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# Management Education in a Public University in the Economic Periphery: Reflections in Action on UBC in Interior British Columbia

## ABSTRACT

Significant changes in university organisation over recent years have often ignored important challenges concerning the consequences for social and economic development. This paper explores different ways of organising universities. It examines a particular question: what should management education in a public university in the economic periphery entail? The paper relies on the literature on both economic organization and universities, and considers the case of the University of British Columbia's Faculty of Management. It is partly based on the author's reflections in action. The paper discusses the drawbacks of equating management education with the activities of typical business schools. The relevance of business schools, and the downsides of their tendency to serve and promote large, for-profit corporations as the drivers of a particular variant of free market economy, are both explored. Equating management and business fails to account for much of the diverse reality of organizing, managing and leading social and economic activity in practice, and constrains what might be imagined. It also fails the public interest. The paper draws on Deweyan analysis and advocates a journey of inquiry into what management education in a public university in the economic periphery should entail. It suggests a public interest forum in which diverse citizens, employees, entrepreneurs, leaders, managers, and consumers learn to inquire freely and openly about the future of management education. The paper thereby addresses how to begin planning and shaping the consequences of territory-sensitive university education more generally.

## KEY-WORDS

PUBLIC UNIVERSITY, ECONOMIC PERIPHERY, MANAGEMENT EDUCATION, BUSINESS SCHOOLS, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PUBLIC INTERESTS

## 1. The consequences of university education

Since the 1990s, there has been increasing emphasis in Western capitalist economies on the need for universities to be relevant; in particular, emphasis has been put on the beneficial consequences of university education for social and economic development in practice. See Jacob (1997) on changes in the science-society contract, notably in North America and Europe, and Chatterton and Goddard (2000) and Pugh et al. (2016) on the emerging requirement for universities to contribute actively to the development of the territories in which they are located. See also reports about university impact on national and regional innovation, e.g., Government of Canada (2016), and Jonkers et al. (2018) for the European Commission. This trend is likely associated with two factors. First, the increased influence of market economies at a time when centrally planned systems were seen to fail. Second, the corresponding influence in many policy areas, including higher education, of discourse on globalization and competitiveness in the neoliberal market economy (Bristow, 2005; Sugden and Wilson, 2005). A symptom is the emergence of business and management education, prized by universities that aim to be relevant to market economies in practice, and typically organized according to market principles; see Huzzard, Benner and Kärreman (2017: 5) on business schools moving from the periphery of the academic system to its core, and being "too important to exist without".

It is one thing to emphasise the consequences of university education for social and economic development, another to plan and shape those consequences.

Amongst the challenges is the interplay between territory and disciplinary expertise. Successful economic development depends on a territory being able to draw on its distinct structure, resources, and capabilities (Valdaliso and Wilson, 2015). Rodríguez-Pose (2018) shows this dependency in the case of economic policy. He contrasts areas that are economically successful with those that are "lagging and declining" (p. 189); "places that matter and places that don't matter" (p. 192). Drawing on Iammarino, Rodríguez-Pose and Storper (2017), Rodríguez-Pose (2018: 205) highlights a political reaction in the "places that don't matter" and advocates a place-sensitive response: "the solution for less successful areas needs to be place-sensitive, that is policies that are informed by theory and empirical evidence but that, at the same time, respond to the structural opportunities, potential and constraints of each place" . Similarly for a university looking to impact a particular territory: the required disciplinary expertise, and the mix of expertise, must be sensitive to that territory's actual and potential structure, resources, and capabilities. It would likely differ from that needed to affect someplace else, simply because territories differ in those regards.

Further challenges lie in understanding the distinct role of public universities and academics. For instance, the argument about university relevance is sometimes interpreted to mean deliver what the market dictates, but presumably a public university has responsibilities beyond the market, to the public; and compare Mooken and Sugden (2014), querying the reason for the existence of academics, if academics are only useful in meeting market interests. Mooken and Sugden suggest that academics have distinct capabilities, associated with pursuing truth and adhering to forms of

coherence, robustness and rigour. That accords with having consequences for social and economic activity, but points to specific types of impact, rooted in particular doings and beings. To illustrate (by drawing an example from an infinite set of possibilities), consider the market for pesticides in growing grapes for wine production. Some wineries might have an interest in hiding evidence about adverse health effects for vineyard workers applying the pesticides, or for people living in areas neighbouring the vineyards. If an academic finds such evidence, their responsibility to the spirit of the truth (Graham, 2005) means that the findings must not be hidden, even if the research is funded by wineries. The impacts might include not only enhanced health for workers and citizens, but also decreased wine sales and profits, higher unemployment, and no future funding for the academic's research. If the required impacts were increased sales and profits, lower unemployment, and future research funding, a criterion rather than pursuit of the truth would be needed.

When new activities are undertaken, universities often maintain organizational forms that ignore the interplay between territory and disciplinary expertise - they eschew territory-sensitive education - and that follow the market with little or no regard for the distinct role of public universities, and academics[1].

This paper queries that approach. It examines a question about management education: what should management education in a public university in the economic periphery entail? In doing so, it addresses university education more broadly.

The paper's response to the question weaves three strands of thinking. First, reflection on the establishment of a new Faculty of Management at the Okanagan campus of the University of British Columbia (UBC), one of the world's most prominent public universities[2]. The paper is written by the Faculty's incumbent Dean[3], and draws on "reflections in action" (Karlsen and Larrea, 2017: 722), meaning "reflections when the process is still running, and the possibility of changing the process is still present" . The context is that UBC's Okanagan campus is located in the economic periphery, and UBC asserts that the consequences of management education are crucial for the university's positive influence on social and economic development in practice. The second strand of thinking is a conceptual and theoretical analysis of economic organization-specifically,

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[1]    Other challenges include the institutional conservatism of universities. Whilst their history reveals remarkable survivability, tied in part to their adaptability, that survivability likely depends on avoiding knee-jerk reactions to current trends. The oldest universities date back centuries (Kerr, 1990), long before the dominance of free market capitalism. As institutions, there are no doubt intentions that they will last centuries into the future, way beyond the decline of free market capitalism. Even at younger institutions, this weight of history can be keenly felt. Further challenges stem from the tendency of universities to prize an order that they find problematic to disrupt, e.g. through innovative activities purposely intended to have beneficial consequences in a particular territory. Sacchetti and Sugden (2009a) consider order as part of the institutional context for, and consequence of, economic development. Universities contribute to the underpinnings of such order, in part by tending to impose disciplinary and even cross-disciplinary orthodoxy that can militate against change.

[2]    *Times Higher Education* ranked UBC in the world's top 20 public universities in 2018 (https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/university-british-columbia [Accessed: 7th August 2018]).

