that contingent faculty live precariously from sessional contract to sessional contract, colleges live precariously from budget year to budget year. A multi-year funding agreement between colleges and provincial governments could have far reaching impacts that would allow institutions to offer a more just employment environment for its contingent faculty in the face of neoliberalism.

Recommendation #3: Recognize Contingent Faculty

Neoliberalism thrives in public sector spaces in large part through its success in rendering faceless and nameless those who work within those public spaces. Dehumanization occurs in that there exists a blindness to the impacts of market forces on the lives of individuals. In the post-secondary sector of this public space, government following a neoliberal orientation has forced colleges

and universities to radically increase its use of contingent faculty - faculty who come and who go based on the vagaries of enrolment patterns and the bluntness of single-year budget planning. They may not work long enough to become known within the organization or they may return year upon year, but their contingent status renders them anonymous actors within the culture of the organization.

While the marketplace may not recognize disempowered individuals or groups, colleges and universities have the capability to recognize and humanize. Such recognition is only nominally associated with budget impacts and as democratic, autonomous and progressive institutions of learning, colleges and universities can institute policy within their own organizations that will bring empowerment and greater fulfillment to contingent faculty.

Recognition can come in many forms. Perhaps the most obvious and mundane is the recognition that flows when one has a space to call home within the four walls of the college. While a personal and private office might be impossible to provide for a contingent faculty member, shared space where faculty can keep personal belongings, complete quiet work and provide consultation for students would go a long way in dignifying the role of the contingent faculty. Many of my participants spoke about the challenge of meeting with students with some of them squeezing out extra time in a classroom at the end of a period while the next class waited to enter, while others sought out a quiet corner in a coffee shop. While in some colleges I found that spaces were available for faculty to book for this purpose, the formality and bureaucracy of the booking process was incongruent with the informality and more relaxed

atmosphere that faculty sought to foster with their students. Simply put, faculty found that the administrative overhead of finding such spaces wasn't worth the hassle. Technology has allowed for some new and innovative thinking about workspace real estate. I can envision an open space with a series of workstations, bounded by a number of quiet rooms for student consultation and a shared space for photocopying, with perhaps even a small lounge with a coffee maker. Serviced by a wireless network connection, such a space would allow contingent faculty members with a laptop to find a home that would meet their needs while on campus and allow them to grow some roots within the larger college.

The nomadic existence of many contingent faculty means that they are often overlooked when the time comes to populate college committees. Contingent faculty's work-lives are governed by policy that is set by boards of governance, senates, local academic committees and departmental working groups, all of which generally deny a meaningful role for these instructors. A key to recognition is the opportunity to be heard and to have one's input seriously considered as part of the organizational policy-setting process. Given the growing ranks of – and increasing reliance on – contingent faculty, colleges should consider setting aside spaces on key committees for contingent faculty to play a role. Such action might require some changes in process, for example in meeting scheduling, but these inconveniences are of only marginal consequence when one considers the value of inclusiveness to the culture of the college.

Another way that contingent faculty can be recognized is through the establishment of teaching awards for exemplary practice. While it may be the case

in many colleges that contingent faculty may be considered for teaching awards already, it is also the case that their names are put forward for such awards less frequently because they are simply not present enough for either students or peers to consider them worthy. I would propose special teaching awards for contingent faculty only, which respect the challenges that such faculty often have to overcome in balancing multiple roles. The awards might, for example, focus on unique strengths that contingent faculty can bring to the college, such as their ability to link the theory in the classroom with the changes in the field of practice. Such awards would serve as a means of celebrating and thus respecting the contribution of contingent faculty to the college but also forge stronger connections to, and loyalty from, such faculty; connections, as I have previously noted, that will be important in preparing the permanent faculty of the future.

Finally, another way to ensure that contingent faculty are recognized within the organization is to ensure that there exists a process to demonstrate that performance matters. Contingent faculty often work from contract to contract and year to year, never receiving any feedback on their performance and having no objective benchmark to know if they are improving, evolving and potentially positioning themselves for permanent employment. While it is anticipated in human resource policy and/or in college collective agreements with fulltime faculty that there will be some form of evaluation and feedback provided on a yearly basis, no such expectation exists for contingent faculty. I heard regularly from contingent faculty that they felt that they were on their own from the day they began their first class with no preparatory teaching support, to their current

situation where they operated in general isolation from the organization. While this sense of isolation differed depending on the nature of the contingent contract – from those continuing education faculty who never saw an administrator to those hopeful full-timers who spent a good deal of their time on campus – there was a general sentiment cutting across all categories of contingent faculty that they were not receiving the kind of feedback on performance that would provide an indication that they mattered within the organization. It is interesting to note that within the ranks of the full-time faculty, the idea of performance appraisal is viewed as patronizing and quite at odds with views of academic freedom. Conversely, contingent faculty were more inclined to seek out this type of interaction with the college in view of the fact that any attempt by the college to reach out to them, for whatever the purpose, meant that they mattered. In order to foster the development of both the skills of contingent faculty and to foster an abiding relationship for future faculty strength, it would be advisable to develop a contingent faculty performance development program.

