Shapeshifting:

Political rationalities, Lean, and the transforming landscapes of Canadian public bureaucracies

by

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation, I explore the question of *how Canadian public bureaucracies have changed over time to reflect broader shifts within and between political rationalities*. Drawing from a range of critical approaches to power, policy, and public administration including governmentality studies and critical policy studies, I offer complex answers. By deploying concepts such as political rationalities, political programmes and technologies, assemblages, and translation, I argue that Canadian public bureaucracies "shapeshift" alongside changes in their broader contexts, forming and "re-forming" as Canada has transitioned from its nation-building period in the nineteenth century to the Keynesian welfarist period in the mid-twentieth century and, ultimately, the neoliberal period of the last thirty years.

I pay particular attention to the neoliberalization of bureaucracies through the case study of Saskatchewan's implementation of Lean Management (Lean), a management approach derived from the industrial practices of mid-century Toyota. I begin by tracing the genealogies of both Canadian public bureaucracies as well as Lean. My genealogy of Canadian public bureaucracies draws on Royal Commissions and other similar state transcripts to trace how public bureaucracies have been conceptualized throughout the history of the Canadian state. I then utilize sources such as historical budget documents and departmental reports to explore how the discursive claims of these periods are rendered tangible through material arrangements. Following this, I explore the genealogy of Lean, tracing how it emerged in 1950s Japan, how it was introduced into North America industry in the 1980s as part of the wave of emulation of Japanese manufacturing techniques by North American firms. Next, I trace how Lean became a form of knowledge and expertise around which a global network of experts, consultants, authors and management gurus crystalized. I then draw on interviews and extensive documentary

analysis to tell the story of Saskatchewan's Lean initiative, an enormously contentious process that dominated the province's political landscape in the past decade. Drawing on this diverse set of methods and sources, I demonstrate how and why Lean's trajectory came to intersect with that of Canadian public bureaucracies, arguing that as bureaucracies "shapeshift," they adopt, repurpose and deploy an ever-changing set of political programmes and technologies to more closely reflect the shifting dynamics of political rationalities.

PREFACE

This thesis is an original work by Justin Leifso. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name "Political Rationalities and the Shifting Technologies and Discourses of Public Bureaucracies," ID No. Pro00065112, January 6, 2017.

Small portions of Chapters 6 and 7 have been published in as Justin Leifso, "Green is the Colour: Saskatchewan, Political Despair, and the Affective Politics of the Rider Nation" in *Sociology of Sport* Vol. 36, No. 1: 48-56. Portions of Chapter 3 are currently under review for inclusion in an edited volume, *Neoliberal Contentions*, edited by Lois Harder, Steve Patten and Catherine Kellogg.

To Rhiannon, for everything

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This thesis was written in many places and in many circumstances between 2016 and 2019. It was written on family trips and in the passenger seat of the family vehicle on the way to visit my ailing father. It was written on the notes app of my phone when certain thoughts came to me in the middle of walking the dog, in offices and on couches, in hotels and healthcare facilities I visited and in the middle of a crowd of conference attendees. In every occasion, it was me doing the writing and I'm proud of the pages that follow. With that said, nobody understands more than me the importance of those who helped and supported me along the way.

First, I'd like to thank the public servants and health providers who took the time to put up with my interview questions. A number of them will no doubt disagree with some of the conclusions in Chapters 6 and 7. I hope, though, that the following chapters make clear the respect I have for these professionals. The story of Lean's implementation in Saskatchewan is one marked by earnest and diligent public servants and health practitioners who, whether they advocated for Lean or resisted it, sincerely felt that they were working towards a better healthcare system and public bureaucracy in the province.

Thanks to my extraordinary colleagues and peers in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta. Colleagues like Janet Phillips, Brent Epperson, Alexa Degagne, Nisha Nath, Mariam Georgis, Leigh Spanner, Margot Challborn, and Drew Brown are reconceptualizing what it means to do Political Science (even if they're no longer in the discipline), and I consider myself lucky to be the beneficiary of their support, friendship, and occasional discussions about the state of the discipline. My cohort of Anya Kuteleva, Chad Cowie, Mike Burton and Emrah Keskin has largely dispersed but remains bound by ties of late-night coffee, stories of intimidating methodology professors, and occasional appearances at one another's weddings. Daisy Raphael, an incredible friend and brilliant scholar, has been a colleague and friend since we were recruited into the Master's Program at the University of Alberta in 2009. We've discussed political economy, affect, colonialism and the nature of the Canadian state. We've bonded over grief and loss while sharing notes about puppy-rearing. And maybe, one day, we will finally turn our attention to storm chasing.

I thank the administrative staff in the Department of Political Science, including Cindy Anderson, Donna Coombs-Montrose, Sharina Prasad and Caroline Kinyua for all their assistance and support over my time in the PhD program. I owe a debt of gratitude, also, to Political Science librarian Katie Cuyler, whose incredible knowledge of government documents made my research, particularly those archival components of Chapters 4 and 5, infinitely easier. Thanks also to faculty in the Department of Political Science, including Dr. Judy Garber, Dr. Linda Trimble, Dr. Ian Urquhart, Dr. Roger Epp, Dr. Yasmeen Abu-Laban, Dr. Malinda Smith, and Dr. Catherine Kellogg for mentorship and guidance with respect to comprehensive exams, publishing, teaching, and life as a political scientist.

Thanks to Rob Aitken, who served on both my candidacy and final exam committees, for excellent questions and wise guidance. I thank Dr. Wendy Larner, whose name and work is woven throughout the fabric of this dissertation, for serving as my external examiner and giving

me a decade's worth of questions to answer through future research. Extraordinary thanks to Dr. Steve Patten and Dr. Lois Harder, members of my supervisory committee, mentors *par excellence* and, I hope, friends for long into the future. Their words of wisdom, kindness and encouragement were crucial in those moments of self-doubt when I wondered if I had made the right decision when I chose the pursuit of an academic career over a public service career.

I am the last PhD student to study under the supervision of Dr. Janine Brodie. She is, without question, one of Canada's preeminent social scientists. The enormous breadth of her work has opened countless pathways for future explorations of political life in Canada. Her extraordinary contributions to social science are made only more remarkable by her generosity, kindness, and dedication to her students. I'll never be able to pay back what she's done for my career and my intellectual trajectory, so I will promise to do my best to pay it forward to my own students in the future. Thank you, Janine.

No words can ever describe the debt of extraordinary gratitude I owe to Rhiannon Stromberg. The club of those whose relationship lasts the entirety of a PhD program is exclusive indeed. For over twelve years, including six years marked by a PhD program, three years married to one another, and nine years with our otherworldly bulldog Liz Lemon, our partnership has remained strong. We are bound together through love, respect, and a commitment to working to make our relationship, and one another, better. Rhiannon has read drafts, comforted me in times of unspeakable grief, listened patiently to streams of consciousness about all matters of neoliberalism theory, and been an unrivalled advocate for me, even when I was unable to advocate for myself. She is also the most competent and dedicated public servant I've ever met. In the following pages, I will discuss the transformation of Canadian public bureaucracies. As bureaucracies continue to shapeshift in ways I will describe, I hope that they begin to resemble more closely the extraordinary example that she sets every day, one marked by professionalism, frank exchanges of ideas, respect and kindness to those below and around her on organizational charts, and a sincere commitment to a *public good*.

And lastly, my parents. In one way or another, the universe took my parents from me in the years it took to finish this degree. In 2016, after my mother was unable to care for my father and his rapidly-advancing dementia, we admitted him to a long-term care home in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. From what I can tell, he now lives in memories of his farm an hour south of the city, near the hamlet of Crane Valley, looking for machinery to fix and for neighbours to visit with. I'm grateful for the caregivers who look after him and treat his secure dementia ward as a home. On October 11, 2018, my mother passed away suddenly and unexpectedly. I remain heartbroken. I'm thankful for an upbringing that involved political awareness and literacy, and am comforted slightly by my confidence that they are both proud of me.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND LEAN TERMS

<u>3P</u> - Production Preparation Process. A process by which projects and processes are designed "from the ground up," in contrast to RPIW or *kaizen* events, in which existing processes are improved.

<u>3S Health</u> - Shared Services Saskatchewan, the collective body responsible for cross-organizational procurement and collective bargaining for all RHAs and healthcare organizations. Formerly known as Saskatchewan Association of Healthcare Organizations (SAHO).

<u>Gemba</u> - the workshop floor (either literally in the case of factories, or figuratively when referring to places where "work is done").

<u>Hoshin Kanri</u> - strategic deployment. Hoshin kanri events include facilitated sessions by which priorities are "aligned" with input from all levels of management and staff.

<u>HQC</u> - Health Quality Council, the body responsible for "evidence-based" health policy and implementation in Saskatchewan.

<u>HSAS</u> - Health Science Association of Saskatchewan.

<u>IMVP</u> - International Motor Vehicle Program. The initial research collaborative responsible translating the Toyota Production System into "Lean."

<u>JBA</u> - John Black and Associates.

<u>Kaizen</u> - Continuous Improvement. For *kaizen* events, see RPIW.

<u>Kanban</u> - Lean inventory system. Usually involves a system by which equipment and goods are automatically ordered when supplies run out.

<u>KOT</u>. Kaizen Operational Team. The staff and management housed within KPOs, responsible for facilitating and coordinating Lean implementation.

<u>KPO</u> - Kaizen Promotion Office. The institutional unit responsible for the promotion and oversight of Lean implementation at an RHA-level.

<u>Muda</u> – Waste.

<u>NPM</u> - New Public Management.

<u>Provincial KPO</u> - Provincial Kaizen Promotion Office. The institutional unit responsible for the coordination of regional KPOs and overall strategic implementation of Lean at a provincial level.

<u>PS2000</u> - Public Service 2000. The late-1980s initiative that sought to introduce New Public Management methodologies into the Canadian federal bureaucracy.

<u>RHAs</u> - Regional Health Authorities.

<u>RPIW</u> - Rapid Process Improvement Workshops. Week-long workshops in which staff and management map out current operational processes and seek to reduce waste by eliminating "wasteful" steps or components of processes. Also known as *kaizen* events.

<u>SAHO</u> - Saskatchewan Association of Healthcare Organizations, now known as 3S Health.

<u>SUN</u> - Saskatchewan Union of Nurses.

- CHAPTER 1 -
Introduction and Theoretical Framework

1.1. Introduction

In 2012, the Government of Saskatchewan announced that it was entering into a contractual agreement with John Black and Associates (JBA), a Seattle-based consulting firm, to introduce "Lean Management" (Lean)[1] into its healthcare system.   Lean, the Minister of Health said at the time, was going to be a "Game Changer" (French 2011). It would allow the province to "bend the cost curve" by finding efficiencies and eliminating waste, effectively making it possible to improve services without having to spend more public money. Soon, Lean was introduced to the entirety of the province's healthcare bureaucracy, including the Ministry of Health, the province's twelve Regional Health Authorities (RHAs), the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, the Health Quality Council (HQC) and, in effect, every health facility in the province. Waste would be eliminated, services would be improved, and government would conduct its business better, in a manner befitting a management approach utilized by successful corporate entities such as Toyota, Boeing, General Electric (GE), and Caterpillar.

Lean became an enormously contentious political issue in the province. While originally optimistic, unions and the media eventually turned on the strategy, calling into question both its effectiveness and the cost of its implementation. While some staff, primarily those who were responsible for implementing Lean, were enthusiastic about its potential, others questioned the time they were expected to spend working on Lean exercises rather than their regular duties. The province's New Democratic Party (NDP) Official Opposition, meanwhile, gleefully took the

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[1] As will become apparent in Chapters 2 and 5, there are an enormous amount of "lean" monikers - the original lean manufacturing, lean management, lean accounting, lean construction, lean procurement, lean IT, lean healthcare, lean policing, lean government, etc. Names are also important to the topic - as discussed in Chapter 2, there are disagreements within the Lean Industry in terms of what the approach should be called. Throughout this dissertation, I use the broad, capitalized term "Lean" as an umbrella term to encompass all lean variations.

opportunity to mock both the cost of the consultants and some of the more unorthodox practices they deployed, such as bringing "senseis" from Japan to inspect Saskatchewan's work, or the practice of widely using Japanese phrases such as *kaizen*, *hoshin kanri*, *kanban, muda* and *gemba* to describe work practices.[2] The Government publicly defended Lean while it distributed speaking points to its staff to defend the initiative against accusations that it was a "cult" and attempted to diffuse unrest on the part of staff and management in the ministries and Regional Health Authorities that were being asked to undertake the Lean project.

By 2017, the Lean experiment in Saskatchewan had been quietly shelved. The institutional infrastructure that had been set up, both within healthcare and the broader bureaucracy, either had been dismantled entirely or had its mandate quietly changed. Staff who had served as "Lean specialists" moved to new positions or had their existing job descriptions changed. The language of Lean, including both the word "Lean" itself as well as the Japanese terminology that accompanied Lean implementation, had all but disappeared from official communications from the province. Lean's implementation did not, it seems, transform the provincial bureaucracy - within healthcare or otherwise - as successfully as anticipated. Yet, the effects of the Lean implementation remain. While *kaizen* (one of the cornerstones of Lean, and the basis of a number of Lean activities) has nearly disappeared, the more modest-sounding (and nearly identical) Continuous Improvement remains. While references to "Lean Healthcare" are nowhere to be found, the Saskatchewan Healthcare Management System deploys similar tools. And while the brash predictions about transformation have ended, frontline staff continue to report regular, if unenthusiastic, "wall walks," whereby managers review charts visualizing

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[2] The use of Japanese terminology is a hallmark of some experts within the Lean Industry, such as those who were responsible for the Lean initiative in Saskatchewan. I will discuss debates about using Japanese terminology in Chapter 3 and then discuss the extent to which the terminology proved controversial in Saskatchewan in Chapters 6 and 7.

indicators and progress reports. Though the priority and visibility with which it is being implemented are far reduced from its zenith in 2013-2014, Lean remains present and widely observable throughout the Government of Saskatchewan.

I was a first-hand witness to, and subject of, the Lean experiment in Saskatchewan. From 2007-2013, I served in a variety of roles in the Saskatchewan public service. I was a policy analyst and senior policy analyst within the province's Ministry of Health, working in areas such as long-term care, mental health, addictions, primary health care, and chronic disease management and care. After a year-long break to travel, I applied for a job in the Ministry's Primary Health Services Branch. I remember vividly that interview in November 2008, when the two hiring managers indicated that some things had changed since I had left a year earlier. "Lean and green" were the "big things" in the Ministry, they told me. "Green" was relatively straightforward for me - the Ministry would, apparently, adopt policies and practices to promote some sort of ecological responsibilities. "Lean," though, was new. Based on the connotations of "lean" and the recent election of the conservative Saskatchewan Party in the province, I assumed that it meant austerity. Anticipating that reaction, they quickly assured me that it did not mean cuts, but rather was a "new way of doing things" based on Toyota. That did not assuage my suspicions. Having recently returned from a year of overseas travel, though, I needed a job. When they offered one, I accepted.

I spent the next decade thinking about Lean's emergence in public institutions. In the job that materialized from that interview, I was responsible for preparing briefing notes that summarized academic and grey[3] literature on primary care in the country, gathering and maintaining quantitative data for the purposes of performance management, writing proposals,

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[3] That is, literature developed not only by academics but by think-tanks, NGOs, and government organizations.

and conducting research and analysis where needed. Increasingly in my time there, though, there was a low hum of "Lean." Newsletters from our Deputy Minister reported on Lean projects taking place in Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) and in other branches of the ministry. I watched as senior management and cabinet ministers began to talk about Lean being "transformational" and, increasingly heard about a growing reliance on management consultants from Seattle who were being deployed to facilitate more Lean activities. Lean made its way into official communications and ultimately the strategic plan for the Ministry. With this, I saw a growing amount of my superiors' time and attention being dominated by ensuring that our work was consistent with this new direction. I participated in a *hoshin kanri*, or Lean-branded strategic planning session, serving as a facilitator as I tried to keep a set of deeply skeptical middle-managers on-topic while a former Boeing employee discussed plane engines and performance targets.

When I moved to the office of the Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan as a manager of performance audits, I was responsible for designing and conducting audits of programs within the province's RHAs. In every audit, from food services in long-term care homes (Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan 2012a) to the scheduling of surgeries (Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan 2012b) to triaging in emergency departments (Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan 2013), I encountered Lean. When I asked questions about what policies and processes were in place to reach a certain goal (a standard set of questions in performance audits), I was given answers permeated with Lean jargon and told about *kaizens* and Rapid Process Improvement Workshops and work standards and 3Ps (terms, again, that I will explore in Chapters 6 and 7).

Throughout this work history, I remained both skeptical about Lean and deeply curious as to how it ended up guiding my work life and that of thousands of others. How did this

management methodology, apparently developed in Japanese auto plants, end up in the Saskatchewan bureaucracy? What led to it being so pervasive in Saskatchewan? Who was responsible for bringing it to the province? What, exactly, did it say about bureaucracies in Canada that Lean, and other methodologies that I had observed being marketed by management consultants, had become so prevalent? As an undergraduate and a Master's student, I had trained as a political economist and I wanted, above all, to know what the relationship was between the broad pattern of policies I understood as neoliberalism and this deployment of private sector practices. I left my job at the Provincial Auditor and began my PhD at the University of Alberta to explore these questions. This dissertation is the result of that work.

Lean's implementation, I argue in the pages that follow, represents an experimental iteration of neoliberal bureaucracy in Canada. It is a clear example of how neoliberalism - which I define below as a set of political rationalities predicated on a specific set of normative claims and made tangible through the implementation of programmes and technologies of government - has changed public bureaucracies in ways that more closely reflect those normative claims. Far from being a static and unmoving monolith that classical sociological theory and popular stereotypes would have us believe, bureaucracies shift form and shape to conform to unstable and provisional logics that underwrite political rationalities. But how? How do public bureaucracies in Canada change as the political, social and economic contexts around them change? This dissertation seeks to answer this question. It will, accordingly, unfold in a way that I believe best captures how public bureaucracies in Canada have changed, culminating in the case study of Lean in Saskatchewan as a case study for contemporary neoliberal bureaucracy. I begin, in this chapter, with a literature review that surveys the landscape of work that examines public bureaucracies in Canada and outlines my theoretical framework, based on, among other

things, concepts drawn from governmentality perspectives and critical policy studies. It is here that I survey how others have observed the changes inherent to neoliberalism, and in particular the processes of neoliberalization. I conceptualize neoliberalization as the distinct processes by which assemblages of programmes and technologies crystalize in particular formations across different scales to resemble the normative ideal that discursively underwrites neoliberal rationalities. Bureaucracies serve as one space in which these technologies are introduced and deployed, existing alongside the technologies that came before them as well as the ones that will come after. This chapter helps to explore the concepts that I find useful for exploring my question.

A methodology chapter follows the introduction and theoretical framework. In this chapter, I describe the mix of methods that I deploy throughout the empirical chapters. I explain how the theoretical framework that I establish in this chapter forms the foundation for my methodology, including using genealogy, problematization, and the strategy of "following" concepts like Lean and public bureaucracies in order to explore how they have evolved and the intricacies of how they intersected in the case study of Lean's implementation in Saskatchewan. In addition to describing my methodological strategy, this chapter also offers some reflection on the practical application of some methods, such as interviews with informants on politically sensitive topics and the obstacles of retrieving documents through Freedom-of-Information requests.

The empirical chapters are largely, but not entirely, chronological. Chapter 3 sets the stage for exploring how Lean emerged in public bureaucracies by tracing Lean's genealogy. I begin where Lean began, in mid-twentieth century Japan where, facing challenging political-economic circumstances following the Second World War (WWII), the Toyota Automobile

Corporation developed a series of practices and techniques to adapt North-American style mass production for the Japanese market, based on the central goal of eliminating waste and maximizing flexibility and adaptability. I then explore the ostensible crisis of American competitiveness in the 1980s, and in particular, the anxiety within American corporate and popular culture stemming from the belief that Japan was "taking over" through its superior competitiveness and methods. This anxiety, I argue, motivated the search for solutions to the "problem" of America's lack of competitiveness. When American researchers and industry insiders sought solutions, they looked to emulate the Japanese companies that were outperforming them. One set of practices used by Toyota were then translated by American researchers as Lean, which became the knowledge around which a network of expertise that I call the Lean Industry developed. In time, the Lean Industry grew into a sprawling collection of professional and epistemic networks, united in the mission of promoting Lean and expanding the influence of Lean experts. When logics surrounding public bureaucracies shifted under neoliberal critique and bureaucracies sought to incorporate increasing degrees of private sector practices, the Lean Industry was ready to introduce its practices and knowledges into public sector institutions.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I set Lean aside and focus on public bureaucracies in Canada and how they have formed and re-formed according to shifts in political rationalities. I draw on texts such as Royal Commissions beginning in the late nineteenth century to explore discourses surrounding public bureaucracies. Based on the work of Brodie (1990, 1997a), I typologize Canadian history into different periods, characterized by economic development strategies, each underwritten by temporally-specific dominant political rationalities. In Chapter 4, I explore how bureaucracies were understood and conceptualized in what I call the Nation-Building Period and

the Keynesian Welfarist Period. I examine discourses surrounding bureaucracies in these eras, and then how these discourses were made tangible through changes to institutional structures and processes. In Chapter 5, I do the same for the era of Canadian neoliberalism. I explore neoliberal discourses of bureaucracies and how reforms such as New Public Management (NPM) were deployed to reorganize the structure and practices of public bureaucracies to better reflect the discursive ideal of bureaucracy congruent with neoliberal rationalities.

My empirical research culminates in Chapters 6 and 7, which, together, offer an in-depth exploration of neoliberal bureaucracies through the Saskatchewan case study. These chapters do two things. First, they examine in detail how the programmes and technologies of neoliberal rationalities come together in shifting, provisional ways through a deeply empirical examination of how and why Lean was adopted in a Canadian province's public bureaucracy. Lean in Saskatchewan serves as an example of how the programmes and technologies of neoliberalization are operationalized and, as such, contributes to the literature surrounding neoliberalization, policy mobility, and assemblages. Secondly, Chapters 6 and 7 also offer the most thorough academic examination of the Lean experiment in Saskatchewan to date. As such, it will doubtlessly be of interest for those who follow Saskatchewan politics and policy, as well as those in the healthcare or public administration fields who are researching what is very likely the most ambitious and well-known attempt to deploy "Lean government."

Collectively through these chapters, I seek to answer the question of how public bureaucracies in Canada have changed over time in concert with broader political rationalities. The answer is complex. As rationalities emerge and disappear, existing and new programmes and technologies are reorganized and deployed through cycles of problematization. Practices, processes, and logics that have their own unique histories, like Lean, are repurposed as solutions

to new problems. The implementation of Lean in Saskatchewan represents the intersection of two genealogies: that of Canadian public bureaucracies, whose history is one characterized by their morphing through processes of problematization to reflect dominant (or emerging) political rationalities, and Lean, which has travelled across geographies both physical and professional through different cycles of problematization only to eventually converge with Canadian public bureaucracies. Through an enormously complex constellation of logics, technologies, expertise, political contestation and apparent serendipity, Lean government has arrived as the latest in a long series of neoliberal bureaucratic reforms. It is at once a fascinating story that reveals much about how abstract concepts such as neoliberal rationalities unfold in tangible ways in particular places. It is also, I hope, a cautionary tale that might bring pause to the accelerating rate with which public bureaucracies in Canada are turning to Lean experts, and experts in other types of management methodologies, for advice on how to conduct government "more like business."

1.2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

An examination of how Canadian public bureaucracies have changed should begin with a survey of those fields that have most closely studied the subject. In this case, Canadian bureaucracies have been studied extensively, most notably within Canadian public administration. Early public administration scholars (Dawson 1929, Kernaghan 1968, and Hodgetts 1973; see Rasmussen and Siegel 2008) set the tone for a descriptive-normative style of analyzing the subject. Dawson, for example, straddled the line between analysis and advocacy when he celebrated the transition from patronage to merit-based hiring practices, while bemoaning "certain peculiar bureaucratic sins" such as bureaucrats' "love of red tape" and "profound distrust" of change (1929, 112). These approaches to public administration mirrored Canadian Political Science of the time, characterized primarily by a formal-legal form of

institutionalism that resembled the American "traditional" institutionalism of Woodrow Wilson

(2006; see Smith 2005). Luminaries of Canadian Political Science such as Ward (1958) and

Forsey (1960) crafted distinguished careers by describing the Canadian state's institutional

arrangements, evaluating how well those arrangements addressed enduring political cleavages

and the pressing issues of the day, and recommending institutional reforms to address these

issues. This work mirrored the priorities of the Canadian state, which sought to use its capacity

to address social problems, adjusting institutions to confront emerging Canadian realities.

Accordingly, the public bureaucracy grew dramatically in the mid-twentieth century, raising "to

unprecedented heights the provision of health, welfare, and educational services as well as the

regulation of individual and group conduct in diverse areas of socio-economic life" (Kernaghan

1968, 292). At a time when social liberalism visualized the state providing basic levels of social

well-being to its citizens, both the Canadian state and political scientists sought institutional

solutions to social problems.

While much of the "institutionalist" strand of Canadian Political Science[4] has moved

towards an approach more similar to that of historical institutionalism (see Hall and Taylor 1996;

Smith 2005), the descriptive-normative tradition of Canadian Political Science has lived on in

contemporary Canadian public administration. Luminaries such as Kernaghan (2000) have

continued using this approach to evaluate the Canadian public bureaucracies, setting the stage for

others (Roy 2008; Vining and Boardman 2008; Baskoy, Evans and Shields 2011; Howlett 2009;

Evans and Sapeha 2015; Lindquist and Rasmussen 2012; Tsasis 2008; Laurin and Wagner 2011;

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[4] "Strands" in the plural is used intentionally, for to speak of a singular Canadian institutionalism would be misguided. Some institutionalisms, like those of Cairns (1968) share similarities with historical institutionalism within comparative Political Science, understanding political institutions as important independent variables in political life. Others remain more dedicated to the traditional, legal-formal descriptive accounts of Canadian political institutions such as those offered by David Smith (1991, 2003). "Institutionalisms" here, then, means those approaches to Canadian politics that prioritize the formal institutions of the Canadian state, whatever their epistemological approach or theoretical framework may be.

Rose and Cray 2010; Aucoin 1986; 2008; 2012) to do the same. This work has done much to illuminate the operational practices of public bureaucracies.

Canadian public administration, however, suffers from weaknesses that make it inadequate as a theoretical foundation for my research. As descendants of traditional, legal-formal versions of Political Science, such work often lacks the appreciation for social, political, and economic contexts that my research requires. Dwivedi and Gow (1999), for instance, provide an excellent and thorough examination of the evolution of culture and practices within the Canadian federal bureaucracy while simultaneously shying away from engaging with the changes facing the state, or the external pressures leading to those changes, over the same period. Peters and Savoie (2012) do somewhat better when locating public service reforms within the context of "a significant shift in politics in the 1980s and early 1990s, with greater assertiveness on the part of elected leaders to rationalize budgets, to take charge of public bureaucracy, and to reform delivery of service" (Peters and Savoie 2012, 198). With a peculiar vagueness, however, they refer to this "significant shift in politics" and name symptoms of that shift, but avoid identifying or discussing the shift itself. Much of current public administration similarly treats bureaucracies as a topic of inquiry separate from its historical context.

This context-free approach to public administration has serious consequences. By avoiding the broader conceptual context of what they study, public administration scholars naturalize a division between administration and politics. By treating bureaucracies as an evaluative field in which best practices are judged for their effectiveness, such work separates bureaucracies from the political. The technical arena of public bureaucracies remains isolated from the political fray. The study of bureaucracies becomes the study of public administration,

an administrative science centred around the pursuit of better, more effective methods of carrying out those decisions.

This does a disservice to the critical study of public bureaucracies, which exist within the political world. By conceptually separating the study of bureaucracies from broader political forms, public administration scholars effectively *depoliticize* the concept of public bureaucracy, constituting it as a site of technicality rather than a site of power. Bureaucracies are scrubbed of any political influences and turned into a topic studied primarily by those interested in the most effective methods of administration, however that is defined historically. Through this process of depoliticization, orthodox public administration scholars undermine the conceptual importance of their own work. Bureaucracies, I argue, are amongst the most visible and pervasive components of the state, institutions that shape daily life like few others. It is thus imperative to understand them not only in terms of their internal logics but also their place within their contextual landscape.

Over the past thirty years, this contextual landscape has been one that, I submit, is plainly consistent with neoliberalism. As such, contextualizing bureaucracies means untangling how they relate to neoliberalism and the overarching frameworks, which I describe below as political rationalities, that came before it. It also means facing a difficult analytical challenge: overcoming neoliberalism's significant conceptual baggage. Neoliberalism has, with heavy use over three decades, become a point of contention in the social sciences. Its rapid rise in popularity since 1990 (Venugopal 2015) has exposed neoliberalism to a degree of concept stretching (Sartori 1971), leaving it "accompanied by considerable imprecision, confusion, and controversy" (Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010b, 328). Being used to explain everything has put neoliberalism at risk of explaining nothing, deteriorating its usefulness in social science

inquiries. Some have gone so far as to wonder if it is perhaps time to retire the term (e.g., Clarke 2008). To use such a loaded term, then, requires considerable conceptual unpacking.

Early on, Wendy Larner provided a very useful account of how academics have treated the concept (2000). According to Larner, the most common strategy for understanding neoliberalism is treating it as a set of policies, or policy framework. In the neoliberalism-as-policy approach, neoliberalism represents a "shift from Keynesian welfarism towards a political agenda favouring the relatively unfettered operation of markets" (Larner 2000, 6). Indeed, throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, the primary account of neoliberalism was a linear tale of market-friendly policies (e.g., Khor 2001; Rapley 2002; Clarkson 2002).[5] Cast aside during the state-heavy mid-twentieth century's experimentation with the Keynesian Welfare State, neoclassical economic liberalism existed solely as a "marginalized set of intellectual convictions" (Mudge 2008, 709) in the work of academics such as Friedman (1980) and Hayek (2007). With the stagflation crisis of the 1970s came the opportunity for those who shared Friedman and Hayek's vision to push their policy agenda. Within this narrative, it was electoral politics, through the election of leaders such as Thatcher in the UK, Reagan in the United States and Mulroney in Canada that brought neoliberal frameworks to national states. Soon, major liberal democracies were ruled by governments espousing the politics of austerity, deregulation, and privatization, effectively turning to the "free market" to deliver public goods. Globally, neoliberal policies were promoted through the process of economic globalization by supranational organizations such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), who had abdicated their original mandates as determined at the Bretton Woods conference in 1944 (Rapley 2002 5-7; Mittelman 2004). In this convergence thesis narrative, neoliberal

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[5] See Brown 2015, 29 and Larner 2000, 6 for more thorough discussion.

globalization played the part of a tsunami or steam roller, washing or rolling over all jurisdictions and leaving little in the form of national, regional or jurisdictional differences. In its wake, there remained a series of states with neoliberal policy frameworks. Larner calls the analytical usefulness of this approach into question, however. She rightly argues that while accounts of neoliberalism as policy "serve a useful purpose in terms of elaborating the *consequences* of welfare state restructuring, as an explanation of the phenomenon itself they may raise more questions than they answer" (Larner 2000, 8). While accurately revealing much about those policies associated with neoliberalism, by focusing on those policies as if they *are* neoliberalism, as I will review in Chapter 5, this approach does not penetrate into the discursive underpinnings of neoliberalism.

The second approach to neoliberalism identified by Larner, neoliberalism as ideology, moves beyond neoliberalism's policies and begins to unpack the concept's discursive aspects. For scholars such as Hall (1988) or Harvey (2007), neoliberalism reflects the ideology of a particular class project. Borrowing from thinkers such as Gramsci (1971) or Althusser (1971) who incorporate discursive elements into their Marxist analyses, class-based accounts of neoliberalism emphasize the importance of ideology for justifying regimes of capital accumulation. In this approach, neoliberalism represents an advanced capitalist ideology that justifies capital accumulation in the late twentieth century in a way that leads to the breakdown of class consciousness and solidarity. Larner argues that this interpretation of neoliberalism, present in Regulation Theory, socialist-feminism and political economy, pushes understanding of neoliberalization beyond the simplified, coherent version associated with neoliberalism-as-policy, stating that these "analyses show that new political configurations are more multi-vocal than we might have understood" (Larner 2000, 9). She also argues, however, that even this

interpretation does not go far enough. For the richest account of neoliberalism, one that holds the key to an operationalizable use of the term, Larner's third approach is the most useful.

This third approach stems from governmentality, a style of studying the political world with its origins in the work of Michel Foucault. Foucault developed a novel approach to studying power, standing opposed to what he considered the "juridical" interpretation of power employed by traditional Political Science. Foucault offered a new conceptualization: the "microphysics" of power (Foucault 1977, 26-27). For Foucault, power is not situated in a particular site or individual, possessed by some to be wielded over others. Rather, power flows through social relations, present in "irreducible locales, settings, fields and relationships – a factory, a prison, a family" (Walters 2012, 14). Power is "everywhere" (Foucault 1984, 93) and studying it cannot be reduced to observing how elites or institutions use legislation or regulation to rule over citizens or advance their material interests. Studying power thus involves identifying the channels through which it flows via the creation of subjectivities, knowledges, and truths.

Foucault turned to questions of government and the state in the 1970s in a series of lectures at the College de France (Foucault 2003; 2009; 2010) where he eventually introduced the term "governmentality." Building on his earlier work on the microphysics of power, Foucault explored more meso-level forms of power such as the state, which he conceptualized as a "shifting, provisional constellation of smaller expressions of power" (Walters 2012, 14). For Foucault, phenomena such as liberalism should not be viewed as ideology or type of government but rather as a model of governance, characterized by mechanisms of rule that differed from earlier forms such as *raison d'etate* or "pastoral power" (Walters 2012). What separates liberalism from other forms of governance, according to governmentality, is its *style* of governing, or "general mentality of rule" (Dean 2010, 176). Liberalism, with its undercurrent of

freedom, rights, and a limited state, does not mean there is *less* governing than in previous eras, but rather that the nature of that governing has changed from overt, authoritarian styles of governing to more nuanced "governing at a distance" or "governing the self" through the "conduct of conduct" (Rose and Miller 1992; Walters 2012).

Scholars from a broad range of disciplines have used the "analytical toolbox" (Walters 2012, 2) offered by governmentality in social science research. For my purpose, the most useful concepts of governmentality originated in the work of the so-called "British governmentalists" (Miller and Rose 2008, 8), particularly Rose and Miller, who authored the highly influential 1992 paper "Political Power Beyond the State." In their engagement with Foucault's work, Rose and Miller "brought a heightened degree of analytical elaboration and conceptual development to studies of government" and "made terms like 'technologies of government,' 'political rationality,' and 'problematics of government' into a conceptual vocabulary capable of being deployed in diverse research fields" (Walters 2012, 48).

Indeed, the list of concepts provided by Rose and Miller helps link the theory of governmentality, unfinished and messy as Foucault left it, to actual research projects. In particular, the concepts of political rationality, programmes, and technologies can be enormously useful in conceptualizing neoliberalism precisely. According to Rose and Miller, political rationalities are discursive formations that underwrite how we see, understand, and analyze the world. By their definition, political rationalities share a number of characteristics. First, they have a moral form, in that they "address the proper distribution of tasks and actions between authorities of different types" and "consider the ideals or principles to which government should be directed, among them freedom, justice, equality, mutual responsibility, citizenship, common sense, economic efficiency, prosperity, growth, fairness, rationality and the like" (Rose and

Miller 1992, 179). Second, Rose and Miller submit, political rationalities have an epistemological character – "they are articulated in relation to some conception of the nature of the objects governed – society, the nation, the population, the economy" (Rose and Miller 1992, 180). Third, they are "articulated in a distinct *idiom* … [that is,] a kind of intellectual machinery or apparatus for rendering reality thinkable in such a way that it is amenable to political deliberations." In short, political rationalities represent an underlying discursive apparatus that shapes what we consider right, good, or even possible. As Wendy Brown states, a "political rationality is not itself an instrument of governing, but rather the condition of possibility and legitimacy of its instruments, the field of normative reason from which instruments and techniques" are forged (Brown 2015, 121).

This version of neoliberalism, one that guides and shapes how we see the world and what we consider to be politically relevant, operational, or acceptable, is far deeper than a set of policies or a policy framework. Rationalities such as neoliberalism shape the discursive field upon which policies operate. Parties of social democratic, liberal[6] and conservative persuasion, for example, pursue similar objectives not because those objectives are somehow lacking in an "ideological" character[7] but rather because the realm of the possible or desirable has been shaped by particular rationalities. Workfare,[8] as one example, has emerged in jurisdictions with competing "ideological" positions, as workfare policies are consistent with the underlying discursive components of neoliberal rationalities, looking to create neoliberal subjects through

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[6] Certainly, these terms are themselves unstable – what it means to be "liberal" has meant different things within a Keynesian order versus a neoliberal one, for example.

[7] Take, for example, the work of Tupper (2001) or Saint-Martin (1998) who both discount the explanatory power of "ideology" in public sector reform because it has been observed in jurisdictions with social democratic governments.

[8] See Broad and Hunter 2010 for a survey of work-to-welfare programs in social democratic jurisdictions.

the individualization of responsibility and well-being. Conflating rationalities with policies misses too much of neoliberalism's conceptual iceberg.

Neoliberal rationalities represent a stark departure from previous manifestations of liberalism. Brodie and DeGagne (2010) point out that neoliberalism "bears only a faint resemblance to the rich tradition of classical liberalism, which assigns to the state responsibility for advancing the political, civic, and economic freedoms of individuals." Liberalism emerged as a separation of the political, economic, and social as separate spheres, each with their own particular logics – a division that was accepted as natural or common-sense (Polanyi 2001, 74). Neoliberal rationalities erase these boundaries. As it exists today, neoliberal rationalities supplant the logics of the social and the political with one particular (neoclassical) version of the economic. (Brown 2015, 39-40). As Lemke (2001, 198) argues, "here, the economy is no longer one social domain among others with its own intrinsic rationality, laws and instruments. Instead, the area covered by the economy embraces the entirety of human action to the extent that this is characterized by the allocation of scant resources for competing goals." In short, neoliberalism represents a *de*liberalization of contemporary political rationalities (Brown 2015). Such important distinctions and considerations cannot be captured by understanding neoliberalism as merely a set of policies or even a policy framework, which leaves little room for such discursive and theoretical complexity.

To conceptualize how political rationalities such as neoliberalism are expressed through political phenomena, I return to Rose and Miller's (1992) framework. For Rose and Miller, political rationalities are realized through programmes and technologies of government. By programmes, Rose and Miller refer to a "translation" of political rationalities that effectively frames problems and solutions in a way that makes rationalities operational. They argue that

such "translatability between the moralities, epistemologies and idioms of political power and the government of a specific problem space, establishes a mutuality between what is desirable and what can be made possible through the calculated activities of political forces" (Rose and Miller 1992, 182). Meanwhile, it is through *technologies* "that political rationalities and the programmes of government that articulate them become capable of deployment" (Rose and Miller 1992, 183). These technologies are the policies, regulations, strategies, guidelines, initiatives, and techniques that articulate and re-articulate (Clarke 2008) rationalities in observable ways.

It is possible to reinterpret Canadian political history through the concepts associated with governmentality. Brodie (1997a), for example, offers a persuasive account of the shifting dynamics of the Canadian state that is highly complementary to Rose and Miller's approach. For Brodie, the history of the Canadian state has included three state forms with transformations between each corresponding to "historical shifts in the organization of the international political economy" (Brodie 1997a, 227). Borrowing from Innis (1962) and Fowke (1952, 1957), Brodie conceptualizes these epochs of Canadian political history as being characterized by particular strategies of economic development that she has labels the First, Second, and Third National Policies (Brodie 1990, chapter 4; Brodie 1997b, 249-258).

Brodie's political economy of Canadian political history is translatable as a series of shifting rationalities, programmes, and technologies. Each national policy, corresponding to a particular rationality, represents a programme that translates that rationality into a political lexicon appropriate for the Canadian context, deploying technologies to articulate and rearticulate itself. The First National Policy (FNP), coinciding with the ascendance of a global laissez-faire rationality, was characterized by implementing "nation-building" technologies such

as a national tariff on manufactured goods, settlement of "the West" (with displacement of Indigenous peoples) and construction of a national railroad (Brodie 1997b, 249-253). These technologies ultimately sought to articulate laissez-faire liberalism, ensuring "the autonomy of the market" by maintaining "an appropriate climate for the private sector by, among other things, keeping taxes low, encouraging savings, enforcing the rights of private property and the legality of the contract, and establishing uniform standards" (Brodie 1997a, 231). Similarly, the Keynesian Welfare State of the Second National Policy (SNP) represented the political programme that translated social liberalism, expressed through technologies such as income security initiatives, public health insurance, the Canada Assistance Plan (Bakker and Scott 1997, 290), federal programs such as equalization (Courchene 1984, 25) and infrastructure such as the Trans-Canada Highway (Paison 2006). The Third National Policy (TNP), meanwhile, corresponds with neoliberal rationalities, articulated through a political programme that has spanned thirty years (Albo and Jenson 1997; Graef 2007; Bradford 2004), characterized by technologies such as the transformation of federal grants to provinces (McBride and McNutt 2007, 186), and the signing of a series of internal and external free trade agreements. Indeed, Brodie herself adapts to the work of governmentality theorists, identifying the shifting logics of governance first as "meso-discourses" (1997a) and later as political rationalities (2007; 2008). In the following chapters, I refer to these eras as the nation-building, Keynesian welfarist, and neoliberal periods in Canada.

This governmentality approach is consistent with the concepts offered by an interdisciplinary school of critical policy scholars. Drawing largely from fields such as political geography and anthropology, these writers address the decontextualizing and depoliticizing of policy, with significant attention paid to policy under neoliberalism (see Peck and Theodore

2016 and Clarke *et al* 2017). Rejecting the language of "some fully-formed, coherently functioning, self-reproducing and 'regime-like' state of neoliberal*ism*," for example, Brenner, Peck, and Theodore (2010, 208) offer the conceptual tool of neoliberal*ization* to capture the "temporally discontinuous and spatially heterogeneous" processes present in contemporary political economy. They begin with neoliberalization's discursive framework, arguing that processes of neoliberalization rest "upon a starkly utopian vision of market rule, rooted in an idealized conception of competitive individualism and a deep antipathy to sources of social solidarity (Theodore, Peck and Brenner 2011, 16). They are careful to avoid adopting a simplistic interpretation of this vision, however, rejecting notions of neoliberalism as a "singular, pristine plan or grand design" (Peck and Theodore 2012). Neoliberalization's discursive foundation is, rather, a loose collection of normative understandings about what ought to be, what is valued, and what political formations are valid – neoliberal rationalities. Neoliberalization, then, consists of the processes that make this fluid market ethos visible – neoliberalism as it "actually" exists (Wacquant 2012).

The aggregate of neoliberalization's programmes and technologies is highly variable, inconsistent and fluid. "Establishing 'market rule,'" Peck, Theodore and Brenner (2009, 107) write, is not "a matter of imposing, from above, a singular regulatory template." Neoliberalization, rather, is characterized by a "lurching dynamic, marked by serial policy failure and improvised adaptation, and by combative encounters with obstacles and counter-movements" (Peck and Theodore 2012, 178-179). Instead of a smooth process by which neoliberal policies are developed and implemented, the programmes and technologies of neoliberalization come in "waves" (Brenner, Peck and Theodore 2010a) that respond to the failure of previous programmes and technologies. Rose and Miller tell a similar story, arguing

that government failure is "intrinsic" (2008, 196) to political programmes. For Rose and Miller,

political programmes are "eternally optimistic, [but] also eternally judged to fail, and the reasons

for this failure are utilized as the basis for further" reform (2008, 197). Processes such as

neoliberalization thus pursue an unattainable goal, realize some type of "pure" rationality, fail,

and are replaced and displaced by new programmes and technologies. As I argue in more detail

in Chapter 5, the commitment to the normative and discursive logics of neoliberalism ensure that

decision-makers continue to search for a *better* type of neoliberal policy and, when none work,

crisis ensues. Waves of failure and crisis such as the 2008 financial crisis bring about new

"lurches" in the neoliberal project as the solutions implemented to fix problems fail to do so and

the contradictions of neoliberal governance intensify, with yet more, "better" forms of neoliberal

policy deployed to address fundamentally neoliberal problems.

Shifts between and within dominant rationalities, complete with iterations, lurches, and

crises, leave a rutted landscape of inconsistent social and political forms. The transition from

one dominant rationality – Keynesian welfarism to neoliberalism, for example – does not

resemble a "clean break" and the programmes and technologies of one rationality do not

evaporate to make way for another. Rather, new technologies are introduced, layered on and

amongst the old. The result is a complex, unevenly distributed and often-inconsistent patchwork

of technologies. In the context of neoliberalization, Clarke (2008) labels this "cohabitation,"

arguing that "as a political-cultural project, [neoliberalism] must find ways of engaging with

other projects, seeking to displace, subordinate, or appropriate them" (Clarke 2008, 139). In

Canada, for example, programmes and technologies of the Keynesian welfarist period have

remained as enduring legacies of that era, even while new technologies are introduced through

neoliberalization. Pension plans, employment insurance, medicare and the like have not

vanished but rather remain as lasting path dependencies, though as part of neoliberalization they face efforts that seek to reform them in a way more fitting forms of neoliberal rationalities. As Brenner, Peck and Theodore (2010b, 189) argue, the "linear, sequential metaphor of transitioning from one (national) organizational system to another seems singularly inapt." Meanwhile, *within* broader neoliberal rationalities, waves of new neoliberal technologies emerge among those already existing, adding to the heterogeneity of existing technologies. I explore this dynamic in more depth in chapters 5 and 6, emphasizing the importance of crisis in the cycle of neoliberal solution-finding.

This conceptualization of neoliberalization is consistent with the growing trend in critical policy studies of treating neoliberalism as an *assemblage*. As critical scholars have written, an assemblage represents "some form of provisional socio-spatial formation," (Anderson and McFarlane 2011, 124; quoted in Higgins and Larner 2007, 4), an "unstable constellation (Ong 2007, 5) or "ensembles of heterogeneous elements" (Ong and Collier 2005, 5). Treating neoliberalism as an assemblage means rejecting the notion that it is a *thing* but rather an uneasy, shifting aggregate of components with varying degrees of consistency with one another. This is an analytical tool of enormous usefulness. As Higgins and Larner write, the challenge for critical scholars is "to know what to do with complexity and contradictions – particularly when the result is that their cases do not fit into the parsimonious explanations that might allow for the tidy packaging under labels such as 'neoliberal projects,' 'neoliberal eras' and the like" (Larner and Higgins 2017, 308). This approach affords the flexibility to confront "'awkward assemblages' and the ambiguous (and not always neoliberal) effects" (Larner and Higgins 2017, 309) they entail. Armed with the concept of assemblages, we can conceptualize neoliberalization as being the processes by which the different discourses and technologies we

understand as being neoliberal are brought together in temporally specific and contingent contexts. When the underlying normative framework of the rationality changes, or when one rationality gives way to another, new technologies are deployed, be they new or repurposed from existing regimes that may or may not be "neoliberal."

This assemblage-building component of neoliberalization is important because it allows a better understanding of how rationalities relate to those rationalities that came before. It helps to demonstrate the extent to which previously existing logics and technologies are reconstituted and redeployed in new arrangements to render rationalities tangible. In Chapters 3 and 4, for example, I will demonstrate the extent to which the claim that "government should operate more like business," so central to the logics of neoliberal rationalities, were noticeable in the public discourses of previous rationalities but marginalized both by academics and decision-makers as part of the broader project of establishing *public* administration as a form of knowledge explicitly separate from profit-seeking enterprise. Understood within the context of assemblages, the claim represents one particular component of a neoliberal assemblage that has been adopted and deployed, now as a dominant logic rather than a marginalized one, as part of the shifting and provisional neoliberal political project.

Neoliberal policies have unfolded unevenly across jurisdictions, appearing differently in Chile than in the UK or China (Harvey 2005), introduced by local elites in some jurisdictions and through "structural adjustment" and pressure from supranational forces in others (Dobbin, Simmons and Garrett 2007). Some scholars have gone so far as to call for a language of "neoliberalisms" in the plural, arguing that each localized expression of neoliberalization is unique. In an article calling for a decolonization of the neoliberal concept, Goldstein (2012) stresses that a singular "neoliberalism" risks universalizing the Global North's experience with

neoliberalization. Goldstein persuasively disaggregates not only the processes of neoliberalization, but also the rationalities that underwrite them: "Actually existing neoliberalism(s) are more than curious local manifestations of global norms, but sets of theories and practices about the world that are fundamentally the products of local history and experience – much of it shaped by colonialism and its aftermath – and the impactful of lived daily reality" (Golstein 2012, 305). As the following chapters progress, I will think about assemblages and the localized nature of neoliberalisms together as I explore the multiscalar dimensions of assemblages and my argument that neoliberalism represents, in effect, an assemblage of assemblages. I will also refer to "neoliberal rationalities" in the plural, considering neoliberalism's enormous geographic and temporal specificities described here.

The localized specificity of rationalities and their corresponding assemblages does not mean, however, that there are not common patterns or family resemblances across these locally specific neoliberalisms. Within contemporary neoliberalism there is a concerted political project to facilitate the uniform implementation of neoliberal technologies, a subject that is captured in an exciting body of work within critical policy studies that has offered accounts of how neoliberal policies "move" (Clarke *et al* 2015). Both Clarke *et al* (2015) and Peck and Theodore (2015) position this literature, which can be largely referred to as policy mobility, in opposition to orthodox policy studies' approach to studying "policy transfer" or "policy diffusion," which both argue suffers from the same type of ahistorical and apolitical shortcomings as the broader body of orthodox policy studies work. Policy *mobility*, or what Peck and Theodore call "fast policy," refers instead to the complex processes by which technologies "travel" across physical and conceptual boundaries, focusing on the networks of experts who provide solutions to problems that arise when current arrangements are found wanting, a process that will echo true in

Chapter 3's look at the Lean Industry and, later, in the Lean Industry's incursion into the Saskatchewan healthcare bureaucracy. As previous solutions are inevitably found wanting, those who market new solutions use successes of their trade as demonstrated in previous experimental implementations and "translate" (Clarke *et al* 2015) them to new settings. Each iteration of the technology becomes, in effect, a new "laboratory" where lessons are learned and expertise is constructed for use in future implementations. The process is seemingly endless, and provides much of the granular inertia of how assemblages are built and rebuilt. As problems are identified and decision-makers seek solutions, networks of experts provide seemingly objective, neutral advice (Prince 2014) packaged as one-size-fits-all fixes to new locales, ensuring that family resemblances between neoliberalisms remain while they are simultaneously being reinvented. Old technologies are critiqued and abandoned, existing ones are retrofit and deployed in new ways, and new ones are subjected to experimental pilot projects. Assemblages form and re-form, remaining in dynamic states of flux.

The ways in which these various conceptual components of political rationalities such as neoliberalism interact with one another and express themselves through the translation of discursive forms into material forms (and vice versa) is thus enormously complex. Understanding the relationship between rationality, programmes and technologies helps explain neoliberalism's conceptual ubiquity. Because rationalities encompass fundamental dimensions of human life – truth, knowledge, expertise – there are essentially no limits to their reach. This is not to say, of course, that all phenomena sit helplessly within the path of a neoliberal "tsunami." Rather, the processes of neoliberalization work through capillaries of social and political forms. Brown (2015) uses the analogy of termites "boring in capillary fashion into the trunks and branches of workplaces, schools, public agencies, social and political discourse, and above all,

the subject" (Brown 2015, 35-36). Technologies of neoliberalism can thus exist essentially

everywhere, and certainly not limited to spaces of the state. Neoliberalism's heavy use is thus

unsurprising. Social scientists have observed neoliberal logics and technologies in multiple

spaces because they *exist* in multiple spaces, shifting in complex, and often incoherent, ways.

The messy, imprecise use of neoliberalism as a concept emerges when we avoid the tedious

legwork of seriously theorizing and specifying the conceptual meaning of neoliberalism,

neoliberalization, and neoliberal rationalities. It is, therefore, important to locate the topic of my

inquiry – public bureaucracies – within this nebulous web deliberately, while remaining

committed to avoiding ascribing the changes I observe to some shapeless incoherent thing called

"neoliberalism." "Because neoliberalism" is not viable analysis.

The theoretical framework presented here is well-suited for this task. Within this

framework, public bureaucracies are but one site through which political rationalities flow via

programmes and technologies. Indeed, though they have not conceptualized it as such, Canadian

and comparative public administration scholars have documented signs of lurching iterations or

waves of neoliberalization within public bureaucracies for decades. New Public Management

(NPM) is the most famous of these bureaucratic neoliberalizing processes. Hood (1991) first

observed a set of processes emerging simultaneously in the 1980s and early 1990s, arguing that

they were related to one another. Bundled together under the umbrella phrase NPM, these

processes included: 1) hands-on professional management in the public sector; 2) explicit

standards and measures of performance; 3) greater emphasis on output controls; 4)

disaggregation of units in the public sector; 5) increased competition in the public sector; 6)

stress on private sector styles of management; and 7) austerity and parsimony in use of public

resources. Scholars adopted Hood's terminology and tracked NPM-related reforms both in the

Global North (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011) and the Global South, often as part of structural

adjustment policies (Manning 2001).

New Public Management is an obvious example of one of neoliberalization's iterations,

for a number of reasons. First, the intellectual foundation of NPM is entirely consistent with

neoliberal rationalities. As Hood rightly notes, the intellectual underpinning of NPM is present

in two traditions: public choice and managerialism. Public choice scholars such as Niskanen

(1971; 1972) have adapted the theory of self-interested rational individuals to frame bureaucrats

as an inefficient bunch of self-interested empire-builders, always seeking to justify their own

existence and enlarge their influence within public organizations. Managerialism, meanwhile, is

derived from scientific management and the idea that professional managerialism is portable

between sectors and industries (Hood 1991, 6). Hood argues that these two influences are

ultimately opposed to one another, put together in a "marriage of opposites." What he misses

when describing these "opposites," however, is their shared normative foundation. Both rest on

the prevailing belief that particular economic logics should serve as the guiding light to more

effective public service. Despite their divergent origins – academia for public choice and

corporate manufacturing for scientific management – both traditions draw from the "economic"

to derive their authority. As such, both are consistent with neoliberal rationality.

Secondly, NPM's emergence is consistent with how governmentality theorists understand

the process of problematization. In the case of the public sector reforms associated with NPM,

the problem was first identified academically, when scholars such as Niskanen (1971) and

Ostrom (1974) began framing bureaucracy as inefficient, bloated and ineffective, a result of the

inherent self-interested nature of bureaucrats. Bureaucracy in the 1970s and 1980s then became

a proxy for the "big government" that politicians such as Ronald Reagan identified as being a

central problem of the time. With its technologies that sought to make bureaucracy operate more "like business," NPM arrived as a solution to this problem, as I will demonstrate in further detail in Chapter 5.

New Public Management also mirrored the spatially and temporally irregular patterns of neoliberalization. It appeared differently in different places and in different times, with New Zealand serving as prototype for "successful" implementation (Boston *et al* 1996) and the US's experimentation with "reinventing government" serving as an example of failure (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011). In Canada, as I will explore in more detail in Chapter 5, public administration scholars such as Kernaghan (2000) and Aucoin (2012) jumped on the NPM wagon, examining the extent to which the Canadian public service conformed to the processes that were being identified elsewhere in western liberal states. Kernaghan (2000) saw the NPM reforms as a sign of the end of Weber's bureaucracy, arguing that the Canadian federal public service had entered a "post-bureaucratic" moment that was fundamentally at odds with traditional bureaucratic formations. Aucoin (2012), meanwhile, examined the uneasy marriage of the concentration of power long identified in Canadian Political Science from Mallory (1957) to Savoie (1999; 2008) with the components of Canadian NPM. The reforms associated with NPM have thus served as a rich source of comparative inquiry, confirming its spatial variability and, accordingly, its consistency with the geographic dimensions of political rationalities' implementation.

As with any set of new technologies, NPM has itself faced critique. For many, NPM represents a failure. Bouckaert and Pollitt (2011) write of the enormous difficulty NPM reforms had overcoming the various institutional path dependencies across liberal democratic states. Such difficulties have been met with frustration by NPM's proponents who believe it has "failed, for the most part, in achieving the goals set forth by its American and British advocates,

particularly the goal of achieving more effective and efficient public organizations" (Dunn and Miller 2007, 350). This frustration, fed by work that has found little evidence that NPM met any of its policy goals (Alonso, Clifton and Diaz-Fuentes 2015), casts NPM as a part of the problem, a symbol of the impossibility of overcoming the internal logics of traditional bureaucratic apparatus. New Public Management has thus undergone its own cycle of problematization, first emerging as a solution to the problem of a bloated, inefficient bureaucratic albatross only to become the tale of a well-intended but unsuccessful attempt to "rein in" wasteful government. I review the problematization of NPM in Canada in greater detail in Chapter 5.

The next wave of neoliberalizing bureaucracies, "governance," emerged both as part of and response to NPM. It was only a few years after Hood identified NPM that Rhodes (1996) identified a shift in how bureaucracies were conceptualized. Rhodes observed "a change in the meaning of government, referring to a *new* process of governing, or a *changed* condition of ordered rule; or the *new* method by which society is governed" (Rhodes 1996, 653). Rhodes, labelling this new understanding as "governance," argued that "central government is no longer supreme" and that "the task of government is to enable socio-political interactions; to encourage many and varied arrangements for coping with problems and to distribute services among several actors" (Rhodes 1996, 658). According to Bevir (2011), this new concept was grounded in two distinct intellectual traditions. First, neoliberals and rational choice scholars viewed "governance" much the same as they did NPM, as a means to achieve "the increased efficiency allegedly brought to the public sector by relying on markets, contracting out, cutting staff, and budgeting under strict guidelines" (Bevir 2011, 16). For them, governance meant less state and more markets and a new social pluralism wherein government monopoly over services was broken, with those sectors closest to citizens - often reconstituted as consumers, as I review in

chapters 6 and 7, providing services through partnerships with state institutions. For others, however, it meant a *reaction* to the earlier waves of neoliberalization such as NPM. Through the early waves of neoliberalization, the state's capacity to deliver services had been diminished. Thus, some scholars argued, state institutions were forced to work with non-state actors through "networks" to ensure those same services were provided, leading to a more decentralized and nebulous institutional arrangement (Bevir 2011, 16-17). Despite these differences, however, the literature on governance argued that contemporary liberal society were pluralist sites of power in which the state no longer enjoyed ultimate power over the economy, communities, etc. In this context, the accepted role of the state and of bureaucracies became to "steer," not "row" (Osborne and Gaebler 1993).

Prompted by these separate interpretations, the emergence of governance has meant a proliferation of strategies to leverage the capacity of these diverse actors providing services once offered entirely by the state. "Quasi-autonomous non-governmental organizations have proliferated," write Rose and Miller (2008, 213), taking on regulatory functions, planning functions, educative functions, "and responsibilities for the provision of previously 'public' utilities such as water, gas, electricity and the 'privatization' of the civil service, prisons and police." As such, technologies have emerged to coordinate these new formations. Often based on "best practices" as identified by private sector firms (e.g., Deloitte 2019a), frameworks have emerged to guide the management of contracts with third parties (e.g., National Audit Office 2008; Government of Queensland 2014), ensure that third parties are governed by principles of "good governance" (e.g., Saskatchewan 2010) and to ensure that funds provided to these third parties are used for their intended purposes (e.g., Newfoundland and Labrador 2014). Adapting

to their new role of "steering" rather than "rowing," bureaucracies have looked to actuarial and auditing practices to serve as their rudder.

As public administration scholars have observed and theorized governance, some have conflated studying these decentralized institutional arrangements with endorsing them. As Walters (2012, 13) points out, those studying governance often convey the idea that "nearly all the major problems can be solved by cooperation, networking, stakeholding, etc." Brown (2015, 125-126) agrees, arguing that "at this point it is clear that 'governance' carries both a positive and a normative valence: while it identifies and works with what is often specified as the specifically modern dispersion of power, it affirms the advantages of this dispersal and the importance of exploiting it effectively." As an example, Kettl (2005, 87) states that "governments can no longer operate alone" and that governments must embrace new strategies such as "building bridges" and "thinking strategically" to build "capacity to meet the challenges ahead." Peters and Pierre (2006, 216) differ in their analysis but not their approach, arguing that "conventional mechanisms" and state institutions still have a place in the context of decentralized governance. Paquet (2013) confronts such skepticism aggressively, calling it blind and futile (2013, 31) and arguing that "in our complex socio-economic world," states must adopt a "small g (governance) approach" (2013, 24) or risk faltering "in all sectors" due to lack of innovation and effectiveness (2013, 25). The result is a collection of academics advising bureaucrats that the key to success is finding ways to best capture the dynamism of decentralized governance. In Chapter 5, I explore NPM and "governance" as previous neoliberal iterations before examining the emergence and proliferation of "innovation" as a more recent neoliberal iteration that counts Lean as one of its counterparts.

It is clear, then, that public bureaucracies can be – should be – located within broader social, political and economic contexts. Yet, there is little work that does so. Public administration remains busy treating bureaucracies as self-contained entities, effectively depoliticizing the concept of bureaucracy entirely. Works of neoliberalism's theorists, meanwhile, often resemble that of Brenner, Peck and Theodore (2010a; 2010b), drawing comparative examples from other work to comment on the patterns of neoliberalization but little in the way of the specific technologies of neoliberalization that render neoliberal rationalities operational. Brown's treatment of governance comes closest to locating bureaucracies within broader contexts of rationalities. While some governmentality-based work does study bureaucracies,[9] its focus remains narrow. Overwhelmingly, literature that touches on what I intend to study remains dedicated to either the broad (e.g., rationalities, neoliberalism, governance) or the very specific (e.g., particular trends in public administration, the genealogy of "the bureaucrat"). The space between the broad and the specific is underdeveloped and unexplored.

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[9] Osborne (1994) contends that "the bureaucrat" emerged in nineteenth century British India before being disseminated by colonial Britain. For Osborne, in an argument that borrows heavily from Latour's (1987) network-actor theory, British-run colonial India served as a "laboratory" whereby the techniques, practices and knowledges underwriting the traditional understanding of the bureaucrat and of bureaucracy were developed. Similarly, Barratt (2009) examines the Northcote-Trevelyan report (1854) to examine how bureaucrats were *governed* as subjects in nineteenth-century Britain, as well as the techniques (e.g., entrance exams) used to construct such bureaucratic subjectivities. In one of the few examples of governmentality-based examinations of public administration, Ferlie and McGivern (2013) use NPM-style reforms in Great Britain's National Health Service (NHS) to examine the extent to which governmentality is useful in studies of public management, though they fall short of using the approach to make larger observations about the NHS or public management. Elsewhere, governmentality scholars have offered insightful analyses on phenomena that, while not specifically focussed on bureaucracy, are revealing. Foucault-inspired critical accounting scholars (e.g., Miller and O'Leary 1993; Morris and Empson 1998; McKinlay and Pezet 2010), for example, have led the charge to explore the importance of professionals and the construction of their expertise in neoliberal rationalities through technologies such as audit (Power 1996; Power 1997). Accordingly, the theme of professionals and expertise has been expanded upon by scholars examining professions *beyond* accounting (Waage and Bendiktsson 2010; Prince 2014; Kothari 2005; Larner 2003; Larner and Laurie 2010; Gendron, Cooper and Townley 2007; Cooper and Taylor 2000; Cooper and Robson 2006; Dyball and Chua, 2007).