[3]    The Faculty was formally established in July 2005, and the author appointed Dean in October 2012.
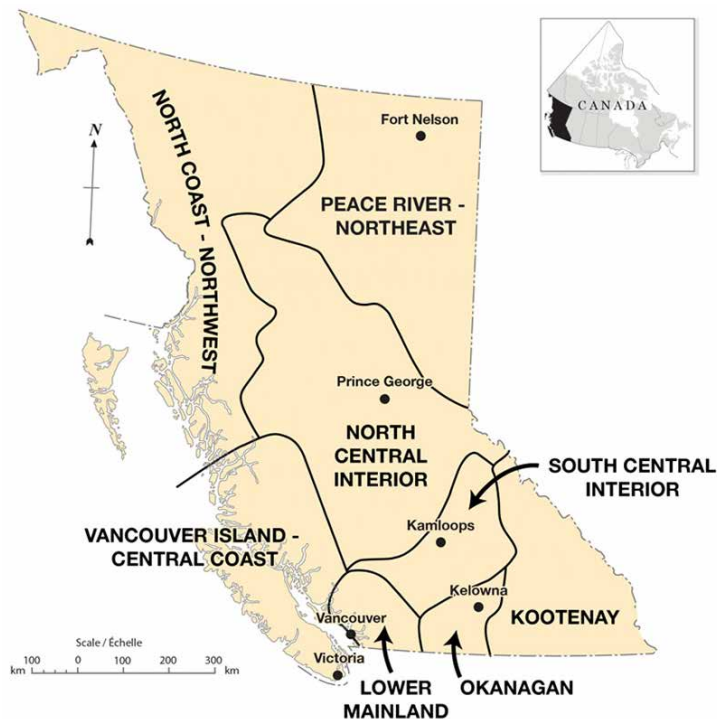
developments of monopoly capital analysis (Baran and Sweezy, 1966; Kalecki, 1971; Cowling, 1982) that focus on the theory of the transnational corporation (Cowling and Sugden, 1987), and Deweyan public interests (Dewey, 1927; Branston, Cowling and Sugden, 2006). Third, studies of universities and academia, from the state of play and change in general (Ginsberg, 2011; Biesta, 2013; Docherty, 2018), to business education in particular (Mintzberg, 2005; Ferlie, McGivern and De Moraes, 2010; Parker, 2018).

The paper argues that management education in a public university in the economic periphery should not equate to the typical education offered by university business schools. Instead, it needs to address the interests of publics. To determine what that would entail, there must be deliberation by publics. More generally, this argument has implications for all university education.

## 2. UBC and the Okanagan

The emphasis in Western capitalist economies on the need for universities to be relevant is clearly illustrated by experiences in Canada, more specifically British Columbia (BC), a province on Canada's Pacific coast (see Map 1).

**Map 1. British Columbia (BC), its regions, and principal settlements**



*Source*: http://opentextbc.ca/geography/front-matter/introduction [Accessed: 21st August 2018].

According to Jones (1997), "there is no such thing as a Canadian 'system' of higher education; instead one can argue that each Canadian province and territory has created a unique network of postsecondary structures and policies"[7]. In BC, for example, Levin (2003a; 2003b) considers the creation of university colleges in the early 1990s. Whilst access to education was a major determinant, "other motivations" were at play, notably "economic rationales, including work force training and social and economic development" (Levin, 2003a: 450).

Such forces also lay behind BC's subsequent separation of colleges and research universities, which led to establishment of UBC's campus in the Okanagan.

In 2004, it was announced that Okanagan University College, which was located in BC's Okanagan region (see Map 1), in so-called "Interior British Columbia"[4], would be split into Okanagan College and the Okanagan campus of UBC. At the time, Brad Bennett - the former chair of the Okanagan University College board of governors, and in 2005 named chair of UBC's board of governors - remarked that "the new UBC Okanagan campus will be developed by people in this region, for people in this region"[5]. In a related vein, UBC's then Provost, Barry McBride, noted that the aim of the university was to be "responsive to the needs and opportunities of the region" and "an economic driver"[6].

Until 2005, UBC had been based primarily at its campus in Vancouver[7], the heart of BC's Lower Mainland (see Map 1), quite a different territory to the Okanagan. Culver et al. (2015) identify the Okanagan as peripheral geographically, to the Lower Mainland, and peripheral temporally, a latecomer to social and economic issues that regions face under globalization. See also Nelson and MacKinnon (2004) and Hutton (1997) on core-periphery in BC.

For millennia, the Okanagan has been part of the Okanagan (Syilx) First Nations territory[8]. It is only since the late nineteenth century that there has been an influx of immigrants, and development of a Western market economy (Sugden and Sugden, 2017; 2019). By road, the Okanagan is approximately 400 kilometres east of the nearest major metropolitan centre, Vancouver. The next closest centre, Calgary, is around 600 kilometres further east, in the province of Alberta. The Okanagan has a set of river-connected lakes - the largest being Okanagan Lake - in a roughly 200

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[4]    Essentially, everywhere in inland British Columbia apart from the Lower Mainland region.

[5]    Campbell confirms UBC. Available at: http://www.castanet.net/news/Kelowna/232/Campbell-Confirms-UBC [Accessed: 8th August 2017].

[6]    Memo to UBC Vancouver Deans, directors and department heads from Barry McBride, Vice President and Provost. Available at: https://news.ok.ubc.ca/2004/05/10/memo-to-ubc-vancouver-deans-directors-and-department-heads-from-barry-mcbride-vice-president-and-provost/ [Accessed: 6th October 2019].

[7]    See Hives (1990) on UBC's early years in Vancouver.

[8]    See the self-description of the Syilx people at http://www.syilx.org/who-we-are/the-syilx-people/ [Accessed: 6th October 2019].

kilometre north-south corridor[9]. The region is bordered by mountains to the east and west. The total population in 2016 was a little over 360,000, under 8% of BC's total population, which in turn was approximately 14% of Canada's total population, nearly 35.2 million[10]. In contrast, in 2016 Greater Vancouver's population exceeded 2.5 million, over 50% of the BC total. Over half of the Okanagan's total population was in the Central Okanagan regional district, where the principal city is Kelowna, population over 125,000 and the site of UBC's Okanagan campus[11]. Between 2011 and 2016, Kelowna was the fastest growing city in BC, and the sixth fastest in Canada[12].