As I have indicated throughout this dissertation, there are some things that institutions cannot do in the face of neoliberalism. Market forces mitigate against such things as a guarantee of permanent employment for contingent faculty, but that does not mean that a fatalistic perspective must prevail. Rather than throwing up their hands, there is a great deal that colleges can do to improve the life, learning and work patterns of contingent faculty and the quality of work in the face of neoliberalism. At the very least, *recognition* is something that brings with

it nominal cost and that can improve the empowerment of contingent faculty while setting the stage for their greater engagement with colleges in the future.

Conclusion

In this section I have presented three broad recommendations that will improve the life, learning and work patterns of contingent faculty. I recommend that colleges in Canada should:

1. Improve practices and procedures associated with the hiring of contingent faculty;
2. Provide professional development and career planning for contingent faculty; and
3. Recognize contingent faculty.

While colleges in Canada confront a great number of challenges related to pressures from market-driven neoliberalism, I believe that those challenges are sometimes used as red herrings to rationalize the mistreatment of contingent faculty. To the extent that a college does not make every effort to respect its contingent faculty, it is undermining its own future and, indeed, buying into the very neoliberal philosophy that challenges the future of public education.

Respecting, acknowledging and empowering contingent faculty transgresses the neoliberal status quo and creates a just college community – in the face of neoliberalism.

Areas for further research

In the same manner that contingent faculty are often a marginalized and unseen workforce within our post-secondary system, the literature has also largely ignored the experiences of contingent faculty. Within this void there are many areas that deserve further study. The following are a few areas that I have identified as I have carried out my own research.

1. Research that more deeply reviews student perspectives of and experiences with contingent faculty;
2. A review of teaching practices used by contingent faculty; and
3. Research that reviews models of employment of contingent faculty, which could lead to proposals for the development of new models of contingent employment;
4. Research that explores alternative models of remuneration of contingent faculty;
5. Research that reviews the efficacy of union representation of contingent faculty; and
6. Comparative research that reviews differences in how neoliberalism has affected permanent and contingent faculty.

As I have written throughout this dissertation, the academic world faces the same challenges that are faced in all sectors of our society. An aging population is resulting in shortages of people prepared to fulfill important work roles. By ignoring the potential of contingent faculty, colleges and universities are allowing short-term and relatively manageable budget pressures to undermine the longer-

term challenges that will confront the post-secondary sector. I am confident that further research of the type proposed above will uncover new critical social prospects for the engagement of contingent faculty that will provide sustainability and opportunity for the academy of tomorrow.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICS APPLICATION

FACULTIES OF EDUCATION, EXTENSION AND AUGUSTANA RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD (EEA REB)

I. Application for Ethics Review of Proposed Research (revised June 21/05)

Principal Investigator - Jeff Zabudsky (Student ID: 1013827) Department/Faculty - Educational Policy Studies

Complete mailing address

E-mail - jzabudsky@rrc.mb.ca

Co-applicant(s) -

Project title - Life, Learning and Work Patterns of Contingent Community College Faculty
in the Face of Neoliberalism

Project Deadlines

Starting Date (2006/02/01)

Ending Date (2006/12/31)

If your project is not finished before the Ending Date, you must apply for an extension by submitting the appropriate *Status of Research Study* form.

Annual Reporting

If your project extends beyond one year from the date of EEA REB approval, you will be required to submit an *Annual Report for Multi-Year Studies* at the end of each year of the project. Projects are normally subject to a complete re-submission after 3 years.

Status (if student) -

Master's Project Master's Thesis Doctoral Dissertation Other (specify)

Funding (if applicable) -

Grant Application Contract Research Non-Funded Research Other (specify)

Do you plan to gather data in University of Alberta units other than Education, Extension or Augustana?

Yes
No

If yes, name the unit(s)

Is another educational institution involved in this project? Yes No

If yes, name the institution(s) and the nature of the involvement: (Large College, Midsized College, Small College)

I, the applicant, agree to notify the EEA REB in writing of any changes in research design, procedures, sample, etc. that arise after the EEA REB approval has been granted. A *Request for Change in Methodology* form must receive approval from EEA REB before the modified research can proceed.

I also agree to notify the EEA REB immediately if any untoward or adverse event occurs during my research, and/or if data analysis or other review reveals undesirable outcomes for the participants.

I have read the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants [GFC Policy Manual, Section 66 [<http://www.ualberta.ca/~unisecr/policy/sec66.html>]] and agree to comply with these Standards in conducting my research.

Signature of Applicant

Date

As the supervisor/instructor, I have read and approve submission of this application to the EEA REB, and ensure that the proposed project is compliant with the University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants [GFC Policy Manual, Section 66
[<http://www.ualberta.ca/~unisecr/policy/sec66.html>].