This dissertation seeks to fill this space. I examine a case study of contemporary bureaucratic practice that will demonstrate how political rationalities articulate themselves through programmes and technologies of the state. Saskatchewan's implementation of Lean – described in detail in Chapters 6 and 7 – represents a quintessential example of recent bureaucratic practices: the privileging of "private sector" techniques and practices, extensive use of management consultants, benchmarking, auditing techniques, strategic planning, and the "leveraging" of partnerships with non-governmental organizations. It is, in other words, an ambitious effort by a provincial government to transform its bureaucracy through the rapid introduction of technologies that conform to a particular rationality – in this case, the rationalities of neoliberalism.

In the following chapters, I seek to tell the complex story of how public bureaucracies in Canada have shapeshifted over time, arriving at the current moment when the Lean Industry has made Lean a common approach in bureaucracies. It is the story of how the concepts reviewed here intersected with one another, how Lean experts have come to form a vast and loosely-connected set of networks that advocate and promote a form of knowledge derived from practices developed in mid-twentieth century Toyota in a way that made them seem attractive for elected officials and bureaucrats looking for solutions to contemporary problems of public administration. Broadly, I argue that public bureaucracies "shapeshift," forming and re-forming in ways that correspond with shifts in political rationalities but more than that, and I believe more importantly, I emphasize the extraordinary complexity of this shapeshifting. I highlight not only the "broad strokes" of shapeshifting but also the localized processes of translation, assemblage-building, and political contestation that collectively form the contours of contemporary public management.

- CHAPTER 2 -
Methodology: Following Two Genealogies

2.1. Introduction

When developing my research question, I worked backwards. In the opening section of

Chapter 1, I recalled my personal history with the subject of Lean in public bureaucracies. I thus

began this process with wanting to know more about what the emergence of Lean in

Saskatchewan meant about public bureaucracies in Canada, particularly as it related to

neoliberalism. I crafted a research question that asked *how Canadian public bureaucracies had*

changed over time in Canada reflecting broader shifts within and between political rationalities.

From there, it was a relatively straightforward decision to trace the history of public

bureaucracies in Canada. Upon preliminary research, however, it became clear that Lean itself

had a fascinating history of its own. I was particularly interested in the consultants and gurus

who I had witnessed spreading the gospel of Lean ideas and practices. As such, I constructed a

research strategy to capture *two* stories, one about public bureaucracies, and one about Lean.

Most importantly, I decided to treat the Saskatchewan experiment as a case study, one example

of where the trajectories of Lean and public bureaucracies intersected. The dissertation is

structured in a way that mirrors this strategy. In Chapters 3, 4, and 5, I "set the stage" by

exploring the genealogies of Lean (Chapter 3) and of Canadian public bureaucracies (Chapters 4

and 5). Then, in Chapters 6 and 7, I offer a detailed examination of my case study, the

implementation of Lean in Saskatchewan's healthcare bureaucracy, as an example of how these

two trajectories intersect and what it looks like when they do.

My methodology begins with the choices I have made, as described in Chapter 1, in the

theoretical framework that I deploy here. The epistemological foundation of this theoretical

framework has methodological consequences. A thesis that relies on political economy,

governmentality, and critical policy studies is not going to resemble many theses in contemporary Canadian Political Science. While the political economy component of my theoretical framework certainly has roots in the discipline, critical policy studies and governmentality do not. Critical policy studies, while an interdisciplinary field, draws largely from geography and anthropology with little acknowledgement from Political Science as a discipline. While my work is not a statistical study, it is deeply empirical, based on a diverse set of methods including documentary analysis, interviews, and observation.

Given the importance I put on theory when constructing a methodological strategy, it should not be surprising that I draw methodological concepts and tools from many of the same authors on whom I relied to build that theoretical framework. Helpfully, the major components of that framework, governmentality and critical policy studies, agree on important questions, most particularly with respect to interdisciplinarity and diverse methodological strategies. Walters (2012) makes a compelling case for genealogy as a methodological tool. Walters points out that, in the Foucauldian tradition, there is no single way "of doing" genealogy. Instead, he offers a set of three different strategies, or "styles" of genealogy: Genealogy as tracing lines of descent, genealogy as counter-memory and re-serialization, and genealogy as the recovery of forgotten struggles (Walters 2012, 116). I will forego an in-depth discussion of each, but say that for my work, genealogy as a line of descent is the most useful. Given my starting point was the implementation of Lean in Saskatchewan's public bureaucracy, this seemed the obvious choice for reasons that Walters makes clear. He uses the familiar, family-tree-building form of genealogy as an analogy:

> Of course, the tracing of family trees can serve various purposes. For some it might be a matter of locating in some distant past a great-great-great grandfather who, it transpires, was himself of noble descent. Or perhaps that distant but fabled

relative who came to 'America' on the *Mayflower*. In such ways are claims about a family's societal pedigree (not to mention its rightful property) still made.

But researching one's family tree can have an opposite effect. Not the enhancement of one's present-day status, or the grounding of a contentious claim, but rather that of introducing elements of contingency and specificity into who and what we are. To ponder over that tangle of bloodlines with its play of conjunctions, the intersection of lives and events that culminate to produce you and your immediate family: is this not to become impressed and perhaps just a little unsettled by the recognition that had those distant relatives never met, things would have been quite different? (Walters 2012, 117)

Here, using genealogy as a methodological tool reveals itself to be ideal for the problem I have tackled and the theoretical framework with which I have sought to tackle it. As Chapters 6 and 7 will make clear, Lean's implementation in Saskatchewan is nothing if it is not a "tangle of bloodlines" with a "play of conjunctions" and "intersections of lives and events." As I discussed in Chapter 1, I conceptualize the rendering of political rationalities as tangible through programmes and technologies to be an exercise in assemblage-building, complete with disparate, inconsistent, sometimes-contradictory components coming together in provisional arrangements, the result of decision-makers seeking to make the material expressions of political rationalities align as closely to their abstract, normative and discursive forms as possible. The components of these assemblages do not materialize out of thin air, they have their own interesting "lines of descent" or, as Walters, says, "pathways":

With [genealogy as line of descent,] it is usually a matter of tracing the pathways by which something significant and valued in the present came to take the form that it has. These pathways are multiple. To follow lines of descent is to decompose what otherwise appears integral and complete; to identify seams and stitches that were initially hidden from view; to reveal that a final product is actually a hodgepodge of bits and pieces, each of which has its own history. (Walters 2012, 218)

As the following chapters will make clear, I conceptualize Lean's introduction into public bureaucracies as being one example among many of bureaucracy's neoliberalizations, one of a series of shifting assemblages consisting of logics, discourses, programmes and technologies,

each (like Lean) with their own particular histories. My research question, surrounding how Canadian public bureaucracies shapeshift, invites a genealogy of the question, including a close examination of how the assemblages that make up those bureaucracies have been arranged and rearranged. A methodological approach that can accommodate a "hodgepodge of bits and pieces" is the ideal tool for the task.

But how, exactly, to use this tool of genealogy? I begin with Walters' description of genealogy's usefulness in "following" lines of descent (Walters 2012, 218). Walters suggests that genealogy is best used "in combination with methods, themes and concepts drawn from other areas of Foucault's work, but also, and equally, other theoretical traditions and (inter-) disciplinary scenes" (Walters 2012, 111). As such, I turn to a wide body of critical literature for more guidance on how to "follow" the stories of Canadian public bureaucracies and Lean. Telling the story of how Canadian public bureaucracies came to adopt and deploy Lean required researching logics and practices spanning the nineteenth to twenty-first centuries, existing from the factory floors of 1950s Toyota to the Canadian federal bureaucracy to the Lean blogosphere to a small Saskatchewan health region. I followed the guidance of Peck and Theodore, who in their work on Fast Policy deployed an "improvisational" strategy, one that "leaves room for methodological experimentation and reflexivity, ranging from policy ethnographies to genealogical analyses and social-constructivist diffusion studies" (Peck and Theodore 2015, xxvi). Together, authors such as Walters (2012), Peck and Theodore (2015) and Clarke *et al* (2015) invite researchers to construct methodological approaches that are both appropriate for the questions being examined, as well as a broader trend towards methodological pluralism. Such writers look to research strategies that include diverse methods such as interviews, ethnographic research, and genealogical analyses as potential tools by which they may follow the

things they are exploring, an invitation I chose to accept, using whatever method fit the specific thing I was researching at any particular point.

While I made full use of the freedom afforded to me by this methodological approach, I looked to Rose and Miller (1992) for some structure. When Rose and Miller identify the inevitable failure of all government programmes, they refer to the cycle of *problematization*. Specifically, they state that government "is a problematizing activity: it poses the obligations of rulers in terms of the problems they seek to address … Indeed, the history of government might well be written as a history of problematization, in which politicians, intellectuals, philosophers, medics, military men, feminists and philanthropists have measured the real against the ideal and found it wanting" (Rose and Miller 1992, 181). Equally important to the process of defining the problem is the process by which solutions are found. For every space or terrain that becomes problematized, a solution is required. Changes of political rationality, whether they be one rationality replacing another or a rationality transforming internally in the face of crisis, are marked by these moments of problematization upon which the predominant way of doing things, itself likely the solution to a previous problem, becomes a new problem waiting for a new solution.

I look to this concept of problematization as not only a theoretical concept but also a methodological one. As I conducted my discursive, genealogical research, I used the concepts of problematization and solution-finding as a methodological yardstick. As I followed my genealogies, I looked for the problems and solutions that had been identified and constructed throughout the history of the Canadian state. I looked for clear articulations of what was considered a problem at different junctures, what solutions were offered, and what programmes and technologies were put into place to address said problems. By identifying problems and

solutions as landmarks, I could examine what logics underwrote their emergence and what programmes technologies were deployed to articulate them in material terms. Adopting problematization as a methodological tool in addition to a theoretical tool afforded a degree of consistency as I drew on a wide range of methods to tell these stories.

2.2. Chapters and Methods

Chapter 3 - Following a nebula

Chapter 3 traces the emergence of Lean. I relied on secondary sources, with some primary sources in the form of first-hand accounts by engineers and consultants present in the emergence and mobilization of Lean, to explore the practices developed in Toyota, known at the time as the Toyota Production System, and how those practices came to be translated and mobilized by academics and industry insiders as "Lean." I then followed Lean through what I call the Lean Industry, a set of experts who sell their expertise in Lean as a solution to seemingly all manner of human problems. The first task was relatively straight-forward. Relying on a combination of primary and secondary sources such as academic histories (usually celebratory accounts of Lean's emergence in management or industrial journals. See Holweg 2007; Emiliani 2006) and first-hand accounts with engineers and management consultants (Ohno 1988; Womack, Jones, and Roos 1990) to understand how the practices of the Toyota Production system emerged. I also used a combination of primary (Crichton 1992; Kornheiser 1990) and secondary (Wiener 2004; Heale 2009) sources to demonstrate the political context that enveloped the transformation of the Toyota Production System into Lean and its emergence in American corporate industry, which I explored, again, using primary (Krafcik 1988) and secondary (Emiliani 2006) sources.

Exploring the network of Lean experts that followed the translation of Lean into American industry was less straightforward. As I explain in Chapter 3, the Lean Industry is a loosely-connected and nebulous web of professional networks crystalized around Lean as a specific form of knowledge. With no overarching professional association or legislatively required accreditation (as is the case with more established professions like accountants, engineers or lawyers), capturing a snapshot of its form and function is not simple. Upon wading into the world of these Lean experts, it became clear that they make extensive use of social media. As such, I decided to follow the Lean Industry through mediums such as Twitter, podcasts and blogs. In particular, I found that Lean experts, especially those with significant public followings, often interact with one another through comments on each other's blog posts. It was through these exchanges that I was able to piece together the professional and epistemological debates that exist within the community and make sense of the nebulous structure of them. By following these forms of media, in addition to books and websites, I was able to provide an account of this complex network. To make it more tangible, I supplemented the work with a visualization, using TouchGraph software to map the links between websites that contain commonly-used Lean phrases, that provides some representation of what this nebulous set of networks resembles.

Watching Lean experts interact with one another in the comment sections of blogs and on Twitter told me a great deal about how they operated, but I remained unsatisfied that I had a firm appreciation for the rich complexity of this world. My research suggested that conferences and symposiums were also important vehicles for the Lean Industry. Conferences provide a number of functions. They offer the industry, which has no mechanism for codifying "best practices," venues to hash out those best practices. Presenters offer lessons from their experiences,

audience-members ask questions, and the resulting conversations leads to the creation and maintenance of a particular form of knowledge with different interpretations of how Lean can, and ought, to be implemented. They also maintain the community and network of experts, both through the formal exercise of organizing and participating in conferences but also the informal networking that takes place, both at the sanctioned "networking events" built into both the formal itineraries of conferences and the informal networking that takes place in restaurants and hotel lounges following the day's schedule. As such, I deployed participant observational work by attending such a conference, the Lean Canada Summit, in Fredericton, New Brunswick in April 2018. I spent three days attending panels, making conversation with attendees, and observing the culture and practices of Lean experts as they interacted with each other and prospective (in this case, public sector) clients. The result of this research is presented in Chapter 3 as an inlay rather than within the chapter's text, adding a tactile component to a chapter that relied primarily on books and online sources.

Chapters 4 and 5: Genealogies of Canadian Public Bureaucracies

Chapters 4 and 5 seek to construct a genealogy of public bureaucracies in Canada and demonstrate how they shapeshift alongside corresponding shifts in political rationalities. I draw on two types of documents. In Chapter 4 and part of Chapter 5, I draw largely on Royal Commissions. For a project that follows the process of problematization and solution-finding within Canadian bureaucracies, there are few better sources than Royal Commissions. They serve as documents that diagnose governmental problems of the day and then present solutions for those problems, offered to the government in helpful documents. As such, these documents serve as what Brodie (2002, 379) calls "state transcripts." Writing specifically about annual speeches from the throne, Brodie describes these transcripts as "unique historical records"

(Brodie 2002, n2) that shed light on the government of the day's priorities. While Royal

Commissions are recommendations *to* government rather than edicts *by* government, I argue that

they serve as similarly useful historical documents, snapshots of the process of problematization.

Commissions have typically been appointed in times of crisis, when an issue is identified as a

problem that exceeds the capacity of established practices or policies to address. Esteemed

individuals are appointed as commissioners to take the issue out of the realm of electoral or

political debate, given a mandate to study the problem and determine what is to be done.

Reports of Royal Commissions, then, document the process by which the state attempts to

address the issues it finds most important: they are documentation of the very process of

problematization that is so central to my methodological strategy, and the discourses found in

these documents are often even more illuminating than state transcripts such as budget speeches

or thrones speeches. Indeed, even the existence of Royal Commissions is revealing. That there

were multiple Royal Commissions focussed specifically on the bureaucracy in the late nineteenth

and early twentieth centuries is itself, a testament to the extent to which the federal bureaucracy

was the focus of problematization at the time.

      In Chapter 4, I focus on Royal Commissions from both the nation-building period and the

Keynesian Welfare period, exploring how these logics were then mirrored in the institutional

arrangements of the Canadian public service, seeking to answer what problems bureaucracies

sought to solve through the discourses and technologies that emerged surrounding bureaucracies.

Chapter 5 draws on Royal Commissions released during the neoliberal era, from approximately

1975 to present.

Table 2.1: Royal Commissions

Commission Name	Year of publication	Chair[10]	Mandate
Commission to Inquire into the Present State and Probable Requirements of the Civil Service	1869-1870 (multiple reports)	John Langton	To enquire into and report upon the organization of the Civil Service of the Dominion of Canada.
Royal Commission to Inquire into the Organization of the Civil Service Commission	1882	Donald McInnes	To consider the needs and conditions of the Civil Service of the Dominion.
Royal Commission on Civil Service	1892	George Hague	...making such enquiry and examination as aforesaid and making such recommendations as you may judge to be expedient for remedying any evils which have prevailed in the Civil Service of Canada, for increasing the efficiency and economy...
Royal Commission on the Civil Service	1908	John Mortimer Courtney	To inquire into and report on the operation of the existing Civil Services Act and kindred legislation with a view to the proposing of such changes as may be deemed advisable in the best interests of efficiency in the public service.
Commission to Inquire into Certain Matters Affecting the Operation of the Civil Service Acts, the Organization of the Public Service and the Methods of Administration Under which the Public Service of Canada is Carried On	1912	Sir George H. Murray	Undertake an inquiry into certain matters affecting the operation of the Civil Service Acts, the organization of the public service, and the methods of administration under which the business of Canada is carried on.
Commission to Inquire	1913	Alfred Bishop	Inquire into and report upon the operation of

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[10] I am purposefully ignoring proper citation practices in this paper. Under most style guides, Royal Commissions should be cited with the author as "Canada" - "*Canada, 1869)" and so on. In this paper, I cite no fewer than ten commissions and as such, citing them properly would make for a confusing narrative. For clarity, I will cite them by using the name of the chair of the commission - "(Glassco 1962)," etc.

into the Public Service		Morine	the existing Civil Service Act and kindred legislation with a view to proposing such changes as might be deemed advisable in the best interests of efficiency in the public service.[11]
Royal Commission on Technical and Professional Services	1930	Edward Wentworth Beatty	To inquire into rates of salaries, pensions, etc., of technical and professional officials of the Civil Service of Canada as compared with such rates applying to similar positions outside of the Civil Service in Canada...
Royal Commission on Administrative Classifications in the Public Service	1946	Walter Lockhart Gordon	To consider objectively scales of salary and conditions of employment in the public service in relation to those which obtain for persons of comparable qualifications and capacities who perform duties of comparable responsibility in private employment.
Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations[12]	1940	Joseph Sirois and Newton Wesley Rowell	To make a re-examination of the economic and financial basis of Confederation and of the distribution of legislative powers in the light of the economic and social developments of the last seventy years.
Royal Commission on Government Organization	1961-1967 (multiple reports)	Grant Glassco	To inquire into and report upon the organization and methods of operation of the departments and agencies of the Government of Canada and to recommend the changes therein which they consider would best promote efficiency, economy and improved service in...[13]

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[11] The mandate of the Morine Commission is identical to that of the Courtney Commission, its predecessor by 4 years. indeed, the Morine Commission makes reference to the original Order-in-Council (OC) appointing the Courtney Commission and the changes, captured within the *Civil Service Act 1908* that resulted from the recommendations.

[12] The Rowell-Sirois Commission is not a perfect fit in this discussion, as it was not mandated explicitly with exploring bureaucracy in Canada. It was, however, given an enormously broad mandate that touched on all manners of the Canadian state. It also provides an enormously useful economic and political history of confederation, an overview of the rationalities that underwrote early political projects in the country, and served as a gateway for the introduction into the Keynesian welfarist period described in the latter half of Chapter 4. As such, I have included it in the Royal Commissions to which I will refer.

[13] "...the despatch of public business, and in particular but without restricting the generality of the foregoing, to report upon steps that may be taken for the purpose of
- eliminating duplication and overlapping of services;
- eliminating unnecessary or uneconomic operations;
- achieving efficiency or economy through further decentralization of operations and administration;
- achieving improved management of departments and agencies, or portions thereof, with consideration to

Royal Commission on Financial Management and Accountability	1979	Allen Lambert	To examine and report on the management systems required in the inter-related areas of: i) financial management and control, ii) accountability of deputy ministers and heads of Crown agencies relative to the administration of their operations; and iii) the evaluation of the administrative performance of deputy ministers and the heads of Crown agencies...[14]
Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada	1984	Donald MacDonald	Inquire into and report on the long-term economic potential, prospects and challenges facing the Canadian federation and its respective regions, as well as the implications that such prospects and challenges have for Canada's economic and governmental institutions, and for the management of Canada's economic affairs.

The current state of Royal Commissions in Canada complicated my ability to rely primarily on them for my examination of neoliberal bureaucracy in Chapter 5, however. While Royal Commissions had an important role to play in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, they are now much less common. Indeed, after the 1996 report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) and 2002's Romanow Commission, Royal Commissions have been

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organization, methods of work, defined authorities and responsibilities, and provision for training;
-making more effective use of budgeting, accounting and other financial measures as means of achieving more efficient and economical management of departments and agencies;
-improving efficiency and economy by alterations in the relations between government departments and agencies, on the one hand, and the Treasury Board and other central control or service agencies of the government on the other; and
-achieving efficiency or economy through reallocation or regrouping of units of the public service"

[14]...And the interdepartmental structure, organization and process applicable thereto, including in particular:
The development, promulgation and application of financial management policy, regulations and guidelines by central agencies, procedures to ensure that necessary changes in policy, regulations and guidelines are identified, and policy regulations and guidelines are adhered to, systems and procedures to ensure effective accountability to government and, where appropriate to Parliament, of the administration of government departments and agencies, and The organization necessary in central agencies, government departments and Crown agencies to achieve the foregoing

essentially absent from Canadian government. The reason for this is, frankly, underexplored in Canadian Political Science, though the lack of state action to address the recommendations made by RCAP or Romanow suggest, at the least, that governments may not want to set up the expectations of implementing complex, costly, or controversial recommendations. However, while Royal Commissions seem to be a thing of the past, commissions of inquiries continue to explore pressing issues. From the Gomery Commission (2005) examination of corruption in the federal government's program of advertising Canadian identity in Quebec to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (2015) mission of capturing and documenting histories of colonialism, recent years have not been totally devoid of commissions of inquiry, though certainly with far less frequency than when Royal Commissions were so common.

Royal Commissions directly addressing problems of bureaucracies *are* totally absent in recent years, however. Since 1979's Lambert Commission was largely dismissed and ignored, as I will review in Chapter 5, there have been no Royal Commissions dedicated to identifying problems and solutions in Canadian bureaucracies. That is not to say, however, that there have not been reports prepared elsewhere. Indeed, initiatives to understand how to "make government work better" remain common. From reports of Independent Officers of Parliament (and their provincial counterparts) to those developed by government agencies, there is no shortage of documents that examine the supposed problems with bureaucratic forms and offer solutions. As such, I look to these reports as articulations of the logics by which bureaucracies are conceptualized within neoliberal rationality. I draw on both Royal Commissions (to the extent that they exist within this period) as well as later documents, primarily those developed within the federal public bureaucracy, to trace the discursive logics of Canadian public bureaucracies.

I use other primary sources and secondary sources to round out my genealogy of bureaucracies throughout the history of the Canadian state. While Royal Commissions provided much of the material I needed to explore the discursive components of my genealogy, I relied on both academic material (Hodgetts 1973; Dawson 1929) as well as archival materials, such as federal estimates documents and departmental annual reports to demonstrate the ways in which these discursive components were articulated through institutional changes within the Canadian state, offering a snapshot of departments and their respective budgetary allocations during these eras. I chose fiscal years twenty years after the "beginning" of these rationalities' emergences. While twenty years may seem an arbitrary period, I wanted to take snapshots from far enough in the future from these landmarks in order to ensure that institutional arrangements of departments had enough time to reflect those discursive changes that preceded them. As such, data from the nation-building era captures departmental arrangements in 1887, twenty years after Confederation. For a snapshot of the Keynesian era, I chose 1965 as it fell twenty years after the end of the Second World War. A similar snapshot in Chapter 5 shows data from 2004, twenty years after the election of Brian Mulroney. These are imperfect landmarks, and in these chapters I both explore them in more detail and make effort to demonstrate the extent to which the boundaries between eras is "blurry," but they remain commonly understood temporal landmarks that delineate when the rationality of a new era has emerged. Scouring through *Sessional Papers* from the nineteenth century was tedious, but it was also some of the most interesting work I conducted in this project. Academic sources from the time also provided snapshots of departmental structures, as well as serving as primary sources in those discussions' chapters of the problems facing public bureaucracies at respective points in history.

Chapters 6 and 7

In Chapters 6 and 7 I move from the federal bureaucracy to a provincial bureaucracy. To "shift levels" and focus on a province after spending two chapters examining the federal bureaucracy risks the comparability of my case study. There is, however, good reason to focus on a provincial public bureaucracy. The realities of the contemporary Canadian state informed my decision. Throughout the various manifestations of federalism in Canada, the federal government has taken a large role in the funding and implementation of state programs. Using its spending power and influence over provinces to "outgrow" its constitutional jurisdictions, the federal government – and the federal bureaucracy – were highly involved in policy areas formally outside their constitutional jurisdiction. Over the past thirty years, however, there has been an increasing trend of "downloading" responsibility for the funding and delivery of social, health, and education services to Canadian citizens and residents. The Harper Conservatives' policy of "open federalism" – itself a dimension of neoliberalization (Harmes 2007) – accelerated the trend of devolution, making it official policy of the federal government to disengage with provinces on policy initiatives. As a result, provincial departments and agencies are currently the most visible operational components of the Canadian state, resembling a series of mini-states in their capacities to collect revenue and distribute it through programs and policies. In this federal arrangement, it is reasonable and prudent to focus on a provincial case to explore current bureaucratic forms and operations.

The second reason for examining a provincial bureaucracy in this chapter was that, because I wanted to examine how Lean and public bureaucracies intersected, there was simply no better case study than Saskatchewan. While governments across Canada and beyond have experimented with Lean projects to "find efficiencies" within specific program areas (see Chapter 3, and in particular Table 3.1. for examples), Saskatchewan has made Lean its lynchpin

for bureaucratic reform. Beginning in 2008 when one of the province's Regional Health

Authorities (RHAs) deployed Lean methodology for a single program within its health region,

the use of Lean has grown beyond the health sector, spreading across the province's bureaucracy.

Ministries, arm's-length agencies, Crown corporations, universities, and non-government

organizations have adopted Lean activities, from technical changes in front-line services (e.g.,

the reorganization of storage spaces) to capital planning (e.g., the design of hospitals and schools

according to improved "flows") to increased use of process mapping and audits to large-scale

strategic planning. The culmination of Saskatchewan's Lean experiment, however, took place in

2012 when the Ministry of Health entered into a contract with Seattle-based management

consulting firm John Black and Associates (JBA). The JBA contract, worth $40 million over

three years, included a broad range of "deliverables" to be performed by the firm, headed by a

bombastic former Boeing executive. Affiliated with the Japanese consulting firm that initially

exported Toyota's production methodology as a management system, JBA won a very narrowly-

defined public tender competition to "assist the Saskatchewan healthcare system to adopt a Lean

Management System" (SAHO 2011), including throughout the Ministry, all RHAs and all arm's-

length health agencies. The JBA contract represented the province's wholesale adoption of Lean

in its health bureaucracy and set the tone for large-scale reform in the rest of its public

bureaucracy.

My case study research included, in addition to genealogical work similar to that in

Chapters 4 and 5, interviews and more intensive documentary analysis. I conducted twenty semi-

structured, confidential interviews with key informants, including senior managers, middle-

managers and front-line staff throughout 2016-2018. I started with a set of open-ended questions

about their recollection of Lean and its implementation in the province before moving onto

follow-up questions. While a number of these interviews took place in-person, it soon became clear to me that telephone interviews were more convenient for the interviewers and, less importantly, for me. Lean was, as Chapter 7 makes clear, politically contentious in Saskatchewan. Even though the height of its controversy is three years in the past, it does remain a sensitive topic (see Mandryk 2019). More than that, most of these interviews took place when Lean's controversy was in very recent memory. As such, essentially no interviewees were willing to meet with me in their places of work for in-person interviews. Coffee shops or libraries provided somewhat better environments, but were still not ideal given the noise and potential for others involved in the project to overhear the conversation (not an unreasonable fear in a "government town"). I determined that the shortcomings of telephone interviews (e.g., the lack of body language and more difficulty in building a rapport with interviewees) were outweighed by the benefits of having interviewees be more comfortable with speaking frankly, so sixteen of the twenty interviews were conducted by telephone. I found that the most resistant potential interviewees were either middle management, or those in jobs entirely focussed on Lean. While nobody gave me reasons for why they did not agree (or why they did agree) to talk to me, it is reasonable to assume that frontline workers felt a degree of anonymity that comes from numbers (there are over 12,000 healthcare providers in Saskatchewan) and senior managers were confident in their job security, or understood that they were nearing retirement (a prospect that was accelerated when the government announced it would be amalgamating health regions in 2017). Both of those groups, as Chapters 6 and 7 will make clear, had strong opinions on Lean and were happy to share. Middle managers, without the anonymity of frontline staff or the security of senior managers, often did not even respond to my requests.

The political sensitivity of Lean also required that I gave interviewees the guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity. I took this seriously, and in the writing of Chapters 6 and 7, ensured that there were no quotes, paraphrasing passages or descriptions that could be used to identify the speaker. This could have meant that important information about how Lean was rolled out across the province was missed. However, I adopted a strategy of using interviews as "sign posts" that directed me towards corroborating information. Interviews, particularly those with senior managers and those who were directly involved in Lean's implementation, provided me with the "broad strokes" of how Lean was deployed. With that information in-hand, I was able to obtain documentation, through methods that I detail below, in order to corroborate their accounts. As such, I was able to avoid relying on the interviews in the text of the thesis, which would have meant a higher risk of providing identifying information of their identities.

If the interviews provided the broad strokes of Lean's implementation, it was official documents, both those that were publicly available and those that were not, that allowed me to fill in the details. Some information, present in publicly-available documentation such as annual reports, strategic plans, and newsletters, was retrievable through relatively simple website-specific searches. The usefulness of these official communications was often limited, however. With growing communications staff and multiple layers of approval required before the release of such documents, there is often little to be gleaned from many documents about the actual operations of the bureaucracy. As a result, I needed to do further work in order to access documents that are not readily available but that may reveal more helpful information. Internal communications and documents provide less sanitized accounts of the rationale for decisions. They also offer glimpses into paths considered and not taken. They can provide deeply instructive accounts of the messy reasons for, and details of, technologies' implementation. I

used two strategies for obtaining such documentation: what I call "strategic web searches," and freedom-of-information requests.

By "strategic web searches," I refer to a set of techniques I used to obtain documents that are technically "publicly available" online, but difficult to find for a variety of reasons. Regional Health Authorities, for example, had far fewer communications staff and resources for "sanitizing" potentially sensitive documents before they are posted publicly. They are often "deadlinked," however, meaning there are no (or very few) links to such documents, making them difficult to find. This difficulty can be mitigated with strategic searches using particular tools. Google, for example, allows users to search specific sites using the command "site:" in the search bar, allowing users to search particular sites (or even pages) for keywords. Searching sites for terms associated with Lean, such as "kaizen," "hoshin kanri," "continuous improvement," or simply "Lean," for example, turned up a number of useful documents, including committee minutes, internal memos, policy & procedure documents, manuals, or graphs and diagrams that provided useful information. Adding the command "filetype:pdf" allowed me to search for PDF files, which were the most likely filetype to contain official documents that had been posted on websites. When the RHAs were amalgamated in 2017, I was concerned that their respective websites would be decommissioned and, with them, the documents I required erased. I took the precaution of using software to download the entirety of the websites, including all documents posted on them, to ensure that I had access to them.

I encountered some difficulty in retrieving documents from the Ministry of Health (or other ministries') website when the Government of Saskatchewan migrated its website, and the websites of its various ministries, to a new portal. Often, web searches would display documents that were no longer available because they had not been migrated properly. In this case, the

Internet Archive's Wayback Machine website was enormously useful. The Wayback Machine allows users to search for particular URLs and retrieve archived versions of them from various points in the past. In most cases, I was able to retrieve the document I needed. In others, I attempted to retrieve the documents through other means.

The most fruitful strategy for retrieving documents was unquestionably Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. In Saskatchewan, *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* stipulates that "every person has the right to and, on an application made in accordance with this Part, shall be permitted access to records that are in possession or under the control of a government institution" (Saskatchewan 2014, 5). To acquire useful documentation, I submitted fourteen Freedom of Information Requests, resulting in the retrieval of approximately[15] 993 documents. Requests were made primarily to the Ministry of Health, but also to RHAs, the Health Quality Council, Shared Services Saskatchewan (3S Health), the Ministry of Education, and the Public Service Commission.

I found some organizations more responsive than others. The Ministry of Education, for example, provided unredacted documents quickly and electronically. The Ministry of Health, meanwhile, provided many documents only in hard copy, often with many more redactions, and - in accordance with the legislation - quoted up to $500 in fees for doing so. Despite these quotes, however, the Ministry waived those fees in every case. Only in one case was I suspicious that information might be being withheld. I consulted with the province's Privacy

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[15] I say "approximately" here because of the wide variance in what constitutes a "document" in the packages I received. Some were finished, lengthy policy documents, while others ranged from single emails to unfinished drafts of emails or multiple documents that were given to me as part of packages from individual Lean events. Sometimes multiple documents were included in a single PDF, other times they were organized by individual PDF Redactions also blurred the distinction between documents, particularly in the cases where entire pages were redacted and in those documents provided by organizations who use redaction software that appears to delete text, leaving white space rather than black lines and blocks, making it difficult to distinguish how much text was in the original. I identified distinct documents as much as possible, though at times it was a subjective exercise deciding where one document ended and another began.

and Information Commissioner, but ultimately decided not to submit a complaint once I received the information I had requested in short order after contacting the Privacy Commissioner.

2.3. Conclusion

The chapters that follow are the product of the research strategy, described here, derived from the research question at hand and the theoretical framework described in Chapter 1. In them, I use a diverse set of methodological tools to trace the stories of Lean, the Lean Industry, and Canadian public bureaucracies. More importantly, I use these tools to follow the trajectories of these stories and demonstrate how they intersected in Saskatchewan's Lean experiment. Deploying different methods to research varying components of these stories and using the concept of problematization as a methodological yardstick, I was able to deploy my theoretical framework and locate Canadian public bureaucracies in broader social, political, and economic contexts. I begin the discussion in the next chapter, setting the stage for later discussions by exploring the emergence of Lean and the Lean Industry, before following the genealogy of Canadian public bureaucracies in Chapters 4 and 5.

- CHAPTER 3 -
The emergence of Lean and the Lean Industry

3.1. Introduction

In the next five chapters, I deploy Chapter 1's theoretical framework and Chapter 2's methodological approach to trace three stories: that of public bureaucracies in Canada, that of Lean, and that of how they came together. It would be possible to trace only public bureaucracies and then examine the "emergence" of "Lean government" as one of many neoliberal reforms. Indeed, this would likely look like many accounts of neoliberalism, in which neoliberal reforms are described strictly as seeking to introduce private sector practices into the public sector. It would also be misguided. Picking up Lean only where it enters the public sector would risk treating Lean to the same essentialist and simplistic type of analysis that Chapter 1 demonstrates is problematic in accounts of neoliberalism. Lean's incursion into the public sector, which I review in brevity at the end of this chapter and in great detail in Chapters 6 and 7, is not a story that can be told entirely from the perspective of bureaucracies. Lean has its own fascinating story, one that is marked, I argue, by the same processes of problematization and solution-finding that exist in broader patterns of governance.

In this chapter, I trace Lean's trajectory before its intersection with Canadian public bureaucracies. The chapter begins with Lean's inception as a set of industrial manufacturing techniques and strategies that were developed within the localized circumstances of mid-century Japan. When Japan's economic success seemed a threat to American industry, a set of American researchers worked to translate the practices of Toyota for emulation by American companies. Out of this translation came the Lean Industry, a sprawling web of networks in which experts define Lean's "best practices" before seeking to market their expertise to an ever-growing array of organizations in a seemingly limitless collection of sectors and industries. The emergence of

the Lean Industry, I argue, "set the stage" for the introduction of Lean into public bureaucracies.

Understanding how the Lean Industry emerged and asserted itself as a source of expertise for

those dealing with the problems of public bureaucracy reveals a great deal, I argue, about

processes such as problematization and translation, and the extent to which assemblages adopt,

repurpose and reconstitute existing technologies in sometimes-awkward ways.

3.2. The Toyota Production System in Post-War Japan

For much of the twentieth century, the Toyota Production System remained insulated

within Toyota's factory walls. Its development began with Sakichi Toyoda, the inventor of an

automatic loom that detected manufacturing flaws and shut down production when threads

broke. Toyoda founded the Toyoda Group[16] in 1918, eventually expanding into automobile

production in the 1930s (Holweg 2007, 421). Upon his death, Toyoda passed control of his

company to his son Kichiiro, who focussed on auto manufacturing rather than the looming

business that his father had founded. With the nascent Japanese auto market dominated by local

branch subsidiaries of Ford and General Motors (Holweg 2007, 421), Toyoda made it a priority

to catch up to his American competitors, ultimately travelling to Detroit to study the Ford

automobile factories. Impressed with the scale of the production but certain it was both

unfeasible in the limited space available in Japanese factories and unable to produce the variety

of models or trims they desired, the Toyodas and engineers such as Taiichi Ohno[17] set to creating

a system that was appropriate for the Japanese context.

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[16] The Toyoda family renamed the company "Toyota" from "Toyoda in 1936." The definitive reason for the change is murky. Some explanations include the number of brush strokes it takes to write "Toyota" (eight) being preferable to "Toyoda" (ten), or that the English version of Toyota "sounds better" than Toyoda. See Westcott 2010.

[17] Ohno has remarked about how circumstance and context drove much of the innovations that would make up the Toyota Production System. In particular, he recalls that it was the Japanese post-war economy, with a severe lack of resources and inability to mimic the mass production present in Detroit's automakers. See Ohno 1988, particularly Chapter 1.

The Toyota Production System, as it would come to be known, emerged as the result of the efforts of these engineers' and factory staff to modify American style, large-scale auto manufacturing processes and accommodate the limited space afforded by Japanese factories. Toyota's engineers worked to make the company's production methods more flexible than its western counterparts. Manufacturers in the United States and Europe, with the luxury of enormous economies of scale, could deploy relatively rigid processes. Parts for cars, for example, were typically stamped out of sheets of metal using large dies. The steel, pressed between two dies using hundreds of kilograms of pressure, took the shape of fenders, bumpers and the like. With each individual die weighing multiple tonnes, changing the equipment on the assembly line to make a different model or to make adjustments when equipment was misaligned or broken down, required entire days of downtime. For engineers such as Ohno, however, this process only made sense at those western factories that were producing tens of thousands of cars at a time – an unrealistic scale at that point in Japan. Through experimentation and trial-and-error, the Toyota engineers devised a system for changing the casts much more rapidly, allowing equipment to be switched over in a manner of hours and allowing plants to produce a wider variety of products over a shorter period of time than their western counterparts (Womack, Jones and Roos 1990, 52-54). Essentially, this period in Toyota's factories represented the first Lean "laboratory," a site of experimentation that would later be used by Lean experts and consultants to demonstrate the efficacy of Lean to prospective clients.

Other components of the Toyota Production System included the practice of only producing those parts that were needed for the next step of the process, producing as many fenders or doors as were needed for cars that were being produced at the time, eliminating the need for warehousing. This system, in which the components for finished products were

produced just in time for its final assembly, became known as Just-in-Time production. *Kanban,*

an inventory process that included mechanisms by which inventory that was running low was

identified for additional production or ordering, was a similarly important component.

Cumulatively, these practices represented the company's dedication to eliminating waste – or

muda in Japanese[18] – through committed effort to experimentation and improvement, what the

company would eventually call *kaizen*, or continuous improvement.[19] By the 1970s, the Toyota

Production System had evolved over decades, through experimentation, trial and error and what

Holweg (2007, 422) calls "continuously iterating learning cycles."

3.3. The Problematization of Japanese Industry

As Toyota was perfecting its production practices, Japanese industry was increasing its

international market share as a whole and by the 1970s, had become the envy of its international

competitors. In 1962, the *Economist* ran a story entitled "Consider Japan," laying out the

argument that the economic growth being experienced in Japan was only a sign of things to

come. Indeed, between 1946 and 1976, the Japanese economy grew exponentially,[20] eventually

accounting "for about 10 percent of the world's economic activity though occupying only 0.3

percent of the world's surface and supporting about 3 percent of the world's population"

(Johnson 1982, 7). The growth was extraordinary; as political economist Sven Steinmo (2010,

108) remarks, "Japan grew from a country devastated by nuclear war and firebombed cities in

1945 to the second richest country in the world in less than 40 years." In the United States,

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[18] Since the emergence of Lean management in North America, the use of Japanese terminology within the writings, practices and texts of Lean consultants, advocates, authors and practitioners has been strongly debated. These debates, like others in the Lean industry, often play themselves out on blogs and discussions that take place in the comments sections of blog posts. See, for example, Graban 2010a.

[19] In a testament to the success of Lean's introduction into many facets of North American enterprise, business and government, "continuous improvement' is now pervasive in many organizations.

[20] According to Johnson's calculations, the Japanese economy grew 55-fold in this 30-year span.

Japan's post-war success was viewed, as the *Harvard Business Review* described at the time, as "both an impressive and as puzzling achievement" (Drucker, 1981). This American response took form in different ways depending on context, but uniformly reflected a collective concern with the state of American industry in an increasingly "global economy." For many Americans, Japan's success became alarming when Japanese corporations began acquiring assets that they understood to be symbols of American success, power, and exceptionalism. The acquisition by Japanese firms of Radio City Music Hall, MGM Pictures, 7-11, and physical landmarks such as hotels and skyscrapers were particularly concerning. In American popular culture, the trend of Japanese takeovers and expansion of corporate Japan into the United States was cast into the future, a future in which Japanese business interests dominating the American private sector was *fait accompli.* Motion pictures such as *Die Hard* and *Back to the Future II* included references to the rise of Japanese business.[21] Popular novels, including Michael Crichton's *Rising Sun* (1992) and Tom Clancy's *Debt of Honour* (1994) referenced the apparently increasing likelihood of Japan's eventual takeover of the United States (Fandino 2016). In the popular American imagination, the United States, having survived the Cold War, was now facing a new rival in the resurgent Japan. By the 1980s, the spectre of Japan overtaking American industry was "a fact of life" (Wile 2013).

In the American press, the perceived rise of Japanese corporations and their dominance over American counterparts played itself out through bleak predictions. Local dailies bemoaned that Japan was "buying" the US with "our money" in what amounted to an "economic Pearl Harbour" (Harvey 1986). Others warned of the "Japanning of America today" (Schweisenberg,

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[21] In *Die Hard,* protagonist John McLean's wife accepted a position with a Japanese firm – Taganaki Inc – in Los Angeles. Meanwhile, in *Back to the Future II*, the "future" of 1915, as predicted in 1985, was a future in which protagonist Marty McFly would work for an overbearing Japanese manager.

1982). Sentiments in national publications were less transparently parochial but still alarmed over the prospects of the Japanese takeover. A columnist in the Washington Post remarked that the "Japanese now own almost everything in America." He went on in more detail:

> They own 7-Eleven. They own Rockefeller Center and Radio City Music Hall; as we speak the Rockettes are working on a new high-speed stage show, "Pardon Me Boys, Is That the Bullet Train to Kyoto?" They own Inter-Continental hotels. They own Rheem, which makes air conditioners. They own CBS records, label of Bruce Springsteen and Bob Dylan. They own Union Bank. They own Firestone Tire, where the rubber meets the road. They didn't buy Goodyear because they've already got the Fuji Blimp. (Kornheiser 1990)

Books appeared to warn of the existential threat to American prosperity offered by Japan's emergence. Pascale and Athos (1982, 201) cautioned that the reputation of American industry was "increasingly weakened even while our self-satisfaction remained the same." Ouchi's (1981, 12) damnation was more severe when he wrote that "Japan has somehow managed to maintain a work ethic while Americans have become soft, lazy, and feel entitled to the good life without earning it." Most famously, Vogel's *Japan as Number One* (1979) issued dire warnings, suggesting that it was "highly unlikely" that the West could catch up to Japan in the "foreseeable future," but with "total effort," American (and European) manufacturers would be able to "remain reasonably close to Japan." Without such "total effort," Vogel warned, those Western producers would "soon discover that the gap between themselves and Japan in productivity [would] widen even more" (Vogel 1979, 13-14).

Public opinion mirrored the alarmism of the business press. By 1990 anti-Japanese sentiment began to rival anticommunism in the United States (Heale 2009). Industrial areas dependent upon manufacturing were especially prone to ugly demonstrations. In Michigan, Japanese vehicles were vandalized, Detroit parking lots sported signs that said "no Japanese cars allowed," and an Asian-American man was beaten to death by two white, unemployed auto workers (Heale 2009, 24). California Governor Jerry Brown mused that the United States was

"forming a type of colonial relationship with Japan. We ship her raw materials, she ships us finished goods" (quoted in Heale 2009, 23). Japan was "presented as a dangerous 'other' to 'the West' on the basis of its alleged differences from a normative but vaguely defined Western model, thus demonstrating the endurance of negative Western stereotypes of the 'Orient'" (Morris 2011, 3). Matthew Wiener (2004) has written that such 1980s depictions of Japanese corporate culture were consistent with a long tradition of "observers [characterizing] Japan as a land of paradoxes and anomalies; exoticizing it as either a comical fantasy-land which need not be taken seriously, or through the lens of menacing stereotypes later associated with notions of the Yellow Peril" (Wiener 2004, 4).

While these passionate condemnations of the "Japanese Miracle" – steeped in racialized xenophobia as they were – served as a form of problematization, broad distrust of another country's success is not a specific enough problem to solve. For the introduction of operationalizable, practical technologies to be possible, a more specific and well-defined problem needed to be identified. In the United States, identifying the precise secret to Japan's success became a paramount priority. Political Science was, unsurprisingly, searching for state-centred answers to the question of the "Japanese Miracle," with Chalmers Johnston's influential *MITI and the Japanese Miracle* (1982) setting the stage for a spirited academic debate about the role of the "developmental state." Business leaders, meanwhile, were much more interested in understanding the practices that Japanese companies were using to produce high -quality goods so efficiently. As one American executive remarked in the early 1980s, the "key issue" that American business would need to address in the coming years was "not technology or investment, not regulation or inflation. The key issue will be the way in which we respond to one fact – the Japanese know how to manage better than we do" (quoted in Ouchi 1981, 3). The

executive's peers apparently agreed, and American companies in the 1980s and 1990s diligently studied the practices of their Japanese counterparts. General Motors, Ford, Chrysler, Hewlett-Packard, General Electric, Westinghouse, IBM and others began focussing on understanding what made the rise of corporate Japan possible (Ouchi 1981, 291). Convinced that Japanese corporations had captured the "market" on more efficient manufacturing means, these representatives of corporate America looked for "the secret" to Japan's success.

As these academics, engineers and executives studied the differences between Japanese and American manufacturing approaches, they identified a problem that was more refined than the broader attacks on Japan: the practices of American industry were inefficient, inflexible and uncompetitive in the face of their Japanese counterparts. One set of researchers "concluded that the auto industries of North America and Europe were relying on techniques little changed from Henry Ford's mass-production system" and that these techniques were "simply not competitive with a new set of ideas pioneered by the Japanese companies" (Womack, Jones and Roos 1990, 3). American auto manufacturing was characterized by bulky, large-scale "mass" production that had been innovated in Detroit by Ford and his rivals then exported throughout the world as the standard model for auto manufacturing. This model "buffered" against risk – large inventory supplies buffered against the risk of shortages of parts, assembly lines had "built-in buffers" to ensure that production continued if equipment broke down, and "legions of utility workers were kept on the payroll to buffer unexpected periods of high absenteeism, repair areas were huge in order to buffer against poor quality, and so on" (Krafcik 1988, 43-44). Such large-scale redundancies, according to the researchers, meant that the operations remained stale and unable to innovate in a way that would allow them to remain competitive.

This articulation of the problem of Western industry was much different than the version of problematization that had been offered by politicians and the business press. This was not a problem that stemmed from a dangerous foe utilizing unfair tactics.[22] Instead, the manufacturing and economic malaise being felt in the 1980s was a symptom of the American inability to compete with a more efficient and innovative counterpart. Through this comparison, the very fabric of American manufacturing, the culture and practices of corporate America, and corporate manufacturing in the United States writ large, became problems to be solved. Rather than repeating and reinforcing essentialist views of an exoticized and dangerous Japanese threat to American business, such diagnoses were instead characterized by self-reflection, particularly concerning the operational practices that American manufacturers deployed in comparison to those used by Japanese firms.

With a problem identified, researchers and industry insiders looked for solutions. For many, the obvious solution was to emulate those practices that had made Japan's auto manufacturing sector so successful. Schonberger (1982) argued Japanese practices could simply be studied in the West, making a grand call to action centred upon his belief that the "Japanese have had little trouble learning our techniques, and we will have little trouble learning theirs" (Schonberger 1982, 14). In a more tempered tone, Alston argued that Americans "should study the Japanese and adapt what we see useful," and that while "Japanese culture contains many elements and concepts that are different from ours, some can clearly be adapted to the American scene" (Alston 1986, 18). American industry moved to emulation and soon after, "the wraps

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[22] Indeed, in the paper that first coined the term "lean production," Krafcik (1988) implores American industrialists to ignore nationality when considering practices to adopt and instead focus on the *practices* that made Japanese companies successful.

were off. Western manufacturers, academics, and consultants had been joining study missions to Japan by the planeload" (Schonberger 2007, 403).

3.4. From the Toyota Production System to Lean: A Story of Translation

In Japan, those searching for a solution found, among other practices, those being deployed within Toyota. The term "Lean," however, was not used to describe the Toyota Production System, either within Toyota or outside of it, until the 1980s. There were, in fact, few written descriptions of how Toyota conducted its business until the 1970s when Japanese authors began to describe the system for outside audiences. The name "Lean" emerged in 1988 when John Krafcik, a former engineer at a California factory owned jointly by Ford and Toyota (Emiliani 2006, 172), coined the term in a paper published in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's (MIT) *Sloan Management Review* (Krafcik 1988). Krafcik described the "superiority" of Lean production over the traditional, American-style mass production utilized by manufacturers such as Ford or General Motors. Krafcik's paper was an early product of the work of the International Motor Vehicle Program, (IMVP), a research project in which he worked as a research assistant and that would eventually become crucial in the emergence of Lean in North America (Womack, Jones and Roos 1990). The IMVP was comprised of researchers at MIT who, spurred by the oil spike and funded with a small grant, set out with the mandate to explore "the future of the automobile" (Holweg 2007, 423). By 1985, the project's researchers had turned their attention from broad questions of "the future" of the automobile to the more specific task of understanding how and why Japanese auto manufacturers had gained so much of the international auto market, largely at the expense of their American competitors. The IMVP was structured much as other large-scale academic investigative projects, with primary investigators at MIT coordinating the efforts of collaborators from a diverse set of institutions

and firms across the US, Europe, and Japan. The project's investigative methodology included visiting factories in these countries, interviewing executives, managers, engineers and front-line staff "on the shop floor" to determine the practices of not only Japanese factories, but also those in America and Europe, to compare the practices of each in order to diagnose why American industry, and the American auto sector in particular, was losing so much ground to its Japanese competitors.

In addition to publications such as Krafcik's, IMVP researchers produced working papers and briefing documents for the government and industry stakeholders who helped fund their work, honing their understanding both of the newly-named "Lean" production system as well as how to describe the system to Western audiences. Their work culminated in the publication of the enormously influential book *The Machine That Changed the World,* authored by IMVP leaders James Womack, Daniel Jones and Daniel Roos (1990). Womack, Jones and Roos examined how the practices that they called Lean Production emerged within Toyota and then reviewed the various facets of how Japanese firms such as Toyota conducted their businesses, from customer relations to inventory control to management of the factory operation. In their book, Womack, Jones and Roos introduced the Lean label to a wider audience, arguing that it fit the system deployed by Japan because it uses "Less of everything compared with mass production – half the human effort in the factory, half the manufacturing space, half the investment in tools, half the engineering hours to develop a new product in half the time" (Womack, Jones and Roos 1990, 11). More importantly, though, they reframed the Toyota Production System not only by assigning it a label, but also by making it accessible to a wide audience and insisting that Lean practices could be adopted without limitations: "Our conclusion

is simple: Lean production is a superior way to make things … It follows that the whole world should adopt lean production, and as quickly as possible" (Womack, Jones and Roos 1990, 231).

It is important to note that there already had been other attempts to sell Toyota's practices to western audiences. By the time Womack, Roos and Jones' book was published in 1990, there were myriad books, some of them written by engineers who had worked in Japanese firms, that identified Just-in-Time production, *kanban* inventory systems, and the like (Ohno 1978; Ohno 1982; Shingo 1989). Yet with its dramatic title; new, concise label, "Lean" production; and the authority bestowed upon them by their standing within the prestigious MIT, *The Machine That Changed the World* established its authors as authorities over the subject that they were translating for western audiences. And, while some within the Lean Industry have worked to demonstrate the extent to which Toyota Production System practices were being implemented in American industry independent of the work and publications of the IMVP researchers,[23] it was the Lean name that stuck and it was the purveyors of the Lean moniker who became amongst the first Lean experts, referred to as the "founders" of Lean (Spence 2013).

The original Lean authors thus sought to *translate* the specific practices of the Toyota Production System into a universal template, under the name "Lean." Beyond assigning English nomenclature and descriptions to the practices they observed in Japanese factories, however, the early Lean authors translated in ways that rendered them technical (Ong 2007) and appropriate for implementation across a wide variety of activities. Clarke *et al* (2017) describe translation both regarding literal translation between languages – surely present in this process – as well as

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[23] One of the more profound debates within the Lean industry is the extent to which Womack, Jones and Roos were selective in the practices that were translated from the Toyota Production System to Lean. In particular, some in the Lean industry have accused the early Lean advocates of ignoring "respect for people," a concept that some American thinkers argue was a much more important component to the Toyota Production System than the early Lean texts suggested. See, for example, Emiliani 2016.

making knowledges and practices understandable in different contexts and settings. They

describe translation as the process of "making a meaning (or set of meanings) move from one

linguistic or cultural context to another" (Clarke *et al* 2017, 35). Translation thus represents the

processes by which something, in this case the practices and approaches they had observed at

work in settings where the Toyota Production System were being deployed, is made

understandable and implementable in new settings, which may have little (or nothing) to do with

its original context. In the case of Lean, the academics, research and industry insiders, most

notably the authors of *The Machine That Changed The* World, framed the translated version of

the Toyota Production System – Lean – as the solution to the problem of corporate North

America's newfound laggard status in the global marketplace.

Stripped away of the mid-century Japanese context in which the Toyota Production

System was developed, the authors of *The Machine That Changed the World* could turn Lean's

tenets into a product that could be implemented anywhere. Indeed, with the publication of their

tome, Womack, Jones and Roos proclaimed that Lean would, "as it inevitably spreads beyond

the auto industry,… change almost everything in almost every industry – choices for consumers,

the nature of work, the fortune of companies, and, ultimately, the fate of nations" (Womack,

Jones and Roos 1990, 14). They worked quickly to ensure that their grand predictions would be

realized. In one configuration or another, Womack and Jones went on to write a collection of

additional books (Womack and Jones 1996; Womack and Jones 2005; Womack 2011; Jones and

Womack 2011) to promote Lean's tenets to a growing audience. They founded "research

institutes," including the Lean Enterprise Institute in the United States, the Lean Enterprise

Academy in the UK, and additional non-profit institutes in other countries that came to belong to

the "Lean Global Network" (Jones and Womack 2016, 29) to serve as institutional nodes and repositories of research and guidance for those looking for new solutions to various problems.

3.5. The Contemporary Lean Industry

Through their books, articles and research institutes, these early Lean advocates became central figures in what grew into an enormous industry. Indeed, their Lean creation has remained remarkably popular and successful to this day. As Liker, Fruin and Adler (1999, 5) point out, "since the publication of *The Machine That Changed the World,*" Lean became "the standard reference point for many American firms." Never too shy to celebrate the success of their creation, Jones and Womack called Lean "the most successful approach to business improvement in our generation" (Jones and Womack 2016, 27). Lean has spawned a sprawling, loosely (if at all) connected network of "experts" populated by consultants, authors and gurus. Books, articles and chapters now offer Lean solutions for problems in a seemingly infinite series of settings: accounting (Maskell and Baggaley 2004; Stenzel 2007), construction (Shang and Low 2014; Santorella 2011), human resources (Jekiel 2011; Harris and Harris 2007), healthcare (Black 2016; Aij and Lohman 2016; Graban 2012), information technology (Bell and Orzen 2011; Williams and Duray 2013) and, government and state institutions (Price and Elliotte 2011; Teeuwen 2011). Blogs, podcasts, YouTube videos, pamphlets and presentations trumpet the benefits of Lean for any organization. Lean is a known commodity, and its practices the basis for an enormous industry that I refer to here as the Lean Industry.

The Lean Industry, as I conceptualize it, is a nebulous web of networks centred on reinforcing claims of expertise over Lean as a form of knowledge derived from the Toyota Production System. Nebulous and decentralized, the Lean Industry is united through its collective commitment to honing, marketing and expanding Lean as a form of knowledge. The

Lean Industry is both the product and mechanism of cycles of problematization, emerging as the product of problem-solving and solution-seeking in a growing series of experimental "laboratories," and then establishing itself as the hub of authority and expertise over a form of knowledge and set of practices that can provide the solution to the problems of public bureaucracies within neoliberal rationalities. As noted in Chapter 1, critical theorists and researchers have produced a rich literature exploring the intersections of political rationalities such as neoliberalism, expertise, and professions. Accounting has been a primary subject of such work, owing largely to the work of Peter Miller and his co-authors (Miller 1992; Miller and O'Leary 1987, Miller et al 2008). Power's work (1995; 1997; 2003) speaks to the way in which auditors construct their own expertise and legitimacy through the practices of auditing itself. By "making things auditable," auditors create worlds in which they serve as experts. Beyond accounting or auditing, however, scholars have examined the role that experts such as engineers (Larner and Laurie 2010) play in mobilizing the practices associated with neoliberal rationalities, working to diffuse the practices and techniques that render them tangible through processes described as "fast policy" (Peck and Theodore 2015) or "making policy move" (Clarke 2016).

Expertise, in short, provides the technical legitimacy for the solutions that render rationalities tangible and empowers its holders through claims to that expertise. The expert both frames the problem and offers solutions, appealing to notions of scientific or technological precision and the luxury of the neutrality that that knowledge affords them. Derived from the practices of engineers on Toyota's factory floors in mid-Century Japan, Lean was translated into a form of knowledge by researchers and consultants in the 1980s who framed themselves as the experts in this exciting new set of practices that could solve the problems that plagued 1980s America. Stripped of its context, Lean was – and is – marketed as a panacea for all manner of

problems. As a form of knowledge and set of practices, Lean promises an antidote to *muda*

(waste) by allowing for practitioners to "do more and more with less and less" (Womack and

Jones 2003, 15), a possibility understood to be universally beneficial. Lean, the story goes, is

good for everything from manufacturing to football.[24]

The practices and discourses of Lean exist within the network of experts who legitimize

Lean as a set of universal solutions through their varied professional practices. In

conceptualizing the Lean Industry as being inhabited by "experts," I draw on the obvious

similarities with more established professions already explored by critical scholars. One striking

difference in this comparison remains, however. Established professions such as accounting are

characterized by codification and formalization, recognized by individual states in a way that

Lean experts are not. In well-established professions, there are architectures that shape

industries, formed by networks of professional associations, oversight bodies, disciplinary

committees and the like, which provide codification and educational credentials, disciplining

professionals in terms of how they are recognized and how they conduct their business. In the

case of accountants in Canada, for instance, the enormously detailed Canadian Institute of

Chartered Accountants Handbook (CPA Canada 2017) provides guidance and direction for any

Certified Professional Accountants (CPAs) in the country. Bar Associations, meanwhile, uphold

strict ethical codes for lawyers, publishing the names of those lawyers who find themselves

disciplined for violating such codes. Provincial colleges of physicians and surgeons hold similar

disciplinary powers over physicians in the country. "Established" professions are established

through authority and legitimacy, structured by legislation and regulation, norms, rules and

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[24] Lean experts have a fondness for adopting former Green Bay Packer coach Vince Lombardi as a "Lean thinker." See Graban 2011a, Kleist 2015,

conventions that give shape to the networks of practitioners that populate them (Power 2003, 392).

The experts that populate the Lean industry are organized much more loosely.[25] To start, there is no single "type" of Lean expert. While accountants, for example, are required to complete a specific form of undergraduate education before articling in an organization while completing more formal training from their professional association, Lean experts are drawn from a far more heterogeneous set of backgrounds, and are employed in a wide range of roles in an equally wide range of organizations. Professors of management produce published research evaluating Lean "best practices" (Sim and Rogers 200; Radnor, Holweg and Waring 2011). Other Lean experts run or are employed by institutions of knowledge generation: think-tanks, research institutes, and training facilities to promote and market Lean. Others take on a role that can be best described as a type of public intellectual, spending their hours in seminars, conferences, and on social media highlighting the "successes" of Lean and offering their analysis and evaluation of the strengths of weaknesses of how organizations have (or have not) implemented the methodology. A different set of Lean experts, one that I label "Internal Lean Specialists," work within organizations as management and staff, using the practices and theories of Lean to "improve" their respective organizations. These Lean experts come from an enormously wide variety of professions: accountants, nurses, policy analysts, bureaucrats, salespeople and the like, bound together not by formal training or registered credentials but by Lean-specific job descriptions.[26] In this way, Internal Lean Specialists (as well as those Lean

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[25] This is not to say that those "established" professions are, themselves, rigid or "fixed." Indeed, as Power (2003, 392) observes in the auditing world, the practices of a profession form a "semi-institutionalized and loosely-coupled whole, a structure that is constantly moving and subject to economic, regulatory and political pressure for change.

[26] I expand on the concept of Internal Lean Specialists in Chapter 6. Specifically, I speak to the importance of such roles in the implementation of Lean in Saskatchewan.

experts not captured within such neatly-delineated professional designations) resemble the "post-Fordist experts" described by Larner, whose "disciplinary backgrounds (if they have one) are likely to be the new growth areas such as marketing, public relations and human resources" (Larner 2002, 663). The most visible members of the Lean Industry are management consultants, who work with clients in different sectors and industries to improve their practices by adopting Lean. In the case of Lean and management approaches like it, the practice wherein Lean experts mobilize their knowledge is done largely by management consultants working with clients who have problems that are ostensibly solvable by practices derived from Lean. As I explore in great detail in Chapters 6 and 7, while Lean experts of all sorts take part in defining "best practices" of Lean, it is the relationships of management consultants with clients by which Lean is most rapidly and thoroughly mobilized.