**Table 1. Annual employment of people 15 years and over in the Thompson/Okanagan development region*, by industry (2016, thousands)**

| Industry | Employment |
|---|---|
| All industries | 248.3 |
| Agriculture | 5.5 |
| Forestry, fishing, mining oil and gas | 10.8 |
| Utilities | 2.5 |
| Construction | 24.3 |
| Manufacturing | 18.0 |
| Services | 187.1 |

* "The Thompson-Okanagan economic region is located in the interior of the province. It stretches from Princeton in the west to Golden and the Alberta border in the east, to Osoyoos and the Washington state border in the south. Kelowna and Kamloops are the largest cities in the region". Available at: https://www.workbc.ca/Labour-Market-Information/Regional-Profiles/Thompson-Okanagan [Accessed: 20th October 2019].

*Source*: data from the BC government. Available at: http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/business-industry-trade/number-of-businesses-and-employment-by-industry [Accessed:17th August 2017].

The Okanagan tends to be seen as essentially agricultural, although Kelowna urbanized very rapidly as soon as it was established (Sugden and Sugden, 2017). By 2016, of the near 250,000 people employed

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[9]     Invest Kelowna (2015) *Okanagan Valley Economic Profile 2015*. Available at: https://www.westkelownacity.ca/en/building-business-and-development/resources/Documents/OVEDS-Economic-Profile.pdf [Accessed: 30th December 2019].

[10]     Statistics Canada. Available at: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/rt-td/population-eng.cfm [Accessed: 13th October 2019].

[11]     BC government data. Available at: http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/people-population-community/population/population-estimates [Accessed: 17th August 2017].

[12]     Statistics Canada. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/170208/t003a-eng.htm [Accessed:17th August 2017].

in the Thompson/Okanagan development region, only 2.2% were in agriculture, including a globally emerging wine sector, compared to nearly double that percentage in forestry, fishing, mining, oil and gas, 7.2% in manufacturing, 9.8% in construction, and 75.4% in services (see Table 1)[13].

Businesses in the Okanagan are almost always very small, rarely large. 71,710 (over 80%) of the 87,433 businesses in the Okanagan in 2016 had no employees, and only 547 (less than 1%) had 50 or more employees (see Table 2).

**Table 2. Business counts, by selected BC location, and employee size (2016)**

|  | Total businesses | Businesses with no employees | Businesses with employees | Businesses with 1-19 employees | Businesses with 20-49 employees | Businesses with 50 or more employees |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BC | 1,092,744 | 896,764 | 195,980 | 173,172 | 14,885 | 7,923 |
| Thompson/ Okanagan development region | 125,026 | 101,645 | 23,381 | 20,638 | 1,882 | 861 |
| Okanagan* | 87,433 | 71,710 | 15,723 | 13,951 | 1,225 | 547 |
| Mainland/Southwest development region | 676,290 | 556,505 | 119,785 | 105,728 | 8,995 | 5,062 |
| Greater Vancouver regional district | 595,031 | 489,336 | 105,695 | 93,156 | 7,984 | 4,555 |

\* For the purposes of this Table, the Okanagan is defined as the sum of three regional districts, Central Okanagan, North Okanagan, and Okanagan-Similkameen.

*Source*: data from the BC government. Available at: http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/business-industry-trade/number-of-businesses-and-employment-by-industry [Accessed: 11th August 2017].

In BC as a whole, there were 7,923 businesses with 50 or more employees, of which 4,555 (57%) were in Greater Vancouver. For the Canadian federal government, enterprises with less than 100 employees are small, and only enterprises with at least 500 employees are large (Finlayson, 2013). In June 2017, the four Census Metropolitan Areas in BC (Abbotsford-Mission, Kelowna, Vancouver, and Victoria) accounted for 281 of the 2,556 enterprises in Canada with 500 or more employees. 241 of those were in Vancouver, only 8 in Kelowna (see Table 3).

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[13]    The Thompson/Okanagan development region comprises five regional districts: Central Okanagan, North Okanagan, Okanagan-Similkameen, Columbia-Shuswap, and Thompson-Nicola. In 2016, the Okanagan – i.e. the Central Okanagan, North Okanagan and Okanagan-Similkameen regional districts – accounted for about two-thirds of the total Thompson/Okanagan population. BC government data. Available at: http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/people-population-community/population/population-estimates [Accessed: 17th August 2017].

**Table 3. Total number of enterprises<sup>*</sup>, by selected Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) and employment size (June 2017)**

|  | Without employees | Up to 99 employees | 100-499 employees | 500 or more employees |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *All CMAs* | *1,812,731* | *757,826* | *12,006* | *2,556* |
| Montreal | 299,862 | 110,303 | 1,858 | 355 |
| Ottawa-Gatineau | 79,447 | 31,069 | 470 | 78 |
| Toronto | 528,887 | 212,632 | 3,400 | 884 |
| Calgary | 125,456 | 51,237 | 721 | 177 |
| Edmonton | 93,614 | 45,114 | 678 | 118 |
| Kelowna | 17,360 | 7,438 | 74 | 8 |
| Abbotsford – Mission | 13,318 | 6,192 | 80 | 7 |
| Vancouver | 220,372 | 94,981 | 1,369 | 241 |
| Victoria | 27,967 | 12,008 | 129 | 25 |

<sup>*</sup> "An enterprise is the legal operating entity at the top of the operating structure. There is only one enterprise per operating structure. It is associated with a complete set of financial statements". Available at: https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/statistical-programs/document/1105_D16_T9_V1 [Accessed: 26th December 2019].

*Source*: Statistics Canada, Business Register Tabulations, June 2017. Reproduced and distributed on an "as is" basis with the permission of Statistics Canada.

Those 8 were in agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting; transportation and warehousing; management of companies and enterprises; educational services; accommodation and food services; and public administration (see Table 4).

The data for establishments tells a similar story. Kelowna had 10 with at least 500 employees, compared to 223 in Vancouver and 2,529 in all of Canada (see Table 5).

Consider also the federal data on corporate head offices, defined to "include establishments and locations primarily engaged in providing general management and/or administrative support services to affiliated establishments. Their activities include corporate functions, such as strategic organizational planning, communications, tax planning, legal services, marketing, finance, human resource management and information technology services"[14]. As shown by the annual survey conducted by Statistics Canada, head offices tend to concentrate in major metropolitan centres. For example, 90% of head office employment in Canada in 2015 was concentrated in four provinces:

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[14]  Statistics Canada Annual Head Office Survey 2015. Available at: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/170313/dq170313a-eng.pdf [Accessed:16th August 2017].

Ontario (42%), Quebec (23%), Alberta (18%) and BC (8%)[15]. 84% of head office employment and over two-thirds of head offices were in eight Census Metropolitan Areas: Calgary, Edmonton, Montréal, Ottawa–Gatineau, Québec, Toronto, Winnipeg, and Vancouver[16]. The Okanagan has, at most, extremely few head offices.