Printed name of Supervisor/Instructor_____
Signature of Supervisor/Instructor_____
Date**ETHICS REVIEW STATUS**

Application approved by EEA REB member
Application not approved

Application approved by EEA REB

Signature of EEA REB Member_____
Date

Distribution of approval page: Original to EEA REB file; Copies to Applicant, Supervisor/Instructor (if applicable), Un it student file (if applicable)

III. Overview of Research Project

Please provide a clear, concise description of the purpose, significance and method of your research project. The focus of the overview should be the method of your study. In your method section, give detailed explanations of

Method

participants: who, number, how recruited and selected

data: what (e.g., survey, interview, video recording), how collected (e.g., number and length of interviews)

method of data analysis (give references)

Dissemination of results

Benefits to participants

See suggested information/consent letter template for level of information required.

Please confine your project overview to two pages (about 800 words) maximum.

Overview

The employment of contingent faculty in post-secondary education in Canada has increased to levels that have been unseen historically. Contingent faculty is a broadly representative term that includes those university and college teachers who do not have permanent and ongoing employment relationships with their employers. These may include such groups as graduate teaching assistants, adjuncts, part-time continuing education instructors and full-time faculty who are employed by the college or university to work on a temporary basis.

Within higher education, these faculty members represent a separate class of instructors in that they are paid lower wages for their work, are provided fewer benefits, given fewer opportunities for professional development, and enjoy less professional prestige for their work. This growing phenomenon can be linked to neoliberal, global trends that are resulting in the commoditization of education as another product or service found in the market-driven economy. The economic, market-driven need for efficiency and cost containment are having a profound impact on academic policy making and are largely at the root of the proliferation in contingent members in the academy. These neoliberal pressures are changing our view of the role of the academy as a place where citizens develop, where intellectual freedom prevails, and where activism finds a home. An

analysis of the experiences of contingent faculty in today's Canadian neoliberal college serves an important purpose to reflect on the future face of our post-secondary system in the twenty-first century.

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to create an understanding of the lived experience of contingent faculty in the face of neoliberal trends in higher education. With an understanding of this experience in place, the research will make recommendations for policy change leading to more inclusive and just models for engagement of contingent faculty in our institutions of higher education.

Significance

The significance of this research is two-fold. Firstly, there is very little literature that explores the lived experiences of contingent faculty. More specifically, there has been little research interest on giving voice to contingent faculty. This silencing of the contingent faculty's voice should be a concern to educational scholars because contingent faculty play such a prominent role today in our institutions of higher education. That these voices are not reflected in the scholarship of higher education means that an important perspective is missing from the general discourse. In order to secure a better understanding of the impact of the proliferation of contingent academic employment in the academy, it is the intent of this research to reflect on the views of contingent faculty themselves.

Secondly, the existing literature does not connect the lived experience of the contingent faculty with the systemic proliferation of neoliberalism within higher education. I contend that the circumstances in which contingent faculty find themselves are directly linked to the rise of neoliberalism in the world of public, post-secondary education. While the concepts of "quality," "return on investment," "efficiency," and "students as customers" curry the favour of proponents who seek to advance neoliberalism in higher education, these same concepts have real-world implications on the lives of those contingent faculty who toil in our public institutions of higher education. It is argued here that a more ground level view of the working lives of contingent faculty will enrich the discourse and point to policy changes that will lead to improvements in the lives of contingent faculty and the maintenance of quality in our institutions of higher education.

Method

The research approach that I will use for this study is that of unstructured interviews. There has been very little written about the lives of contingent faculty and, in particular, descriptions of lived experiences that come directly from contingent faculty themselves. Unstructured interviews will afford me the opportunity to better present those experiences, through contingent faculty's own words, in a richer and more meaningful way.

Participants

This research will include an initial round of interviews with approximately twenty individuals who are drawn from the ranks of the contingent faculty in three different community colleges in three different Canadian provinces. This group will be narrowed over time to a smaller group of five or six individuals who will be engaged for a more in-depth round of interviews. The research participants will be recruited by the principal researcher through a letter of invitation to be distributed by the Human Resources Departments of the three colleges involved in the research. Research ethics guidelines and processes at each of these colleges will be carefully observed. Research participants will be selected based on their ability to be available for the interviews, a roughly equal distribution across each of the three institutions, and a representative cross-section on the basis of gender, age, and ethnicity.

Data

Data will be gathered through unstructured interviews following the framework provided by Fontana and Frey (2000). Features of the Fontana and Frey (2000) approach include gaining access to the participants' setting, understanding the language and culture of the participants, deciding how to present oneself, gaining trust, and establishing rapport. All of these techniques are designed to give authentic voice to participants in order to richly describe their circumstance. This materialist method is consistent with the work of Dorothy Smith (1987, 1999) whose critical social stance is found in an institutional ethnography that constructs accounts "from the standpoint of those with whom or for whom the researcher chooses to work. Beginning from people's experience of being ruled, the practices of ruling could be explicated in research accounts" (Campbell, 2003, p. 17).