Fittingly, given the importance of consultants within the Lean Industry's ranks, it is in the broader world of management consulting that the Lean Industry finds the profession that most closely resembles its own structure. There are neither overarching, recognized professional standards for consultants, nor organizations with the authority to enforce those rules.[27] Similarly,

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[27] This is not to say that there have been no attempts to *create* the infrastructure that would allow consulting to more closely resemble other, more established professions. As Kirkpatrick, Muzio and Ackroyd (2012, 190-191) demonstrate, there have historical attempts to create professional associations, most notably in the UK, back to the 1930s. Indeed, there exist national bodies that claim to represent the interests of management consultants in the UK, the US, and Australia. These organizations, however, remain voluntary, immature, and lacking both the sophistication and legitimacy or authority as their counterparts in more recognizably established professions. In Canada, any institutional structure that seeks to shape the consulting industry is informal. When efforts have been made to institutionalize it in a fashion closer to its more established counterparts, it has resulted in voluntary and largely unrecognized organizations. While provincial bodies have legislative authority to oversee accounting, the law, engineering, nursing and the like, the closest thing to such an organization in the world of management consulting, Certified Management Consultants Canada (CMC-Canada). CMC-Canada frames itself as a body that "fosters excellence and integrity in the management consulting profession as a whole" (CMC-Canada 2017a). With a $2 million budget (CMC-Canada 2017b, 10), CMC-Canada's activities are ostensibly limited to "thought leadership" in the form of blog posts and, in 2016, hosting an international consulting conference (CMC-Canada 2017b, 6). Aside from these limited activities, CMC-Canada promotes its designation, a "Certified Management Consultant" as its primary activity. While the organization claims 2,600 members in Canada, its primary activity is one that seemingly viewed as an afterthought in the consulting industry, as consultants themselves see little to no value or usefulness in the designation (Daoleuxay 2017, 61-64).

there is no standard "kind" of management consultant; consulting comes in an enormous variety in terms of size, clientele and specialization. Independent consultants and boutique consulting firms compete with large firms, including large accounting firms increasingly interested in offering Lean consulting services, to increase their market share in the consulting industry.[28] Their areas of expertise are similarly diverse: information technology (Deloitte 2019b; PWC 2019), human resources (Daeco 2017; AON Canada 2017),"change management" (Watershed 2019; Ethier 2015), public engagement (Lura 2013; Delaney and Associates 2017), communications (FTI 2018; Tantalus Group 2016), and more esoterically-named services such as, for instance, "business orchestration solutions" (Syntegrity Group 2017). Consultants also specialize by market, working primarily with corporate clients (and individually specialized industries within the private sector), the non-profit sector, or public-sector agencies. Moreover, organizations can (and do) hire multiple consultants to provide different services simultaneously, one consultant to help draft a strategic plan, another to conduct public engagement and yet a third to put together a communications strategy to "sell" the organization's new vision, for example.[29]

Given that there is little in the way of an institutional or codified structure to the Lean industry, competition for legitimacy and authority over Lean knowledge becomes the *de facto*

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[28] McDougald and Greenwood (2012) provide a thorough and fascinating review of the "big four" accounting firms (Deloitte, PriceWaterhouseCooper, Earnst & Young, and KPMG) in the consulting industry. They draw attention to the importance of management consulting in the rapid, large-scale mergers that resulted in a "big four" (derived from a "big six" and a "big eight" before that), as firms sought to capture larger portions of the consulting market share through mergers. As a concluding point, they argue that there lies a tension in such firms between consulting and accounting, with the increasingly large proportion of consulting work done in firms jeopardizing the importance of accounting with them.

[29] In my time in the Ministry of Health, I witnessed similar scenarios. In 2012, for example, the small branch in which I worked was working with three consulting firms simultaneously. One, John Black and Associates, was providing the Ministry guidance with respect to the implementation of Lean as outlined in Chapters 6 and 7. Another, named Syntegrity, facilitated focus groups. Yet a third firm, a communications consultancy, was helping the branch draft a policy framework and the communications strategy that accompanied that document.

organizing force. Without formal authority, status as a recognized and respected authority on

Lean affords individuals an unregulated but very real influence over the rest of the industry. The

original Lean experts, for example, remain exalted figures in the landscape of Lean consultancy.

The Lean Enterprise Institute, founded by the authors of *The Machine That Changed the World,*

finds itself at the centre of Lean knowledge and expertise. Using visualization software

TouchGraph that allows for the visualization of Google search hits, the central place of the Lean

Enterprise Institute becomes clear. A series of commonly-used phrases associated with Lean,

from various "types" of Lean – Lean management, Lean accounting, Lean thinking, *kaizen*,

Continuous Improvement, and Rapid Improvement Workshops visualizes the organizations most

commonly associated with Lean terminology, as identified by Google searches. The results

demonstrate the central place of the Lean Enterprise Institute, represented by the organization's

dolphin and "lean" (short for its www.lean.org URL) at the centre of the Lean industry.[30]

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[30] The resulting graph shown in Figure 3.1 is the result of putting in 10 terms commonly associated with Lean management, determined by me through my research. TouchGraph does allow for some results to be hidden. The only hits hidden from this graph are those associated with social media, in particular YouTube, Facebook and LinkedIn. These social media sites were commonly linked to multiple search terms. However, given there is little relevance to two terms both being present on YouTube or LinkedIn, I chose to hide them from the larger graph.

Figure 3.1: A visualization of the Lean Industry

This visualization of internet links confirms what even superficial reviews of Lean literature suggest: that the originators of the "Lean" translation of the Toyota Production system remain influential within the Industry. *The Machine that Changed the World* returns over 16,000 citations on Google Scholar. Lean experts clamour for attention by Womack and Jones in

particular, expressing dissatisfaction when they do not receive it.[31] They are referred to as "founders" of Lean, "fathers" or "godfathers" of Lean, and their work is said to have "define[d] the lean field" (Balle 2015).

That the original Lean experts remain influential figures in the Lean Industry has much to do with the value assigned to proximity to the "origins" of Lean within the Lean Industry. As the original "translators" of the Toyota Production System into Lean, the original Lean experts possess the authority that comes with proximity to the original ideas and practices espoused by the engineers who first developed the Toyota Production System. Indeed, within the Lean Industry, these engineers and any of their words that remain on record are given an exalted, almost sacred place. A book (Shimokawa and Fujimoto 2009) comprised entirely of a collection of interviews and scattered writings of the original Toyota Production System engineers was published in 2009. The writings of these engineers are cited widely within the work of Lean experts: Taiichi Ohno's *Toyota Production System* (1988) returns over 6,200 citations on Google Scholar and fellow Toyota engineer Shigeo Shingo's *A Study of the Toyota Production System* (1989) returns over 2,000 (dwarfed as they are by the 16,000+ citations of *The Machine that Changed the World*). Lean experts recall stories of the original engineers, using them as parables for contemporary Lean practices (All About Lean 2016; Seiter 2014). Ohno's quotes and musings on production and management are the subjects of their own web pages that resemble those of poets or philosophers (Vliet ND). Blog posts seek to understand what "the inventors of the Toyota Production System had in mind in the first place" (Balle 2015).[32] Within the Lean

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[31] In one blog post, an academic writes about his contributions to Lean, including "more than a dozen books and twenty papers," but laments that "strangely, Womack (Lean Enterprise Institute) and Jones (Lean Enterprise Academy) do not recognize (or use) any of [his] work" (Emiliani 2016).

[32] The reverence with which Lean experts view those close to "the source" of Lean can sometimes border on the surreal, as is the case with the mysterious Toyota internal document, *The Toyota Way 2001*. According to Toyota (2012), *The Toyota Way 2001* "clarifies the values and business methods that all employees should embrace in order to carry out the Guiding Principles at Toyota through the company's global activities." While Toyota shares the

Industry, the closer one can claim to be to the "genesis" of Lean and the original "laboratories" in which Lean practices were developed, the more pure and authentic one's Lean remains; proximity to Lean's origins represents a currency within the Industry that is used to consolidate legitimacy and authority to gain clients. In Chapters 6 and 7, I will detail the importance of lineage to the origins of Lean to the Saskatchewan Lean implementation.

Given the importance of lineage and authenticity, it is unsurprising that skirmishes erupt within the Lean industry over who has the most legitimate proximity to the original Toyota engineers. While the original Lean experts retain their status in the Industry due to their proximity to Lean's origins, other experts question this status. Emiliani (2006), for example, traces alternative trajectories through which Lean was transported to the US and translated for American audiences. Downplaying the importance of *The Machine That Changed the World*, Emiliani argues that a series of symposiums and conferences in Connecticut in the 1980s facilitated collaboration between corporate manufacturers and consultants who had first-hand experience with the Toyota Production System.[33] Others follow similar lines of argument, focusing on those lesser-known pathways through which Lean travelled to the United States and looking to correct what they understand to be an inflated sense of importance surrounding *The Machine That Changed the World*. Some, for example, emphasize the role played by Japanese

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basic "principles" of Continuous Improvement and Respect for People (concepts that are central in Lean literature), it has never made the document itself public, giving it a level of mystery reserved for ancient texts. Online forum threads show Lean experts asking one another if they have seen it or if they can somehow obtain a copy or whether or not the document really exists (Lean.org Forum 2001). Using language that reflects the mystery surrounding the document, one Lean expert likens it to the "necronomicon," an ancient book of magic in the work of H.P. Lovecraft (Baudin 2013). This mysteriousness gives the knowledge captured within *The Toyota Way 2001* a sort of scarcity, and those with exposure to it an extraordinary claim to Lean expertise. Like priests who have access to the word of God through Latin and then translate it to their parishioners' vernacular, Lean experts (Larman and Vodde 2009, Miller 2010; Emiliani 2008) can use the knowledge they gained from reading *The Toyota Way 2001* and translate it to the rest of the Lean Industry in a way that affords them additional claims to *authentic* Lean expertise.

[33] Elsewhere, he argues that the organizations that have seen the greatest success with Lean are those who did not deploy practices espoused by Womack et al, but rather who learned Lean from the Shingujitsu consultants. See Baudin 2017.

consultants who had worked directly for Toyota before leaving to form consulting firms specializing in diffusing the Toyota Production System, particularly Shingujitsu, a Japanese consulting firm that later expanded to include an American branch (Shingujitsu Global 2017). Indeed, some Lean experts look to discard the Lean moniker altogether, suggesting that Lean is a "brand" of the Toyota Production System,[34] calling into question the reverence given to the original Lean experts. Michel Baudin, a French writer and consultant who lived in Japan in the 1980s when he learned about the Toyota Production System, essentially calls Womack, Jones and Roos's claim to Lean expertise fraudulent, looking to other books published in the 1980s (Schonberger 1982; Sazuki 1986; Imai 1986) to argue that by the time *The Machine That Changed the World* was published, the "implementation of what Womack and Jones later called 'Lean' was well underway. To the people already involved, [they] were late comers, but the bandwagon was not that crowded and they were welcome to contribute. They were, however, not entitled to the mantle of founding fathers" (Baudin 2017). With arguments such as this, experts seek to bypass the translation that Womack *et al* have provided and seek to link their approach to Lean *directly* to the Toyota Production System, effectively making claims that their Lean is more pure or authentic than those who trace their expertise through the "mainstream" Lean Industry.

These skirmishes over authenticity and proximity to the genesis of Lean also play out through more mundane technical questions. When Womack, Jones and Roos (1990) originally published *The Machine That Changed the World*, their focus was primarily on the *practices* utilized by Toyota and similar manufacturing companies. The *kanban* method of inventory control, for example, was a central tenet of Lean according to not only Womack, Jones and Roos

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[34] Jon Miller, a consultant with a think tank called the Gemba Academy, argues that while you can "say that lean manufacturing is a subset of [the Toyota Production System … lean is a brand, like Toyota is a brand" (Pereira 2008, comment section).

but other North American "translators" of Lean. Similarly, Just-in-Time Production, or producing one product immediately before it is required in order to be added to or assembled with other products, represented another example of a technique the *Machine that Changed the World* authors believed could be exported to a wide range of industries and organizations. For others in the Lean industry, however, the focus of Womack, Jones and Roos on these practical, technical components of how to implement Lean represented a misreading of the Toyota Production System and the knowledge that its original engineers and factory managers developed and communicated. For these critics, this approach is inadequate, focusing primarily on the "tools" of Lean – those operational practices deployed at Toyota – without understanding more abstract, normative components of the Lean approach. One, for instance, comments that while "Womack has heightened the awareness of the 'tools' of [the Toyota Production System]/Lean," this has come at the expense of the "problem identifying/solving" mindset that some argue is more consistent with the perspectives and approach of Toyota engineers such as Ohno (Pereira 2008; comment section). The focus on tools has come under scrutiny in debates between Lean experts. Lean experts opine on the difficulties of implementing a Lean "culture" vs Lean tools (Graban 2006a) or deridingly refer to experts who specialize solely on the sporadic use of tools and episodic workshops as "tool heads" (Seddon 2006; Balle 2018 comment section, Graban 2006b). Despite attempts by Womack and Jones, through the publication of their second book, *Lean Thinking* (2003), to focus on how to implement a broader Lean "culture," the narrative that they remained committed only to the use of tools and episodic Lean "events" remains prevalent in some circles of the Lean Industry.

Disagreements also often erupt over specifics of the Lean consulting industry, such as the extent to which consultants should use the Japanese terminology such as *kaizen*, *Kanban*, *gemba*

and the like that originated within the Toyota Production System.[35] Other times, the Lean

Industry's focus is defending particular aspects of interpretations of Lean from criticisms from

either purveyors of other forms of Lean or from consultants or experts who espouse forms of

industrial engineering or improvement (Graban 2010b). Often, debates take the form of one

expert opining on what *is* or *is not* "real" Lean, with experts accusing the work of their

seemingly inferior counterparts as not being "real" Lean but, rather, "LAME" (Graban 2007) or

"fake Lean" (Emiliani 2010). A common lament within the Lean industry centres on the

supposed dilution of Lean, that their form of expertise has suffered from imposters who market a

watered-down version.[36] From the perspective of these accounts, resistance to Lean – from

organizations, clients, or the public – derives from instances when the methods that have been

deployed have not been *authentically* Lean. If only that contract had been with a consultant who

offered an *actual* Lean approach, their results would be better. Failure is the result of deviation,

while true or authentic Lean remains intact.

On the surface, such skirmishes between experts may resemble mere debates amongst

colleagues who differ on the nuances of their craft, or perhaps competition for claims of

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[35] Some Lean experts (e.g. Pereira 2010) believe that the use of Japanese terminology can be alienating for clients and new adopters of Lean, instead arguing for writing "simply and directly" and using language with which practitioners and clients are familiar. Fellow Lean practitioner Mike Wroblewski (2010) responded, arguing that English borrows heavily from many other languages and as, is capable of incorporating the original Japanese words for the concepts derived from the Toyota Production System. Likewise, fellow expert Ron Periera argued that "without humility, we're all doomed" and that translating the Japanese terminology to English demonstrates a lack of humility "and a lack of respect to those who paved the lean road before us" and that "any tool or concept with Japanese roots should be referred to by its Japanese name (Peirera 2010). Each of these blog posts then descend into heated debates in their comment sections, with bloggers exchanging arguments about the extent to which Japanese terminology has a place in contemporary Lean consulting.   One commenter likened Lean experts to physicians, who use Greek or Latin terminology for anatomy. Others accuse those who insist on using Japanese of alienating their audiences and using the language to inflate their own importance and/or expertise. See Graban 2010a; Emiliani 2010; Wroblewski 2010; Periera 2010. This debate would manifest itself in Saskatchewan's Lean experiment, particularly in 2013-2014, when the use of Japanese jargon and terminology became an important point of political contention – see Chapters 6 and 7.

[36] Baudin (2016a) insists that "Ever since the name (Lean) was coined, all sorts of consultants and gurus have rebranded their offerings as "Lean," misleading their audiences and living off the reputations of the Toyota Production System.

authority that will ostensibly result in additional clients and work. While these are valid interpretations, I argue that such debates also serve a *performative* role that works to construct Lean's legitimacy. Within debates within the Lean Industry, the constant remains the pervasive conviction that Lean is *the* solution to any problem. Lean thus remains the ideal to which its experts, and the clients who look to those experts for advice, aspire. It serves as a legitimate form of knowledge over which disagreements and skirmishes over "best practice" may be conducted. That Lean is a valuable approach that any organization should use to improve their practices, technologies and processes becomes a matter of common sense. It is not a matter of *whether* Lean should be adopted widely and extensively, but rather *how*. Any debate about whether Lean, the Toyota Production System, or any form of "quality improvement science" represent valuable or valid approaches for dealing with any particular issue is lost behind debates on how *best* to do so. Such debates thus work to construct the façade of neutrality inherent to expertise; when the question of *how best to* implement Lean dominates discussions within a setting, there is little room to question whether it is appropriate at all. As such, these debates resemble those in more established fields and professions. Lean experts debate how best to implement Lean in the same way that economists, for example, debate tax policy. In both cases, the practices and experiences are stripped of their context and presented as a neutral form of knowledge, with debates over that knowledge serving to construct and then reinforce the legitimacy of the knowledge and the expertise of the debaters.

The spaces in which Lean's best practices are debated and hashed out work double-duty, also serving as the sources of literature from which Lean experts derive their authority. The books, blog posts, podcasts and social media accounts written and maintained by Lean experts serve as a literature that acts as the source of Lean knowledge. As Gendron *et al* (2007) state,

"the ability of a profession to hold and expand a jurisdiction depends especially upon the profession's capacities to anchor its claims to expertise in a literature whose premises resonate with those of its audiences" (Gendron *et al* 2007, 102). Accordingly, it is not simply enough to have experts, consultants or otherwise, espousing the benefits of Lean. For these experts to have recognizably legitimate claims to expertise, they must draw from a pool of knowledge. This pool of knowledge is not difficult to find. There are seemingly limitless books that espouse Lean. Productivity Press, an imprint of Routledge, began by printing the writings of Toyota's engineers and now publishes Lean books exclusively (Routledge 2017). The Lean Enterprise Institute has its own publishing operation that provides a similar service, though relying more on publishing the work of the original Lean experts and their students than Productivity Press, a difference that reflects the informal structure of the Lean Industry. Books focus on the specific practices of Lean, such as value stream mapping (i.e., tracing the steps – and waste, or *muda* – in a particular practice; see Rother and Shook 1999), the terminology of Lean (Lean Enterprise Institute 2014), using Lean in developing a startup company (Ries 2011), and even offer a *Lean for Dummies* (Sayers and Williams 2012). So-called "Shingo Publication Awards," named after one of the original Toyota engineers, are awarded to "writing that has had a significant impact on and advances the body of knowledge regarding operational excellence." For Lean experts, the reliance on books resembles that of management consultants, who deploy books as "key instruments for disseminating ideas" and a "favoured marketing tactics in the firms' attempt to increase their market share" of clients' business (Saint-Martin 2012, 454). The Lean Industry is thus not merely a network of experts but also a network who produce what Gendron *et al* (2007, 124) calls a "network of literature." Together, the experts, their interactions with one another, and the literature to which they contribute and from which they draw their legitimacy form

Lean's "network of support." The internal logics of the Lean Industry dictate what Lean "is,"

allowing Lean experts to then seek opportunities to grow the Industry to introducing Lean to new

areas through contract work, education and training, public speaking, social media, networking

opportunities such as conferences, workshops and seminars. More than that, however, it serves

to professionalize and build network hierarchies in the Lean Industry. "Getting published,"

particularly by those publishers that cater to the Lean Industry specifically (for example,

Productivity Press) provides additional legitimacy and authority for Lean experts seeking to

improve their status.

Making Lean Move: The 2018 Lean Summit, Fredericton New Brunswick

     As I explain in this section, books, blog posts and social media are some of the tools that Lean experts use to perform their expertise, legitimize their claim of authority over Lean knowledge, as well as spread that knowledge (and, in turn, the influence of their own personal brand of Lean). Here, I focus on a different tool that the Lean Industry (and, indeed, other management consultants) use to mobilize their particular form of expertise: the professional conference. In April 2018, dozens of Lean practitioners gathered in Fredericton, New Brunswick to participate in the 2018 Lean Summit conference. Organized by the Government of New Brunswick and the City of Fredericton, the annual conference sought to "bring together a network of public and private sector individuals, organizations, and companies from across Canada" to "share, learn, and inspire one another to improve service to [their] customers, drive efficiency, increase effectiveness and add value to your business" (Lean Summit 2018). I attended this conference as an observer in an ethnographic exercise to explore the practices that Lean experts use to reinforce and grow their influence and expertise.
     Like many conferences with attendees and presenters travelling from elsewhere, the Lean Summit included a reception the first night. While many of the following days' attendees would be local, representing the bureaucracies of the Government of New Brunswick and the City of Fredericton, this reception was largely attended by those coming from out of town. Formally dressed Lean experts milled about with their complementary drinks discussing their travel to Fredericton, how the weather was in their part of Canada, and the Lean projects they had been working on. Display booths were present around the "networking" area, including those of event sponsors such as Rogers, as well as public sector organizations that had implemented Lean. I struck up a conversation with a representative of the Government of New Brunswick. I mentioned my experience working for the Saskatchewan Public Service and we started to compare the experiences of Lean implementation in the two provinces (see Chapters 6 and 7 for the Saskatchewan case). New Brunswick utilized Lean, he told me, but did not use much Lean "language" (as Saskatchewan did) but rather "continuous improvement" (itself a

translation, I noted to myself, of the Lean concept *kaizen*). Most interestingly, he told me that the manager overseeing the central unit overseeing Lean's implementation in the Government of New Brunswick came from NB Liquor and, before that, from New Brunswick corporate conglomerate Irving, who had long deployed Lean in their operations. The Lean Industry mirrors neoliberal rationality in its ability to appear as capillaries, boring into state institutions in different locales at different times in different ways.

Over the next two days, I attended full days' worth of panels. Presenters were, by and large, Lean experts of two sorts: Internal Lean Specialists working within mostly public (but some private) organizations, and Lean consultants. The Internal Lean specialists' presentations were primarily focused on their work implementing Lean in their own organizations, including step-by-step recollections of how they had worked to deploy Lean as well as "lessons learned" that can serve as learning moments in honing down the "best practices" of Lean. The presentations of the management consultants, who I recognized from the networking event at the welcome reception, were slightly different. One presentation, from an Ottawa-based Lean consulting firm, discussed the best practices of using Lean alongside Agility, a similar IT approach. Another consultant, from auditing firm KPMG (and whose background included work in Saskatchewan's Lean implementation) co-presented with a client, the mayor of a Newfoundland municipality. In these occasions, consultants use their presentations to reinforce and market their own expertise. Speaking in neutral, scientific tones, they discussed Lean best practices as an authority on the subject. The Ottawa-based consultant, mirroring what I heard in my conversation with the representative of the Government of New Brunswick, suggested that Lean experts need not use Japanese terminology. His presentation focussed on when to use Lean and when to use IT interventions to solve problems. The KPMG consultant, meanwhile, co-presented with his client. Speaking from the perspective of a student, the client discussed the difficulty he had in implementing the changes that the consultant has guided him in making. The consultant spoke with much more authority, acting very much like the *sensei,* as many in the Lean Industry describe experts. Both of these consultants use the previous success as a demonstration of the utility of their approaches to Lean.

My tablemates in the audience were largely from the public service, and worked primarily within the bureaucracies of the province of New Brunswick and the City of Fredericton, which seemed to have encouraged staff to attend the conference and, ostensibly, paid their registration. Their perspectives of Lean were mixed. Some believed that it could be used anywhere and were excited that, finally, their own organizations were looking to deploy Lean tools, which they understood had been successful in other places. Others were more skeptical. Those who were skeptical were, unsurprisingly, public servants who had witnessed multiple waves of "quality improvement" reforms. I noticed that a number of presentations had picked up on such skepticism, and included slides or speaking points dedicated to winning over staff who may have had "change fatigue," or skepticism that has resulted from being expected to adopt multiple, successive initiatives meant to change or improve the way they conduct their work.

There are many of these types of conferences. Here, the Lean Industry once again mimics other professions. Between the informal (and sometimes-formally encouraged) networking and the presentations, such conferences reinforce the technological, "scientific" form of knowledge that the Lean Industry has worked to make Lean. Debates, such as the extent to which Japanese terminology should be used, what the best way to deal with "change

fatigue" might be, or whether or not Lean is best used in small, manageable projects of full-scale systemic reforms are not merely debates between colleagues and peers, but also serve to reinforce that it is not a question of *whether* Lean should be used, but rather *how* it should be used. Moreover, those in attendance - in this case, public servants encouraged to attend by their managers - become not only attendees but potential clients and, perhaps, Internal Lean Specialists. Through their presentations, Lean Experts work to create a market for their own expertise, helping to build the discursive foundation for a world in which their authority is total and the potential for contracts is great. Consultants and authors and gurus and bloggers ensure that when public sector staff and managers and elected officials look around for answers to vexing problems, they find Lean.

3.6. Lean Incursions into the Public Sector

From its genesis as the Toyota Production System to its translation in the late 1980s to its widespread implementation throughout the 1990s and into the early 2000s, Lean was, by all accounts, a movement that existed entirely within the private sector. The Lean Industry sought to increase its scope within an ever-growing spectrum of companies, firms, and corporations in a growing number of industries - from the auto industry to computers to aerospace. Lean grew, through processes of problematization, travelling over borders and through the growing networks of the Lean Industry to become an undeniably influential approach to conducting business. While this is an interesting story, however, its significance here lies in how the Lean Industry came to position itself as a solution for problems of the *public* sector. As I explore briefly in Chapter 1 and in greater detail in Chapter 5, the twenty-first century has been characterized by a crisis of neoliberal rationality's form of governance. In Canada, governments have sought reforms that stay true to the logics of neoliberalism but without the consequences of earlier neoliberal reforms. Austerity in the 1990s, with its deep and broad cuts to budgets and public services, had consequences in the form of contestation that made similar cuts politically unpalatable in the future. As such, neoliberalization's iterations have been characterized by searching for solutions that would remain consistent with the logics of neoliberal rationality while avoiding unacceptable outcomes. As such, the search has focussed on those "innovative"

solutions that can eradicate the "waste" that the neoliberal imaginary ascribed to the public sector. With its focus on eliminating waste above all else, Lean was well positioned to make its way to bureaucratic institutions.

It took some time, however, before Lean made substantive incursions into the public sector. Throughout the 1990s, the terms "lean government" or "lean state" were limited to critical accounts of the "hollowing out of the state" and neoliberal policies, without reference to the Lean practices that were entrenching themselves within private industry, though Sears (1999) made effort to draw similarities between austerity politics and the rise of Lean in the 1990s. By the early 2000s, however, there were indications that Lean was making headway into public institutions. In 2003, a handful of American cities began experimenting with Lean techniques (Krings, Levine, and Wall 2006) and, as I explore in great detail in Chapters 6 and 7, by 2005 Lean techniques had been adopted in some publicly-delivered healthcare systems. In the past decade, governments' implementation of Lean practices has accelerated. Due to the enormous diversity of what counts as "Lean," including small workshops and isolated projects, it is perhaps impossible to determine the extent to which Lean has penetrated Canada's various public bureaucracies. However, as **Table 3.1** demonstrates, there are Lean activities taking place in the bureaucracies of every province as well as the federal government. Cities in the United States, Australia, and the UK; sub-national governments and national governments have, to some degree, implemented some form of Lean. The number and variety of departments, agencies, authorities, ministries, branches, divisions and units that have deployed Lean in their business is significant.

Table 3.1: Lean Implementation in Canadian Bureaucracies

Canadian Jurisdiction	Example of Lean Deployment

British Columbia	LeanBC – an office, within the BC Public Service that provides internal consulting services to the rest of the BC provincial bureaucracy.
Alberta	The Lean Journey – a resource offered by the Alberta Department of Agriculture and Forestry for use by agricultural producers in the province to assist them in adopting Lean.
Saskatchewan	See Chapters 6 and 7.
Manitoba	Manitoba Housing Lean Journey – a housing strategy utilizing Lean as its management framework.
Ontario	Health Quality Ontario Quality Improvement Guide – a guide created for continuing care health facility that includes Lean tools, amongst other quality improvement methodologies.
Quebec	Le Centre de leadership et de développement des compétences: l'amélioration des processus – a centralized office that provides training, education and consulting services for departments and agencies in the Government of Quebec implementing Lean projects. (
New Brunswick	Performance Excellence – an office, housed within New Brunswick's Office of Executive Council, that encourages the use of Lean throughout the Government of New Brunswick
Nova Scotia	Department of Internal Services – Nova Scotia's centralized services department, according to its 2015-2016 annual report, promotes Lean to departments and agencies.
Prince Edward Island	PEI Staff Resource Centre offers Lean-based training for healthcare staff to implement in their work.
Newfoundland and Labrador	Newfoundland and Labrador's Cabinet Secretariat – The permanent supporting infrastructure for cabinet has made a "commitment to continuous improvement through Lean management principles" in addition to a Lean training program.
Federal Government	Privy Council Office – In 2013, the PCO conducted a "kaizen" process improvement workshop to improve its case-file system.

The growth of "Lean government" has not gone unnoticed within the Lean Industry, which is optimistic about its future in the public sector. Lean "founder" James Womack (2014) notices the obvious utility in using Lean principles in government institutions, yet laments that "when I look at governments at every level today I observe that most issues are not clearly stated, regulatory and service provision processes are not designed using Lean principles, and regulations and services are not administered or provided using Lean tools." Academic papers

implicitly point to neoliberal policies and austerity as being a prerequisite for establishing an environment in which Lean could flourish: "Fiscal stress, demand for lower taxes and the expectation of improved government services mean that public sector managers face an environment where Lean thinking is very attractive" (Scorsone 2008, 61). Others (Janssen and Estevez 2012, S1) suggest that although most "citizens agree to have smaller government," they also agree "that governments should still have the ability and capacity to solve societal problems. These seemingly contradicting requirements result in the rise of a concept we label as '*lean government*.'" Commissioned by the Government of Scotland to research the potential utility of Lean in the public sector, Radnor *et al* concluded that "lean is transferable to the public sector and can be used to develop more seamless processes, improve flow, reduce waste and develop and understanding of customer value" (Radnor *et al* 2006, 5). Some Lean experts, unsurprisingly, make bold promises about the power of Lean in government. One Lean expert insists that "Lean government" can "easily [yield] returns-on-investment (ROI) of 20x" (LEAN Gov Center ND). Cohen (quoted in Cohen 2016) suggests that Lean is "critical to remaking our cities" and righting "the ship and address[ing] the biggest global challenges." Often, the literature descends into open Lean Industry-type boosterism and marketing – one piece insists that the "implementation of more complex lean initiatives in the public sector of the economy is critical for quality improvement and *survival*" (Comm and Mathaisel 2000, 118; emphasis added). Equally bold are Price *et al* (2011, 1): "the fight against terrorism, national security issues, broad-scale natural disasters, public health scares, rising healthcare costs, and drastic shifts in business sectors and economics. At the same time that more is required of governments, budget pressures have increased." Elsewhere, Lean experts ensure executives and managers that Lean will solve the labour issues that result from austerity: "To be sure, some countries bar

layoffs of public-sector workers. In other cases, union contracts make layoffs difficult. Even so, increasing operational effectiveness can free employees from one part of an organization to deliver new or better services in other areas, within existing budgets and without layoffs" (Bhatia and Drew 2006).

After thirty years of neoliberal rationality changing and transforming social, political and economic formations, it is not difficult to see how Lean and the Lean Industry eventually represented themselves as logical fits. After a generation of bureaucracies being problematized as ineffective, inefficient and bloated, there seems few more obvious places where the solutions of Lean can be introduced to address problems. I argue that there are two basic tenets of neoliberal rationalities that make Lean a "good fit" for state institutions. First is perhaps the most obvious due to the name of the management approach itself: Lean management is supposedly "lean." Whatever disagreements exist between different schools and camps and individuals within the Lean industry, the one thing that they all agree one is that Lean's central tenet is to reduce waste, or *muda*. The drive to reduce waste is found in essentially every important Lean "text" – from Ohno (1992) to *The Machine that Changed the World* (Womack *et al* 1990) to *Lean Thinking* (Womack and Jones 1996). Meanwhile, the cycles of problematizing bureaucracies underwrite the ascendance of the claim that bureaucracies are "full of waste," as I will describe in more detail in Chapters 5 and 6. Lean offers states the ability to "find efficiencies" and to "do more with less," which are, as I will explore in more detail in the last half of Chapter 5, fundamental to the waves of neoliberal reforms that have been introduced into public bureaucracies over the past thirty-five years. Bureaucracies, with their capacity to conduct their work sabotaged by previous neoliberal reforms and widely understood to *still* be wasteful despite those previous reforms, are ripe fruit for the Lean Industry.

Relatedly, neoliberal rationalities privilege the practices of the "private sector" as the solution to the wastes of government. If the implementation of New Public Management demonstrated anything, it is that those practices ostensibly utilized in private enterprise – competition, benchmarking, etc. – provide an attractive solution for governments seeking to do their business "differently." That the practices espoused by the Lean Industry are derived from successful corporate and industrial firms demonstrates their utility. If it is good enough for large, successful corporate entities like Toyota, Boeing, and Caterpillar, surely it is good enough for "big government." From a neoliberal perspective, Lean is inherently *better* than any approach, method or strategy developed and deployed within the state simply by the nature of its origins in the private sector. This normative claim works alongside processes of expertise and specialization that strip practices and knowledge of their practice in an clear example of how economic logics begin to colonize the social and political, as described by Brown: "Productivity, cost effectiveness, or consumer satisfaction are understood to inhere in practices with little respect to what is being produced, generated, or delivered. This permits private-sector practices to move readily into the public sector; it allows, for example, educational or health care institutions to be transformed by practices developed in the airline or computer industry" (Brown 2015, 137).

3.7. Conclusion

The trajectory by which Lean travelled from the shop floors of Toyota's factories to public sector organizations is one best understood as the global construction and mobilization of a form of expertise. Derived from techniques developed by Toyota to produce cars with greater flexibility and less waste than their American counterparts, "Lean" emerged in the 1980s as a translation of those practices. Alarmed that corporate America was losing ground to its surging

Japanese counterparts, researchers and industry insiders sought answers, ultimately attempting to emulate Japanese industry through the deployment of practices such as those found in Lean. From that original translation emerged an enormous, complex, shifting series of networks of expertise that I label the Lean Industry. Inhabited by an interdisciplinary and varied set of experts, the Lean Industry seeks to hone knowledge and expertise of Lean, often through internal debates and competition, and introduce it to an ever-growing number and type of organizations and outlets.

Understanding the Lean Industry is, then, vitally important for understanding how Lean has been introduced into public bureaucracies. If neoliberalization is the process by which political rationalities are made tangible through the assembling of the discourses and technologies of government, then it is important to understand the processes by which that assemblage-building takes place. To begin discussing Lean in state institutions without first understanding the Lean Industry would risk misunderstanding or oversimplifying the process by which Lean eventually emerged in public bureaucracies. Neither Lean nor the Lean Industry are *inherently* neoliberal. The Toyota Production System was developed in the middle of the twentieth century, the product of mid-century industrial engineers within the political-economic context of state-led development. Its genesis had little to do with the theories of neoclassical economists, nor with the ascension of neoliberal rationalities in the 1980s. That it found its way to the public sector is a testimony to the repurposing nature of neoliberal assemblage-building. In the next two chapters, I turn my attention to the history of bureaucratic shapeshifting in Canada before examining how these two different stories of Lean and public bureaucracies intersected in Chapters 6 and 7.

- CHAPTER 4 -
The Shifting Landscape of Historical Bureaucracies in Canada

4.1. Introduction

Fully exploring how technologies such as Lean have been introduced into neoliberal bureaucratic assemblages requires understanding the trajectory that Canadian public bureaucracies have taken, both before and after the ascendance of neoliberalism. In this chapter, I demonstrate how public bureaucracies in Canada shapeshifted throughout their first century, morphing and reconstituting themselves through the deployment of new and renewed technologies according to the normative and discursive formations that align with shifting political rationalities. Setting the stage for an examination of neoliberalizing bureaucracies in chapters 5, 6, and 7, I use this chapter to survey the history of the Canadian federal public service throughout the nation-building period and the Keynesian welfarist period, examining the logics that underwrote their shifting bureaucratic forms. In doing so, I seek to understand how bureaucracies were understood, what they were intended to do, and how that manifested itself through institutional arrangements. I answer the call of Stephen Collier (2017), who challenges critical scholars to move past a tendency to oversimplify comparisons between neoliberal governance and previous political rationalities. Collier argues that current critical scholars critique neoliberalism's reliance on technical forms of expertise while ignoring the fact that neoliberal thinkers in the 1970s such as Ostrom (1974; 1991) made similar critiques of welfarist bureaucracy. In doing so, Collier brings attention to the potential risk that critical work can romanticize previous bureaucratic forms, framing them as more responsive to social and public goals than more recent, neoliberal forms of bureaucracy. I seek to avoid this analytical trap by rejecting simplistic descriptions of bureaucratic forms, ensuring that I take into account the

nuances and complexity associated with these rationalities, programmes and technologies that render them tangible, and the blurriness of the boundaries that exist between them.

In this chapter I demonstrate that throughout the Canadian state's first hundred years, Canadian bureaucracies were shaped by the understanding that they represented a distinct sphere of knowledge and practice, governed by rules and logics of their own and separate from other spheres. During the early nation-building period, this was reflected in the pursuit of a patronage-free, merit-based public service, free from the messy passions of partisan politics, that could implement the myriad of nation-building technologies of the time. As such, Royal Commissions reflected a pressing need to eliminate patronage, a hallmark of modern statecraft, and encourage the recruitment of "ideal" bureaucrats - young, healthy, morally upstanding men who could competently administer the First National Policy. A combination of the First National Policy largely meeting its nation-building purposes (Smiley 1975, 44) and political unrest accompanying the World Wars and the Great Depression, however, brought the *laissez-faire* rationality underwriting the nation-building period into question. After a decade of political contestation, a new rationality emerged with a new vision of an expanded state and, accordingly, an expanded bureaucracy. Underwritten by logics of solidarity and social citizenship, the emergent rationality, Keynesian welfarism, retained the concept of a *public* service separate from electoral politics, but incorporated into new discursive components. This sphere could utilize different forms of expertise, such as social science, to ensure basic levels of welfare for Canadian citizens. And, while the nation-building period's priority was separating bureaucracies and their operations from the immoral messiness of electoral politics, in the Keynesian welfarist period, experts emphasized the distinction between public bureaucracies and private enterprise. This is not to say, however, that there were not calls for government to "operate more like business," a

claim that would eventually become central to the neoliberalization of bureaucracies through

projects such as the New Public Management-based Public Service 2000 (PS2000). The

difference was that these claims were marginalized at the time, set aside from the orthodox belief

that the state and its bureaucratic apparatus had roles that were both *different* from business and

the private sector and more encompassing in that it covered management of the entire economy

versus private enterprise's narrow goals of profit-seeking. The disappearance of distinction

became a central feature of the end of Keynesian welfarism and the emergence of neoliberal

rationality.

4.2. *Laissez Faire,* Nation-Building, and the Emergence of the Canadian Public Bureaucracy

Global *laissez-faire* served as the backdrop for the Canadian state's formation. As a

political rationality, *laissez-faire* was predicated, at least on its face, on the "free market"

operating with limited interference by the state. Foucault described *laissez-faire* as being

promoted by those in the nineteenth century who argued that the state should be guided "by

reason, knowledge, and truth to accept the principle of freedom of economic agents" (Foucault,

2007: 284–5). As such, *laissez-faire* ostensibly constructed a binary between the state and the

"market," which operated according to its own laws as prescribed by the nascent science of

economics. Political economists have long made it clear, however, that the concept of "the free

market" associated with *laissez-faire* required heavy state intervention to render it tangible,

especially in newly-formed settler-colonial states. Most famously, Karl Polanyi (2001)

demonstrated the extent to which "the market" as a discrete entity, separate from society or state,

is a relatively recent concept. According to Polanyi, the "free market" was an arbitrary

construct, one that required deliberate intervention by the state to both function and *exist*. More

specifically, he spoke about the importance of state intervention to bring *laissez-faire* into existence:

> There was nothing natural about laissez-faire; free markets could never have come into being merely by allowing things to take their course. Just as cotton manufacturers - the leading free trade industry - were created by the help of protective tariffs, export bounties, and indirect wage subsidies, laissez faire itself was enforced by the state. (Polanyi 2001, 145)

Despite the normative undercurrents of *laissez-faire* rationality, which supposedly privileged the "market" as being the driving force of prosperity, it was a project that required the state to create and maintain economic formations.[37] The rationality of *laissez-faire* was not predicated on the belief that the economy would operate on its own as much as the understanding that the role of the state was to enable the construction of an economy based on rules, captured by classical liberal economists of the time.

The emergence of the Canadian state demonstrated the extent to which the production of an economic arrangement founded on the principles of *laissez-faire* rationality required state intervention. There were, in effect, two sets of problems that required state-led solutions. The first was a breakdown in British North America's place in the British colonial and international political economies. With their preferential trade treatment by the United Kingdom no longer available, the colonies of British North America looked to the United States for a closer trade relationship. After some short lived success, it became clear that the United States would rather expand its own territorial boundaries rather than accept free trade with its colonial neighbours (Rowell-Sirois 1940, 20).[38] Without a free-trade relationship with an economic centre, "financial

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[37] Mitchell goes further, arguing that even the phrase "the economy" did not appear until the twentieth century, arguing that it "seems to have taken at least two decades, from the mid-1930s to the mid-1950s, for the economy to come to be understood as a self-evident totality" (Mitchell 1998, 88). The proliferation and growth of the term parallels, not coincidentally, the emergence and growth of economics as an academic discipline separate from other social sciences.

[38] Style guidelines indicate that Royal Commissions should be cited by the institution that publishes the report (e.g., "[Canada 1940, 20]" for this citation). Because the following two chapters make such extensive use of Royal

and economic interests in the St. Lawrence area" sought to develop an east-west economic and political union in which a "new frontier" would present investment opportunities in the form of "large-scale settlement and immigration" (Fowke 1952, 275). The result was a crisis in which, writes Brodie, the colonial elite were forced to search "'gropingly' for a new development strategy to meet the new contingencies forced upon them by Britain's precipitous shift to free trade" (Brodie 1990, 92).

The second problem was related to Canada's status as a settler-colonial project, which only reinforced the need for state intervention. Speaking about the "logic of elimination" inherent to settler-colonialism, Patrick Wolfe explains that "the primary motive for elimination is not race (or religion, ethnicity, grade of civilization, etc.) but access to territory. Territoriality is settler colonialism's specific, irreducible element" (Wolfe 2006, 388). Similarly, Dhillion suggests that the project of colonialists is to create a new social and political order with the ultimate aim of securing a permanent hold on specific, conquered locales (Dhillon 2017, 17). As Wolfe so succinctly puts it, "settler colonialism destroys to replace" (Wolfe 2006, 388). The quest to replicate European colonial space, complete with not only the institutions of governance but also those gendered (Stasiulis and Jhappan 1995; Simpson 2014, ch 6) and racialized (Monaghan 2013) components of colonial identity and reinforced through affective "settler structures of feeling" (Rifkin 2011; Mackey 2014) required the removal of those who were in place and the overlaying of colonial space on top of Indigenous spaces. After having been crucial as strategic allies from contact up to and including the War of 1812, the nations and peoples who

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Commissions and similar inquiry reports, I am using the Commissioners name in the in-text citations. In the bibliography, they are listed under "Canada" with the colloquial name [e.g., "The Rowell-Sirois Commission] in brackets.

existed in what would become Canada had, in other words, become a problem in need of a solution.

The solution to these interrelated problems took the form of a set of technologies of governance that simultaneously displaced, dispossessed and removed those standing in the way of the Canadian project's territorial requirements while simultaneously putting in place a political and economic structure that would replace them. These programmes and technologies, what Brodie (1990; 1997) calls the *First* National Policy, included a national railway to move people and goods on an East-West axis, settlement of the west with a new crop of European immigrants to provide both wheat for export and a market for goods manufactured in Central Canada, a tariff to dissuade those new farmers from purchasing cheaper goods from the United States, and a programme of treaty-making and state-sponsored policies of colonial displacement. The First National Policy, as both Fowke (1952) and Brodie (1990) describe it, represented a clear attempt to deliberately construct an east-west market economy in a way that fit the profile of *laissez-faire* described by Polanyi.

From these major pillars to more specific programs such as the postal service to the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) and the sprawling infrastructure needed to enforce the *Indian Act* and keep Indigenous peoples contained to the reserves designed to make way for newly-arriving Western settlers, the development of the Canadian state was comprised of a series of deliberate decisions and actions taken by invested actors. The seemingly contradictory nature of the *laissez-faire* rationality in Canada was captured by Hodgetts, who wryly observed that "merchants and businessmen like John Young and Hamilton Merritt, both believers in *laissez faire*, were the strongest supporters of the canal-building" and that bureaucrats of the day were frequently the recipients of "demands from the self-reliant yeomen that the Government build a

road, a bridge, a gaol, timber slides, or dredge a harbour and provide new postal services"
(Hodgetts 1952, 420). Indeed, while the abstract, normative and discursive foundations of
laissez faire emphasized limited government and the ability of the market to operate freely,
Canada's nation-building period demonstrated the extraordinary extent to which the state was
often required in order to produce both the market and the conditions by which it could operate
"freely."

Table 4.1. Federal Departments and Budgets Allocations 1887

Department	Budget (Estimates)	% of Budget
Agriculture	$47,705	6.68
Customs	$33,109	4.63
Finance	$53,067	7.43
Indian Affairs	$36,915	5.17
Interior	$119,875	16.78
Justice	$23,165	3.24
Marine and Fisheries	$38,212	5.35
Militia and Defence	$41,200	5.77
Post Office	$163,365	22.90
Privy Council Office	$22,077	3.09
Public Works	$42,020	5.88
Railways and Canals	$47,447	6.64
Secretary of State of Canada	$45,980	6.44

The institutional infrastructure of the time demonstrated the emphasis the young Canadian state had put on solving these problems of nation-building. In the years following Confederation, the federal public service included a handful of departments that reflected the expectations of the state, as shown in Table 4.1. There were relatively few federal departments, and the federal budget was dominated by those departments devoted to nation-building. The Post Office enjoyed the largest share of the federal budget allocation, reflecting the enormous importance to the project of developing a method of intranational communication, demonstrating the extent to which the flow of information was required for the construction of a political and economic entity. The only other department of the time that had a significant proportion of the federal budget, the Department of Interior, was responsible for much of the logistics of colonization. In that year's annual report, the Deputy Minister of the Interior reported on business "from Winnipeg to New Westminster" (Canada 1887a, 7-ix). The Deputy Minister provided figures that represented the number of settlers travelling to the new West, the number of homesteads that had been established, and the wheat crop, which was still recovering in the Prince Albert area due to "the unfortunate half-breed and Indian outbreak on the South Saskatchewan," (Canada 1887a, 7-xvii) referring to the Northwest Rebellion. This colonial project was aided, of course, by the Department of Indian Affairs which, that same year, reported to its Minister that the "interruption" of the Northwest Rebellion had been "happily succeeded by a season of tranquility and subordination on the part of the misled and deluded Indians" (Canada 1887b, 6-ix). That the Department of Indian Affairs shared an additional five percent of the federal budget meant that departments responsible for the project of displacement and settlement collectively rivalled that of the post-office in the early decades of the Canadian state. Nation-building and colonialism are expensive business.

With the nascent Canadian state busy with nation-building and constructing the infrastructure for an east-west union, increasing attention was paid to ensuring that there was an institutional infrastructure that could implement priorities, captured in no fewer than eight Royal Commissions between 1869 and 1913. For these commissions, political patronage was the primary issue to address. The practice of rewarding party stalwarts and allies with government positions had been widely-accepted, a prize to be claimed by successful political parties. Ken Rasmussen (1994) explains the extent to which patronage was both established and accepted, "a natural part of the social structure which was based, above all else, on the notion of privileges rather than of equal rights … Patronage was merely one of the privileges that the elite had at its disposal to counter the rise of democratic forces" (Rasmussen 1994, 46), to the extent that the limited enfranchisement of the time could be called "democratic forces." Prime Minister Macdonald had, for example, criticized Ontario's premier, John Sandfield Macdonald, for deploying too thrifty a budget when he could have expanded government in order to dole out more jobs to party allies (Lewis 2003, 24). Elsewhere, a party leader of the time argued that "we must support our supporters" (quoted in Dawson 1929, 32). Political patronage was considered an acceptable, inevitable part of nineteenth century governance.

As expectations of the role of the state in nation-building grew however, attitudes towards a bureaucracy that was characterized by patronage appointments of non-meritorious public servants changed. Before the grand goals and projects of the First National Policy, the patronage system was adequate because the role of the state in British North America was so limited. As such, "honesty, ordinary ability, and a fair amount of common sense were the only essential attributes of a civil servant" (Dawson and Ward 1970, 250). The implementation of the First National Policy, however, required a more robust and competent state apparatus than could

be provided by a bureaucracy populated with public servants hired based on political loyalties rather than merit or ability. As expectations placed on the state to implement the National Policy increased, "ordinary ability" was no longer sufficient and those commissioners assigned to studying the civil service were damning in their evaluation of the patronage that existed in the Canadian bureaucracy. Patronage, the Langdon Commission reported, led to a large number of low-ranking bureaucrats with high salaries and "a tendency to fill the service with second rate men" (Langdon 1869, 5). The result, commissions argued, was an ineffective, dysfunctional organization that was seemingly beyond hope. The McInnes Commission (1881) reported that "there exists in the mind of the public a very general belief that the Civil Service is defective and inefficient" due to patronage, which was believed to be "difficult and almost impracticable" to eliminate (McInnes 1881, 44). Patronage, the story went, was a scourge that would forever sabotage the ability of the state to efficiently conduct its business.

While efficiency was paramount for Royal Commissions of the time - the term appears in the mandate of four Commissions identified in Chapter 2 - it was used in a way that differs from contemporary versions of neoliberal "efficiency." Efficiency in the nation-building period, rather, was synonymous with the studious implementation of state priorities that could only be delivered by healthy and *moral* public servants. Indeed, efficiency in these early Royal Commissions was inseparable from a moral imperative surrounding the elimination of patronage that was being articulated in the politics of the day. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a series of scandals ensured that corruption and character remained important political issues, framing partisans as unethical and unscrupulous agents, uninterested in a broader public interest or public good. The 1874 election was centred largely on the so-called "Pacific Scandal." In 1873, Liberals accused Conservative John A. Macdonald of taking bribes to

facilitate the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad. Despite Macdonald's insistence that

the accusations were unfounded, an investigation found them credible, leading to Macdonald and

the Conservatives to resigning and an 1874 election that centred largely on the scandal. Liberal

Leader Alexander Mackenzie campaigned to address corruption, swearing to "elevate the

standard of public morality … and to conduct public affairs upon principles of which honest men

can approve, and by practices which will bear the light of day" (Quoted in Beck 1968, 23),

offering a set of reforms including election laws, secret ballots, and the creation of the Supreme

Court to address corruption. Corruption was a theme again in 1890, when two Conservative

MPs, Thomas McGreevy and Hector Langevin, were revealed to have taken bribes in exchange

for lucrative public work contracts (Beck 1968, 61). Similar themes emerged between 1906 and

1908:

> Broadly speaking, the government was accused of gross abuses in the practice of
> patronage: of rewarding its friends and sacrificing the public interest in the purchase of
> supplies, the sale of public lands, and the award of public franchises. There were also
> charges of election frauds in Brockville and West Huron. Angry scenes took place in
> parliament because the government declined an investigation whenever the opposition
> embarked on a fishing expedition. (Beck 1968, 109-110)

With scandals marring the reputation of partisan activities, Royal Commissions found,

the presence of such activities within the public service inherited their morally repugnant

reputation. The McInnes Commission stated that patronage had had "evil effects" and a "baneful

influence" (McInnes 1881, 41). The stark language used by commissioners mirrored the grave

concern expressed by critics of the day. LeSeur, for example, called an arrangement in which

"the powers of government should be locally exercised by representatives of the dominant party"

for the benefit of that party a "serious corruption of that true democratic principle" (LeSeur 1894,

199). The moral deficiency of patronage, commissions argued, could be addressed through a

merit-based system to reward moral character. The McInnes Commission advised that

government should seek to increase the number of public servants who were of good "age, health, and moral character" (McInnes 1881, 44). The Courtney Commission (1908) mirrored the sentiment, advocating for screening candidates for "age, health, and moral conduct" (Courtney 1908, 9).[39] The ideal bureaucrat was one of outstanding moral character, in good health, who is both satisfied and stable in his position: "when a young man of great efficiency, who gives indication of force of character, appears it is surely to the advantage of the country that it should get the full benefit of his capacity as soon as possible" (McInnis 1908, 45). Commissions argued that these ideal public servants, young, male, healthy and of the "right" moral character could devote their "energies and time" to "systematically and conscientiously to the discharge of their duties" (Hague 1892, xxviii). Commissioners accordingly recommended the deployment of entrance exams that would simultaneously test both their administrative competency and moral character. "All persons permanently in the employment of the Government," reads the second report of the Langton commission, should "be subjected to the examination" (Langton 1869b, 4). The Courtney Commission, meanwhile, recommended that the civil service should require that "three certificates as to character … be submitted to the Board at the time of examination" to ensure that only upright young men made the cut" (Courtney 1908, 11).

The emphasis that commissions put on the virtue of a merit-based system and, accordingly, the moral imperative of eliminating patronage, demonstrates the emergence of the

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[39] Commissioners of the day took the question of age very seriously. The Murray Commission, for example, wrote that the "limits of age for appointments are too wide. If a man is to be properly trained in the Civil Service, he should enter it as soon as possible after he has completed his education. Under present conditions the maximum limit of age is 35. Men who come in after 25 have probably attempted   some other occupation and failed in it; and there is, moreover, great inconvenience in having officials of 30 and upwards working side by side with younger men and performing duties of an elementary character" (Murray 1913, 14). This mirrored the opinion of the Hague commission eleven years prior, which argued that the limit of 35 was too high, and required lowering to 25 (Hague 1892, xxiii).

bureaucracy as a vocation, space, and form of knowledge separate from those of electoral politics. In this, discourses surrounding bureaucracies and the creation of a competent and scientific form of bureaucratic expertise mirrored a process taking place elsewhere, in which an increasing number of professions and spheres of expertise were developing and crystalized around new forms of scientific knowledge. By the time the Canadian state had emerged, the values of empiricism present in the enlightenment had two centuries to crystalize and rational, scientific approaches were emerging to perfect all sorts of activities. Frederick Taylor (1896; 1911) was experimenting with practices on shop floors to maximize efficiency in what became known as scientific management. Food companies were promoting "scientific" approaches to domestic labour, such as the use of gelatin to "perfect" the salad (Shapiro 1986). And, of course, Weber (1978) was observing the organization of the Prussian military and theorizing that bureaucracy was the most advanced, rationalized form of organizing and conducting large-scale activities. Royal Commissions would adopt and deploy this logic that public administration could, and should, be organized as a self-contained, neutral and scientific approach to conducting the business of the state, separated from the unsavoury passions of electoral politics.

Reinforcing this distinction, commissions called for a greater set of responsibilities for the public service, allowing for less political interference by Ministers or partisans. The Murray Commission, for instance, argued that the "business of a Minister is not to administer, but to direct policy" and as such, ministers "should be relieved as far as possible of all purely administrative work" (Murray 1913, 9). The devolution of responsibilities required, though, a more robust institutional structure for the civil service, one that more closely resembled the hierarchical and permanent structure as described by Weber (1978). Multiple commissions in the period discussed issues such as classification of both salary and responsibility, going so far as

to recommend specific levels of compensation for specific classifications (e.g., McInnis 1882, 44; Langton 1869) or commenting on the specific practices in, and operations of, departments and projects (e.g., Hague 1892; Morine 1913).

During the nation-building period of the Canadian state's early history, then, the quest for a technical, administrative expertise was first characterized by the emergence of the very possibility of such a form of expertise. It included the separation of the professional, dutiful and ethical implementation of the state's business from the corrupt business of partisanship. As Rasmussen and Juillet argue, conceptualizations of merit at the time were based not only on competency as measured by efficiency or effectiveness but also on personal character. "The original meaning of merit implied a form of subjective responsibility, loyalty and conscience for the public good, and carried with it a sanctified halo" and "very large expectations as to what it would accomplish when it was enshrined as the principle used as the basis for public service" (Rasmussen and Juillet 2009, 75-76). That Royal Commissions assigned moral qualities to the eradication of patronage is, then, fitting. Discourses of competence, efficiency, and ethical character appeared together because they were synonymous. Viewed through a governmentality lens, this is hardly surprising. Moral claims are, indeed, central components to political rationalities, helping to define how political subjects conceptualize the world (Miller and Rose 1992, 179).

Emerging rationalities and their corresponding programmes and technologies are rarely introduced without resistance from the existing order, however. The importance of eliminating patronage notwithstanding, convincing partisans to abandon a lucrative system of rewarding partisan loyalty was a difficult task. Despite the overwhelming consensus of the Royal Commissions of the time that the elimination of patronage from the federal public service was

necessary for the Government of Canada to pursue its policy objectives, the practice remained stubbornly difficult to eradicate, a testament to the friction that existing practices produce when those that would replace them appear. Indeed, it was not until after the First World War that the formal patronage system was effectively abolished. Following the Courtney Commission's 1907 report, reforms in 1908 resulted in the introduction of the Civil Service Commission (predecessor to the modern Public Service Commission), an entrance exam, and prohibition on political activity. Such reforms seemingly addressed patronage within the Ottawa-based Inside Service, seeking both to ensure that public servants were competent as well as drawing a clearer distinction between the serious work of nation-building and the sullied, immoral messiness of politics. Loopholes surrounding classification, appointments, and temporary staff, however, "prevented durable reforms" (Civil Service Commission of Canada 1958, 266) and led to further frustration.

It was nearly a decade before the federal government took the steps necessary to more thoroughly eliminate patronage. Facing a hostile public during the Conscription Crisis of 1917, Prime Minister Robert Borden called an election and made elimination of patronage in the Outside Service (i.e., those civil servants, such as Indian Agents, posted outside of Ottawa) an important component of his platform. In 1918, the government introduced another set of reforms that sought to more completely eliminate patronage from the federal public service (Roberts 1996, 42). The *Civil Service Act* of 1918 retained many features of its predecessor but expanded the merit system beyond the Ottawa-based Inside Service (i.e., the central civil service) and gave a great deal more power to the Civil Service Commission, a degree of centralization that later became the subject of its own problematization. This centralization, argues Roberts (1996), was largely due to the influence of a set of Chicago-based management consultants. Basing their

work on previous experience in introducing reforms into American cities, they made claims to

expertise over a "scientific" form of administration that was even further from the realm of

politics than were civil servants, and were clearly influenced by the increasingly popular

scientific management movement (Roberts 1996, 24). Against the wishes of senior public

servants (Roberts 1996, 47-61), the consultants were trusted with overseeing the implementation

of the newly-centralized system.

With the emphasis on merit, greater responsibility delegated to public servants, and the

deployment of "scientific" approaches to administration as espoused by early management

consultants, it is thus clear that logics and practices of the late nation-building period reflected a

desire to move towards a greater professionalization and specialization on the part of the young

Canadian bureaucracy, one separate from the suspect realm of partisan politics. As Rasmussen

states, related "to the desire for a new source of legitimacy based on efficiency was an interest in

seeing the state function on the basis of a more rational, universal approach to policy problems in

lieu of the intense particularism associated with patronage" (Rasmussen 1994, 49). For their

part, Royal Commissions imagined a fully rationalized, technically-driven bureaucracy that more

closely resembled the ideal-type of bureaucracy being observed, theorized and advocated in

continental Europe (Weber 1978), the United States (Wilson 2006), and the United Kingdom[40]

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[40] The Northcote-Treveylan report, commissioned by the British government and released in 1853, was deeply influential for those pushing for merit-based reforms in Canada, and "referred to endlessly in Canadian debates over reform" in the nineteenth century (Rasmussen and Juillet 2009, 78). Indeed, the Northcote-Treveylan report mirrors its Canadian successors in its call for a merit-based bureaucracy, arguing that it was "highly necessary that the conditions which are common to all the public establishments, such as the preliminary testimonials of character and bodily health to be required from candidates for public employment, the examination into their intellectual attainments, and the regulation of the promotions, should be carefully considered, so as to obtain full security for the public that none but qualified persons will be appointed, and that they will afterwards have every practicable inducement to the active discharge of their duties" (Northcote-Treyvelen 1853, 3). Roberts (1996), however, brings attention to important differences in the reforms brought about by Northcote-Treyvelen and those implemented in Canada. In particular, he argues that the British reforms that focussed on bureaucratic organization were more decentralized than those in Canada. Indeed, the centralization that marked the Canadian reforms would later be problematized in the twentieth century, including by the Glassco Commission.

(Northcote-Treveylan 1853) at the turn of the twentieth century. Undoing the "evil" of patronage would, commissioners believed, allow Canada's public bureaucracy of the time to focus on developing the national political and economic union more efficiently than was possible with the large proportion of "second-rate" public servants who had obtained their jobs through patronage. By reforming the public service along lines of new concepts of merit and professionalization, officials sought to build the Canadian state's capacity to facilitate the construction of a national economic and political union as part of the broader nation-building project. More importantly for the discussion here, though, is the nation-building period's production of the public service as being a sphere, separate from partisanship, of a professional public service governed by its own rules and practices.

4.3. The Second National Policy and Building the Keynesian Welfare State

The social, political, and economic upheaval that accompanied the Great Depression and the Second World War brought whatever consensus there was surrounding the nation-building project and *laissez-faire* rationality into question. Though the state had a clear role to play in the production of the "market economy" that characterized the nation-building period, once that market economy was left to operate, it collapsed and brought *laissez-faire* into question around the world. The effects of this collapse were exacerbated by the inability of the limited state to address them. There had been little room in the nation-building period for the state to ensure any semblance of welfare for citizens or residents, which had previously been handled elsewhere, such as by charity or the church: "The previous doctrine of separate spheres could not be sustained in the face of economic collapse, staggering levels of unemployment and desperate social need—all of which surpassed the resources of families, churches and charities" (Brodie 1997a, 232). In the face of egregious social cleavages, political unrest "grew throughout the

1930s and into the early years of the 1940s. By the mid-1940s, the question was not whether

there would be a postwar social settlement but rather which federal party would negotiate it"

(Brodie 2008, 383). The political economic arrangement that underwrote the nation-building

period was itself problematized.

In Canada, this was perhaps most famously captured in the report presented by the Royal

Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, or the Rowell-Sirois Commission. The Rowell-

Sirois Commission was appointed in 1937 to conduct "a re-examination of the economic and

financial basis of Confederation and of the distribution of legislative powers in light of the

economic and social developments of the last seventy years" (Rowell-Sirois 1940, 13). Rowell-

Sirois captured a snapshot of the problematization of the nation-building period, critiquing its

underlying rationality for its conceptualization of the proper place of the state and its privileging

of an unregulated "free market."[41] More specifically, the Commissioners argued that *laissez-faire*

was outdated, a product of its time and circumstances:

> The role which governments were called upon to play was one peculiar to the conditions
> of the time. An individualistic outlook, which relies on the family as the unit of mutual
> welfare, is nourished in a pioneer society and people readily agree that governmental
> action should be confined to the narrowest possible limits. Accordingly, the principal
> functions of the state followed the prescription of Adam Smith. (Rowell-Sirois 1940, 37)

This consensus, the commission wrote, was no longer tenable. "Since 1867, there have been

sweeping economic and social changes and no less important changes in opinion as to the

appropriate functions of government, none of which could have been anticipated at the time [of

confederation]" (Rowell-Sirois 1940, 36). The Rowell-Sirois Commission report captures the

problematization of the economic inequality - delineated by both class and region – and

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[41] It is not without its critics, however. From a Marxist perspective (though deploying concepts more consistent
with elite theory), for example, Squires (2008) argues that the Rowell-Sirois Commission was an exercise in
constructing hegemony by acting "both as a tool for building a liberal 'consensus' and a filter for excluding, along
ideological and scientific lines, views that did not accord with the result" (Squires 2008, 160).

identifies such inequality as the outcome of Canadian economic development strategy within the broader context of global *laissez-faire*.