**Table 4. Total number of enterprises and establishments[*] with 500 or more employees, by North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), Kelowna CMA (June 2017)**

| NAICS 2 digit classification | Enterprises | Establishments |
|---|---|---|
| *All industries* | *8* | *10* |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting | 1 | 1 |
| Wholesale trade | 0 | 1 |
| Retail trade | 0 | 1 |
| Transportation and warehousing | 1 | 1 |
| Management of companies and enterprises | 1 | 2 |
| Educational services | 2 | 2 |
| Health care and social assistance | 0 | 1 |
| Accommodation and food services | 1 | 0 |
| Public administration | 2 | 1 |

[*] An "establishment is the production entity or the smallest grouping of production entities which: a. Produces a homogeneous set of goods or services; b. Does not cross provincial boundaries; and c. Provides data on the value of output together with the cost of principal intermediate inputs used along with the cost and quantity of labour resources used to produce the output." A "production entity is a physical unit where the business operations are carried out. It must have a civic address and dedicated labour". Available at: https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/statistical-programs/document/1105_D16_T9_V1 [Accessed: 26th December 2019].

*Source:* Statistics Canada, Business Register Tabulations, June 2017. Reproduced and distributed on an "as is" basis with the permission of Statistics Canada.

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[15]   Canada is made up of 10 provinces and 3 territories.

[16]   Statistics Canada Annual Head Office Survey 2015, *op. cit.*.

**Table 5. Total number of establishments, by selected Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) and employment size (June 2017)**

|  | Without employees | Up to 99 employees | 100-499 employees | 500 or more employees |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *All CMAs* | *1,984,127* | *823,106* | *16,387* | *2,529* |
| Montreal | 330,283 | 118,108 | 2,452 | 358 |
| Ottawa – Gatineau | 88,713 | 34,145 | 726 | 128 |
| Toronto | 574,082 | 225,098 | 4,452 | 741 |
| Calgary | 134,732 | 56,414 | 1,053 | 179 |
| Edmonton | 100,610 | 49,998 | 995 | 151 |
| Kelowna | 19,114 | 8,115 | 104 | 10 |
| Abbotsford – Mission | 14,363 | 6,638 | 100 | 5 |
| Vancouver | 240,841 | 101,827 | 1,705 | 223 |
| Victoria | 31,062 | 13,289 | 178 | 27 |

*Source*: Statistics Canada, Business Register Tabulations, June 2017. Reproduced and distributed on an "as is" basis with the permission of Statistics Canada.

## 3. Business education versus management education

When UBC established the Okanagan campus it founded a new Faculty of Management. In keeping with the common practice that informally equates management and business education, it appears that from the outset there was a push in BC from an influential subset of community members who wanted the Okanagan's new Faculty of Management to give local students access to a UBC business education. There was likely also a presumption within UBC that business is an important subject area for a modern university, and one that the Okanagan campus needed to embrace.

In 2006, the first Okanagan campus academic plan identified a business-centric vision for the Faculty: "The Faculty of Management at UBC Okanagan aspires to provide leading edge business education and research to the Okanagan region. The Faculty strives to provide the knowledge and critical thinking skills and to promote the values of ethical and sustainable business to allow our students to become exceptional business leaders in the region, in British Columbia and

internationally" (UBC Okanagan, 2006:20). In the early years of the Faculty, UBC's Sauder School of Business, based at the Vancouver campus, also had a direct influence; for a while in 2010, the two Faculties shared a Dean and were jointly governed. A significant minority of faculty in Management continue to advocate for UBC in the Okanagan to have a Sauder-like school.

In the context of UBC's aspiration for the Okanagan campus to be relevant locally and internationally – an aspiration that current UBC plans suggest is at least as pertinent today as when the campus was established (UBC Okanagan, 2014; UBC, 2018) - a focus on business as understood in many business schools is questionable and problematic, certainly restraining.

In part, the reasons are generic, unassociated with territories such as the Okanagan. In part, they have a geographic dimension, specifically concerning the economic periphery.

Business schools have been criticized for becoming "less and less relevant to practitioners" by over emphasising "a model of science that uses abstract financial and economic analysis, statistical multiple regressions, and laboratory psychology" (Bennis and O'Toole, 2005: 98). Dostaler and Tomberlin (2013: 116) conclude their literature review by observing "that the divide between business research and practice is widening and has negative impacts on business teaching at all levels". See also Alvesson and Spicer (2017: 105) on the prevailing power dynamics in typical business schools, yielding research articles "which are judged by an increasing number of academics to be pointless technical exercises which are uninteresting, make little in the way of real contribution and have no impact beyond a marginal amount on a small group of specialists".

Perhaps especially problematic, whereas "management" might encompass all of the diverse ways of organizing, managing and leading social and economic activity that can be observed or might be imagined[17], "business" in Western business schools typically concentrates on a particular variant of free market economy and, in that context, on serving and promoting large, for-profit corporations. That argument has been made despite variety in business school form and activity, illustrated for the case of the UK by Williams (2010), more widely by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB, 2011) in its analysis of globalisation, and more recently by Huzzard, Benner and Kärreman (2017: 12) in their comment that, despite similar forces being influential on business schools globally, "national context, political dynamics and strategic choice […] still matter".

On the typical free market focus, Currie, Knights and Starkey (2010) suggest that business schools actively promulgated the "recipe for disaster" that they see as the "neoliberal economic consensus that swept both developed and developing economies in the late 1990s and early 2000s". For Khurana (2007), market logic is especially influential in US education towards the end of the last century. See also Mintzberg (2005), and Huzzard, Benner and Kärreman (2017) on the "wholesale embrace of the market" (p. 10) by first US and then European business schools, and included in that "an increasing encroachment of corporate interests in research outputs" (p. 9). As for the tendency to focus essentially on large, for-profit businesses, Parker (2018: 110) argues

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17    Compare Parker (2018), for whom the subject of management is tied, in practice, to corporate business.

that "the business school assumes capitalism, corporations and managers as the default form of organization, and everything else as history, anomaly, exception, alternative". See also McDonald (2017) on the close relationship between large corporate capitalism and business schools in the US, in particular the influence and failures of Harvard Business School.

Such a focus has significant drawbacks for a public university seeking relevance in the likes of the Okanagan.

Whilst large corporations operate in peripheral territories, at most they have relatively small branches or otherwise function through supply networks that comprise far smaller enterprises. Socio-economic activity in the periphery differs from what is perceived by many business schools to characterize major metropolitan centres that are home to a significant number of large branches of global corporations, and corporate headquarters.