The initial round of twenty interviews will each be approximately one hour in duration and will be recorded on an audio tape recorder and then transcribed by a transcriber. A subsequent round of interviews will involve a smaller group of five or six participants drawn from the initial group and will allow the principal researcher to draw out in greater detail important themes that emerged in the first round of interviews. This second round of participants will again be chosen on the basis of availability to participate, a roughly equal distribution across each of the three institutions and every effort will be taken to maintain representation across gender, age and ethnicity lines. All research participants will have the opportunity to review a transcript and synopsis of their interview.

Results of the interviews will initially be shared with research participants in order to ensure a shared understanding of interpretations that have been made by the principal researcher. Subsequently, results will form the basis of the principal researcher's doctoral dissertation.

Benefits to participants

Participants will benefit from this research in that it is intended to give voice to an under-represented community within Canadian colleges with the purpose of developing policy recommendations to improve working conditions for these individuals within post-secondary institutions.

IV. Procedures for Compliance with the U of A Standards

Human research conducted under the auspices of the University of Alberta must follow the Standards reflected in the GFC Policy Manual Section 66 entitled "Human Research - University of Alberta Standards for the Protection of Human Research Participants." This document is available on the University web site at <http://www.ualberta.ca/~unisechr/policy/sec66.html>

Please attach the following:

Information letter(s) to participant(s) (e.g. teachers, students, parents/guardians) (see suggested template)

Consent form(s) for participant(s) (e.g. teachers, students, parent/guardians) (see suggested template)

In the case of solicitation of participants through advertisement, a copy of the advertisement(s)
A copy of any data gathering instruments. In the case of published instruments, only the name need be given. In the case of interviews, sample interview questions must be included.

A copy of the *Confidentiality Agreement* (if required)

Any additional documentation

Please describe clearly and concisely how you intend to comply with the Standards by answering each of the following questions.

How will you explain the purpose and nature of your research to prospective participants?

First, I will provide details of the purpose and nature of my research project in writing in a preamble on the consent form. Second, I will continue to inform research participants by reviewing my intentions and familiarizing them with the research process at the beginning of each interview.

(a) What steps will you take to obtain the free and informed consent of the participants? e.g. How will you provide opportunities for potential participants to exercise their right to not participate?

The informed consent of participants will be obtained by providing them with all the background information to the research orally and in writing, and then by inviting them to sign a consent letter to participate. I will also provide them with names and contact information for the researcher, research supervisor, and department chair in case they need further information.

(b) Are there limited and/or temporary exceptions to the general requirements for full disclosure of information? If yes, (i) please describe the exception(s) (ii) justify the need for the exception(s), and (iii) explain the provisions for debriefing participants.

There are no exceptions to the general requirements for full disclosure of information.

(c) Are there any circumstances which could compromise the voluntary consent of participants (e.g., incentives, captive populations, second relationship)? If yes, how will these circumstances be dealt with?

I am a senior administrator in the Canadian college system. While my home institution will not be involved in this research activity, it may be construed that my research is sponsored by the participants' home institution given the natural relationships that administrators have developed across the college system. I will make clear in the information that there is no requirement to participate, confidentiality will be maintained, and the participants' home institution is not in any way sponsoring the research activity.

How will you provide opportunities for your participants to exercise the right to opt out without penalty, harm or loss of promised benefit?

Participants will be reminded at the beginning and at every step in the process that it is their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

(a) How will you address privacy, anonymity and confidentiality issues?

Processes to achieve accuracy of data, confidentiality, and anonymity are implemented in the design of the study. A technical recording device will be used to ensure accuracy of data collected from the open-ended interviews. Only my transcribers and I will have access to data and information. The transcribers will be asked to sign a transcriber confidentiality agreement, a copy of which is attached as Appendix B. To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms will be used.

(b) If you plan to record sounds or images in your project, how will you address anonymity and confidentiality of participants and non-participants?

In order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality, the following guidelines will be strictly followed: 1) Research participants will have an opportunity to review interview transcripts and delete any text from interviews that they feel will compromise their identities. 2) The unstructured interviews will be held in a place of the participants choosing thus ensuring they feel safe and secure.

5. Will there be any risk, threat or harm to the participants or to others? If yes, (a) please elaborate and (b) how will you minimize the risk, threat or harm?

There is no other perceived threat or harm to the research participants or others involved in this research project.

How will you provide for security of the data during the study and for a minimum of 5 years thereafter?

I will keep the data in a locked filing cabinet in my office, and I will delete all raw data five years following completion of the project.

If you involve research assistants, transcribers, interpreters and/or other personnel to carry out specific research tasks in your research, how will you ensure that they comply with the Standards?

The transcribers will sign confidentiality agreements.

Please describe any other procedures relevant to complying with the Standards.

APPENDIX B: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

[Date]

Dear xxx:

This letter serves as an invitation to you to participate in a research study titled *Life, Learning and Work Patterns of Contingent Community College Faculty In the Face of Neoliberalism*. The purpose of the research is to develop an understanding of the experiences of contingent and part-time faculty in community colleges in Canada and to develop policy recommendations that will improve that experience. I am a senior administrator in the Canadian community college system, and I am the principal researcher in this study. The research will be carried out as a requirement of my Ph.D. studies at the University of Alberta's Department of Educational Policy Studies. The use of this research data will be strictly confined to my Ph.D. dissertation and academic and professional conference presentations and publishing.