Similar logics were found in discussions of bureaucracies in Canada. The Beatty Commission's report, for example, is a testimony to the changing perspective of the proper role of the Canadian state in the 1920s and 1930s. Whereas the earlier commissions into Canada's civil service had expressed a tacit acceptance of a deeply limited role for the Canadian state, the Beatty Commission explicitly rejected such a perspective as out of date, calling *laissez faire* a "discarded doctrine" that rested on the "supposed impotence of government to undertake complex tasks of administration, even in respect of those matters which are the natural province of government" (Beatty 1930, 9). For the Beatty Commission, like the Rowell-Sirois Commission, a new era required a new configuration of the state, one that could address the problems identified with *laissez-faire*.

As the *laissez-faire* rationality dissipated and the era of nation-building ended, the logics and practices of a new rationality that envisioned a far greater role for the state in the lives of its citizens emerged. Increasingly, the belief that the state could regulate the market became increasingly acceptable, as were "the claims that economic activity should be collectively regulated in order to maximize collective welfare, that the state would provide social welfare for its citizens, and that state practices would be guided by a commitment to formal equality and impersonal procedures" (Brodie 1997, 232). In this, there are two distinct but related claims. The first, focussed on economic planning, was directly related to the emergence of Keynesian as a dominant economic logic. Keynes argued that fiscal policy should moderate the unstable nature of capitalism, and that, in times of a national economy's underperformance, the state's "responsibility is to use its policy tools to increase aggregate demand and restore employment"

and that these tools included running budget deficits through increased public spending and reduced taxes (Lewis 2003, 32). This Keynesian economic logic was paired with a new form of welfarism, rendered tangible through a growing constellation of programmes such as social insurance, medicare, and public education that sought to socialize responsibility and risk, all predicated on a type of social citizenship "fused with a state-orchestrated vision of an inclusive pan-Canadian nationalism" (Brodie 2002, 381). Given these two related-but-distinct logics, I refer to this rationality as Keynesian welfarism.

Claims that were consistent with the emerging rationality, as scholars have previously demonstrated, had been clearly articulated by the post-war period. Brodie (2002), for example, has documented increasing social claims in early twentieth-century speeches from the throne and government reports. Bradford (1999) meanwhile, has documented the various political movements in the form of "socialist workers and intellectuals, Progressive reformers, and agrarian populists" (Bradford 1999, 27). Royal Commissions reflected the emerging rationality. Rowell-Sirois, for example, mirrored the broader belief that the state should take a greater role in guaranteeing basic standards of living. The Commission's recommendations called for a greater intervention by the Canadian federal government to not only expand "as rapidly as possible, the national income which is woefully inadequate for the standards of well-being which Canadians have come to adopt" but also to ensure that that income is both "better distributed and a greater measure of social and economic security [provided] for those in low income groups" (Rowell-Sirois 1940 Book II, 9).

As Bradford (1999) and Lewis (2003) have written, in Canada this rationality expressed itself through two general forms, in broad agreement in their critique of *laissez-faire* but differing in their solutions to the ills of the previous period. "Social Keynesianism" offered an

alternative as conceptualized by a broad coalition of socialist workers, reformers, and farmers that centred upon "substantial overhaul of existing state structures to concentrate economic policy authority" to facilitate "progressive wealth distribution" (Bradford 1999, 27). Technocratic Keynesianism, meanwhile "did not view capitalism as fundamentally flawed … Instead of reform of capitalism or federalism, the Technocratic Keynesians argued that equilibrium could be restored through greatly improved data collection about the economy's overall behaviour and timely dissemination about the future to private and public sector decision-makers (Bradford 1999, 28). As Bradford argues, the fundamental difference between the two interpretations of the Keynesian rationality came down to the difference between a bureaucratic, expert-driven form of governance versus one that saw politics and political contestation as its primary vehicle for change. In short, while the tenets of both forms of this new Keynesian rationality spoke directly to the weaknesses of *laissez-faire*, drawing direct comparisons to the political, social and economic turmoil that had resulted in its dissolution, they differed in the extent to which they understood technical expertise to be central to the solution presented by the problematized former rationality.

According to both Bradford and Lewis, the competition between these two versions of Keynesian "embedded" liberalism was soundly won by the bureaucratically-focussed technocratic version. Perhaps unsurprisingly given Royal Commissions' nature of expert-driven problematization, Commissions in the twentieth century mirrored both the problematization of the previous rationality and the turn to a technocratic approach to rendering the discursive and normative foundation of Keynesianism tangible. Woven throughout the Beatty Commission's report, for example, is the understanding that the accepted and *expected* role of government had changed dramatically since Confederation, and since earlier royal commissions that examined

the organization and function of Canada's young civil service: "the tasks discharged by the Civil Service at the present time are very much greater and more complex than they were in 1913" (Beatty 1930, 9). The Gordon Commission (1946) similarly wrote that "with the increasing complexity of society there has been a steady growth in the activities and responsibilities of government which has imposed increasing demands upon the civil service and particularly upon its principal officials" (Gordon 1946, 11).

This was echoed again in the most well-known of the bureaucracy-focussed Royal Commissions, 1960's Royal Commission on Government Organization, or the Glassco Commission. The Glassco Commission had been appointed to "inquire into and report upon the organization and methods of operation of the departments and agencies of the government of Canada and to recommend the changes therein which they consider would best promote efficiency, economy and improved service in the dispatch of public business" (Glassco 1962, 19). Like the Beatty and Gordon Commissions before it, the Glassco Commission made it clear that *laissez-faire* was, from the vantage of hindsight, a failed rationality. More than that, however, Glassco made clear that *laissez-faire* was misunderstood: "the text-book version of *laissez-faire* government - 'the night watchman state' - has never existed. Confederation itself was conceived in large part as a means to economic development, and from the earlier days the Government of Canada has been continuously concerned with promoting the economic development of the country" (Glassco 1962, 38). Here, the Glassco Commissioners problematized *laissez-faire* not only for the normative assumptions typically associated with it - those centred upon a limited state and the efficacy of the "free market" - but also for the fallacy upon which these assumptions are predicated. The Glassco Commission understood that state

intervention had been, as political economists have identified, central to the realization of the Canadian state.

The Glassco Commission also documented the ways in which the institutional form of the Canadian public bureaucracy changed. Indeed, as the Glassco Commissioners had identified, the problematization of *laissez-faire* and the emergence of the discourses of the new welfarist rationality had come an enormous growth in the size and scope of the institutional structures of the Canadian bureaucracy. In the years and decades following WWII, the "federal government undertook a series of social welfare measures, including unemployment insurance, family allowances, health-care reforms, and a limited commitment to full employment. It also launched a series of macroeconomic demand-management policies, using fiscal and monetary tools" (MacDonald 1997, 176). From 1913 to 1960, the staff of the federal public service grew 900%, from 24,000 to 216,000, a far greater rate of growth than the population, which grew 250% in the same time period (Glassco 1960, 35)). To be sure, much of this growth was explained not only by the emergence of a new political rationality but also the necessities of two enormous war efforts. The size of the public service grew rapidly during each WWI and WWII, followed by a dramatic reduction in its size. The reduction after WWII was temporary, however, and as the public service began to adopt a greater number of activities, buoyed by the growing expectations of the state, the number of public servants grew accordingly. The Commissioners understood these statistical nuances, arguing that "the public service of Canada, as it exists today, must be recognized to be largely the product of the last two decades (1940-1960)" (Glassco 1960, 36).

Table 4.2. - Federal Departments and Budget Allocations, 1965

Department	Budget	% of budget
Agriculture	121,745,100.00	1.75%
Citizenship and	91,761,900.00	1.32%

Immigration		
Defence Production	92,279,320.00	1.33%
External Affairs	133,153,674.00	1.91%
Finance	1,712,638,700.00	24.59%
Fisheries	29,598,000.00	0.43%
Forestry	59,289,500.00	0.85%
Industry	31,024,600.00	0.45%
Justice	65,828,644.00	0.95%
Labour	150,171,100.00	2.16%
Mines and Technical Surveys	57,109,500.00	0.82%
National Defence	1,550,000,000.00	22.26%
National Health and Welfare	1,390,794,800.00	19.97%
National Revenue	92,046,200.00	1.32%
Northern Affairs and National Resources	97,781,900.00	1.40%
Post Office	221,320,000.00	3.18%
Privy Council Office	4,307,367.00	0.06%
Public Works	216,690,700.00	3.11%
Secretary of State of Canada	8,046,400.00	0.12%
Trade and Commerce	82,344,040.00	1.18%
Transport	296,251,500.00	4.25%
Unemployment Insurance	95,189,400.00	1.37%
Veterans Affairs	364,763,300.00	5.24%

Source: Parliament of Canada, *Estimates*, *1965-1966*

More importantly, the Glassco Commission identified that the public service was growing not only in size but also in scope, increasing the number of areas of social life in which it was intervening. Indeed, the size of the bureaucracy in terms of numbers was accompanied by

an expansion in the number and types of departments the federal government deployed at the time. While departments in the late nineteenth century had been limited to a relatively narrow set of practices, by 1965 there were twenty-three federal departments covering a much wider set of policy areas focussed on a much more comprehensive sample of human affairs. As Table 4.2 demonstrates, since Confederation, departments and agencies had multiplied, increasing from the small set of departments focussed on facilitating a new economic system in the nineteenth century to a much larger selection of organizations encompassing a dizzying array of responsibilities. In addition to many departments - Finance, Justice, the Post Office, etc. - that had been in place eighty years earlier, a number of new departments such as National Health and Welfare and Labour pointed to a different set of priorities for the Canadian state.

Budget allocations also demonstrated the extent to which the role of the state differed in the welfarist period compared to the nation-building era. Whereas budget allocations in 1887 had focussed primarily on nation building, with the Post Office and departments responsible for establishing the territorial components of the Canadian state enjoying the largest budget allocations, by 1965 the priorities of the federal government had changed dramatically. Three departments - Finance, National Defence, and National Health and Welfare - made up over sixty-five percent of the entire federal budget. The large allocation earmarked for National Defence is not surprising, given both the residual effects of the WWII effort and that this period represented the height of the Cold War. The allocations for Finance and National Welfare, however, are also telling. National Health and Welfare is a relatively self-explanatory title for the department, which was responsible for the provision of health and social wellness services. Indeed, its budget allocation for 1965 included over one billion for health services, both in direct services and transfers to provinces, as well as over $750 million for the provision of welfare programs

such as family allowances, youth, allowances, old age allowances, and some payments to citizens with disabilities. More money for such programs was funneled through the Department of Finance. While the majority of Finance's budget (over $1 billion) was in place to service the national public debt, an additional $466 million represented payments, either as cash grants or in cost sharing arrangements through programs such as the *Established Programs Act,* to the provinces for delivery of their own programs not captured in other departments' budget lines. The *Canada Assistance Act*, another program for transfers between the federal and provincial governments, came into effect the next year. The infrastructure of the Canadian state, in short, demonstrated the enormous change in the role of the state. Reflecting the tenets of welfarism, the bureaucratic structure of the Government of Canada was organized to deliver programs to ensure a basic standard of living for its citizens.

Other changes were more nuanced than budget figures could demonstrate. The role of the Department of Finance, for example, had contorted in ways that corresponded to the Keynesian approach to economic and fiscal management. In the nation-building era, Finance had been little more than a book-keeping and auditing office (Bryce 1986, 1-21). Indeed, as Bryce (1986) has written, the department had essentially no role in the preparation of budgets, giving "cursory" approval to estimates developed within line departments (Bryce 1986, 14). Even the outbreak of the First World War resulted in growth only in terms of clerks responsible for tracking the enormous number of war bonds being issued (Bryce 1986, 16-21). In the setting of the nation-building period, the role of the Department of Finance reflected the state's narrow role. There was, Bryce explains, no emphasis on economic expertise (Bryce 1986, 11). Clerks and officers of the department were there to monitor the flow of funds flowing into and out of the government's account. This, of course, changed dramatically as the role of the state changed.

Keynes, Bradford reminds us, "saw public finance as no mere bookkeeping exercise" (Bradford 1999, 236). As such, the emergence of Keynesian welfarism, complete with not only a commitment to social programs but a set of macroeconomic tools meant to dull the jagged edges of capitalism, meant a new role for Finance. As Bradford (1999) and Mahon (1977) have written, during the Keynesian welfarist period, the Department of Finance became a centrally-featured institution within the federal bureaucratic structure, a node for Keynesian ideas working alongside the Bank of Canada and, under minister C.D. Howe, the Department of Industry in the state's project of economic planning (Bradford 1999, 237-239; Mahone 1977, 178-180). As the scope of the state's activities and responsibilities grew to reflect Keynesian rationality, its bureaucracy both grew and shapeshifted to reflect the new consensus.

The growing scope of state activities was neither lost on the Glassco Commission nor welcomed by it. Commissioners recognized that an expanded role for the state meant additional pressure, expectations, and complexity. Belying the commissioners' own normative judgements of the state's expanding role, their report lists an expansive list of practices now deployed by the state:

> But from the relatively simple beginnings in the nineteenth century, the government has become progressively more involved in an increasingly complex economy - promoting, supporting, protecting, regulating and controlling by a growing variety of means, direct and indirect, general and specific. More and more it has had to inform itself in detail of the condition and prospects of all segments of the economy, to assess the impact of government programmes and plans on each segment, and to measure and adjust the increasingly complex interplay of its policies and programmes. The list is now virtually endless: fiscal and monetary policy, the customs tariff, sales and excise taxes, the income tax structure, transportation policies and services, subsidies, patent and copyright laws, research programmes, the regulation of standards of quality, restrictive trade practices regulation, the promotion of foreign sales and domestic consumption, export credits and guarantees, and many others. Willy-nilly, government has become the great regulator of Canadian economic life. (Glassco 1960, 37-38)

The Glassco Commission understood that expectations of the state had changed dramatically since the nation-building era. It was no longer politically acceptable for the state to limit itself to the sort of economic development that characterized its first fifty years. Regardless of the commissioners' derisive observation about the "willy-nilliness" of the expansion of the state's practices, they recognized that the broader normative understandings of what the state should do had changed, and bureaucracy would need to adapt accordingly.

As what was expected of the state changed, so too did forms of expertise that were valued and recruited in order to deploy the growing set of technologies that it utilized. With the grand expansion of the Canadian state during the mid-twentieth century came a new ideal type of bureaucrat. The ideal *laissez faire* bureaucrat had been a young, healthy man with sound judgement and moral character who would dutifully fulfill the limited number of operations expected of the state at the time with little in the way of specialized, subject-matter specific, or technical expertise. The expanding realm of state intervention during the welfarist period, however, required significantly more specialized forms of expertise.   Economists were an increasingly common presence in the Department of Finance and other departments, moving freely between jobs in government and academia (Bradford 1999b, 237). Political scientists trained in a rapidly growing number of Political Science departments, meanwhile, were common in other central agencies such as the Privy Council. Writing in 1959, Heeney described the shifting conceptualization of what a public service resembled:

> Today's civil servant, though he must still administer statutes, has many other jobs to do. He forecasts the weather; he develops new strains of rustless wheat; he observes and photographs sputniks; he blows up Ripple Rock. You will find the civil servant, indeed, side by side with his fellow citizens in nearly every area of endeavour and accomplishment (Heeney 1959, 2).

The expansion in the types of practices and forms of expertise deployed by the state was not lost on the Glassco Commission, who noted that the "public service of Canada employs a large and growing professional group - lawyers, scientists, engineers, medical doctors, accountants, teachers, nurses, economists, statisticians, librarians, and others. It includes, too, an even larger technical group and a sizeable establishment of managerial, accounting and other administrative personnel" (Glassco 1960c, 252). This expansion was not unique to Canada. Indeed, critical scholars have documented extensively the role played by technical expertise within the Keynesian welfare rationality. With the emergence of Welfarism came the problematization of a wide range of "social problems" such as poverty and inequality. As such problems materialized, so too did new forms of expertise focussed on finding solutions, including "public health, sociology, welfare economics, social administration, social work and social policy" (Dean 2010, 153-155). "In turn," writes Larner, "the knowledge produced by these disciplinary experts [becomes] closely linked with the activities of professionals and bureaucrats located in government departments, giving rise to a particular institutional spaces such as schools, courts, and hospitals" (Larner 2002, 653). A proliferation of professional experts thus emerged, seeking to better understand the demographics and characteristics of a population in order to "manage" them on behalf of a state form that was now understood to be responsible for alleviating a growing set of problems. The introduction of these forms of expertise into the bureaucracy resembles what Clarke and Newman (1997), writing in the British context, describes as the introduction of professionalism into bureaucracy. The competencies of public administration developed during the nation-building period were not, Clarke and Newman argue, sufficient to achieve the goals of the welfare state. They instead "needed to be tempered by forms of 'expertise' which were more than administrative competence and which drew on distinctive

bodies of knowledge and skills about the causes and solutions of social problems. This marks the point at which bureaucratic administration and professionalism met in the development of the welfare state" (Clarke and Newman 1997, 6). It also marks the point at which departments of Political Science and Public Administration, such as that at Queen's University, emerged to fill the new need for "public" experts.

The Canadian proliferation of this expertise required bureaucratic infrastructure to transform. The Glassco Commission reflected this bureaucratic reshaping:

> The typical modern department is a large-scale organization, charged with a wide variety of services to or on behalf of the public or with the enhanced housekeeping tasks of accommodating, equipping and servicing the new operations. Its activities may encompass a large commercial undertaking like the postal service, the operation of harbours, airports, research laboratories and experimental farms, hospitals and schools, or marketing, lending and insurance services. It may need specialists in purchasing, design and construction, transportation, communications, economic and social research, statistical analysis, records management, data processing or public relations. The list could be extended almost indefinitely. (Glassco 1960, 48)

To accommodate this growing list of knowledges deployed by the state, the Glassco Commission insisted that bureaucratic structures needed to be reformed. Writing specifically about scientific policy, for example, the commission argued that "the existence of suitable machinery for informing and assisting the Prime Minister and Cabinet with respect to major scientific policy decisions is of paramount importance" (Glassco 1960, 218). The commission similarly made recommendations as to how expertise-centred institutions such as the National Research Council (Glassco 1960, 377) or Department of National Health and Welfare be structured to best reflect advances in such knowledges (Glassco 1960, 383). As the Canadian state deployed a growing set of technologies that dealt with the lives of Canadians, from pensions to healthcare to justice and rehabilitation, so too did its public bureaucracy need to accommodate the new sets of expertise required to facilitate, guide, and implement those technologies.

For the Glassco Commission, however, the practices and structure of the Canadian bureaucracy had not changed as rapidly as had expectations of the state or the scope of activities the state had adopted. The Glassco Commissioners also provided a clear example of problematization in terms of the bureaucratic technologies that were put into place during the time. Reviewing the earlier reforms that sought to eliminate the political patronage within the federal bureaucracy, the commissioners argued that the solutions had themselves become the problems. While the reforms of 1918 had "unquestionably succeeded" in meeting their primary objective, "the elimination of patronage throughout most of the service," they "stripped the departments of any formal power to control the selection, organization, grading, remuneration or career development of their staffs" and centralized the power in a way that became problematic only after WWII when Canada faced "the administrative needs of a large, complex, and, after 1949, expanding public service" (Glassco 1960, 42). Here, the commissioners argued, the centralization that the Canadian public service instituted in order to eliminate patronage was successful "against the most narrow objectives" of eliminating patronage but was too restrictive and disciplinary in the context of broader priorities. But "good management," the report wrote, "consists in more than the avoidance of sin, and this Calvinistic approach to public administration, while well designed to discomfit bad managers, was bound to prove most frustrating to good ones" (Glassco 1960, 44). In other words, the Glassco report argued that central administration held too much responsibility with respect to the mundane, day-to-day operations of a large bureaucratic organization. Echoing Weber's concern that bureaucracy stifled creativity in the name of rationalization (Weber 1978), the Glassco Commission argued that there was insufficient room for the management of individual departments to run their departments effectively. This problematization of the system adopted to eliminate patronage is a

clear example of the perpetually failing nature of government as described by critical scholars as reviewed in Chapter 1. During the *laissez-faire* period, the problematization of the long-accepted institution of patronage resulted in an institutional fix that later became a problem of its own.

The Glassco Commission called for greater flexibility in the organization and operation of the federal public service to facilitate the ability of departmental managers to effectively oversee their responsibilities. Most famously, the Glassco Commission called for the federal public service to "let the managers manage,"[42] a phrase that was later embraced by those pushing for reforms associated with New Public Management. This meant that there needed to be more clearly articulated roles for both individual departments and for central administration. Departments, the commissioners wrote, had a number of central responsibilities, including advising the minister, preparing and present plans for future programs and policies for reviews by ministers, adopting organizational structure that reflected its responsibilities, distributing resources in the form of funding and staffing, developing and deploying "the tools of management" and evaluating its own performance (Glassco 1960, 49). Accordingly, departments were responsible for the oversight of the responsibilities for the implementation and operation of programs related to their policy areas, with little day-to-day interference from what the Commissioners referred to as "Central Government," ostensibly meaning cabinet and the executive bureaucratic infrastructure that supported it.

Although Glassco imagined more autonomy for individual departments and their managers, they reiterated the importance of oversight by central government. "The policies and

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[42] Interestingly, the phrase "let the managers manage" appears nowhere in the actual Glassco Commission's report. As the later Lambert Commission (1979, 23) would write, the findings and recommendations of the Glassco Commission were merely (and accurately) "interpreted" as such.

programmes of each" department, they wrote, "must be balanced against and harmonized with those of other departments and agencies … The money [each department] spends is not departmental money available as of right, but public money, and the ultimate test of its spending is not of its legality but of its effectiveness in the view of the public" (Glassco 1960, 51). As such, the commissioners wrote, "the authority of each department" had to be "subject to the overriding needs of the government for unity, coherence and proper regard for the general interests of the Canadian public." The responsibility for interpreting "the general interests of the Canadian public" was assigned to a combination of elected politicians and the bureaucratic framework of "central government." It was the job of elected officials, the Commission reported, to "define the goals of national interest to which government action" would be directed.

Coordinating the bureaucracy's efforts to meet those goals, however, would come down to the institutional framework of central government. Here too, the Commissioners called for clearly delineated roles and responsibilities. In particular, the Glassco Commission sought to reform and formalize the administrative structure of central agencies such as the Department of Finance, Treasury Board, the Privy Council and the Ministers and Deputies associated with those departments. Commissioners offered an organizational chart mapping the responsibilities and relationships of these "agencies of central direction" as they called them. Together in a "general plan of central authority," these units would interpret the strategic direction of executive government. Individual departments would have the room to pursue their priorities without day-to-day interference by central government, which had become a legacy of the system implemented to eliminate patronage. In short, the Glassco Commission envisioned a federal public service in which central agencies such as the Department of Finance and Treasury Board would help to coordinate the broad strategic priorities set by elective governance and in which

departments could pursue goals consistent with those priorities with little interference or day-to-day oversight. Here, Glassco sought to reinforce the division between public administration and partisan politics that emerged during the nation-building period.

The Keynesian welfarist logics of the Glassco Commission notwithstanding, there were claims woven throughout the text that pointed to an increased role for the claim that government should adopt practices of the private sector.   Commission Chair Grant Glassco came from a business background, and the Commission's research staff consisted "of some 170 specialists many of whom were drawn from management consultant firms" (Saint-Martin 1998, 340).[43] These backgrounds were reflected in the findings of the commission, which looked to the private sector for a model of how to structure the federal bureaucracy. Upon its observation that the Canadian bureaucracy had not been able to adjust as quickly as the role of the Canadian state had, the Commission recommended that the bureaucracy emulate the private sector: "The immediate aim of the techniques of management developed for industry is to attain the organization's goals with the greatest possible economy of effort," the Commission wrote. "Consequently, most of the techniques of management developed for business can be adopted to government" (Glassco 1962, 47). For the Glassco Commission, the expanded role and expectation of the state into public life ironically necessitated increased use of private sector practices.

It would be oversimplification, however, to suggest that these early signs of managerialism or privileging of private sector practices and technologies meant that Keynesian bureaucracy or the discourses surrounding it resembled those that emerged under neoliberalism.

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[43] Interestingly, Saint-Martin also traces the trajectory of many of the Commission's staff as they moved into government roles created as a result of the Glassco Commission's recommendations - see Saint-Martin 1998, 340-341.

While the Glassco Commission advocated for the implementation of practices already deployed the private sector, the commission's report is careful to also note those differences between the public and private. "Significant differences" existed between government and business, the commission argued, including "the political character of public administration and of the tests by which it is judged. Another obvious difference lies in the absence of the profit test in public administration as a guide to the allocation of resources as a measure of competitive performance" (Glassco 1960, 46). Such distinctions were typical of broader discourses of public bureaucracies, particularly by academics of the time, who noted both the presence of those advocating for the state's deployment of private sector practices while also arguing that such arguments misunderstood the role of state bureaucracies (e.g., Mackenzie 1959, 77; Hodgetts and Corry 1959, 492). The Glassco Commission was simultaneously open to the argument that practices deployed in the private sector could be adopted by public bureaucracies while equally deliberate in their unwillingness to suggest that the private and the public were synonymous or that all private sector logics could - or should be - deployed by state bureaucracies. For experts of public administration, both within government, Royal Commissions, and academia, there was something *different* about public and private organizations. Much like earlier Royal Commissions had drawn a distinction between public administration and politics through their problematization of public administration, here they drew a distinction between public administration's service and pursuit of a *public good*, facilitated by new sets of expertise that could ensure welfare for citizens, and private enterprise's pursuit of profit. Academics of the time defended the distinction and resisted the appearance of contrary logics, resembling the friction that arose when royal commissions sought to eliminate patronage. But assemblages are awkward, and the discursive seeds of the claim that "government should operate more like

business" had been sewn and operated alongside this defense of a *public* service. The evaporation of such distinctions would, as demonstrated in the following chapters, be a fundamental component of neoliberalism's problematization of bureaucracy. The claim that government ought to act more like business would be a feature component of neoliberal assemblages.

These early managerial discourses were also accompanied by institutional changes that would later facilitate neoliberalization within the bureaucracy. Glassco's reports and recommendations reverberated throughout the structures of the public service. Dawson argued that "few commissions [had] so immediate an impact on any area of government as [had] the Glassco commission, and none on the federal administration" (Dawson 1970, 235). A new "miniature department, with its own official deputy head reporting directly to a minister," (Tunnoch 1965, 558) the Bureau of Government Organization, was established to provide institutional support for a committee of deputy ministers to pour over the recommendations. The government ultimately accepted over two hundred of Glassco's recommendations, rejecting fewer than thirty (Dawson and Ward 1970, 235). Of the resulting changes to the federal bureaucracy, one of the most profound was the ascendency of institutional units that eventually became important conduits of neoliberalization. As mentioned above, Glassco recommended the Department of Finance and the Treasury Board be given centrally important roles, along with the Privy Council, in overseeing the overall direction of departments. The Commission further recommended reforms to the way in which budgeting and planning was conducted in the public service, resulting in the 1969 adoption of the Planning, Programming, and Budget System and, ultimately, an increased role for the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) (Saint-Martin, 1998). The predominance of such institutional units has long been identified as important feature of

neoliberalization (Larner 2002, 653) and, as described further in Chapter 5, this also would be the case in Canada. Institutional changes in the welfarist period thus reflected discursive changes in that, in the midst of a rapid reconfiguration and expansion of technologies deployed by the state as Keynesian welfare rationality emerged, there were discourses and practices emerging that would one day become important features in the assemblage of a new rationality, the early indication of threads that would eventually be woven into entirely different projects.

The presence of these early signs of neoliberalization is thus both a cautionary tale for those critical scholars who might risk oversimplifying temporal periods or spaces in terms of their characteristics and a case for the usefulness of thinking of political rationalities as assemblages. Those discourses and practices that would come together in an arrangement now identifiable as "neoliberalism" did not materialize out of nowhere in the 1970s, 1980s or 1990s. There is no tidy juncture point at which one set of technologies or discourses replaces another - the assemblages associated with particular rationalities emerge, re-form, and disappear more gradually and subtly than that. Indeed, as the practices of the Toyota Production System were emerging in Japan and later being codified by early Lean experts, those discourses and practices that would also come to characterize neoliberal bureaucracies were present, if not dominant, in discussions of public bureaucracies. Assemblage-building and rebuilding is not an instantaneous process, and the extent to which managerialism had already began to shift into place in the 1960s demonstrates the extent to which some components of an emerging rationality's assemblages may be present far earlier than the rationality's emergence. How these logics and technologies became features of neoliberal rationality is the subject of the remaining chapters.

4.4. Conclusion

The stereotypical image of bureaucracies is static. Since Weber, we have conceptualized bureaucracies as rigid, hierarchical, resistant to change, and indeed for anyone who has spent significant time working in one, those characteristics are likely all-too familiar. But as this examination of the first hundred years of Canada's federal bureaucracy has demonstrated, it is clear that bureaucracies are anything *but* static in important ways. In both the nation-building period and the Keynesian welfarist period, the dominant rationalities of the time meant fundamental changes in both how bureaucracies were conceptualized and the material arrangements through which those conceptualizations were articulated. The nation-building project of the country's first fifty years required a competent, professional public service that was free from the ills of patronage, which had come under severe critique as both ineffective and *immoral*. A concept of public service that emerged that emphasized its separation from the corrupt and messy world of politics. This version of public service would be populated by competent, healthy young men of upstanding character, who could dispassionately undertake the business of the state in a rational fashion as was being observed in other countries. In the Keynesian-welfarist period, bureaucracies retained this distinctiveness as a sphere of expertise and practice. However, with increased expectations that the state could deploy new forms of expertise to guarantee the welfare of its citizens came new dimensions to this distinct sphere. Much like the state's role was no longer limited to nation-building, public bureaucracies were no longer limited to book-keeping and facilitating infrastructure. Public bureaucracies became spaces in which the expertise of Keynesian welfarism could be deployed in order to benefit the lives of citizens, a logic that remained separate from that of private enterprise. The federal

bureaucracy changed dramatically to reflect this change, with new departments emerging and the priorities of Keynesian-welfarism articulated through severe changes in budgetary allocations.

The first century of the Canadian state, then, demonstrates the extent to which public bureaucracies shapeshift, retaining their basic forms while their contours adjust and reform to more closely resemble the rationalities that underwrite them. They contort themselves as an ongoing project to best reflect the shifting logics of political rationalities. As fundamental discursive values such as what is right, acceptable, possible, or even political shift, so too do expectations for what the state should (or should not) do, what it can (or cannot) do, and what it does (or does not) do. As these expectations change, so too do what is valued in bureaucratic expertise, bureaucrats, and, accordingly, bureaucracies. In the next chapter, I look at this shapeshifting process in the context of neoliberal rationalities. More particularly, I examine neoliberal bureaucracy as the site of intense contradictions that have expressed themselves in the "groping" (Brodie 1990) search for new solutions that can somehow remain consistent with the logics of neoliberal rationality but avoid the consequences of neoliberal technologies - the perpetual quest to "do more with less." With this discussion, I will demonstrate how Canadian public bureaucracies became welcoming environments for the incursion of Lean and the Lean Industry.

- CHAPTER 5 -
Neoliberalizing the Bureaucracy: Reconceptualizing the public, NPM, and "Innovative"
Solutions

5.1. Introduction

In Chapter 4, I began to explore the extent to which bureaucratic logics and formations in

Canada have shapeshifted in concert with shifts within and between broader political

rationalities. In both the nation-building period and the Keynesian welfarist period, changes in

bureaucratic structure and operations reflected shifting rationalities and different expectations for

and conceptualizations of the state and, as such, subtle shifts in bureaucratic logics and forms.

The nation-building period included the long quest to officially eliminate political patronage,

which had come to be understood as incompatible with the construction of the modern state. In

the post-war period, a technocratic form of Keynesianism emerged that promised to provide the

expanded set of responsibilities based on the logic that bureaucratic experts could manage

statecraft and the wellness of citizens through both macroeconomic interventions and social

programs. In both periods, a bureaucratic expertise emerged that sought to codify itself as a

distinct realm of knowledge consistent with the broader rationality.

In this chapter, I explore how the Canadian federal bureaucracy shapeshifted with the

ascendance of neoliberal rationalities, and how it continued to shapeshift alongside the multiple

processes of neoliberalization, seeking new neoliberal programs and technologies through the

perpetual cycles of experimentation, failure and crisis characteristic of neoliberal governance

(Peck, Theodore and Brenner 2010a). I first trace the problematization of the logics of

Keynesian welfarist bureaucratic forms that crystallized in the 1970s as part of broader

Keynesian crisis. I examine the process by which the fundamental distinction that I explored in

Chapter 4, one that distinguished between the purpose, logics, and operations of public sector

organizations and their private sector counterparts, evaporated. As I demonstrate in Chapter 4, the claim that "government should act more like business" had long been present in debates about public bureaucracies, but it had remained on the margins like many of the tenets of neoliberalism that languished in the academic writing of scholars such as Friedman and Hayek. Decision makers and scholars of the time understood the claim that government ought to operate more like business to be misguided and misinformed, one that did not take into account the differences between the purposes and practices of public bureaucracies and private firms. As this technocratic Keynesian rationality of the twentieth century gave way to an emerging neoliberal consensus, however, the state itself became problematized and with it, any concept of a noble mission for public bureaucracies. Within this discursive landscape, the distinction that had been so fundamental to mid-century conceptualizations of bureaucracy gave way to one that claimed that there was *no* inherent difference between public sector organizations and their private sector counterparts. With the distinction gone, the practices that had been traditionally used in each could be compared against one another. Unsurprisingly, and without evidence, those practices of the private sector were claimed to be superior. "Government should act more like business" became a dominant logic rather than a marginalized one and the Canadian state undertook a thirty-year mission to reform its bureaucratic structures accordingly.

Neoliberalizing Canadian bureaucracies, however, has been a bumpy and contested process, characterized by the same perpetual cycle of failure and experimental solution-finding that defines neoliberalization more broadly. As I described in Chapter 1 and will explore in more detail in this chapter, successive iterations of bureaucratic reforms have sought to transform Canadian bureaucracies to address the failures of their successors in a way that avoids questioning the logics that underwrite those failures, a compounding set of contradictions that

ensures ongoing failure.   In the last section of the chapter, I explore this set of contradictions associated with neoliberal bureaucratic reform, which I argue has led Canada to the search for "innovation," an aspirational silver bullet that will simultaneously satisfy neoliberal dedication to private logics while avoiding the consequences of neoliberal programmes and technologies.

5.2. Neoliberalism Comes to Canada

The familiar version of Canada's turn to neoliberalism traditionally begins with the election of Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservatives in 1984, with Mulroney performing a similar role to that of Reagan in the United States and Thatcher in the United Kingdom. Certainly, Mulroney's ascendance to Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, and then as Prime Minister, signaled a turning point. Historically, the federal conservative parties in Canada had been suspicious of free trade, particularly with the United States; it had been John A. Macdonald's Conservatives who introduced the tariff as part of the First National Policy. Yet, as neoliberal rationality and the tenets of neoclassical economics became increasingly popularized in the Global North, and following lobbying efforts on the part of Canadian corporate interests,[44] the PCs' position eventually changed under Mulroney, himself a member of the corporate elite. In addition to his pursuit of constitutional renegotiation following patriation and the inability to convince Quebec to sign onto the new *Constitution Act 1982*. Mulroney's priorities in the 1980s first mirrored Thatcher's in the UK, seeking to privatize and reduce the size of the federal government before turning towards the pursuit of free trade, first through the Canada-United

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[44] Perhaps most famously, Tom D'Aquino, the Chief Executive Officer of the Business Council on National Issues (BCNI - later the Canadian Council of Chief Executives), an organization representing the CEOs of Canada's largest corporate firms, reported that after struggling to convince Mulroney of the tenets of free trade, a chance street-corner meeting after the 1984 election. "After he was elected but just before Brian moved into 24 Sussex, and while he was still living in the Opposition leader's house at Stornoway," d'Aquino told Peter C. Newman, "I was walking along Acacia Avenue and ran into him. 'Lookit,' he said, 'I know you people have been promoting this idea of free trade now for a couple of years, and I've read your most recent paper. It's got a lot of appeal, and I'm really looking at it with great interest." (Newman 20009)

States Free Trade Agreement (CUFTA) and then the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The 1988 election was contested primarily over the tenets of Free Trade, with the Liberals and the NDP opposing the agreement and Mulroney's PCs advocating for it.

Using Mulroney's 1984 election as a milepost for the beginning of neoliberalism is convenient, but it draws the boundaries between political rationalities too neatly. As I described in Chapter 4, some of the components of what would become an assemblage of neoliberal logics and technologies had emerged by the 1960s. Crisis in the 1970s brought the Keynesian-welfarist consensus into question, however, and set the stage for neoliberal rationality's ascent. McBride (2001, 75) pinpoints 1975 as the "beginning" of neoliberalism, the result of a confluence of economic crisis for which the Keynesian system of fiscal and monetary policies had no immediate solution. The United States' 1971 abandonment of the gold standard, long a lynchpin of the Keynesian international order as administered by the Bretton Woods Institutions (see Eichengreen 2008, 134-184) signalled a shift to floating exchange rates and a reduced ability on the part of states to implement domestic policy interventions without worries of fluctuations in their currencies. A series of oil shocks put further pressure on the national economic arrangement and fueled increasing regional tensions between energy-producing western provinces and the rest of the country. Stagflation, a combination of economic stagnation and inflation, left those experts who had been working to guide the Canadian political economy bewildered and signalled that the Keynesian mechanisms for managing the economy were no longer effective. Keynesian rationality and its technologies of governance had little in the way of answers to this crisis.

In the midst of crisis, increasing critiques of the Keynesian welfarist order appeared internationally. Some came from the left, "from proponents of human rights against powers of

authorities" (Miller and Rose 2008, 18). More famously, however, came a set of critiques of Keynesian welfarism originating from economics departments increasingly inhabited by neoclassical economists (Fine 2001, 3-24). Such critiques were launched via a deliberate political project conducted by Hayek and fellow neoliberal economists in Germany, the United Kingdom, France and the United States, who were engaged "in a process of further education and collective learning dedicated to advancing a common neoliberal cause" (Plewhe 2009, 5; see other pieces in Mirowski and Plehwe 2009, especially Mirowski 2009). This "neoliberal thought collective" (Plehwe 2009) situated itself in a position to provide solutions to the crisis of the 1970s that had vexed experts of Keynesian economics, a project captured so succinctly when Friedman wrote about his philosophy of change in the prologue to the 1982 edition of *Capitalism and Freedom:* "Only a crisis—actual or perceived—produces real change," Friedman wrote, adding that "when that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around" (Friedman 1982, ix).

The critiques of Keynesian welfarism by these neoliberal thinkers are now well-known, relying on what Fine calls the "simply, wildly unrealistic assumption" of rational expectations: "the idea that, in effect, each economic agent acts upon the same, consistent economic model, fully deploying the information available" (Fine 2001, 8). Based on this ontological premise, neoliberals launched into a critique of the Keynesian welfarist state. Friedman, for example, took direct aim at all of the well-meaning programmes of the American welfare state and their ostensible failures. Agricultural subsidies "had become a national scandal" and "done little to help the impecunious farmer," housing programs had "worsened the housing conditions of the poor, contributed to juvenile delinquency, and spread urban blight" and reforms to social security had ensured the growth of individuals receiving relief (Friedman 1982, 198-199). Specific to the

state and bureaucracy, neoliberal thought was articulated through the work of public choice

scholars, who, in the words of Fine (2001), sought to "colonize" disciplines such as Political

Science with the logics of neoclassical economics. A set of influential Public Choice thinkers

offered stinging critiques of the state, and especially public bureaucracy, based on the

epistemological foundations of neoliberalism. Thinkers such as Niskanen (1971; 1972) and

Buchanan (1977; Buchanan and Tullock 1962) took direct aim at the apparently naive view that

bureaucrats could be motivated, or could work within the pursuit of, a public good. Instead, they

argued, bureaucrats were budget maximizers, self-interested individuals seeking to increase their

influence within their respective organizations. Relying on this assumption, Niskanen (1971)

argued that bureaucracies "supply an output up to twice that of a competitive industry faced by

the same demand and cost conditions" (Niskanen 1971, 64). With this, public choice theorists

offered an intellectual, scientific legitimacy to the claim that "government should operate more

like business." Couched in neutral-sounding expertise and expressed through formulas,

Niskanen and others seemingly *proved* that old claim that government should operate more like

business, paving the way for it to take its place within a neoliberal assemblage rather than

languishing on the margins during Keynesian welfarism. With welfarism's crisis came the

context in which neoliberal scholars could frame that crisis in their own terms.

Far before Mulroney's 1984 election, state transcripts in Canada showed signs of a shift

towards problematizing the Keynesian welfarist consensus. Brodie (2002), for example, has

captured the shift in federal Throne Speeches, calling the 1970s to mid-1980s "early transitional

years" in which subtle and incremental shifts in the language of the speeches hinted at the

"contours of neoliberal governance" taking shape (Brodie 2002, 387-388). Bradford (2004) has

traced the same pattern in federal budgets, calling the 1970s "years of inconclusive

macroeconomic experimentation" and the 1980s "the decade of the paradigm shift" (Bradford 2004, 241) in federal budgets. Auditor General's reports also took a turn in the late 1970s, casting dire warnings in 1976, for example that the office was "deeply concerned that Parliament - and indeed the Government - has lost, or is close to losing, effective control of the public purse" (Auditor General 1976, 2.1).

Based on the Auditor General's stark diagnosis, Pierre Trudeau appointed Allen Lambert, a lifelong banker and recently-retired president of the Toronto-Dominion Bank, as the chair of the Royal Commission on Financial Management and Accountability to address the auditors' concerns. Lambert's terms of reference accordingly mirrored the concerns of the Auditor General, stating "that the growth of government responsibilities and programmes to meet the needs of Canada in recent years has placed unprecedented demands" on the administrative apparatus of the federal government, and that the Auditor General had demonstrated that "the current state of financial administration in the Government of Canada is not now adequate to ensure full and certain control over and accountability for public funds required for the expanded responsibilities and programmes that now exist" (Lambert 1979, iv-v). As such, Trudeau instructed Lambert to report back on financial management and control, accountability and evaluation of deputy ministers, and departmental structure. Trudeau had asked Lambert to review the ability of the federal bureaucracy to deliver the services expected by Canadians. Instead, Lambert offered blunt critiques of Keynesian welfarism and its programmes and technologies, many of which had emerged under Trudeau's watch. Commissioners argued that the expansion of state activities in the decades following the war was "unsustainable" and made "it increasingly obvious that there needs to be greater care in the use of resources that have been entrusted to government" (Lambert 1979, 7). State transcripts of the 1970s indeed reflected the

broader problematization of the Keynesian welfarist technologies that had been put into place throughout the twentieth century.

That shift mirrored the broader neoliberal problematization of the state. In addition to specific practical advice in terms of improving and expanding methods of financial control within departments and Crown Corporations, the Auditor General made the case for changing how Canadians and their government *conceptualized* public funds and consider them to be analogous to private sector trust funds that should be guarded with systems "at least as reliable and strong as those over trust funds in the private sector" (Auditor General 1976, 2.5). The Lambert Commission, meanwhile, communicated boilerplate examples of neoliberal problematization of "big government." The expanded state, commissioners warned, required tax increases, an increasingly unpalatable option: "Workers in this country [have] become increasingly resistant to the growing proportion of their income being siphoned off in taxes, particularly because it [is] not apparent that services [are] being provided at the lowest cost and because there was no opportunity to measure the real value of the benefits being provided (Lambert 1979, 16-17). Adopting on a tone identical to public choice scholars, the Lambert Commission suggested that, while the goals of the post-war Keynesian consensus may have been laudable, their unintended consequences were dire - a quintessential example of problematizing Keynesian welfarism:

> Many costly measures aimed at improving our welfare system have been put in place during the last decade … these represent well-intentioned efforts to serve the goals of fairness and equal opportunity, particularly for those Canadians who are disadvantaged in one way or another. It must be recognized, however, that our well-meaning efforts as a people have contributed to the present critical financial straits of the federal government and the serious threat that poses to other levels of government and to the whole Canadian economy. As Pogo succinctly put it, 'I have seen the enemy and he is us!' (Lambert 1979, 17)

Lambert, in other words, argued that social programs were the *cause* of the crisis facing

Canadian governance. Commissioners' indignation became even more pointed later in the

report, where they identified to both politicians and Canadian citizens writ large as responsible

for the dangerous growth of expectations of the state: "Parliament has long been regarded as the

guardian of the public purse." (Lambert 1979, 29). Showing extraordinary contempt for

Canadian democracy, Lambert argued that, because of its failure to live up to that expectation

over the past several years, Parliament needed to "accept some of the share of the blame, along

with the Canadian electorate, for the troubles that now best us" (Lambert 1979, 29). Public

servants were, of course, not immune from the blame: "While the Glassco Commission insisted

that managers be free to manage, it is evident to us that they have not been able to use this

freedom effectively" (Lambert 1979, 33).

In the expert opinion of the Lambert Commission, the overreaching welfare state had two

seemingly disastrous results. First, it had increased the financial resources needed to fund the

expanded set of government-delivered programs, a state of affairs that had led to public debt and

a requirement for increased taxes. Secondly, the rapidly expanding state had fueled massive

inefficiency within departments, which had little in the way of incentives to control their own

spending or think of delivering programs with "economy and efficiency." Commissioners would

have had difficulty mirroring Reagan's "government is not the solution, government is the

problems" speech any more closely. Here, the Lambert commission began to articulate not only

an unease with the operation of the state but also a problematization of a positive form of the

state altogether.

As I demonstrated in Chapter 4, however, the transition between rationalities rarely

happens without friction. Unsurprisingly, Lambert's sweeping condemnation of the prevailing

wisdom of Keynesian welfarism met resistance. Canadian Political Science stalwart James

Mallory argued that Lambert's report, while "lucidly argued," was insufficiently "sensitive to the

fact that government is essentially a political operation. Politicians in power must constantly be

aware that rational management is never enough. Political demands have to be satisfied,

decisions have to be timed more to the electoral cycle than to the business cycle. The cabinet is a

political body" (Mallory 1979, 527). One public servant later summarized the response of

political scholars by suggesting that Lambert's recommendations were "hopelessly naive, if well-

meaning" (O'Neal 1994). Here, commenters such as Mallory defended the logics of a *public*

service, one that they did not believe was reducible to markets and the rules that ostensibly guide

them. Political rationalities are stubborn things. When the Lambert Commission so bluntly

suggested that Canada move on from Keynesian welfarism, it ran afoul of the dominant logics of

the time that had crystallized over decades and, much like the repeated calls of earlier Royal

Commissions to abandon patronage, met resistance.

The process by which neoliberal logics embedded themselves within state transcripts

continued, however. Six years after Lambert, the MacDonald Commission deployed a more

nuanced, if substantively identical, message. A lawyer and longtime Liberal Member of

Parliament and cabinet minister, Donald MacDonald had retired from federal politics in 1977.

After winning re-election following the surprisingly short tenure of Joe Clark's Progressive

Conservative government, Trudeau sought answers to the problems facing the federal

government's fiscal capacity, particularly in light of a recession in the early 1980s. As such, he

tasked MacDonald's Royal Commission on Economic Union and Development Prospects for

Canada with the mandate to "inquire into and report on the long-term economic potential,

prospects and challenges facing the Canadian federation and its respective regions, as well as the

implications that such prospects and challenges have for Canada's economic and governmental institutions, and for the management of Canada's economic affairs" (MacDonald 1985, xvii).

The MacDonald Commission holds a place in the history of political rationalities similar to that of the Rowell-Sirois Commission in that it provides a snapshot of the problematization of a previous rationality and the search for new solutions at a watershed moment in transition between rationalities. The MacDonald commission, according to Brodie (1994), represented nothing less than a signpost signaling the emergence of a neoliberal consensus:

> [The MacDonald Commission] was instrumental in telegraphing the key components of the emerging new order. It successfully advanced the position that free trade with the United States was the only viable economic development strategy left to Canada. Canadians were told to close their eyes and take "a leap of faith" because the globalization train had already left the station. Moreover, it advised all governments, federal and provincial, to adopt a market-oriented industrial policy, to facilitate adjustment, and to create new opportunities for private sector growth. (Brodie 1994, 3)

Its dramatic importance notwithstanding, MacDonald sought to avoid making the type of stark categorical declarations that Lambert had, making careful effort to explore what commissioners understood to be the dynamics of both state and markets, suggesting that neither was mutually exclusive, but that the relationship between the two was coming under question in Canada and beyond. "The relationship between states and markets, each subject to their own organizing criteria, is once again on the agenda of democratic governments in Canada and elsewhere," (MacDonald 1985, 41) the Commission wrote before identifying its own goal to "to clarify this debate, disentangle the complex issues involved, and suggest criteria to govern the future unfolding of the relationship between these two powerful stems which interact, which need each other, and within which we act as citizens, as consumers and as producers" (MacDonald 1985, 41). Here, the commission recognized that their work was coming at a crucial and powerful

moment, one at which the "balance" of state and market was being questioned with a prescience that had been lacking in the prognosis and recommendations of the Lambert Commission.

Woven through MacDonald's nuanced language, however, remains a commitment to the introduction of neoliberal logics and technologies. For the MacDonald Commission, the balance between state and markets needed to be recalibrated in a way that would limit the size and scope of the state in the face of the spectre of "big government" (MacDonald 1985, 24). MacDonald reported that growth in government was "pervasive (MacDonald 1985, 25) and that the increased use of Crown Corporations as policy instruments was "conspicuous" (MacDonald 1985, 25). The Welfare State, the commission wrote,

> has become a complex and comprehensive set of programs which offers collective provision against the normal hazards of life, such as sickness and old age, as well as against the particular risks, such as unemployment, which attend economic fluctuations. Private economic actors are linked to the state in a maze of incentives and disincentives, opportunities and obligations. Countless subsidies, guaranteed loans, quotas, tax provisions, technical and research assistance, environmental regulations, and other instruments and policies too numerous to mention affect decision making in the economy. (MacDonald 1985, 26)

Markets, meanwhile, operated according to a different set of principles and were fundamentally important to human existence, "not only for the achievement of economic goals, but also for their contribution to human freedom and dignity" (MacDonald 1985, 42) For MacDonald, states were responsible only for providing the conditions by which markets could operate properly:

> Markets require order, the rule of law, respect for property rights, the enforcement of contracts, reliable weights and measures, a system of currency, and an infrastructure of transportation and other facilities which markets provide only with difficulty. The human skills required to function successfully in market processes result from state action in education and training, supplementing the basic education in social skills provided by the family.

To meet the goal of recalibrating the "balance" between state and markets, the Commissioners recommended sweeping changes, including abandoning some policies and introducing others. That sprawling set of income supplements for the poor, for example, could potentially be replaced by a single guaranteed income level of $2750 for adults and $750 for children, levels that would be clawed back at a rate of $20 for every $100 earned by other means (MacDonald 1985). More dramatically, the Commissioners argue that Canada should pursue a policy of free trade with the United States to increase "openness to international competition" and "end those patterns of government involvement in the economy which may generate disincentives, retard flexibility, and work against the desired allocation of resources" (MacDonald 1985, 50). The state, in other words, needed to be rolled back in order to let market forces guide economic activity. Indeed, despite earlier concessions that the welfare state was a necessary component of contemporary economic development, commissioners focussed primarily on "a greater reliance on the flexibility of markets and policies which facilitate competition and adjustment, an approach in striking contrast to some existing policies" (MacDonald 1985, 55).[45]

With the MacDonald Commission, the work that had been done by neoliberal economists to erase the distinction between public and private sectors was officially transcribed as doctrine. When experts had, as recently as Mallory's dismissal of the Lambert report, dismissed the claim that government should act more like business, they were drawing and enforcing the boundaries

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[45] Among the proposals the Commission made included work to strengthen the power of legislatures. Sounding alarms at the same consolidation of power in the executive that had worried Canadian political scientists for much of the latter half of the twentieth century (culminating, of course, with Aucoin's "Court Government" [Aucoin 1999]), the Commissioners called for a rebalancing of power through the introduction of new parliamentary committees. Despite its apparently "non-economic" nature, such a proposal was framed as a counter to the consolidation of executive power that commissioners understood to be inherent with "big government." The introduction of increased legislative mechanisms for oversight of the executive were ultimately part of the Commission's larger project of reducing the influence of the state in economic affairs.

of the realm of bureaucratic expertise and its logics. By the MacDonald Commission, the claim

was no longer easily dismissed by experts. Indeed, it *became* the logic of experts. The

MacDonald Commission took earlier critiques of the welfare state and reframed them through

the emerging expertise of public choice and anti-bureaucratic logics derived from the broader

neoliberal rationality. The familiar, decades-old critique took a new, prioritized place within

evolving discourses and logics of the shifting rationalities and the distinct sphere of bureaucratic

expertise and practices, which had emerged in the nation-building period and taken on new

meaning in the Keynesian-welfarist period, gave way to the understanding that public

bureaucracies could, and *should*, operate "more like business."

By the time that Jean Chretien's Liberals were elected in 1993, neoliberal logics were

firmly in place. Despite having opposed free trade in the 1988 election, with leader John Turner

suggesting that it represented Mulroney's plan to "destroy a great 120-year-old dream called

Canada" (quoted in CBC News 1988), the Liberals in power showed no hesitation in continuing

free trade negotiations and ultimately signing the expansion of the Canada-US Free Trade

Agreement to NAFTA. The 1995 budget, meanwhile, is typically understood to be a watershed

moment of Canada's deployment of neoliberal policies. In his 1995 budget speech, Finance

Minister Paul Martin announced that eliminating "debt and deficit" was one of Canada's two

primary problems, along with the looming threat of Quebec's secession (Canada 1995, 2) before

telling the House of Commons that the Liberals were undertaking nothing less than a redesigning

of "the very role and structure of government itself" (Canada 1995, 6). Martin's budget is an

extraordinary historical document, announcing severe cuts to public expenditures, privatization

of major state-owned enterprises including Canadian National (CN) Railway, reduction of

transfers to provinces, and a system of ensuring that government departments would have to find

funding for new initiatives within their existing budgets. There are few more clear and explicit

pronouncements of the problematization of a rationality and its corresponding programmes and

technologies than Martin's speech, which essentially announced that the Liberals were seeking to

abandon any vestiges of welfarism or technocratic Keynesianism. If the 1970s had been a time of

uncertain experimentation and problematization and the 1980s had been a period of neoliberal

rationality's crystallization, the 1990s would be fully neoliberal. Martin had announced it in the

House of Commons: government was the problem, and adopting practices of the private sector

was the solution.

5.3. Solving the Problem of Government: Neoliberalizing the Canadian Public Bureaucracy

Neoliberal logics were articulated through material changes in the composition of the

federal government. Table 5.2. reveals the composition of federal departments and their

respective budget allocations in 2004, twenty years after the election of Mulroney and 11 years

after Chretien's election.

Table 5.2. - Federal Departments and Budget Allocations, 2004

Department	Budget (000s)	% of budget
Agriculture and Agri-Food	2,612,230	1.54%
Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency	489,206	.29%
Canada Customs and Revenue Agency	3,429,361	2.03%
Canadian Heritage	3,187,844	1.89%
Environment	3,925,969	2.32%
Finance	73,050,819	43.20%
Fisheries and Oceans	1,470,799	0.87%
Foreign Affairs and Intl. Trade*	59,81,084	0.95%
Governor General	19,181	.01%

Health	3,945,966	2.33%
Human Resources and Skills Dlvpmt*	2,011,514	1.89%
Human Resources Development*	28,553,961	16.89%
Indian Affairs and Northern Dlvpmt	5,761,736	3.41%
Industry	3,767,368	2.23%
International Trade*	237,747	0.14%
Justice	1,699,565	1.01%
National Defence	13,300,282	7.87%
Natural Resources	1,383,241	0.82%
Parliament	450,553	0.27%
Privy Council	442,160	2.61%
Public Works and Government Services	414,016	2.45%
Solicitor General	4,491,710	2.66%
Transport	1,673,237	0.99%
Treasury Board	2,497,482	1.48%
Veterans Affairs	2,787,721	1.65%
Western Economic Diversification	390,806	0.23%

Source: 2004-2005 Main and Supplementary Estimates
*There is a degree in "duplication" in departments in the 2004-05 fiscal year. Following the 2004 federal election, departmental changes meant new entities with slightly different names and, as such, new budget lines.

There are a number of notable changes from Chapter 4's snapshot of the composition of the federal government. Most notably is the Department of Finance's allocation of nearly half the federal budget. As was the case in in 1965, the vast majority of Finance's allocation was earmarked for transfers to provinces and territories, either through the equalization program or grants such as the Canada Health and Social Transfer. The growth in the relative allocation for the department reflects the downloading of responsibility to provinces that took place in the decade prior to this budget, with the federal government having retreated from many of the services it provided directly and instead providing provinces with block grants to provide health

and social services - thus explaining, also, a nearly 90% reduction in Health Canada's budget

from its 1965 counterpart, National Health and Welfare. The only other department with a

significant proportion of the budget, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), also

reflects the effects of neoliberal rationality. Created in 1993-1994 in a move that amalgamated a

number of different functions, including labour, by the late 1990s it was identifying "to reduce

the dependence of individuals on Employment Insurance (EI) Income Benefits and other

government income-support payments" as a central goal (Canada 1997, 2-3). Whereas

maximizing employment was a primary concern during the Keynesian welfarist period,

neoliberal rationality instead privileged ensuring that individuals were not reliant on state

programs. As McBride argues, "the ethos" of HRDC became less about "helping people find

work and improving economic conditions through developing the expertise of working

Canadians" - itself the product of an individualizing logic that seeks to produce entrepreneurial

spirits - and more about "cost-saving and processing individuals so that they would remain on

the books for as short a period as possible" (McBride 2001, 88).

In addition to changes to the composition and broad strokes of the federal bureaucracy,

there were also proposals for reforms directly related to bureaucratic operations. The Lambert

Commission, for example, focussed specifically on problems associated with the practices and

structure of the federal public bureaucracy and offered solutions that corresponded to the stark

problems they had identified, signaling the beginning of a decades-long mission to "fix"

bureaucracy and satisfy the inherent problems of the state through the introduction of private

sector logics and technologies. The commissioners essentially provided a road map for what later

became NPM. They argued that departments should "establish clearly defined objectives against

which the performance of a department or agency can be measured either in total or in respect of

a particular program or activity," (Lambert 1979, 24) and that "sound management must begin with the establishment of goals and the assignment of relative priorities to them through the allocation of resources" (Lambert 1979, 31), virtual verbatim articulations of an important components of what became NPM. Goals should be outlined, commissioners argued, in five year fiscal plans "to show where we are going, how we will get there, and what the financial consequences will be for Canadians" (Lambert 1979, 34). Such fiscal plans would be complemented on a departmental level by Departmental Strategies, "medium-term projections at the departmental level analogous to the Fiscal plans" and short-term Statements of Operational Goals (Lambert 1979, 44). In addition to these reports, meant to supplement "accountability" on the part of departments, Deputy Ministers would be given additional responsibility for overseeing the minutiae of their departments, in effect rebalancing the responsibility, post-Glassco, that had been placed within lower ranks of management.

Turning to the composition and organization of the bureaucracy, the commissioners argued that too much power had been consolidated by the Privy Council Office at the expense of the Finance Department. Indeed, in a passage that seems otherworldly after thirty years of neoliberal reforms, the commissioners bemoaned what they considered to be an insufficiently influential Finance Department: "The once pre-eminent position of the Department of Finance as the arbiter of all matters related to the broad financial position of the federal government," the commission wrote, "has been eroded," pointing blame partially at the legacy of the Glassco commission, which had recommended the separation of the Treasury Board from Finance (Lambert 1979, 25).   Perhaps even more telling, the commission turned to explicitly neoliberal technologies, arguing that government departments needed to take more seriously the expertise and "best practices" associated with accounting: "Based on a cash account approach that is

primarily geared to meeting the reporting requirements of Parliament, the Bank of Canada, the

Department of Finance, and Statistics Canada, this system fails to pay due regard to acceptable

accounting principles," the commission wrote (Lambert 1979, 28). "The inadequacy of internal

audit systems, concerned primarily with maintenance of probity and very little whether

operations are carried out efficiently and effectively, only intensifies the problem" (Lambert

1979, 28). This stark state of affairs, commissioners argued, could be solved through the

increased reliance on accounting expertise by way of an empowered Comptroller General that

could "oversee and supervise the continuing evaluation of the great bulk of government

programs and other activities, which should be undertaken in order to assess their efficiency and

effectiveness, and to determine ways and means of improving both where possible" (Lambert

1979, 38) and a Chief Accountant, who would assist the Comptroller General by overseeing a

centralized structure of government accounting (Lambert 1979, 38). Such positions,

commissioners argued, would also direct a more robust program of auditing within departments

to ensure that management and staff were acting responsibly (Lambert 1979, 49). The starkness

of Lambert's message would ensure that the tangible solutions it offered would remain on the

sidelines.

     This, however, did not last. By 1990, academics such as Christopher Hood (1991) had

recognized that a series of reforms consistent with Lambert had emerged internationally in the

form of New Public Management (NPM). In Canada, the 1980s had been marked by a number

of experiments with reforming the federal public service to make it operate more consistently

with the emerging consensus. Meanwhile, Mulroney, like Thatcher, had made a demonization of

bureaucrats and the bureaucracy a central tenet of his rhetorical strategy in opposition and

leading up until the 1984 election (Wilson 1988). Shortly after being elected, he tasked Deputy

Prime Minister Erik Nielsen with reviewing 1,000 programs with the goals of improving service

to the public as well as management of public programs. Staffed by a team of public service and

private sector representatives, Nielsen's Task Force arguably exceeded its mandate and made

large-scale policy recommendations, including (unsurprisingly) budget cuts and a reduction of

services, recommendations that were ultimately abandoned, swept to the "history of public

administration" (Zussman 1988, 36).

The reforms of the 1980s culminated with an ambitious initiative within the public

service, titled Public Service 2000 (PS2000). The task given by Mulroney to those responsible

for the initiative was instructive:

> Over the years, the Public Service has been tasked to satisfy the demand for many
> new programs and services, and in recent years it has had to do so within a
> climate of increasing fiscal restraint and with a significant reduction in personnel.
> This task has been made even more difficult by traditional institutional structures
> and controls that do not encourage efficiency or improvements in the service to
> the public. The complexity of the administrative regime governing the Public
> Service has been recognized as a serious problem for more than a decade. The
> need for simplification, greater devolution of authority and responsibility, and
> increased efficiency, is higher now than ever before. To equip public servants for
> the 21st century, and to enable them to function effectively in the context of
> continuing restraint, fundamental changes are required to the ways in which the
> Public Service is structured and managed. (Canada 1989)

The Prime Minister, in other words, reflected those problems that had been similarly

articulated in the Lambert and MacDonald Commissions, understanding that the growth

of state programs and departments that had accompanied the emergence of Keynesian

welfarism were now understood to themselves be problems.