In practice, managing any form of social and economic activity in the Okanagan typically warrants awareness of, and direct interaction with, not only for-profit large, small and medium sized enterprises, but also a diverse array of other actors, including: First Nations organizations, social enterprises, cooperatives, not-for-profits and voluntary organizations, community networks, community bodies, and sets of citizens more broadly. These actors differ in their objectives and cultures. Diverse organisations interconnect; to study and understand any one actor, it is important to inquire about relations amongst actors. The interconnectedness is associated with the region having relatively close-knit communities. Habitually, careful account needs to be taken of those communities, and their values. Economic activity is sometimes organized without reference to the market, and none of this is to mention the over-shadowing presence of municipal, provincial, and federal governments, the provincial post-secondary institutions, and the regional health authority, all of which feature prominently in many of the management challenges faced by people in the Okanagan.

Nor is it to mention that, notwithstanding observed practice, novel and innovative forms of organising, managing and leading might be imagined for the likes of the Okanagan. They could impact social and economic change. The possibility of such forms needs space in the research agendas, and teaching curricula, of universities.

Whilst the direct influence of large, for-profit corporations on socio-economic activity is undoubtedly relevant in the economic periphery, it is relatively less significant than in the core, as seen by typical business schools. To characterize in extreme form, the large corporations and the business schools that serve them have created their own, stylized world, but that is not the real world of the structure, resources and capabilities of remote and rural regions. It might be added that, in reality, the economic core comprises diverse people, communities and organizations that face similar management challenges to those in the periphery. They also experience diversity of organisational types, albeit perhaps with differences in the mix of types, and the reasons for the presence of types (see Buckingham, Pinch and Sunley (2012) on the geographic distribution of social enterprises across territories in the UK).

## 4. Public interests in organisations and socio-economic processes

Most tellingly, large corporations in free market economies are governed by private interests. They are hierarchical systems in which those determining the processes for creating and using knowledge, planning activities, making strategic choices and in a broad sense allocating resources, do so in pursuit of their private interests, regardless of the agreement or resistance of publics (Branston, Cowling and Sugden, 2006; Sacchetti and Sugden, 2010). It follows that a business school serving the needs of such corporations would likely also pursue private interests; Pfeffer and Fong (2004: 1503) suggest that, in practice, that is exactly what has happened. Things might have been different if business schools had been "connected to but also somewhat apart from business and other organizations, providing objective research and critical consideration of business, business practices, and their effects on people and society in an effort to serve not only business but also broader social interests and concerns". As it is, "general public interest" has not been advanced by traditional business schools.

For a university concerned with the public, that outcome is a strategic failure (Cowling and Sugden, 1999)[18].

One response to the failure is to centre management education on the study of public interests, not only as regards large corporations and neoliberal market economies but also other organisational types and socio-economic processes[19]. As Parker (2018: 112) argues, organising is ubiquitous, and varied: "there are lots of different forms of organising, and they all articulate different assumptions about hierarchy, economic exchange, tenure, boundaries and so on. Furthermore, they might be informed by anarchism, socialism, feminism, localism, libertarianism, environmentalism and whatever other complex politics human beings bring to bear on their lives".

The study of public interests needs to be addressed without recourse to a narrow business school mind-set. Social enterprises, for example, can take various forms, influenced not only by market logics but also social care logics (Pinch and Sunley, 2015, drawing on Dunn and Jones, 2010). Space in research agendas, and teaching curricula, to think about new forms of enterprise in terms of public interests is also essential. In part, because a new form imagined within the university might be directly adopted in practice. In part, because universities and their faculties through their

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[18]    A strategic failure is "a failure to determine the strategic direction of production, and thereby to determine the evolution of an economy, in the broader interest - in the interest of the community at large" (Cowling and Sugden, 1999: 361).

[19]    Ferlie, McGivern and De Moraes (2010) suggest that the label management rather than business may be more suited to a school concerned with public interest. Consider also Mintzberg (2005: 7). He uses the term business school to depict what actually is, typically, and the term management school to depict what "could be". For him, "the role of the *management* school is management development to promote organisation development to attain social development. In other words, *how* we serve our purpose is by developing better managers to improve organisations. *Why* we do this is to create a better society" (p. 379).

research and teaching contribute to, and help to shape, institutional contexts that are territorial and time dependent[20]. Those contexts could give rise to newly imagined forms of enterprise that can impact public interests (Pinch and Sunley, 2015).

A notable hurdle is that, as a concept, *public interest* tends to be treated loosely. In their argument for a public interest management school, Ferlie, McGivern and De Moraes (2010: sS65-sS66) criticize Rynes and Shapiro (2005) for having no definition of public interest. They build on Pfeffer and Fong (2004) to advance the argument, but do not get far. They merely stress the need to avoid becoming "overdependent on corporations or individual donors for key resources", and to go beyond "narrow business issues". An objective is to embrace not only "reflective business practitioners" but also "other constituencies" Ferlie, McGivern and De Moraes assert that the broader issues "are likely not to take the form of localized or immediate questions or be solely focused on short-term profit maximization or performance improvement"[21].

Increased clarity and depth is provided by the application of Dewey's analysis. For Dewey (1927), the consequences of an act might significantly affect not only those directly carrying out the act but also others. The impact felt by a direct participant confers a "private interest"[22]. In contrast, a public interest is "a shared concern" amongst a set of people - a public - who are not directly undertaking the act (Dewey, 1927; Long, 1990: 171). Because an act might give rise to more than one shared concern, it might be associated with more than one public, each with its own interest, which might or might not conflict (Dewey, 1927).

Consider the consequences of a strategic choice to establish a new production facility in the Okanagan. One public might be Okanagan First Nations people who have not ceded their territory to settlers and who see their rights overrun again as a consequence of the choice. Another might be the residents who live near the new facility, sharing an interest in the consequences for environmental pollution. Perhaps another, Okanagan parents wondering whether their children might be able to work and live locally; and another, people in the neighbouring Kootenay region (see Map 1) who would appreciate the employment opportunities the new facility offers. If the facility is established as a for-profit organisation, a public might be the set of shareholders who have no control but who are interested in their financial return. If it is a social enterprise committed to the employment of homeless people, a public with an interest in the facility might be the currently unemployed, homeless population; those who might have been employed had the organisation been established as a for-profit; people who fear the homeless as neighbours; and those who support the meeting of

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[20]  Drawing on Pinch and Sunley (2015: 304): "institutions are generally understood as systems of rules that structure social interactions, including both formal rules and informal conventions and norms […]. Organisations may be conceived as formal expressions of these institutions […]. Institutionalisation refers to the processes through which particular values and behaviours become embedded within an institution and its organisational manifestations".

[21]  The term public has also been treated loosely in universities; see Guzmán-Valenzuela (2016) for a discussion of different uses.