Method

Your participation will involve a one hour interview with the principal researcher at a place of your convenience. A series of preliminary questions have been prepared, however, it is the researcher's intention to develop a dialogue and new questions might arise within the discussion. If you are agreeable, the researcher may request a follow-up interview that would also be one hour in duration. Research participants will be drawn from a group of volunteers at three different community colleges and will be selected on the basis of even geographic distribution and in a manner that reflects the age, gender and ethnicity of the group being studied. An audio recording device will be used to ensure accuracy in capturing the data. A transcriber will be hired to transcribe the discussion. This person will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement to protect the anonymity of the research participants.

Verification/Review

Within one month of the interview, participants will receive a transcript of the interview along with a synopsis provided by the researcher. The participant will be asked to confirm that accuracy of the synopsis and offer any further insight or clarification that would enhance the message intended by the participant.

Rights

The rights of participants are as follows:

- To not participate
- To withdraw at any time without prejudice to pre-existing entitlements, and to continuing and meaningful opportunities for deciding whether or not to continue to participate
- To opt out without penalty and any collected data withdrawn from the data base and not included in the study.
- To privacy, anonymity and confidentiality
- To safeguards for security of data (data are to be kept for a minimum of 5 years following completion of research)
- To disclosure of the presence of any apparent or actual conflict of interest on the part of the researcher.

Other Uses

Data gathered for this research will be used only for the purposes of the above named PhD dissertation and academic and professional conference presentations and publishing. Any other use will occur only with the written approval of the participants.

Informed Consent

Concerns, complaints or consequences involving this research can be directed to the researcher, the research supervisor, or the university department chair. Their contact information is as follows:

Jeff Zabudsky, Researcher

Tel: (W) 204-632-2360

Email: zabudsky@shaw.ca

Dr. Andre Grace, Research Supervisor

Tel: 780-492-0767

Email: andre.grace@ualberta.ca

Dr. José da Costa, Department Chair

Tel: 780-492-5868

Email: Jose.da.Costa@ualberta.ca

Ethics Approval Statement

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education, Extension and Augustana Research Ethics Board (EEA REB) at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the EEA REB at (780) 492-3751.

Thank you for your consideration of my request for your participation in this research study. If you are prepared to participate, please sign the Consent Letter appended to this letter and return it to the researcher in the stamped self-addressed envelope.

Yours truly

Jeff Zabudsky
PhD Candidate

Consent Letter

I [] consent to participating in the research project titled, *Life, Learning and Work Patterns of Contingent Community College Faculty In the Face of Neoliberalism*. I understand my rights as follows:

- To not participate
- To withdraw at any time without prejudice to pre-existing entitlements, and to continuing and meaningful opportunities for deciding whether or not to continue to participate
- To opt out without penalty and any collected data withdrawn from the data base and not included in the study.
- To privacy, anonymity and confidentiality
- To safeguards for security of data (data are to be kept for a minimum of 5 years following completion of research)
- To disclosure of the presence of any apparent or actual conflict of interest on the part of the researcher.

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Signed: _____
Date: _____

APPENDIX C: ETHICS APPLICATION (LARGE INSTITUTION)

File #

(Large College) Research Ethics Board (REB) Application for Ethical Review of Research Involving Human Participants

Please refer to the documents attached, which must be completed and submitted along with your request for the approval of the Ethics Review Board to conduct research involving the _____ community.

Submit completed forms to:

- [Primary Contact Person]
- [Position Title]
- [Address]

If you have questions about or require assistance with the completion of this form, please contact [Primary Contact Person], at [Phone Number], or [Email Address].

Return your completed application and all accompanying material in electronic format [primary contact email address] **OR** if in printed format, 5 copies to [primary contact mailing address].

Please ensure all necessary items are attached prior to submission, otherwise your application will not be processed (see checklist below). **No research with human participants shall commence prior to receiving approval from the Research Ethics Board.**

Original Copy + 4 additional copies (if in printed format) of the following DOCUMENTS	✓ if applicable
Recruitment Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of invitation • Verbal script • Telephone script • Advertisements (newspapers, posters, experetrix0 • Electronic correspondence guide 	✓ <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Consent Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent form • Assent form for minors • Parental/3rd party consent • Transcriber confidentiality agreement 	✓ <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> ✓
Data Gathering Instruments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaires (<i>Initial question list for unstructured IV's</i>) • Interview guides 	✓ <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

• Tests	
Feedback Letter	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letter of Approval for research from cooperating organizations, school board(s), or other institutions	✓
Any previously approved protocol to which you refer	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Researcher:

Jeff Zabudsky

Phone Number:

204-632-2360

e-mail:

jzabudsky@rrc.mb.ca

Title of Study:

Life, Learning and Work Patterns of Contingent Community College Faculty in the Face of Neoliberalism

Context of Study (e.g., masters, doctoral program):

Doctoral Program, Department of Educational Policy Studies, Faculty of Education, University of Alberta

Academic Supervisor:

Dr. Andre Grace, Professor, Dept. of Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta

Phone Number:

780-492-0767

Section A - Research Design:

- 1. Intent of the Study (include problem state if appropriate, major goals, objectives or variables being studied):**

Overview

The employment of contingent faculty in post-secondary education in Canada has increased to levels that have been unseen historically. Contingent faculty is a broadly representative term that includes those university and college teachers who do not have permanent and ongoing employment relationships with their employers. These may include such groups as graduate teaching assistants, adjuncts, part-time continuing education instructors and full-time faculty who are employed by the college or university to work on a temporary basis.

Within higher education, these faculty members represent a separate class of instructors in that they are often paid lower wages for their work, are provided fewer benefits, given fewer opportunities for professional development, and enjoy less professional prestige for their work. This growing phenomenon can be linked to neoliberal, global trends that are resulting in the commoditization of education as another product or service found in the market-driven economy. The economic, market-driven need for efficiency and cost containment are having a profound impact on academic policy making and are largely at the root of the proliferation in contingent members in the academy.

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to create an understanding of the lived experience of contingent faculty in the face of neoliberal trends in higher education. With an understanding of this experience in place, the research will make recommendations for policy change leading to more inclusive and just models for engagement of contingent faculty in our institutions of higher education.

2. Population being studied and sample selection:

The research approach that I will use for this study is that of unstructured interviews. There has been very little written about the lives of contingent faculty and, in particular, descriptions of lived experiences that come directly from contingent faculty themselves. Unstructured interviews will afford me the opportunity to better present those experiences, through contingent faculty's own words, in a richer and more meaningful way.

This research will include an initial round of interviews with approximately fifteen individuals who are drawn from the ranks of the contingent faculty in three different community colleges in three different Canadian provinces. This group will be narrowed over time to a smaller group of five or six individuals who will be engaged for a more in-depth round of interviews. The research participants will be recruited by the principal

researcher through a letter of invitation to be distributed by the Human Resources Departments of the three colleges involved in the research. Research ethics guidelines and processes at each of these colleges will be carefully observed. Research participants will be selected based on their ability to be available for the interviews, a roughly equal distribution across each of the three institutions, and a representative cross-section on the basis of gender, age, and ethnicity.

3. Treatments, interventions or manipulations:

Data will be gathered through unstructured interviews following the framework provided by Fontana and Frey (2000). Features of the Fontana and Frey (2000) approach include gaining access to the participants' setting, understanding the language and culture of the participants, deciding how to present oneself, gaining trust, and establishing rapport. All of these techniques are designed to give authentic voice to participants in order to richly describe their circumstance. This materialist method is consistent with the work of Dorothy Smith (1987, 1999) whose critical social stance is found in an institutional ethnography that constructs accounts "from the standpoint of those with whom or for whom the researcher chooses to work. Beginning from people's experience of being ruled, the practices of ruling could be explicated in research accounts" (Campbell, 2003, p. 17).

The initial round of fifteen interviews will each be approximately one hour in duration and will be recorded on an audio tape recorder and then transcribed by a transcriber. A subsequent round of interviews will involve a smaller group of five or six participants drawn from the initial group and will allow the principal researcher to draw out in greater detail important themes that emerged in the first round of interviews. This second round of participants will again be chosen on the basis of availability to participate, a roughly equal distribution across each of the three institutions and every effort will be taken to maintain representation across gender, age and ethnicity lines. All research participants will have the opportunity to review a transcript and synopsis of their interview.

4. Significance of the study in the real world:

The significance of this research is two-fold. Firstly, there is very little literature that explores the lived experiences of contingent faculty. More specifically, there has been little research interest on giving voice to contingent faculty. This silencing of the contingent faculty's voice should be a concern to educational scholars because contingent faculty play such a prominent role today in our institutions of higher education. That these

voices are not reflected in the scholarship of higher education means that an important perspective is missing from the general discourse. In order to secure a better understanding of the impact of the proliferation of contingent academic employment in the academy, it is the intent of this research to reflect on the views of contingent faculty themselves.

Secondly, the existing literature does not connect the lived experience of the contingent faculty with the systemic proliferation of neoliberalism within higher education. I contend that the circumstances in which contingent faculty find themselves are directly linked to the rise of neoliberalism in the world of public, post-secondary education. While the concepts of "quality," "return on investment," "efficiency," and "students as customers" carry the favour of proponents who seek to advance neoliberalism in higher education, these same concepts have real-world implications on the lives of those contingent faculty who toil in our public institutions of higher education. It is argued here that a more ground level view of the working lives of contingent faculty will enrich the discourse and point to policy changes that will lead to improvements in the lives of contingent faculty and the maintenance of quality in our institutions of higher education.