Those tasked with PS2000, led by Clerk of the Privy Council Paul Tellier,

released a white paper, *Public Service 2000: The Renewal of the Public Service,* in 1990.

In it, they reflected on the previous attempts to reform the federal public bureaucracy,

pointing out that traditionally, such efforts had been done through Royal Commissions -

those same ones that I have reviewed here. PS2000 was different, the report identified, because the initiative would be "led from within by those who must implement its results" and that "it carries the conviction of Ministers and the leadership of the Public Service that a fundamental rethinking is necessary of what the Public Service does and the way it does it" (PS2000 1990, 23). In other words, whereas the series of Royal Commissions, from confederation until the 1970s, had been conducted by external esteemed experts, such commissions could largely be ignored, PS2000 carried the weight of government and the expertise of those who would ultimately be responsible for implementing its recommendations.

For PS2000, the need to become more efficient was due to shifting fiscal realities facing the public sector. The 1990 white paper parroted the Lambert and MacDonald Commissions, suggesting that times of fiscal restraint - the inevitable spectre of neoliberalism, which typically remained unnamed in the document - meant that the federal public bureaucracy faced significant dilemmas. "Deficit reduction has been an important element of the Government's economic policy" meant that "the increased demand for public services means that resources are stretched thin" (PS2000 1990, 17-18). As such, the report argued, the Canadian public service faced an ultimatum: reform, or cut services. The choice, according to the report, was clear. The public service could "reduce the direct costs of providing services by cutting back on quality and timeliness," or it could "reduce the number of services by abandoning some of them entirely (this would mean cutting whole programs) or, alternatively, it could "find a more efficient way to administer the Public Service so that resources, energy and time devoted to the personnel, administrative and financial management regimes can be redirected towards

better service" (PS2000 1990, 18). In other words, the government could choose between fewer services, no services, or simply doing things "more efficiently." Do things better, PS2000 argued, or do not do them at all.

With PS2000 came an important development in the discursive politics of neoliberalizing the bureaucracy. Documents such as the Lambert Commission report represented outside experts problematizing bureaucracy, arguing that expanded state institutions were to blame for problems of the day. They had also begun the work of suggesting that markets should be left to operate more "freely. With PS2000, however, came a clear articulation, coming from *inside* the state, that the solution to the problem of public bureaucracy was for it to operate more like a private enterprise. "Like any other enterprise," the report states, the federal public bureaucracy must be "efficient and well-managed." Later, the report explains that while there is a difference between public service and private enterprise, such differences to not preclude the public from emulating the private:

> Major corporations in the private sector have also been going through a process of self-examination, challenging traditional ways and developing new management philosophies. They have moved towards flatter organizational structures, populated by more autonomous units supervised by fewer central staff. They have become more conscious of the need for quality products and have made service a primary focus in order to retain and expand their clientele. They are much more innovative and responsive to changes in their environment. And they recognize that highly trained, adaptable employees add the greatest value to the corporation's activities.
> While the Public Service requires different administrative and management regimes, there is much in the example of these private sector corporations from which the Public Service can learn. Above all it can learn that people must come first if an organization is to adapt to new challenges and provide good service to its clientele. (PS2000 1990, 33).

Written in a neutral tone and within the context of other, traditional-seeming statements about what guides a professional public service, such statements seem innocuous. Such banality,

however, conceals their significance. The work of disintegrating the distinction between public sector logics and private sector logics had already begun by the time PS2000 released its report. Here, though, it takes on a new tone, characterized by a lexicon of truth and commonsense. Of course, PS2000 suggested, the public service should be like any other organization. Of course it should be as "efficient and well managed" as private sector firms. The new bureaucratic expertise was now built on the understanding that bureaucracy should operate as a private firm would, and to think otherwise would be folly. The claim that "government should operate more like business," long cast aside in serious discussions about bureaucracy in Canada, had been repurposed and redeployed as part of the reformation of political rationalities' boundaries, and the tables had turned.

The substance of PS2000 flowed from these discursive foundations and was plainly consistent with NPM. As I described in Chapter 1, the international pattern of NPM included national governments implementing reforms to introduce private sector practices to their public bureaucracies. With its promise to "significantly improve productivity by reducing red tape and unleashing the innovative capacities of individuals throughout the Public Service" (PS 2000 1990, 36), PS2000 fit the description neatly. The report called for increased individual accountability of public servants to reduce costs in the federal bureaucracy by making "individuals responsibility for their own careers" (PS2000 1990, 37), a focus on being "results-oriented" (PS2000 1990, 46) and improving performance - which would now be "assessed against readily understood standards" and "clear objectives" (PS2000 1990, 48). Little wonder that public administration scholars have widely identified PS2000 as an example of NPM-type reforms (Savoie 2015, 190; Pollitt 1995; Hood 1995, 94).

Resistance, as it had in response to Lambert, once again caused friction as these new logics were introduced. Scholars committed to the public sector as being a separate sphere of knowledge and practice were suspicious of both PS2000's logic and the chances that it would succeed in its goals. Donald Savoie, for example, echoed earlier expressions of indignation at the suggestion that the public sector should adopt and deploy strategies of its private sector counterpart:

> The philosophy is rooted in the conviction that private sector management is superior to public administration. The solution, therefore, is to transfer government activities to the private sector through privatization and contracting out. Given that all government activities can hardly be transferred to the private sector, the next best solution is to transfer business management practices to government operations. (Savoie 2006, 594).

Savoie's reaction was typical of academics during the Keynesian welfarist period or even upon the release of the Lambert report. In the period of neoliberal rationality's dominance, however, this insistence that the public and private remain separate were eventually, marginalized to an ever-shrinking selection of public administration scholars whose voices increasingly seemed outdated in an era where scholars were (and are) encouraged to "mobilize" their knowledge in a way that can best adapt to and leverage developments such as NPM. Indeed, some notable public administration scholars in the country welcomed the changes or, at least, believed change to be inevitable. Kernaghan, for one, argued that Savoie's insistence that NPM was fundamentally about the introduction of private sector logics into the bureaucracy ignored those proponents of NPM who, he argued, did not advocate such incursions (Kernaghan 1995, 481). Borins, meanwhile, framed skepticism such as Savoie's as being anachronistic and stuffy, in contrast to forward-thinking academics and practitioners who were responsible for thinking about *the future* versus *the past*:

> Some of us sense that the current wave of innovation and ferment in the public service is different in both scope and significance from the reform efforts of the past. … Our

> debates will drone on endlessly and, from the point of view of the practitioner, irrelevantly. It would be as if academics were the public sector's auditors but had no generally accepted accounting principles. (Borins 1995, 129)

For those who were embracing the potential that NPM represented to modernize public bureaucracies, then, those academics spending time and attention bemoaning "the good old days" before bureaucracy sought to incorporate more private sector practices into its operations needed to either get with the times, or get out of the way. For them, the introduction of NPM foreshadowed a new era, one characterized by a "post-bureaucracy" (Kernaghan 2000) that would, ostensibly, leave those naysayers in the past. These scholars thus lent further legitimacy and credence to the claim that bureaucracies should deploy private sector practices. By framing the claim of those who disagreed as outdated, backward-looking, or (like Keynesian welfarist rationality more broadly) ineffective, such scholars essentially framed NPM and the neoliberalization of the bureaucracy not as only as beneficial but inevitable. Resembling the liberal scholars who chastised their critical colleagues for resisting the inevitability of globalization, such arguments sought to minimize not only their counterparts' arguments, but the very idea of a distinction between private and public sector practices. As the title of Borins' title reminded them, NPM was "here to stay" (Borins 1995). The conceptualization of bureaucracy as a domain of expertise, predicated on the belief that bureaucracies could be used to pursue the public good, was crumbling.

As I discussed in Chapter 1, international consensus was that national efforts to implement NPM-inspired reforms were underwhelming. And, Borins' confidence in the lasting potential of NPM notwithstanding, Canada's[46] NPM-inspired reforms of PS2000 were no

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[46] As they were elsewhere. Indeed, NPM was considered to be an inconsistent set of reforms essentially as soon as it was conceptualized. Hood (1991) expressed skepticism. Suggesting that the components of NPM included both traditionally bureaucratic and managerialist logics, Hood wrote that whether they would be found compatible "remains to be seen" (Hood 1991, 6) and highlighted the enormous resistance to NPM's promises of universality

different. Indeed, a 1993 Auditor General's report called into question the initiative's results only three years after the PS2000 White Paper had been released. Aucoin recalled that after 1993, "positive references to Public Service 2000 had diminished considerably" and after that year's election, "had disappeared altogether" (Aucoin 1995, 16). The reasons for such disappointing results vary by author. For its part, the Office of the Auditor General suggested that the lacklustre results were due to a lack of political leadership (Auditor General of Canada 1993). Aucoin, meanwhile, suggests that it was "difficult to disagree" with the Auditor's diagnosis (Aucoin 1995, 15), arguing that there was insufficient political leadership on the part of either the Mulroney PCs or the Chretien Liberals to overcome the skepticism within the public service that such reforms would work (Aucoin 1995, 15-17). St-Martin, meanwhile, has pointed to more fundamental contradictions of NPM, arguing that as public servants became more "entrepreneurial" and less beholden to the hierarchical structure of approval, their decisions became off-topic and off-message from the priorities set out by executive government, leading to a "public relations disaster" that needed to be reined in by returning to more traditional practices (Saint-Martin 1998, 553).

More importantly, however, were fundamental contradictions in what the federal bureaucracy was being asked to do and in the very nature of neoliberal bureaucratic reforms. Clark (2002) summarizes that while "many of the PS 2000 reforms were accepted by the Chretien government … by the late 1993, fighting the deficit was given priority over the 'humanist' PS 2000 agenda" (Clark 2002, 783). Writing in 1997, Clerk of the Privy Council

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and predicted that states would continue to pursue NPM, but incompletely and only focussing on those components of the broader pattern that corresponded with localized political circumstances and path dependencies. In France, Cole and Jones reported that there were important differences between the specifics of French NPM and Hood's ideal-type, but that the "direction of change" was "on balance, rather similar in France to comparable countries" (Cole and Jones 2005, 585). New Zealand, on the other hand, "is regarded as *the* primary example of an extensive and intellectually coherent attempt at public sector reforms that followed the key characteristic associated with NPM" (Lodge and Gill 2011, 142).

Jocelyne Bourgon went into more detail, stating that while PS2000 had sought to "improve

service to the public, and meet the standards of efficiency and effectiveness associated with the

private sector," it had become "widely seen as having raised expectations which it had then

failed to meet, partly because of the effects of deficit-reduction and downsizing during the

period." The clerk went into great detail, arguing that:

> a decade of downsizing and relative inattention to human resources management issues
> had resulted in a 'quiet crisis' in the public service. Central elements of this problem
> were diminished morale, job satisfaction and levels of motivation among current public
> servants, increased levels of defection among groups with key technical and managerial
> skills, and growing concern about the capacity of the public service to attract and retain
> people with the skills that would be needed in the future (Privy Council 1997).

This diagnosis speaks to significant contradictions within the fabric of PS2000 and NPM,

which I discuss below, but also to more fundamental questions about the experimental and

perpetually-failing nature of neoliberalization. I spoke to this dynamic of neoliberalization in

Chapter 1, but it bears reviewing again here. Critical scholars (e.g., Rose and Miller 2008, 197;

Peck and Theodore 2015) speak of the perpetual cycle of failure and experimentation associated

with neoliberalization. Sometimes, these crises are small in magnitude and significance - a

housing policy that is found wanting in that it did not meet the objectives set out in a strategic

plan, or a tax that comes becomes problematized in the face of criticism from business leaders

because of potential capital flight to lower-tax jurisdictions. In other instances, crisis involves

not the problematization of particular technologies but rather of large-scale programmes, or of

political rationalities themselves: the "Great Recession," involved a massive breakdown in the

programmes and technologies of neoliberalism, from complex debt mechanisms offered by

financial institutions to monetary policy to, as the eventual election of Donald Trump would

demonstrate, the very concept of elite-led expertise in terms of free trade or even science. In the

case of neoliberalism, neither large- nor small-scale crisis has led to a fundamental

problematization of the normative logics about the supremacy of the free market underwriting the rationality, however. Rather, new solutions are introduced that seek to address the shortcomings of those introduced before them *in a manner that remains faithful to neoliberal rationalities*. Public-private partnership (P3) arrangements are developed to encourage private investment in mixed housing after previous socialized housing units are privatized, private surgical clinics are opened to deal with waitlists that have ballooned after the health cuts of the 1990s, or boutique tax deductions for the working class are implemented to mitigate the reduced purchasing power that their wages represent compared to twenty years earlier. Reforms come in waves introduced as parts of political programmes meant to address previous waves. And with every additional wave of reforms comes additional baggage to overcome, each bringing on their own unintended consequences that can later become the subject of critique and problematization. Residuals of each wave of reforms haunt succeeding reforms, and the later into the process a particular technology is developed, the more internal tensions it must overcome.

In the case of neoliberalizing bureaucracies, these tensions can be insurmountable. In particular, I speak of tensions that arise when the "shortcomings" that technologies seek to address are less "shortcomings" than they are fundamental contradictions of neoliberal governance. These contradictions arise when market-based reforms are introduced into incompatible environments. Restructuring departments and units, reforming how work is done, and making significant changes to the practices of bureaucratic institutions are substantial initiatives and require resources, primarily in the form of labour. Drastically cutting the size of public bureaucracies while simultaneously asking them to lead significant internal changes is, essentially, asking fewer people to do more work - the clerk's identification of poor morale is thus unsurprising. Moreover, not only was the federal bureaucracy (and, with their own

budgetary crises, provincial bureaucracies) given the responsibility to reform itself amidst shrinking resources, it was asked to maintain and administer and deliver publicly delivered services and programs increasingly under strain of the broader cuts. Amidst cuts to their own workforce and a massive, government-wide initiative meant to transform the way they conducted their work, bureaucrats were also asked to "keep the lights on" in terms of administering programs. More than that, cuts to programs needed to be administered - the combining of the Canada Assistance Plan and the *Established Programs Financing Act* with the Canada Health and Social Transfer (McKeen and Porter 2003, 115), for example, was not merely a matter of shutting some kind of bureaucratic valve to reduce the amount of funds flowing to provinces. Meetings needed to be held, legislation needed to be drafted and redrafted, regulations needed to be developed, policy manuals needed to be created, and endless numbers of briefing notes needed to be written. Neoliberal reforms needed, in other words, to be introduced, implemented and maintained by bureaucracies.

The baggage begins to collect as successive waves of reforms come to terms with the consequences of earlier waves' contradictions. In the provinces, for example, where the majority of public services are delivered, cuts looked differently than they did federally. Responsible for more of the programs delivered directly to citizens and residents, the provinces' decision to cut were not only focussed on transfers and grants to other institutions (such as universities, school boards, municipalities, etc) but also to direct services such as healthcare, social services, and education. The reduced transfer payments included in the federal government's broad cuts led to the provinces make cuts of their own, including both in the size of provincial bureaucracies and the services they provided (Clark 2002). Such cuts proved to be unpopular. In Saskatchewan, the NDP government's 1992 decision to close or convert 52 rural hospitals remains a common

speaking point for its Saskatchewan Party nemeses, as I will discuss in Chapters 6 and 7. Bob Rae's furlough days - "Rae Days" - remain similarly infamous. The initially severe cuts of Ralph Klein's PC were short-lived and, fueled by resource wealth, followed by an enormous expansion of services and the provincial bureaucracy. The technologies of neoliberal policy - austerity, deregulation, privatization - have consequences that are felt by citizens. And citizens, it seems, do not appreciate losing public services.

The baggage gets heavier yet as further waves of reforms and solutions try to deal with the failures of their predecessors. Under the logics of neoliberal rationality, any suggestion that shortcomings of policy reflect contradictions or shortcomings within neoliberal rationality itself is ruled out of order and outside the realm of acceptable discussion. Within this discursive formation, the fact that the type broad cuts that were prevalent in the 1990s are now politically unacceptable speaks not of the shortcomings of neoliberal rationality's underlying logics but rather of the technologies that were deployed to render those logics tangible. Failure of reforms such as NPM or market-based interventions in particular policy areas are not reflections of the logics that underwrite them but instead reflections on the technical or logistical details of the technologies. Perhaps practitioners did not follow best practice with respect to the increasingly formulaic strategies of public engagement, or did not take into consideration any one of the many complexities of "wicked problems." Whatever the case, though, the shortcomings of prior reforms were the product of errors rather than being features of the system. The baggage grows heavier and the task creeps towards impossibility as successive attempts of neoliberal reforms look for new solutions that will solve the problems that are, in fact, inherent to them.

5.4. Solving the Unsolvable: Innovate Everything

Neoliberal rationality, however, is nothing if not persistent. Despite the contradictions inherent in neoliberal reforms and the extent to which they contribute to perpetual failure, the logics of neoliberal rationality endure. The logic predicated on the claim that "government should act more like business," for example, has survived. Simple and hardwired after thirty years of repeating, it remains a profoundly resonant claim that has remained unyielding in the face of repeated failures in the experimental implementation of those technologies meant to render it tangible. Throughout the history of neoliberal rationality in Canada, as the case of public sector reforms in this chapter has demonstrated, the results of its technologies have been found lacking but the fundamental logics at its core have remained relatively unscathed. Failures of neoliberal technologies, in other words, have not necessarily led to fundamental questioning of the logics that guide them. The result is a vexing problem for the state: how to implement reforms that can avoid the failures of past reforms while remaining true to logics of the rationality that underwrite them? Or, in other words, how to introduce those private sector logics while avoiding the painful consequences that previous attempts to do so have involved?

The most recent solution that has emerged to address this impossible-seeming problem has been the wholesale adoption of "innovation" as a guiding value of public sector reform. Indeed, innovation has become an enormously popular buzzword in Canada and beyond. Internationally, this has taken form in supranational organizations facilitating and promoting innovation as a panacea for the issues facing public bureaucracies across the world. The OECD, for example, has put an emphasis on innovation and has published reports focussing on national "innovation systems" meant to promote and facilitate the diffusion (or, mobility) of "best practices" in innovation (OECD 1997; OECD 2014). The OECD, mirroring similar sentiments

within Canada, suggests that innovation is a universal good, something that needs to be pursued

by organizations, public and private alike:

> The public sector cannot be a stranger to innovation. As in the private sector, it needs to
> be able to implement novel approaches to deliver on its core functions. As technologies,
> circumstances and needs change it means that it cannot be assumed that existing
> structures, processes and interventions remain the most appropriate or most effective.
> New options must be developed and assessed on a continual, consistent and reliable basis
> in order to be ready for both expected and unexpected challenges. This is true for both the
> private and public sectors. The process of innovation must therefore take a more central
> role if government is to remain effective, relevant and suitable (OECD 2014, 3).

Academics have, unsurprisingly, joined the chorus. Sanford Borins, in a sequel to his celebration

of NPM, has taken his work international, working with the Brookings Institute (2014a) and the

IBM Center for the Business of Government (2014b) to review "best practices" for introducing

innovative practices into government. Specific to Canada in comparative perspective, Jarvis

argues that compared "to other Western governments, Canada has been slow to adopt more

innovative approaches" (Jarvis 2016, 9) before bemoaning that the Canadian bureaucracy's

inability to innovate is sabotaged by the very existence of traditional bureaucratic structure:

"Even where Canada has taken positive steps toward becoming more innovative and forward

thinking, the impact of those changes is limited by a hierarchical culture that remains steadfastly

focused on following rules and procedures" (Jarvis 2016, 9).

Despite the ostensibly slow pace of its deployment, Innovation has emerged as a central

theme in state transcripts focussed on the public bureaucracy in the twenty-first century,

culminating in the Blueprint 2020 (BP2020) initiative.[47] The initiative had its roots as early as

2011, with a committee of federal deputy ministers that eventually worked with various strategic

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[47] It is not, however, the beginning of this development. Amidst the OECD's review of the Canadian public
service's "innovation system,' it provides a useful history of the federal government's incremental adoption of
"innovation" going back to the 1990s - see OECD 2018, 24-29.

agencies within the federal bureaucracy, including Policy Horizons Canada,[48] the Privy

Council's Office, and the Canada School of Public Service.[49] "Overall," a number of

participants in the initiative later recalled in a conference paper,

> the [consultation] and its associated studies concluded that the identified change drivers
> would re-shape the Public Service's organizational design and core functions (i.e., policy
> development, program and service delivery, regulation and management). There was a
> strong consensus among participants in the study that the status quo would no longer be
> sustainable, and that the Public Service had a vital role to play in rethinking how it
> functions so as to retain its legitimacy, authority and relevance. (Edwards, Fritz and
> Kehoe 2015, 3)

Following this early consultative work and the establishment of a Byzantine governance

structure,[50] BP2020 was announced by Clerk of the Privy Council Wayne Wouters amongst

fanfare within the public service in 2013. In his opening announcement, Wouters vaguely

identified a challenging new world in which the Canadian federal bureaucracy needed to operate:

"The world in which the Public Service operates is becoming increasingly complex, and we will

need new competencies and capabilities to navigate it successfully. We must keep pace to serve

Canada and Canadians, now and in the future" (Privy Council Office 2013). Wouters made clear

that BP2020 would continue to embrace the same notions that underwrote NPM, as well as

network governance and a reliance on "best practices" in fields such as human resource

management and information technology:

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[48] Policy Horizons Canada's ambitious-sounding mandate surrounds anticipating trends with which the Canadian government will need to grapple: "identify emerging policy issues and explore policy challenges and opportunities for Canada, as well as to help build foresight literacy and capacity across the Government of Canada. Horizons' experienced futurists provide expert advice on emerging issues, foresight and scanning through one-on-one discussions, interdepartmental meetings, and facilitated workshops" (Policy Horizons Canada ND).

[49] The Canada School of Public Service is the internal training organization for public servants in the federal bureaucracy.

[50] From Edwards, Fritz, and Kehoe: The Board of Management and Renewal, a committee of deputy heads chaired by the Clerk of the Privy Council, established the Blueprint 2020 initiative, and provided strategic direction as the initiative unfolded. A Sub-Committee on Public Service Engagement (now called the Sub- Committee on Public Service Engagement and Workplace Culture), chaired by Louise Levonian, was created by the Board of Management and Renewal to oversee the Blueprint 2020 initiative. This steering committee then assembled a "tiger team" of specialized capacities" (Edwards, Fritz, and Kehoe 2015, 4).

[Blueprint 2020] includes 4 guiding principles. These are:
- An open and networked environment that engages citizens and partners for the public good;
- A whole-of-government approach that enhances service delivery and value for money;
- A modern workplace that makes smart use of technologies to improve networking, access to data and customer service; and
- A capable, confident and high performing workforce that embraces new ways of working and mobilizing the diversity of talent to serve the country's evolving needs. (Canada 2013)

The initiative involved an ambitious round of consultations within the federal public bureaucracy and resulted in a report, *Destination 2020*, and a number of follow-up reports that tracked the progress that had been made on delivering its promises. Amidst *Destination 2020's* aspirational and non-committal language about making the public service work better for Canadians and capitalizing on human resources and IT comes the clear and pervasive privileging of "innovation" as a central theme. "We always need to assess how we can serve Canada and Canadians more effectively," Wouters wrote in the *Destination 2020* introduction, "and must apply our innovation and dedication to make sure we're ready for the future - to be more effective, more efficient and to get better value for money (Blueprint 2020 2014, 1). Here, the place of "innovation" is clear - innovation provides the ability to provide public services while remaining "efficient" and getting "better value for money." In addition to efficiency and value for money, innovation also becomes synonymous with entrepreneurialism. Wouters' successor, Michael Wernick, for example, observed that since "launching Blueprint 2020 in 2013, the Public Service has worked to instill a culture where innovation is supported and valued. Recognizing the need for change, public servants are doing their part to achieve it. Their entrepreneurial spirit has impressed me" (Privy Council Office 2018, 3), a sentiment he repeats later in the report when he suggests that he was "impressed by what entrepreneurial public servants have been able to accomplish" (Privy Council Office 2018, 34). In 2017, the federal

government, along with its territorial and provincial counterparts, affirmed its commitment to

innovation through the Federal, Provincial and Territorial Declaration on Public Service

Innovation. The declaration, unsurprisingly, makes clear that the pursuit of innovation is a

common goal across all orders of Canadian government:

> Canada is a resilient, inclusive, diverse and outward-looking country. These are our strengths. But we must build on them and be even more inventive if we are to succeed in the face of rapid social, economic, environmental and technological change. Rapid innovation is now the norm in the scientific, business and social sectors. Embracing this innovation is no less important in the public sector and is crucial to building inclusive, sustainable communities. (Impact and Innovation Unit 2017a)

In addition to appeals to grand abstract concepts such as innovation and entrepreneurship,

state transcripts of the last few years include expressions that, while hardly less vague, provide

some articulation of how such innovation might be achieved. For example, the *Destination*

2020 report indicates that the public service must embrace "innovation crowdsourcing" in order

to develop new, innovative ideas to modernize the public service. Tangible recommendations

for facilitating innovation include "Red Tape Tiger Teams," borrowing a term for a type of

internal efficiency consultant from the world of industrial management theory (e.g., Wheelwright

and Clark 1992) that would seek to "identify irritants and solutions," "work from the ground up"

and "use a mixture of social media and roundtables" (Blueprint 2020 2014, 15) in order to reduce

red tape and "up the adoption of good ideas" (Blueprint 2020 2014, 12) A centralized Tiger

Team within the Treasury Board Secretariat would act as government-wide internal consultants

who would identify the "biggest irritants" in the public service and then work "with departments

to find solutions" (Blueprint 2020 2014, 15). Unsurprisingly, given the pervasiveness of public-

sector Lean initiatives that I will review in more detail in the next chapter, the report suggests

that these Tiger Teams would deploy, in addition to technological solutions, Lean:

> As a first step, several departments and agencies will collaboratively launch 'lean pilots'. Public servants will be engaged in how rules are developed and implemented. An inclusive and transparent approach will be adopted, with findings, lessons learned and actions being undertaken to reduce internal red tape and introduce 'lean' processes being regularly shared on a social media site. (Blueprint 2020 2014, 15)

I review Lean's introduction into public bureaucracies, using Saskatchewan's deployment of Lean as a case study, in great detail in the following chapters. It is, however, important to note here the significance of Lean being introduced as part of this "Tiger Team" initiative. The introduction of Lean as a solution to the vexing, impossible problem of neoliberalizing bureaucracies relies heavily on the decades-old assumption that government is inherently wasteful. This, in turn, compounds the assumptions associated with innovative solutions. The search for innovative solutions relies on the belief that *somewhere* there are solutions that will allow for government to "do more with less." Introducing Lean into the equation, predicated as it is on the wholesale identification and elimination of "waste,' indicates that at the heart of these innovation solutions will be a relentless pursuit of "inefficiencies" that unfailingly emerge in bureaucracies.

Other ideas for institutionalizing "innovation" within the operations of the bureaucracy include a "Central Innovation Hub" within the Privy Council's Office. This Hub, the report suggests, would be established in the PCO, reporting directly to the Clerk of the Privy Council, and "provide expertise and advice on emerging areas that will help change the way the Public Service does business. It will also support departments in applying new approaches - such as behavioural or 'nudge' economics, big data, and social innovation - to complex policy and program challenges" (Blueprint 2020 2014, 12). This central hub would work, the report suggests, with Innovation Labs or Change Labs responsible for trying "new approaches that

bridge policy, program and service perspectives in solving client programs." (Blueprint 2020 2014, 12).

With Tiger Teams and Central Innovation Hubs and innovation labs, Blueprint 2020 stands in stark contrast to the institutional changes that Royal Commissions in the mid-twentieth century had recommended. Those commissions typically made recommendations for institutional reform that were *prescriptive* in nature. By this, I mean that the institutional reforms such as, for example, a renegotiation of power between the Department of Finance and Treasury Board, or between Deputy Ministers and their middle management, were the solutions to problems that the commissioners had identified. The recommendations identified in more recent reports such as *Destination 2020*, however, are not as specifically prescriptive. There are few clear suggestions that resemble the simple "the government should/will pursue [a policy or program] to [meet an objective]" format. Rather, these recommendations reflect implementing institutional changes that will facilitate *further searching*. Such reports insinuate that they do not *have* the solutions to the problems facing government, but rather that *somewhere* they exist and the best way to find them is to promote a culture of innovation, through Tiger teams and hubs and labs. With these mechanisms of innovative solution-finding in place, the solutions to tangible problems facing government will somehow, sometime, materialize.

Corresponding institutional changes have accompanied the words of reports and declarations, including those establishing units within the federal bureaucracy to pursue, promote and facilitate "innovative" practices. Indeed, there now exists a sprawling network of institutional nodes within the federal public bureaucracy that share a common purpose of promoting and facilitating "innovation" in the public service. The PCO's Innovation Hub, for example, emerged in 2015 "to help transform the way in which the Federal Public Service does

its business by exploring how new policy and program tools can help address complex public

policy challenges … by establishing new business lines in impact measurement and the

cataloguing of 'what works'" (Impact and Innovation Unit 2017b). The importance of

entrepreneurialism also becomes more tangible with the Innovation Hub. The First Innovation

Hub annual report, for example, suggests that central to the Hub's mission of working "across

the Public Service to apply new tools and approaches and help create the space for innovation to

take root and thrive" are "public policy entrepreneurs - experts with specific skills and expertise

in applying innovative methods to improve outcomes for citizens" (Impact and Innovation Hub

2018, 1). The Innovation Hub has since been rebranded as the PCO's Impact and Innovation

Unit. The unit's first post-rebranding annual report suggests that the change reflected a desire

within the federal public bureaucracy to focus less on pure "innovation" and more on

implementing those innovative ideas that had been developed: "the IIU's mandate has grown to

work more actively with federal departments, other levels of government, and external partners,

to support the implementation of innovative programs and services designed to improve social,

economic, and environmental outcomes for citizens" (Impact and Innovation Hub 2018, 6).

Perhaps the clearest indication of the importance the bureaucracy has put on

"innovation," the Deputy Ministers Task Force on Public Sector Innovation was established in

2017. The Clerk of the Privy Council provided the Task Force with a mandate letter outlining

what the PCO would expect in terms of deliverables. The Task Force, the letter suggests, would

be responsible for "advancing medium- and long-term policy planning with respect to

opportunities for significant innovation and how we deliver programs and develop policy advice"

(Impact and Innovation Unit ND). The task force's mandate includes, among other things, "core

systems transformation to address outdated systems and processes" as well as other, more exotic

sounding goals to incorporate trendy and sophisticated technologies to tackle problems of the public service by "experimenting with disruptive technologies (e.g., artificial intelligence, blockchain, machine learning, etc) within government" (Impact and Innovation Unit ND). Perhaps most revealing, the mandate letter reveals that the Innovation Hub's focus on recruiting "public policy entrepreneurs" came directly from the Clerk of the Privy Council himself, who uses the Mandate Letter to instruct the Task Force to recruit "full-time Policy Entrepreneurs as a leadership opportunity dedicated to advancing the Task Force's mandate" (Impact and Innovation Unit ND).

These policy entrepreneurs have materialized in the form of the GC Entrepreneurs program. The GC Entrepreneurs are, according to the Deputy Minister Task Force, "18 public servants," recruited by the Task Force to "work on a number of initiatives aligned with [its] mandate." While there is little publicly available information that denotes exactly how the GC Entrepreneurs operate, one report states that they work "in small, diverse teams across departmental lines," and that "the GC Entrepreneurs are experimenting with new ways of advancing projects that do not have a natural home within a specific department or agency" (Impact and Innovation Unit ND). They have, ostensibly, two purposes. First, they act as internal consultants, being assigned to particular projects of priority. Second, they act as "ambassadors of innovation" by "raising awareness and inspiring public servants to apply new tools and approaches to their work" (Impact and Innovation Unit ND). In this ambassador role, the Entrepreneurs work as social media influencers. Their website is hosted on the Medium platform, independent of the canada.ca domain and hosts a series of blog posts, written from the perspective of the GC Entrepreneurs themselves that reflect on how best to promote innovation and some of the projects in which they have participated (see **Figure 5.1**). Using casual

language on the Medium blog and an active Twitter account, the GC Entrepreneurs work to create a "hip" aesthetic.

Figure 5.1 - Visualization of "Innovative Staffing," a project of a GC Entrepreneur
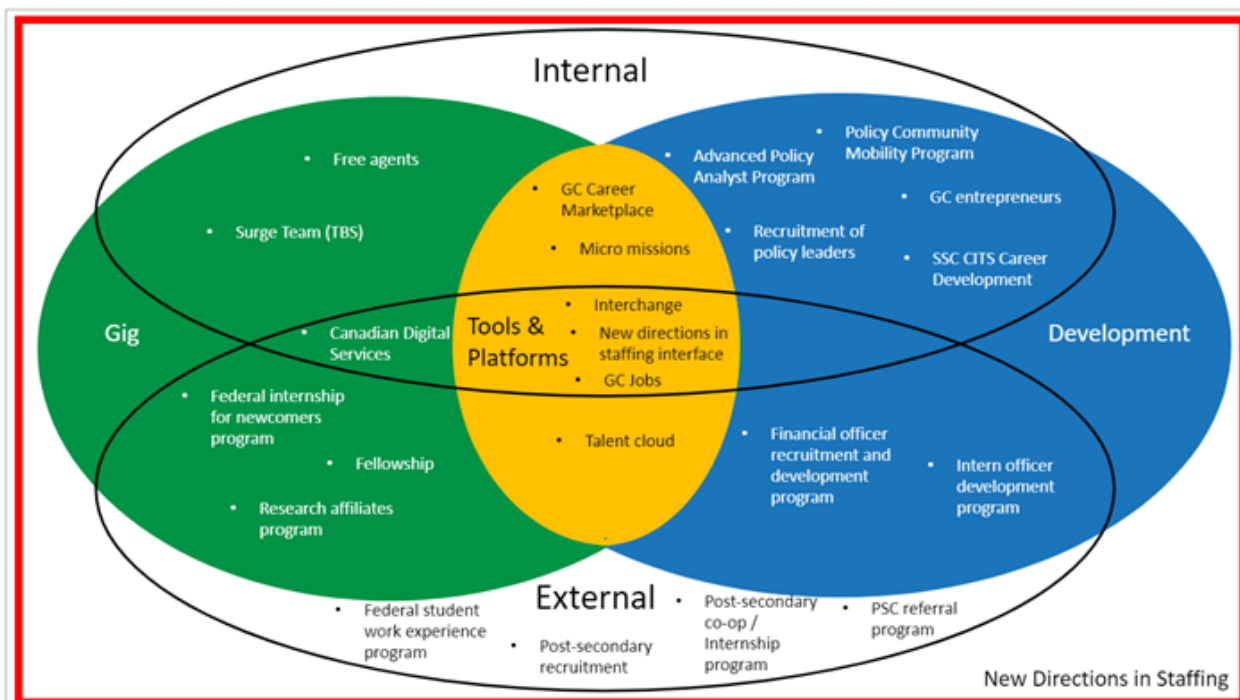
Source: Impact and Innovation Unit ND

Juxtapositioned against the stuffy and anachronistic stereotype of a government bureaucrat, these primarily young professionals seem to mirror a style that would not be uncommon in, for example, the technology companies of Silicon Valley. Given the emergence of tech jargon such as crowdsourcing, artificial intelligence and blockchain, it seems that this is not a coincidence. The bureaucracy in the 2020s, it seems, will not resemble that of the 1960s or 1970s so much as it will resemble the style of Google or Apple, relying on technology and a seemingly "nimble" workforce to innovative the state's way out of fundamental contradictory problems. Armed with these tools, these new policy "entrepreneurs" will have the freedom to take on complex problems and drive innovation. Bureaucracies must cast aside even the

appearance of the "old" bureaucracy and make way for a new, hipper, more flexible way of solving problems. Actual solutions will come, naturally, as these entrepreneurs work their magic.

Impact Canada serves as yet another program put into place by the PCO to promote and facilitate innovation. The Impact Canada program represents a series of competitions focussed on particular policy areas. "The Government of Canada is issuing challenges to Canadians and global innovators to generate innovative solutions to some of the biggest issues that face Canadians and their communities" (Impact Canada ND). There are two "signature program streams" associated with Impact Canada: the Smart Cities Challenge, which seeks "to help communities of all sizes to improve the lives of their residents through innovation, data and connected technology" and a "clean technology program stream to drive new solutions in 5 discrete areas." (Impact Canada ND). In addition to these two "signature program streams," the slickly designed Impact Canada website identifies a wide number of other challenges. A literal competition for prize money to be won by the most innovative solution to particular problems, Impact Canada's consistency with the longstanding neoliberal project of introducing increased competition into bureaucratic organizations is clear. Competition is fundamental to the potential of the free market. Somewhere, innovation exists. Government merely needs to develop the best way to find it. Introducing market mechanisms to do so seems only logical.

At face value, there is nothing particularly noteworthy about the search for "innovation." As Borins (1995) argues in his defense of NPM, innovation in the public sector merely means the search for one of two thing: brand new ideas, being implemented for the first time anywhere, or ideas that have been implemented in some organizations but are being implemented in others for the first time. This definition of innovation thus merely represents a new, decontextualized

name for policy mobility. By this definition, a program being implemented in, for example, by the Government of Manitoba that had been implemented in New Brunswick or Arizona or Wales, qualifies as being "innovative." The history of Royal Commissions and internal inquiries and reports seeking answers to how to improve the structure and operations of public bureaucracy provide ample evidence that, indeed, the search for new solutions to emerging problems is nothing new to Canada's public bureaucracy.

However, I argue that the search for innovation does not end with promoting the experimentation or adoption of new ideas. The contradictory, crisis-prone nature of neoliberalization may cast innovation as merely searching for good new ideas but it also assigns the search a superficial aspirationality. Without the ability to fundamentally question the logics that guide neoliberal assemblage-building, decision-makers are left to make, in the words of the commissioner Donald Macdonald, a "leap of faith" (quoted in Drache and Cameron 1985, xx). Somewhere in these new ideas will come a program, a policy, a regulation - a technology - that will finally allow the state to simultaneously operate by logics of the private sector while avoiding the consequences of doing so. Innovation refers not to a specific solution or even the possibility of implementing a specific solution but rather, in this context, to a conviction that somewhere, in the vague and nebulous concept of "innovation," there lies *something* that will allow government to implement technologies that satisfy these contradictory logics. It represents a faith that somehow, states will develop the ability to provide the public services and programs that the public came to expect throughout the twentieth century while simultaneously remaining faithful to and consistent with the private sector logics privileged by neoliberal rationality. There must be a way, this recent iteration of neoliberalizing bureaucracy tells us, to "do more with

less," and with observable solutions nowhere to be found, the only thing left is a vague understanding of "Innovation."

This cycle and pattern of continued searching for the best possible way to meet the abstract, perhaps impossible task set out by neoliberal rationality, demonstrates the extraordinary durability of neoliberalism. Despite the continued failure of reforms such as those laid out in Lambert or PS2000, at no point do fundamental questions of whether or not the conceptualization of efficiency in the public service that underwrites them is wise or even possible appear. Rather than giving up on the goal of introducing increasing degrees of private sector logics of competition and accountability into public bureaucracies when previous efforts have fallen short, the answer has been to reinforce these efforts with additional efforts, based on, in the absence of tangible alternatives, a vague concept of Innovation that appeals to some fundamental belief that scientific or technocratic approaches to neoliberalizing bureaucracies will, one day, successfully duplicate the inherently superior processes of the private sector. That there seems to be an increasing desire within the federal public bureaucracy to recruit and employ "policy entrepreneurs" and to reinforce an "entrepreneurial spirit" within the public service only reinforces the point. Somewhere, an innovative solution to this impossible (or, might I suggest, "wicked") problem exists. That somewhere is almost certainly within the hallowed walls of some innovative firm in the private sector, perhaps one that deploys futuristic-sounding strategies and technologies such as blockchain. The best way to capture the dynamism of that innovation and entrepreneurship is clearly to try to mimic such firms as closely as possible. Innovation may be the result of states attempting to find solutions to the contradictions inherent to neoliberal bureaucracies, but it seems that such solutions are not so far off from

earlier neoliberal reforms such as NPM. Old wine in new, Instagram-approved, systematically-designed, and crowdsourced bottles.

5.5. Conclusion

As Chapters 4 and 5 have demonstrated, the trajectory of Canadian public bureaucracies is woven through the shifting landscape of political rationalities. Whereas in earlier periods of the Canadian state, bureaucracies had emerged as their own particular sphere of expertise complete with logics and practices specific to them, the neoliberalization of bureaucracies involved disintegrating the distinction between public bureaucracies and private enterprise. The claim that government should operate more like business was repurposed and redeployed, this time as a central tenet of what bureaucracies should be and how they should operate rather than a marginal claim to be ignored or dismissed by experts and practitioners of public administration.

Programmes and technologies were put into place to render this new conceptualization of bureaucracy tangible. Initiatives such as Public Service 2000 sought to introduce practices that were consistent with NPM in the 1990s. Such reforms, however, were found underwhelming. Implemented alongside other neoliberalizing technologies of government, NPM in Canada faced serious contradictions. The practical realities of the neoliberalizing technologies of the 1990s made it difficult to implement those NPM-inspired reforms that had been recommended by the Lambert Commission and PS2000. More fundamental than that, however, the lingering spectre of Keynesian welfarism remained. Decision-makers were faced with a seemingly unsolvable problem: how to introduce neoliberalizing technologies that would avoid the painful results of earlier neoliberalizing efforts. The answer to this question, I argue, was an unflinching faith in Innovation and the belief that if innovating mechanisms could be introduced to the bureaucracy, the answer to the vexing contradictions of neoliberal governance would appear. Neoliberal

rationality has unleashed a variety of experimentations, which include the turn to Innovation (and, I will argue in the next chapter, Lean).

In the next chapter, I return again to the Lean Industry and examine how the trajectory of its genealogy intersected with that of Canadian public bureaucracies. Chapters 4 and 5 have focussed on the broad brush strokes of shapeshifting, and demonstrated that clearly, bureaucracies shapeshift alongside broader rationalities. But the brush strokes do not give opportunity to examine the extraordinary complexity associated with how this shapeshifting happens. In the next two chapters, the case study of Saskatchewan's implementation of Lean explores one site of such complexity, where the genealogical "lines of descent" of Lean and public bureaucracies in Canada meet, highlighting the localized processes of translation, friction, and assemblage-building associated with bureaucratic shifts.

- CHAPTER 6 -
Lean Experiments in Saskatchewan

6.1. Introduction

The previous three chapters have told two separate stories. Chapter 3 discussed the Lean Industry and the extent to which its experts have translated and mobilized Lean across a number of sectors, industries, and geographies. Chapters 4 and 5 traced the genealogies of Canadian public bureaucracies' shapeshifting in the face of broader changes in political rationalities, leading to the emergence of "Innovation" and the search for solutions to the contradictions of neoliberal approaches to public bureaucratic reforms. At times, these chapters describe processes that have taken place simultaneously. While Canadian bureaucracies were shifting in ways that corresponded to the emergence of Keynesian rationality, for example, engineers in Toyota's factories were dutifully experimenting with new approaches and techniques for manufacturing automobiles. As the shifting processes of neoliberalism began to penetrate public bureaucracies in the 1980s, American researchers and business insiders were travelling to Japan to learn the secret to the country's industrial success. I have told these stories in a way that has made them seem, in effect, parallel to and separate from one another.

In this chapter and the next, the genealogies of Canadian public bureaucracies and Lean finally intersect. I focus intensely on specific case study: the implementation of Lean in Saskatchewan's health bureaucracy. While Lean has now permeated public institutions across North America, as I reviewed in Chapter 3, Saskatchewan was the first jurisdiction to deploy Lean across its entire bureaucratic apparatus. This chapter examines the material and discursive specifics of Lean's incursion into public institutions. I first examine the specific form of neoliberalization that has been present in Saskatchewan, one informed not only by the broader discursive foundations of neoliberal rationalities but also by the localized political conditions in

the province. More specifically, I examine how healthcare was problematized in Saskatchewan by the conservative Saskatchewan Party and its charismatic leader (and Premier), Brad Wall. I argue that Wall's approach to healthcare mirrored the broader struggles, as I described in the last half of Chapter 5, to address fundamental contradictions of neoliberal governance. Believing that the province's healthcare bureaucracy was inherently wasteful but unwilling to repeat the same types of draconian cuts that the province had witnessed in the 1990s, Wall's Saskatchewan Party government sought a solution that would simultaneously remain faithful to the logics of neoliberal rationalities while avoiding the consequences of previous neoliberal reforms, particularly the closing of healthcare facilities in the 1990s. This, I argue, set the stage for the incursion of the Lean Industry, led by Seattle-based Lean Expert John Black, his firm, John Black and Associates (JBA), and an eager executive in one of the province's Regional Health Authorities.

6.2. Problematizing the State and Healthcare: Saskatchewan's March Towards Lean

6.2.1. Saskatchewan: A Short Political Economy

In many ways, Saskatchewan's neoliberalization resembled neoliberalization elsewhere, including a charismatic personality elected in the early 1980s promising to "fix" the "problem" of big government through privatization and deregulation. Yet for every tale of neoliberal rationality rooting itself through discourses, technologies and programmes, there are local peculiarities. Saskatchewan is no exception, both fitting the patterns of neoliberalization elsewhere and retaining palpably localized characteristics. Its place in the Canadian project was set in the formation of the Canadian state and, more particularly, within the First National Policy (Brodie 1990), the set of state policies put into place in the latter half of the nineteenth century to foster a national economic and political union. No longer afforded free access to British markets

and unable to secure free trade with the United States, Central Canada deployed a national tariff on goods, the settlement (and creation) of the Canadian West, a transcontinental railroad to construct an east-west economic union and the dispossession of land from Indigenous peoples. One result was a highly-regionalized state, with a new Canadian West created to provide a source of wheat for consumption in Central Canada and economic centres such as Great Britain and Europe more broadly (Rowell-Sirois, 1940, 77-79), a market for goods manufactured in Central Canada, and a boundary to stem American expansion (Fowke, 1957). As Western settlers arrived, they displaced the Indigenous peoples whose land had already been dispossessed through the purchases by the new Canadian government of Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company. These settlers were assigned a regionally specific role in Confederation centred upon ensuring ongoing capital accumulation in Central Canada. The newly created Canadian West was characterized by the boom-bust cycle inherent to a staples economy. The Great Depression was accordingly hard on Western provinces, with Saskatchewan and its wheat-based economy "the most severely affected" (Rowell-Sirois 1940, 163-164). This place, as an agrarian-focussed Western province, defined much of the provincial state's policies during the twentieth century. Pitsula and Rasmussen (1990) argue that Saskatchewan's history has been characterized by efforts to overcome this hinterland role, be it through the emergence of publicly owned Crown Corporations, nationalization of industries such as potash, or partnerships with private firms to construct "megaprojects." The results, historically, were mixed, leading one scholar to write that "no matter how much faster we run, we don't get ahead" (Fairbairn, 2001, 296).

Following early control by the provincial Liberal Party, Saskatchewan's political history was dominated for most of the twentieth century by the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation

(CCF) and its rebranded successor, the New Democratic Party (NDP). The social democratic party had traditionally espoused a prototypical example of a Fabian-inspired, technocratic vision of social democracy. The early "Saskatchewan leaders" of the movement, CCF-NDP cabinet minister and eventual Premier Allan Blakeney would later write, "had less disdain for the existing governmental system. In this regard, they were Fabian rather than European or agrarian socialists" (Blakeney 2007, 49). As such, the governments of Premier T.C. "Tommy" Douglas were partial to using careful, bureaucratic planning as the primary tool through which their vision could be reached. Douglas convened a committee of political economists from the University of Saskatchewan, including Vernon Fowke, to provide advice on economic development. More importantly, however, he imported British Fabian thinkers and bureaucrats, among them George Woodall Cadbury, to organize the provincial bureaucracy's structure and efforts to make good on the CCF's ambitious goals (Johnson 2004, xvi). Douglas' government put emphasis on the competency of public servants, recruiting well-educated and promising bureaucrats from across Canada to help implement the government's ambitious goals (McLarty 1979), mirroring the professionalization of the public service federally. Ultimately, many of these bureaucrats would eventually leave Saskatchewan upon the election of a Liberal government in 1963, with a number of them eventually landing in high-profile positions working for the federal government, collectively becoming known as the "Saskatchewan Mafia" (Pasolli 2009).

The NDP-CCF retained these technocratic tendencies throughout the 1970s when the party was once again in power under Blakeney. A former public servant, Blakeney also believed in a technocratic approach to governance. Blakeney's government made commitments to state intervention in the economy, and "improve[ing] living conditions for working people and narrow

income gaps between rich and poor by implementing a variety of 'social justice' policies" (Praud and McQuarrie 2001, 151). The Blakeney New Democrats employed an extensive prescription drug program that allowed Saskatchewan residents to receive prescription medications for a $3.95 flat rate (Pitsula and Rasmussen 1990, 128) and a children's dental plan that provided free dental health education, preventative services and treatment for children between the ages of four and sixteen (Pitsula and Rasmussen 1990, 129). Such social welfare policies were combined with increased state intervention in the provincial economy: "the public sector played a role in economic development, especially in the areas of oil and potash, where the government used crown corporations like the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and SaskOil as major vehicles of development" (Leeson 2009, 129). In addition to using nationalized resource enterprises like the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and SaskOil, the Blakeney government created the Saskatchewan Land Bank. Designed to increase the number of family farms in the province, the Land Bank purchased land for farming and leased it to farmers with an option to buy (Praud and McQuarrie 1990, 151). In short, the Blakeney years in Saskatchewan were marked by the deployment of technologies meant to both promote economic growth and redistribute the fruits of that growth through social programs (Harding 1995).

6.2.2. Neoliberalizing Saskatchewan

By the early 1980s, however, Blakeney's government faced the same type of sweeping critiques of welfarism that had emerged elsewhere. Interestingly, the sorts of political economic conditions that led to a crisis of Keynesian welfarism in Canada and beyond were not especially noticeable in Saskatchewan. Indeed, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the political economy of the province was favourable, fueled by high prices for both agricultural products and natural resources such as potash. Instead, the critique of Keynesian welfarism was articulated by

discourses particular to the province's political-economic history, which expressed themselves most clearly in the 1982 election. Heading into that election, the Progressive Conservatives (PCs) were led by Grant Devine, a political novice, economics professor, and enthusiastic devotee of neoclassical economics. With little political experience, Devine's electoral strategy rested on two premises: charisma and scathing critiques of the overbearing "socialism" of the NDP. With respect to the former, Saskatchewan historian Bill Waiser recalls Devine as an "irrepressible performer on the hustings, whose contagious enthusiasm knew no limits except perhaps the boundaries of the province" and who "projected a folksy, down-home image, someone who understood the province, its people, their values - but most of all their needs" (Waiser 2005, 235). Devine wove this folksy enthusiasm together with a localized version of the neoliberal critique on the Keynesian welfare state presented elsewhere by leaders such as Reagan, arguing that the NDP's approach to "big government" governance was bloated and wasteful. The PCs' 1982 election material stated that "Saskatchewan's potential has never been more clear" but that "only the government has grown rich," before suggesting that the central issue of the election was "whether we are to become servants of the government in the next decade or whether we enter a new era where our government becomes the servant of our people" (Progressive Conservatives 1992, 1). Devine argued that the NDP's interventionist governance had held Saskatchewan back for much of its history, stifling freedom and free enterprise. Using "socialism" as a pejorative shorthand for an overly bureaucratic, "old-fashioned" type of government, he argued that the contemporary moment of prosperity in Saskatchewan was the perfect opportunity to cast off the irons of this burdensome socialism and finally embrace the prosperity of the free market.

Blakeney's New Democrats, who spent much of the previous term focussed on the

constitutional mega politics surrounding the patriation of the Canadian constitution and adoption of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, were caught "flat-footed" (Waiser 2005, 235) in the 1984 election. Devine's party of political novices won a massive majority. Despite his neoclassical training and large majority, however, Devine refrained from immediately deploying broad neoliberal policies. There was no strong move toward privatization of the province's extensive crown corporations, cabinet ministers attempted to moderate ultra-conservative resolutions at party conventions, and, though they purged the public service of those they saw as NDP "subversives," the overall size of the Saskatchewan public service failed to shrink in overall size (Pitsula and Rasmussen 1990, 49-53). If their conservative base supporters and business allies were looking for a dramatic shift to more market-based policy, they were surely disappointed in Devine's playing "cat-and-mouse with the neo-conservative agenda during its first term" (Conway 2001, 98).

Devine's second term was different. Broad cuts to programs were implemented through orders-in-council, including funding reductions to school boards; layoffs at Potash Corporation; cuts to municipal funding; nursing-home fee increases; cancellation of capital construction projects; closure of the Regina branch of the province's medical school; a funding freeze to the provincial universities; cuts to the human service and support sector; cuts in legal aid; cuts in the prescription drug program; and cancellation of the children's dental plan (Conway 2001, 100). Devine's second term also saw his government's attempts at employing a more extensive privatization agenda, and "between December 1986 and November 1987, privatization moved to the top of the government's list of priorities" (Pitsula and Rasmussen 1990, 136). Devine put a number of public firms up for sale: the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation, the general insurance component of Saskatchewan General Insurance (SGI), parts of SaskTel, the

natural gas division of SaskPower, the Saskatchewan Potash Corporation, and Saskatchewan

Government Printing - "Large or small, big profit-makers or modest profit-makers, they were all

slated for privatization." (Pitsula and Rasmussen 1990, 157-158). Privatization was

controversial in a province that had a long history of Crown corporations. The most acute

controversy came with the attempt to privatize the natural gas side of SaskPower, the province's

public electricity and gas company. Despite the government's assurance that it would not

privatize the natural gas utility after splitting it from SaskPower, the gas utility, renamed

SaskEnergy, was nonetheless put up for sale in 1989. The NDP opposition walked out of the

legislature, leaving bells in the building ringing to call MLAs into the chamber for weeks

(Rasmussen 2001, 27). Eventually, public resistance proved too much, and the government

halted SaskEnergy's privatization.

Other policy changes of the time were more specific to Saskatchewan's shifting political

economy. Despite the continued presence of wheat on government stationery and license plates,

the "breadbasket of Canada" had, over time become less rural and less tied to agriculture. As

agriculture became increasingly marginalized in the political economy of the province (Fairbairn

2001, 298) and the number of family farms shrunk, rural populations moved increasingly into the

province's cities (or to those in other provinces). By the 1980s, agriculture no longer dominated

the political economy of the province. A farmer and agricultural economist, Devine had already

sought to appeal to his party's rural base. In the 1982 election, the PCs had promised to

"improve the quality of rural life" by introducing a Rural Community Development Program to

"revitalize commerce and small business in rural areas and ensure that adequate social services

and health facilities … are available in all rural areas (Saskatchewan PCs 1982). In 1986, an

increasingly unpopular Devine was resuscitated when, having asked political ally Mulroney for

help, the federal government responded with a $1 billion deficiency payment program for western farmers to help mitigate low prices for grain. "He went to Ottawa to plead his case and brought back the bucks. Then, in an open-necked plaid shirt and cowboy boots country costume, he stumped the province, taking credit for every dollar" (Spencer 2007, 184). For the PCs, "saving rural Saskatchewan and preserving the family farm and the values of hard work and community spirit that it represented" (MacKinnon 2003, 21) were a galvanizing strategy. By the end of their second term, the PCs had decided to double-down on this image of rural defenders, seeking to remake Saskatchewan's social and geographic identity by rolling back the clock and de-urbanizing the province. This culminated in the 1991 announcement of Fair Share Saskatchewan, a program through which the government attempted to move urban-based provincial government departments and their corresponding staff to rural communities (MacKinnon 2003, 21). The program, which would have transferred 1,500 bureaucratic jobs to rural Saskatchewan, came under swift opposition from the Saskatchewan Government Employees Union (SGEU) and was ultimately abandoned. It was, however, a sign of the extent to which the policy reforms under Devine were not only neoliberalizing but also reflected localized political specificities.

The heavy investment into rural communities in 1980s Saskatchewan demonstrated the messiness of neoliberalizing processes. Devine was, in many ways, a quintessential vehicle for neoliberalization. Like Mulroney, Thatcher and Reagan, his faith in "the market" to deliver public services was seemingly total, though apparently not enough to convince the Devine government to deploy an austerity-based approach in the province, particularly in rural areas. One of the strengths of examining such political events through the lens of political rationalities, however, is the ability to take into consideration such political machinations and to understand

that shifting rationalities need not be uniform marches towards some perfect ideal. It is, as I have continued to emphasize throughout these chapters, an uneven and jerky process. It is also deeply localized. While Devine effectively capitalized on the emerging neoliberal discourses, the local political contingencies prevented the rapid introduction of policies and technologies that would fulfil a platform espoused by neoclassical economists. The province's long agricultural history and the affective politics of sentimentality surrounding rural living and "the family farm" made it politically unfeasible for Devine to implement austerity in those rural areas. That the NDP remained strong in cities, requiring the Devine PCs to appeal increasingly to its rural base, reinforced the contradictory treatment of rural Saskatchewan in the 1980s. Thus, while the first wave of neoliberalization was taking shape in Saskatchewan and beyond, it was paired with increased capital and operational expenditures in the province's rural communities.

The Devine era ended with the provincial election of 1991. That year, the Devine government feared that it would lose a non-confidence vote and prorogued the legislature without passing a budget, preceding to fund government activity through special warrants, legislative tools by which executive council may appropriate funds outside the normal legislative process. Normally used for covering shortfalls near the end of fiscal years, the use of special warrants to continue governing in this way violated parliamentary precedent, putting the Lieutenant Governor in a difficult position, forcing her to reportedly give the premier an ultimatum to call an election or she would (Jackson 2001, 18). It was only revealed after the subsequent election and the PC defeat at the hands of the NDP under Roy Romanow, that PC MLAs and caucus staff had misused caucus communication funds for personal use, such as a new saddle for one MLA's horse. The resulting investigation led to the conviction of fifteen Progressive Conservative officials and PC MLAs for fraud, and appropriately brought the

Devine chapter to a devastating close – the PC party was dissolved, and its few remaining MLAs joined the new Saskatchewan Party in 1997.[51]

Romanow's first budgets were exercises in severe austerity, combining spending cuts and tax increases to deal with the large public debt left by Devine. The 1992 budget announced a ten percent deficit reduction surcharge on personal income tax, a two percent increase in the PST over two years, an increase of three cents per litre in the diesel and fuel tax, an increase in the tobacco tax, an increase in corporate tax rates, capital surcharge on resource corporations and the capital tax on financial institutions. Corresponding cuts were drastic. Transfers to hospitals, universities, schools and municipalities were reduced between two and three per cent (leading 52 rural hospitals to close or be converted to health centres), and services such as optometric care, chiropractic services and the prescription drug plan were restricted in the provincial health insurance plan (Praud and McQuarrie 2001, 156-157). In their remaining time in power, the NDP was committed to balanced budgets. Though some have argued that the era of Lorne Calvert, elected by the party as Leader and Premier when Romanow retired in 2001, signified a return to the left for the NDP (e.g., McGrane 2009), the degree to which Calvert moved to the left was negligible, ushering in policies such as drastic corporate tax reductions and loosening of resource royalty regulations (Saskatchewan 2007). Neoliberalizing Saskatchewan thus mirrored the process taking place at the national level.

As the 1990s ended, however, there was growing dissatisfaction in the province with the NDP, particularly in rural areas. In some ways, this dissatisfaction reflected the neoliberal contradictions and crises reviewed at the national level in Chapter 5. The austerity budgets introduced by the government to combat the deficits of the 1980s left little room for either the

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[51] See Conway 2001 and Rasmussen 2001 for a detailed look at the record of the Devine government.

provision of services or the maintenance of provincial infrastructure. Aging infrastructure, including schools, hospitals and highways continued to degrade with few resources available for their upkeep. These consequences of neoliberal austerity were cast through the prism of the province's political history. The closure of hospitals and pothole-riddled highways, for example, became flashpoints for opposition to the NDP government in rural areas, and both opposition politicians and rural-based media accused the government of abandoning rural areas in times of difficulty. In rural Saskatchewan, the cutbacks of the 1990s were not so much the result of austerity as much as they were part of NDP's urban-centric base and neglect of the "traditional" agricultural sector and the rural, agrarian way of life that went with it.

Opposition parties, struggling to become the "free enterprise" alternatives to the "socialist" New Democrats, had little effective representation in the provincial legislature. A number of ideas emerged to present a united opposition to the New Democrats, including a provincial wing of the newly-popular Reform party (Mandryk 1997a). Amidst these debates, however, a series of meetings were taking place between the four remaining PC MLAs and a similar number of Liberal MLAs (Mandryk 1997b). On August 8 1997, these eight MLAs announced that they were leaving their prospective parties and sitting together as part of a new provincial party, named the Saskatchewan Party (Mandryk and Braden 1997). Immediately, the governing New Democrats called the new party's novelty into question, arguing that it represented nothing more than the Devine PCs with a cosmetic makeover. Nonetheless, the party now had more members than the newly-decimated Official Opposition Liberal Party, presenting the speaker of the house with a dilemma in terms of which party would serve as Official Opposition. The speaker ultimately deciding to grant the new party Opposition status, complete with the improved resources in terms of office space and research staff that it included

(Braden 1997a).

The new Saskatchewan Party opposition framed itself as the rightful foil for the NDP, arguing that the ostensible "socialists" had benefited for too long from vote-splitting between "free market" political parties and that there needed to be one market-centred alternative to the long-governing NDP (Braden 1997b). Mirroring Devine, they argued that the twentieth century had been characterized by political and economic malaise under the NDP. They tapped into the province's collective anxieties surrounding the province's history of population loss and outmigration. A young and articulate MLA from Swift Current, Brad Wall, was notably skilled at weaving together narratives of the NDP's socialism stifling the future potential of the province. Wall had first been elected in 1997 and quickly became an effective attack dog in the Legislative Assembly. When the party's first leader, Elwin Hermanson, stepped down after losing a 2003 election that the Saskatchewan Party was widely expected to win, Wall was acclaimed leader, a role in which he continued to skillfully appeal to the province's history of political despair, demonstrating a rhetorical flourish as he framed population loss as being solely the fault of the NDP: "Parents are being left behind by their kids as they go pursue opportunities elsewhere. Grandparents are being left behind as families choose to pursue … And when any of those decide to leave, Mr Speaker, Saskatchewan loses a part of its future" (Wall 2006, 555).

The Saskatchewan Party continued Devine's use of "socialism" as a shorthand for both the overly-bureaucratic, unambitious NDP and the economic malaise that, they argued, the NDP had caused in the province. Like Devine before them, they argued that this stale socialism responsible for the province's historic stagnation had stifled the prosperity that the free market could bring to the province. Saskatchewan Party MLAs argued that the population boom of the wheat economy was possible because it predated "the socialist disease which infected this area"

(Dearborn 2006, 72), that oil companies had fled the province because of "the socialist philosophy of the government" (Dearborn 2006, 639) and, in the words of Wall himself, that the history of the province was "60 years of socialist history unimpeded by progress or an idea on how to grow the economy" (Wall 2006, 556). In a spring 2006 caucus meeting I attended as an intern in the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program, MLAs bemoaned the amount of sand - which had been spread on ice during the winter months - that remained on the sidewalks of the legislature. Another sign of the NDP's socialist mediocrity, they agreed.