[22]  Where there is more than one direct participant, each has a private interest, which might or might not conflict.

social needs and the fostering of social cohesion. The precise set of publics would also vary according to any changing mix of social care logics and market logics in the strategy and operation of the facility (Pinch and Sunley, 2015): the homeless might make up a public interested in favouring social care logics, whereas a group of investors might be a public supporting market logics.

*All people* who are not direct participants in the decision to establish a new production facility but who share a significant concern with its consequences, are members of a public, and *all publics* should matter to a university focused on public interests.


## 5. Public interests in management education

A richer approach to the failure of business schools to address publics is to go beyond the study of public interest in organisational types and socio-economic processes, to explore directly the public interest in management education. The education that is offered in practice could then be centred on the findings; they could be used as a foundation and departure point, albeit in the context of Collini's (2017: 156) idea that a university is "a partly-protected space in which the search for deeper and wider understanding takes precedence over all more immediate goals", and bearing in mind that everything in academia is contestable (Mooken and Sugden, 2014).

A challenge is that what is meant by "the public interest in management education" is poorly understood, because understanding and serving the public interest is not on the agenda of the typical business school, and the concept of "public interest" is loosely treated. It is also because universities tend to adopt the essence of the large, for-profit corporate way of organising as a model for their own practice (Sugden, 2004)[23].

Winter (2009: 123) writes of "business-like arrangements" in which "managerialism and its associated ideologies, values and interests reshaped the nature of universities, making them into producers of commodities that consumers (students) may choose to demand depending on their competing preferences and the institution's perceived brand image". For Docherty (2011: 52), "in the marketized consumerist model of education, the relation of the student to knowledge is cheapened to the point of utter falsification: there exists a body of knowledge; the student pays to get it; and I, as teacher, reach back into the store and provide it". See also Biesta (2013), who comments on the rise of the so-called global university, primarily focused on adjusting to private rather than public interests, with adverse consequences for the prioritisation of teaching. Huzzard, Benner and Kärreman (2017: 6) stress styles of managing, leading, and strategizing "along lines similar to those of firms and companies"; branding and financialization; and rankings based on competitive capability in markets for goods and services.

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[23]    Business schools are at the forefront of universities embracing corporate characteristics (Huzzard, Benner and Kärreman, 2017).

As for the Canadian experience, Pennock et al. (2016) study university senates, and present evidence that the effects of corporatisation are a concern for senators. On UBC, Walker (2008) addresses the early twenty first century - precisely the time that UBC established its Okanagan campus. She argues that "UBC's commitment to the social good is compromised […] in the attempt to satisfy corporate demands" (p. 47). At the Okanagan campus, market conceptualisations are evidenced by budget models that tend to require increased market revenue as a necessary condition for innovation; and by the perception, for many faculty and administrators, that students are the university's "customers", and faculty the "clients" of university service departments.

In sum, with their neoliberal ways of organizing, managing and leading themselves, universities have typically not shown substantive concern with understanding public interest in education. Their neoliberal practices have contributed to, and helped to shape, a prevailing institutional context that stresses private interest.

To overcome this lack of concern and explore the interests of publics in management education by applying Deweyan analysis, a major difficulty must be met: people might not know that they have concerns about the consequences of management education and, even if they do, they might not know if those concerns are shared with others (Dewey, 1927; Branston, Rubini et al., 2006).

Dewey (1927: 317) sees publics as "amorphous and unarticulated". "Indirect, extensive, enduring and serious consequences of conjoint and interacting behaviour call a public into existence having a common interest in controlling […] consequences. But the machine age has so enormously expanded, multiplied, intensified and complicated the scope of the indirect consequences […] that the resultant public cannot identify and distinguish itself" (p. 314). If the machine age of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries affected the scope of indirect consequences, imagine the exponential alterations associated with the globalisation of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

The difficulty is illustrated by how the Okanagan campus has engaged with the wine industry. British Columbia is a globally emerging wine territory, the heart of which is the Okanagan, the location for over 50% of the territory's wineries[24], and over 80% of its total vineyard acreage[25]. Since UBC established the Okanagan campus, it has deliberately aimed to impact the industry's development. From 2012, a group of colleagues at the Faculty of Management has led many of those efforts, a process explored by Mooken, Sugden and Valania (2018). They argue that, to begin with, the industry doubted that the university could have beneficial impacts, because of its experience: it was felt that UBC's Vancouver campus had been conducting wine related research that was presumably interesting to faculty, and perhaps some wine territories, but that was largely inaccessible and irrelevant to the Okanagan. Discussions between 2012 and 2014 revealed that participants in the industry were unaware that UBC could provide research and teaching that might have beneficial consequences for the industry, despite their experience thus far. They were not aware

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[24]   Based on data collected by the Faculty of Management to create a mailing list of British Columbia wineries.

[25]   Available at: http://www.winebc.com/discover-bc/okanagan-valley [Accessed: 13th August 2016].

that they were a public with an interest in the consequences of activities that UBC could undertake. According to Karlsen (2005), that is typical: industries tend not to understand how they might benefit from engagement with a university, particularly at the start of a relationship.

Discussions with industry also revealed that it had no mechanisms for participants to explore and identify their shared interests – no mechanisms to form publics – and, within UBC, it was recognised that there was little knowledge about how best to support the industry's development. "Time and space were needed for the industry and the university to get to know each other, and to build understanding of roles and contributions" (Mooken, Sugden and Valania, 2018: 136).

UBC's response to the difficulty has been multi-faceted. First, allowance has been made for time and space to engage, evidenced by the university's patience in seeking concrete outcomes from the work, and the use of its cash and in-kind resources to support activities (including the hosting of educational forums, workshops, and public talks, and the publication and dissemination of reports on key challenges), despite the absence of revenue streams. Indeed, despite the absence of a market for the activities.

Second, industry challenges have been addressed, to demonstrate how the university might be able to support the industry, to enable potential publics to appreciate that they might have interests in management education. For example, in 2015 participants in the industry identified controversies about the labelling of "Cellared in Canada" wines, blends produced by the large corporations using grape juice from outside BC. The labelling was seen as a major barrier to BC's emergence as a globally recognised wine territory. The subject was divisive for the industry, too difficult for it to address without outside support. UBC was asked to help, a request that a year earlier would likely not have been made, because of industry perceptions at the time. That resulted in establishment of an industry task force that was coordinated by UBC, in partnership with KEDGE business school, Bordeaux. It focused on anomalous federal regulatory requirements[26]. The findings were discussed by the industry at the 2016 UBC Wine Leaders Forum[27], then used as a basis for participants in the industry to collaborate on new policy proposals, lobby government and bring about change (Mooken, Sugden and Valania, 2018). Participants at the Wine Leaders Forum were shown that they have a common interest in the consequences of management education.