5. Ethical implications and considerations (e.g., voluntary participation, freedom to withdraw without penalty, non-identifiability, informed consent).

Explaining the purpose and nature of research to prospective participants

First, I will provide details of the purpose and nature of my research project in writing in a preamble on the consent form. Second, I will continue to inform research participants by reviewing my intentions and familiarizing them with the research process at the beginning of each interview.

Free and informed consent of the participants

The informed consent of participants will be obtained by providing them with all the background information to the research orally and in writing, and then by inviting them to sign a consent letter to participate. I will also provide them with names and contact information for the researcher, research supervisor, and department chair in case they need further information.

Limited and/or temporary exceptions to the general requirements for full disclosure of information

There are no exceptions to the general requirements for full disclosure of information.

Right to opt out without penalty, harm or loss of promised benefit

Participants will be reminded at the beginning and at every step in the process that it is their right to withdraw from the study at any time.

Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality issues

Processes to achieve accuracy of data, confidentiality, and anonymity are implemented in the design of the study. A technical recording device will be used to ensure accuracy of data collected from the open-ended interviews. Only my transcribers and I will have access to data and information. The transcribers will be asked to sign a transcriber confidentiality agreement, a copy of which is attached. To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms will be used.

Further, research participants will have an opportunity to review interview transcripts and delete any text from interviews that they feel will compromise their identities. The unstructured interviews will be held in a place of the participants choosing thus ensuring they feel safe and secure.

Threat or harm to the participants or to others

There is no other perceived threat or harm to the research participants or others involved in this research project.

6. Data collection, storage and disposal:

Data will be collected by an audio recording device and will be transcribed by a transcriber who will sign a confidentiality agreement. I will keep the data in a locked filing cabinet in my office, and I will delete all raw data five years following completion of the project.

7. Copies of instrumentation, interview guides or protocols to be used: - attach Copies

See attached: Letter of Invitation to Participate, list of proposed questions, transcriber confidentiality agreement

8. Informing participants of findings

As part of the methodology of the study, results of the interviews will initially be shared with research participants in order to ensure a shared understanding of interpretations that have been made by the principal researcher. Ultimately, all participants will be provided with access to an electronic copy of the final dissertation.

Section B - Risks to Participants

1. Potential for emotional distress?

There is no perceived risk of emotional distress to participants.

2. Isolation of participants and researcher?

There is no perceived risk of isolation of participants and researcher.

3. Potential for mental or psychological harm?

There is no perceived risk of mental or psychological harm.

4. Potential for physical harm?

There is no perceived risk of physical harm.

5. Infringement of rights?

There is no perceived risk of infringement of participant rights.

6. Other potential risks of any kind?

I am a senior administrator in the Canadian college system. While my home institution will not be involved in this research activity, it may be construed that my research is sponsored by the participants' home institution given the natural relationships that administrators have developed across the college system. I will make clear in the information that there is no requirement to participate, confidentiality will be maintained, and the participants' home institution is not in any way sponsoring the research activity.

Section C: Implications for the Institution

1. Feasibility of study (e.g., time constraints, sample selection):

The researcher will require the assistance from _____ College in identifying research participants. The researcher will ask for a randomly

generated list of approximately 40 contingent faculty members. The researcher will forward letters of invitation back to _____ a College for distribution through internal college mail. Once this has occurred, the researcher will require no further assistance from _____ College. An exception to the above may take place if a low response rate requires a larger sample than the original 40.

2. Potential use of college resources (e.g., college time, equipment and supplies to be used):

The researcher will require a college staff member to generate a random list of 40 contingent faculty members and forward this list to the researcher. The staff member will then need to distribute packages to each of the named individuals through internal college mail.

Signature(s) of Researcher(s)

Date

**APPENDIX D: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE ALL STAFF EMAIL AT
LARGE INSTITUTION**

Part-time _____Faculty – Invitation to Participate in Research Study

Part-time faculty at _____ College are invited to participate in a PhD dissertation research study based out of the University of Alberta's Department of Educational Policy Studies. The purpose of the research is to develop an understanding of the experiences of sessional, part-time, and casual teaching faculty in community colleges in Canada and to produce policy recommendations that will improve that experience. This research has been cleared by the _____ Ethics Review Board.

For a full research study description and invitation package, please send an email to the researcher, Jeff Zabudsky, at: zabudsky@shaw.ca

APPENDIX E: INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH (LARGE INSTITUTION)

[Date]

[Name / Address]

Dear [Name]

This letter serves as an invitation to you to participate in a research study titled *Life, Learning and Work Patterns of Contingent Community College Faculty In the Face of Neoliberalism*. The purpose of the research is to develop an understanding of the experiences of contingent and part-time faculty in community colleges in Canada and to develop policy recommendations that will improve that experience. I am a senior administrator in the Canadian community college system, and I am the principal researcher in this study. The research will be carried out as a requirement of my Ph.D. studies at the University of Alberta's Department of Educational Policy Studies. The use of this research data will be strictly confined to my Ph.D. dissertation and academic and professional conference presentations and publishing.