To demonstrate the extent to which the NDP's stifling socialism was sabotaging Saskatchewan's economic development, the party focussed on losses suffered by the government in failed investments geared towards driving economic diversification. The Saskatchewan Party made it a priority to call into question the NDP government's competence as managers of public funds, capitalizing on a series of embarrassing, money-losing investments by the province's state-owned enterprises. Almost immediately after forming,[52] Saskatchewan Party MLAs began criticizing the practice of the province's Crown corporations investing in overseas companies, arguing that "taxpayers don't want their money, collected through huge rate increases, spent in Guyana or Australia or the Caribbean or anywhere else" and investing millions "of Saskatchewan taxpayers' money all over the world without any accountability at all" (Gantefoer 1997, 1949).

For the Saskatchewan Party, the "socialism" of the NDP was not so much an ideology as much as it was a synonym for the province's historical mediocrity. More than that, however, it was fueled not by a devotion to equality or social justice but, rather, by a *commitment* to

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[52] On the first sitting of the Saskatchewan legislature after the formation of the Saskatchewan Party, former Liberal Rod Gantefoer criticized the province's Crown Investment Corporation (CIC) for continued investments by Crown corporations abroad.

mediocrity. Wall, for example took umbrage with the use of the phrase "wee province" – first used by NDP premier and idol of the party Tommy Douglas – in their rhetoric:

> I recall very clearly the Premier [Calvert] standing in his place here and in the rotunda and other public venues where he often referred to Saskatchewan as a wee province, w-e-e. A wee province. Mr Speaker, a have province is not a wee province. A have province is a strong province. It's a prosperous province. It has largeness in terms of its capabilities, its strength, its ability to contribute to other people's weaknesses. We are not a wee province, and yet the Premier has consistently referred to this place as a wee province. (Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly 2004, 1763)

MLAs suggested that the NDP's socialism was a worldview that believed that economic growth should be avoided. By focussing on the NDP's apparent mediocre style of socialism, Wall and his party effectively argued that the NDP were the reason Saskatchewan had underperformed for much of its history. In contrast, the Saskatchewan Party characterized themselves as the party of optimism, juxtaposed against an NDP that they framed as being the harbingers of the political despair so inherent to the Saskatchewan experience (Leifso 2019, 52).

As the 2007 provincial election drew closer, Wall and the party presented themselves as the vehicle of better times ahead. The party's platform repeatedly referred to their opponents as the "tired, old" NDP who had, "for too long … squandered Saskatchewan's tremendous potential" (Saskatchewan Party, 2007, p. 2), juxtaposing it with the Saskatchewan Party, who represented a "new" Saskatchewan and the possibility for a "government with the positive vision for the future that will realize this potential" (Saskatchewan Party, 2007, p. 24). As an alternative to the NDP's policies, Wall promised lower taxes, an "innovation agenda" and a "growth agenda" predicated on giving private industry more say in the policy process (Saskatchewan Party 2007). As Enoch notes, Wall created a "binary opposition between the future and the past, with the province's social democratic past responsible for stagnation and lethargy, while the neoliberal future is associated with optimism and prosperity" (Enoch 2011, 199). Mirroring the

rhetoric of Devine twenty years earlier, the Saskatchewan Party juxtaposed the drab, burdensome socialism of the NDP with the exciting potential of the free market that only the Saskatchewan Party represented.

6.2.3. Problematizing Healthcare and "Bending the Cost-Curve"

As the Saskatchewan Party was rising, concerns over healthcare became an increasingly important thread within public debates across Canada. Indeed, throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, there was significant concern that the country's public healthcare system was "unsustainable." This concern focussed primarily on a number of issues arising in health care at the time, such as technological advances in health care equipment and pharmaceuticals, rising staffing costs for front-line service providers, and an aging population. "We are getting older," a column in the *Ottawa Citizen* proclaimed, adding that with "the rising cost of high-tech medicine and costly new medicines, our cash-strapped medicare system is going to get very expensive very quickly" (Gratzer 2000). Statistical and economic analyses predicted future growth in healthcare expenditures and offered stark warnings about difficult decisions to come. The Conference Board of Canada, for example, warned that with "health care expenditures expected to rise over the next 20 years, governments will have a difficult balancing act in terms of collecting public revenues and then allocating them among competing social programs and other important public initiatives" (Brimacombe, Antunes, and McIntyre 2002, ii). Less measured were media reports across the country that echoed the claim that Canada's healthcare system was in "crisis." In 1999, the Globe and Mail's John Ibbitson reflected on population projections in Ontario, warning of "a potential fiscal catastrophe that all governments face and that they all must somehow avoid" (Ibbitson 1999). In 2000, a *Victoria Times-Colonist* columnist insisted that "Canada's health-care system has limped from crisis to crisis since Chretien took office"

(Yaffe 2000). In the aftermath of the 1995 budget and the downloading of cuts onto provinces, worries about how the country would pay for its healthcare system were pointed.

The question of "sustainability" culminated in 2001 when the federal government appointed Romanow to a Royal Commission focused on the future of healthcare. The Romanow Commission's report made clear that claims of healthcare's "sustainability' were central to its work:

> For years now, Canadians have been exposed to an increasingly fractious debate about medicare's "sustainability." They have been told that costs are escalating and that quality of services is declining. They have heard that insatiable public expectations, an aging population and the costs of new medical technologies and prescription drugs will inevitably overwhelm the system. They have been warned that health spending is crowding out other areas of public investment. Thus one of the fundamental questions my report must address is whether medicare is sustainable? (Romanow 2002, xvi)

Ultimately, the Romanow Commission essentially rejected many concerns about "sustainability," questioning solutions that called for greater privatization or a private system parallel to the public system and suggesting that the Canadian health care system was "as sustainable as we want it to be" (Romanow 2002, xvi). Romanow essentially argued that the question of "sustainability" was a political one rather than a technical one,[53] suggesting that policymakers needed to make bold political choices. The choices Romanow preferred included large-scale reinforcement of health care services through a renewed political commitment to a publicly funded health care system, strengthening of the *Canada Health Act*, expansion of home care, and renewed, dedicated funding for provincial systems by the federal government.

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[53] To be sure, Romanow did not entirely discount the importance of "innovation" or "eliminating efficiencies" in his report: "Better management practices, more agile and collaborative institutions and
a stronger focus on prevention can generate significant savings. Technological advances can also
help to improve health outcomes and enable a more effective deployment of scarce financial and human resources. Indeed, our healthcare system is replete with examples of excellence in innovation, many of them world-class" (Romanow 2002, xv-xvi). These types of issues, however, were not of primary concern to Romanow, who focussed more on large-scale, systemic policy decisions such as expansion of home care, a national pharmacare program, and increased funding in the form of a block grant dedicated exclusively to health care (as opposed to the Canadian Health and Social Transfer).

Romanow's call for strengthening healthcare through greater investment and expansion of services notwithstanding, as the larger discussion surrounding the sustainability of healthcare continued, it came to focus less on such tangible solutions and more on finding those innovative approaches that would "bend the cost curve." Indeed, "bending the cost curve" became a preoccupation in health policy. Referring to the increasing rates of expenditure, "bending the cost curve" essentially means reducing the rate at which health costs are rising. Beyond simple cuts, however, "bending the cost curve" has come to include not only reducing the relative resources needed to keep the health care system running, but also ensuring that services do not suffer, as was the case in the 1990s as governments cut widely and deeply. Lewis and Sullivan, for example, write:

> Bending the cost curve is technically simple: governments can decide to allocate less money, just as they did in the mid-1990s. Newfoundland has budgeted a 3 percent decrease in spending for 2013-14. The combined provincial estimates call for a 2 percent increase, the smallest since the mid-1990s. Consider the cost curve already bent. The real challenge is to bend it permanently while making the system perform better. That condition is unlikely to be met without fundamental changes in accountability for performance and value. (Lewis and Sullivan 2013).

"Bending the cost curve," in other words, became healthcare's version of the "Innovation" that had emerged, as reviewed in Chapter 5, as the solution to the broader crises of neoliberal contradictions in Canada. Healthcare became a problem in need of being solved. The solution could not include a further strengthening or entrenchment of publicly funded and delivered healthcare, as Romanow recommended, but instead something that would, somehow, allow provincial governments to simultaneously maintain or improve the level of healthcare services they were delivering while avoiding both the cuts that had plagued the 1990s and the temptation to increase budgets beyond inflation. Healthcare was in trouble, the story went, and only some innovative way of "bending the cost curve" could solve the problem.

This problematization of healthcare and the need to "bend the cost curve" found an enthusiastic vehicle in Brad Wall and the Saskatchewan Party. Saskatchewan, as McIntosh and Marchildon argue, is "not a province like all the others when it comes to health care." Canada's universal, single-payer healthcare system originated in Saskatchewan, culminating in the 1962 doctors strike when the province's physicians walked off the job for two weeks before acquiescing in exchange for the assurance they would continue operating as independent, autonomous businesses. This history, fueled by the provincial CCF-NDP propagating its myth, has a strong resonance in its political fabric. As such, the politics of health care have remained a constant presence in the province's electoral politics, and Saskatchewan's political history is dotted with attempts to renew or reform its healthcare system. Such attempts mirror the changing demographics of the province's population, changes characterized by greater urbanization and a shift away from its traditional agricultural nature. The province's central healthcare committee released a report in the 1960s (Saskatchewan 1963) recommending closure of a small number of rural hospitals, a recommendation that was followed by the Liberal government of the time. The angry reaction from rural residents was swift, and contributed to the Liberal government's defeat and the return of an NDP government (Houston 1990, 468).

In the 1990s, the NDP sought to make healthcare improvements that would have long-lasting consequences for health policy in the province. In the early 1990s, the government publicly proclaimed that it would shift healthcare to a "wellness model" that sought to move the focus of the system from tertiary and acute care towards primary care and preventative models of medicine. Despite these goals, however, the initiative coincided with austerity politics of the 1990s. In the 1995 federal budget, the Chretien Liberals, focussed on reducing the federal government's own budget deficit, famously cut financial support for provincial medicare

programs through the elimination of two transfers under the umbrella of the much-reduced Canada Health and Social Transfer. This compounded an already-difficult fiscal situation in the province, the result of large deficits and public debt accrued by the Devine Conservatives and threats from credit bureaus to severely downgrade the province's credit rating. The Romanow NDP, like social democratic governance elsewhere, turned to "third way" governance and its own form of austerity politics, cutting health and social services throughout the province while instituting a provincial sales tax of 7%. Within this context, the move towards the "wellness model" became less about shifting the focus of the provincial healthcare system from acute and tertiary care and more about cost reductions. The "wellness model," as a result, became synonymous with cuts to services and in "particular, the closure or conversion of 50 small rural hospitals as part of the province's rationalization of acute care delivery in Saskatchewan gave rise to a public perception that the 'wellness agenda' was, in fact, merely a code for neo-liberal fiscal restraint that undermined Tommy Douglas' vision of accessible, publicly funded care" (Marchildon and Macintosh 2009, 338). In Saskatchewan, the cuts and restraint fit neatly into the broader anxiety about "sustainability" in healthcare.

In the context of urbanization and concerns over the reduction of population and services in small communities, the closure and conversion of rural hospitals was not merely a sign of austerity, but a sign of intensifying loss of "rural life." Foreshadowing the Saskatchewan Party, the Progressive Conservative and Liberal parties had made heavy use of the closure of the rural hospitals in their critiques of government throughout the 1990s (Swenson 1993, 1009; McPherson 1995, 246; Toth 1998, 958). Family physicians and general practitioners, often the only health providers in shrinking rural communities, left in search of more lucrative offices with less responsibility to provide around-the-clock care, also becoming fodder for opposition attacks

on the NDP.

Given the importance of healthcare in Saskatchewan's political history and the resonance

of the "healthcare crisis" across Canada, then, it was unsurprising that the Saskatchewan Party

made it a pillar of its larger critique of NDP governance. The Saskatchewan Party appealed to

the notion of a "crisis" (Wood 2007) in Saskatchewan's healthcare system, one caused by an

uncaring technocratic NDP that privileged urban areas over rural and the preferences of policy-

makers and practitioners over "regular" people in the form of patients. For the Saskatchewan

Party and its rural base, the closure of the hospitals was merely another example of the NDP's

inability to serve rural residents' interests. In some cases, they incorporated memories of the

hospital closures into their critiques of out-of-province investments by the province's Crown

Corporations:

> Mr. Speaker, before the 1991 election, there wasn't one word about hospital closures in the election campaign of the NDP. After the election — I believe it was 1992 — we saw 52 rural hospitals gone.
>
> Now the problem also with that, Mr. Speaker, I guess the question you would ask is, did it save money? Well if it did, we don't know where it went, Mr. Speaker. Maybe in dot-coms down in the States or money in Australia, investments this government has made, but the people of Saskatchewan did not see the benefit for closing 52 hospitals. (Bjonerud 2004, 708).

The Saskatchewan Party also framed the healthcare system as cold, bureaucratic, and

unresponsive. To do so, it utilized a strategy that colloquially came to be known as "patient of

the day." Frequently during the Legislative Assembly's session, the Opposition would meet with

patients who had difficult experiences in the healthcare system. They would then invite them to

sit in the public galleries of the Assembly and, with their questions during the daily Question

Period, refer to the patients' individual cases. The Minister of Health would then uncomfortably

rise to answer the question in front of the patient.[54] These questions were typically emotionally-charged, focussing on the difficulties facing patients rather than on the resource-allocation priorities of government. In 2006, the Opposition devoted several entire Question Periods to the case of an 18-month old girl named Paige Hansen, who the Opposition named "Baby Paige":

> Having heard nothing from Saskatoon by Tuesday, Michelle, Paige's mother, rushed her daughter to emergency at Royal University Hospital. Michelle was told that Paige would require an MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] and a bone scan. And at this time, she was informed that the MRI was not working and that she would have to wait three weeks for a bone scan. Paige stayed in the hospital overnight. All that could be done for her without a diagnosis was to continue with the antibiotics and the painkillers. Mr. Speaker, is this acceptable that an 18-month-old screaming in pain should be forced to wait three weeks for diagnostic testing because of equipment failure and because of waiting lists? (Harpauer 2006, 1280).

Stories of Paige Hansen and other patients of the day were woven through a broader critique of an unresponsive healthcare system that had left Saskatchewan's residents and patients vulnerable and precarious. For the Saskatchewan Party, healthcare was symptomatic of the larger problems pressing Saskatchewan. An enormous, bureaucratic system that prioritized the preferences of policy-makers and health practitioners more than it did individual Saskatchewan residents, the health system was symbolic of the NDP's comfort with stuffy, bureaucratic solutions. Moreover, given that the Ministry of Health's budget represented over 40% of the budget (like other provinces), Health represented the most obvious target for the Saskatchewan Party's critiques of NDP governance. Dissatisfaction opened space for the Saskatchewan Party to offer its solutions.

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[54] I served as an intern in the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly in 2006, attending every Question Period for the spring session. Patient of the Day was a common theme in that session. Typically, the health critic (or the MLA for the patient's riding) would rise in the house and ask the question. The House, normally rowdy and noisy with heckles to the point that spectators are unable to hear either questions or answers, would become essentially silent as the critic would put forward emotionally charged stories of patients facing unreasonable wait times, being denied life-extending (but expensive) cancer drugs, or being misdiagnosed. The minister would typically rise, give a boilerplate acknowledgement of the difficulty facing the patient and then provide a technical answer about the responsibility of RHAs to deliver the day-to-day health services of the province. The room, in every occasion, was palpably tense.

Wall and the Saskatchewan Party identified a number of strategies for dealing with the healthcare "crisis." First, they promised to increase the number of healthcare practitioners in the province significantly. Here, they found unlikely allies in provincial health unions, and in particular the influential Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN). In the years and months leading up to the 2007 election, SUN provided bountiful fodder for the Opposition by arguing that the province's healthcare system was acutely understaffed, particularly of (and, given the source, unsurprisingly) registered nurses (e.g., Wood 2007). The Saskatchewan Party capitalized on SUN's proclamations, going so far as adopting them as their own policies, frequently quoting SUN president Rosalee Longmoore to lend their own critiques more credibility (Wall 2006a, 1727) and including a quote by Longmoore about the government's "inaction" on staffing shortages representing "an organized effort to use the nursing shortage as an excuse for closing beds and closing rural facilities" in their 2007 election platform document (Saskatchewan Party 2007).[55] Wall's party capitalized on the Minister of Health's unwillingness to indicate how many nurses the province should employ by suggesting that it was a symptom of the NDP's comfort with status quo and mediocrity, arguing that the government had given up providing goals at all and, thus, had essentially abandoned a vision for the province (Wall 2006b, 1782).

Third, and most importantly, the Saskatchewan Party called for some sort of audit of the healthcare system. Wall and his party used different terms and shifting foci for the audit - a "patient first audit," a "value-for-money"[56] "value-for-money, patient first money." Early discussion of the audit indeed focussed primarily on finding vaguely-defined "efficiencies" in the

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[55] In government, the Saskatchewan Party would negotiate its first collective agreement with a health union with SUN, giving the province's registered nurses a 35% raise in 2007.

[56] "Value-for-money" audit is one term, alongside "performance audit," that refers to an audit that looks for not only the financial irregularities, particularly in the public sector, of a "normal" audit but also whether or not particular government programs are "efficient and effective." For 18 months in 2012-2013, I was a Manager of Performance Audits in the Office of the Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan.

healthcare system to best utilize the resources dedicated to health. This idea was crystallized in Saskatchewan Party policy, with the party's 2005 policy document that suggested that a Saskatchewan party government would "complete a value-for-money audit of the provincial health care system," (Saskatchewan Party 2005, 24), something that would remain in the party's 2007 policy guide as it headed into an election that year (Saskatchewan Party 2007b). Saskatchewan Party MLAs indicated that "no amount of tinkering or short-term fixing will actually solve the problem. What's needed is a complete patient first audit of the health system" (Stewart 2007). For his part, Wall publicly questioned the proportion of the health budget that was dedicated to administrative costs, suggesting that in the case of an audit, "the question is, are we right sized in terms of management versus health-care providers" (Wood 2007). The NDP, keen on tying the Saskatchewan Party to the PCs' history of austerity and privatization, claimed that this audit represented an exercise in cuts (Taylor 2007, 1350). In the face of such accusations, the Saskatchewan Party then focussed not only on auditing the system for inefficiency or waste, but also for the patient experience. Wall told supporters that such an audit would focus on administration and management costs and reducing inefficiencies, with an emphasis on ensuring "patient care ahead of paper-shuffling" (Quoted in Warren 2007). All it would take to "fix" healthcare, then, would be to take care of those inefficiencies that were so inherent to the bureaucratic, "socialist" way of doing things as espoused by the NDP.

As was expected, Wall and the Saskatchewan Party won a large majority in 2007 and within a year, had made good on their campaign promise to commission a "patient-centred audit," now under the name "Patient First Review." The government named Tony Dagnone, a long-time health executive in British Columbia, to lead the review. Dagnone was given the mandate to consult with patients and healthcare providers and complete an administrative review

of the entire healthcare system (Dagnogne 2008, 60). He divided the mandate into two separate

inquiries, essentially mirroring the way Wall and the Saskatchewan Party had framed their own

solutions for the healthcare system. The first focussed on the "patient experience" and the other,

on the management and function of the healthcare system. "Unlike previous reviews of the

health system," he wrote, "the Patient First Review is unique in its focus on the care and caring

experience" (Dagnogne 2008, ii). After a year of researching the province's system, and aided

by management consultants from audit firms KPMG and Deloitte, Dagnogne's report mirrored

issues that Wall had emphasized, and reflected the healthcare reforms that the Saskatchewan

Party had called for:

> It is possible to improve the quality of health care in Saskatchewan AND control health care's spiralling costs. In fact, best quality practice can, in many cases, result in savings to the system. Other industries have long understood the costs of poor quality; when something isn't done right the first time, there are inevitable costs associated with repairing the damage that is done. In health care, this waste, redundancy, and ineffectiveness means increased cost to the patient (and to society), not to mention increased risk of harm from multiple unnecessary procedures, adverse effects of medication changes, infections from longer hospital stays, and progression of disease caused by delay in receiving the right care. (Dagnone 2009, 3)

For Dagnone, then, the prescription for improving healthcare in Saskatchewan would include

containing costs - bending the cost curve - while somehow also maintaining *or improving*

services. Refering to what "other industries have long understood," he appealed to the logics of

the private sector to highlight "waste, redundancy and ineffectiveness." The publicly funded,

publicly delivered healthcare system was inefficient, bloated, and ineffective. As such, it did not

take the "patient experience" seriously, focussing more on the needs of "the system" and

providers than patients, who he sought to redefine as "customer-owners" (Dagnone 2009, 15).

By eliminating the waste, as other industries had done, a more efficient and humane healthcare

system could be achieved. Dagnone, in other words, was clearly articulating solutions for the

healthcare problems that were consistent with both the problems and his party had identified, as well as the broader pattern of innovation that had emerged. Lean would find a welcome home here.

6.3. The Lean Industry Comes to Saskatchewan

6.3.1. The Expertise of John Black

A Vietnam veteran-turned-folk-singer,[57] John Black's emergence as a Lean consultant and his role in the implementation of Lean throughout Saskatchewan is a prototypical story of the Lean Industry. Black began working at the Boeing aeronautical company in the late 1970s, where he remembers introducing concepts that he had learned during his time in the army: "With the army, I had conducted my own research into waste - specifically, waste in war - and I soon discovered that many of the same concepts applied to the corporate realm" (Black 2016, 58). It was from his experience at Boeing, Black writes, that he developed his "understanding of the infrastructure needed to drive change in healthcare came" through his time "in the trenches of the 'quality revolution' of the 1980s, first in 1980 for the Boeing Commercial Airplane Company (BCAC) 757 airplane program, then moving to Boeing Aerospace the company's military division in 1982, and working for BCAC again in 1985" (Black 2016, 17). Boeing executives had visited General Electric to learn components of Lean-based *Just-in-Time* production systems, implementing JIT workshops with the help of a management consultant through what became known internally as Accelerated Improvement Workshops (AIWs) (Leitner 2005, 264). Black, having participated in one such workshop, was an important actor in the expansion of the practices throughout the rest of the company.

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[57] Black's folk music focuses primarily on his time in the military and Vietnam. He has a Youtube page with performances of his songs, which include "Roll on Russia," "Dear Dad" and "Vietnam I'm Dreaming On."

In the 1990s, Boeing became one of the many companies, as I described in Chapter 3, that looked to Japan in order to emulate the practices taking place within their factories and industrial settings. By 1990, the firm had moved increasingly towards implementing Lean tools across its operation. Black recalls,[58] however, being unsatisfied with the extent to which the company had implemented a "culture" of high performance, insisting to the company's executives that in order to perform better, management and staff needed to see Lean in its original Japanese setting: "I believed that, to move Boeing to the next level of performance, we needed to go to Japan to study world-class companies and then create a new vision for Boeing. I walked the halls telling anyone who would listen that just because we had 60 percent market share for commercial airliners didn't mean we had world-class metrics. It was a tough sell" (Black 2016, 60).

Boeing's first corporate trip to Japan took place in 1990, a visit that lasted two weeks and included tours of Toyota, as well as Hitachi and Komika facilities. The exercise, writes Black, opened participants eyes, with one manager commenting "Thank God Toyota is not in the aerospace industry" (Black 2016, 61). Boeing's staff participated in six more such study tours to Japan in the following year, with 99 executives including "chairman and CEO Frank Shrontz and all of Boeing's presidents, general managers, and other executives, down to the director level." After receiving training from consultants and engineers in Toyota, Boeing managers then began training the company's staff internally in the ways of Lean. In the next two years, an additional 100,000 employees were trained by Boeing managers in Lean basics (Black 2008a, 34; Leitner

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[58] It should be noted here that not every account of Lean's emergence at Boeing frames Black as the primary figure in Boeing's adoption of Lean as he does in his own book. While Leitner (2005) emphasizes the importance of the Japanese research trips, for example, he does not include the same anecdotes about Black seemingly single-handedly convincing senior managers of Boeing that these trips were required, though he does corroborate that Black would become the director of the company's Lean Manufacturing Office.

2005, 245) - a strategy of training senior leadership before those below them that were later used in Saskatchewan.

The initial years of Lean's implementation at Boeing, however, were marked by scattered and uncoordinated effort. Different components of Lean were being implemented in different areas of the company with varying levels of enthusiasm, and were conceptualized within the company as "stand-alone initiatives, competing with one another, rather than as parts of a Lean production system" (Leitner 2005, 265). The company's approach to Lean consolidated during the 1990s, ultimately leading to the creation of a Lean Manufacturing Office, under the direction of Black, in 1996 (Leitner 2005, 269). Black, then, developed his authority and legitimacy as a "Lean expert" by being a first-hand participant in the implementation of Lean in an industrial setting and, as such, a participant in an important "laboratory" in which Lean and the lessons of Toyota were translated for implementation in a different industry and a different country with a different language and culture.

Boeing also began to contract with additional Lean experts with direct ties to the original Toyota engineers who had developed the Toyota Production System in the 1960s. In particular, Boeing contracted with Shingujitsu, the consulting firm founded by former Toyota engineers who had reported directly to Taiichi Ohno (described in Chapter 3), the "father" of the Toyota Production System. Foreshadowing his later insistence that clients adopt and use the original Japanese terminology in their Lean work, Black reflected on the importance of finding proper Lean *senseis*: "However, in my view, the point at which Boeing became truly committed to [World Class Companies'] principles was the introduction of *senseis* to Boeing with the mission to implement the Toyota Production System." These *senseis* - consultants, according to the only other published work on the subject (Leitner 2005) - facilitated Lean's growth within Boeing,

eventually introducing an increasing number of Lean processes "such as distribution kaizens, production preparation process (3P) workshops and Heijunka" (Leitner 2005, 265). For Boeing, the *sensei*'s authority was derived directly from their lineage, as I described as being typical in Chapter 3, to the original source of Lean. According to one executive, the value of the Shingijutsu consultants' contribution was grounded in their connection to Taiichi Ohno:

> They [the principals] worked for him and absorbed his thinking and philosophy. Then they created a way to pass this on to others. Their way is very Zen-like. They are able to link to people by using everyday examples to explain their thinking. Genba kaizen – getting people out of their offices [to see how work is actually performed in workplaces with their own eyes – is unique. (Quoted in Shingijutsu 2017).

Onsite work by Shingijutsu's *senseis* was complemented by further trips to Japan, this time to work with Shingijutsu's Lean experts with the explicit goal of learning about Lean and the Toyota Production System, versus the broader set of approaches studied in the earlier visits. From 1995-1998, a reported 1,500 Boeing executives travelled to Japan, where they spent a week of intensive training with the Shingijutsu's *senseis*, learning the ways of the almost cult-like leader, Ohno.[59]

Ultimately, Black, like many others in the Lean Industry, would capitalize on his growing expertise and become a management consultant. In 1999, he "retired from Boeing with the intention of offering what [he] knew about Lean to other companies in other industries" (Black 2008, 36). Black partnered with his wife, a former Boeing employee with her own firm and they changed the name of her consulting firm, Poggetti and Associates, to John Black and Associates, effectively capitalizing on the name recognition and claims to expertise that Black had developed

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[59] One of the effects of Boeing's adoption was the company's development of a cadre of Internal Lean Experts as described in Chapter 3: "Today, the Shingijutsu consultants are called upon for approximately 120 consulting weeks per year [by Boeing]. The intensive amount of training of the years has enabled Boeing to build up a strong internal resource of highly trained Lean consultants. Approximately 200 full-time Boeing employees are Lean experts, and 300 additional employees are well trained and operating in various areas of the organizations. These Lean experts are called up for a significant amount of the Lean direction. These days, Shingijutsu is utilized only for very complex issues" (Dirgo 2006, 26).

at Boeing. Here, Black followed a well-traveled path: developing the skills associated with

Lean, participating in the approach's "successes" in a specific laboratory and then using that

experience as a source from which he could draw authority in his claims of expertise, proof that

he could implement lessons from the laboratory in any setting. Like so many other Lean experts

before him and more to follow, Black turned his claims of expertise into a proprietary service.

It was as a consultant in his firm that Black participated in mobilizing Lean to yet another

setting and industry: healthcare. Black writes that he was hesitant to work with healthcare

organizations:

> I was warned by consulting veterans to avoid three areas: government, education, and
> healthcare. Because these areas were so inwardly focused, they said, large-scale change
> would be a "nightmare." Furthermore, they added, 'healthcare as an industry is probably
> the least capable of changing because of its cottage-like structure (i.e., fragmented among
> many independent medical providers and facilities). So, as I began my consulting work
> helping organizations successfully and profitably apply [Lean] to their own operations, I
> avoided these three areas. (Black 2016, 1)

Black's resistance to working in healthcare notwithstanding, a chance encounter with a

healthcare executive in search of solutions provided him with an apparently irresistible

opportunity to spread the influence of Lean. In November 2000, on a flight between Seattle and

Atlanta, Black was seated next to Mike Rona, the president of Virginia Mason hospital, a non-

profit hospital in Seattle. Black, the story goes, "recounted some of his work and showed Rona a

PowerPoint presentation about the Toyota Production System. Rona was fascinated by the

conversation and on his return to Seattle, he read Black's book, *A World Class Production

System"* (Kenney 2011, 10). Impressed, Rona introduced the book and its concepts to Gary

Kaplan, Virginia Mason's CEO. Kaplan was apparently intrigued by Black's pedigree at Boeing

and the successes that Lean had at that company and others (Kenney 2011, 10). The senior

leadership at Virginia Mason began to seriously consider contracting with Black to implement Lean in the hospital.

Black's work at Virginia Mason hospital, even more than his work at Boeing, provided him with the credibility and exposure as a Lean expert within the broader Lean Industry. He has been recognized as having played a "key role in initiating Lean transformation at the Virginia Mason Medical Centre" and for being "a visionary and innovator in Lean healthcare" on whose shoulders consultants working in Lean stand (Graban 2014), a legacy captured in books about Lean in Virginia Mason (e.g., Kenney 2011; Graban 2012; and Pisek 2014). Through this participation in Lean's ostensible successes at Boeing and Virginia Mason, Black attained a record that that afforded him the ability to describe his past successes in a way that both gave him some level of influence and authority within the Lean Industry and, accordingly, let him market his successes to potential future clients. Indeed, Black used his time at Virginia Mason as the basis for the first edition of his book, *The Toyota Way to Healthcare Excellence* (2008). In the book, Black both recalls his work at Virginia Mason while simultaneously providing lessons, advice, and "best practice" for healthcare executives and managers who are interested in pursuing their own "lean Journey." In the book, Black refers to himself almost as inseparable from the staff and management at Virginia Mason as he recalls Lean's enormous success in the hospital:

> Since Virginia Mason started on its Lean journey, we've conducted nearly 500 Rapid Process Improvement Workshops. Almost every one of them has led to significant improvements— at least a 50 percent reduction in time, space, or the need for other resources. In areas of major focus, we've seen defects go to nearly zero. We've experienced improvements in hospital length of stay, wait times to see a doctor, face-to-face time for patients with their physicians, time to get lab results, and even time to get the bill sent out. Lean works! (Black 2008b, xii)

This passage, and others like it sprinkled throughout the book, serve two purposes. First, they establish that Lean is a viable tool for use in healthcare settings, as demonstrated by the "laboratory" of Virginia Mason hospital. Secondly, and more importantly, they emphasize Black's role in that success, reinforcing him as a Lean expert with a proven track record of implementing Lean in different settings. By framing himself as a prestigious Lean expert with a record of success, Black underwrote the utility of his proprietary "best practices" while marketing himself as a consultant to those who might read the book. Like the books of other management consultants, Black's sought to create a world in which he was expert, in which his interpretation of Lean's tenets was influential, and in which hiring him was a certain step for success.

A Lean Solution for a Grasping Province

Within the context of the problematization of healthcare, staff and management within Saskatchewan's health bureaucracy were searching for solutions. Research and policy staff within the Ministry of Health were tasked by management to research the various "quality improvement" approaches being used in healthcare settings in other jurisdictions. One member of the Ministry of Health's staff remembers the time as being slower because of the impending election and the inability of government to make announcements[60]:

> This was almost a time when we were like finding shelter from the election. We were doing dueling briefing binders of options. Various things would've been in there like how many health regions we should have. Value for money audits. All these types of things. … here's an opportunity for change. We've got some ideas and we think they're good, let's kick some tires, let's professionally research them while we have time because we don't often do that, or have time to do that (Interview 15).

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[60] Saskatchewan's elections legislation limits the provincial government's ability to publicly communicate in the period leading up to general elections.

In addition to audits, improvement approaches included, amongst others, Total Quality

Management (TQM), Dashboarding, Balanced Scorecards, and Lean Management.[61] In these

early years, Lean was but one of a number of options being explored by research staff in the

Ministry, a subject of curiosity that drew the attention of its policy and research staff. One staff

member recalls that early in 2008, they were "just starting" to pay attention to the efforts being

made at Seattle's Virginia Mason hospital, one of the first laboratories in which Lean was

deployed in a clinical setting (Interview 17). Staff in the Ministry were asked by management to

begin conducting more in-depth research into Lean, not as one among many, but as the primary

method for quality improvement. Environmental scans, documents in which examples of Lean's

use in a variety of medical settings, particularly in the United States, were developed to

demonstrate the utility of Lean within healthcare settings.

Meanwhile, as the Ministry of Health was doing preliminary research about the use of

Lean and other "quality improvement" initiatives in different jurisdictions, one of its RHAs was

experimenting with Lean implementation under the watch of an ambitious and curious CEO.

Dan Florizone was a career health executive in Saskatchewan when he was hired to act as Chief

Executive Officer (CEO) of Five Hills Regional Health Authority (Five Hills). In interviews,

Florizone suggests that his first encounter with Lean took place in 2005, when he took part in a

John Black-led Rapid Process Improvement Workshop (RPIW) – or *Kaizen* – at Virginia Mason.

The experience left a strong impression on him: "I'd never witnessed that in action. What I saw

at Virginia Mason was unification, articulation, demonstration, and full deployment of patient-

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[61] Total Quality Management, yet another derivative of work done in Post-War Japan, refers to organizations in which all employees are dedicated to the perpetual improvement of their work and products, similar to *kaizen* within Lean jargon (see Powell 1995 for a history of TQM). Dashboarding is a method of tracking key performance indicators (KPIs), using "dashboards" to visualize performance indicators. Balanced Scorecards are another visualization technique, focussing not only on performance indicators but also vision, mission, and goals of an organization.

and family-centred care. All of a sudden it came together. And I've been moving Lean forward as a management system ever since" (Saskatoon Health Region 2016). It took Florizone little time in bringing the lessons he obtained in Seattle to his work in Five Hills. In January 2006 he communicated to staff in the region that one of Five Hills' strategic priorities for the year would be to "improve the quality of [its] services and workplace through the active participation and input of staff" by "further develop[ing] Rapid Process Improvement Workshops that involve these front line providers and their manager in developing, evaluating, and implementing rapid change" (Five Hills 2006, 2). From 2006-2008, Five Hills experimented with Lean tools with increasing frequency, implementing pilot projects in areas such as workplace safety, tickets for maintenance projects, scheduling of colonoscopies, and inventory counting on supply carts (French 2011). Internal and external documents show that using Lean tools where possible had become official policy within the region by 2007 (Five Hills 2007a, 28) and by 2009 had become one of the defining values for how the region was undertaking its business (Five Hills 2010a). As Lean projects became more common in the region, staff were increasingly expected to undertake Lean training, participating in training sessions provided by contracted Lean consultants and "experts" that led them to obtaining certification through symbolic "belts" reminiscent of martial arts – Lean green belts, Lean black belts, etc.

In its earliest experimentations with Lean, the Saskatchewan healthcare bureaucracy sought out additional Lean experts to help roll out projects. Five Hills contracted with Lean Advisors Inc, a Lean consulting firm led by a former CEO of the Lean Enterprise Institute, the thinktank and research institute founded by the original Lean experts (which would, eventually, merge with the Kaizen Institute, founded with an engineer who had worked with Ohno).   The introduction of Lean into Five Hills was further facilitated by the presence of a Lean expert in

the region's main centre of Moose Jaw. Dale Schattenkirk had emerged at the local

manufacturing plant of international cable manufacturer, General Cable, as a Lean specialist.

First introduced at an "Open House" at General Cable, Florizone recruited Schattenkirk to work

with Five Hills and help to introduce Lean into the region and, more specifically, Moose Jaw's

local hospital (Fine *et al.* 2009). Schattenkirk became an important actor within Five Hills' Lean

experimentations. He joined a provincial delegation of healthcare providers and managers on a

study trip to the United Kingdom to learn about the NHS's *Releasing Time to Care* program,

which had been an early experimentation of Lean concepts in healthcare. By 2007, he had

become a manager within the region, with the title of Process Improvement Quality Manager,

leading a unit called the Pursuing Excellence Section. Schattenkirk's unit was tasked with,

amongst other quality improvement tasks, facilitating "improvement of processes of using [Lean]

to obtain efficiencies and effectiveness while reducing waste," and advising "managers and

teams on Lean tools" (Five Hills RHA 2007b, 121). Schattenkirk, in effect, became

Saskatchewan's first public sector Internal Lean Specialist, an import from the private sector

tasked with introducing the technologies of Lean into the public healthcare system. As I explore

further below, Schattenkirk would later found his own consulting firm, working with other

provincial governments to introduce Lean into their public bureaucracies.

Lean's early emergence in Saskatchewan, then, was the product of a number of

incursions by the Lean Industry. Florizone had attended a workshop at the Virginia Mason

Hospital in Seattle. From there, he sought to import Lean experts into his health region to help

facilitate the growth of Lean in its practice, including contracting with a Lean consultant and

recruiting a Lean expert to serve as an internal Lean specialist. Five Hills RHA had identified a

problem, one that was broadly identified within healthcare in Canada and beyond, and the Lean

Industry had the solution. Certainly, there was a certain degree of serendipity at play -

sometimes, practices such as Lean simply "stumble into" spaces in which they find hospitable

settings. Be they a chance encounter between Black and the CEO of Virginia Mason or

Florizone's attendance at a *Kaizen* workshop, these seemingly coincidental intersections are

important. It would be a mistake, however, to put too much emphasis on serendipity. Doing so

would ignore what I demonstrated in the previous three chapters - that the trajectory of the

genealogies of Canadian bureaucracy and the Lean Industry had been slowly, incrementally

converging for a generation. More specifically, in Chapter 3 I explored the extent to which the

Lean Industry has facilitated the translation and introduction of Lean into new settings,

industries, and sectors. As the discursive foundations of public bureaucracies and public policy

in Canada shifted towards neoliberalism and the search for solutions to crises in the

neoliberalization of the state, the Lean Industry was there with answers. The individuals and the

circumstances in which they met might have been the product of serendipity, but the pattern of

Lean's incursion into public bureaucracies is the story of a political project by a network of

experts made possible by shapeshifting of bureaucracies.

6.3.2. "Excited Chaos": Lean Travels to Saskatchewan's Provincial Healthcare Bureaucracies

The early Lean experimentations at Five Hills drew attention in Saskatchewan. In 2006,

Deputy Minister of Health John Wright reported to the province's Public Accounts Committee

that he was "taking a look at, with Moose Jaw, the RHA Five Hills, a lean organization pilot

project. People may be familiar with the term lean from Toyota — lean manufacturing, lean

processing. There's an awful lot that we can learn" (Wright 2006, 630). In 2009, Schattenkirk,

Florizone and two colleagues were the recipients of the Lieutenant Governor's Gold Medal

chosen by the local chapter of the Institute of Public Administration Canada (IPAC), as a "mark

of distinction and exceptional achievement to a person who has shown distinctive leadership in public administration in Saskatchewan, or has made a significant contribution in the field of public administration in Saskatchewan" (Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan 2018). As other health regions contacting Five Hills to have its staff visit and consult on the implementation of further Lean activities, the region became, in effect, a Lean laboratory within the province. It had conducted early experiments with Lean and worked to translate Lean tools in a way that demonstrated their utility for Saskatchewan's setting.

The progress made in Five Hills was impressive enough to attract attention to Florizone as a potential provincial leader of health reform. After the Saskatchewan Party's victory in 2007, Premier Brad Wall had made short work of shuffling the senior members of the province's public service. In a series of Orders-in-Council (OCs), the Premier dismissed a number of deputy ministers (DMs) and assistant deputy ministers (ADMs), moved some to new portfolios, and appointed others both from within and outside the public service. Wall appointed Garnet Garven, who had served for twelve years as the University of Regina's Dean of Business Administration, as Deputy Minister to the Premier and cabinet secretary, which made him the province's most senior bureaucrat. As part of the same set of OCs, Wall dismissed DM of Health John Wright, a long-time public servant in the province who had previously served as DM of Finance and the President of SaskPower. After an acting DM filled the role for nearly a year, the government announced that it was appointing Dan Florizone as permanent DM of Health.

Five Hills' Lean successes served as a selling point for the government as they chose a new Deputy Minister (Interview 18). With Florizone, the Saskatchewan Party found a senior public servant who spoke of an approach to government that would "revolutionize" (French 2011) healthcare in the province. The appeal was obvious. Lean had already been studied by

staff within the Ministry of Health as being a potential approach for reformed services. More importantly, however, the promise of Lean fit seamlessly within the Saskatchewan Party's conceptualization of healthcare and bureaucracy more broadly. With its emphasis on the elimination of waste and promise of private-sector innovation, Lean spoke to the pervasive belief, grounded within broader neoliberal critiques of bureaucracy, that bureaucratic government, be it in healthcare or beyond, is fundamentally wasteful. By deploying practices developed in the private sector, the province could eliminate waste and resources could be reappropriated elsewhere. Services could be maintained or improved without increased funding.

Florizone arrived at the Ministry of Health in 2008 and quickly went to work shifting the priorities of the Ministry to accommodate the introduction and implementation of Lean at a Ministry- and system-wide basis. Indeed, it took little time after Florizone's arrival at the Ministry of Health before "Lean" became a common word in the lexicon of the organization. According to its 2008-2009 Annual Report (Ministry of Health 2009, 15), the Ministry of Health indicated that it was pursuing a "Lean Culture" in November 2008. At that time, the Ministry described Lean as a patient-centred approach that focuses on creating more value for the customer (patient or client)" (Ministry of Health 2009, 15) Internally, the Ministry focussed on the extent to which a "'Lean' culture" would improve morale in the Ministry by "putting power in [employees'] hands to change outdated processes and eliminate non-productive steps from their work" (Ministry of Health Briefing Note, April 26, 2010).

Lean, in short, represented the innovative solution that healthcare needed. Healthcare had become the subject of critique as wasteful and in need of efforts to "find efficiencies" - the ideal setting for private sector practices. Wholesale privatization was essentially off the table in medicare's home province (not to mention in probable contravention of the *Canada Health Act*),

notwithstanding some modest privatization through privately-run surgical operating rooms and diagnostic imaging such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) services. Drastic, systemic cuts to services were also unacceptable, particularly when so much of the Saskatchewan Party's rhetoric surrounded "patient-centred" care. Indeed, Florizone promised that Lean provided an alternative to these broad indiscriminate cuts: "The old way of cost-cutting was absolutely wrong-headed … [upon discovering Lean], I realized for the first time why we were so mistaken in the '80s and '90s when we were cutting budgets and ending up with poor service at the end of the day" (French 2011). Lean, ostensibly the "new way" in contrast to Florizone's description of an "old way," provided what no doubt seemed to be a policy "magic bullet" to address the vexing contradiction of neoliberal policy. It offered the ability to cut "waste" that the Saskatchewan Party understood to be inherent to government-delivered healthcare and thus saving money *without* making substantial cuts to services or facilities.

The confidence of both politicians and senior healthcare executives that Lean would provide the savings in resources and time necessary to "bend the cost curve" and allow the province to dedicate more resources to "value-added" services was grounded in its demonstrated successes in the private sector. One cabinet Minister, for example, pointed out that "We know that companies like Toyota has [sic] been using the lean technology [and] Brandt Industries here in Saskatchewan is a firm believer in the lean process" before boasting that the Saskatchewan "government is the first one that we're aware of in Canada that's actually undertaken the lean technology" (Draude 2011, 1002). Another minister went further, explaining more explicitly that the appeal and benefits of Lean were based on its origins in private industry:

> Lean is not a government initiative. It's a different way of doing business, and there is a long list of incredibly reputable companies who have engaged in this process as well including 3M, Air Canada, Amazon.com, Staples, Target, Ford, General Electric. These are not people who are going to be engaged in a flavour

of the month, fly-by-night, kind of do it today, gone tomorrow initiative. These
are huge corporations who want to do business better. (Heppner 2014, 492).

In my interviews (e.g., Interview 1; Interview 18), multiple informants present in the early years

of the Lean experiment told me that Lean's success at Boeing, where the margin of error is low

because of the nature of constructing airplanes, was its primary selling point.[62] Beyond public

proclamations of how the corporate-tested approach would doubtlessly lead to benefits for the

province, the Ministry of Health explained the logic internally. In Briefing Notes, Ministry

officials drew similarities between Lean's origins and healthcare, effectively blurring any

distinction between public and private:

> Although started in the manufacturing sector, the fact remains that the public sector like
> any other industry - private or public - involves thousands of processes that are intended
> to offer value for those who use or depend on them. Like other industries, the public
> sector is interested in delivering quality, cost-effective services that meet the needs of
> those it serves and creates staff satisfaction. Every step in a process, every decision
> related to that step must be seen through the eyes of the customer (Ministry of Health
> Briefing Note, December 8 2011).

If Lean could work for successful corporations, the justification for Lean both publicly and

internally went, it surely must work for government. The Lean Industry's strategy of using

previous successes and ties to the genesis of Lean as justification for its growth was enormously

successful in Saskatchewan.

In addition to such explanations about the similarities of public and private sector

organizations, Ministry documents also started to refer to patients and citizens as "customers."

Like they did with public and private sector organizations, officials explained such similarities,

essentially synonymizing "citizen," "tax-payer" and "client" or "customer:

> Lean is a patient-focused approach to identifying and eliminating all non-value adding
> activities and reducing waste within an organization. Value-adding activities are *those*

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[62] My research ended long before a series of crashes of Boeing's 737 Max 8 planes, caused by faulty safety systems
and an unwillingness of Boeing to properly train pilots on the planes' software, triggered airline regulators to ground
them globally

that the client/patient is willing to pay for. Everything else is waste and should be eliminated, simplified, reduced or integrated. While in a public funded health care system, many of our clients do not directly "pay" for services, they do fund services with tax dollars. (Ministry of Health Briefing Note November 19, 2010).

Such logics fit in neatly with other proclamations in internal documents, which stated that the government had "a fiscal and ethical responsibility to provide taxpayers with the best possible value for their tax dollars. Lean [would help] us do that" (Ministry of Health Briefing Note, May 20, 2010).

By 2010, the Ministry of Health had fourteen Lean initiatives underway internally. Lean was being deployed in areas such as contract management, inventory management, out-of-country medical claims, income-testing processing, health card applications, the process for referrals and approvals of briefing notes, and bursary reviews and awarding. (Ministry of Health Briefing Note, April 26, 2010). Such initiatives were largely found in areas that Lean seemed the most obvious fit - highly repetitive, technical, or specific processes that most closely resembled a manufacturing process, such as processing forms more efficiently to deal with backlogs. By 2012, the Ministry had spent nearly $500,000 in 27 Lean initiatives as well as training senior leadership in *Kaizen* and cultural change management (Ministry of Health Briefing Note, March 29, 2012).

In addition to deploying Lean initiatives within its own branches and units, the Ministry of Health began to promote and coordinate further implementation of Lean in RHAs, where the vast majority of work in healthcare is done. Indeed, while there are around two hundred employees working for the Ministry of Health directly, and while the processes that were first targeted by the Ministry for Lean "improvements" suggest that there were indeed some areas that seemed appropriate for Lean practices, it is the RHAs that deliver day-to-day health services, such as those delivered in hospitals, long-term care homes, and population health centres. In

2008, the Ministry reported that "a few regions and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency [had] undertaken quality improvement projects using Lean and other process reengineering approaches" and that "while none have taken the same organization-wide approach to the adoption of Lean as the Five Hills Health Region, all regions have expressed a clear commitment to adopting Lean and some have begun providing Lean/Six Sigma training to their staff" (Ministry of Health Briefing Note, ND). By 2009, the Ministry reported that both "the Council of CEOs (which includes CEOS from all Regional Health Authorities and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency) and the Ministry are strongly committed to the provincial rollout of Lean in the province's health system" (Ministry of Health Briefing Note, March 20, 2009). As time went on, the Ministry of Health began to formalize its requests that RHAs begin to deploy Lean initiatives. By 2010, the Ministry of Health had made contact with each RHA, as well as the Health Quality Council (HQC) and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. Ministry officials delivered presentations to RHA leadership and asked RHA leadership to agree to proceed with implementing Lean. At this point, the Ministry and RHAs planned for senior leadership to take the same *Kaizen* training that leadership in the Ministry had taken. In 2008, RHAs, coordinated by the HQC began experimenting with Releasing Time to Care, a program based on a Lean-based project undertaken by the British National Health Service (NHS) The one that had been the subject of a "study tour" by a delegation of healthcare executives and managers led by the Minister of Health in 2008 (Kyle 2008).

The Lean initiatives that were taking place during this initial experimentation phase in the RHAs were, similar to those within the Ministry, focussed primarily on episodic projects in areas that were the most obviously consistent with manufacturing settings. In the small, rural Heartland RHA, the 2010 budget announcement made a passing reference to a "strategic

investment" in using Lean to examine "systems and work processes to create efficiencies that increase productivity and quality of care" (Heartland 2010a). In the larger, more urban Saskatoon RHA, efforts to implement Lean were more extensive. By 2009-10, Lean projects were underway in the Royal University Hospital's (RUH) Health Records Department, a number of staff members had taken training and received their "Yellow Belt" certification, work had begun on using Lean to address flow issues in the region's emergency departments, and the management of anesthetic supplies in the RUH operating rooms (Saskatoon 2010, 29). The Ministry reported that, across the provincial healthcare system as of 2011, there were 125 Lean initiatives (SAHO 2011, 10).

Such projects were, at this point, piecemeal experimentations with what one manager called the various "tools" afforded by Lean (Interview 2). For RHAs during these early years, Lean offered a set of techniques and practices that could be used to pursue quality improvement. They were not, according to those present at the time and internal documents, going to be the only – or even the main – methods by which improvement would be made at the point of service for clients and patients within the healthcare system. They were, rather, one of many different approaches available for executives, leadership and frontline staff to deploy for quality improvement (Interview 2). "It was being approached like any other quality improvement initiative, it was being approached like an opportunity to look at a quality improvement framework in a different way," one RHA manager recalled (Interview 1).

Yet, despite the piecemeal process, Lean was spreading. Now translated for the Saskatchewan setting, it could be mobilized across institutional settings within the province through experimentation and trial-and-error. And, even in these early years, there were signs that the Ministry and the province would, at some point, proceed with a provincially-integrated

rollout of Lean. Early efforts to do so, however, were met with mixed results, relying on

independent RHAs adopting and deploying Lean on their own accord. The Ministry had

provided Five Hills with some funding to help accelerate its work, with the hope that the Lean

"successes" in Five Hills would demonstrate Lean's potential to leaders in other regions. While

the Ministry and Five Hills worked to promote Lean based on "best practice" as demonstrated in

Five Hills, "uptake of Lean in other regions was sporadic" (Ministry of Health Briefing Note

November 19, 2010). The Ministry of Health offered financial help to support those

organizations who took the initiative to deploy Lean initiatives. In 2008, for example, the

Ministry gave the Health Quality Council (of which Florizone was the chair at the time) $5

million for the "Accelerating Excellence" program.   Overseen by HQC, the "Accelerating

Excellence" program also included participation by the Ministry, RHAs, Cancer Agency, as well

as health care unions, associations, and appropriate post-secondary institutions. The program,

the province wrote, was not dedicated exclusively to Lean but rather to the broader subject of

quality improvement, provided "an opportunity for senior management and board members to

work together while learning to lead the integration of quality into their systems" (SAHO 2011,

11). For its part, HQC described Accelerating Excellence as

> a multi-level effort to rethink and renew healthcare through a variety of programs –
> including Quality as a Business Strategy for leadership teams, Releasing Time to Care™
> for nurses and the Quality Improvement Consultant program. It blends several
> approaches to improving quality, notably W. Edwards Deming's theories of management
> and Lean (based on Toyota's methods for eliminating waste and increasing efficiency).
> (HQC 2012, 23).

Using the funds provided by the Ministry and HQC through the Accelerating Excellence

program, a number of RHAs undertook Lean initiatives, often focused on organization and

tidying, and HQC would later highlight them as part of a retrospective report (HQC 2012). A

year later, the Ministry of Health made an additional $5 million available, this time without the

intermediary role of HQC, for RHAs to access funding required for initiating Lean projects. As a condition of this funding, the Ministry asked each RHA to implement at least two initiatives. Early success was mixed, the Ministry reported, as nearly half of the initiatives in place in 2010 were in Five Hills (Ministry of Health Briefing Note, November 19 2010).

The period between 2007-2011, then, represented a period of policy experimentation spurred by a continuing crisis of neoliberal governance, expressed through the particular circumstances of both the province's political history and the discursive politics surrounding healthcare at the time. Healthcare was understood to be broken, characterized by bloat and inefficiency. Previous neoliberal technologies put in place to fix it had failed. The cuts of the 1990s had long-lasting political consequences that essentially guaranteed that cuts were no longer an option. A solution was needed that would "fix" healthcare without resorting to such draconian measures. And so the Government of Saskatchewan searched and grasped for solutions. Staff were assigned to find innovative approaches to healthcare, looking to other provincial and national systems of healthcare for "high performing" systems that could be replicated in Saskatchewan. The research and experimentation conducted at this time, both within the Ministry of Health and RHAs, represented the search for a better system of organizing and delivering healthcare services. Lean, actively promoted and mobilized by the network of experts that I call the Lean Industry, provided one such solution. The province did not, however, immediately roll Lean out throughout its healthcare system. After Lean had infiltrated the provincial healthcare bureaucracy, its adoption was, as Peck et al (2010) have described the process of neoliberalization, lurching, moving unevenly from one space to another within the Saskatchewan bureaucracy. Individual, episodic Lean experiments were carried out in particular programs sporadically across facilities, organizational units, and health regions.

6.4. Conclusion

Lean's appearance in Saskatchewan represented the complex intersection of stories. By the early 2000s, the province's political climate, with a localized version of neoliberalization flavoured by its political history and place within confederation, made for a welcoming environment for Lean. Brad Wall and the Saskatchewan Party came to power having spent years critiquing what they called the NDP's "socialism," in reality a shorthand for their synonymizing the NDP with the province's historical stagnation, the product of the party's reliance on state-led development and its apparent comfort with mediocrity. Despite the Saskatchewan Party's insistence that it could introduce the province to better days by harnessing the forces of the free market, however, Wall and his party, once in power, were constrained in their ability to introduce neoliberal policies in policy areas such as healthcare. The party had not only critiqued the NDP's bureaucratic tendencies, they had also critiqued earlier neoliberal policy solutions such as the closure of rural hospitals or cuts that had left patients such as "baby Paige" without adequate care. Upon taking power in 2007, Wall's party was then faced with a similar dilemma facing many decision makers in neoliberal times: how to remain consistent to neoliberal logics while avoiding the consequences of earlier neoliberal policies. Wall promised an audit, insisting that there were inherent efficiencies in the province's publicly delivered healthcare system that could be eliminated. Relying on the same logic that has led the federal government to pursue "innovation," Wall's government understood that healthcare could be fixed in a way that would maintain or reduce the level of resources needed while maintaining or improving the level and quality of services.

In this discursive landscape, Lean found a comfortable home. As I described in Chapter 3, Lean had been translated from its origins in Industrial Japan for consumption and use in North

American industry. Through the work of consultants such as John Black, it had then been translated for a healthcare setting, promising to eliminate waste and transform healthcare settings by freeing up resources for improvement. With Dan Florizone's visit to Seattle for a John Black-led seminar came Lean's initial incursion into the province. From there, the process of translation within Saskatchewan began. Florizone's Five Hills RHA served as a laboratory within the province, both demonstrating that Lean could work in the province's healthcare system and providing an institutional hub from which Lean could be mobilized and diffused to other RHAs and healthcare organizations. The early years of the province's Lean initiative was one marked by experimentation, trial and error, and a piecemeal approach in which Lean was considered one solution among many. It was, in effect, a set of individual technologies to be used in specific circumstances to address specific issues. That, however, was about to change. In Chapter 7, I will review how Lean changed from a set of specific individual practices being implemented inconsistently across the province to a coherent political programme, one that included a shift in "culture" in terms of language and knowledge, a wide set of interrelated practices and technologies, and the attempt to institutionalize Lean in the province permanently.

- CHAPTER 7 -
A Provincial Lean Programme

7.1. Introduction

Following the early years of Lean projects in Saskatchewan, marked by the uneven and

inconsistent experimentation across RHAs and the Ministry of Health, the Ministry recognized

that a more coordinated approach was necessary to meet the ambitious goals that had been

communicated by, among others, the Premier and the Minister of Health. In this chapter, I

explore the height of the Lean initiative in Saskatchewan and, in particular, the hiring of John

Black and Associates (JBA), the Seattle-based consulting firm that had facilitated the workshops

that originally inspired Dan Florizone to introduce Lean into Five Hills RHA in 2005. The JBA

contract, I argue, represented the transition from the experimental, piecemeal phase of the Lean

initiative in Saskatchewan towards a cohesive political programme, complete with both a

discursive framework, normative claims, a Lean-specific lexicon, and a set of technologies in the

form of guidelines and best practices designed to reform the material reality of healthcare in the

province. The Ministry of Health and JBA sought to transform the *culture* of the healthcare

system in the province. In this, as I demonstrate here, the Lean initiative failed to meet

expectations. While some of the technologies introduced during the "Lean years" remain in the

province, resistance in the province to the cultural shift and the way that it was introduced

ensured that the broader "transformational" elements of the initiative fell short.

7.2. The Drive to a Provincial Lean Project

7.2.1. The Problem of Piecemeal Experimentation

Following the period of uneven experimentation with Lean tools, Ministry of Health

leadership understood that the patchwork collection of Lean practices across the province would

be inadequate to bring on the "transformation" that the government was seeking. Wall and the

Saskatchewan Party had promised a patient-first audit and an "innovative" approach to healthcare that would differ both aesthetically and substantially from the tired, old "socialist" approaches that the NDP had offered throughout most of the province's existence. Lean's implementation had proven insufficient to deliver on such ambitious claims. Geographically, Lean's implementation was inconsistent across regions and organizations. While some, like Five Hills RHA, had been enthusiastic in Lean's rollout, other regions had not answered the Ministry's call to the same extent.

Lean's implementation was also operationally inconsistent. More specifically, the early Lean experimentations were episodic and discrete, focussed on individual projects rather than systemic change. In Chapter 3, I explored the extent to which attempts to implement Lean, without implementing the full "culture" across the entirety of an organization, is considered to be one of the deadly sins of Lean implementation within the Lean Industry. Lean experts often criticize those Lean initiatives that fall short of the full implementation that experts believe is necessary to achieve the full benefits of Lean. For those experts within the Lean Industry, Saskatchewan's early patchwork of initiatives, implemented inconsistently across a series of organizations working independently of one another without a centralized approach or coordinating entity was totally inconsistent with Lean's "best practices." As one Lean consultant who worked with RHAs in Saskatchewan explained in an interview, with Lean, "it's all or nothing" (Interview 13).

In the face of these regional and operational inconsistencies, the Ministry began to signal that a more integrated rollout of Lean was necessary. Messaging within the Ministry of Health began to shift in 2011 and 2012 to reflect the need to implement Lean systematically at the provincial level rather than continue the piecemeal experimental rollout that had existed until

then. Briefing notes boasted that while "lean improvement efforts to-date in the provincial health system have resulted in a number of quality, efficiency, safety and productivity gains," Saskatchewan still lacked "a consistent and disciplined, system-wide approach to the strategic development and deployment of Lean." This, the Ministry argued, limited "the potential and sustainability of Lean efforts and results." (Ministry of Health Briefing Note, March 19, 2012). A subsequent briefing note added that the Ministry was "ready to take the next step, and that is to collectively build the internal capacity, infrastructure, and overall organizational culture needed to advance our Lean journey." More specifically, internal communications began to outright reject the existing, piecemeal version of Lean in place. While early experimentations with Lean in RHAs and the Ministry were couched within a language of it being one "tool" among many available to those who worked to improve health care services, in 2011 messaging indicated that "Lean is a philosophy or a mindset, *not* a tool. Lean is most effective when it becomes the *culture* of an organization, as opposed to simply a series of one-off efficiency proposals (Ministry of Health Briefing Note December 7, 2011). The decentralized, piecemeal approach of letting RHAs implement Lean on their own became less acceptable the longer it went on. Word also came from the Premier's Office. In his Mandate Letter to Health minister Don McMorris, Wall named Lean by name as an example of methods to prioritize (Premier of Saskatchewan 2010a). Accordingly, Lean was identified in the Ministry of Health's 2011-2012 strategic plan as "the most effective and efficient delivery possible is a key priority for the Ministry of Health and an effort that will, ultimately, enhance the health system for Saskatchewan people." Lean was "always" going to have to be provincially coordinated, according to senior Ministry officials (Interview 18).

With that in mind, the Ministry began to use regular meetings with senior management of RHAs to notify them that Lean would no longer be one set of "tools" among others in their broader quality improvement efforts, but rather the primary approach for essentially everything the health bureaucracy did. In 2011, Florizone announced to the regional CEOs that they and their senior leadership would be expected to pursue and receive accreditation in Lean methodology from John Black and Associates (JBA). The announcement was one characterized by Florizone's suggestion that every RHA's senior leadership was expected to endorse and adopt the plan, and resistance would be met with dismissal. (Interview 1, Interview 2, Interview 5). Here, senior RHA officials and others present in meetings and familiar with the discussions recall that the message was both clear and imposing. Lean would be implemented, across the province, in every RHA and health agency, whether those organizations' senior leadership teams were in agreement or not. One official present remembered the message being "we all do this or there will be big cuts and you will all lose your jobs. That was the burning platform. And so it was like get on board or the train is leaving the station without you. That was how it was introduced" (Interview 1).

The threat of job losses for senior executives came with similar threats of regional amalgamations. The Saskatchewan Party had called for the amalgamation of health regions before taking power (Saskatchewan Party 2005) and the option had remained a part of discussions regarding the administration of the healthcare system since the RHAs were created in 2001, themselves the result of the amalgamation of smaller health districts. Despite his emphasis on integrating the healthcare system more cohesively, Dagnone had stopped short of calling for amalgamation in the Patients First Review. Instead, he wrote that he had "not examined or made any recommendations respecting changes to the existing regionalized model of governance,"

adding that profound "structural change to the health system at this time would only serve to distract what needs to be the immediate and first priority - restoring the patient to the centre of the system" (Dagnogne 2009, 5). He did, however, suggest that his hesitance to recommend amalgamation should not "deter the government from considering such changes in the future" Dagnone 2009, 5). Indeed, RHA executives reported, Florizone made it clear to senior regional management that they had the choice to "act as one, or to become one" (Interview 1).