Third, to help the industry appreciate what its common interest might be, there have been systematic attempts to explain what a university like UBC actually does, and is not: what distinguishes UBC's involvement with the industry is "its particular focus on the organization of knowledge - the creation, acquisition, maintenance, dissemination, assimilation, application and (*inter alia*) mobilization of knowledge by [a university] whose prime reference point is the pursuit

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[26]   UBC-KEDGE *Final Report and Recommendations of the Task Force on Labelling and Presentation*. Available at: http://ubckedgewine.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/labellingtaskforce_report_final.pdf. [Accessed: 9th January 2018].

[27]   First piloted in 2014, and initially organised in partnership between UBC and KEDGE, the UBC Wine Leaders Forum is now an annual retreat style activity for winery owners and principals to identify and address their strategic challenges (Mooken, Sugden and Valania, 2018).

of truth through reason and evidence" (Mooken, Sugden and Valania, 2018: 138); "universities are not supermarkets where winery owners can select and purchase knowledge" (Mooken, Sugden and Valania, 2018: 138, drawing on Isaksen and Karlsen, 2010; Malecki, 2009).

Fourth, there have been deliberate attempts to keep UBC's engagement with the wine industry open to organizations of every size. BC has approximately 300 wineries, 3 large and a few medium sized, the vast majority small (Mooken, Sugden and Valania, 2018). The industry has experienced tensions between large and small producers, for example about "Cellared in Canada", and UBC has come under pressure from large producers to engage with the industry solely on their agendas, despite wider interests. That pressure has been applied to the leadership of the Okanagan campus, and resisted. No set of producers should dominate the university agenda. The responsibility of the university is to all publics, which includes all sets of participants in the industry who share a significant concern with the consequences of management education.

It follows from these arguments that UBC also has a responsibility to publics out with the industry, and a fifth response to the difficulty of publics discovering themselves and their interests has been to draw attention to wider concerns. For example, since 2014 there have been discussions with the industry about the importance of identity to the territory's development. They resulted in a series of workshops hosted across the territory in 2017 and 2018, and publication of a freely available report entitled *BC Wine Territory Identity* (Buschert et al., 2018). The report highlights the need to think beyond the industry when exploring identity: "The culture and contribution of different groups of people living in the region need to be taken into consideration, and respected. That includes earlier and more recent immigrants, and most notably First Nations, points that were recognized in the workshops" (p. 19). There is a possibility, albeit likely a low probability, that people out with the industry who read such comments might be stimulated to explore their shared interests in UBC's wine management education.

## 6. A journey of inquiry

The idea of stimulating exploration of shared interests is in line with Dewey's (1927) response to the difficulty facing publics. He saw a need for deliberative democratic debate, discussion and persuasion, and, in that context, emphasises "freedom of social inquiry and of distribution of its conclusions" (p. 339). With this in mind, and to go beyond the piecemeal efforts illustrated by how the Okanagan campus has thus far engaged with the wine industry, a possibility is to undertake a journey of inquiry (Mooken, 2015; Culver et al., 2015, relying on Dewey (1938; 1947) and Kauffman (1959), and exploring regional social and economic development in the Okanagan). Specifically, a journey of inquiry into what management education in a public university in the economic periphery should entail, bearing in mind the interests of publics in the consequences of such education. This suggestion is not particular to UBC's Faculty of Management in the Okanagan. It is more widely relevant.

A journey of inquiry has two defining features (Culver et al., 2015). First, both its direction, and the behaviour and action on the journey, are not predetermined. Instead, they are chosen. Second, the choices are based on the pursuit of truth using reason and evidence, informed by sensibility.

The explicit avoidance of pre-determined outcomes is to enable the inquiry to identify and explore all imaginable possibilities. Dewey (1938) sees inquiry as an organic process in which there is ongoing change, including in the subject matter being inquired about. He warns against being "so controlled by a conceptual framework fixed in advance that the very things which are genuinely decisive in the problem in hand and its solution, are completely overlooked" (p. 70). There are twists and turns in a journey of inquiry, including turns back: "The 'settlement' of a particular situation by a particular inquiry is no guarantee that *that* settled conclusion will always remain settled […] the criterion of what is taken to be settled, or to be knowledge, is being *so* settled that it is available as a resource in further inquiry; not being settled in such a way as not to be subject to revision in further inquiry" (p. 8-9). This echoes the practice in academia of, over time, building arguments on previous literature, providing new insights, proposing hypotheses, and perhaps suggesting apparently clear answers, only for those insights and answers to be questioned and possibly overturned in light of new conceptualizations, analysis and data in further research.

The second defining feature of the journey of inquiry is choice-making based on truth, reason, evidence, and sensibility, and that is a direct appeal to the essence of academic activity. See Mooken and Sugden (2014) and, on sensibility, Docherty (2008; 2013). For him, knowledge is deficient if it is not lived and felt "at the inner level of sensibility" (Docherty, 2008: 4). This is not an argument against the relevance of what he calls sense. It is an argument to balance sense and sensibility. With perhaps related concerns in mind, Dewey (1938: 70) argues that "a problem must be felt before it can be stated". See also Beveridge (1957) on "emotional sensitivity" and the scientist as "creative artist" who does more than apply "rules of logic and experiment" (p. 76); and on "feelings" or "taste", needed in research when there is "insufficient information available for effective reasoning" (p. 57) .

A journey of inquiry into management education would require "facilitators" who ensure that the journey's defining features are respected. They are needed to safeguard against abuse of extant power; the process is novel, a challenge to the large, for-profit corporate agenda in both business schools and universities, proponents of which might seek to undermine the journey. Facilitation could be a role for a group of scholars. They should not be drawn only from business and management faculty, partly because the objective is an open inquiry. Experience at UBC's Faculty of Management suggests that some faculty actively favour a public interest agenda, others embrace a typical business school model, sometimes on the basis of reason, evidence and sensibility; and sometimes without reason and evidence but to protect the status quo, perhaps because the market-centric model has served them well in their careers to date, perhaps because  they see that their rise through the ranks, and future job, necessitates they play the corporate, market game of modern universities. If those protecting the status quo are the sole facilitators of the journey of inquiry, the risk is that they exercise their freedom as academics - their power - to promote the corporate, marketized model, and prevent the emergence of a school centred on public interests (compare Ginsberg (2011) on a renewed role for faculty to save the

university from administrative bloat, and associated managerialism). More positively, another reason for facilitators to be drawn from across disciplinary boundaries is that research and teaching about organizing, managing and leading social and economic activity necessarily involves a wide range of disciplines, subject areas and expertise, found across the social sciences, arts, humanities, and sciences, throughout a university. A third reason is that, in any case, drawing on multiple perspectives is a way of stimulating creativity and imagination. As Beveridge (1957: 55) notes, when addressing a particular research problem "original contributions are more likely to come into being if there is available a breadth of knowledge extending into related or even distant branches of knowledge".