Method

Your participation will involve a one hour interview with the principal researcher at a place of your convenience. A series of preliminary questions have been prepared, however, it is the researcher's intention to develop a dialogue and new questions might arise within the discussion. If you are agreeable, the researcher may request a follow-up interview that would also be one hour in duration. Research participants will be drawn from a group of volunteers at three different community colleges and will be selected on the basis of even geographic distribution and in a manner that reflects the age, gender and ethnicity of the group being studied. An audio recording device will be used to ensure accuracy in capturing the data. A transcriber will be hired to transcribe the discussion. This person will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement to ensure the research participants remain non identifiable.

Verification/Review

Within one month of the interview, participants will receive a transcript of the interview along with a synopsis provided by the researcher. The participant will be asked to confirm that accuracy of the synopsis and offer any further insight or clarification that would enhance the message intended by the participant.

Rights

The rights of participants are as follows:

- To not participate
- To not answer without explanation or penalty any questions you do not wish to answer
- To withdraw at any time without prejudice to pre-existing entitlements, and to continuing and meaningful opportunities for deciding whether or not to continue to participate
- To opt out without penalty and any collected data withdrawn from the data base and not included in the study.

- To privacy and non-identifiability
- To not be identified in any reporting of the findings
- To safeguards for security of data (data will be kept on a password protected computer or in a locked cabinet accessible only to the researcher and academic advisor. Data will be kept for a minimum of 5 years following the completion of research and then destroyed)
- To disclosure of the presence of any apparent or actual conflict of interest on the part of the researcher.

Other Uses

Data gathered for this research will be used only for the purposes of the above named PhD dissertation and academic and professional conference presentations and publishing. Any other use will occur only with the written approval of the participants.

Informed Consent

Concerns, complaints or consequences involving this research can be directed to the researcher, the research supervisor, the university department chair or the Associate VP, Research at _____ College. Their contact information is as follows:

Jeff Zabudsky, Researcher

Tel: (W) 204-632-2360

Email: zabudsky@shaw.ca

Dr. Andre Grace, Research Supervisor, University of Alberta

Tel: 780-492-0767

Email: andre.grace@ualberta.ca

Dr. José da Costa, Department Chair, University of Alberta

Tel: 780-492-5868

Email: Jose.da.Costa@ualberta.ca

Dr. _____, Associate VP, Research, _____ College

Tel: _____ Ext. _____

Email: _____

Ethics Approval Statement

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines and approved by the Faculties of Education, Extension and Augustana Research Ethics Board (EEA REB) at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Chair of the EEA REB at (780) 492-3751.

Thank you for your consideration of my request for your participation in this research study. If you are prepared to participate, please sign the Consent Letter appended to this letter and return it to the researcher in the stamped self-addressed envelope.

Yours truly

Jeff Zabudsky
PhD Candidate

Consent Letter

I _____ consent to participating in the research project titled, *Life, Learning and Work Patterns of Contingent Community College Faculty*

In the Face of Neoliberalism. I understand that my participation will be audio taped and the audio tapes will be securely maintained for a period of five years whereupon they will be destroyed. Audio tape data will be transcribed by a hired transcriber who will be required to sign a confidentiality statement. I further understand my rights as follows:

- To not participate
- To not answer without explanation or penalty any questions I do not wish to answer
- To withdraw at any time without prejudice to pre-existing entitlements, and to continuing and meaningful opportunities for deciding whether or not to continue to participate
- To opt out without penalty and any collected data withdrawn from the data base and not included in the study.
- To privacy and non-identifiability
- To not be identified in any reporting of the findings
- To safeguards for security of data (data will be kept on a password protected computer or in a locked cabinet accessible only to the researcher and academic advisor. Data will be kept for a minimum of 5 years following the completion of research and then destroyed)
- To disclosure of the presence of any apparent or actual conflict of interest on the part of the researcher.
- To raise concerns, complaints or consequences involving this research with the researcher, the research supervisor, the university department chair or the [Large College Primary Contact]

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX F: INITIAL LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Could you please describe for me the history and nature of your employment at X College? (I.E. Program of Focus / Length of employment / type of employment / changes in employment over time.)
2. Please describe anything you would like to about your personal life, in particular, anything that would help me to understand how you create a work/life balance.
3. Why are you working for the College?
4. What are your short and long-term career aspirations?
5. Are you satisfied with the job-related support you receive from the college?
6. Describe the interaction that you have with other contingent or part-time college faculty at the college? Are you satisfied with these interactions?
7. Describe the interaction that you have with the full-time faculty at the college? Are you satisfied with these interactions?
8. Describe the interaction that you have with administrators at the college? Are you satisfied with these interactions?
9. Other than your teaching duties, what other types of activities are you engaged in at the college? (I. E. Committee work / curriculum development / professional development / socializing / etc.)
10. Are there things that the college could do to enhance your experience as an employee at the college?
11. Overall, are you happy with the nature of your employment relationship with the college?
12. Is there anything else you would like to add?