Threats of job losses and/or regional amalgamation caused understandable tension between RHAs and the Ministry. When some regional executives responded to Ministry directives to implement Lean, they noted that RHA executives were not accountable to or directed by the Ministry of Health but instead by their independent (though provincially-appointed) boards. The response from the Ministry was that it would simply replace boards with individuals who would support a systemwide implementation of Lean (Interview 5). Such intensely unilateral decisions were poorly received. One senior RHA executive suggested that the Ministry's approach was "bullying," with little regard for regional input (Interview 2). In addition to questioning the extent to which the Ministry could direct the day-to-day operations of RHAs, some regional leadership members threatened to resign, or did resign: "They either chose to resign or chose not to participate in leadership certification. But basically they chose to leave the system because they said 'I don't have it within me,' or I don't know what their reasons would've been, but that was sort of… you either had to commit to it, or make a decision to do something else" (Interview 1).

Disrespectfully or not, it became clear that the province was pursuing a provincially integrated Lean rollout and regions would participate. At the request of some regional leaders who suggested that it was difficult for them to agree to wholeheartedly adopt an approach with

which they had very limited exposure or experience, however, Florizone and the Ministry of Health did offer to schedule a "study tour" to Seattle for senior executives to witness large-scale Lean operations in action. Organized by the Ministry of Health and taking place in 2011, the tour was attended by Florizone, the Minister of Health, and other officials both from the Ministry and RHAs (Ministry of Health List of Participants 2008) and included participation in a Rapid Process Improvement Workshop (or *Kaizen* event) similar to the one that Florizone had first attended in 2005 when he was first convinced of Lean's benefits and potential. Participants visited Virginia Mason hospital as well as Boeing facilities, following the process of jetliners being manufactured and "at every step of the way, talking about the concepts that had built that organization to the degree of efficiency that it had" (Interview 2). The trip served not only as a "learning opportunity" but also as a "team-building" exercise and the opportunity for Florizone to emphasize the importance of regional CEOs to align their strategic priorities and "work together" rather than competing with one another for resources.

7.2.2. Hiring John Black and Associates

In 2011, the Ministry began to seek expert help from management consultants to guide the process of expanding Lean beyond its initial experimentation. The Ministry indicated that the Ministry of Health and the Leadership Council, which included leaders from the RHAs, Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and Health Quality Council, had "jointly agreed to move forward with the acquisition of professional services in support of a shared desire to advance the adoption of *Hoshin Kanri*, or Lean's version of strategic planning, and a Lean management system within the provincial health system" (Ministry of Health Briefing Note July 21, 2011). These professional services would be utilized, the Ministry indicated, in two phases: an initial phase would "involve a consultant Sensei to assist [the Ministry of Health and Leadership Council] in

strategy/policy deployment (*Hoshin Kanri*)" and a second phase would centre on implementing "a provincial Lean management system … across various levels within the health system" (Saskatchewan Ministry of Health July 21, 2011). Early estimates of cost for outside expertise were modest in comparison to the eventual $40 million contract: Ministry officials estimated that the first phase would cost between $100,000 and $125,000 and the second between $600,000 and $900,000 per year for five years, a total of between $3 million and $4.5 million (Ministry of Health Briefing Note July 21, 2011).

The first phase of the consultant-driven provincial implementation began in August 2011, when the Ministry (through the Saskatchewan Association of Health Organizations, or SAHO) tendered a contract for *hoshin kanri*. *Hoshin kanri,* the Lean term for "strategic deployment," essentially represents a version of strategic planning, including the identification and setting of priorities with corresponding performance measurements and targets. As Black describes it, "leaders use it to deploy and emphasize policies. Goals are quantified, methods of achieving the goals are clearly communicated, and roles and expectations are agreed upon before action is taken. Regular diagnoses and reviews are conducted to measure both progress toward goals and the effectiveness of the methods employed" (Black 2008, 79). The process typically involves a consultation process between different levels of management and staff, ostensibly with the goal reaching consensus on priorities.[63] The RFP drew four bids, including from JBA, who won the contract in 2011 and the firm worked throughout 2012 to guide the Ministry's process of identifying its priorities and targets. With the *hoshin kanri* process, the Ministry sought to ensure "that leaders set the strategic direction for the system, but also engage different levels of staff

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[63] In March 2012, I was involved in the *Hoshin Kanri* process. More specifically, I helped JBA facilitate a *Hoshin Kanri* session with directors and executive directors - middle management - within the Ministry of Health.

and providers in a process of 'catchball'[64] to ensure both a top-down and bottom-up flow of information and advice, as well as to ensure that available resources are aligned with, and support attainment of, the strategic priorities" (Ministry of Health Briefing Note January 25, 2012). By August 2012, the process had identified a number of ambitious targets for health indicators, including a 5% decrease in the rate of youth obesity in ten years, a 50% decrease of the incidence of communicable diseases in five years, and a 50% reduction in the hospitalization rate for ambulatory conditions. These targets were likely impossible; a drop of 50% in communicable diseases in five years would be an unprecedented accomplishment in public health. In briefing notes from the period, they indicate that the 50% were "placeholders," arbitrary temporary numbers to be replaced by more realistic goals once such goals had been determined at a later date. Ultimately, the targets were not replaced as was expected, and found their way into the Ministry of Health's strategic plan. Later, these targets were used by Saskatchewan's Provincial Auditor to demonstrate that the Ministry was not meeting the targets it had set out, for example, for the rate of diabetes in the province (Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan 2012).

The tendering of the contract for Phase 2, or the implementation phase, of the provincial Lean rollout virtually overlapped with the awarding of the Phase 1 contract. Indeed, while the committee of officials who scored the Phase 1 contract bids met to score the bids on 14 September 2011, the phase 2 RFP was issued five days later (Ministry of Health Briefing Note January 25, 2012). The language of the contract mirrored internal communications, referring to the work that had been done up to that point, stating that its "numerous efforts in the Saskatchewan health care system have created an environment of 'excited chaos', with plenty of

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[64] "Catchball" is a term used by some Lean experts, such as John Black, to describe the process by which ideas and concepts are "tossed" from one level of an organization (e.g., management) to another (e.g., staff).

enthusiasm and numerous quality improvement and Lean initiatives underway, but no consistent strategy harnessing the effort" (SAHO 2011, 12). As such, the RFP went on, the provincial health bureaucracy was "attempting to undertake a more disciplined approach in our Lean journey" that would make Saskatchewan "the model of a high performing health system" (SAHO 2011, 12). Like its predecessor, the Phase 2 RFP included a very specific set of practices and expertise. The RFP was titled "Request for Proposals for the Supply of Lean Management System Consulting/Sensei Services" and called for a "partnership with a well-established and highly-experienced Sensei and supplier of Lean consulting services to assist the Saskatchewan healthcare system to adopt a Lean Management System" (SAHO 2011, 13) Unsurprisingly, JBA submitted a bid. (Ministry of Health Briefing Note, March 29 2012). After another committee had scored the bids, JBA had won another contract, this time much more comprehensive than the phase 1 contract. Indeed, once JBA was awarded the contract, negotiations surrounding the scope and scale of the agreement were complex enough that the firm signed an interim agreement with the province to begin providing services while details of the final contract were being negotiated. The final contract ultimately took effect in August 2012 and was worth $10 million a year with an option for the province to extend the work for up to four years. JBA had won the competition for a $40 million contract, a figure nearly ten times that which had initially been estimated for total costs of the Lean implementation.

7.3. Implementing Lean Province-Wide: The JBA Contract

The contract between the Province of Saskatchewan and JBA, and more specifically the schedule of services included in its appendices, is a template of how John Black interprets and implements Lean with his clients. Rather than the episodic, piecemeal approach to Lean that had been present in Saskatchewan already, the contract set out the specific processes that would be

put into place to ensure that the entire healthcare system would begin to use Lean. As a whole, the deliverables as outlined in the JBA contract represent a staggeringly wide range of practices that, I argue, represent an attempt by the province to rapidly introduce a new political programme into the province. As I reviewed in Chapter 1, Rose and Miller (1992) describe political programmes as "translations" of political rationalities that identify solutions and problems in tangible ways. They serve as the discursive frameworks that can be articulated into tangible results and changes through technologies of government, such as policies, strategies, guidelines or projects. Broken down, the operational components of the contract can be organized into three sometimes-overlapping categories that articulate a cohesive political programme. The first, a program of education and training provided the discursive foundation for the second two, which included sets of technologies in the form of operational reforms and projects to institutionalize Lean.

7.3.1. Speaking Lean: Training and Education

The contract called for a concerted effort to disseminate knowledge of Lean terminology, practices, and methodology to construct a Lean "culture." By late 2013, the Ministry was suggesting that every one of the 40,000 individuals working in the provincial health bureaucracy, from nurses to janitors, would undergo *Kaizen* Basics training (Ministry of Health 2013). These *Kaizen* Basics training sessions essentially worked to ensure that all staff working within the province's healthcare system were familiar with the terminology and concepts associated with Lean. In addition to the *Kaizen* basics training required for all staff within the health system, JBA also was responsible for additional training for 800 "Lean Leaders." Lean Leaders were managers trained through an intensive program of in-class and practical exercises. While the *Kaizen* Basics training was comprised entirely of a one-day session with Lean experts from JBA,

the Lean Leader Certification training program involved 80 days of training, both in classrooms and "on the ground" training overseeing see their own Lean projects in their particular organizations. The training included twenty-four modules, ranging from an introduction to the terminology and history of Lean covered in *Kaizen* Basics to in-depth descriptions of each of the components of JBA's version of Lean, as shown in **Figure 7.1**

Figure 7.1: Lean as Conceptualized in the Lean Leaders Certification
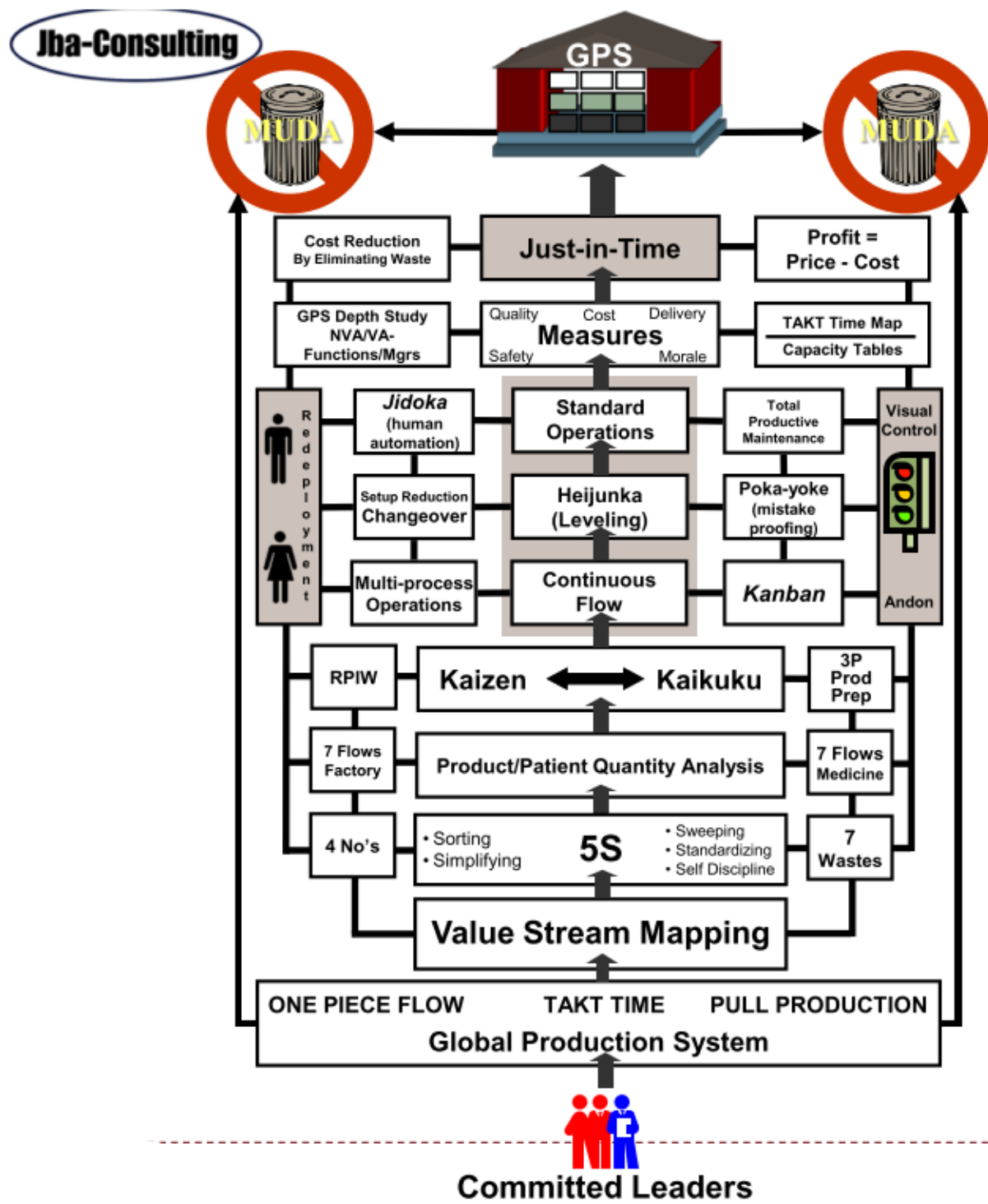
Later, Black would write that in reality, Lean Leaders spent more like 90 to 100 days on their training, often working on the modules early in the morning, late at night, and on weekends (Black 2016, 319). While *Kaizen* Basics sought to ensure that everyone working in the healthcare system had a basic understanding of the Lean form of knowledge, the Lean Leader certification was meant to ensure that leadership were not only trained in the basics, but also instrumental in driving the implementation. Physicians, meanwhile, were *encouraged* to participate in Lean Leader certification training. With total professional freedom and autonomy for physicians a defining feature of the original Medicare compromise, the Ministry and RHAs had limited ability to force them to participate in Lean, or any large-scale initiative. As such, the Lean Leader certification was modified for physicians, requiring them to participate in twenty-four days of training rather than the eighty days, as required in the standard program (Davies, Laurent, and Brossart 2014; HQC 2013).

The large-scale efforts to train all staff within the healthcare system on the "basics" of JBA's version of Lean represented nothing less than an attempt to restructure and rearticulate the basic lexicon and frames of reference for health providers in the province. For the 40,000 healthcare providers in the province, distributed across hundreds of communities in a dozen RHAs, each with their own particular professional education, training, and scope of practice, their work was now described and defined in ways that needed to correspond to Lean, and the version of Lean defined with JBA in particular. The Lean Leader Certification component of the training programs represented an especially deliberate attempt to redefine the credentials needed for leadership or management positions within management ranks of the healthcare system. Managers often faced such training with sober expectations, resigned to the fact that they had to participate whether they believed in Lean as an approach at all. "[The certification] has no

academic value, but you need it to be employed," one recalled (Interview 1). Meanwhile, some managers openly sought to avoid such training. One recalled, for instance, a competition with colleagues over who could survive the longest without participating in Lean Leader certification, and ultimately taking pride in their success in never having attended (Interview 15), a small example of everyday resistance (Scott 1989).

Pockets of resistance notwithstanding, hundreds of managers in the health system completed Lean Leader Certification, either under the direction of JBA or, later, the Health Quality Council (which would, as I describe below, come to serve as an important institutional component of the Lean implementation in 2013).[65] Many understood that adopting and deploying Lean was an expectation of their employment. Still, others received the training with a great deal of enthusiasm. One manager, who had recently completed the program, mirrored the Lean Industry's core belief that Lean could, essentially, be used for fix any problem (Interview 7), suggesting that any shortfalls in a Lean project's results did not reflect poorly on the approach but rather that Lean had not been implemented properly, mirroring sentiments that were later expressed by other Lean experts who argued that the ultimate failure in Saskatchewan's Lean initiative was due to its lack of following proper Lean "best practices," as I discuss in more detail below.

Regardless of the mixed response to training by its employees and managers, the health system underwent an enormous effort to train its staff in the terminology of Lean, and JBA's interpretation of Lean more specifically. In other words, one of the first steps for implementing Lean acclimatized those working for its client organizations to the reality that their work would

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[65] The Deputy Minister of Health reported to a standing committee of the legislature that 677 managers had been certified as Lean Leaders by 2017 (See Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly 2017). Of these, approximately 200 were trained by JBA (Government of Saskatchewan 2014) and the remainder, presumably, by the Health Quality Council.

be guided by the tenets and practices of Lean. This represented not only a transformation, as I describe below, of how such employees and managers performed their duties, but also a shift in the forms of knowledge that underwrote those duties. The JBA contract, in effect, sought to create a discursive landscape in which the JBA consultants' expertise would be valued, respected, and, most importantly, followed.   Training materials were provided by JBA, initial training was delivered by the firm, and staff and managers were expected to understand the language of Lean as defined by JBA. JBA's interpretation of Lean served as a form of knowledge and the training served as a technology by which that knowledge was disseminated in ways that set the stage for the introduction of the other technologies included in the contract. In addition to degrees or professional designations in recognized fields and specializations, individuals providing health care services in Saskatchewan also needed to recognize the authority inherent in Lean expertise and conduct themselves according to the wisdom espoused by those with that expertise. Lean practice was essentially codified as "best" practice and the work of introducing a Lean culture, complete with the discursive logics to guide actual Lean practices, had begun.

The infusion of Lean knowledge into Saskatchewan through the use of training was not merely the introduction of new terminologies or introducing staff to new practices of work. It represented a rearticulation of the problems facing healthcare. Lean's primary concern is the elimination of waste, a central tenet that sits at the core of Lean knowledge and the Lean Industry. Lean's experts derive their authority from their perceived ability to reduce waste. The first section in the Lean Leader certification program describes in detail the seven types of waste - or *muda* - as described by Toyota engineer and Toyota Production System founder Taiichi Ohno (John Black and Associates 2013a). The practices outlined in the training materials, and

implemented within the health system as I describe below, reinforce the central place that the elimination of waste holds in the Lean ethos. The assumption is that the healthcare system is overflowing with inefficiency and waste. The widely publicized problems of healthcare associated were redefined as symptoms of waste, and, accordingly, solving those problems became a question of eliminating waste.

To reduce the waste, the training program offered by JBA and the Lean experiment proposed a reconstitution of the province's healthcare patients into customers and the healthcare system into a private enterprise. Indeed, in the training material for the Lean Leadership certification program, the term "customer" vastly outnumbers the term "patient" - a ratio of twenty-three to one in the manual's glossary, for example (John Black and Associates 2013b). One training module reminds trainees, in large bold font, that "in health care, the Customer is the Patient" (John Black and Associates 2013c, 19). Mirroring the language being used within the Ministry of Health to justify the introduction of Lean, trainees in the JBA training programs were told that a central component of eliminating waste was developing the ability to identify those processes that added value versus those that did not. To identify such processes correctly, trainers instructed their pupils to "ask 'is this something that the customer would be willing to pay for'?" (John Black and Associates 2013a). Before the tools and methods of Lean could be fully incorporated into the work of Saskatchewan's healthcare providers, they first needed to be educated to understand that health care in Saskatchewan was defined by economic transaction and improving it meant conceptualizing patients as clients and measuring all processes by whether or not customers would pay for it - a literal incorporation of market logics. Indeed, like the many manifestations of Lean that had emerged as the approach had been introduced by the Lean Industry in different sectors and companies before arriving in Saskatchewan, the training

program of JBA included a translation of Lean for the sector, an interpretation of Lean knowledge and practices and how they were applicable in settings that spanned divisions between public and private. Services and practices within the province's healthcare system needed to be commodified.

Like the RFP before it, the training program for healthcare staff was unsurprisingly rife with a particular form of Lean knowledge that relied heavily on Japanese terminology. A glossary provided definitions for dozens of terms, including not only the Japanese terminology but particular conceptualizations of straightforward English terms like "work" and "waste" (John Black and Associates 2013b). Unlike other experts within the Lean Industry, John Black and his consultants, it became clear, expected those they were training to learn a proprietary language specific to their approach to Lean, ensuring that JBA's consultants would guide the direction of the province's health bureaucracy. The use of Japanese terminology would ultimately become a lightning rod for criticism of Lean within the province, as I describe below.

In sum, the training and education components of the JBA contract represented the discursive component of a Lean political programme. The inconsistent and uneven experimentation characterized the early Lean initiative was replaced with an attempt to, in the Ministry's own words, introduce a *culture*. The education and training components of the JBA contract served the discursive foundation for this culture, complete with a codified set of terminology, and an imported logic, legitimized through the work that Lean had done in previous experiments, that "waste" was the root of all problems in healthcare. With the training and education in place, the ground was softened for the introduction of technologies in the form of operational and institutional reforms.

7.3.2. Changing Work: Operational Reforms

The first set of "operationalizing" technologies in the JBA contract set out specific practices and techniques of work, articulated through two broadly defined tools, 3P and RPIWs (or *kaizen* events). Each tool was designed in a way meant to render the discursive components of Lean tangible in two different ways, by both developing processes from scratch and "improving" existing processes and practices through the elimination of waste. The first, "3P" (not to be mistaken with public-private partnerships, or P3s), or Production Preparation Process events, are the process by which Lean consultants facilitate the design of entirely new processes, though straightforward definitions are somewhat elusive. Black's own definition, for example, sheds little light on it:

> "3P: Production preparation process. The purpose of 3P Lean design events in healthcare is to structure a world-class quality of care that can be delivered at the required patient-demand volume (*takt* time) and in the correct timing (just in time) with simple and defect-free processes. The focus is on the patient, and the challenge is to start 'with a blank sheet of paper' (no preconceptions or limitations). Adopt the mind of a 13-year-old. (Black 2016, 484).

Training materials offer examples of previous 3P "successes" plaited with confusing visualizations (e.g., **Figure 7.2**).

Figure 7.2 - A JBA Visualization of 3P's place within Lean
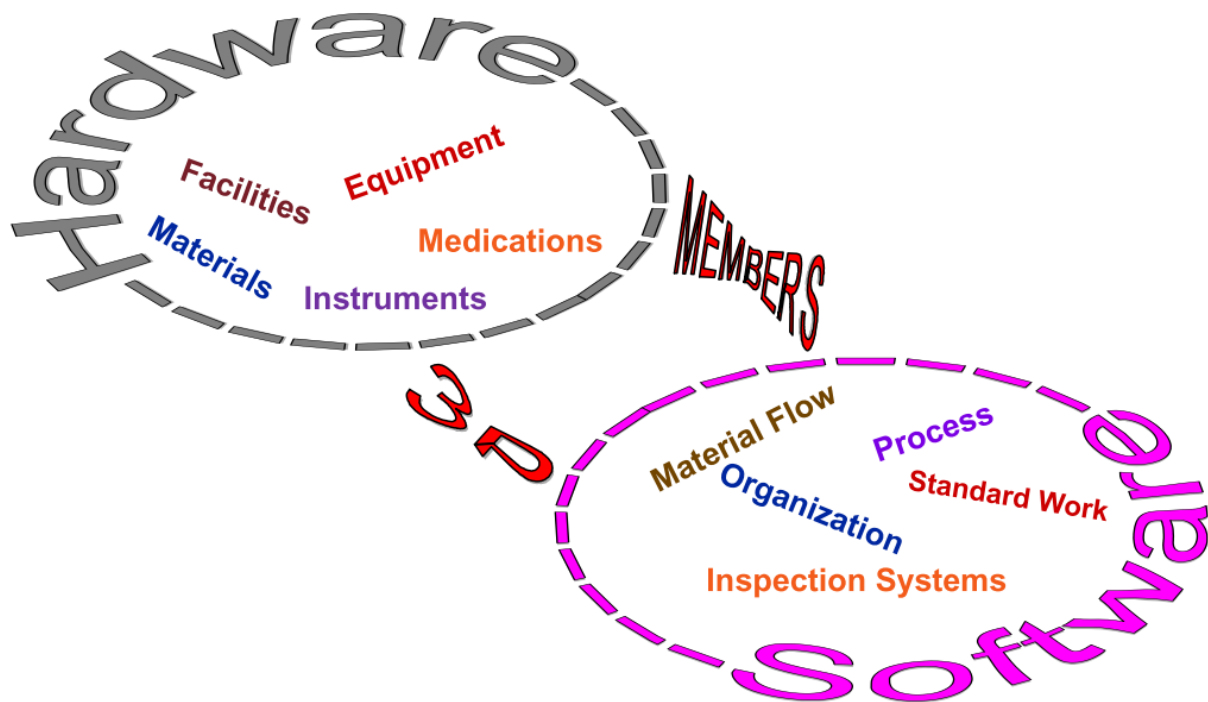
In practical terms, the most obvious examples of 3P events in Saskatchewan were large-scale capital construction projects for new healthcare facilities. The first project for which JBA was contracted in Saskatchewan was the planning of the Saskatchewan Children's Hospital in the Saskatoon Health Region.[66] Similar processes were used for the planning of facilities in other regions. In the Prairie North Health Region, 3P events were held to design the replacement for the North Battleford's Saskatchewan Hospital, the province's only psychiatric rehabilitation hospital. The JBA contract called for 23 such "large scale" 3P projects along with a number of smaller projects, suggesting that any new facilities built in the province would use Lean methods

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[66] The building of a children's hospital was a long-standing electoral promise of the Saskatchewan Party, which used the province's practice of transporting children to the Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton as an example of the failing healthcare system in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Children's Hospital, which was renamed the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital in 2017 after a $50 million donation, is set to open in 2019. Despite the title, the facility is not a free-standing hospital but rather an extension on the existing Royal University Hospital at the University of Saskatchewan.

in their design. In Five Hills, for example, 3P was used in the design and construction of a new regional hospital that would serve as a hub for secondary and tertiary care throughout the south-central portion of the province. The region promoted the use of 3P events on its YouTube page featuring footage of participants reviewing process maps as well as models of hospital floors made with paper and styrofoam while audio clips of interviews with executives, staff and patients of the health region who were involved in the process explaining the benefits of the 3P process (Saskatchewan Health Authority - Moose Jaw Area 2012). Through such promotion, the region promoted the array of perspectives that could be captured in such a process, including not only providers but also maintenance, housekeeping and patients.

The Wigmore Hospital in Moose Jaw became a point of political contention. As the hospital was being designed and constructed, questions arose around its size, which included fewer beds than the Moose Jaw Union Hospital that it had replaced. Physicians, meanwhile, raised questions about the lack of a hyperbaric chamber, a feature of the Union Hospital, in initial plans - a decision was ultimately reversed after becoming a topic of debate within the legislature. Within a year of opening, news articles began to appear with patients and families voicing concern over wait times, cleanliness, and service in the region (Stodalka 2016). One patient reported that front-line providers were too distracted by Lean consultants timing their tasks (see below) to interact or socialize with patients. The mayor of the city - a former NDP MLA and cabinet minister - commented that she had heard comments that the waiting rooms for the Emergency Department were too small (Stodalka 2016). The size of the Wigmore Hospital's Emergency Department waiting rooms remained a point of contention for those in front-line services as well. One nurse recalled that the waiting rooms of the Emergency Departments had been designed to reflect a "Lean" department, where patients would be quickly and efficiently

triaged upon arrival thus eliminating the requirement for large waiting rooms where unhappy and sick patients would wait for medical attention. Yet when the hospital opened, such processes were apparently not in place (Interview 20). With smaller waiting rooms, the media reported, patients were sitting on the floor as they waited to be taken to examination rooms (where they would wait again for examination by a physician). The logics of Lean had materialized as physical infrastructure and a lasting material legacy of the Lean initiative.

The second component of the operational reforms outlined in the JBA contract focussed not on developing entirely new processes, as the 3P events had been, but rather on improving existing processes. Here, the tool identified in the contract and used most extensively throughout the province was the Rapid Process Improvement Workshops (RPIWs), or *kaizen* events. RPIWs are five-day workshops, typically conducted over a work week, in which a number of stakeholders associated with a particular process gather to "improve" that process. The process serves as a form of micro-problematization, with phases that focus both on identifying problems as well as solution-finding to address those problems. Workshops typically include eight participants, including a lead and a sub-lead as well as staff who participate in the process and, ideally, a patient or patient representative who receives the services the process delivers. For each phase, a set of tools, each documented by a standard form with JBA's logo and a copyright statement, are provided to the team to facilitate and guide the team in its work. Teams first work to assess and quantify the components of a particular process. Value stream maps, for example, measure the time expended for every step in a particular process, using a stopwatch and a template, and "map" these steps out on a diagram. After identifying all wasted time in the process, the team is required to develop a "future state" map that demonstrates an improved, waste-free version as conceptualized by the team (see **Figure 7.3**). Other tools, such as

"spaghetti diagrams," map the paths that staff take in doing their day-to-day tasks (see **Figure 7.4**).[67] RPIWs also served as training opportunities for those required to obtain Lean Leader certification. Once new processes had been developed, "Standard Work" sheets were completed, outlining what steps should be taken for each task, including how long each step should take (e.g., **Figure 7.5**). After their initial classwork and tour of North American Lean facilities, Lean Leaders were required to take part in three RPIWs, once as a mere participant, once as a sub-team lead and once as an actual Team Lead, before receiving their certification from JBA (Black 2016, 321).

Figure 7.3 Value Stream Map
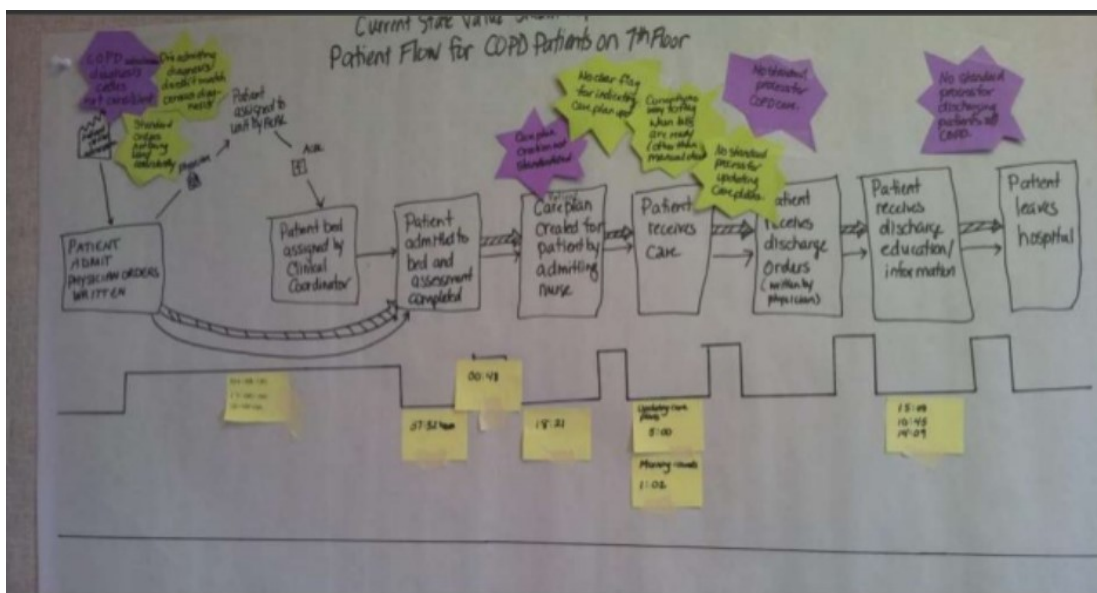
Source: https://www.slideshare.net/SaskQualitySummit?utm_campaign=profiletracking&utm_medium=sssite&utm_source=ssslideview

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[67] In addition to 3P and RPIWs, practices included 5S, or Sorting, Simplifying, Sweeping, Standardizing, and Self Discipline, a long name for a standardized process of tidying and organizing a workspace (Regina Qu'Appelle Health Authority 2013). Other tools included *kanban*, or a system of tracking inventory.
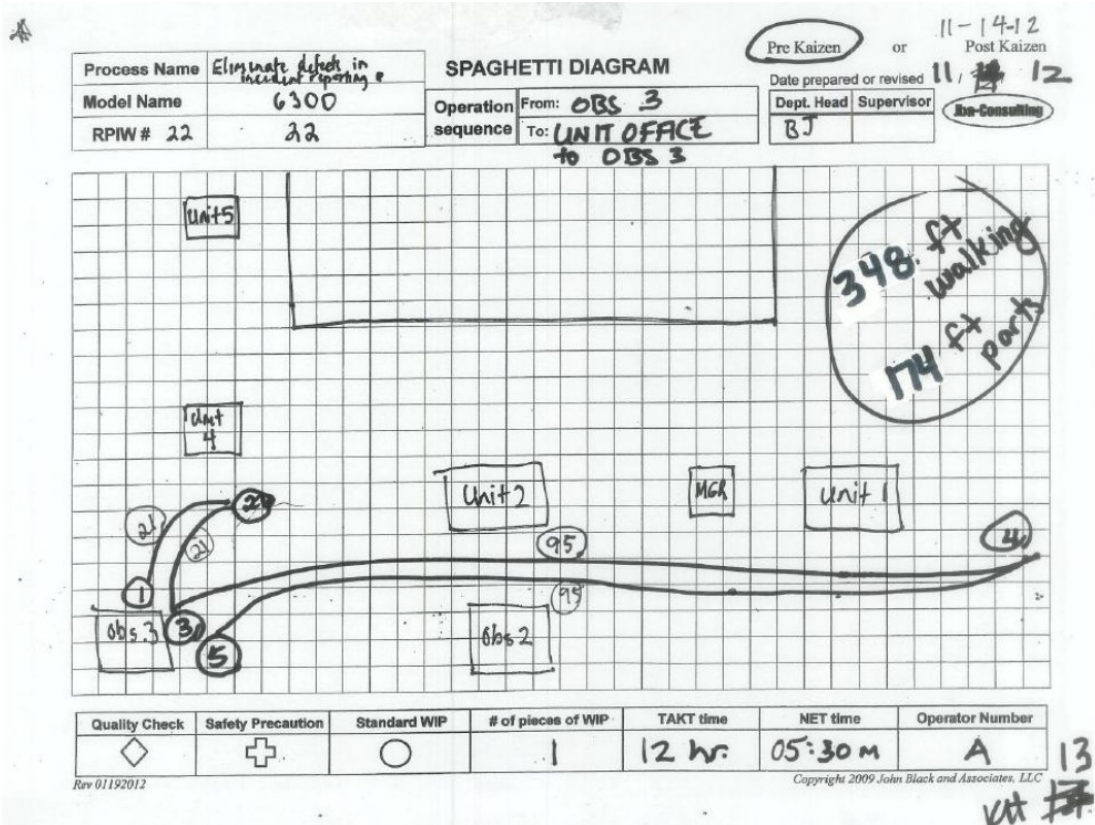
Figure 7.4 Spaghetti Diagram

Figure 7.5. - Typical standard work form

Putting Patients First better health · better care · better value · better teams	**Name of Activity**: Performing a Spirometry Test **Role Performing Activity**: Spirotrec trained provider performing a spirometry test to diagnose Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Regina Qu'Appelle HEALTH REGION **STANDARD WORK**	**Electronic Location**: Click here to enter text. **Hard Copy Location**: Portable Spiromtry Kit		**Department**: Primary Health Care
	Document Owner ▮▮▮▮▮ **Position**: Supervisor, RQHR Pulmonary Function Lab **Email**: ▮▮▮▮@rqhealth.ca		**Source of Standard Work**: Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region **AND/OR** Below the Line
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Standard Work Summary: This is standard work for a trained spirotrec provider to perform a spirometry test using the mobile spirometry kit from the time the provider rooms the patient to the time spirometry test is complete and patient leaves.

Task Sequence (Order in which tasks occur)	Task Definition (Brief summary of task)	Task Cycle Time (Define unit of measure – Seconds, minutes, etc)
1.	Private comfortable climate controlled room for testing is important	
2.	Screen patient for contraindications to spirometry	1 minutes
3.	Measure and record patient's height, weight, SpO2 and HR. Height and weight will be entered in the patients demographic information. HR and SpO2 can be entered in the notes / comments	3 minutes
4.	Gather the following information, and input into the appropriate field on the demographic screen or in the notes section: • Age • Gender • Race • HSN number • Smoker or Non Smoker • If smoker, how long have they smoked for, and how much per day on average • Referring and Interpreting Doctor or Nurse Practitioner • List of all medications the patient is taking	2 minutes

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The specific practices used in RPIWs to improve processes - timing particular tasks,

mapping the paths staff take while conducting their work, and quantifying the specific steps in

any particular process - are similar to Taylorist scientific management. The importance of

Taylorism to twentieth-century industrial capitalism is well-documented. Harry Braverman, for

example, states that it is "impossible to overstate the importance of the scientific management

movement" to the "institutions of capitalism" (Braverman 1998, 60), describing it as

"management masquerading in the trappings of science" (Braverman 1998, 59). Miller and

Rose, meanwhile, remind us that "Taylorism was not merely a cynical attempt to increase control

over the workplace and maximize the rate of exploitation of the worker. Rather it was one of a

set of programmes articulated in the language of 'efficiency,' entailing an alliance between

macro-political aspirations and the power of expertise" (Miller and Rose 2008, 43) Moreover,

they write, Taylorism framed the "labouring subject" as "an object of knowledge and a target of

intervention, as an individual to be assessed, evaluated and differentiated from others, to be

governed in terms of individual difference" (Miller and Rose 2008, 43).   Through *kaizen*

exercises, the movement, tasks, practices, and knowledge deployed by healthcare workers and

management were to become calculable, observable, and *governable*. By breaking down these

tasks into calculable steps and reconstituting the tasks associated with particular processes, Lean

projects ensured the reconstitution of what was considered a problem and a viable solution for

Saskatchewan's healthcare system. The solutions provided by JBA and the Lean Initiative were,

consistent with broader logics of Lean dating back to its inception in Toyota, focussed entirely

on the elimination of waste. The Lean initiative essentially framed any problems facing the

healthcare system at the time as a problem of inefficiencies and waste. Issues such as health

inequalities related to social determinants of health, long understood to be closely associated

with costs and outcomes of healthcare (Lynch et al 2000; Pickett and Wilkinson 2015; Dagkas 2014; Hyman 2009; Greenwood and de Leeuw 2012), became secondary problems, if at all. Lean's implementation represented not a purely *discursive* reconstitution of Saskatchewan's problems in healthcare but also the reconstitution of the practices of health providers' work and health infrastructure. Healthcare was reconceptualized as spaces of waste rather than of wellbeing.

For frontline staff, the constant presence of measurements and quantification of work represented a challenge both to their work and to their expertise. Staff recall the difficulty of conducting their work while being timed (Interview 9; Interview 12), for instance, or having to navigate around the daily "huddles" that management is required to participate in on the *gemba* (shop floor, or hospital unit) (Interview 9). A hospital-based pharmacist recalled a Lean leader from the hospital's health region visiting the hospital's pharmacy as part of a Lean activity to find efficiencies in the way the region managed its medications. The pharmacist recalled the Lean expert reviewing the hospital's processes for filling prescriptions for hospital patients, including the storage of medications. After review, the region's Lean expert recommended that the labels of pharmaceuticals, including narcotics, be colour coded by a sticker in order to increase the speed at which pharmacists could identify particular medications. The pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in the hospital understood the suggestion to be profoundly at odds with their training, which included identifying medication not by the appearance of the label but rather by its name. The staff resisted the recommendation and it was not implemented - another example of the smaller resistances that arose when Lean practices were introduced into professional settings.[68]

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[68] This event was relayed to me in my previous work with the Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan, based on an interview with a hospital-based pharmacist in a mid-sized Saskatchewan city in July 2012.

7.3.3. KPOs and the Remaking of HQC: Institutionalizing Lean

The third component of the JBA contract included provisions to ensure the large-scale institutionalization of Lean throughout the province's healthcare sector. The contract called for the creation of *Kaizen* Promotion Offices (KPOs) in all of the healthcare organizations in the province, for example. According to Black, KPOs serve as "the team that promotes and manages all improvement activities in [a] system" (Black 2016, 479), staffed by a Kaizen Operations Team (KOT) that "promote and manage all improvement activities, partnering with organizational leaders to ensure coordination of resources and support for the successful *kaizen* activities and value stream improvement" (Black 2016, 332) or, in other words, the "infrastructure to support *kaizen*" (Black 2016, 193). Indeed, KPOs represent the deliberate efforts of JBA to essentially expand the influence of the Lean Industry and, more specifically, their proprietary version of the Lean Industry, by requiring organizations to either train existing staff to serve as internal Lean specialists, or to hire individuals who already had such expertise to work within the units (e.g., Interview 4).

In Saskatchewan, the development and implementation of KPOs was regionally uneven, with some regions deploying much larger and more sophisticated KPOs than others, and thus ultimately pursuing a more aggressive agenda of Lean implementation than their smaller counterparts. This unevenness was determined by two related factors. First, JBA and the Ministry of Health's strategy for deployment was characterized by stages, or phases, with some regions being identified for the first phase and others for the second once Lean had been fully implemented in the earlier phase. Black recalls the phased process:

> When we began the Lean implementation, the largest health region, Saskatoon, was chosen as the model line, with implementation also beginning immediately in the Five Hills, Regina Qu'Appelle, Prairie North, and Prince Albert Parkland health regions as

Phase 1 … This staggered implementation was required to prevent resources from being spread too thinly, geographically or organizationally, to be effective (Black 2016, 370).

The second factor was the size and types of services provided within regions. There were significant differences between the province's RHAs in terms of population, facilities, and resources. Regions with larger organizations were more capable of implementing the institutional components of Lean than were their smaller, more rural counterparts. This was particularly the case with respect to regions that already had significant capacity in terms of strategy or quality improvement. As such, KPOs that were developed in the regions mirrored this internal capacity. Saskatoon, the largest and most urban health authority in the province, was identified early on by the province and JBA as being one of the "phase 1 regions." Moreover, Saskatoon already employed a large number of quality improvement staff. Upon the signing of the JBA contract and the emergence of the requirement for KPOs, the quality improvement units within the region were transformed to the region's KPO, ultimately housing over fifty full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) and organized by type of service, with JBA consultants assigned to each service type (Saskatoon Health Region 2014).

The regional KPOs, however, could not provide the type of province-wide support that JBA and the Ministry of Health understood to be necessary for a provincial implementation of Lean. Indeed, the inability of the RHAs to cooperate with one another or work in an integrated fashion had been one of the factors that led to the Lean implementation, underwritten by the threat of amalgamation and the loss of executive jobs, in the first place. In order for Saskatchewan to pursue a fully integrated provincial Lean system, a provincial KPO would be required to serve as a central institutional hub. The Provincial KPO,[69] Black writes, would serve

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[69] The Provincial KPO was named as such with the acronym PKPO. For the sake of reducing acronyms, I use "Provincial KPO" when speaking of the specific institution within HQC, and "provincial KPO' when speaking of an abstract or hypothetical.

as "the umbrella KPO, [setting] standards for all regional KPOs, [tracking] overall Lean progress, and [providing] backup support for any region experiencing difficulty (Black 2016, 332). A provincial KPO, documents noted, "would serve as a provincial unit that could coordinate the Lean transformational efforts being undertaken by the province, as a whole. At the time, the Deputy Minister made the decision to situate the Provincial KPO within the Ministry of Health" (HQC 2012, 2). Originally, the Provincial KPO was housed within the Strategy and Innovation Branch of the Ministry of Health, which had been split off from the older Policy and Planning Branch. Plans to create the provincial KPO within the Ministry of Health began in June 2012 before being implemented in July 2012, a month before the JBA contract was ultimately signed.

By late 2012, however, the KPO within the Ministry of Health had been identified as inadequate for its purpose. A relatively small unit with a small staff, the KPO within the Ministry was challenged with providing the large functions required of a provincial KPO while also dealing with the day-to-day issues that characterize life in a line department, limiting its ability to fill the large role as conceptualized, and required, by JBA (Interview 19; HQC 2012). The problem facing JBA and the Ministry of Health, however, was that there were relatively few healthcare organizations with a provincial mandate that could reasonably be expected to house a provincial KPO. As history had already demonstrated, the Ministry had relatively limited success in coordinating regional efforts. SAHO, the Saskatchewan Association of Healthcare Organizations, was the organization that had been used to release the RFPs for Lean work but was focussed primarily on representing the regions in collective bargaining processes with the province's large healthcare unions. The mandate of the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and

eHealth Saskatchewan, two other provincial organization that focussed on cancer treatment and Information Technology respectively, made them similarly unsuitable.

The Health Quality Council (HQC), however, had had a long history of working and collaborating with regions on projects centred on quality improvement, and represented a possible new home for the provincial KPO. The search for a provincial-level KPO coincided with a time of uncertainty and transition for HQC. As the Ministry of Health and JBA were deliberating the structure of the provincial Lean implementation and internally questioning the Ministry of Health as home to the Provincial KPO, HQC was under deliberations of its own, seeking to determine where it fit into the provincial healthcare system's emerging, Lean-centred landscape. The province had created HQC as part of a previous round of healthcare reforms in the province a decade earlier. In 2001, the Fyke Commission had recommended that the province establish a Quality Council that would "consist of informed, independent people rather than representatives of organizations whose particular interests they are expected to advance" and which would serve as a "high profile organization that analyzes, comments on, and recommends, but does not have authority or responsibility for implementation" (Fyke 2001, 50). The Quality Council as envisioned by the Fyke Commission was one that foregrounded evidence-based policy-making in Saskatchewan's healthcare sector, researching and reporting on national and international standards and "best practices" for the use of the Ministry of Health and the newly-established RHAs. The resulting organization, as instituted under *Health Quality Council Act*, was given a broad mandate that includes monitoring health indicators in the province, researching "new technologies" in healthcare and promoting improved health services through training (Saskatchewan 2002, 4). Its early years were characterized by data collection and analysis, eventually moving towards partnerships and collaboration with RHAs and the

Saskatchewan Medical Association (SMA) to operationalize the research that HQC had

conducted in its early years (Interview 19). Such efforts included Releasing Time to Care, one of

the province's first stand-alone Lean projects, and an effort to disseminate "best practices" with

respect to chronic diseases, the Chronic Disease Management Collaborative (HQC 2018).

The province's move towards a provincial implementation of Lean, however, raised

questions of HQC's purpose within the new regime. By 2011, HQC's executives and board of

directors were discussing what the new Lean initiative meant for HQC's role in the provincial

healthcare bureaucracy. HQC, according to one interview, understood that some of its work that

had been a priority in the years immediately prior to Lean's implementation had waned because

of various factors including the relationship with the province's medical association. "Health

Quality Council," one interviewee recalled while referring to the organization's ability to react to

"pushes" and "pulls" within the healthcare system, "thought very carefully about 'where is their

pull' and the 'pull' was in the regional effort to advance the ideas and tools and methods of Lean

to facilitate better care for residents" (Interview 19). The challenge was significant. HQC had a

mandate to assess "best practices" in health care, but doing so would become difficult when the

Ministry indicating that "best practices" were synonymous with Lean practices. Management

and the board made the most of the dilemma, identifying the need to work strategically to justify

HQC's ongoing existence. At the July 2011 board meeting, the CEO and board chair discussed

the necessity of HQC to reflect on its place within the healthcare system as Saskatchewan moved

towards Lean deployment. "The upcoming months are undoubtedly going to see some critical

conversations around how to work differently," the CEO reported to the board, suggesting that

"the desire to pursue support in building capacity and deploying quality improvement

methodologies like Lean and *Hoshin Kanri* will unquestionably impact HQC's work" (HQC

Board Minutes July 11-12, 2011). In response, the board passed a motion calling for a meeting between the CEO and the Deputy Minister of Health "securing endorsement that HQC plays a key role/has responsibility in measurement and reporting as it is a legislative requirement AND to clarify our support for Lean" (HQC Board Minutes July 11-12, 2011). By 2012, staff in HQC had begun to receive Lean training and management and the board continued to seek clarification of HQC's role within Lean, with internal communication suggesting that senior administration in the Ministry was encouraging "HQC's board to think about how the organization's role needs to evolve and ensure broad and effective adoption of the Lean Management system" (HQC Board Minutes June 18-20, 2012). By October of the same year, management and the board spent significant time identifying ways that HQC might contribute to the Lean initiative, identifying areas such as "initiat[ing] and lead[ing] communications about Lean and *Hoshin Kanri* to ensure that there is broad understanding both internally in the health system and with the public that these new ways of working, concepts and principles are all about improving quality, and not just about efficiency and cost savings" (HQC Board Minutes October 29-30, 2012). HQC was shapeshifting, adapting to a cooptation of its mandate, justifying its ongoing existence by locating itself in the new system as strategically as possible.

HQC's role in the Lean implementation grew exponentially in late 2012 and early 2013. Board minutes from the period suggest that there was increasingly specific direction coming from the Ministry of Health, and that HQC had demonstrated its utility to both in provincial initiatives to both the Ministry of Health and JBA (HQC Board Minutes October 29-30, 2012). Sometime between October and December of that year, the decision was made between the Ministry of Health, JBA and HQC that HQC would take over the Provincial KPO responsibilities from the Ministry of Health. Black has indicated that the transition was made "to achieve better

alignment," a vague description, but nonetheless a similar story to that told by those who were in

HQC at the time, who indicated that it was the experience of HQC in their collaborative work

with regions that made HQC a suitable home for the Provincial KPO.

Black's recollection, that HQC's CEO "and I worked to transfer the [provincial KPO]

from the Ministry of Health to the HQC in early 2013" (Black 2016, 332), however, glazes over

a great deal of detail surrounding the negotiations and process by which responsibility for

coordinating Lean throughout the province was transferred, but confirms that the mission of

HQC was essentially transformed. Indeed, emails indicate that the process by which HQC was

given responsibility for the Provincial KPO was relatively quick and required a flurry of action

in the form of negotiations and collaboration between the Ministry of Health, HQC, and JBA. In

December 2012, senior management of the Ministry of Health indicated to HQC leadership that

the organization was to develop a transition plan that would detail exactly how HQC would take

over responsibility as Provincial KPO. This led to a flurry of activity within HQC, with

leadership in HQC believing that the transition needed to take place with relative haste. Emails

between senior management and the board suggested that management understood that it would

be important for the transition of responsibility to take place by March 31, a turnaround of three

months. Lean training quickly became a priority, and in the fall of 2012, HQC underwent a rapid

process of certifying its staff, including taking part in RPIW sessions in different capacities and

taking part in a North American study tour.

A draft plan for the transition of the Provincial KPO functions to HQC was distributed

amongst senior HQC management, its board, the Ministry of Health, and JBA in January 2013,

with all actors having a say in how the transition would progress (HQC internal and external

emails, December-January 2013).   The final version of the document was drafted by HQC and

edited within the Ministry of Health with feedback from JBA (HQC internal and external emails, December-January 2013). It outlines the process by which HQC assumed responsibility as Provincial KPO, as well as the effects that the transition would have on its work. It identified a number of broad, overlapping areas over which HQC would inherit responsibility from the Ministry of Health's Provincial KPO. Under the plan, HQC was responsible for setting direction for the province's Lean implementation, establishing a provincial infrastructure that could facilitate, coordinate and support Lean initiatives in regions and, particularly, the work of regionally-based KPOs, report on performance of the Lean experiment, and coordinating provincial Kaizen activity through communicating "best practices," including overseeing training of healthcare staff on the tenets and practices of Lean (HQC 2013, 4-5). The document required signature of a wide selection of individuals, including CEOs of select RHAs, multiple levels of authority within the Ministry of Health and, at the top of the signing page, John Black (HQC 2013, 9).[70]

The actual transfer of responsibilities was set to take place throughout the month of March 2013, aligning with the end of the fiscal year and the beginning of 2013-2014. Tellingly, JBA was heavily involved in the process: an initial meeting between HQC and JBA was identified as the first necessary step, and it was in this meeting between HQC and JBA that expectations for what HQC's responsibilities would be and in which JBA's "commitment to [Provincial KPO] setup and ongoing guidance" was established. This suggested that JBA had ultimate authority over the new Provincial KPO's structure and operations (HQC Transition Plan 2013, 6). This first meeting was to be followed by a second later in the month, in which JBA would have the opportunity to review the work and progress that had been made by HQC to date

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[70] In his book and without reference to the plan or the work HQC did beyond saying that its CEO worked with Black to plan the transition, Black quoted the transition plan almost verbatim (Black 2016, 336).

(HQC 2013, 6). With the process guided and approved by JBA, HQC inherited responsibility as the Provincial KPO on April 1, 2013.

There were inherent tensions associated with HQC's inheritance of its additional KPO responsibilities. First among them was HQC's legislative mandate that it was legally required to fulfil. For the board and management of HQC, ensuring that the organization maintained the requirements of its legislative mandate while taking on the role of provincial KPO was crucial. Emails between board members suggested that questions of whether or not they could take on their new role as provincial KPO while fulfilling their legislated requirements without additional resources were real and pressing. Despite these early questions, however, HQC ultimately indicated in its transition plans that there "is no question that the key roles and responsibilities of the [provincial KPO] strongly align with [the legislated mandate]" (HQC 2013, 6). Additional communication between management and HQC's board mirrored these sentiments, transitioning from messages of concern surrounding the new mandate to those expressing enthusiasm that Lean would present a new "opportunity' for HQC to demonstrate its relevance in the Saskatchewan healthcare system.

The second tension associated with HQC's transformation into the Provincial KPO centred on funding and resources. Despite taking on a significant new role within the provincial healthcare system, HQC received no additional resources or funding from the province as provincial KPO (Provincial Auditor 2013). For the Ministry, however, the lack of additional resources was reasonable given the amount of staff that HQC had already assigned to "quality improvement" using prior investments in initiatives such as Releasing Time to Care (correspondence from Ministry official, 2018). Those outside the Ministry understood it differently. While senior management and executives within RHAs had been given the

ultimatum of adopting and deploying Lean or facing amalgamation and losing their jobs, management within the healthcare system understood that HQC's funding served as a leverage point. To secure its funding on an ongoing basis and demonstrate its continued relevance within the Saskatchewan Healthcare system, HQC had little choice but to demonstrate itself to be able to adapt to Lean.

Lean's institutionalization through KPOs represented another area where tensions mounted. Black wrote that regional KPOs were not staffed properly (Black 2016, 332-334), arguing that management within the RHAs were unwilling to reorganize their regions and reassign quality staff to the new units, ignoring that collective bargaining and the importance of specific responsibilities and tasks within particular job classifications made it nearly impossible for employers to unilaterally change individuals' job descriptions. For his part, Black suggested that problems with job classification for members of regional KPOs were addressed "at [his] prompting" (Black 2016, 337). Beyond logistical issues of staffing within the regional KPOs, Black expressed impatience with the speed with which HQC was able to shift its operational priorities and activities to more closely resemble what he conceptualized as a proper KPO. The Provincial KPO at HQC, he wrote, "faced challenges transitioning from the HQC's initial focus on quality improvement to the implementation of the necessary components of a Lean transformation" (Black 2016, 336). Black points to HQC's staff's unwillingness or inability[71] to travel as part of their newly-formulated job descriptions as being evidence that the provincial KPO "came to represent the traditional culture, one that JBA had been brought to the province to change" (Black 2016, 337). Black believed and argued, in other words, that HQC's inability to completely reshape its organization and work to flawlessly mirror his conceptualization of a unit

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[71] He writes, vaguely, that while HQC's new role required its staff travel to regional KPOs for "days at a time if necessary," the "travel appeared difficult for the PKPO staff" (Black 2016, 337).

whose sole purpose was the wholesale introduction of Lean as the primary - the *only* - method for conducting work in the healthcare sector was a stumbling block in the province's Lean implementation. Black's impatience with the logistical and structural realities of the Saskatchewan healthcare system would become a repeated point of contention in the province, as I discuss in more detail in the pages that follow.

Black's frustration and impatience, expressed in interviews and in his own writing, suggests that translation is neither smooth nor uncontroversial. Indeed, in his condemnation of HQC's inability to rapidly and wholly reform its central purpose, Black reveals a severe dissonance that existed between how he and his consulting firm understood Saskatchewan's Lean implementation, and the understanding that existed within the healthcare system - at least those working within RHAs and HQC. By lamenting the provincial KPO and HQC's role as symbols of "traditional culture," for example, Black directly contradicted the work, as revealed through internal documentation, done at HQC to translate HQC's work in a way that sought to both meet the standard of the organization's legislated mandate and its new role as provincial KPO. While HQC sought ways of framing Lean to coincide with HQC's initial mandate and continuing work, Black understood such efforts as counterproductive to the greater effort. This brash approach to Lean's translation and implementation in the province would, as I explore in more detail below, become a central theme in the public response to Lean in the province.

7.4. The Long Demise of the Lean Initiative

7.4.1. *Anchor Draggers and Xenophobia: Early Optimism turns to Controversy*

The Lean experiment began to receive significant public attention in 2011. In an interview with reporter Janet French, Florizone announced that the Ministry of Health's adoption of Lean was a "game changer" that had the potential to "turn the system on its head" (French

2011). Florizone boasted that Lean's full implementation would take fifty years, and stated that

no jurisdiction in the world had been so ambitious with Lean, and that it would represent a

"transformational" change to the Saskatchewan healthcare system. In hindsight, consultants and

public servants involved in the early implementation of Lean suggest that the early "overselling"

of Lean was problematic in that it identified Lean as not only a technical solution for dealing

with the problems facing healthcare at the time, but also as a political issue in the province

(Interview 15; Interview 18). By making Lean a cornerstone piece of how it would address the

issues that it had long associated with the NDP, the Saskatchewan Party government ensured that

it received much more attention by the press, frontline providers, public sector unions, and the

Opposition.

Initially, health region leadership, unions, and the media had given Lean a cautious

approval, but responses among senior regional leadership were mixed. Some were excited.

Many of these executives had spent their career in health services and administration and already

experienced the appearance (and disappearance) of management and quality improvement

frameworks that seemed very similar to Lean: "I lived through quality management, total quality

improvement, you name it," one recalled (Interview 3). After the cuts of the 1990s, these

executives, who had primarily worked in healthcare delivery and administration for their entire

careers, had seen countless "fads" meant to address the inefficiencies in government meant to

"bend the cost curve" and deliver the same level of healthcare service without additional

resources. The difference for executives, however, was the promise that Lean came with

resources. Despite the fact that Lean's central premise includes the assumption that

organizations should be able to do "more with less," these executives saw a strategic opportunity

to use the resources being provided by the province to promote Lean to address the deficiencies

that had resulted from neoliberal cuts. One senior official in the health system commented that "we had gone through years of cuts" (Interview 1) and that the implementation of Lean represented not austerity or cuts, but rather a *response* to the earlier rounds of austerity and cuts that had sabotaged the ability of provinces to deliver publicly-funded healthcare. One Ministry staff person who became involved with Lean's coordination and implementation mirrored this sentiment, suggesting that they understood Lean to be a chance to "save" public healthcare (Interview 17). Despite underlying skepticism about the Lean's appearance as a "fad" and the use of consultants with little knowledge of the province or its healthcare system, such executives saw an opportunity to obtain resources for which they had long advocated. For them, the specifics of Lean's approach, such as having a "common" language of quality improvement to use across facilities and regions, or a systematic approach to finding improvements that could be made in individual programs had some merit. But it was the opportunity that was provided by the priority the government had given Lean, complete with resources to undertake the initiative, that represented a potential for improvement in their respective regions.

The province's healthcare unions similarly gave Lean early, cautious approval. In 2012, the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN) provided a summary of the Lean experiment to its members, including an overview of Lean concepts and terminologies as well as how the Ministry of Health and RHAs were introducing Lean into Saskatchewan's healthcare settings. While the union suggested that it would monitor the Lean situation and encouraged its members to report back to leadership on what they were seeing in their day-to-day work with respect to Lean, it was nonetheless optimistic that Lean represented "opportunities for SUN members to transform health care in your facility and/or region" (SUN 2012, 3). The same year, the president of the Health Science Association of Saskatchewan (HSAS) reported to that union's membership that

Lean provided "the opportunity for us to share information and concerns we have had with situations" in the province's health regions (HSAS 2012, 4). Similar to executives, healthcare unions saw the obvious priority given to Lean as a potential to address issues their membership had long identified.

Media coverage of Lean in this early period also was sympathetic, characterized by descriptive stories and articles that quoted the Minister of Health and Ministry officials on the potential that Lean implementation held (e.g., French 2011). One article, titled "Eliminating Waste in Healthcare," for example, asks what Boeing and Saskatchewan healthcare had in common, before allowing RHA executives to answer the question by suggesting that "all health-care areas" could "benefit by using Lean principles" (Cowan 2011). Another provided a more detailed overview of the early Lean initiatives, quoting Florizone and Health Minister Don McMorris as they extolled the virtues of Lean in healthcare (French 2011). Meanwhile, the province's most well-known political columnist, the *Regina Leader-Post*'s Murray Mandryk, called Lean a "thoughtful approach to austerity" (Mandryk 2010a). He suggested that Wall deserved credit for "innovative" approaches such as Lean (Mandryk 2012a), and praised Health Minister Don McMorris for using Lean to address issues in healthcare (Mandryk 2010b; Mandryk 2011).

As time went on, however, Lean increasingly came under scrutiny from front-line workers, the media, and the Opposition. The frontline staff that I interviewed were nearly uniform in their hostility towards Lean. Common complaints about the methodology suggested that it made their jobs more difficult, taking time away from patients to focus instead on arcane practices such as the measurement of their steps or the time it took them to do particular tasks. Some frontline staff suggested that they had originally believed that the Lean methodology

would be productive in healthcare, but they eventually soured as they believed that it interfered

with their work. Such complaints were typically woven together with broader frustrations they

held regarding management and the "wastefulness" of middle and upper management. Others

complained that, as Lean became controversial, it became increasingly hard to discuss work at

social functions (Interview 7), where they would encounter friends or family who wished to

communicate their disapproval with the Lean initiative.

Unions representing front-line staff also reversed their initial approval of Lean. While its

early reaction to the Lean initiative had been cautious optimism, nursing union SUN began to

oppose Lean's implementation in the healthcare system, explaining that "SUN was hopeful at the

outset that Lean concepts would be effective - it's very disappointing this is turning out not to be

the case in practice." SUN's president suggested that the focus on efficiencies - central to Lean -

came at the expense of other concepts such as patient complexity, and nurses' ability to care for

their patients: "Now that Lean is being put into practice we are seeing the primary focus is on

creating efficiencies, waste reduction and budgetary savings only, it fails to take into account

patient acuity and complexity and is unfortunately proving to have little impact on direct care at

the bedside and patient outcomes" (SUN 2014). In a letter to the province's two daily

newspapers, SUN's president argued that the withdrawal of support was, in fact, not a change at

all but merely a continuation of skepticism that the union and its members had long expressed:

"Registered nurses, myself included, have had high hopes for lean, with its promise of engaging

providers and putting patients first. We have also had serious doubts about how it would actually

be implemented. This remains true." (Zambory 2014). As 2014 went on, SUN's public

statements continued to question the effectiveness of Lean. More specifically, the statements

revealed a defensiveness over nurses' competencies, education, and their particular form of

expertise: "We have, at times, participated in conversations with Government around Lean and our message remains the same — making certain process more efficient is a positive thing and we support those efforts, but research does demonstrate that Lean is not a clinical tool and there is a gap between Lean improvement processes and the clinical nursing process" (SUN 2014b). Friction between the training and professional ethos of healthcare providers and the Lean programme was emerging.