Facilitation would need to provide a rich set of differentiated learning spaces offering challenge and stimulation. To begin the journey, the facilitators could reach out systematically to engage and assist multiple, dispersed and mobile publics to recognise themselves, and to identify and voice their interests in what management education in a public university in the economic periphery should entail. For example, in the Okanagan context they could engage different groups of residents, and stimulate their thinking by discussing diverse organisational types and socio-economic processes, observable and imaginable, influenced by market logics, social care logics, and so on. The groups might include Okanagan First Nations people, parents, the unemployed, and the homeless, as well as participants in wine and other industries, from large, medium and small for-profits, to social enterprises, charities and citizens bodies. Such engagements might reveal ideas specific to the Okanagan, or perhaps to peripheral territories more generally, and they might suggest territorially neutral possibilities. The facilitators could also engage diverse groups outside the Okanagan, elsewhere in Canada and indeed internationally, again reflecting Beveridge's (1957) point about breadth of knowledge.

More specifically, ways of enabling publics are considered by Sacchetti, Sacchetti and Sugden (2009), drawing on Dewey (1927), and on analysis of the competence-based view of the knowledge economy (Gertler, 2001). They advocate *public interest forums*, namely: spaces in which people (diverse citizens, employees, entrepreneurs, leaders, managers, consumers, *etc.*) learn to inquire freely and openly, deliberating about socio-economic concerns such that participants can not only identify when they constitute a public but also explore the interests of that public. Thinking and communication in a forum is based on reason and evidence, and a result of participants learning about the interests of each other as well as themselves. Following Sacchetti and Sugden (2009b), the forums are underpinned by the values of democratic deliberation, notably the rejection of controlling influences; an emphasis on positive freedom; inclusion on equal terms; and informed participation and continuous learning.

A starting-point for a journey on management education could be a public interest forum on the consequences of management education in the economic periphery in the future; or perhaps, on aspects of management education, for instance on the consequences for a prominent industry in a particular territory. In the Okanagan, for example, it might be on wine management education.

Focusing on the future might give distance from immediate controversy and conflict, thereby enabling a wide set of people to participate without (or with less) interference from current vested interest. Forum participants would need to address the meaning of management education –

including the argument that management and business education are not necessarily one and the same – and from that basis imagine the future. The forum would enable and empower publics through deliberation, so that they determine and voice their interests. Those voices would then provide reason, evidence and sensibility as the basis for continuing the journey. They would provide the foundation for developing a rounded approach to shaping the form and content of management education in a public university in the economic periphery.

Compare Ferlie, McGivern and De Moraes (2010: s66) on how to develop a public interest management school. They suggest the possibility of "stakeholder consultations". Whilst that would require decision-makers to take account of a wider set of concerns than merely their own, stakeholder analysis does not challenge the essence of what those decision makers currently do (Freeman et al., 2010; Hallier and Sugden, 2012. See also Pennock et al. (2016) on perceived links between stakeholders and the corporate world). The stakeholder approach stops well short of a public interest forum, in particular the Deweyan imperative that confronts what decision-makers currently do by giving centre-stage to the *a priori* unknowable outcomes of democratic deliberation (Branston, Cowling and Sugden, 2006).

## 7. The future for management education, and universities

For Docherty (2018: 63), the neoliberal university is "a mechanism for the privatisation of knowledge in a society dedicated to the service of increasing the wealth of a specific class of individuals". It is associated with lack of democracy. Echoing that characterisation, this paper argues that, in essence, the typical business school offers neoliberal education. The chosen strategy is to serve large corporations, and support development of essentially neoliberal market economies controlled by elite, private interests. Impact is achieved by supporting that system. Other interests and impacts are marginalised or ignored. Understanding the public interest is not on the agenda. In the extreme, neoliberal business schools have so embraced the large corporate, market model that they have been captured, leaving no space for what Collini (2017: 156) calls "the search for deeper and wider understanding". They do as the market dictates.

In contrast, the vision of this paper is a territory-sensitive approach to management education that emphasises what is observable and what is imaginable, centres on the interests of publics, and is grounded in a public interest forum on the consequences of education. Following Dewey (1927), that is a future based on democracy[28].

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[28]    Docherty (2018) associates neoliberal education not only with the absence of democracy but also with the denial of freedom, and injustice. The neoliberal education of typical business schools could be addressed from those perspectives, for example by drawing on studies of governance and the absence of freedom in the monopoly capital literature (for example, Branston, Cowling and Sugden (2006) on corporate governance; Cowling and Sugden (1998) on international trade).

It is not a future that delivers what public interest dictates. Mooken and Sugden (2014: 600) identify pursuit of the spirit of the truth and adhering to forms of coherence, robustness and rigour as basic capabilities in academia; their absence implies "academic poverty". They conceptualise spirit of the truth by drawing on Graham (2005: 163), for whom it means "the belief that intellectual inquiry should be allowed to go where it will at the instigation of those gifted at intellectual research and teaching". This approach views "truth as a contestable notion" (Mooken and Sugden, 2014: 603), aligning with the view that everything in an academic context is contestable. An implication is that the responsibility of academics is not to deliver what the market dictates; doing so amounts to academic poverty, a characteristic of neoliberal business schools. Similarly, the responsibility of academics is not to deliver what public interest dictates.

To be rooted in territorial sensitivity and centred on the interests of publics, is not to deny omnipresent contestability and basic capabilities in academia.

To illustrate, suppose an academic's research, funded by producers, evidences adverse health effects for workers who apply pesticides in vineyards. The consequences of disseminating the results could include producers being sued for damages by the affected workers, which gives producers an interest in the results being falsified. They are a public with an interest in suppressing the truth. The academic has a responsibility not to falsify, no matter the impact.

Whilst this paper focuses especially on management education in the economic periphery, it opens questions about the core, which is also populated by diverse people, communities and organizations that, in reality, face similar management challenges to those in the periphery. It would be exciting to see a public university commit to a journey of inquiry into management education - or aspects of management education, in the periphery or the core, or both - and for that process to be the subject of academic study. Much could be learnt about the interests of publics; processes for enabling those interests to be identified and voiced; and public interest providing a foundation and departure-point for shaping university management education in practice.

Such learning could be applied beyond management. It is an open question whether the public interest in university education is well understood in any subject area.

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