While media coverage in the early stages of Lean implementation largely worked to provide public servants and politicians with a platform upon which they could promote the Lean initiative, as time went on, media coverage began to reflect growing criticisms of Lean. By early 2014, shortly after SUN had indicated it no longer supported the initiative, Mandryk was musing about "whether Lean is truly the answer" and suggesting that "the cult of Wall combined with the cult of lean may be powerful, but so is resistance to change in the health system when workers become convinced bad change is being imposed on them from the outside" (Mandryk 2014a). A month later, he argued that "as a concept" Lean was "difficult to criticize" but that, as the provincial auditor had pointed out to him, it was exceedingly difficult to "measure" Lean's successes or to "fairly measure whether the Black and Associates' version of Lean deserves the credit it is getting from its rather zealous advocates" (Mandryk 2014b). By late 2014, he was criticizing the government's tendency of ignoring critiques of Lean and its "near-blind allegiance to Black and his methods of quality improvement" (Mandryk 2014c).

For many in the healthcare system, it was not the *idea* or the concepts of Lean that caused concern. Rather, it was the style and actions of JBA and, more specifically, John Black. Black's approach to working with clients prioritized strict adherence to his brand of Lean. For Black, deviation from JBA's guidance is tantamount to rebellion. On the topic of regional managers and

staff attempting to use English terms rather than his preferred Japanese nomenclature, for example, Black wrote that "permitting changes in one region or facility can instigate an epidemic of 'doing one's own thing.' In addition to opening the door to reduced rigour, if not chaos, such customization can destroy the ability to" to improve processes (Black 2016, 384). Appealing to the concept of "anchor-draggers," a concept within Lean circles that refers to those managers or staff who resist Lean implementation and need to be "dealt with" (Womack and Jones 1996, 132-133), Black then turned his attention to those who dared to speak ill of Lean: "A related obstacle involves people speaking derisively about Lean. Such bad-mouthing occurs in many implementations, and it was a problem early in the process for some teams in Saskatchewan" (Black 2016, 384). Such "negative reactions," however, "are to be expected" because in any organization, "radical change is hard," and "can seem confusing and overwhelming." Nonetheless, "committed leaders should not tolerate Lean bad-mouthing" and as management remains steadfast in its Lean conviction, "verbal resistance disappears as anchor draggers move on and others experience proof that Lean works" (Black 2016, 385). For Black, those who resisted Lean were an unfortunate inevitability, an error that must be managed or removed. Any resistance or critique of Lean, any alternative suggestions for approaches that should be used, were categorized under the banner of "anchor draggers," those who lack the vision or are too beholden to the "old" ways to see the vision of what Lean represents. Lean was the correct way of doing things, and any deviations or anomalies were as harmful to the collective project of Lean's implementation as a deformed car door in a Toyota factory.

Unsurprisingly, Black's rigidity and framing those who questioned Lean's implementation or his style as "anchor draggers" bred further resentment. This became abundantly clear when a memo, drafted by Regina Qu'Appelle RHA and directed to the Ministry

of Health was made public. The memo focussed on frustrations within the region with Black and his consultants and included direct quotes of the region's Senior Leadership Team, who provided feedback on the Lean implementation up until mid-2014. Amongst specific technical suggestions, there were scathing indictments of how JBA operated. One manager suggested that "All training needs to be done using adult education principles and foundations" and that "poor quality videos, didactic approaches focused on 'the talking head expert,' memorization, activities that are not meaningful and in some cases are insulting - all of which are part of JBA's approach - are not only not educationally sound but cause skepticism, alienation and frustration" (RQHR 2014). Another suggested that the region's "experience with JBA has been one of a lack of respect, 'tattling' on leaders if they question, expecting rigid conformity in a militaristic style, gossiping, and undermining…" (RQHR 2014). Similar remarks included that JBA's "dogma is incompatible with the alleged encouragement of new analysis and improvements ("You will free think EXACTLY the way I free think.) and the rigidity is off-putting for physicians" (RQHR 2014). The Deputy Minister of Health later, in front of a legislative committee, admitted that JBA's style was rigid and confrontational:

> You know, our consultant had probably a discipline that was needed early on, but had some very rigid views on certain things and how certain things are done. And as I said, we're trying to adapt this to the Saskatchewan context a little bit more, I think, certainly from my perspective and the CEOs, kind of that circling back, making sure that people understand their importance in moving this initiative forward, kind of grounding that work and the work that they do every day. So yes, there has actually been a lot of change, I think, in a very short time and probably more to come. (Hendricks 2016, 729).

Hendricks' public statements reflected a broad consensus within management and staff working within the healthcare system that John Black and his firm's approach made the job of implementing Lean much more difficult. One senior manager called Black's conduct "embarrassing" (Interview 1), a sentiment reflected by others in similar positions. Another took

particular exception to Black's bombastic performances in the media, suggesting that Black should be "the last person you want near the media" (Interview 18). Indeed, while those I interviewed in my research often expressed respect for Black's dedication and drive to implement his methodology, nearly all who had direct contact with him also expressed a deep skepticism with respect to his personal and professional conduct.

Such clashes over implementation strategies and could be considered to be merely differences in style. But such conflicts also evince the messiness and complexity of the process by which policies and forms of expertise are translated as they move. For those who clashed with Black, it was not merely his style that created tensions between JBA and the staff and management of the healthcare system but rather the inability or unwillingness of Black and his consultants to take local circumstances into account. Multiple interviewees, for example, referred to JBA's lack of knowledge about the Canadian healthcare system and the dynamics associated with it, including collective bargaining, to be points of contention. Such frustrations were undoubtedly exacerbated by Black's public remarks, including boasts about his lack of knowledge of Saskatchewan before taking on the contract, telling a reporter that upon hearing from Saskatchewan representatives who approached him for work and training, he thought that the province "might as well be Antarctica" (French 2014a). Elsewhere, managers and staff, mirroring the "everyday resistance" deployed by the manager in the Ministry of Health who refused to participate in Lean training, recall simply going along with the process of training and Lean events but then conducting their work the way they wanted. This was particularly the case in smaller, rural areas. One manager suggested that staff in their rural facilities would often humour the consultants during training sessions and then carry on with their business as usual,

expecting that neither JBA nor the Ministry of Health or HQC would bother monitoring the extent to which the RHA was adhering to Lean (Interview 1).

The lack of enthusiasm demonstrated by unions such as SUN, the increasingly skeptical media coverage of Lean implementation, and the resentment over Black's style were predictably weaponized by the Official Opposition NDP. As the Lean healthcare implementation was rolled out and word of JBA's tactics (especially the use of Japanese terminology) and the cost of Lean's implementation began to spread, the Official Opposition began to use the criticism to fuel its strategy in the media and in the legislature. The costs of JBA and the Lean implementation was particularly ripe fruit for the Opposition. Leader of the Opposition Cam Broten, for example, often led their daily Question Period questions with Lean. Appealing to the skepticism of using Japanese terminology, Broten and the NDP took particular care to bring attention to JBA's use of Japanese *senseis* and the travel costs associated with bringing such experts to Saskatchewan:

> Mr. Speaker, there are good aspects to lean, but this government has allowed the lean process to become fat.[72] This government, Mr. Speaker, has forced common sense underground. Over the weekend, Mr. Speaker, my inbox filled up from health care workers who are afraid to speak out, Mr. Speaker, who are afraid to voice their opinions because of the culture that is being created. This government, Mr. Speaker, is spending $40 million on just one consultant, and that doesn't even include the other costs that health regions are picking up for additional lean contracts and other lean costs in other ministries. And we know, Mr. Speaker, that this government is flying in senseis from Japan and paying them $3,500 a day to give training to Saskatchewan health care workers. So I think when you're spending $3,500 a day on one sensei from Japan, and there are more senseis, that Saskatchewan people deserve better answers. So my specific question to the Premier was this: what exactly happens in the Japanese cultural training sessions for health care workers? (Broten 2014, 4724).

The Lean contract, the tactics of JBA, and the cost of the Lean implementation dominated much of the 2014-2015 legislative sessions, with the NDP repeatedly asking pointed questions similar to the one above. The Saskatchewan Party government, led by Wall himself, dismissed

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[72] There is, within this quote and within this dissertation, an enormous gap in which a discussion about Lean and the politics of fatness within broader logics of austerity would be fitting.

such concerns and insisted that the Lean initiative would deliver better services and save resources. The NDP Opposition, in short, framed themselves as defenders of front-line workers who, they suggested, felt unable to bring up concerns over Lean because of fears of punishment on the part of JBA or their employers, who refused to tolerate skepticism or resistance to Lean.

The frustration was mutual. While Saskatchewan managers and staff bristled that Black and his staff were rigid and disrespectful, Black was growing wary the "Canadianness" of his Saskatchewan clients, deploying common tropes about the polite and docile Canadian:

> Saskatchewan, like the rest of Canada, has a culture different from that of the United States - one that is generally more collaborative and more respectful of authority. The people of Saskatchewan prefer a more indirect communication style, one that sometimes avoids confrontation at any cost, and they can become uncomfortable with communication that in the United States would simply be considered direct. (Black 2016, 286)

Black considered the complaints and criticisms of staff and managers to be symptoms of their inability to deal with his straight-talking "American" style. In the media, he argued that the criticism and negative media coverage were both inaccurate and unfair, focussing on criticism without taking into account the progress he believed was obvious (Black 2017). In other interviews, he challenged Leader of the Opposition Cam Broten to meet him or to visit frontline Lean activities to see the benefits and potential it offered (French 2014b).

Black's response to criticisms touched on another sensitivity of the Lean Industry. For JBA, as with any management consultants, claims of expertise rely on their knowledge being understood as objective or scientific. Unsurprisingly, then, Lean experts began to complain that the Saskatchewan initiative was exposing Lean to the messiness of politics. Mark Graban, responding to reports by Lean experts within the province that Lean had "gotten political," bemoaned in apparent exasperation that "of course it [had]" (Graban 2014). Another expert suggested that Lean had become "a political football in the normally congenial province of

Saskatchewan" (Shook 2014).   As controversy raged on, however, these experts who bemoaned the "politicization" of Lean pondered if it had been Black's approach that had been the problem. Graban, for example, suggested that perhaps the province should have simply deployed Lean tools within the banner of the Patient First review "instead of trumpeting Lean, Lean, Lean" (Graban 2014). Another suggested that "Saskatchewan public servants don't need Japanese consultants to teach them Japanese culture in order for them to start using lean principles to improve services" (Shook 2014). In either case, the Lean Industry disapproved of the extent to which Saskatchewan's Lean experiment was clouding Lean's reputation as an objective expertise and science. One consultant levelled a scathing critique of Black's defensiveness in the face of criticism, telling me Black's book was a "self-serving piece of shit" (Interview 13).

As controversy mounted, Deputy Minister of Health Dan Florizone began to weigh in and defend the Lean implementation publicly. In an interview, Florizone sought to reinforce the reasons why Lean was necessary, problematizing the pre-Lean system succinctly and profanely: "We have great and dedicated people," he told Mandryk, "working in a system that is truly fucked" (Quoted in Mandryk 2014a). He defended the decision to hire Black, suggesting that the system needed to recruit "the best" to assist its drive for improvement and suggested that the use of Japanese terminology, a flashpoint for criticism, had been a necessary tool to intervene in the bureaucratic inertia that had characterized the healthcare system: "I'd change the stupid language in a heartbeat, but in this stupid-ass system, I can't get their attention any other way. It sounds cult-like. It's not … I don't give a shit what they call it … I used it as a shocker … I may reflect back and say: 'You really screwed that one up, Danny'" (Quoted in Mandryk 2014a). For his part, Black insisted that the media should have focussed on the savings that Lean was achieving in the province rather than the costs of the consultants or other criticisms (Black 2014). In either

case, though, criticism in popular discourse in the province focussed not on the "foreignness" of introducing private sector logics into public sectors institutions but rather on the "foreignness" of its source - an American consultant introducing a Japanese-sounding transformation.

The political contestation that arose from the implementation of Lean and, more specifically, the way it was implemented, speaks to the potential messiness of how rationalities are articulated through programmes and technologies. While policy experts in fields such as Lean may wrap themselves in the language of universalism and sell potential clients on their ability to incorporate the practices that have been used - and found successful, according to them - the rapid introduction of a new political programme, complete with a coherent set of discursive, institutional and operational changes is grounds for contestation. Forms of expertise, ways of work, and formations of organizational structure already exist. Change creates friction, regardless of the personalities or styles of those involved. Surely, most people familiar with Lean's implementation in Saskatchewan would turn, in part at least, to Black's bravado and perceived arrogance as an underlying factor in the controversy surrounding Lean. This would be both understandable and largely correct. However, to do so, I argue, risks underestimating the contestation and political compromises associated with translation and assemblage-building. Rather than a determining factor in Lean's controversy in Saskatchewan, it is more likely that Black's personal style merely made the political nature of translation and assemblage-building, which are typically disguised as the neutral diffusion of "best practices," transparent and obvious. The rigidity and demanding nature of JBA simply made explicit what might, in other occasions of translation and assemblage-building, be decidedly - *purposefully* - implicit.

Here, it should be noted, the importance of researchers locating bureaucratic operations and reform within broader processes and structures of power becomes even more clear. Lean's

implementation in Saskatchewan demonstrates the extent to which such processes can become *undeniably* political, in ways that invite frustration from those whose political project includes being neutral and "apolitical." To attempt to explore the dynamics of this process *without* locating them within political contexts would mean "externalizing" the political resistance to Lean and, in effect, taking those concerns of Lean consultants about the process becoming "politicized" at face value, essentially missing the enormous importance of the political nature of expertise. It would, in short, miss entirely too much of the rich story of Saskatchewan's Lean implementation and, I argue, of similar stories elsewhere.

7.4.2. "Lean" Becomes Toxic

Within the context of this critique, academics began asking questions about the efficacy of Lean's reforms. Clinical researchers and their health administration colleagues offered evaluations of Saskatchewan's Lean experiment in healthcare that pointed out that, in evaluatory terms, Lean was relatively young and would need substantial monitoring to determine effectiveness (Goodridge *et al* 2015; Sari *et al* 2017; Kinsman *et al* 2014;). Public administration and health researcher Greg Marchildon (2013) argued that early buy-in from practitioners was supported by generous settlements with nurses and physicians in the provinces, an arrangement that would likely evaporate if a downturn in the province's natural resources materialized. University of Regina political scientist Tom McIntosh mirrored the concerns communicated by management who were called into question the appropriateness of Lean within the context of a provincial, publicly-delivered and administered healthcare system, arguing that neither the Ministry of Health nor JBA had a sufficient grasp of "the difficulty of implementing Lean in an environment characterized by multiple centres of decision-making authority and stakeholders with professional and regulatory autonomy" (McIntosh 2016, 7), taking direct aim

at the one-size-fits-all model, a fundamental component of how policy moves within neoliberal governance that understands "best practices" as being operationalizable across sectors and settings.

One study caused particular controversy in the province. As part of a broader evaluation of the economic potential or risks associated with deploying Lean in healthcare settings, Moraros, Lemstra and Nwankwo (2016) argued that although "reduced financial cost is a reported benefit of Lean, it is worthy to note that we were unable to identify a single study that had actual quantifiable data to that effect. The province of Saskatchewan appears to be the only jurisdiction with actual financial costs information … If the numbers reported [by the media and the government] are accurate and true, it will mean that \$1511 was spent on Lean for every one dollar saved by the province" (Moraros, Lemstra and Nwankwo 2016, 162-164). Unsurprisingly, the prospect of a -151,110% return on investment was quickly noticed and utilized by the opposition. Leader of the Opposition Cam Broten argued that "the study should be the absolute final straw for the disastrous and costly John Black Lean program" (quoted in CBC News 2016).

Academic studies were accompanied by performance audits by the province's Provincial Auditor. In 2014, the office released its report on the effectiveness of HQC's coordination of Lean. It found that, despite HQC's official role as Provincial KPO, it had not been given enough authority to perform a coordinating role. "Although the Ministry made HQC responsible for the Provincial Lean Office,[73] it did not give HQC full authority to carry out all of its responsibilities. [JBA] retained certain responsibilities. The ministry also retained authority to manage the consultant and the consultant's contract" (Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan 2014, 217). As such, the Auditor reported, HQC did "not have full authority to carry out its responsibilities" and,

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[73] Amusingly, the Provincial Auditor's Office chose to refer to the Provincial KPO as the Provincial Lean Office, refusing to deploy the same Japanese terminology as mandated by JBA and the Ministry of Health.

as a result, "did not have effective processes to coordinate the use of Lean as a continuous

improvement methodology across the health sector." (Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan 2014,

217). The next year, the Auditor released a report that examined the broader Lean initiative.

While the report was more positive than the original, HQC-focussed audit, it nonetheless pointed

out that there was no way of knowing whether or not Lean had been successful:

> Although those responsible for the Lean initiative planned for, tracked, and monitored certain aspects of the use of Lean, they did not identify or gather sufficient information to enable them to assess the overall success of the use of Lean. That is, at August 2015, sufficient information is not available to know whether the Lean initiative is providing better service, creating a culture of continuous improvement, or demonstrating a return on investment (Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan 2015, 161)

The mediocre reviews by the Provincial Auditor provided the media with additional fodder;

Mandryk criticized the government-wide Lean approach in terms of the classic New Public

Management frames, arguing that there could not be "ongoing improvement" without the ability

to measure results (Mandryk 2015). Coverage by the province's dailies, television stations and

CBC Saskatchewan increasingly focussed on criticisms lobbed by the Opposition, unions, and

frontline staff. By 2014-2015, there were few public champions of Lean outside the upper

echelons of the provincial government.

The government responded to this increasingly inhospitable political landscape in two

ways. First, it offered evidence that Lean was working. The government began to work to

demonstrate the efficacy of Lean through qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative

information took the form of anecdotes, or "success stories" (ThinkLean 2014). Frustration grew

within middle and senior management responsible for Lean's implementation that the media

focussed on the critiques of Lean and the unflattering assessments rather than these "good news

stories," and interviews suggested that particular reporters were more interested in sensationalist

or "bad" news than stories of success, telling me that they had invited reporters to take part in

RPIWs in order to see their potential (Interview 2). Eventually, the government moved to counter unflattering evaluations of Lean by releasing quantified data. In March 2015, the Ministry announced that it had calculated that the healthcare system had saved a cumulative $125 million using Lean. The calculations, which were derived from an online database compiled by HQC in which healthcare organizations submitted reports of the savings that had been achieved through Lean experiments, were both self-reported and heavily dependent on savings that had been reported by Five Hills and Saskatoon RHAs, which each reported that they had saved around $30 million, and the Saskatchewan Provincial lab, which had reported that it had saved $50 million. More granular calculations were not provided.

Relatedly, the government moved to counter criticisms about how much it was costing to import Japanese *senseis* by asking JBA to change its practices. According to Black, despite the fact that "JBA had been respectful of costs, and at a considerable loss, invoiced a flat rate of $2,000 (US dollars) for each of our four Japanese team members," the Ministry of Health had, in response to critiques by the Opposition and media, asked JBA to end its use of consultants from Japan (Black 2016, 386). This, according to Black, represented nothing less than the government bowing to parochialism and xenophobia:

> No other client in JBA's history had ever singled out any of our consultants based on gender, race, ethnicity, or nationality. In addition, the objections aired in public forums often carried distinctly nationalist, if not racist, overtones. As a former Equity Employment Opportunity officer for Boeing and race-relations education staff officer at US Army Europe, I felt the attacks contradicted Canada's typical respect for cultural and ethnic diversity. (Black 2016, 386).

Ironically, by arguing that Lean had saved over $100 million and by seeking to reduce the amount spent on consultants, the provincial government was violating the Lean Industry's "best practices." Early in Lean's deployment, Lean had been trumpeted as a revolutionary approach to organizational improvement that would serve as an innovative solution that would allow services

to be improved without increasing the resources needed for them. The financial impact and potential savings associated with implementing Lean were, in other words, consistently used as justifying factors for its own implementation. Lean, through the savings it could provide, would serve as a solution to the problematized "unsustainable" healthcare problems that had plagued provincial healthcare systems. Yet within the Lean Industry, and even among those who had pushed for Lean within Saskatchewan, such open and public proclamations of Lean's potential for painless austerity ran counter to Lean's ultimate goal, which was improving the processes and programs. In his book, Black bemoaned the degeneration of Lean into a cost-cutting exercise (Black 2016, 385), as if the desire to "bend the cost curve" had not been a foundational reason for the initiative's implementation in the first place.

The government's proclamations of Lean's potential also made Lean an *explicitly* political process. This ran contrary to the type of neutral, expertise-driven advice-giving preferred by the Lean industry, who prefer to avoid the very political contestation and challenges that Saskatchewan's public pronouncements drew. Regardless of their accuracy, releasing figures to demonstrate the savings that had been captured by Lean was an acquiescence to this form of politicization. Meeting criticism on political terms, framed by whether or not Lean had saved money, may have been consistent with the logics that underwrote Saskatchewan's adoption of Lean, steeped in the problematization of government and healthcare as bureaucratic, inefficient, and cold, but it was simultaneously inconsistent with the Lean Industry's project of selling its expertise as a decidedly *un*political, objective product.

7.4.3. An Early End to the JBA Contract

Despite the government's efforts to counter the criticism that had increasingly become the standard view of Lean in the province, behind the scenes work was being undertaken to, if

not *discontinue* the Lean initiative, significantly reduce the extent of its public-facing

components while reorganizing its implementation in ways that signalled at least a reduction in

the importance of Lean in day-to-day operations of both the healthcare system and the provincial

public bureaucracy. By 2014, internal communications in the healthcare system indicated that

the province was negotiating an early end to the JBA contract. "We have received a directive

from our Minister to reduce costs and negotiate an early exit date from the [JBA] contract,"

Deputy Minister (and Florizone's successor) Max Hendricks told senior leadership of RHAs

(email from Ministry to RHA leadership 2014). Tellingly, the Ministry indicated that while the

JBA agreement was ending early, Saskatchewan would continue to use Lean, suggesting that

senior regional leadership was working with the Ministry to "successfully deploy the

Saskatchewan Lean Management System and ready ourselves to self-sustain" (RQHR 2014, 1).

In other words, the Deputy Minister told his regional counterparts, the province needed to sustain

its own Lean work without the controversial inclusion of JBA or its bombastic CEO John Black.

For his part, Black wrote that the decision to end the contract early was one that demonstrated a

digression of the Lean project into a cost-cutting exercise. According to Black, he convinced the

Ministry to restore "many of the losses and cut only three months from our contract (Black 2016,

386).

　　　　Regardless of whether or not Black convinced the Ministry to retain his services for

longer than it had planned, the province announced over the holidays in December 2014 that it

was ending the JBA contract in March 2015. Using the period between Christmas and New

Years to quietly make the announcement, the Minister of Health publicly suggested that the

decision to end the JBA contract early was predicated on the ability of Saskatchewan's

healthcare organizations to lead the Lean initiative on their own. "We're to the point where

there's enough of a foundation of Lean within the health system in terms of our 'Lean leader' certification where we're at right now that we're ready to move out on our own," the Minister of Health told the media (CBC 2014). A press release told a similar story, saying that "Collectively, the province's health regions and health care organizations have acquired sufficient knowledge and training that they are now in a position to make the final move toward self-sufficiency and take ownership of this ambitious initiative" (Saskatchewan 2014). The Opposition was quick to proclaim the Lean experiment a failure and argued that despite the contract's early end, the residual effects of the KPOs and transformation of regional structures to accommodate Lean remained as costly reminders of Lean's waste (CBC 2014).

7.4.4. Dan Florizone Exits Provincial Leadership

While healthcare was the central focus of Lean in the province, the government did make efforts to expand Lean beyond healthcare and into the rest of the provincial public service. In 2010, as the Ministry of Health and RHAs were experimenting with piecemeal Lean projects, the provincial government was using these experiments as justification for introducing Lean into other ministries. "As we've seen from the Ministry of Health's experiences," one cabinet minister was quoted as saying in an official press release, "the Lean approach is an effective way to streamline our approach to service delivery. I'm confident that incorporating Lean across the public service will improve our processes and enable us to provide even better services to residents of Saskatchewan" (Saskatchewan 2010). In mandate letters to each member of his cabinet, Wall identified "simplification," or "applying best practices like LEAN methodology, to streamline program and service delivery and to identify and eliminate unnecessary processes and requirements" (Premier of Saskatchewan 2010b). A governance structure developed to guide the non-Health Lean initiative, with a secretariat called the Corporate Projects Group given the

responsibility for coordinating Lean efforts across ministries under the direction of a committee of Deputy Ministers. Lean "champions" were responsible for promoting and facilitating efforts in their respective ministries.

The zenith of the non-health Lean initiative came with the shuffling of Dan Florizone from the Ministry of Health to the Ministry of Education on July 1, 2013. In addition to Florizone's new role as the Deputy Minister of Education, he was given a new title as Deputy Minister of Lean. The Corporate Projects Group, which had been housed in the Public Service Commission, followed Florizone to Education, where it retained its five FTE positions to support provincial efficiency efforts, half of which were dedicated to Lean. The movement of Lean's primary champion in healthcare seemed to be a sign that Lean was gaining yet more momentum in the province. Florizone encouraged this narrative, tweeting that he wondered if "the education system in Saskatchewan is ready for Hoshin Kanri" (quoted in Couture 2013).

Despite the governance structure and presence of Florizone at Education, the infrastructure supporting the government-wide Lean implementation never approached the size or maturity of its healthcare counterpart. While dozens of Internal Lean experts were either trained or hired in the healthcare system, with over sixty FTEs dedicated to the Saskatoon RHA's KPO alone, by 2015 there were "at least" thirteen positions dedicated to "Lean-related activities" across government (Provincial Auditor 2015). Similarly, while HQC's Provincial KPO had at least fifteen positions[74] dedicated to coordinating Lean within the healthcare system, the Corporate Projects Office had a total of five FTE positions, only 2.5 of which were dedicated to Lean. Meanwhile, while JBA's contract included an enormous scope for its $40 million, the

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[74] While it served as the provincial KPO, HQC had a number of positions that were called "Kaizen specialists." As of July 2015, there were fourteen of these specialists identified on HQC's website, with an additional executive director for the KPO within HQC. See HQC 2014.

largest contract for Lean consulting in the broader initiative was an agreement with Vancouver-based consulting firm Westmark, and included a much more limited scope of activities and a fraction of the cost - $800,000. And while there was a "Productivity Fund" that was available for ministries to undertake their own Lean projects, it was a relatively minor $2 million (Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly 2014, 493-495).

The death knell for the nonhealth Lean initiative came sixteen months after its zenith. In November 2014, Florizone announced that he was leaving the Ministry of Education to become the CEO of Saskatoon RHA effective January 5, 2015. With Florizone gone from the provincial bureaucracy, the little centralized institutional infrastructure that had been put in place was essentially dissolved. The Corporate Projects Group's FTE positions were reduced and what was left over was transferred to the Ministry of Finance, where it was incorporated into the Ministry's Office of Planning, Performance and Improvement, essentially returning to its place as one method among many by which the government was pursuing improvement (email correspondence with Ministry of Finance official). Ultimately, the non-health Lean initiative, which had, with the possible exception of efforts by the Ministry of Education to coordinate the work of school divisions by using *hoshin kanri* and other Lean tools in 2014-2015, never reached the type of maturity that its healthcare counterpart had, ended gradually and organically. While there likely remain pockets - units or individuals - that continue to use Lean tools intermittently along with other "quality improvement" methodologies, there is no coordinated, centrally-promoted "Lean" initiative to speak of. "It fizzled out," one senior manager who worked on the Lean initiative observed (Interview 17).

With the end of JBA's involvement and Dan Florizone's exit from provincial leadership came the unofficial end of Lean's visible presence in the province. The health-focused Lean

initiative was more enduring than its non-health counterpart, though following the ending of the

JBA contract, it became more difficult to gauge the level of engagement in the Lean initiatives in

Saskatchewan. If there was one notable example of the Lean experiment's running its course in

Saskatchewan's healthcare bureaucracy, it was the reconstitution of the province's KPOs. The

centrepieces of the institutionalization of Lean in the province from 2012-2015, the KPOs either

disappeared (to the extent that they existed in smaller RHAs at all) or were repurposed, often in

the name of a broader project of quality improvement. The Saskatoon KPO, probably the

institutional node that became the most "mature" institution of Lean implementation within

RHAs, became the Quality Improvement Office, its Lean specialists rebranded as Quality

Consultants (Saskatoon RHA 2017). Most notably, however, was the quiet discontinuation of

HQC as the provincial KPO. In late 2015, a meeting between senior leadership of the healthcare

system marked a turning point, when HQC shed its responsibility for the coordination of Lean,

which would be taken on by a committee of regional representatives. A letter from Hendricks

made vague reference to the new role that HQC would play post-Lean, which signalling that the

organization would return to its focus before the Lean initiative. There was no singular decision

or point at which HQC gave up its role as provincial coordinator of Lean and, accordingly, there

was no announcement of such a change made, including in the organization's annual reports.

References to the KPO were quietly removed from the website and job titles in HQC were

changed from *Kaizen* Specialists to Improvement Specialists. A fitting representation of the end

of the visible Lean initiative in Saskatchewan, the seismic changes that had accompanied HQC's

inheritance of the Provincial KPO title were undone with little fanfare or attention.

Yet, the effects of the Lean initiative remained, even if they fell short of the

transformational potential touted in its early days in the province. Since Lean's zenith, the

Saskatchewan healthcare system has undergone significant and fundamental changes. Most strikingly, the government announced in 2016 that it would amalgamate the RHAs, creating the Saskatchewan Health Authority in late 2017. The transition from a number of regions to one large health authority remains an ongoing project: each RHA retains, for example, its own IT infrastructure and websites and many services remain geographically specific, based on the boundaries and jurisdictions of the former RHAs. And while Lean certainly remains present in the day-to-day operations in this new health authority, the quiet set of decisions made to reduce its visibility from a groundbreaking transformational change to a set of tools that could be used, among others, makes it difficult to determine the extent to which Lean remains. For all of the grand pronouncements and predictions that were made in the early years of the Lean initiative, whatever remains of the experiment exists as a quiet, technical approach to carrying out work in the healthcare system, one without the grandiose promises of its past and without the characteristics of a coherent political programme as was articulated through the JBA contract.

7.5. Conclusion

The last two chapters have told one story of Lean's incursion into the public sector. As I emphasized in Chapter 6, this story is one that includes many dimensions that are specific to Saskatchewan. While broad strokes of Brad Wall and the Saskatchewan Party's emphasis on finding a policy solution that would somehow remain faithful to neoliberal logics while avoiding the consequences of neoliberal policies such as 1990s-style austerity resembled the type of crisis-triggered solution-finding elsewhere, the finer points were specific to Saskatchewan: the emphasis on restoring the "rural way of life" and the critique of a form of "socialism" specific to the Saskatchewan NDP. The determination of Dan Florizone, so committed to introducing Lean not as one technology amongst others but as an entirely new political programme and culture

within the province's healthcare system, is another unique circumstance. As is John Black's

abrasive style and the rigid form of Lean that JBA introduced into the province, which inspired

so much resentment and resistance among staff and management within the healthcare system.

To understand this story, a deep and careful examination of these provincially specific dynamics

is crucial.

Despite these localized specificities, however, there are insights in the Saskatchewan

story for understanding how public bureaucracies shapeshift as part of broader processes of

neoliberalization. The first is the messiness of such processes, reflected in the *localized*

translation and assemblage-building and contestation present in Saskatchewan's Lean

experiment. The early years of Lean were marked by scattered and uneven implementation,

experimentation with individual Lean tools as part of a broader project of solution-seeking.

RHAs, Ministry branches and other healthcare organizations deployed Lean differently and at

different times, drawing lessons from their counterparts' experiences and then communicating

their own lessons for use in other areas. Sometimes, as was the case with regional units

redesigned as KPOs, or HQC's rebranding as Provincial KPO, organizations changed their own

purpose and operations to "fit" Lean as much as Lean was translated to "fit" in Saskatchewan.

Technologies such as those associated with Lean, particularly when packaged together with

discursive components as a cohesive political programme, are not simply "dropped in" and

immediately implemented, they do not effortlessly integrate and change the nature of a locale

like sugar dissolving in coffee. No matter how well-integrated or centrally controlled,

bureaucracies are complex and disaggregated. Saskatchewan's population is a little over a

million and, while I argue that its political history is both rich and fascinating, there is nothing

about this small province's public bureaucracy that makes it particularly exceptional in terms of

its complexity. That Lean's implementation included such complex dynamics of internal translation and assemblage building *within its own healthcare bureaucracy* speaks to the dizzying array of minutiae involved in what I describe as iterations or waves of neoliberalization. Concepts such as translation or policy mobility apply not only to national or supranational processes, but also, as the Saskatchewan case demonstrates, they happen subnationally, locally, and, indeed, intra-institutionally.

The second insight to draw from the Saskatchewan story is variety of nature of friction of experimentation, neoliberalization and assemblage-building in practice. The JBA contract and the attempted introduction of a coherent political programme was designed to address the disorder of Lean's early implementation in the province, but in effect revealed friction in the form of resistance and resentment. Surely, the heavy-handed approach that Dan Florizone took when announcing the province's direction, along with the bombastic stylings of his chosen consultant, John Black, had something to do with the resistance that emerged in response to Lean. Among the senior managers I interviewed, Black's abrasiveness and unwillingness to tailor his message and approach to Saskatchewan was certainly a contributing factor in their frustration (and, I acknowledge, a contributing factor to their willingness to speak to me). But it would be a mistake to overestimate the importance of personal styles to Lean's underwhelming results as a political programme in the province. Frontline staff that I interviewed, for example, made no mention of John Black's personality, or of the Ministry's tactics to force their employers to deploy Lean. They told me about the consultants and RHA staff who timed their tasks and managers who took up space in hallways with their daily huddles in front of visibility boards that display Lean-specific metrics and performance. They resented being told to follow strict steps for mundane tasks throughout the day and being given marching orders by

consultants without their clinical education or experience, and they mocked being given a new set of Japanese terms to use for processes that they failed to see as valuable. Individually, these grievances might represent little more than the day-to-day struggles of people at work. But together they tell the story of the friction and contestations that arise when seeking to change essentially *everything* about how a bureaucratic institution operates by introducing practices developed in other contexts for other reasons. These tensions were more fundamental to the failure of Lean's cultural transformations than were the individual characteristics of any individuals. Translating private sector technologies into the public makes for successful consulting careers and snappy campaign slogans, but the process, as it turns out, is fraught friction that articulates itself through small-scale resentment and resistance on the ground. While Chapters 4 and 5 demonstrated the extent to which friction arises at a high level when the logics and technologies of new rationalities "bump up" against those that already exist, Chapters 6 and 7 give detailed, empirical examples of how these frictions unfold on operational levels. Lean's implementation in Saskatchewan resulted in managers resisting training, staff in rural areas ignoring directives, and Lean becoming subject of intense debate within the formal politics of the province.

The third insight I draw from the Saskatchewan Lean experiment is related to the second, and focuses on the *importance* of friction to translation. While Saskatchewan's Lean experiment failed to live up to the impossible expectations that decision makers had bestowed upon it, it would be a mistake to argue that it failed entirely. For the Lean Industry, Saskatchewan served as a laboratory for introducing Lean into new spaces of the public sector. In public sector Lean circles now, it is "best practice" to avoid many of the tactics that made the Lean initiative so controversial in Saskatchewan. In New Brunswick, for example, Lean is being implemented

with only limited references to Lean terminology in either Japanese or English. Better, consultants understand now, to introduce it without the fanfare and promises of transformational change that preceded the provincial Lean implementation in Saskatchewan. The cultural dimensions of Saskatchewan's Lean implementation fell flat, and they did so quickly. Practices of Lean do exist in Saskatchewan's new provincial health authority, but they do so as part of quality improvement methodologies and approaches rather than as part of a broad, cohesive political programme that seeks to redefine both the logics and practices of the entire healthcare system. For the Lean Industry, this is all quite fine. The existence of Lean practices ensures that their expertise will still be valued and in demand. If a particular program or project is deemed problematic and those responsible for fixing it are familiar with Lean, they will look to a Lean expert for help. The Lean expert may then sell their advice quietly as neutral and objective, the stuff of technical expertise much like computer programmers, without the political fuss that came when Florizone and Black promised to transform the healthcare system. Saskatchewan, with all of its political contention and messiness, was thus an important site of experimentation for the Lean Industry, wherein lessons for future implementations in other locales were gained. Translations of public sector practices into public sector institutions face tensions inherent to the project of replacing one set of logics and practices with another.

With the end of this chapter comes the end of the empirical section of this thesis. In the next chapter, I bring the discussion to a conclusion as I reflect on my broader research question surrounding public bureaucracies and Canada and how they shapeshift alongside changes between and within political rationalities. I offer what I believe is a novel theoretical contribution to discussions of neoliberal governance, public policy, and public administration

and identify those areas of my research that I think open up interesting pathways for future

research.

- CHAPTER 8 -
Conclusion

8.1. On Shapeshifting Bureaucracies

8.1.1. The Broad Strokes of Shapeshifting

In Chapter 1, I argued that public bureaucracies should be studied within broader political and historical contexts. I argued that public administration studies largely fall short of this goal. Wedded to a formal-descriptive approach, public administration scholars too often conceptualize public bureaucracies as being static and somehow separate from the political processes taking part around them. I argued that this does a disservice to the study of bureaucracies, and set myself to the task of demonstrating that public bureaucracies remain in constant states of flux, periodically undergoing wide shifts in orientation and practices. I constructed a theoretical framework from components of governmentality and critical policy studies that I believe offers one way of studying public bureaucracies in the context of the world around them. I looked to political rationalities to conceptualize broad discursive logics and concepts such as programmes, technologies, translation, and assemblages to describe how those logics are materialized into institutions and practices.

I argued that public bureaucracies have shifted alongside the changes in political rationalities that have characterized Canadian politics since confederation. More specifically, I argued that public bureaucracies "shapeshift," forming and reforming alongside these rationalities. Chapters 4 and 5 demonstrated that as political rationalities and their underlying logics change, public bureaucracies are contorted and rearranged in ways that reflect how bureaucracies are conceptualized within those logics. Some features remain familiar, of course. The federal public bureaucracy continues to be led by the Clerk of the Privy Council, who directs a hierarchy of deputy ministers in specific portfolios, as it always has. But despite such

resemblances, chapters 4 and 5 demonstrated the extent to which bureaucracies have changed

alongside broader shifts in political rationalities. In the nation-building, Keynesian welfarist, and

neoliberal eras, the structure and operations of public bureaucracies were reinvented to better

reflect broader conceptions of the role of the state and the relationship between states, markets,

and citizens. In the nation-building period, bureaucracies embodied the nation-building project,

with the most notable change being the abolition of patronage and, with that, the construction of

the concept of public service as a sphere of practice and knowledge, where the business of the

state could be dispassionately conducted separate from the often-corrupt and self-interested

world of partisan politics. Institutionally, the federal bureaucracy also reflected the nation-

building project, with departments such as Interior and the Post Office enjoying large proportions

of the federal budget.

As the nation-building period ended and global *laissez-faire* was discredited, a new

rationality emerged. Keynesian welfarism was underwritten by logics that differed from the

nation-building period. In the nation-building era, the state's role was understood to be one that

facilitated the construction of an east-west national unit, with limited intervention into the lives

of its citizens. Social policy such as welfare and healthcare was understood to be the domain of

non-state actors such as charities. This changed with the emergence of Keynesian welfarism,

however. Underwritten by logics of solidarity, Keynesian welfarist rationality put state

institutions under new light. The notion that bureaucracy represented a distinct sphere of

knowledge and practice separate from partisan politics remained, but inherited new logics of the

time. Collective understanding was that national institutions and policies could be used to ensure

a basic level of welfare for citizens. Macro-economic tools such as fiscal and monetary policy

could be used to stabilize capitalism and protect citizens against problems such as

unemployment, which had been prevalent during the Great Depression. Broad programmes of social and health policy such as social assistance, employment insurance and medicare could help ensure basic standards of health and welfare, and bureaucracies were tasked with deploying technologies to realize these goals. Public service retained its emphasis on professionalism and merit, but required new forms of knowledge and expertise about economics, public finance, and numerous other new terrains of government intervention. And, while claims that government should operate "more like business" found their way into discussions about bureaucracies, they were quickly marginalized by an understanding that public and private institutions had fundamentally different missions and forms of accountability. While discourses in the nation-building era sought establish boundaries between public administration and politics, in the Keynesian welfarist era, emphasis was put on the distinction between private enterprise and the public sector. Bureaucratic assemblages shifted to accommodate the knowledges and expertise associated with the rationalities of the time.

As public bureaucracies were adjusting themselves to reflect Keynesian welfarism, another story was unfolding. In the context of post-war Japan, the Toyoda family's auto plants were learning to build cars differently than the North American standard. With less capital, fewer resources, a smaller market, and much less space than North American auto companies like Ford or General Motors, Toyota's engineers experimented with new methods for constructing cars. An overarching emphasis on eliminating waste emerged, and with it, a series of practices, developed through experimental trial and error. Together, these practices were deployed by the company produce fewer cars with more variety at less cost than the "mass production" system characteristic of North American auto companies.

As I describe in Chapter 3, anxiety in North America about Japan's success set the stage for the Toyota Production System's translation into Lean. In the 1980s, op-ed columns, references in popular culture, and books sounded alarms over Japan's increasingly visible success. While the reaction of some was parochial and xenophobic, others saw an opportunity to learn from Japan. Academics and industry insiders travelled to Japan to study their industrial practices. Amongst these practices, they found the Toyota Production System. One set of researchers from MIT was particularly influential, and gave Toyota's practices a succinct English name, Lean Production, and reported back to corporate America that this superior system could be used in any industry and, indeed, beyond. This represented the genesis of the Lean Industry, a loosely organized set of professional and expert networks that coalesced around the refinement and transfusion of Lean to an ever-growing number of organizations and practices. By the time Lean became popular in wide swaths of corporate America, it already had a rich history of its own, quite distinct from what was happening in public bureaucracies in Canada and beyond.

With the neoliberalization of bureaucracies, however, these stories became less distinct and separate. By the 1970s, discursive and institutional components that had existed in previous eras were being rearranged in new configurations, deployed alongside both similarly refurbished and new logics and technologies being assembled to fit with neoliberal rationalities. The distinction between public bureaucracies and private enterprise, so fundamental to the Keynesian welfarist vision of bureaucracies, was among the most important changes. The claim that government should operate more like business was elevated from a marginalized to a central position within the new logics of neoliberal governance. Royal Commissions such as Lambert and MacDonald wrote as if the superiority of market logics in questions of public administration

was self-evident, using their authority and expertise to lend legitimacy to the old claim that government should operate more like business.

Amidst the wide array of neoliberalizing logics and technologies that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s came Canada's version of NPM, expressed most explicitly through the Public Service 2000 (PS2000) initiative. The federal public service, PS2000 insisted, would need to "modernize" by adopting increasing numbers of private sector practices, mirroring similar patterns taking place in public bureaucracies across liberal democracies. These efforts were found underwhelming, however, and further neoliberalizing reforms have compounded the cycle of experimentation and failure that critical policy scholars have identified as central to neoliberal governance. By the turn of the twenty-first century, political communities in Canada and beyond had experienced the consequences of two decades of neoliberal reforms and the results were not particularly popular. The residuals of Keynesian welfarism included the expectation of state-delivered public services that, throughout the 1990s, had been eliminated, reduced, or privatized. Increasingly, new iterations of neoliberal reforms were expected to both remain faithful to the logics of neoliberal rationality, in particular the privileging of market-based reforms, while somehow avoiding the intense friction that came with previous attempts to do so. The contradiction between the abstract logics of neoliberal rationality and the frictions inherent to neoliberalization has meant increasingly heavy baggage for successive iterations of neoliberal bureaucratic reforms.

The most recent iteration in the federal bureaucracy has been to search for "Innovation." Vaguely defined and aspirational, the quest for Innovation has seen the federal bureaucracy reconfigure itself once again, this time to facilitate a search for new, innovative best practices - something new for the sake of newness. Tiger teams and entrepreneurs have been dispatched to

cut across "silos" of bureaucracy, task forces and central hubs have been tasked with experimenting with artificial intelligence and blockchain for reasons that are difficult to identify. The search is on for that policy intervention that exists *somewhere* that can solve the vexing problem of neoliberalism's contradictions and crises. In this environment, it is unsurprising that Lean, with the infrastructure of the Lean Industry promoting it as the solution to nearly any problem, has grown rapidly in public sector institutions in the last fifteen years.

That Lean's trajectory eventually intersected with those of bureaucracies reveals the utility of understanding neoliberalization as a process of assemblage-building and, more importantly, highlights moving past the tendency to define everything that happens in the context of neoliberalism as "neoliberal" with broad and uniform strokes. While I subscribe to Wendy Brown's imagery that neoliberalism bores into human life and exists as "capillaries" throughout how we live our lives, this does not mean that everything touched by neoliberalism or existing within neoliberalism is inherently neoliberal. Taaichi Ohno and his fellow engineers were not concerned with the balance of state and markets nor were they interested in the concept of self-interested rational individuals. They were trying to make cars in a time and in a place that put severe restrictions on their ability to do so. There was nothing to suggest that Lean would somehow find itself to national governments, subnational governments, cities, universities, hospitals, non-profits, and countless other organizations.

Yet Lean *did* become an important part of public bureaucracies. The Lean Industry capitalized on solution-seeking on the part of potential clients. When an executive from Virginia Mason hospital happened to sit next to Lean expert John Black on a flight, Black made certain to tell him about the potential of Lean in healthcare. When a Canadian healthcare executive, seeking a solution to the "sustainability" problem of healthcare, visited a workshop at Virginia

Mason hospital, he was told that Lean could provide the answers to his problems. When he was hired as the Deputy Minister of Health, he insisted to government and the province that Lean could transform not only healthcare but the provincial bureaucracy writ large. Through a series of seemingly serendipitous events, the Lean Industry found its way to public bureaucracies, alongside other programmes and technologies developed to better fit with neoliberal rationality. Assemblages, as Larner and Higgins (2017) remind us, can accommodate awkward fits.

8.1.2. Filling Out Texture and Details

In some ways, the analysis above answers my research question at a broad level. Public bureaucracies change and shapeshift. This much is clear. They undergo *constant* rearticulations of themselves, seeking always to better reflect what is expected of them. Sometimes this includes new practices and ideas, other times they incorporate those that already exist in new ways, "cohabitating" (Clarke 2008), as Chapters 3, 4, and 5 demonstrate. Tracing these broad brush strokes of bureaucratic reform was crucial for addressing my research question, but leaving the research solely at this level of abstraction would miss so much of the texture and details of shapeshifting. The case of Lean's Saskatchewan initiative, however, demonstrates the extraordinary complexity of how these processes unfold on the ground. While Saskatchewan's neoliberalization, for example, had neoliberal family resemblances, including a problematization of Keynesian welfarism and an embrace of the "free market," there were localized particularities that eventually proved themselves important for the emergence of Lean. The closure of 52 rural hospitals, skillfully deployed as a rhetorical device by conservative politicians in the province, tapped into the province's collective anxiety over economic malaise, urbanization, and population loss. Cases such as "Baby Paige" reinforced the belief that healthcare was broken in the province, another symptom of the inept "socialism" of the governing NDP.

By problematizing healthcare in this way, however, Brad Wall and his Saskatchewan Party had painted themselves into the corner of neoliberalization's contradictions. In opposition, they had paired this problematization of the healthcare system (and other signs of austerity such as deteriorating infrastructure) with a critique of the NDP's overbearing "socialism" and suppression of superior market forces. The NDP, their adversaries charged, had chased investors and industry away with high taxes and Crown Corporations while simultaneously sticking to the politics of austerity and letting the province crumble. The governing Saskatchewan Party needed to somehow "open up" the economy with further neoliberal reforms while avoiding the types of results that 1990s austerity had meant in the province. In other words, they needed to stay committed to the logics of neoliberalism while avoiding the results of neoliberalism. Initially they mitigated the contradiction by suggesting that it was bureaucratic waste that needed to be rooted out. An audit of healthcare services in the province, they promised, would identify and eliminate that waste. The resources saved through this hypothetical audit, which was eventually conducted under the auspices of the Patient First Review, could be used to shore up budgets in areas the NDP had let languish. Eliminating the waste that the Saskatchewan Party understood to be inherent in government under the NDP would solve the paradox of neoliberal governance.

While the Patient First Review did not provide the type of practical toolbox for identifying and eliminating waste, by the time the Saskatchewan Party had taken office, work was already under way in the Ministry of Health and Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) to find solutions for healthcare. In the Ministry, Lean was but one of a number of solutions being researched. In Five Hills RHA, however, Florizone had taken the lessons from his workshop in Seattle seriously and had begun pushing Lean as an increasingly important component of the region's operations. Lean, which had evolved through previous translations by way of

experimentation in laboratories across Japanese and American industry, corporate boardrooms and healthcare facilities, found itself in another site of experimentation. Five Hills became a laboratory where Lean was translated and made intelligible to others within Saskatchewan's public sector

The piecemeal experimentational phase of Lean's rollout did not deliver the sort of transformational results that the provincial government suggested it would, however. After Florizone had become Deputy Minister of Health, he moved towards a coherent, province-wide implementation of Lean. The eventual contract was a tool meant to transform nearly everything about the healthcare system, using a training and education program to deploy language meant to centre Lean terminology as the core of healthcare expertise, introducing technologies such as 3P and *kaizen* events as the primary tools of program improvement, and institutionalizing Lean through the creation of regional Kaizen Promotions Offices (KPOs) in each RHA and a Provincial KPO in the province's Health Quality Council. From 2012-2015, Lean permeated the healthcare bureaucracy of Saskatchewan. The case study of Saskatchewan's Lean initiative thus provides crucial texture to the story I have told about public bureaucracies in Canada. Bureaucracies shapeshift alongside corresponding political rationalities. This, as I have already said, is clear. But *how* this happens requires understanding not only the broad patterns, as I described in Chapters 4 and 5, but also a snapshot of the limitless processes that populate those patterns. The Saskatchewan case demonstrates that translation and assemblage-building, for example, should not be conceptualized or studied as if they are "large-scale" processes alone. In practice, processes like translation, experimentation and solution-finding take place in *parts* of public institutions. Initiatives are launched in meetings, teleconferences, in memos, and through emails between managers, staff, and executives. Similarly, the friction that develops when new

technologies are introduced or old technologies are repurposed is not an abstraction. It exists in

managers refusing to take training, in executives leaking emails and plans to the media and

opposition politicians, and in frontline staff simply ignoring directives. As such, it was

necessary for me to explore the details and nuances of bureaucratic change present in Chapters 6

and 7 in addition to the broad shifts that I traced in Chapters 4 and 5. It was also necessary for

me to move beyond orthodox public administration's treatment of bureaucracies as being

"separate" from political processes. Examining this story in all its complexity required taking

both the minute and events as well as the broad patterns of the political world into consideration.

8.2. What Comes Next? Recognizing and Following Logics and Technologies

8.2.1. Saskatchewan as a Laboratory

When I set out to write this dissertation, I understood that the chapters about

Saskatchewan's Lean initiative would be the culmination of the empirical research that I have

been conducting formally for over two years and for years longer informally, as a member of the

Saskatchewan public service, as a resident of Saskatchewan, as member of the Saskatchewan

diaspora, and as a graduate student and researcher. I was also increasingly worried. With the

end of the JBA contract and various signs of Lean's demise, from HQC's moving away from its

Provincial KPO duties to the apparent *vanishing* of Lean terminology from the Government of

Saskatchewan's websites, I worried that I had missed my opportunity to strike the iron while it

was hot. It seemed, superficially, that the Lean experiment had come and gone, ending with a

whimper after it had been introduced with so much fanfare and, then, controversy. There are

surely few worse scenarios for an ambitious PhD student than having their research subject

become redundant or irrelevant. Having lived through some of the Lean implementation,

however, I understood two things. First, Lean's implementation meant *something*, even if that

something was only relevant as a historical snapshot of how public bureaucracies can subtly (or not-so-subtly) change alongside shifts in their corresponding political rationalities. Second, there was no reliable version of this story "out there." Saskatchewan may be small in terms of population and influence, but the Lean experiment was a jarring experience for tens of thousands of staff and managers within its healthcare bureaucracy and provincial public bureaucracy more broadly. So, saddled with the trepidation of believing I could be racing towards my own academic and intellectual irrelevance, I carried on.

My worry was misplaced. Lean has grown exponentially within public bureaucracies since Saskatchewan's first experiments ten years ago. As I explored in some detail in Chapter 3, Lean is pervasive in all orders of government, in arms-length institutions, in universities and schools, and in the nonprofit sector. While I have reservations about what that means for the future of public bureaucracies in Canada in terms of its ongoing neoliberalization and the enduring power of the logics of neoliberal rationalities, I understand that the iron was hot for far longer than I could have predicted. The trajectory Saskatchewan's experimentation with Lean took between 2008-2015, it seems obvious to me now, had lasting reverberations in the province and beyond, and is deeply revealing in terms of the nuanced ways in which bureaucracies shapeshift. While on the surface, the Lean experiment floundered, it has left significant residuals. The ways in which it transformed Saskatchewan *and the ways in which Saskatchewan transformed it* remain enormously instructive.

The terms *assemblage* and *translation* are useful for examining the process by which Lean was introduced to Saskatchewan, though they are slightly misleading. To imagine someone translating something usually does not conjure controversy or political contestation (notwithstanding the difficulties that can arise when something is "lost in translation" or, more

amusingly, the difficulty that arises with assembling a piece of furniture). But, as the emergence of Lean in Saskatchewan demonstrates, such processes are prone to enormous volatility and political contention. By boasting about the "transformational" potential of Lean, matched in its enthusiasm only by the bombastic nature of John Black, the province ensured that Lean would be prone to politicization in bureaucratic, legislative and electoral politics. But these characteristics were only the most extreme points of contention in Lean's introduction to the province. The introduction of the Lean Industry, with its new forms of expertise, met resistance on the part of those professionals who already worked in the provincial healthcare system, for example. Collectively, these points of contention served as experiments in the laboratory that was Saskatchewan's Lean initiative. As the description of a Lean conference in Chapter Three demonstrates, Lean experts working in Canadian governments now by-and-large avoid the terminology that was deployed in Saskatchewan. "Avoid the Japanese jargon" is a typical piece of advice from one Lean expert to another. And the way Lean experts, both within Saskatchewan and beyond, remember Saskatchewan's Lean initiatives serve as evidence of these ongoing lessons. Lean, it is now understood, should be framed not as a political project or be introduced with grandiose promises of savings. It should, rather, have the appearance of neutral "best practice" in the same way that its more established cousins in the form of accounting practices are introduced. In this setting, for example, it only makes sense that advertisements for jobs and job descriptions casually include passing reference to Lean knowledge as a preference. So, in short, Lean was translated for Saskatchewan and, when that translation was found wanting, was translated *by* Saskatchewan. The friction generated by the province's Lean experiment served to polish Lean of the controversial, cultural elements of its implementation while leaving the technical, neutral-sounding practices in place.

These smoothly-contoured practices can now be carried beyond Saskatchewan's public bureaucracy, both operationally and geographically. Dale Schattenkirk, a central figure in the early Lean experimentations in Five Hills, founded his own consulting firm before taking a position with KPMG, where he works with Canadian governments to implement Lean. Westmark consulting, the consulting firm who did much of the training work in the non-health Lean initiative in Saskatchewan, was purchased by PriceWaterhouseCooper, another of the big audit firms in a sign that Lean is becoming increasingly valued by large-scale consulting operations. Florizone, who left Saskatchewan's healthcare system when the RHAs were amalgamated, is one of a number of former Saskatchewan public servants who used their experience and training as Internal Lean Specialists in the province to turn to consulting work, seeking to apply the lessons they learned as they contract with new public sector clients. A professional association, the Lean Practitioners of Saskatchewan, has emerged to promote Lean and serve as one node among many in the ever-expanding Lean Industry. The results of the political contestation associated with the translation of Lean in Saskatchewan are new forms of Lean that can be introduced and translated elsewhere, though certainly with less boastful promises and, accordingly, fewer political skirmishes. While the visible form of what many in Saskatchewan remember as the Lean initiative may have evaporated amidst the political storm, in its failure come far more lasting reverberations.

There is no reliable way of quantifying what the ongoing effects of Lean were in Saskatchewan. The province's consolidated numbers suggested that $125 million had been saved. The figures are self-reported and, in my experience, prone to enormous inconsistencies in terms of the granular calculations done by each Healthcare organization, including twelve highly irregular RHAs, the provincial lab, HQC, the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, 3S Health, and

eHealth. The more detailed examples that the province offered in terms of their "successes" - a

reduction in registration-to-discharge times in Saskatoon's pediatric cardiology department, for

example, or the wait times at Five Hills' labs - remain similarly unconvincing. While such

improvements may indeed have been achieved, they are extremely narrow in terms of the areas

in which they were deployed. Indeed, while Lean experts, in Saskatchewan and elsewhere, are

quick to insist that Lean can be used anywhere, in Saskatchewan the Lean initiative, even in its

most mature form through 2014-2015, did not seek to make improvements in those areas of

community health, primary health care, or population health, where many in healthcare believe

that fundamental changes must be made to address the problem of "sustainability' and also to

incorporate and accommodate the perspectives of, for instance, Indigenous peoples or activists

associated with disability politics or the emerging community of fat activists who work to

problematize the clinical nature in which the medical community treats their concerns.

The results were, in short, underwhelming compared to the enormous expectations put on

Lean to be a transformational "game changer." In the context of what I have argued in the

previous chapters, this should not be surprising. Lean, like Red Tape Tiger Teams or Innovation

Hubs in the federal government, or the volumous number of other "innovative" initiatives that

are doubtlessly the subject of their own experimentations in federal departments, provinces and

cities, was predicated entirely on the continuous failure of neoliberal reforms. Such initiatives

are iterations in the ongoing search for *another* set of reforms that (this time!) will lead to that *El*

Dorado of contemporary neoliberal governance: providing public services without committing

resources to them. Indeed, Saskatchewan provides the quintessential example of this goal. The

Saskatchewan Party has, for its entire existence, used the closure of rural hospitals (as well as the

dilapidated state of highways and roads, other rural healthcare facilities, and schools) as political

fodder, pointing blame at the burdensome socialism of the NDP and its abandonment of rural Saskatchewan to ensure that the type of cuts that Romanow's NDP undertook in the 1990s are simply not considered palatable any longer. Despite neoliberalism's dominance, citizens still have expectations of public services, a pesky residual from the previous Keynesian rationality. For Wall, this contradiction was easy enough to overcome: eliminate the waste that neoliberal rationality insists is inherent to bureaucracy and the state. Enter Lean, with its promises to "do more with less" by eliminating all the waste. Lean offered Saskatchewan the chance to avoid having to address the crisis of neoliberal governance by reinforcing the logic that there was no crisis at all. The province simply needed to get rid of the waste. Lean provided the opportunity to avoid having to reconsider the logics of neoliberal rationalities by offering technologies that promised that this time, doubling down on neoliberal logics would *work*. Like the GC Entrepreneurs program or the federal government's promise to explore blockchain, Lean provided an "innovative solution" that, somehow, would be different than all the innovative solutions before it. We don't need bold political choices, we need Lean, or blockchain, or labs.

As such, I argue that Lean and its innovative counterparts are similarly incapable of addressing all manner of policy, including those beyond healthcare that I have focussed on here. The issues that face Canada require a fundamental recalibration of how we approach governance. How should, for example, the Canadian state address its colonial past and present? What do such approaches say about generating the political will needed to address the causes and effects of climate change? What recommendations do they offer to alleviate the generational inequalities that face young adults who remain incapable of generating the wealth needed to leave their parents' homes? An approach to governance that is predicated entirely on "better services" through "eliminating inefficiencies" is, I argue, merely a mechanism by which states

and their bureaucracies avoid questioning the rationality that has led to so many repeated failures, leaving them entirely incapable of answering these profoundly difficult questions that require substantial reconfigurations of the logics that exist within contemporary neoliberal rationalities.

8.2.2. Looking for What Comes Next

Fundamental to my analysis of how public bureaucracies shapeshift has been the understanding that political rationalities and their associated assemblages are *constantly* shifting. So how does that help to study the present, and anticipate what the next (or even current) shifts might bring? Knowing that Saskatchewan represents a laboratory in Lean and that the Lean Industry has taken lessons from the province's initiative is well and good, but what comes next? The Lean Industry and Lean in Canadian bureaucracies (and bureaucracies abroad) seem to be strong, and detailed work can be done to explore in more depth how Lean experts, both those working as Internal Lean Specialists and those working as external consultants, work to expand the use of Lean within public institutions. While I believe the work I conducted in Chapters 3, 6 and 7 revealed a great deal on the topic, further ethnographic work done within the Lean Industry could expand on the work I have done and reveal a great deal about the material practices these experts use to enhance their influence and ensure their ongoing relevance in public institutions. The consulting world is notoriously opaque in both its structure and its practices, and my interactions with it during this doctoral research convinced me that careful relationship-building with consultants, underwritten by a genuine curiosity in their work, can prove fruitful.

A more murky line of research on shapeshifting bureaucracies and the rationalities that frame them would focus on identifying current logics, programmes and technologies existing now that have the potential to be repurposed and redeployed in new configurations in the future.

Whatever post-neoliberalism looks like, my research here demonstrates that at least some of its important components are very likely observable now. Much like the claim that government should operate more like business was dusted off and incorporated as a central tenet of neoliberal rationality, and much like Lean has been made an important part of neoliberal bureaucratic reforms, chances are highly likely that traces of tomorrow's rationalities exist now, in disaggregated and likely-unrelated practices, logics, claims, and institutional structures. Arguments and claims about sovereignty made by the counter-globalization movement in the late 1990s and early 2000s, for example, now find themselves as rhetorical devices of Donald Trump and white nationalists marching through cities with tiki torches. Similarly, in Canada, the left's long held distrust of foreign corporations has now been appropriated by conservative politicians insisting that the Canadian environmental movement is funded by American wealth. Which of today's logics and practices will reappear tomorrow alongside others as part of new rationalities and assemblages? While I disagree with the project of positivist scholars who argue that predictability should be a part of social science, I do believe there is value in monitoring how discursive and institutional forms are being deployed and redeployed in new configurations. I believe that conducting genealogical examinations in the present to trace how logics and technologies are being deployed and redeployed can help "get ahead" of the next big shifts and help illuminate what will come out of the next crisis. Seeking out those claims and practices being used "on the margins" or being framed as "innovative" now and following them as they are deployed and redeployed by different actors and agents, I believe, is a useful strategy for tracing what comes next. Saskatchewan spent the better part of a decade and tens of millions of dollars wrestling with ghosts and trying to fix problems without seriously engaging with the fundamental assumptions that I believe are at the heart of neoliberal governance's contradictions

and shortcomings. I hope that by following the various pathways that are converging now into what will "come next," academics and decision-makers can identify and the next "innovative solution" and seek legitimate alternatives.

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